

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE SCRIBE OF THE ALHAMBRA:  
LISÂN AL-DĪN IBN AL-KHAṬĪB, SOVEREIGNTY AND HISTORY IN NASRID  
GRANADA

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## Abbreviations

|                        |                                                    |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <i>BA</i>              | <i>Biblioteca de al-Andalus</i>                    |
| BL                     | British Library (London)                           |
| BN                     | Biblioteca Nacional de España (Madrid)             |
| BnF                    | Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Paris)           |
| BNRM                   | Bibliothèque Nationale du Royaume du Maroc (Rabat) |
| <i>EI</i> <sup>2</sup> | <i>Encyclopedia of Islam</i> , Second Edition      |
| <i>EI</i> <sup>3</sup> | <i>Encyclopedia of Islam</i> , Third Edition       |



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## Notes on Transliteration, Dates and Translations

For Arabic and Persian transliteration, I have relied on the guidelines established by the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, with the addition of full transliteration of names, and titles of works. Whenever possible, names of regions, towns, mountains and bodies of water are provided in their conventional English names and spellings. In the case of place names in Iberia or North Africa, this dissertation maintains conventional Spanish or French renditions, except for place names for which commonplace English renditions exist. Famous structures are referred to by their conventional English names (i.e. Alhambra rather than *al-ḥamrāʾ*). Dates in this dissertation are provided in both the Hijri and Common Era calendars. Unless indicated otherwise, all translations in this dissertation are my own.

## Abstract

This dissertation explores the relationship between intellectual networks, royal patronage and developments in political thought in late medieval Islamic Spain and North Africa. It proposes a new reading of the history of the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada (635/1238–897/1492) that examines these broader issues by closely studying the life and works of Lisān al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭīb (713/1313–776/1374), the most prominent Spanish Muslim historian, chancellor and philosopher during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, situating this figure within a larger network of scholars, statesmen and functionaries in the late medieval Islamic West. This dissertation illustrates the manner in which the crisis and transformation that characterized the territorial fragmentation of Islamic Spain and North Africa contributed to the rise of a distinct class of scholar-officials who reshaped the intellectual and political culture of the Western Mediterranean. It argues that the gradual concentration of executive political authority in the hands of scholar-officials, such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb, was part of the process of the consolidation of royal power at the expense of the nobility during the late Middle Ages. For their part, these scholar-officials composed works across a variety of genres that sought to legitimate and rationalize the centralization of royal authority. To examine this phenomenon, this dissertation draws upon a corpus of Arabic, Castilian and Aragonese manuscripts, as well as coinage and epigraphy. It investigates the lives of those individuals who existed in close proximity to royal power during the late medieval period in order to explore how their own experiences and ideas fashioned discourses about sovereignty, governmentality and the craft of history during the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

The rise of a distinct class of scholar-officials, whose members included Christians, Muslims and Jews working for different (often competing) dynasties, was underpinned by

similar networks of patronage, intellectual interests and a shared geography. These highly-educated individuals rose to prominence as chancellors, treasurers, and councilors within the royal courts in Iberia and were responsible for producing a multitude of works, while patronizing pieces of art and architecture that embodied their particular worldview.

Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb provides us with an illustrative example of this class of individuals during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. This figure followed in the footsteps of leading Spanish Muslim scholar-officials such as Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Ibn ‘Amīra, Ibn Sa‘īd and Ibn al-Abbār, individuals who had exercised significant administrative and political authority while also being deeply involved in various intellectual and literary pursuits during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century. Ibn al-Khaṭīb authored over 50 works, including historical chronicles, epistolography, biographical dictionaries, poetry, medical texts, and political treatises, throughout his career. This dissertation illustrates his role at the intersection of intellectual and political developments and demonstrates how his literary production was closely intertwined with his function as a statesman. It provides the first comprehensive study in English of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s life, from his birth into a minor family in the small town of Loja in 713/1313 to his rise as a physician and scribe in the Nasrid court, his transformation from a client and servant of the Nasrid dynasty into an itinerant scholar-official who sought to establish his own individual power and influence across the Islamic West, to his controversial assassination in Fez in 776/1374. It looks particularly closely at the letters that he exchanged with his broader network of scholars, nobles, functionaries and kings across the Mediterranean world to think about the question of loyalty, ties of obligation and individual strategies of survival in the Islamic West during this period.

## Introduction

Much of our understanding of the history, culture and society of the Islamic West during the medieval period has been mediated through the writings of various Andalusī authors.<sup>1</sup> Among these writers, the names of two key figures, Lisan al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn al-Khaṭīb (d. 776/1374), and Abū Zayd ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), stand out particularly clearly. Their writings and works populate the footnotes and bibliographies of modern studies on al-Andalus and North Africa. Their historiographical influence extends far beyond their own era or region and has heavily informed scholarly understandings of earlier periods. This has enabled them to leave a permanent mark on the ways that modern scholars have thought about the periodization of North African and Iberian history during the Middle Ages as well as the way that the nature of society, political developments and religious currents in the Islamic West have been conceptualized. Ramzi Roughi has highlighted this significant point in his recent book about the Hafids when he states, in reference to Ibn Khaldūn’s monumental historical chronicle: “the *Kitāb al-‘Ibar* was the most systematic and comprehensive work ever written to frame the entire history of the Maghrib as the history of the ‘Arabs’ and the ‘Berbers.’ This is significant because it made an Andalusī perspective the standard way of understanding the Maghrib and its past.”<sup>2</sup> Throughout his book, Roughi discusses the ways in which this “Andalusī perspective” played out within Ibn Khaldūn’s (and others’) historical writing, underscoring in particular the central place which the latter’s chronicle has been accorded in the modern historiography of the

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<sup>1</sup> “Andalusī” within this dissertation refers to Muslims whose families originated or resided in the medieval Iberian Peninsula. The term encompasses both Muslims who resided in al-Andalus (whether those parts under Islamic rule or the territories conquered by Castile, Aragon, Navarre or Portugal) or who later migrated to North Africa or the Near East while retaining a strong affiliation with their Andalusī identity (often in the form of retaining the name of their city or town of origin in Iberia as part of their *nisba*).

<sup>2</sup> Ramzi Roughi, *The Making of a Mediterranean Emirate: Ifrīqīya and Its Andalusī, 1200–1400* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), p. 153.

Islamic West. His work also indicates the manner in which Ibn Khaldūn was utilizing historical writing as a tool in order to convey a particular vision of society and politics. Rouighi's major contribution has been to draw attention to the rather uncritical way that historical chronicles, such as the *Kitāb al-ʿIbar*, have been utilized since the 19<sup>th</sup> century to reify a particular conception of the Islamic West while comparatively little emphasis has been placed upon the various social, political and intellectual contexts in which these works were produced.

My project, in the broadest sense, is an attempt to think more deeply about the role of Andalus as producers of historical writing and notions of governance during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century while considering the various ways that historical writing in all its forms and genres was put in the service of dynastic ideology. The courts of the four post-Almohad dynasties—the Marinids, Nasrids, Zayyanids and Hafsidids provided the context for many of the intellectual and administrative developments in the late medieval Islamic West. Specifically, a large portion of the historical knowledge, literary output and documentary production was the product of court secretaries, who were linked to the sovereigns in Granada, Fez, Tlemcen and Tunis through various networks of patronage, loyalty and ties of obligation. This close alignment between knowledge and power was, in turn, reflected within the various works produced throughout this period. It is my primary contention that a close study of the chancery—and particularly the offices of the chief minister (*wazīr*) and chancellor (*kātib diwān al-inshāʾ*)—can demonstrate the interrelationship between governance, historical writing and the articulation of dynastic ideology. These three key developments were linked to a single class of individuals: the court secretaries (or *kuttāb*). The Nasrid Kingdom, centered on the city of Granada and, particularly, its palace-fortress complex of the Alhambra provided one of the most important contexts for the evolution of this phenomenon in the late medieval world and serves as the primary focus of this study.

The Alhambra is a structure that has long fascinated visitors to Granada, regardless of whether the individual is a 14th-century Castilian nobleman, a 15<sup>th</sup>-century German humanist,<sup>3</sup> a 19<sup>th</sup>-century American writer,<sup>4</sup> or any of the two million tourists who visit the building annually in our own time. Since the Middle Ages, there has been no shortage of interest in this palace-fortress complex, its monumental scale and its exquisite craftsmanship. The very foundations of Spanish Orientalism can even be sought in the writings of those individuals (Alonso del Castillo,<sup>5</sup> Luis del Mármol Carvajal,<sup>6</sup> among others) whose task it was to painstakingly record and preserve the hundreds of inscriptions that cover its walls, a tradition that continued well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, since the Alhambra encapsulates nearly a millennium of history and represents a rare example of a well-preserved palace from the medieval Islamic world, there has been no shortage of studies about it among historians of art and architecture.<sup>8</sup> Yet, despite this extensive lay and scholarly interest in the building, not least in the Anglophone world, relatively little has been written in English about the people that inhabited it, oversaw its construction, composed its inscriptions, patrolled its fortifications and governed a considerably prosperous and long-lived kingdom from within its walls. These individuals included sovereigns and slaves,

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<sup>3</sup> Hieronymus Münzer, *Viaje por España y Portugal* (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 1991), pp. 91–99.

<sup>4</sup> Washington Irving, *The Alhambra* (London: H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1832), 2 vols.

<sup>5</sup> Alonso del Castillo, *Papeles varios de Alonso del Castillo*, BN 7453. For a study of this individual and his writings, see Darío Cabanelas Rodríguez, *El Morisco granadino Alonso del Castillo* (Granada: Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife, 1965).

<sup>6</sup> Luis del Mármol Carvajal, *Historia del rebelion y castigo de los Moriscos del Reino de Granada* (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2015), ed. Javier Castillo Fernández, pp. 45–54.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Emilio Lafuente y Alcántara, *Inscripciones árabes de Granada, precedidas de una reseña histórica y de la genealogía detallada de los reyes Alahmares* (Madrid: Imprenta Nacional, 1859).

<sup>8</sup> Among the most important studies are Olga Bush, *Reframing the Alhambra: Architecture, Poetry, Textiles and Court Ceremonial* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018); Antonio Malpica Cuello, *La Alhambra: Ciudad Palatina Nazarí* (Malaga: Editorial Sarria, 2007); Antonio Fernández-Puertas, *La fachada del Palacio de Comares* (Granada: Patronato de la Alhambra, 1980); Oleg Grabar, *The Alhambra* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978); Antonio Gallego y Burín, *La Alhambra* (Granada: Editorial Comares, 1963); Basilio Pavon Maldonado, *Estudios sobre la Alhambra* (Granada: Patronato de La Alhambra, 1975); Leopoldo Torres Balbás, *La Alhambra y el Generalife* (Madrid: Editorial Plus-Ultra, 1953).



scholars and soldiers, men and women. As part of its study of the various individuals and processes that took place within the confines of this structure, this dissertation seeks to illuminate the social, intellectual and political history of the Alhambra during the late Middle Ages, with particular attention to the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, specifically the reigns of the Nasrid sovereigns Yūsuf I (r. 733/1333–755/1354) and Muḥammad V (r. 755/1354–793/1391).

This dissertation offers a new way of thinking about the world that created the Alhambra, specifically by looking at the context and writings of one particular group of individuals who built and inhabited it: the scholar-officials. The rise of a distinct class of scholar-officials in late medieval Spain was underpinned by similar networks of patronage, intellectual interests and a shared geography. These highly-educated individuals rose to prominence as chancellors, treasurers, and councilors within the royal courts in Iberia and were responsible for producing a multitude of works across various genres, while patronizing pieces of art and architecture that embodied their particular worldview. Not unlike their counterparts in the Spanish Christian kingdoms of Castile-León and Aragón during the same period, known as *letrados*, these chancery officials in Granada developed forms of historical writing that sought to legitimate their own position in society and perpetuate distinct ideas about kingship and sovereignty. Lisān al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭīb (d. 776/1374) provides historians with an illustrative example of this class of individuals during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Born in the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada—the last surviving Muslim polity in the Iberian Peninsula—in 713/1313, Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭīb began his career as a scribe, physician and poet in the Alhambra before rising to become one of the most influential statesmen in Islamic Spain and North Africa. Alongside the performance of his substantial administrative and political duties as Nasrid chancellor and chief minister, he authored over 60 works, including historical chronicles, epistolography, biographical

dictionaries, poetry, philosophical tracts and medical texts throughout his career. He left his imprint on the very shape of the city of Granada itself, with his poetry even being inscribed upon the many Nasrid palaces in the Alhambra. As a physician, philosopher and historian, he was at the forefront of the intellectual developments of the age. His thought was heavily shaped by the incredibly turbulent times in which he lived, which witnessed the political and territorial fragmentation of power in the Islamic West and the devastation of the Black Death, two major crises with which he would deal directly in his capacity as Granada's leading statesman.

Ibn al-Khaṭīb's intellectual circle was as expansive as his political universe, a fact which can be gleaned from the rich corpus of over 200 surviving letters that he exchanged with the scholars, nobles and rulers of his age from Seville to Cairo. The extensive community of letters to which he belonged across the Mediterranean included individuals as diverse as the physician-philosopher Yūsuf b. Waqqār in Castile, the historian Ibn Khaldūn, and the itinerant judge Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, as well as leading litterateurs and functionaries in Mamluk Egypt. Bound together through shared scholarly interests, extensive epistolary correspondence, and ties of patronage and friendship, this "community of letters" bore remarkable resemblance to similar intellectual networks elsewhere in the medieval world, whether Buyid Iraq and Iran during the 10th/11th century<sup>9</sup> or Renaissance Italy during the 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>10</sup> Despite their similarities to these other intellectual networks, however, the community of letters in late medieval Spain and North Africa was also distinct in one significant way. It was populated not only by the leading scholars of the age, but it was characterized by the fact that these same individuals often occupied the

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<sup>9</sup> Joel L. Kraemer, *Philosophy in the Renaissance of Islam: Abū Sulaymān al-Sijistānī and his Circle* (Leiden: Brill, 1986); and Maurice A. Pomerantz, *Licit Magic: The Life and Letters of al-Ṣāhib b. 'Abbād* (d. 385/995) (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

<sup>10</sup> Paul D. McLean, *The Art of the Network: Strategic Interaction and Patronage in Renaissance Florence* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).

most senior and executive political offices in their respective kingdoms. The emergence of this distinct class of scholar-officials, their shared experiences as leading statesmen, their cognizance of their position in society and their close relationship with one another enabled them to play a major role in shaping both the political developments and intellectual culture of their era. The term “scholar-official” has long been utilized by historians of medieval China to refer to the ruling administrative elite of literati who played a fundamental role in the governance of the kingdom. Within this dissertation, it is utilized specifically to scholars in late medieval Iberia and North Africa who ascended to leading positions of administrative and executive authority. Its advantage over other general terms such as “bureaucrat” or “secretary” is that it reflects the dual roles of these individuals in society, while its adaptability to a variety of contexts ranging from medieval China to the Ottoman Empire and Renaissance Italy makes it a useful term for communicating that individuals such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb, as both scholar and statesman, should be understood as part of a broader trans-regional and trans-historical phenomenon.

#### The Ascendancy of the Secretarial Elite in the Islamic West, c. 1100–1400: Historical Background

The establishment and ascendancy of this class of scholar-officials across both Spain and North Africa was a centuries-long political, social and cultural process. While ultimately rooted in long-standing socio-political and institutional developments that characterized al-Andalus since the late Umayyad era in the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century, the preceding Almohad period crucially shaped the emergence of this social and political class. The Almohads (r. 515/1121–667/1269) were the first (and last) Muslim dynasty to politically unify the entirety of the Islamic West since the initial

Umayyad conquest of North Africa and Iberia in the 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>11</sup> This new political reality facilitated the intellectual, cultural and political interchange between al-Andalus and North Africa (particularly Morocco) during the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> centuries, producing similar norms, intellectual developments, political discourses, and cultural practices and institutions that spanned the Straits of Gibraltar, a process that continued well into the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>12</sup> Like the Almoravids before them, Almohad prestige and legitimacy was predicated upon military power, a mission of religious revivalism and purification,<sup>13</sup> and their patronage for learning. Following the devolution of the Almohad empire during the early 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, between roughly 617/1220 and 669/1270, four successor states emerged in the lands formerly ruled by this dynasty: the Marinids (r. 642/1244–870/1465) in Fez, the Nasrids (r. 629/1232–897/1492) in Granada, the Zayyanids (r. 632/1235–963/1556) in Tlemcen, and the Hafsids (r. 626/1229–982/1574) in Tunis.<sup>14</sup> Another successor kingdom, that of the Banū Hūd, emerged and was based in Murcia but

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<sup>11</sup> Throughout this dissertation, the “Islamic West” is defined as the region of Africa extending from Cyrenaica to the Atlantic coast, north of the Sahara Desert, and the Muslim-ruled portions of Iberia known as al-Andalus. Although the work of Ambrosio Huici Miranda, particularly his *Historia política del imperio almohade* (Tetouan: Editora Marroqui, 1956-1957), remains an important study of the Almohads, Maribel Fierro’s work on the social, political, and religious context of Almohad North Africa and Iberia has greatly contributed to scholarly understanding of the period and demonstrated the singular importance of the Almohad period in the history of the Islamic West. See, in particular, Maribel Fierro, *The Almohad Revolution: Politics and Religion in the Islamic West during the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012).

<sup>12</sup> Laila M. Jreis Navarro, *Entre las dos orillas: El viaje de exilio de Ibn al-Jāṭib a través de su obra Nufādat al-ḡirāb fī ‘ulālat al-igtirāb* (Granada: University of Granada PhD Dissertation, 2016), pp. 65–77; Francisco Vidal Castro, “Nazaríes y Meriníes, Caminos Entrecruzados: al-Andalus y El Maghreb al-Aqṣā (‘Marruecos’), siglos XIII–XV,” in *Al-Andalus y el Norte de Africa: Relaciones e Influencias* (Seville: Fundación El Monte, 2004), eds. Pablo Beneito and Fátima Roldán, pp. 271–305.

<sup>13</sup> Unlike the Almoravids the focal point of Almohad religio-political discourse was Mahdism, which played an important role in shaping the various discourses of sovereignty and religion during their reign in both al-Andalus and North Africa.

<sup>14</sup> Fernando Rodríguez Mediano’s discussion of the post-Almohad polities provides important insight into the major socio-political transformations occurring in the Islamic West following the devolution of the Almohad caliphate and sheds significant light on the Marinids in particular by illustrating the various challenges that they faced in attempting to consolidate their rule in the former territories of the Almohads in the Maghrib (Fernando Rodríguez Mediano, “The Post-Almohad Dynasties in al-Andalus and the Maghrib [seventh–ninth/thirteenth–fifteenth centuries],” *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, Volume II: *The Western Islamic World, Eleventh to Eighteenth Centuries* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012], ed. Maribel Fierro, pp. 106–143).

was rather short-lived, the last of its kings only ruling until 668/1270. Despite this territorial fragmentation, the legacy of the Almohads continued to exert itself in various ways, especially in the titulature, coinage, architectural forms,<sup>15</sup> historiography, social and political structures, and court ceremony in the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century Islamic West.

The emergence of a class of functionaries whose rhetorical and administrative skills were often prized over the nobility of their lineage or their tribal origins was itself shaped by Almohad patronage of *belle-lettres*, rhetoric, poetry and literature. While various fields of knowledge, including philosophy, lexicography, theology, and jurisprudence, were patronized by the Almohad political elite, it was *adab* (Arabic literary expression and *belle-lettres*) and the secretarial arts (*kitāba*) which most notably thrived during their rule, especially in al-Andalus.<sup>16</sup> Historical writing, whether in the form of biographical dictionaries or chronicles, also flourished during this period and came to be tied even more directly with royal or dynastic patronage, as indicated by the production of Ibn Šāḥib al-Šalāh's *al-Mann bil Imāma*.<sup>17</sup> The monumental historiographical projects of Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Abī Zar' (d. 726/1326),<sup>18</sup> Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb (d. 776/1374) and Abū Zayd 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn (d. 808/1406) were all illustrative examples of this phenomenon during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. While rooted in developments that characterized the Almohad era, these monumental historical works should also be situated within the broader context

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<sup>15</sup> María Antonio Martínez Núñez, "Ideología y epigrafía almohades," in *Los Almohades: problemas y perspectivas* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2005), eds. Patrice Cressier, Maribel Fierro and Luis Molina, 1: 5–52; Julio Navarro Palazón, "La yesería en época almohade," in *Los Almohades: problemas y perspectivas*, 1: 281–284.

<sup>16</sup> An overview of Almohad patronage of scholarship and learning during the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> centuries is provided by Muhammad al-Manūnī, *Ḥadarat al-Muwwaḥḥidīn* (Casablanca: Dar Toubqal, 1989).

<sup>17</sup> Ibn Šāḥib al-Šalāh (Abū Marwān 'Abd al-Malik b. Muḥammad al-Bājī), *al-Mann bil Imāma* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1987), ed. 'Abd al-Hadi al-Tazi.

<sup>18</sup> This individual composed a chronicle titled "The History of the Kings of the Maghrib and the City of Fez" (*Kitāb al-ānīs al-muṭrib bi-rawḍ al-qirṭās fī ākḥbār mulūk al-maghrib wa tārīkh madīna Fās*) which provides a historical narrative of Morocco, focusing on the city of Fez, from the time of Idrīs I (r. 788–791) to the Marinid ruler Abū Sa'īd 'Uthmān II (r. 1310–1331).

of similar trends occurring in the Islamic world during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, which witnessed a vast production of historiography, including the “Compendium of Histories” (*Jamī‘ al-Tawārīkh*) by the Il-Khanid chief minister Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh (d. 718/1318), the “Acquaintance with the History and Affairs of the Kingdoms” (*Al-Sulūk li Ma‘rifat Duwal al-Mulūk*) by the Egyptian scholar Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442),<sup>19</sup> the “History of the Kings of Egypt and Cairo” (*al-Nujūm al-Zāhira fī Mulūk Miṣr wa al-Qāhira*) by the Egyptian historian Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf b. Taghribirdī (d. 874/1470), and the “Book of Victory” (*Ẓafarnāma*), a history of the Central Asian conqueror Tīmūr written by the Persian historian Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī (d. 858/1454). Like their contemporaries in the Islamic West during the same period, these individuals came from highly learned backgrounds, drew upon their extensive connections with the royal court and administration, and composed their works partially to legitimate the dynasties which they served.

Alongside dynastic patronage of historical writing, this period also witnessed the rise of the college (*madrasa*) as a distinct institution of learning across the Islamic world.<sup>20</sup> This had important social consequences, as Konrad Hirschler (among others) have argued, since it facilitated scholarly pursuits, enabling individuals to devote considerable time and effort to the pursuit of learning and the production of knowledge.<sup>21</sup> While the first *madrasas* (colleges) in the Islamic West only began to be constructed by the Marinids during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>22</sup> it

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<sup>19</sup> Taqī al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk li-Ma‘rifat Duwal al-Mulūk* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1997), 8 vols., ed. Muhammad ‘Abd al-Qadir ‘Ata.

<sup>20</sup> For a study of the rise of colleges in Fatimid and Ayyubid Egypt, see Gary Leiser, *The Restoration of Sunnism in Egypt: Madrasas and Mudarrisūn, 495-647/1101-1249* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan PhD Dissertation, 1976). See, also, Jonathan Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) for a discussion of *madrasas* in the intellectual and political culture of Mamluk Cairo.

<sup>21</sup> Konrad Hirschler, *Medieval Arabic Historiography: Authors as Actors* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 16.

<sup>22</sup> For an excellent recent study of this development see Riyaz Mansur Latif, *Ornate Visions of Knowledge and Power: Formation of Marinid Madrasas in Maghrib al-Aqsā* (University of Minnesota PhD Dissertation, 2011). Also,

was the home, mosque, and the chancery which traditionally functioned as the most important spaces of learning and the pursuit of knowledge and continued to be for centuries after the emergence of the college as a distinct institution of learning. The college, like the chancery, embodied the increased convergence between circles of learning and ruling elites, with the latter playing an instrumental role in the patronage of literary production, including historiography. Much of the information for the intellectuals in question, their education and the broader social milieu that produced them comes from two broad categories of sources: the *ṭabaqāt* (biographical dictionaries) and the *barnāmaj/fahrasa* (compendium of teachers).<sup>23</sup> The biographical dictionary, the most renowned of which include Ibn Bashkuwāl's (d. 578/1183) *Kitāb al-Ṣila*<sup>24</sup> and its continuations by Ibn al-Abbār (d. 658/1260),<sup>25</sup> Ibn 'Abd al-Malik al-Marrakushī (d. 703/1303)<sup>26</sup> and Ibn al-Zubayr (d. 708/1308),<sup>27</sup> often follows a specific pattern of narrating the scholar's origin, his/her teachers, a chronology of their career and a discussion of their intellectual legacy or impact. Fragments of their surviving poetry and prose writings are also often included. These compositions were often explicitly modeled on older works composed within al-Andalus since the late 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century and often integrated, expanded or emended the biographies found within those texts.<sup>28</sup> The author of the biographical dictionary will also

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see Muhammad Abu Rihab, *al-Madāris al-Maghribiyya fī al-'aṣr al-Marīnī : dirāsa āthāriyya mi'māriyya* (Alexandria: Dār al-Wafā' li-Dunyā al-Ṭibā'a wa-al-Nashr, 2011).

<sup>23</sup> Charles Pellat, "Fahrasa", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs.

<sup>24</sup> Abū al-Qāsim Khalaf b. 'Abd al-Malik b. Bashkuwāl, *Kitāb al-Ṣila fī Tārīkh A'immat al-Andalus*, 2 vols. (Tunis: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 2010), ed. Bashār Awwad Ma'ruf.

<sup>25</sup> Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Abbār, *al-Takmila li-Kitāb al-Ṣila*, 4 vols. (Tunis: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 2011), ed. Bashār Awwad Ma'ruf.

<sup>26</sup> Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Malik al-Marrākushī, *al-Dhayl wa 'l-takmila li-kitābayni 'l-Mawṣūl wa 'l-Ṣila*, 6 vols. (Tunis: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 2012), eds. Ihsan Abbas, Muhammad Bensharifah, Bashār Awwad Ma'ruf.

<sup>27</sup> Abū Ja'far Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Zubayr, *Kitāb Ṣilat al-Ṣila*, 3 vols. (Rabat: Wizarat al-Awqaf wa al-shu'un al-Islamiyya, 1994), eds. Abd al-Salam al-Harras and Shaykh Said al-A'rab.

<sup>28</sup> Among the most significant examples of surviving biographical dictionaries from al-Andalus, aside from the aforementioned *Kitāb al-Ṣila* and its continuations, are Abū al-Walīd 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. al-Faraḍī (d.

specifically indicate their direct relationship (if any) with the individual being written about. The other major genre, the *fahrasa*, known in other parts of the Islamic world as the *thabat* or *mu'jam*, was a distinct form of writing in the Islamic West from the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century onwards and provides a detailed record of a scholar's teachers and the specific works that they studied with each.<sup>29</sup> Unlike the biographical dictionary, which is usually a later account of a scholar's career by one of their peers, the *fahrasa* is usually penned by the scholar themselves, thus providing both a contemporary record for their activities while also often containing autobiographical information which greatly illuminates their own self-representation. These works, which range from a few dozen pages to several volumes, also contain significant information about a scholar's itinerary, their colleagues and the chronology of their careers. In addition to the surviving texts from the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> centuries, these two bodies of sources provide some of the most important reflections upon the intellectual milieu of the period and shed particularly significant light upon the increasingly porous boundaries between disciplines.<sup>30</sup>

While there has been a considerable treatment of Aristotelian philosophy (*falsafa*) during the Almohad era,<sup>31</sup> less attention has been devoted to thinking more comprehensively about the

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403/1012), *Tārīkh 'Ulamā' al-Andalus* (Tunis: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 2008), ed. Bashār Awwad Ma'ruf; Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Futūḥ al-Ḥumaydī (d. 488/1095), *Jadhwat al-Muqtabis fī Tārīkh 'Ulamā' al-Andalus* (Tunis: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 2008), eds. Bashār Awwad Ma'ruf and Muḥammad Bashār Awwad; and Abū Ja'far Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Ḍabbī (d. 599/1203), *Bughyat al-Multamis fī Tārīkh Rijāl Ahl al-Andalus* (Cairo: Dar al-Kitāb al-Misri, 1989), ed. Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī.

<sup>29</sup> For an important example from the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century, see Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Khayr al-Ishbīlī, *Fahrasat Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī* (Tunis: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 2009), eds. Bashār Awwad Ma'ruf and Mahmud Bashār Awwad. The sole surviving manuscript of Ibn Khayr al-Ishbīlī's aforementioned *fahrasa* (El Escorial 1672) also dates to the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, copied in Granada or Morocco Ramaḍān 20 712/January 11 1313.

<sup>30</sup> For an excellent study of the intellectual culture of al-Andalus during this period, with particular attention to the intersection between learning and its broader social context, see Dominique Urvoy, *Le Monde des Ulémas andalous du V/XIe au VII/XIIIe siècle: Etude sociologique* (Geneva: Droz, 1978).

<sup>31</sup> See, for example, Sarah Stroumsa, "Philosophes almohades? Averroès, Maïmonide et l'idéologie almohade," in *Los Almohades: Problemas y Perspectivas* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2005), eds. Patrice Cressier, et al., 2: 1137–1162; Dominique Urvoy, *Averroès: les ambitions d'un intellectuel musulman* (Paris: Flammarion, 1998); Oliver Leaman, *Averroes and his Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Majid Fakhry, *Averroës (Ibn Rushd): His Life, Works and Influence* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2001); Lenn Goodman, "Ibn Ṭufayl,"



intellectual culture cultivated in al-Andalus during this period.<sup>32</sup> Both the biographical dictionary and the *fahrasa* became an embodiment of the existing intellectual and administrative networks in the Islamic West while providing important insights into the types of disciplines pursued by secretaries, jurists, theologians, physicians, philosophers and mystics alike. They demonstrate an increased convergence during the late Almohad era between the traditional sciences (*al-‘ulūm al-naqliyya*) on the one hand and the intellectual/philosophical sciences (*al-‘ulūm al-‘aqliyya*) on the other. The former encompassed disciplines such as Arabic, Qur’anic sciences, prophetic traditions, jurisprudence and grammar, while the latter included medicine, philosophy, logic, natural sciences, physics, geometry, and astronomy. It was among secretarial elites and litterateurs in al-Andalus that this diverse curriculum of learning was most evident, with the phrase “immersed in various fields of knowledge” (*mutafannin fī-l-‘ulūm* or *al-mushāraka fī-l-‘ulūm*) appearing frequently throughout the sources to refer to such scholars. The versatility of these individuals contributed to a certain degree of fluidity in professional identity, which is particularly reflected within the various biographical dictionaries and *fahāris* authored from the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century onwards in which it was not uncommon for a single individual to be referred to as a jurist, secretary, judge, litterateur, poet, theologian, and mystic.<sup>33</sup> This is not to say that there was not a clear distinction between intellectual disciplines, which there continued to be, as clearly indicated by the composition of substantial works devoted to the “Division/Categorization of the Sciences” (*taqṣīm al-‘ulūm*) by leading 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century scholars,

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in *The Literature of al-Andalus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), eds. María Rosa Menocal, Raymond P. Scheindlin, Michael Sells, pp. 318–330.

<sup>32</sup> Among the two most significant studies of the intellectual history of al-Andalus during the Almoravid and Almohad periods are Dominique Urvoy, *Pensées d'al-Andalus: la vie intellectuelle à Cordoue et Seville au temps des empires Berbères (fin XIe siècle-début XIIIe siècle)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 1990); and Mohammed Bencherifah, *Ibn Rushd al-Ḥafīd: sīra wathā’iqīyya* (Casablanca: Matba’at al-Najah al-Jadida, 1999).

<sup>33</sup> For an illustration of the diverse curriculum of education in late 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>-century al-Andalus, see Claude Addas, *Quest for the Red Sulphur: The Life of Ibn ‘Arabi* (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1993), trans. Peter Kingsley, pp. 93–110.

including Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Akfānī (d. 749/1349)<sup>34</sup> and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b.

Khaldūn,<sup>35</sup> whose careers were themselves heavily defined by an engagement with a multitude of scholarly subjects and the pursuit of a number of careers. Nevertheless, it is also apparent that the broad education which provided individuals with the opportunity to become learned in law, theology, lexicography, philosophy, history and belles-lettres alike contributed to the rise of a group of scholars whose lives and careers complicate and nuance any attempt to establish firm dichotomies or boundaries between these intellectual activities during the late Middle Ages.

Although the distinction between a jurist and a philosopher or a hadith scholar and an astronomer remained intact in al-Andalus and serve as useful categories of analysis, the pervasiveness of *adab* within the intellectual sphere meant that it had become increasingly common by the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century for a jurist and litterateur alike to be steeped in literature, poetry and the secretarial arts. As such, it is more productive to speak of an administrative elite in late medieval Islamic Spain and North Africa that was conversant in a multitude of disciplines, ranging from Aristotelian philosophy, Arabic rhetoric and medicine to mysticism, jurisprudence and dialectic theology, embodying a trend that Thomas Bauer has described as the “*adabization* of ‘ulamā’” and the “*ulamaization of adab.*”<sup>36</sup> A particularly instructive example of this phenomenon within the late Almohad context is the career of the litterateur and judge Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Sulaymān b. Ḥuṭ Allāh al-Anṣārī (d. 612/1215).<sup>37</sup> Focusing on the

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<sup>34</sup> Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Akfānī, *Irshād al-Qāṣid ilā Asnā al-Maqāṣid* (Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-‘Arabi, 1990), pp. 91–228.

<sup>35</sup> Abū Zayd ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima* (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-‘Asriyya, 2008), ed. Darwish al-Juwaydi, pp. 401–614.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas Bauer, “Mamluk Literature: Misunderstandings and New Approaches,” *Mamluk Studies Review* 9 (2005), p. 108.

<sup>37</sup> Abū ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Askar and Abū Bakr b. Khamīs, *A’lām Mālaqa* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1999), ed. Abdulla al-Murabit al-Targhi, pp. 236–237. Another prominent example of an Andalusī jurist and litterateur who held a multitude of posts in various regions over the course of his career during the late Almohad era is Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Quṭrāl al-Anṣārī (d. 651/1253), who served as a judge in Ubeda, Xativa, Cordoba, and Fez (Shams al-

context of late medieval Egypt and Syria, Elias Muhanna has similarly argued that “rather than the scribes representing a class distinct from the scholars, the administration came to be populated by individuals who studied in madrasas and received an education in the religious sciences in addition to an orientation to scribal protocols and procedures.”<sup>38</sup> The existence of individuals, such as the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century Andalusī Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Fihri, who was referred to as “the great Imām and statesman, the pre-eminent litterateur of the community and master of belle-lettres who was the leading secretary among scholars and most learned scholar among the secretaries (*kātib al-‘ulamā’ wa ‘ālim al-kuttāb*),” provides an illustration of this phenomenon.<sup>39</sup>

As the works of Roger LeTourneau,<sup>40</sup> Maya Shatzmiller,<sup>41</sup> Muzahim Allawi al-Shahiri<sup>42</sup> and Muhammad al-Manuni<sup>43</sup> have demonstrated for the Marinid context, the broader religious and intellectual culture fostered by the post-Almohad dynasties was closely linked with the broader project of consolidating dynastic authority and legitimacy. This development in the post-classical Islamic world contributed to a large degree of fluidity between social classes and an interdependency between scholarship, historical writing and governance, since many jurists, theologians, litterateurs and poets received a similar education and were dependent upon the

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Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhabābī, *al-‘Ibar fī Khabar man Ghabar* [Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1985], ed. Muhammad al-Sa’id Zaghloul, 3: 267).

<sup>38</sup> Elias Muhanna, *The World in a Book: al-Nuwayri and the Islamic Encyclopedic Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), p. 22.

<sup>39</sup> Khalīd b. ‘Isā al-Balawī, *Tāj al-Mafriq fī Taḥliyat ‘Ulamā’ al-Mashriq* (al-Muhamadiyya, Morocco: Matba’a Fadala, n.d.), ed. al-Hasan al-Sa’ih, 2: 110

<sup>40</sup> Roger Le Tourneau, *Fez in the Age of the Marinides* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961)

<sup>41</sup> Maya Shatzmiller, *The Berbers and the Islamic State: The Marīnid Experience in Pre-Protectorate Morocco* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2000), esp. pp. 85–114.

<sup>42</sup> Muzahim Allawi al-Shahiri, *al-Ḥaḍāra al-‘Arabīya al-Islāmīya fī al-Maghrib: al-‘aṣr al-Marīnī* (Amman: Markaz al-Kitāb al-Akādīmī, 2012).

<sup>43</sup> Muhammad Manuni, *Waraqāt ‘an al-ḥaḍāra al-Maghribīya fī ‘aṣr Banī Marīn* (Rabat: Kullīyat al-Ādāb wa-al-‘Ulūm al-Insāniya bi-al-Rabāt, 1979).

patronage of the military and political elite, while the latter were themselves increasingly learned in the vast array of scholarly disciplines.

It was this broader context that contributed to the emergence of an influential class of scholar-officials who shaped both the intellectual culture and political developments of the age. Many individuals who had begun their careers as litterateurs, physicians and jurists rose to prominence as secretaries, judges, diplomats, and ministers within the royal courts and, thus, began to compete for executive authority that was traditionally held by the nobility. The novelty was not that these individuals were “new men” per se, since many of them belonged to families who had served in the civil administration of various dynasties or local power bases for centuries, but that it was their distinct education and relationship to royal power that facilitated their rise. Their careers provide insight into the role of the chancery as an avenue for the social mobility of townsmen, as well as illustrating the importance of this institution as a site of the political and social competition among various families within Nasrid Granada. Recent research by Ahmad Azzawi,<sup>44</sup> and Abd al-Halim Husayn al-Harut<sup>45</sup> on the chancery, in addition to detailed studies on specific Nasrid chancellors such as Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Jayyāb (d. 749/1349),<sup>46</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb,<sup>47</sup> and Ibn Zamrak (d. 797/1395),<sup>48</sup> have laid the groundwork for understanding the emergence of the chancery and its structure while indicating the

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<sup>44</sup> Ahmad Azzawi, *Rijāl al-idāra wa al-a'yān fī al-'aṣr al-marīnī : min khilāl rasā'il shakhṣīya li-Ibn al-Khaṭīb* (Rabat: Rabat Net Maroc, 2010); Ahmad Azzawi, *al-Gharb al-Islāmī : khilāla al-qarnayn 7 wa-8 H : dirāsa wa-taḥlīl li-rasā'ilih*, 4 volumes (Rabat, 2007).

<sup>45</sup> Abd al-Halim Husayn al-Harut, *Al-Rasā'il al-Dīwānīyya fī Mamlakat Gharnāṭa fī 'Asr Banī al-Aḥmar* (Amman: Dār Jarīr, 2006).

<sup>46</sup> Ali Muhammad al-Nuqrat, *Ibn Jayyāb al-Gharnāṭī: ḥayatuhi wa shi'ruhi* (Sirte, Libya: al-Dār al-Jamāhīriya lil-Nashr wa-al-Tawzī' wa-al-l'ān, 1996 and Maria Jesús Rubiera Mata, *Ibn al-Yayyab: El otro poeta de la Alhambra* (Granada: Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife, 1982).

<sup>47</sup> The historiography on Ibn al-Khaṭīb has been dealt with in a separate section below.

<sup>48</sup> Ahmad Salim al-Himsi, *Ibn Zamrak al-Gharnāṭī, 733-796 H/1333-1393 M : sīratuhu wa-adabuh* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risala, 1985); Emilio García Gómez, *Ibn Zamrak: El poeta de la Alhambra* (Granada: Patronato de la Alhambra, 1975); and Régis Blachère, “Le vizir-poète Ibn Zamrak et son oeuvre,” *Annales de l'Institut d'Etudes Orientales de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université d'Alger* 2 (1936), pp. 291–312.

interrelationship between learning and administration in the Nasrid and Marinid contexts. The rich historiographical tradition about Ibn Khaldūn's life and thought has also presented major insights into the nature of this secretarial class, their shared intellectual culture, their mobility, and their relationship with royal power during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>49</sup>

The most prominent secretaries, chancellors or functionaries who served in the administrations of the newly-formed kingdoms of the Nasrids, Marinids, Zayyanids and Hafsid had begun their careers as functionaries or scholars within the Almohad empire in the early 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century. One illustrative example is Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Abbār (d. 658/1260), who had been employed as a court secretary for the Almohads in Valencia, before migrating to Tunis and eventually rising to become the head of the Hafsids chancery.<sup>50</sup> His works, especially his *Takmilat Kitāb al-Ṣila*, *I'tāb al-Kuttāb* and his *al-Ḥulla al-Siyarā*, are among the most important literary sources for assessing the scholarly culture and institutional history of scholar-officials in the medieval Islamic West. Through his use of biography and history, Ibn al-Abbār emphasized that secretaries (*kuttāb*) constituted a distinct political and social class in society that existed at the intersection of political power and intellectual developments since the inception of Islamic history in the 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century. Another figure, Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb al-Ghāfiqī (d. 686/1287), who had served the Hudids in Murcia, became the chief of the Nasrid chancery under Muḥammad I (r. 635/1238–672/1273). Similarly, a jurist and litterateur named Abū al-Muṭarrif Aḥmad b. 'Amīra (d. 667/1269), initially in the employ of the Almohads in

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<sup>49</sup> Muhsin Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of History: A Study in the Philosophic Foundation of the Science of Culture* (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1957), pp. 17-62. Important recent contribution about Ibn Khaldūn's which situate the thinker within the broader context of a network of intellectuals active in the 8th/14th-century Islamic West include Syed Farid Alatas, *Ibn Khaldun* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Abdessalam Cheddadi, *Ibn Khaldūn: L'homme et le théoricien de la civilisation* (Paris: Gallimard, 2006); Allen James Fromherz, *Ibn Khaldun, Life and Times* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).

<sup>50</sup> For more on Ibn al-Abbār, see *Ibn al-Abbar: Polític i escriptor àrab valencià (1199-1260) - Actes del congrés Internacional "Ibn Al-Abbar i el seu temps" - Onda, 20-22 febrer, 1989* (Valencia: Generalitat Valenciana, 1990).

Valencia and subsequently the governors of Majorca, migrated to North Africa and was appointed the chief judge of Rabat,<sup>51</sup> while Mālik b. al-Muraḥḥal (d. 699/1299), a litterateur, secretary and judge from Málaga would go on to be appointed to leading positions in the Azafid and Marinid chanceries in Ceuta and Fez, respectively.<sup>52</sup>

These were individuals whose lives spanned the late 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> and much of the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> centuries and lived through a period which witnessed both the era of Islamic political/military ascendancy as well as decline in al-Andalus, a theme reflected throughout their writing. More significantly, it is through the testimony of many of these scholars, some of whom wrote extensive historical accounts, that we can reconstruct the social, intellectual, and political circumstances in al-Andalus during the early 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century. It can thus be clearly documented that the leading Andalusī intellectuals of the late Almohad-era secured positions of authority in both the Hudid emirate in Murcia and the Nasrid kingdom of Granada, the most prominent among whom were Abū ‘Āmir Yaḥya b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Rabī‘ al-Ash‘arī (d. 639/1241), Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Jinān al-Mursī (d. 650/1252), Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Fakhkhār al-Ru‘aynī (d. 666/1268), as well as the aforementioned Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb. During the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, they would bequeath their notions of governance, chancery practices, dedication to historical writing, and tradition of itinerancy to a generation of students that included litterateurs, jurists, and historians such as Abū al-‘Alā’ Muḥammad b. al-Murābit al-Murādī (d. 663/1265), Khalaf b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīzal-Ghāfiqī al-Qubturī (d. 704/1304) and Abū

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<sup>51</sup> Mohammed Bencherifah, *Abū-l Muṭarrif Aḥmad bin ‘Amīra al-Makhzūmī: ḥayātuh wa athāruh* (Rabat: Matba‘at al-Risala, 1966); Fernando N. Velázquez Basanta, “Abū (l-)Muṭarrif Aḥmad ibn ‘Amīra, epistológrafo y poeta valenciano de siglo XIII a través de la *Iḥāṭa* de Ben al-Jaṭīb,” in *Homenaje al Prof. Jacinto Bosch-Vilá* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1991), 1: 393–408.

<sup>52</sup> Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Abbār, *Tuḥfat al-Qādim* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1986), ed. Ihsan Abbas, pp. 209–215. For an in-depth study of the life and writings of Mālik b. al-Muraḥḥal, whose career provides a significant illustration of the phenomenon of itinerant Andalusī secretaries and scholar-officials during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, see Muhammad Mas‘ud Jubran, *Mālik b. al-Muraḥḥal: adīb al-‘udwatayn* (Abu Dhabi: al-Majma‘ al-Thaqafi, 2005).

Ja‘far Aḥmad b. al-Zubayr al-Thaqafī (d. 708/1308).<sup>53</sup> In the decades that followed, many of these scholars would themselves produce an influential group of students, who went on to become the next generation of chancellors, political thinkers and historians during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed, the teachers and mentors of the most prominent Nasrid secretary and statesman of the era, Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb were among those Nasrid scholars and administrative elites who were themselves patronized, mentored or taught by scholar-officials who had risen to prominence between 617/1220 and 679/1280, thus enabling us to establish an intellectual and administrative genealogy between early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid secretaries and chancellors and the last generation of Almohad scholar-officials. It was these individuals who were responsible for the expansion and professionalization of the chancery, located adjacent to the royal palace of the Alhambra during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. This process was reflected in the composition by these individuals of a large number of texts, especially in comparison to earlier periods of Andalusī and Maghribī history, devoted to the secretarial arts and administrative practice.<sup>54</sup>

Nasrid secretaries and scholar-officials were not an isolated class of individuals within the Alhambra but were part of an elaborate community of letters across the Islamic West. Their itinerancy enabled them to travel between courts for the purpose of attaining information, performing diplomatic missions, and, not infrequently, enabled them to switch allegiances and place their distinct skill-set at the disposal of their new sovereign. In a recent article, Allen

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<sup>53</sup> Ibrāhīm b. ‘Alī b. Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab fī Ma‘rifat A’yān ‘Ulamā’ al-Madhab* (Cairo: Dar al-Turath, 1975), 1: 188–189.

<sup>54</sup> Abū al-‘Abbās al-Qalqashandī’s monumental *al-Subḥ al-A‘shā*, although written in Mamluk Egypt, is an important example of the increased prominence of this genre of writing and its impact across the late medieval Islamic world. Al-Qalqashandī’s monumental work is notable not only for its encyclopedic proportions, but also for its specific references to administrative practice in the al-Andalus and North Africa during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries and its incorporation of Andalusī or Maghribī chancery documents, a testimony to the dedication to epistolography and the secretarial arts in the Islamic West by the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.

Fromherz recognizes that these itinerant intellectuals, due to the influence they wielded in their respective courts, “represented a third and often unspoken leg of power in medieval North Africa and al-Andalus.”<sup>55</sup> Fromherz also points to the considerable influence that this scholarly class wielded as a result of their role in “legitimizing and chronicling political and social power,” and emphasizes that it is essential to think about individuals such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Khaldūn as part of this broader intellectual and cultural class:

This was a community of influential ministers and polymaths who wielded power and influence throughout the fourteenth-century Muslim Mediterranean. Their overlapping web of genealogical claims, their common educational lineage based on the fluid *ijāza* network, their interest in Sufi spirituality, and their similar political strategies and methods formed a unique landscape upon which the political and intellectual history of the region played out.<sup>56</sup>

This broader intellectual, cultural and political environment prompted a major elaboration in historiography and political theory by figures closely connected with circles of power. It was the secretarial class’ access to chancery documents, personal letters, and intelligence from other courts that enabled them to compose elaborate local, universal and dynastic histories. Their historiographical production was directly influenced by the patronage of their sovereigns, and their role as historians was linked with their profession as courtiers and government officials. The production of numerous political treatises and mirrors for princes by these same circles of scholar-ministers was a further indication of the extent to which the secretaries placed their literary skills and scholarship in the service of the dynasty. Their writings sought to rationalize dynastic sovereignty and reconcile it with notions of religio-political legitimacy that were in currency. Political treatises and mirrors for princes, in particular, became the primary mechanism through which particular norms of sovereignty and visions of legitimate authority were

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<sup>55</sup> Allen Fromherz, “Ibn Khaldūn, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and their Milieu: A Community of Letters in the Fourteenth-Century Mediterranean,” *Medieval Encounters* 20 (2014), p. 290.

<sup>56</sup> Fromherz, “Ibn Khaldūn, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and their Milieu,” pp. 289, 301.



communicated, while the frequent exchanges (through the medium of epistles) among intellectual networks of scholar-ministers became the means of the dissemination of these ideas.

The rise of these scholar-officials, who bridged the worlds of learning, governance and kingship, contributed, within the Nasrid context, to a discernible transition, over the course of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century from the appointment of “military viziers” to “chancellor-viziers” in which the office of chief minister was increasingly controlled by secretaries and literati, rather than by members of the military elite or nobility, although—as will be discussed—this distinction requires further nuance. Between 700/1300 and 773/1371, three chancery officials, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Ḥakīm (d. 708/1309), Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Jayyāb (d. 749/1349) and Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb (d. 776/1374), who had begun their careers as scribes and secretaries rose to the highest echelons of power, with the title of *Dhū-l Wizāratayn* (“Bearer of the Two Offices”), signifying their civil and military authority as well as their simultaneous control over both the chancery and the office of chief minister. This increased interdependency between the scribal profession and executive political authority within the Andalusī context, reflected in the ubiquity of the (originally Abbasid) title “Bearer of the Two Offices” (*Dhū-l Wizāratayn*) from the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century onwards, provides important insight into the phenomenon of the “scholar-minister” in the medieval world. The rise to prominence of these individuals to the most powerful positions within the kingdom also reflects the importance of a related, but distinct, phenomenon in the royal courts of the late medieval and early modern world: the royal favorite. By conceptualizing Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s career, particularly his extraordinary rise and fall, through the lens of royal favoritism, described as *privanza* in the Castilian sources and *ikhtiṣāṣ* in Arabic, this dissertation attempts to discern the particular nature of the relationship between these

scholar-officials and royal power and to argue that notions of loyalty, proximity and devotion played a central role in their elevation.

Rather than reifying the traditional grand narrative of political development in the Middle Ages, in which the emergence of a strong royal administration—of which this secretarial class was a key component—has been viewed as an attempt by kings to curb the authority of the nobility and military elite in order to consolidate their own sovereignty and “centralize” royal power, this study is more interested in understanding the figures of the secretaries and scholar-officials themselves. This project builds upon previous scholarship on royal administration in the medieval Islamic world, notably Dominique Sourdél and Paul Heck on the Abbasids,<sup>57</sup> Carla L. Klausner on the Seljuks,<sup>58</sup> Muhammad al-Manawi and Leila al-Imad on the Fatimids,<sup>59</sup> Muhammad Atallah on the Ayyubids,<sup>60</sup> and Ahmad Azzawi,<sup>61</sup> Evariste Lévi-Provençal and Mohamed Meouak on the Spanish Umayyads,<sup>62</sup> Bruna Soravia on the Taifa kingdoms,<sup>63</sup> Rachid

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<sup>57</sup> Dominique Sourdél, *Le vizirat 'abbāside de 749 à 936* (Damascus: Institut français de Damas, 1960), 2 vols., and Paul L. Heck, *The Construction of Knowledge in Islamic Civilization: Qudāma b. Ja'far and his Kitāb al-Kharāj wa-ṣinā'at al-kitāba* (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

<sup>58</sup> Carla L. Klausner, *The Seljuk Vizierate: A Study of Civil Administration, 1055–1194* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1973).

<sup>59</sup> Leila S. al-Imad, *The Fatimid Vizierate, 969–1172* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1990) and Muhammad Hamdi al-Manawi, *al-Wizāra wa al-wuzarā' fī al-'aṣr al-fāṭimī* (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1970).

<sup>60</sup> Muhammad Abd al-Rahman Atallah, *Rasā'il al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil, dirāsa taḥlīliyya* (Tanta: Dar al-Hadara li-tiba'a wal nashr, 2000).

<sup>61</sup> Ahmad Azzawi, *al-Maghrib wa-al-Andalus fī al-qarn al-sābi' /13M: dirāsa wa-taḥqīq li-dīwānīyāt kitāb Faṣl al-khiṭāb fī tarsīl Abī Bakr Ibn Khaṭṭāb* (Qunaytra, Morocco: Jam'iyat al-Ḥasan al-Wazzān lil-Ma'rifa al-Tārikhiya, 2008); Ahmad Azzawi, *Rasā'il dīwāniya Muwaḥḥidiya* (Rabat, 2006).

<sup>62</sup> Evariste Lévi-Provençal, *L'Espagne musulmane au Xe siècle: institutions et vie sociale* (Paris: Larose, 1932); Mohamed Meouak, *Pouvoir souverain, administration centrale et élites politiques dans l'Espagne umayyade (Ile–Ive/VIIIe–Xe siècles)* (Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 1999); Mohamed Meouak, “Histoire de la *kitāba* et des *kuttāb* en al-Andalus umayyade (2e/VIIIe–4e/Xe siècles),” *Orientalia Suecana* XLI–XLII (1992–1993), pp. 166–180; Mohamed Meouak, “Notes sur le vizirate et les vizirs en al-Andalus à l'époque umayyade (milieu du Ile/VIIIe–fin du IVe/Xe siècle),” *Studia Islamica* 78 (1993), pp. 181–190; and Mohamed Meouak, “Notes historiques sur l'administration centrale, les charges et le recrutement des fonctionnaires dans l'Espagne musulmane (2e/VIIIe–4e/Xe siècles),” *Hespéris-Tamuda* 30 (1992), pp. 9–20.

<sup>63</sup> Bruna Soravia, *Les fonctionnaires épistoliers (kuttāb al-inshā) en Espagne musulmane à l'époque des roitelets (Ve s. H./XIe s.)* (Paris: University of Paris-Sorbonne Nouvelle PhD Dissertation, 1998).

El Hour on the Almoravids,<sup>64</sup> Pascal Buresi and Hicham El Aallaoui on the Almohads,<sup>65</sup> and Beatrice Manz on the Timurids,<sup>66</sup> whose work enables scholars to place the rise of scholar-official in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Granada within the broader framework of similar developments across Andalusí, North African and Near Eastern history.

Unlike the noble or patrician families within the Nasrid kingdom, many court secretaries did not find themselves advancing politically due to their family lineage or social status but largely as a result of their distinct education, literary skills, especially their poetic and rhetorical abilities, and specific function at court (as physicians, private secretaries and royal tutors) which enabled them to increase their proximity to the sovereign.<sup>67</sup> To be sure, the relationship between the secretaries and circles of power was characterized by a variety of attitudes and tensions as demonstrated by Ahmad Damaj in his recent article.<sup>68</sup> Damaj's work has further illuminated the significant dynamic between the court secretaries and the ruling authorities in the Nasrid context.<sup>69</sup> His work represents a major contribution to the understanding of the relationship between this secretarial class and the dynasty within the Nasrid context precisely because of the

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<sup>64</sup> Rachid El Hour, *La Administración Judicial Almorávide en al-Andalus: Élités, negociaciones y enfrentamientos* (Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2006), pp. 135–164.

<sup>65</sup> Pascal Buresi and Hicham El Aallaoui, *Governing the empire provincial administration in the Almohad Caliphate (1224-1269): critical edition, translation, and study of Manuscript 4752 of the Hasaniyya Library in Rabat containing 77 taqādim* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Hicham El Aallaoui, *L'art du secrétaire entre littérature et politique. Les actes des chancelleries almoravide et almohade* (Lyon: Université Lumière II PhD Dissertation, 2007).

<sup>66</sup> Beatrice Manz, *Power, Politics and Religion in Timurid Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), esp. pp. 79–110.

<sup>67</sup> Ahmed Chafiq Damaj, "El panegírico al servicio del gobernante en la Granada nazarí: las bases de su contenido," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 54 (2005): 29–38. Also, see Damaj's "Relación entre el poeta y el poder político en la época de Taifas: de la concordia a la discrepancia," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 53 (2004): 3–38 for a discussion of the political role of the poet-secretaries during the Taifa period in al-Andalus.

<sup>68</sup> Ahmad Chafiq Damaj, "Punto de vista del intelectual sobre su relación con el poder político en la época nazarí," *Anaquel de Estudios Árabes* 15 (2004): 97–121.

<sup>69</sup> Ahmad Chafiq Damaj, *El intelectual y el poder político en la época nazarí* (Granada: Universidad de Granada PhD Dissertation, 2003).

way in which he seeks to interrogate the broader process of knowledge production during this period.

### Historiography

The setting for many of the events, figures and questions discussed within this dissertation is the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada was the last surviving Islamic polity in Spain during the Middle Ages. Covering a period of over 250 years, this polity straddled the borderland between Islam and Latin Christendom. By the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, the formative period of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life, the kingdom encompassed one of the most populous, urban and diverse populations in late medieval Spain, being home to a large community of Andalusī Muslims, a significant garrison of North African troops, a considerable Jewish population,<sup>70</sup> as well as various communities of Spanish and Italian Christians. The mass migration of thousands of Andalusī Muslims to Granada in the wake of the Castilian, Portuguese and Aragonese conquest of Islamic Spain (al-Andalus) between the 630s/1230s and 670s/1270s transformed it from a provincial town into one of the largest cities in the western Islamic world. Lying at the center of important trade routes that connected Europe with West Africa and Spain with Egypt and Syria, Nasrid Granada developed into a thriving metropolis and entrepot in the Western Mediterranean, which was politically, culturally and economically integrated into the broader Mediterranean world during the late Middle Ages. Although the surrounding area was inhabited since antiquity, the city of Granada itself only emerged as a major town in Islamic Spain during the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Following the rise of the Nasrids within the context of the devolution of Almohad imperial power in Iberia during the 620s/1220s and 630s/1230s, it came to replace the

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<sup>70</sup> Malika Zemmama Squalli, *Les Dhimmi Juifs dans le Royaume Nasride de Grenade (1238-1492)* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Septentrion, 2001).

cities of Valencia, Córdoba, Sevilla and Murcia (following the conquest of these cities by Castile and Aragón) as the most significant urban center in Islamic Spain.

Over the past several decades, there have been a number of studies on the Nasrid kingdom and its history which have greatly contributed to scholarly understanding of that polity.<sup>71</sup> In addition to highlighting the importance of its existence as an embattled frontier state and the last bastion of Islamic rule in the Iberian peninsula in which frontier warfare and the relationship with the Christian kingdoms was an immensely important aspect of its history, various scholars have also shed important light on the diplomatic, social, political and religious history of the Nasrid Kingdom. Moreover, there has been increasing scholarly attention to the internal developments within the Nasrid court, focusing on the various strategies of political legitimization,<sup>72</sup> the interrelationship between the Nasrid sovereigns and the Mālikī jurists,<sup>73</sup> and the patronage of architecture and scholarship. Although geographically the least extensive of the four post-Almohad polities in the Islamic West, the Nasrids were perhaps the most influential

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<sup>71</sup> The most significant ones have been Maria Jesús Viguera Molins (ed.), *El reino nazarí de Granada (1232–1492) Política, instituciones. Espacio y economía. Historia de España de Menéndez Pidal*, Vol. VIII-3 (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 2000); Maria Jesús Viguera Molins (ed.), *El reino nazarí de Granada (1232–1492). Sociedad, vida y cultura. Historia de España de Menéndez Pidal*, Vol. VIII-4 (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 2000); Rachel Arié, *El Reino Naşrī de Granada (1232–1492)* (Madrid: Editorial MAPFRE, 1992); Leonard Patrick Harvey, *Islamic Spain, 1250 to 1500* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); Miguel Ángel Ladero Quesada, *Granada. Historia de un País Islámico* (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1989); José Enrique López de Coca Castañer, “El periodo nazarí (siglos XIII-XV),” in *Historia de Granada, Vol. II: La Epoca Medieval, Siglos VIII-XV* (Granada: Editorial Don Quijote, 1987), eds. Rafael Gerardo Peinado Santaella and José Enrique López de Coca Castañer, pp. 243–368; Hugh Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal: A Political History of Al-Andalus* (London: Longman, 1996), pp. 273–304.

<sup>72</sup> Important work has recently been done on the political mobilization of genealogy in Nasrid Granada. See, in particular, Maribel Fierro’s articles “The Anşārīs, Nāşir al-Dīn and the Naşrids in al-Andalus,” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 31 (2006): 232–247 and “Ways of Connecting with the Past: Genealogies of Nasrid Granada” in *Genealogy and Knowledge in Muslim Societies: Understanding the Past* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), eds. Sarah Savant and Helena de Felipe, pp. 71–88; Barbara Boloix-Gallardo’s “The Genealogical Legitimization of the Nasrid Dynasty: The Alleged Anşārī Origins of the Banū Naşr,” in *The Articulation of Power in Medieval Iberia and the Maghrib*, ed. Bennison, pp. 61–86; Francisco Vidal Castro, “Frontera, genealogía y religion en la gestación y nacimiento del Reino Nazarí de Granada: En torno a Ibn al-Aḥmar,” in *III Estudios de Frontera. Convivencia, defense y comunicación en la Frontera* (Jaen, 2000), ed. Francisco Toro Ceballos and José Rodríguez Molina, pp. 793–810.

<sup>73</sup> Maria Isabel Calero Secall, “Rulers and Qādīs: Their Relationship during the Naşrid Kingdom,” *Islamic Law and Society* 7 (2000): 235–255.

and politically stable (or, more accurately, the least unstable) of these kingdoms during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>, especially during the reigns of Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V, who ruled collectively for nearly six decades.<sup>74</sup> It was during the reign of these two rulers that major administrative, cultural and political developments took place in the kingdom, many of which were facilitated by shifting political circumstances. Perhaps the most significant of these was the Battle of Tarifa or Rio Salado (741/1340) which effectively ended any large-scale Marinid military and political intervention in the Iberian peninsula.<sup>75</sup> Another was the Castilian civil war (1350–1369) and the Castilian-Aragonese conflict known as the “War of the Two Peters” (1356–1375), which provided the Nasrids with unprecedented reprieve from raids and attacks from the Christian kingdoms. Among other things, the disengagement of both Castile and the Marinids from Granadan affairs provided the Nasrids with the opportunity to restructure many of the institutions of their kingdom, formulate new conceptions of royal sovereignty and even pursue aggressive strategic interests, culminating in major raids against Castile and the occupation of Ceuta in North Africa during the 760s/1360s and 770s/1370s. The late-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century marks the height of Nasrid prestige in the Islamic West and the direct engagement (and intervention) of their sovereigns in North African affairs, reversing the previous dynamic of North African intervention in al-Andalus. Although the decisive military defeat of a joint Marinid-Nasrid force

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<sup>74</sup> For an overview of the reigns of these emirs, with a particular emphasis on cultural and intellectual accomplishments, see Antonio Fernández-Puertas, “The Three Great Sultans of al-Dawla al-Ismā’īliyya al-Naṣriyya Who Built the Fourteenth-Century Alhambra: Ismā’īl I, Yūsuf I, Muḥammad V (713–793/ 1314–1391),” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 7 (1997), pp. 7–25.

<sup>75</sup> One of the most comprehensive studies of Marinid-Nasrid relations is Miguel Ángel Manzano Rodríguez’s *La Intervención de los Benimerines en la Península Ibérica* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1992) which explores the relationship between the two dynasties through the lens of the institution of the *shaykh al-ghuzāt*, which enabled the Marinids to maintain an important military (and political) presence in Nasrid Granada between the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and mid 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Another work that takes a similar approach has been al-Mabrūk Ghaniyya Usta’s *Ḥarakat al-Jihād al-Mushtarak ‘ala mada qarn fi ḡill al-silāt bayn Banī al-Aḥmar bi-Gharnāṭa wa Banī Marīn bi-Fās, 674–777 A.H./1275–1375 A.D* (Tripoli: Markaz Jihād al-Libīyyīn lil Dirāsāt al-Tārīkhīyya, 1995).

at Rio Salado (741/1340) and the subsequent Castilian conquest of Algeciras (745/1344) was a major setback for Marinid interests in the Iberian Peninsula, the Nasrids were to experience the greatest period of their kingdom's political power and cultural splendor in the decades that followed (roughly, between 741/1340 and 793/1390). The relative political success of the Nasrids—or more specifically, of Muḥammad V—during this period can be largely attributed to a carefully developed system of alliances, facilitated largely by the elaborate and close relationship among individuals across the various courts, including the Castilian court.

These broader political developments were complemented by various historical-ideological works and monumental architectural constructions such as the Court of the Lions palace of the Alhambra. Leading officials, chief ministers and court secretaries such as Ibn al-Jayyāb, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Zamrak, whose poetry adorns much of the Alhambra—played a major role in this process of cultural production and articulation of dynastic ideology, which emphasized the Nasrid sovereign as a learned king who was God's representative on earth, responsible for the maintenance of justice, the upholding and expansion of the institutions of government, and the defense of the faith.

Due to the nature of the sources and the role of the court secretaries in drafting formal correspondence, treaties and other documents of state, this broader geo-political context forms the necessary backdrop of any discussion of intellectual or scholarly networks during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Several studies of Nasrid Granada, Marinid North Africa and Castile between the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries have furthered scholarly understanding of the relationship between politics, diplomacy and intellectual production during this period.<sup>76</sup> Among

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<sup>76</sup> Two particularly important works in this regard, which focus heavily on frontier warfare, are Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *The Gibraltar Crusade: Castile and the Battle for the Strait* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011) and his *The Last Crusade in the West: Castile and the Conquest of Granada* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014). Despite O'Callaghan's insistence on employing the rather limiting framework of the

the most significant of these works has been Leonard Patrick Harvey's *Islamic Spain, 1250–1500*, which draws heavily upon chronicles and diplomatic correspondences from both Castile and Nasrid Granada to demonstrate the central role of diplomacy—which fell under the purview of the chancery, which individuals such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb controlled during the 8th/14th century—as one of the underlying forces that ensured the Nasrid dynasty's political survival and the expansion of its influence.<sup>77</sup> Similarly, the work of Rachel Arié and Ahmad Mukhtar Abbadi, which emphasize that the Nasrid kingdom sat at the nexus of a network of complex political relations that extended beyond the Islamic West, have situated the political developments occurring in the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid kingdom within this broader context of diplomacy and political transformation in the western Mediterranean.<sup>78</sup> These works have laid much of the groundwork for this dissertation, which contributes to our understanding of this period by illustrating the integral significance of scholarly and intellectual networks of itinerant court secretaries in shaping the various political developments in the Islamic West in the late

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*Reconquista* as his primary interpretive lens, both works provide an indispensable assessment of the military and political state of affairs in southern Iberia between the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries. O'Callaghan's extensive use of Castilian chronicles, chancery documents as well as provincial archives also brings to light important evidence that illustrates the major importance of the Castilian documentary record for Nasrid history.

<sup>77</sup> Leonard Patrick Harvey, *Islamic Spain, 1250–1500* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

<sup>78</sup> Rachel Arié, "Les Relations entre le Royaume Nasride de Grenade et le Maghreb de 1340 à 1391," in *L'Occident Musulman au bas Moyen-Age* (Paris: De Boccard, 1992), pp. 85–104; Ahmad Mukhtar Abbadi, *El Reino de Granada en la época de Muḥammad V* (Madrid: Publicaciones del Instituto de Estudios Islámicos en Madrid, 1973). These works are further complemented by other major studies of diplomacy between the Iberian Kingdoms and North Africa, including Henri Bresc and Yusuf Ragib, *Le sultan mérinide Abu l-Hasan 'Ali et Jacques III de Majorque : du traité de paix au pacte secret* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 2011); Umar Saidan, *ʿAlāqāt Isbāniyya al-Qaṭalāniyya bi-l Ḥafṣiyyīn fī al-thulthayn al-awwāl wa al-thānī min al-qarn al-rābiʿ ʿashar m* (Susa, Tunis: Manshurāt Saʿīdan, 2002); Charles-Emmanuel Dufourcq, *L'Espagne Catalane et le Maghrib aux XIIIe et XIV siècles* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966); Ángeles Masiá de Ros, *La Corona de Aragón y los Estados del Norte de África: Política de Jaime II y Alfonso IV en Egipto, Ifríquía y Tremecén* (Barcelona: Instituto Español de Estudios Mediterráneos, 1951); Mariano Gaspar Remiro, *Relaciones de la corona de Aragón con los estados musulmanes de occidente: El negocio de Ceuta entre Jaime II de Aragón y Aburrebia Solaiman, sultan de Fez, contra Mohamed III de Granada* (Madrid, 1925); Andrés Giménez Soler, *La Corona de Aragón y Granada: Historia de las relaciones entre ambos reinos* (Barcelona: Imprenta de la Casa Provincial de Caridad, 1908).



medieval period, while encouraging scholars to consider the interplay between governance, literary production and itinerancy.

Perhaps no figure in the history of late medieval Islamic Spain embodies the secretarial class' existence at the intersection of the political-administrative and scholarly-intellectual spheres more clearly than Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb, who served in various capacities as chancellor, treasurer, ambassador, and chief minister of Nasrid Granada. This figure followed in the footsteps of leading Spanish Muslim scholar-officials such as Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Ibn 'Amīra, and Ibn al-Abbār, itinerant individuals who had exercised significant administrative and political authority while also being deeply involved in various intellectual and literary pursuits during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century. His rise to power was part of a broader process in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Granada which involved the gradual concentration of executive political authority in the hands of the literary-administrative elite (*ahl al-qalam*/"men of the pen") within the chancery at the expense of military commanders and noble families (*ahl al-sayf*/"men of the sword"), who had traditionally held the position of chief minister since the inception of the Nasrid kingdom a century earlier. Indeed, the fact that he was commonly memorialized by scholars and intellectuals simply as *Dhū-l Wizāratayn* ("Bearer of the Two Offices," which can also be translated in the Nasrid context as "Lord of the Sword and Pen"), underscores the inseparability between Ibn al-Khaṭīb's career and these broader institutional developments.

Lisān al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb al-Salmānī was born near Loja in 713/1313 into a family of notables, originally from Córdoba, who had traditionally been employed in the religious and civil service of Andalusī rulers.<sup>79</sup> Soon after his birth, the family

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<sup>79</sup> 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2010), 7: 344; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa*, 4: 374; Alexander D. Knysh, "Ibn al-Khaṭīb," in *The Literature of al-Andalus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), ed. Maria Rosa Menocal, Raymond P. Scheindlin and Michael Sells, p. 358; Jorge Lirola Delgado, "Ibn al-Jaṭīb al-Salmānī, Lisān al-Dīn," *BA*, 3: 644–646.

moved to Granada, where Ibn al-Khaṭīb received his education in literature, rhetoric, natural sciences, medicine, theology, jurisprudence, and philosophy, studying with some of the most distinguished scholars of the age.<sup>80</sup> His family was closely linked with the Naṣrid court, where his father held an important administrative post in the service of the emir Ismā‘īl I (r. 714/1314–725/1325). During the early 730s/1330s, Ibn al-Khaṭīb entered into the service of Yūsuf I (r. 733/1333–755/1354) as a secretary and physician, before being promoted to the position of chancellor and chief minister following the death of his mentor, Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Jayyāb, in 749/1349.<sup>81</sup> He also held the office of majordomo, which gave him a considerable degree of control over the financial, administrative, military, and political affairs of the kingdom of Granada.<sup>82</sup> This is reflected in Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own statement in which he asserts “[Yūsuf I] appointed me to a dignified position of (military) leadership (*al-qiyāda*) and the office of chief minister (*rusūm al-wizāra*), appointed me his ambassador (*ista‘malanī fī-l saḡāra*) to kings, delegated his authority to me in his palace (*istanābanī bi dār mulkihi*), giving me his royal seal and sword (*wa rama ila yadī bi khātimihi wa sayfihi*), and entrusting me with his wealth (*dhakhīratihī*) and royal treasury (*bayt mālihi*), the guarding of his women and children (*sujūf ḥuramihi*), and access to his inaccessible fortress [the Alhambra].”<sup>83</sup> Following the accession of the sixteen-year old Muḥammad V (r. 755/1354–760/1359, 763/1362–793/1391) to power, he retained his political offices until the emir’s deposition in 760/1359.<sup>84</sup> In that year, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was briefly imprisoned in Granada by the new regime, before being released and exiled to North Africa, where he joined his sovereign Muḥammad V and spent most of his time writing and in

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<sup>80</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344; Knysh, “Ibn al-Khaṭīb,” p. 358; Lirola Delgado, “Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” *BA*, 3: 646–647.

<sup>81</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344; Knysh, “Ibn al-Khaṭīb,” p. 358; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 377; Lirola Delgado, “Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” *BA*, 3: 648.

<sup>82</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344; Knysh, “Ibn al-Khaṭīb,” p. 359.

<sup>83</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 443.

<sup>84</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344–345.

spiritual retreat.<sup>85</sup> It was during his time in Morocco that the vast majority of his works were composed.

After the restoration of Muḥammad V to the throne in 763/1362, due largely to the efforts of Pedro I of Castile (r. 1350–1369), Ibn al-Khaṭīb returned to Granada, where he was reappointed chief minister and exercised supreme control over the administrative, political and military affairs of the kingdom of Granada for several years.<sup>86</sup> However, due to a variety of reasons that will be elucidated within this dissertation, his status and power in Granada had diminished considerably and his influence over the emir Muḥammad V had waned, a fact that his political opponents sought to exploit. In 773/1371, the court intrigues and increasingly hostile atmosphere in Granada compelled Ibn al-Khaṭīb to flee Granada for the friendly court of the Marinids.<sup>87</sup> His enemies at the Nasrid court accused him of treasonous conduct and heresy and sought to have him punished for his alleged crimes. Shortly afterwards, a Naṣrid-instigated coup in the Marinid kingdom brought to power a sovereign who complied with Muḥammad V's desire to see Ibn al-Khaṭīb punished. The former chief minister was publicly humiliated, put on trial, tortured and imprisoned in Fez.<sup>88</sup> The architects of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's political demise were his former friends and allies, Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Bunnāhī (the chief judge of Granada) and Ibn Zamrak (the Nasrid chancellor), who, in addition to having the chief minister's property confiscated and a significant amount of his works burned in public, had him excommunicated on accusations of heresy.<sup>89</sup> While awaiting his final judgment, however, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was

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<sup>85</sup> Knysh, "Ibn al-Khaṭīb," p. 359.

<sup>86</sup> Knysh, "Ibn al-Khaṭīb," p. 360.

<sup>87</sup> M. Isabel Calero Secall, "Rulers and Qādīs: Their Relationship during the Naṣrid Kingdom," *Islamic Law and Society* 7 (2000), p. 249; Knysh, "Ibn al-Khaṭīb," p. 360.

<sup>88</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 353. For a detailed discussion of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's trial and death, see Maria Isabel Calero Secall, "El proceso de Ibn al-Jaṭīb," *al-Qantara* 22 (2001): 421–429.

<sup>89</sup> Knysh, "Ibn al-Khaṭīb," pp. 361–362; Secall, "Rulers and Qādīs," p. 249–250.

assassinated in his prison cell in Rabī‘ II 776/September 1374.<sup>90</sup> Although he was buried at Bāb al-Maḥrūq in Fez the following day, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s enemies had his body exhumed and burned before being subsequently reinterred in a different tomb.<sup>91</sup>

Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s long career as a court secretary and diplomat, which spanned both southern Iberia and North Africa, uniquely positioned him as both a political figure and intellectual, simultaneously an active participant in politics and the most important historical source for those developments. As chief minister, he occupied the most important position in Granada after that of king, and his role as head of the royal chancery gave him access to important documents pertaining to the kingdom, its administration and its rulers.<sup>92</sup> While in the employ of Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V, his duties encompassed everything from representing the Naṣrids as ambassador to the Marinid sultans in North Africa to tax collection and the organization of the frontier fortresses in the kingdom of Granada. As an intellectual, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was a prolific writer who composed more than sixty works dealing with various matters, including poetry, mysticism, history, politics, medicine, ethics, literature and philosophy.<sup>93</sup> Unlike Ibn Khaldūn, Ibn al-Khaṭīb did not attract the attention of Anglophone scholarship until relatively recently, as part of a broader interest in Andalusī studies in the North American academy. Over the past 50 years, most scholarship about him has been written in either Arabic or Spanish. In the short historiographical survey that follows, I attempt to sketch the contributions of previous scholars and highlight the various approaches to Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s life and thought. In several ways, this dissertation’s approach to Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s life and his context has been

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<sup>90</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 353–354; Knysh, “Ibn al-Khaṭīb,” pp. 361–362.

<sup>91</sup> Knysh, “Ibn al-Khaṭīb,” p. 362.

<sup>92</sup> al-Harūt, *al-Rasā’il al-Dīwānīyya*, pp. 178–191. For a detailed discussion of the Naṣrid *Dīwān al-Inshā’*, see al-Harūt, *al-Rasā’il al-Dīwānīyya*, pp. 36–80.

<sup>93</sup> For a full list of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s works, see Appendix II.

indebted to this rich body of historical scholarship. Although the interest in Ibn al-Khaṭīb among Spanish scholars can be dated to the 12<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century, as demonstrated by various El Escorial manuscripts of his works being copied and deposited in the Biblioteca Nacional by Spanish Arabists,<sup>94</sup> it was only in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that scholars began to engage more directly with his life and works. Traditional 20<sup>th</sup>-century Arabic and Spanish scholarship about Ibn al-Khaṭīb has tended to focus upon his role as a public figure within the Nasrid and Marinid courts. Muhammad Abdullah Enan's work has been one of the most path breaking contributions in this regard and, in presenting a comprehensive intellectual biography of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, placed him within a broader network of court secretaries and scholars while also indicating the significance of his unique contributions to history, philosophy, epistolary, mysticism and politics.<sup>95</sup> Enan's work illustrates the various dimensions that should be considered when thinking about Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his writing, including his position as a court secretary and chief minister, his engagement with Islamic mysticism, and his role as a litterateur, poet and historian. Enan's annotated edition of two of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works, the "Comprehensive History of Granada" (*al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa*), a work of biography and history, and the "Sweet Basil of the Secretaries" (*Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*), a work of epistolary which preserves Ibn al-Khaṭīb's personal and official correspondence between 751/1350 and 772/1370, illustrates his appreciation of importance of the interrelationship between knowledge and power within the context of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life.

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<sup>94</sup> Notable examples include BN MS 4891, BN MS 4892, BN MS 4898 and BN MS 4899. Notably, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings were extensively utilized by Miguel Lafuente y Alcántara in the composition of his monumental *Historia de Granada comprendiendo la de sus cuatro provincias, Almería, Jaén, Granada y Málaga, desde remotos tiempos hasta nuestros días*, 4 vols. (Granada: Imprenta y Librería de Sanz, 1843–1846), particularly the second and third volumes dedicated to the Nasrid kingdom. See, in particular, Lafuente y Alcántara, *Historia de Granada*, 3: 112–122 for an example of his incorporation of entire sections from Ibn al-Khaṭīb's *al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa* into the narrative.

<sup>95</sup> Muhammad Abdullah Enan, *Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khanājī, 1968).

The traditional historiography, represented chiefly by Enan, has situated Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings within the context of broader social and political developments during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, focusing in particular on the oscillations of his career, with some scholars attempting to identify with precision the specific context of the production of his various works in order to better understand the significance of their content.<sup>96</sup> Much of the scholarship following this approach to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life has been produced in Arabic during the past several decades.<sup>97</sup> Muhammad Titwani's book on Ibn al-Khaṭīb, which sketches his biography while providing a detailed summary of his many works—including a discussion of their content, the possible motive for composition, and the manuscript tradition—has in many ways provided a useful starting point for any attempt to locate Ibn al-Khaṭīb's intellectual contributions within his broader cultural and political context.<sup>98</sup> Titwani's work greatly illuminated the significant autobiographical dimension of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings. This approach to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life has continued to be influential within modern scholarship, with several intellectual biographies being written in the past two decades that have sought to acquaint a modern audience with his life and career,<sup>99</sup> while largely reiterating the assumptions and perspectives laid out within earlier scholarship. Although the traditional scholarship on Ibn al-Khaṭīb has brought to light important aspects of his life and thought, including his relationship with other functionaries and intellectuals in the Marinid and Nasrid realms, it is characterized by an overreliance on Abū al-‘Abbās al-Maqqarī's narrative for Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life. Although al-Maqqarī, writing in the early 11<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century, is undoubtedly one of the most important sources for Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life and

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<sup>96</sup> Ahmad Mukhtar Abbadi, "Mu'allafāt Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb fī l-Maghrib," *Hespérís* 47 (1959): 247–253.

<sup>97</sup> For a recent example, see Nabil Khalid al-Khatib, *Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb, 713–776/1313–374: nathruhu wa shi'ruhu wa thaqāfatuhu fī iṭār 'asrihi* (Beirut: Dar al-Nahda al-'Arabiyya, 2013).

<sup>98</sup> Muhammad Titwani, *Ibn al-Khaṭīb min Khilāl Kutubih* (Tetouan: Mawlay al-Hasan Institute, 1954).

<sup>99</sup> A good example is Emilio Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib* (Granada: Editorial Comares, 2001).

works, the traditional scholarship at times privileges his perspective over that of earlier sources. Moreover, in the decades since the publication of the works of Enan and Titwani, dozens of new manuscripts from the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century Islamic West have been discovered which shed new light upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his broader context, including works authored by Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself that were thought lost. As recently as November 2016, a manuscript of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's earliest known work, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr* ("Poetry and Prose"), which was written around 744/1344, was edited by the Moroccan scholar Hayat Qara.<sup>100</sup> This specific discovery and several others underscore the importance of re-evaluating the assumptions and narratives of previous scholarship.

Drawing heavily upon the bio-bibliographical approach to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, which was pioneered by Arabic-language scholarship and Spanish Arabists during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, modern scholarship has revolved around a close investigation of four key aspects of his career: his importance as a poet and litterateur, his historical writings, his political thought and his mystical worldview. Many of these scholars have provided an important corrective to Enan's classic biography by diversifying the approach to Ibn al-Khaṭīb by looking at specific aspects of his works (or a single work) within his broader Andalusī and Maghribī social and cultural milieu. Unlike Titwani, many of these scholars were not content with mere narration or description but have sought to critically engage with his work and situate them within the broader framework of Islamic or Andalusī intellectual history. Some of the main scholars who have contributed to furthering this approach include Rachel Arié,<sup>101</sup> Emilio García Gómez,<sup>102</sup> Saadedine

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<sup>100</sup> Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr* (Tetuan: al-Khalij al-Arabi, 2016), ed. Hayat Qara

<sup>101</sup> Rachel Arié, "Lisan al-Din b. al-Khatib: quelques aspects de son oeuvre," in *Atti del terzo Congresso di studi arabi e islamici* (Naples: Istituto Universitario Universale, 1967), pp. 69–81.

<sup>102</sup> Emilio García Gómez, *Foco de antigua luz sobre la Alhambra: desde un texto de Ibn al-Jatib en 1362* (Madrid: Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos en Madrid, 1988).

Bencheneb,<sup>103</sup> ‘Abd al-Majid Turki,<sup>104</sup> Mohammed Kattani,<sup>105</sup> Iṣām Qaṣabjī,<sup>106</sup> Antonio Fernández-Puertas,<sup>107</sup> and Maria Jesús Viguera Molins among others.<sup>108</sup> Over the past two decades, more scholars have begun to draw attention to Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s intellectual network, his itinerancy and the role these played in shaping his life and writing. This body of scholarship, including contributions by Fernando Velázquez Basanta,<sup>109</sup> Celia del Moral,<sup>110</sup> Allen Fromherz<sup>111</sup> and Maria Jesús Viguera Molins,<sup>112</sup> has highlighted the importance of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s surviving correspondence and the formation of personal relationships with courtiers and scholars throughout al-Andalus and North Africa as a body of texts that enable historians to better situate Ibn al-Khaṭīb within a broader intellectual and political context. Laila Jreis Navarro’s recent dissertation has contributed immensely to this approach by closely analyzing Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s *Nufādat al-Jirāb*, the text composed during his exile in Salé between 761/1360 and 763/1362, with an emphasis upon his correspondence and itinerancy.<sup>113</sup> Her exploration of

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<sup>103</sup> Saadedine Bencheneb, “Mémoires, tableaux historiques et portraits dans l’oeuvre de Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb,” *Revue d’histoire et de civilisation du Maghreb* 2 (1967): 54–85.

<sup>104</sup> Abd al-Majid Turki, “Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb (713–776/1313–1374), juriste,” *Arabica* 16 (1969): 155–211, 280–329.

<sup>105</sup> Mohammed Kattani, “Ibn al-Khatib wa ma’hib al-fikriyya fi asrihi,” *Revue de la Faculté de Lettres* 2 (1987): 15–40.

<sup>106</sup> ‘Iṣām Qasabjī, *Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb: ḥayātuhi wa fikruhi wa shi’ruhi* (Aleppo, 1983).

<sup>107</sup> Antonio Fernández-Puertas, “Los textos poéticos de Ibn al-Jaṭīb y los coránicos del salón de comares (La Qubba del Sultan Yūsuf I),” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 60 (2011): 123–151.

<sup>108</sup> For a comprehensive list and summary of the major doctoral theses written about Ibn al-Khaṭīb in Spain over the past half century, see Abdel Rahim Mahmoud El-Shafi, “Tesis doctorales acerca Ibn al-Jaṭīb presentadas en España,” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 64 (2015): 133–147.

<sup>109</sup> Fernando N. Velázquez-Basanta, “El literato y historiador granadino: Ibn al-Aḥmar retrata al poeta Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 59 (2010): 191–217.

<sup>110</sup> Celia del Moral, “Luces y sombras en las relaciones entre Ibn al-Jaṭīb e Ibn Jaldūn a través de su correspondencia personal,” in *Ibn al-Jaṭīb y su tiempo* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2012), eds. Celia del Moral and Fernando Velázquez Basanta, pp. 205–222.

<sup>111</sup> Allen Fromherz, “Ibn Khaldūn, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and their Milieu: A Community of Letters in the Fourteenth-Century Mediterranean,” *Medieval Encounters* 20 (2014): 288–305.

<sup>112</sup> María Jesús Viguera Molins, “Ibn al-Jatib visita el monte de los Hintata,” in *Homenaje al Profesor J. M. Fórneas Besteiro* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1994), 1: 645–659; María Jesús Viguera Molins, “Ibn Marzuq según Ibn al-Jatib: Análisis de una biografía,” *Revue de la Faculté de Lettres* 2 (1987), pp. 33–41.

<sup>113</sup> Laila M. Jreis Navarro, *Entre las dos orillas: El viaje de exilio de Ibn al-Jāṭīb a través de su obra Nufādat al-ġirāb fī ‘ulālat al-igtirāb* (Granada: University of Granada PhD Dissertation, 2016).



the literary dimensions of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings and engagement with the question of genre also reflects an increased interest with these questions in current Arabic scholarship, notably the work of Abd al-Halim al-Harout<sup>114</sup> and Muhammad Masoud Jibran.<sup>115</sup> A recent article by Camilo Gómez-Rivas has also illustrated the interplay between Ibn al-Khaṭīb's experiences and his literary production, focusing specifically on the profound impact that the experience of exile in Salé had upon the galvanization of his distinct identity and consciousness as an Andalusī Muslim.<sup>116</sup> Gómez-Rivas argues that this short three-year period, during which time Ibn al-Khaṭīb wrote many of his surviving works, was “significant in shaping his narrative of al-Andalus, complemented by the accumulated experience of banishment, exile, and refuge, which so characterized the Andalusī experience in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.”<sup>117</sup>

In addition to looking broadly at his intellectual network and the question of identity, several scholars have sought to highlight the significance of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's engagement with Sufism and Islamic philosophy. Indeed, it was Ibn al-Khaṭīb's mystico-philosophical work, “The Garden of Acquaintance with the Nature of Noble Love” (*Rawdat al-Ta'rif fī al-Ḥubb al-Sharīf*), which includes substantial quotations from both mystical philosophers such as Ibn 'Arabī and peripatetics such as Avicenna, that formed the basis of the accusations of heresy brought against him by Granada's chief judge, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī.<sup>118</sup> The question of the degree to which his philosophical-theological views contributed to his fall from power has been a key point of

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<sup>114</sup> Abd al-Halim al-Harut, *Al-Nathr al-Fannī 'inda Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb* (Amman: Dar Jarir, 2013).

<sup>115</sup> Muhammad Masoud Jubran, *Funūn al-Nathr al-Adabī fī Athār Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb*, 2 volumes (Beirut: Dar al-Madar al-Islamī, 2004).

<sup>116</sup> Camilo Gómez-Rivas, “Exile, Encounter, and the Articulation of Andalusī Identity in the Maghrib,” *Medieval Encounters* 20 (2014): 340–351.

<sup>117</sup> Gómez-Rivas, “Exile, Encounter, and the Articulation of Andalusī Identity in the Maghrib,” p. 342.

<sup>118</sup> Alexander D. Knysh, *Ibn 'Arabi in the Later Islamic Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 179–184; Qassabjī, *Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb*, p. 17; Secall, “Rulers and Qādīs,” p. 249.

contention in the historiography.<sup>119</sup> Far from being a minor detail within his broader career, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's theological and mystical views permeate his writings, especially those composed after 760/1359.<sup>120</sup> The work of Emilio de Santiago Simón has been, to date, the main engagement with the mystical dimension of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings, focusing particularly on his major work of mystical philosophy, *Rawḍat al-Ta'rif*.<sup>121</sup> More recent work by Alexander Knysh,<sup>122</sup> Linda Jones,<sup>123</sup> Bárbara Boloix Gallardo,<sup>124</sup> Victor de Castro León,<sup>125</sup> Cynthia Robinson and Amalia Zomeño<sup>126</sup> has further illuminated the place of Sufism and Sufis within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's corpus. However, this body of scholarship has not fully engaged with the full extent of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's written corpus or investigated the development of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's mystical and philosophical thought over the course of his career. In fact, with the exception of Abd al-Aziz Bin Abdullah's work in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and Ali Humayun Akhtar's recent

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<sup>119</sup> For the most recent contribution, see Ali Humayun Akhtar, "The Political Controversy over Graeco-Arabic Philosophy and Sufism in Nasrid Government: The Case of Ibn al-Khatib in al-Andalus," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 47.2 (2015), pp. 323–342.

<sup>120</sup> For an excellent study of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's Sufism and mysticism, see Qassabjī, *Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb*, pp. 51–307.

<sup>121</sup> Emilio de Santiago Simon, *El polígrafo granadino Ibn al-Jatib y el sufismo. Aportaciones para su estudio* (Granada: Excma. Disputación Provincial y Departamento de Historia del Islam de la Universidad, 1983); idem, "¿Ibn al-Jaṭīb, místico?" *Homenaje a don José María Lacarra de Miguel* (Zaragoza, 1977), 3: 217–228; idem, "Jatibiana mística I: El Kitāb Rawḍat al-Ta'rif. Su temática," *Andalucía Islámica. Textos y estudios* 1 (1980): 105–122; idem, "Sobre la fechas de redacción de 'Kitab Rawdat al-Ta'rif' y de ultimación de 'Kitab al-lhata' de Ibn al-Jatib," *Cuadernos de Historia del Islam* 8 (1977); idem, "Un opúsculo inédito de Ibn al-Jatib sobre sufismo," *Homenaje a Jose M. Fórneas Besteiro* (Granada, 1994), 2: 1243–1253.

<sup>122</sup> Alexander D. Knysh, *Ibn 'Arabi in the Later Islamic Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 172–184.

<sup>123</sup> Linda G. Jones, "Mystical Encounters: Locating Sufis and Sufism in the Biographical Writings of Ibn al-Khaṭīb," *Medieval Encounters* 20 (2014): 352–382.

<sup>124</sup> Bárbara Boloix Gallardo, "Ṭarīqas y sufíes en la obra de Ibn al-Jaṭīb: el "almizcle" de la escala social nazarí," in *Saber y poder en al-Andalus: Ibn al-Jaṭīb (s. XIV): Estudios en conmemoración del 700 aniversario del nacimiento de Ibn al-Jaṭīb* (Córdoba: El Almendro-Biblioteca Viva de al-Andalus, 2014), eds. Maria Dolores Rodríguez Gómez, Maria Dolores, Antonio Peláez Rovira and Bárbara Boloix Gallardo, pp. 119–140.

<sup>125</sup> Victor de Castro León, "El Kitāb A'māl al-A'lām: El misticismo de Ibn al-Jaṭīb," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 66 (2017), pp. 31–56.

<sup>126</sup> Cynthia Robinson and Amalia Zomeño, "On Muḥammad V, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Sufism," in *The Articulation of Power in Medieval Iberia and the Maghrib*, ed. Bennisson, pp. 153–174.

contribution, his complex and nuanced engagement with peripatetic philosophy (*falsafa*) has rarely been addressed.<sup>127</sup>

In closely considering Ibn al-Khaṭīb's role and contributions a historian, Wilhelm Hoenerbach's works have been particularly important.<sup>128</sup> Hoenerbach has identified three of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works—*al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa*, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya fī-l Dawla al-Naṣriyya*, and *A'māl al-A'lām*<sup>129</sup>—as representing the kernel of his historical and political thought. For Hoenerbach, the value of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's historical chronicles do not lie solely in the information that they provide about the Nasrid, Andalusī or Maghribi past, but rather in the way that this information is communicated and represented, which provides modern scholars with a significant understanding of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's distinct vision of politics and society. Hoenerbach argues that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's *A'māl al-A'lām*, in particular, represents the maturation of his historical-political thought, especially given how he points to recurrent patterns of human behavior and assesses the material factors underlying various developments rather than emphasizing divine providence. Hoenerbach also points to the role of “the ignorant, rebellious masses” (*awbāsh*) in Ibn al-Khaṭīb's historical narrative as an important indication of the of the Granadan minister's concern with political and social change across Islamic history. Hoenerbach situates Ibn al-Khaṭīb's historical writing within a broader context of late medieval intellectuals who he argues represented a new mode of thinking about concepts such as society, political change and “the state,” and draws comparisons between the Granadan minister on one hand and Ibn Khaldūn,

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<sup>127</sup> Abd al-Aziz Bin Abdullah, *al-Falsafa wa al-Akhlāq 'inda Ibn al-Khaṭīb* (Tetouan, 1953).

<sup>128</sup> Wilhelm Hoenerbach, “El Historiador Ibn al-Jaṭīb: Pueblo-gobierno-estado” *Andalusia islámica* 1 (1980): 44–63 and idem, *Islamische Geschichte Spaniens* (Zurich: Artemis Verlags, 1970), pp. 9–47.

<sup>129</sup> Another important study of *A'māl al-A'lām* has been Mohamed Meouak, “Ibn al-Jatib y su obra A'mal al-A'lam. Fuentes escritas y valoración historiográfica,” *Al-Andalus/Maghreb. Estudios árabes e islámicos*, Cádiz, 7 (1999): 185–222.

Pero López de Ayala (d. 1407),<sup>130</sup> and Niccolo Machiavelli (d. 1527) on the other.<sup>131</sup> By encouraging modern scholars to think critically about what he identifies as the radical and “almost positivist” nature of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s historical works, Hoenerbach contributes significantly to the modern understanding of Ibn al-Khaṭīb by drawing a significant link between historiography and political thought during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>132</sup> He also invites scholars to think about the role of government service in shaping the historical and political views of the court secretaries. More recently, Emilio Molina López and Ahmad Chafic Damaj have also contributed to a broader understanding of the manner in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s political thought was interwoven with his historiographical and literary production.<sup>133</sup>

Muhammad al-Barakah and Said Benhamada’s recent work provides considerable insight into the theories of governance espoused by Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his articulation of political

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<sup>130</sup>Pero López de Ayala (d. 1407), a contemporary of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, was a Castilian poet, historian and chancery official during the reigns of Pedro I (d. 1350–1369) and Enrique II Trastámara (r. 1369–1379), Juan I (r. 1379–1390) and Enrique III (r. 1390–1406). His career as a court secretary and a historian, his skills as a poet and rhetorician and his impact on royal policy and diplomacy certainly invites comparisons with figures such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb. Both López de Ayala and Ibn al-Khaṭīb can be considered important representatives of the emerging class of court secretaries that were playing an increasingly-important role on both sides of the frontier in Iberia during the fourteenth century. For more on him, see Michel Garcia, *Obra y personalidad del Canciller Ayala* (Madrid: Editorial Alhambra, 1983); Antonio Serrano de Haro, *El embajador don Pero López de Ayala (1332–1407)* (Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 2001); Constance L. Wilkins, *Pero López de Ayala* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989).

<sup>131</sup> For comparisons between medieval Muslim political thinkers and Niccolo Machiavelli within modern scholarship, see James Winston Morris, “An Arab Machiavelli? Rhetoric, Philosophy and Politics in Ibn Khaldun’s Critique of Sufism,” *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 8 (2009): 242–291; John H. Miller, *Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli: An Examination of Paradigms* (Manhattan, Kansas: Kansas State University M.A. thesis, 1983); Barbara Freyer Stowasser, *Religion and Political Development: Some Comparative Ideas on Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli* (Washington D.C.: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, 1983); R. Hrair Dekmejian and Adel Fathy Thabet, “Machiavelli’s Arab Precursor: Ibn Ḥafar al-Ṣiqillī,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 27.2 (2000): 125–137

<sup>132</sup> Recently, Muhsin Ismail Muhammad has echoed Hoenerbach’s characterization of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s approach to history as “scientific,” emphasizing the importance of empirical evidence and socio-political analysis within his work. For more, see Muhsin Ismail Muhammad, “El método de investigación histórica de Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” in *Ibn al-Jaṭīb y su tiempo* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2012), eds. Celia del Moral and Fernando Velázquez Basanta, pp. 71–83.

<sup>133</sup> Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, pp. 172–186; Ahmad Chafic Damaj, “Concepto de Estado en Ibn al-Jaṭīb: ¿Un reformador?” in *Actas del 1er Coloquio Internacional sobre Ibn al-Jatib* (Granada: Fundación Ibn al-Jatib de Estudios y Cooperación Cultural, 2007), pp. 75–99.

legitimacy.<sup>134</sup> They take into consideration his political experience in the Nasrid and Marinid courts, in addition to noting an important letter of advice that he sent to Pedro I following his victory at the Battle of Najera (1367), in order to highlight his broader political theory. Although the primary purpose of their work was to present an edition of one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's lesser-known political treatises, their analysis encourages the modern scholar to think more critically about the relationship between Ibn al-Khaṭīb's representation of political affairs on one hand and his central role in participating in and shaping many of those same developments on the other. D. M. Dunlop,<sup>135</sup> Wadad Kadi<sup>136</sup> and Carlos Serrano Contreras<sup>137</sup> have shed important light on several of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's political treatises, demonstrating the importance of Graeco-Arabic philosophical concepts within his political theory, as well the particular manner in which he adapted classical works from the Central Islamic Lands for his own purposes. Kadi, in particular, has pointed to a significant treatise by Ibn al-Khaṭīb composed for Pedro I in the aftermath of the Battle of Najera in which the former provides the Castilian king with advice about administration and governance.<sup>138</sup> For Kadi, the underlying unity of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's political writings is its pragmatism and practicality, which drew heavily from his considerable political experiences as the chief minister and chancellor of Nasrid Granada.

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<sup>134</sup> Muhammad al-Baraka and Said Benhamada, *Al-Siyāsa al-sulṭāniyya 'inda Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb min khilāl risālatihī "fī aḥwāl khidmat al-dawla wa maṣā'irihim"* (Casablanca: Ifriqiya al-Sharq, 2013).

<sup>135</sup> D. M. Dunlop, "A Little-Known Work on Politics by Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb," *Miscelanea de estudios árabes y hebraicos* (Granada) 8 (1959): 47–55.

<sup>136</sup> Wadad Kadi, "Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb on Politics," in *La Signification du Bas Moyen Age dans l'Histoire et la Culture du Monde Musulmane: Actes du 8me Congres de L'Union Europeenne des Arabisants et Islamisants, Aix-en-Provence Septembre 1976* (Aix-en-Provence: Edisud, 1978), pp. 205–217.

<sup>137</sup> Carlos Serrano Contreras, "La indicación a la Instrucción del Visirato: ¿Plagio o reflexión original? Del testamento de Ibn al-Dāya al tratado de gobierno de Ibn al-Jatīb," in *Mediterráneos: An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Cultures of the Mediterranean Sea* (New Castle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), eds. Sergio Carro Martín et al., pp. 101–113.

<sup>138</sup> Kadi, "Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb on Politics," pp. 212–214. Also, see Julia Marquer, "La figura de Ibn al-Jatīb como consejero de Pedro I de Castilla: entre ficción y realidad," *E-Spania* (online journal), December 2011: <http://e-spania.revues.org/20900> and Michel Garcia, "Cartas del moro Benalhatib al rey don Pedro," *Atalaya: revue française d'études médiévales hispaniques* 10 (1999): 20–37.

Another recent contribution to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's political thought has been Muhammad Zaghal's work exploring some of the former's political treatises within the context of his specific encounter with structures of power, whether in his capacity as the chief minister of Granada or during his exile and trial.<sup>139</sup> Zaghal is primarily concerned with the various ways that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's literary writings and political treatises reflected his diverse and complicated political experience. Similar to Hoenerbach, then, Zaghal also identifies a clear link between political experience, historiography and representation within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings. Ahmad Chafic Damaj's work has also shed considerable light on the complexity of the relationship between intellectuals and political power within the Nasrid context.<sup>140</sup> He has contextualized Ibn al-Khaṭīb within the broader discourse about the relationship between circles of learning and political-administrative service.<sup>141</sup> Damaj has demonstrated that that various considerations informed the decision of scholars to enter government service, and that their writings contain a conscious reflection on issues such as their position within the ruler's court, the question of the permissibility of accepting or rejecting gifts, the nature of obedience to the ruler, the risks inherent in the relationship between intellectual and ruler, and, finally, the consequences of being co-opted by the ruling authorities on one hand and removing themselves from political circles altogether on the other. Damaj argues that intellectuals, particularly those belonging to the secretarial class, acted in three important ways during the Nasrid period: as government functionaries, as politicians, and as manufacturers of a particular discourse about "the state" and government service. His work has thus provided an important framework for better

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<sup>139</sup> Muhammad Fateh Zaghal, *Sulṭat al-muthaqqaf bayna al-iqtirāb wal ightirāb: qirā'ah fī sīrah Ibn al-Khaṭīb wa tajrabbathu al-siyāsiyyah* (Damascus: Mansurat Wizarah al-Thaqafah, 2006).

<sup>140</sup> Ahmad Chafiq Damaj, "Punto de vista del intelectual sobre su relación con el poder político en la época nazarí," *Anaquel de Estudios Árabes* 15 (2004): 97–121.

<sup>141</sup> Ahmad Chafiq Damaj, *El intelectual y el poder político en la época nazarí* (Granada: Universidad de Granada PhD Dissertation, 2003).

understanding Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his broader intellectual-political circle. A recent dissertation by Saleh al-Zahrani has explored Ibn al-Khaṭīb's poetic corpus within the broader context of his experiences in al-Andalus and the Maghrib in order to determine the various political and ideological (especially mystical) concepts referred to within it.<sup>142</sup> Al-Zahrani has been one of the few scholars whose work has comprehensively explored Ibn al-Khaṭīb's poetry in order to discern the various ways that political notions have permeated this genre of his writings.

As this historiographical survey demonstrates, the study of Ibn al-Khaṭīb has advanced considerably over the past several decades, with an increased focus upon specific elements within his historical and literary works. Spanish scholars, in particular, have highlighted the importance of his dual role as an intellectual and statesman and interrogated the implications of this fact for understanding and interpreting his works. During the last six years alone, there have been three edited volumes and two major conferences dedicated to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life and works, a fact which highlights the recognition of his significance by modern scholars.<sup>143</sup>

Although there has been a general departure from earlier approaches, which had often relied heavily upon the writings of Ibn Khaldūn and al-Maqqarī, in favor of a direct engagement with Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own works, modern scholarship has nevertheless neglected several aspects of his life and thought. Although Ibn al-Khaṭīb's role as a poet, a physician, a historian, a statesman and a political thinker have come to be appreciated, relatively little has been written about his role as a court secretary, his engagement with philosophy, and his participation in a broader

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<sup>142</sup> Saleh al-Zahrani, *Aspectos culturales e ideológicas en el Diwān de Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Jaṭīb* (Granada: Universidad de Granada PhD Dissertation, 2011).

<sup>143</sup> Celia del Moral and Fernando Velázquez Basanta eds., *Ibn al-Jaṭīb y su tiempo* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2012); María Dolores Rodríguez Gómez, Antonio Peláez Rovira and Bárbara Boloix Gallardo eds., *Saber y poder en al-Andalus: Ibn al-Jaṭīb (s. XIV): Estudios en conmemoración del 700 aniversario del nacimiento de Ibn al-Jaṭīb* (Córdoba: El Almendro-Biblioteca Viva de al-Andalus, 2014); Bárbara Boloix Gallardo ed., *Encounters with Ibn al-Khatib on the Occasion of the 700th Anniversary of his Birth (1313-2013)*, *Medieval Encounters* 20.4–5 (2014): 277–402.

community of letters encompassing similar scholar-officials across Iberia and North Africa. Despite his immense scholarly output, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was not an anomaly in his era. Rather, it is important to place Ibn al-Khaṭīb within a broader network of court secretaries and scholar-officials during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> - and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Islamic West who were engaged in the production of various forms of knowledge that sought to complement, legitimate and perpetuate structures of political power.

Situating Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his works within a broader conversation about the interdependency between literary production, sovereignty and governance enables scholars to draw comparisons with other scholar-ministers in classical Islamic history, including Yaḥyā b. Khālīd al-Barmakī (d. 190/806), Abū ‘Alī Muḥammad b. Muqlā (d. 328/940), Hasday b. Shaprut (d. 365/975), Samuel b. Naghrilla (d. 448/1056), Nizām al-Mulk (d. 485/1092), Abū al-Muẓẓafar Yaḥyā b. Hubayra (d. 560/1165),<sup>144</sup> as well as to important examples of this phenomenon during the post-classical period such as Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh (d. 718/1318) in the Ilkhanate and the Çandarlı family in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman polity.<sup>145</sup> This dissertation seeks to explore how his life and works reflect the convergence of social history, scholarly production (particularly historical writing) and the development of notions of royal power during the Nasrid period in order to illustrate how his literary production was closely intertwined with his function as a statesman. It is underpinned by Konrad Hirschler’s observation that “medieval Arabic historians were active interpreters of their society [who] sought to make sense out of the past” by “producing meaningful narratives within their societal context.”<sup>146</sup> My approach draws

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<sup>144</sup> Herbert Mason, *Two Statesmen of Mediaeval Islam: Vizir Ibn Hubayra (499-560 AH/105-165 AD) and Caliph an-Nāṣir li Dīn Allāh (553-622 AH/1158-1225 AD)* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1972).

<sup>145</sup> Franz Taeschner and Paul Wittek, “Die Vezirfamilie der Ğandarlyzāde (14/15. Jhdt.) und ihre Denkmäler,” *Der Islam* 18 (1929), pp. 60–115.

<sup>146</sup> Hirschler, *Medieval Arabic Historiography*, p. 3.



inspiration from George Makdisi's study of Ibn 'Aqīl,<sup>147</sup> Walter J. Fischel's work on Ibn Khaldūn,<sup>148</sup> and Cornell Fleischer's biography of Muṣṭafā Ālī,<sup>149</sup> as well as more recent intellectual biographies, which have utilized the lives of intellectuals and statesmen as a point of departure for thinking broadly about their social, cultural and political milieux.<sup>150</sup> The nature of the extant sources from the late medieval Mediterranean greatly facilitates such an approach due to the wealth of onomastic data provided by the many chronicles, biographical dictionaries and travelogues produced during this period which enable scholars to think more carefully about the history of this period in terms of a concrete set of client-patron relations and networks of scholars.

### Sources and Methodology

Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb's life is, by far, the most well-documented for any single figure in Nasrid history. There exists a large and diverse body of texts, drawn from across the Mediterranean and written in both Arabic and Castilian, for the study of his career. Although his own writings remain the most important historical source for his life, there are a variety of other sources from the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> centuries that shed important light upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life. The first category of sources consists of narrative accounts in historical chronicles and biographical dictionaries that are based primarily upon his own autobiography which he wrote at

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<sup>147</sup> George Makdisi, *Ibn 'Aqil: Religion and Culture in Classical Islam* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997).

<sup>148</sup> Walter J. Fischel, *Ibn Khaldun in Egypt: His Public Functions and his Historical Research (1382-1406): A Study in Islamic Historiography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).

<sup>149</sup> Cornell Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Ali* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

<sup>150</sup> Notable examples include Ilker Evrim Binbaş, *Intellectual Networks in Timurid Iran: Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi and the Islamicate Republic of Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Miles Hollingworth, *St. Augustine of Hippo: An Intellectual Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Corrado Vivanti, *Niccolò Machiavelli: An Intellectual Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013); and Ahmed El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law: A Social and Intellectual History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

the end of his monumental “The Comprehensive History of Granada” (*al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa*) around 771/1369.<sup>151</sup> One of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s closest confidants and friends, the renowned court secretary and historian ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), had access to Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s writings and incorporated the bulk of his autobiography into his own account, preserved in his “Book of Lessons” (*Kitāb al-‘Ibar*),<sup>152</sup> the “Introduction to History” (*al-Muqaddimah*) and the “Autobiography” (*al-Ta’rīf*). These works by Ibn Khaldūn made extensive use of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own personal correspondence and poetry, but also include the former’s own reflections on the various personalities, scholarly works and political developments that he discusses. While portions of Ibn Khaldūn’s biography of Ibn al-Khaṭīb were written as early as 779/1377, significant sections were incorporated into the *Ta’rīf*, which was completed around 806/1404. This means that his account of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s life and career was composed over a period of 30 years, the bulk of which was written after the former’s death. Ibn Khaldūn’s narrative of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s life and career remains one of the most valuable contemporary testimonies about the Nasrid chancellor’s life. The close friendship between the two individuals, Ibn Khaldūn’s own career as a secretary in both Islamic Spain and North Africa, as well as his interaction with many other scholar-officials across the Islamic West provided him with a unique degree of familiarity with Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his context.

Ibn Khaldūn’s access to many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s works, including several which are now lost, adds further value to his writings as a major source for Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s life. Many 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-

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<sup>151</sup> This autobiography has been preserved at the end of El Escorial MS 1673, pp. 425–499, which was copied in Rabī’ II 895/March 1490 in Granada. This has been edited by Muhammad Abdullah Enan and published at the end of Volume IV of the *Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khanji, 1973), the edition of the text utilized throughout this dissertation (unless noted otherwise). Another copy of the autobiography can be found as part of BnF Arabe 7257, 118v–137r.

<sup>152</sup> ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Khaldūn, *Kitāb al-‘ibar wa-dīwān al-mubtada’ wa-al-khabar fī ayyām al-‘Arab wa-al-‘ajam wa-al-barbar* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2010).

century Mamluk biographical accounts of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, including those written by Taqī al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442),<sup>153</sup> Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī (d. 852/1449)<sup>154</sup> and Shams al-Dīn al-Sakhawī (d. 902/1497)<sup>155</sup> are themselves entirely or heavily based on the narrative provided by Ibn Khaldūn, who had spent the last portion of his life (ca. 784/1382–808/1406) in Mamluk Egypt. Several biographies of Ibn al-Khaṭīb by early modern authors, including the West African scholar Aḥmad Bābā al-Tinbuktī (d. 1036/1627)<sup>156</sup> and the Syrian historian Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ṭūlūn (d. 953/1546),<sup>157</sup> also draw extensively upon Ibn Khaldūn. Very few of these scholars or those who relied upon them engaged with or utilized Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own writings directly, although some of them (notably Ibn Ḥajar) had read his “Comprehensive History” and occasionally incorporated additional information into their accounts based upon their encounters with individuals who had met Ibn al-Khaṭīb.<sup>158</sup> It is important to read these sources carefully to distinguish between the material derived entirely from Ibn Khaldūn and any original information or observations that they contain. Even those sources which rely heavily or exclusively upon Ibn Khaldūn are immensely valuable in allowing scholars to appreciate the legacy of Ibn al-Khaṭīb throughout the late medieval and early modern Islamic world.

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<sup>153</sup> Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda fī tarājim al-a’yān al-mufīda* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 2002), 3: 443–448. For a discussion of the relationship between Ibn Khaldūn and al-Maqrīzī, see Mounira Chapoutot-Remadi, “Ibn Khaldūn et Maqrīzī. Histoire d’une rencontre,” in *Ibn Khaldūn. Auge y declive de los imperios: del siglo XIV al mundo actual: Actas del Congreso Internacional, Granada 2006* (Granada: Fundación El legado andalusí, 2008), eds. Jerónimo Páez and María Jesús Viguera, pp. 121–130.

<sup>154</sup> Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī, *al-Durar al-Kāmina* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1997), 3: 285–288.

<sup>155</sup> Shams al-Dīn al-Sakhawī, *Wajīz al-Kalām fī al-Dhayl ‘alā Duwal al-Islām* (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risāla, 1995), eds. Bashshār ‘Awwād Ma’rūf, ‘Iṣām Fāris al-Ḥarastānī, and Aḥmad al-Khuṭaymī, 1: 209.

<sup>156</sup> Aḥmad Bābā al-Tinbuktī, *Nayl al-Ibtihāj bi Taṭrīz al-Dibāj* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafa al-Diniyya, 2004), 2: 104–105.

<sup>157</sup> Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ṭūlūn, *Inbā’ al-Umarā’ bi Anbā’ al-Wuzarā’* (Beirut: Dar al-Basha’ir al-Islamiyya, 1998), pp. 78–83.

<sup>158</sup> Another notable exception to this broader rule is the Syrian secretary and chancellor Ibn Ḥijja al-Ḥamawī (d. 837/1434), whose reception of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s writings appears to have occurred independently of Ibn Khaldūn.

In addition to Ibn Khaldūn's account, we also possess the writings of several other scholars from 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid Granada and Marinid North Africa who preserved fragments of poetry, correspondence and biographical information that provide significant insight into Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life and career. Among the most significant of these authors is Ismā'īl b. al-Aḥmar (d. 807/1405), whose biographical dictionary of poets devotes considerable attention to 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century al-Andalus.<sup>159</sup> Within the work, Ibn al-Aḥmar provides a lengthy biography of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, whom he identifies as "our teacher" (*shaykhunā*), and includes several extracts of his poetry and prose. As a work written independently of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's autobiography and Ibn Khaldūn's own writings on the subject, Ibn al-Aḥmar's *Nathīr Farā'id al-Jumān* provides historians with a significant account of Lisān al-Dīn's life and career written by one of his students and composed within a decade of his death.<sup>160</sup> The work also preserves important official documents from the life of the author, demonstrating Ibn al-Aḥmar's proximity to Ibn al-Khaṭīb and access to his writings. As an exiled Nasrid prince in North Africa and a leading scholar-official in Fez, Ibn al-Aḥmar also possessed remarkable insight into the socio-cultural and intellectual context of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Islamic West, making his works immensely valuable for the reconstruction of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's world.<sup>161</sup> Many other works by scholar-officials from the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century have survived that include useful, albeit fragmentary information, about Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life. These include the "Chronicle of the 'Abd al-Wāḍid

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<sup>159</sup> Ismā'īl b. al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā'id al-Jumān fī Naẓm Fuḥūl al-Zamān* (Beirut: Dar al-Thaqafa, 1967), pp. 242–292. For a study of this figure's life and writings, see Abd al-Qadir Zamama, *Abū al-Walīd ibn al-Aḥmar* (Casablanca: Dar al-Thaqafa, 1979).

<sup>160</sup> An annotated Spanish translation of Ibn al-Aḥmar's biographical account can be found in Fernando N. Velázquez-Basanta, "El literato y historiador granadino: Ibn al-Aḥmar retrata al poeta Ibn al-Jaṭīb," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 59 (2010): 191–217.

<sup>161</sup> Among his surviving historical chronicles are "The History of the Marinid Kingdom" (*Rawḍat al-Nisrīn fī dawlat Banī Marīn*) (Ismā'īl b. Yūsuf b. al-Aḥmar, *Rawḍat al-Nisrīn fī dawlat Banī Marīn* [Rabat: al-Matba'a al-Malakiyya, 1962], ed. Abd al-Wahhab bin Mansur) and "The History of the Zayyanids" (*Tārikh al-Dawla al-Ziyāniyya bi-Tilimsān*) (Ismā'īl b. Yūsuf b. al-Aḥmar, *Tārikh al-Dawla al-Ziyāniyya bi-Tilimsān* [Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafa al-Diniyya, 2001], ed. Hani Salama)

Dynasty” (*Bughyat al-Ruwwād fī Dhikr al-Mulūk min Banī ‘Abd al-Wād*) by Abū Zakariyyah Yaḥyā b. Khaldūn (d. 780/1378),<sup>162</sup> the “Collected Poems” (*Dīwān*) of Aḥmad b. Khātimah al-Anṣārī (d. 770/1369),<sup>163</sup> the “Obituaries” (*Wafayāt*) by Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī (d. 708/1407),<sup>164</sup> the *Rawnaq al-Taḥbīr* of Ibn Simāk al-‘Amilī, and the *Marqaba al-Ulyā* by Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī al-Bunnāhī (d. after 793/1391).<sup>165</sup>

To this extensive body of works we can also add several works by 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century scholars from the Islamic West, who also provide significant biographical information about Ibn al-Khaṭīb. These individuals include Abū Yaḥyā Muḥammad b. ‘Āṣim al-Gharnāṭī (d. 858/1454),<sup>166</sup> Abū ‘Abd Allāh b. Ghāzī al-Miknāsī (d. 919/1513),<sup>167</sup> Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. al-Qāḍī al-Miknāsī (d. 1025/1616),<sup>168</sup> and Muḥammad b. Maryam al-Tilmisānī (d. 1025/1616).<sup>169</sup> These sources often preserve anecdotes, fragments of poetry, and other information about Ibn al-Khaṭīb which nuance and supplement the chancellor’s own self-representation in “The Comprehensive History of Granada.” They also enable modern historians to appreciate the emergence of his intellectual and political legacy within several generations of his death. In addition to these aforementioned works, the various notes and marginalia left by copyists and

<sup>162</sup> Yaḥyā b. Muḥammad b. Khaldūn, *Bughyat al-ruwwād fī dhikr al-mulūk min Banī ‘Abd al-Wād* (Algiers: al-Maktaba al-Wataniya, 1980), ed. Abd al-Hamid Hajjiyat.

<sup>163</sup> Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī, *Dīwān Ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Mu’āṣir, 1994), ed. Muhammad Ridwan al-Dayya.

<sup>164</sup> Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī, *al-Wafayāt* (Beirut: Dar al-Afaq al-Jadida, 1980), ed. Adil Nuwayhid, pp. 370–371.

<sup>165</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus* (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-‘Asriyya, 2006), ed. Salah al-Dīn al-Hawwari.

<sup>166</sup> Abū Yaḥyā Muḥammad b. ‘Āṣim, *Junnat al-Riḍā fī Taslīm li-mā Qaddar Allāh wa Qadā*, 2 vols. (Amman: Dar al-Bashir, 1989), ed. Salah Jarrar.

<sup>167</sup> Abū ‘Abd Allāh b. Ghāzī al-Miknāsī, *al-Rawḍ al-Hatūn fī Akhbār Miknāsāt al-Zaytūn* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafa al-Diniyya, 2007), eds. ‘Ata Abu Raya and Sultan bin Malih al-Asmari.

<sup>168</sup> Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. al-Qāḍī, *Jadhwat al-Iqtibās fī Dhikr man Ḥalla min al-A’lām Madinat Fās* (Rabat: Dar al-Mansur, 1973), 1: 308–311; and Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. al-Qāḍī, *Durrat al-Ḥijāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl* (Cairo: Maktabat Dar al-Turath, 1972), ed. Muhammad al-Ahmadi Abu al-Nur, 2: 271–274.

<sup>169</sup> Ibn Maryam al-Tilmisānī, *al-Bustān fī Dhikr al-‘Ulamā’ wa al-Awliyā’ bi-Tilmisān* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2014), ed. ‘Abd al-Qadir Bubaya.

owners of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's manuscripts, which include both anonymous individuals as well as major scholars such as Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Wansharīsī (d. 914/1508), can shed significant light upon the Granadan chancellor's life and his legacy during the late medieval and early modern era.

Despite living over two centuries after Ibn al-Khaṭīb's death, the renowned North African scholar Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Maqqarī (d. 1041/1632) is among the leading sources of information about his life, career and literary contributions.<sup>170</sup> This individual, who was descended from Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Maqqarī (d. 759/1358), one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's teachers, authored two multi-volume works, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*<sup>171</sup> and *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*,<sup>172</sup> focusing upon al-Andalus and its intellectual heritage.<sup>173</sup> Several volumes of the *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb* are devoted exclusively to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, memorialized within the very title of the work as the “chief minister of al-Andalus.” This work, written as a literary monument to Andalusī civilization and celebrating the accomplishments of its scholars, preserves entire treatises, poems and correspondence by Ibn al-Khaṭīb (and his contemporaries) that would otherwise be lost to modern scholars. These works are invaluable resources that enable modern historians to carefully reconstruct Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life and his broader cultural and intellectual context, especially when critically utilized alongside Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own works and the surviving sources from the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries. The *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb* is also a vital resource for understanding Ibn al-Khaṭīb's legacy both as a political figure and an intellectual in the early modern Islamic world, a

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<sup>170</sup> For a comprehensive study of the life and writings of al-Maqqarī, see Sabahat Adil, *Memorializing al-Maqqarī: The Life, Works, and Worlds of a Muslim Scholar* (Chicago: University of Chicago PhD Dissertation, 2015).

<sup>171</sup> Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-riyāḍ fi akhbār ‘l-yāḍ*, 5 vols. (Cairo: Maṭba‘at Lajnat al-Ta’līf wa-al-Tarjama wa-al-Nashr, 1939), eds. Mustafa al-Saqqa, Ibrahim al-Ibyari and Abd al-Hafiz Shalabi.

<sup>172</sup> Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb min Ghusn al-Andalus al-Raṭīb*, 11 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1995).

<sup>173</sup> One of the most important contributions to date demonstrating al-Maqqarī's importance as a source for the literary and intellectual history of al-Andalus has been Celia del Moral, *Literatos Granadinos en el “Nafḥ al-Ṭīb” de al-Maqqarī* (Granada: University of Granada PhD Dissertation, 1982).

fact which has become increasingly appreciated by modern scholars.<sup>174</sup> The work's importance as a source was already recognized by some of al-Maqqarī's own contemporaries, notably the Syrian litterateur Shihāb al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥayy b. al-'Imād (d. 1089/1679) who drew heavily upon it for his own biographical entry on Ibn al-Khaṭīb.<sup>175</sup> Unlike many other biographers and chroniclers, al-Maqqarī did not rely solely upon the testimony of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn, but made an effort to read and incorporate as much of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own writings as possible, as well as that of his contemporaries, reading through hundreds of manuscripts preserved in various libraries across North Africa and Ottoman Egypt. The meticulous manner in which al-Maqqarī documented the life and works of Ibn al-Khaṭīb is exemplified by the fact that his *Azhār al-Riyāḍ* and *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb* reproduce marginalia and notes that he encountered when reading through many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's manuscripts. Al-Maqqarī's preservation of the poetry and writings of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's critics and detractors also provide scholars with a more nuanced and critical perspective of his life than a sole reliance upon his autobiography and the writings of Ibn Khaldūn would have allowed. Al-Maqqarī's approach to the life of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, which emphasizes his correspondence with his contemporaries, including other scholar-ministers such as Ibn Marzūq and Ibn Khaldūn, provides significant evidence for Ibn al-Khaṭīb's participation in a "community of letters" that encompassed the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century Islamic West. Furthermore, al-Maqqarī's *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb* and the *Azhār al-Riyāḍ* highlight the autobiographical dimension of Ibn

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<sup>174</sup> Ralf Elger, "Adab and Historical Memory: The Andalusian Poet/Politician Ibn al-Khaṭīb as Presented in Aḥmad al-Maqqarī (986/1577–1041/1632), *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*," *Die Welt des Islams*, New Series, 42, Issue 3, Arabic Literature and Islamic Scholarship in the 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> Century: Topics and Biographies (2002): 289–306; Celia del Moral, "Un monumento literario a la memoria de Ibn al-Jaṭīb," in *Saber y poder en al-Andalus Ibn al-Jaṭīb: Estudios en conmemoración del 700 aniversario del nacimiento de Ibn al-Jaṭīb* (Córdoba: Ediciones El Almendro, 2014), eds. María Dolores Rodríguez Gómez et al, pp. 183–202.

<sup>175</sup> Shihāb al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥayy b. al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-Dhahab fī Akhbār man Dhahab* (Damascus: Dar Ibn Kathir, 2016), 8: 422–426.

al-Khaṭīb's own writings, allowing scholars to appreciate the manner in which all his works, whether poetry or prose, can be utilized to better understand his life and thought.

As demonstrated by the extensive corpus of Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself and the aforementioned sources, there exists a diverse and varied array of sources for the study of the political, social, intellectual and cultural history of Nasrid Granada during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, including 1) historical chronicles and biographical dictionaries; 2) official documents, including diplomatic correspondence; 3) epistolography and collections of letters; 4) medical treatises; 5) poetry; 6) autobiography and travelogues; 7) political tracts; 8) legal, philosophical and theological writings; and 9) material culture, including epigraphy, coinage and architecture. These include texts and materials produced within the Kingdom of Granada, as well as sources originating in the Spanish Christian kingdoms, North Africa, and Mamluk Egypt and Syria. Alongside the major Arabic-language historical narrative sources, there also exist several Castilian and Aragonese chronicles that provide additional perspectives on Nasrid history during this period. The *Crónica del Rey Don Pedro* by the Castilian historian Pero López de Ayala (d. 1407) is one of the most significant contemporary Castilian narrative sources and provides an important perspective on events in Nasrid Granada during this period.<sup>176</sup> As a leading Castilian functionary and courtier, López de Ayala's chronicle also includes useful documents that can illuminate Castilian-Nasrid relations in the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. The *Chronicle of Pere III of Catalonia*,<sup>177</sup> Pedro Afonso's *Crónica Geral de Espanha*<sup>178</sup> and Matteo Villani's *Chronica*<sup>179</sup> are

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<sup>176</sup> Pero López de Ayala, *Coronica del Rey don Pedro* (Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1985), ed. Constance L. Wilkins and Heanon M. Wilkins.

<sup>177</sup> Pere III of Catalonia, *Chronicle* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1980), 2 vols., trans. Mary Hillgarth.

<sup>178</sup> Pedro Afonso, *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1983), 4 vols., ed. Luís Felipe Lindley Cintra.

<sup>179</sup> Matteo Villani, *Chronica* (Parma: Fondazione Pietro Bembo, 1995), 2 vols.



also important works that provide numerous insights into the broader political context of Nasrid history during this period. This set of sources is invaluable for the details that they provide about the broader social, cultural and political context of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century and enable scholars to better situate Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life and writings.

Political tracts and treatises, whether normative discussions of institutions or mirrors for princes, constitute another particularly rich corpus of sources for Nasrid history during this period. In addition to the writings of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Khaldūn, the most significant of these works include “The Treatise on Beneficial Politics” (*al-Shuhub al-Lāmi‘a fī al-Siyāsa al-Nāfi‘ah*), a comprehensive political treatise composed around 761/1360 in Fez by the Andalusī émigré scholar Abū al-Qāsim b. Riḍwān al-Mālaqī (d. 783/1381), the Master of the Royal Seal (*ṣāhib al-‘alāmah*) in the Marinid kingdom;<sup>180</sup> the “Norms of Politics and Governance” (*Rawnaq al-Taḥbīr fī Ḥukm al-Siyāsa wa al-Tadbīr*) by the Granadan court secretary Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī (d. after 1392),<sup>181</sup> and the “On Sovereignty and the Politics of Kings” (*Wāsiṭat al-Sulūk fī Siyāsat al-Mulūk*) authored by the Zayyanid ruler Abū Ḥammū Mūsā II.<sup>182</sup> Perhaps the most important normative political treatise ever produced during the Nasrid period was the *Badā’i‘ al-Silk fī Ṭabā’i‘ al-Mulk* by Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Azraq (d. 897/1492).<sup>183</sup> The work provides

<sup>180</sup> ‘Abd Allāh b. Yūsuf b. Riḍwān al-Mālaqī, *Al-Shuhub al-Lāmi‘a fī al-Siyāsa al-Nāfi‘ah* (Beirut: Dār al-Mudār al-Islāmī, 2001), ed. Sulayman Ma’tuq al-Rifa’i.

<sup>181</sup> Muḥammad b. Abī al-‘Alā’ b. Simāk al-‘Āmilī, *Rawnaq al-Taḥbīr fī Ḥukm al-Siyāsa wa l-tadbīr* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2002), ed. Suleyman al-Qurashi.

<sup>182</sup> Mūsā b. Yūsuf b. Zayyān, *Kitāb wāsiṭat al-sulūk fī siyāsat al-mulūk* (Riyadh: Markaz Ibn al-Azraq li-Dirasat al-Turath al-Siyasi, 2015), ed. ‘Abd al-Ghani Muhammad ‘Ali Mastu.

<sup>183</sup> Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Azraq, *Badā’i‘ al-Silk fī Ṭabā’i‘ al-Mulk*, 2 vols. (Beirut: al-Dar al-‘Arabiyya li-Muwasa’at, 2006), ed. ‘Ali Sami al-Nashshar. Originally from Málaga, Ibn al-Azraq was a Mālikī jurist who held the post of chief judge (*qādī*) of Granada (and, subsequently, Málaga) during the reign of the Nasrid sultans Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī (d. 890/1485) and Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Zaghāl (d. 899/1494). It was during his service to the latter that he was commissioned (around 891/1486) with the specific task of leading a diplomatic mission to various Muslim kingdoms (notably the Zayyānīd kingdom of Tlemcen, the Hafsiids in Tunis, and the Mamluks in Egypt) to secure aid for the Nasrids who were facing a massive Castilian-Aragonese onslaught against their kingdom. His mission ended in failure, but he was appointed Chief Judge of Jerusalem by the Mamluk sultan Qā’it Bey in 1491; he died a few months after this appointment. His career as a high-ranking member of the Nasrid

a significant amount of information about certain institutions—including the vizierate, the chancery and the chief judgeship—as they existed in the Islamic West during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries. It builds on an earlier foundation of classical Islamic political theory that includes such works as “The Ordinances of Government” (*al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah*) and “The Ethics and Norms of Worldly and Religious Affairs” (*Adāb al-Dunya wa al-Dīn*) by the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>-century Iraqi scholar Abū al-Ḥasan al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058), and the “Beacon of Sovereigns” (*Sirāj al-Mulūk*), written by the Andalusī jurist Abū Bakr al-Turtūshī (d. 520/1127)<sup>184</sup> while he was in Fatimid-ruled Alexandria, among other works. Although there have been several general studies on the Nasrid chancery<sup>185</sup> and the vizierate in medieval al-Andalus<sup>186</sup> and North Africa<sup>187</sup> which allow us to broadly situate Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his intellectual production, there have been no comprehensive study of the Nasrid vizierate or chancery which would enable scholars to appreciate the role of these institutions upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own political and intellectual

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administration, his role as a diplomat and his concern with both the theory and practice of politics echoes Ibn al-Khaṭīb in a number of ways. It is likely that it was during his holding the office of Chief Judge of Granada in the late 1370s/1470s that Ibn al-Azraq composed his major work entitled *Badā’i’ al-Silk fī Ṭabā’i’ al-Mulk* (which can be translated as “The Nature of Kingship and Governance”). This work is a political treatise (over 1000 pages long) which covers the various aspects of political theory and discusses the various institutions within the Islamic polity. Like many other works of political theory written during this period in the Islamic world, Ibn al-Azraq’s main argument revolves around the idea that it is only by just governance that a prince can ensure the survival of his kingdom; tyranny and injustice are condemned as bringing about the ruination of kingdoms. In this way, the book is not only a major Fürstenspiegel and work of political ethics, but is also concerned with the sociological dynamics which govern the nature of the state. The role of *sharī’a* and its institutional manifestations are also absolutely central to the vision of sovereignty being put forth within the treatise. In many ways, Ibn al-Azraq’s work is a major commentary upon the Muqaddima of Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), whom he cites throughout, and deals with matters as diverse as administration, frontier warfare (*ribāṭ/jihād*), pursuit of knowledge, taxation, and religious institutions. His concern is as much about Islamic civilization (in the literal sense of the term) as it is about political legitimacy or kingship.

<sup>184</sup> Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Turtūshī, *Sirāj al-Mulūk*, 2 volumes (Cairo: al-Dār al-Misriyya al-Lubnāniyya, 1994), ed. Muhammad Fathi Abu Bakr.

<sup>185</sup> Abd al-Halim Husayn al-Harut, *al-Rasā’il al-dīwāniyya fī mamlakat Gharnāṭa fī ‘aṣr Banī al-Aḥmar* (Amman: Dar Jarir, 2013) and Aziz Husayn Ali al-Musawi, *al-Nathr al-andalusī: al-rasā’il al-sulṭāniyya fī ‘aṣr Banī al-Aḥmar* (Amman: Dar al-Manhajīyya, 2016).

<sup>186</sup> Usama ‘Abd al-Hamid al-Samarra’i, *Tārīkh al-Wizāra fī al-Andalus, 138–897/755–1492* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2012).

<sup>187</sup> Muhammad Muhammad Ahmad Isma’il, *al-Wizāra fī Ifrīqiyya fī ‘Ahd al-Dawla al-Ḥafṣiyya, 626–982/1227–1574* (Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Thaqafa al-Diniyya, 2015).

formation and, thus, better understand his works. While the reconstruction of the Nasrid chancery and vizierate are beyond the scope of this project, this dissertation engages with these various political treatises and situates Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings within a broader intellectual tradition.

Geographical writings and travel accounts are another important source for reconstructing the broader context of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life and career. In addition to his own literary-geographical works, including the "The Travels of Winter and Summer" (*Khaṭrat al-Ṭayf fī Rihlāt al-Shitā' wa al-Ṣayf*),<sup>188</sup> the "Shaking Off of the Travel Bag in the Comfort of Exile" (*Nufāḍat al-Jirāb fī 'Ulālat al-Ightirāb*)<sup>189</sup> and "The Criterion of Selection in Enumerating the Localities and Residences" (*Kitāb Mi'yār al-ikhtiyār fī dhikr al-ma'āhid wa-al-diyār*),<sup>190</sup> there are numerous travelogues and *fahāris* from the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries which provide important details about the social, political, intellectual and cultural context of both Granada and North Africa during this period.<sup>191</sup> The most renowned of these is, of course, Ibn Baṭṭūṭah's travelogue titled *Tuḥfat al-Anẓār fī Gharā'ib al-Amsār wa 'Ajā'ib al-Asfār*, which includes a

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<sup>188</sup> Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, "Khaṭrat al-Ṭayf fī Rihlāt al-Shitā' wa al-Ṣayf," in *Khaṭrat al-Ṭayf: Rihlāt fī al-Maghrib wa al-Andalus, 1347–1362* (Beirut: al-Mu'assasa al-Arabiyya lil-dirasat wal-nashr, 2003), ed. Ahmad Mukhtar al-Abbadi, pp. 31–56.

<sup>189</sup> Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb fī 'Ulālat al-Ightirāb*, Vol. II (Cairo: Dār al-Kātib al-'Arabī, 1968), ed. Ahmad Mukhtar Abbadi; Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb fī 'Ulālat al-Ightirāb*, Vol. III, Leiden MS Or. 11.

<sup>190</sup> Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, *Kitāb Mi'yār al-ikhtiyār fī dhikr al-ma'āhid wa-al-diyār* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafa al-Diniyya, 2002), ed. Muhammad Kamal Shahbana.

<sup>191</sup> These include Muḥammad b. Jabīr al-Wādī Āshī, *Barnāmaj al-Wādī Āshī* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1982), ed. Muhammad Mahfuz; al-Qāsim b. Yūsuf al-Tujībī, *Barnāmaj al-Tujībī* (Tunis: al-Dar al-'Arabiyya li-l Kitāb, 1981), ed. Abd al-Hafiz Mansur; al-Qāsim b. Yūsuf al-Tujībī, *Mustafād al-Rihla wa al-Ightirāb* (Tunis: al-Dar al-Arabiyya li-l Kitāb, 1975), ed. 'Abd al-Hafiz Mansur; Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Ru'aynī, *Barnāmaj Shuyūkh al-Ru'aynī* (Damascus: Ministry of Culture, 1962), ed. Ibrahim Shabbuh; 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Tījānī, *Rihlat al-Tījānī* (Tunis: al-Dar al-Arabiyya li-l Kitāb, 1981), ed. Hasan Husni Abd al-Wahhab; Aḥmad b. Yūsuf al-Lablī, *Fahrasa* (Rabat: Dar al-Aman, 2013), ed. Nur al-Dīn Shubad; 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Qalaṣādī, *Rihlat al-Qalaṣādī* (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm, 2011), ed. Muhammad Abu al-Ajfan; Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Malik al-Mintawrī, *Fahrāsāt al-Mintawrī* (Rabat: Dar al-Aman, 2011), ed. Muhammad Bencherif; Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad al-Sarrāj, *Fahrāsāt al-Imām al-Ḥāfiz Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā bin Aḥmad al-Sarrāj al-Fāsī* (Tangier: Dar al-Hadith al-Kattaniyya, 2013), ed. Na'ima Banis; and Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Balawī, *Thabat Abī Ja'far Aḥmad bin 'Alī al-Balawī al-Wādī Āshī* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1983), ed. 'Abd Allah al-'Imrani.

notable section on this traveler's journey throughout the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>192</sup> It is particularly insightful since the earliest surviving manuscript,<sup>193</sup> dated Ṣafar 757/February 1356, was written in the hand of Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Juzayy (d. 758/1357),<sup>194</sup> a Granadan scholar and secretary who contributes his own perspective throughout the text.<sup>195</sup> The details provided by these works are further complemented by the autobiographical and geographical writings of various Andalusī scholar-officials who traveled between al-Andalus, North Africa and the Mashriq who left behind substantial writings, including Ibn al-Ḥājj al-Numayrī,<sup>196</sup> Ibn Khaldūn (whose *Ta'rif* has been mentioned above) and Khalīd b. 'Isā al-Balawī.<sup>197</sup>

Poetry is another major source of information, whether dispersed throughout different genres of writing or in the production of various poetic compilations (*dīwāns*) of which many have survived from the period in question, including those of the prominent scholar-officials Ibn al-Khaṭīb,<sup>198</sup> Ibn Zamrak<sup>199</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb,<sup>200</sup> Ibn al-Ḥājj al-Numayrī,<sup>201</sup> Ibn Khātimah al-

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<sup>192</sup> A detailed summary of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's travels in the Nasrid kingdom can be found in H.T. Norris, "Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's Andalusian Journey," *The Geographical Journal* 125 (1959), pp. 185–196.

<sup>193</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥla*, BnF MS Arabe 2291.

<sup>194</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 256–265; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā'id al-Jumān*, pp. 292–307; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 102–103. He was one of the sons of Abū al-Qāsim b. Juzayy and was employed as a secretary in the royal chancery alongside Ibn al-Khaṭīb.

<sup>195</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥla*, BnF MS Arabe 2291, 97v–100r.

<sup>196</sup> Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥajj al-Numayrī, *Fayḍ al-'ubāb wa-ifāḍat qidāḥ al-ādāb fī al-ḥaraka al-sa'ida ilā Qusantīna wa-al-Zāb* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1990), ed. Muhammad ibn Shaqrun.

<sup>197</sup> Khalīd b. 'Isā al-Balawī, *Tāj al-Mafriq fī Taḥliyat 'Ulamā' al-Mashriq* (al-Muhamadiyya, Morocco: Matba'a Fadalāh, n.d.), 2 vols., ed. al-Hasan al-Sa'ih.

<sup>198</sup> Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, *Dīwān Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb al-Salmānī*, 2 vols. (Casablanca: Dār al-Thaqafa, 1989), ed. Muhammad Miftah.

<sup>199</sup> Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Zamrak, *Dīwān Ibn Zamrak* (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-'Asriyya, 1998), ed. Ahmad Saleem al-Homsi.

<sup>200</sup> 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān Ibn al-Jayyāb al-Gharnāṭī* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Adab, 2016), ed. Fawzi Isa.

<sup>201</sup> Ibn al-Ḥājj al-Numayrī, *Mazāyin al-Qaṣr wa Maḥāsin al-'Aṣr*, BL Or. 5670. This has been edited and published as Ibn al-Ḥajj al-Numayrī, *Dīwān Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥājj al-Numayrī* (Abu Dhabi: al-Majma al-Thaqafi, 2003), ed. Abd al-Hamid Abd Allah al-Haramah.

Anṣārī,<sup>202</sup> and Ibn Furkūn.<sup>203</sup> Significantly, the poetry of many of these Nasrid secretaries and chancellors adorn the various palaces of the Alhambra, the tombs of Nasrid sovereigns and dedications of other monuments (such as the College of Granada) throughout the Nasrid Kingdom. This demonstrates the importance of epigraphy as an important source in its own right while illustrating the interplay between the poetic text and monumental architecture.<sup>204</sup>

In addition to literary sources, numerous original Arabic documents from and about the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada have survived, both within archives and in epistolographical (*inshāʾ*) compilations.<sup>205</sup> Although no original Nasrid “archive” of royal or administrative records survived the Christian conquest of 1492, many official documents produced by the Granadan chancery and other institutions have been preserved through other means. Perhaps the most significant example is the archive of Arabic texts in the Archivo General de la Corona de Aragón (ACA), which includes original copies of many Nasrid chancery texts sent to the Crown of Aragón between the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>206</sup> The bulk of Arabic documents from the

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<sup>202</sup> An autograph copy of Ibn Khātima’s *dīwān* has survived (El Escorial MS 381), which has been published as Ibn Khātima, *Dīwān Ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr al-Muʿasir, 1994), ed. Muhammad Ridwan al-Dayya. For a Spanish translation of Ibn Khātima’s poetry, see *El dīwān de Ibn Jātima de Almería* (Barcelona: Publicaciones del Departamento de Árabe e Islam, 1975), ed. Soledad Gibert Fenech.

<sup>203</sup> Abū al-Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad b. Furkūn, *Dīwān Ibn Furkūn* (Casablanca: Matbaʾat al-Najah al-Jadida, 1987), ed. Muhammad Bencherifah.

<sup>204</sup> For an important perspective, see Saleh al-Zahrani, “La supesta poesia epigráfica de Ibn al-Jaṭīb en la Alhambra,” in *Saber y poder en al-Andalus: Ibn al-Jaṭīb (s. XIV): Estudios en conmemoración del 700 aniversario del nacimiento de Ibn al-Jaṭīb* (Córdoba: El Almendro-Biblioteca Viva de al-Andalus, 2014), ed. María Dolores Rodríguez Gómez, María Dolores, Antonio Peláez Rovira and Bárbara Boloix Gallardo, pp. 203–216.

<sup>205</sup> María Jesús Viguera Molins, “Sobre documentos árabes granadinos,” in *En el epílogo del Islam andalusí: La Granada del siglo XV* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2002), ed. Celia del Moral, pp. 117–138.

<sup>206</sup> Many have been edited, translated and published in M.A. Alarcón and R. García de Linares eds. *Los documentos árabes diplomáticos del Archivo de la Corona de Aragón* (Madrid: Escuela de Estudios Árabes, 1940). Other published collections of documents pertaining to diplomacy and political relations between Granada and its neighbors include Juan de Mata Carriazo, “Las treguas con Granada de 1475 y 1478,” *al-Andalus* 19 (1954), pp. 317–367; María Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, *La frontera amb l’Islam en el segle XIV cristians i sarraïns al país Valencia* (Barcelona: Consell Superior d’Investigacions Científiques, 1988); Àngels Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II–Aragó, Granada i Marroc: aportació documental* (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1989); José Antonio García Luján, *Treguas, guerra y capitulaciones de Granada (1457-1491)*, *Documentos del Archivo de los Duques de Frías* (Granada: Diputación de Granada, 1998); and Roser Salicrú i Lluch, *Documents per a la història de Granada del regnat d’Alfons el Magnànim, 1416-1458* (Barcelona: Consell Superior d’Investigacions Científiques, 1999). The

Nasrid period, ranging from official royal/administrative texts to legal documents and private family collections, were preserved within local ecclesiastical, notarial and provincial archives throughout the newly-constituted Reino de Granada (largely corresponding with the territory of the former Nasrid kingdom).<sup>207</sup> Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, many of these have been discovered, edited, and published.<sup>208</sup> Alongside many of the original Arabic documents that have

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publication of collections of Castilian documents, such as *Colección documental de Pedro I de Castilla (1350–1369)*, 4 vols. (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1997), ed. Luis Vincente Díaz Martín, has further facilitated the study of Nasrid political and frontier history.

<sup>207</sup> Carmen Barceló and Ana Labarta, “Los documentos árabes del Reino de Granada. Bibliografía y perspectivas,” *Cuadernos de la Alhambra* 26 (1990), pp. 113–119; Amalia Zomeño, “From Private Collections to Archives: How Christians Kept Arabic Legal Documents in Granada,” *al-Qantara* 32 (2011), pp. 461–479; and Emilio Molina López and María del Carmen Jiménez Mata, “From Muslim to Christian Hands: The Documents from the Municipal Archive of Granada,” in *From al-Andalus to Khurasan. Documents from the Medieval Muslim World* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), eds. Petra Sijpesteijn, Lennart Sundelin, Sofia Torallas Tovar and Amalia Zomeño, pp. 23–38; Francisco Vidal, “Un tipo de manuscritos ‘documentales’: Las escrituras árabes notariales en al-Andalus naṣrī (s. XIII–XVI),” in *Manuscritos: papel, técnicas y dimensión cultural. IV Primavera de Manuscrito Andalusi* (Casablanca-Rabat: Universidad Hassan II-Bouregreg, 2012), ed. Mostafa Ammadi, pp. 23–57.

<sup>208</sup> Mariano Gaspar Remiro ed., *Documentos árabes de la Corte Nazari de Granada* (Madrid: Tip. de la Revista de Archivos Bibl. y Museos, 1911); A. González Palencia, “Documentos árabes del Cenete (siglos XII–XV),” *Al-Andalus* 5 (1940), pp. 301–382; A. Bustani, “Tres cartas árabes del ultimo period del reino de Granada que se conservan en el Archivo del Marqués de Campo Real en Jerez de la Frontera,” *Mauritania* 181 (1942), pp. 370–372; Luis Seco de Lucena, “Documentos árabes granadinos. I. Documentos del Colegio de Niñas Nobles,” *Al-Andalus* 8 (1943), pp. 415–429; Luis Seco de Lucena, “Documentos árabes granadinos. II. Documentos de la Comendadores de Santiago,” *Al-Andalus* 9 (1944), pp. 121–140; Luis Seco de Lucena, “Un nuevo texto en árabe dialectal granadino,” *Al-Andalus* 20 (1955), pp. 153–165; Rafaela Castrillo, “Una carta granadina en el Monasterio de Guadalupe,” *Al-Andalus* 26 (1961), pp. 389–396; Luis Seco de Lucena, *Documentos arábigo-granadinos: edición crítica del texto árabe y traducción al español con introducción, notas, glosarios e índices* (Madrid: Impr. del Instituto de Estudios Islámicos, 1961); María del Carmen Villanueva Rico, *Habices de las mezquitas de la ciudad de Granada y sus alquerías* (Madrid: Instituto Hispano-Árabe de Cultura, 1961); Carlos Romero de Lecea and Luis Seco de Lucena Paredes, *Privilegios reales y viejos documentos. I–VIII / VII, Granada (Reino Nazari)* (Madrid: Joyas Bibliográficas, 1969); Muhammad Abdullah Enan, “Arba’ wathā’iq dīblūmāsiyya min mūluk Gharnāṭa ilā mulūk Aragūn,” *Revista del Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos en Madrid* 20 (1979–1980), pp. 103–112; F.J. Aguirre Sádaba, “Un documento de compraventa arábigo-granadino,” *Andalucía Islámica* 1 (1980), pp. 163–172; M. Espinar Moreno and J. Grima Cervantes, “Estudio de algunas cartas de los reyes nazaríes dirigidas a los habitantes de Huércal (1409–1488),” *Revista del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino* 2 (1988), pp. 39–57; Ana Labarta, “Cartas árabes malagueñas,” *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 19 (1989), pp. 612–620; Enrique Toral and Fernández de Peñaranda, “Dos cartas del rey Mahomad V de Granada,” *Boletín del Instituto de Estudios Giennenses* 140 (1989), pp. 45–59; Emilio Molina López, “Un nuevo fondo de documentos árabes granadinos, Archivo de la Catedral de Granada,” in *Miscellanea Arabica et Islamica, Dissertationes in Academia Ultrajectina prolatae anno MCMXC (OLA 52)* (Leuven: Peeters, 1993), ed. F. de Jong, pp. 275–292; F. Muriel Morales, “Tres cartas de la cancillería de Muḥammad IX de Granada,” *al-Andalus-Magreb* 5 (1997), pp. 171–188; Rafael Peinado Santaella, “Una aportación documental sobre el poblamiento, el paisaje agrario y la propiedad de la tierra de dos alquerías de la Vega de Granada: Chauchina y el Jau a finales del período nazarí,” *Revista del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino* 10–11 (1996–1997), pp. 19–92; J.P. Monferrer Sala and R. Pinilla Melguizo, “Tres documentos árabes granadinos sobre las treguas de 1469 and 1472,” *Revista del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino*

survived from the Nasrid period, large numbers, particularly those pertaining to property and inheritance, were also translated into Castilian over the course of the late 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> centuries; this was also the case for many Arabic inscriptions.<sup>209</sup> Due to their inclusion of

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12 (1998), pp. 231–262; María C. Jiménez Mata and Emilio Molina López, *Documentos árabes del Archivo Municipal de Granada (1481-1499)* (Granada: Ayuntamiento de Granada, 2004); José Antonio García Luján and M. Lázaro Durán, "Escrituras árabes granadinas y firma autógrafa de Abū Zakariyyā Yaḥyā al-Nayyār," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos. Sección Árabe-Islam* 54 (2005), pp. 79–99; Francisco Vidal Castro, "Water and Farm Estates in the Arabic Documents of the Naṣrid Kingdom of Granada," in *From al-Andalus to Khurasan*, pp. 39–58; Amalia Zomeño, "The Notaries and their Formulas: The Legacies from the Library of the University of Granada," in *From al-Andalus to Khurasan*, pp. 59–77; María Dolores Rodríguez Gómez and Salud María Domínguez Rojas, "La compraventa de fincas urbanas en la Granada del siglo XV a través de dos documentos notariales árabes," *Anaquel de Estudios Árabes* 19 (2008), pp. 175–199; María Dolores Rodríguez Gómez, "Les Maṣārī de Grenade d'après quelques documents arabes (1442-1490)," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 65 (2008), pp. 555–594; María Dolores Rodríguez Gómez, "Al otro lado de la muralla. Dos documentos notariales árabes granadinos de Almanjáyay (Granada 1499)," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos. Sección Árabe-Islam* 57 (2008), pp. 295–319; María Dolores Rodríguez Gómez, "La porte d'al-Murḍī de Grenade à travers deux documents notariaux arabes (1493)," *Arabica* 56 (2009), pp. 235–268; ; María Dolores Rodríguez Gómez and Francisco Vidal Castro, "Fāṭima bint Muḥammad vende una finca de regadío: Sobre mujeres nazaríes y propiedades en la Granada del siglo XV," in *Estudios de Frontera 8: Mujeres y Fronteras; Homenaje a Cristina Segura Graiño, Congreso celebrado en Alcalá la Real, 19 y 20 de noviembre de 2010* (Jaén: Diputación de Jaén, 2011) ed. F. Toro Ceballos and J. Rodríguez Molina, pp. 415–430; María Dolores Rodríguez Gómez and Francisco Vidal Castro, "Les terres de l'Alitaje (Grenade) et le pouvoir socio-politique et économique dans l'al-Andalus naṣride: Édition, traduction et étude de deux actes notariés de 878/1473-879/1474," *Arabica* 65 (2018), pp. 331–367; Amador Díaz García, *Documentos árabes sobre el Castillo de Cúllar (Granada)* (Almería: Arráez Editores, 2016); María Isabel Calero Secall, *Los manuscritos nazaríes de Cútar (Málaga): Documentos y estudios* (Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, 2016). For a discussion of the role of scribes and notaries in the production and preservation of Arabic documents after the Christian conquest of 1492, see Amalia Zomeño, "Los notarios musulmanes de Granada después de 1492," *Cuadernos del CEMYR* 22 (2014), pp. 195–209.

<sup>209</sup> Alonso del Castillo, *Sumario é recopilacion de todo lo romanceado por mi* (Madrid: Impr. de la Real academia de la historia, 1852); Mariano Gaspar Remiro, *Escrituras árabes del Archivo municipal de Granada* (Granada: Imprenta de José Gomez, 1907); Luis Seco de Lucena, "Escrituras de donación arábigo-granadinas," *Revista del Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos en Madrid* 5 (1957), pp. 65–74; María José Osorio Perez and Emilio de Santiago Simon, *Documentos arabigos-granadinos romanceados* (Granada: Centro de Estudios Historicos de Granada y su Reino, 1986); Emilio de Santiago Simon, "Algunos documentos Arábigos granadinos del Archivo Municipal de Granada," *Revista de del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino* 1 (1987), pp. 261–269; Antonio Malpica Cuello, "Los Infantes de Granada. Documentos árabes romanceados," *Revista de del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino* 6 (1992), pp. 361–421; C. Trillo Sanjosé, "Dos cartas árabes romanceadas del Archivo de la Alhambra," *Cuadernos de la Alhambra* 28 (1992), pp. 271–277; Manuel Espinar Moreno, "Escrituras árabes romanceadas sobre la acequia de Aindamar (siglos XIV-XVI)," *Sharq al-Andalus* 10-11 (1993), pp. 347–371; Manuel Espinar Moreno, "Documentos arábigo granadinos traducidos por Alonso del Castillo," *Revista del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino* 10-11 (1996-1997), pp. 229–255; María Jiménez Alarcón and Camilo Álvarez de Morales, "La Huerta del Rey Moro. Noticias de la Granada Nazarí a través de documentos árabes romanceados," *Revista de del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino* 10-11 (1996–1997), pp. 115–132; Manuel Espinar Moreno, "Escrituras árabes inéditas del siglo XV romanceadas por Alonso del Castillo," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos. Sección Árabe-Islam* 46 (1997), pp. 29–48; Camilo Álvarez de Morales and María Jiménez Alarcón, "Pleitos de Agua en Granada en tiempos de Carlos V. Colección de escrituras romanecadas," in *Carlos V, los Moriscos y el Islam* (Madrid: Universidad de Alicante, 2001), ed. María Jesús Rubiera, pp. 59–90; A. Martín Quirantes, "Nuevas aportaciones a la documentación de la época mudéjar nen la

important details, such as the names of individuals, specific dates and (in the case of legal texts) lists of witnesses to their authenticity, these types of documents are invaluable for the study of late medieval Granadan social, political and cultural history. In addition to these original Arabic or “Castilianized” documents, the vast Castilian and Aragonese-Valencian archives (local, noble, royal and ecclesiastical) contain a large amount of material, including land surveys, decrees, letters, and financial reports, pertaining to Granada and its Muslim population from the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> centuries, further illustrating the diverse array of sources at the disposal of the historian of the Nasrid kingdom.

A far more unwieldy source is the large corpus of epistolography (*inshāʾ*) that has survived from the late medieval Islamic West. As a body of texts that can be characterized as both literary and documentary and which were produced by the various chancellors and secretaries in Spain and North Africa, they are among the most important type of sources that are utilized within this dissertation. While there are indications throughout the sources that some formal practices of record-keeping did indeed exist in the Islamic West, it was largely through the composition of official compilations of documents—including foreign correspondence, royal decrees and appointments of functionaries—by the students and successors of the previous chancellor that records of these texts survive, often in highly-edited form. This is evident from the earliest decades of the Nasrid kingdom when the official letters and documents penned by Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the head of the Nasrid chancery during the reign of Muḥammad I, were

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Vega de Granada: tres documentos romanecados por Alonso del Castillo,” *Revista de del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino* 15 (2001), pp. 289–307; María José Osorio Pérez and Rafael Peinado Santaella, “Escrituras árabes romanceadas del Convento de Santa Cruz la Real (1430–1496). Pinceladas documentales para un imagen de la Granada nazarí,” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos. Sección Árabe-Islam* 51 (2002), pp. 191–217; M. Fera García and O. Arias Torres, “Un nuevo enfoque en la investigación de la documentación árabe granadina romanceada (ilustrado con dos traducciones inéditas de Bernadino Xarafí, escribano y romanceador del Reino de Granada,” *al-Qantara* 26 (2005), pp. 121–177; Camilo Álvarez de Morales, “Romanced Documents, Bilingual Documents and Books of *Habices*,” in *From al-Andalus to Khurasan*, pp. 3–21.



preserved in a work entitled *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb fī Tarsīl Abī Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb*.<sup>210</sup> Similarly, the chancery compositions (and personal correspondence) of the itinerant secretary and judge Abū al-Muṭarrif b. ‘Amīrah were compiled by the Nasrid court secretary and poet Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Hānī’ al-Sabtī (d. 733/1333).<sup>211</sup>

This genre of writing, known as epistolography (*inshā’*), served the purpose of preserving the chancery and scribal practices of previous generations of functionaries while also establishing the literary norms and conventions of the art of letter-writing.<sup>212</sup> It also fulfilled an instructional function of providing students of the secretarial arts with models to emulate as they composed their own epistolary, ensuring the transmission of knowledge about this craft to subsequent generations. As the compilation of letters and decrees authored by Abū al-‘Alā’ Muḥammad b. al-Murābiṭ al-Murādī (d. 663/1265) illustrates, many of these works often incorporated personal correspondence (*rasā’il ikhwāniyyah*) between scholar-officials as well as more official documents (*rasā’il dīwāniyyah*).<sup>213</sup> This tradition continued into Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s

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<sup>210</sup> Hassan El-Ghailani, *Edición y estudio del “Faṣl al-Jitab” de Abu Bakr ibn Jattab al-Mursi* (Madrid: Complutense University PhD Dissertation, 2002).

<sup>211</sup> Muḥammad b. Hānī’ al-Sabtī, *Rasā’il Ibn ‘Amīrah al-Dīwāniyya wa al-Ikhwāniyya* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2014), ed. Muhammad Benma’mar.

<sup>212</sup> Such a practice among Andalusī functionaries is documented as early as the Almoravid era, with the official decrees and letters of the chancellor and chief minister (“Dhū-l Wizāratayn”) Abū ‘Abd Allāh ibn Abī al-Khiṣāl (d. 540/1146) being preserved within a single codex (El Escorial MS 519). This collection has been edited and published by Muhammad Ridwan al-Dayya, *Rasā’il Ibn Abī al-Khiṣāl* (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 1987). Other notable examples of such preservation of official documents can be seen from similar codices dating from the Almohad era (El MS 1919, f. 1r-7v; Hassaniyya MS 4752). Several of these have been edited and published in Ahmad Azzawi, *Rasā’il Muwaḥḥidiyya: majmū’a jadīda*, 2 vols. (Quneitra: Manshurat Kuliyat al-Adab wa al-Ulum al-Insaniyya bi al-Quneitra, 1995), which incorporates the documents previously published by E. Lévi-Provençal, *Documents inédits d’histoire almohade: Fragments manuscrits du Legajo 1919 du fonds arabe de l’Escorial, publiés et traduits avec une introduction et des notes* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1928), and Pascal Buresi and Hicham El Aallaoui (trans. Travis Bruce), *Governing the empire provincial administration in the Almohad Caliphate (1224-1269): critical edition, translation, and study of Manuscript 4752 of the Hasaniyya Library in Rabat containing 77 taqāḍīm (“appointments”)* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 245-497. For other surviving collections of official documents and literary epistles from the Almoravid and Almohad era, see El Escorial MS 488 and El Escorial MS 538.

<sup>213</sup> Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Murābiṭ al-Murādī, *Zawāhir al-Fikr wa Jawāhir al-Fiqr* (Casablanca: Matba’at al-Najah al-Jadida, 2010), 2 vols., ed. Ahmad al-Misbahi. This work preserves many of the epistles and letters of leading scholar-officials from the mid-7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, including Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Ibn ‘Amīrah and b. al-Jinān al-Mursī.

own day, when he was tasked during the early 740s/1340s with preserving some of Ibn al-Jayyāb's official correspondence, in his (no longer extant) *Tāfah man Jam wa Nuqṭat man Jam* and the recently-discovered *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*. It was his commitment to the preservation of official records and documents that he composed as Nasrid chancellor that underpinned Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own authorship of two compilations of his chancery production and personal correspondence, the "Sweeping of the Shop" (*Kunāsat al-Dukkān*)<sup>214</sup> and the "Sweet Basil of the Secretaries" (*Rayānat al-Kuttāb*).<sup>215</sup>

The "Sweeping of the Shop" is a fairly short compilation of important decrees and letters which he composed while head of the chancery in the employ of Yūsuf I and was compiled during his first exile in North Africa between 760/1359 and 763/1362. The "Sweet Basil of the Secretaries," on the other hand, is a comprehensive collection of Nasrid chancery documents containing many of the letters, decrees, treaties, appeals, speeches, and other texts that Ibn al-Khaṭīb composed between 751/1350 and 772/1370. As Emilio Molina López has recognized, the *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb* "constitutes, alongside the documents preserved in the Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, the most significant source for the foreign affairs of the Nasrid sultanate during the reign of Muḥammad V."<sup>216</sup> Significantly, this was Ibn al-Khaṭīb's most copied work between the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> centuries, surviving in whole or in part in dozens of manuscripts dispersed throughout the North Africa, the Middle East, Europe, the United Kingdom and the United States. It has also remained his least studied work among modern scholars.

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<sup>214</sup> Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, *Kunāsat al-Dukkān ba'd Intiqāl al-Sukkān* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafa al-Diniyya, 2002), ed. Muhammad Kamal Shabana.

<sup>215</sup> Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb wa Nuj'at al-Muntāb* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khanji, 1980), 2 vols., ed. Muhammad Abdullah Enan.

<sup>216</sup> Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, p. 186.

In addition to engaging with the documents found in both the editions and unpublished manuscripts of these works, this dissertation will also critically examine the manner in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb also incorporated numerous documents throughout his other historical and biographical writings, a fact which makes his corpus an important political and administrative archive of Nasrid history. Alongside these Nasrid collections of documents, one of the most comprehensive collections of epistolary is the *Ṣubḥ al-A‘shā fī Sinā‘at al-Inshā’* by the Mamluk historian and court secretary Abū al-‘Abbās al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418).<sup>217</sup> The work preserves several decrees, treaties, and chancery documents from the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> Islamic West, including several by Ibn al-Khaṭīb. More significantly, the multi-volume work provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the nature of political administration in the late medieval Islamic world. There also exist several works dealing explicitly with the secretarial arts and the chancery, whether from the late medieval Islamic West, such as Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Qallūsī’s *Tuḥfat al-Khawwās fī Ṣarf al-Khawwās*,<sup>218</sup> Ismā‘īl b. al-Aḥmar’s *Kitāb Mustawda‘ al-‘Alāmah wa Muḥtadī‘ al-‘Allāmah*<sup>219</sup> and Ibn Khaldūn’s *Muqaddimah*, or from Egypt and Syria from the Ayyubid and Mamluk era.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Abū al-‘Abbās al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A‘shā fī Sinā‘at al-Inshā’*, 15 vols. (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1987), ed. Muhammad Husayn Shams al-Dīn. Additionally, there are several other epistolographical works and compilations of official documents from Egypt and Syria between the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries that shed important light on the conventions of this genre of writing, such as al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil, *Rasā’il al-Qāḍī al-Fāḍil* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2005), ed. ‘Alī Najm ‘Isa; Ibn Ḥijja al-Ḥamawī, *Kitāb Qahwat al-Inshā’* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2015), ed. Rudolf Veselý.

<sup>218</sup> Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Qallūsī, *Tuḥfat al-Khawwās fī Ṣarf al-Khawwās*, BnF Arabe 6844, ff. 112v–133v.

<sup>219</sup> Ismā‘īl ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawda‘ al-‘Alāma wa Muḥtadī‘ al-‘Allāma* (Rabat: Kulliyat al-Adab wa al-Ulum wa al-Siyasa, 1964) eds. Muhammad al-Turki al-Tunisi and Muhammad al-Titwani.

<sup>220</sup> These include Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, *al-Ta’rīf bi-l Muṣṭalaḥ al-Sharīf* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1988), ed. Muhammad Husayn Shams al-Dīn; Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2004), 34 vols.; ‘Uthmān ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nabulūsī, *Kitāb luma‘ al-qawānīn al-muḍī‘a fī dawāwīn al-diyār al-Miṣriyya*, Gotha MS Orient A 1891; and ‘Abd al-Salām b. al-Ḥasan al-Qaysarānī (Ibn al-Ṭuwayr), *Nuzhat al-Muqlatayn fī Akhbār al-Dawlatayn* (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Rayyan, 2010), ed. Ayman Fu’ad Sayyid.

While such documentary or literary-documentary evidence is especially important for addressing the particular questions of this dissertation, epigraphy (whether surviving on stone and plaster or recorded within text by 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup>-century authors such as Alonso de Castillo and Luis del Mármol Carvajal in the years following 897/1492) also constitutes an important documentary source in its own right. In addition to the court poetry inscribed upon the Alhambra and the College of Granada, this body of sources includes epitaphs on tombs, dedications of public monuments, as well as inscriptions on fortifications, mosques and local residences. Finally, the large number of surviving Nasrid coins, which themselves include numerous inscriptions, are another important documentary source for the study of the political and economic history of Granada during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. They will be utilized specifically in order to trace the evolution of Nasrid dynastic ideology throughout the period studied within this dissertation.

There are a number of broader methodological considerations which will be addressed throughout this dissertation, but which should be highlighted from the outset. Firstly, the reconstruction of the details about the rivalry between the “men of the pen” and the “men of the sword” is itself heavily dependent upon the historical and biographical material written by secretaries within a distinct network of scholar-officials, whose social background, intellectual commitments and intimate relationship with royal power heavily colored their representation of the kingdom’s political structures. As such, any consideration of the dynamics of urban politics, the nature of the nobility and the rise of the secretarial elite in the Nasrid court during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century requires a critical and careful engagement with their writings. This is particularly important in light of the absence of any surviving histories written from the perspective of the nobility, unlike the situation in late medieval Castile where the existence of competing

historiographical traditions of the *caballeros* and *letrados* provide historians with a more nuanced perspective. The second major problem is with the very categories utilized within the sources and scholarship, namely the “men of the sword” and “men of the pen.” Although groups of court secretaries and military elites certainly vied for power, sometimes extremely violently, in the Nasrid kingdom, it is apparent that they did not constitute monolithic categories.

The specific context of Nasrid Granada demonstrates that, although there is analytic value in maintaining a broad distinction between the “the men of the pen” and the “men of the sword”, many social categories during this period were incredibly fluid, a fact which encourages a more critical and nuanced reconstruction of the various classes and factions that comprised the Nasrid social and political hierarchy. As scribes such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb established themselves as leading statesmen and implemented familial strategies intended to perpetuate the power and influence of their lineages, they came to embody many of the values, practices and ideas traditionally associated with the nobility. Similarly, while many noblemen witnessed their power being eroded by palace officials in the Alhambra, they groomed many of their sons for careers in the Nasrid royal administration, whether as secretaries or as functionaries in the judicial hierarchy. The evidence of biographical dictionaries from the Almoravid period onwards also indicates the existence of additional categories, including the “learned knight” (*al-fāris al-adīb*),<sup>221</sup> the “warrior-scholar” (*al-‘ālim al-mujāhid*) and the “physician-minister” (*al-wazīr al-ṭabīb*), further indicating the importance of not overstating the distinction between “profession” or “class” during this period.

The first part of this dissertation provides a complete reconstruction of the career of Ibn al-Khaṭīb based on all available primary evidence and studies this individual’s rise to

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<sup>221</sup> Ibn al-Abbār, *Tuhfat al-Qādim*, p. 50.

prominence within the broader framework of the professional rivalry between the “men of the sword” (military elites) and the “men of the pen” (secretarial class) during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Chapter 1 (“Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb: The Making of a Nasrid Scholar-Official”) examines the role of royal and local networks of patronage as major factors in shaping the production of knowledge. It illuminates the broader intellectual culture of the period and situates Ibn al-Khaṭīb within his social, political and cultural context. The chapter provides a complete reconstruction of the early career of Ibn al-Khaṭīb based on all available primary evidence, illustrating the various ways that Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s historical, philosophical and political interests were shaped and influenced by several of his teachers, patrons and mentors within the Nasrid chancery and royal court. Chapter 2 (“The Political Ascendancy of the Secretarial Elite in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-c. Nasrid Granada”) explores the professional rivalry between the “men of the sword” (military elites) and the “men of the pen” (secretarial class) in Nasrid Granada during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. It documents the gradual concentration of power within the hands of scribes and palace officials in 14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid Granada and explores how the chancellors created a parallel power structure to the nobility, establishing themselves as leading advisors of the king, securing the office of chief minister, and exercising a greater degree of political authority than some of the leading military elites in the kingdom.

Chapter 3 (“From Scribe to Statesman: Ibn al- Khaṭīb as Nasrid Chancellor”) examines how Ibn al-Khatib’s position as the kingdom’s chancellor shaped his intellectual production, the progression of his political career and his historiographical representation of the Nasrid kingdom. Whereas previous scholarship has often treated his scholarly output separately from his role as a statesman, this chapter illustrates the manner in which the vast intellectual-administrative network which Ibn al-Khaṭīb established throughout the late 730s/1330s and early 740s/1340s was

strategically mobilized in order to further his political ambitions and shape the internal developments and foreign affairs of the Nasrid kingdom between 749/1349 and 760/1359. Chapter 4 (“An Anṣārī Caliphate? Court Secretaries and the Articulation of Dynastic Ideology in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid Granada”) looks closely at Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s literary, philosophical and historical works to demonstrate the specific intersection between the production of knowledge, chancery practice and the articulation of sovereignty. This chapter also examines Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s role in the articulation of a particular Nasrid dynastic ideology which drew upon both genealogical bases of political legitimation as well as novel conceptions of royal sovereignty. It illustrates how patronage networks, epistolary communication and itinerancy contributed to the emergence of novel conceptions of kingship and royal authority, highlighting the specific role of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his immediate intellectual circle in crafting a new language of sovereignty during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.

Chapter 5 (“Medicine and Authority: Ibn al-Khaṭīb as Physician-Minister) explores the Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s role as the pre-eminent physician within the Nasrid court and the relationship between this function and his political authority. Chapter 6 (“The Limits of Loyalty: Ibn al-Khaṭīb between Islamic Spain and North Africa) examines the last two decades of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s life, focusing on his relationship with both the Nasrid successors to Yūsuf I and the Marinids in North Africa to think about the evolution of his political career and writings in light of his increasingly fluid loyalties. The chapter explores his transformation from a client and servant of the Nasrid dynasty into an itinerant scholar-official who sought to establish his own individual power and influence across the Islamic West, even as he continued to be employed within the service of various rulers in both Granada and North Africa. It looks particularly closely at on letters that he exchanged with his broader network of scholar-functionaries and kings across the Mediterranean world to think

about the question of loyalty, ties of obligation and individual strategies of survival in the Islamic West during this period.



## Chapter 1: Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb: The Making of a Nasrid Scholar-Official

How can historians account for the rise of litterateurs, poets and physicians to the highest executive offices of state during the late medieval era? What was the relationship between the art of writing, rhetorical skill and the exercise of political authority, especially within an increasingly urban context? Which institutions, ideas and practices shaped kingship, politics and intellectual culture in the western Islamic world between 1250 and 1500? These are a few of the broader questions which this dissertation seeks to address. It attempts to do so by thinking carefully about one particular category of individual (the scholar-official) in one particular place (Nasrid Granada) during a particular period (the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century). Although the existence of scholar-officials—defined as scholars who held official appointments and wielded some level of executive authority within a kingdom’s administration—are well attested in both Latin Christendom and the Islamic world throughout the Middle Ages, these individuals became ubiquitous during the late medieval period and greatly shaped both the politics and scholarly developments of the age.<sup>1</sup>

The emergence of royal courts and administrations, increasingly located within a fixed urban setting, which valued individuals with distinct skill-sets such as rhetoric, grammar, poetry,

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of this phenomenon in Latin Christendom, see John W. Baldwin, “Studium et Regnum: the Penetration of University Personnel into French and English Administration at the Turn of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries,” *Revue des Études Islamiques* 44 (1976), pp. 199–215. Among the most extraordinary examples of this phenomenon in late medieval Islamic history is the case of Ibn Hubayra, who began his life in relative poverty in the obscure village of Dūr in Iraq (near modern Tikrit) before going on to acquire a considerable education, a factor which facilitated his employment in the lower levels of the civil administration, before rising to become the chief minister of the Abbasids in Baghdad during the mid-6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century (Mason, *Two Statesmen in Mediaeval Islam*, pp. 13–83). For an excellent study of scholar-officials during the classical Islamic era, with particular attention to their pivotal role in shaping both administrative and intellectual developments, see Paul Heck, *The Construction of Knowledge in Islamic Civilization: Qudāma b. Jaʿfar and his Kitāb al-Kharāj wa šināʿat al-kitāba* (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

arithmetic and law, provided numerous opportunities for social mobility and contributed to the emergence of new families and lineages of scholar-officials. An examination of the chancery (*dīwān al-inshāʾ*) in Nasrid Granada is a productive avenue of inquiry for thinking about the social and institutional context that propelled skilled scholars and men of letters into leading positions of authority during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. It is through a study of the network of individuals that constituted the Nasrid chancery and royal administration that modern scholars can better appreciate the manner in which knowledge and power, scholarly production and royal patronage intersected most intimately within late medieval Granada.

Like many of the Nasrid kingdom's institutions, the chancery was a product of the significant transformations occurring across both Spain and North Africa during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century. The mass migration of thousands of Andalusī Muslims to both the Kingdom of Granada and North Africa in the wake of the Castilian, Portuguese and Aragonese conquest of al-Andalus between the 630s/1230s and 670s/1270s heavily shaped the cultural, social, institutional and intellectual developments in these territories during the late Middle Ages. This mass migration left a major imprint upon Nasrid society, politics and even the urban layout of the city of Granada itself. The nucleus of the city came to be composed of several walled quarters, many of which (like the Albaicín) were inhabited by newly-arrived Andalusī émigrés from southern and eastern Iberia.<sup>2</sup> The other major section of Granada was the Alhambra fortress-palace complex, which was built on an elevated plateau and divided from the remainder of the city by the Darro River. The Alhambra was the location of the royal palace and chancery, while also containing

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<sup>2</sup> The very names of the city's various quarters often reflect the diverse origins of its population, with Albaicín, for example, deriving from *al-Bayyāsīn* (literally: "the [neighborhood of] people from Baeza"), a reference to the émigrés from Baeza who settled there during the late 1220s. This neighborhood was greatly augmented following the arrival of émigrés from Sevilla in 646/1248 following its conquest by Castile.

several neighborhoods within its walls.<sup>3</sup> During the late medieval period, it encompassed a considerable area and was often referred to as its own distinct city (*Madinat al-Ḥamrā* ). While many Andalusí townsmen and peasants remained under Christian rule as Mudéjars, tolerated subjects of the Spanish kingdoms, a large number of the émigrés that arrived in Nasrid Granada from regions such as Murcia, Sevilla and Córdoba included scholars, merchants, artisans and magistrates. Many of the émigré scholars who established themselves within the emerging chancery in the Alhambra or as officials in the city proper had begun their careers serving within the administration of either the Almohads or the Banū Hūd during the early and mid-7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century. The Nasrid chancery, and the individuals that constituted it, therefore served as an important link between the Kingdom of Granada and its predecessors. Many of these newly-arrived scholars, such as Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb al-Ghāfiqī, established themselves in Granada through elaborate networks of patronage which linked intellectuals with princes and urban notables.

In addition to these scholars and former administrators, the extant sources provide significant onomastic and biographical information that enables us to determine that townsmen from a variety of social and professional backgrounds established themselves within the administration during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century. The rise to prominence of these individuals was directly linked with the royal chancery, an institution located within the confines of the Alhambra that became an important avenue for the social mobility of townsmen and provincial families, who came to acquire a great deal of political influence following their appointment as secretaries, judges and financial officers. Due to the large number of scholars that populated the royal court in the Alhambra, the Nasrid chancery effectively functioned as one of the most

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<sup>3</sup> For a detailed description of the urban layout of Nasrid Granada during this period, see Luis Seco de Lucena, *Plano de Granada Árabe* (Granada: Imprenta de El Defensor de Granada, 1910).

important institutions of learning in Granada. The apprentices of secretaries and young scribes in the chancery were immersed in a diverse curriculum that encompassed everything from belles-lettres (*adab*), lexicography, arithmetic, calligraphy and rhetoric to jurisprudence, logic, philosophy, medicine, poetry and history. These intellectual disciplines provided a distinct skill-set to young scribes, facilitating the rise of sons of provincial elites to positions of political prominence in the royal administration.

This process of townsmen, provincial elites or émigré scholars rising to senior positions within the Nasrid administration continued into the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, with individuals from Málaga, Ceuta, Arcos, Jaén, Almería and Loja, among other locales, migrating to the royal capital (Granada) and entering the service of the sovereign and his court. These individuals within the royal administration gradually emerged as a distinct and influential group in society that played a major role in shaping both the institutional and political developments as well as the intellectual culture of the Nasrid kingdom. This intellectual-administrative elite was closely connected, whether through blood ties, marriage alliances or teacher-student relationships, with the generation of late Almohad scholars, administrators and statesmen discussed in the Introduction. As this chapter will demonstrate, this continuity was both the result of a deliberate strategy by the secretarial elite in ensuring the promotion of their own sons and students within the chancery, as well as the consequences of royal patronage, whereby the Nasrid rulers and their immediate family cultivated their ties with specific individuals or administrative-scholarly lineages over several generations.

A study of the life and writings of Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb, the chancellor (*ra'īs diwān al-inshā'*) and chief minister (*wazīr*) of the Nasrid kingdom allows us to closely and critically examine the interrelationship between the development of the chancery, the centralization of

royal power, the production of historical knowledge and the articulation of dynastic legitimacy. Alongside the performance of his political and administrative duties, which were substantial, Ibn al-Khaṭīb authored over 60 works, including historical chronicles, epistolography, biographical dictionaries, poetry, medical texts, and political treatises, throughout his career. Although certainly exceptional with regards to the sheer volume of his intellectual output, Ibn al-Khaṭīb shared much in common with the larger secretarial class to which he belonged. He was the inheritor of a previous generation of functionaries such as Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Ibn ‘Amīra, Ibn Sa‘īd and Ibn al-Abbār and embodied the phenomenon of the scholar-minister in the late medieval world.

This chapter’s presentation of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s life emphasizes his role at the intersection of intellectual and political developments and demonstrates how his literary production was closely intertwined with his function as a statesman. Close attention will be devoted to the autobiographical component of his writings, which represent a rather conscious reflection upon his own role as both a leading political figure and a participant within the broader intellectual milieu of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Islamic West. This chapter argues that by the late 740s/1340s Ibn al-Khaṭīb had established himself as a leading scholar-official in Granada due largely to the thorough education he had received, the patronage of the royal court, and his close political and intellectual ties to various scholar-officials across the Islamic West. It will be shown that his rise from the son of a provincial notable to the private secretary of Yūsuf I was the product of a deliberate strategy initiated by his father ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb (d. 741/1340) and continued by his teacher Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Jayyāb (d. 749/1349) that secured his rise through the ranks of the Nasrid administration. Moreover, this chapter highlights the manner in which his early education and career as a court secretary in the chancery were central to his intellectual formation. It is

quite difficult to appreciate Ibn al-Khaṭīb's interest in belles-lettres and history without acknowledging his indebtedness to the various individuals who influenced his political ambitions, furthered his passion for mysticism and encouraged his pursuit of philosophy and medicine, all of which fundamentally shaped his development as one of Granada's leading scholar-officials.

As part of the reconstruction of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's early life and his rise to power, my own approach within this chapter is to draw heavily upon his own autobiographical writings, supplemented by additional evidence from his contemporaries. A source-critical biographical approach to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life allows scholars to better appreciate the importance of family background, education and networks of patronage in the professional advancement of a court secretary during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. The heavy focus upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb's earlier life, which has remained relatively understudied, provides us with an opportunity to examine the importance of family rivalries, alliances and strategy in shaping political and administrative developments within a specifically urban context as highlighted by scholars for other regions and periods of the medieval world.<sup>4</sup> It also enables us to better position Ibn al-Khaṭīb's rise to prominence within the specific context of the rivalry between the "men of the sword" (the nobility) and the "men of the pen" (secretarial class), while exploring the various ways that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's historical, philosophical and political interests were shaped and influenced by his teachers, patrons and mentors within the Nasrid chancery and royal court. A close examination of his own writings alongside other contemporary texts provides the broader framework for an exploration of whether Ibn al-Khaṭīb could be considered either exemplary or exceptional among court secretaries in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid Granada. A methodological approach that privileges

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<sup>4</sup> Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal*, p. 85.

Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own writings also permits a critical engagement with the question of self-representation and autobiography as distinct genres of historical writing among the secretarial class in Nasrid Granada. It also facilitates an examination of the relationship between Ibn al-Khaṭīb's role as both a narrator and participant in many of the events and developments he describes throughout his work. A focus upon his autobiographical writings further allows scholars to appreciate the importance ascribed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to his own intellectual, political and familial genealogies. As will be demonstrated throughout this dissertation, this mirrored his own interest in dynastic history and genealogy (*'ilm al-ansāb*) throughout his historical and political writings.

#### Between Loja and Granada: The Origins of the Banū al-Khaṭīb

Lisān al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Sa'īd b. 'Abd Allāh b. Sa'īd ("al-Khaṭīb") b. 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Salmānī<sup>5</sup> was born in Loja, a small town to the west of Granada, on Rajab 25 713/November 15 1313 into a family of local notables.<sup>6</sup> The history of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's family and his own self-representation is embodied within this lengthy name. The patronymic "al-Salmānī" which he proudly appended to his name demonstrates that, like many of his contemporaries in Nasrid Granada, he claimed to be a descendant of one of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>-century Arab conquerors of Spain, specifically linking his own lineage with a Yemenite Arab warrior who had arrived from Syria with the contingent of Balj b. Bishr al-Qushayrī (d. 124/742) in early 124/742. According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own account, his family, which settled in Córdoba in the 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century, belonged to a "noble, wealthy and scholarly house" (*bayt fiqh wa khayriyya wa*

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<sup>5</sup> This is how Ibn al-Khaṭīb's full name appears in Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, El Escorial MS 1673, p. 425.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285.

*māliyya*) famously known as the Banū al-Wazīr (“sons of the vizier”) due to their employment in the administrative service of Andalusī rulers.<sup>7</sup> He asserts that his family was closely affiliated with Yahyā b. Yahyā al-Laythī (d. 234/848) and joined the jurists of Córdoba in the famous rebellion of al-Rabaḍ against the Umayyad emir al-Ḥakam I (r.180/796–206/822) in 202/818 before moving to Toledo.<sup>8</sup> By connecting his family with Yahyā b. Yahyā, one of the students of Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795) and the leading propagators of the Maliki school of Islamic law in al-Andalus, Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to aggrandize the reputation of his ancestors, providing them with impeccable religious credentials. Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s emphasis upon his ancestors as conquerors of Spain, their role as political-administrative officials in Umayyad Córdoba, and their close affiliation with the leading Maliki jurists of the early Middle Ages was part of a concerted effort to assert his own family’s antiquity among the Andalusī elite.

The construction of a distinctly Arab-Muslim lineage is reflective of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own genealogical anxieties, but was also a reflection of broader trends in 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid Granada, where many of the Nasrid elites specifically linked themselves with the early Arab conquerors of Spain, deliberately excluding Hispano-Muslim (*muwallad*) and Berber lineages, as demonstrated by Maribel Fierro in a recent article.<sup>9</sup> Along with the insistence upon a noble Arab-Muslim pedigree, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was also eager to counteract any potential allegation that his family had ever endured Mudéjar status. Throughout Andalusī history, Mudéjar status—the arrangement in which Andalusī Muslims resided under Christian rule as tax-paying

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<sup>7</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khanji, 1973), ed. Muhammad Abdullah Enan, 3: 386, 4: 439; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2010), 7: 344; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 386; 4: 439.

<sup>9</sup> Maribel Fierro, “Ways of Connecting with the Past: Genealogies in Nasrid Granada,” in *Genealogy and Knowledge in Muslim Societies: Understanding the Past* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), ed. Sarah Bowen Savant and Helena de Felipe, pp. 80–81.



subjects— was viewed by the majority of Muslim jurists as a legally and morally questionable state of existence that subverted the “natural order” of Islamic political and social dominance over non-Muslims.<sup>10</sup> Mudejarism continued to be perceived negatively during the Nasrid era, when enduring the “humiliation” of residing under non-Muslim political authority was considered especially problematic in light of the existence of Islamic kingdoms such as the Nasrid emirate, which provided a “refuge” for Iberian Muslims seeking to practice their faith undeterred. It is within this context that Ibn al-Khaṭīb stresses the voluntary migration (*hijra*) of his ancestors from Toledo to southern Spain prior to its conquest by Alfonso VI (r. 1072–1109). The negative attitude towards Mudéjarism pervades Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s biographical works, where he deliberately excludes Mudéjar scholars from his biographical dictionary and remarks negatively upon those Andalusī Muslims who chose to reside under Christian rule.<sup>11</sup> Like most of his contemporaries in al-Andalus, Ibn al-Khaṭīb strongly advocated the legal and religious necessity of emigration (*hijra*) to Islamic lands in the event of Christian conquest.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> For a discussion of Mudéjar status and the history of Muslim communities in the Christian kingdoms during the Middle Ages, see Brian Catlos, *Muslims of Medieval Latin Christendom, c. 1050–1614* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 17–89, 313–514; Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, pp. 55–150; John Boswell, *The Royal Treasure: Muslims Communities under the Crown of Aragon in the Fourteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); Kathryn A. Miller, *Guardians of Islam: Religious Authority and Muslims Communities of Late Medieval Spain* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Kathryn A. Miller, “Muslim Minorities and the Obligation to Emigrate to Islamic Territory: Two Fatwas from Fifteenth-Century Granada,” *Islamic Law and Society* 7, Islamic Law in Al-Andalus (2000), pp. 256–288; P.S. Van Koningsveld and G.A. Wieggers, “The Islamic Statute of the Mudejars in the Light of a New Source,” *al-Qantara* 17 (1996), pp. 19–58; Robert I. Burns, *Islam under the Crusaders: Colonial Survival in the Thirteenth-Century Kingdom of Valencia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973); Ana Echevarría Arsuaga, *La minoría islámica de los reinos cristianos medievales* (Málaga: Editorial Sarriá, 2004); and Mònica Colominas Aparicio, *The Religious Polemics of the Muslims of Late Medieval Christian Iberia: Identity and Religious Authority in Mudejar Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 2018). An overview of the historiography and scholarship on the Mudéjars is provided by David Nirenberg “The Current State of Mudejar Studies,” *Journal of Medieval History* 24 (1998), pp. 381–389.

<sup>11</sup> There are important exceptions to this broader attitude, such as his biography of the Andalusī physician Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Faraj al-Qaribliyānī (d. 761/1360), who was born and educated in Crevillente (Ibn al-Khaṭīb al-Iḥāṭa, 3: 179–180).

<sup>12</sup> Maribel Fierro, “La emigración en el Islam: conceptos antiguos, nuevos problemas,” *Awraq* 12 (1991), p. 78; Linda Jones, “Retratos de la emigración: La (Re)conquista y la emigración de los ulemas a Granada, según *al-Iḥāṭah* de Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” in *Estudios Onomásticos-Biográficos de al-Andalus: Biografías Mudéjares o La experiencia de ser minoría. Biografías Islámicas en la España Cristiana*, Vol. XV (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones

It is quite noteworthy that, apart from a short reference to a single (distant) relative, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, who he claims had been appointed chief judge (*qāḍī*) in Priego de Córdoba—located between Granada, Jaén and Córdoba—at some point during the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century, Ibn al-Khaṭīb provides no specific names, dates or concrete information about any of his ancestors between the 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>13</sup> This contrasts with the ability of many of his contemporaries, such as Abū al-Qāsim b. Juzayy (d. 741/1340)<sup>14</sup> and Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī (d. 795/1393), to produce detailed biographical information about their ancestors dating back to at least the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> centuries. The earliest ancestor about whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb provides substantial information is Sa‘īd b. ‘Alī, his paternal great-great grandfather. Sa‘īd b. ‘Alī is particularly significant within the broader narrative presented since we are told that it was in his honor that the family became known as Banū al-Khaṭīb (“sons of the preacher”) following his appointment as a preacher in Loja’s great mosque.<sup>15</sup> According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s account, Sa‘īd, who died in the late 620s/1220s, was part of the branch of the family that had originally settled in the fortress-town of Montefrío before moving to Loja,<sup>16</sup> where he became a renowned member of the political elite, being a member of the local council of notables (*mushāwar*) and was appointed to the offices of judge (*qāḍī*) and preacher (*khaṭīb*).<sup>17</sup> The position of *mushāwar*, a

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Científicas, 2008), ed. Ana Echevarría Arseuaga, pp. 21–58. For an overview of legal-theological discourses about Muslims under non-Muslim rule in the pre-modern period, see Khaled Abou El-Fadl, “Islamic Law and Muslim Minorities: The Juristic Discourse on Muslim Minorities from the Second/Eighth to the Eleventh/Seventeenth Centuries,” *Islamic Law and Society* 1 (1994), pp. 141–187.

<sup>13</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 386, 4: 439.

<sup>14</sup> For a discussion of this individual’s ancestry, see Celia del Moral Molina and Fernando Nicolás Velázquez Basanta, “Los Banū Ŷuzayy. Una familia de juristas e intelectuales granadinos del siglo XIV. I: Abū l-Qāsim Muḥammad Ibn Ŷuzayy,” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 45 (1996), pp. 165–170.

<sup>15</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285.

<sup>16</sup> During the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, Montefrío was a minor town and would only increase in importance during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries due to its strategic location on the kingdom’s northern frontier. For more, see José Ruiz Fernández de Cañete, *La Frontera Nazarí: Castillo-Fortaleza de Montefrío* (Granada: CajaGRANADA, 2008), pp. 33–96.

<sup>17</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 386–387.

post usually referring to jurists who were consulted either by the chief judge or by the ruler and who formed part of their advisory councils, reflects Sa'īd's prominent status and role in the local administration.<sup>18</sup> It is Sa'īd b. 'Alī who is credited with establishing the family among the local elites in Loja, despite living through the turmoil of the devolution of Almohad authority in al-Andalus and the establishment of the Nasrid kingdom. Ibn al-Khaṭīb's narrative traces his ancestors' many migrations, from tribal military units in 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>-century Syria to conquerors and administrators in 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup>-century Umayyad Córdoba to respectable residents of 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>-century Toledo to refugees fleeing the Castilian conquest of Toledo during the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century to religious officials in southern Spain under the Almoravids and Almohads before establishing themselves as local notables in the territory that would comprise the Nasrid kingdom. This enabled him to weave his family's story into the fabric of the political, military and intellectual history of al-Andalus. The construction of an elaborate narrative in which a Yemenite Arab tribesman from Syria participated in the conquest of Spain and established an unbroken lineage of scholars and administrators which eventually established itself as a leading family in Loja by the early 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century was one which sought to underscore the status of the Banū al-Khaṭīb as a significant Arab-Muslim lineage that had existed since the foundation of al-Andalus. This is best illustrated by Ibn al-Khaṭīb's classification of himself as "Córdoban by origin, and then Toledan, Lojan and Granadan [by residence]" (*qurṭubī al-aṣl thumma ṭulayṭuliyya thumma lawshiyya thumma gharnāṭiyya*), claiming his ancestors' history and status as an integral part of his own identity.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The position of *mushāwar* had a long history in al-Andalus and has been studied for the Umayyad period by Manuela Marín, "Sura et ahl al-sura dans al-Andalus", *Studia Islamica* 62 (1985), pp. 15-51, and for the Almoravid era by El Hour, *La Administración Judicial Almorávide*, pp. 135–164.

<sup>19</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 439.

Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that his own teachers and elders (*mashyakha*) informed him that Saʿīd was such a highly respected and eminent member of the intellectual and administrative elite in the region that he was known widely as *Sīdī Saʿīd* (“my lord Saʿīd”).<sup>20</sup> Supplementing these assertions about his ancestor’s piety, knowledge and eminence, Ibn al-Khaṭīb invokes the testimony of the elderly statesman Abū al-Ḥakam b. Muḥammad al-Montifrīdī, a descendant of one of Montefrío’s leading families with whom he conversed in Loja while visiting his family’s lands, that Saʿīd would spend many nights holding a vigil of Qurʾan recitation in Loja’s fortress.<sup>21</sup> This anecdote was an attempt to highlight both Saʿīd’s piety and his vigilance of maintaining a guard over the frontier (*ribāʿ*), demonstrating his great-great grandfather’s commitment to Islamic ideals and his leadership of the local community. Moreover, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that he found official documents (*maktūbāt*) written by the Hudid emir al-Mutawakkil Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Hūd (r. 625/1228–636/1238) and his son al-Wāthiq b. Hūd (d. after 665/1266) granting Saʿīd favor and interceding on his behalf with the queen of Castile (*al-malika zawj sulṭān qashtāla*), further evidence—Ibn al-Khaṭīb insists—of his grandfather’s esteemed position in society and his noble status.<sup>22</sup>

The careful narration of this information was an important supplement to Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s deliberate emphasis upon his ancestors as renowned individuals who worked closely with the established political elites in the territories that would come to comprise the Nasrid kingdom. They also suggest that Saʿīd served in an official capacity within that administration. Ibn al-Khaṭīb stresses that Saʿīd resided in Loja during the turbulent period which witnessed the unraveling of Almohad authority in al-Andalus and died, along with many members of his

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<sup>20</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 387.

<sup>21</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 387, 4: 440.

<sup>22</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 440.

family, during the Castilian sack of Loja during the 620s/1220s, which also claimed the lives of many of Loja's notables.<sup>23</sup> This representation of the Banū al-Khaṭīb as political and administrative elites during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century is also a major component of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn's biography of Ibn al-Khaṭīb in his *Kitāb al-ʿIbar*.<sup>24</sup> This reflects the close relationship between the two historians and Ibn Khaldūn's deep familiarity with Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own autobiographical writings. Another student of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the Nasrid poet-prince and historian Ismāʿīl b. Yūsuf b. al-Aḥmar, who was writing in Fez in the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, also emphasized Saʿīd's eminence, referring to him both as a jurist (*faqīh*) and as a saint (*walī Allāh*).<sup>25</sup> However, aside from these accounts of Saʿīd by Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his immediate intellectual circle during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century, there is no mention of this particular individual, let alone any other distant ancestor of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, in any of the surviving biographical dictionaries or extant sources from the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>26</sup> The absence of Saʿīd or any other members of the Banū al-Khaṭīb from the important 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century biographical dictionary "The Illustrious Scholars of Málaga" (*Aʿlām Mālaqa*),<sup>27</sup> written by Abū 'Abd Allāh b. 'Askar and Abū Bakr b. Khamīs between 635/1237 and 642/1244, is particularly noteworthy.<sup>28</sup> While it is certainly plausible that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was indeed descended from Saʿīd, the historicity

<sup>23</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 440; Jorge Lirola Delgado, "La familia de Ibn al-Jaṭīb," in *Actas del 1er Coloquio internacional sobre Ibn al-Jatib: Loja, 28 y 29 de octubre de 2005* (Granada: Fundación Ibn al-Jatib de Estudios y Cooperación Cultural, 2007), p. 14.

<sup>24</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn*, 7: 344.

<sup>25</sup> Ismāʿīl ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farāʿid al-Jumān*, p. 242.

<sup>26</sup> Within his autobiography Ibn al-Khaṭīb claims that some of his ancestors, notably Saʿīd b. 'Alī, are specifically mentioned in the (now lost) biographical dictionary of Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid al-Ghāfiqī al-Mallāḥī (d. 619/1222) titled "The History of the Scholars of Elvira" (*Tārīkh ʿUlamāʾ Ilbīra*) (Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 439).

<sup>27</sup> Abū 'Abd Allāh b. 'Askar and Abū Bakr b. Khamīs, *Aʿlām Mālaqa* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1999), ed. Abdullah al-Murabit al-Targhi.

<sup>28</sup> This work sheds considerable light on the intellectual culture in al-Andalus during the early 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century and provides significant details about the involvement of scholarly elite in political circles. For more, see Joaquín Vallvé Bermejo, "Una fuente importante de la historia de al-Andalus: La Historia de Ibn Askar," *Al-Andalus* 31 (1966), pp. 238–265.

of the specific details about his life remains tenuous in the absence of further corroborating evidence. The figure of Sa‘īd in the *Iḥāṭa* can be seen as reflecting Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s memorialization of an ancestor who established the Banū al-Khaṭīb as an important family in Loja during the formative years of the Nasrid kingdom during the 630s/1230s, thereby linking his own family with the emergence of the Nasrid dynasty that he served.

In contrast with this elaborate biography of Sa‘īd b. ‘Alī, hardly any concrete information is provided about Sa‘īd al-Khaṭīb’s eldest surviving son ‘Abd Allāh (Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s great-grandfather), who is simply referred to as righteous, highly esteemed and pious.<sup>29</sup> This relative silence about ‘Abd Allāh raises several questions. Was ‘Abd Allāh an unimportant figure? Did he fail to live up to the lofty standards established by Ibn al-Khaṭīb for his ancestors? If this was the case, it is highly plausible that Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to deliberately omit information from his autobiography that did not serve his immediate interests, in this case that of establishing his ancestors as significant officials and scholars. Alternatively, it may simply be that Ibn al-Khaṭīb could not gather ample information about ‘Abd Allāh to justify writing a lengthier biography of him. Either way, it would seem that ‘Abd Allāh was far less significant for Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s narrative than the former’s father (Sa‘īd “al-Khaṭīb”) or his son (Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s paternal grandfather), also named Sa‘īd, about whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb provides substantial information. Ibn al-Khaṭīb mentions that his family was related by marriage to the Hashemite clan of the Banū al-Ṭanjālī who rebelled against the Nasrid emir Muḥammad I (r. 635/1238–672/1273).<sup>30</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb is deliberately cryptic about the circumstances, but this rebellion seems to have coincided with the civil war within the kingdom stemming from the rivalry between the Nasrids and the Banū Ishqalyūla. As a result of these disturbances, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that his grandfather Sa‘īd

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<sup>29</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 387.

<sup>30</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 387; 4: 440; Lirola Delgado, “La familia de Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” p. 15.

was imprisoned in Granada for a considerable period of time (*fa-nālahu i 'tiqāl ṭawīl*) due to his association with the Banū al-Ṭanjālī.<sup>31</sup> Among the primary functions of inclusion of these details within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's broader marriage appears to be the highlighting of his family's genealogical proximity to the Hashemites, a source of immense prestige in pre-modern Islamic societies. Following the proclamation of his innocence and his subsequent release, Sa'īd was treated generously by Muḥammad I who allowed him to reside in Granada and appointed him to a prestigious position within the royal administration (*wallāhu al-a 'māl al-nabīha wa al-khuṭaṭ al-raft'a*).<sup>32</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb adds that the king of Granada (probably Muḥammad II) even sought to appoint Sa'īd as the royal tutor of one of his sons, but this was opposed by the young prince's mother, indicating that he had become well-established as an influential courtier within the Alhambra by the end of the reign of Muḥammad I.<sup>33</sup> At some point during the early 670s/1270s, Sa'īd married a daughter of the Granadan nobleman Abū 'Ulā Aḍḥā b. Aḍḥā al-Hamadānī, whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb links with early Arab conquerors of al-Andalus, specifically military units from Emesa in Syria (*ashrāf jund Ḥimṣ*) under the command of Balj b. Bishr al-Qushayrī, who settled near Seville and Granada.<sup>34</sup> The Banū Aḍḥā, a family whose members feature prominently within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own *Iḥāṭa*,<sup>35</sup> were among the region's oldest noble families, being attested as leading notables as far back as the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>36</sup> According to the Granadan

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<sup>31</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 387.

<sup>32</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 387, 4: 441.

<sup>33</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 441.

<sup>34</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 387, 4: 440–441; Lirola Delgado, "La familia de Ibn al-Jaṭīb," p. 15. This individual was related to the chief judge Muḥammad b. Aḍḥā al-Hamadānī who held the position of chief judge in Granada around 640/1242 during the reign of emir Muḥammad I, underscoring the importance of this family as leading officials within the Nasrid kingdom (al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 137–138).

<sup>35</sup> Particularly notable is the biography of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Aḍḥā al-Hamadānī, a local lord in Granada and later governor of Jaén, who is represented as a courtier of the Umayyad caliph 'Abd al-Raḥmān III and whose praise poems (*madīḥ*) for the latter are preserved in full (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 150–153).

<sup>36</sup> Maribel Fierro, *Abderramán III y el califato omeya de Córdoba* (San Sebastián: Editorial Nerea, 2011), pp. 201, 212–213; Eduardo Manzano Moreno, *Conquistadores, emires y califas: los omeyas y la formación de al-Andalus* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2006), p. 454; El Hour, *La Administración Judicial Almorávide*, pp. 256–257. The *Qalā'id al-*

historian and chief judge Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī, writing in the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, “the antiquity (*aṣāla*) of this noble house is clearly indicated in the history of [‘Īsā b. Aḥmad] al-Rāzī [d. 343/955].”<sup>37</sup> They remained important figures in the early Nasrid kingdom, with an individual from this family, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḍḥā al-Hamadānī (d. 709/1309), being described by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as “an influential and powerful statesman, like his ancestors, who served on the king’s council and was appointed to various executive offices (*athar salafīhi fī al-wizāra wa mujālasat al-sultān wa tawallā al-wilāyāt al-sultāniyya*),” illustrating the family’s continued prominence into the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>38</sup> By connecting Sa‘īd to one of the most prestigious lineages in the region Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to underscore his grandfather’s status and importance within the Nasrid kingdom. Following the premature death of this wife, Sa‘īd—who had become well-established and wealthy by this time—contracted another fortuitous marriage with a daughter of the nobleman Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ja‘dāllah al-Sulamī.<sup>39</sup> This woman, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s paternal grandmother, was a maternal cousin of the wife of Muḥammad II, since they were both descended from the (Córdoba) Banū Daḥūn family.<sup>40</sup> This enabled Ibn al-Khaṭīb to claim that he was directly (albeit distantly) related, through marriage and blood ties, with the Nasrid royal house. The importance that he places among these ties illustrates the

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*‘Iqyān wa Maḥāsīn al-A‘yān* by the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>-century litterateur and historian Abū al-Naṣr al-Faṭḥ b. Khāqān (d. 529/1135) also mentions a member of the family, Abū al-Ḥasan Alī b. ‘Umar b. Aḍḥā (d. 539/1145), as a leading judge and minister with extensive land holdings in Granada during the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century (al-Faṭḥ ibn Khāqān, *Qalā’id al-‘Iqyān wa Maḥāsīn al-A‘yān* [al-Zarqa: Maktabat al-Manar, 1989], ed. Husayn Yusuf Kharyoush, 1: 513–514). Writing in the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, Ibn al-Abbār dedicates a lengthy biography to this Abū al-Ḥasan Alī (and his son Abū Bakr Muḥammad) and details their leading role alongside Sayf al-Dawla b. Ḥūd (d. 540/1146) in the anti-Almoravid rebellion in Granada in 539/1145 (Ibn al-Abbār, *al-Ḥulla al-Siyarā’*, 2: 211–217). Similarly, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Sa‘īd al-Andalusī, writing in the mid-7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, describes the Banū Aḍḥā as one of the leading lineages of Granada (*bayt ‘azīm bi-hā*) (Ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī, *al-Mughrib fī Ḥulā al-Maghrib*, 2: 87).

<sup>37</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, p. 137.

<sup>38</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 238.

<sup>39</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 387, 4: 441; Lirola Delgado, “La familia de Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” p. 15.

<sup>40</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 388, 4: 441. According to Ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī, this noble family had controlled the fortress-town of Porcuna near Jaén since the Umayyad era (Ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī, *al-Mughrib fī Ḥulā al-Maghrib*, 1: 30, 154).



significance of marriage ties between families among the elites of Nasrid Granada and demonstrates how both male and female ancestry were particularly important in this context.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, it highlights Ibn al-Khaṭīb's particular strategy of claiming membership in the high-status groups that constituted Nasrid society through lesser-known or minor branches, a common phenomenon in the construction of genealogies during the medieval period, as observed by Zoltán Szombathy.<sup>42</sup>

While stressing Sa'īd's marriage into the leading noble lineages of the region (*wa ṣāhara fī ashraf buyutātihā*) Ibn al-Khatib informs us that his grandfather, who died in Granada in Rabī' II 683/June-July 1284, was an expert in jurisprudence (*fiqh*), arithmetic (*al-hisāb*) and belles-lettres (*adab*), possessing calligraphic handwriting (*ḥusn al-khaṭṭ*) and was particularly gifted in the art of writing and Qur'anic recitation.<sup>43</sup> The emphasis on writing, literature/belles-lettres, and arithmetic—all important disciplines of knowledge associated with the Nasrid chancery—suggests that Sa'īd began his career in Granada as a scribe or secretary in the royal administration. This is reinforced by evidence drawn from Ibn al-Khaṭīb's dynastic chronicle of the Nasrids in which he states that he “found written in the handwriting of my grandfather: ‘among the poems of my lord, the Commander of the Muslims Abū ‘Abd Allāh [Muḥammad II], son of the Commander of the Muslims al-Ghālib bi-llāh [Muḥammad I], on pride is the following couplet...’”<sup>44</sup> Sa'īd's reference to the poetry of Muḥammad II, whom he refers to as “my lord,” suggests that he was associated with the court. The wealth that Sa'īd accumulated over the

<sup>41</sup> Josef Ženka, “The Great Ruling Family of the Fourteenth Century: Muṣāhara in the Age of Ibn al-Khaṭīb,” *Medieval Encounters* 20 (2014), pp. 329–330.

<sup>42</sup> Zoltán Szombathy, “Motives and Techniques of Genealogical Forgery in Pre-Modern Muslim Societies,” in *Genealogy and Knowledge in Muslim Societies: Understanding the Past* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), eds. Sarah Savant and Helena de Felipe, p. 29.

<sup>43</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 387, 4: 440; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285; Lirola Delgado, “La familia de Ibn al-Jatīb,” p. 15; Ahmad Chafic Damaj, *Sabios y literatos de Loja Andalusí* (Granada: Fundación Ibn al-Jatib de Estudios de Cooperación Cultural, 2009), p. 144.

<sup>44</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 76.

course of his career is noted by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who cites a story narrated from his paternal grandmother (i.e. Sa‘īd’s wife) that the family could afford to feed the needy and destitute in Granada.<sup>45</sup> Although the *Iḥāṭa* does not provide further details about Sa‘īd, the historian Ibn al-Aḥmar refers to him as “a military commander (*qā’id*),” a fact which substantiates Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own narrative about his grandfather’s elite status and explains his ability to contract a marriage with one of the most important noble families in 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid Granada.<sup>46</sup>

Notwithstanding the fact that very little can be independently ascertained about Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s family origins, even his own account provides little substantive evidence for his family prior to the 620s/1220s. Towards the end of his life, while residing in North Africa between 773/1371 and 1374/776, Ibn al-Khaṭīb wrote a short work entitled “The Noble Virtues of the Banū al-Khaṭīb” (*al-Mafākhir al-Ṭayyibiyya fī al-Mafākhir al-Khaṭībiyya*) which outlined the accomplishments of his family and ancestors. Although no longer extant, it was intended to deflect accusations from his rivals in Granada and North Africa that his humble origins and lack of direct marriage ties (*muṣāhara*) with elite families disqualified him from holding high office. The work sought to construct a noble pedigree and to emphasize that he descended from a long line of scholarly elites, military commanders and bureaucrats that had traditionally served the rulers of al-Andalus since the late 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century and intermarried with the leading Andalusī noble families, thus mirroring the narrative provided within his autobiography. During a period when noble lineage was often inseparable from holding high office, it is important to recall that Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s reconstruction of his family origins in the autobiographical sections of the “Comprehensive History” (*al-Iḥāṭa*) and the “Deeds of the Notables” (*A‘māl al-A‘lām*) were written to legitimate and buttress his own political position at a time when it had become

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<sup>45</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 441.

<sup>46</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā’id al-Jumān fī Naẓm Fuḥūl al-Zamān*, p. 242.

increasingly precarious. The composition of family history and genealogy that stressed the longstanding prestige of one's lineage while stressing the prominence of one's ancestors as either nobles, administrators, mystics, or scholars was quite commonplace in the Islamic West during 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, as the cases of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn,<sup>47</sup> Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. Qunfudh (d. 810/1408)<sup>48</sup> and Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Marzūq (d. 781/1379)<sup>49</sup>—all of whom belonged to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's circle of intimates—attest.<sup>50</sup> These texts should be situated within a broader literary and intellectual tradition of autobiographical writing in the Islamic world.<sup>51</sup>

As Ibn al-Khaṭīb's biography of his grandfather Sa'īd b. 'Abd Allāh makes clear, connections and links with the dynastic family, which was essentially a large aristocratic order in which both male and female<sup>52</sup> lineages were significant, was an important marker of prestige for a particular family or individual within Nasrid Granada.<sup>53</sup> It was in this context that the instrumentalization of genealogy and genealogical ties became increasingly important. This was especially true for scholar-functionaries such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb who often competed for influence and status with other officials, both military and religious, in the Nasrid court whose noble

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<sup>47</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥlat Ibn Khaldūn*, pp. 27–36.

<sup>48</sup> Ibn Qunfudh, *Uns al-Faqīr wa 'Izz al-Ḥaqīr*, pp. 79–105.

<sup>49</sup> Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Marzūq, *al-Manāqib al-Marzūqiyya* (Casablanca: Matba'at al-Najah al-Jadida, 2008), ed. Salwa al-Zahiri, pp. 139–311.

<sup>50</sup> For an important example of this form of “family history” which combined autobiography, genealogy and historical/biographical narrative, during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, see Ibn Sa'īd al-Andalusī, *al-Mughrib fī Ḥulā al-Maghrib*, 2: 133–148. Moreover, the composition of family histories had become quite commonplace during this period, with Ibn al-Khaṭīb describing the Granadan judge Abū Ja'far Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Mas'ada (d. 699/1300) as composing a history of his clan and family (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 164), a work which forms one of the sources cited throughout the *Iḥāṭa*.

<sup>51</sup> For an excellent study of autobiographical writing in the medieval and early modern Islamic world, see Dwight F. Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

<sup>52</sup> María Jesús Rubiera Mata, “El vínculo cognático en al-Andalus,” in *Andalucía medieval: Actas del I Congreso de Historia de Andalucía. Andalucía Medieval* (Córdoba: Publicaciones del Monte de Piedad y Caja de Ahorros de Córdoba, 1978), p. 123.

<sup>53</sup> Ženka, “The Great Ruling Family of the Fourteenth Century,” pp. 306–339.

pedigree and links with the ruling dynasty were far more illustrious. Alongside marriage ties and genealogy, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's biography of his ancestors also invoked a long-standing history of client-patron ties, known in Arabic as *walā'*, in order to underscore his family's history of distinguished service to the Nasrid dynasty (*al-qidmu fī al-khidma*)<sup>54</sup> The efforts of Ibn al-Khaṭīb to tie his family (and thus himself) closely to the ruling dynasty through blood, ties of obligation, clientship and loyalty is demonstrative of a broader phenomenon occurring throughout the late medieval Islamic West in which scholar-officials stressed the antiquity of the bond between their families and the sovereign. Ibn Khaldūn, who stressed the close relationship between his ancestors and the Hafsīd royal line since the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century, is another instructive example of this phenomenon.<sup>55</sup>

Ibn al-Khaṭīb's father, 'Abd Allāh, was born in Granada in Jumādā I 672/November-December 1273.<sup>56</sup> Although his father, Sa'īd, died (in Rabī' II 783/June 1284) before he had reached the age of 10, 'Abd Allāh was raised by his mother and her extended family, the Banū Ja'dāllah al-Sulamī. His family's elite status and wealth ensured that he was brought up comfortably and received the finest education available, studying with some of Granada's leading scholars.<sup>57</sup> 'Abd Allāh reached maturity during the height of the reign of Nasrid emir Muḥammad II al-Faqīh ("the Learned"), whose patronage of scholarship transformed Granada into an important intellectual center. Some of the scholars 'Abd Allāh studied with included Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ballūṭī (d. 702/1302), Abū Ishāq b. Zurqāl and Abū Ja'far Aḥmad b. al-Zubayr (d.

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<sup>54</sup> This is reminiscent of family strategies of legitimation during the Umayyad era, in which many sought to affirm their loyalty to the dynasty by stressing the long-standing ties that existed between their ancestors, as *mawālī* (converts to Islam), and the Umayyad royal house, in some cases even insisting that their ancestors had entered the service of the dynasty during the height of its power in Damascus (Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal*, p. 65).

<sup>55</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥlat Ibn Khaldūn*, pp. 32–36.

<sup>56</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 391; Lirola Delgado, "La familia de Ibn al-Jaṭīb," p. 15.

<sup>57</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285.

708/1308), the latter being among the city's leading religious authorities and intellectuals.<sup>58</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb stresses that his father was a committed student of knowledge during his youth and, among other things, excelled at composition, both prose and poetry, and was particularly well-versed in history (*tārīkh*).<sup>59</sup> ‘Abd Allāh also received several certificates of transmission (*ijāza*) from scholars in Egypt and Syria, a symbol of intellectual prestige that demonstrated his links with scholarly authorities in the central Islamic lands.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, he was well-trained in the courtly arts, being an eloquent orator and having a thorough knowledge of chess (*shaṭranj*) and proverbs.<sup>61</sup> Significantly, in addition to this description of his father's erudition and learning, Ibn al-Khaṭīb describes his father as “a soldier and military man” (*mutajjanid*) trained in the martial arts.<sup>62</sup> This provides an illustration of the phenomenon of the fluidity of social categories and boundaries within the Nasrid context, in which elites were expected to not only participate in circles of learning, but were also active members of a warrior aristocracy within the kingdom.

Despite his thorough education, Ibn al-Khaṭīb remarks that ‘Abd Allāh abandoned the pursuit of knowledge and moved to his ancestral town (*balad salafihi*) of Loja, possibly as a result of the turbulent political situation in Granada that accompanied the overthrow of Muḥammad III (r. 702/1302–708/1309).<sup>63</sup> A hint of criticism and disapproval can be discerned in Ibn al-Khaṭīb's description of his father as living a life of leisure and relaxation (*īthār al-rāḥa*) upon returning to Loja, with much of his time occupied by hunting (*mudāwamat al-ṣayd*) and

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<sup>58</sup> Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām* [Riyadh: Dar al-Mughni li-l-nashr wa-l-tawzi', 1998], ed. Mazen ibn Salem Bawazir, pp. 87–89; Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 388, 4: 442; Ibn al-Qāḍī, *Durrat al-Ḥijāl*, 2: 11–12; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 54–55. For an annotated Spanish translation of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's biography of Ibn al-Zubayr, see Fernando Nicolás Vázquez Basanta, “Abū Ya‘far Aḥmad ibn al-Zubair, profesor, cadí y poeta, a través de la “Iḥāṭa” de Ben al-Jaṭīb,” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos* 34 (1985), pp. 97–107.

<sup>59</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 388, 4: 442.

<sup>60</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 442.

<sup>61</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 388.

<sup>62</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 388.

<sup>63</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 388; Lirola Delgado, “La familia de Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” p. 15.

entertaining guests.<sup>64</sup> However, he also adds that these activities were essential to ‘Abd Allāh’s building of strong social and political ties with many of Loja’s notable families, enabling him to become a distinguished and respectable figure among the town’s elites, being consulted on important decisions pertaining to the region’s governance (*mu‘tamad bi-l tajilla maqṣūd al-ḥila makḥṭūb al-mudākhala min abnā’ ashraf al-dawla muntaji ‘ li-awlā al-kudiya*).<sup>65</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb makes reference to his family’s lands (*amlāk*) in Loja, located on the road from Granada to Seville and which encompassed farmland as well as fortifications.<sup>66</sup> He also describes his father as living a life of comfort and affluence (*muratab bi-‘ādat al-taraf*).<sup>67</sup> These details indicate that ‘Abd Allāh was among Loja’s elite citizens and that he had inherited both estates and wealth from his family. What was the precise nature of ‘Abd Allāh’s role in the local administration in Loja during this period? Although Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that his father held an appointment as a minister (*muqīm li-l rasm makḥṣūṣ bi-laqab al-wizāra*) in Loja at this stage, sometime around 710/1310, it is unclear what this entailed.<sup>68</sup> While it is certainly plausible that ‘Abd Allāh served in some capacity within the local administration or ruling council, the declaration that he was appointed as a leading official in the city should be approached with some skepticism. It is more plausible that title *wazīr* is utilized in this context to signify ‘Abd Allāh’s respected status among Loja’s elites or his affiliation with the provincial authorities.<sup>69</sup> It is particularly notable that the sections of the *Iḥāṭa* composed earlier in Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s career makes no reference to his father’s appointment to high office or the title of *wazīr*. In other words, there seems to have been

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<sup>64</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 388.

<sup>65</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 388.

<sup>66</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 387, 4: 440.

<sup>67</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 442.

<sup>68</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 442.

<sup>69</sup> For another contemporary example of the utilization of the title to signify the wielding of some level of executive authority in a local context (as opposed to a specific office), see El Escorial MS 419, 1v., where the physician and litterateur Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. Khātima (d. after 771/1369) is referred to as “*al-wazīr*” by the copyist (a student of his named Ibn Zarqala) despite his never having been appointed to this senior administrative post.

an attempt by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to rewrite his father's early career history (especially for the period between 700/1300 and 714/1314) within the autobiographical sections composed during the late 760s/1360s, as well as the biography of his father inserted within the "Description of the Notables" (*Awṣāf al-Nās fī al-Tawārīkh wa al-Ṣilāt*).<sup>70</sup>

The survival of multiple copies of his works, including versions written earlier in his career, therefore enables us to better appreciate his working method and understand the manner in which earlier biographical material was emended, edited, omitted or expanded within the final draft of his writings. The *Awṣāf al-Nās*, another of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's biographical dictionaries which was integrated into his monumental "The Sweet Basil of the Secretaries" (*Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*), refers to 'Abd Allāh as one of the most influential local leaders of Loja, but does not specify whether he held any administrative or political post during this period.<sup>71</sup> The omission of any specific reference to 'Abd Allāh's contracting of a fortuitous marriage suggests that his wife—Ibn al-Khaṭīb's mother—did not belong to any of the major families of Loja or Granada. His mother's non-noble status is also apparent from Ibn al-Khaṭīb's complete silence about his maternal ancestry, which contrasts sharply with his heavy emphasis upon his paternal grandmother's noble lineage. The fact that 'Abd Allāh was unable to link himself via marriage with any of the established noble families in the Nasrid kingdom demonstrates that, even during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, the Banū al-Khaṭīb remained relative outliers among the elite families of the Nasrid kingdom.

While there is much that remains unclear about the specific activities and status of 'Abd Allāh during the first decade of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, it is apparent that the family's fortunes rose

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<sup>70</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās fī al-Tawārīkh wa al-Ṣilāt* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafa al-Diniyya, 2002), ed. Muhammad Kamal Shabana, pp. 82–84.

<sup>71</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 83.

tremendously following the rise to power of Abū al-Walīd Ismā‘īl I to the Nasrid throne in 713/1314 . Ibn al-Khaṭīb indicates that his father was an important and loyal supporter of Ismā‘īl when the latter rebelled against Abū al-Juyūsh Naṣr (r. 709/1309–713/1314), the son of Muḥammad II.<sup>72</sup> According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, ‘Abd Allāh’s close relationship with Loja’s elites, which he had cultivated over the years, enabled him to mobilize their political and military power in support of Ismā‘īl’s bid for the Nasrid throne.<sup>73</sup> Although Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s statement that ‘Abd Allāh was “one of the greatest factors that facilitated [Ismā‘īl’s] rise to power” is certainly hyperbolic, the description of ‘Abd Allāh’s enthusiasm for Ismā‘īl’s cause and his personal loyalty towards him is illustrated by the that he accompanied the latter when he entered Granada victoriously on Shawwāl 27 713/February 14 1314.<sup>74</sup> Following the establishment of Abū al-Walīd Ismā‘īl as the new Nasrid emir, Ibn al-Khaṭīb claims that ‘Abd Allāh was rewarded for his support by being granted a significant position within the Nasrid administration in Granada, a fact which transformed the family’s fortunes.<sup>75</sup> Although originally entrusted with supervising the food stores (*makhāzin al-ṭa‘ām*), a post associated with the Nasrid treasury, he was soon appointed to the more prestigious position of a secretary of the royal chancery.<sup>76</sup> Throughout his works, Ibn al-Aḥmar consistently refers to ‘Abd Allāh both as a secretary (*kātib*) as well as *al-ra’īs* (“chief/leader”), a term implying a senior rank, which lends further credence to Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s description of his father’s promotion within the Nasrid administration.<sup>77</sup> The rise of

<sup>72</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 388–389, 4: 442.

<sup>73</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 83; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 388–389.

<sup>74</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 388–389, 4: 442.

<sup>75</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 389, 442.

<sup>76</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn*, 7: 344; Taqī al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī, drawing upon Ibn Khaldūn’s account, also affirms that ‘Abd Allāh was initially appointed to preside over the food stores (al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd al-Farīda fī Tarājīm al-A’yān al-Mufīda* [Beirut, 2002], 3: 444).

<sup>77</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā’id al-Jumān fī Naẓm Fuḥūl al-Zamān*, p. 242. Although the title *ra’īs* was ordinarily utilized to refer to military commanders, within this particular context it indicated a senior rank within the chancery.



Ismā‘īl I took place only several months after the birth of his son, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb, in Rajab 713/November 1313, which indicates that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was only several months old when he moved to Granada with his family. In addition to the testimonies of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn that attest to ‘Abd Allāh b. Sa‘īd’s significant position within the Nasrid administration, his title of *wazīr* (“minister”) is noted in royal Nasrid and Marinid correspondence with Ibn al-Khaṭīb throughout the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>78</sup> Although it appears that the title is utilized as an honorific status rather than signifying a specific administrative rank within this context, the use of *wazīr* in connection with ‘Abd Allāh nevertheless suggests that he was closely connected with the royal court.<sup>79</sup> The rise of Ismā‘īl I thus had major implications for the fortunes of provincial elites, such as ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb, whose loyalty to the new emir and his cause contributed to their promotion within the political and administrative ranks of the Nasrid kingdom.

### Early Life

Several months after his birth in Loja on Rajab 25 713/November 15 1313, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s family moved to Granada to join his father, who had been appointed to a position within the royal administration of the newly-enthroned Nasrid emir Ismā‘īl I. Due to his father’s prestigious status and the wealth accumulated by the family, including lands in both Loja and Granada, his ties with the intellectual elite within the Nasrid kingdom and his employment within the royal administration, Ibn al-Khaṭīb received an extensive education during his youth,

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<sup>78</sup> See, for example, the a letter written by the Marinid sovereign Abū Sālim (r. 760/1359–762/1361) to Ibn al-Khaṭīb in which ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb is described as an “eminent nobleman and minister” (*al-shaykh al-ajall al-a‘azz al-asnā al-wazīr al-arfa’ al-amjad*) (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 86).

<sup>79</sup> Antonio Peláez Rovira, *El Emirato Nazarí de Granada en el siglo XV: Dinámica política y fundamentos sociales de un estado andalusí* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2009), p. 44.

studying with some of the most distinguished scholars of the age. His autobiography in the *Iḥāṭa* preserves the names of his most important teachers and often includes a description of the subjects that he studied with each. This list was organized along the lines of the *fahrasa* or *barnāmaj* that many scholars in the Islamic West had composed since the 6th/ 12<sup>th</sup> century with the purpose of displaying their extensive knowledge and indicating their specific intellectual lineage. Alongside this section of the *Iḥāṭa*, further information about his teachers, education and intellectual formation are dispersed throughout the remainder of his works. The specific details that Ibn al-Khaṭīb provides are rather remarkable and shed significant light on the education of Andalusī elites during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. It illustrates the “curriculum” of education in Nasrid Granada in the period immediately preceding the construction of the city’s first formal institution of learning, the College (*madrasa*) of Granada, established in Muḥarram 750/April 1349. As in the case of earlier scholar-officials, such as the Abbasid chief minister Ibn Hubayra (d. 560/1165) in Baghdad<sup>80</sup> or the powerful Andalusī chamberlain Ibn Abī ‘Āmir al-Manṣūr (d. 392/1002),<sup>81</sup> whose meteoric rise to power was preceded by a distinguish career of learning, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s extensive education at the hands of the Nasrid kingdom’s leading scholars, physicians and functionaries was instrumental in socializing him into a world of learning and statecraft and laid the foundation for many of his most important friendships, relationships, enmities and alliances for years to come.

As a child, Ibn al-Khaṭīb, like most of his peers in Nasrid Granada, received his preliminary education in the Great Mosque of Granada in the traditional institution of primary learning known as the *maktab/kuttāb* being taught to recite the Qur’an, as well as the basics of

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<sup>80</sup> Mason, *Two Statesmen of Mediaeval Islam*, pp. 25–37.

<sup>81</sup> Xavier Ballestín Navarro, *al-Mansur y la dawla ‘amiriya: Una dinámica de poder y legitimidad en el occidente musulmán medieval* (Barcelona: Publicacions I Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, 2004), pp. 29–33.

reading and writing, and the fundamentals of Islamic ritual practice and belief, or what Konrad Hirschler has described as the “5 Rs” (recitation, reading, writing, arithmetic and rituals).<sup>82</sup> It is also plausible that, since Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s father had the resources to do so, he was entrusted to the care of a number of private tutors who were responsible for imparting the basics of education. Perhaps his most significant teacher during these early years was Abū ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Wālī al-Ru’aynī (d. 750/1350), known as Ibn al-‘Awwād, one of the leading experts in the Qur’anic sciences in Granada.<sup>83</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s testimony indicates that both memorization and transcription of texts were equally important as methods of early childhood education, a phenomenon also observed by Florian Sobieroj for other regions of the Islamic world.<sup>84</sup>

Shortly afterwards, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was placed under the tutelage of another leading scholar, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Umar b. Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Qijāṭī (d. 730/1330).<sup>85</sup> Although originally from Baza, a town located on the Nasrid kingdom’s eastern frontier, al-Qijāṭī had established himself in Granada around 712/1312 and rose to become one of the city’s leading religious authorities.<sup>86</sup> In addition to the Qur’anic sciences, al-Qijāṭī was also an expert in poetry, jurisprudence and belles-lettres. Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that he studied both the Qur’an and the Arabic language with al-Qijāṭī, whom he describes as one of his most influential teachers as a youth.<sup>87</sup> He continued his studies in Arabic, jurisprudence and Qur’anic exegesis with Abū

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<sup>82</sup> Konrad Hirschler, *The Written Word in Medieval Arabic Lands: A Social and Cultural History of Reading Practices* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), p. 82. For a comparative perspective on early childhood education in the medieval and early modern Islamic world, see Hirschler, *The Written Word in Medieval Arabic Lands*, pp. 82–123, and Florian Sobieroj, *Variance in Arabic Manuscripts: Arabic Didactic Poems from the Eleventh to the Seventeenth Centuries—Analysis of Textual Variance and Its Control in the Manuscripts* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), pp. 53–62.

<sup>83</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 33–35, 4: 457–458; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285, 4: 23; al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 7: 357.

<sup>84</sup> Sobieroj, *Variance in Arabic Manuscripts*, pp. 78–85.

<sup>85</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 458.

<sup>86</sup> Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 2: 110; Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 104–107; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 37–40; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 24; al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 8: 51–54.

<sup>87</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 458; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285.

‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. al-Fakhkhār al-Ilbīrī (d. 754/1353),<sup>88</sup> a leading authority on grammar, prosody, jurisprudence, and poetry who also served as a professor in the College of Granada and a preacher in the Great Mosque whose students included, among others, the famous Andalusī legal theoretician Abū Ishāq al-Shāṭibī (d. 790/1388).<sup>89</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb emphasizes that Ibn al-Fakhkhār was the most highly regarded expert in Arabic (*al-imām al-mujma’ ‘alā imāmatihi fī fann al-‘arabiyya*) in Granada and indicates that he studied extensively with him.<sup>90</sup> Under the tutelage of Ibn al-Fakhkhār, Ibn al-Khaṭīb would have become acquainted with Sībawayh’s *al-Kitāb*, the *Siḥāḥ* of Ismā‘īl b. Ḥammād al-Jawharī (d. 393/1003), the *Kitāb al-Jumal fī-l Nahw* by ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 474/1078), the *Maqāmāt* of Abū Muhammad al-Qāsim b. ‘Alī al-Ḥarīrī (d. 516/1122), the *Alfiyya* of Ibn Mālik al-Jayyānī (d. 672/1274), as well as other foundational texts on Arabic grammar, rhetoric and lexicography. At this stage of his education, Ibn al-Khaṭīb would have also studied sections of *Tashīl al-Fawā’id wa Takmīl al-Maqāṣid* by Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Malik al-Jayyānī (d. 672/1274), various compendia of classical Arabic poetry, including the pre-Islamic *Mu‘allaqāt* and poems by Umayyad and Abbasid-era litterateurs. It is highly likely that his studies with Ibn al-Fakhkhār also incorporated the didactic poem on prosody by Ḍiyā’ al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Khazrajī (d. after 610/1213), known as *al-Qaṣīda al-Khazrajiyya*, as well as the *Minhāj al-Bulaghā’ wa Sirāj al-Udabā’* and the *Maqṣūra* of Abū al-Ḥasan Ḥāzim al-Qarṭajānnī (d. 684/1285), which were popular texts among scholars in early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century Granada.

As Florian Sobieroj has stated, a close bond emerged between a teacher and his most capable students within the social setting of the class, with the latter becoming his closest

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<sup>88</sup> This figure should not be confused with Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Fakhkhār (d. 723/1323), an émigré to the Nasrid kingdom from Arcos de la Frontera (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 70–71).

<sup>89</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 458; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 36; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 7: 330–331, 353–357.

<sup>90</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 458.

associates (*aṣḥāb*).<sup>91</sup> Within the context of Nasrid Granada, this early teacher-student relationship could and did evolve into a long-term and mutually-beneficial friendship. In a letter composed in Gibraltar around 743/1342 congratulating his teacher on being appointed as the preacher of the Great Mosque of Granada, Ibn al-Khaṭīb, by then a prominent secretary within the Nasrid chancery, invokes their teacher-student relationship, praising Ibn al-Fakhkhār as “the one in whose capable hands our father placed us to acquire an education and the individual from whom we narrated the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet,” thus placing establishing an intellectual genealogy, or *isnād*, between himself and the Prophet Muḥammad with Ibn al-Fakhkhār serving as the essential link with prophetic knowledge.<sup>92</sup> The letter itself testifies to the continued ties between teachers and students in Granada years after the completion of an individual’s early education and underscores the fact that Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s instruction owed much to his own father’s elite position as well as his proximity to royal power, which both afforded him the resources to devote attention to his son’s education while also enabling him to build close relations with senior scholars in the Nasrid kingdom. It is particularly important to recognize that Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s early teachers were all connected, in one way or another, with the Nasrid royal court or administration. The education of children such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb by these scholars was thus another consequence of the networks of patronage which bound together the political elites with the intellectuals of Nasrid Granada.

It was during this early period of his education, between roughly 720/1320 and 730/1330, that Ibn al-Khaṭīb also studied the Qur’an and its auxiliary sciences, including exegesis, with Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Yaḥyā b. Yūsuf b. Juzayy (d. 741/1340), the renowned author of the “Sciences of Revelation” (*al-Taṣhīl fī ‘Ulūm al-*

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<sup>91</sup> Sobieroj, *Variance in Arabic Manuscripts*, p. 65.

<sup>92</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manzūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 81–83.

*Tanzīl*)<sup>93</sup> and a member of one of Granada's leading scholarly lineages.<sup>94</sup> Another of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's Qur'anic teachers during the intermediate stages of his education was Abū 'Amr Muḥammad (d. 750/1349), son of the famous scholar Abū Ja'far b. al-Zubayr.<sup>95</sup> The fact that the latter had been the teacher of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's father 'Abd Allāh demonstrates the continuity in the education of administrative elites (and their children) between the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries as well as the importance of scholarly lineages within Granada as teachers of the next generation of court functionaries. These details within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's autobiography shed light upon the relationship between 'Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb and Abū 'Amr, the student and the son of Ibn al-Zubayr respectively. It becomes apparent that the bonds between student and teacher, on one hand, and between intellectual and administrative elites on the other were instrumental in constituting the networks of patronage that bound together the intellectual and political spheres together within Nasrid Granada.

Similarly, the continued patronage of education and scholarship by political and administrative elites was heavily shaped by individuals such as 'Abd Allāh who attempted to ensure that his son received a prestigious education at the hands of leading scholars such as Abū 'Amr b. al-Zubayr and Ibn al-Fakhkhār. The latter, in turn, benefited from a consolidation of their relationship with existing administrative-political elites, while also increasing their own

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<sup>93</sup> Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Juzayy, *al-Taṣhīl fī 'Ulūm al-Tanzīl* (Kuwait: Dar al-Diyya', 2013), 4 vols., ed. Muhammad bin Sayyidi Muhammad Mawlay.

<sup>94</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 458; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285. For a biography of Abū al-Qāsim b. Juzayy, see Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 20–23; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 27; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 46–48; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jūman*, pp. 165–166; Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 2: 274–276; Ibn al-Qāḍī, *Durrat al-Hijāl*, 2: 117–118; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 216; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 8: 58–60. For a biographical study of this individual and his works, see Moral Molina Velázquez Basanta, "Los Banū Ŷuzayy. Una familia de juristas e intelectuales granadinos del siglo XIV. I," pp. 172–197; María Arcas Campoy, "Un resumen de la Historia de al-Andalus del alfaquí granadino Abū l-Qāsim b. Ŷuzayy (siglo XIV)," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos* 36 (1987), pp. 157–163; María Arcas Campoy, "Un tratado de derecho comparado: El *Kitāb al-qawānīn* de Ibn Ŷuzayy," *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 5-6 (1987-1988), pp. 49-57.

<sup>95</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 458. For more on Abū 'Amr Muḥammad, see Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 156–158; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 185.

prestige (and influence) by playing a major role in the intellectual formation of the next generation of secretaries, judges and royal officials. Significantly, after he established himself as a leading figure within the royal court Ibn al-Khaṭīb would play an important role as the patron of Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Juzayy, the son of his teacher Abū al-Qāsim b. Juzayy, demonstrating the replication of these networks of patronage across several generations. At this juncture, it should be noted that, unlike Marinid Morocco during the same period, Granada possessed no formal colleges (*madrasas*) until 750/1349. As such, both the Great Mosque of Granada and the Alhambra royal palace, spaces where intellectual elites and government functionaries were frequently brought into contact, served as the major institutions of learning for the children of political and administrative elites during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

While Arabic grammar, rhetoric, reading, writing and the Qur’anic sciences constituted the core of his studies during his early years, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was also exposed to the study of hadith and Islamic law during this stage of his education. One of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s teachers in jurisprudence included Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad b. Jābir b. ‘Alī al-Anṣārī al-Gharnāṭī (d. 739/1338), with whom he studied the *Tafrī* of Abū al-Qāsim b. al-Jallāb (d. 378/988), particularly its abridgement (*mukhtaṣar*) by Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Rab‘ī al-Tunīsī’s (d. 715/1315) known as *al-Sahl al-Badī‘ fī Ikhtiṣār al-Tafrī*.<sup>96</sup> In the early 730s/1330s, Ibn al-Khaṭīb also studied under the chief judge of Granada, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā b. Bakr al-Ash‘arī al-Mālaqī (d. 741/1340), who died at the Battle of Rio Salado in 741/1340.<sup>97</sup> The latter, who Ibn al-Khaṭīb refers to as “our teacher” (*shaykhunā*), was an expert

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<sup>96</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 106; Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 2: 317. The *Tafrī* of Ibn al-Jallāb was one of the most popular texts of Maliki jurisprudence in the Islamic West during this period and was especially popular within Nasrid Granada and in Mudéjar communities in Aragón.

<sup>97</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 458; al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 152–158.

in various subjects including Arabic, Qur'an, jurisprudence and history. He was also the teacher of many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's peers, including Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Bunnāhī (the future chief judge of the Nasrid kingdom).<sup>98</sup>

Although al-Ash'arī was probably the most famous and highest-ranking teacher in this regard, Ibn al-Khaṭīb appears to have continued to study jurisprudence with other leading scholars in Granada, including Abū al-Qāsim Salmūn b. 'Alī b. 'Abd Allāh b. Salmūn (d. 767/1366),<sup>99</sup> another chief judge of Granada, and his brother Abū Muḥammad b. Salmūn.<sup>100</sup> During the early 730s/1330s he studied briefly with the hadīth scholar Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Bakrūn b. Hizb Allāh,<sup>101</sup> Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Jābir al-Qaysī al-Wādī Āshī (d. 749/1349),<sup>102</sup> the judge Abu al-Hajjaj Yūsuf al-Muntashāqirī (d. after 761/1360),<sup>103</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan al-Tilmisānī, and Abū al-Qāsim b. al-Mahanī al-Mālaqī among several others.<sup>104</sup> Several of the texts on jurisprudence, legal theory and theology that he likely studied during this period of his life include the *Mukhtaṣar* of Ibn al-Ḥājib (d. 646/1249),<sup>105</sup> *al-Jawāhir* by Ibn Shash, *al-Mustaṣfa'* by Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), and the *Risāla* by Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī (d. 386/996).

<sup>98</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 176–180; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 120; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 175–176; al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 7: 359–362. Among al-Ash'arī's surviving works is a hagiography of the third caliph 'Uthmān b. 'Affan entitled *al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān fī Maqāt al-Shahīd 'Uthmān bin 'Affān* (Rabat: Dar al-Aman, 2015), eds. Muna Iz'iriyin and Khadija Iz'iriyin.

<sup>99</sup> Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 1: 397–398.

<sup>100</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 458; al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 177–178.

<sup>101</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 189–190; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 241.

<sup>102</sup> For more on Ibn Jābir, see Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 163–165, Ibn al-Qāḍī, *Durrat al-Ḥijāl*, 2: 102–103, Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 2: 299–301; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 251–252; al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 7: 192–194.

<sup>103</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 377–390. This *nisba* indicates that he was originally from Montejícar, located between Granada and Jaén.

<sup>104</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 458–459. For a more comprehensive list and discussion of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's teachers, see al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 7: 182–432, 8: 3–144; Titwani, pp. 48–55; Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, pp. 40–58.

<sup>105</sup> Unsurprisingly, this abridgement of Maliki jurisprudence was a particularly popular text throughout the Nasrid kingdom and was read, quoted, copied and taught in a variety of contexts (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 209). Many of Ibn al-Ḥājib's students would go on to become leading authorities on Islamic law and hold significant positions in the judiciary across the Islamic West.



The position of many of his teachers as functionaries within the administration illustrates the manner in which teacher-student relations can therefore be mapped onto the existing networks of patronage and institutional relationships that existed within the Nasrid administration. Although not usually noted for his interest in jurisprudence (*fiqh*) or legal theory (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), this list of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's teachers indicates his familiarity with the subject, as does his composition of *al-Ḥulal al-Marqūma fī al-Luma' al-Manzūma*, a versified treatise and abridgement of a work on legal theory written by Abū Ishāq al-Shirāzī (d. 476/1083), the first professor at the Nizāmiyya *madrassa* in Baghdad. Ibn al-Khaṭīb's familiarity with jurisprudence and belles-lettres alike by the time he reached maturity demonstrates that the intellectual formation of Nasrid administrative elites (*kuttāb*) during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century shared much in common with the education of clerics (*'ulamā'*). Both the children of religious scholars and those of administrative elites were educated by the same individual, reading the same texts and often within the same space (the mosque or royal palace) in Nasrid Granada.

Reflecting upon the distinct form of education received by Andalusī elites, Ibn Khaldūn notes that, unlike other parts of the Islamic world (including North Africa), they privileged a knowledge of language and epistolary form—essential subjects for the chancery profession—over more “foundational” subjects such as hadith and the Qur'an:

“the Andalusis do not restrict themselves to teaching their children the Qur'an, which they consider not simply the foundation of the faith and all sciences but also a pedagogical tool. They combine a knowledge of the Qur'an with teaching them poetry and the art of epistolary (*al-tarassul*) such that when they attain maturity they would already have attained an advanced knowledge of Arabic grammar, poetry, writing, and the Qur'an...thus, the Andalusis emphasize exposing their children to a wide range of subjects, notably poetry, epistolary and Arabic grammar, from a very young age, leading to these people becoming the most renowned experts in the Arabic language. However, this comes at the expense of providing their children with a firm knowledge of the Qur'an and *hadith*, which are the foundation of all (true) knowledge. As a result of this

education, Andalusis are known as a people whose expertise lies in writing and belles-lettres (*al-adab*).”<sup>106</sup>

Although this passage obscures the fact that the Qur’an, hadith and Islamic law remained important subjects taught to children in Nasrid Granada (as Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own education attests), Ibn Khaldūn nevertheless conveys, with a hint of disapproval, the degree to which *adab* (belles-lettres) was considered a foundational field of knowledge in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Granada, in contrast with North Africa where a knowledge of the Qur’an was privileged.

Aside from belle-lettres and poetry, perhaps the most significant intellectual discipline in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb distinguished himself as a young man was medicine.<sup>107</sup> As a youth in the 720s/1320s, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was immersed in studying the natural sciences (including medicine and botany) with Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Anṣārī (d. 730/1330), known as Ibn al-Sarrāj.<sup>108</sup> The latter, who served as a court physician in Granada, had studied with the leading physician-philosopher Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Riqūṭī al-Mursī,<sup>109</sup> as well as the Nasrid royal physician (*ṭabīb al-dār al-sulṭāniyya*) Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Karnī (d. ca. 700/1300).<sup>110</sup> During this period of his life, Ibn al-Khaṭīb would have become intimately familiar with works of Dioscorides, Hippocrates, Galen, Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), and Ibn Ṭufayl.

Among his most influential and important teachers during his youth was Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad b. Hudhayl (d. 753/1352). This was a close associate of ‘Abd Allāh b. al-

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<sup>106</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, pp. 536–538.

<sup>107</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 444.

<sup>108</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 160–162.

<sup>109</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 67–68; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 85; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 228. For more on al-Riqūṭī, see Gerard Wiegers, *Islamic Literature in Spanish and Aljamiado: Yça of Segovia (fl. 1450), His Antecedents and Successors* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 49–52.

<sup>110</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 206–207; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 184, 3: 175.

Khaṭīb and became one of the scholars with whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb closely affiliated himself during his early years in the Nasrid court. As Rafaela Castrillo has illustrated, Ibn Hudhayl was specifically responsible for initiating Ibn al-Khaṭīb into the disciplines of knowledge known collectively as the *‘ulūm al-‘aqliyya* (the philosophical sciences), which encompassed peripatetic philosophy, metaphysics, logic, music, astronomy and mathematics, roughly corresponding with the *trivium* and *quadrivium* in medieval Latin Christendom.<sup>111</sup> Ibn Hudhayl, who was originally from Archidona near Málaga, was a leading member of Granada’s intellectual elite who served as the Nasrid court physician.<sup>112</sup> His career in the Nasrid court is attested as early as Ismā‘īl I, a sovereign to whom he dedicated a work on medicine and physicians, *Kitāb al-Ikhtibār wa l-I‘tibār fī Imtiḥān al-Aṭibbā’*, which was preserved within the Nasrid royal library.<sup>113</sup> Ibn Hudhayl was eventually appointed as professor in the College of Granada following its establishment in 750/1349, teaching medicine and dialectical theology (*uṣūl*).<sup>114</sup> Ibn Khaldūn and al-Maqrīzī, among others, stress that Ibn Hudhayl was among Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s most important mentors and emphasize that he learned the philosophical sciences (*al-‘ulūm al-falsafiyya*) from him.<sup>115</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself refers to Ibn Hudhayl as “our teacher” (*shaykhunā*), and states “I studied medicine (*al-ṭibb*), the philosophical sciences (*al-ta’ālīm*),<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Rafaela Castrillo, “Yahyà b. Hudayl, iniciador de Ibn al-Jatib en el conocimiento de la ciencia médica,” *al-Qantara* 7 (1986), pp. 13–18.

<sup>112</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 459; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā'id al-Jumān*, pp. 320–323; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 254; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 8: 32–41.

<sup>113</sup> The codex was unfortunately destroyed, along with many other Nasrid manuscripts, during the Great Fire of El Escorial in 1671.

<sup>114</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 390; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 254.

<sup>115</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn*, 7: 344; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 444.

<sup>116</sup> According to Ibn Khaldūn, within the context of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Islamic West the designation *al-ta’ālīm* corresponded with the quadrivium of geometry (*al-handasa*), arithmetic (*‘ilm al-āritmāṭiqī*), music (*‘ilm al-musīqa*) and astronomy (*‘ilm al-hay’a*) (Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, p. 463).

logic (*al-manṭiq*) and astronomy (*sināʿat al-taʿdīl*) with him and was one of his closest adherents.”<sup>117</sup>

For many of his contemporaries and later biographers, Ibn Hudhayl (along with his contemporary al-Ābilī [d. 757/1356] in North Africa)<sup>118</sup> represented the continued importance of the philosophical sciences during the Nasrid and Marinid eras in the Islamic West. Ibn al-Khaṭīb described him as “the last bearer of the rational sciences in al-Andalus” (*kāna akhir ḥamalāt al-funūn al-ʿaqliyya bi al-Andalus*), Ibn Ḥajar proclaims him “the pre-eminent philosopher of al-Andalus” (*faylasūf al-Andalus*), and al-Maqqarī, writing over two centuries later, asserted that Ibn Hudhayl was one of the most pre-eminent philosophers of his age (*aʿjūbat zamānihi fī al-īlāʿ ʿala ʿilm al-awāʾil*).<sup>119</sup> Ibn Hudhayl’s commitment to philosophy is especially evident within his poetry, fragments of which are preserved by his contemporaries, a further testimony to the importance of this form of communication in imparting philosophical wisdom during this period. Ibn al-Khaṭīb, seeking to establish a clear intellectual lineage, emphasizes that Ibn Hudhayl had studied medicine (*qaraʿa al-ṭibb*) with the Andalusī scholar Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad al-Arkushī, Abū Zakariyya al-Qasrī and various scholars in North Africa.<sup>120</sup> Moreover, he asserts that Ibn Hudhayl studied astronomy (*al-nujūm*), arithmetic (*al-ḥisāb*), mathematics (*ʿamaliyyāt al-ḥisāb wa jabruhu*), geometry (*al-handasa*) and the principles of philosophical theology (*al-uṣūl*) with the eminent Andalusī astronomer and physician Abū ʿAbd

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<sup>117</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 388; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285. Ibn al-Khaṭīb provides a detailed biography of Ibn Hudhayl in *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 390–401 and *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 85–86.

<sup>118</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 176; Nassif Nassar, “Le Maître d’Ibn Khaldūn: Al-Ābilī,” *Studia Islamica* 20 (1964), pp. 103–114; Ali Rahuma Sahboun, *al-Ābilī: Nābighat al-Maghrib al-Kabīr wa Ustādh Ibn Khaldūn* (Rabat, 2009).

<sup>119</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 390; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 254.

<sup>120</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 390–391; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 254. Significantly, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that Ibn Hudhayl studied the *Ayāt al-Bayyināt* by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 605/1209) with Abū al-Qāsim b. Jābir, eventually writing a commentary on the work (which Ibn al-Khaṭīb displays a familiarity with), a testimony to the study of the philosophical sciences in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid Granada.

Allāh Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. ‘Alī b. al-Raqqām (d. 715/1315).<sup>121</sup> The latter was also the teacher of the Nasrid emir Naṣr (the son of Muḥammad II), thus reflecting the fact that scholars, royal officials and princes alike participated in the same circles of learning during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. The prominence of Ibn Hudhayl within the Nasrid court provides concrete evidence for the continued patronage of the philosophical sciences during the reign of Yūsuf I.

The intellectual pursuits of many within the Nasrid chancery demonstrates that the rational sciences, far from declining, persisted into the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century and, at least within certain circles, were actively taught and received royal patronage despite the sustained attacks against these disciplines by many contemporary jurists and theologians.<sup>122</sup> The careers of these individuals reflects the manner in which the practice of medicine and the pursuit of philosophy were often deeply connected throughout the Nasrid era (as, indeed, they had been since the era of Avicenna). While Ibn al-Khaṭīb would study with various philosophers throughout his career, it was Ibn Hudhayl who had the greatest impact on him both personally and intellectually.<sup>123</sup> Far from distancing himself from Ibn Hudhayl’s philosophical commitments in the *Iḥāṭa* or his autobiography, written as late as 771/1369, Ibn al-Khaṭīb unapologetically celebrates his teacher’s accomplishments and represents himself as the inheritor of his wisdom.

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<sup>121</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 391; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 180, 4: 254.

<sup>122</sup> The career of Abū al’Abbās Aḥmad b. Shu’ayb al-Kiryānī (d. 749/1349), an expert in medicine, alchemy and poetry who served as a secretary in the Marinid chancery during the reign of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī is particularly instructive in this regard. This individual is described by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as “being devoted to the philosophical sciences (*wa al-ghālib ‘alayhi al-‘ulūm al-falsafiyya*), a fact for which he was rebuked and condemned (by his contemporaries)” (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 272), underscoring how these intellectual pursuits continued to flourish within the confines of the chancery but nevertheless continued to be censured by many within the dominant scholarly establishment.

<sup>123</sup> Further evidence for the close personal bond between the two men is an anecdote narrated within the *Iḥāṭa* in which Ibn Hudhayl, approaching death, summoned Ibn al-Khaṭīb and requested that he bury him alongside his wife (who had predeceased him) at the Elvira Gate, a request that Ibn al-Khaṭīb fulfilled (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 400–401).

The close relationship between Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Hudhayl attracted the ire of many of the jurists within the Nasrid court, who considered many of the latter's opinions and pursuits to border upon the heretical. Indeed, as will be seen, when Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī, the chief judge of Granada, accused Ibn al-Khaṭīb of religious misconduct in the early 770s/1370s, he invoked his friendship with Ibn Hudhayl, who was accused of promoting heretical philosophical opinions. Ibn Hudhayl played a significant role in further encouraging Ibn al-Khaṭīb's pursuit of the disciplines of medicine and the natural sciences, fields of knowledge which 'Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb also motivated his son to cultivate. Although it has often been noted that Ibn al-Khaṭīb would go on to become one of the most celebrated physicians of the Nasrid era, authoring at least three major treatises and several short works on medicine throughout his career, less attention has been devoted to the fact that his interest in this particular field of knowledge owed much to his mentor Ibn Hudhayl, who had himself authored two known (but no longer extant) medical tracts, the "Selection and Contemplation in the Discipline of Medicine" (*al-Ikhtiyār wa al-I'tibār fī al-Ṭibb*) and "A Short Memento about Medicine" (*al-Tadhkira fī al-Ṭibb*).<sup>124</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb's knowledge and practice of medicine was pivotal in bringing him into even closer proximity to the Nasrid emir Yūsuf I, who appointed him as his personal physician. Around 742/1341, Ibn al-Khaṭīb would write a treatise on medicine in the Avicennan tradition, entitled "The Yūsufite Treatise of Medicine" (*al-Yūsufī fī al-Ṭibb*), which was dedicated to this Nasrid emir. The original codex of this work, long thought lost but which has recently resurfaced in a private royal collection in Qatar, was beautifully illuminated, written in elegant calligraphic script and presented by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to the Nasrid ruler, Yūsuf, in whose honor the work was named. The

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<sup>124</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 391. The Moroccan researcher Hayat Qara has recently discovered another of Ibn Hudhayl's works, a treatise entitled *Takmilat al-Aghrād fī Muzāwalat al-Amrād* (On the Elimination of Diseases), preserved in the private library of al-Hajj al-Hadi al-Sudi al-Qurashi in Fez (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Maqālat Muqni'at al-Sā'il 'an al-Maraḍ al-Hā'il* [Rabat, Dar al-Aman, 2015], ed. Hayat Qara, p. 6).

dedication is particularly insightful as to the nature of the relationship between the latter and Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who describes himself as “the servant dependent on the king’s patronage/benefice and the one brought up since youth in his service (‘*abd ni ‘matihi wa nash ‘āt khidmatihi*) Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Sa‘īd b. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb, may God grant him success as long as he maintains the favor of his sovereign majesty [Yūsuf I].”<sup>125</sup>

It is quite notable that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was able to attain a fully rounded education within Nasrid Granada itself and was not obligated to travel to other cities in the Islamic West or the Central Islamic Lands; rather, many scholars from al-Andalus and the Islamic West often ventured to Granada to learn and teach. This partially reflects the development of the Nasrid capital into a significant intellectual center in its own right by the early years of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century which enabled individuals such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb to attain a broad education in Arabic grammar, jurisprudence, medicine, history and the Qur’anic sciences without traveling widely. To be sure, there remained a certain amount of prestige attached to scholars in the Islamic West, such as Ibn Marzūq, who spent much of their youth upon the *riḥla fī ṭalab al- ‘ilm* (“the journey in search of knowledge”), attaining knowledge and studying with major scholars in the Central Islamic Lands.<sup>126</sup> The education afforded to elites and their children within the home, the mosque and the chancery in the Nasrid kingdom was considered to be sufficient for the intellectual

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<sup>125</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Yūsufī fī al-Ṭibb*, Unpublished MS in Private Collection in Qatar, f. 1r. Facsimile of frontispiece found in *Mawsū‘at al-nafā’is: Mukhtārāt min majmū‘at makhṭūṭāt wa-muqṭanayāt Ḥamad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Jāsim Āl Thānī* (Doha, 2017), ed. Naṣr al-Dīn Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Farfūr, p. 166. I would like to thank Josef Ženka (Charles University, Prague) for this reference.

<sup>126</sup> The most important surviving *fahāris* written during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, including that by Shams al-Dīn ibn Jabīr al-Wādī Āshī, one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own teachers (*Barnāmaj al-Wādī Āshī* [Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1982], ed. Muhammad Mahfudh), and the one authored by al-Qāsim ibn Yūsuf al-Tujībī (‘Abd al-Hafidh Mansur ed., *Barnāmaj al-Tujībī* [Dar al-‘Arabiyya li-l Kitab, 1981]) list numerous Cairene and Damascene scholars among their teachers, testifying to the continued importance and prestige of traveling to the *Mashriq*. For an important example of an Andalusī *riḥla* to the Mashriq during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, see Manuela Marín, “El Viaje a Oriente de Abū Marwān al-Bāṣī (m. 635/1237),” in *Estudios Onomásticos-Biográficos de al-Andalus*, Vol. VI (*Homenaje a José María Fórneas*) (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1994), ed. Manuela Marín, pp. 273–304.

formation of many scholars and officials. It is notable, however, that Ibn al-Khaṭīb—unlike many of his peers and colleagues—neither traveled east to seek knowledge nor performed the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, despite expressing his desire to do so several times, as early as 744/1343.<sup>127</sup> Two of his contemporaries that made this pilgrimage were the scholar-officials Ibn al-Ḥājj al-Numayrī and Khālīd b. ‘Īsā al-Balawī, both of whom composed extensive travelogues of their journeys across North Africa and the Near East.<sup>128</sup> Upon his return to the Islamic West, Ibn al-Ḥājj was enlisted in the royal service of the Marinids before returning to Granada several years later and resuming his duties as a secretary in the chancery. Another of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s contemporaries, the Granadan litterateur Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. Yūsuf al-Ru‘aynī (d. 779/1377), famously journeyed across the Islamic world, spending significant time in Egypt, Syria, Anatolia and the Hijaz and studying with leading scholars, including Abū Ḥayyān, Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Jazarī and Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf b. Zakī al-Mizzī (d. 742/1341).<sup>129</sup> During his time in Mardin, al-Ru‘aynī entered the service of the Artuqid ruler Shams al-Dīn Ṣāliḥ (r. 712/1312–765/1363), composing panegyrics in his honor and dedicating his “Harvesting the Flowers and the Collection of Gems,” a substantial treatise on Arabic lexicography, to this sovereign, indicating the important role played by the rhetorical and poetic abilities of itinerant litterateurs in securing royal patronage.<sup>130</sup> While not serving within any royal court, the career of the Andalusī scholar

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<sup>127</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, p. 101.

<sup>128</sup> Khālīd b. ‘Īsā al-Balawī, *Tāj al-Mafriq fī Taḥliyat ‘Ulamā’ al-Mashriq* (al-Muhamadiyya, Morocco: Matba‘a Fadalāh, n.d.), 2 vols., ed. al-Hasan al-Sa’ih. This individual was a close friend of Ibn al-Ḥājj al-Numayrī, in whose home he resided while in Constantine in North Africa and with whom he had traveled to the Mashriq (al-Balawī, *Tāj al-Mafriq*, 2: 115–116).

<sup>129</sup> Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Ru‘aynī, *lqṭiṭāf al-Azāhir wa lltiqāṭ al-Jawāhir* (Abu Dhabi: al-Majma‘ al-Thaqafi, 2005), pp. 82–86; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 198–199; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 276–277; Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharat al-Dhahab*, 8: 449–450. Al-Ru‘aynī’s travel companion was another Granadan scholar, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Jābir al-Hawwārī (d. 780/1378), who eventually settled near Aleppo in Syria (al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 362–363, 3: 333–334; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 206–207).

<sup>130</sup> Al-Ru‘aynī’s panegyric for Shams al-Dīn Ṣāliḥ is fully preserved within his work (al-Ru‘aynī, *lqṭiṭāf al-Azāhir wa lltiqāṭ al-Jawāhir*, pp. 89–98).



Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Sa‘d al-Andarashī al-‘Akkarī (d. 750/1350), who spent his early life in the Nasrid kingdom before traveling to Egypt and Syria, establishing himself in Damascus as a leading authority in the Arabic language, provides another instructive example of scholarly itinerancy during this period.<sup>131</sup>

### The Nasrid Chancery

The chancery is an institution that has received a great deal of attention among scholars of the Islamic world.<sup>132</sup> Known variously as the *dīwān al-rasā’il*, *dīwān al-inshā’*, *dīwān al-mukātabāt*, or *dīwān al-tarsīl wa-l-kitāba*, throughout medieval Islamic history it denoted an institution where official documents were produced. Along with the treasury, military bureau and the judiciary, it was among the most important institutions that constituted the royal administration. The sealing of documents, the production of administrative and fiscal records, foreign correspondence and the copying and preservation of documents all fell under the purview of the chancery.<sup>133</sup> The individual whose function it was to produce these documents within the chancery was known as a secretary or scribe (*kātib*, pl. *kuttāb*). Significantly, the Arabic sources from the late medieval Islamic West often make a distinction between a craft (*sinā’a*), a trade or profession (*ḥirfa*), an office (*khuṭṭa* or *rutba*), and a salaried appointment (*wazīfa*). The state of being a secretary encompassed all of these. Within the context of the Nasrid kingdom, the practice of medicine or secretarial arts was considered a craft, and the position of chancellor,

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<sup>131</sup> Jorge Lirola Delgado and Fernando N. Velázquez Basanta, “Abū l-‘Abbās al-Andarashī,” *BA*, 1: 89–91. During the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, some of these scholars even traveled as far east as Central Asia, as in the case of the grammarian Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Alī al-Sulamī (d. 656/1258) (al-Dhahabī, *al-Ibar*, 3: 277).

<sup>132</sup> H.R. Roemer, “Inshā’,” *EP*<sup>2</sup> (Brill, Brill Online), eds. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W.P. Heinrichs; Jürgen Paul, “ENŠĀ’,” *Encyclopædia Iranica*: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ensa>.

<sup>133</sup> For a discussion of the chancery in the medieval Islamic world, see Maaïke L.M. van Berkel, “Archives and Chanceries: pre-1500, in Arabic,” *EP*<sup>3</sup> (Brill, Brill Online), eds. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, and Everett Rowson.

secretary, judge or vizier an office or salaried appointment. The concept of trade or profession was usually applied to craftsmen, merchants, carpenters, blacksmiths and other non-administrative occupations. It was from these backgrounds that many secretaries and scholar-officials came, with the historic trades of their families forming parts of their patronymic, as in the case of Ibn al-Fakhkhār (“son of the Potter”), Ibn al-Jayyāb (“son of the Tailor”) and Ibn al-Ḥaddād (“son of the Blacksmith”).

According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, it was Muḥammad II who was responsible for the transition of the Nasrids from a military confederation of nobles and frontier warriors to an urban-based polity, establishing the various institutions, offices and of governance, administration and kingship (*mumahhad al-dawla alladhī waḍa‘a alqāb khidmatihā wa qaddara marātibahā wa istajāda abṭāliha wa aqām rusūm al-mulk fī-hā wa istadarr jibāyatuhā*).<sup>134</sup> The most important of these institutions founded (or, more accurately, expanded) by Muḥammad II were the royal chancery, responsible for the production of documents and foreign correspondence, and the financial bureau or treasury, which oversaw the collection of taxes, the distribution of salaries and other matters pertaining to fiscal administration. The chancery, located in the Alhambra, was headed by the chancellor (*kātib dīwān al-inshā’*).<sup>135</sup> This figure was more than just the leading secretary or scribe in the kingdom. Referred to as “the pre-eminent lord of the pen” (*ṣāhib al-qalam al-a‘lā*), the holder of this office was among the rulers’ most trusted advisors, held a leading position on the royal council (*shūrā*), and were heavily involved in the process of decision making. The chancellor was delegated a large measure of power from the sovereign

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<sup>134</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 75; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 149.

<sup>135</sup> For a detailed reconstruction of the structure and personnel of the Nasrid chancery, see Antonio Fernández-Puertas, *The Alhambra: From the Ninth Century to Yūsuf I (1354)* (London: Saqi Books, 1997), pp. 143–158; al-Ḥarūt, *al-Rasā’il al-Dīwāniyya*, pp. 39–80.

and, working in conjunction with the chief minister, secretaries of the chancery and various nobles of the kingdom, played a central role in governance of the kingdom.

Already during the reign of Muḥammad I, eminent litterateurs and scholar-officials such as Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb and Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Hayḍam al-Ru‘aynī (592/1195- 666/1268),<sup>136</sup> known as Ibn al-Fakhkhār, individuals who had previously served in Almohad and Hudid administrations were appointed as chancellors of the Nasrid kingdom. However, it was two individuals who would play a particularly important role in the development of the chancery during the reign of Muḥammad II: Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. ‘Ābid al-Anṣārī,<sup>137</sup> and Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥakīm al-Rundī, both of whom were leading scholars and litterateurs. They both oversaw the development of the Nasrid chancery into an institution governed by distinct practices and ordinances. The particular norms and protocols of chancery practice, ranging from specific formulas, the type of paper, writing instruments and ink to be utilized, and the authentication of documents through the placement of signatures or seals, were all meticulously laid out within treatises such as Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Qallūsī’s (d. 707/1308) *Tuḥfat al-Khawwās fī Ḥarf al-Khawwās*<sup>138</sup> al-Qalqashandī’s *Subḥ al-A‘shā*, and Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umārī’s *al-Ta‘rīf bi-l*

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<sup>136</sup> Originally from Sevilla, this individual was one of the leading scholars of the late Almohad era in al-Andalus. He lived in different Andalusi cities, including Málaga (615/1218), Jerez de la Frontera (615/1218), Córdoba (Ramaḍān 625/August 1228), Murcia (Rajab 629/May 1232), Granada (636/1238) before crossing into North Africa and living in Tlemcen (646/1248) and Marrakech, where he died on Ramaḍān 24 666/June 7 1268. He served as a secretary for the Hudids, Nasrids and last Almohad caliphs in Marrakech. His student was Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik who preserves some of his epistles in the *Dhayl wa al-Takmila*. He authored a *barnamaj* (edited), written around 646/1248, in addition to a number of legal and literary works. He received ijāzas from seven scholars from the Mashriq in Sha‘bān 619/September 1222. He served as chancellor for Muḥammad I between 636/1238 and 646/1248 (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa* 4: 163-167; al-Umārī, *Masālik al-Absār* 7: 174-175).

<sup>137</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 281–282.

<sup>138</sup> Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Qallūsī, *Tuḥfat al-Khawwās fī Ḥarf al-Khawwās*, BnF Arabe 6844, ff. 112v–133v. For more on this individual, see Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 75–78; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 105–106.

*Muṣṭalah al-Sharīf*.<sup>139</sup> Moreover, works of epistolography often preserved actual or model documents to serve as a templates and guide for scribes and secretaries in their composition of various types of texts, whether foreign correspondence, oaths, treaties, appointments, decrees or records.<sup>140</sup> There are several examples of such works throughout Andalusī history.<sup>141</sup> One of the earliest of these compendia in the Nasrid kingdom was the collection of letters, decrees and epistles penned by Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the head of the Nasrid chancery during the reign of Muḥammad I, which was compiled by Ibn al-Ḥakīm, the chancellor during the reigns of Muḥammad II and Muḥammad III, in a work entitled *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb fī Tarsīl Abī Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb*.<sup>142</sup>

The institutionalization of particular scribal and secretarial practices, whether formulas, ink or paper, in the Nasrid chancery is evident from the many surviving documents, preserved both in archives and as part of epistolographical manuals, most of which date from the reign of Muḥammad II onwards. The evolution of the chancery is further indicated by development of the various signatures (‘*alāma* or *tawqī*’) of the Nasrid sovereigns, which had been “And, verily, only God is the true Victor” (*wa lā ghāliba illā Allāh*) during the reign of Muḥammad I, was briefly changed to “it was written on this date” (*wa kutiba fī hādhā al-tārīkh*) at some point during the reign of Muḥammad II before becoming “this is authentic” (*ṣaḥḥa hādhā*) during the

<sup>139</sup> Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, *al-Ta’rīf bi-l Muṣṭalah al-Sharīf*, pp. 119–216.

<sup>140</sup> An overview of chancery manuals in the medieval Islamic world is provided by Rudolf Veselý, “Chancery Manuals,” *El³*. Important examples of Arabic chancery manuals include ‘Alī b. Khalaf al-Kātib, *Mawāḍ al-bayān* (Frankfurt am Main: Ma’had Tārīkh al-‘Ulūm al-‘Arabiyya wa-al-Islāmiyya fī iṭār Jāmi’at Frānkfurt, 1986), ed. Fuat Sezgin; Maḥmūd b. Salmān al-Ḥalabī, *Ḥusn al-tawaṣṣul ilā ṣinā’at al-tarassul* (Cairo: al-Maṭba’a al-Wahabiyya, 1881); and Ibrāhīm b. Hilāl al-Ṣābī, *Dīwān Rasā’il al-Ṣābī*, 2 volumes (London: al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2017), ed. Ihsan Dhanoun al-Thamiri.

<sup>141</sup> See, in particular, Muḥammad b. Futūḥ al-Ḥumaydī, *Tashīl al-Sabīl ilā Ta’alum al-Tarsīl* (Cairo: Matba’at Dar al-Kutub wa al-Watha’iq al-Qawmiyya, 2014), eds. ‘Abd al-Hamid Muhammad Shu’ayb and Ahmad Ahmad Mujahid; and Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Khiṣāl, *Rasā’il Ibn Abī al-Khiṣāl* (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 1987), ed. Muhammad Ridwan al-Dayya.

<sup>142</sup> Hassan El-Ghailani, *Edición y estudio del “Faṣl al-Jitab” de Abu Bakr ibn Jattab al-Mursi* (Madrid: Complutense University PhD Dissertation, 2002).

reign of Ismā‘īl I and remained so until the end of the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>143</sup> As Ana Labarta has demonstrated, the standardization of Nasrid royal seals, made of red wax and affixed to documents, reflects the development and institutionalization of particular chancery practices.<sup>144</sup> The use of signatures and seals (*al-‘alāma*)<sup>145</sup> was intended to authenticate documents and to prevent forgeries. Rather than having a distinct office of Master of the Royal Seal, as many other Muslim dynasties did, the Nasrid sovereign himself would place his seal and signature on all official documents.<sup>146</sup> Usually, however, this task was delegated to the chancellor or chief minister. One of the distinguishing aspects of the Nasrid chancery was that a number of its secretaries were familiar with Romance,<sup>147</sup> just as the Castilian and Aragonese chanceries employed individuals, primarily Jews, who had a knowledge of Arabic.<sup>148</sup> A significant example of such a Romance-speaking member of the Nasrid chancery and court is Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. ‘Īsā al-Ḥimyarī (d. 739/1339), described by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as “the royal translator” (*tarjumān al-sulṭān li-l Rūm bi-l Andalus*).<sup>149</sup> Similarly, al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, a leading secretary and judge within the Nasrid administration and one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s teachers, is described as having a knowledge of “foreign languages” (*ma‘rifa bi-l lughāt al-gharība*),

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<sup>143</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawḍa‘ al-‘Alāma*, pp. 23–24.

<sup>144</sup> Ana Labarta, “Sellos en la documentación nazarí,” *Revista del Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino* 28 (2016), pp. 129–149.

<sup>145</sup> For an overview of the function of signatures on chancery documents in Islamic history, with particular attention to Egypt and North Africa, see Samuel Sterns, *Fāṭimid decrees: original documents from the Fatimid Chancery* (London: Faber and Faber, 1964), pp. 123–165; John Derek Latham, *From Muslim Spain to Barbary: Studies in the History and Culture of the Muslim West* (London: Variorum, 1986), VII: 316–332.

<sup>146</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawḍa‘ al-‘Alāma*, p. 21.

<sup>147</sup> Romance-language letters on behalf of Muḥammad III to Jaume II penned by “Don Mahomat alcayde mayor de la cavalleria de los ballesteros del rey de Granada e su escrivan” between 1302 and 1309 (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 58–59) and October 1303 (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, p. 85, 215, 233–234, 249, 259, 263, 271–273, 277–279, 283–287, 314, 341–342), and two letters by “Don Mosse escrivan del rey” dated July 1302 (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 59–61). For an overview and study of the Romance-language production of the Nasrid chancery, see Ana Labarta, “Misivas en romance remitidas desde la corte nazarí: análisis diplomático,” *Anuario de historia del derecho español* 87 (2017), pp. 619–653.

<sup>148</sup> Some of these are mentioned by name in the Aragonese documents, as in the case of Vitalem Çaporta of Barcelona (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, p. 48).

<sup>149</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 96.

Romance probably being among them.<sup>150</sup> The development of a multilingual chancery was similar to the situation in Mamluk Cairo, where several individuals are identified as “translators” (*tarjūmān*).<sup>151</sup>

While the function of scribes and secretaries (as the Arabic word *kātib* [from the root *k-t-b*, meaning “to write”]) was ostensibly to compose, draft, copy, record and sign official documents and records, working within a hierarchical administration, they had played a prominent role in Andalusī society since the Umayyad era.<sup>152</sup> As the confidants and advisers of kings, nobles, judges and viziers, they were actively involved in governance and often enjoyed the patronage of these figures. The Nasrid poet-prince and scholar-official Ibn al-Aḥmar describes secretaries as “the tongues with which dynasties and kings would speak and the heart of every institution and bureau” (*wa hum alsinat al-mulūk bi-kull awān wa maqāwil al-duwal wa šudūr kull dīwān*).<sup>153</sup> Their instrumental role in court politics and civil administration was complemented by their participation in a wide range of intellectual and cultural activities. Far from being dispensable or faceless members of a structured bureaucracy, each secretary’s career was shaped by their own charisma, their personal relationship with one another, political elites and the sovereign, as well as their own distinct accomplishments. The considerable scholarship on secretaries throughout medieval Islamic history has illustrated their centrality to the governance of the realm and the production of documents intended for the internal administration of the kingdom as well as foreign correspondence.<sup>154</sup> The position of secretary or

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<sup>150</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 146.

<sup>151</sup> See, for example, the case of Sharaf al-Dīn Shīrazad b. Mamdūd al-Rūmī (d. 707/1307) (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 2: 116).

<sup>152</sup> Mohamed Meouak, “Histoire de la *kitāba* et des *kuttāb* en al-Andalus umayyade (2e/VIIIe-4e/Xe siècles),” *Orientalia Suecana* XLI-XLII (1992-1993), pp. 166–180; Bruna Soravia, “Entre bureaucratie et littérature: la *kitāba* et les *kuttāb* dans l’administration de l’Espagne umayyade,” *al-Masāq* 7 (1994), pp. 165–200.

<sup>153</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawḍa’ al-‘Alāma*, p. 18.

<sup>154</sup> For an overview of the scholarship about court secretaries in Islamic history, see Maaïke van Berkel, “The Development of the *Kātib*’s Social and Cultural Position: A Critical Review of the Present State of Research,” in

scribe was considered a noble one throughout Islamic history and maintained this distinction in the late medieval period, with the Egyptian scholar-official Abū ‘Amr ‘Uthmān b. Ibrāhīm al-Nābulusī (d. 660/1262) proclaiming that

the secretarial art is a noble craft, a splendid and lofty rank for those who master it. He who is ignorant of its excellence has surely never known one of its true practitioners. As for those secretaries worthy of the name, they are in truth the very meaning of existence, they are the kernel within the shell of this present world, the spirit in the body of this creation and the sheen upon its mirror, which reveals all excellence in perfect clarity.<sup>155</sup>

Secretaries were often praised as the earthly counterpart of angels, since the latter also served a supreme power as intermediaries with their servants and their function also encompassed the registering, recording and production of scrolls of deeds. This comparison was an allusion to the Qur’an, which states “Verily, there have been appointed over you guardians and protectors. They are noble and honorable scribes, recording and having a thorough knowledge of all that you do” (*wa inna ‘alaykum li-ḥāfiẓīn kirāmān kātibīna ya ‘lamūna mā taf‘alūna*) (Q. 82: 10–12). Moreover, the Qur’an’s reference to the tools of their craft—scrolls, books and pens—in different contexts was often invoked to underscore the legitimacy of the secretarial arts and the dignity of the profession.<sup>156</sup>

Just as other fields of knowledge had their authorities and distinguished sources, so too did the secretaries in the late medieval Islamic world, including Nasrid Granada, look to the classical period for models and inspiration.<sup>157</sup> During the 720s/1320s and 730s/1330s, Ibn al-

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*Marginal Voices in Literature and Society: Individual and Society in the Mediterranean Muslim World* (Strasbourg: European Science Foundation in collaboration with Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l’Homme d’Aix-en-Provence, 2000), ed. Robin Ostle, pp. 79–87.

<sup>155</sup> ‘Uthmān b. Ibrāhīm al-Nābulusī, *The Sword of Ambition: Bureaucratic Rivalry in Medieval Egypt* (New York: New York University Press, 2016), trans. Luke Yarbrough, p. 99.

<sup>156</sup> Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 7: 3–4.

<sup>157</sup> For an example of the memorialization of secretaries during the classical period and the preservation of their writings by later generations of scholar-officials, see al-Nābulusī, *The Sword of Ambition*, pp. 101–127, 137–153.

Khaṭīb would have closely studied works of belle-lettres and the secretarial arts such as Ibn Qutayba's *Adab al-Kuttāb* and its commentary by the Almoravid-era Andalusī scholar Ibn al-Sīd al-Baṭalyawsī (d. 521/1127)<sup>158</sup> titled *al-Iqtidāb fī Sharḥ Adab al-Kuttāb*. He would also have become intimately familiar with wisdom literature such as *Kalīla wa Dimna*, a work which formed part of the standard education of many court secretaries in al-Andalus. The figure that looms largest in the writings of various late medieval Andalusī court secretaries is 'Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā al-Kātib, a leading secretary of the late Umayyads in Damascus.<sup>159</sup> The Abbasid scholar-minister Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. Muqlā (d. 328/940), the Buyid secretary Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Hilāl al-Ṣābī (d. 384/994), as well as the Barmakid family of scholar-officials, were also prominent. Referred to "Imāms of the [Secretarial] Craft" (*a'immat al-ṣinā'a*), their writings, chancery production and maxims were widely cited and transmitted by generations of Nasrid secretaries and scholar-officials. The single most influential text guiding the self-perception and function of scribes was the "Letter to Secretaries" of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, which is incorporated in full into the writings of both the North African secretary and historian Ibn Khaldūn as well as the Granadan secretary and chief judge Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>160</sup>

Court secretaries were expected to be conversant in a wide range of intellectual disciplines and to be familiar with a vast corpus of literary texts, historical anecdotes, and philosophical wisdom. Among the pre-requisites for those being appointed as scribes, the Mamluk scholar-official Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333), citing earlier authorities,

<sup>158</sup> Delfina Serrano, "Ibn al-Ṣīd al-Baṭalyawsī (444/1052-521/1127): de los reinos de taifas a la época almorávide a través de la biografía de un ulema polifacético," *al-Qantara* 23 (2002), pp. 53–92.

<sup>159</sup> Ihsan Abbas, *'Abd al-Ḥamid ibn Yaḥyā al-Kātib wa mā tabaqā min rasā'ilīhi wa rasā'il Sālim Abī al-'Alā'* (Amman: Dar al-Shuruq, 1988).

<sup>160</sup> 'Alī ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl fī Tafdīl al-Nakhīl* (Rabat: Dar al-Aman, 2015), ed. 'Abd al-Rahman bin Muhammad al-Hibawi, pp. 394–400.



includes a detailed knowledge of history (*al-tawārīkh wa ma‘rifat akhbār al-duwal*), legal ordinances and precepts relevant to governance/administration (*al-aḥkām al-ṣulṭāniyya*), a knowledge of the Qur’an and its exegesis, and Prophetic hadith, as well as an expertise in Arabic grammar, poetry, and the scribal/secretarial arts of composition.<sup>161</sup> Similarly, the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century Egyptian scholar-official asserts:

The only men who may properly be called secretaries are those who combine knowledge of diverse sciences and who comprehend every branch of knowledge. The true secretary will have recited the Illustrious Qur’an, spent time in study of religious law, heard and narrated hadith and understood its principles and fine points, studied inheritance law, mastered Arabic, scaled the twin summits of poetry and prose, gained complete command of epistolarly style, recounted poems and aphorisms, read the epic tales of old, and understood the nuances of poetry and its varieties and forms. He will have committed to memory a great many poems, by Arabs and non-Arabs alike and studied their battles, their speeches, their biographies, their historical chronicles, and the record of all events concerning them. He will have learnt a goodly amount of arithmetic. Indeed, he will have entered into every arena of learning by the widest gate. Refined literature (*adab*) holds a singular place in his preparation.<sup>162</sup>

Al-Nuwayrī strongly encourages secretaries to attain a mastery of rhetoric/eloquence (*al-bayān*) and the various literary forms and styles, such as rhymed prose (*saj‘*) and the numerous types of poetry.<sup>163</sup> For centuries, poetry had been the pre-eminent literary form utilized by court secretaries for the transmission and communication of particular ideals and notions about society, governance and ethics. It was a way for these individuals to illustrate their extensive learning as well as to develop a distinct form of speech and writing to be utilized within the court. This primacy of poetry as a form of political eloquence remained important throughout the Nasrid period. There are several examples from late medieval Granada of compilations of court poetry and aphorisms from the classical Islamic era to the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century which communicated

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<sup>161</sup> Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 7: 25–31.

<sup>162</sup> al-Nābulusī, *The Sword of Ambition*, pp. 99–101.

<sup>163</sup> Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 7: 31–33.

moral and political precepts, with the *Fukāhāt al-asmār wa-mudhhabāt al-akhbār wa-al-ash‘ār*<sup>164</sup> and the *‘Ayn al-Adab wa al-Siyāsa*<sup>165</sup> by the Granadan courtier and secretary ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Hudhayl al-Fazārī (fl. 772/1370–802/1400) constituting particularly important examples. These works preserve valuable fragments of poetry by various Nasrid court secretaries while also indicating the distinct literary tastes and reception of classical poetry in Granada during the late medieval period.

While Granada had become a significant intellectual and cultural center by Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s early childhood, the city (and the Nasrid kingdom as a whole) also entered a renewed period of political turmoil. One of the major catalysts for this instability was the overthrow of the Nasrid emir Abū al-Juyūsh Naṣr (r. 708/1309–714/1314) in 713/1314 and the enthronement of Ismā‘īl b. Faraj, Naṣr’s cousin/maternal nephew and a military commander from Málaga descended from a brother of Muḥammad I. The usurpation of the throne from the direct male descendants of Muḥammad I and the rise of a collateral line of the Nasrid house inaugurated a period of instability within the kingdom. The political uncertainty was compounded by the fact that Naṣr, supported militarily by Castile, continued to govern in Guadix until his death on Dhū-l-Qa‘da 6 722/November 16 1322 while Ismā‘īl I ruled the remainder of the realm.<sup>166</sup> The frontier also witnessed increased activity during this period with intensifying Castilian raids against Granada, including major raids striking into the heartland of the kingdom itself. While winning a significant victory over Castile in 719/1319 at the Battle of the Vega, the measure of stability

<sup>164</sup> ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Fukāhāt al-asmār wa-mudhhabāt al-akhbār wa-al-ash‘ār* (Kuwait: Mu‘assasat Jā‘izat ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Sa‘ūd al-Bābaṭīn lil-Ibdā‘ al-Shi‘rī, 2004), ed. ‘Abd Allāh Ḥammādī.

<sup>165</sup> ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *‘Ayn al-Adab wa al-Siyāsa wa Zayn al-Ḥasab wa al-Riyāsa* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1981).

<sup>166</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 101–102; Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām* (Riyadh: Dar al-Mughni, 1998), p. 259; Anonymous, *Tārīkh al-Andalus*, p. 271. For a political history of this period, see Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, pp. 171–189.

that this provided the Nasrids, who were able to launch major raids against Castile and seize several border fortresses, was ended by the subsequent assassination of Ismā‘īl I in 725/1325. He was succeeded by his young son Muḥammad IV (r. 725/1325–733/1333), who was also assassinated in 733/1333 before being succeeded by his brother Yūsuf I (r. 733/1333–755/1354), who met a violent death by an assassin’s blade while leading prayers in the Alhambra mosque in 755/1354. This political violence contributed to the increased instability of Nasrid Granada and enabled Castile to regain the military initiative on the frontier by the late 730s/1330s and seize several strategic border fortresses.<sup>167</sup> Nasrid political power and internal stability was also greatly compromised by the intervention of the Marinids (both directly and in the form of the semi-independent *shuyūkh al-ghuzāt* who controlled Ronda) in Iberian affairs during this period. The Nasrid Kingdom in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb spent the formative years of his youth was thus colored equally by political instability as well as intellectual and cultural efflorescence.

#### Ibn al-Khatib as Court Secretary, 741/1340–749/1349

Despite the political turmoil in Granada during his youth, by the time Ibn al-Khaṭīb had reached adulthood in 730/1330, he had received a broad education in Arabic, rhetoric, grammar, poetry, jurisprudence, and Qur’anic sciences, known collectively as the *‘ulūm al-naqliyya* (“the traditional sciences”). Ibn al-Khaṭīb appears to have continued with his studies even after being appointed as a scribe in the chancery and beginning his career in the royal administration around 733/1333. However, even before his official appointment he had been initiated into courtly life and the chancery profession by his father, trained in the equestrian and martial arts, and studied

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<sup>167</sup> For a detailed study of political assassinations in Nasrid Granada during this period, see Francisco Vidal Castro, “El asesinato político en al-Andalus: la muerte violenta del emir en la dinastía nazarí (s. XIV),” in *De muerte violenta: política, religion y violencia en al-Andalus* (Madrid: CSIC, 2004), ed. Maribel Fierro, pp. 349–398.

with some of the leading scholar-officials and physician-ministers in the Nasrid capital.<sup>168</sup> It was following his introduction to officialdom, as an apprentice within the Nasrid chancery, that he received a more advanced education, continuing his study of the traditional sciences, but also becoming well-acquainted with logic, medicine, philosophy, music, belles-lettres and history. The Alhambra palace, which constituted a large and distinct complex in Granada during this period, offered numerous opportunities for study and learning, especially due to the diverse group of individuals who resided within its walls and its vast resources, such as the royal library. As with earlier examples in Andalusī history, such as the jurist and physician-philosopher Abū al-Walīd Muḥammad b. Rushd (d. 595/1198) and the scribe and philosopher Abū Jaʿfar Aḥmad b. Jurj al-Balansī (d. 601/1204),<sup>169</sup> this dynamic intellectual context enabled Ibn al-Khaṭīb to immerse himself in both the traditional and philosophical sciences.

As discussed above, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's father had been appointed to a leading position within the Nasrid court around 714/1314 and was associated specifically with the royal chancery, although it remains unclear in what capacity. While employed in the administration, ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb, who had himself received a comprehensive education during his youth, worked under the tutelage of the head of the chancery and chief minister *Dhū-l Wizāratayn*<sup>170</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Jayyāb (d. 749/1349). It was during his service within the royal administration in Granada, a period spanning more than two decades between 714/1314 and 741/1340, that ʿAbd Allāh was most active as a writer and scholar. Ibn al-Khaṭīb emphasizes that his father was devoted to the pursuit of belles-lettres and was particularly skilled in the art of oratory and

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<sup>168</sup> Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, p. 68.

<sup>169</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Mūsā al-Andalusī, *al-Ghuṣūn al-Yāniʿa fī Maḥāsini Shuʿarāʾ al-Miʿa al-Sābiʿa* (Cairo: Dar al-Maʿarif, 1990), ed. Ibrahim al-Abyari, pp. 36–41; Ibn al-Abbār, *Tuhfat al-Qādim*, pp. 81–82.

<sup>170</sup> This title, which is attested in al-Andalus as far back as the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century was an honorific utilized for any individual who held both the offices of chancellor (*kātib dīwān al-inshāʾ*) and chief minister (*wazīr*), two of the most senior functions of state.

eloquence.<sup>171</sup> Although none of his works survive, a few fragments of his poetry are preserved in the *Iḥāṭa*, which are extracted from Ibn al-Khaṭīb's now-lost "The Radiant Crown" (*al-Iklīl al-Zāhir*), which he began composing shortly after the beginning of his own career in the chancery. These poetic fragments, which shed important light upon 'Abd Allāh's literary expression, also embody the themes that impressed themselves upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb in the construction of his family's legacy. Among the most famous of these verses was 'Abd Allāh's poem, addressed to his son Ibn al-Khaṭīb, that

Medicine, poetry and the secretarial arts have elevated us to nobility and  
excellence

These three things have raised us to lofty appointments, including the office of  
royal chamberlain

*al-ṭibb wa al-shi'r wa al-kitāba simātunā fī banī al-nujāba; hunn thalāth  
mublighāt marātib ba'ḍuhā al-ḥijāba*<sup>172</sup>

This couplet demonstrates that, already within 'Abd Allāh's own lifetime, the family harbored ambitions for holding high office, including an eye upon the supreme office of chamberlain (*ḥājib*). More specifically, it sheds light on 'Abd Allāh's emphasis upon his own intellectual pursuits and competence in poetry, the secretarial arts and medicine as primary factors that enabled his family to rise within the Nasrid court. Unlike Ibn al-Khaṭīb's attempts to ascribe a noble antiquity to the family extending to the Umayyad era, 'Abd Allāh does not invoke any position of seniority or legendary family genealogy extending to 2nd/ 8<sup>th</sup>-century Syria, but stresses instead the importance of education and knowledge as key factors enabling social mobility. The intellectual and professional pursuit of both the secretarial arts had long been associated with political and social advancement. Significantly, it is a theme that figures

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<sup>171</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 83–84.

<sup>172</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 390.

prominently in polemics against Christians and Jews in the medieval Islamic world. The Egyptian scholar-official ‘Uthmān b. Ibrāhīm al-Nabulusī, the author of a treatise arguing against the legitimacy of employing non-Muslims in the administration, decries the role of medicine and the secretarial arts in elevating the social status of Jews and Christians:

The wisest and greatest Coptic Christians said to their people: “Teach your children the secretarial art, that they may share with the Muslims in their property, their interests and their decisions.” They all agreed upon this plan and the result is plain to see. They gained power in the Muslims’ administration and did as they pleased in the government. How apposite are the lines a poet composed to describe the Jews and Christians, observing that the former train their children in medicine, the latter theirs in the secretarial art, as follows:  
God curse the Christians and Jews! They have attained what they wanted to get from us: They have emerged as doctors and secretaries that they might seize both souls and property.<sup>173</sup>

As will be seen in the following chapter, the recognition by the nobility that it was the mastery of medicine and the secretarial arts (along with rhetoric, astrology/astronomy, arithmetic and finance) that propelled many individuals to leading positions of authority within the royal administration, generated its own polemic against scholar-officials. Unsurprisingly, it often drew from these longstanding polemics against Christians and Jews.

The emphasis upon medicine in ‘Abd Allāh’s poem to his son is particularly striking within this context because it suggests that the pursuit of this discipline had already become associated with the family decades before Ibn al-Khaṭīb had distinguished himself as a physician. The verses speak directly to the theme which is also prevalent in Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own writings of the Banū al-Khaṭīb as Nasrid government functionaries since the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, with the reference to the secretarial arts (*al-kitāba*) implying that this had become a family trade by the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. By the early 730s/1330s, ‘Abd Allāh had served under three Nasrid emirs

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<sup>173</sup> Al-Nabulusī, *The Sword of Ambition*, p. 57.

and it was during this period that he initiated his son into courtly life in Granada and prepared him for a career within the royal administration, securing a position for him within the chancery. The preservation by Ibn al-Khaṭīb of his father's poem that places such emphasis upon the theme of government service and the transmission of a specific skill set—medicine, poetry and the secretarial arts—from father to son was part of his careful crafting of his own professional and family lineage. In his “Description of the Masters of the Royal Seal” (*Kitāb Mustawḍaʿ al-ʿAlāma*), written in Fez around 792/1390, the Nasrid poet-prince Ibn al-Aḥmar illustrates how common it was for offices within the chancery to be inherited from father to son, providing several examples of the rise of “administrative lineages” (such as the Banū Abī Madyān in the Marinid court) whose various members held the post of “Master of the Royal Seal” for generations.<sup>174</sup> This is also evident in the case of the early Nasrid chancery. Beginning with Abū ʿUmar Yūsuf b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Saʿīd al-Yaḥṣūbī al-Lawshī (d. 660/1261),<sup>175</sup> who served as chancellor during the reign of Muḥammad I, three additional members of this family—Abū Bakr b. Yūsuf b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Saʿīd al-Yaḥṣūbī al-Lawātī (the son of Muḥammad I's secretary), al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Saʿīd al-Yaḥṣūbī al-Lawātī and al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Saʿīd al-Yaḥṣūbī al-Lawātī—were appointed in succession as chancellors under Muḥammad II.<sup>176</sup> These individuals belonged to a prominent family from Loja, indicating the close relationship between scholar-officials from this town and the Nasrid dynasty.

There were also other significant lineages of secretaries, functionaries and scholar-officials in early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century Nasrid Granada, which transmitted their status and, in many

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<sup>174</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawḍaʿ al-ʿAlāma*, pp. 17–84.

<sup>175</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 421–422.

<sup>176</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 77–78.

cases, their position in the chancery from father to son. The most important of these individuals among Ibn al-Khaṭīb's associates include Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad al-Quṭba Dawsī,<sup>177</sup> Abū Ishāq b. al-Hajj al-Numayrī,<sup>178</sup> Ibn Simāk al-ʿĀmilī,<sup>179</sup> Abū Bakr b. Juzayy, Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. Juzayy,<sup>180</sup> Abū Jaʿfar b. Abī Ishāq<sup>181</sup> and ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq b. ʿAṭiyya al-Muḥāribī.<sup>182</sup> The chancery was the focal point of familial rivalry and competition among literary elites and notables. Embodying this competitive spirit, Ibn al-Khaṭīb inserts a biography of himself within the *Tāj al-Muḥalla*, a work enumerating the virtues and literary skill of leading Nasrid scholars and officials in the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, justifying his decision by asserting that “I desired not to be separated from the members of my class/caste (*abnāʾ jinsī*),” reflecting his strong consciousness of the distinct professional category to which he belonged.<sup>183</sup> He goes on to state that he “competed with my colleagues in the various intellectual pursuits and sought to include myself among their number, even if merely in this book...verily, I vied with all of them as their equal (*nāfastuhum munāfasat al-akifāʾ*)” in advancing myself forward.”<sup>184</sup> This deeply-rooted professional rivalry among chancery officials and Granada's literary elites, all of whom aspired to hold high-ranking positions within the administration, was a major factor that underpinned Ibn

<sup>177</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 250–251.

<sup>178</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 342–363. Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 64, 142–143; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 260–269; al-Balawī, *Tāj al-Mafriq*, 2: 115; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farāʾid al-Jumān*, pp. 313–318; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭib*, 9: 330–349. For important studies of Ibn al-Hajj al-Numayrī (d. 1383), an Andalusī court secretary and judge from a prominent Granadan family who was employed by two Marinid (Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī and Abū ʿInan) and two Naṣrid (Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V) rulers, see J. F. P. Hopkins, “An Andalusian Poet of the Fourteenth Century: Ibn al-Hajj,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 24 (1961): 57–64; and A.L. de Premare, *Maghreb et Andalousie au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle: Les notes de voyage d'un andalou au Maroc, 1344-1345* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1981).

<sup>179</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 67.

<sup>180</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 66–67.

<sup>181</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 76.

<sup>182</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 269–272.

<sup>183</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 68.

<sup>184</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 68. A similar sentiment is expressed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb in the preface to his autobiography, completed Muḥarram 771/August 1369, which was incorporated into his “Comprehensive History of Granada” (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 438).



al-Khaṭīb's ambitions in both his pursuit of learning and his political maneuvering throughout his life.

The competitive nature of the chancery profession and the importance of education aside, the rise of one family's fortunes and the decline of another's during this period was closely linked with broader factors such as plague and war. Throughout the 730s/1330s, Castilian raids and Marinid military intervention in Nasrid affairs culminated in the Battle of Tarifa/Rio Salado in 741/1340, which was a major military victory for Castile (and Portugal). Although he never explicitly claims to have done so, Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself appears to have fought in this campaign, as indicated by the highly detailed reports and description of the battle throughout his works.<sup>185</sup> It was a particularly disastrous defeat for the Nasrids, who lost control of strategic frontier fortresses such as Priego and Alcalá la Real as well as major towns such as Algeciras in the immediate aftermath of the battle. The defeat also constituted a major personal tragedy for Ibn al-Khaṭīb. Along with many other officials and scholars (including many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's teachers and mentors), 'Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb was killed in the battle on Jumādā I 741/October 30 1340, a fact that left a strong impression upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb for the remainder of his life.<sup>186</sup> Indeed, the biographical sections of the "Comprehensive History" devoted to his father's biography includes a powerful elegy by the jurist and preacher of the Great Mosque of Granada, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Lawshī (d. 773/1372),<sup>187</sup> affirming that 'Abd Allāh died fighting bravely, thus achieving a martyr's death.<sup>188</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb also includes two poetic elegies, one which he himself composed and the other by his teacher Abū Zakariyya b.

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<sup>185</sup> Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatīb*, p. 69.

<sup>186</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 389–391, 4: 442. A brother of Ibn al-Khaṭīb (about whom virtually nothing is known) was also killed during the battle.

<sup>187</sup> For more on this figure, see Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 182–183.

<sup>188</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 391–392, 4: 442; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 84.

Hudhayl lamenting ‘Abd Allāh’s death.<sup>189</sup> The death of his father and many of his mentors during this battle deeply affected Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his memorialization of the loss at Tarifa often manifested itself by a consistent reflection upon themes of loss in his poetry and a pronounced anti-Christian militancy within his writings. It also prompted a heightened sympathy for the Marinids, whom he began to view as the only political power that had the resources and will to withstand Castilian military expansion and thus ensure the survival of al-Andalus.

Despite his lamentation, Ibn al-Khaṭīb expresses his gratitude to his father for having bequeathed to him a lofty position, an honorable standing within society and a prestigious office, referring to his position within the chancery (*khalīfānī ‘ālī al-daraja shahīr al-khuṭṭa mashmūl bi-l qubūl*).<sup>190</sup> According to Ibn Khaldūn, it was Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own literary and rhetorical skill, especially his poetic and epistolary ability, that attracted the attention of Yūsuf I and prompted him to appoint him as a secretary of the royal chancery and make him one of his courtiers.<sup>191</sup> While Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s literary talents undoubtedly further commended him for the position, his appointment as a court secretary or scribe cannot be understood without reference to his father’s own service in the royal court and the patronage of his teacher, Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Jayyāb, who had served as the head of the royal chancery since 710/1310. The exact date of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s appointment to a post in the Nasrid administration is unknown, but his recitation of a court panegyric in the presence of Yūsuf I shortly following his enthronement indicates that he was already an important courtier of this king by Dhū-l Ḥijja 733/August 1333. Following the death of his father, brother and many high-ranking Nasrid officials and scholars, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was promoted to a senior secretarial post within the royal chancery in the Alhambra. In order to better

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<sup>189</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 391–392.

<sup>190</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 442–443.

<sup>191</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn*, 7: 344; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 444.

understand his role and intellectual development as a court secretary, it is useful to look carefully at the various figures that mentored and influenced him during this period.

This prosopographical approach is justified by the fact that Ibn al-Khaṭīb during this period thought of himself as part of a broader network of intellectuals and functionaries within the Nasrid kingdom. Indeed, by the early 740s/1340s he had already completed three separate biographical dictionaries— “The Ornamented Crown” (*al-Tāj al-Muḥallā*), “The Radiant Crown” (*al-Iklīl al-Zāhir*) and the “Addendum to the *Ṣila*” (*‘Ā’id al-Ṣila*)— dedicated to representing these networks by preserving the biographies of the intellectual and administrative elites of the Islamic West, with particular attention to the Nasrid realm. Although none of these works have survived, the fragments preserved within the “Comprehensive History” and al-Maqqarī’s *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb* demonstrate that there was a specific attempt by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to memorialize those scholars and officials who influenced him directly and to which he was connected through teacher-student relationships and ties of patronage within the Nasrid court. Significantly, many of these same individuals would be included within Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s later biographical dictionaries, the “Comprehensive History of Granada” (*al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa*), the “Concealed Brigade of Biographies of Poets We Encountered in al-Andalus during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> Century” (*al-Katība al-Kāmina fī man laqaynah bi-al-Andalus min shu‘arā’ al-mā’a al-thāmina*) and the “Description of the Notables” (*Awṣāf al-Nās*), a fact which conveys his consistent high regard for these teachers throughout his life. The valuable information provided within these biographies enables modern scholars to further reconstruct the intellectual culture of Nasrid Granada during the early to mid 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century and thus better situate Ibn al-Khaṭīb within his specific context. A careful investigation into this network of individuals affirms the importance of the chancery and court during the reign of Yūsuf I as a social and

intellectual space within which particular forms and practices of knowledge were transmitted to Ibn al-Khaṭīb by his teachers, highlighting the continuities between the different generations of scholar-functionaries within Nasrid Granada.<sup>192</sup>

Despite being a member of the Nasrid intellectual and administrative elite, several scholars have remarked upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb's perceived inability to link himself via marriage (*muṣāhara*) to any of Granada's leading political or intellectual lineages during this period. While his political enemies accused him of being unable to secure a lucrative marriage with any of Granada's major families, nowhere does Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself address the matter. Any anxieties that he may have had about his the status of his spouse were addressed primarily in various attempts in his autobiography to link his ancestors by marriage to the leading political, military and scholarly lineages of Granada. This is especially evident in his claim that his grandfather Sa'īd was connected by marriage to the Hashemite clan of the Banū Ṭanjālī, to the military commander Abū Ja'far Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ja'dāllāh al-Sulamī and (distantly) to the wife of emir Muḥammad II. However, within the context of his own life it is evident that he was not closely tied through marriage to any of the Nasrid military elites or nobility. While this fact has often been utilized to undercut his importance within Granada, it is quite evident that the absence of substantial ties of kinship between Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Granada's political elite in the 740s/1340s increased his dependence upon the sovereign, a fact which tied him even more closely with the Nasrid dynasty itself. Far from weakening his opportunities for political ascension, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's lack of marriage ties with the established Nasrid nobility thus meant that his loyalties to the Nasrid royal house and the person of the king were perceived as undivided. Moreover, in the absence of any blood or marriage ties with any of the leading

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<sup>192</sup> For a political and cultural history of Nasrid Granada during the reign of Yūsuf I, see Muhammad Kamal Shabana, *Yūsuf al-Awwal ibn al-Aḥmar, sulṭān Gharnāṭa* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafa al-Diniyya, 2004).

Granadan notables, the importance of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's intellectual and political ties with the Nasrid elite was amplified, since these were the only ties of obligation that bound them together.

Following the death of his father, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's most significant mentor and patron within the Nasrid chancery was Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Jayyāb, known as *Dhū-l-Wizāratayn* for holding the offices of chief minister and chancellor simultaneously.<sup>193</sup> During his time as a councilor of Ismā'īl I and as secretary in the Nasrid chancery, 'Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb had been a subordinate of Ibn al-Jayyāb. The two men worked closely with one another for nearly four decades, developing a strong alliance and friendship that was underpinned both by the bond of patronage but also their shared intellectual interests. The strong degree of affinity that existed between these individuals is indicated by the fact that, following 'Abd Allāh's death at the Battle of Rio Salado in 741/1340, Ibn al-Jayyāb himself personally took it upon himself to ensure that the former's son, Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭīb, secured a significant appointment as a secretary in the chancery. The Nasrid chancellor played a central role in immersing Ibn al-Khaṭīb in the disciplines of belles-lettres, history and the secretarial arts. Within his autobiography, Ibn al-Khaṭīb asserts that he “was finely educated and initiated into the world of belles-lettres by the respected, righteous and noble teacher and head of the royal chancery (*al-ra'īs ṣāhib al-qalam al-a'lā*) Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Jayyāb.”<sup>194</sup> Elsewhere, he also proclaims that the Nasrid chancellor as “the most eminent scholar” (*ṣadr ṣudūr hadhihi al-milla*) and the “master of the secretarial arts” (*shaykh al-kitāba*), whose “virtues were renowned throughout the East and the West.”<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 125–152; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 125–129; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā'id al-Jumān*, pp. 239–242. For two excellent studies of this individual, see María Jesus Rubiera Mata, *Ibn Al-Yayyab, El Otro Poeta De La Alhambra* (Granada, 1994) and 'Alī Muhammad al-Nuqrat, *Ibn al-Jayyāb al-Gharnāṭī: ḥayātuhu wa shi'ruhu* (Benghazi, 1996).

<sup>194</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 458.

<sup>195</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn*, 7: 344; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 57–59; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 183–193; al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 7: 407–432, 8: 3–9.

This high praise was echoed by other contemporaries as well. Ibn Khaldūn describes Ibn al-Jayyāb as “the most learned man in the Islamic West” (*shaykh al-‘adwatayn*) and emphasizes that he had served within the royal chancery in Granada since the reign of Muḥammad III (r. 702/1302–709/1309) and held the position of Nasrid chancellor for nearly four decades.<sup>196</sup> Similarly, the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century scholar Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm b. Farḥūn (d. 799/1397), writing in Medina, praises him as a polymath (*mutafannin fī-l ‘ulūm*), specifically emphasizing his knowledge of rhetoric, history, arithmetic, belles-lettres, poetry and hadith, while Ibn al-Aḥmar describes him as attaining a mastery over both the philosophical and traditional sciences.<sup>197</sup> This illustrates the increasing integration of historical writing and the science of history (*‘ilm al-tārīkh*) into the wide range of scholarly disciplines prominent within the Nasrid chancery during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.

Most of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s works bear the imprint of Ibn al-Jayyāb’s influence and reflect his indebtedness to his teacher. Indeed, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s first known works, written in the early 740s/1340s, were composed under Ibn al-Jayyāb’s instruction and guidance and refer to him consistently as *al-shaykh* (“the pre-eminent teacher or elder”). These include the now lost “The Trifles of the Compiler” (*Tāfah man Jamm wa Nuqṭat man Yamm*) and the recently rediscovered “Verse and Prose” (*al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*),<sup>198</sup> both of which include a compilation of Ibn al-Jayyāb’s poetry and chancery correspondence organized along similar lines to epistolary and poetic collections written by late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid chancellors such as Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb. In addition to inspiring Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s production of his own compilations of chancery documents and official correspondence, the “The Sweeping of the Shop after the Relocation of

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<sup>196</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn*, 7: 344.

<sup>197</sup> Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 2: 111; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā’id al-Jumān*, p. 240.

<sup>198</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr* (Tetuan: al-Khalij al-‘Arabi, 2016), ed. Hayat Qara.

the Inhabitants” (*Kunāsat al-Dukkān ba’d Intiqāl al-Sukkān*) and the “The Sweet Basil of the Secretaries” (*Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*), Ibn al-Jayyāb’s prosimetric style and composition of Nasrid history and dynastic propaganda (including genealogy) served as a model for Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own works in this genre, particularly evident in “The History of the Nasrid Dynasty” (*Ṭurfat al-‘Aṣr fī Tārīkh Dawlat Banī Naṣr*) and the “Resplendence of the Full Moon” (*Lamḥa al-Badriyya*).

The surviving fragments of Ibn al-Jayyāb’s panegyric poetry, preserved on the walls of the Alhambra and within Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s works, illustrate his mastery at using verse for communicating Nasrid dynastic ideology, one of the major legacies of this individual, who found successors in both the figure of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Zamrak during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. The *Dīwān* of Ibn al-Jayyāb, which was itself compiled by Ibn al-Khaṭīb,<sup>199</sup> also indicates that his poetic style and various forms of verse he composed—panegyric (*madīḥ*), laments (*marthiyya*), strophic poetry (*zajal* and *muwashshah*)—were emulated by Ibn al-Khaṭīb.<sup>200</sup> As a scholar-official who produced several works of history, epistolary and poetry while holding the offices of chief minister and chancellor simultaneously, Ibn al-Jayyāb served an important mentor and model for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, whom the former viewed as his eventual successor to the position. It was most probably at Ibn al-Jayyāb’s recommendation that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was appointed the private secretary (*kātib al-sirr*) of Nasrid emir Yūsuf I, thus bringing him into close personal proximity with the king himself.<sup>201</sup> The adjacency of the chancery to the royal residence in the Comares Palace of the Alhambra, undoubtedly further strengthened the bond between the

<sup>199</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 128.

<sup>200</sup> ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān Ibn al-Jayyāb al-Gharnāṭī* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Adab, 2016), ed. Fawzi Isa.

<sup>201</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 443; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 129.

chancery and royal power, with individuals such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn al-Jayyāb serving as a direct link between the king and the rest of the royal administration.

The chancellor Ibn al-Jayyāb served as both Ibn al-Khaṭīb's most important scholarly mentor as well as his greatest supporter as he advanced through the administrative ranks in the Alhambra. The *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, dating from around 744/1343 and constituting Ibn al-Khaṭīb's earliest surviving work, greatly illuminates the relationship between the two individuals. Referring to Ibn al-Jayyāb throughout the work as "our teacher" (*shaykhunā*)<sup>202</sup>, Ibn al-Khaṭīb preserves his correspondence with him. The letters exchanged between the two men consist entirely of verses of poetry or rhymed prose (*saj'*), embodying the prosimetric style of the Nasrid chancery during this period. Replete with superlative praise and panegyric, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's letters to Ibn al-Jayyāb constitute an appraisal of his teacher's knowledge, superior status and continued guidance,<sup>203</sup> while Ibn al-Jayyāb exalts his student as "having excelled in both the composition of poetry and prose...and attaining the very pinnacle of achievement in the literary arts despite [his] youth."<sup>204</sup> Ideas of friendship and love played an important role in the framing of the relationship between the two men, with one poem by Ibn al-Khaṭīb composed for Ibn al-Jayyāb declaring that

Verily, "friendship" (*al-ṣadāqa*) is an utterance whose various meanings and reality are as strange, and even stranger, than the griffon

For how much silver has tarnished, how many towns have perished and how much gold have we seen vanish?

Yet true friendship, unlike these, is an eternal treasure, the most sublime and brilliant thing that can be attained by an individual.

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<sup>202</sup> This epithet it utilized by Ibn al-Khaṭīb exclusively for those within his intellectual work for individuals with whom he enjoyed a teacher-student relationship and allows historians to distinguish between his mentors and colleagues/peers.

<sup>203</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 109–110.

<sup>204</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, p. 104.



For when you express your contentment with me, as you have done, I have little care for anyone else.

And so long as you are present I cannot and shall not weep for all those who have departed.

It cannot be otherwise, for you are to me as my very family and father (*anta al-ahl 'indī wa al-ab*).<sup>205</sup>

The correspondence between them is particularly distinguished by Ibn al-Jayyāb referring to Ibn al-Khaṭīb throughout as “my most beloved son” (*waladī al-aḥabbu ilay*) and Ibn al-Khaṭīb at times referring to his teacher as “my family” (*anta al-ahl 'indī*) and “the one who is as my own father” (*abī, maḥall wālidī*),<sup>206</sup> language that reflects not only the close relationship between the two individuals, but also suggests that Ibn al-Jayyāb, who had lost his son Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad at a young age,<sup>207</sup> considered Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who had recently lost his father, his protégé and “adopted” him as his possible successor.<sup>208</sup> The ubiquity of the vocabulary of filial affection throughout the correspondence thus demonstrates the manner in which the professional ties of loyalty within the chancery and teacher-student relationships could appropriate or replicate the language of blood and familial ties, as will be demonstrated more fully in the following chapter.

As the frequency of their correspondence as well as the content of the letters in the *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr* demonstrate, Ibn al-Jayyāb served as a vital link between Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who was away from Granada in either Málaga or on the outskirts of Gibraltar for much of 744/1343, and the center of royal power in Granada, even writing to Ibn al-Khaṭīb on at least one occasion on behalf of Yūsuf I.<sup>209</sup> This prompted a response from Ibn al-Khaṭīb, his earliest

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<sup>205</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Dīwān*, 1: 111

<sup>206</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Dīwān*, 1: 111.

<sup>207</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, pp. 72–74.

<sup>208</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 56–62; Lirola Delgado, “La familia de Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” p. 16.

<sup>209</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 50–51.

preserved letter to Yūsuf, while he was still in Málaga. In the letter, Ibn al-Khaṭīb reaffirms his loyalty and allegiance to the Nasrid sovereign, describing himself as “the servant who is honored by service rendered to him [Yūsuf I], the one raised within the confines of his sacred precinct, who knows no other master except him nor any other benevolence and grace except for his,” before lamenting that “being deprived of the radiance of your royal presence, from standing at your feet and among your slaves and servants has caused an immense longing and yearning in my soul.”<sup>210</sup> Moreover, he declares that Ibn al-Jayyāb’s letter which conveyed the emir’s well-wishes has provided him with the opportunity to reaffirm the loyalty and love which he owes his sovereign and concludes by appending a supplication praying for the Yūsuf’s well-being and the defeat of his enemies.<sup>211</sup> This exchange of letters provides invaluable evidence about the pivotal role of Ibn al-Jayyāb, in his capacity as chancellor as well as mentor, in securing the Nasrid emir’s patronage for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, even when the latter was distant from the royal court and sovereign’s presence. This continued advocacy by Ibn al-Jayyāb on behalf of his student played a role in furthering Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s rise within the Nasrid administration and further cemented the ties of loyalty and friendship between the two men. It was the immense respect for Ibn al-Jayyāb that may also have prompted Ibn al-Khaṭīb to name his second son ‘Alī in his teacher’s honor.

The correspondence between Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn al-Jayyāb also reflects a relationship strongly marked by a commitment to similar intellectual pursuits and ideals. In a poem written to Ibn al-Jayyāb from Málaga around 743/1342, Ibn al-Khaṭīb invokes both the “intellectual virtues of Luqmān” and the “wisdom of Hermes.”<sup>212</sup> This reference in a single stanza to both the prototypical Qur’anic wiseman and a figure from antiquity (Hermes Trismegistus), whose name

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<sup>210</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 39–40.

<sup>211</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 41–42.

<sup>212</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, p. 48.

was synonymous with esoteric and occult knowledge in the Islamic tradition<sup>213</sup> reflects the manner in which both exoteric and esoteric knowledge were seen as constituting important pillars of knowledge in the broader milieu of Nasrid Granada. Indeed, even leading jurists such as Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Maqqarī (d. 759/1358), another teacher of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, often quoted Islamic and ancient wisdom within the same context in order to underscore the inseparability of these forms of knowledge. It also demonstrates the importance of literary genres such as poetry and epistolary in imparting this knowledge, which can be categorized broadly as moral philosophy, from teacher to student. Ibn al-Jayyāb was among the most influential of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s teachers upon his intellectual formation and his efforts in promoting his student’s rise within the Nasrid chancery, mentoring him in the secretarial arts and encouraging his interest in belles-lettres was recognized by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as the main factors securing his own ascendancy within the Nasrid court.<sup>214</sup> It was also Ibn al-Jayyāb who brought Ibn al-Khaṭīb into contact with some of the most senior scholars in Nasrid Granada.

By the mid-740s/1340s, therefore, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s appointment as a court secretary had brought him into contact with new forms of knowledge, while also bringing him within the confines of the inner circle of Yūsuf I, whom he served as both a private secretary and physician. Remarkably, his proximity to the Nasrid royal house also extended to his close relationship with many Nasrid royal women, including Faṭima bt. Muḥammad (d. 749/1349), the powerful grandmother of Yūsuf I, whose epitaph Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself composed.<sup>215</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s

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<sup>213</sup> For an extensive discussion of Hermes in the medieval Arabic tradition, see Kevin van Bladel, *The Arabic Hermes: From Pagan Sage to Prophet of Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

<sup>214</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 68.

<sup>215</sup> Barbara Boloix-Gallardo, “Beyond the Ḥaram: Ibn al-Khaṭīb and His Privileged Knowledge of Royal Nasrid Women,” *Medieval Encounters* 20 (2014), pp. 383–402. For more on Fāṭima bt. Muḥammad, see María Jesús Rubiera Mata, “La Princesa Fāṭima bint al-Aḥmar, la María de Molina de la dinastía Nazarí de Granada,” *Medievalismo: Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales* 6 (1996), pp. 183–192.

literary skill and attachment to the extended royal household also meant that he recited panegyrics during public events and often authored the inscriptions engraved upon public and royal buildings, including the Alhambra. These functions granted him a large degree of authority to craft the specific vocabulary of sovereignty and dynastic legitimacy in Nasrid Granada, as well be demonstrated in the third part of this dissertation.

The royal chancery thus constituted a significant institution which hosted large numbers of scholars patronized by the Nasrid emirs. It was within this context that it served as a circle of learning, bringing together a diverse group of scholars from various regions in the Nasrid realm who contributed to both the administration of the kingdom and the wealth of its intellectual culture. During the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and throughout the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, the Nasrid chancery and royal court in the Alhambra provided the context for the cultivation of the disciplines of belles-lettres, philosophy, history and medicine. This allowed the intellectual sciences as well as the traditional sciences to flourish within the kingdom during this period and attracted a variety of intellectuals from across Iberia and North Africa to the Nasrid court.

It was during his early career in the royal administration that Ibn al-Khaṭīb became acquainted with Abū ‘Uthmān Sa‘īd b. Aḥmad b. Luyūn (d. 750/1349), a figure he refers to as “our teacher” (*shaykhunā*) and “the philosopher” (*al-ḥakīm*).<sup>216</sup> Born in Almería to a family originally from Lorca, Ibn Luyūn was a particularly skilled poet and distinguished himself as a

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<sup>216</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 205. For a detailed overview of Ibn Luyūn life and works, see Abū ‘Uthmān Sa‘īd b. Aḥmad b. Luyūn, *Lamḥ al-Siḥr min Rūḥ al-Shi‘r wa Rawḥ al-Shihr* (Abu Dhabi: al-Majma’ al-Thaqafi, 2005), ed. Sa‘īd bin al-Ahrash, pp. 25–88.

prolific author,<sup>217</sup> establishing himself as one of the leading litterateurs in the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>218</sup> As with Ibn Hudhayl, Ibn Luyūn's expertise in the theory and practice of medicine contributed to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's pursuit of this scholarly discipline.<sup>219</sup> Significantly, Ibn Luyūn authored a treatise on agriculture (*ṣina 'at al-filāḥa*), written entirely in verse, which likely served as a model for Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own "Rhymed Treatise on Aliments" (*Urjūza fī al-Aghdhiya*), a versified treatise enumerating various foods and herbs, describing the nutritional and medicinal value of each.<sup>220</sup> The composition of treatises on aliments was a long-standing tradition in al-Andalus (and across the Islamic world) and served to impart this knowledge to those being trained in medicine and the healing arts, with the "Book of Aliments" (*Kitāb al-Aghdhiya*) by the renowned 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>-century Andalusī physician Abū Marwān 'Abd al-Malik b. Zuhr (d. 557/1162) being an illustrative example.<sup>221</sup> Another important example is the "Book of Aliments" (*Kitāb al-Aghdhiya*)<sup>222</sup> by the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century Andalusī physician Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Khalṣūn, an individual who figures prominently within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's "Comprehensive History

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<sup>217</sup> Among the handful of his surviving works is "The Beneficial Necklace regarding Inheritance Law" (*al-Silsāl al-Fā'id fī 'Ilm al-Farā'id*) a versified treatise on inheritance law, preserved in Escorial MS Arabe 1157 (copied on 17<sup>th</sup> Shawwāl 747/January 31<sup>st</sup> 1347 in Almería, during the lifetime of the author), and the "The Selected Passages from the Book of Religious and Wordly Refinement" (*al-Nukhba al-'Ulyā fī Adab al-Dīn wa al-Dunyā*), an abridgement of a treatise on political and religious ethics by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058), preserved in various manuscript copies in the the Biblioteca Nacional de España and the Bibliothèque Nationale du Royaume du Maroc: BN MS 4933, BNRD D 1265, BNRD D 590, BNRD D 38, BNRD G 1010 (copied in Shaban 733/April 1333)

<sup>218</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 86–87; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 8: 87–142.

<sup>219</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 48.

<sup>220</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Urjūza fī al-Aghdhiya*, Fondation du Roi Abdul-Aziz Al Saoud (Casablanca) MS 179, pp. 1–59. Ibn Luyūn's treatise on agriculture survives in a manuscript copied in Almería on 20<sup>th</sup> Rabi II 749/July 18<sup>th</sup> 1348, during the lifetime of the author, and has been edited and translated into Spanish by Joaquina Egúaraz Ibáñez as *Ibn Luyūn: Tratado de Agricultura* (Granada: Patronato de la Alhambra, 1975). For another example of this popular genre of writing enumerating and defining the various types of foods and agricultural terminology during the Nasrid period, see Abū Bakr 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Arbūlī, *Un Tratado Nazarī sobre Alimentos: Al-Kalām 'ala l-Agḍiya de al-Arbūlī* (Almería: Arraéz Editores, 2008), ed. and trans. Amador Díaz García.

<sup>221</sup> Abū Marwān 'Abd al-Malik b. Zuhr, *Kitāb al-Aghdhiya* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1992), ed. and trans. Expiración García Sánchez.

<sup>222</sup> Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Khalṣūn, *Kitāb al-Aghdhiya* (Damascus: Institut Français de Damas, 1996), ed. and trans. Suzanne Gigandet (available online: <https://books.openedition.org/ifpo/5490>).

of Granada.”<sup>223</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s preference for the *urjūza* as his preferred method of composition in various genres and subjects of knowledge indicates his appreciation of the didactic function and importance of this particular literary form, which was written in a syllabic rhyming scheme (*rajaz*) that facilitated students’ memorization and was often accompanied by the teacher’s own commentary and insights. As Sobieroj has meticulously illustrated, didactic poems (*al-urjūza*) were composed across intellectual disciplines, including both the traditional and philosophical sciences, throughout medieval al-Andalus, North Africa, West Africa and the Near East.<sup>224</sup>

It was in this didactic literary style that one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s most important medical works “The Didactic Poem on Medicine” (*al-urjūza fī l-ṭibb*) was also composed.<sup>225</sup> The Andalusī physician-minister Ibn Ṭufayl also authored a work with the same title and theme. The usage of verse in communicating medical knowledge in the medieval world had been pioneered by Avicenna’s “Poem on Medicine” (*Manẓūma fī-l ṭibb*), translated into Latin (prose) by the polyglot physician and scholar Armengaud Blaise (d. 1312)<sup>226</sup> as the *Canticum* and widely transmitted, copied, annotated and printed in medieval and early modern Europe.<sup>227</sup> As stated by

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<sup>223</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 256–268.

<sup>224</sup> Sobieroj, *Variance in Arabic Manuscripts*, pp. 257–285.

<sup>225</sup> For an edition and Spanish translation of this work, see Concepción Vázquez de Benito, “La *Urjūza fī-l-ṭibb* de Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Orientalistas* 18 (1982), pp. 147–177; Concepción Vázquez de Benito, “Un poema sobre la medicina de autor andalusí,” in *Homenaje a Florencio Marcos* (Salamanca: Disputación de Salamanca, 1992), pp. 643–647; and Concepción Vázquez de Benito, “Fin de la *Urjūza fī-l-ṭibb* de Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” in *Ciencias de la Naturaleza en al-Andalus: Textos y Estudios*, Volume V (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1998), ed. C. Álvarez de Morales, pp. 137–214.

<sup>226</sup> Genviève Dumas, *Santé et société à Montpellier à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 194–196. While the Latin translation of Avicenna’s *Urjūza fī-l ṭibb* as the *Canticum* has often been misattributed in scholarship to Gerard of Cremona (d. 1187), it was actually undertaken by Armengaud Blaise, himself a (maternal) nephew of the renowned Valencian physician and translator Arnaldus de Villa Nova (d. 1311), in Montpellier during the late 13<sup>th</sup> century and included a translation of Averroes’ annotations/commentaries on the *Urjūza fī-l ṭibb*. For further discussion of the role of Armengaud Blaise as a translator of medical knowledge in late medieval Europe, see Michael R. McVaugh, “Armengaud Blaise as a Translator of Galen,” in *Texts and Contexts in Ancient and Medieval Science: Studies on the Occasion of John E. Murdoch’s Seventieth Birthday* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), eds. Edith Dudley Sylla and Michael McVaugh, pp. 115–133.

<sup>227</sup> Henri Jahier and Abdelkader Noureddine, *Poème de la Médecine de Ibn Sina* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1956). For an English translation, see Haven C. Krueger, *Avicenna’s Poem on Medicine* (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas Publishers, 1963).

Avicenna himself in his preface to the “Poem on Medicine,” it “dealt with all parts of medicine, drawn up in a very simple style, in convenient versification so that it may be easy, less difficult to understand.” An important 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-century Castilian work on medicine, *El Sumario de la Medicina* by Francisco López de Villalobos (d. 1549), which is itself heavily based on Avicenna’s “Canon on Medicine” (*al-Qānūn fī-l ṭibb*), was also written in verse as part of a broader didactic function.<sup>228</sup> It was with this desire of making medical knowledge accessible to his own students (among others) that accounted for Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s composition of prosimetric treatises on medicine, alongside more substantial works on the subject.

Ibn Luyūn’s ideas about poetry, language and belles-lettres also seem to have considerably influenced Ibn al-Khaṭīb, a fact reflected by the the latter naming one of his poetic works “Magic and Poetry” (*al-Siḥr wa al-Shi‘r*)<sup>229</sup> in honor of Ibn Luyūn’s “A Glimpse of Magic amidst the Spirit of Poetry” (*Lamḥ al-Siḥr min Rūḥ al-Shi‘r wa Rawḥ al-Shihr*) an abridgement of the “Spirit of Poetry” (*Rūḥ al-Shi‘r*) by Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. al-Jallāb (d. 663/1265).<sup>230</sup> In addition to his literary pursuits, Ibn Luyūn was deeply interested in mystical philosophy and seems to have been one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s most significant early teachers in this field. The deep association between poetry, philosophy and mystical expression in al-Andalus has been observed by several modern scholars<sup>231</sup> and the Nasrid period was no exception. Ibn Luyūn utilized literary expression and poetry as a vehicle for communicating specific philosophical and

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<sup>228</sup> For an edition of this work, see Francisco López de Villalobos, *El Sumario de la Medicina* (Salamanca, 1998), eds. L. Sánchez Granjel, M. Sánchez Granjel, M.T. Herrera and Concepción Vázquez de Benito.

<sup>229</sup> José Manuel Continente Ferrer, “El ‘Kitāb al-siḥr wa-l-šīr’ de Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” *Al-Andalus* 38 (1973), pp. 394–414. An edition, study and Spanish translation of this work was the subject of José Manuel Continente Ferrer’s 1973 PhD dissertation at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid entitled *El Libro de la Magia y de la Poesía (Kitāb al-siḥr wa-l-šīr) de Ibn al-Jaṭīb*.

<sup>230</sup> Ibn Luyūn, *Lamḥ al-Siḥr min Rūḥ al-Shi‘r*. According to the colophon of one of the surviving manuscripts, this work was completed in Rajab 739/February 1339 (Ibn Luyūn, *Lamḥ al-Siḥr min Rūḥ al-Shi‘r*, Fondation du Roi Abdul-Aziz MS 577, p. 109). This work was a detailed description, with various examples, of the different types of verse and poetry, ranging from elegy and courtly panegyric to polemical and mystical forms.

<sup>231</sup> Hamida Saleh al-Baldawi, *Falsafat al-Taṣawwuf fī al-Shi‘r al-Andalusī* (Beirut, 2011).

mystical ideas, a tradition he bequeathed to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, whose own poetry is replete with mystical metaphors, allusions and concepts. Indeed, this scholar's works can shed important light on the particular mystical ideas which impressed themselves upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb during this stage of his career. Ibn Luyūn's authorship of a treatise entitled "An Exposition of the Path of the Selfless Mystics" (*al-Ināla al-'Alamiyya fī al-Risāla al-'Ilmiyya fī Tarīq al-Mutajaridīn min al-Ṣūfiyya*) a summary and commentary upon the writings of the Andalusī mystic Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shushtarī (d. 668/1269) provides extensive evidence that his own mystical ideas were heavily indebted to this specific school of Islamic mysticism.<sup>232</sup> Ibn Luyūn's role in transmitting his ideas about al-Shuhstarī to Ibn al-Khaṭīb is evident from the latter's familiarity with the *al-Ināla al-'Alamiyya*, which he quotes in the "Comprehensive History."<sup>233</sup> As his favorable biography (or, rather, hagiography) of al-Shushtarī in the "Comprehensive History" also makes clear, Ibn al-Khaṭīb developed strong sympathies for the ideas of this mystical philosopher, whom he refers to as "the prince of the selfless (*amīr al-mutajaridīn*)...and the blessing of al-Andalus (*barakat al-Andalus*)" and quotes his poetry and epistles at length.<sup>234</sup> More significantly, Ibn Khaldūn affirms Ibn al-Khaṭīb's strong sympathies for the form of mysticism expounded by al-Shuhstarī, even narrating several verses of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's poetry which "conformed to the mystical tradition of al-Shushtarī."<sup>235</sup> The pervasive influence of al-Shushtarī's mystical school can also be discerned throughout Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings across multiple genres. Aside from instilling him with a deep appreciation of mystical philosophy, Ibn Luyūn played an important role in motivating Ibn al-Khaṭīb's interest in political theory and moral philosophy. Ibn Luyūn's

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<sup>232</sup> Abū 'Uthmān b. Luyūn, *Al-Risāla al-Shuhstariyya aw al-Risāla al-'Ilmiyya fī al-Taṣawwuf* (Casablanca: Dar al-Thaqafa, 2004), ed. Muhammad al-Adluni al-Idrisi.

<sup>233</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 205.

<sup>234</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 205–216.

<sup>235</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, p. 606.



surviving manuscripts, many of which remain unedited, indicate that works from the classical period of Islamic history, such as al-Māwardī's *Adāb al-Dunya wa al-Dīn*, continued to be read and appreciated by the Nasrid literary elite, while also demonstrating the reception of mystical philosophical ideas during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>236</sup>

Although Ibn al-Jayyāb, Ibn Hudhayl, and Ibn Luyūn were undoubtedly his most important teachers in the secretarial arts, literature, philosophy and medicine during his early career in the Nasrid chancery in Granada, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's encountered other individuals in both Granada and Málaga throughout the 740s/1340s who influenced his intellectual and political formation. One of the most important of these individuals who shaped Ibn al-Khaṭīb's thought while he was resident in Málaga was Abū Ja'far Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm b. Aḥmad b. Ṣafwān al-Mālaqī (d. 763/1361), a close affiliate of Ibn al-Jayyāb, who began his career as a court secretary in the employ of Muḥammad II<sup>237</sup> and who had served as the private secretary, chancellor and (briefly) chief minister during the early reign of Ismā'īl I.<sup>238</sup> Ibn Ṣafwān, who returned to Málaga from Granada after serving Ismā'īl I as chief minister, is described by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as a

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<sup>236</sup> Several of Ibn Luyūn's works that remain unedited include *al-Iksīr fī al-Mubtagha min Ṣinā'at al-Taksīr* (BNRM D 1590, BNRM D 1588), a treatise on mathematics, and *Bughyat al-Mu'ānis min Bahjat al-Majālīs* (BNRM K 236, BNRM D 1037, BNRM D 3667), a work on courtiership and belles-lettres, the latter which was studied by Rafael Pinilla Melguizo in his PhD thesis entitled *La "Bughyat al-mu'ānis" de Ibn Luyun, resumen de la "Bahdhat al-madjalīs" de Ibn Abd al-Barr* (Córdoba, 1992). For more on Ibn Luyūn and his works, including an edition and Spanish translation of his rhymed proverbs, see Emilio García Gómez, "Hacia un Refrancero arábigoandaluz. IV: Los proverbios rimados de Ben Luyun de Almería (1282-1349) ," *al-Andalus* 37 (1972), pp. 1–75.

<sup>237</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 131–132. Ibn al-Khaṭīb notes that Ibn Ṣafwān was born around 695/1296, but this is most certainly incorrect since it conflicts with other information provided within the biography. For example, Ibn Ṣafwān is reported to have traveled to Marrakech to study with Ibn 'Abd al-Mālik al-Marrākushī (d. 703/1303), suggesting that he had at least reached the age of maturity by 695/1296.

<sup>238</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 62–63; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 221–232; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 131–137. This individual should not be confused with Abū Ṭāhir Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ṣafwān al-Qaysī (d. 749/1348), a mystic who served as a preacher in one of Granada's mosques during the reign of Yūsuf I (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa* 3: 236–239; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 119–120; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 54–55; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 191). For an annotated Spanish translation of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's biography of Abū Ja'far b. Ṣafwān, see Fernando Nicolás Velázquez Basanta, "Abū Ya'far Aḥmad Ibn Ṣafwān, otro poeta místico malagueño del siglo XIV a la luz de la "Iḥāṭa" de Ben al-Jaṭīb", in *Homenaje al Profesor José M<sup>a</sup> Fórneas* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1995), 1: 393–408.

polymath, having attained mastery over both the traditional and philosophical sciences as well as the secretarial arts: “he was among the most eminent scholars, a leading litterateur and secretary of the Nasrid realm, a teacher of its next generation of scholars, accomplished in both poetry and prose, a mystic, sharp-witted, intelligent, a master of the legal sciences, arithmetic, belles-lettres and the notarial arts, an expert in history and language, engaged in the study of peripatetic philosophy (*falsafa*), mysticism (*taṣawwuf*) and theology/metaphysics (*al-‘ulūm al-ilāhiyya*).”<sup>239</sup> This representation is also echoed by Ibn Farḥūn, who describes Ibn Ṣafwān as “among the most pre-eminent secretaries [of al-Andalus] who excelled in belles-lettres, arithmetic, history and Arabic, and was an expert in philosophy and mysticism with a major interest in metaphysics.”<sup>240</sup>

While accompanying the Nasrid military to repel the assault of Alfonso XI on Algeciras in 744/1343–1344, Ibn al-Khaṭīb spent about six months in Málaga, where he divided his time between the battlefield and studying with Ibn Ṣafwān. His encounter with Ibn Ṣafwān is particularly instructive because it reflects the manner in which the intellectual elites in the service of the Nasrid emirs were often brought into contact with one another in the course of their administrative and military duties.<sup>241</sup> The very fact that many of these functionaries served as both scholars and soldiers is itself a notable aspect of Nasrid intellectual and political life during this period. Several writings describing, legitimating and inciting participation in frontier warfare were composed by court secretaries in Nasrid Granada during this period. The most

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<sup>239</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 221–232; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 216–223. Ibn Ṣafwān’s interest in the rational sciences led him to befriend the Marinid secretary and physician Abū al’Abbās Aḥmad b. Shu’ayb al-Kiryānī (d. 749/1349), an expert in philosophy, alchemy and poetry (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 272).

<sup>240</sup> Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 1: 193–195. A poem by Ibn al-Jayyāb praises Ibn Ṣafwān as “the great mystic” (*al-‘ālim al-mutaṣawwif*) and the “leader of guidance” (*imām al-hidāya*) further demonstrating the prestige and recognition which this scholar enjoyed among his contemporaries (Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, p. 570).

<sup>241</sup> Among the other scholars encountered by Ibn al-Khaṭīb around Gibraltar and Algeciras in 743/1342–744/1343 was Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. al-Sarrāj (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 31; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 124–125), Abū Ja’far b. Ṣāhib al-Ṣalah (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 55), and possibly Abū al-Qāsim b. Riḍwān (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 55).

famous is Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī's *Tuḥfat al-Anfus wa Shi'ār Sukkān al-Andalus*, which cites Qur'an, hadith, poetry, historical anecdotes and a range of other sources pertaining to the justification, virtues and proper conduct of frontier warfare.<sup>242</sup> Rather than the praise of holy war simply falling under the rubric of polemic or theoretical knowledge, it was expected that "men of the pen" would be prepared and willing to serve the king and defend the kingdom on the battlefield. During the Algeciras campaign, Ibn al-Jayyāb wrote some verses to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, encouraging the latter to gird his sword and armour, mount his horse and proceed bravely on the battlefield and in raids on enemy territory, or else flee (in shame) from the Islamic West to the Mashriq.<sup>243</sup> The circumstances of 'Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb's death at Rio Salado only three years earlier highlights the peculiar fact that many within the Nasrid administration actively participated in major military campaigns, highlighting the difficulties inherent in establishing a sharp dichotomy between military and administrative functions in Nasrid Granada during this period. It is more useful to think of the "men of the sword" and "men of the pen" as indicating distinct classes of society while keeping in mind that the former often exercised administrative functions and the latter intermittently participated in military campaigns. The fact that so many senior Nasrid scholar-officials—including Ibn al-Khaṭīb's teacher Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ash'arī, the chief judge of Granada<sup>244</sup>—could perish on the battlefield illustrates the manner in which the military developments on the frontier had a direct impact upon political and institutional developments in Granada. Given the ever-present possibility of death, these individuals had to constantly ensure that their affairs, and those of the kingdom, were set in order. This meant that

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<sup>242</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuḥfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652.

<sup>243</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, p. 63.

<sup>244</sup> Incidentally, during the early 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, another leading Granada jurist (Abū Yaḥyā b. 'Āṣim) also died on the battlefield while fighting against the Castilians at Boca de Asno near Antequera (al-Maqrīzī, *al-Sulūk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, 6: 280–281).

the delegation of authority (*niyāba/wakāla*) took on a renewed importance, with chancellors, secretaries, judges and viziers alike all entrusting a large measure of authority to subordinates.

There were many learned noblemen and knights during this period, as a result of the specific context of Nasrid Granada, shaped both by the ever-present reality of the frontier as well as the cultural (and political) capital of learning. A significant example of this phenomenon is the jurist Aḥmad b. Aḥmad b. Khalaf (d. 730/1330), an erudite scholar and secretary in the Nasrid chancery, specifically the military bureau (*dīwān al-jund*), who actively participated in military campaigns and died on the battlefield in Dhū-l Qa‘da 730/August 1330.<sup>245</sup>

During the late Middle Ages, in both Latin Christendom and the Islamic world, the phenomenon of the “warrior-scholar” became ubiquitous. The careers and writings of the scholar-warriors Don Juan Manuel in Castile<sup>246</sup> and Baybars al-Manṣūrī (d. 725/1325) in Mamluk Egypt<sup>247</sup> indicate the convergence of learning, statecraft and military service during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries, while illustrating the complex interplay between the “pen” and the “sword.” The participation of these individuals in various military campaigns, the shaping of

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<sup>245</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 62.

<sup>246</sup> Don Juan Manuel was a leading Castilian nobleman and a grandson of Alfonso X, and received an all-rounded education that included learning Latin, history, poetry, but in which becoming versed in the martial arts (including the mastery of swordsmanship, archery and horsemanship), hunting and other pursuits that were shaped by the courtly context in which his formation took place. His life, career and corpus provide important insight into the interdependency between literary-intellectual pursuits and political-military experiences among elites in late medieval Iberia. For an overview of the various literary, political and military pursuits of Don Juan Manuel, see José María Castro y Calvo, *El arte de gobernar en las obras de Don Juan Manuel* (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1945), pp. 29–116.

<sup>247</sup> Baybars was a renowned military commander and participated in a number of major campaigns, including the Siege of Acre in 1291. He held a number of important posts at various points in his career, including governor of Karak and the office of *dawādār* (head of the chancery), as well as (briefly) the sovereign’s deputy (*nā’ib al-saltāna*) in 711/1311 Egypt. In addition to his administrative and military responsibilities, he was also a noted scholar and author (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 301–302). An overview of his career is provided by E. Ashtor, “Baybars al-Manṣūrī”, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition [Brill: Brill Online, 2018], eds. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Among his surviving works are *Kitāb al-Tuḥfa al-Mulūkiyya fī al-Dawla al-Turkiyya* (Cairo: al-Dar al-Misriyya al-Lubnaniyya, 1987), ed. ‘Abd al-Hamid Salih Hamdan, *Mukhtār al-Akḥbār* (Cairo: al-Dar al-Misriyya al-Lubnaniyya, 1993), ed. ‘Abd al-Hamid Salih Hamdan, and *Zubdat al-Fikra fī Tārīkh al-Hijra* (Beirut: al-Ma’had al-Almani li-l Abḥath al-Sharqiyya, 1998), ed. Donald S. Richards.

politics, and in eminent circles of learning played an important role in fashioning not only their own thought and writings, but it also reflects their own instrumental role in the formation of an extensive network of scholars, nobles, functionaries and sovereigns. Although the status, experience and context of both of these examples set them apart from Ibn al-Khaṭīb in significant ways, their life and writings are also instructive in enabling us to recognize that the complex relationship between the “pen” and the “sword” was a phenomenon that extended far beyond the confines of the Nasrid kingdom. Ibn al-Khaṭīb, like many of his teachers, colleagues, and contemporaries across the Mediterranean world (broadly defined), was an active participant in the various political developments of his age, but also expertly utilized their immense erudition and literary prose to communicate specific ideas about society, politics, nobility and kingship. The popularity and survival of many of his works provides a significant window into the interplay between intellectual-literary representation and political developments and enables us to better understand how he was able to shape particular intellectual and political discourses, while also appreciating the complex set of motivations and interests that undergirded his writing.

It was during his time in Málaga that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was commissioned by Ibn Ṣafwān to compile his poetry into a single volume, which he completed and titled “The Magnificent Pearls and the Depths of the Seas” (*al-Durar al-Fākhira wa al-Lujaj al-Zākhira*), a work unfortunately lost but fragments of which are preserved within the *Iḥāṭa*. Following the completion of this work, Ibn Ṣafwān awarded an *ijāza* (certificate of transmission) to Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his eldest son ‘Abd Allāh (born in 743/1342)<sup>248</sup> dated Rabī‘ 6 II 744/August 28 1343, preserved in its entirety in the “Comprehensive History,” giving both Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his son permission to

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<sup>248</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb indicates that his son ‘Abd Allāh was born in Granada on Ṣafar 17 743/July 22 1342 (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa* 3: 439).

transmit the works of both Ibn Ṣafwān and those of his teachers.<sup>249</sup> Having studied with individuals such as the renowned historian Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Mālik al-Marrākushī (d. 703/1303) and the astronomer-mathematician Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. al-Bannā’ (d. 721/1321),<sup>250</sup> Ibn Ṣafwān therefore served as a link between Ibn al-Khaṭīb and several late 6<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century scholars and the inclusion of the text of this *ijāza* within his work reflects Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s recognition of the document’s value.

Significantly, it was shortly after his own encounter with Ibn Ṣafwān in Málaga that Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s oldest surviving work, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, was composed. It was also around this time that Ibn al-Khaṭīb began compiling his own poetry in a work known as *Dīwān al-Ṣayyib wa al-Jahām wa al-Māḍī wa al-Kahām*. His interest in poetic expression, especially in the form of the *muwashshaḥ*, also prompted him to write the “Army of Compositions” (*Jaysh al-Tawshīsh*), an anthology of 182 poems, including *zajals* and *muwashshaḥs*, composed by different Andalusī poets, focusing especially upon secretaries and scholar-officials throughout Andalusī history.<sup>251</sup> The work, which preserves Andalusī poems otherwise lost to scholars, reflects the various literary preferences of the Nasrid literary elite, highlighting those fragments of poetry in circulation within the chancery and learned circles, while also reflecting Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own notions regarding the centrality of poetic composition within the profession of court secretaries. Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s intellectual pursuits and administrative duties enabled him to establish strong personal relationships, as well cement intellectual and political ties, with individuals connected with the administration of the kingdom. Along with Ibn Ṣafwān, the most influential of these individuals was Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d.

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<sup>249</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 228–229.

<sup>250</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 165.

<sup>251</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kitāb Jaysh al-Tawshīh* (Cambridge: Trustees of the “E.J.W. Gibb Memorial,” 1997), ed. Alan Jones.

750/1349), whose name is included among the list of teachers in Ibn al-Khaṭīb's autobiography.<sup>252</sup> This was the son of Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Ḥakīm al-Rundī (d. 708/1309), who was the first Nasrid chancellor to be appointed chief minister and thus hold the title *Dhū-l Wizāratayn* ("Bearer of the Two Offices") before he was violently assassinated during the early reign of Muḥammad III.<sup>253</sup> As an elder statesman and an individual whose family had been closely linked with the Nasrid court for over fifty years, Abū Bakr b. al-Ḥakīm was ideally placed to advise Ibn al-Khaṭīb on politics and serve as one of his most important references for the history of the Nasrid realm.<sup>254</sup> As an intellectual with an interest in Aristotelian philosophy (*mutafalsif*) and an accomplished poet himself, he also represented the model of the scholar-official that Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to emulate.<sup>255</sup> Abū Bakr's poetry is incorporated into Ibn al-Khaṭīb's *Jaysh al-Tawshīsh*, making him one of only Nasrid scholar-officials whose composition is included within the anthology.<sup>256</sup>

The itinerant nature of scholar-officials and the close connection between al-Andalus and North Africa meant that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's intellectual and political network also encompassed leading individuals from the Marinid realm. Abū Muḥammad 'Abd al-Muḥaymin b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaḍramī (d. 749/1349), an Andalusī who served as the Marinid chancellor (*ṣāhib al-qalam al-a'lā*) in Fez during the reign of Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī (r. 731/1331–749/1348), who appears to have

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<sup>252</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Iḥāṭa*, 4: 458.

<sup>253</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 272–280. For a biography of *Dhū-l Wizāratayn* Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥakīm, see Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 444–476; and María Jesús Rubiera Mata, "El Dū l-wizāratayn Ibn al-Ḥakīm de Ronda," *al-Andalus* 34 (1969), pp. 106–121.

<sup>254</sup> His son Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad (d. 760/1359) was also a close associate of Ibn al-Khaṭīb. For more on him, see Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 266–269; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 196–197; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 136–137).

<sup>255</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 61; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Jaysh al-Tawshīh*, p. 115; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 195–196; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 8: 42.

<sup>256</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Jaysh al-Tawshīh*, pp. 115–130.

visited Granada briefly at some point during the early 740s/1340s.<sup>257</sup> It was during this visit that Ibn al-Khaṭīb met him, since he refers to him as “our teacher” (*shaykhunā*), a phrase, as we have seen, that he employed only for individuals with whom he had studied directly.<sup>258</sup> This encounter further illustrates the importance of diplomacy as well as military service in shaping the intellectual environment of the Nasrid realm by providing the context for the meeting of various scholar-officials. Ibn al-Khaṭīb, narrating from his now-lost earlier work *‘Ā'id al-Ṣila*, describes ‘Abd al-Muḥaymin as “the seal of the eminent scholars (*khātimat al-ṣudūr*)” and an expert in Arabic, hadith, belles-lettres (*adab*), poetry and history,” thereby enumerating the fields of knowledge in which many employed within the Nasrid and Marinid chancery excelled during this era.<sup>259</sup> Although it remains unclear in exactly which circumstances or for how long Ibn al-Khaṭīb studied with ‘Abd al-Muḥaymin, who was also one of the most important teachers of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn, he clearly saw this figure as an exemplary representation of the scholar-official in the Islamic West, referring to him in his *al-Iklīl al-Zāhir* with the highest praise:

“the one who exemplifies the virtue of the [Islamic] West over the East (*fakhr al-maghrib ‘alā al-mashriq*), the one who illuminated the horizon with the light of his knowledge (*aṭla ‘a minhu nūr adā’at al-āfāq*)...with illustrious ancestors who ornamented him with their virtues like glowing stars ornament the heavens (*wa salaf zuyinat samā’uhu bi-nujūm al-manāqib*)...his fame was as clear as the dawn, kings competed over recruiting him into their service with various kingdoms seeking to claim him in the manner that they ordinarily laid claim to treasure. He successfully established his own power and authority through the

<sup>257</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 99–100; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 223–226; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 257–258. ‘Abd al-Muḥaymin, who had spent some time in Egypt, was well known to his contemporaries in the Mamluk Sultanate, with Shihāb al-Dīn b. Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī (d. 749/1349), the leading historian and chancellor in Mamluk Cairo, describing him as the “chancellor of the Marinid kingdom (*kātib al-dawla al-marīniyya*), while praising his rhetorical skill and epistolary as equaling that of some of the greatest poets and secretaries in Islamic history (Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, *Masālik al-Abṣār*, 13: 207–208. Al-‘Umarī’s incorporation of a fragment of ‘Abd al-Muḥaymin’s literary composition into his biography also attests to the circulation of the writings of court secretaries from the Islamic West among their counterparts in Egypt and Syria.

<sup>258</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Iḥāṭa*, 4: 11; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 100. A detailed biography of Ibn al-Muḥaymin (referred to as one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s teachers) is provided in al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Tīb*, 8: 9–16.

<sup>259</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Iḥāṭa*, 4: 11.



prudent practice of politics...he was the very eyes with which the king would see and the tongue with which the sovereign would speak.”<sup>260</sup>

Ibn al-Khaṭīb was frequently in contact with other leading secretaries and officials in the Marinid realm throughout the 740s/1340s, including Abū ‘Alī b. Tadrārt al-Tinmalī, who he met near Algeciras and with whom he exchanged several letters.<sup>261</sup> Following the capture of Algeciras by Alfonso XI in late 744/early 1344,<sup>262</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb returned to Granada. Throughout this period, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s political fortunes continued to rise and his relationship with both Ibn al-Jayyāb and Yūsuf I was strengthened. During Muḥarram 748/April 1347, Ibn al-Khaṭīb accompanied the emir Yūsuf on his royal progress throughout the eastern portion of the Nasrid realm. His work “The Travels of Winter and Summer” (*Khaṭrat al-Ṭayf fī Rihlāt al-Shitā’ wa al-Ṣayf*), a geographic description of the kingdom and a literary-political work celebrating the virtues and justice of Yūsuf I, was based on this journey and was written shortly after his return to Granada.<sup>263</sup> It was during the course of this journey that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was brought into contact with Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Khātima al-Anṣārī (d. 772/1370), one of the leading historians, physicians and court secretaries in Almería, whose commitment to belles-lettres, historical writing, mystical philosophy and medicine enabled him to forge a close friendship with Ibn al-Khaṭīb over the next two decades.<sup>264</sup> Among the earliest letters preserved by Ibn al-Khaṭīb

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<sup>260</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 11–12.

<sup>261</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 92–95; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 104–105; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 207–210. Ibn al-Khaṭīb was also well-acquainted with his brother Muḥammad, who also served as a secretary in the Marinid chancery (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 213–214).

<sup>262</sup> Algeciras, one of the major towns on the Straits of Gibraltar, was under direct Marinid sovereignty during this period and its loss was a major strategic defeat, a fact recognized as far away as Mamluk Egypt. For more, see Ibn Faḍlallāh al-‘Umarī, *Masālik al-Aḥsār*, 4: 125–126.

<sup>263</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, “*Khaṭrat al-Ṭayf fī Rihlāt al-Shitā’ wa al-Ṣayf*,” pp. 31–56.

<sup>264</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 69–70; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 239–245; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā’id al-Jumān*, pp. 331–332; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 175–176. His poetry is preserved in El Escorial MS 319, 1r–8v (*Kitāb rā’iq al-taḥliya fī fā’iq al-tawriya*) and El Escorial MS 381 (an autograph copy of his *Dīwān*). For a Spanish translation of Ibn Khātima’s poetry, see *El dīwān de Ibn Jātima de Almería* (Barcelona: Publicaciones del Departamento de Arabe e Islam, 1975), ed. Soledad Gibert Fenech. He also authored *Īrād al-la’āl fī anshād al-*

is a letter from Ibn Khātima, composed on Rabī‘ I 10 748/June 20 1347, in his “Comprehensive History” in which the latter expresses his friendship and seeks his favor.<sup>265</sup> As Chapter 4 will show, the close relationship between the two individuals and their shared intellectual commitments was made even more apparent during the arrival of the Black Death in the Nasrid Kingdom between 748/1347 and 750/1349, with each authoring a significant treatise on the nature and treatment of the plague. Both men were important students of the scholar and mystic Abū al-Barakāt Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Balāfiqī (d. 768/1366 or 774/1372), who often served as the link which bound together both individuals, with Ibn Khātima’s *Dīwān* providing significant evidence about a feast at Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s residence in Granada at some point after 749/1349 in which all three individuals were gathered and exchanged poetry, illustrating the broader social context which often brought together Nasrid scholars and officials.<sup>266</sup> In addition to reflecting the socialability and ties of patronage inherent within the context of the literary salon,<sup>267</sup> this anecdote also demonstrates Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s wealth, prestige and status by the late 740s/1340s, which enabled him to host a banquet and literary salon (*mujālasa*) for leading scholars at his residence in Granada.

Along with *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr* and *Jaysh al-Tawshīsh*, the *Khaṭrat al-Ṭayf* is one of the only other surviving works of Ibn al-Khaṭīb during his early career as a court secretary.

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*ḍawāl*, a short abridgement of linguistic work by Ibn Hānī al-Sabtī, edited by G.S. Colin in “Un document nouveau sur l’Arabe dialectal d’Occident au XIIe siècle,” *Hespéris* 12 (1931), pp. 8–32. Among his historical works was the now-lost *Maziyyat Almarīyya ‘alā ghayrihā min al-bilād al-andalusiyya*, a monumental history of Almería, discussed in Emilio Molina López, “La obra histórica de Ibn al-Khatima de Almería,” *al-Qantara* 10 (1989), pp. 151–174. For more on Ibn Khātima, see Khalid Chakor Alami, “Un poète andalou de l’époque nasride, Ibn al-Khatima al-Ansari,” *Hespéris-Tamuda* 34 (1996), pp. 21–44; and Serge Gibert, “Ibn Khātima,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, Edited by: P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online.

<sup>265</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 241–244.

<sup>266</sup> Ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī, *Dīwān Ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī* (Beirut, Dar al-Fikr al-Mu‘asir, 1994), ed. Muhammad Ridwan al-Dayya, pp. 201–202; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 244–245. For an excellent study of the history and function of the literary salon (or *mujālasa*) in the medieval Islamic tradition, see Samer M. Ali, *Arabic Literary Salons in the Islamic Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).

<sup>267</sup> Ali, *Arabic Literary Salons in the Islamic Middle Ages*, p. 47.

Notably, both *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr* and the *Khaṭrat al-Ṭayf* were authored within the context of itinerancy which allowed Ibn al-Khaṭīb to journey between Granada and cities such as Málaga, Guadix and Almería, thus demonstrating the interrelationship between intellectual development, political-administrative functions, and literary composition. Many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own mentors within the Nasrid chancery themselves exemplified the importance of itinerancy and scholarship as important aspects that complemented their pursuit of a successful career within the royal administration. As the diverse geographic origins of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own teachers demonstrates, many of the officials within the Nasrid court were drawn not from noble Granadan families, but from various provincial elites across the Nasrid realm (and beyond). While Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own background lay in Loja, located near Granada, other figures employed within the chancery during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries originated from regions as far afield as Murcia, Sevilla, Córdoba, Almería, Ronda, and Málaga.

One of these individuals during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century was Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Shibrīn (d. 747/1346), an Andalusī of Sevillian origin who was born in Ceuta.<sup>268</sup> A jurist, poet and litterateur, he was also employed within the Nasrid chancery in Granada, where he became one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's teachers, and also served as a judge.<sup>269</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb specifically refers to him as "our teacher" (*shaykhunā*) in his "Comprehensive History" and describes him as a jurist, historian, judge and secretary.<sup>270</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that it was the turbulent situation in Ceuta (a reference to the Nasrid conquest of the city in Shawwāl 705/May

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<sup>268</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 240; al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 163–164; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 212–213.

<sup>269</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 239–241; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 37–39; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 166–172; al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 8: 85–87. According to the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century account of the North African scholar Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh al-Tijānī, Ibn Shibrīn had traveled widely across the Islamic West, including a visit to Hafsid Tunis in Dhū-l Qa'da 703/June 1304, before journeying to Granada with his father shortly afterwards and being appointed to the Nasrid chancery during the reign of Muḥammad III (Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh al-Tijānī, *Riḥlat al-Tijānī* [Tunis: al-Dar al-Arabiyya li-l Kitāb, 1981], p. 164).

<sup>270</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 239.

1306) that prompted Ibn Shibrīn to move to Granada, where he was appointed as a secretary in the royal chancery (*irtasama bi al-kitāba al-sulṭāniyya*) before being appointed a judge shortly thereafter.<sup>271</sup> While in Granada, he remained in correspondence with contemporary scholars and officials in North Africa, including Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh al-Tijānī, who preserves several fragments of his poetry and one of his letters.<sup>272</sup> The style of this correspondence, written in a combination of rhymed prose (*saj’*) and poetry, bears great resemblance to similar letters exchanged across the western Mediterranean throughout the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries and is identical to the prosimetric form employed by both Ibn al-Jayyāb and Ibn al-Khaṭīb in their own missives.

Ibn Shibrīn served as an important mentor to Ibn al-Khaṭīb and was memorialized by the latter as “one of the people of true faith, eminence and justice,” who was an expert in poetry, belles-lettres and the secretarial arts.<sup>273</sup> Ibn Shibrīn, an individual associated with both the chancery and the judiciary, reflects the versatility of Nasrid intellectuals during the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries and the fluidity between the various social categories of “*adīb*” (litterateur), “*faqīh*” (jurist), and “*kātib*” (secretary). In addition to praising his poetry and epistolary, Ibn al-Khaṭīb describes Ibn Shibrīn as a historian (*mu’arrikh*). He explains that Ibn Shibrīn was “historically-minded” (*tarīkhiyyan*) who “critically scrutinized the veracity of the facts that he narrated” (*muḥaqqiqan li-mā yanquluḥu*).<sup>274</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb also emphasizes that his teacher’s interest in history was epitomized by his composition of a large volume on the subject, but no further

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<sup>271</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 240; al-Tijānī, *Riḥlat al-Tijānī*, p. 164. For a description of the Nasrid conquest of Ceuta, see Latham, *From Muslim Spain to Barbary*, III: 116–117; and Mohamed Cherif, *Ceuta aux époques almohade et mérinide* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1996), pp. 56–58.

<sup>272</sup> al-Tijānī, *Riḥlat al-Tijānī*, pp. 164–171.

<sup>273</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 240.

<sup>274</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 240.

details are provided.<sup>275</sup> Due to the efforts of the late Moroccan historian Mohammed Bencherifah (d. 2018), a historical work by Ibn Shibrīn has been discovered and edited, thus allowing scholars to better appreciate Ibn al-Khaṭīb's various statements about his teacher's interest in history. The work is in fact a versification of the "The Scales of Achievement" (*Mizān al-ʿAmal*) by Ibn Rashīq al-Mursī (d. 696/1296), a dynastic chronicle covering the history of the Islamic caliphates and dynasties from the death of the Prophet to the end of the Almohad era.<sup>276</sup>

This remarkable text, a rare example of a didactic poem on Islamic history, sheds new light upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb's intellectual formation during this period and particularly illuminates the development of his historical thought. The discovery of the text has demonstrated that Ibn Shibrīn was in fact a student of Ibn Rashīq, whom he refers to as "our teacher" (*shaykhunā*), thus enabling us to further connect Ibn al-Khaṭīb directly to the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century generation of Andalusī scholar-officials through a clear intellectual lineage of teacher-student relationships. While not mentioning Ibn Rashīq specifically by name, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's biography of Ibn Shibrīn enumerates the latter's many teachers, including jurists, litterateurs and mystics, and celebrates his having received *ijāzas* from various scholars in both the Mashriq and Maghrib.<sup>277</sup> Ibn Shibrīn's versification of the *Mizān al-ʿAmal* indicates his access to the works of his teacher, Ibn Rashīq, while also highlighting his particular interest in this specific historical work.<sup>278</sup> Although it is difficult to ascertain the nature of Ibn Shibrīn's other historical writings (which are no longer extant), his interest in Islamic dynastic history is clear from his decision to versify this particular work. Finally, Ibn Shibrīn's production of versified history (*urjūza*) rather than a prose chronicle

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<sup>275</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 240.

<sup>276</sup> This work has been edited by Mohammed Bencherifah, *Ibn Rashīq al-Mursī, 628–696/1231–1296: ḥayātuhu wa athāruhu* (Rabat: Manshurat Wazarat al-Awqaf wa al-Shuʿun al-Islamiyya, 2008), pp. 341–351.

<sup>277</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 242.

<sup>278</sup> Numerous references throughout the *Iḥāṭa* also indicate that Ibn al-Khaṭīb had direct access to Ibn Shibrīn's own private writings.

reflects his own literary preferences and didactic purposes and possibly that of the Nasrid learned elite by the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>279</sup>

It is plausible that Ibn Shibrīn's preference for communicating historical information through verse greatly influenced Ibn al-Khaṭīb's production of his own versified history of Islamic dynasties, the "Poetic Enumeration of Dynasties" (*Raḡm al-Ḥullal fī Naẓm al-Duwal*). The latter work bears an unmistakable similarity to Ibn Shibrīn's *urjūza* of the *Mizān al-'Amal*, both in terms of style, form and content. One of the most important similarities pertains to the treatment of the Fatimids. The Fatimid caliphs in both works are acknowledged as legitimate 'Alids and incorporated within the broader narrative framework of Islamic dynasties. It was highly irregular for Sunni historians to acknowledge the legitimacy of the Shi'i Fatimids, let alone narrate their history alongside that of other Islamic dynasties, which suggests that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's interest in that particular dynasty—which he writes about extensively in his historical works—may have been partially inspired by Ibn Shibrīn's perspective on the subject. Considering these potential influences alongside Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own emphasis on his close relationship with Ibn Shibrīn during his time in the Nasrid chancery lends weight to the idea that many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own literary choices and historical interests were themselves shaped by the various intellectuals whom he encountered in the Alhambra during the 740s/1340s. This is not to say that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own works do not bear the mark of originality or creativity, but close attention should be paid to the fact that many of the forms of knowledge produced by court

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<sup>279</sup> For an earlier Andalusī example of a versified history, see Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi's poetic chronicling of the military exploits of 'Abd al-Raḥmān III during the mid-4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century (Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd Rabbihi, *al-'Iqd al-Farīd* [Beirut: Dar Sader, 2001], ed. Muhammad al-Tunji, 4: 469–494), and that of Abū Ṭālib 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 500/1106), outlining the history of Islamic polities, with a distinct focus upon al-Andalus, up until the early 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century ('Alī b. Bassām al-Shantarīnī, *al-Dhakīra fī Maḥāsīn Ahl al-Jazīra* [Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2012], ed. Salem Mustafa al-Badri, 1: 575–594). Another important example is the versified history dedicated primarily to the Marinids written by Abū Fāris 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Malzūzī during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century (Abū Fāris al-Malzūzī, *Naẓm al-sulūk fī al-anbiyā' wa-l-khulafā' wa-l-mulūk* [Rabat: Matbu'at al-Qasr al-Malaki], 1963).

secretaries during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century were strongly informed by those of their predecessors. Most of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works are marked by a preference for the use of prosimetrum or verse in organizing knowledge, whether historical, legal or medical, which reflects the major influence exerted upon him by his teachers within the Nasrid chancery, including Ibn Shibrīn.

While most of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's close associates, mentors and friends were directly associated with the chancery, throughout the 740s/1340s Ibn al-Khaṭīb also maintained close ties with several members of the traditional scholarly elite (the '*ulamā*'), many of whom were also employed in the Nasrid administration as judges (as in the case of Ibn Shibrīn), whether in Granada or elsewhere in the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>280</sup> Perhaps the most eminent of these figures whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb encountered early in his career was Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf b. Mūsā al-Muntashāqirī (d. after 761/1360), a litterateur, historian, jurist and mystic who served as chief judge in his native city of Ronda and Marbella.<sup>281</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb met him near Gibraltar around 744/1343, which prompted a friendly letter exchange between the two individuals, preserved in both the *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr* and the *Iḥāṭa*, with al-Muntashāqirī praising Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who at the time was barely 30 years old, as being "among the most eminent litterateurs of the age whose literary skill and acumen has surpassed the eloquence of all, and whose star continues to ascend."<sup>282</sup> Moreover, al-Muntashāqirī issued an *ijāza* to Ibn al-Khaṭīb granting permission to him and his sons to transmit all his works and those of his teachers, who included many of the

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<sup>280</sup> Other figures who held the judgeship with whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb was particularly close include Abū al-Qāsim al-Khiḍr b. Abī al-ʿĀfiya (d. 745/1344), whom he describes as "our teacher" (*shaykhunā*) in *al-Siḥr wa al-Shi'r* (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 39–40; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 177–182), Abū al-Qāsim b. ʿĪsa (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 44–45), Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Khaḍīm al-Lakhmī (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 143–146), and Abū Jaʿfar Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Umawī, known as Ibn Burṭāl (d. 750/1349) (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 128–129; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 125–126; al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, p. 159).

<sup>281</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Iḥāṭa*, 4: 377; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 43; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 119–122; Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 2: 371.

<sup>282</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 126–130; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Iḥāṭa*, 4: 378–381.

preeminent scholars from the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century Islamic West.<sup>283</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb's encounter with Abū al-Ḥajjāj al-Muntashāqirī, one of the leading scholar-officials of Ronda, was a further testimony to the importance of itinerancy as a factor which enabled court secretaries to expand their intellectual horizons and political network, both through the acquisition of *ijāzas* and by being brought into close contact with a previous generation of Nasrid scholars.

Within Granada itself, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's most important mentors were also members of the judicial hierarchy, notably Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī al-Sabtī (d. 760/1359), known as al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī,<sup>284</sup> and Abū al-Barakāt Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Balaḥīqī (d. after 771/1369),<sup>285</sup> both of whom are referred to as “our teacher” (*shaykhunā*) throughout Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works.<sup>286</sup> Al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, descended from a family of *shurafā'* (descendants of the Prophet) and intellectual elites in Ceuta, settled in Granada during the reign of Ismā'īl I and served as a secretary in the royal chancery before being appointed as a preacher (*khaṭīb*) in the Great Mosque of Granada on the Rabī' II 4 737/November 10 1336.<sup>287</sup> An expert in lexicography, history, jurisprudence, belles-lettres and grammar, he was appointed chief judge of Granada during the reigns of Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V.<sup>288</sup> Along with Ibn Shibrīn, al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī's prominence within the Nasrid chancery

<sup>283</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Iḥāṭa*, 4: 387–388.

<sup>284</sup> For a short study of his life and scholarly production, see Muhammad al-Hajawi, *Abū al-Qāsim al-Sharīf al-Sabtī: ḥayātuhu wa athāruhu al-adabiyya al-lughawiyya wa al-balaghiyya* (Quneitra, 1996).

<sup>285</sup> For an important biographical study of this individual and his family, see Soledad Gibert, “Abū-l-Barakāt al-Balaḥīqī, Qāḍī, Historiador y Poeta,” *Al-Andalus* 28 (1963), pp. 381–424; and Cristina de la Puente, “La familia de Abu Ishaq b. al-Hayy de Velefique,” in *Estudios Onomástico-Biográficos de al-Andalus*, Vol. V (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1992), eds. Manuela Marín and Jesús Zanón, pp. 39–55.

<sup>286</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 141.

<sup>287</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 180–189; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Iḥāṭa*, 2: 182–183; Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 2: 267–268; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā'id al-Juman*, pp. 231–235; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 145–146; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 214.

<sup>288</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 93–95; Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 2: 267–268; Ibn al-Qāḍī, *Durrat al-Ḥijāl*, 2: 268; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā'id al-Jumān*, pp. 231–235; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 145–149; al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 7: 182–183; Ibn Qunfudh, *al-Wafayāt*, p. 362. For more on al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, see María



reflects the specific patronage for scholars from Ceuta, especially following the Nasrid conquest of the North African city in 705/1306, highlighting the inseparability between broader political developments and the administrative-intellectual context in Granada. Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī, a poet, mystic and jurist from Almería, also held the chief judgeship of Granada during the reigns of Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V.<sup>289</sup> Far more than any other individual in Granada, Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī appears to have fulfilled the role of spiritual mentor for Ibn al-Khaṭīb and is described by the latter as a living saint (*walī Allāh*) and the most eminent scholar of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century (*ṣadr ṣudūr hadhihi al-mi'a*).<sup>290</sup> Although never referred to by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as “our teacher” (*shaykhunā*),<sup>291</sup> the jurist and litterateur Abū Saʿīd Faraj b. Qāsim b. Aḥmad b. Lubb (d. 782/1381) was another individual with whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb established a close relationship during his early career in the Nasrid administration. As one of Granada’s most leading scholar-officials and the teacher of many its jurists,<sup>292</sup> including Abū Ishāq al-Shāṭibī, Ibn Lubb served, along with al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī and Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī, as a vital link between Ibn al-Khaṭīb and the broader community of theologians and legal scholars in the Nasrid kingdom.

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Isabel Secall, “Una familia Ceuti en la Granada de los siglos XIV y XV: los Banū l-Šarīf al-Ḥasanī,” *al-Qantara* 7 (1986), pp. 86–101.

<sup>289</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Iḥāṭa*, 2: 143–169; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 28–30; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 156–161; al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 174–177; Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 2: 269–274; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 96–97; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 8: 16–31. For an important biography of this individual’s father, see Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Iḥāṭa*, 3: 248–251. Biographies of Abū al-Barakāt can be found in the *Katība al-Kāmina*. He is also praised by Ibn Khaldun in his *Taʿrīf*.

<sup>290</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 28; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 127–134. Similarly, in his *al-Faṣl al-ʿādil bayn al-raḳīb wa al-wāshī wa al-ādhil* Ibn Khātima refers to Abū al-Barakāt as “among God’s saints and the inheritor of their station” (*khalaf awliyāʾ Allāh taʿāla wa wārith darajatihim*) (Soledad Gibert, “Un tratadito de Ibn Jatima sobre los enemigos de los amantes,” *al-Andalus* 18 [1953], p. 4).

<sup>291</sup> While Ibn al-Khaṭīb does not list Ibn Lubb among his own teachers, the former’s 11<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup>-century biographer al-Maqqarī nonetheless includes Ibn Lubb mentors.

<sup>292</sup> One of Ibn Lubb’s students, Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā al-Sarrāj (d. 803/1401), referred to him as “the most eminent scholar (*shaykh al-shuyūkh*) and the teacher of teachers (*ustādh al-asātidha*) in al-Andalus and the leading legal authority of his age” (Abū Zakariyya al-Sarrāj, *Fahrasat al-Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā bin Ahmad al-Sarrāj al-Fāsī*, p. 646).

By the late 740s/1340s, Ibn al-Khaṭīb had established himself as a leading scholar-official in Granada due largely to the thorough education he had received, the patronage of the royal court, and his close political and intellectual ties to various scholar-officials across the Islamic West. His rise from the son of a provincial notable to the private secretary of Yūsuf I was the product of his own brilliance as a scholar, physician and orator, as well as the result of a deliberate strategy initiated by his father ‘Abd Allāh and continued by his teacher Ibn al-Jayyāb to ensure that he attained the credentials required to ascend through the ranks of the Nasrid administration. As this chapter has sought to demonstrate, his early education and career as a court secretary in the chancery were central to his intellectual formation. It is quite difficult to appreciate Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s interest in belles-lettres and history without acknowledging his indebtedness to Ibn al-Jayyāb and Ibn Shibrīn, his passion for mysticism without understanding the influence of Ibn Luyūn Ibn Ṣafwān, and Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī, nor his knowledge of peripatetic philosophy and medicine without recognizing the singular importance of Ibn Hudhayl. Similarly, his particular vision of the ideal conduct of a scholar-official was heavily shaped by his contact with statesmen such as ‘Abd al-Muḥaymin al-Ḥaḍramī and Abū Bakr b. al-Ḥakīm, as well as judges such as Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf al-Muntashaqrī and al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī.

Before reaching the age of 30, Ibn al-Khaṭīb had been appointed to serve in a senior capacity within the Nasrid administration, with his duties encompassing the composition of chancery correspondence and official documents, the recitation of panegyrics during public ceremonies, and regularly accompanying the emir on both his military campaigns and travels throughout his kingdom. As the private secretary of Yūsuf I and in his function as the royal physician, Ibn al-Khaṭīb enjoyed a close proximity to the person of the king, and thus to royal power. Although not connected by blood or marriage to any of the city’s elite families, his close

ties with statesmen such as the chancellor and chief minister Ibn al-Jayyāb, Abū Nu‘aym Riḍwān al-Naṣrī (d. 760/1359), the Nasrid chamberlain (*ḥājib*), who also served as head of the military,<sup>293</sup> and chief justices such as al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī and Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī, ensured that his star would continue to rise. By the mid-740s/1340s his influence had become notable enough that other scholar-officials throughout the Nasrid realm considered him a significant intermediary between themselves and Yūsuf I or the chamberlain Riḍwān.<sup>294</sup> As evident from his writings from the period, such as the *Tāj al-Muḥalla* and the *Iklīl al-Zāhir*, Ibn al-Khaṭīb had incorporated himself within the broader “community of letters,” a network of scholar-officials that encompassed al-Andalus and North Africa. As the next two chapters will make clear, it is this network which he continued to expand and mobilize throughout the next three decades of his life in order to secure his increasingly-ambitious political interests.

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<sup>293</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 506–513.

<sup>294</sup> See, for example, a letter written by Ibn al-Khaṭīb on behalf of the Nasrid ambassador to Tunis in *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 105–108 and the Nasrid chancery official Abū al-‘Alā’ Muḥammad b. Simāk al-‘Āmili’s (d. 760/1359) letter seeking Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s favor in *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 199–200.

## Chapter 2: The Political Ascendancy of the Secretarial Elite in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-c. Nasrid Granada

“We grant [Ibn al-Khaṭīb] full authority over all that God has bestowed upon us (*wa aṭlaqana yadahu ‘alā kulli mā ja‘ala Allāh lanā al-naẓar fīhi*)”<sup>1</sup> - Yūsuf I (r. 733/1333–755/1354)

Modern scholarship on Nasrid Granada has often characterized the long reigns of Yūsuf I (r. 733/1333–755/1354) and Muḥammad V (r. 755/1354–760/1359, 763/1362–793/1391) as a period of remarkable cultural and intellectual production, focusing especially upon the construction and expansion of the Alhambra palaces and other monumental building projects. However, there has been relatively little attention to the broader administrative and political changes within Nasrid Granada taking place during the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Among the most important of these transformations was the increased delegation of power to the secretarial class, and their hegemony over the office of chief minister, which had been controlled by military figures and noblemen since the inception of the Nasrid kingdom a century earlier.

The court politics of the period, which witnessed the increased concentration of executive power within the hands of scholars, scribes and palace officials, transformed the chancery into one of the most significant bases of power in the Nasrid kingdom and provides the immediate background for understanding the political thought of Ibn al-Khaṭīb. The latter’s writings were aimed at presenting a distinct vision of politics and sovereignty that emphasized the proper delegation of royal power. This “proper order” was explicitly juxtaposed with a pre-existing state of affairs in which Nasrid politics was dominated by the nobility and various military factions within the kingdom. Specifically, Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to legitimize the appointment of leading members of the secretarial elite (*kuttāb*) to senior political offices as a prudent strategy that

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 443.

enabled the Nasrid sovereigns to maintain an effective balance between the various factions within their kingdom. Through a detailed discussion of the various political factions in Nasrid Granada, their social backgrounds and their relationship with the sovereign, Ibn al-Khaṭīb represented his own rise (and that of his predecessors) as part of a broader effort by Yūsuf I to expand his own royal authority and power.

The empowerment of the secretarial elite, while a central theme within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own historical works, was merely one component of this royal strategy, which was often intended to counterbalance the influence and power of specific factions of nobles within their court. While these royal anxieties about noble power played an important role in the empowerment of palace officials, including secretaries, court politics during this period did not strictly revolve around a rivalry between "men of the sword" and "men of the pen." Although groups of court secretaries and military elites certainly vied for power, sometimes violently, in the Nasrid kingdom, they did not constitute monolithic categories. In fact, individuals within the chancery, including Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself, were closely tied to specific military elites, and noble families often groomed their sons for careers in the chancery and judiciary. Moreover, certain non-noble individuals wielded a large degree of executive authority while being closely connected with leading military figures, thereby demonstrating the fluidity of social status beyond a simple dichotomy between military and secretarial elites. It was also common for specific political factions during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century to be constituted by alliances between individuals that belonged to the military elite, the chancery and judiciary, as was the case with Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own political circle.

In order to explore how the competition between the secretarial and military elites came to shape the concepts that came to be enshrined within the literary and historiographical

representation of court politics, this chapter provides a reconstruction of the political history of Nasrid Granada during between 700/1300 and 749/1349. While illustrating the manner in which social status, patronage networks and professional rivalry fashioned the court politics in Nasrid Granada, the following two chapters demonstrate that an uncommonly high number of scholar-officials ascended to the highest offices of state during this period and maintained their hold on power for nearly 50 years. These individuals, who began their careers as scribes in the chancery, rose to prominence as leading figures in the king's royal assembly, securing the office of chief minister, and exercising a larger measure of political authority than some of the leading military elites in the kingdom. They expanded their own influence within the court through proximity to the sovereign (in their capacity as physicians, royal tutors, treasurers, and private secretaries), the appointment of their own kinsmen, students and friends to office, and the establishment of important alliances with various factions of nobles across the kingdom. The secretarial elite legitimized their authority through the composition of numerous texts dealing comprehensively with the nature of royal sovereignty, the delegation of authority and the socio-political structures of power. These texts, historical chronicles, documents and political treatises alike, provide important details about both the theory and practice of power in the Nasrid kingdom during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, while also embodying the concerns, anxieties and perspectives of individuals such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb. A close analysis of these writings allows for a careful examination of the manner in which historiography, political treatises, and the construction of monumental inscriptions (such as those still visible upon the walls of the palace of the Alhambra) was instrumentalized by a particular group among the literary-secretarial class to buttress their distinct position within the Nasrid kingdom.

## The Sword and the Pen: Professional Rivalry in Nasrid Granada, 700/1300–749/1349

The long-standing interest in the concept of nobility, vassalage and lordship in the context of medieval Europe is attested by the rich historiographical tradition and extensive scholarly literature over the past century that has focused on the specific ideas, institutions, privileges and culture that defined this class.<sup>2</sup> This has been complemented by significant contributions exploring the various aspects of medieval government and administration.<sup>3</sup> Collectively, this body of scholarship has provided remarkable insight into the various social and political structures of medieval European society, nuancing traditional and teleological grand narratives about the evolution of bureaucracy, political centralization and the rise of the early modern state.<sup>4</sup> Such extensive studies about the social and political structures of medieval European society have been facilitated by the existence of and increased access to the large number of archives and manuscript libraries across Europe. Conversely, with notable exceptions, the absence of significant repositories of surviving documents from the medieval Islamic world has often posed a major obstacle to the historian interested in examining similar questions. Given the foundations of the Kingdom of Granada by a confederation of military lords and urban patricians whose leader, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Naṣr, pledged his fealty and loyalty to Fernando III of Castile, questions of client-patron relations, noble power and the nature of bonds of loyalty between military and political elites are paramount in the context of Nasrid history. Over the past

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<sup>2</sup> Important studies include Martin Aurell, *La noblesse en Occident (Ve–XVe siècle)* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1996); Joel T. Rosenthal, *Nobles and the Noble Life, 1295–1500* (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1976); Chris Given-Wilson, *The English Nobility in the Late Middle Ages: The Fourteenth-Century Political Community* (London: Routledge, 1987); Joseph Morsel, *L'aristocratie médiévale* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2004); Thomas N. Bisson, "Medieval Lordship," *Speculum* 70 (1995), pp. 743–759; Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); and Carol Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates: Lineage and Faction in a Medieval Commune* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

<sup>3</sup> John W. Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus: Foundations of French Royal Power in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California, 1986).

<sup>4</sup> The traditional perspective is exemplified by Joseph R. Strayer, *The Reign of Philip the Fair* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), among others.

two decades, the discovery and accessibility of a large number of literary sources (letters, biographical dictionaries and historical chronicles), chancery documents and a considerable amount of legal records has enabled scholars to think more carefully about noble families, royal administration and the socio-political structures of power within the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada. Most of these studies have been focused upon the Granadan political elite during the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>5</sup> This chapter attempts to rectify this lacuna by providing an overview of the social and political dynamic of elite families and their relationship to political power during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.

The intricate and dynamic relationship between the established nobility and the class of scholar-officials in Nasrid Granada, which ranged from cooperation to violent rivalry, formed the context for Ibn al-Khaṭīb's political ascendancy in the Nasrid court. The reconstruction of the details about this rivalry is itself dependent upon the historical and biographical material written by secretaries within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own network of scholar-functionaries, whose social background, intellectual commitments and intimate relationship with royal power heavily colored their representation of the kingdom's political structures. Their various works, historical-biographical as well as political treatises, thus provide historians with a distinct representation of Nasrid Granada. As such, any consideration of the dynamics of the professional rivalry, the nature of the nobility and the rise of the secretarial elite in the Nasrid court during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century requires a critical and careful engagement with their writings. This is particularly

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<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the most important contributions have been Antonio Peláez Rovira, *El emirato Nazarí de Granada en el siglo xv: Dinámica política y fundamentos sociales de un estado Andalusí* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2009); Rafael G. Peinado Santaella, *Aristócratas nazaríes y principales castellanos* (Málaga: Centro de Ediciones de la Disputación de Málaga, 2008); and Clara Almagro, "¿Un hidalgo musulmán? La oligarquía nazarí desde un pleito de hidalguía castellano," *al-Qantara* 38 (2017), pp. 71–97. For other studies, see José Enrique López de Coca Castañer, "Granada en el siglo XV: las postrimerías nazaríes a la luz de la probanza de los infantes don Fernando y don Juan," in *Andalucía entre oriente y occidente (1236–1492): Actas del V Coloquio internacional de Historia Medieval de Andalucía, durante los días 27 al 30 de noviembre de 1986* (Córdoba: Diputación Provincial, 1988), ed. Emilio Cabrera Muñoz, pp. 599–642.



important in light of the absence of any surviving histories written from the perspective of the military elite themselves, unlike the situation in late medieval Castile where the competing historical traditions of the *caballeros* and *letrados* provide historians with a more nuanced perspective.<sup>6</sup> In this context, it is imperative to utilize the surviving documentary evidence, including royal decrees, coinage and diplomatic correspondence, as well as biographical dictionaries and historical accounts from Mamluk Egypt and Syria (especially the works of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, al-Dhahabī and Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī) which complement the writings of Andalusī and Maghribī court secretaries, while shedding important light on the political developments and structures of power in the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>7</sup>

From the outset, it is necessary to underscore that the very structure of the *Iḥāṭah* itself reflects Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s concern with establishing a careful taxonomy and specific terminology for the various groups that constituted Nasrid society. This biographical dictionaries entries classify individuals according to specific social categories: royal figures (*al-mulūk wa al-*

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<sup>6</sup> Luis X. Morera, “An Inherent Rivalry between “Letrados and Caballeros?” Alonso de Cartagena, the Knightly Estate, and an Historical Problem,” *Mediterranean Studies* 16 (2007), pp. 67–93.

<sup>7</sup> The importance of works from the Central Islamic Lands, particularly from Syria, Egypt and the Hijaz, as a major source for the social, intellectual and political history of al-Andalus has long been recognized in Spanish and Arabic scholarship, especially since these writings often relied upon materials or sources that are no longer extant. See, for example, Maribel Fierro and Jesús Zanón, “Andalusíes en dos obras de al-Dahabī: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’ y Taḍkirat al-ḥuffāz*,” in *Estudios Onomásticos-Biográficos de al-Andalus*, Vol. I (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1988), ed. María Marín, pp. 183–233; Victoria Aguilar, Miguel Angel Manzano and Carmen Romero, “Biografías andalusíes en las obras de Yāqūt e Ibn Jallikān: *Iršād al-arīb, Muḥam al-buldān y Wafāyāt al-a’yān*,” in *Estudios Onomásticos-Biográficos de al-Andalus*, Vol. I (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1988), ed. María Marín, pp. 235–271; Jesús Zanón, “Biografías de andalusíes en los *Masālik al-absār* de al-‘Umarī,” in *Estudios Onomásticos-Biográficos de al-Andalus*, Vol. III (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1990), ed. María Luisa Ávila, pp. 157–213; Maribel Fierro and María Mercedes Lucini, “Biografías de andalusíes en *al-Muqaffā* de al-Maqrīzī (m. 845/1442),” in *Estudios Onomásticos-Biográficos de al-Andalus*, Vol. III (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1990), ed. María Luisa Ávila, pp. 215–255; Juan M. Vizcaino, “Lectores del Corán en al-Andalus: Andalusíes en dos diccionarios biográficos de *qurrā’*,” in *Estudios Onomásticos-Biográficos de al-Andalus (Homenaje a José María Fórneas)*, Vol. VI (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1994), ed. Manuela Marín, pp. 463–504; Helena de Felipe and Fernando Rodríguez, “Las fuentes de Ibn Farḥūn en las biografías de alfaquíes de al-Andalus,” in *Estudios Onomásticos-Biográficos de al-Andalus*, Vol. II (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1989), ed. María Luisa Ávila, pp. 211–245; Mohammed Bencherifah, *Tarājim Maghribiyya min Maṣādir Mashriqiyya* (Casablanca: Matba’at al-Najah al-Jadida, 1996).

*umarā*’); notables and men of distinction (*al-a’yān wa al-kubarā’ wa al-fuḍalā*’); judges (*al-qadā*’); religious scholars and jurists (*al-muqri’in, al-‘ulamā’, al-muḥaddithīn, al-fuqahā*’); secretaries and poets (*al-kuttāb wa al-shu‘arā*’); local officials and statesmen (*al-‘ummāl wa al-utharā*’); and holy men (*al-zuhhād wa al-ṣulahā’ wa al-ṣūfiyya wa al-fuqarā*’).<sup>8</sup> This particular organization represents a notable departure from traditional biographical dictionaries in al-Andalus, such as Ibn Bashkuwāl’s *Kitāb al-Ṣilah* or al-Ḥumaydī’s *Jadhwat al-Iqtibās*, which utilize a primarily alphabetical scheme. Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s concern with broader social categories is further reflected by the particular attention that he devotes to the physical, genealogical, and cultural characteristics of the kingdom’s inhabitants in the preface of both *Iḥāṭah* and the *Lamḥa al-Badriyya*.<sup>9</sup> The Nasrid military elite are divided by Ibn al-Khaṭīb into two distinct categories, “Andalusī” and “Berber.” The “Berber” component mentioned here is a reference to the *shuyūkh al-ghuzāt* or detachments of North African “holy warriors” stationed primarily in Granada, Málaga, Ronda and Guadix.<sup>10</sup> These consisted, Ibn al-Khaṭīb explains, “of tribes of Marinid, Zanāta, Tijānī, Maghrāwah and ‘Ajīsī Berbers as well as North African Arab tribes” and were commanded by the exiled (royal) Marinid clans of the Banū Abī al-‘Ulā and the Banū Raḥḥū.<sup>11</sup> While they exercised a primarily military function and did not hold the office of chief minister, Miguel Ángel Manzano Rodríguez’s detailed and meticulous study illustrates the manner in which they actively intervened within Granadan dynastic and factional politics, effectively

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<sup>8</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 87.

<sup>9</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 134–139; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 63–66.

<sup>10</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 379–393.

<sup>11</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 136; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 64. According to the Mamluk chancellor Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, writing around 740/1340, the “largest contingent of the Nasrid military were [Berbers] from the North Africa, including those from the royal clans of the Marinids and Zayyanids. The [Nasrid] Sultan granted them exquisite palaces and villas as their residences” (Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, *Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār*, 4: 121). For a detailed discussion of the Nasrid military, see Cristóbal Torres Delgado, “El ejército y las fortificaciones del reino nazarí de Granada,” *Actas del I Simposio Nacional “Las Armas en la Historia (siglos X-XIV)*, Special Volume of *Gladius* (1988), pp. 197–217.

functioning as noble families.<sup>12</sup> Many were also hired as mercenaries by the Christian kingdoms, as studied by Hussein Fancy and Brian Catlos.<sup>13</sup> As for the Andalusī contingent of the Nasrid military, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that they “were led by commanders (*raʿīs*) from the kin (*al-qarābah*) [of the king] or the eminent from among the nobles (*shuyūkh al-mamālik*).”<sup>14</sup>

Who, exactly, were these “eminent nobles”? What was their relationship with the royal family and other social and political groups in society? Considering the major role they played within the kingdom’s politics and history, not least vis-à-vis royal power and the secretarial elite, it is useful to briefly explore their characteristics. These individuals, who formed the leading factions among the Nasrid political elite were descended from military commanders (*qāʾids*) and urban notables (*aʿyān*), mainly from Jaén, Córdoba or Sharq al-Andalus, such as the Banū al-Mawl or the Banū al-Fihri, who had supported Muḥammad I in laying the foundation of the Nasrid kingdom during the 630s/1230s and 640s/1240s.<sup>15</sup> Their families were important actors in the dismantling of Almohad authority in southern Iberia during the early 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century and formed a significant military-political faction within the Hūdid emirate (ca. 625/1228–635/1238). Ibn al-Khaṭīb dwells at length upon this particular group of the Nasrid elite, whose members often occupied the leading political offices of the kingdom during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries, with many of their descendants dominating Nasrid politics well into the mid-9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Miguel Ángel Manzano Rodríguez, *La Intervención de los Benimerines en la Península Ibérica* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1992). Also, see Pilar Garrido Clemente, “La actitud Nazarí ante las expediciones Benimerines a la Península: Los Šuyūkh al-Guzāt,” in *Al-Andalus y el Norte de África: Relaciones e Influencias* (Seville: Fundación El Monte, 2004), eds. Pablo Beneito and Fátima Roldán, pp. 67–110.

<sup>13</sup> Hussein Fancy, *The Mercenary Mediterranean: Sovereignty, Religion, and Violence in the Medieval Crown of Aragon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016) and Brian Catlos, “Muhammad Abenadalill: A Muslim Knight in the Service of the Kings of Aragon (1290–1291),” in *Jews, Muslims, and Christians in and around the Crown of Aragon: Essays in Honour of Professor Elena Lourie* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), ed. Harvey J. Hames, pp. 257–302.

<sup>14</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 136; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 64.

<sup>15</sup> For an important study of the political history of the early Nasrid kingdom, see Bárbara Boloix Gallardo, *Ibn al-Aḥmar: Vida y reinado del primer sultán de Granada (1195–1273)* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2017).

century.<sup>16</sup> Their status in society was reinforced by a distinct attire and symbols of authority, with Ibn al-Khaṭīb emphasizing that “their garb traditionally resembled that of their Christian enemies, with heavy armor, hanging shields, durable helmets, broad spears, and each knight flying a distinctive banner by which they were identified.”<sup>17</sup> The description of the traditional attire of the Nasrid military elite, which Ibn al-Khaṭīb explicitly likens to the Castilian nobility, is contrasted with that of the large mass of Nasrid infantry (*al-jumhūr*), described as wielding large throwing spears and “Frankish bows.”<sup>18</sup> The differentiation between the Nasrid nobility and the remainder of the soldiers highlights the difference in social status between the various components of the the Andalusī factions of the Nasrid military. The visual evidence provided by the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century illuminations from the *Cantigas de Santa María* (see Figure 1) is particularly striking.

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<sup>16</sup> Ana Echevarría, *Knights on the Frontier: The Moorish Guard of the Kings of Castile (1410–1467)* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), trans. Martin Beagles, p. 39.

<sup>17</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 136; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 64. However, he stresses that by the mid-8th/14th century this had largely been abandoned in favor of “light breastplates, golden helmets, Arab saddles, leather shields and light lances” (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 136; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 64) indicating the adoption of the styles of North African light cavalry (*jinetes*) by the Nasrid elite.

<sup>18</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 136–137; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 65.

Figure 1: Depiction in the *Cantigas de Santa María* of Muḥammad I and his army (Source: El Escorial T.I.1, f. 187r)



The reference in these paintings to the “King of Granada [Muḥammad I] and his knights/nobles (*cavallería*)” and their depiction as wielding heavy shields, carrying banners, wearing chainmail and iron helmets, complements Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s emphasis on the distinct attire and status of this faction. Significantly, the Nasrid sovereign (clad in red robes) is depicted within these images as a *primus inter pares*, riding alongside his nobles.

Between the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Nasrid nobility played a central role in organizing the defenses of the Nasrid-Castilian frontier, while also leading military campaigns and raids against the Christian kingdoms. As individuals who were conversant in Romance (just as several of their counterparts among the Castilian and Aragonese nobility were fluent in Arabic), they also functioned as important intermediaries between the Nasrid sovereigns and both Castile and Aragón, corresponding directly with functionaries, noblemen and kings in Christian Spain. During the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, this is best exemplified by the Arabic and Romance-language correspondence of the Banū Abī al-‘Ulā, one of the most powerful noble factions in Granada (as outlined below) with Aragón.<sup>19</sup>

The knowledge of Romance languages by many among the Nasrid military elite can be explained partly by the fact that they spent a great deal of their time as residents in Castilian and Aragonese territory, as ambassadors, political hostages, mercenaries or as exiles, becoming intimately familiar with the culture of the nobility in these kingdoms.<sup>20</sup> One of the most prominent examples of such a Nasrid nobleman was Abū Bakr ‘Atīq b. al-Mawḷ, who had lived

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<sup>19</sup> For examples of the Romance-language letters of of ‘Uthmān b. Idrīs b. Abī al-‘Ulā (Hozmen fill de Adriç fill de Abdella) to Jaume II, see the missives dated August 1314 (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, p. 480), May 1317 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 12; Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 501–502), January 1321 (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 518–519), May 1324 (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 537–538), and January 1326 (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, p. 548). See, also, the letter from Abū Thābit ‘Āmir b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā to Alfonso IV of Aragón dated July 1335 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 21).

<sup>20</sup> Echevarría, *Knights on the Frontier*, pp. 72–80.

in the Castilian court during his youth, attaching himself to leading members of the Castilian nobility.<sup>21</sup> In addition, during the late 7th/13th and 8th/14th centuries, considerable numbers of Castilian noblemen, notably the Lara family, spent a good deal of time in the Kingdom of Granada, which also served as an important avenue for the transmission of certain noble customs and ideals between Castile and Granada. During the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, at the height of the political alliance between Pedro I and Muḥammad V, there was even a development of a distinct Nasrid royal coat of arms which was carved into several parts of the Alhambra. As Jesús Rodríguez-Velasco, among others, has observed, this coat of arms was heavily modeled on that of the Castilian “Order of the Sash” (*Orden de la Banda*), a royal chivalric military order of knights which had been established by Alfonso XI in 730/1330.<sup>22</sup> The Italianate frescoes in the “Hall of Kings” of the Alhambra, dating from the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century and depicting chivalric scenes inspired by Arthurian legend,<sup>23</sup> provides another important example of the reception of Castilian ideas of knighthood, nobility and chivalry among political elites within the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>24</sup> Unlike the traditional religious and intellectual elite in the Kingdom of Granada,

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<sup>21</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 60–61.

<sup>22</sup> Jesús D. Rodríguez-Velasco, *Order and Chivalry: Knighthood and Citizenship in Late Medieval Castile* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), trans. Eunice Rodríguez Ferguson, p. 158. For a detailed discussion of the Order of the Band, see D’Arcy Jonathan Dacre Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown: The Monarchical Orders of Knighthood in Late Medieval Europe, 1325–1520* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1987), pp. 46–95; Rodríguez-Velasco, *Order and Chivalry*, pp. 118–159.

<sup>23</sup> According to the argument presented by Antonio Contreras Martín, many of these paintings were inspired by the cycle of Arthurian legends known as *Lancelot en prose* and *Lanzarote del Lago*, which enjoyed a broad circulation in both Castile and Aragón throughout the 14<sup>th</sup> century and spread to Granada during the reign of Muḥammad V (Antonio Contreras Martín, “The Hispanic Versions of the Lancelot en Prose: Lanzarote del Lago and Lançalot,” in *The Arthur of the Iberians: The Arthurian Legend in the Spanish and Portuguese Worlds* (Wales: University of Wales Press, 2015), ed. David Hook, p. 308. An alternative interpretation is presented by Carlos Alvar, who argues that the paintings share much in common with 14<sup>th</sup>-century French ivory luxury objects depict scenes of Tristan and other Arthurian material not necessarily connected with *Lanzarote del Lago* (Carlos Alvar, “The Matter of Britain in Spanish Society and Literature from Cluny to Cervantes,” in *The Arthur of the Iberians*, pp. 189–191).

<sup>24</sup> For a study of these paintings, see Jesús Bermúdez Pareja, *Pinturas sobre piel en la Alhambra de Granada* (Granada: Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife, 1987); Jerrilynn D. Dodds, “The Paintings in the Sala de de Justicia of the Alhambra: Iconography and Iconology,” *The Art Bulletin* 61 (1979), pp. 186–197; and Cynthia



there existed a degree of camaraderie between Nasrid noblemen and their Castilian counterparts, which, alongside their fluency in Romance and familiarity with the particulars of Castilian and Aragonese politics, made them even more indispensable assets as middlemen and power brokers on behalf of the Nasrid sovereigns. The Nasrid nobility's frequent contact and, not uncommonly, alliances with Castilian noblemen acquainted the latter with the history, politics and developments within the Nasrid kingdom, and became one of the important means through which knowledge about Islamic Spain (and North Africa) was transmitted to the Christian kingdoms. It is through such contact that many of the perspectives of the Nasrid nobility often survive in the various histories authored in both Castile and León. Many noblemen possessed their own distinct seals, which they affixed to documents,<sup>25</sup> and ruled their territory from their own fortresses and palatial courts, had their own secretaries, chancellors and councils, paralleling the organization of the royal court in Granada.

Although the scholarly literature about lordship, vassalage and nobility, especially works dealing with Castile,<sup>26</sup> provides valuable methodological insights and highlights broader questions in the study of power and privilege during the Middle Ages, it is important not to assimilate uncritically the specific language and concepts traditionally utilized in the

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Robinson, "Arthur in the Alhambra? Narrative and Nasrid Courtly Self-Fashioning in the Hall of Justice Ceiling Paintings," *Medieval Encounters* 14 (2008), pp. 164–198.

<sup>25</sup> Labarta, "Sellos en la documentación nazarí," pp. 144–148.

<sup>26</sup> Important studies include Simon Barton, *The Aristocracy in Twelfth-Century León and Castile* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Rafael Sánchez Saus, *La Nobleza Andaluza en la Edad Media* (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2005); Simon Doubleday, *The Lara Family: Crown and Nobility in Medieval Spain* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001); César González Mínguez, *Poder Real y Poder Nobiliar en la Corona de Castilla (1252–1369)* (Bilbao: Editorial Universidad de País Vasco, 2012); María Asenjo González, "La aristocracización política en Castilla y el proceso de participación urbana (1252–1520)," in *La Monarquía como Conflicto en la Corona Castellano-Leonesa (c. 1230–1504)* (Madrid: Silex, 2006), ed. José Manuel Nieto Soria, pp. 133–196; Salvador de Moxó, "De la Nobleza Vieja a la Nobleza Nueva. La Transformación Nobiliaria Castellana en la Baja Edad Media," *Cuadernos de Historia. Anexos de la Revista Hispania* 3 (1969), pp. 1–210; Marie-Claude Gerbert, *Las noblezas españolas en la Edad Media. Siglos XI–XV* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2007); Luis Suárez Fernández, *Nobleza y monarquía: entendimiento y rivalidad: el proceso de construcción de la corona española* (Madrid: Esfera de los Libros, 2003).



examination of these issues in the context of medieval Western Europe into an analysis of the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada. Although this question is outside the purview of this study, the culture, structures and representation of nobility within the Kingdom of Granada differed considerably from Latin Christendom. The term is utilized within this dissertation to indicate a specific class that considered itself the ruling elite of the kingdom by virtue of their descent from families who had laid the foundations for the Kingdom of Granada during the early 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, exercised a primarily military function, and whose power and wealth were centered on a particular patrimony (usually a fortress or township). Their privileged position was reinforced by the perpetuation of their status, land, wealth and political influence over several generations. The power of the nobility was underpinned mainly by their extensive land holdings, control of strategic frontier fortresses, and their monopolization of senior political offices. The fact that the nobility assassinated<sup>27</sup> or dethroned no less than 6 Nasrid sovereigns over the course of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, with two noblemen (Ismā'īl b. Faraj and Muḥammad b. Yūsuf) even supplanting reigning sovereigns to become kings themselves, illustrated their powerful position within the kingdom and the distinct position in society that they occupied. As Ana Echevarría, among others, has shown, this phenomenon of dominant noble families in Nasrid politics would continue into the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century and until the very end of the kingdom's existence.<sup>28</sup>

The Arabic chronicles and documents utilize a distinct vocabulary when discussing the Nasrid nobility, referring to them as “the elite” (*al-khāṣṣah*), “the eminent lords” (*al-shuyūkh/al-*

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<sup>27</sup> For the complex causes, actors and realities that brought about such a large number of regicides in Nasrid Granada during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, see Francisco Vidal, “El Asesinato Político en al-Andalus: La muerte violenta del emir en la Dinastía Nazarí (s. XIV),” in *Estudios Onomástico-Biográficos de al- Andalus: De Muerte Violenta. Política, Religión y Violencia en al-Andalus*, Vol. XIV (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2004), ed. Maribel Fierro, pp. 349–397.

<sup>28</sup> Echevarría, *Knights on the Frontier*, pp. 22–39.

*ashyākh*), “the leaders” (*al-ru’asā’*), “the people of power and influence” (*ahl al-jāh*),<sup>29</sup> “the leading statesmen” (*wujūh al-dawlah*), “the leading families” (*ahl al-buyūtāt*), “the senior notables” (*al-a’yān*), “the magnates” (*al-nubahā’*), “the military elites” (*al-quwwād*) and “the eminent dignitaries” (*al-wuzarā’*), all of which signify the political elite as a specific group in society whose identity was tied with their power, influence and familial status.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, it was the heritability of their status, wealth and power across several generations that enables us to speak of a distinct Nasrid “nobility” or “aristocracy.” The concept of noble status in Nasrid Granada was also tied directly to the relationship with the sovereign, the theoretical locus of authority, with marriage ties to the royal family constituting a particularly privileged position.<sup>31</sup> It was to these individuals, connected through either kinship or marriage ties to the sovereign, that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was referring when he asserted that the Nasrid military was often commanded by “kin of the sovereign” (*al-qarābah*). The Mamluk chancellor Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, writing about Granada around 740/1340, the “*qarābah*,” which he also refers to as “the nobles” (*al-ru’asā’*), were “individuals who had a claim to the throne or who could seize power to become kings themselves.”<sup>32</sup> The Banū Ishqalyūla,<sup>33</sup> essentially the co-rulers of the Nasrid kingdom during the first three decades of its existence, represent a particularly important example of these noble families during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>34</sup> The particular relationship

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<sup>29</sup> For a discussion of the various connotations of the term *jāh* in the Andalusī context, see Manuela Marín, “Sentido y usos de *ḡāh* en biografías de ulemas andalusíes,” *al-Qanṭara* 32 (2011), pp. 129–173.

<sup>30</sup> For an example of the uses of some of these titles in official Nasrid correspondence during the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, see the letter, dated Muḥarram 23 831/November 13 1427, in which Muḥammad VIII appoints the nobleman Abū al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad al-Bāḡī as governor and military commander of the fortress of Comares (Mariano Gasparo Remiro, *Documentos Árabes de la Corte Nazari de Granada* (Madrid: Tip. de la Revista de Archivos Bibl. y Museos, 1911), pp. 5–6.

<sup>31</sup> Echevarría, *Knights on the Frontier*, p. 22.

<sup>32</sup> Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, *Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār*, 4: 127.

<sup>33</sup> Josef Ženka, “Ishqalyūla, no Ašqilūla: el nombre correcto de la familia fundadora del Emirato Nazarí,” *Anaquel de Estudios Árabes* 25 (2014), pp. 195–208.

<sup>34</sup> María Jesús Rubiera, “Los Banū Escallola, la dinastía granadina que no fue,” *Andalucía Islámica, Textos y Estudios* 2-3 (1981–1982), pp. 85–94; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 221–222.

between the nobility and the Nasrid royal family is indicated by the fact that they were referred to as “the loyal friends, supporters and protectors” (*al-awliyāʾ*), a term which embodied a recognition of their senior status,<sup>35</sup> while the bond between Nasrid administrators or palace officials and the sovereign was often articulated in terms of service (*khidma*)<sup>36</sup> and patronage (*niʿma*).<sup>37</sup> In addition to Nasrid documents and literary works, sources produced in Latin Christendom, whether in Iberia or Italy, between the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> centuries also recognized these Nasrid elites as a distinct class in society and consistently referred to them using terms such as *caballería*, *hidalgos*, *alguaciles*, *alcaydes*, and *baroni*.<sup>38</sup> The existence of a distinct nobility in the Nasrid context, while significant, was not necessarily an aberration and had important antecedents during the Umayyad and Taifa periods in particular.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, many of the noble families during the Nasrid period claimed descent from the same leading (Arab) families prominent during the late Umayyad era, including the Banū Fihri and the Banū Aḏḥā al-Hamadānī, among others.

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<sup>35</sup> For a notable example of the usage of the term *al-awliyāʾ* in reference to the nobility, see the letter penned by Ibn al-Jayyāb on behalf of Yūsuf I during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century confirming a nobleman’s rule over a particular (unnamed) region (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manḥūr*, pp. 70–72), a letter written by Ibn al-Khaṭīb (on behalf of Yūsuf I) to the governor and political elites of Almería in 751/1350 (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥanat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 38–42). For an illustration of its use in reference to the nobility during the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, see the letter, dated Muḥarram 22 895/December 16 1489, from Muḥammad XI (“Boabdil”) to the nobles of Ugíjar (Gasparo Remiro, *Documentos Árabes de la Corte Nazari de Granada*, pp. 51–52).

<sup>36</sup> The notion of *khidma* can be dated to the early Umayyad era in al-Andalus (Meouak, *Pouvoir souverain, administration centrale et élites politiques*, pp. 29–34) and carries a wide range of connotations ranging from a general sense of administrative service rendered to a particular sovereign or dynasty to a personal bond of loyalty, subordination and devotion between master and servitor.

<sup>37</sup> An elaborate discussion of patronage and bonds of loyalty, with particular attention to the concepts of *walāʾ* and *niʿma*, in the classical Islamic world can be found in Roy Mottahedeh, *Loyalty and Leadership in an Early Islamic Society* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001), pp. 40–96.

<sup>38</sup> See, in particular, the Castilian translation of two 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century Nasrid documents, dated Shaʿbān 15 749/November 8 1348 and Ramaḍān 8 769/April 27 1368 respectively, that refer repeatedly to leading Granadan families using these terms (María José Osorio Perez and Emilio de Santiago Simon eds., *Documentos arabigos-granadinos romanceados* [Granada: Centro de Estudios Historicos de Granada y su Reino, 1986], pp. 9–45).

<sup>39</sup> Miguel Cruz Hernández, “Esquema de las interrelaciones de las clases sociales andalusies” in *Homenaje al Professor Jacinto Bosche Vilá* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1991), 1: 79–83.

Alongside these leading noble families, with whom the Nasrids frequently intermarried, the established Granadan patrician families (*a'yān*) were the other major group that are frequently described as leading members of the Nasrid political elite within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works. These were individuals whose wealthy, land-owning families had resided in Granada or Málaga for centuries, often holding leading administrative, judicial and political posts. These families, which included the Banū al-Juzayy,<sup>40</sup> the Banū Simāk,<sup>41</sup> the Banū Sahl b. Mālik,<sup>42</sup> the Banū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī<sup>43</sup> and the Banū 'Aṭīyyah al-Muḥāribī,<sup>44</sup> often intermarried closely among one another, leading one scholar to describe them as "the great ruling family of the fourteenth-century [Nasrid kingdom]."<sup>45</sup> Their number included statesmen, chief ministers, financial officers and chief judges, as well as important military commanders and scholarly figures throughout the Nasrid era. Collectively, the families associated with these military and urban elites played a significant role in the kingdom's politics and governance between the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries.

While the political history of Nasrid Granada during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century was often dominated by the negotiation and contestation of power among these leading military-political elites, who perceived threats to their influence as coming primarily from other rival families of

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<sup>40</sup> Celia del Moral Molina and Fernando N. Velázquez Basanta, "Los Banū Ŷuzayy. Una familia de juristas e intelectuales granadinos del siglo XIV. I," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 45 (1996), pp. 161-197.

<sup>41</sup> Jacinto Bosch Vilá, "Los Banū Simāk de Málaga y Granada: Una familia de cadíes," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 11 (1962), pp. 22-37.

<sup>42</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 320-321.

<sup>43</sup> Maía Isabel Calero Secall, "Los Banu l-Hasan al-Bunnahi: una familia de juristas malagueños," in *Estudios árabes dedicados a D. Luis Seco de Lucena* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1999), eds. Concepción Castillo Castillo, Inmaculada Cortés Peña and Juan Pedro Monferrer Sala, pp. 53-76.

<sup>44</sup> José María Fórneas Besteiro, "Los Banū 'Aṭīyyah de Granada (I)," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 25 (1976), pp. 69-80, and José María Fórneas Besteiro, "Los Banū 'Aṭīyyah de Granada (II)," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 26 (1977), pp. 28-60; El Hour, *La Administración Judicial Almorávide*, pp. 257-261.

<sup>45</sup> Ženka, "The Great Ruling Family of the Fourteenth Century," p. 309.

comparable status, this dynamic was set to change during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Throughout the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, provincial families, wealthy merchants, and Muslim emigrants from Christian Spain (*muhājirūn*) who established themselves in the chancery, judgeship or royal court due largely to the patronage received from the Nasrid sovereign came to constitute another component of the Granadan political and administrative elite. Unlike the aristocratic and patrician families within the kingdom, the court secretaries and palace officials in Nasrid Granada did not find themselves advancing politically due to their family lineage, wealth or social status but largely as a result of their distinct education and specific function at court. Like the *dictatores* in Renaissance Italy during the same period, it was their rhetorical skill, especially in the arts of epistolary and oratory, that underpinned the rise of these individuals. While their position in society was often connected with their role within the royal administration and the patronage of the sovereign, some also linked themselves, through service, marriage and other ties of obligation to the established noble families.

This was the status of many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's ancestors (including father and grandfather) as well as many of his teachers in the Nasrid chancery during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, as discussed in the previous chapter. Their relatively meagre landholdings and lack of integration (either through long-standing marriage ties or political connections) into the most powerful Nasrid families distinguished them from the nobility and patricians in the kingdom.<sup>46</sup> Their rank in society was almost entirely dependent upon their proximity to the royal family, with terms derived from the root *kh-ṣṣ* (meaning "close association, the conferral of special honors and to be assigned a privileged status"), such as "*ikhtiṣās*" ("the possession of special distinctions and favor") and "*ikhtiṣṣa bi*" ("to be distinguished above others") being employed to

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<sup>46</sup> For an important study of the role of marriage ties (*muṣāhara*) in the consolidation of Nasrid political elites, see Ženka, "The Great Ruling Family of the Fourteenth Century," pp. 309–339.

refer to them.<sup>47</sup> This term was closely related in meaning to the concept of *privanza* in medieval Castile,<sup>48</sup> with the term *privado*, rather than *caballero* or *alcayde*, often being utilized in Castilian sources to refer to these non-noble councilors in the Nasrid court, illustrating an awareness among Castilian authors of the nature of this group's position. As David Nirenberg has illustrated, the concept of *privanza* came to be associated by the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries with a form of "governing affection" with the *privado* as "beloved councilor, who enjoyed the special favor and intimacy (*privanza*) of his lord. In the political vocabulary of [the] period, love and intimacy were understood as powerful inspirations for and representations of political confidence: hence kings and princes were well advised to depend upon *amor* and *privanza* in choosing the administrators of their and the kingdom's affairs."<sup>49</sup> The implications and importance of favoritism and the political influence of the royal favorite has been well-documented and studied in the context of Castile, with both the case of Álvaro de Luna (d.

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<sup>47</sup> The use of the concept and terminology of *ikhtiṣās* to articulate the close proximity between the ruler and those to whom political authority was delegated is also evident in texts produced in Mamluk Egypt and Syria during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, as in the case of al-Dhahabī's description of the leading statesmen Husām al-Dīn 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Kurdī (d. 658/1260), described as "having immense distinction bestowed on him by the Ayyubid Sultan al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ (*wa kāna lahu ikhtiṣās zā'id bi-l Malik al-Ṣāliḥ*)" (al-Dhahabī, *al-'Ibar*, 3: 293).

<sup>48</sup> For an extensive discussion of *privanza* and its implications for kingship within the Castilian context, see François Foronda, *La privanza ou le régime de la faveur: Autorité monarchique et puissance aristocratique en Castille, XIIIe-XVe siècle* (PhD Dissertation: Université de Paris I Pantheon-Sorbonne, 2003); François Foronda, "La privanza dans la Castille du bas Moyen Age. Cadres conceptuels et stratégies de légitimation d'un lien de proximité," *Annexes des Cahiers de linguistique et de civilisation hispaniques médiévales* 16 (2004), pp. 153–197; Covadonga Valdaliso Casanova, "Privanza y privados en el reinado de Pedro I de Castilla," *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos* 34 (2007), pp. 293–305; David Nirenberg, "Christian Love, Jewish 'Privacy' and Medieval Kingship," in *Center and Periphery: Studies on Power in the Medieval World in Honor of William Chester Jordan* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), ed. Katherine L. Jansen et al., pp. 25–37.

<sup>49</sup> David Nirenberg, *Neighboring Faiths: Christianity, Islam and Judaism in the Middle Ages and Today* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), p. 67.

1453)<sup>50</sup> and that of Francisco Gómez de Sandoval (d. 1625)<sup>51</sup> receiving considerable attention.

Within the Nasrid kingdom during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, no less than in Castile during the late medieval and early modern era, this idea of proximity to and special distinction bestowed by the king to his non-noble councilors came to play a major role in the manner in which royal politics and the delegation of sovereignty were articulated, negotiated and contested.

Alongside senior executive posts (commander of the military, chief minister, chamberlain and royal deputy), the positions of private secretary, chancellor, treasurer, member of the royal assembly and physician brought with them a significant degree of power, especially since they embodied the concept of *ikhtiṣās/privanza*, with its connotations of a special distinction and proximity to the sovereign. Moreover, the role of many individuals among the secretarial elite as court poets, boon-companions (*nudamā'*) of the sovereign and tutors of royal princes in the Alhambra provided them with an even greater degree of physical access to the sovereign and his family. The increasing importance of the question of the delegation of royal power and that of legitimate executive authority, especially as represented by these various courtly offices and functions in the Islamic West can be seen from the large number of historical chronicles, political treatises and official documents about the topic composed during this period in both Nasrid Granada and North Africa. The most significant work on the subject was Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddima*, written around 779/1377, which seeks to meticulously document the specific usage

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<sup>50</sup> See, among others, Echevarría, *Knights on the Frontier*, pp. 2–5; José Serrano Belinchón, *El Condestable: de la vida, prisión y muerte de don Alvaro de Luna* (Guadalajara: Aache Ediciones, 2000); Isabel Pastor Bodmer, *Grandeza y tragedia de un valido. La muerte de Don Álvaro de Luna*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Caja de Madrid, 1992); Nicholas Round, *The Greatest Man Uncrowned: A Study of the Fall of Don Alvaro de Luna* (London: Tamesis Books, 1986); D. T. Jean, *John II of Castile and the Grand Master Álvaro de Luna* (Madrid: Castalia, 1978).

<sup>51</sup> Antonio Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism in the Spain of Philip III, 1598-1621* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Patrick Williams, *The Great Favourite: The Duke of Lerma and the Court and Government of Philip III of Spain, 1598-1621* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006); Paloma Bravo, *L'Espagne des favoris, 1598-1645: splendeurs et misères du valimiento* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2009); Francesco Benigno, *La sombra del rey: validos y lucha política en la España del siglo XVII* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1994).

of these titles/offices within a comparative context while providing a historical contextualization of their function and importance throughout Islamic history.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, the *Rawnaq al-Taḥbīr* of Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī, a student of Ibn al-Khaṭīb in the Nasrid chancery who would play a leading role as a scribe and historian in the Alhambra until the first decade of the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, reflects a similar concern with neatly defining and clearly demarcating the various offices of state, with specific preconditions, protocols and parameters being established for each.<sup>53</sup> It is this body of texts, as well as the normative literature (mirror for princes/fürstenspiegel) composed during the classical period of Islam that were widely circulated within the Nasrid kingdom, that provides important insights into the development of the secretarial elite’s conceptions of these offices. Far from simply replicating the ideas and notions found within these earlier texts, Nasrid court secretaries found ways to deploy older concepts of authority in novel ways, molding them to fit their own political context. The detailed examination of political institutions and administrative transformations within the writings of court secretaries reflects the attempt by these individuals to utilize the written word in order to enshrine and make normative their own ideas about the delegation of royal power, the nature of legitimate governance and court ceremony.

Within the Nasrid context during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, the contest for power between secretarial and military elites often centered on the office of chief minister, or wazīr/vizier. The

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<sup>52</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, BL MS Add 9574, f. 133r-147v. This copy of the *Muqaddima*, which is cited throughout the dissertation, was copied in North Africa during the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century based on the earliest copy of the work, which was completed by Ibn Khaldūn in 779/1377 and dedicated to the Hafsid ruler Aḥmad II (r. 772/1370-796/1394). For an extensive discussion of the manuscript and textual history of the *Muqaddima*, see Franz Rosenthal, “The Textual History of the *Muqaddima*” in *The Muqaddima: An Introduction to History* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958), trans. Franz Rosenthal; Jumaâ Cheikha, “Ibn Khaldun’s Manuscripts and an Analysis of his Handwriting,” in *Ibn Khaldun: The Mediterranean in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, the Rise and Fall of Empires* (Seville: Fundación El Legado Andalusi, 2006), pp. 354-361.

<sup>53</sup> Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī, *Rawnaq al-Taḥbīr fī Ḥukm al-Siyāsa wa al-Tadbīr*, BNRMS MS K1121, pp. 11-50.



term, as Ibn al-Khaṭīb emphasizes,<sup>54</sup> derived from the Qur'an, where it is utilized for Moses' brother Aaron: "O God, appoint for me a wazīr from among my family, my brother Aaron, strengthen me through him, let him be my associate and partner in this matter" (Q. 20: 29–32). The dignity of the office was also affirmed by the proliferation of numerous hadith ascribed to the Prophet and maxims ascribed to ancient philosophers and sages, such as "the good and proper order of the world is dependent on the good conduct of kings and the good conduct of kings is dependent upon the uprightness of his viziers."<sup>55</sup> The numerous Mirrors for Princes, political treatises and literary works across centuries stressed that the ideal chief minister was one who gave wise counsel to the king, maintained his loyalty to the sovereign, effectively administered the realm and protected the kingdom. The classical understanding of the office is reflected in the writings of al-Mawardī, whose views on the latter were frequently cited and proliferated throughout the post-classical Islamic world: "The chief minister occupies a distinct position. He oversees the affairs of the kingdom but is himself overseen by kings. He is simultaneously a governor and the governed, the one to whom obedience is owed and the one who maintains obedience, since he administers the kingdom but is bound by the obedience of his sovereign...in his hands are the reigns of governance, responsible for its proper order and culpable for its corruption."<sup>56</sup>

Throughout Islamic history, a multitude of individuals had occupied the office of vizier or chief minister, including scholars, physicians, military commanders, noblemen, as well as Jews and Christians, demonstrating that the vizierate was among the most fluid of political

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<sup>54</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, El Escorial MS 554, ff. 53 r–53v.

<sup>55</sup> Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 6: 88.

<sup>56</sup> Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 6: 89.

offices.<sup>57</sup> Rather than having a singular function, it was defined by the individual who held it and the jurisdiction of the office was often shaped by the broader political context. The fact that the post of chief minister during the first century of the Nasrid kingdom was occupied by a variety of individuals, rather than exclusively military men or nobles, and embodied different levels of executive authority illustrates that this trend continued well into the late Middle Ages. During the first few decades of the Nasrid kingdom, however, the military elite and Granadan nobility often occupied the position, allowing them to expand their own influence within Nasrid politics (see Table 1). Their kinship or marriage ties with the sovereign complemented and buttressed this authority, enabling these individuals to play a central role in the governance of the kingdom, with a large degree of executive authority concentrated in their hands. As the history of Nasrid Granada during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century demonstrates, however, this reality was complicated by a new class of scholar-officials who competed with these nobles for influence in the Alhambra.

**Table 1:** A list of the chief ministers between 636/1238 and 714/1314, corresponding to the reigns of Muḥammad I and Muḥammad II

| <b>King</b> | <b>Chief Minister</b>                           | <b>Background</b>                                  |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Muḥammad I  | Abū Marwān ‘Abd al-Malik b. Yūsuf b. Ṣanādīd    | Nobleman from Jaén                                 |
| Muḥammad I  | Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Shaybānī al-Azdī              | Granadan patrician                                 |
| Muḥammad I  | Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Shaybānī al-Azdī | Granadan patrician, son of the previous individual |

<sup>57</sup> For a discussion of this institution during the Umayyad era in al-Andalus, see Meouak, *Pouvoir souverain, administration centrale et élites politiques*, pp. 58–63; Meouak, “Notes sur le vizirate et les vizirs en al-Andalus à l’époque umayyade,” pp. 185–189.

Table 1 (continued)

|              |                                                    |                       |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Muḥammad I   | Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Ramīmī   | Nobleman from Almeria |
| Muḥammad I   | Abū Yaḥyā b. al-Kātib                              | Secretary             |
| Muḥammad II  | Abū Sulṭān ‘Azīz b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Mun‘im al-Dānī | Nobleman from Denia   |
| Muḥammad III | Abū Sulṭān ‘Azīz b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Mun‘im al-Dānī | Nobleman from Denia   |

The Wise King”: Knowledge, Governance and Kingship

The rise of the scholar-official during this period in the Islamic West should be situated within the broader context of a cultural and political milieu which was marked by the phenomenon of the scholar-prince or “learned sovereign.” This was the notion, particularly evident from the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century onwards, that the ideal sovereign or prince, in addition to embodying traditional attributes of kingship, such as royal justice, arbitrating between the various factions of society, and military leadership, should also be an individual who possessed a well-rounded education. This education was conceived as being rooted in moral philosophy, literature and grammar/rhetoric, as well as archery, swordsmanship and other martial noble pursuits, such as hunting. Such an emphasis on practical and theoretical knowledge of a variety of subjects was complemented by the traditional expectation that the ruler would have a firm understanding of religious precepts, legal rulings and, at least outwardly, exhibit some form of piety and reverence for the divine. In order to achieve this ideal, there were a large number of works composed during the late Middle Ages (and throughout the early modern period) devoted

to the education of princes across the Islamic world. These were not merely “Mirrors for Princes” that laid out the ideals and norms of kingship, or on the proper conduct, dignities and comportment of kings, but were texts written with the express intention of indicating the importance of particular forms of knowledge as essential pre-requisites for the effective and just governance of a kingdom.<sup>58</sup> While an understanding of social and political hierarchy was imperative, effective statecraft was also informed by a knowledge of fields such as law, theology, history, (moral) philosophy, rhetoric/poetry, and even astrology. This has been amply demonstrated in the case of the Castilian Don Juan Manuel, whose literary works had a strongly didactic function and often drew upon his own considerable political experience.<sup>59</sup> It was in this context in which scholars and learned men were appointed as royal tutors of princes, many of whom rose to become important councilors to future sovereigns and were rewarded these individuals with substantial wealth, power and influence. For many scholar-officials, the promotion of this ideal of the “scholar-prince” appears to be inherently tied to their own political and financial interests. While this was certainly the case, the learned sovereign also represented a political ideal that many court secretaries and scholars aspired to bring into practice. While Alfonso X and Frederick II are the most well-known examples of the “learned king” during the Middle Ages, the late medieval Nasrid Kingdom of Granada also provides several illustrations of this phenomenon.

The transformation of the Nasrid court into a flourishing cultural and intellectual center in the Islamic West marked the culmination of a process that had begun during the reign of

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<sup>58</sup> For an illustrative example of this genre of writing in the medieval Islamic world, often composed by secretaries for the princes or kings in which courts they served, see *Ādāb al-Mulūk* (Beirut: Dar al-Tali’a, 2001), ed. Jalil al-‘Atiyya, written by the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>-century scribe and courtier Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Razīn al-Kātib (fl. 1160–1200), who served in the court of the Zangids in Mosul.

<sup>59</sup> Castro y Calvo, *El arte de gobernar en las obras de Don Juan Manuel*, pp. 119–198.

Muḥammad II “The Learned” (r. 672/1273–703/1303) and continued under his successors, when scholars and secretaries had become a significant presence within the Alhambra.<sup>60</sup> This was particularly the case following the creation of an elaborate chancery and royal scriptorium located within the Comares Palace, where the various “*kātib*s (secretaries) and *raʿīses* (heads of department) worked closely with the ‘*arīfes* (architects) and *muʿallims* (master craftsmen),” under the guidance of the chancellor.<sup>61</sup> Muḥammad II, a contemporary of Alfonso X “the Wise” (r. 1252–1284) in neighboring Castile, played a major role in the patronage of scholars and scholarship.<sup>62</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb asserts that it was this ruler who was responsible for the establishment of many of the institutions, norms and offices of proper administration and governance, including both the chancery and treasury.<sup>63</sup> He ascribes this sovereign’s achievements in this regard to his “remarkable intellectual capacity, political acumen, wisdom, astuteness and extensive experience,” since he had served as the leading counselor and vizier of his father, Muḥammad I.<sup>64</sup> Muḥammad II, proclaims Ibn al-Khaṭīb, even surpassed his father in several respects, particularly in his remarkable erudition and refinement, which were illustrated by his “beautiful calligraphic handwriting and official signature” (*barāʿat al-khaṭṭ wa ḥusn al-tawqīʿ*) and close association with all types of scholars, including physicians, astrologers, philosophers, secretaries and poets.<sup>65</sup>

There was a particular interest among princes and rulers in philosophy, history, astronomy and belles-lettres among Nasrid princes during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries. While emphasizing the role of the founder of the Nasrid dynasty, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf, as a

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<sup>60</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 75.

<sup>61</sup> Fernández-Puertas, *The Alhambra*, p. 143.

<sup>62</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 224; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 75; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 149.

<sup>63</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 75; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 143.

<sup>64</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 75.

<sup>65</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 75.

warrior-king and defender of the frontier, the historian and scholar-official Ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī also describes him as an individual “with a good understanding of poetry with an immense interest in history” (*wa yaḥḥam al-shi‘r wa yukṭhar muṭāla‘at al-tārīkh*).<sup>66</sup> Similarly, Yūsuf (d. 660/1262), a son of Muḥammad I and brother of Muḥammad II, is described by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as “an eminent prince with a deep love of learning and a specific inclination towards the philosophical sciences (*al-ta‘ālīm*) and the science of the stars (*al-nujūm*), fields of knowledge in which he attained a mastery” and owned a large library of books.<sup>67</sup> The interest in the philosophical sciences, and Aristotelian philosophy in particular, among certain segments of the intellectual elite in the kingdom is further indicated by the survival of two neatly transcribed manuscripts from the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, with the first containing the “Epistle on the Enumeration of the Sciences” (*al-Maqāla fī Iḥṣā’ al-‘Ulūm*) by Abū Naṣr al-Farābī (d. 339/950) and dated Jumādā II 716/August 1316,<sup>68</sup> as well as the *Ṭaqwīm al-Dhihn*<sup>69</sup> and “An Answer to Questions [on Cosmology, Physics and Arithmetic]” (*Ajwiba Masā’il*)<sup>70</sup> by Abū al-Ṣalt Umayya b. al-Ṣalt al-Dānī (d. 529/1134) and dated 710/1310; the other, copied in Almería in 724/1324,<sup>71</sup> consisting of several works by Averroes, including “The Decisive Treatise” (*Faṣl al-Maqāl*),<sup>72</sup> “Exposition of the Methods of Proof” (*al-Kashf min Minhāj al-Adilla*),<sup>73</sup> and the “Epistles on Logic and Natural Philosophy” (*Maqālāt fī al-mantiq wa al-‘ilm al-tabī‘ī*).<sup>74</sup> The patronage of these sciences was particularly evident during the reign of Muḥammad II, whose court during the

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<sup>66</sup> Ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī, *al-Mughrib fī Ḥulā al-Maghrib*, 2: 88.

<sup>67</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 354. Another son of Muḥammad I, the Nasrid prince Faraj b. Muḥammad (d. 653/1256) is also represented as an educated individual and a particularly skilled poet (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 247–248).

<sup>68</sup> El Escorial MS 646, ff. 27v–45r.

<sup>69</sup> El Escorial MS 646, ff. 1r–15r.

<sup>70</sup> El Escorial MS 646, ff. 17r–27r.

<sup>71</sup> El Escorial MS 632, ff. 153r.

<sup>72</sup> El Escorial MS 632, ff. 1v–20v.

<sup>73</sup> El Escorial MS 632, ff. 20v–74r. This is particularly valuable and includes one of the oldest and most complete manuscript copies of the “Exposition of the Methods of Proof.”

<sup>74</sup> El Escorial MS 632, f. 74v–149r. This encompasses Averroes’ commentary on Aristotle’s *De Anima*.

late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century attracted a large number of scholars from across Iberia and North Africa, including the eminent Andalusī astronomer and physician Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. ‘Alī b. al-Raqqām (d. 715/1315). Ibn al-Raqqām was one of the leading scholars of the rational sciences (*al-‘ulūm al-‘aqliyya*), who was an expert in arithmetic, geometry, medicine, and astronomy.<sup>75</sup> Originally from Murcia, he spent a substantial amount of time in North Africa, specifically Hafsid Tunis and Bijāya before joining the court of Muḥammad II in Granada. His surviving works include several astronomical tables.<sup>76</sup> Ibn al-Raqqām was appointed as the tutor of the Nasrid prince Naṣr, who was enthroned as sovereign of Granada in 709/1309 and became one of his most committed students. Naṣr’s education at the hands of this scholar and his specific interest in astronomy and other sciences shaped his desire to transform Granada into a scholarly and intellectual hub, continuing the trend begun by his father Muḥammad II. His reign is particularly instructive for illustrating the link between the rational sciences and royal patronage within the Nasrid court in Granada. Ibn al-Raqqām’s son, the astronomer Ibrāhīm b. al-Raqqām, would go on to become one of Naṣr’s closest counselors, even accompanying the sovereign into exile in Guadix, where he continued to receive patronage for his scholarly pursuits, an illustration of the close relationship between particular sovereigns and a specific family of scholars during the Nasrid era. Another of the recipients of Muḥammad II’s

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<sup>75</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 180.

<sup>76</sup> These included *al-Zīj al-qawīm fī funūn al-ta’dīl wa-l-taqwīm* and *al-Zīj al-shāmil fī tahdhīb al-kāmil*. Ibn al-Khaṭīb also indicates that he authored *Abkār al-afkār fī al-uṣūl* (a work of jurisprudence), a summary of the *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān wa-l-khawāṣṣ*, and a medical treatise. For more on Ibn al-Raqqām, see Muhammad Abdulrahman, *Ḥisāb aṭwāl al-kawākib fī al-Zīj al-shāmil fī tahdhīb al-kāmil li-Ibn al-Raqqām* (Barcelona: University of Barcelona PhD Dissertation, 1996); Juan Carandell, *Risāla fī ‘ilm al-ẓilāl de Muḥammad Ibn al-Raqqām al-Andalusī* (Barcelona: Instituto “Millás Vallicrosa” de Historia de la Ciencia árabe, 1988); E.S. Kennedy, “The Astronomical Tables of Ibn al-Raqqām a Scientist of Granada,” *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften* (1977), 11: 35–72; Angel Mestres, “Maghribī Astronomy in the 13th Century: A Description of Manuscript Hyderabad Andra Pradesh State Library 298,” in *From Baghdad to Barcelona: Studies in the Islamic Exact Sciences in Honour of Prof. Juan Vernet* (Barcelona: Instituto “Millás Vallicrosa” de Historia de la Ciencia árabe, 1996), eds. Josep Casulleras and Julio Samsó, 1: 383–443; Roser Puig, “Dos notas sobre ciencia hispano-árabe a finales del siglo XIII en la *Ihāta* de Ibn al-Jatīb,” *Al-Qantara* 4 (1983): 433–440.

patronage was Ibn al-Ḥakīm, who, as will be discussed below, began his career as a scribe in the Alhambra before going on to become the councilor, chancellor and chief minister of Muḥammad III, another “learned prince.”

Nor was the patronage of learning and the transformation of Granada into a scholarly center unrelated to the broader political developments of the age. The Nasrid conquest of the major intellectual center of Ceuta on the North African coast in Shawwāl 705/May 1306, during the reign of Muḥammad III (r. 702/1302–709/1309), prompted a large number of scholars, including many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own teachers, to migrate to Granada and secure employment within the Nasrid court.<sup>77</sup> The networks of patronage established during the reign of Muḥammad II continued to shape the relationship between Nasrid political elites and intellectuals well into the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Perhaps the most illustrative example of a “learned king” during the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century was Yūsuf III (r. 811/1408–820/1417), the grandson of Muḥammad V. This individual, who received his education at the hands of many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s students in the Nasrid court, was particularly renowned as a poet who composed his own *dīwān* that has survived into the present.<sup>78</sup> Significantly, he was also responsible for the compilation of Ibn Zamrak’s poetry into a single manuscript codex, which has survived into the present.<sup>79</sup>

The ideal of the learned Muslim king or prince was not confined to Nasrid Granada during this period. The Azafid dynasty which ruled Ceuta was particularly renowned for its learned rulers, several of whom composed works of law, theology, mysticism and literature.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 226. According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, in Muḥarram 706/July 1306, a few months after the Nasrid conquest of Ceuta, several major families of scholars and notables from the city were taken to Granada, resettled in new quarters close to the Alhambra, and were granted a considerable stipend from Muḥammad III (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 552).

<sup>78</sup> Yūsuf III, *Dīwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Anjlu al-Misriyya, 1965), ed. Abd Allah Guenon.

<sup>79</sup> Ibn Zamrak, *Dīwān*, pp. 30–32

<sup>80</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 119–124.



The Marinid case also provides some illustrative examples of this phenomenon, particularly in the figure of Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī and his successors. This Marinid sovereign, although famed for his ambitious military campaigns which took him from Tarifa to Tunis, was often described within chronicles and biographical dictionaries as a scholar in his own right, with Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī referring to him as *al-Imām al-Faqīh* (The Learned Sovereign)<sup>81</sup> and both Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī and al-Sakhāwī asserting that he was “a learned and knowledgeable scholar.”<sup>82</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan’s itinerant court (as well as his capital in Fez) was distinguished by the presence of a large number of scholars, many of Andalusī origin, and he endowed several colleges in Morocco. Famously, he also transcribed several copies of the Qur’an which he sent to be deposited in the holy cities of Medina and Jerusalem, which further illustrates the manner in which the ideal of the “learned sovereign” was crucial to the fashioning of his royal image.<sup>83</sup> The importance of learning and knowledge in Abū al-Ḥasan’s court is indicated by the fact that two of his sons (Abū ‘Inān and Abū Sālim) who would go on to rule as Marinid sovereigns received a thorough education, studying with many of the scholar-officials in his court. These princes were also described as erudite and knowledgeable scholars in their own right.<sup>84</sup>

Similar cases can be invoked for the other North African dynasties. Writing around 806/1403 in Constantine, Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī describes Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā, the founder of the Hafsid dynasty as “an eminent, felicitous, prudent, reasonable king, who was also a brilliant scholar (*‘ālim majīd*), accomplished poet (*shā‘ir muḥsin faṣīḥ*) and erudite author (*kātib ṣalīb al-ra’ī*)...who was ranked among the leading scholars and eminent poets” and mentions his

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<sup>81</sup> al-Dhahabī, *al-‘Ibar*, 4: 90.

<sup>82</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 50; al-Sakhāwī, *Wajīz al-Kalām*, 1: 59.

<sup>83</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 275–276.

<sup>84</sup> Abū Sālim is described by al-Sakhāwī as having a knowledge of arithmetic and “the science of the stars” (astrology/astronomy) (al-Sakhāwī, *Wajīz al-Kalām*, 1: 128).

patronage of scholars and scholarship, in whose intellectual discussions he would actively participate.<sup>85</sup> The Nasrid poet-prince also describes a number of Hafsid and Zayyanid rulers and princes as learned, particularly in belle-lettres and preserves various fragments of their poetry.<sup>86</sup> The phenomenon of the scholar-prince, like the scholar-minister, was also evident in the Near East during the same period. The most well-known case is that of the Ayyubid prince of Hama, Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'īl (d. 732/1331), an immensely learned scholar-prince whose intellectual production, including works on history (including the monumental *al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*) and geography (*Taqwīm al-Buldān*) have survived.<sup>87</sup> He also wrote works on medicine, philosophy and theology, corresponding closely with leading scholars about intellectual matters, and even attracting the attention of the Damascene theologian Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), who sent him a detailed letter.<sup>88</sup> Al-Malik al-Ashraf (d. 796/1296) of Rasulid Yemen was another scholar-prince from this period, who appears to have been particularly interested in astronomy.<sup>89</sup> The astrolabe which he constructed, dated 690/1291, is preserved in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.<sup>90</sup> During the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century the rulers Shāhrukh (r. 807/1405–850/1447) and Ulugh Beg (r. 813/1411–852/1449) in Timurid lands, and

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<sup>85</sup> Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī, *al-Fārisiyya fī Mabādi' al-Dawla al-Ḥaḥṣiyya*, pp. 112–113. Similarly, Ibn al-Qunfudh claimed that this sovereign's father, Abū Muḥammad 'Abd al-Wāḥid b. Abī Ḥaḥṣ, was also a "learned king" (*malik 'ālim*) (Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī, *al-Fārisiyya fī Mabādi' al-Dawla al-Ḥaḥṣiyya*, p. 105).

<sup>86</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 97–117.

<sup>87</sup> al-Dhahabī, *al-'Ibar*, 4: 92.

<sup>88</sup> For a translation and study of this epistle, see Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Taymiyya, *Lettre à Abū l-Fidā'* (Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1994), trans. Jean R. Michot.

<sup>89</sup> During the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, this dynasty produced another distinguished scholar-prince, al-Malik al-Aḥḍal (r. 764/1363–778/1377), who constructed a college and composed a significant Arabic anthology, covering a diverse number of subjects, including astronomy. For a facsimile of the latter, see Daniel Martin Varisco and G. Rex Smith (eds.), *The Manuscript of al-Malik al-Aḥḍal al-'Abbās b. 'Alī b. Dā'ūd b. Yūsuf b. 'Umar b. 'Alī b. Rasūl: A Medieval Arabic Anthology from the Yemen* (Warminster: E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 1998).

<sup>90</sup> David A. King, "The Medieval Yemeni Astrolabe in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City," *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften* (1985) 2: 99–122; <https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/91.1.535a-h/>. For a broader discussion of this prince's broader scholarly pursuits, see Daniel Martin Varisco, *Medieval Agriculture and Islamic Science: The Almanac of a Yemeni Sultan* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994).

Mehmed II (r. 848/1444–850/1446, 855/1451–886/1481) and Bayezid II (r. 886/1481–918/1512) in the Ottoman context constitute the most significant examples of “scholar-sultans” and patrons of learning.

Among the various examples of learned kings in the late medieval Islamic West, the representation of the Marinid ruler Abū ‘Inān constitutes a particularly instructive illustration of the phenomenon. This sovereign was described as an eminently learned jurist and theologian whose court was populated by the leading scholars of the age. He actively sponsored sessions of learning (*majālis*), constructed massive colleges (*madāris*), with his name and titles carefully inscribed upon them, and promoted himself as a leading scholarly authority in his own right. It was in the specific field of hadīth that Abū ‘Inān was most influential. By acquiring a large number of certificates of audition and transmission from scholars in the Mashriq as well as the Maghrib, Abū ‘Inān promoted himself as the essential link between the Prophet and an entire generation of Muslims in the Islamic West, supplementing his claim to be the “Commander of the Faithful” (*amīr al-mu’minīn*) and God’s caliph (*khalīfat rabb al-‘ālamīn*) with such credentials. This is nowhere clearer than in a work, titled “The Central Pearl of the Precious Necklace in the Lines of Transmission of the Books whose Authenticity has been Established by the Consensus of the Muslims and which Have Been Transmitted on the Authority of the Marinid Sovereign Abū ‘Inān the Commander of the Faithful” (*Wāsiṭat al-‘Iqd al-Thamīn fī asānīd al-kutub allatī in ‘aqada ‘ala siḥḥatiha ijmā‘ al-muslimīn min riwāyat al-sulṭān Abī ‘Inān al-Marīnī amīr al-mu’minīn*), that this sovereign commissioned Ibn Marzūq, the leading scholar-official of his court, to write.<sup>91</sup> This work provides detailed lines of transmission (*isnād*) of six canonical collections of hadīth—the *Jamī‘ al-Saḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī, the *Musnad* of Muslim b. al-

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<sup>91</sup> Ibn Marzūq, *Wāsiṭat al-‘Iqd al-Thamīn*, El Escorial MS 1167, ff. 162r–177v.

Ḥajjāj, the *Jāmi‘ al-Kabīr* of al-Tirmidhī, the *Muwaṭṭā‘* of Mālīk b. Anas, the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd, and the *Sunan* of al-Nasā‘ī—that were drawn from the various certificates of audition (*ijāzāt*) granted to Abū ‘Inān by scholars from across the Islamic West and the Near East during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Many of these were acquired through intermediaries such as Ibn Marzūq, who had traveled widely across the Islamic world, studying with prominent scholars and was part of a vast network of jurists and theologians. Within his preface to the work, Ibn Marzūq claims that “there is no collection of better or shorter lines of transmission of such a great number of hadith back to the Lord of Messengers in any of the lands of the Maghrib than this” and proclaims that “our lord, the Commander of the Faithful [Abū ‘Inān], is the supreme scholar of hadith in this era and has achieved what no king before him had been able to achieve before” (*mawlānā amīr al-mu‘minīn hūwa amīruhum fī al-ḥadīth fī hadhā al-‘aṣr wa anhu ḥadhī bi-mā lam yaḥdha bi-hi malik min qabluh min mulūk al-dahr*).<sup>92</sup>

This emphasis on Abū ‘Inān as a scholar of hadith is also evident in other sources. One particularly insightful anecdote about this ruler as an important link in the transmission of the *Jāmi‘ al-Saḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī is found in the *thabat* of the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-century Andalusī scholar Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad al-Balawī al-Wādī Āshī:

My teacher’s father said: I received certificate of transmission [for the *Jāmi‘ al-Saḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī] from the renowned secretary and chief judge Walī al-Dīn Abū Zayd ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Khaldūn, who asserted: “The vast majority of this work was transmitted to me through the pre-eminent sovereign, the Commander of the Muslims Abū ‘Inān Fāris, the son of the sovereign and Commander of the Muslims Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī (may God sanctify his soul!), in the royal palace in Fez (*bi-dār mulkihi min Fās*) in various sessions of learning and study (*fī majālis muta‘adida*), and he granted me permission to transmit it on his authority (*wa ajāzanī sā‘iruhu*).” I heard this from a number of eminent scholars who granted [Ibn Khaldūn] written certificates of audition in Egypt and elsewhere.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Ibn Marzūq, *Wāsiṭat al-‘Iqd al-Thamīn*, El Escorial MS 1167, f. 163v.

<sup>93</sup> al-Balawī al-Wādī Āshī, *Thabat*, p. 269.

This story, buried within a dense work devoted to enumerating names of scholars, books and lines of transmission (*asānīd*) not only provides a window into the early career of Ibn Khaldūn in the Marinid court, but illustrates the degree to which Abū ‘Inān was acknowledged as a scholar of *hadith* both by contemporaries and subsequent generations. Nor was *hadith* the only field of knowledge in which Abū ‘Inān aspired to be recognized as a scholar. According to Ibn Marzūq, this Marinid ruler “had attained a mastery of the theological and literary sciences,” and goes on to praise his immense learning in the fields of poetry, logic, belle-lettres and history.<sup>94</sup> Similarly, Ibn al-Aḥmar portrays Abū ‘Inān as a learned king and polymath “who was an expert in jurisprudence, logic and philosophical theology, as well as having a strong grasp of Arabic and arithmetic, whose erudition was so vast that he would openly debate the eminent scholars and correct their mistakes. He had also memorized the Qur’an, attaining a mastery of the Qur’anic and *hadith* sciences, as well as being accomplished in calligraphy, oratory, poetry, the art of letter writing and the secretarial arts.”<sup>95</sup> Ibn Marzūq, eager to ensure that this emphasis on Abū ‘Inān as spending immense wealth, time and energy on scholarly pursuits did not contradict an image of a strong ruler concerned with the proper governance of the kingdom, asserts that “his pursuit of knowledge took place alongside all his other duties of ensuring the well-being of his subjects. He took an active personal role in governing the various countries and provinces of his kingdom, as can be seen from his own handwritten signature on every document that was sent to him from regions encompassing both east and west, al-Andalus and North Africa.”<sup>96</sup> Ibn Marzūq attempted to stress that it was a remarkable testament to the sovereign’s energy and commitment

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<sup>94</sup> Ibn Marzūq, *Wāsiṭat al-‘Iqd al-Thamīn*, El Escorial MS 1167, f. 163v.

<sup>95</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Rawḍat al-Nisrīn*, p. 38.

<sup>96</sup> Ibn Marzūq, *Wāsiṭat al-‘Iqd al-Thamīn*, El Escorial MS 1167, f. 163v.

to the pursuit of learning that he could devote his time to far-reaching conquests, the administration of the kingdom and the implementation of justice, while continuing to “read, write, and compile treatises and books” (*fa-lā tashghuluhi hadhihi al-shawāghil allatī a ‘yat min qabluh ‘an al-naẓar wa al-taṣnīf wa al-jam‘ wa al-intiqā’ wa al-ta’līf*).<sup>97</sup>

This elaborate tapestry of just rulership, in which the pursuit of knowledge constituted a central thread, was also characteristic of Ibn Marzūq’s “The Virtues and History of Our Lord Abū al-Ḥasan” (*al-Musnad as-saḥīḥ al-ḥasan fī maāthir mawlāna Abī l-Ḥasan*), written around 772/1370.<sup>98</sup> This work is essentially a biography of the Marinid sultan Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī (r. 731/1331–749/1348), who is represented as an ideal ruler and a paragon of just governance.<sup>99</sup> The treatise endows Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī with supreme religious and political legitimacy and is emblematic of the development of a particular political discourse during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. As with his representation of Abū ‘Inān, the paradigm of the “learned king” is dominant throughout the work.<sup>100</sup> Ibn Marzūq portrays Abū al-Ḥasan as the ideal ruler not only because of his pursuit of knowledge and patronage of institutions of learning and scholars, but because of the manner in which these aspects of his reign complemented his active involvement in governance and military leadership.

As these writings demonstrate, many scholar-officials put forward the notion that it was the king who could most effectively wield both the sword and the pen that embodied the ideal sovereign. As a competent general who actively participated in military campaigns, a king who

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<sup>97</sup> Ibn Marzūq, *Wāsiṭat al-‘Iqd al-Thamīn*, El Escorial MS 1167, f. 163v.

<sup>98</sup> Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Marzūq, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Ḥasan fī Mā‘thir wa Maḥasīn Mawlana al-Imām Abī al-Ḥasan* (Rabat: Dar al-Aman, 2012), ed. María Jesús Viguera.

<sup>99</sup> María Jesús Viguera Molins, “La exaltación biográfica de Abul-Hasan, sultan de los benimerines,” in *Estudios Onomástico-Biográficos de al-Andalus: Biografías y género biográfico en el Occidente Islámico*, Vol. VIII (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1997), eds. María Luisa Ávila and Manuela Marín, pp. 403–423.

<sup>100</sup> See, in particular, Ibn Marzūq, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Ḥasan*, pp. 213–230.

personally and publicly administered royal justice, and a patron of scholarship and learning, Yūsuf I sought to present himself as such a leader. It was within the broader cultural milieu in which learning and knowledge served not only a practical purpose in royal courts, but came to constitute a central component of political legitimation, that one of the most important institutions in Nasrid history was constructed. In Muḥarram 750/April 1349, the College of Granada (*al-madrasa al-naṣriyya*) was completed. As one of Yūsuf I's most significant and monumental constructions, it constitutes one of the best reflections of the convergence between royal patronage and intellectual culture in the Islamic West.<sup>101</sup> Like the Marinid *madrasas* constructed by Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī and Abū 'Inān, which served as the primary models for the College of Granada, this structure was intended to celebrate the elaborate wealth and power of the sovereign, while proclaiming his commitment to knowledge (*'ilm*).

The establishment of this *madrasa*, the first of its kind in al-Andalus,<sup>102</sup> transformed Granada from an embattled frontier polity into a major center of learning in the Islamic West, competing with other intellectual centers such as Fez, Tlemcen, Tunis, Marrakesh and Meknes. The subjects taught at the College encompassed both the “traditional sciences” (*al-'ulūm al-naqliyya*) as well as the “philosophical sciences” (*al-'ulūm al-'aqliyya*). Its students and teachers included some of the greatest luminaries from al-Andalus as well as North Africa, many of whom belonged to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own intellectual network. Already in 755/1354, the aforementioned Mālikī jurist, litterateur and scholar (and Marinid functionary) Ibn Marzūq al-

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<sup>101</sup> The most important scholarship about the College of Granada includes *La Madraza: pasado, presente y futuro* (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2007), eds. Rafael López Guzmán and María Elena Díez Jorge; *La Madraza de Yusuf I y la ciudad de Granada: análisis a partir de la arqueología* (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2015), eds. Antonio Malpica Cuello and Luca Mattei.

<sup>102</sup> Although the College of Granada was the first known Andalusī *madrasa*, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that “the admirable college was constructed during the reign of Yūsuf, which was the most illustrious of all the colleges in his capital” (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 134), suggesting that there were other such colleges built in Granada. For more on the question of the Nasrid *madrasa*'s novelty, see George Makdisi, “The Madrasa in Spain: Some Remarks,” *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* 15–16 (1973), pp. 153–158.

Tilmisānī (d. 781/1379) was established as a professor in the College. The establishment of the College and its transformation into one of the most important institutions of learning in Granada was made possible by the close relationship between the sovereign, leading statesmen such as Riḍwān and the various secretaries and functionaries within the Nasrid chancery, including Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself. The verses inscribed on the walls of the College, which are preserved by early modern authors such as the Morisco Alonso de Castillo (d. 1610), were authored by Ibn al-Jayyāb, celebrated the patronage of learning by Yūsuf I and illustrate the interrelationship between royal power and the chancery in the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>103</sup> Several of the verses inscribed upon the Colleges were also composed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb.<sup>104</sup>

While this overview of the increased importance of learning within royal courts serves to contextualize and situate the emergence of the scholar-minister as a distinct phenomenon in the late medieval Islamic West, it is through a close examination of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's career and writings as chancellor, explored further in the following chapter, that the specific nature of their role within both politics and intellectual developments can be better understood. At this juncture, let us return to the rise of scholar-ministers in early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century Granada.

#### “Lords of the Sword and Pen”: The Rise of Nasrid Scholar-Ministers, 803/1303–749/1349

Since the 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century, the contest between the “men of the pen” and the “men of the sword” had been a significant aspect of both Islamic political culture as well as the literary representation of the reality of politics.<sup>105</sup> The complex relationship between the pen and the

<sup>103</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, p. 111; Darío Cabanelas, “Inscripción poética de la Antigua madraza granadina,” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 26 (1977), pp. 7–26.

<sup>104</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 9: 197–198.

<sup>105</sup> See, for example, the Abbasid-era poet al-Buḥturī (d. 284/897) that states “the penetrating swords give back their decisive power to a pen that indicates to them where they should strike,” while a poetic line by his contemporary Ibn al-Rūmī (d. 283/896) declares that “pens have mastery over the sword” (Abū Bakr b. ‘Alī b. Hījja



sword (and the factions of society that they embodied) continued to be an important aspect of courtly life in the Islamic world during the late Middle Ages, with a contemporary of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the Egyptian litterateur Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Nubāta (d. 768/1366)<sup>106</sup> composing a celebrated treatise entitled “The Distinction between the Sword and the Pen” (*al-Mughāyara bayna al-Sayf wa al-Qalam*), which received a broad circulation.<sup>107</sup> This genre of literature, which was also popular in the Islamic West,<sup>108</sup> provides an important window into the very real struggle between these two broader professional groups—military men and secretaries—for power in the various courts of the Islamic world, including al-Andalus. The competition between the “men of the sword” and the “men of the pen” within the increasingly urban context of late medieval power politics was actively invoked by authors during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century as a framework for thinking about the administrative transformations taking place across the Mediterranean and analyzing and theorizing the nature of political authority and sovereign power. Within the context of late medieval Islamic Spain and North Africa, the most notable scholar to put this dichotomy to work was Ibn Khaldūn, who states in his *Muqaddima*:

“Both the sword and the pen are tools that are relied upon by the ruler for the governance of the kingdom. At the inception of the kingdom, the need for the sword surpasses that of the pen, because during that period of the kingdom the pen is merely subservient and an agent that executes the sovereign’s command

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al-Ḥamawī, *Khizānat al-Adāb wa Ghāyat al-Arab* [Beirut: Dar Sader, 2001], ed. Kawkab Diab, 2: 217. For more on this topos in Arabic literature and its broader context in classical Islamic history, see Geert van den Gelder, “Conceit of Pen and Sword: On an Arabic Literary Debate,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 32 (1987), pp. 329–360; Adrian Gully, “The Sword and the Pen in the Pre-Modern Arabic Heritage: A Literary Representation of an Important Historical Relationship,” in *Ideas, Images and Methods of Portrayal: Insights into Classical Arabic Literature and Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), ed. Sebastian Günther, pp. 403–430; Erez Naaman, *Literature and the Islamic Court: Cultural Life under al-Ṣāḥib Ibn ‘Abbād* (London: Routledge, 2016).

<sup>106</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 135–136.

<sup>107</sup> Ibn Ḥijja al-Ḥamawī, *Khizānat al-Adāb*, 2: 218–238. For more on Ibn Nubāta, see Thomas Bauer, “Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī (686–768/1287–1366): Life and Works. Part I: The Life of Ibn Nubātah,” *Mamluk Studies Review* 12 (2008), pp. 1–35.

<sup>108</sup> The Andalusī poet and litterateur Abū Ḥaṣṣ Ḥamad b. Muḥammad b. Burd (d. after 440/1048) was credited with introducing the genre in the Iberian Peninsula during the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century (al-Ḥumaydī, *Jadhwat al-Iqtibās*, p. 169; Ibn Khāqān, *Matmaḥ al-Anfus*, p. 95; Abū al-Khaṭṭāb ‘Umar b. Dihya al-Kalbī, *al-Muṭrib min Ash‘ār Ahl al-Maghrib* [Beirut: al-Maktaba al-‘Asriyya, 2008], p. 115).

while the sword is his active partner that establishes the bases of power. Likewise, towards the end of a kingdom's lifespan, when its group-feeling (*'asabiyya*) has dissipated...the dynasty is compelled to rely upon the men of the sword (*arbāb al-suyūf*) in order to defend the kingdom and its existence. In these two situations, then, the sword possesses a major distinction and advantage over the pen, and the men of the sword possess more power (*jāh*), benefices (*ni'am*) and landholdings (*iqtā'*) than any other faction. However, during the middle period of a kingdom, the ruler is able to dispense, to a certain degree, with the sword because his authority has become firmly established and can turn his mind to reaping the benefits of kingship, such as collecting taxes, controlling lands, competing with other kingdoms in grandeur, and enforcing the law. The pen is his most powerful instrument and ally in establishing these things, which increases his dependence upon it. During such a time, the swords remain unused in their scabbards, unless they are unsheathed due to some necessity. Otherwise, they serve little purpose. It is the men of the pen (*arbāb al-aqlām*) that enjoy more power (*jāh*) in this context and hold a higher rank (*rutba*). They have greater benefices and wealth and possess a greater proximity to the king (*aqrab min al-sulṭān majlisan*), enjoying closer contact and physical access to him (*wa akthar ilayhi taraddudan wa fī khalwatihi nājiyyan*) due to the fact that they become the tools through which he can most fully exercise his sovereignty. At such a time, the king's reliance on the leading nobles of the kingdom (*al-wuzarā'*) and the men of the sword (*ahl al-suyūf*) can be dispensed with and they no longer constitute a part of the ruler's intimate circle, but rather need to beware of his displeasure."<sup>109</sup>

The specific context of Nasrid Granada demonstrates that, although there is analytic value in maintaining a broad distinction between the categories of “the men of the pen” (*ahl al-qalam*) and the “men of the sword” (*ahl al-sayf*), the history of this period also illustrates that the various functions (secretary, judge, chief minister, ambassador), identities (noble, scholar, soldier and courtier) and motivations (wealth, power, knowledge, and piety) of the various officials who wielded power during this period were intricately interwoven. An awareness of this fluidity of social categories permits a more critical study of the various classes and factions that comprised the Nasrid social and political hierarchy. As scribes such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb established themselves as leading statesmen and implemented familial strategies intended to perpetuate the power and influence of their lineages, they came to embody many of the values, practices and ideas

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<sup>109</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, BL MS Add 9574, f. 147v-148r.

traditionally associated with the nobility. Similarly, while many noblemen became increasingly cognizant that executive power came to be increasingly located within the Alhambra, they groomed many of their sons for careers in the Nasrid royal administration, whether as secretaries or as judges. To more concretely illustrate the contours and dynamics of this rivalry, it is instructive to look at how it played out in the specific context of the Nasrid kingdom. During the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, five individuals who had begun their careers as financial officers, scribes or physicians rose to the position of chief minister, the highest executive office within the Nasrid kingdom (Table 2). The power that these individuals wielded and, more specifically, their open display and performance of that power earned them the enmity of the nobility. The opposition of the nobility was rooted in their concern that the increased delegation of royal authority to secretarial elites, whose power was based on their close relationship to the sovereign, threatened their own privileged position. Despite royal favor, alliances with specific noble factions and their elaborate patronage networks, the status of these scholar-ministers was extremely precarious, as indicated by the fact that most of them met violent ends at the hands of the nobility. This was certainly the case for Ibn al-Ḥakīm, the first scholar-official to ascend to the post of chief minister in Nasrid Granada.

Table 2. A list of the chief ministers between 703/1304 and 776/1374, corresponding to the reigns of Muḥammad III, Naṣr, Ismā‘īl I, Muḥammad IV, Yūsuf I, Muḥammad V, Ismā‘īl II and Muḥammad VI

| King         | Chief Minister                                                                                       | Background                        |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Muḥammad III | <i>Dhū-l Wizāratayn</i> Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥakīm al-Rundī (d. 708/1309) | Scholar and secretary from Ronda. |

Table 2 (continued)

|             |                                                                                                                           |                                                     |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Naşr        | Abū Bakr ‘Atīq b. Muḥammad b. al-Mawl (d. 730/1329)                                                                       | Nobleman from a Cordoban family                     |
| Naşr        | Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥajj (d. after 714/1314)                                              | Scholar of Mudéjar background                       |
| Ismā‘īl I   | Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Abī al-Faṭḥ Naşr b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Naşr b. Abī al-Faṭḥ al-Fihri (d. 720/1320)          | Nobleman from a high-ranking family from Orihuela   |
| Ismā‘īl I   | Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Mas‘ūd b. ‘Alī b. Mas‘ūd al-Muḥāribī (d. 725/1325)                                                   | Granadan patrician                                  |
| Muḥammad IV | Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Maḥrūq (d. Muḥarram 2 <sup>nd</sup> 729/November 6 <sup>th</sup> 1328) | Secretary and financial officer                     |
| Muḥammad IV | Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr b. al-Mawl                                                                            | Nobleman. This was the son of Naşr’s chief minister |
| Muḥammad IV | Abū al-Nu‘aym Riḍwān (d. 760/1359)                                                                                        | Castilian-born freedman                             |
| Yūsuf I     | Ibrāhīm b. ‘Abd al-Barr                                                                                                   | Granadan Patrician                                  |
| Yūsuf I     | Abū al-Nu‘aym Riḍwān                                                                                                      | Castilian-born freedman                             |
| Yūsuf I     | <i>Dhū-l Wizāratayn</i> Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Jayyāb (d. 749/1349)                                                      | Secretary and litterateur                           |

Table 2 (continued)

|                                 |                                                                                           |                                                                               |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Yūsuf I                         | <i>Dhū-l Wizāratayn</i> Lisān al-Dīn Muḥammad b.<br>‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb (d. 776/1374) | Secretary, litterateur and<br>physician                                       |
| Muḥammad<br>V (first<br>reign)  | <i>Dhū-l Wizāratayn</i> Lisān al-Dīn Muḥammad b.<br>‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb               | Secretary, litterateur and<br>physician                                       |
| Ismā‘īl II                      | Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Abī<br>al-Faṭḥ al-Fihrī                             | Nobleman                                                                      |
| Muḥammad<br>VI                  | Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Abī<br>al-Faṭḥ al-Fihrī                             | Nobleman                                                                      |
| Muḥammad<br>VI                  | Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Mas’ūd                                                 | Granadan patrician. This<br>was the son of the chief<br>minister of Ismā‘īl I |
| Muḥammad<br>V (second<br>reign) | Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Kumāsha                                                              | Nobleman                                                                      |
| Muḥammad<br>V (second<br>reign) | <i>Dhū-l Wizāratayn</i> Lisān al-Dīn Muḥammad b.<br>‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb               | Secretary, litterateur and<br>physician                                       |
| Muḥammad<br>V (second<br>reign) | Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Zamrak                                                | Secretary and litterateur                                                     |

Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥakīm al-Rundī, a scholar and secretary from Ronda<sup>110</sup> who rose to become the Nasrid chancellor, became chief minister in Dhū-l Qa‘da 703/June 1304 during the reign of Muḥammad III (r. 702/1302–708/1309).<sup>111</sup> This appointment took place despite the express wishes of the former chief minister Abū Sulṭān ‘Azīz b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Mun‘im al-Dānī (d. 703/1303),<sup>112</sup> who unsuccessfully advocated for Abū Bakr ‘Atīq b. al-Mawl (d. 730/1329), a leading nobleman, to succeed him.<sup>113</sup> Ibn al-Ḥakīm was the first individual in Nasrid history to be designated *Dhū-l Wizāratayn* (“Bearer of the Two Offices”) for occupying the post of chancellor and chief minister simultaneously.<sup>114</sup> A contemporary source, the Anatolian traveler and scholar Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Āqshihri (d. 739/1338),<sup>115</sup> who was well-acquainted with Ibn al-Ḥakīm, whom he visited in Granada around 704/1304 refers to the latter as “the Bearer of the Two Offices, the Lord of the Sword and the Pen.”<sup>116</sup> This provides remarkable insight into the far-reaching authority embodied within the

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<sup>110</sup> By the 780s/1280s, Ibn al-Ḥakīm, who had travelled across the Mediterranean to the Near East, studying jurisprudence, theology as well as literature and history with some of the leading male and female scholars of the age, had established himself as a leading scholarly authority before being appointed a secretary in the chancery of Muḥammad II around 686/1287 (al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 3: 360–367, 8: 42–43, 48–49). Ibn al-Khaṭīb reproduces a portion of his *thabat*, listing his various teachers and certificates of transmission that he acquired, within the *Iḥāṭa* (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 446–452). The Banū al-Ḥakīm were among the most important families in Ronda throughout the Nasrid period, establishing themselves as de facto rulers of the city during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al-A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 148r–148v.) The prominence of the family within Ronda continued until the late 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, when the city was conquered by the Catholic Monarchs.

<sup>111</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 300–301.

<sup>112</sup> In an official (Romance-language) missive to Bernat de Sarrià, a leading functionary of Jaume II of Aragón, dated September 1303, this individual referred to himself as “Don Asis Adeni alguaçil mayor del muy noble rei de Granada” (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II–Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, p. 78).

<sup>113</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 548, 4: 445; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 93; Rubiera Mata, “El Dū l-wizāratayn Ibn al-Ḥakīm de Ronda,” pp. 111–115.

<sup>114</sup> Originally an Abbasid title first attested during the 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> century, its usage in al-Andalus dates to the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century, when it was conferred by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III upon Abū ‘Umar Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Shuhayd in 328/939 (Meouak, *Pouvoir souverain, administration centrale et élites politiques*, p. 137; Ibn al-Abbār, *al-Ḥulla al-Siyarā’*, 1: 238; al-Ḥumaydī, *Jadhwat al-Muqtabis*, p. 190). During the Umayyad period, however, the title held a very different meaning than it did during the Nasrid era.

<sup>115</sup> For more on this figure, see “Muḥammad al-Āqshihri,” *BA*, 1: 97–98; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 188–189.

<sup>116</sup> Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Āqshihri, *al-Rawḍa al-Firdawsīyya wa al-Ḥaḍra al-Qudusiyya* (London: Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2010), ed. Qasim al-Samarra’i, 1: 224.

title *Dhū-l Wizāratayn* during the Nasrid era by indicating that it encompassed both civil and military functions. Ibn Khaldūn, writing half a century later, also reinforces this conception of the title, defined as the “unification of the offices of the sword and pen,” and which he considers to be synonymous with the supreme executive authority traditionally associated with the office of chamberlain (*hājib*) in al-Andalus.<sup>117</sup> The usage of the title thus signified Ibn al-Ḥakīm’s complete control over the major offices of state, which gave him power and jurisdiction over the fiscal, military and political spheres in the Nasrid kingdom, enabling him to exert his influence over affairs traditionally dominated by the nobility. Moreover, the defeat (and execution) of rebellious Nasrid nobles, such as Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf b. Naṣr in Guadix in 703/1303, allowed Ibn al-Ḥakīm to consolidate his authority.<sup>118</sup>

A patron of scholarship, the beneficiaries of which included many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s teachers such as Ibn al-Jayyāb, Ibn Shibrīn and Ibn Hudhayl, Ibn al-Ḥakīm had panegyrics dedicated to him praising his lineage, knowledge and conduct in the most extravagant terms, often employing language and allusions traditionally reserved for poetry praising the Nasrid sovereign.<sup>119</sup> Several poems penned by Ibn al-Jayyāb proclaimed him “the master of the pens and swords and of religious and worldly affairs” and “the restorer of sovereignty (*mulk*) and religion (*dīn*),”<sup>120</sup> while another courtier exalted him as “the reviver of the glory of Islam” (*kāfi al-islām kull ‘aẓīma wa mu’īdahū ghaḍḍa kā’ina lam yadhbul*).<sup>121</sup> Amassing a large fortune, Ibn

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<sup>117</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, BL MS Add 9574, f. 137r. My reading of the term is rooted in its definition as a unification of the office of chief minister and chancellor, departing from Ana Echevarría’s argument that the title *Dhū-l Wizāratayn* signified a “grand vizier” who presided over a number of other leading ministers within the Nasrid administration (Echevarría, *Knights on the Frontier*, p. 40).

<sup>118</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 551–552.

<sup>119</sup> For the various panegyrics written by Ibn al-Jayyāb for Ibn al-Ḥakīm, see Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, pp. 136–140, 162–167, 248–252, 289–293, 316–319, 385–388, 393, 438, 474–476.

<sup>120</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, pp. 140, 388.

<sup>121</sup> For this poem, written by Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Arafa al-Lakhmī, see Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 279–282.

al-Ḥakīm lived opulently in a large palace housing one of the largest libraries in al-Andalus, openly displaying his wealth and power.<sup>122</sup> While it may only be a slight exaggeration to refer to him as “the true ruler of Granada,”<sup>123</sup> Ibn al-Ḥakīm’s authority during his time in office was largely uncontested, with Muḥammad III delegating most of the functions of state to him, leading Ibn al-Jayyāb to extol him in his panegyrics as the “pillar of sovereignty” (*‘imād al-mulk*) and “the axis around which the affairs of state (*umūr al-mulk*) revolve.”<sup>124</sup> During his time as chief minister and chancellor, he also oversaw the expansion of the Alhambra palace complex, constructing within its vicinity the royal mosque, baths as well as the dynasty’s mausoleum (*al-Rawḍa*)<sup>125</sup> Moreover, the Partal palace of the Alhambra, inscribed with the poetry of Ibn al-Jayyāb, was also built during this period.<sup>126</sup> These constructions illustrate the direct role played by scholar-officials such as Ibn al-Ḥakīm in both the establishment of monuments celebrating royal power and in shaping the very space of the Alhambra. According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the royal mosque in the Alhambra was among the most extravagant buildings in Granada, with elaborate columns, inscriptions and silver decorations, and was financed by the tribute (*jizya*) and plunder that Ibn al-Ḥakīm had exacted from neighboring Christian towns on the frontier.<sup>127</sup>

Although he was the first scholar-official to hold such a position in Nasrid Granada, the case of Ibn al-Ḥakīm was not an anomaly during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, which witnessed an increased tendency of royal councilors, nobles, secretaries or physicians, to exercise supreme

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<sup>122</sup> Rubiera Mata, “El Dū l-wizāratayn Ibn al-Ḥakīm de Ronda,” p. 114. For a discussion of Ibn al-Ḥakīm’s residence(s) and their location within Granada, see Fernando N. Velázquez Basanta, “Abū l-‘Abbās al-‘Azafī,” *BA*, 1: 126–130.

<sup>123</sup> Rubiera Mata, “El Dū l-wizāratayn Ibn al-Ḥakīm de Ronda,” p. 114.

<sup>124</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 173; Anonymous, *Tārīkh al-Andalus*, p. 270; Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, pp. 387, 438.

<sup>125</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 88; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 142; José Miguel Puerta Vilchez, *Reading the Alhambra: A Visual Guide to the Alhambra through its Inscriptions* (Granada: Patronato de la Alhambra, 2011), trans. Jon Trout, pp. 278–290.

<sup>126</sup> Puerta Vilchez, *Reading the Alhambra*, pp. 252–275.

<sup>127</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 88.



executive authority on behalf of the sovereign. It was in this specific political context that there was an increased interest in political theory among court secretaries, which is indicated by the dozens of works composed during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century dedicated to the protocols and ceremonial of kingship, the nature of delegated royal authority and mirror for princes literature. This theory, in turn, became the lens through which both sovereignty and the delegation of royal power was represented and interpreted. The particular type of executive authority exercised by Ibn al-Ḥakīm was envisioned in the writings of court secretaries as corresponding to a particular type of executive authority, referred to as the *wizāra tafwīḍi* (“the delegatory vizierate”), “the vizierate of the sword and pen,” in which its bearer was delegated all the major functions of state by the sovereign and, thus, exercised almost total control over the governing of the kingdom; classical authorities such as al-Māwardī even proclaimed that the authority and jurisdiction of such a chief minister is equal to that of the ruler himself.<sup>128</sup>

Within the late medieval Islamic West, this particular situation was frequently referred to as *istibdād*, with the individual who exercised such authority often being referred to as *mustabidd* or *mudabbir al-dawla* (“the effective ruler of the kingdom”). It was a category that was often employed throughout the historical and political treatises of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Khaldūn, in particular, in order to systematize the nature of the delegation of royal authority. *Istibdād*, despite its negative implications in its current Arabic usage, was not intended to imply the illegitimate usurpation of power by the individual to whom it referred, but, rather, a state of affairs in which individuals other than the sovereign exercised supreme executive authority. Ibn Khaldūn explicitly describes Ibn al-Ḥakīm’s authority in terms of *istibdād*, asserting that he kept Muḥammad III in seclusion and effectively governed on his behalf (*fa ḥajaruhu wa istawlā ‘alā*

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<sup>128</sup> Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-Qalqashandī, *Ma’āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma’ālim al-Khilāfa* (Kuwait: Wizarat al-Thaqafa wa al-Anba, 1964), ed. ‘Abd al-Sattar Ahmad Faraj, 1: 74; Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 6: 92.

*amrihi*).<sup>129</sup> Significantly, Ibn al-Khaṭīb emphasizes that this degree of power did not stem from Ibn al-Ḥakīm's own status or independent powerbase, but was delegated to him by the sovereign.<sup>130</sup> He claims that such a delegation was necessitated by the near-blindness of Muḥammad III, which impeded his ability to govern.<sup>131</sup> This conceptualization of power depended upon establishing a strengthened vision of kingship as the respository of legitimate authority, which will be discussed further below. The ability of a scholar such as Ibn al-Ḥakīm to ascend to the highest offices of state was underpinned by his proximity to royal power, which was facilitated by his role as a secretary and scribe that brought him into intimate contact with figure of the sovereign. Ibn al-Ḥakīm thus provides an illustrative example of the political implications of *privanza*, whereby a member of the secretarial elite could be granted supreme executive authority due to royal favor. This royal favor, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states, stemmed from Muḥammad III's own role as a scholar-sultan, whose interest in poetry, patronage of learning and frequent association with scholarly boon-companions (*al-nudamā'*) brought these individuals, among whom was Ibn al-Ḥakīm, into his inner circle.<sup>132</sup> The *wizāra tafwīḍi* was explicitly contrasted within the writings of court secretaries with the *wizāra tanfīdhi* ("the executive vizierate") in which the chief minister served as the ruler's intermediary with his subjects, was delegated control over specific aspects of governance, implemented and acted on

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<sup>129</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 173.

<sup>130</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 89.

<sup>131</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 86.

<sup>132</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 86; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 142. Ibn al-Khaṭīb specifically names the secretaries and litterateurs Ibn al-Jayyāb, Abū Bakr b. Shibrīn, Abū 'Abd Allāh b. 'Āṣim, Abū Ishāq b. Jābir, Abū 'Abd Allāh b. al-Lawshī, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥaḍramī, Abū al-Ḥajjāj al-Ṭurtūshī and Abū al-'Abbās b. al-Qarrāq—many of whom were his own teachers and mentors—as leading functionaries and courtiers during the reign of Muḥammad III, even employing the term "minister" (*wazīr*) to refer to them. Another of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's teachers and associates, al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, was also a recipient of Ibn al-Ḥakīm's patronage and stated that "the eminent chief minister Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Ḥakīm personally escorted me from Ceuta [following the Nasrid conquest] and provided me with accommodations in a place immediately adjacent to his own home" (al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, *Raf' al-Hujub al-Mastūra 'an Maḥāsini al-Maqṣūra* (Rabat: Wizarat al-Awqaf, 1997), ed. Muhammad al-Hijawi, 2: 670).

the orders of the sovereign, and served as his main advisor.<sup>133</sup> Although this division of the vizierate can be dated to the Abbasid era, the employment of these categories within the political treatises and historical chronicles composed in both Islamic Spain and North Africa during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries demonstrates that they continued to be meaningful ways of understanding, representing and legitimating the delegation of royal power.<sup>134</sup>

As the “Lord of the Sword and Pen,” one of the many institutions in the kingdom which Ibn al-Ḥakīm controlled was the financial bureau or treasury. He was primarily responsible for the distribution and disbursement of salaries and stipends to both the Nasrid military and civil servants in the administration. Due to the lack of documentary sources and fiscal records, the specific role of individuals such as Ibn al-Ḥakīm in taxation remains unclear. It is uncertain whether he had the authority to impose new taxes or change tax rates, or to extract wealth from the semi-independent lands of nobles. It is clear, however, that his access to the treasury enabled him to finance elaborate constructions such as the palaces and mosque of the Alhambra, while also organizing the payment of the controversial tribute to Castile. Throughout the Middle Ages, the treasury had been the bureau in which many Jewish and Christian scribes/secretaries were traditionally employed. The vitriolic polemic against the delegation of such a large measure of authority to Christians and Jews is particularly evident during the late Middle Ages, with the treatise of the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century Egyptian scholar-official al-Nabulusī, drawing on an extensive legal and historical tradition rejecting the validity of appointing non-Muslims to positions of authority over Muslims, constituting an illustrative example.<sup>135</sup> Much of the polemic did not

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<sup>133</sup> al-Qalqashandī, *Ma’āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma’ālim al-Khilāfa*, 1: 75; Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 6: 92–94, 110–113.

<sup>134</sup> Ibn Sīmāk al-‘Āmilī, *Rawnaq al-Taḥbīr fī Ḥukm al-Siyāsa wa al-Tadbīr*, BNRMS MS K1121, p. 11; Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, BL MS Add 9574, f. 136r. For more on this point, see F. Martínez Lumberras, “Instituciones políticas del reino moro de Granada: El Visirato,” *Revista de Control de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino* 1 (1911), pp. 77–92.

<sup>135</sup> Al-Nabulusī, *The Sword of Ambition*, pp. 11–97.

simply decry the fact that these individuals were given authority over the fiscal administration of the kingdom, but that this allowed them to accumulate a considerable amount of wealth and power:

What, then, are we supposed to think about these thieving, dishonest Copts, who amass estates, palaces, and towers by the sea and on the land, and whose luxuries are plainly evident and cannot be hidden away, who have no fear that any consequences from those in authority will affect their estates? These estates ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb called “witnesses to corruption and treachery” (*shuhūd al-khiyāna*).

[...]

Although the Copts serve in offices of little consequence and have no ability to speak of, they somehow acquire the trappings of wealth, splendid possessions, adornment, haughtiness, and accoutrement entirely out of proportion to their pay. They expand their prosperity to trading on land and sea, to waterwheels and agriculture, to livestock and luxury items, to durable goods, jewels, and various other kinds of possessions.<sup>136</sup>

Although it can hardly be said that Ibn al-Ḥakīm “served in an office of little consequence” prior to being appointed as chief minister, his executive authority and the vast wealth that he amassed as a result of his function as “Lord of the Sword and Pen” underpinned the transformation of his social status from a scholar from a family of provincial elites to the most powerful individual within the Nasrid kingdom. The ostentation and power wielded by Ibn al-Ḥakīm earned him the enmity of the nobility, who contemptuously represented him as a mere book-keeper (*kātib*) who had risen far beyond his station and claiming a status to which he was not legitimately entitled. This echoes much of the polemic surrounding the social mobility of Jews and Christians who had been appointed as secretaries, treasurers and viziers throughout Andalusī history. Ibn al-Ḥakīm’s particular policies of restoring Granada’s alliance with Castile may also have contributed to his demise or, at the very least, served as a rallying cry for his

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<sup>136</sup> Al-Nabulūsī, *The Sword of Ambition*, pp. 187–189.

opponents. The specific reason for his downfall is provided by the historian and judge Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī al-Bunnāhī (d. 794/1392), who asserts that it was rooted in the personal hostility between Ibn al-Ḥakīm and Abū Bakr ‘Atīq b. al-Mawl which intensified in Shawwāl 707/April 1308, prompting the latter (who had been based in Guadix) to return to Granada and conspire with Naṣr, the half-brother of Muḥammad III, to seize power.<sup>137</sup> On the first day of Shawwāl 708/March 14<sup>th</sup> 1309, during the festival of ‘Īd al-Fiṭr, a Granadan mob—led primarily by Abū Bakr ‘Atīq b. al-Mawl and other noblemen (*wujūh al-dawla*)—attacked and killed Ibn al-Ḥakīm, looting his residence, burning his books (the symbol of his scholarly status) and mutilating his corpse.<sup>138</sup> Many of his close friends among the literary elite were also attacked, with several murdered alongside him.<sup>139</sup> Not unlike the Mudéjars and Jews in the Crown of Aragón during the same period, the secretarial class in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Granada had come to be perceived, especially by the military elite and their supporters, as representing an inferior social class entirely dependent upon royal power. Public and symbolic acts of violence towards those among them who were perceived as rising beyond their station—as in the case of Ibn al-Ḥakīm and, as shall be seen, Ibn al-Khaṭīb—was therefore a way of ensuring the maintenance of a social

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<sup>137</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 227.

<sup>138</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 445, 474; Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 227; al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, *Raf’ al-Ḥujub al-Mastūra ‘an Maḥāsīn al-Maqṣūra*, 2: 671; Anonymous, *Tārīkh al-Andalus*, p. 271; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 301; Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 3: 367; Rubiera Mata, “El Dū l-wizāratayn Ibn al-Ḥakīm de Ronda,” p. 114. An important contemporary account of the assassination is provided by the ruler of Crevillente Muḥammad ibn Hudayr (“Mahomat Abenfudell arrays de Crivillen”) in a letter sent to Jaume II dated March 25 1309 (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 349–250), nine days after the events in question.

<sup>139</sup> Among those murdered were Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Ḥajarī al-Ru‘aynī, known as Ibn al-Khamīs al-Tilmisānī, a litterateur and poet who had joined the court of Ibn al-Ḥakīm in Granada in 703/1304 (al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, *Raf’ al-Ḥujub al-Mastūra ‘an Maḥāsīn al-Maqṣūra*, 2: 671; Ibn al-Qāḍī, *Durrat al-Ḥijāl*, 2: 27–33; al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 7: 334–353; Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī, *al-Durrar al-Kāmina*, 4: 71), and Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Arafa al-Lakhmī, a leading litterateur described by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as “the most eminent poet of his age” who had attached himself to Ibn al-Ḥakīm’s court in Granada around 705/1306 (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 278–284). The Ceutan litterateur Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-‘Azafī (d. 708/1309) was among those within Ibn al-Ḥakīm’s court who barely managed to escape the violence (Fernando N. Velázquez Basanta, “Abū l-‘Abbās al-‘Azafī,” *BA*, 1: 125).

hierarchy which privileged the “men of the sword.”<sup>140</sup> It was equally an attempt by these military elites to challenge the authority and sovereignty of the king, whom they viewed merely as a *primus inter pares* whose responsibility it was to preserve the privileges and power of the nobility.

According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the mutilation of Ibn al-Ḥakīm’s body and denial of a burial was intended by his murderers as a warning to all those non-nobles who aspired to rise to such heights and exercise executive authority, a statement that is clearly indicative of the former’s own anxieties about his own position as a secretary who had risen to the position of *Dhū-l-Wizāratayn*.<sup>141</sup> The extensive biographical information provided about him in the *Iḥāṭa* and the preservation of a large number of panegyrics dedicated to him in the redaction of Ibn al-Jayyāb’s collection of poetry are a reflection of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own proximity to Ibn al-Ḥakīm, whose son and grandson were among the former’s most important teachers and intimate friends. Through these connections, he was given important access to both documents and oral accounts about Ibn al-Ḥakīm, whose career he meticulously documents. Through the composition of his biography, which was among the longest and most detailed of those preserved in the *Iḥāṭa*, Ibn al-Khaṭīb also sought to legitimize Ibn al-Ḥakīm’s appointment to the supreme offices of the Nasrid kingdom and, in doing so, establish his career as an important precedent for his own. The memorialization of Ibn al-Ḥakīm owed much to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who, as both a scholar and a

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<sup>140</sup> The nature of the violence directed against Ibn al-Ḥakīm, including mob justice, the dismemberment of the corpse, the denial of a burial, and the assassination of other individuals belonging to the same social class alongside him exhibits a certain resemblance, *mutatis mutandis*, to the murder of the Jewish secretary-minister Joseph b. Naghrilla in Granada in 459/1066, an event narrated in detail by Ibn al-Khaṭīb (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 439–440). Within the Mamluk context, the murder and bodily mutilation of Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Uthmān al-Tanūkhī (d. 693/1294), a secretary and merchant who was appointed as chief minister, provides an instructive comparison with the case of Ibn al-Ḥakīm (al-Dhahabī, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 381).

<sup>141</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 474.

statesman who bore the title “*Dhū-l Wizāratayn*,” envisioned himself as the former’s natural successor.

Immediately following the assassination of Ibn al-Ḥakīm, the conspirators marched on the Alhambra and dethroned Muḥammad III, who was imprisoned in Almuñecar and replaced by his half-brother Abū al-Juyūsh Naṣr.<sup>142</sup> The murder of Ibn al-Ḥakīm during the coup that brought Naṣr to power in 708/1309 ensured the re-assertion of control by Nasrid military elites, referred to as “the leading nobles of the kingdom” (*kibār al-dawla*) by Ibn al-Khaṭīb.<sup>143</sup> Naṣr’s first chief minister was none other than Abū Bakr ‘Atīq b. al-Mawl (d. 730/1329), the assassin of Ibn al-Ḥakīm and the leading conspirator in the rebellion against Muḥammad III.<sup>144</sup> Ibn al-Mawl was a military commander whose father belonged to an elite family from Córdoba that had been among the earliest supporters of Muḥammad I.<sup>145</sup> Further linking this family, with the Nasrid dynasty was the fact that they intermarried closely with one another over several generations, with Abū Bakr’s brother Mawl marrying the sister of Abū Sa‘īd Faraj (d. 720/1320),<sup>146</sup> the latter being the father of Nasrid emir Ismā‘īl I.<sup>147</sup> As previously noted, the power of the Nasrid nobility was underpinned mainly by their extensive land holdings, control of strategic frontier fortresses, their monopolization of senior political offices (especially the vizierate), and their close intermarriage

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<sup>142</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 553; 4: 445; Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 227. After several months of imprisonment in Almuñecar, Muḥammad III was returned to Granada where he was confined in one of his former palaces, until he died on Shawwāl 3 713/January 21 1314 and was buried in the royal mausoleum near Muḥammad I and Muḥammad II (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 554–555).

<sup>143</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 93; Rubiera Mata, “El Dū l-wizāratayn Ibn al-Ḥakīm de Ronda,” pp. 111–115.

<sup>144</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 335, 4: 60. In a letter from the Aragonese ambassador Pere Boyl to Jaume II dated February 1 1310, Ibn al-Mawl is referred to as “alguazir mayor” (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, p. 380).

<sup>145</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 335, 4: 60–61; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 96–97; Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 228. For more on the Banū Mawl, see Bárbara Boloix Gallardo, *De la taifa de Arjona al reino nazarí de Granada (1232–1246): En torno a los orígenes de un estado y de una dinastía* (Jaén, 2006), 137–142.

<sup>146</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 241–246.

<sup>147</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 335.

with other leading Granadan families and the Nasrid dynasty itself. The Banū Mawl, in particular, were part of the ruling elite of the kingdom and their marriage ties with the dynasty made them part of the group known as *al-qarāba* (or “kin”) of the Nasrid emirs. They possessed immense influence and manpower, with their retinue consisting of their own knights and an extended network of clients that were recipients of the family’s patronage. As the murder of Ibn al-Ḥakīm demonstrated, the nobility could mobilize their significant following among the Granadan population and deploy extreme violence to protect their interests if necessary.

Although Ibn al-Mawl was initially the effective holder of power (*al-mustabidd bi-l amr*) during the early reign of Naṣr, his ineffectiveness in dealing with the various crises that the Nasrid kingdom faced between 708/1309 and 712/1312, including the Aragonese siege of Almería, the Castilian conquest of Algeciras and Gibraltar, and the rebellion of Abū Sa‘īd Faraj in Málaga, greatly diminished his prestige and authority among the elites of the kingdom.<sup>148</sup> After holding the post of chief minister for about three years, he was exiled by Naṣr to North Africa in Ramaḍān 711/January 1312.<sup>149</sup> He was replaced with Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Alī b. al-Ḥājj (d. after 714/1314), known as “the Architect” (*al-muhandis*), a Mudéjar scholar-official from Sevilla who had served the Nasrids since the reign of Muḥammad II.<sup>150</sup> As an individual skilled in both Romance and Arabic, he had been a leading figure within the chancery, tasked primarily with foreign correspondence to the Christian kingdoms. The influence of Ibn al-Ḥājj in Naṣr’s administration had been significant as early as Sha‘bān 709/February 1310, as indicated by his being referred to as “the leading councilor of the king of Granada” (*conseller major del rey de Granada*) by the Aragonese ambassador Pere Boyl in a letter to Jaume II of

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<sup>148</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 228.

<sup>149</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 97; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 335. The specific circumstances of Ibn al-Mawl’s removal from offices remain unclear.

<sup>150</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 140; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 44.



Aragón.<sup>151</sup> It also appears that he possessed his own seal, with which he authenticated documents, as illustrated by a letter from a leading Nasrid military commander to Jaime II, who requested that Ibn al-Ḥājj affix his own seal on the document (*rogue a don Mahomad conssegero mayor del rey de Granada que pusiese en esta carta su sello*).<sup>152</sup> Like Ibn al-Ḥakīm, this individual was one of the scholar-functionaries who had risen to prominence as a result of the patronage of this Nasrid emir during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to his non-noble status, itself a threat to the power of the military elite, Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who does not hide his disdain for this individual, asserts that the “Christian proclivities” of Ibn al-Ḥājj, who spoke Castilian fluently, possessed an expertise in Spanish Christian history and culture, and emulated Castilian noble customs, attracted the ire of the Granadan populace, many of whom cast aspersions on the legitimacy of his Islamic faith.<sup>153</sup>

Ibn al-Ḥājj, who referred to himself as “Don Mahomad privado del rey de Granada” or “conseller major del rey de Granada,” worked to actively establish peaceful relations with the Christian kingdoms.<sup>154</sup> He was also responsible for re-affirming Granada’s vassalage to Castile and personally overseeing the transfer of tribute (*parias*) to the latter, a fact which also undermined his status among many in Granada, including leading figures among the military

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<sup>151</sup> Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, p. 382. This is also evident from Romance-language letters penned by Ibn al-Ḥājj and sent to Jaime II, dated December 1310 onwards, in which the former refers to himself as “the leading councilor of the king of Granada” (*consejero mayor del rey*) (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 393, 443–445. A Romance-language letter from Naṣr to Jaime II (written by Ibn al-Ḥājj), dated May 1313, reflects his (official) role as vizier and is signed by Ibn al-Ḥājj as “Don Mahomad alguazil mayor del rey” (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, p. 447).

<sup>152</sup> Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, p. 446.

<sup>153</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 140–141, 3: 335; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 97; Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 229; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 173; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 44.

<sup>154</sup> See, for example, the letter from the Aragonese ambassador Pere Boyl to Jaime II dated February 1 1310 (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 379–382). For the surviving correspondence, see Giménez Soler, *La Corona de Aragón y Granada*, pp. 177–182. A surviving letter (in Romance) penned by Ibn al-Ḥājj on behalf of Naṣr to Jaime II of Aragón and dated to Ṣafar 710/July 1310 is preserved in the ACA in Barcelona (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 7). Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 19–20.

elite.<sup>155</sup> As a non-noble individual and, worse, a Romance-speaking Mudéjar, his position was particularly precarious, especially since the revolt that dethroned Muḥammad III less than 5 years earlier had been predicated upon the restoration of the nobility to their previous position of privilege. Considering the context of Naṣr's enthronement, why, then, would he replace his noble chief minister (the very individual who was responsible for bringing him to power) with Ibn al-Ḥajj? The reference in the Castilian sources to Ibn al-Ḥajj as the king's *privado* may provide some clues. As one of the king's intimate councilors and an individual whose social status and position was entirely dependent upon the sovereign, this individual did not pose a threat to Naṣr's own royal power. The case of Ibn al-Ḥajj, like that of Ibn al-Ḥakīm, thus illustrates the rise to power in early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Granada of individuals who belonged to the literary-scholarly class, appointed by emirs seeking to delegate their authority to loyal clients and undercut the power of the kingdom's nobility. In addition to these political considerations, the personal ties that Naṣr, a student of the Andalusī astronomer and physician Ibn al-Raqqām,<sup>156</sup> had cultivated with many among the intellectual elite, including Ibn al-Ḥajj, also informed his empowerment of these individuals and desire to create a court dominated by scholar-officials rather than military elites. Far from being a minor aspect of his court, Naṣr appears to have devoted himself completely to the pursuit of the philosophical sciences, becoming particularly interested in astrology and even composed several astronomical charts and built an astrolabe.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Giménez Soler, *La Corona de Aragón y Granada*, pp. 178–182, 186.

<sup>156</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 96; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 334. The fact that Ibn al-Raqqām's son, the astronomer Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Raqqām, had also entered Naṣr's service and accompanied the latter into exile in Guadix, provides a further illustration of the intersecting importance of royal patronage for particular scholarly pursuits and the loyal service of particular lineages of scholar-officials to specific sovereigns. Ibrāhīm b. al-Raqqām accompanied Naṣr into exile in Guadix after 713/1314, where he produced one of the most famous examples of a Nasrid astrolabe in 720/1320 under this ruler's patronage (Rafael J. López Guzmán, José Miguel Puerta Vilchez and María Jesús Viguera Molins, eds., *Arte y culturas de al-Andalus: El poder de la Alhambra* [Granada: Patronato de la Alhambra y el Generalife, 2013], p. 154).

<sup>157</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 96; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 334. Another important astronomer in Nasrid Granada during this period was Abū Ja'far Aḥmad b. Ḥasan b. Bāṣa al-Aslamī (d. 709/1309), the time-keeper

While stargazing and governance were far from mutually exclusive during the Middle Ages, these extensive intellectual pursuits better explain the circumstances that prompted Naṣr to leave the task of ruling the kingdom to Ibn al-Ḥājj. The close relationship between Naṣr and his royal tutor and court physician, Ibn al-Raqqām, is described Ibn al-Khaṭīb in terms of *privanza*, with Naṣr “intimately associating himself with and providing the highest distinctions to the eminent and honorable Imām Abū ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Raqqām” while the latter was “eternally loyal to the sovereign, even supporting his decision to maintain his chief minister in power, even though the vast majority of people were clamoring for his removal from office.”<sup>158</sup> While shedding important light on the increased importance of the figure of royal tutor, this passage also reflects the possibility that the appointment of Ibn al-Ḥājj and the delegation of royal power to him was partially influenced by Ibn al-Raqqām.

Unlike his rather charitable historiographical treatment of the reign of Muḥammad III and his concentration of a large degree of executive authority in the hands of Ibn al-Ḥakīm, Ibn al-Khaṭīb asserts that the delegation of royal authority to Ibn al-Ḥājj ultimately cost Naṣr his throne.<sup>159</sup> While the lowly social origins of Ibn al-Ḥājj would have disqualified him from holding the office of chief minister in the eyes of the nobility, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s emphasis is on this individual’s conduct, which he characterizes as duplicitous, potentially treasonous, and as engendering the enmity between the sovereign and his subjects.<sup>160</sup> Similarly, the Granadan historian al-Bunnāhī claims that it was the treasonous and oppressive behavior of Ibn al-Ḥājj culminated in a revolt of the Granadan populace on Ramaḍān 25 713/January 13 1314, which

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in the Great Mosque of Granada, who was an expert in the construction of astrolabes and other instruments (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 204; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 73).

<sup>158</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 96; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 334.

<sup>159</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 97; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 335.

<sup>160</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 97; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 335.

demanded the forced removal of this figure from his post as chief minister.<sup>161</sup> Ibn al-Ḥajj's appointment and conduct, Ibn al-Khaṭīb asserts, contributed to the nobility's resentment of Naṣr, leading many among the elite to abandon the emir and flee to Málaga in support of his nephew (and cousin) Ismā'īl around 712/1312.<sup>162</sup> The latter entered Granada at the head of an army, composed largely of Granadan noble families and military elites, on Shawwāl 27<sup>th</sup> 713/February 14<sup>th</sup> 1314, forcing Naṣr to abandon the Alhambra on Dhū-l Qa'da 3 713/February 19 1314 and establish himself in Guadix, where he ruled independently until his death in Dhū-l Qa'da 722/November 1322.<sup>163</sup>

Although emphasizing that Naṣr possessed many redeeming qualities, notably his "love of goodness, peaceful nature and commitment to knowledge and scholars,"<sup>164</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb paints a rather bleak picture of this king's reign, which he describes as "a period of continuous misfortune and disaster for the Muslim community in which they were afflicted by the constant attacks of the enemy." While the case of Ibn al-Ḥakīm becomes, for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, an illustrative example of the achievements and stability brought about by delegating royal power to a scholar-vizier, that of Ibn al-Ḥajj is represented as the disastrous implications of appointing the wrong individual to such a position. Similarly, al-Bunnāhī ascribes the overthrow of Naṣr to Ibn al-Ḥajj, arguing that it was the sovereign's loyalty to his chief minister that ultimately cost him the throne and was directly responsible for the enthronement of his nephew, Ismā'īl b. Faraj, as

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<sup>161</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 229.

<sup>162</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 340. This perspective is shared by Ibn Khaldūn, who characterizes Ibn al-Ḥajj as "tyrannical" (Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 173).

<sup>163</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 340; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 173; Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 230; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 219. The establishment of Naṣr in Guadix was part of an agreement with Ismā'īl I, in which the latter permitted Naṣr to rule over Guadix and its environs in exchange for abdicating the throne. During his exile in Guadix, Naṣr sought the aid of both Castile and Aragón in an attempt to regain his throne (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 8; Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 457–468, 488–489). It appears that around 715/1315 Abū Bakr 'Atīq b. al-Mawī briefly re-entered his service (Giménez Soler, *La Corona de Aragón y Granada*, p. 190).

<sup>164</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 96; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 334.

sovereign.<sup>165</sup> He argues that Naṣr's conduct "resembled that of the Commander of the Faithful 'Uthmān in defending his secretary Marwān b. al-Ḥakam [d. 65/685]," a reference to refusal of the early Muslim caliph 'Uthmān b. 'Affān (r. 23/644–47/656) to surrender his own councilor and advisor to his rebellious subjects, an act which culminated in the caliph's assassination and sparked the First Muslim Civil War, or *fitna*.<sup>166</sup> The utilization of this story by al-Bunnāhī was intended to communicate the dangers to a sovereign's power and survival when they misguidedly placed their faith in "bad" councilors by indicating that even "Rightly-Guided" caliphs were not protected from the devastating consequences of doing so.

The rise of Ismā'īl, the son of a Nasrid military commander from Málaga, was remarkable and reflects the insecure nature of Nasrid royal authority during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century and the ability of members of the extended royal family, which functioned as a large aristocratic order, to ascend to the throne. Ismā'īl's father was Abū Sa'īd Faraj b. Ismā'īl b. Yūsuf (d. 720/1320), the paternal nephew of the Nasrid emir Muḥammad I and one of the most powerful noblemen within the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>167</sup> This individual was one of the best examples of the "noble kin" (*al-qarāba*) described by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as leading figures among the Nasrid elite. Abū Sa'īd had been appointed as governor of the major provinces of Málaga and Algeciras in 677/1278 and held the post for over 30 years, which enabled him to consolidate his power and establish a strong following among both administrators and military elites.<sup>168</sup> The extent of his power and influence is illustrated by the fact that it was his army (and navy) that played a central role in the conquest of Azafid Ceuta on the North African coast in Shawwāl 705/May 1306.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, pp. 229–230.

<sup>166</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 230.

<sup>167</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 242.

<sup>168</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 242–243; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 173; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 219.

<sup>169</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 242–243; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 173, 6: 237–239.

His marriage to Fāṭima bt. Muḥammad, the daughter of Muḥammad II and the sister of Naṣr, a union that produced Ismāʿīl, that brought him into further proximity with the ruling line.<sup>170</sup> It was this powerful status, predicated upon extensive land holdings, kinship and marriage ties and possession of an extensive military, that enabled him, in Ramaḍān 711/January 1312 to declare his independence from Naṣr in Granada.<sup>171</sup> As mentioned above, this rebellion was supported by many leading military elites and nobles in the Nasrid kingdom, many of whom rallied to his powerbase in Málaga by late 712/1312.<sup>172</sup> Although recognizing his son Ismāʿīl as *Sulṭān* and pledging allegiance to him, Abū Saʿīd effectively governed on his son's behalf.<sup>173</sup> Two years later, in Ramaḍān 713/December 1313, Ismāʿīl, with the full support of leading members among the Nasrid military elite, placed Abū Saʿīd under house arrest before later confining him to the fortress of Salobreña, where he would remain until his death in 720/1320. The overthrow and imprisonment of Abū Saʿīd was made possible by the support that Ismāʿīl, whose strongest claim to be the legitimate sovereign was based upon the fact that his mother, Fāṭima bt. Muḥammad, was the daughter of Muḥammad II, had received from the Nasrid nobility as well as from the *shaykh al-ghuzāt* ʿUthmān b. Abī al-ʿUlā.<sup>174</sup> Moreover, Ibn al-Khaṭīb asserts that Ismāʿīl, dissatisfied with sharing power with his father, sought to establish his uncontested authority as sovereign. It was also possible, as Ibn Ḥajar and others assert, that Abū Saʿīd Faraj was uneasy about the implications of dethroning Naṣr, the legitimate heir and successor of Muḥammad II.<sup>175</sup> In any case, it is apparent that Ismāʿīl, fully supported by much of the Nasrid nobility, pushed forward with his campaign against Naṣr and entered Granada triumphant on Shawwāl 27

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<sup>170</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 173.

<sup>171</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 245; Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 228.

<sup>172</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 243.

<sup>173</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 228.

<sup>174</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 219.

<sup>175</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 193

713/February 14 1314. He was enthroned in the Alhambra as Ismā‘īl I, formally receiving the public oath of allegiance (*al-bay‘a al-‘amma*) on Dhū-l Qa‘da 12 713/February 28 1314.<sup>176</sup>

The oath, penned by Ibn al-Jayyāb, condemned in the strongest terms the policies of Naṣr and Ibn al-Ḥājj and legitimized Ismā‘īl as the only figure capable of restoring order and justice:

The land of al-Andalus was illuminated and encompassed with brilliance [from the reign of Muḥammad I] until the day that kingship fell into the hands of one who failed to govern, shattering its glory, debasing the faith by abandoning holy war, squandering its wealth and treasury by filling the coffers of the enemies to the brim, granting the Christians absolute control of the frontier, unjustly and arbitrarily ruling over the Muslims and Islam, in the full knowledge that, if God did not prevent it, such contemptible and shameful conduct would only lead to the complete destruction of the true faith and its adherents. They remained in a lamentable and chaotic state between agreement and disagreement, vacillating back and forth and thrashing violently into one another. God then eliminated and severed this terrible diseased limb, leaving the misguided one in a state of failure and disappointment. The glory of Islam was then revived and made victorious by one possessing eminence, purity of lineage, virtue, fortitude, forbearance and a strong commitment to justice. He was the one who is the most qualified and entitled to be king, the most pre-eminent descendant of that noble and glorious Imām [Muḥammad I], the Commander of the Muslims and the Champion of the Faith, the most beloved of the Muslims, the Just Sovereign and Eminent King [Abū al-Walīd Ismā‘īl].<sup>177</sup>

Unlike his immediate predecessors, Ismā‘īl explicitly represented himself as a warrior-king in the mold of the dynasty’s founder Muḥammad I. One of the most frequently narrated anecdotes about him, preserved by both Ibn al-Khaṭīb and al-Bunnāhī has him proclaiming, in response to a scholarly discussion about philosophical theology which was taking place in this presence, that “the foundations of the faith (*uṣūl al-dīn*) are Chapter 112 of the Qur’an (*al-Iklāṣ*) and—brandishing his sword—this!”<sup>178</sup> The active and personal leadership of Ismā‘īl I in the various

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<sup>176</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 230. The text of the oath of allegiance is partially preserved in al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, pp. 230–232.

<sup>177</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 232.

<sup>178</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 96; al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 233.

military campaigns that he undertook is often noted and remarked upon.<sup>179</sup> He was also described as a patron of scholarship, with a particular love of belles-lettres, even composing several poems himself.<sup>180</sup> Far from being mutually exclusive, the combination of both militant kingship and learned attributes was seen as a royal virtue, with Ibn al-Aḥmar proclaiming that Ismāʿīl's distinction was such that "he was obeyed by his swords on the battlefield and his pens in the bureaus."<sup>181</sup>

The displacement of the direct male descendants of Muḥammad I by a collateral branch of the dynasty through the efforts of a broad coalition of leading military elites illustrates the extent of the nobility's power in the Nasrid kingdom. The cognatic kinship of many among the nobility with the reigning dynasty allowed them to establish themselves as the equals of the king, rather than his subordinates. The constant threat of the potential, which was evident during the rebellion of the Banū Ishqalyūla during the reign of Muḥammad II and successfully realized in the case of Ismāʿīl, that they could supplant the Nasrid sovereign remained ever-present throughout the history of the kingdom. Ibn al-Khaṭīb's meticulous documentation in at least two of his surviving works of Ismāʿīl's rise to power from the son of governor to sovereign of Granada indicates his intimate knowledge of the circumstances that brought to power this line of the Nasrid dynasty, a story in which his own family played a leading role and largely benefited. However, the emphasis on the role of the military elite, Abū Saʿīd's independent power as governor, and the ability of relatives of the sovereign to successfully topple the sovereign were also intended as a cautionary tale about the dangers to royal power posed by the unchecked power of the nobility.

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<sup>179</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 234.

<sup>180</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 81–82.

<sup>181</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 93.



The rise to power of Ismā‘īl I forced Ibn al-Ḥājj into exile in North Africa<sup>182</sup> and restored the hegemony of various groups of military elites and noble families in Nasrid Granada. This coup also displaced older military elites, namely the Banū Raḥḥū who accompanied Naṣr to Guadix, and were replaced by noble lineages and provincial elites who had demonstrated their loyalty by supporting Ismā‘īl’s bid for power. Many of the leading figures who wielded executive authority in Granada throughout the next two decades belonged to those noble families who had elevated Ismā‘īl to the Nasrid throne (see Figure 3 above). Alongside these elites, lineages from provincial centers such as Loja (including the Banū al-Khaṭīb) were also rewarded for their support by being appointed by Ismā‘īl to senior positions in the Nasrid court. Following his ascent to the throne, Ismā‘īl appointed two individuals as chief ministers: Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Abī al-Faṭḥ Nuṣayr b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Nuṣayr b. Abī al-Faṭḥ al-Fihri (d. ca. 720/1320), a leading military commander (*qā’id*) from a high-ranking family as chief minister, and Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Mas‘ūd b. ‘Alī b. Mas‘ūd al-Muḥāribī (d. 725/1325), a member of Granada’s patrician class (*a’yān*).<sup>183</sup> Both of these individuals belonged to families who had played a key role in the rebellion against Naṣr. While Abū al-Ḥasan al-Muḥāribī held the office of chief minister, his brother, Abū Bakr Yaḥyā b. Mas‘ūd b. ‘Alī b. Mas‘ūd al-Muḥāribī (d. 727/1327), occupied the post of chief judge (*qāḍī al-jamā‘a*) and acted as the emir’s representative to Castile, indicating the importance of family ties in the establishment of the nobility’s control over the Nasrid administration.<sup>184</sup> The appointment of Abū Bakr Yaḥyā b.

<sup>182</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 141. As both Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Ḥajar (relying upon the former’s account) note, the safe passage of Ibn al-Ḥājj (who could have easily met the same fate as Ibn al-Ḥakīm) to North Africa was due largely to the protection granted by ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā, one of Ismā‘īl’s leading military commanders (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 44).

<sup>183</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 105; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 70–73. The Muḥāribī family was one of the Granada’s oldest patrician families, dating back to at least the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century (Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 1: 445–446).

<sup>184</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 150–151; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 265.

Mas‘ūd also reflects the close relationship between the offices of chief minister and chief judge at this particular moment in Nasrid history. The monopolization of the leading political-administrative functions by members of a single noble lineage resembles a similar phenomenon during the Umayyad era, when noble families strategically groomed various sons for careers as ministers, judges and secretaries in the royal court. Alongside these individuals, the newly-appointed *shaykh al-ghuzāt* ‘Uthmān b. Idrīs b. Abī ‘Ulā (d. 730/1330) was also among the most powerful figures in the kingdom.<sup>185</sup> A pretender to the Marinid throne and a commander of the military in Málaga, ‘Uthmān had been one of the key supporters of Ismā‘īl in his revolt against Naṣr 714/1314 and one of the primary reasons for the success of this endeavor.<sup>186</sup> The decisive role played by these families, especially the Banū Abī ‘Ulā, in the various military engagements during the reign of Ismā‘īl I, especially at the Battle of the Vega in 719/1319, Baza in 724/1324 and Huescar<sup>187</sup> and Martos in 725/1325, further entrenched their political influence and prestige as the kingdom’s ruling elite.<sup>188</sup>

Perhaps the most important of these victories was the Battle of the Vega. In spring 719/1319, a major Castilian force led by the *infantes* Juan and Pedro of Castile, the regents during the minority of King Alfonso XI (r. 1312–1350) launched an assault against Granada but were disastrously defeated in Jumādā I 719/June 1319 by the forces commanded by Ismā‘īl I and ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā.<sup>189</sup> During the battle both the *infantes* were killed alongside thousands of

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<sup>185</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 383–185; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 2: 265.

<sup>186</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 173, 7: 384.

<sup>187</sup> The Nasrid siege of Huescar in Jumādā II 725/June 1325 may have been the first instance of the utilization of gunpowder artillery within the context of the Iberian Peninsula, with Ibn al-Khaṭīb describing the widespread fear and chaos caused among the town’s inhabitants by “the great siege engine,” which fired projectiles “with the power and sound of lightning bolts,” preserving poems by both Ibn al-Jayyāb and Ibn Hudhayl (who seem to have been present at the battle) proclaiming the innovative and unprecedented nature of the weapon (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 110–111).

<sup>188</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 173, 7: 384.

<sup>189</sup> Pedro Afonso, *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1983), ed. Luís Felipe Lindley Cintra, 4: 517; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 389; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 259–260, 384; al-Bunnāhī, *al-*

Castilian troops. While a major military and political catastrophe for Castile, this was a considerable victory for the Nasrids and greatly strengthened the authority and legitimacy of Ismāʿīl I. News of the Nasrid victory over Castile at the Battle of the Vega was widely reported across the Mediterranean and detailed accounts of the battle are recorded within Arabic chronicles written in Mamluk lands only several years later, with the work of Abū Muḥammad al-Birzālī (d. 740/1339), a Damascene of Andalusī heritage writing around 725/1325, and al-Dhahabī being a prime example.<sup>190</sup> This was the second major Nasrid strategic victory in less than a decade, coming less than a decade after the successful defense of Almería during the Aragonese crusade in 709/1309, and thus ensured a certain level of calm on the frontier for several years.<sup>191</sup> Writing throughout the 730s/1330s and 740s/1340s in Cairo, the Mamluk chancellor and historian Ibn Faḍlallāh al-ʿUmarī, reflecting upon the state of affairs in al-Andalus shortly after the battle, even asserted that

“during their many battles with the Iberian Christians (*franġ*), the Muslims are often victorious, such as in the case of their major victory against the Christians at the *Vega* (*marġ*) of Granada in 719/1319, a battle in which 60,000 Christian soldiers and two of their princes (*malikān*), Pedro and Juan, uncles of the king,

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*Ikhlīl*, pp. 233–234; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 219, 2: 265. Saleh al-Zahrani, “Revisiones y nuevos datos sobre la batalla de la Vega de Granada (719/1319) a través de las fuentes árabes,” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 58 (2009), pp. 353–372; al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Tīb*, 1: 428–430.

<sup>190</sup> Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad al-Birzālī, *al-Muqṭaḍī ʿala Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn* (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-ʿAsriyya, 2006), ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salam Tadmuri, 4: 433–441; al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, pp. 205–206; al-Dhahabī, *al-ʿIbar*, 4: 52–53; Ismāʿīl b. ʿUmar b. Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya* (Beirut: Dar al-Maʿrifa, 2010), 14: 510; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 219. Al-Dhahabī’s account draws heavily upon the testimony of the Andalusī jurist and hadith scholar Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. Rabīʿ al-Ashʿarī, who was present at the battle, indicating the manner in which Nasrid writings and perspectives were incorporated into the works of Mamluk scholars.

<sup>191</sup> For more on the Aragonese crusade against Almería, see Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, pp. 173–179; Antonio Giménez, *El sitio de Almería en 1309* (Barcelona: Casa provincial de Caridad, 1904); Maria Teresa Ferrer I Mallol, *La Frontera Amb l’Islam en el Segle XIV: Cristians i sarraïns al País Valencià* (Barcelona, 1998), pp. 99–101; Carmen Maria Marugán Vallvé, “El sitio de Almería de 1309: El desarrollo de la campaña militar”, in *Almería entre culturas (siglos XIII-XVI)* (Almería: Institutode Estudios Almerienses, 1990), pp. 171–186; Cynthia L. Chamberlin, “Not All Martyrs or Saints: The Aragonese-Castilian Crusade against Granada, 1309-1310”, *Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 23-1 (1992), pp. 17-45; Antonio Peláez, “Un año crítico de la historia nazarí: Naṣr (1309-1310). Precisiones y rectificaciones,” *Miscelánea de estudios árabes y hebraicos* 54 (2005), pp. 117-142; Vicent Baydal, “‘Tan grans messions’. La financiación de la cruzada de Jaime II de Aragón contra Almería en 1309,” *Medievalismo* 19 (2009), pp. 57-154; Carme María Marugán, “El ejército de la corona de Aragón en la expedición contra Almería de 1309,” *Medievalismo* 19 (2009), pp. 199-242.

perished. The corpse of Pedro is now suspended from a coffin on one of the Alhambra's gates, while Juan's body was only returned [to Castile] after a large ransom. The battle earned the Muslims a massive amount of booty, the like of which had never been seen before in history. 'Verily, victory comes only from God, the Almighty and Wise.'<sup>192</sup>

While the importance of the nobility in contributing to these military victories cannot be overstated, the Nasrid emir's dependence upon them is further indicated by their appointment as ambassadors, governors, judges and royal advisors throughout the 710s/1310s and 720s/1320s. The precariousness of Ismā'īl's own position in the kingdom until 722/1322, when Naṣr (supported militarily and politically by Castile) ruled independently in Guadix, furthered the emir's reliance on the power and support of the nobility, whose privileged status within the kingdom was enshrined by the large degree of authority that enjoyed. However, his choice of chief minister (Abū al-Ḥasan al-Muḥāribī), a member of Granada's patrician class rather than military elite/nobility, suggests that he exercised caution in delegating too much power to them. The reign of Ismā'īl also witnessed the emergence of provincial elites and chancery officials as an influential political class within Nasrid politics. Among these were individuals like 'Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb, drawn from leading provincial families who had demonstrated their loyalty to Ismā'īl during his rebellion against Naṣr and proved themselves as effective councilors and administrators. The royal chancery, located in the Comares Palace of the Alhambra, was the main institution in which many of these individuals, including 'Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb, Abū Bakr b. Shibrīn, and al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, began their careers in the Nasrid court. Continuing the trend begun several decades earlier during the reigns of Muḥammad II and Muḥammad III, the

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<sup>192</sup> Ibn Faḍlallāh al-'Umarī, *Masālik al-Absār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār*, 4: 121–122. A similar narrative is provided by Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 2: 265. Reports about Nasrid military victories over Castile were often greatly exaggerated within Mamluk sources, with a prominent example of such embellishment being al-Dhahabī's description of an alleged battle which took place between Muḥammad I and Alfonso X in 663/1264–5 that ended with the capture of the Castilian sovereign himself and the deaths of over 40,000 of his troops (al-Dhahabī, *al-'Ibar*, 3: 307).

chancery during Ismāʿīl's reign constituted an important venue that provided opportunities for the social and political mobility of scholars and provincial elites, with many occupying various positions as judges, secretaries and advisors on the royal council. Their promotion through the ranks of the Nasrid chancery and administration solidified the bonds of patronage and loyalty between the scholar-officials and the dynasty. This empowerment of scholars and chancery officials is all the more significant considering that, unlike his predecessors, Ismāʿīl was not a scholar-sultan nor particularly learned. As individuals who had demonstrated their loyalty to Ismāʿīl and whose social status was predicated upon their royal service, their political fortunes were inextricably tied to the figure of the king and his household. The literary production of this scholarly-administrative elite was shaped by their own education, professional identity and their patronage by the Nasrid emirs.

The office of chancellor was also increased in importance during this period, with Ibn al-Jayyāb, the protégé of Ibn al-Ḥakīm, being appointed as Ismāʿīl's private secretary (*kātib sirr*), which brought him into even closer proximity to royal power.<sup>193</sup> The fact that Ibn al-Jayyāb, who served six Nasrid sovereigns over a period of 50 years and held the position of chancellor uninterrupted between 709/1308 and his own death in 749/1349, allowed the chancery to become a relatively stable institution amidst the political turmoil and factionalism that characterized Granada during this period.<sup>194</sup> His prudent political strategy of establishing alliances with various factions of society enabled him to consolidate long-standing ties with nobles and scholars alike, appointing dozens of his own protégés and students into senior positions of authority within the royal court and chancery, and allowed him to effectively shape this institution. Reflecting on this particular situation, Ibn Khaldūn even refers to Ibn al-Jayyāb

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<sup>193</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 111.

<sup>194</sup> Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, pp. 44–45 [also quote Ibn Khaldun here].

as having attained an uncontested grip and secure control over the chancery, utilizing the phrase *al-mustabidd bi-l kitāba*.<sup>195</sup> As indicated above in the context of Ibn al-Ḥakīm, this concept of *istibdād* referred to a particular type of executive authority that reflected the office holder's own independent power. The interconnection between historical writing and the chancery, explored in Chapter 3, reflects the manner in which the close ties between this office and the sovereign shaped the manner in which the history of the Nasrid kingdom was written. Similarly, the figure of the royal physician, who was usually drawn from the secretarial elite and scholarly class, increased in prominence during this period, as already seen in the case of Ibn al-Raqqām.<sup>196</sup> During the reign of Ismā'īl I, this position was held variously by Ibn al-Sarrāj (d. 729/1330),<sup>197</sup> Ibn Hudhayl and Abū Ghālib Tammām al-Shaqqūrī. The expanded privileges of these scholar-officials during this period, along with the precedents set by Ibn al-Ḥakīm and Ibn al-Ḥājj earlier in the century, would set the stage for their rise to the leading positions of state and their contestation of the nobility's power and privilege.

This significant shift, in which palace officials and the learned elite were empowered as a counterbalance to the nobility was complemented by the increased tendency of the Nasrid emirs, beginning with Ismā'īl I, to take concubines of Christian (primarily Castilian) origin, rather than daughters of leading noble families, as their royal consorts.<sup>198</sup> This break with Nasrid custom, in which leading noblemen were incorporated into the ruling family through marriage ties as

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<sup>195</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344.

<sup>196</sup> This phenomenon is also demonstrable across the Islamic West, with Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī describing Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf al-Qarmūnī (himself a student of the Jewish physician and philosopher Ibn Zarzal, who served as royal physician in Nasrid Granada and the court of Pedro I), the royal physician of the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Hafsīd ruler Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad al-Mustaṣṣir as "attaining major prominence, power and influence within the royal court as a result of his intellect and erudition." (Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī, *al-Fārisiyya fī Mabādi' al-Dawla al-Ḥaḥṣiyya*, p. 178).

<sup>197</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 160-162.

<sup>198</sup> During this period, there was a similar tendency of Castilian and Marinid sovereigns to also take concubines as their royal consorts.

fathers-in-law and brothers-in-law of the sovereign, effectively weakened the influence of the Nasrid nobility over these kings and their heirs.

While there is evidence that Nasrid princesses continued to be married to prominent noblemen, the fact that subsequent Nasrid emirs, including Muḥammad IV, Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V, were the sons of Castilian concubines—who themselves wielded significant authority in their own right—undercut the influence of leading military families over the figure of the sovereign. The attempt by Ismāʿīl to implement a variety of strategies to undercut the power of the nobility would have been necessitated by the experiences of his own rise to power. It was clear that he was anxious about his own authority being challenged by military figures and noblemen with blood or marriage ties to the dynasty. The importance of royal women in Nasrid Granada as significant political actors has been discussed by both María Jesús Rubiera Mata and Bárbara Boloix Gallardo,<sup>199</sup> who also notes the secretarial elite's anxieties about their function as councilors and *privados* of the king, which made them competitors for influence.<sup>200</sup> Fāṭima bt. al-Aḥmar was a major force in Nasrid politics for over 50 years and was the daughter of a Nasrid emir, the sister of two others, the mother of another, and the grandmother of two others. It was through her that all Nasrid sovereigns after 714/1314 traced their lineage to the dynasty's founder. As an eminent scholar, poet and historian in her own right, she became one of the most important patrons and allies of the ascendant secretarial elite. Ibn al-Khāṭib appears to have

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<sup>199</sup> María Jesús Rubiera Mata, "La Princesa Fāṭima bint al-Aḥmar, la María de Molina de la dinastía Nazarí de Granada," *Medievalismo: Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales* 6 (1996), pp. 183–192; Bárbara Boloix Gallardo, *Las sultanas de la Alhambra: las grandes desconocidas del reino nazarí de Granada (siglos XIII-XV)* (Granada: Editorial Comares, 2013); Bárbara Boloix Gallardo, "Mujer y poder en el reino Nazarí de Granada: Fāṭima bint al-Aḥmar, la perla central del collar de la dinastía (siglo XIV)," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 46 (2016), pp. 269–300.

<sup>200</sup> For a discussion of women's involvement in court politics elsewhere in the medieval Islamic world, see Maaïke van Berkel, "The Young Caliph and his Wicked Advisors: Women and Power Politics under Caliph Al-Muqtadir (r. 295–320/908–932)," *al-Masāq* 19 (2007), pp. 3–15.

enjoyed a particularly close relationship with her and even composed her epitaph, which was then inscribed upon her tomb.

On Rajab 26 725/July 8 1325, three days after his return from the successful raid on Martos and for reasons that remain unclear, Ismā‘īl was violently assassinated in the Alhambra by several leading members of the military elite.<sup>201</sup> While attempting to defend the king from the assassins, his chief minister, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Muḥāribī, was also severely wounded.<sup>202</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s official account, written for the Nasrid sovereign around 763/1362, narrates the assassination in all its colorful detail:

“When [Ismā‘īl] was returning from Martos, he had insulted and offended one of the leading nobles from among his relatives, namely his paternal cousin, Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl, known as the Lord of Algeciras (*ṣāhib al-jazīra*). The king had disrespected and threatened him, which led the latter to hold a grudge against him. As a result, [Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl] treacherously assassinated the king within the confines of the royal palace, in the presence of his own servants and the leading statesmen of the kingdom and all this despite the impregnability and security of that stronghold. This occurred on Monday, the third day after the king’s triumphant return from Martos. [Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl] had conspired to perpetrate his heinous crime in collusion with a group from among his kin (*al-qarāba*) and servants. The assassin struck while the king was passing through a narrow passageway on his way to his privy council chambers (*majlis al-qu‘ūd al-khāṣṣ*). [Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl] embraced him before unsheathing a dagger that he had concealed under his arm, with which he stabbed the king three times, once in the throat, right above his collarbone, causing him to bleed out rapidly but not before crying out for his chief minister [Abū al-Ḥasan al-Muḥāribī]. Although the latter rushed forth rapidly, he was met with the unsheathed swords of the co-conspirators of the traitor [Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl], which prevented from reaching his sovereign. Commotion ensued and more swords were drawn, and each [of the king’s defenders] sparred with the conspirators. While they were preoccupied with the chief minister, the king had escaped the scene. This caused immense panic and bewilderment among the conspirators who believed that the king had survived the assassination and they decided to flee the scene. However, every escape route was sealed off and they were all killed on the spot. Several individuals, innocent of all wrongdoing, were falsely implicated in the murder and they were tortured [in order to extract confessions], their homes plundered by the ignorant masses and the remnants of their bodies were mounted upon the gates.

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<sup>201</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al-A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149r; al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 235.

<sup>202</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al-A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149r.



The wounded king was carried to one of his chambers in the Alhambra, where he died.”<sup>203</sup>

Ibn al-Khaṭīb clearly states that the murder was planned and perpetrated by Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl, the king’s paternal cousin, and his supporters in collusion with various members of the nobility, with the ringleaders of the conspiracy (apparently) evading punishment, but does not provide any specific names or details about who these individuals were. The account of the assassination in the “Deeds of the Notables” (*A‘māl al-A‘lām*), written during Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s North African exile between 773/1371 and 776/1374, when he felt secure enough to be more candid about events in Granada, only adds that the heads of the assassins were mounted on the gates of the Alhambra.<sup>204</sup> The hesitance of Ibn al-Khaṭīb to implicate specific individuals (aside from Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl) is particularly curious and suggests that, even decades later, details about the assassination were particularly sensitive. Similarly, al-Bunnāhī’s account closely mirrors Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s and only specifically implicates Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl.<sup>205</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, on the other hand, exhibits no such qualms and stresses that the assassination was perpetrated by “leading military elites from among the kin of the king with ‘Uthmān [b. Abī ‘Ulā] as part of the conspiracy” (*bi-ighṭiyāl ba‘ḍ al-ru‘asā’ min qarābatihī bi-mudākhalat ‘Uthmān*).<sup>206</sup> He further states that “the traitor,” a reference to Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl, had fled the scene and taken refuge in the house of ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā, but was immediately killed by the latter, probably in order to deflect any suspicion of his own involvement in the assassination.<sup>207</sup> According to al-Dhahabī, writing in Damascus several years later, the assassins were Ibrahīm b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī

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<sup>203</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 112; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 392.

<sup>204</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al-A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149r.

<sup>205</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 235.

<sup>206</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 384.

<sup>207</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 174.

al-‘Ulā and Yaḥyā b. ‘Umar b. Raḥḥū, members of the Marinid exile families of the *shuyūkh al-ghuzāt*. This account was drawn from the unique testimony of the Nasrid secretary and scholar Ibn al-Ḥājj al-Numayrī, with whom the Damascene historian met during the 730s/1330s.<sup>208</sup> This provides the most compelling evidence for the direct involvement of ‘Uthmān in the murder of Ismā‘īl I, especially since it is reinforced by Ibn Khaldūn’s account. Incidentally, al-Dhahabī’s narrative demonstrates the value of utilizing sources from the Mamluk lands for Nasrid history since they often preserved material and perspectives that complemented (and sometimes contradicted) those found in chronicles composed in the Islamic West. Along with the evidence provided by the *Crónica de Alfonso XI*, these accounts make it clear that the assassination was the product of a collusion among various factions among the Nasrid military elite, including the Banū Abī al-‘Ulā, the Banū Raḥḥū and other leading nobleman related to the king.

While the official Nasrid account, represented by Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s narrative, insists that Ismā‘īl’s death was the result of a personal vendetta among the king’s close relatives, the participation of such a broad coalition of nobles, including rival families, in assassination suggests that there were other dynamics at play, as illustrated by a recent study of Francisco Vidal.<sup>209</sup> It is quite plausible that the expanded royal authority which Ismā‘īl attempted to promote, even referring to himself as “God’s caliph” (*khalīfat al-raḥmān*), which was inscribed on the Generalife Palace of the Alhambra (see Figure 2), alarmed many among the nobility, who feared that their own influence at court was diminishing. Even the account provided by Ibn al-Khaṭīb is underpinned by the notion that, following his string of military successes and the consolidation of his position as the sole king of the Nasrid kingdom (after the death of Naṣr in Guadix in 722/1322), Ismā‘īl was perceived as treating the nobility with disrespect. Considering

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<sup>208</sup> al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, p. 375.

<sup>209</sup> Vidal, “El Asesinato Político en al-Andalus,” pp. 370–381.

that those implicated in his assassination, namely ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā, were precisely the same individuals responsible for Ismā‘īl’s elevation to the throne a decade earlier, it is possible that, feeling betrayed and concerned with their waning influence in the Nasrid court, they sought to supplant the king by promoting a more agreeable and pliable candidate.

Figure 2. Inscription on the north pavilion of the Generalife Palace of the Alhambra of a poem of Ibn al-Jayyāb written for Ismā‘īl I, describing the sovereign as “the caliph of the Most Merciful (*khalīfat al-raḥmān*), the best of kings (*khayr al-mulūk*) Abū al-Walīd, chosen from the the most supreme kings of Qaḥṭān, who followed in the footsteps of his honorable ancestors, the supporters (*Anṣār*) of the best of creation who hailed from ‘Adnān.” Photograph taken by the author in September 2015.



The assassination of Ismā‘īl elicited outrage from many among the secretarial class, with public elegies for the king being written by several leading secretaries and beneficiaries of his patronage, including Abū Bakr b. Shibrīn, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Lawshī and Ibn al-Jayyāb.<sup>210</sup> Following his burial in the royal cemetery of the Alhambra alongside his (maternal) grandfather Muḥammad II, a grandiose marble tombstone was raised above his tomb and was inscribed in gold and silver by a prosimetric elegy penned by Ibn al-Jayyāb, who memorialized the emir as a “the martyred king” (*al-sulṭān al-shahīd*), “the Just Ruler” (*al-imām al-‘ādil*), and the “champion of Islam” (*nāṣir millat al-muṣṭafā al-mukhtār*), even comparing him with the third caliph ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān, the archetype of the martyred sovereign in Sunni Islam.<sup>211</sup> These elegies also condemned his assassins in the strongest terms, proclaiming that “those who express joy [about Ismā‘īl’s death] today will certainly be plunged into the depths of hell tomorrow.”<sup>212</sup> As these sentiments demonstrate, the violent death of Ismā‘īl served as a totem around which the secretarial class rallied to articulate their notions of royal authority while condemning the nobility for their willingness to subvert the life of the sovereign and the stability of the kingdom to their own political interests. More specifically, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s painstaking attempts to preserve these poems and inscriptions in several of his works underscores his own sympathy with these notions and his desire to memorialize Ismā‘īl and, thus, sacralize the concept of royal sovereignty.

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<sup>210</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 115; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 395–396.

<sup>211</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 113–114; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 393–394; Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, p. 413.

<sup>212</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 396.

Following the assassination of Ismāʿīl, his 9-year-old son by a Christian concubine named ʿAlwa,<sup>213</sup> Muḥammad IV, was swiftly proclaimed as the new ruler.<sup>214</sup> This was the first time in Nasrid history that a minor had ascended to the throne, introducing a new factor into Nasrid dynastic politics.<sup>215</sup> The succession of a number of minor kings to the Nasrid throne (Muḥammad IV, Yūsuf I, and Muḥammad V) during this period motivated Ibn al-Khaṭīb's careful attention to the political and administrative implications of royal minorities throughout Andalus and North African history in his works, especially the *Aʿmāl al-Aʿlām*, which was a substantial treatise written with the explicit objective of examining this phenomenon. This historical chronicle, which looks especially closely at the reign of the Umayyad caliph Hishām II (r. 360/971-366/976),<sup>216</sup> reflects the manner in which Nasrid historiography was colored by the political exigencies of the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century while also highlighting Ibn al-Khaṭīb's repeated usage of earlier precedents in Andalus history in order to legitimize, justify and explain the institutional developments in the Nasrid era. While demonstrating an awareness of the various problems associated with the accession of underage rulers, Ibn al-Khaṭīb emphasized the necessity of recognizing the legitimacy of royal minorities, emphasizing that such cases only furthered the need for the proper delegation of political power to loyal advisers and competent statesmen. The concern with the reign of Ibn Abī ʿĀmir al-Manṣūr and his two sons, ʿAbd al-

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<sup>213</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 538.

<sup>214</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Aʿmāl al-Aʿlām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149r; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 236–237, 4: 172. Other children of Ismāʿīl I included Faraj, Faṭīma and Maryam (born to ʿAlwa, the mother of Muḥammad IV), Yūsuf (born to Bahār), and Ismāʿīl (born to Qamar) (al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 236).

<sup>215</sup> For a discussion of the phenomenon of royal minorities elsewhere in the medieval Islamic world, see Konrad Hirschler, “‘He is a child and this land is a borderland of Islam’: Under-age Rule and the Quest for Political Stability in the Ayyūbid Period,” *al-Masaq* 19 (2007), pp. 29–46; Angus Stewart, “Between Baybars and Qalāwūn: Under-age Rulers and Succession in the Early Mamlūk Sultanate,” *al-Masaq* 19 (2007), pp. 47–54.

<sup>216</sup> Victor de Castro León, “Ibn al Jatib y el Kitab Aʿmal al aʿlam: la figura de Almanzor,” *Studia Historica. Historia Medieval* 35 (2017), pp. 63–85; Alejandro García Sanjuán, “Legalidad islámica y legitimidad política en el califato de Córdoba: la proclamación de Hishām II (360-366 H/971-976),” *al-Qantara* 29 (2008), pp. 45–77; María Luisa Avila, “La proclamación (bayʿa) de Hišam II, año 976 d.C.,” *al-Qantara* 1 (1980), pp. 79–114.

Malik al-Muẓaffar and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Sanjūl (“Sanchuelo”) reflects the contemporary concern with the rise of political strongmen as well as an anxiety about the chaos and turbulence (*fitnah*) that followed the improper designation of authority.<sup>217</sup>

The various factions among the royal family, military elites and nobility in the Nasrid kingdom competed with one another for control over the young Muḥammad IV. Following the death of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Muḥāribī, who succumbed to injuries sustained trying to defend Ismā‘īl I from his assassins, shortly after the proclamation of Muḥammad IV as king,<sup>218</sup> Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Maḥrūq (d. 729/1328) was elevated to the position of chief minister and royal chamberlain (*ḥājib*) in Ramaḍān 725/August 1325.<sup>219</sup> This individual belonged to a notable Granadan family and had been a leading minister and the mayordomo (*qahramān*) of Ismā‘īl I.<sup>220</sup> While not a member of any long-standing noble family, Ibn Maḥrūq was the grandson of Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ash‘arī (d. 701/1301), known as al-Maḥrūq, who had been one of the most important mystics in 7th/13th-century Granada, constructing several Sufi lodge (*zāwiyas*) in the city, and was described by Ibn Shibrīn as “the reviver of mysticism in al-Andalus.”<sup>221</sup> Al-Maḥrūq enjoyed close ties with Muḥammad II, who dispatched him as an ambassador to North Africa on several occasions.<sup>222</sup> As a result of this relationship, which brought with it both wealth and influence, the family established themselves

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<sup>217</sup> Victor de Castro León, “Ibn al Jatib y el Kitab A’mal al a’lam: la figura de Almanzor,” *Studia Historica. Historia Medieval* 35 (2017), pp. 74–82. These late Umayyad political developments are discussed in David Wasserstein, *The Caliphate in the West: An Islamic Political Institution in the Iberian Peninsula* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 17–33, and Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal*, pp. 115–129.

<sup>218</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 537, 4: 71.

<sup>219</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 537, 2: 136-137; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 119; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 121; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 265; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 221; al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, p. 375.

<sup>220</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 537, 2: 136-137; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 119; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 121; al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, p. 375.

<sup>221</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa: Nuṣūṣ Jadīda*, pp. 255–256.

<sup>222</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa: Nuṣūṣ Jadīda*, pp. 255–256.

as an important lineage in the Nasrid court. The career of al-Maḥrūq and his descendants demonstrates the importance of proximity to the sovereign in the establishment and consolidation of influence during the Nasrid era and represents the phenomenon of *privanza* or *ikhtiṣāṣ* in which individuals not descended from key noble/military families and not possessing any blood or marriage ties to the Nasrid dynasty, rose to become important courtiers and royal councilors. The emphasis upon this family and their relationship to power by Ibn al-Khaṭīb reflects the latter's attempt to legitimate the elevation of such individuals to positions of executive authority within the Nasrid kingdom. According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Ibn Maḥrūq began his career as a secretary in the chancery (*taraqā ila al-kitāba mar'usan ma'a al-jumla*) and as a court poet (*imtadaḥa al-umarā'*) for the Nasrid emirs before being appointed as the leading financial minister (*wakīl*) in the Alhambra, gradually being promoted to the post of mayordomo (*qahramān*) which enabled him to “acquire immense power (*jāh*) and wealth (*amwāl 'arīḍa*).”<sup>223</sup> As in the case of both Ibn al-Ḥakīm and Ibn al-Ḥājj, Ibn al-Khaṭīb characterizes the relationship of Ibn Maḥrūq to royal power in terms of *privanza*, even referring to him as “one of the people distinguished by royal favor” (*min ahl al-khuṣūṣiyya*).<sup>224</sup>

Ibn al-Maḥrūq's social status in the Nasrid court was predicated as much on his close relationship with the emir Ismā'īl I, whom he served as mayordomo and royal treasurer, as it was based upon his grandfather's prestige (as indicated by the family being associated with the name al-Maḥrūq). His appointment as chief minister, Ibn al-Khaṭīb emphasizes, owed much to key

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<sup>223</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 136-137. Ibn al-Khaṭīb stresses his knowledge of financial matters and mathematics, especially emphasizing the discipline of *farā'id* (or inheritance law), which was a particularly prominent field of knowledge within the Nasrid chancery. Moreover, his emphasis on Ibn Maḥrūq's elegant handwriting (*kan lahu khaṭṭ ḥasan*) constitutes further evidence that this individual began his career as a secretary in the chancery. Ibn Ḥajar also states that Ibn Maḥrūq held the position of treasurer (*wakīl*) during the reign of Naṣr (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 221).

<sup>224</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 136.

alliances that he established with several noble factions, and, most significantly, the support that he received from the *shaykh al-ghuzāt* ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā.<sup>225</sup> By 727/1327, it appears that these alliances had crumbled, owing to personal tensions between ‘Uthmān and Ibn Maḥrūq, who attempted to establish his absolute authority within the Nasrid court by barring all access to Muḥammad IV, effectively ruling as the king’s sole regent.<sup>226</sup> Within the *Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, Ibn al-Khaṭīb describes Ibn Maḥrūq as the “king’s deputy” (*wakīl al-sulṭān*) to whom executive authority was delegated, as well as the effective ruler of the Nasrid kingdom (*mudabbir al-dawla al-naṣriyya*) during his time in office.<sup>227</sup> Ibn Khaldūn provides more insight into the nature of this office (*wakīl*) and explains that in Nasrid Granada in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century it was specifically employed to refer to the mayordomo, “an individual who was charged with overseeing the royal household, the private affairs of the king and the financial affairs of the kingdom.”<sup>228</sup> It was also connected with the function of treasurer. The extent of his influence is indicated by the fact that he was the first (but certainly not the last) individual in Nasrid history to utilize the title of chamberlain (*ḥājib*), traditionally utilized in Andalusī history for ministers who were delegated absolute power and supreme control over the military, administrative and fiscal spheres of the kingdom.<sup>229</sup> Ibn Maḥrūq was supported by several leading members of Granada’s nobility, including his brother-in-law Abū al-Faṭḥ Nuṣayr b. Ibrāhīm al-Fihri (d. 745/1344).<sup>230</sup> The latter was a member of one of Granada’s most powerful noble families, whose members, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states, had “possessed a special distinction within the Nasrid kingdom and were often appointed

<sup>225</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 136; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 384.

<sup>226</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 136; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 3584

<sup>227</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 119; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 121.

<sup>228</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, BL MS Add 9574, f. 138v.

<sup>229</sup> For a discussion of the usage and meaning of this title during the Umayyad period in al-Andalus, see Meouak, *Pouvoir souverain, administration centrale et élites politiques*, pp. 65–68.

<sup>230</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa: Nuṣūṣ Jadīda*, pp. 47–48; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 241.



to the highest positions of state,” as seen in the case of Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Abī al-Faṭḥ Nuṣayr al-Fihri, the chief minister of Ismā‘īl I.<sup>231</sup> Just as this family proved to be an important asset for Ibn Maḥrūq, their association with the latter also immensely increased their own power and wealth within the kingdom, ensuring their political prominence in Nasrid affairs for the next several decades. This alliance, which was strengthened by marriage ties between the families, demonstrates the various nuances in Nasrid politics that enabled the formation of political factions which were constituted by individuals drawn from both the “men of the pen” (like Ibn al-Maḥrūq) and “men of the sword.”

To further secure his power, Ibn Maḥrūq arrested, imprisoned or exiled various members of the court who were perceived as direct rivals, including Abū Nu‘aym Riḍwān (d. 760/1359),<sup>232</sup> the freedman of Ismā‘īl I and the tutor/advisor of Muḥammad IV, who was briefly incarcerated before being expelled to Tlemcen. As an individual closely connected with the royal family and, more significantly, the tutor of the king—a position that brought with it an intimate bond and access to royal favor—Riḍwān was in many ways a *privado* whose removal paved the way for Ibn Maḥrūq to exercise his own unrivalled influence over the young king. A far more dangerous opponent, however, was the *shaykh al-ghuzāt* ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā, the commander of the Nasrid military and perhaps the single most powerful figure in the Nasrid kingdom. He was also the figure that had been one of the staunchest advocates for Ibn Maḥrūq’s appointment as chief minister.<sup>233</sup> From 727/1327 onwards, Ibn Maḥrūq’s tenure as chief minister was characterized by his violent rivalry with ‘Uthmān, whom he expelled from Granada (along with

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<sup>231</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 342–343. Another prominent member of this family was Ibrāhīm b. Nuṣayr b. Abī al-Faṭḥ al-Fihri (d. 741/1341), described by Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī as “one of the leading noblemen in Granada” (*aḥad wujūj quwwād Gharnāṭa*) (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 48).

<sup>232</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 510. This individual was among those defending Ismā‘īl I against his assassins in the Alhambra (al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 235).

<sup>233</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 384.

many of the the Banū Abī al-‘Ulā) and replaced as *shuyūkh al-ghuzāt* with another line of Marinid princes (the Banū Raḥḥū).<sup>234</sup> This prompted a series of retaliations by ‘Uthmān, who seized the region of Andarax, near Almería, on Jumādā I 11 727/April 4 1327 and transformed it into his base of operations to attack Granada.<sup>235</sup> ‘Uthmān also installed a Nasrid pretender, Muḥammad b. Faraj (d. 735/1335),<sup>236</sup> a brother of Ismā‘īl I, as emir in Andarax while sending his son as an emissary to the court of Alfonso XI to organize an assault against Ronda.<sup>237</sup> The power struggle between ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā and Ibn Maḥrūq thus plunged the Nasrid kingdom into an all-out civil war, which led to major destruction and the loss of thousands of lives.<sup>238</sup> This conflict, which lasted nearly 18 months and was referred to as “a terrible civil strife” (*fitna ‘aẓīma*) by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, enabled Castile (led by Alfonso XI) to regain the initiative along the frontier and capture a number of strategic fortresses along the kingdom’s northwestern boundary.<sup>239</sup> The continued bloodshed and destruction caused by Ibn al-Maḥrūq’s attempts to secure his absolute control of the kingdom and its sovereign, alienated various factions in the kingdom, including powerful members of the nobility, the Granadan populace, and the king himself. Even Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s laudatory biography of Ibn Maḥrūq in the *Iḥāṭa* is punctuated by a strong disapproval of his conduct.<sup>240</sup> Seeking to end the conflict and also to establish his own sovereign authority, Muḥammad IV ordered a group of the royal bodyguard, mainly consisting of converted Christians who had been in the service of his father (*tā’ifa mukhtaṣṣa min mamālīk*

<sup>234</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 535; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 384; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 2: 265, 3: 221, 4: 261; al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, p. 375.

<sup>235</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149v; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 174, 7: 385.

<sup>236</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 84. This was the paternal grandfather of the historian and secretary Ibn al-Aḥmar (Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā’id al-Jumān*, p. 307).

<sup>237</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149v; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 174, 7: 385.

<sup>238</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 118–119; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 385.

<sup>239</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 118–119; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 535–536; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 385.

<sup>240</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 136.

*abīhi*), to orchestrate the assassination of Ibn Maḥrūq.<sup>241</sup> While the latter was performing his administrative duties in the Alhambra on Muḥarram 2 729/November 6 1328, he was attacked and killed by two military slaves (*mamlūkān*) in the presence of Fāṭima bt. Muḥammad, the emir's powerful grandmother.<sup>242</sup> The circumstances of the assassination demonstrated that the Nasrid emirs (and royal women) were not entirely powerless in the face of their own overbearing *privados*, but could rely upon their own clients and military slaves to enforce their will. Despite his assassination on the sovereign's orders, Ibn al-Khaṭīb provides a highly positive biography of Ibn Maḥrūq in the *Iḥāṭa*, describing him as being "honorable, righteous, disinclined towards violence and firmly adhering to justice. May God have mercy upon him"<sup>243</sup> This memorialization suggests a close relationship between this individual and Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own circle of teachers, including Ibn al-Jayyāb.

Immediately following the death of Ibn Maḥrūq, 'Uthmān b. Abī al-'Ulā made peace with the emir and was restored to his former post as *shaykh al-ghuzāt* (which he held until his death in 730/1330).<sup>244</sup> Muḥammad b. Faraj was exiled to North Africa, bringing the civil war to a conclusion.<sup>245</sup> Before his death, 'Uthmān b. Abī al-'Ulā ensured that his son Abū Thābit 'Āmir (d. 749/1348) inherited his position as *shaykh al-ghuzāt*, an indication of the hereditary nature of political power among the Nasrid elites.<sup>246</sup> The representation of these events by Ibn al-Khaṭīb

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<sup>241</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 119; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 537; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 265.

<sup>242</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149v; al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, p. 376; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 174, 7: 265. According to the *Iḥāṭa*, Ibn al-Maḥrūq was killed on the emir's explicit orders and was "set upon by two young military slaves, who stabbed him with daggers until he was dead. This took place while Ibn Maḥrūq was in the residence of the honorable and elderly grandmother of the emir [Fāṭima bt. Muḥammad], whom he sought to consult about some official matters" (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 137).

<sup>243</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 136.

<sup>244</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 385; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 2: 265.

<sup>245</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 536; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 385; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 221; al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, p. 376.

<sup>246</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 174, 7: 385; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 64.

placed heavy emphasis on the ability of ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā to mobilize the support of Alfonso XI and install a Nasrid pretender, prompting a brutal conflict that encompassed the kingdom, also underscored the vast power and resources of this faction, as well as their willingness to secure their own interests by any means necessary. Like his description of the noble-led rebellion that dethroned Naṣr, the narrative was intended as a precautionary tale about the dangerous implications of the unrestricted power of the nobility, which for him posed a threat not only to the integrity of royal authority but to the political survival of the kingdom.

The violent removal of the powerful Ibn Maḥrūq, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Khaldūn both noted, finally enabled Muḥammad IV to rule in his own right.<sup>247</sup> While he was replaced as chief minister by a leading military commander, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr b. al-Mawl (the son of Abū Bakr ‘Atīq, Naṣr’s chief minister), who was appointed in Rabī‘ II 729/February 1329, he only occupied the office for about four months until Rajab 17<sup>th</sup> 729/May 17<sup>th</sup> 1329, when he was exiled to North Africa.<sup>248</sup> During this period, Abū Bakr al-Muḥāribī (originally appointed as *qāḍī* during the reign of Ismā‘īl I) maintained his control over the judgeship until 727/1327 when he was sent as an ambassador to Marinid Morocco, where he died. His position was inherited by his son Abū Yaḥya Mas‘ūd, who held the post until he was designated chief judge of Almería on Muḥarram 10<sup>th</sup> 731/October 24<sup>th</sup> 1330.<sup>249</sup> His replacement as chief judge of Granada was a leading Málaga scholar, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā b. Bakr al-Ash‘arī al-Mālaqī (d. 741/1340).<sup>250</sup> The five years between 725/1325 and 730/1330, which witnessed the assassination of Ismā‘īl, the wielding of absolute power by Ibn Maḥrūq and the

<sup>247</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149v; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 174.

<sup>248</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 61; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 120.

<sup>249</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 120; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 538; al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 151–152.

<sup>250</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 120; al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 152–158.

rebellion of Muḥammad b. Faraj had alerted Muḥammad IV to the serious threat to royal sovereignty posed by factionalism among the political elite.

The reign of this emir and his successors is represented by court histories, including those of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Khaldūn, as marking an important turning point in the relationship between Nasrid sovereigns and the aristocracy, as they sought to curb the privileged position of the military elite, many of whom, such as Muḥammad b. Faraj, possessed a theoretical claim to the throne due to both their blood ties and ability to mobilize broad support. While the imprisonment and exile of pretenders to the throne remained an important strategy, these emirs also adopted a broader strategy for contesting and undermining the privileged position of the nobility. The relatively swift dismissal of both Abū Yaḥyā Masʿūd al-Muḥāribī as chief judge and Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr b. al-Mawl as chief minister reflects the concerted attempt by Muḥammad IV to undercut the power of the military elites and establish his own sovereign authority. One way in which he sought to accomplish this was by appointing individuals drawn from the ranks of the scholarly elite and clients of the dynasty to the leading offices of state. Within mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid Granada, the most indicative example of this royal strategy of concentrating executive political and administrative power within the hands of individuals tied to the royal household through ties of loyalty and clientage (*walāʾ*), thus lessening the reliance upon the nobility, was the appointment of Abū Nuʿaym Riḍwān al-Naṣrī, the freedman and military commander of Ismāʿīl I, to the office of chief minister, royal chamberlain (*ḥājib*) and deputy (*nāʾib*).<sup>251</sup> Although exercising a military function, this individual was not a member of the traditional military elite and his position in society (as a freedman) was entirely dependent on

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<sup>251</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 120; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 537. <sup>251</sup> For more on this individual, see Luis Seco de Lucena Paredes, "El Ḥājib Riḍwān, la madraza de Granada y las murallas del Albayzín," *Al-Andalus* 21 (1956), pp. 285–296.

the Nasrid sovereigns. His relationship with the Nasrid sovereigns was articulated both in terms of servitude (*khidma*) and patronage (*ni‘ma*), with Ibn al-Khaṭīb referring to him as “the shaykh and military commander who rose from among the ranks of the dynasty’s eminent servants (*al-mutaḥawal min al-khuddām al-nubahā*)...and one of most excellent men from among the veteran military slaves and freedmen (*baqyat rijāl al-kamāl min mashyakhat al-mamālīk wa khiyār al-mawālī*).”<sup>252</sup>

Riḍwān, a Castilian from Calzada de Calatrava who was enslaved as a child during a raid in the 670s/1270s and raised in the Nasrid palace, had served within the royal administration in Granada since the reign of Ismā‘īl I.<sup>253</sup> He served as the tutor of Muḥammad IV and was his close advisor before he was arrested by Ibn Maḥrūq in Rajab 728/May 1328, imprisoned (and tortured) in Almuñecar and then exiled to Tlemcen.<sup>254</sup> Riḍwān returned to Granada in mid-729/1329, when he was appointed chief minister and royal chamberlain by Muḥammad IV and granted authority over the kingdom’s financial and political affairs.<sup>255</sup> He was also granted command of the Nasrid military. Significantly, correspondence dated November 13<sup>th</sup> 1331 and a Latin letter written by Alfonso IV of Aragón (r. 1327–1336) dated September 26<sup>th</sup> 1332 mention Riḍwān as commander of Nasrid army and leading major raids as far as Guardamar and Elche in Aragonese territory.<sup>256</sup> Aragonese documentary evidence attests that these attacks, which devastated the territory around Orihuela and Elche (*ha cremat e derrocat tot lo loch de Guardamar e encara totes les alqueries de Oriola et de Elg*) and led to the capture of over 1500 Christians and the transfer of 400 Mudéjars to Granada, constituted some of the most large-scale

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<sup>252</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 15.

<sup>253</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 507.

<sup>254</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 510.

<sup>255</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 510.

<sup>256</sup> Ferrer I Mallol, *La Frontera Amb l’Islam en el Segle XIV*, pp. 127–128, n. 150, 278–279.

Nasrid raids against the region.<sup>257</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb also references Riḍwān's military campaigns against Guardamar, which he dates to Muḥarram 732/October 1331.<sup>258</sup>

The immense success of these military campaigns, which led to a large influx of both wealth and captives into the Nasrid kingdom, enabled Riḍwān to effectively leverage himself into a leading position of power, despite his own status as a former slave. The fact that Riḍwān was even leading the Nasrid army, a role traditionally reserved for the *shaykh al-ghuzāt*, is itself demonstrative of the increased delegation of power and authority to non-noble individuals within the Nasrid kingdom during the reign of Muḥammad IV. It is highly significant that throughout Ibn al-Khaṭīb's representation of Riḍwān's rise to power, emphasis is placed on his loyalty to the Nasrid sovereign and the delegatory nature of his authority. This reflects the former's attempt to contrast Riḍwān—associated throughout the narrative with political stability, military victories and the entrenchment of royal power—with the chaos of unimpeded noble factionalism. Within the historiographical representation of this individual, therefore, an important kernel of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's political becomes evident: the emphasis on the royal delegation of authority as the basis of political legitimacy. Nor was Riḍwān the sole example of clients of the dynasty assuming greater power during this period. During the early 730s/1330s, another manumitted slave named 'Aṣām (d. 733/1333), also of Christian origin, was appointed as chief of the financial bureau (*ṣāhib dīwān al-'aṭā'*) which disbursed stipends to the military and administration.<sup>259</sup> According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, this individual, who appears to have exercised a primarily administrative and fiscal function, was briefly appointed as co-vizier, alongside Riḍwān, and refers to him as the treasurer (*wakīl*).<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Giménez Soler, *La Corona de Aragón y Granada*, pp. 251–253.

<sup>258</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 509.

<sup>259</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 274.

<sup>260</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 120.

Both Riḍwān and ‘Aṣām worked closely with the leading secretaries in the chancery, including the chancellor Ibn al-Jayyāb, and collectively they exercised enough influence within the court to counteract the power of the nobility, even challenging the hegemony of the Banū Abī al-‘Ulā. The relationship of these freedmen (referred to variously as *mawālī*, *khuddām*, *‘ulūj*, or *mamālīk*, with the latter two terms carrying the specific connotation of a military role<sup>261</sup>) to royal power was often characterized by Ibn al-Khaṭīb in terms of a special relationship that revolved around proximity and distinction (*al-khuṣūṣiyya*), with Riḍwān being referred to as “the one who held the highest and most exclusive rank of distinction vis-a-vis kingship and the tutelage of royal princes (*al-makhṣūṣ bi al-qidh al-mu‘alla min al-mazya al-musallam la-hu fī khuṣūṣiyya al-mulk wa al-tarbiyya*).”<sup>262</sup> The increased prominence of former slaves and officials of Christian origin is reminiscent of a similar phenomenon during the Umayyad emirate and caliphate between the 2<sup>nd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> centuries in which individuals of servile European origins (*ṣaqāliba*) played an important role within the administration.<sup>263</sup> As Mohamed Meouak has observed, these individuals who served as palace officials enjoyed a particular bond of obligation (*walā’*) with the sovereign based on proximity and loyal service, that distinguished them from both the broader class of functionaries and noble families with whom they often contended for power.<sup>264</sup> While certainly less common than their counterparts during the Umayyad era, the rise of Christian-born functionaries (and military commanders) within the Nasrid context nonetheless

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<sup>261</sup> For a discussion of *‘ulūj* or elches in the Nasrid kingdom, see Echevarría, *Knights on the Frontier*, pp. 88–93, 145–148. The Nasrid sovereign Yūsuf III (r. 811/1408–820/1417) refers to Mufarrij, his freedman and commander of the Nasrid military, as “*mamlūk ni‘matuna*” (Yūsuf III, *Diwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith*, p. 118).

<sup>262</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 15.

<sup>263</sup> For a comprehensive study of this phenomenon, see Mohamed Meouak, *Ṣaqāliba, eunuques et esclaves à la conquête du pouvoir: Géographie et histoire des élites politiques “marginales” dans l’Espagne ummayyade* (Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2004).

<sup>264</sup> Mohamed Meouak, “Les ‘Marges’ de l’Administration Hispano-Umayyade (Milieu IIe/VIIIe-Debut Ve/XIe siècles): Prosopographie des fonctionnaires d’origine ṣaqalibī, esclave et affranchie,” in *Estudios Onomásticos-Biográficos de al-Andalus (Homenaje a José María Fórneas)*, Vol. VI (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1994), ed. Manuela Marín, pp. 305–336.



represents an important phenomenon and awaits further study.<sup>265</sup> There were between 500-700 of these “renegades,” whether Christian mercenaries or Christian-born freedmen, in the Nasrid royal guard. Within the Marinid context, there also appears to have been an increased tendency of scholar-officials (Jews as well as Muslims) and Christian-born freedmen to hold the position of mayordomo and chamberlain beginning in the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>266</sup> However, none of these figures were appointed to the office of chief minister, which remained the privilege of the leading Marinid clans and tribes.

Concurrent with this broader shift in power within the court, Muḥammad IV performed one of his most significant acts as Nasrid emir by crossing into North Africa on Dhū-l Ḥijja 24 732/September 16 1332 to personally seek the military assistance of the Marinid ruler Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī against Castile.<sup>267</sup> Shortly afterwards, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī dispatched his son Abū Mālik, commanding a force of 5000 men, to Iberia.<sup>268</sup> The establishment of this alliance between the Nasrids and the Marinids enabled the latter to reconquer Gibraltar from Castile on Dhū-l Ḥijja 12 733/August 24 1333 and re-assert their presence in Iberian affairs. As part of the renewed hostilities with Castile, Riḍwān, who played a major role in recapturing Gibraltar, launched a major military campaign against Priego (on the Nasrid kingdom’s western frontier), which was conquered in Muḥarram 733/October 1332.<sup>269</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, in particular, stresses the active military leadership of Muḥammad IV.<sup>270</sup> These resounding military successes, which

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<sup>265</sup> According to Cristóbal Torres Delgado, there were around 700 of these “renegades” within the Nasrid royal guard by the end of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century (Torres Delgado, “El ejército y las fortificaciones del reino nazarí de Granada,” p. 210).

<sup>266</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Rawḍat al-Nisrīn*, p. 31.

<sup>267</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 119; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 536; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 174, 7: 265; al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, pp. 236–237. Muḥammad II had also crossed the straits to seek Marinid aid against Castile in Dhū-l Qa’da 692/October 1293 (Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 225–226; al-Dhahabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, p. 96; al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 223).

<sup>268</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 265.

<sup>269</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 509; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 265; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 237.

<sup>270</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 236.

owed much to Marinid military aid, threatened the hegemony of the Nasrid military elite and was viewed with particular suspicion by the Banū Abī al-‘Ulā, mortal enemies of the reigning Marinid dynasty.<sup>271</sup> This uneasiness about Marinid-Nasrid rapprochement appears to have been one of the main reasons for the assassination of Muḥammad IV on Dhū-l Ḥijja 13 733/August 25 1333 by members of Granada’s military elite, led by the Banū Abī al-‘Ulā.<sup>272</sup>

The fact that these noblemen killed ‘Aṣām, the Christian-born treasurer, alongside Muḥammad IV, indicates that this act of violence was an attempt to realign Nasrid politics in their favor.<sup>273</sup> It indicates that the nobility felt threatened by the rise and appointment of individuals such as Riḍwān and ‘Aṣām to leading positions of state, since this diminished their own authority and influence within the kingdom.<sup>274</sup> This is explicitly stated by Ibn Khaldūn when he asserts that the assassins of Muḥammad IV carried out the act as a means of restoring their collective power vis-à-vis the sovereign.<sup>275</sup>

The nobility’s close relationship with the Nasrid dynasty, with whose members they intermarried closely, only increased its own collective power and influence as a distinct political class in the kingdom. Between roughly 708/1309 and 734/1333, the factionalism and violence caused by these “men of the sword” was a major factor in undermining the stability of the Nasrid kingdom, a fact that many within the secretarial class sought to painstakingly document in their historical and literary works. This became abundantly clear following the coups that dethroned Muḥammad III in 708/1309 and Naṣr in 714/1314 and the successive assassinations of two

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<sup>271</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 274, 385.

<sup>272</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 121–122; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 540–542; al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 237; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 174, 6: 274, 7: 385; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 237; Seco de Lucena, “El Ḥāyib Riḍwān,” p. 291.

<sup>273</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 540; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 274, 385.

<sup>274</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 274, 385.

<sup>275</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 274, 385.

Nasrid emirs, Ismā‘īl I in 725/1325 and Muḥammad IV in 733/1333, by members of the military elite, who had transformed themselves into kingmakers. This instability contributed to the erratic pattern of dynastic succession in the Nasrid kingdom, which witnessed the transfer of sovereignty from son (Muḥammad III) to brother (Naṣr) to maternal nephew/cousin (Ismā‘īl I) to son (Muḥammad IV) and then brother (Yūsuf I) during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Significantly, during the quarter-century from Ibn al-Ḥakīm’s assassination in 708/1309 to the enthronement of Yūsuf I in 733/1333, the only institution in the Nasrid kingdom that remained relatively stable was the Nasrid chancery, with the office of chancellor being occupied by a single individual (Ibn al-Jayyāb) since the reign of Naṣr. The public and brutal nature of the murder of Muḥammad IV, with the king being stabbed multiple times and his dead body being left naked and unattended, was strongly condemned by the literary elite, who decried the regicide as a major transgression, with Abū Bakr b. Shibrīn memorializing Muḥammad IV as a martyr and condemning his assassins as traitors.<sup>276</sup> This sharp critique of the murder of Muḥammad IV is also found in the *Crónica de Alfonso XI*, which declares the assassins to be “traitors against God and the world (*traydores a Dios y al mundo*).”<sup>277</sup> That regicide was considered so great a crime highlights the shared ideas about the inviolability of kingship and the person of the sovereign which is evident within both the writings of Nasrid scholar-officials and their Castilian counterparts. The tomb of Muḥammad IV in Málaga was inscribed with the words of Ibn al-Jayyāb referring to him as “the glorious ruler (*al-sulṭān al-ajall*) and sanctified king (*al-malik al-muqaddas*),”<sup>278</sup> reflecting the articulation among the literary elite of a (public) discourse about Nasrid kingship that sought to

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<sup>276</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al- A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 150r. This poem by Ibn Shibrīn is also quoted in Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 237.

<sup>277</sup> Fernán Sánchez de Valldolid, *Gran Crónica de Alfonso XI*, 2: 71.

<sup>278</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 541.

counteract the nobility's disregard for both the sovereignty and lives of the kings that they served.

It was within the turbulent political context of the early 730s/1330s, in which Granadan politics continued to be dominated by the “men of the sword” and Muḥammad IV attempted to counteract their influence by empowering non-noble individuals such as Riḍwān, that the assassinated sovereign's younger half-brother,<sup>279</sup> the 15-year-old Yūsuf I,<sup>280</sup> was proclaimed king (in Algeciras) on Dhū-l Ḥijja 13 733/August 25 1333.<sup>281</sup> As with the enthronement of Muḥammad IV, the accession of Yūsuf I, a minor who still resided within his mother's household and under her influence,<sup>282</sup> posed certain problems. The authority of the king was delegated to his various ministers, among whom was the leading nobleman (of Córdoba origin) Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Faraj ‘Abd al-Barr (d. 757/1356), who appears to have exercised the function of chief minister for the first two weeks of Yūsuf's reign.<sup>283</sup> Significantly, this individual was closely tied (through marriage) to both the former chief minister Ibn Maḥrūq and Riḍwān al-Naṣrī, indicating the manner in which the political elites in Nasrid Granada were bound together.<sup>284</sup> However, upon the formal establishment of Yūsuf as emir in Granada, he dismissed Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (at the insistence of the nobility) and appointed Riḍwān as chief minister in Muḥarram 734/September 1333.<sup>285</sup> A Castilian-born “renegade” and servant of the Nasrid dynasty, Riḍwān exercised de facto authority over major functions of state for much of

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<sup>279</sup> Like Muḥammad IV, Yūsuf I was the son of Ismā‘īl and a Christian concubine (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 319).

<sup>280</sup> According to al-Bunnāhī, Yūsuf I was 17 years old when he was enthroned (al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 237).

<sup>281</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 318.

<sup>282</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al- A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 151v.

<sup>283</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 128; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 319. Ibn al-Khaṭīb indicates that this individual was a leading nobleman (*min ahl al-buyūtāt bi-l ḥaḍra wa a‘yān al-qaṭr wa wuzarā’ al-ṣuq’ wa shuyūkh al-ḥadra*), highlighting his immense influence and wealth (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 322–323). His father had served as the *qahramān* (majordomo) of Muḥammad II.

<sup>284</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 323–324.

<sup>285</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 128; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 319, 324.

the next several decades, significantly undermining the Nasrid nobility's monopolization of power.<sup>286</sup> The case of Riḍwān is particularly interesting because of his ability to integrate himself, through marriage alliances with leading patrician families, into the Nasrid political establishment, allying himself with several leading factions. As described in the following chapter, this enabled him to carefully maintain a balance between the expansion of royal power, the empowerment of the secretarial elite and the interests of the nobility.

The reign of Yūsuf I witnessed the gradual weakening of the military elite's leading position in Nasrid politics vis-à-vis palace officials, including both non-noble members of the Nasrid "men of the sword" (such as Riḍwān), and members of the secretarial class ("men of the pen"). Beginning with the appointment of Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Jayyāb as chief minister and chancellor of the kingdom (*Dhū-l Wizāratayn*) around 741/1340,<sup>287</sup> the Nasrid vizierate would be controlled by individuals drawn from the secretarial class and intellectual elite for over half a century. It would not be until the early decades of the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century that Nasrid military elites, many of whom were descended from the same families active in the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, would once more re-establish their authority over the vizierate.

It is plausible that the repeated political violence and instability caused by various military elites within the Nasrid realm between 720/1320 and 741/1340, prompted Yūsuf I to concentrate more power in the hands of the chancery officials and the secretarial class. As competent and experienced functionaries, whose own fortunes were directly tied with the Nasrid dynasty, they could be relied upon for both their loyalties and efficient administration of the kingdom. It was significant that both Ibn al-Jayyāb (Ibn al-Ḥakīm's successor as Nasrid chancellor) and Ibn al-Khaṭīb were close allies of Riḍwān, whose patronage and protection

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<sup>286</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 128; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 319–320.

<sup>287</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 128; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 126.

empowered the literary elite and other non-noble elements in the Nasrid court as a means of weakening the nobility's monopolization of power within the kingdom. Similarly, the appointment of secretaries and scholars such as al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, a leading litterateur from Ceuta and a close friend of Ibn al-Jayyāb, to the post of chief judge of Granada between 741/1340 and 760/1359 is demonstrative of the increased concentration of power in the hands of the secretarial class.<sup>288</sup> Concurrent with this broader administrative shift was an attempt to enshrine this new state of affairs within historical writing, political treatises and the literature produced within the Nasrid court, as evident from Ibn al-Khaṭīb's aforementioned tract on politics.

The Nasrid strategy of delegating an increased measure of executive authority to freedmen and scholar-officials who were tied to the royal house through ties of clientage and loyalty bears resemblance to a similar development in neighboring Castile, particularly during the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when Juan II (r. 1406–1454) and Enrique IV (1454–1474) increasingly “chose their *validos* [royal favorites] from among the second-rank nobility or even the burgess class, and favored functionaries of the royal household who were raised to the highest posts in government,” in order to prevent the monopolization of executive power and political authority by the nobility.<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>288</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 182–184; al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 181–182.

<sup>289</sup> Echevarría, *Knights on the Frontier*, p. 10.

### Chapter 3: From Scribe to Statesman: Ibn al-Khaṭīb as Chancellor

Far from being an anomaly, Ibn al-Khaṭīb succeeded a long line of scholar-ministers whose erudition, extensive intellectual network and role as intimate councilors (*privados*) to the sovereign enabled them to directly impact the intellectual and political culture of the Nasrid kingdom. It was specifically in his role as head of this royal chancery that Ibn al-Khaṭīb, like Ibn al-Jayyāb and Ibn al-Ḥakīm before him, had the greatest impact upon the representation of royal power, through the composition and recitation of court poetry, the penning of official documents (including diplomatic correspondence), the production of elaborate works of historiography, and the construction of monuments to Nasrid sovereignty.

This chapter charts Ibn al-Khaṭīb's ascendancy to high political office, particularly his dual appointment as chancellor and chief minister of the Nasrid kingdom. It will devote particularly close attention to the figure of the Nasrid chamberlain (*ḥājib*) Abū Nu'aym Riḍwān (d. 760/1359). This Castilian-born freedman played a central role in empowering the literary elite between the 720s/1320s and 750s/1350s. As an individual who existed at the intersection of noble power, the chancery and royal authority, his career enables us to appreciate the role of palace officials in shaping Nasrid politics during this period, while his function as both a leading military commander and an effective administrator complicates narratives that are predicated upon a sharp dichotomy between the "men of the sword" and "men of the pen" in Nasrid Granada. Just as Ibn al-Jayyāb had initiated the young Ibn al-Khaṭīb into the Nasrid chancery and incorporated him into a broad network of scholar-officials, Riḍwān's patronage and support for Ibn al-Khaṭīb served a similarly significant function for his entry into the world of Nasrid statecraft. The close collaboration between Riḍwān, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and other leading scholar-officials in Granada laid the foundation for the establishment of the College of Granada, the first

college (*madrasa*) to be established in al-Andalus. Moreover, during the 750s/1350s both men oversaw the construction of the Alhambra palaces, a monument to Nasrid sovereignty but also a space increasingly occupied, defined and shaped by Nasrid administrators and intellectual elites. As one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb most powerful allies, an examination of Riḍwān's biography (which primarily survives in the *Iḥāṭa*) provides important insight into the former's representation of Nasrid political history during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century while illuminating his conceptions of statecraft, kingship and governance.

One of the broader questions which this chapter attempts to address is what it meant to be a scholar-minister in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid Granada. How did Ibn al-Khaṭīb's distinctive interests in a range of intellectual disciplines that included belles-lettres, poetry, and philosophy relate to his function as a statesman? In what ways did his writing of history and political theory, in particular, reflect his specific position and concerns as a chancellor and ambassador? This chapter looks at the manner in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb's historiographical pursuits were integrated into his political function as chancellor. Like many of his contemporaries, Ibn al-Khaṭīb instrumentalized historical writing for various purposes, including the articulation of dynastic ideology, the buttressing of his own political authority, and the crafting of a distinct legacy for himself.

The decade from Ibn al-Khaṭīb's designation as chancellor in 749/1349 to his exile to North Africa in 760/1359 was the period in which many of his most important political and historical writings took shape. His ability to write extensively about various topics ranging from poetry to history and medicine while effectively carrying out his responsibilities as chief minister and chancellor of the Nasrid was repeatedly remarked upon by his contemporaries. More than any other aspect of his life, it is the sheer volume of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's corpus and its survival into



the present that distinguishes him from his predecessors. This considerable body of texts, which represents some of the richest documentation available for the entirety of the Nasrid kingdom's history, greatly illuminates the interplay between his dual roles as a leading figure in Granadan politics and the kingdom's leading chronicler. The present chapter looks closely at Ibn al-Khaṭīb's career as chancellor and explores three aspects of his role as scholar-minister: 1) the manner in which his patronage of scholars and scholarship contributed to shaping the intellectual culture of Nasrid Granada; 2) his intercession for many individuals within his intellectual network and how this enabled him to shape their political fortunes; and 3) the relationship between his status as the Nasrid kingdom's leading historian and his statecraft, arguing that his monumental historical and epistolographical works, the *Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa* and the *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, were intimately tied to his function as chancellor. The chapter also considers how his position as chancellor and ambassador enabled him to influence the foreign policy and diplomacy of the Nasrid kingdom, specifically by forging closer ties with the Marinids.

#### The Chancellor and the Chamberlain: The Realignment of Nasrid Politics, 733/1333–760/1359

It was in the turbulent context of the fraught (and often violent) factional and dynastic politics of Granada during the late 720s/1320s and early 730s/1330s that Ibn al-Khaṭīb began his career in the service of Yūsuf I. Having spent his youth in Nasrid Granada, in both the palatial complex of the Alhambra and the city proper, Ibn al-Khaṭīb had become intimately familiar with the complex political dynamics in the Nasrid capital. By the time he was 20 years old, he had lived through the assassination of two Nasrid sovereigns and would have been painfully familiar with the devastation endured by the city and the valley around it as it was caught in the throes of

the violent civil war between ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā and Ibn Maḥrūq during the late 720s/1320s. The uncertainty and violence he associated with these “men of the sword” would have contrasted sharply with the solace and tranquility of the Nasrid chancery and the Great Mosque of Granada, where he spent his days in the company of the kingdom’s leading intellectuals and secretaries. As described in Chapter 1, his family’s fortunes were closely linked with the Nasrid dynasty itself, with ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb serving three Nasrid emirs (Ismā‘īl I, Muḥammad IV and Yūsuf I) over a period of 26 years. As a leading Nasrid functionary who worked in the Comares palace of the Alhambra, ‘Abd Allāh was brought into close proximity with many of the leading political figures that dominated the Nasrid court between 714/1314 and 741/1340. Both ‘Abd Allāh and his son, Ibn al-Khaṭīb, were most closely affiliated with those scholar-officials in the chancery, particularly the figure of the chancellor himself, Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Jayyāb. The particularly close bond forged between Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn al-Jayyāb, who had held the post of chancellor for about 40 years and served no less than six Nasrid sovereigns, was instrumental in facilitating the former’s political rise.

Following the death of his mentor Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Jayyāb in Shawwāl 749/January 1349, Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the private secretary and physician of Yūsuf I, was appointed to succeed him as chancellor.<sup>1</sup> According to the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century scholar Ibn Farḥūn, writing in Medina, Ibn al-Khaṭīb had already inherited Ibn al-Jayyāb’s position as chancellor (*wa waratha khuṭaṭuhu fī-l-kitāba ‘alā al-salṭana*) with the latter’s explicit approval towards the end of his life.<sup>2</sup> This is also reinforced by Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s short autobiographical passage in the *Awṣāf al-Nās*, in which he unequivocally states:

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 128–129; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 444.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 2: 111.

“the eminence which I have attained owes much to the master of the profession (*raʿīs al-ṣināʿa*) and the community’s eminent leader (*imām al-jamāʿa*) [i.e. Ibn al-Jayyāb] who invested me with robes of honor and opened for me the gates of approval and praise...and favored me with friendship and closeness, relying upon me in the exercise of important offices in the royal court, bringing me into close proximity to the royal person while continually protecting and caring for me with concern, which led to my immense success and prosperity. [Ibn al-Jayyāb] began by granting me significant offices and employed me for only the most important functions, eventually appointing me as chief of the two senior administrative offices (*al-kitābatayn*), the chancery (*al-inshāʾ*) and the financial bureau (*al-dīwān*)...there was no greater honor that he could have granted me!”<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. al-Ṣabbāgh al-ʿUqaylī (d. 758/1357), a close associate of Ibn al-Khaṭīb within the Nasrid chancery during this period, describes the immensely close bond between Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn al-Jayyāb as a leading factor that underpinned his appointment as chancellor:

“The Bearer of the Two Offices Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb enjoyed a privileged and exclusive position of proximity and distinction in relation to Ibn al-Jayyāb (*ikhtaṣṣa bihi ikhtiṣāṣan tāman*), leading the latter—who was greatly impressed and delighted by his intelligence, shrewdness and political acumen—to formally and publicly designate him as his successor as chancellor, for which he received the explicit support of the eminent chamberlain [Riḍwān] whom he consulted about the matter when [Ibn al-Khaṭīb] reached a suitable age (*wa awrathuhu rutbatihī min baʿdihi wa ʾahada bihā ilayhi mushīran bi-dhālika ʾalā man istashārahu min aʾlām al-ḥujjāb ʾinda zuhūr ʾumrihi*). Thus, he [Ibn al-Khaṭīb] achieved immense favor, prestige, renown and fortune.”<sup>4</sup>

The above passages shed further light upon the central role played by Ibn al-Jayyāb in the patronage (and protection) extended to Ibn al-Khaṭīb and securing his elevation to the highest offices of state. They also demonstrate the manner in which the secretarial/literary elite during this period were able to exert their influence over important posts, with Ibn al-Jayyāb—backed

<sup>3</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 68–69.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 192. Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh was an accomplished scribe and jurist and held various positions within both the judiciary and the military bureau (*dīwān al-jund*) in Granada before joining the service of the Marinid sovereign Abū ʾInān in Jumādā I 753/July 1352 (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 122–124).

by Riḍwān—having enough authority and influence to appoint Ibn al-Khaṭīb, his own protégé, to succeed him as chancellor. This bears close resemblance to the circumstances of Ibn al-Ḥakīm's own appointment the position during the reign of Muḥammad II at the recommendation of his predecessor, the chancellor Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Ābid al-Anṣārī (d. 690/1291).<sup>5</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb received important political support and counsel from his teachers within the Nasrid administration, including the judge Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī, whose congratulatory letter to Ibn al-Khaṭīb upon his appointment as chancellor—preserved in full within the “Comprehensive History”—referred to the latter as “a beloved and devoted son, a true and loyal friend,” and pledged his full support and approval.<sup>6</sup>

Following Ibn al-Jayyāb's death several months later, Yūsuf I also appointed Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the new chancellor, as chief minister, an appointment which would grant him the title “Bearer of the Two Offices.” As previously discussed, this title brought with it a considerable amount of authority covering both civil and military jurisdictions, with Ibn al-Khaṭīb asserting that “after Ibn al-Jayyāb (may God have mercy upon him) passed away, the office of chief minister passed to me and my fortunes continued to increase and I received a considerably higher salary (*muḍa'af al-jirāya*) and was distinguished by being appointed to a military command (*mu'azzazam bi-wilāyat al-qiyāda*).”<sup>7</sup> According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, his responsibilities and jurisdiction as chancellor and chief minister during the reign of Yūsuf I and early reign of Muḥammad V included

“attending open court (*al-wuqūf bayna yadayhi fī al-majālis al-‘amma*), communicating official documents (*īṣāl al-riqā'*), executing the king's orders (*al-tanfīdh li-l ḥukm*), serving as his intermediary with others (*al-tardīd baynahu wa bayn al-nās*), presenting his decrees (*al-‘arḍ*), producing chancery documents (*al-inshā'*), acting as his deputy and representative (*al-muwākala*), confirming

<sup>5</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 281–282.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 168–169.

<sup>7</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 128–129.

official appointments (*mujaddid al-wilāyat*), and receiving a substantial salary (*muṭlaq al-jirāya*).”<sup>8</sup>

This major development was not simply due to Ibn al-Jayyāb’s influence in the Alhambra, which was considerable, but also the result of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own extensive ties with leading figures in the administration, a fact that enabled him to construct a broad network of friends and allies across the Nasrid kingdom which encompassed secretaries, judges and military officials. Perhaps the most important of these individuals was the chamberlain Riḍwān, who had been a prominent individual in Nasrid politics, military affairs and the administration for over 30 years by the time Ibn al-Khaṭīb was appointed chancellor. It was his close bond with Riḍwān, who played as important a role for Ibn al-Khaṭīb in the sphere of Nasrid politics as ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb and Ibn al-Jayyāb had done for his initiation into the chancery and intellectual development, that accounted for his rise from a secretary in the chancery to one of the leading statesmen in the kingdom. The close personal relationship between Yūsuf I and Ibn al-Khaṭīb should also be taken into account when considering the various reasons for the latter’s appointment as chief minister. Reflecting upon his bond with the sovereign during his North African exile two decades later, Ibn al-Khaṭīb invokes their proximity in age, among other reasons, as a significant factor that motivated Yūsuf’s decision to elevate him as both chancellor and chief minister, stating that “[Yūsuf I] bestowed his graces and blessings upon me, since at that time we were rather close in age (*wa sinnī yawma ’idh qarīb min sinnihi*).”<sup>9</sup> For Ibn al-Khaṭīb, it was Yūsuf’s conscious decision to grant him royal privileges and entrust him with executive power that was directly responsible for the transformation of his fortunes and status, explaining that “his extraordinary beneficence in elevating my rank and dignity far exceeded

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<sup>8</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 141.

<sup>9</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al-A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 151v.

anything that someone of my status deserved from someone in his position (*wa bālagha min luṭf manzilatī ladayhī mā yablagh mithlī min mithluh*).<sup>10</sup>

Already possessing notable influence in the royal court as the physician and private secretary of Yūsuf I by 749/1349, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's claims that his promotion to the offices of chancellor and chief minister granted him increased authority over the financial, administrative, military, and political affairs of the Nasrid kingdom, asserting that "[Yūsuf] appointed me as his executive representative in all royal affairs and the administration of the kingdom (*fa-asnad ilayy jamī' amrihi wa faragh lī min tadbīrihi*)," a narrative that also finds echoes within Ibn Khaldūn's writings.<sup>11</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, writing several years later, stressed his significant executive authority as chief minister and chancellor during this period and proclaimed that "[Yūsuf I] appointed me to a dignified position of (military) leadership (*al-qiyāda*) and the office of chief minister (*rusūm al-wizāra*), appointed me his ambassador (*ista'malanī fī al-safāra*) to kings, delegated his authority to me in his palace (*istanābanī bi dār mulkih*), giving me his royal seal and sword (*wa ramā ilā yadī bi khātimih wa sayfih*), and entrusting me with his wealth (*dhakhīratih*) and royal treasury (*bayt mālih*), the guarding of his women and children (*sujūf ḥuramih*), and access to his inaccessible fortress [the Alhambra]," adding that the official document appointing him to the position of chief minister explicitly stated that "we [Yūsuf I] grant [Ibn al-Khaṭīb] full authority over all that God has bestowed upon us (*wa aṭlaqnā yadahu 'alā kullī ma ja'la Allāh lanā al-naẓar fīhi*)."<sup>12</sup> As chancellor and chief minister, his duties included attending meetings of the royal council, redacting and producing official documents and decrees pertaining to the governance of the kingdom, disbursing salaries and military stipends, presenting decrees to the

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<sup>10</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al-A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 151v.

<sup>11</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al-A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 151v; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344.

<sup>12</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 443; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285.

king for his approval, executing royal commands, and reciting panegyrics for the ruler at official ceremonies such as festivals, the birth of princes and the reception of high-ranking ambassadors. In addition, Ibn al-Khaṭīb served as the king's official representative in all affairs, entrusted with the royal seal for the authentication of documents, was responsible for all foreign correspondence in Arabic. Already in the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, there is a reference to a distinct “Palace of Reception” (*dār al-ḍiyāfa*)—possibly located in the Alcázar Genil/Qaṣr al-Sayyid— for foreign dignitaries, nobles and ambassadors in Granada.<sup>13</sup> It would have been a key part of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's function as chief minister to host, meet and negotiate with these individuals. His involvement in Nasrid policy vis-à-vis North Africa was particularly central and is illustrated both by the extensive correspondence that he produced with the Marinid kingdom as well as his being sent as ambassador to Fez on a number of occasions. Moreover, according to Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, writing in 738/1338, it was among the duties of the Nasrid chief minister to join the sovereign every Monday and Thursday in holding open court at the “House of Justice” (*dār al-ʿadl*) in the Alhambra, where portions of the Qur'an and hadith would be recited, and where petitions would be received and heard.<sup>14</sup> Since Ibn al-Khaṭīb was simultaneously appointed as private secretary, chancellor and chief minister it is quite difficult to assess which specific powers stemmed from each function. This is implied within his own writings, which describes these three roles, to which he was appointed separately, as being interwoven and increasingly subsumed under the office of the vizierate following 749/1349.<sup>15</sup>

Although theoretically possessing absolute jurisdiction over the appointment of functionaries (secretaries, judges, financial officers, market inspectors, etc.) as well as military

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<sup>13</sup> ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 68.

<sup>14</sup> Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār*, 4: 120.

<sup>15</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, 129.

commanders, governors and ambassadors, in practice his powers remained quite limited in this respect until his second vizierate (763/1362–773/1371) during the (second) reign of Muḥammad V. Given the power of the nobility, particularly in outlying regions on the frontier and coast, the hegemony of the patricians over certain offices such as the judiciary, it is likely that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's role was merely the formalization and confirmation of their position, often in close consultation with both Yūsuf I and other members of the administrative hierarchy. Other appointments, particularly those involving military matters, were bound by the conventions such as those dictating that the command of the military and governorships over towns like Ronda, Andarax and Guadix would be granted to Marinid princes from the Banū Raḥḥū or Banū Abī al-‘Ulā. Despite his battlefield experience and formally holding a military command, it is likely that many of the decisions pertaining to military matters in particular remained firmly in the hands of Yūsuf I and individuals like Riḍwān during this period.

It is evident that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's function as Nasrid chancellor and chief minister greatly augmented not only his power and influence, but also his wealth. There were several sources of this wealth. The first derived from his considerable salary/stipend from the treasury. While precise figures are difficult to ascertain, the salaries of leading figures within the administration in the Islamic West were substantial, rising as high as 100 gold dinars a month in the Marinid kingdom during the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, according to the testimony of Ibn al-Aḥmar.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, Ibn al-Khaṭīb would have received large benefices—in the form of estates, land and money—from the sovereign as a reward for loyal service. The case of an early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century official, Muḥammad b. ‘Urwa al-Wādī Āshī (d. 712/1312), whose estates and wealth were confiscated and appropriated to the royal treasury by the Nasrid sovereign indicates how, on one

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<sup>16</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 256.



hand, such individuals could enrich themselves considerably, while, on the other, illustrating how such wealth was ultimately considered the property of the king and could be appropriated and redistributed accordingly.<sup>17</sup>

Ibn al-Khaṭīb's influential position in the Alhambra meant that he acted as an intercessor and intermediary for many in the Nasrid kingdom, including nobles, merchants, secretaries and patricians, and would have received large sums in exchange for any favors or even for transmitting requests and petitions to the ruler. In addition to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's role in the office that produced official documents, decrees and foreign correspondence (*dīwān al-inshā'*)—the institution designated throughout this dissertation by “royal chancery”—he had also been appointed to a position within the treasury or financial bureau (*al-dīwān*), as illustrated by the above passage. It was commonplace for court secretaries to be appointed to various offices within the chancery depending on their abilities, with many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's contemporaries beginning their careers within the military bureau and the notarial or judiciary bureau. As chancellor and chief minister, Ibn al-Ḥakīm had exercised his control over all of these, appointing loyal associates as their chiefs. While there is no evidence for a similar degree of complete control over these institutions on the part of Ibn al-Khaṭīb until his second vizierate under Muḥammad V (763/1362–773/1371), as will be discussed in Chapter 6. Nevertheless, his dual appointment to both the treasury and the royal chancery is significant in itself, indicating how one individual often exercised a variety of functions within the court. The treasury encompassed the entire fiscal administration of the kingdom, including the collection of various types of taxes, and throughout Islamic history was considered among the most important institutions the kingdom, to be entrusted only to the most competent and loyal individuals. Ibn

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<sup>17</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 31.

al-Khaṭīb had privileged access to the financial bureau and its records, as indicated by his incorporation of a detailed record produced by one in its offices (*dīwān al-khirṣ*), which stated that the number of estates, houses and towers in the Vega of Granada exceeded fourteen thousand.<sup>18</sup> This is corroborated by Ibn Khaldūn, whose historical chronicle asserts that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was granted authority over the kingdom's finances between 749/1349 and 755/1354.<sup>19</sup> Drawing upon Ibn Khaldūn's account, al-Maqrīzī states that Yūsuf I granted Ibn al-Khaṭīb authority over the treasury and tax collection, asserting that "it was in this capacity that Ibn al-Khaṭīb extracted and collected immeasurable amounts of money for the sovereign."<sup>20</sup> Significantly, both Ibn Khaldūn and al-Maqrīzī connect this fiscal role of Ibn al-Khaṭīb with his "proximity" to Yūsuf I and the "distinction" (*ikhtiṣāṣ*) that he attained within his court, proclaiming that the Granadan chancellor "attained an unprecedented degree of distinction in the Nasrid court, exceeding that of anyone who had preceded him."<sup>21</sup>

During his second tenure as chief minister during the reign of Muḥammad V, between 763/1362 and 773/1371, Ibn al-Khaṭīb emphasizes how he had made the treasury and kingdom prosper as a result of his successful "increasing of income from the collection of taxes (*tathmīr al-jibāya*)," illustrating his expanded fiscal responsibilities later in his career.<sup>22</sup> An anecdote narrated by Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Ḥasanī (the son of al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī) and preserved by al-Maqqarī provides a further illustration of the importance of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's role in fiscal administration and tax collection in his political ascendancy. Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Ḥasanī asserts that when Ibn Zamrak requested from Ibn al-Khaṭīb to be exempted from certain taxes,

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<sup>18</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 124.

<sup>19</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344.

<sup>20</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 444.

<sup>21</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 444.

<sup>22</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 446.

the latter proclaimed that “we did not become established in our leading position within this palace except by levying these taxes and ensuring their collection (*mā istaqamnā fī hadhihi al-dār illā bi-ḥifẓ al-‘awā’id*).”<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, the lack of surviving financial records and registers, and the dearth of surviving histories by other Nasrid authors makes it nearly impossible to ascertain the exact nature of the fiscal dimensions of his political authority during this period.

While certainly enjoying considerable influence during this period, many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb claims to absolute and unchallenged political, fiscal and administrative authority during the reign of Yūsuf I should be read with caution. Such statements (like many others about his early career) more accurately reflect his position during the period of his second tenure as chief minister between 764/1362 and 773/1371, during the reign of Muḥammad V. Although Ibn al-Khaṭīb held both the offices of chancellor and chief minister between 749/1349 and 760/1359, encompassing the late reign of Yūsuf I and the early reign of Muḥammad V, most political, administrative and military authority remained concentrated in the hands of the chamberlain (*ḥājib*) Abū Nu‘aym Riḍwān throughout this period. Even the chancery correspondence and diplomacy, which were theoretically within Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s jurisdiction as chancellor, bore the mark of Riḍwān’s influence. In light of these facts, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s above statement should best be understood as an attempt to claim that the extensive authority over the political and administrative affairs of Nasrid Granada that he enjoyed during the second reign of Muḥammad V was rooted in his first appointment as chief minister during the reign of Yūsuf I. This particular strategy was adopted in order to affirm the antiquity of his office(s) and, thus, further legitimize his far-reaching powers during the 760s/1360s. Considering his tendency to edit his earlier writings, including the *Iḥāṭa*,

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<sup>23</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 59–60.

throughout his career, many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's statements about his early career thus embody the realities and anxieties of his position in the Nasrid court around 772/1370.

Based upon the existing evidence, however, it appears that during his first tenure as chief minister (749/1349–760/1359), as opposed to his second appointment to that office (763/1362 – 773/1371), Ibn al-Khaṭīb was unable to fully exert his influence or authority within the Nasrid administration. Just as his early career in the chancery was colored by his relationship with Ibn al-Jayyāb, his initiation into the world of Nasrid statecraft was shaped by the patronage and guidance of Riḍwān. The nature of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's relationship with Riḍwān throughout this era is borne out by his own biography of the chamberlain within the *Iḥāṭa*, which memorializes this individual in the same manner as he does many of his own teachers in the same work. It is this biography of Riḍwān, based heavily upon this individual's own testimony, which provides us with most of the details about the chamberlain's career, another indication of the manner in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb's corpus represents an attempt to enshrine his broader political and intellectual network in writing, thus preserving for posterity key details about some of the leading figures in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid Granada.

Ibn al-Khaṭīb explains that Riḍwān, a freedman (*mawlā*) in the service of the Nasrid dynasty, received an extensive education and began his military career as a soldier in the employ of Ismā'īl I while the latter was still a military commander in Málaga.<sup>24</sup> Following Ismā'īl's enthronement as emir, Riḍwān's own status was also elevated and he became one of Ismā'īl's highest-ranking military commanders and closest political advisers, eventually being appointed as the tutor and guardian of the emir's son Muḥammad IV.<sup>25</sup> As both a military commander and scholar, Riḍwān existed at the intersection of the military and intellectual elites, a fact further

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<sup>24</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 507–508.

<sup>25</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 510; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345.

highlighted by his ability to link himself via marriage to noble Granadan political and scholarly lineages, although Ibn al-Khaṭīb's account emphasizes royal service, rather than marriage ties to the nobility, as central factors in Riḍwān's elevation. Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that, following the assassination of Ismā'īl I and the enthronement of the young Muḥammad IV, Riḍwān remained one of his most trusted advisors and played a central role in the administration of the Nasrid kingdom, while the latter's influential grandmother Fāṭima bt. Muḥammad, one of Riḍwān's strongest allies, continued to play an active role in Granadan politics.<sup>26</sup> Despite being briefly imprisoned and exiled by Ibn Maḥrūq, Riḍwān had emerged as the uncontested leader of the Nasrid military and controlled many of the financial, administrative, diplomatic and political affairs of the kingdom by the end of the reign of Muḥammad IV, working closely with many within the chancery (such as Ibn al-Jayyāb). Ibn al-Khaṭīb asserts that by the early 730s/1330s Riḍwān began exercising de facto authority over the functions, appointments and offices of state, including leadership of the military (*fa ittaṣal naẓaruhu mustabidd 'alayhi fī tanfīdh al-umūr wa taqdīm al-wulāt wa al-'ummāl wa jawāb al-mukhāṭaba wa tadbīr al-ri'āya wa qawd al-juyūsh*).<sup>27</sup> This was formalized by his appointment as chief minister in Muḥarram 734/September 1333, during the early reign of Yūsuf I.<sup>28</sup> This narrative of Riḍwān in the "Comprehensive History," which valorizes his patron's rise from Castilian slave to royal chamberlain, provides scholars with the most detailed account of the career of a renegade in Nasrid history. The intimate and sympathetic portrait provided by Ibn al-Khaṭīb enables scholars to understand the latter's emphasis upon royal patronage and service to the dynasty, rather than nobility or familial

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<sup>26</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 511.

<sup>27</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 128; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 319–320.

<sup>28</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 511.

status, as singular factors which enabled the rise of individuals to political prominence in the Nasrid court.

The rise to prominence of Riḍwān during this period is also corroborated by contemporary Castilian and Aragonese sources. Among the most important of these is *Crónica de Alfonso XI*, which describes how, immediately following the assassination of Muḥammad IV, it was “a Muslim knight known as Reduan, the son of a Christian man and Christian woman, whom the king of Granada trusted immensely (*un cavallero moro que dezian Reduan que fuera fijo de christiano e de christiana e era ome quien fiava mucho el rey*)...that acclaimed Yucaf as the new king (*alco por rey a este Yucaf*). The sons of Ozmin and the other nobles of the Granada accepted him as their king (*e los fijos de Ozmin e los otros cavalleros de Granada rescibieronlo por rey*).”<sup>29</sup> Although the Castilian chronicle erroneously states that Riḍwān rode hastily to the Alhambra to proclaim Yūsuf as king (in reality, this occurred in Algeciras), this account nevertheless provides important insight into the role of this figure in the elevation of Yūsuf to the Nasrid throne. Moreover, there is substantial evidence that Riḍwān corresponded directly with Alfonso IV (r. 1327–1336) and Pedro IV (r. 1336–1387) of Aragón in order to secure a peace treaty between the Nasrids and Aragón. In these documents, four of which have been preserved in the Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Riḍwān consistently refers to himself as “Riḍwān, son of God’s servant, the chief minister of the Sultan” (*Riḍwān ibn ‘Abd Allāh wazīr al-sulṭān*), a fact which corroborates the Arabic chronicles’ assertions about his significant influence in Nasrid politics as early as Muḥarram 734/September 1333, less than a month after the death of Muḥammad IV.<sup>30</sup> Another example of an Iberian Christian-born freedman and military

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<sup>29</sup> Fernán Sánchez de Valldolid, *Crónica de Alfonso XI*, BN MS 829, ff. 190r–190v.

<sup>30</sup> These documents included a letter sent to Alfonso IV dated September 29<sup>th</sup> 1333 regarding negotiations for a peace treaty between Granada and Aragón (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 32), a letter sent to Alfonso IV dated June 27<sup>th</sup> 1335 regarding the liberation of captives (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 35), a letter sent to

commander ascending to a senior position within the administration can be seen in the contemporary of Riḍwān, Hilāl b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Qaṭalānī (“the Catalan”). He was enslaved in Aragonese territory as a child by Nasrid raiders during the reign of Muḥammad II before being gifted to the Zayyanid ruler Abū Sa‘īd ‘Uthmān I (r. 681/1283–703/1303), eventually rising to become the chief minister of the Zayyanid sovereign Abū Tashufīn I (r. 718/1318–737/1337).<sup>31</sup> Like the case of Riḍwān with Muḥammad IV and Yūsuf I, Hilāl had enjoyed a close personal relationship (predicated on the latter’s role as tutor, boon-companion and knight) with Abū Tashufīn since he was a young prince, played an important role in securing his succession to the throne. His role as the royal favorite, chief minister and leading councilor of the Zayyanid sovereign enabled him to acquire a great deal of executive authority, effectively ruling the kingdom on Abū Tashufīn’s behalf.<sup>32</sup> As with his Granadan counterpart, Hilāl took a leading role in diplomacy with the Crown of Aragón, with his signature “Hilāl, the son of ‘Abd Allāh” appearing on various documents<sup>33</sup> and establishing a significant peace treaty with Aragón in August 1327.<sup>34</sup>

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Alfonso IV dated July 19<sup>th</sup> 1335 expressing optimism about a peace treaty between Granada and Aragón (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, núm.33), and a letter sent to Pedro IV dated July 14<sup>th</sup> 1336 confirming the peace treaty between the two kingdoms (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 46). Despite this extensive diplomacy, preparations for the Marinid invasion of Spain ensured the collapse of the Nasrid-Aragonese treaty following the establishment of an agreement between Pedro IV of Aragón and Alfonso XI of Castile to counteract Marinid aggression in the Straits of Gibraltar (Pere III, *Chronicle of Pedro IV of Aragón* [Toronto, 1980], trans. Mary Hillgarth, 1: 215–217, 226). Around the same time, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī was in the process of negotiating a peace treaty with Jaume III of Majorca (1324–1344). For more, see Henri Bresc and Yusuf Ragib, *Le Sultan Mérinide Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī et Jacques III de Majorque: du traité de paix au pacte secret* (Cairo: Institut français d’archéologie orientale, 2011).

<sup>31</sup> Yaḥyā b. Khaldūn, *Bughyat al-Ruwwād*, pp. 214–215, 217; Dufourcq, *L’Espagne Catalane et les Maghreb*, pp. 474–475.

<sup>32</sup> Dufourcq, *L’Espagne Catalane et les Maghreb*, pp. 474–475.

<sup>33</sup> ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 88 and 90.

<sup>34</sup> ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 16). For a discussion of Hilāl’s active role in diplomacy with both Majorca and Aragón, see Dufourcq, *L’Espagne Catalane et les Maghreb*, pp. 482–486.

While these freedmen and renegades rose to immense political heights within these kingdoms, the foundation of their authority remained relatively precarious and depended on the continued favor of the sovereign. As a result of the machinations of his rivals (primarily members of Granada's military elite) within the court, who sought to contest his far-reaching influence, Riḍwān was arrested, publicly humiliated and imprisoned by Yūsuf I on Rajab 22 740/January 23 1340 and replaced as chief minister by Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Mawl b. Yaḥyā b. Mawl al-Ummī (d. after 741/1340), a paternal cousin of Ismā'īl I.<sup>35</sup> His considerable wealth was confiscated by the king and he was incarcerated in the fortress of Almería, where he remained imprisoned and under a heavy armed guard until Rabi II 741/October 1340.<sup>36</sup> Although Ibn al-Khaṭīb stresses that Riḍwān's arrest was entirely the result of "nefarious and unceasing court intrigue" (*mā lā yu'dam bi-abwāb al-mulūk min shurūr al-munāfasāt*), his removal from power and imprisonment should also be understood as an attempt by Yūsuf I, now having reached maturity, to break the chamberlain's monopoly on power and rule in his own right. Moreover, it is significant that Riḍwān had increasingly been seen as a major advocate of an accord with the Christian kingdoms at a time when much of the Nasrid court, including Yūsuf I, were clamoring for holy war. The intrigue against him and his eventual imprisonment in Rajab 740/January 1340 was thus an attempt to ensure that the bellicose faction in the royal court could proceed with their plans for war (in coordination with the Marinids, who crossed the straits in Ṣafar 741/August 1340)<sup>37</sup> unimpeded. Ironically, Riḍwān's arrest and incarceration for the entirety of the period encompassing the preparations for the Battle of Río Salado (and possibly the battle itself) meant

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<sup>35</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 511, 4: 320; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 128. This individual was also the paternal nephew of Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr b. al-Mawl, the chief minister of Muḥammad IV (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 320).

<sup>36</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 511.

<sup>37</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 130.



that the Nasrids were deprived of one of their most experienced and capable military commanders during this crucial period. It was also in the lead-up to Río Salado that, on Rabī‘ I 29 741/September 22 1340, Yūsuf I decided to arrest and exile to Tunis the *shaykh al-ghuzāt* Abū Thābit ‘Āmir b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā, one of the most effective military commanders in the kingdom, replacing him with Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. ‘Umar from the rival Marinid clan of the Banū Raḥḥū.<sup>38</sup> Although the king’s untimely act of vengeance against this individual and his family, who was complicit in the assassination of both Ismā‘īl I and Muḥammad IV (the father and half-brother of Yūsuf I), may have weakened the Granadan military on the eve of Río Salado, it nonetheless cleared the way for the assertion of his own royal authority.<sup>39</sup> One of the immediate consequences, however, was that Sulaymān b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā—among the most competent military leaders in the Nasrid kingdom—joined the court of Alfonso XI, and commanded a contingent of knights to fight against the Nasrid-Marinid at the Battle of Río Salado several weeks later.<sup>40</sup>

The arrest and exile of these noblemen was prompted by the increasingly close alliance between Yūsuf I and the leading enemy of the Banū Abī al-‘Ulā, the Marinid sultan Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī, who had landed at Algeciras at the head of a large force on Ṣafar 9 1341/August 4 1340.<sup>41</sup> It is a testimony to his own confidence and sovereign power by this stage of his reign that Yūsuf was able to confront the Banū Abī al-‘Ulā with relative ease; it should be recalled that a similar effort to do so by Ibn Maḥrūq fifteen years earlier had led to violent civil strife that

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<sup>38</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 130; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 174, 7: 274, 385–386. Abū Thābit’s brothers, Idrīs, Maṣṣūr and Sulṭān were also arrested and exiled.

<sup>39</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb celebrates the demise of the Banū Abī al-‘Ulā as divine justice for their role in the assassination of Muḥammad IV: “after a short passage of time [after the death of Muḥammad IV], God Almighty punished the sons of ‘Abd Allāh with the bitterness of exile and such vengeful retribution that they never again rose to prominence. Verily, God is the Eventual Victor” (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 543).

<sup>40</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 385.

<sup>41</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 274.

devastated the kingdom. Although Abū Thābit ‘Āmir and some of his brothers were exiled, several members of the Banū Abī al-‘Ulā, their families and knights eventually returned to Nasrid Granada, with one of them (Idrīs b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī ‘Ulā) corresponding directly with Queen Leonor of Aragón in 752/1351, testifying to the continued importance of this lineage in Nasrid politics.<sup>42</sup>

It was not until Rabī‘ II 741/October 1340 that Yūsuf I— “full of regret and compelled by political necessity” according to Ibn al-Khaṭīb—released Riḍwān from prison in Almería and reinvested him with his influential position in the Nasrid court.<sup>43</sup> The devastating military defeat at Río Salado on Jumādā I 9 741/October 30 1340<sup>44</sup> and the subsequent military campaigns of Alfonso XI that culminated in the conquest of Alcalá la Real had claimed the lives and dealt a blow to the prestige of major political and military figures within the Nasrid court, both allies and enemies of Riḍwān. As an experienced statesman and competent military commander, Riḍwān’s abilities would have been considered indispensable at this critical juncture, as alluded to by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who ascribes the defeat to incompetent leadership and the Nasrids being outmaneuvered by the forces of Alfonso of Portugal. Although he appears to have been offered to be restored to the office of chief minister by Yūsuf I, Riḍwān considered it prudent to refuse and settle instead for the emir’s royal favor and the post of commander of the army.<sup>45</sup> Riḍwān nominated as chief minister his close supporter and ally, the chancellor Ibn al-Jayyāb, while continuing to exercise de facto authority over many leading Nasrid offices of state, with Ibn al-Khaṭīb claiming that while Yūsuf I formally reigned as sovereign, Riḍwān truly held the reins of

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<sup>42</sup> ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 68.

<sup>43</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 511.

<sup>44</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 271–272; Luís Seco de Lucena, “La fecha de la batalla del Salado,” *Al-Andalus* 19 (1954), pp. 228–231.

<sup>45</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 511.

power.<sup>46</sup> The removal from the Nasrid kingdom of the Banū Abī al-‘Ulā, one of the most powerful factions that had dominated Granadan politics for nearly three decades, meant that Riḍwān’s position as the kingdom’s leading statesman was largely uncontested.

Following his restoration, Riḍwān continued to work tirelessly to secure an accord between the Nasrids and the Christian kingdoms, and sent the Nasrid military commander Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Yūsuf b. Kumāsha, a prominent nobleman,<sup>47</sup> as ambassador to Barcelona to negotiate a 10-year treaty between the Marinids, Nasrids and the Crown of Aragón.<sup>48</sup> This agreement was finalized on the Shawwāl 21 745/February 25 1345, with the surviving text of the treaty (in Romance) preserved in the Archivo de Corona de Aragón.<sup>49</sup> In order to ensure the ratification of the treaty, Riḍwān sent Abū al-Ḥasan b. Kumāsha to Tlemcen to ensure the Marinid sultan Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī signed the treaty, which he did on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Ṣafar 746/June 17<sup>th</sup> 1345.<sup>50</sup> Ibn Kumāsha continued to serve periodically as emissary to Aragón and the Marinids during the reign of Muḥammad V.<sup>51</sup> As the utilization of Abū al-Ḥasan b. Kumāsha as ambassador to both the courts of the Marinids and the Crown of Aragón demonstrates, the military elite continued to exercise important functions of state during the reign of Yūsuf I even after the defeat at Río Salado. It also demonstrates the mobility of this same military elite between Christian and Muslim courts in Iberia during this period. ‘Alī b. Kumāsha would

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<sup>46</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 511–512.

<sup>47</sup> This was the son of Yūsuf b. Muḥammad b. Kumāsha, a nobleman who controlled the fortress of Vera and negotiated directly with Aragón around 716/1316 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 4) and served as an ambassador on behalf of the Nasrids (Giménez Soler, *La Corona de Aragón y Granada*, p. 199). For a discussion of the Banū Kumāsha, see Luís Seco de Lucena, “Cortesianos naṣrīes del siglo XV. Las familias de Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr e Ibn Kumāsha,” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos* 7 (1958), pp. 19–28.

<sup>48</sup> ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 55–56, 66; Pere III, *Chronicle*, pp. 382–383. The Valencian noble Ramon de Boil was the Aragonese ambassador to Granada.

<sup>49</sup> ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 22–23. Ibn Kumāsha had also served as Nasrid ambassador to and intermediary with Aragón as early as 735/1335 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 34, 39, 42, and 49).

<sup>50</sup> ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 96–97.

<sup>51</sup> ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 69 and 76.

eventually seek exile in Barcelona during the 760s/1360s and was even appointed as the Aragonese ambassador to Nasrid Granada in Jumādā II 766/February 1365.<sup>52</sup> The nobility's close relationship with their counterparts in the Castilian and Aragonese kingdoms, facilitated by their knowledge of Romance, as well the antiquity of their family's roles as commanders of the Nasrid military and governors of provinces ensured their continued prominence in Nasrid politics. The extensive surviving correspondence, in both Arabic and Romance, of the Banū Abī al-'Ulā with the Crown of Aragón on behalf of the Nasrids throughout the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century is an important illustration of their role in this regard.<sup>53</sup>

Even as the political balance within the Nasrid court was gradually shifting in favor of the secretarial class, various members of Granada's nobility maintained their privileged status. An official document, penned by Ibn al-Jayyāb and preserved by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, appointing Abū Yahya b. Abī al-Ḥasan b. Mas'ud al-Muhāribī, a leading military commander at the Battle of Río Salado and the son of Ismā'īl's chief minister, testifies to the continued importance of this particular lineage in Nasrid politics well into the 740s/1340s.<sup>54</sup> The letter of investiture refers to the Muhāribī family as "the supporters whose sincere loyalty we recognize...and whose distinguished service compels us [Yūsuf I] to extend them appropriate benefices and honors" explicitly notes the close bonds of loyalty between its members and the Nasrid dynasty (*awliyā'unā aladhī fī khidimati salafunā dhimamu al-mawāqif al-shahīra*), and thus illuminates

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<sup>52</sup> Ferrer I Mallol, *La Frontera Amb l'Islam en el Segle XIV*, p. 159. For his later career, see Juan Torres Fontes, "La embajada de Ali Ibn Kumasa en 1382," *Murgetana* 16 (1961), pp. 25–30.

<sup>53</sup> For the Arabic-language correspondence, see the letters from 'Uthman b. Idrīs b. Abī al-'Ulā to Jaume II of Aragón dated May 1314 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 6), May 1321 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 14), October 1323 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 17), October 1324 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 19), and December 1324 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 22); and the correspondence between 'Uthmān's sons, Abū Thābit 'Āmir, Ibrāhīm, Sulṭān and Idrīs and the Crown of Aragón between 1330 and 1365 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 29, 31, 36–38, 45, 47–50, 68 71–72).

<sup>54</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manzūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 75–77.

the nature of the relationship between the Nasrids and certain noble families in the kingdom.<sup>55</sup> Significantly, this letter's authorship by Ibn al-Jayyāb (the chancellor and chief minister) testifies to the existence of cordial relationships (even friendships) between individual members of the literary class and the military elite. Ibn al-Jayyāb's own *dīwān*, which preserves several panegyrics recited for Abū al-Ḥasan al-Muḥāribī, the chief minister of Ismā'īl I, further reflects this dynamic.<sup>56</sup> This complicates any attempt to speak of a strict division or animosity between the "men of the pen" and the "men of the sword". Rather, it would be more accurate to consider the manner in which several members of the Nasrid nobility, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Muḥāribī, actively allied themselves with the sovereign and leading secretaries to counteract the interests of rival factions among the military elite.

Their function as local power brokers and ambassadors, in particular, meant that many military elites and nobles closely collaborated with many among the secretarial elite in the chancery in both diplomacy and the administration of the Nasrid kingdom. Both Ibn al-Jayyāb and Riḍwān recognized that the stability and efficient governance of the realm was predicated upon a delicate equilibrium between the nobility and the agents of royal power (represented by the chancery officials). According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, it was precisely Riḍwān's competence in maintaining this balance between the various factions and classes in the court, overseeing the appointment of intellectuals to the highest positions of state while nonetheless continuing to extend favor to the military class, that accounted for his popularity from both nobles and commoners across the kingdom (*wa farahat al- 'āmmā wa al-khāṣṣa li-l khuṭṭa li-irtifā' al-munāfasat bi-makānihi wa riḍa al-aḍḍād bi tawasuṭihi*).<sup>57</sup> Although the biography of Riḍwān in

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<sup>55</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manzūm wa al-Manthūr*, p. 76.

<sup>56</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, pp. 147–150, 173–175.

<sup>57</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 511.

the “Comprehensive History” emphasized this individual’s political accomplishments and military service, commemorating his various victories against Castile and Aragón and highlighting his credentials as a holy warrior (*mujāhid*) in the service of the faith and the Nasrid dynasty, it was this individual’s role as a benefactor of scholars (*mukriman li-l ‘ulamā’*) that Ibn al-Khaṭīb particularly singles out for praise. For Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Abū Nu‘aym Riḍwān—a “man of the sword” as well as a “man of the pen,” born a Christian but nonetheless tied through marriage with many of Granada’s patrician families—was the ideal statesman and political role model, describing him in glowing terms as well-mannered, compassionate, patient, magnanimous, intelligent and brave.”<sup>58</sup>

The previously mentioned College of Granada was perhaps the greatest symbol of Riḍwān’s power. Despite bearing the name of the Nasrid sovereign Yūsuf I, it was the creation of this sovereign’s chamberlain. Riḍwān immense wealth, ability to marshal resources, and close links with various scholars across the Kingdom of Granada enabled him to realize this grandiose project. According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, this figure invested considerable funds into a pious endowment (*waqf*), which formed the foundation of the College’s existence, personally financed its decoration and ornamentation, and linked it with the urban system of waterworks to ensure it had a steady supply of water from the river.<sup>59</sup> Such details enable us to appreciate the role of the *waqf* (pl. *awqāf*) as one of the avenues in which scholar-officials and palace functionaries invested their wealth. The construction of the College was merely one example of his extensive patronage of public works, which also included the walls around the Albaicín neighborhood, as well as an elaborate chain of over forty watchtowers and fortifications across the Nasrid kingdom

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<sup>58</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 508.

<sup>59</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 508–509.

extending from Vera to Gibraltar.<sup>60</sup> Unlike the *madrasa*, these would have also been financed by the public treasury (*bayt al-māl*), which consisted of wealth drawn from taxation or acquired during the many raids against Castilian territory. This concerted program of urban expansion and elaborate construction in Granada during the 8th/14th century was accomplished through the close collaboration between the secretarial class, nobles, artisans, and craftsmen. The construction of these elaborate structures, which included royal structures such as palaces but also public works like colleges, fortifications, mosques, and hospitals, illustrates how these scholar-officials utilized their considerable wealth (and authority) to leave their imprint on the city and kingdom. It also demonstrates the manner in which their own personal wealth, accumulated over decades while in royal service, were invested in developing the urban space of Granada. For their part, rulers such as Yūsuf I sponsored such constructions not only as a result of the influence of scholar-officials in his service, but also as part of his attempt to project his own status and reputation as a patron of scholars and learning, an important component of the image of kingship during this period.

During the 740s/1340s and 750s/1350s, Yūsuf I oversaw the expansion of the Alhambra palace, collaborating with the secretarial class, artisans and craftsmen to ensure the construction of a monument to Nasrid royal power and authority. The Gate of Justice (*Bāb al-Sharī‘a*), a monumental arched gateway, following earlier Almohad models,<sup>61</sup> completed in Rabī‘ I 749/June 1348, was another of these major constructions.<sup>62</sup> It is particularly noteworthy that these parts of the Alhambra, with the Comares Palace being a primary example, are adorned not only with dynastic slogans and praise of the king, with the poems of both Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn

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<sup>60</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 508–509.

<sup>61</sup> Martínez Núñez, “Ideología y epigrafía almohades,” in *Los Almohades: problemas y perspectivas*, 1: 11–12.

<sup>62</sup> Puerta Vílchez, *Reading the Alhambra*, pp. 32–34.

al-Jayyāb being among the first to be inscribed upon their walls. The close collaboration between court secretaries, chancellors and craftsman was most evident in the inscription upon the walls of the Alhambra and upon royal tombs of the poetry written by both Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn al-Jayyāb. These iconographic inscriptions communicated an image of the Nasrid sovereigns as just rulers and holy warriors whose genealogical descent from the Companions of the Prophet Muḥammad made them the guardians of Islam in the Iberian Peninsula.

### The Secretarial Elite and Political Theory in Nasrid Granada and Marinid Morocco

The rise of Ibn al-Khaṭīb as *Dhū-l Wizāratayn* and Riḍwān as chamberlain during the 740s/1340s and 750s/1350s marked the ascendancy of chancery and palace officials to the highest political offices in the Nasrid kingdom. This administrative shift in which the vizierate had become the prerogative of the secretarial elite was reflected within the normative political treatises composed by Andalusī scholars, both in Nasrid Granada and in North Africa, throughout the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. The interrelationship between this professional rivalry between the nobility and learned elite within the Nasrid kingdom and their respective ideas about royal sovereignty bears remarkable resemblance to the divergence between the *caballeros* and *letrados* in Castile during the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries. As argued by Helen Nader, “the *caballeros* continued to see themselves and the monarchy as partners in a secular, aristocratic and particularist government [while] the *letrados* developed a theory of monarchy that placed the king at the apex of a divinely ordained and immutable hierarchy of institutions administered by anonymous bureaucrats.”<sup>63</sup> While the degree of this “bureaucratization” does not necessarily hold true for the Nasrid case, where the situation was far more fluid, a comparable divergence

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<sup>63</sup> Helen Nader, *The Mendoza Family in the Spanish Renaissance, 1350 to 1550* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1979), p. 20.



between the two classes and their visions for society, as embodied within the development of distinct historical traditions, is certainly discernible in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Granada.

The works composed by scholar-officials and court secretaries drew upon a rich repository of Graeco-Arabic and Persianate political thought from across the Islamic world to theorize the various types of political office, the qualifications required to hold various posts, and the nature of just governance. The Kingdom of Granada was an important avenue for the reception and engagement with Aristotelian philosophy and Graeco-Arabic political thought, as indicated by the large number of classical and post-classical treatises transcribed, adapted and cited by various court secretaries in the Nasrid chancery between the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries. The corpus of political treatises on kingship, governance and administration in Nasrid Granada should be situated within the broader context of the large production of works on these topics across the late medieval world, whether in Europe, North Africa or the Near East.

Among Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works, only two that properly belong to the rubric of political philosophy have survived: the "Treatise on Politics" (*al-Maqāma fī al-Siyāsa*)<sup>64</sup> and "On the Norms of the Vizierate" (*al-Ishāra ilā Adab al-Wizāra*),<sup>65</sup> composed between 768/1367 and 771/1370. The fact that both of these works are framed as *maqāmat*, a literary genre with a narrative frame written in rhymed prose, indicates the close relationship between rhetorical eloquence and politics that characterizes Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings. Other treatises authored within the Nasrid chancery include Ibn Simāk al-ʿĀmilī's "The Norms of Politics and Governance" (*Rawnaq al-Taḥbīr fī Ḥukm al-Siyāsa wa al-Tadbīr*). While in many ways modeled upon earlier works and bound by the conventions of the genre, which left little room for the introduction of specific contemporary examples to illustrate the arguments being put forth, a close reading of

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<sup>64</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, El Escorial MS 554, 34v-47v.

<sup>65</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, El Escorial MS 554, 47v-66r.

these texts in light of the broader context of Nasrid Granada during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century provides a significant window into the political thought of their authors.

These texts were characterized by an interest in the office of the chief minister, which had increased in importance and significance throughout the period in question. The turbulent political context in which noble factions contested royal authority and even dethroned sovereigns was reflected within the writings of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and other scholar-officials composed during this period. These texts were marked by a clear anxiety about the far-reaching influence of the nobility and its role in undercutting the sovereign power of the emir and, thus, the stability of the polity. Throughout these treatises, it is the “kin” (*qarāba*) of the sovereign that are represented as posing the greatest threat to royal power. Within the “Treatise on Politics” (*al-Maqāma fī al-Siyāsa*), Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s carefully-crafted treatise on royal administration Ibn al-Khaṭīb advises the Nasrid sovereign “to refrain from appointing to high office any individual who considers himself worthy of sovereign authority, exhibits any trait of arrogant disobedience, whose wealth exceeds your own, fraternizes with your enemies, attaches his loyalties to any but yourself, aggrandizes himself at your expense, affiliates with any but those beloved to you, and who contends for influence and power with others within your court.”<sup>66</sup> Moreover, he warns the sovereign against allowing governors to maintain their hold over fortresses or provinces for extensive periods of time, since this would allow them to entrench their own authority and effectively become the real holders of power in a particular region.<sup>67</sup> Far from being a theoretical point, this emphasis on being wary of well-entrenched governors alluded to the several examples of noble individuals (such as the Banū Ishqalyūla during the 670s/1270s and 680s/1280s, Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf b. Naṣr in Guadix in 703/1303, Abū Sa‘īd Faraj in Málaga in 712/1312 among

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<sup>66</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, El Escorial MS 554, 37v-38r.

<sup>67</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, El Escorial MS 554, 39r-41r.

others) who led rebellions against Nasrid sovereigns from their support base centered on a particular region, fortress or city.<sup>68</sup> This strong attack the wealth, influence and power of the nobility within the “Treatise on Politics” was consistent with Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s colorful descriptions of the violence and destruction throughout Granada during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century which he attributes to this group’s ambitions. The theme of cautioning rulers against appointing anyone from the nobility or their own extended family to positions of power was one that was echoed throughout other political treatises composed during this period. While it certainly reflected anxieties about noble power and privilege, it was also rooted in the shared intellectual cosmos of these secretaries, who were steeped in the Graeco-Arabic philosophical tradition. While Aristotle’s “Politics” and “Ethics” were among the most significant texts that shaped these individuals’ conceptions of statecraft, they drew especially heavily on the pseudo-Aristotelian text known as the *Secretum Secretorum* or Secret of Secrets.

Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s “Treatise on Politics” sought to emphasize the importance and value of appointing to the office of chief minister clients of the dynasty, whose wealth, status and loyalty were inextricably linked with the figure of the sovereign. While reminding the sovereign that “an upright and loyal chief minister is a sovereign’s strongest bedrock and foundation” (*al-wazīr al-ṣāliḥ aḥd al-‘udadik wa awṣal madadik*), the tract stresses that the ideal chief minister belongs to a well-known family (*ma ‘rūf al-bayt*), whose loyalty to the sovereign has been firmly established (*ma ‘rūf al-ikhlāṣ li-dawlatik*), and whose conduct is just (*mu’tḥir li l-‘adl wa al-iṣlāḥ*).<sup>69</sup> Significantly, the treatise itself stresses the importance of the appointed chief minister’s skilled swordsmanship (*dariban bi-ḥaml al-silāḥ*), an indication of the expectation of both “men of the

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<sup>68</sup> I.S. Allouche, “La révolte des Banū Aškīlūla contre le sultan naṣrīte Muḥammad II d’après le Kitāb A’māl al-A’lām d’Ibn al-Khaṭīb,” *Hesperis* 35 (1938), pp. 1–11.

<sup>69</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, El Escorial MS 554, 37r–37v.

sword” and “men of the pen” aspirants to officialdom in Nasrid Granada to be acquainted with the martial arts and be prepared to defend the sovereign (against assassination) or the kingdom (during times of war) should the need arise.<sup>70</sup>

Another political treatise from this period, “On Beneficial Politics” (*al-Shuhub al-Lāmi‘a fī al-Siyāsa al-Nāfi‘a*), composed around 761/1360 in Fez by the Andalusī émigré scholar Abū al-Qāsim b. Riḍwān al-Mālaqī (d. 783/1381),<sup>71</sup> the Master of the Royal Seal (*ṣāhib al-‘alāma*) in the Marinid kingdom, allows us to place Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s ideas about executive authority in broader perspective. Ibn Riḍwān’s text, which draws heavily from Aristotle’s *Politics* as well as from classical Arabic texts about governance, stresses that “a chief minister, to whom the major functions of state are delegated, is indispensable to kingship” before enumerating the various qualities of an ideal chief minister, which echo those described by Ibn al-Khaṭīb and include “a thorough knowledge of the offices of state and their jurisdictions, just conduct and an aversion to tyranny, a strong will and determination, knighthood and leadership of the military, and effective statecraft.”<sup>72</sup> Similar to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Ibn Riḍwān emphasizes that the chief minister should belong to a well-known lineage whose members were known to have exercised the function (*bayt wizāra*) since such individuals were intimately familiar with the responsibilities of the office and were essentially “educated and raised from a young age to exercise this function.”<sup>73</sup> Although less interested in representing noble power as an impediment to effective kingship than Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s “Treatise on Politics,” Ibn Riḍwān nonetheless cites Aristotle’s advice to

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<sup>70</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, El Escorial MS 554, 37v.

<sup>71</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 223–247; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawḍa‘ al-‘Alāma*, pp. 51–56. This individual had begun his career as a royal counselor and chancellor in Málaga in the administration of Abū Sa‘īd Faraj before migrating to the North Africa, where he was employed in the Marinid chancery before eventually being appointed as the Master of the Royal Seal during the reign of Abū ‘Inān (r. 749/1348–759/1358). His father, Yūsuf b. Riḍwān, had been a leading scholar and political figure in Málaga during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 280).

<sup>72</sup> Ibn Riḍwān, *Shuhub al-Lāmi‘a*, pp. 187–192.

<sup>73</sup> Ibn Riḍwān, *Shuhub al-Lāmi‘a*, p. 190.

Alexander and implores the sovereign to “never appoint any individual from among his own relatives (*al-qarāba*) nor entrust them with any senior political office.”<sup>74</sup> This echoes Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own precautionary advice to the Nasrid sovereign to refrain from appointing as chief minister any individual who could match the wealth and power of the sovereign or who possessed a claim to the throne. On the question of the role of noble lineage and status as a basis for the exercise of executive power, Ibn al-Khaṭīb directly entreats the sovereign to remember that “fear of God and piety is the epitome of virtue and takes precedence over nobility of descent” when selecting a candidate for the position of chief minister.<sup>75</sup> As an individual who claimed descent from a long line of functionaries, whose father belonged to the Nasrid administrative elite and who was skilled in the martial arts as well as civil administration, Ibn al-Khaṭīb easily fit the mold of an ideal chief minister.

Unsurprisingly, one of the primary functions of the treatise was to legitimize the political ascendancy of the secretarial elite and advocate for their appointment to senior executive offices throughout the kingdom and especially within the royal court. Throughout the work, Ibn al-Khaṭīb represents political office and rank (*al-rutba*) not as a benefice to be bestowed by birthright upon noblemen or leading families, but as a delegation of royal authority, the appointment to which should be predicated on the competence of the individual as well as their loyalty and subordination to the figure of the sovereign. Charismatic military commanders, powerful noblemen and influential queen-consorts or concubines, the leading competitors of the secretarial elite for political influence over the sovereign, are identified within the treatise as the obstacles to good governance, while skilled secretaries, erudite scholars and competent generals executing the orders of a learned sovereign represents the political ideal. This particular

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<sup>74</sup> Ibn Riḍwān, *Shuḥub al-Lāmi’a*, p. 190.

<sup>75</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, El Escorial MS 554, 37r–37v.

conception of the kingdom was, to a certain degree, rooted in the specific genre (*speculum principii* or *fürstenspiegel*) in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb was writing, but did reflect a concrete attempt to reflect the major political shift within Granada in which executive authority was no longer the exclusive prerogative of the nobility, but came to be concentrated for a certain time within the hands of scholar-officials. As a scholar-official himself and an intimate colleague of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Ibn Riḍwān similarly modelled his conception of the office of chief minister on the norms of political theory as well as the existing political reality in which an increasing number of secretaries and scholars, rather than military elites and noblemen, occupied leading positions within the royal administration.

The impact of the rise of individuals such as Ibn al-Jayyāb and Ibn al-Khaṭīb to these senior offices on the composition of political treatises is even more evident within the writings of the secretary Ibn Sīmāk al-ʿĀmilī, a student and protégé of Ibn al-Khaṭīb in the Nasrid chancery. This individual, while repeating many of the exact conditions listed in Ibn Riḍwān's treatise, adds another quality that should be expected of an effective chief minister "the appointee [to the office of chief minister] should be a competent scribe, with a firm knowledge of epistolary and calligraphy, a litterateur with an expertise in history of nations and kings, whose father had served in the royal palace, since this ensures that he has been groomed to hold the office."<sup>76</sup> This condition enshrined within political theory the idea that a scholar-official who was a member of the secretarial elite was most suited for the position of chief minister. Based upon his description, especially the emphasis on the knowledge of history and the scribal arts, it becomes abundantly clear that Ibn Sīmāk, a student and protégé of Ibn al-Khaṭīb in the Nasrid chancery, viewed his own teacher and mentor as embodying the characteristics of the ideal chief minister. These

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<sup>76</sup> Ibn Sīmāk al-ʿĀmilī, *Rawnaq al-Taḥbīr fī Ḥukm al-Siyāsa wa al-Tadbīr*, BNRMS MS K1121, p. 13.

treatises, among others, provide examples of how many among the secretarial elite sought to legitimate and make normative the ascendancy of litterateurs and scribes to the senior offices of state. This phenomenon reflects the manner in which the literary production of secretarial elites sought to complement the broader administrative transformations occurring within the Nasrid kingdom.

The “Treatise on Politics,” which was incorporated into Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s *Iḥāṭa* and his *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb* and also survives in individual manuscripts, has been demonstrated to have been an adaptation of an earlier Graeco-Arabic philosophical treatise on politics by Aḥmad b. Yūsuf b. al-Dāya (d. 340/951) that was written in 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>-century Egypt.<sup>77</sup> As Wadad Kadi has argued for the “Treatise on Politics” and Carlos Serrano Contreras has argued with regard to Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s “On the Norms of the Vizierate,” these texts may have drawn heavily on the writings of Ibn al-Dāya, but they nevertheless bear the unmistakable imprint of the Nasrid chancellor’s rhetorical style, political context and clearly reflect his own political ideals.<sup>78</sup> While painstakingly documenting the similarities and differences between Ibn Dayā’s treatise and the “On the Norms of the Vizierate,” Serrano Contreras illustrates how the latter work was shaped by Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own concerns and motivations as a leading functionary within the Nasrid kingdom. For example, he omitted the section from Ibn al-Dāya’s treatise recommending against being appointed as a “delegatory chief minister,” a function that he sought to legitimize at a time when he held a large measure of executive power as Nasrid chief minister during the late

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<sup>77</sup> Douglas Morton Dunlop, “A Little-Known Work on Politics by Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb,” *MEAH* 8 (1959), pp. 47-54.

<sup>78</sup> Wadad Kadi, “Lisān al-Dīn Ibn al-Ḥaṭīb on Politics,” in *La Signification du Bas Moyen Age dans l’Histoire et la Culture du Monde Musulman: Actes du 8eme Congres de l’Union Europeenne des Arabisants et Islamisants* (Aix-en-Provence, 1978), pp. 210-211; Carlos Serrano Contreras, “La indicación a la Instrucción del Visirato: ¿Plagio o reflexión original? Del testamento de Ibn al-Dāya al tratado de gobierno de Ibn al-Jatīb,” in *Mediterráneos*, pp. 101-113.

760s/1360s (when the treatise was composed).<sup>79</sup> While indicating the importance of the Nasrid court for the reception of classical Graeco-Arabic political philosophy, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's treatises thus illustrate the creativity of court secretaries and scholar-ministers in adapting older political texts about governance to the specific political context of Nasrid politics in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century.

#### "From the Alhambra of Granada, May God Protect It": Ibn al-Khaṭīb as Chancellor and Ambassador

As these treatises indicate, there was a direct relationship between learning and statecraft. While the composition of works on political philosophy and mirrors for princes was one way that scholar-officials complemented their authority and made normative their particular vision of kingship and the polity, learning was utilized in other ways as well. The patronage of scholars and scholarship was, for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, one of the most important responsibilities of statesmen, princes and sovereigns and was a major characteristic of his own tenure as chancellor and chief minister. Ibn al-Khaṭīb actively represented himself as a scholar-minister, whose patronage of learning and intimate connections with other scholars was a fundamental component of his identity. This specifically meant that in addition to his administrative duties and governance of the kingdom, he maintained his commitment to the pursuit of knowledge, continuing to author various literary and medical works while associating himself with the leading scholars of the age.<sup>80</sup>

As in the case of earlier scholar-viziers in Islamic history, such as the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>-century Abbasid chief minister Ibn Hubayra, the domains in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb actively participated

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<sup>79</sup> Serrano Contreras, "La indicación a la Instrucción del Visirato," pp. 111–112.

<sup>80</sup> This is explicitly stated in Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 438.



beyond the royal court included the mosque and the college.<sup>81</sup> The immense wealth as well as greater political influence that he accumulated as chancellor and chief minister, royal physician and the king's private secretary enabled him to become a major patron of scholars during this period, even establishing his own court. His leading position in society enabled him to utilize his extensive resources to host large gatherings of scholars and patronize literary salons (*majālis*). It was said of Ibn Hubayra's *majlis* that it "was a salon of learning, a gathering of qualified men who as traditionists, Qur'an reciters, jurisconsults, legal scholars, judges, ascetics, Sufis, princes, or, in general, the *A'lām* (the famous men of the time), all shared a common interest in knowledge and came together every Friday, for several years, with the firm intention of entering into a serious discussion."<sup>82</sup> So too did Ibn al-Khaṭīb's active sponsorship and encouragement of learned discussions on topics ranging from poetry, history, philosophy, law and medicine bring together a diverse array of functionaries, litterateurs and notables.

This patronage and his own active participation in circles of learning strengthened his long-standing bonds with individuals such as al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī and Abū al-Barakāt al-Balaṭīqī as well as with scholars from North Africa, who arrived in Granada throughout the 750s/1350s. One of the best illustrations of the importance of the *majlis*/scholarly gathering as a space that brought together various scholars, functionaries and statesmen, including Ibn al-Khaṭīb, comes from an anecdote narrated by the renowned legal theorist Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Shāṭibī:

"I once attended a scholarly gathering (*majlis*), which was led by the teacher and judge Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Maqqarī, in the Great Mosque of Granada in late Rabi I 757/March-April 1356. Among those in attendance were the judge Abū 'Abd Allāh [al-Maqqarī], our teacher the judge Abū al-Qāsim al-Sharīf [al-Gharnāṭī],

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<sup>81</sup> Mason, *Two Statesmen of Mediaeval Islam*, p. 43.

<sup>82</sup> Mason, *Two Statesmen of Mediaeval Islam*, pp. 44–47.

the teacher Abū Saʿīd b. Lubb, the teacher Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Balansī<sup>83</sup>, Dhū-l-Wizāratayn Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb, as well as a number of eminent students of knowledge (*al-ṭalaba*)...”<sup>84</sup>

The function of the anecdote is to demonstrate how al-Shaṭībī was able to demonstrate his ample knowledge on a particular question in the presence of such eminent authorities. The list of figures that he mentions were among the leading scholars, functionaries, jurists, litterateurs and theologians in the Islamic West, illustrating the role of the Great Mosque of Granada as an important social space of learning that facilitated the socialization of these various figures. Moreover, it provides definitive evidence that both al-Shaṭībī and Ibn al-Khaṭīb shared several teachers and often frequented similar social and intellectual spaces.

It was during his early career as chancellor and chief minister that Ibn al-Khaṭīb took an active interest in patronizing several leading scholars from North Africa who had taken up residence in Granada. Among these émigrés was Abū ʿAlī Maṣṣūr b. ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Zawāwī, who is referred to by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as “our companion and colleague” (*ṣāhibuna*), and is described in the *Iḥāṭa* as an expert in both the traditional and philosophical sciences, with a specific interest in the fields of logic, dialectical theology, mathematics and arithmetic.<sup>85</sup> Abū ʿAlī arrived in Granada in 753/1352, where he remained until Shaʿbān 765/May 1364, and was appointed as a professor in the College and taught jurisprudence and the Qurʾanic sciences.<sup>86</sup> This scholar also figures prominently within al-Shaṭībī’s *al-Ifādāt wa al-Inshādāt*, a further testimony to the convergence of the intellectual circles of the former, who was unaffiliated with

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<sup>83</sup> Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Balansī (d. 782/1380) was a prominent jurist and grammarian who held the post of Professor in the College of Granada (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 38–39; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 56; E. Navarro I Ortiz, “Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Balansī,” *BA*, 1: 164–169).

<sup>84</sup> Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Shaṭībī, *al-Ifādāt wa al-Inshādāt* (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risala, 1983), ed. Muhammad Abu al-Ajfan, pp. 126–127.

<sup>85</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 324–330; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 222.

<sup>86</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 325.

the court and was predominantly a legal theorist and jurist, and that of scholar-officials and statesmen such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb.

Abū ‘Alī’s expertise in the rational sciences and belles-lettres closely mirrored Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own interest in these disciplines, leading to a close bond of friendship (*suḥba*) to develop between them. The nature of the relationship, however, was not merely one of colleagues, but one of patronage. Among the works that Ibn al-Khaṭīb commissioned Abū ‘Alī to produce was a short list of his various teachers and the works that he studied with each (*taqyīd mashyakhatihi*).<sup>87</sup> The preface to this work, composed during the mid-750s/1350s, illustrates Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s status as patron, with Abū ‘Alī praising him as “my lord through whose illuminated lamp of knowledge I am guided” (*sayyidī al-a‘lā aladhī ahtadī bi-miṣbāḥihi*) and “the pre-eminent chancellor and chief minister” (*dhū al-qalam al-a‘lā wa badr al-wizāra al-awḍaḥ al-ajlā*) while lauding his mastery of *adab*, the rhetorical arts and poetry.<sup>88</sup> Abū ‘Alī celebrates the Nasrid court as “the Ka‘ba of the Kings of Islam and the destination of the most eminent scholars.”<sup>89</sup> This language reflects that of many other panegyrics dedicated to Ibn al-Khaṭīb and illustrates how the latter actively sought to have himself represented as a scholar-vizier whose legitimacy as a statesman was equally based on effective governance, the patronage of learning and his own considerable intellectual abilities.

The importance that Ibn al-Khaṭīb attached to his bond with Abū ‘Alī, which served as a testimony to his status as both an eminent intellectual as well as a patron of scholarship, is indicated by his incorporation within his *Ihāṭa* of the full text of Abū ‘Alī’s *taqyīd* as well an *ijāza* that this scholar issued to Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his three sons dated Rabī‘ II 29 757/May 1

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<sup>87</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Ihāṭa*, 3: 326.

<sup>88</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Ihāṭa*, 3: 326.

<sup>89</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Ihāṭa*, 3: 326.

1356.<sup>90</sup> Although it was fairly customary to request an *ijaza* for one's children in the late medieval Islamic world, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's attempt to incorporate his sons into his intellectual network and ensure that they received the necessary education and recognition from the leading scholars of the era was underpinned by an attempt to prepare them for careers as scholar-officials, just as his father had done for him.

Several of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's teachers and mentors from childhood and his early days as a secretary would also find themselves beneficiaries of his patronage. One of these figures was Abū 'Abd Allāh b. al-Fakhkhār al-Ilbīrī, who was appointed to the prestigious post of preacher (*khaṭīb*) in the Great Mosque of Granada and as a professor in the College following its construction. This individual had been among Ibn al-Khaṭīb's most important teachers as a child and youth. In a letter composed in Gibraltar around 743/1342 congratulating Ibn al-Fakhkhār on his appointment as preacher in the Great Mosque, Ibn al-Khaṭīb invokes their teacher-student bond, praising him as "the one in whose capable hands our father placed us to acquire an education and the individual from whom we narrated the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet," thus placing Ibn al-Fakhkhār as his link with prophetic knowledge.<sup>91</sup> He stresses that his teacher's appointment was due "largely to the blessed efforts of Riḍwān, may God preserve him, whose virtues are infinite and loyalty is renowned and whose righteous deeds belong to the highest station of praise and glory...verily, he is the one who raises the standards/banners of the Nasrid kingdom, who guides it through difficult times, who annihilates its enemies and is the most eminent among its esteemed and beloved ones."<sup>92</sup> This appointment, like many others, was framed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb in terms of a favor, grace or benefaction (*ni'ma*) which was bestowed upon the beneficiary of

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<sup>90</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 326-330.

<sup>91</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manzūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 81-83.

<sup>92</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manzūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 81-83.

patronage by the sovereign. However, as the discussion of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own elevation within the ranks of the Nasrid court illustrated, such "favor" was the result of an individual's ties with close confidants and councilors of the king which influenced the latter's choice in appointing specific individuals to positions of authority and distinction. The letter to Ibn al-Fakhkhār is a prime example of Ibn al-Khaṭīb consciousness of his own position within a broader patronage network of scholars and officials and his ability to utilize his political influence to shape the fortunes of various individuals within this network. The appointment of scholars such as Ibn al-Fakhkhār to leading positions due to the influence and support of former pupils like Ibn al-Khaṭīb ensured the replication and consolidation of pre-existing networks of patronage which strengthened the ties between certain members of the scholarly elite (the *'ulamā'*) and leading Nasrid statesmen over several generations.

The recognition of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's proximity to royal power and his immense political influence meant that his patronage and favor was actively sought by his peers within the Nasrid chancery, as illustrated in a poem composed by the secretary Abū al-'Alā' Muḥammad b. Simāk al-Āmili which requests the latter to "extend him some favor (*ni'ma*) by shaking the tree of the caliphate so that he may reap some of its fruit."<sup>93</sup> This individual's son, Abū al-Qāsim b. Simāk, the author of the aforementioned *Rawnaq al-Taḥbīr*, would go on to become one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's most important students and protégés in the chancery.<sup>94</sup> The younger Ibn Simāk, cognizant of how his own status as a secretary was tied to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's patronage, composed a panegyric for his benefactor and mentor, which Ibn al-Khaṭīb preserved in full within his *Katība al-Kāmina*.<sup>95</sup> Two other significant examples of Ibn al-Khaṭīb rewarding those within his

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<sup>93</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 199–200.

<sup>94</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 299–300.

<sup>95</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 300–301.

intellectual network by facilitating the political fortunes of their sons include Abū al-‘Abbās al-Ḥasanī, the son of al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, and Abū Bakr b. Juzayy, the son of Abū al-Qāsim b. Juzayy, both of whom were appointed as secretaries and judges.<sup>96</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s appointment of the sons of his early patrons in the Nasrid court served as a means of strengthening his relationship with these families, but also sought to ensure that the chancery was populated by trustworthy and competent individuals whose status was tied to his benefaction. The preservation of numerous fragments of poetry dedicated to him from his various pupils within his various works, but especially in the *Katība al-Kāmina*, authored during his last years in North Africa, illustrates Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s concern with shaping his own legacy as a scholar-vizier and patron of learning. A notable example is the poem composed by the secretary Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Qaṭṭān al-Hāshimī, who praised Ibn al-Khaṭīb as “the most eminent scholar of the age, the axis around whom royal affairs revolve, the great chief minister of the Yūsufite kingdom.”<sup>97</sup> Another is the panegyric by Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Āṣim which celebrates the “brilliance of the court of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, from which the lights of knowledge and belles-lettres emanate.”<sup>98</sup>

As chancellor, Ibn al-Khaṭīb recruited young secretaries and functionaries into the royal administration, thereby establishing himself as the patron of a new generation of Nasrid administrators and scholars. His composition of elaborate works on epistolary, consisting primarily of his own letters and compositions from the Nasrid chancery, served to instruct these recruits on the finer points of the secretarial arts while transmitting the norms and protocol of the secretarial arts to a new generation of scribes. It was in this way that he contributed to shaping

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<sup>96</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Katība al-Kāmina*, p. 301; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 165–169.

<sup>97</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 230–231.

<sup>98</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 298–299.

the structure and personnel of the Nasrid royal chancery, which shaped the administrative and intellectual culture of Granada for decades to come. Perhaps the most important of these was Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ibn Zamrak.<sup>99</sup> Although born to a small family of humble means (his father was a blacksmith) in the Albaicín neighborhood of Granada, Ibn Zamrak demonstrated remarkable poetic skill and had been enlisted as a scribe in the Nasrid chancery by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who groomed him as his successor and protégé.<sup>100</sup> Around 759/1358, Ibn al-Khaṭīb appointed as his deputy within the chancery the scholar Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq b. Abī Qāsim b. ‘Aṭīyya al-Muḥāribī, an individual belonging to the Granadan Banū ‘Aṭīyya patrician family who had served as the chief judge of Guadix and the preacher in its mosque.<sup>101</sup> This figure was delegated a large measure of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s duties in the chancery, especially as the latter became increasingly occupied with the administration of the kingdom and sought to maintain an equilibrium between his dual role as the kingdom’s chancellor and chief minister. ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq also functioned as Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own private secretary and scribe, copying a considerable amount of his own works, including the first full draft of the “Comprehensive History” (*al-Iḥāṭa*).<sup>102</sup> Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Sharīshī,<sup>103</sup> another of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s subordinates, would also play an instrumental role in the production of early drafts of the “Comprehensive History.”<sup>104</sup> In addition to appointing them to leading positions within the chancery and judiciary, many of the scholars and secretaries within Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s circle were given positions that brought them closer to the sovereign (as in the case of al-Sharīshī who was

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<sup>99</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā’id al-Jumān*, pp. 327–329; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 190.

<sup>100</sup> García Gómez, *Ibn Zamrak*, pp. 29–36,

<sup>101</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 141; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 17–18; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 137–138.

<sup>102</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 17–18.

<sup>103</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 214–215; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 96. Al-Sharīshī was also an acquaintance of Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Shāṭibī, whom the latter appears to have met in Granada during the late 750s/1350s (al-Shāṭibī, *al-Ifādāt wa al-Inshādāt*, p. 97).

<sup>104</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 9: 330.

appointed as the royal tutor of Muḥammad b. Yūsuf, the future Muḥammad V).<sup>105</sup> As will be discussed in Chapter 6, Ibn al-Khaṭīb also initiated his own sons ‘Abd Allāh, Muḥammad and ‘Alī into officialdom by enrolling them as secretaries within the Nasrid chancery upon their coming of age.

It was in his capacity as head of the chancery and chief minister that Ibn al-Khaṭīb utilized his influence to directly impact the lives of other scholar-officials in his broader intellectual network. While patronizing scholars in the Nasrid court and appointing them to specific administrative or teaching posts across the kingdom was one way that he did this, another was through his direct political intercession on their behalf. As observed by Sean Gilsdorf, intercession within the context of courtly and aristocratic politics in the Middle Ages was often “as much about forging and maintaining bonds of amity and consensus as they were about asserting and acknowledging hierarchical distinctions of power and authority.”<sup>106</sup> This is most clear in his composition of a letter to the Marinid sultan Abū ‘Inān, dated Rajab 24 754/August 25 1353, which interceded on behalf of Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Marzūq (d. 781/1379), a leading North African scholar-official who had resided in Granada since 748/1348.<sup>107</sup> During his stay in Granada, Ibn Marzūq—one of the leading intellectuals in the

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<sup>105</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 9: 330. This individual appears to have remained the royal tutor of Nasrid princes well into the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, since Yūsuf III— the grandson of Muḥammad V born around 776/1374—refers to him as “our tutor (*al-mu‘alim al-jumla minnā*) who taught us the Qur’an and Sunnah of the Prophet” (al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 9: 330).

<sup>106</sup> Sean Gilsdorf, *The Favor of Friends: Intercession and Aristocratic Politics in Carolingian and Ottonian Europe* (Leiden: Brill: 2014), p. 7.

<sup>107</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 341–344; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kunāsāt al-Dukkān*, pp. 158–162. According to Emilio Molina López, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Marzūq first became acquainted during the Tarifa/Rio Salado campaign in 741/1340, when the latter was part of the court of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī (Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, p. 54).



Islamic West<sup>108</sup>—became Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s closest associate, mentor and friend.<sup>109</sup> Ibn Marzūq was originally sent as an ambassador to Castile by the Marinid sultan Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī in late 748/early 1348,<sup>110</sup> spending some time in Granada, but following the chaos in North Africa, he returned to Granada, where he joined the Nasrid court of Yūsuf I.<sup>111</sup> He was appointed by the emir as preacher (*khaṭīb*) in the royal mosque of the Alhambra on Ṣafar 6 753/March 24 1352, and also received an appointment as a professor (*mudarris*) in the College of Granada.<sup>112</sup> After spending nearly five years in Granada, he returned to Morocco in early Sha‘bān 754/September 1353 and entered the service of Abū ‘Inān.<sup>113</sup>

The aforementioned letter by Ibn al-Khaṭīb which was sent to Abū ‘Inān in the name of Yūsuf I was an attempt to plead Ibn Marzūq’s case before the Marinid court and emphasize his righteousness and loyalty to the Marinids. The letter vouches in the strongest terms for Ibn Marzūq and requests that Abū ‘Inān receive him well and allow him to join the royal court in Fez. This particular document illustrates clearly the importance of the relationship between scholar-officials such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Marzūq and how, on one hand, the ties between members of this broader intellectual network bonds were significant in furthering the personal and professional interests of one another and, on the other hand, how the securing of one another’s interests was made possible by their privileged positions within the royal administration. It also indicates how these scholar-officials relied upon the influence of their peers to facilitate their mobility between various courts. As will be seen, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s

<sup>108</sup> Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 2: 290–296; Ibn Qunfudh, *al-Wafayāt*, pp. 373–374; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 235–236; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 219–220.

<sup>109</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 103–130; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 7: 365–393. Although al-Maqqarī refers to Ibn Marzūq as Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s “teacher” (al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 7: 365), the relationship gradually developed into a close friendship over the years.

<sup>110</sup> Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatīb*, p. 54.

<sup>111</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 324; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 235.

<sup>112</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 104; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 324; Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatīb*, p. 54–55.

<sup>113</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 104–105.

intercession for Ibn Marzūq laid the foundation for a close bond of loyalty that would endure for decades and which proved to be vital since the latter played a pivotal role in assisting Ibn al-Khaṭīb when he was in a similarly vulnerable and insecure position several years later.

Another beneficiary of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's political intercession was Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Maqqarī (d. 759/1358), a leading Maliki jurist and mystic from North Africa.<sup>114</sup> He arrived in Granada as the Marinid ambassador in Jumādā II 756/June 1355.<sup>115</sup> Al-Maqqarī, who was the direct ancestor of Abū al-'Abbās al-Maqqarī (the author of *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*), was one of the most senior religious authorities in the Islamic West, descending from an important scholarly family from Tlemcen and serving as chief judge in that city.<sup>116</sup> Although initially sent as a diplomat, he took up residence in Granada and began teaching jurisprudence and hadith at the College, thereby delaying his return to the Marinid kingdom. His close relationship with Ibn al-Khaṭīb is evident from the latter's access to his own writings and the extensive biography inserted within the "Comprehensive History," one of the longest within that work; Ibn al-Khaṭīb even named his *'Amal man Ṭabb li man Ḥabb* after one of al-Maqqarī's works.<sup>117</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb's status as a close associate and student of al-Maqqarī was noted by contemporaries as well as later scholars such as the 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup>-century Ibn Maryam al-Tilmisānī (d. 1025/1616).<sup>118</sup> In his *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, al-Maqqarī's direct descendant, the famous Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad al-Maqqarī, highlighted the close relationship between his ancestor and Ibn al-Khaṭīb; in fact, the emphasis upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb within al-Maqqarī's works was partially motivated by the

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<sup>114</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 179–180; Ibn Maryam al-Tilmisānī, *al-Bustān*, pp. 295–311. One of his most important surviving works of jurisprudence is the *Qawā'id al-Fiqh* (Rabat, 2012), ed. Muhammad al-Dardabi.

<sup>115</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 196.

<sup>116</sup> Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahab*, 2: 264–265.

<sup>117</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 191–226.

<sup>118</sup> Ibn Maryam al-Tilmisānī, *al-Bustān*, p. 311.

fact that the former had studied under his ancestor.<sup>119</sup> Al-Maqqarī's extended residence in Granada and his failure to return to Fez in a timely fashion earned him the reproach of Abū 'Inān, which prompted Ibn al-Khaṭīb to send a letter to the Marinid sultan dated Jumādā II 21 757/June 21 1356 pleading al-Maqqarī's case and interceding on his behalf.<sup>120</sup> The ambassadors dispatched to Fez carrying the letter were Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own teachers and leading Nasrid scholars, al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī and Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī, highlighting the importance attached to this mission. Shortly afterwards, yet another letter on the same subject was sent to Abū 'Inān in the name of Muḥammad V, reflecting Ibn al-Khaṭīb's commitment to al-Maqqarī's cause and echoing earlier efforts on behalf of Ibn Marzūq three years earlier.<sup>121</sup> The success of this diplomacy is reflected in the fact that al-Maqqarī returned to Fez shortly thereafter and was even appointed as the city's chief judge, a post he held until his death in Muḥarram 759/January 1358.

In addition to enabling him to expand his intellectual and administrative network considerably, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's appointment as the kingdom's chancellor brought him into the inner circle of many within his intellectual network who already held important positions the Nasrid administration, such as the judge Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī who continued to serve as a mentor and ally to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, illustrating the importance of personal ties between scholar-functionaries in the Nasrid kingdom. Although in many cases Ibn al-Khaṭīb's decision to extend an individual patronage and favor was underpinned by specific political or strategic motivations, several of the relationships that he maintained during his early years as chancellor were rooted in other considerations. A notable example of such an individual with whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb enjoyed

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<sup>119</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 7: 195–324.

<sup>120</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kunāsāt al-Dukkān*, pp. 200–204; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 197–200.

<sup>121</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kunāsāt al-Dukkān*, pp. 206–208.

a particularly close relationship was Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Lawshī (d. 752/1351), a scholar and poet who, like Ibn al-Khaṭīb, originated from a Lojan family that had been in the service of the Nasrid sovereigns.<sup>122</sup> Al-Lawshī, who had lived in Granada since the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century and served its various rulers, was a renowned poet who had risen to prominence during the reign of Muḥammad III due to the patronage of Ibn al-Ḥakīm.<sup>123</sup> As a court secretary from a prominent Lojan family, he was a close associate and friend of ‘Abd Allāh, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s father.<sup>124</sup> Al-Lawshī served as a link between Ibn al-Khaṭīb and the older generation of scholar-administrators in Granada. Within the “Comprehensive History” al-Lawshī is described as “being acquainted with the sultan al-Ghālīb bi-llāh [Muḥammad I] since before he became king and eventually joined his court,”<sup>125</sup> although he also notes that in his later years al-Lawshī had withdrawn from courtly life and lived frugally as an ascetic.<sup>126</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s continued affiliation with individuals from Loja, highlights the manner in which provincial elites in the Nasrid capital built their own personal networks rooted in their shared origins.<sup>127</sup> The strong bonds between provincial elites from Loja, tied together through family ties, experiences and patronage, within the administration in Granada (and Málaga) reflects the pattern of the migration of local families and individuals to the centers of power in the Nasrid kingdom during

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<sup>122</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 119–120.

<sup>123</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 89.

<sup>124</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 269–272; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 59–61; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 175–177.

<sup>125</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 269.

<sup>126</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 270.

<sup>127</sup> Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ṭanjālī (d. 764/1363), the preacher of the Great Mosque of Málaga, with whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb studied and traveled to Morocco on one occasion was another example of such an individual (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 149). This individual’s son, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ṭanjālī (d. 753/1352), appointed as the chief judge of Málaga in 750/1349, was another colleague of Ibn al-Khaṭīb (al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Qudāt al-Andalus*, pp. 165–171, Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 214), as was another member of the Banū Ṭanjālī clan in Loja, Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Mun‘im (d. 750/1349), a notable physician and judge, whose daughter, Umm al-Ḥasan, a prominent litterateur and physician in her own right, is included by Ibn al-Khaṭīb in two of his biographical dictionaries (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 111–112; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 430–431; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 109).

the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries. This is reminiscent of the mobilization of local scholarly networks in political administration during the late Umayyad period, in which individuals from Ibn Abī ‘Āmir al-Manṣūr’s hometown of Algeciras played a particularly important role in the administrative, political and intellectual life of Córdoba during the latter’s tenure as chamberlain.<sup>128</sup>

### “The Bard of their Histories and the Archive of their House”: History and Governance

The patronage of scholarship, the appointment of individuals to various administrative posts across the Nasrid kingdom and political intercession were among the most important ways that Ibn al-Khaṭīb exerted his authority as chancellor. This enabled Ibn al-Khaṭīb to influence the political, administrative and intellectual culture of the Nasrid court. Similarly, the writing of history (*tārīkh*) and the composition of numerous works across various genres became another avenue through which he left an important imprint upon the history of the Nasrid kingdom and manifested his own authority as a leading statesman. What, exactly, was the nature of the relationship between historical writing, the chancery and statecraft? The simplest answer is that Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s role as head of the chancery provided him access to important documents and pertaining to the kingdom, its administration and its rulers, which would facilitate his composition of dynastic chronicles and histories.<sup>129</sup>

How did he have access to these records and texts? If the Alhambra housed formal archives, where drafts or copies of official documents were kept, none of them have survived

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<sup>128</sup> Maribel Fierro, "El entorno algecireño de Almanzor" in *La Península Ibérica al filo del año 1000. Congreso Internacional Almanzor y su época (Córdoba, 14 a 18 de octubre de 2002)* (Córdoba: Fundación Prasa, 2008), ed. José Luis del Pino, pp. 587-600.

<sup>129</sup> al-Harūt, *al-Rasā’il al-Dīwāniyya*, pp. 178–191.

into the present.<sup>130</sup> While there are indications throughout the sources that such practices of record-keeping did indeed exist, it was largely through the composition of official compilations of documents—including foreign correspondence, royal decrees and appointments of functionaries—by the students and successors of the previous chancellor that records of these texts survive, often in highly-edited form. This is evident from the earliest decades of the Nasrid kingdom when the official letters and documents penned by Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the head of the Nasrid chancery during the reign of Muḥammad I, were preserved by Ibn al-Ḥakīm in a work entitled *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb fī Tarsīl Abī Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb*.<sup>131</sup> Similarly, the chancery compositions (and personal correspondence) of the itinerant secretary and judge Abū al-Muṭarrif b. ‘Amīra were compiled by the Nasrid court secretary and poet Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Hānī’ al-Sabtī (d. 733/1333), a close associate of many of Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb’s own teachers.<sup>132</sup>

This genre of writing, known as epistolography (*inshā’*), served the purpose of preserving the administrative practice of previous generations of functionaries while also establishing the literary norms and conventions of the art of letter-writing.<sup>133</sup> It also fulfilled an instructional

<sup>130</sup> The notable exception is the rich corpus of formal correspondence from the Nasrid kingdom that survives as the *Cartas Arabes* collection in the Archives of the Crown of Aragón in Barcelona.

<sup>131</sup> Hassan El-Ghailani, *Edición y estudio del “Faṣl al-Jitāb” de Abu Bakr ibn Jattāb al-Mursi* (Madrid: Complutense University PhD Dissertation, 2002).

<sup>132</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 58. Muḥammad b. Hānī’ al-Sabtī, *Rasā’il Ibn ‘Amīra al-Dīwāniyya wa al-Ikhwāniyya* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2014).

<sup>133</sup> Such a practice among Andalusi functionaries is documented as early as the Almoravid era, with the official decrees and letters of the chancellor and chief minister (“Dhū-l Wizāratayn”) Abū ‘Abd Allāh ibn Abī al-Khiṣāl (d. 540/1146) being preserved within a single codex (El Escorial MS 519). This collection has been edited and published by Muhammad Ridwan al-Dayya, *Rasā’il Ibn Abī al-Khiṣāl* (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 1987). Other notable examples of such preservation of official documents can be seen from similar codices dating from the Almohad era (El MS 1919, f. 1r-7v; Hassaniyya MS 4752). Several of these have been edited and published in Ahmad Azzawi, *Rasā’il Muwaḥḥidiyya: majmū’a jadīda*, 2 vols. (Quneitra: Manshurat Kulliyat al-Adab wa al-Ulum al-Insaniyya bi al-Quneitra, 1995), which incorporates the documents previously published by E. Lévi-Provençal, *Documents inédits d’histoire almohade: Fragments manuscrits du Legajo 1919 du fonds arabe de l’Escorial, publiés et traduits avec une introduction et des notes* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1928), and Pascal Buresi and Hicham El Aallaoui (trans. Travis Bruce), *Governing the empire provincial administration in the Almohad Caliphate (1224-1269) : critical edition, translation, and study of Manuscript 4752 of the Hassaniyya Library in Rabat containing 77 taqāḍīm (“appointments”)* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 245-497. For other surviving collections of official documents and literary epistles from the Almoravid and Almohad era, see El Escorial MS 488 and El Escorial MS 538.

function of providing students of the secretarial arts with models to emulate as they composed their own epistolary, ensuring the transmission of knowledge about this craft to subsequent generations. As the compilation of letters and decrees authored by Abū al-‘Alā’ Muḥammad b. al-Murābiṭ al-Murādī (d. 663/1265) illustrates, many of these works often incorporated personal correspondence (*rasā’il ikhwāniyya*) between scholar-officials as well as more official documents (*rasā’il dīwāniyya*).<sup>134</sup> This tradition continued into Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own day, when he was tasked during the early 740s/1340s with preserving some of Ibn al-Jayyāb’s official correspondence, in his (no longer extant) *Tāfah man Jamm wa Nuqtat man Yamm* and the recently-discovered *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*. It was his commitment to the preservation of official records and documents that he composed as Nasrid chancellor that underpinned Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own authorship of two compilations of his chancery production and personal correspondence, the *Kunāsāt al-Dukkān* and the *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*. While his composition of these works suggests that there were repositories of documents in the Alhambra, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s extensive administrative-intellectual network of scholars and functionaries was the primary means through which he was provided with valuable access to official documents from previous generations.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of his various works of history, biography and epistolography is his meticulous preservation of these texts, which ranged from diplomatic correspondence to *ijāzas* and royal decrees.<sup>135</sup> Whenever possible, Ibn al-Khaṭīb notes the specific characteristics of the document and the circumstances in which he encountered it. While the preservation of Andalusī poetry by Ibn al-Khaṭīb throughout his works has been noted by

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<sup>134</sup> Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. al-Murābiṭ al-Murādī, *Zawāhir al-Fikr wa Jawāhir al-Fiqr* (Casablanca: Matba‘at al-Najah al-Jadida, 2010), 2 vols., ed. Ahmad al-Misbahi. This work preserves many of the epistles and letters of leading scholar-officials from the mid-7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, including Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Ibn ‘Amīra and b. al-Jinān al-Mursī.

<sup>135</sup> J. Vallé Bermejo, “Un privilegio granadino del siglo XIII,” *Al-Andalus* 29 (1964), pp. 232–242.

scholars,<sup>136</sup> less attention has been devoted to the Granadan chancellor's concern with doing the same in the case of many administrative and royal documents that he encountered. with A notable example of his concern with the incorporation of official documents is his preservation of an otherwise lost royal decree of investiture (dated Dhū-l Ḥijja 12 643/April 30 1246) from the reign of Muḥammad I which he states had been shown to him by his teacher Abū al-Barakāt al-Balaḥḥī (waqafanī shaykhunā Abū al-Barakāt al-Balaḥḥī 'ala ṣahīr sulṭānī ṣadr 'an al-amīr al-Ghālib bi-llāh).<sup>137</sup> Similarly, Ibn al-Khaṭīb preserves an official letter relating to the conquest of Quesada in 695/1296 written by Ibn al-Ḥakīm on behalf Muḥammad II, which had been in the possession of the former's son, Abū Bakr b. al-Ḥakīm, one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's teachers.<sup>138</sup> The possession of this document by Abū Bakr b. al-Ḥakīm illustrates that chancery correspondence, like other literary writings, were preserved by a particular chancellor (and their family and students) for several decades after their composition. The reference to the various official documents of Muḥammad II bearing his own signature (*tawqī'*) being in the possession of different individuals (*wa tawqī'uhu yashudhdhu 'an al-iḥṣā' wa bi-ayday al-nās ilā hadhā al-'ahd al-kathīr min dhālika*), with Ibn al-Khaṭīb quoting from a number of them, appears to reinforce this point.<sup>139</sup> A similar anecdote describes how the chief judge of Granada al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī requested one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's chancery epistles (a letter sent from Granada to the Medina) from the Nasrid poet-prince Ibn al-Aḥmar, a copy of which he owned.<sup>140</sup> Moreover, the disparate preservation of Nasrid documents within various literary works across both Iberia and North Africa between the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> centuries indicates the dispersal of these epistles

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<sup>136</sup> Victor de Castro León, "Ibn al-Jaṭīb y la poesía: El Kitāb A'mal al-a'lām, ejemplo de antología poética de al-Andalus," *Anaquel de Estudios Árabes* 28 (2017), pp. 51–77.

<sup>137</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 419–421.

<sup>138</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 465–473.

<sup>139</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 558; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 76.

<sup>140</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 91.



and their widespread transmission. An important example is the official decree appointing Abū Yahyā b. ‘Āṣim as chief judge of Granada, composed in Ṣafar 857/February 1453, which was uncovered by al-Maqqarī in Tlemcen during the late 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century and fully preserved within his *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*.<sup>141</sup>

What motivated Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s careful preservation of these documents and epistles? While it is possible that he did so in order to demonstrate his extensive ties and close relationship with various members of Granada’s scholarly and political elite, this alone does not suffice as an explanation. Perhaps the most important factor was his attempt to establish his own authoritative role as the kingdom’s leading historian and his works as an archive for the kingdom’s history. This is demonstrated most clearly by his own declaration, in his preface to the *Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, that he was the best-positioned individual to write a history of the Nasrid kingdom and its rulers because he was “the bard (literally: Juhayna<sup>142</sup>) of their histories, the axis around which their affairs revolve and the archive of their house” (*idh kuntu Juhayna akhbārihim wa quṭb madārihim wa zimām dārihim*).<sup>143</sup> The explicit reference to himself as the “*zimām*” of the Nasrid dynasty illustrates the importance of his own role as a historian in reinforcing his privileged position within Granada. This multivalent term was utilized here not only to indicate his role as a register or archive<sup>144</sup> of the Nasrids, but also plays upon the broader connotations of the term, which literally means “bridle,” and its implications of power and authority. Moreover, given the fiscal dimensions of the word—with the *dīwān al-zimām* being one of the traditional financial

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<sup>141</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 172–179.

<sup>142</sup> This is in reference to the Arab tribe of Juhayna, a subset of the Quḍā’a confederation, that was renowned in Islamic tradition as accomplished poets and repositories for the deeds and histories of the Arabs, which led to the aphorism during the classical Arabic period that “From Juhayna come the truthful and certain reports” (*wa ‘inda Juhayna al-khabar al-yaqīn*).

<sup>143</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 41.

<sup>144</sup> The usage of *zimām* in the sense of “written record” or “register” is attested throughout Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s writings, as in his description of a book in the personal library of the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century Granadan judge Abū Ja’far Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Mas’ada (d. 699/1300) (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 165).

bureaus in early Islamic history—its usage was also intended to invoke Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own control over the treasury and taxation in the Nasrid kingdom. This proclamation indicates the manner in which he viewed and represented his three key roles within Granada—as chancellor, chief minister and treasurer—as being interrelated. Moreover, it reflects his own understanding that his own work constituted an archive which preserved official documents, thereby acting as a repository of cultural, political and dynastic memory. It was not only handwritten texts related to Granada that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was interested in preserving. Both the “Comprehensive History” and the “Resplendence of the Full Moon” incorporate epigraphic inscriptions that Ibn al-Khaṭīb claims to have encountered throughout his career and travels in both al-Andalus and North Africa. He would often remark on the circumstances in which he encountered a particular object or monument, provide details about its location and often reproduce the text of the inscription. The most illustrative example of this was his transcription of the epitaphs inscribed on the tombs of the Nasrid rulers Muḥammad I,<sup>145</sup> Muḥammad III,<sup>146</sup> Naṣr,<sup>147</sup> Ismā‘īl I,<sup>148</sup> Muḥammad IV,<sup>149</sup> and Yūsuf I,<sup>150</sup> the last one being penned by Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself. He also incorporated the

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<sup>145</sup> “This is the tomb of the greatest of rulers, the Glory of Islam, the Adornment of Creation, the Pride of Night and Day, the Savior of the Muslim Nation, the Axis of the Faith, the Light of the Divine Law, the Protector of the Prophetic Tradition, the Sword of Truth, the Protector of all beings, the Lion of War, the Destroyer of the Enemies, the one who sets things in order, the frontier warrior, the Destroyer of Armies, the Annihilator of Tyrants, the one who triumphs over disbelievers and rebels, the Commander of the Faithful, the Leader of the Rightly-guided and the Pious, the Defender of the Faith, the most illustrious of kings and sultans, al-Ghalib bi-llah, the Holy Warrior Abū‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn Naṣr al-Ansārī. May God raise him to greatest heights of salvation and place him alongside the blessed prophets and the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous saints. He was born and had the mercy of God Almighty bestowed on him in 591 A.H. [1195 A.D.] and he died on Friday after the afternoon prayer in 29th Jumādā II 671 [January 21st 1273]. Praise to Him whose authority and dominion is eternal and who perseveres forever. There is no God but He, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful” (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, 74–75). He also provides the obverse side of the funerary inscription, written in verse, which essentially summarizes the prose.

<sup>146</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 555–556; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, 94–95.

<sup>147</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 341–342; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, 102–104.

<sup>148</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 393–394; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, 113–114.

<sup>149</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 541–542; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, 122–123.

<sup>150</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 333–336; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, 135–138.

epitaphs of the tombs of the Nasrid noblemen Abū Sa‘īd Faraj (father of Ismā‘īl I)<sup>151</sup> and Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Ibrāhīm b. Ishqalyūla.<sup>152</sup>

The writing of history, which incorporated official documents, was among the most important avenues through which Ibn al-Khaṭīb articulated a comprehensive vision of Nasrid politics, history and society. As discussed in Chapter 1, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s interest in the “science of history” (*‘ilm al-tārīkh*) was itself encouraged by many of his teachers (including his own father) in the Nasrid chancery, who were described as experts in history. This discipline of knowledge was viewed as a particularly important scholarly pursuit among court secretaries, a fact which was underpinned by their immersion in the world of belles-lettres (*adab*) as well as the utility of historical knowledge for statecraft. Several scholars have observed the close convergence between historical writing and ruling elites in the medieval Islamic world from about the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century onwards, with Konrad Hirschler stating that it was “this closer connection between power and knowledge [that] brought about a stronger interest in governance as the main subject of historical inquiry.”<sup>153</sup> This trend is particularly apparent in the Islamic world and medieval Europe during the late Middle Ages, when the writing of history, particularly dynastic and court histories, and the institution of the chancery were closely tied together due to royal patronage. [quick overview of history writing in al-Andalus since Umayyad period; draw on Benaboud book] As is evident from the fact that most important works of historiography in the Islamic world continued to be composed by chancellors and court secretaries between the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries, with Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh and al-Qalqashandī being only the most notable examples, this trend continued throughout the late medieval and

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<sup>151</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 244–246.

<sup>152</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 378–379.

<sup>153</sup> Hirschler, *Medieval Arabic Historiography*, p. 14.

early modern period.<sup>154</sup> One of the most important examples of a scholar-minister in Andalusī history, Abū Marwān ‘Abd al-Malik b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Malik b. Shuhayd (d. 393/1002), the chief minister of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III and al-Manṣūr, was described as a learned historian (*kana awḥada al-nās bi l-taqaddum fī ‘ilm al-khabar wa al-tārīkh*) who authored a comprehensive history of the Islamic world from the mid-1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century until his own day.<sup>155</sup> Another forerunner to Ibn al-Khaṭīb may be sought in the figure of Abū Marwān ‘Abd al-Malik b. Idrīs al-Jazīrī (d. 394/1004), a leading secretary, scholar and poet within the Umayyad and Amirid court who exercised a considerable degree of executive authority while heavily shaping the intellectual culture of the period.<sup>156</sup> The historian and scholar Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥumaydī also authored a significant handbook instructing secretaries on the proper method of composing letters and documents.<sup>157</sup> The history of these figures demonstrates the close linkage between the chancery and the composition of historical chronicles (and biographical dictionaries) throughout Andalusī history. The case of Ibn al-Khaṭīb provides us with the opportunity to closely explore the manner in which the writing of history, the articulation of dynastic ideology and the buttressing of the political authority of these chancellors were closely connected in the Nasrid era.

In a recent article, Kaya Şahin, writing about the role of bureaucrats in historiographical production in the 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman Empire, offers a productive way of thinking about

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<sup>154</sup> For a comprehensive study of the phenomenon of the chancellor-historian in the early modern Ottoman context, see Kaya Şahin, *In the Service of the Ottoman Empire: Celālzāde Muştafā, Bureaucrat and Historian* (Chicago: University of Chicago PhD Dissertation, 2007).

<sup>155</sup> Al-Ḥumaydī, *Jadhwat al-Iqtibās*, p. 404; Ibn Bashkuwāl, *al-Şila*, 1: 451–452; Ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī, *al-Mughrib fī Ḥulā al-Maghrib*, 1: 139–140. This was the son of the previously mentioned Abū ‘Umar Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Malik b. ‘Umar b. Shuhayd, who was the first to hold the title of “Bearer of the Two Offices” (*Dhū l-Wizāratayn*) in al-Andalus.

<sup>156</sup> Al-Ḥumaydī, *Jadhwat al-Iqtibās*, pp. 404–406; Ibn Bashkuwāl, *al-Şila*, 1: 452–453; Ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī, *al-Mughrib fī Ḥulā al-Maghrib*, 1: 244–245. For a study of this figure’s life and writings, see Yasir Salama Abu Ta‘ma, *Khātim Bulaghā’ Kuttāb al-Andalus: Abū Marwān ‘Abd al-Malik al-Jazīrī* (394H/1004M) (Jerash, Jordan: al-Jinan, 2009) and Ahmad Abd al-Qadir Salahīyya, *Shi‘r Abī Marwān al-Jazīrī al-Andalusī* (Damascus: Dar al-Maktabi, 1997).

<sup>157</sup> Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Futūḥ al-Ḥumaydī, *Tashīl al-Sabīl ilā Ta‘alum al-Tarsīl* (Cairo: Matba‘at Dar al-Kutub wa al-Watha’iq al-Qawmiyya, 2014), eds. Abd al-Hamid Muhammad Shu‘ayb and Ahmad Ahmad Mujahid.

these works in a manner that reaches beyond positivistic and empirical approaches when he argues that, within these courtly and bureaucratic contexts, “history writing [was] a dialectical and dialogical activity that both influenced and was influenced by the political, cultural and ideological concerns of a specific period.”<sup>158</sup> In addition to demonstrating how a 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman secretary and chancellor (Celālzāde Muṣṭafā) utilized the written word to carefully craft a particular image of royal power and legitimation, Şahin illustrates how his subject’s main historical work (the *Ṭabaqātül-Memālik ve Deracātül-Mesālik*) “is the vessel for Muṣṭafā’s selective remembering and creative narration of his personal and professional observations and experiences.”<sup>159</sup> As in the case of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, this Ottoman scholar-minister incorporated “official” documents, including royal decrees and diplomatic correspondence, into his historical chronicle, indicating the interrelationship between bureaucratic function and the composition of history.<sup>160</sup> Moreover, both men spent a significant amount of their later years heavily editing their earlier compositions and compiling their own collections of documents in epistolographical collections. Şahin observes that “by using the same flowery language in imperial correspondence, peace treaties, fermāns [decrees], and history, Muṣṭafā produced and propagated a form of expression that unified bureaucratic practice and history,” an aspect which also characterizes Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s writings.”<sup>161</sup> To borrow Şahin’s phrasing, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s works constitute a “personal testimony.”<sup>162</sup> Through his frequent narration of his own experiences and the invocation of his authority as both scholar and statesman, the insertion of

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<sup>158</sup> Kaya Şahin, “Imperialism, Bureaucratic Consciousness and the Historian’s Craft: A Reading of Celālzāde Muṣṭafā’s *Ṭabaqātül-Memālik ve Deracātül-Mesālik*,” in *Writing History at the Ottoman Court: Editing the Past, Fashioning the Future* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), eds. H. Erdem Çipa and Emine Fetvacı, p. 40.

<sup>159</sup> Şahin, “Imperialism, Bureaucratic Consciousness and the Historian’s Craft,” p. 41.

<sup>160</sup> Şahin, “Imperialism, Bureaucratic Consciousness and the Historian’s Craft,” p. 41.

<sup>161</sup> Şahin, “Imperialism, Bureaucratic Consciousness and the Historian’s Craft,” p. 47.

<sup>162</sup> Şahin, “Imperialism, Bureaucratic Consciousness and the Historian’s Craft,” pp. 48–50.

himself into the historical narrative (often through the utilization of the first person voice), and the strong judgements of historical figures and events, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's historiographical writings are imbued with an important autobiographical dimension.

It was Ibn al-Khaṭīb's privileged access to official correspondence, royal documents and leading individuals in the court (including royal women like Faṭima bt. al-Aḥmar) which enabled him to compose his earliest historical chronicle, a three-volume history of the Nasrids entitled "The Masterpiece of the Age: A History of the Nasrid Dynasty" (*Ṭurfat al- 'Aṣr fī Tārīkh Dawlat Banī Naṣr*), already been completed before 742/1341, while still a secretary in the chancery.<sup>163</sup> Following his appointment to the offices of chief minister and chancellor Ibn al-Khaṭīb, drawing upon his access to these resources and following the example of his predecessor Ibn al-Jayyāb, continued to compose genealogical and historical works devoted to the Nasrid dynasty.

For Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the craft of history (*al-fann al-tarīkhī*) was "one of the ultimate objectives and goals of humanity" and among the most noble of human endeavors, a fact to which "reason and scripture (*'aql wa dīn*) both bear witness."<sup>164</sup> Throughout his works, he sanctifies the written word, invoking the Pen referred to in Chapter 96 of the Qur'an as the object through which the Divine communicated knowledge to humanity. The fact that he identifies the "Pen" with both the Aristotelian notion of the active intellect as well as the physical instrument of writing provides unique insight into the philosophical importance that he ascribed to very act of writing. The composition of history required an immense knowledge of the rhetorical arts. Since the earliest centuries of Islamic history, well-crafted language and eloquent speech was an incredibly distinguished quality and characteristic. Rhetoric and eloquence were identified in the Qur'an as a divine gift to humanity, second only to the act of creation and the revelation of

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<sup>163</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufādat al-Jirāb*, 2: 368; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manzūm wa al-Manthūr*, p. 101.

<sup>164</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 80-81.

scripture itself.<sup>165</sup> Moreover, traditions (hadith) ascribed to Muḥammad were frequently narrated which praised skillful language, eloquence and the rhetorical arts, identified with the Qur’anic term *al-bayān*, and described the persuasive power of rhetoric as a form of magic.<sup>166</sup> The ubiquity of Greco-Arabic philosophical precepts such as “knowledge is the pillar of the soul and eloquence/rhetoric (*al-bayān*) is the pillar of knowledge” further underscored the importance of skillful language during the classical Islamic period, including in al-Andalus.<sup>167</sup> According to Andalusī litterateur Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, writing in the Umayyad caliphal court during the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century, eloquence and skilled rhetoric were fundamental skills and tools for statecraft, particularly in the case of ambassadors and royal courtiers since “the magical qualities of eloquence and skillful rhetoric (*siḥr al-bayān*) are such that they greatly influence the soul and move hearts.”<sup>168</sup> The Mamluk scholar-official al-Nuwayrī incorporates a significant exposition of the importance of rhetoric and eloquence as part of his discussion of the repertoire of skills that secretaries were expected to possess.<sup>169</sup>

The persuasive power of rhetoric is reinforced throughout Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own corpus of writings, including his historiographical production. Nasrid courtiers also frequently invoked the power of rhetoric and eloquence, often describing them as a distinction and blessing bestowed by God upon individuals, with ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Hudhayl al-Fazārī beginning his treatise

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<sup>165</sup> “The Most Merciful. He taught the Qur’an, created man and taught him clear and eloquent speech (*al-bayān*)” (Q. 55: 1–4).

<sup>166</sup> As in the hadith “Verily, magic can be found amidst eloquence and skilled rhetoric” (*inna min al-bayān li-siḥr*), narrated within a variety of works during the classical Islamic period, including in al-Andalus (see, for example, Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, *al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, 2: 102–103 and Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Fukāhāt al-asmār wa-mudhhabāt al-akhbār wa-al-ash’ār*, p. 67).

<sup>167</sup> Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, *al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, 2: 103. Similar ideas were echoed by early Abbasid court secretaries, such as Sahl b. Harūn, who was alleged to have proclaimed that “the intellect guided the soul, knowledge guided the intellect, and eloquence/rhetoric (*al-bayān*) was that which made knowledge intelligible and accessible” (Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, *al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, 2: 103).

<sup>168</sup> Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, *al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, 2: 102.

<sup>169</sup> Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 7: 6–13.

on poetry and political aphorisms titled *Fukāhāt al-asmār wa-mudhhabāt al-akhbār wa-al-ash'ār* by expressing his gratitude “to God who bestowed upon us the gift of eloquence and skilled rhetoric (*al-bayān al-mu'rib al-laṭīf al-mughrib*), the one who made poetry a form of wisdom (*hikma*) and a definitive proof (*ḥujja*) that illustrates the truth of rhetoric and clear speech,” proclaiming that these were all gifts acquired through intuition and inspiration (*ilhām*).<sup>170</sup> The strong defense of poetry as a legitimate pursuit and its promotion as a pre-eminent form of speech and eloquence was also characteristic of the writings of the Andalusī secretary and litterateur Ibn al-Aḥmar in North Africa.<sup>171</sup>

According to Ibn al-Khatib, the act of writing history, in particular, was a sacred duty and it was the sole means through which knowledge, religion and law were preserved among humanity. It was only as a result of written history, Ibn al-Khatib asserts, that the examples of previous nations and civilizations were transmitted to subsequent generations. This was echoed by his student Ibn Simāk, writing several decades later, who defends history as “the only reason for the preservation of the example of virtuous statesmen.”<sup>172</sup> In addition to defending the utility of the discipline of history, Ibn al-Khatib also devotes particular attention to the method of history, insisting upon the importance of verification, credible sources and the accurate transmission of information. Like his contemporary Ibn Khaldun, the insistence upon certain foundational principles and norms for the writing of history was a distinct aspect of his historiographical theory. The writing of history, which incorporated official documents, was among the most important avenues through which Ibn al-Khaṭīb articulated a comprehensive

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<sup>170</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Fukāhāt al-asmār wa-mudhhabāt al-akhbār wa-al-ash'ār*, p. 61. This is also repeated in the author's earlier work titled *ʿAyn al-Adab wa al-Siyāsa*, where he thanks God for “bestowing the gift of eloquence and skilled rhetoric (*al-balāgha wa al-bayān*)” (b. Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *ʿAyn al-Adab wa al-Siyāsa*, p. 7)

<sup>171</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 32–66.

<sup>172</sup> Ibn Simāk al-ʿĀmilī, *Kitāb al-Ḥullal al-Mawshiyya*, p. 56.



vision of politics, history and society. This is most evident from his universal chronicle of Islamic history, known as the “Deeds of the Notables,” composed during the last three years of his life. Within this work, which incorporates numerous documents and texts, he utilizes historical narrative in order to examine the question of the delegation of political authority across the centuries and in a variety of contexts. Ibn al-Khatib explores a multitude of questions within the Deeds of the Notables, including, among others, the nature of history, the centrality of law in society, the importance of a strong royal administration, and the problem of the usurpation of power by a figure other than the sovereign. The work represents the kernel of his social and political thought, providing important insights into his worldview. It is in this chronicle, for example, that he emphasizes the importance of the urban populace as an important agent of social and political change within Islamic societies.

As a self-described “archive” of Nasrid history, a status which he reinforced by interspersing numerous official documents and epistles from the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century throughout his historical works, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s historiographical ambition culminated in the monumental “The Comprehensive History of Granada” (*al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa*), a work which brought together the threads of biography, historical theory, epistolary, autobiography and political thought, weaving together a rich tapestry of the literary, social, political history of the city of Granada itself. While the Nasrid dynasty and the accomplishments of the kingdom’s intellectual and administrative elite received particular attention within this work, the “Comprehensive History” was written with the explicit objective of celebrating Granada as one of the greatest cities of the late medieval Islamic world. After enumerating over fifty works of local history composed throughout the Islamic world, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states his reasons for composing the “Comprehensive History” as follows:

“After witnessing the numerous works of history lovingly and loyally dedicated by scholars to their homeland (*waṭan*)...I was possessed with a strong sense of pride (*ḥamiyya*) and partisanship (*‘asabiyya*) for my own people (*qawmī*), a feeling that cannot be considered blameworthy by any religious or moral standards, and realized that this city (*ḥaḍra*)—which has been bestowed by such undeniably immense bounties and glory from God—has been chosen by God as a borderland (*thaghr*) of Islam, and populated by the Arab notables, the tribal kin of His Prophet. Moreover, it has the distinction of belonging to the middle clime, being blessed with flowing rivers, a thriving large population and entire forests of trees...It was this love for my homeland (*ḥubb al-waṭan*) that led me to offer this work as a service, and I prayed that I would both have the health and sufficient time away from my administrative duties to complete it...God alone knows the purity of my intentions and that I have sought neither worldly benefit (*dunyā*) nor power (*jāh*) by writing this work but, rather, I viewed this endeavor as a duty imposed on me alone and have sought to execute it to the best of my abilities.”<sup>173</sup>

This prefatory remark, in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb valorizes Granada and its inhabitants as being entitled to a historical work that celebrates their deeds and virtues, sheds important light on the project itself. Unlike his introduction to the *Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, in which his own political role as Nasrid chief minister and chancellor are emphasized, Ibn al-Khaṭīb repeatedly insists in this passage that the work should not be conceived in political terms nor as an effort to reap the benefits of dynastic patronage, but simply as a service to his homeland. While there is little reason to doubt his commitment to representing Granada as one of the Islamic world’s illustrious cities, the relationship between his composition of the work and his own authority as Granada’s leading statesman is more complex than he claims. As in the case of the *Muqaddima* of his younger contemporary Ibn Khaldūn, the *Iḥāṭa* defies traditional genre classifications and reinforces the inseparability between the realms of historical-biographical writing, notions of sovereignty, and a distinct vision of society and politics. As his prefatory remarks to both the *Iḥāṭa* and the *Lamḥa al-Badriyya* demonstrate, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was strongly aware of the power of historical writing in shaping the legacy of both places and people. Through the broader political

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<sup>173</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 81-86.

narratives that he constructed, the individuals whom he chose to valorize or vilify, and the taxonomies that he employed, the *Iḥāṭa* illustrates the interrelationship between historiography, genealogy, authority and intellectual networks during the Nasrid period. It is a work that provides immense insight into his own working method and assumptions as a historian.

The *Iḥāṭa* can be divided into three broad sections: 1) a topographical, geographical and sociological overview of the Nasrid kingdom; 2) a biographical dictionary of the leading individuals who inhabited the city between the 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries; and 3) Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own autobiography, which incorporates copies of his most important chancery decrees, epistolary and poetry. The very structure of the work illustrates that Ibn al-Khaṭīb envisioned it as project that was closely tied to his own life, political function and broader intellectual legacy. It also reflected his own understanding of the relationship between urban space, history and politics. The work itself marks the culmination of historiography as a literary endeavor and discipline of knowledge in the Nasrid context and has been recognized as among the most significant works of history produced in al-Andalus during the Middle Ages. Just as Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own autobiography was written in such a manner that his family's story was represented as mapping neatly onto that of the major developments in Andalusī history (arriving as conquerors, serving the Umayyads, fleeing from Castilian conquests in order to avoid Mudéjar status, and serving as judges and scribes in the Almohad administration before finally their fortunes with the early Nasrid emirs), so too did the *Iḥāṭa* exhibit a similar tendency to weave himself, his intellectual network and those he envisioned as his predecessors (scribes, scholars and scholar-functionaries) into the political, social and cultural history of Granada.

The science of history, like the rhetorical arts and epistolary, was viewed as a particularly important scholarly pursuit among court secretaries. A close reading of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's historical

and biographical writings reveals the value that he placed upon functionaries, administrators and secretaries having a thorough knowledge of history. Throughout his *Iḥāṭa*, leading administrators in the Nasrid kingdom, including figures as diverse as the judge Abū Bakr b. Shibrīn and the Castilian-born chamberlain Riḍwān, are referred to by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as leading authorities on history, while previous chief ministers such as Ibn al-Ḥājj were singled out for their encyclopedic knowledge of the history of Christian Spain. Ibn al-Khaṭīb's biography of Riḍwān, who was represented as the ideal statesman, is particularly instructive in this regard, with the latter being described as

“fearless and steadfast in the face of crisis, a follower of the Prophet's example...attaining a mastery over the major works of history, possessing an immense knowledge of jurisprudence, hadith, geography and the conditions of various countries, an expert in the practice of politics, a benefactor of scholars, refraining from indulgence and complaisance, rarely engaging in dissimulation or hypocrisy, averse to heretics, balancing the letter of the law (*al-ẓāhir*) with the esoteric (*al-bāṭin*), moderate in food and drink.”<sup>174</sup>

While it is unclear whether Riḍwān was truly such a polymath, his representation as an intellectual whose knowledge encompassed the various Islamic sciences as well as the geography, politics and history of various kingdoms demonstrates that, for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, a mastery of history was an indispensable skill for statesmen to possess. Within his own writings, Ibn Simāk also placed a similar emphasis on history, with his *Rawnaq al-Taḥbīr*, citing the Abbasid scholar-vizier Abū ‘Alī b. Muqla (d. 328/940), requiring secretaries and chancellors to “have an immense knowledge of the deeds of kings, and the histories of peoples and states, as well as having a strong grasp of literary aphorisms and poetry” (*akhbār al-mulūk wa al-siyar wa al-duwal wa al-tawārīkh wa al-amthāl wa al-ash‘ar*).<sup>175</sup> This emphasis is also reflected in Ibn

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<sup>174</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 508.

<sup>175</sup> Ibn Simāk, *Rawnaq al-Taḥbīr*, BNRM K 1121, p. 16.

Riḍwān's *al-Shuhub al-Lāmi'a*, which lists a knowledge of history, among other disciplines of knowledge, as a pre-requisite for royal secretaries.<sup>176</sup> Writing half a century earlier in the Mamluk Sultanate, the scholar-official Shihāb al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333), asserts that a detailed knowledge of history (*al-tawārīkh wa ma'rifat akhbār al-duwal*) was among the skills that court secretaries were expected to possess: "And secretaries should familiarize themselves with the history of polities, the reigns of kings and their policies, their accomplishments and military stratagems in order to attain a holistic understanding of the experiences of past rulers [in order to extract lessons]." <sup>177</sup>

It is this utility and functional value of history for statecraft that warrants closer examination. For Ibn al-Khaṭīb, a mastery of history of both the Nasrid kingdom as well as neighboring countries was an indispensable skill for statesmen to possess, especially since these individuals were responsible for the internal governance of the kingdom, the drafting of treaties and royal decrees, and the representation of the kingdom's interests as ambassadors. Ibn al-Khaṭīb's dynastic chronicle, the *Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, indicates the concern with diplomacy in particular by including a brief overview of developments in each of the neighboring kingdoms (Castile, Aragón, Portugal, Fez, Tlemcen and Tunis) after a description of the reign of each Nasrid sovereign. At times, these sections run several pages long, as when Ibn al-Khaṭīb provides a lengthy narrative of the various actors and developments of the Castilian civil war during the reign of Pedro I (r. 1350–1369). Such historical information allowed Ibn al-Khaṭīb to situate the reign of each Nasrid emir within a broader political context while recording the history and developments of these kingdoms for the purposes of providing future secretaries and chancellors with useful information that would guide their correspondence and diplomacy with

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<sup>176</sup> Ibn Riḍwān, *al-Shuhub al-Lāmi'a*, p. 193.

<sup>177</sup> Al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 7: 29.

these states. The production of the “Poetic Enumeration of Dynasties” (*Raḡm al-Ḥulal fī Naẓm al-Duwal*), a chronicle written in verse to facilitate memorization, of the various kingdoms that had reigned in the Islamic world from the 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century to his own day, served a similarly practical purpose. Rather than viewing these historiographical endeavors solely as a reflection of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own interest in the rise and fall of dynasties, they should be understood as an attempt to integrate a knowledge of history into the practice of statecraft.

Extraordinarily, Ibn al-Khatib incorporated a substantial section on the history of the Iberian Christian kingdoms of Aragon, Castile and Portugal within his “Deeds of the Notables.”<sup>178</sup> This short history was, in fact, an abridged translation of various Castilian chronicles. The most important was the *Estoria de España*, the monumental historiographical and political project conceived by Alfonso X of Castile-Leon during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century. The manner in which he acquired this work further highlights the importance of intellectual networks in courtly circles, as well as the intersection between knowledge, itinerancy and statecraft during this period. During the 750s/1350s, the eminent Jewish physician-philosopher Josef b. Waqqār<sup>179</sup> served as the Castilian ambassador to Granada. The overlapping intellectual interests between this individual and Ibn al-Khatib, especially in the realms of mysticism, philosophy and medicine, as well as their shared identity as statesmen led to the formation of a close bond between the two men. During one of Ibn Waqqār’s diplomatic missions to the Alhambra, Ibn al-Khaṭīb specifically requested that he provide him with a written Arabic work that accurately outlined the political history of the Christian kingdoms.<sup>180</sup> Ibn Waqqār, drawing heavily upon the *Estoria de España*, composed a short treatise on the subject and it is this work—along with Ibn

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<sup>178</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 156r–160v.

<sup>179</sup> For the Ibn Waqqār family, see *Medieval Iberia: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Routledge, 2003), ed. E. Michael Gerli, p. 422.

<sup>180</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 156r.

al-Khatib's commentary—that was incorporated in full into the “Deeds of the Notables.”<sup>181</sup>

Rather than viewing these historiographical endeavors solely as a reflection of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own interest in the rise and fall of dynasties, they should be understood as an attempt to integrate a knowledge of history into the practice of statecraft.

Ibn al-Khaṭīb's concern with preserving a history of the political development of neighboring kingdoms in order to provide a historical corpus to which Nasrid functionaries and diplomats, as well as sovereigns and their chief ministers, could refer is best exemplified by his detailed treatment of the Castilian civil war within a number of his works. This episode serves as a useful case study for exploring the close interrelationship between Ibn al-Khatib's roles as historian and statesman. It reflects his close attention to the particulars of political developments in Castile, his incorporation of detailed information drawn from a wide network of informants, including Castilian functionaries, and his representation of these details. Describing the accession of Pedro I in Muḥarram 751/March 1350, whose lineage as far back as Fernando III is provided, Ibn al-Khaṭīb explains that one of his first acts as sovereign was to establish a peace treaty with the Nasrids.<sup>182</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb stresses that this peace treaty was necessitated by the civil war in Castile and Pedro's insecure position due to his rebellious nobles (referred to as *khawārij*), the root causes of which he identifies as the murder of Leonor Núñez de Guzmán (d. 1351)—identified as the mother of Pedro's half-siblings—and the power struggle with his half-brother “the count Enrique” (*akhīhi Andrīq al-mad'ū bi al-qund*).<sup>183</sup> The narrative is interspersed with details about the alliance between Pedro I and Muḥammad V and the ongoing war between Castile and Aragón. Ibn al-Khaṭīb asserts that “the majority of [Pedro's] subjects' loyalties and

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<sup>181</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 156r–160v.

<sup>182</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 22.

<sup>183</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 22–23, 42.

sympathies were with his brother Enrique, a fact which led various cities and towns to actively rebel and pledge allegiance to this individual, forcing Pedro to seek refuge in his capital (*dār mulkihi*) Sevilla.”<sup>184</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb explains that the rebellion against Pedro in Sevilla in 767/1366 forced the Castilian sovereign to abandon this city and turn to his Muslim allies, who invaded the kingdom “and seized control of a great part of the frontier fortresses and towns, thanks be to God,” thereby providing the specific political context for the Nasrid campaign against Córdoba, Ubeda and Jaén that led to the reassertion of control by Muḥammad V over many of the territories lost to Alfonso XI several decades earlier.<sup>185</sup> The narrative continues by explaining that the lack of support from his Portuguese and Galician allies led Pedro to cross the sea and seek refuge in the town of Bayonne, located beyond the boundaries of Castile, where he sought the aid of “[Edward], the son of the King of England, known as Braqsīn” (*al-ma’rūf bi-braqsīn*)<sup>186</sup> who served as Pedro’s intermediary with the English sovereign (Edward III).<sup>187</sup> While initially reluctant to aid Pedro, Ibn al-Khaṭīb explains, the English king eventually relented and allowed his son to support the exiled Castilian ruler.<sup>188</sup> The Nasrid historian goes on to describe the alliance in the following terms:

seventeen days later both Pedro I and the aforementioned English prince (*al-brins*) returned to Castile in the company of a large number of nobles and knights, composed of many of [the Black Prince’s] own retinue and relatives. This is in addition to the large sums of money that they loaned to Pedro—two hundred thousand gold dinars from the King of England alone, to say nothing of the other amounts—and kept as hostage Pedro’s children and royal treasury to ensure that the latter would maintain his promises. Each knight in Pedro’s army received one gold dinar every three days. There were more than thirty thousand knights gathered at Pamplona but crossing into Spain was complicated by the fact that

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<sup>184</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 42-43.

<sup>185</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 43.

<sup>186</sup> I have been unable to identify this reference, but the possibility that it represents a garbled Arabic rendering of “Black Prince” can be ruled out on the basis that throughout his account Ibn al-Khaṭīb utilizes this designation, referring to him as “*al-brins*.”

<sup>187</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 43.

<sup>188</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 43.



much of the country was allied with Enrique, the brother of Pedro. As a result, an agreement was established between this army and the king of Navarre to allow them to pass through his territory unimpeded. The army reached the borders of Navarre and Castile, where they were met by Enrique who was in command of a massive army, the like which had never been seen...the two armies engaged in battle on Saturday the 6<sup>th</sup> of April [1367] of the Christian [Julian] calendar, which corresponds with [5<sup>th</sup>] Sha‘bān 768.<sup>189</sup>

Although Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s dating of the Battle of Najéra (April 3 1367) is slightly inaccurate, his narrative of the events that culminated in the battle displays an extraordinary degree of familiarity with the specific details of these events and the various negotiations that took place between Pedro and his English allies.<sup>190</sup> Moreover, the Nasrid historian’s narrative of events bears close resemblance to Pero López de Ayala’s, particularly in the level of detail that he provides, while his number of 30,000 English troops and vast overestimate of the Franco-Castilian army aligns well with the account provided by Jean Froissart in his *Chroniques*. It is particularly notable that almost the entire sequence of events is told from the perspective of Pedro I and his supporters, with very little discussion of the activities of Enrique II, suggesting that his informants (unsurprisingly) belonged to the court of the former. Although no Granadan forces are known to have taken part in the Battle of Nájera, Pero López de Ayala notes that Pedro’s retinue in Burgos in 1366 consisted of several hundred Granadan knights, many of whom could easily have served as important sources of information for the Nasrid chancellor.<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 44. The account of this military engagement within the *A‘māl al-A‘lām* adds that “this battle took place at Najéra located on the outskirts of Navarre” (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al-A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 160r).

<sup>190</sup> For an extensive discussion of the context and developments of the English intervention in the Castilian civil war during the reign of Pedro I, see L.J. Andrew Villalon, “Spanish Involvement in the Hundred Years War and the Battle of Nájera,” in *The Hundred Years War: A Wider Focus* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), eds. L.J. Andrew Villalon and Donald J. Kagay, pp. 3–74; P.E. Russell, *The English Intervention in Spain and Portugal in the time of Edward III and Richard II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 95–107.

<sup>191</sup> Clara Estow, “War and Peace in Medieval Iberia: Castilian-Granadan Relations in the mid-fourteenth Century,” in *The Hundred Years War: A Wider Focus*, p. 168.

Ibn al-Khaṭīb's narration of the battle itself also reflected this intimate knowledge of events and is worth including in full:

The great Frankish army that proceeded from Europe (*al-jam‘ al-iḥranjī al-āṭī min al-arḍ al-kabīra*) were organized in three row-like infantry formations, each one aligned behind the other, with the only horsemen being their military commanders. Each of the infantry was armed with a long, wide pike that was held before them, each being fixed with an iron base on the ground behind them and aimed at their enemy and their knights. These pikes formed a protective wall around their formations, which included numerous heavily-armored archers (and only God alone could know how many there were!)...at the vanguard of this army were arrayed the Duke [John of Gaunt], the brother of the Black Prince (*al-brins*), the Black Prince and the Sulṭān [Pedro I], and the Count [John] of Armagnac (*qund darmāniyān*) and many other eminent nobles (*umarā’*). Behind all these were the knights along with their squires and servants, and towards the rear were the pack animals and mules. This army had so many banners, catapults and war machines, drums, and trumpets that to enumerate the details would require much time.

At the vanguard of the army of the Count [Enrique], the effective ruler of Castile, was his brother Sancho who led the Castilian contingent of the troops, which were so numerous that they occupied all the plains and hills around the battlefield. Behind these soldiers were arrayed fifty thousand knights adorned from head to toe with colorful armor. In the center of the army was Enrique's other brother Tello (*Naṭiyya*) who commanded a group of leading commanders and heavily-armored knights, which constituted the larger part of the army today. Behind these stood the Sulṭān Enrique surrounded by a retinue of troops. When the armies clashed, the [English] archers exacted a massive toll upon the archers and infantry of their enemy. The Castilian heavy cavalry then charged forth and broke through the enemy's lines, which led the Black Prince to charge forward and engage in battle himself, issuing a mighty battle cry...and sent a messenger to his brother in the vanguard of the army, encouraging him with the words 'if you find any weakness in yourself, remember that you are the son of the King of England.' This motivated the troops and they collectively charged forward and completely broke the Castilian heavy cavalry, slaughtering all in their path with their swords. The rest turned and fled in absolute defeat. When Enrique witnessed the defeat of his brother's forces, he charged forth himself with his Aragonese auxiliaries, yelling 'O people of Castile, my supporters, beware of bringing shame upon yourselves. Here I stand!' but this did not encourage his troops and he retreated in the company of four of his most trustworthy supporters. Enrique's most loyal followers and supporters that remained on the battlefield were either all killed or taken captive...this battle claimed the lives of over fifty thousand men. The English captured a large amount of booty, including weapons, money, and goods

and took a large number of prisoners who were ransomed for large sums. Enrique fled and took refuge in Aragón before arriving in France.”<sup>192</sup>

In addition to illustrating the close attention to detail and a concern with the political developments of neighboring kingdoms that distinguished his writings, the length of this military report, which was clearly authored by an eye-witness to the battle, and its incorporation within the “Comprehensive History,” demonstrates the broader function that the extensive narration of the Castilian civil war played within Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s historical narrative. It is quite evident that Ibn al-Khaṭīb ascribed immense significance to the Castilian civil war, a conflict in which the Nasrids were active participants. The Battle of Najéra served as the immediate background for Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s extensive discussion (and celebration) of the major Nasrid conquests between 768/1366 and 771/1369, military campaigns that he himself played a particularly important role in organizing. The discussion of the civil war provided Ibn al-Khaṭīb with the opportunity to furnish his readers with important information about other neighboring kingdoms—in this case, the English—about which they would have been largely ignorant. The emphasis on the English throughout his account, while certainly reflecting his own curiosity and knowledge about these people, demonstrates that he deemed it necessary for his contemporaries and readers, including chancellors and statesmen, to be aware of the immense power and influence of this group of people who played such an important role in Iberian politics during the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Ibn al-Khaṭīb provides a rather sympathetic portrayal of the English in the *Iḥāṭa*, describing them as

“a nation distinguished above all others in their strong commitment to the principles of loyalty and friendship, their self-debasement whenever thankful or in the arms of their lovers, just as was customary among the ancient Arabs. Their military customs are also quite distinct, with both their ordinary soldiers and commanders often fighting on foot, digging trenches into the earth, and reciting satirical ballads and songs to mock their enemies on the battlefield. Their archers have distinct heavy bows, and all are clad in heavy armor while their arrows are

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<sup>192</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 44-47.

one handspan in length and each possesses a long fletching. Each of their archers have incredibly accurate aim and their arrows can match the speed of any rapid horse. The English elite adorn themselves with jewels and have a fondness for silverware.”<sup>193</sup>

Within his later “Deeds of the Notables (*A‘māl al-A‘lām*), written in North Africa between 774/1372 and 776/1374, Ibn al-Khaṭīb describes the English as “a powerful and courageous people who reside in two big islands, one of which is 700 miles in length” and identifies them as “descendants of the Vikings (*majūs*) who raided Seville during the reign of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān II.”<sup>194</sup> Elsewhere in this work, he discusses their role during the Third Crusade, demonstrating that he had an understanding of their historic presence and their long-standing contact with Islamic world. Despite this extraordinarily provincial description of the English—which contrasts sharply with the accuracy of his earlier representation of the Black Prince and his military tactics— it is plausible that the details provided by Ibn al-Khaṭīb about the English served as an attempt to catalogue the traits, history and political allegiances of this people. In doing so, he sought to provide his contemporaries in the Islamic West with a stronger understanding of the politics of Christian Europe, whose various nations had become increasingly significant political actors in Iberian and North African history during the late Middle Ages. The works of other chancellor-historians in the Islamic world during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries, notably Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, Ibn Khaldūn and al-Qalqashandī, are marked by a similar interest in providing specific and accurate information drawn from their network of informants about the various Christian polities and peoples in the Mediterranean world and northern Europe from Antiquity to the present. As with Ibn al-Khaṭīb, however, their narratives and information about Latin Christendom tended to be an assortment of legends,

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<sup>193</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 43-44.

<sup>194</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al-A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 76r.

contemporary reports, and descriptions drawn from earlier Arabic geographical and historical writings.<sup>195</sup>

The extensive account of the Castilian civil war also served an additional purpose for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, which was to highlight the various conflicts among the Christian kingdoms of Iberia, underscoring the potential for dissension and disunity among the opponents of the Nasrids. Writing around 770/1368, when the conflict between Enrique and Pedro had entered its final phase, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that “the fires of civil war (*nār al-fitna*) continue to divide the Castilians while the lands of Islam, thanks be to God, remain united and victorious,” before declaring that “we have prolonged our discussion of the political affairs of these Christian nations not only out of curiosity but in order to instill the reader with a sense of caution and for him to draw instructive lessons from this nation’s experiences.”<sup>196</sup> This “caution” was a reference to the powerful military force that could be mobilized by the Christian powers both in Iberia and those beyond the Pyrenees, whose longbowmen and military organization impressed Ibn al-Khaṭīb, in any future conflict with the Muslim kingdoms in Iberia and North Africa. The “instructive lessons” referred to the destructive nature of dynastic struggles in devastating a kingdom’s wealth and power, while providing an opening for external forces—the Nasrids, Aragón and the English in the case of the Castilian civil war—to directly benefit from such a conflict.

The account of the civil war in Castile allowed Ibn al-Khaṭīb to highlight his own specific role in perpetuating the conflict and providing his own sovereign, Muḥammad V, with the opportunity to recapture major territories that had been lost to Alfonso XI several decades

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<sup>195</sup> For an excellent overview of medieval Arabic writing about medieval Latin Europe, see Daniel G. König, *Arabic-Islamic Views of the Latin West: Tracing the Emergence of Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

<sup>196</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 48.

earlier. His account of the conflict between Pedro and Enrique stresses that it was the military intervention of the Nasrids that enabled Pedro to politically survive for so long, and stresses that “such military assistance was granted with the intention of perpetuating the conflict (*fitna*) that had consumed the disbelievers, thereby allowing [us] to keep the enemies of the faith occupied with each other.”<sup>197</sup> Seeking to highlight how Nasrid survival was closely tied to the disunity and turmoil of the Christian kingdoms, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that “following the end of the dynastic struggle [after the assassination of Pedro], the Christians were united under one banner, all sources of their disunity being removed, and they turned their attention to [attacking] Muslim lands, calling upon all their brethren, including the King of Aragón, the King of Portugal and the King of France, to join them in doing so.”<sup>198</sup> This statement, motivated in part by his own experience combating a diverse coalition of troops from various Christian kingdoms at Algeciras in 744/1344, illustrates that, for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, it was only through an elaborate diplomatic strategy of assisting one Iberian Christian sovereign against another that the Kingdom of Granada could safeguard its existence in the face of a superior and powerful enemy. It is important to recall that Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s father, brother and many of his most important teachers had perished in battle in 741/1340 fighting against Castile. He himself had taken the field against Alfonso XI around 744/1343 and witnessed the immense military might of two united Christian kingdoms (Castile and Portugal) for himself. Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s anxieties about Castilian expansion and commitments to preserving the Nasrid kingdom were the primary motivation behind his concerted efforts to steer Nasrid policy towards closer cooperation with the North African dynasties while maintaining a broader strategy of keeping the Christian kingdoms divided. In order to highlight his own role in the crafting of this particular strategy during the reign of Pedro

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<sup>197</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 85.

<sup>198</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 86.

I, Ibn al-Khaṭīb demonstrates how he instrumentalized his considerable knowledge of the history and politics of the Christian kingdoms as part of a deliberate stratagem to ensure the perpetuation of the Castilian civil war. He specifically describes how, at the instruction of Muḥammad V, he composed a letter of advice directed to Pedro I, which

warned him against his own people and to guard himself against the machinations of those loyal to his brother while urging him to seek refuge in a fortified and secure location in order to protect his children and treasures, thereby taking his fate into his own hands. I complemented such advice and supported the prudence of my statements by citing well-known texts and famous histories. I did this in order to perpetuate the fires of strife and conflict that had consumed their lands. The king graciously accepted my advice and expressed his gratitude, choosing as his refuge the town of Carmona.<sup>199</sup>

Following this attempt to establish that his letter of advice to Pedro I was responsible for the continuation of the Castilian civil war, Ibn al-Khaṭīb explains that it was following Pedro's entrenchment in Carmona that the internal conflict within the Christian kingdoms intensified further and enabled entire detachments of Nasrid cavalry to raid Castilian territories unimpeded and seize control of large swathes of the frontier, including major towns such as Algeciras. Significantly, the full text of this letter is preserved not within Ibn al-Khatib's own works, but in the historical chronicle of the 14<sup>th</sup>-century Castilian chancellor and scholar Pero López de Ayala (d. 1407), an individual whose life, career and writings bore a remarkable resemblance to Ibn al-Khatib's.<sup>200</sup> The Castilian chronicler states that "after his victory at the Battle of Nájera, King Pedro sent letters requesting advice from a certain Muslim of Granada, who was his trustworthy

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<sup>199</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 86.

<sup>200</sup> For more on Pero López de Ayala and his works, see Michel Garcia, *Obra y personalidad del Canciller Ayala* (Madrid: Editorial Alhambra, 1983); Rica Amran ed., *Autour de Pedro López de Ayala* (Paris: Indigo, 2009); Constance L. Wilkins, *Pero López de Ayala* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989); Antonio Serrano de Haro, *El embajador Don Pero López de Ayala (1332–1407)* (Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, 2001); Germán Orduna, *El arte narrativo y poético del canciller Ayala* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1998).

friend, a great sage and philosopher and leading councilor to the King of Granada, whose name was Benahatin.”<sup>201</sup> While López de Ayala mentions Ibn al-Khaṭīb by name as the author of the letter, its contents were heavily edited to reflect Lopez de Ayala’s own historiographical and political purposes, which was to critique Pedro’s policies (since the chronicle was written in the court of Enrique II, Pedro’s half-brother and rival).<sup>202</sup> The letter of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, which was formulated in the style of a mirror for princes, was represented favorably by Lopez de Ayala as a prudent piece of advice that would have saved Castile and its people the tribulations of civil war if only its recipient had adhered to it. Significantly, the letter is also preserved independently of Lopez de Ayala’s chronicle and survives in two additional Castilian manuscripts.<sup>203</sup> Although scholars have debated about its authenticity,<sup>204</sup> the Castilian version of the letter accurately reflects many of Ibn al-Khatib’s political ideas that appear elsewhere throughout his works, with Clara Estow describing the epistle as “an abbreviated manual on good government.”<sup>205</sup> The importance that the letter to Pedro I played within the narrative of both men, however, illustrates the interconnectedness between historiography, political thought and statecraft. The framing of the letter of advice to Pedro I around a prophecy ascribed to Merlin presents an interesting

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<sup>201</sup> Pero López de Ayala, *Crónica del Rey Don Pedro*, BN MS 10234, ff. 137v–138r.

<sup>202</sup> Alvar, “The Matter of Britain in Spanish Society and Literature from Cluny to Cervantes,” in *The Arthur of the Iberians*, pp. 246–247.

<sup>203</sup> The letter preserved in BnF Espagnol 216 is closely studied in José Luis Moure, “Otra versión independiente de las cartas del moro “sabidor” al rey don Pedro: consideraciones críticas y metodológicas,” *Incipit* 13 (1993), pp. 71–85. For an edition of the letter preserved in BN 9428, see José Luis Moure, “Ms. 9428 (Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid): “carta del rrey don pedro que le enbio vn moro de andaluzia” *Incipit* 13 (1993), pp. 193–206.

<sup>204</sup> José Luis Moure, “Sobre la Autenticidad de las Cartas de Benahatin en la *Crónica* de Pero López de Ayala: consideración filológica de un manuscrito inédito,” *Incipit* 3 (1983), pp. 53–93; José Luis Moure, “La lengua de las cartas árabes en la cronística castellana de los siglos XIV y XV de la impericia a la intencionalidad retórica,” *Incipit* 23 (2003), pp. 61–77; Michel Garcia, “Cartas del moro Benalhatib al rey don Pedro,” *Atalaya: revue française d’études médiévales hispaniques* 10 (1999): 20–37; Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, pp. 130–132; O’Callaghan, *Last Crusade in the West*, pp. 23–25.

<sup>205</sup> Clara Estow, “The Philosopher and the King: The Logic of Castilian Politics in the Mid-Fourteenth Century,” in *Ibn Jaldún. Auge y declive de los imperios*, p. 220.



example of the transmission of cultural ideas and literary traditions across the frontier.<sup>206</sup> It also reflects the popularity of Merlin prophecies as a form of political critique and discourse throughout the courts of medieval Iberia during this period. The earlier *Poema de Alfonso XI*, composed around 1348 by Rodrigo Yañez, also incorporates prophecies ascribed to Merlin to frame and justify broader historical and political developments.<sup>207</sup> The Galician *Crónica de 1404*, linked in several ways with the earlier historiographical production of Pedro Afonso de Barcelos (d. 1350),<sup>208</sup> as well as the latter's own Portuguese *Livro das Linhagens* (written around 1343), provide further evidence of the increased influence of Arthurian legend, including the prophecies of Merlin, within Iberian courtly and noble circles during this period.<sup>209</sup> As indicated by the fresco paintings in the so-called "Hall of Kings" (dating from the reign of Muḥammad V), Nasrid Granada was also influenced by this. Unfortunately, Ibn al-Khaṭīb mentions only "well-known texts and histories" as forming the basis of his letter to Pedro I, so it remains unclear whether or not his original epistle included reference to Merlin's prophecies.

As this short exploration of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's discussion of Castilian history and politics has attempted to show, the Granadan chancellor sought to establish himself not only as the architect of a Nasrid diplomatic strategy that ensured the continuation of a state of war between the various Christian kingdoms, but also sought to document how this enabled the Nasrids to considerably expand their territory. Ibn al-Khaṭīb instrumentalized his knowledge of Castilian

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<sup>206</sup> Rafael M. Mérida Jiménez, *Transmisión y difusión de la literatura caballeresca: Doce estudios de recepción cultural hispánica (siglos XIII-XVII)* (Lleida: Edicions de la Universitat de Lleida, 2013), p. 51.

<sup>207</sup> Alvar, "The Matter of Britain in Spanish Society and Literature from Cluny to Cervantes," in *The Arthur of the Iberians*, pp. 244–246.

<sup>208</sup> José Ignacio Pérez Pascual, "Relaciones entre la 'Crónica de 1344' y la 'Crónica de 1404,'" in *Actas do IV Congresso da Associação Hispânica de Literatura Medieval: (Lisboa, 1-5 Outubro 1991)* (Lisbon: Cosmos, 1993), eds. Aires Augusto Nascimento and Cristina Almeida Ribeiro, 3: 167–171.

<sup>209</sup> For the sections of these texts dealing with Merlin and King Arthur, see Pedro Afonso, *Crónica de 1344* (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1970), eds. Diego Catalán and María Soledad de Andrés, pp. 278–284. An extensive discussion of the circulation of Arthurian legend in medieval Iberia can be found in *The Arthur of the Iberians*, ed. David Hook, pp. 1–381.

politics and history to promote the interests of the Nasrids, while meticulously documenting and valorizing his own alleged role in perpetuating the Castilian civil war and orchestrating the political demise of Pedro I, which paved the way for an unprecedented wave of Nasrid military victories and conquests. This provides an illustration of one manner in which his extensive historiographical project—the “Comprehensive History”—was intimately connected with his specific function as chief minister and chancellor.

Significantly, while he does not preserve the text of the letter that he sent to Pedro I, Ibn al-Khaṭīb does incorporate the full text of his exhortative sermons inciting the populace of the Nasrid kingdom to take up arms and to participate in holy war against Castile.<sup>210</sup> Similarly, he reproduces in full many of the celebratory letters of conquest (*fathnāmas*) which he penned and sent to various Muslim kingdoms announcing the victory of the “Nasrid holy warriors” against the “polytheistic worshipers of the Cross.”<sup>211</sup> Such strong sentiments were reflected in the writings of other court secretaries in Granada, during the same period, with the Granadan scholar-official Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī celebrating the expansive military campaigns of Muḥammad V and asserting that this sovereign succeeded in “breaking the power of [al-Andalus’] enemies, subduing the Castilians (*waṭā’ al-rūm*) and prevented their aggression, humiliating them after conquering them, devastating their lands, causing havoc among their populace, killing their knights and champions, spreading such fear and terror that even their most powerful nobles expected death to arrive at any time and pleaded for mercy with every utterance...”<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> This sermon, titled “Inciting the Masses along the Well-Known Path” (*Ḥaml al-Jumhūr ‘alā al-Sanan al-Mashhūr*) was written on Ramaḍān 12 767/May 23 1366 (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 54–64).

<sup>211</sup> al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 2: 49–60.

<sup>212</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuhfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, ff. 3v–4r.

It was Ibn al-Khaṭīb's commitment to presenting himself as a militant defender of the faith, rather than as a councilor to the King of Castile, that shaped his decision to incorporate some texts but not others into the later redactions of his "Comprehensive History." That such sentiments constituted a central aspect of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own self-representation is reflected within an autobiographical passage included within the recension of the "Comprehensive History" dated 769/1368, in which he proclaims:

Since my appointment as chief minister, I have striven to pursue righteousness, combating all lower desires, passions and whimsical inclinations, rejecting all falsehoods and corruption, earnestly guiding the faith, defending the frontiers of Islam, safeguarding the treasury, justly distributing wealth to the holy warriors and soldiers, actively fighting the enemy, speaking only truth...and working constantly for the benefit and welfare of Islam.<sup>213</sup>

It was such notions as the "welfare of Islam" and the conception of his own role and responsibility as the defender of the faith that would motivate and undergird Ibn al-Khaṭīb's diplomacy with the Marinids.

#### Diplomacy as Statecraft: Ibn al-Khaṭīb as Ambassador

It was Ibn al-Khaṭīb's extensive knowledge of the neighboring kingdoms and their politics that enabled him to play an important role in crafting such a broad diplomatic strategy that encompassed not only Castile and Aragon, but the various kingdoms of North Africa as well. As chancellor, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was tasked with navigating the complex minefield of diplomacy with the North African kingdoms during the 740s/1340s and 750s/1350s. The defeat at Río Salado in 741/1340 compelled the Marinid sultan Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī to retreat from Iberian affairs. Far from weakening his vision of the restoration of territorial unity in the Islamic West over a century after the devolution of the Almohad caliphate, he embarked on a 12-year

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<sup>213</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 34.

campaign of conquest of the Zayyanid and Hafsid realms following his return to North Africa. Although the Marinid sovereign had conquered Tlemcen from the Zayyanids in Shawwāl 738/May 1338 (after a long siege), and entered Tunis victorious in Jumādā II 748/September 1347, the attempt to unify the region under Marinid authority ultimately ended in failure.<sup>214</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan's army suffered a major defeat at the hands of local Arab tribes outside Qayrawan in Muḥarram 749/April 1348, a fact which dealt a severe blow to Marinid prestige and weakened his military and political position in Ifriqiya.<sup>215</sup> This was followed shortly thereafter by the overthrow of his own authority in Morocco itself when his son Abū 'Inān Fāris (r. 748/1348–759/1358) returned to Fez from Tlemcen, where he had been established as governor, and proclaimed himself sovereign.<sup>216</sup>

Much of the late 740s/1340s and 750s/1350s witnessed the demise of Marinid power in central and eastern North Africa and the restoration of Zayyanid rule to Tlemcen and Hafsid rule to Tunis. While sailing back to Morocco to restore his authority within his own kingdom, Abū al-Ḥasan's fleet was destroyed by a violent storm with the sultan barely surviving with his life (and finding himself stranded in enemy territory).<sup>217</sup> Although attempting, together with the remnants of his army and loyal followers, to reassert his control in Morocco, he was defeated by Abū 'Inān near Marrakech in Rabī' I 751/May 1350, forcing him to seek refuge in the High Atlas Mountains, where he lived in exile under the protection of the Hintāta tribal confederation—remnants of the Almohads—until his death on Rabī' II 23 752/June 19 1351.<sup>218</sup> The fact that these setbacks coincided with the spread of the plague across Tunis, which claimed the lives of

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<sup>214</sup> al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 116. For a detailed narrative of the political situation in North Africa during the 740s/1340s, see Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 263–264, 273–309.

<sup>215</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 283–287; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 116.

<sup>216</sup> al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 116.

<sup>217</sup> al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 116.

<sup>218</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 131; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 116.

much of Abū al-Ḥasan's army as well as numerous Marinid scholars and administrators who had accompanied him, underscored the disastrous nature of the entire campaign. This chaotic situation in North Africa, in which the Zayyanid and Hafsīd kingdoms briefly ceased to exist and two individuals simultaneously laid claim to the Marinid throne in Fez, complicated Nasrid diplomacy with the various North African dynasties. For the first time since the 660s/1260s, the Nasrids found themselves withstanding the military might of Castile without the extensive assistance (and political leverage) provided by the Marinids.

A corpus of over 50 official documents, written by Ibn al-Khaṭīb between 751/1350 and 760/1359, preserved primarily within his own works, sheds light on the diplomatic strategy that the Nasrid chancellor crafted during this period. This strategy centered on establishing an alliance with the Marinids, whom he viewed as the only military force capable of withstanding Castile, even asserting that “there is absolutely no doubt among those possessing any intellect that the enemy will completely conquer this land [al-Andalus] if the bonds [between the Marinids and Nasrids] are severed or if [the Marinids] refuse to aid this nation”<sup>219</sup>. Galvanized by his victory at Río Salado in 741/1340, Alfonso XI of Castile (r. 1312–1350) had launched an aggressive series of military campaigns against Nasrid Granada and Marinid strongholds in the Iberian Peninsula during the early 740s/1340s. Following his successful conquest of Alcalá la Real in 742/1341 and Algeciras in 745/1344, Alfonso XI turned his attention to the Marinid fortress of Gibraltar, which his forces besieged in late 750/1349.<sup>220</sup> An early letter written by Ibn al-Khaṭīb dated Rabī‘ I 17 742/August 31 1341, which detailed the advance of Alfonso XI in the straits and along Granada's western frontier, reflects Ibn al-Khaṭīb's deep concern with the

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<sup>219</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 66.

<sup>220</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 272–273, 339. For the most recent study of the military struggle over the Straits of Gibraltar during this period, see Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *The Gibraltar Crusade: Castile and the Battle for the Strait* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

precarious security situation of the Nasrid kingdom vis-à-vis Castile even before he became chancellor.<sup>221</sup> Within this missive, Ibn al-Khaṭīb describes Alfonso XI's siege and conquest of the Nasrid fortresses of Alcalá la Real in 742/1341, lamenting that “the Trinity overcame the Oneness [of God]” while praying for the deliverance of Islam in the Iberian peninsula.<sup>222</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb represented Alfonso XI as a major threat to the continued survival of the Nasrids, emphasizing that he was “an immensely powerful Christian king (*tāghiya marhūb wa malik majdūd habat lahu al-rīḥ*) who was a catastrophe for the Muslims, seizing control of Algeciras after his victory at the Battle of Tarifa. He then besieged Gibraltar and it seemed that he would conquer all of al-Andalus (*kād yastawlī ‘alā al-Andalus*), but God—in his immense mercy—prevented this.”<sup>223</sup> A letter penned by Ibn al-Khaṭīb on behalf of Yūsuf I sent to Almería in 751/1350 proclaims that only divine providence and mercy had saved the Nasrid kingdom from complete destruction and Islam in al-Andalus from annihilation at the hands of Alfonso XI, and requests that prayers be offered in thanksgiving for such a miracle from the pulpits and minarets of the city.<sup>224</sup> This theme of Nasrid vulnerability in the face of Castilian military power continued to be one that pervaded his writings until the end of his life. Incidentally, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's earliest preserved document that he authored as chancellor was an official missive composed on behalf of Yūsuf I and sent to the Marinid sultan Abū ‘Inān dated Muḥarram 3 751/March 13 1350, written immediately following Alfonso's death at Gibraltar, demonstrated this preoccupation with securing Marinid military aid.<sup>225</sup> While providing a detailed report about the state of affairs in Iberia following the Castilian withdrawal from Gibraltar in the aftermath of

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<sup>221</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 99–101.

<sup>222</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, pp. 99–101.

<sup>223</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 133. In Muḥarram 751/March 1350, while besieging the city, Alfonso XI died of the plague, resulting in the siege being lifted and the withdrawal of Castilian troops.

<sup>224</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayhanat al-Kuttab*, 2: 39–41.

<sup>225</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayhanat al-Kuttab*, 1: 140–145.

the death of Alfonso XI, Ibn al-Khaṭīb stresses the indispensability of Marinid aid to Granada, asserting that Nasrid affairs and the fate of Islam in al-Andalus were tied with the fortunes of the Marinid kingdom.<sup>226</sup>

As both chancellor and ambassador, Ibn al-Khaṭīb played a leading role in the shaping of Nasrid foreign policy during this period by encouraging closer cooperation with the Marinid kingdom was one of the most important ways that he exerted his influence as chancellor during this period. Concurrent with this active diplomacy, Ibn al-Khaṭīb also sought to document these developments. His “The Sweeping of the Shop after the Relocation of the Inhabitants” (*Kunāsat al-Dukkān ba’d Intiqāl al-Sukkān*), a collection of 25 important decrees and letters which he composed while head of the chancery during the reign of Yūsuf I, included documents that sought to delineate the political relationship that existed between the Nasrid and Marinid kingdoms, highlighting the value that Ibn al-Khaṭīb placed upon this alliance. The dozens of surviving missives composed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb between 750/1350 and 755/1354 include a letter from Yūsuf I to Abū’ Inān dated Muḥarram 752/March 1351 discussing the Marinid-Nasrid alliance,<sup>227</sup> a letter from Yūsuf I to Abū’ Inān dated Rabī‘ I 15 752/May 12 1351 congratulating the Marinid sultan on the conquest of Tlemcen from the Zayyanids,<sup>228</sup> and a letter from Yūsuf I to Abū’ Inān dated Rabī‘ I 12 754/April 17 1353 on matters related to the Marinid ruler’s conquest of Bejaia, demonstrating Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s close observance of developments in North Africa and an attempt to maintain amiable relations between the Nasrid and Marinid kingdoms.<sup>229</sup> He was also sent as the Nasrid emissary to the Marinid kingdom on two occasions, first in Jumādā I 752/July 1351 during the reign of Yūsuf I and again in Dhū-l Qa‘da

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<sup>226</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayhanat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 142.

<sup>227</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kunāsat al-Dukkān*, pp. 69–78

<sup>228</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 216–224; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kunāsat al-Dukkān*, pp. 80–94.

<sup>229</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 229–234; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kunāsat al-Dukkān*, pp. 114–121.

755/December 1354 shortly following the enthronement of Muḥammad V.<sup>230</sup> The choice of Ibn al-Khaṭīb as ambassador indicates that his strongly pro-Marinid inclinations were evident within the Nasrid court during this period of his career. As described in Chapter 1, many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's closest family members, colleagues and teachers had perished during the wars against Alfonso XI and that he himself had fought against the Castilian monarch during the campaign against Algeciras in 744/1343–1344, underscoring his intimate familiarity with the nature of the military-political threat against the Nasrid kingdom.

Perhaps the most important of these embassies took place in Dhū-l Qa'da 755/December 1354, merely one month after the official enthronement of Muḥammad V, when Ibn al-Khaṭīb was sent by Abū Nu'aym Riḍwān, along with al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, the chief judge of Granada, and Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī, as the Nasrid emissary to the Marinid sultan Abū 'Inān, a mission whose purpose was to secure military assistance against Pedro I of Castile.<sup>231</sup> The official missive that Ibn al-Khaṭīb carried was of his own composition and provided a report of events in the Kingdom of Granada since the assassination of Yūsuf I and devotes particular attention to the oath of allegiance to Muḥammad V, specifically emphasizing the contractual and consensual nature of his accession, the textual and oratory nature of the oath of allegiance, and the central role of both a handclasp and written signature as cementing a pledge of loyalty between the sovereign and his subjects.<sup>232</sup> However, it was not the content of the letter but the personality and charisma of Ibn al-Khaṭīb that made the biggest impact.

After being admitted into the Marinid sultan's presence in Fez on Dhū-l Qa'da 28 755/December 14 1354, Ibn al-Khaṭīb recited a powerful poem referring to Abū 'Inān as "God's

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<sup>230</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 28; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344–345; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 444.

<sup>231</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 19; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 444–345; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285.

<sup>232</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 459–464.



caliph (*khalīfat allāh*)” and urging him to mobilize his forces and provide military assistance to the Muslims in al-Andalus, described as being at the mercy of increased Castilian aggression.<sup>233</sup> This poem, which made such an impression upon contemporaries that it was narrated in full throughout various chronicles and biographical dictionaries during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, was received enthusiastically by Abū ‘Inān, who allegedly proclaimed: “Verily, you will not depart my court without having successfully secured your objective!”<sup>234</sup> Among those praising Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s role in securing the objectives of this mission was al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, who informed Ibn Khaldūn, a leading functionary in the Marinid court at the time: “Before Ibn al-Khaṭīb, it was unheard of that a diplomat could successfully accomplish their mission before even conveying their salutations to the ruler.”<sup>235</sup> The circumstances of this diplomacy illustrate the importance of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own rhetorical abilities and accomplished oratory skills as important qualities that complemented his function as a statesman. It was precisely due to his accomplishments in this regard that he was given the sobriquet *Lisān al-Dīn* (“The Tongue of the Faith”) by his contemporaries. Several generations earlier, another Nasrid chancellor, Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. al-‘Ābid (d. 690/1291), had also recited a poem in the presence of the Marinid sovereign in Fez which motivated the latter to lend assistance, an indication of the importance of this genre of poetry within Nasrid-Marinid diplomacy.<sup>236</sup>

This Nasrid diplomatic approach was part of a long Andalusī tradition, which would extend into the 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century, of utilizing poetry to appeal for military assistance and aid from neighboring Muslim dynasties against the advancing Christian kingdoms.<sup>237</sup> Several examples of

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<sup>233</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345.

<sup>234</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 445.

<sup>235</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345.

<sup>236</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 223.

<sup>237</sup> For a detailed study of this poetic genre, its structure and themes, see Fadel Fathi Wali, *al-Fitan wa al-Nakbāt al-‘Āmah wa Athruhā fī al-Shi’r al-Andalusī* (Ha’il, Saudi Arabia: Dar al-Andalus, 1994), pp. 133–143, 205–232;

Andalusi poems calling for aid from various Muslim kingdoms in the face of the military expansion of the Christian kingdoms are carefully and painstakingly preserved by al-Maqqarī, who sought to highlight both the literary brilliance of these works as well as the dire political situation in late medieval Islamic Spain.<sup>238</sup> This genre of poetry often combined various types of content, structure, style and tone, often appealing to the various religious and social sensibilities of the audience, by invoking such notions as honor, vengeance, and the obligation to defend their co-religionists. It was closely related in both its stylistic and thematic elements to Arabic elegiac poetry (*rithā'*),<sup>239</sup> especially since both types of poems often culminated in an incitement to vengeance (*taḥrīd*), in which the petitioner implored the audience (whether a sovereign or ordinary believers) to provide military assistance or other forms of aid (including diplomatic or political pressure upon the Christian Kingdoms<sup>240</sup>). Although a longstanding tradition evident since the early 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century, it was from the mid-late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century onwards that the particular instrumentalization of these poetic forms to achieve broader political or diplomatic goals becomes most evident, with the famed “Lament for al-Andalus” (*Rithā' al-Andalus*)<sup>241</sup> by

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Makki, *Dirāsāt Andalusīyya*, pp. 295–306; and ‘Azouz Zarqan, *Shi'r al-Istiṣrākh fī al-Andalus* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2008).

<sup>238</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 72–115. A prominent example of the genre is also evident in the compilation of poetry by the Nasrid emir Yūsuf III (Yūsuf III, *Diwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith*, pp. 50–53).

<sup>239</sup> Various examples of elegiac poetry in al-Andalus from the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century onwards, particularly the tradition of lamenting the Christian conquest of specific Andalusī towns and cities (*rithā' al-mudun*), are presented and studied in Makki, *Dirāsāt Andalusīyya*, pp. 251–294, 361–382.

<sup>240</sup> A renowned example of this type of request is the *qaṣīda* composed by Granadan Mudéjars around 1501 that was addressed to the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid II, studied and translated in James T. Monroe, “A Curious Morisco Appeal to the Ottoman Empire,” *Al-Andalus* 31 (1966), pp. 281–303.

<sup>241</sup> For an English translation, see Abū al-Baqā' al-Rundī. “Lament for the Fall of Seville (1267),” in *Medieval Iberia: Readings from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Sources* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), ed. Olivia Remie Constable, pp. 220–222.

Abū al-Baqā' Ṣāliḥ al-Rundī (d. 684/1285)<sup>242</sup> and the elegiac ode of Ibn al-Abbār<sup>243</sup> seeking assistance on behalf of Valencia from the Hafsids being only two of the more renowned and widely transmitted examples. As Linda Jones has demonstrated, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's poetry within these contexts reflects his strategic mobilization of particular imagery and symbols in order to fashion a particular militant discourse that would resonate with his audience.<sup>244</sup> It was this deployment of particular rhetorical strategies and ability to craft eloquent poems as well as documents and letters as a means of communicating a distinct message and advancing a particular agenda that enables us to appreciate the continued importance of eloquent and skilled orators as diplomats and royal representatives in the late medieval Islamic West.

While in the Marinid court, Ibn al-Khaṭīb also took the opportunity to spend time with various scholar-functionaries, including Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn Marzūq, developing relationships that would define his intellectual and political career. One of the most significant encounters he had was with Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Abī al-Qāsim b. Juzayy (d. 758/1357), a leading litterateur, secretary and jurist, best known for his role in transcribing the "Travels" (Riḥla) of Shams al-Dīn b. Baṭūṭṭa.<sup>245</sup> This individual had been writing a substantial history of Granada, and apparently provided Ibn al-Khaṭīb with draft manuscripts of the work, a fact that laid the foundation of the latter's own project of writing a monumental history of the city and its

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<sup>242</sup> al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 6: 243–245. Ibn al-Khaṭīb incorporated a substantial entry on Abū al-Baqā' al-Rundī within his "Comprehensive History," preserving several fragments of his poetry and prose compositions (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 360–376). For a modern biography of this individual, see Muhammad Ridwan al-Dayyā, *Abū al-Baqā' al-Rundī: Shā'ir rithā' al-Andalus* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risala, 1976), and Makki, *Dirāsāt Andalusīyya*, pp. 307–360. Al-Rundī's collection of poetry and some of his prose works have been published as *Dīwān Abī al-Ṭayyib Ṣāliḥ ibn Sharīf al-Rundī al-mutawaffā 684 H-1285 M : fī a'māliḥ al-adabīya al-shi'r wa-al-nathr* (Alexandria: Markaz al-Babtin li-Taḥqīq al-Makhtutat al-Shi'riyya, 2010), ed. Hayat Qara.

<sup>243</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 6: 305–308.

<sup>244</sup> Linda Jones, *The Power of Oratory in the Medieval Muslim World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 148–156.

<sup>245</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 256–265.

inhabitants.<sup>246</sup> Further detail is provided by the Nasrid scholar-ruler Yūsuf III, who emphasizes Ibn Juzayy's influence on Ibn al-Khaṭīb's composition of the "Comprehensive History."<sup>247</sup> According to Yūsuf III, the first draft of the work was written between 756/1355 and 760/1359, during the first reign of Muḥammad V, when the governance of the kingdom was largely in the hands of Abū Nu'aym Riḍwān.<sup>248</sup>

He departed Fez for Ceuta, where he composed a letter on Muḥarram 9<sup>th</sup> 756/January 24<sup>th</sup> 1355 praising Abū 'Inān and expressing gratitude for his commitment to granting aid to al-Andalus,<sup>249</sup> before crossing the straits and arriving back in Granada on the Muḥarram 15 756/January 30 1355 and was warmly received by its intellectual and political elite, who were pleased by both the swiftness with which the mission was accomplished as well as the restoration of amiable relations between the Nasrids and Marinids. Despite assurances for military assistance, however, no army was dispatched from North Africa across the Straits, and the Marinid realm descended into chaos once more following the death of Abū 'Inān and the outbreak of civil war in Morocco in 759/1358. Nevertheless, diplomatic relations were maintained and several of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's letters to Abū 'Inān and his successors, sent on behalf of Muḥammad V, from 757/1356 to 760/1359, survive which attest to the amiable ties between the two kingdoms.

By 760/1359, Ibn al-Khaṭīb had become a leading political figure and intellectual in the Islamic West. His close relationship with eminent scholars, such as al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī and Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī in Granada and al-Maqqarī and Ibn Marzūq in North Africa, earned him recognition and respect among the intellectual elite. His own role as Granada's chief

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<sup>246</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 257.

<sup>247</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 9: 328–330.

<sup>248</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 9: 329–330.

<sup>249</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā'id al-Jumān*, pp. 288–292.

minister, chancellor and ambassador to the Marinids also allowed him to establish his reputation as a pre-eminent statesman among the rulers and scholar-officials in both Nasrid Granada and Marinid Fez. Ibn al-Khaṭīb's successful exercise of the offices of chief minister and chancellor for over a decade made him one of the most influential figures in Nasrid Granada. His close relationship with both Granada's chief judges and the chamberlain Riḍwān, the effective ruler of the Nasrid kingdom during this period, also ensured that he was afforded a certain measure of protection from the traditional military elites and Granadan nobility, who did not appreciate such political and administrative power being wielded by an individual who began his career as a scribe in the chancery.

Through a reconstruction of the political and administrative history of the Nasrid court between 700/1300 and 749/1359, the past two chapters have attempted to examine manner in which political thought, historiography and administrative changes were intricately interwoven. It explored the concept of *privanza* in the Nasrid context and how proximity to the sovereign, facilitated by the role of various individuals as scribes, chancellors, tutors and councilors, challenged the hegemony of the military elite in Granada. By looking at how the delegation of royal authority was chronicled, contested and legitimated, it sought to demonstrate the specific context for the rise of Ibn al-Khaṭīb as a leading statesman in the Nasrid kingdom and his own representation of that authority. It was primarily Ibn al-Khaṭīb's function as private secretary (*kātib al-sirr*) to the emir Yūsuf I and his extensive connections with leading figures in the administration, including the chancery and judgeship, that enabled him to play an increasingly significant role within the political and administrative affairs within the kingdom. His fortunes continued to increase throughout the reign of Yūsuf I, when in Shawwāl 749/January 1349 he was appointed as chancellor and, shortly thereafter, to the post of chief minister.

As this chapter has attempted to demonstrate, both history and skillful, eloquent rhetoric, were important tools of statecraft in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century Granada. The period from his appointment as chancellor/chief minister in 749/1349 and his exile to North Africa in 760/1359 marks an important shift in his role within the Kingdom of Granada, from a scribe in the chancery to a leading statesman. This decade coincided with one of the most politically turbulent moments in Nasrid history, represented by the major threat posed by Alfonso XI, the most serious military threat to the political survival of Islam in the Iberian Peninsula since Fernando III. Although his own considerable abilities as an orator, writer and rhetorician played an important role in propelling him towards high office, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's position ultimately depended upon his ties of loyalty and obligation to the Nasrid emirs Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V, as well as senior figures within the Nasrid administration such as Riḍwān.

This chapter has also attempted to show how Ibn al-Khaṭīb's authorship of historical, epistolographical, political and biographical works was an intellectual endeavor that was closely linked with his function as a statesman. The authorship of the "Comprehensive History" and "The Deeds of the Notables," in particular, should be situated the wider context of the monumental historiographical projects that characterized the medieval world during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. This enables us to draw broad comparisons between him and scholar-statesmen such as Rashīd al-Dīn in Iran, Jean Froissart in France, Ibn Khaldūn in North Africa or Fernán Sánchez de Valladolid, Pero López de Ayala and Pedro Afonso in Iberia, all of whom also utilized historiography to articulate notions of authority, kingship and politics.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> Diego Catalán, *De Alfonso X al Conde de Barcelos; cuatro estudios; sobre el nacimiento de la historiografía romance en Castilla y Portugal* (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1962). For an important comparative study of historiography in 14<sup>th</sup>-century Castile and the Crown of Aragón, see Frédéric Alchalabi, *L'Écriture de l'histoire dans les Chroniques de Pierre Ier et Pierre III* (Lille: Atelier National de Reproduction des Thèses, 2005). An extensive study of French vernacular historical writing during the late Middle Ages has been undertaken by Pierre Courroux, *L'Écriture de l'histoire dans les chroniques françaises (XIIe–XVe siècle)* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2016).

## Chapter 4: An Anṣārī Caliphate? Court Secretaries and the Articulation of Dynastic Ideology

The previous chapter illustrated that it was in their capacity as chancellors, historians and royal functionaries that Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his broader network of scholar-officials in the chanceries across the Mediterranean were primarily responsible for the composition of court documents, monumental histories, and foreign correspondence. The writings of court secretaries and other scholar-officials sought to rationalize dynastic sovereignty and harmonize it with notions of religio-political legitimacy that were in currency or novel mystical and philosophical ideas that they sought to promote. Political treatises, historical chronicles, and poetry were the primary means through which particular norms of sovereignty and visions of legitimate royal authority were communicated. The frequent exchanges (through the medium of epistles) among intellectual networks of scholar-ministers, the production of coinage and the construction of monumental inscriptions across the royal palaces—all of which were connected with their function as chancellors—became the channels for the dissemination of these ideas. It was through these avenues that Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his network of scholar-officials in Islamic Spain and North Africa were collectively responsible for the articulation of a new vocabulary of sovereignty during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. This is best demonstrated by the ubiquity of the term “God’s caliph” (*khalīfat allāh*) as a synonym for royal authority across their works, whether in poetry, dedications of texts, historical chronicles, or monumental inscriptions. The reformulation of kingship in terms of quasi-imperial authority by court secretaries between 1250 and 1500 can also be discerned in other regions of the Mediterranean during this period, whether Castile or Mamluk Egypt, and as far afield as Iran and Central Asia.

Through a close examination of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's historical, literary and political writings, as well as the corpus of various court secretaries and scholar-officials that constituted his immediate circle in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Islamic West, this chapter explores their development and articulation of a new language of sovereignty in the late medieval Islamic West. While the writings of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his circle were generally focused upon *'adl* (justice), *'ilm* (knowledge) and *jihād* (holy war/militancy) as key traits of ideal rulers, their discourses about kingship and political legitimacy were varied, ranging from the promotion of particular genealogical claims to reifying traditional juristic conceptions of temporal authority to promoting notions of sacral kingship that stressed the charismatic authority of the sovereign. This chapter reconstructs the genealogical bases of political legitimation in Nasrid Granada, documenting claims to Anṣārī lineage during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries, while exploring the multifaceted aspects of this claim, which simultaneously invoked the religious distinction of the Companions of Muḥammad, the legendary accomplishments of pre-Islamic Arabian kings and the "Arabness" of the Nasrid sovereigns.

The second portion of this chapter explores new conceptions of royal and quasi-caliphal sovereignty by looking at the writings of Ibn al-Khaṭīb (and other Nasrid chancellors) during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, bringing these strategies of political legitimation in Nasrid Granada into conversation with similar developments occurring elsewhere in the Islamic West. While presenting evidence of the usage of variations on the caliphal title ("Commander of the Faithful," "caliph," "possessor of the caliphate" etc.) for Nasrid sovereigns from Ismā'īl I onwards, by court secretaries, it is my contention that the term "caliph" (and its variants) as utilized by Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his circle became a term laden with entirely different meaning and implications than it possessed during the classical Islamic period. Rather than understanding it as a claim to a



classically-conceived office or institution, in its 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Marinid and Nasrid usage the term should be understood specifically within the context of the political reality of the late medieval Islamic West. Its usage rendered obsolete the notion that kings, sultans and emirs were invested with legitimacy and authority by a universal, symbolic caliph. Rather, sovereigns and kings, by virtue of the fact of their sovereign authority and kingship, possessed a divine mandate to rule and were effectively God's representatives (*khulafā'*; sing. *khalīfa*) on earth. This reformulation of legitimate royal authority by Ibn al-Khaṭīb and other scholar-officials in the Islamic West, who were writing in the aftermath of the destruction of the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad in 656/1258 and the Almohad caliphate in Marrakech in 668/1269, was both prompted by and enabled by the absence of a singular, central authority (despite claims by the Hafsids and Abbasids in Cairo) in the Islamic world. The main contribution of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his contemporaries in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century was to further strengthen this conception of sovereignty while also infusing their respective sovereigns with the titles, regalia and authority previously enjoyed exclusively by caliphs during the classical Islamic period while also endowing kingship with sacral qualities. While sharing much in common with their contemporaries in the Persianate and Arabic-speaking lands in the Near East, who also engaged in multiple strategies of legitimation as they sought to grapple with the emergence of a new political reality, the writings of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his circle represented a distinctly Andalusī and Maghribī attempt to rationalize and justify this new logic of royal sovereignty.

## Nasrid Genealogy and Ideology, 1270-1410

While “ideology” is a polyvalent term which is potentially unwieldy when utilized in the context of a medieval kingdom such as Nasrid Granada, throughout this chapter I employ Anne Broadbridge’s working definition of the concept:

An ideology of kingship is the set of ideas by which a ruler defines himself as a sovereign...these ideas gave rulers models for their behavior and helped them both assert the legality and legitimacy of their reigns, and maintain their claims to rule in the eyes of various, often overlapping audiences, frequently in opposition to the claims of others.<sup>1</sup>

As already seen, the individuals responsible for the the articulation and dissemination of dynastic ideology in the Nasrid kingdom were the court secretaries and chancellors, who utilized a variety of means ranging from elaborate historical chronicles, foreign correspondence, coinage, panegyrics and monuments to royal power such as the Alhambra to communicate a distinct vision of sovereignty throughout the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Their historiographical endeavors were directly influenced by the patronage of their sovereigns and served as a mechanism for chronicling and legitimating royal power, reflecting the manner in which their role as historians was linked with their profession as courtiers and government officials. The production of numerous political treatises and mirrors for princes by individuals such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb was a further indication of the extent to which they placed their erudition in the service of the dynasty. They were also seeking to shape the behavior of the sovereign and princes, their conduct and worldview, attempting to instill those whom they served with values such as the militant defense of the faith, the upholding of justice, the principle of consultation and the patronage of learning. On the one

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<sup>1</sup> Anne Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology in the Islamic and Mongol Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 6.

hand, they sought to underscore the (theoretical) role of the sovereign as God's representative on earth while on the other attempted to curb the more tyrannical and capricious tendencies of the king. Since many scholar-officials had differing, sometimes opposing, notions of what defined an ideal ruler and given the ever-changing political situation in Iberia and North Africa throughout the late Middle Ages, the the process of articulating a dynastic ideology often lacked consistency.

Almost all histories, whether medieval or modern, of the foundations of the Nasrid kingdom are heavily colored by Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings. Not only does he provide one of the most comprehensive and coherent narratives of the political history of the Nasrids, but it is one that is imbued with an authoritativeness underpinned by Ibn al-Khaṭīb's immense erudition and status as Nasrid chancellor, as well as his access to earlier records, documents and eye-witness accounts. It is with this strong sense of authority that Ibn al-Khaṭīb emphasizes his own role, as the dynasty's chief minister, chancellor and historian, in shaping the norms, governance and institutions of the Kingdom of Granada. He does so by integrating his own chancery production or decrees within his written history. One of these documents, a monumental prosimetric epitaph inscribed on the tomb of Yūsuf I, was reproduced in full within two of his works (*al-Iḥāṭa* and *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*) and reads as follows:

This is the tomb of the martyred sovereign (*al-sulṭān al-shaīd*), whose nature and conduct was the very embodiment of perfection, whose virtue and forbearance was renowned in Syria and Iraq, whose achievements were glorious and whose days were blessed, whose conduct and comportment was virtuous, the pre-eminent Imam (*al-imām al-a'la*), the brilliant star, the sword of the faith (*ḥusām al-milla*), the most illustrious of kings, whose protection and assistance from God—in both peace and war—was evident, the axis of intelligence and modesty, the descendant of the Lord of the Anṣār (*sulālat sayyid al-anṣār*), the defender of Islam with both his judgement and his unfurled banner...the Commander of the Muslims (*amīr al-muslimīn*) Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 135–136; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 333–336.

This array of titles, proclamations and epithets provides a window into the world of Nasrid political legitimation during the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. The inscription reflects the ideals of kingship that Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to establish and the framework for which his writings on sovereignty and political authority should be interpreted. It directly influenced his own prosimetric epitaph for the tomb of Yūsuf I.<sup>3</sup> This chapter will attempt to parse out the specific meaning and undertones of this text, particularly the significance of the “al-Anṣārī” patronymic and its relationship to references to the Nasrid sovereign as “Commander of the Faithful.” Although this was a text that long predated Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s historiographical corpus, it reflects many of themes and ideas about sovereignty that characterized the writings of court secretaries and scholar-officials throughout the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Among the things that immediately strike the reader of this epitaph is the repeated and consistent emphasis on militancy. It is this characteristic of Nasrid kingship which provides a useful starting point for the broader exploration of political legitimation during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

From the inception of the Kingdom of Granada, its existence as a precarious and besieged frontier polity ultimately provided the primary impetus for the earliest formulations of Nasrid dynastic ideology. The earliest Nasrid coinage, epigraphy and foreign correspondence from the reign of Muḥammad I and Muḥammad II refers to the king with the titles *amīr al-muslimīn* (Commander of the Muslims)<sup>4</sup> or *al-mujāhid fī sabīl Allāh* (The Holy Warrior). The title *amīr al-*

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<sup>3</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 333–336.

<sup>4</sup> The origins of the title *amīr al-muslimīn*, which was also adopted by the Marinids and Zayyanids, lies in the late 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century and was when it was supposedly bestowed upon the Almoravid ruler Yūsuf b. Tashufīn (r. 456/1065–500/1106) by the Abbasid caliph. The usage of the title was closely tied to developments in medieval Islamic political theory. It essentially served to distinguish the de facto ruler of a particular kingdom or region from the legitimate and universal leader of the Muslim community (the caliph, who utilized the title *amīr al-mu’minīn* or Commander of the Faithful) who was theoretically the one who could invest regional rulers with the authority to govern on his behalf (al-Qalqashandī, *Ma’āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma’ālim al-Khilāfa*, 1: 28. For a discussion of this title, see Max van Berchem, “Titres califiens d’occident à propos de quelques monnaies mérinides et ziyānides,” *Journal Asiatique* 10: IX (1907), pp. 271–275. The title “Commander of the Muslims” was also utilized by the Marinids as their official title in foreign correspondence, as attested by the letters from the Marinid ruler Abū Ya’qūb Yūsuf to

*muslimīn* was frequently utilized in official diplomatic correspondence with the Nasrids from the Aragonese and Castilian courts, whether written in Romance or Arabic, as illustrated by the missive sent from Pedro IV of Aragón to Yūsuf I in 745/1345.<sup>5</sup> Considering the Almoravid roots of the title “Commander of the Muslims,”<sup>6</sup> its usage by the Nasrids was an attempt to affirm their role as *fidei defensores* (“defenders of the faith”) and legitimate their kingdom’s existence as a bulwark against the advancing forces of Latin Christendom. This was evident in both Arabic and Romance correspondence which issued from the Granadan chancery,<sup>7</sup> with one letter from Yūsuf I to Aragón describing himself as both “Commander/King of the Muslims (*rey dels moros*) and

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Jaume II of Aragón dated 703/ 1304 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 77–79), the letter of Abū Thābit ‘Āmir to Jaume II dated Dhū-l Qa’da 707/April 1308 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 80), the letter of Abū al-Rabī’ Sulaymān to Jaume II dated Rabī’ II 709/September 1309 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 82), the letters from Abū Sa’īd ‘Uthmān to Jaume II dated 723/ 1323 and 724/1324 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 83 bis; ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 84–86;), the letters from Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī to Yūsuf I (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 93–94, 96–97), missives from the same ruler to Pedro IV dated Dhū-l Ḥijja 746/April 1346 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 95, 98) and Rajab 751/October 1350 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 99), and a letter from Abū Sālim to Pedro IV dated Sha’bān 761/June 1360 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 110). The Romance-language correspondence between the Aragonese and Marinids from 1291 to 1327 also attests to the utilization of this title (see the many edited documents in Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*). For its usage by the Zayyanids, see the letters from Abū Ḥammū Mūsā II to Pedro IV dated Rabī’ I 761/January 1360 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 111) and Šafar 764/December 1362 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 113), as well as from the peace treaty between the Zayyanids, Marinids and Aragón dated Šafar 764/December 1362 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 114).

<sup>5</sup> ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 23. See, also, the extensive collection of documents edited in Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, in which Nasrid rulers from 1291 to 1327 are consistently referred to as “*amir almuçlemin*.”

<sup>6</sup> ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Khuzā’ī, *Takhrij al-Dalālat al-Sam’iyya ‘alā mā kāna fī ‘ad rasūl allāh šalā allāh ‘alayhī wa salam min al-ḥiraf wa al-šanā’i’ wa al-‘amālāt al-shar’iyya* (Tunis: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 2010), ed. Ihsan ‘Abbas, pp. 50–51.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, the treaty between Muḥammad II and Jaume II of Aragón dated Rajab 695/May 1296 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 1) and Rabī’ II 701/January 1302 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 3); a missive from Muḥammad III to Jaume II (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 1), in which the Nasrid ruler describes himself as “son of the Commander of the Muslims and grandson of the Commander of the Muslims (*fijo de amir almuzlimin y nieto de amir almuzlimin*); the letter from Ismā’īl I to Jaume II dated Rabī’ II 721/May 1321 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 15); a letter from Muḥammad IV to Alfonso IV dated May 13<sup>th</sup> 1331 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 20); the letters from Yūsuf I to Pedro IV between Sha’bān 745/December 1344 and Rabī’ I 746/July 1345 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 60, 63, 65–67); the letter from Muḥammad V to Pedro IV dated Rabī’ II 759/April 1358 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 70); the treaty signed with Aragón in Rajab 768/March 1367 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 75); the letters from Muḥammad VI to Pedro IV dated Ramaḍān 761/July 1360 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 73) and Dhū-l Qa’da 762/ September 1361 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 74, 109); and the peace treaty between Muḥammad V and Pedro IV dated Muḥarram 779/May 1377 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 161).

“defender of the Islamic faith” (*defensor de la lley dels moros*).<sup>8</sup> Through the revival and adoption of this title, the Nasrids attempted to invoke their own succession to the “orthodox” and “militant” credentials of the Almoravids, whose early rulers were memorialized (even sacralized) in Marinid and Nasrid historiography as models of Islamic kingship. The connection between this title and the emphasis on the militant defense of the faith is reinforced by the Andalusī historian and litterateur Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Sa‘īd al-Andalusī (d. 785/1286), writing around 647/1249–1250, who specifically refers to Muḥammad I as “Commander of the Muslims” (*amīr al-muslimīn*) and stresses his role as a frontier warrior and knight defending the faith against a far superior Christian enemy (*wa hūwa al’ān bi-hā muthāghīran li-‘asākir al-naṣārā al-kathīra bidūna al-fāris wa hūwa min ‘ajā’ib al-dahr fī al-furūsiyya wa al-iqdām wa al-sa‘āda fī liqā’ al-‘adū*).<sup>9</sup>

Nasrid historiography also tied the Almoravids particularly closely to the city of Granada itself, with claims that it served as this dynasty’s administrative and political center in al-Andalus. Moreover, the eventual adoption of “*ṣaḥḥa hadhā*” (“this is authentic”) as the royal seal

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<sup>8</sup> ACA, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 30. For other examples of Romance-language missives from Granada utilizing the title “rey de los moros” and its variations, see ACA, Cartas árabes, Colecciones, Suplemento 32–35. In two letters written in Catalan from the Marinid ruler Abū Ya‘qūb Yūsuf to Jaume II, dated August 1301 and February 1302, the former refers to himself as “*rey dels sarrayns fill de rey de sarrayns*” (King of the Muslims, son of the King of the Muslims) (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 153–156), while an Aragonese chancery document (a translation of a Granadan missive), dated February 1303, utilizes the phrase “*emperador dels moros fill del emperador dels moros*” (emperor of the Muslims, son of the emperor of the Muslims) to refer to Muḥammad III (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 145–146). Similarly, in a missive from Jaume II to Abū Ya‘qūb Yūsuf, dated April 1302, the Marinid ruler is referred to as “*rey de los moros fill de rey de moros*” (King of the Muslims, son of the King of the Muslims) (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II--Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 156–157). In all these cases, it is apparent that these titles were utilized in an analogous fashion to the usage of “*amīr al-muslimīn ibn amīr al-muslimīn*” in Nasrid and Marinid Arabic-language letters, providing an early attestation of the fact that illustrating that all of these forms were understood to be a legitimate rendering of “Commander of the Muslims.” For early usages of “Commander of the Muslims son of Commander of the Muslims” in a non-diplomatic context in the Marinid court, see the dedication to Abū Ya‘qūb Yūsuf on the illuminated Qur’an codex, which was deposited in the royal library in Fez in Rajab 705/January 1306 (*Qur’ān*, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek [BSB] Cod. Arab. 3, f. 121v) and a treatise on the legal status of music, dated Sha‘bān 701/April 1302, also dedicated to Abū Ya‘qūb Yūsuf (*Kitāb al-lmṭā’ wa al-Intifā’ fī Mas’alat Samā’ al-Samā’*, BN MS Res. 246, f. 1v).

<sup>9</sup> ‘Alī ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī, *al-Mughrib fī Ḥulā al-Maghrib*, 2: 87.

and signature may have been a symbolic gesture invoking the Almoravids, particular the ruler Yūsuf b. Tashufīn, whose own seal was “*ṣaḥḥa dhālika bi-ḥawl Allāh*” (“that is correct by the power of God”).<sup>10</sup> This deployment of militancy and the invocation of orthodoxy as tools of political legitimation bear close resemblance to similar strategies undertaken by al-Mutawwakil b. Hūd in his struggles against both the Christian kingdoms and the Almohads during the early 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>11</sup> the very context from which the Nasrid polity itself arose. As discussed below, this theme of militancy was closely tied with both genealogical discourses about Anṣārī lineage as well as the gradual Nasrid utilization of grandiose titles such as “God’s Caliph.” In order to understand the manner in which these discourses were deployed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, it is necessary to revisit their foundations in the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century.

Historians seeking to reconstruct Nasrid dynastic ideology during the first 70 years of the kingdom’s history (roughly corresponding to the reigns of Muḥammad I, Muḥammad II, and Muḥammad III, who reigned between 629/1232 and 708/1309) are faced with two interrelated methodological problems: 1) the paucity of sources from the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century which shed light on the ideological or religio-political underpinnings of Nasrid royal authority; and 2) the large number of surviving mid to late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century literary sources, mostly composed by Nasrid chancellors and court secretaries, which consciously and deliberately impose their own conceptions of sovereignty onto an earlier period. When considering these texts it is particularly important to keep in mind that, despite their authors’ attempt to claim the antiquity of various concepts and titles, they are reflective of particular developments that were taking place during

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<sup>10</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawḍa’ al-‘Alāma*, p. 22.

<sup>11</sup> For more on this, see Abigail Krasner Balbale, “Jihād as a Means of Political Legitimation in Thirteenth-Century Sharq al-Andalus,” in *The Articulation of Power in Medieval Iberia and the Maghrib* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), ed. Amira K. Bennison, pp. 87–106, which provides an exploration of the various strategies employed by Ibn Hūd to legitimate his rule, including his use of *jihād* and his seeking official investiture from the Abbasids.

the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. This is particularly true of genealogy (*nasab*), a concept that became increasingly important among court functionaries, such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who viewed it as an essential component of their broader articulation of a distinct religio-political ideology for the Nasrid dynasty. For centuries, genealogy had been one of the most significant (and universal) bases of political legitimacy for the various dynasties in the Islamic world.<sup>12</sup> The Islamic West was no exception. Beginning in the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, each of the post-Almohad dynasties sought to emphasize their descent in such a way so as to connect themselves to the (Arab) lineages of early Islamic history. The Hafsids claimed descent from the second caliph, ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (r. 13/634–23/644),<sup>13</sup> and both the Marinids<sup>14</sup> and Zayyanids<sup>15</sup> tied themselves directly to the Prophet’s family (*al al-bayt*) by claiming an Idrisid-Sharifian descent through his grandson al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. 50/670).<sup>16</sup> Over time, particular genealogies were constructed, genealogical claims emended or changed altogether, with both male and female lineages playing an important role in claiming a particular ancestral affinity with these relatives

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<sup>12</sup> For a critical reflection and discussion on the form and function of Arab genealogy in the medieval Islamic world, see Zoltán Szombathy, *The Roots of Arabic Genealogy: A Study in Historical Anthropology* (Piliscsaba: The Avicenna Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, 2003) and Ilker Evrim Binbaş, “Structure and Function of the Genealogical Tree in Islamic Historiography,” in *Horizons of the World: Festschrift for Isenbike Togan*, ed. Ilker Evrim Binbaş and Nurten Kiliç-Schubel (Istanbul, Ithaki, 2011), pp. 465–544.

<sup>13</sup> Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, *al-Ta’rīf bi-l Muṣṭalah al-Sharīf*, p. 41; al-Qalqashandī, *Ma’āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma’ālim al-Khilāfa*, 2: 258–259; Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Shammā’, *al-Adilla al-Bayyina al-Nūrāniyya fī Mafākhir al-Dawla al-Ḥafsiyya* (Tunis: al-Dar al-‘Arabiyya li-l Kitāb, 1984), ed. Al-Tair ibn Muḥammad al-Ma’murī, p. 48; al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, *Raf’ al-Ḥujub al-Mastūra ‘an Maḥāsīn al-Maqṣūra*, 1: 126–128, 391; al-Balawī, *Tāj al-Mafriq*, 2:116; Ibn al-Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī, *al-Fārisiyya fī Mabādi’ al-Dawla al-Ḥafsiyya*, pp. 100, 108.

<sup>14</sup> Ismā‘īl b. Yūsuf b. al-Aḥmar, *Rawḍat al-Nisrīn fī Dawlat Banī Marīn* (Rabat: al-Tab’a al-Malakiyya, 2003), ed. ‘Abd al-Wahhab bin Mansur, p. 17; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Marzūq al-Tilmisānī, *al-Musnad al-Sahīḥ al-Ḥasan fī Ma’āthir Mawlāna Abī al-Ḥasan* (Rabat: Dar al-Aman, 2012), ed. María Jesús Viguera, p. 95.

<sup>15</sup> Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Khaldūn, *Bughyat al-Ruwwād*, p. 204; Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Tanasī, *Tārīkh Banī Zayyān, mulūk Tilimsān: muqtaṭaf min Naẓm al-durr wa-al-‘iqyān fī bayān sharaf Banī Zayyān* (Algiers: al-Mu’assasa al-Waṭaniyya lil-Kitāb wa-al-Maktaba al-Waṭaniyya al-Jazā’iriyya, 2010), ed. Mamud Bu ‘Ayyad, p. 110.

<sup>16</sup> Particularly significant is the manner in which the Marinids emphasized the connection between themselves and the early medieval Idrisid dynasty of Fez through the patronage of historiography and architecture, as well as through the “rediscovery” of the tombs of the early Idrisid rulers and the construction of mausoleums at these sites in both Fez and Zarhoun. For more, see Herman L. Beck, *L’Image d’Idrīs II, ses descendants de Fās et la politique sharīfienne des sultanes marīnides (656–869/1258–1465)* (Leiden: Brill, 1989).



or associates of the Prophet. Particularly significant was the manner in which the Marinids emphasized the connection between themselves and the early medieval Idrisid dynasty of Fez through the patronage of historiography and the Mawlid ceremony, as well as through the “rediscovery” of the tombs of the early Idrisid rulers and the construction of mausoleums at these sites in both Fez and Zarhoun.<sup>17</sup>

For their part, the Nasrids formulated a genealogical myth in which the dynasty’s founder (Muḥammad I) was descended from Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda (d. 11/635), a close companion and early supporter of the Prophet Muḥammad (d. 10/632) and chief of the Khazraj tribe in Medina, through his son Qays b. Sa’d (d. 59/679).<sup>18</sup> The Khazraj belonged to a category of Muslims identified in the Qur’ān as the *Anṣār*, or “the Helpers (or Supporters)” for their role in providing refuge and military assistance to the Prophet and the nascent Muslim community following their exile from Mecca in 622.<sup>19</sup> Due to their association with the Prophet and their pivotal role in early Islamic history, the *Anṣār* of Medina were highly regarded by subsequent generations of Muslims, not least in al-Andalus, where descent from the *Anṣār* was considered to be a noble pedigree.<sup>20</sup> There was widespread claim to this particular lineage in Andalusī history and

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<sup>17</sup> Two important examples of historiography are Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Abī Zar’, *Kitāb al-ānīs al-muṭrib bi-rawḍ al-qirṭās fī ākhbār mulūk al-maghrib wa tārīkh madīna Fās* (Rabat: al-Matba’a al-Malakiyya, 1999), ed. ‘Abd al-Wahhab bin Mansur, a monumental chronicle providing a historical narrative of Morocco, focusing on the city of Fez, since the foundation of the Idrisid Kingdom by Idrīs I (r. 172/788–177/791) and culminating in the reign of Abū Sa’īd ‘Uthmān (r. 710/1310–731/1331); and Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī al-Jaznā’ī, *Janā Zarāt al-Ās fī Binā’ Madīnat Fās* (Rabat: al-Matba’a al-Malakiyya, 1991), ed. ‘Abd al-Wahhab bin Mansur, written for the Marinid chief minister ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Yābānī in the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>18</sup> It has only been in the past decade or so that the importance of genealogy within the broader scheme of Nasrid political legitimization has been recognized by modern scholarship. See, in particular, Maribel Fierro, “The *Anṣārīs*, Nāṣir al-Dīn and the Naṣrids in al-Andalus,” *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 31 (2006), pp. 232–247; Bárbara Boloix-Gallardo’s “The Genealogical Legitimization of the Nasrid Dynasty: The Alleged *Anṣārī* Origins of the Banū Naṣr,” in *The Articulation of Power in Medieval Iberia and the Maghrib*, ed. Bennison, pp. 61–86; Francisco Vidal Castro, “Frontera, genealogía y religión en la gestación y nacimiento del Reino Nazarí de Granada: En torno a Ibn al-Aḥmar,” in *III Estudios de Frontera. Convivencia, defense y comunicación en la Frontera* (Jaen, 2000), eds. Francisco Toro Ceballos and José Rodríguez Molina, pp. 793–810.

<sup>19</sup> Fierro, “The *Anṣārīs*, Nāṣir al-Din and the Naṣrids in al-Andalus,” p. 236.

<sup>20</sup> Fierro, “The *Anṣārīs*, Nāṣir al-Din and the Naṣrids in al-Andalus,” p. 247. For a discussion of the *Anṣār* and *anṣārī* descent in al-Andalus more generally, see Boloix, *De la Taifa de Arjona al Reino Nazarí de Granada*, pp. 96–110.

society, especially among families in the region that came to constitute the Kingdom of Granada.<sup>21</sup> Further contributing to the prestigious character of these lineages was the narration and dissemination of increasingly elaborate Prophetic traditions (*ḥadīth*) about the virtues (*faḍā'il*) of the Anṣār and Medina.

This tradition continued into the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries. In his treatise entitled “On the Virtues of the Anṣār” (*Nuzhat al-Abṣār fī Faḍā'il al-Anṣār*), Abū Bakr b. al-Farrā' al-Ghassānī (d. 699/1299), the chief judge of Granada during the reign of Muḥammad I, the various virtues of the Anṣār are enumerated on the basis of various Qur'anic verses and ḥadīth ascribed to the Prophet Muḥammad.<sup>22</sup> The Granadan secretary Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī narrates a tradition that proclaims that the distinction of “The Supporters” (*al-anṣār*) was one that was bestowed directly by God and cites the poem of the 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>-century Medinian poet Ḥassān b. Thābit al-Anṣārī, the first line of which states “God named them the Anṣār because of their support of the religion of true guidance and their distinguished defense of the faith on the battlefield.”<sup>23</sup> The adoption of a specifically Anṣārī lineage by the Banū Naṣr, as the Nasrids referred to themselves, was a multifaceted process that was motivated by a variety of considerations. Primarily, it was as a way of providing their dynasty with an honorable lineage appropriate to their status as defenders of the faith and the last remaining independent Muslim dynasty in al-Andalus.<sup>24</sup> This should lead us to examine the motivations for emphasizing a specifically Anṣārī ancestry. This question becomes particularly salient significant in light of other evidence from the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> A notable example from the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century of figures within the Nasrid kingdom claiming to be descendants of Qays b. Sa'd b. 'Ubāda include the historian and poet Abū Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥaqq b. Ismā'īl al-Bādisī (J. Haremska, “'Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Bādisī,” *BA*, 1: 138–142).

<sup>22</sup> Abū Bakr b. al-Farrā' al-Ghassānī, *Nuzhat al-Abṣār fī Faḍā'il al-Anṣār* (Riyadh: Adwa' al-Salaf, 2004), ed. 'Abd al-Razzaq bin Muhammad Marzuq, pp. 101–365

<sup>23</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuḥfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, f. 61r.

<sup>24</sup> Mata, “El Califato Nazarí,” p. 297.

century that indicates that this was not the only genealogical claim in circulation in the years following the foundation of the Nasrid kingdom. According to the itinerant Andalusī historian, secretary and litterateur Abū al-Ḥasan b. Saʿīd al-Andalusī, a contemporary of Muḥammad I, whom he met in Seville during the 630s/1230s, the founder of the Nasrid dynasty was a descendant of the Marwanid branch of the Umayyads, which he signifies with the patronymic “al-Marwānī.”<sup>25</sup>

While the origins of Muḥammad b. Yūsuf, an obscure frontier warrior from Arjona, will never be known, by the beginning of the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, any previous patronymics or genealogical claims were abandoned in favor of the emphasis on an Anṣārī lineage. The claim to be the legitimate successors and descendants of the Anṣār complemented the Nasrids’ own vision of themselves as defenders of the faith, upholders of the Maliki school of law (which originated in Medina, the homeland of the Anṣār), and patrons of Arabic learning and culture, particularly rhetoric and poetry. More broadly, the Nasrid emphasis on the descent from the Anṣār should be seen in light of the broader emphasis on “Arabness” within al-Andalus, a phenomenon especially evident during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, with the devolution of the Almohad polity and the rise of independent Andalusī kingdoms following nearly 200 years of Berber political domination of the Iberian Peninsula. The attempts to construct a grand historical narrative about the social and ethnic identity of Andalusī Muslims, and the Nasrid sovereigns who governed them, drew upon a longstanding tradition of Arabic genealogical writing in the Iberian Peninsula, a trend that is evident since the 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> century. The privileging of “Arabness” and the insistence on genealogical continuity between the 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>-century Arab conquerors of the Visigothic kingdom and the Muslim inhabitants of Iberia in late medieval al-Andalus was further

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<sup>25</sup> Ibn Saʿīd al-Andalusī, *al-Mughrib fī Ḥulā al-Maghrib*, 2: 87.

complemented by anti-Berber sentiment, another well-established Andalusī tradition that was exemplified by leading Andalusī litterateurs such as Abū al-Walīd al-Shaḡundī (d. 629/1231) in the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century and Ibn al-Khaṭīb, among others, during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>.<sup>26</sup> This was counteracted by a rich historiographical about the “virtues of the Berbers” and their various intellectual, military and political accomplishments, a genre that found its clearest expression in the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century work “The Virtues of the Berbers” (*Mafākhīr al-Barbar*).<sup>27</sup>

For Ibn al-Khaṭīb, one of the foundational reasons for the existence of the craft of history itself (*al-fann al-tarīkhī*) was for the purposes of genealogy and as a mechanism for people to legitimately establish their ancestry (*ya ‘rafūn bihi ansābihim shar‘an*).<sup>28</sup> An important illustration of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s utilization of historiography and literature to privilege an ethnoculturally exclusive vision of al-Andalus can be found in the opening pages of his “Comprehensive History,” where he proclaims:

I was possessed with a strong sense of pride (*ḥamiyya*) and partisanship (*‘asabiyya*) for my own people (*qawmī*), a feeling that cannot be considered blameworthy by any religious or moral standards, and realized that this city (*ḥaḍra*)—which has been bestowed by such undeniably immense bounties and glory from God—has been chosen by God as a borderland (*thaghr*) of Islam, and populated by the Arab notables, the tribal kin of His Prophet.<sup>29</sup>

The direct, genealogical tie between the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century inhabitants of Granada and the leading Arab tribal kin of Muḥammad is, for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, one of the characteristics of the Nasrid

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<sup>26</sup> Jreis Navarro, “Entre las dos Orillas,” pp. 57–58. For a good example of this anti-Berber polemic, which was periodically deployed during moments of conflict between the Nasrids and Marinids, see the poem of Yūsuf III during the Gibraltar campaign in which he attacks the Marinid sovereign Abū Sa‘īd ‘Uthmān III (r. 800/1398–823/1420), contrasting the Nasrids’ Arab descent and “ancient kingship and sovereignty” (*fa-fīna al-mulk wa al-tamlīk qidman*) with the pagan and slave heritage of the Berbers (*wa fīhā al-riqq mā ṣalū wa lā ṣāmū*) (Yūsuf III, *Diwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith*, pp. 110–111).

<sup>27</sup> Anonymous. “Kitāb Mafākhīr al-Barbar,” in *Tres Textos Árabes sobre Beréberes en el Occidente Islámico* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1996), ed. Muhammad Ya‘la, pp. 125–272 (Arabic pagination).

<sup>28</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-lḥāṭa*, 1: 80.

<sup>29</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-lḥāṭa*, 1: 83–84.

kingdom that distinguishes it above many other lands. Significantly, this is then tied closely with the militant credentials of the Granadans, as inhabitants of a frontier kingdom. This emphasis on Arabness is also apparent in his discussion of the origins of the Nasrid capital of Granada. Despite recognizing its long association with North African Berber dynasties—even acknowledging that the city had been constructed by the Berber Zirids in the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century—Ibn al-Khaṭīb stressed the nearly-exclusive Arab composition and identity of Granada (and the region of Elvira/Ilbīra), a region which he associates closely with the Damascene Arab contingents which arrived under the leadership of Balj b. Bishr. After listing over 80 Arab lineages from which he claims that the overwhelming majority of Granada’s population descended, Ibn al-Khaṭīb—himself claiming the Yemeni tribe of Banū Salmān as his ancestors—proclaimed that the existence of these tribes was “sufficient testimony for the nobility of descent (*aṣāla*) of Granada’s inhabitants and constitutes clear evidence for the Arabness (*al-‘urūbiyya*) of the kingdom.”<sup>30</sup> The usage of this particular construction (*al-‘urūbiyya*) is quite rare in pre-modern Arabic writing, and requires some explanation. Its usage follows an extensive presentation of evidence about the tribal and ethnic descent of the inhabitants of the Nasrid kingdom from families linked with the early Arab conquerors of Visigothic Hispania and precedes a description of the “ideal” physiological features encountered in Granada, including light skin tones and dark hair. This emphasis on the allegedly deep-rooted “Arab” identity of the Nasrid kingdom and its population is one of the major themes that emerges from the surviving literary sources, biographical dictionaries and historical chronicles from the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Even Ibn Khaldūn, who critiques the lack of social and tribal cohesion (*‘asabiyya*) among the inhabitants of the Nasrid kingdom, notes the continued maintenance of Arab

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<sup>30</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 136.

genealogies and a concern with lineage among the remaining Andalusī Muslims in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Iberia.<sup>31</sup>

As Maribel Fierro has argued, the emphasis on Syrian and Yemeni Arab lineages within the Nasrid kingdom should be understood as an attempt to establish important links with the earliest Arab conquerors of Iberia who were represented as having laid the social, cultural and political foundations of Andalusī civilization.<sup>32</sup> This enabled Andalusī Muslims in the Kingdom of Granada to claim the mantle of their “ancestors” as militant champions of the Islamic faith while also legitimizing their own privilege as an Arab elite who served as the guardians of Arabic language, learning and culture, and had maintained a continuous residence in Granada and its vicinity for over five centuries. This emphasis was complemented by the reimagination of Granada (often referred to as “the Damascus of al-Andalus”)<sup>33</sup> as the center of Islamic culture in the Iberian Peninsula, despite the rather late date of the city’s founding (5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century) relative to towns like Córdoba and Seville, inheritor of the splendor of previous eras of al-Andalus.

The Nasrid emphasis on an Arab lineage linking themselves with one of the conquest elites should be interpreted within the context of this broader social and cultural phenomenon. As Fierro rightly observes, this process of “Arabization” involved the deliberate omission and erasure of non-Arab (i.e. Berber and *muwallad*) ancestries from the collective memory of Andalusī Muslims—populations from whom many of these communities probably descended—in order to distinguish the Nasrid kingdom from North Africa, which was commonly depicted by

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<sup>31</sup> For a broader discussion of Ibn Khaldūn’s perception and representation of the Nasrid kingdom in light of his historical and sociological theories, see Gabriel Martínez-Gros, “La théorie d’Ibn Khaldūn sur le royaume de Grenade,” in *El discurso político en la Edad Media* (Buenos Aires: Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas, 1995), eds. Nilda Guglielmi and Adeline Rucquoi, pp. 189–215.

<sup>32</sup> Maribel Fierro, “Ways of Connecting with the Past: Genealogies of Nasrid Granada” in *Genealogy and Knowledge in Muslim Societies: Understanding the Past* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), eds. Sara Savant and Helena de Felipe, pp. 71–88.

<sup>33</sup> Ibn Saʿīd al-Andalusī, *al-Mughrib fī Ḥulā al-Maghrib*, 2: 83.

Andalusi authors as a land lacking culture or refinement, while also clearly differentiating themselves ethnically, linguistically and culturally (as well as religiously) from their Iberian Christian neighbors to the north. The construction of elaborate genealogies connecting the inhabitants of the Nasrid kingdom to a relatively limited set of Arab lineages also fulfilled the function of establishing kinship ties between the various families of Granada, whose “imagined community” was now held together not simply by a shared religion and purpose, but also by a common genealogy.

Nor were genealogical discourses during this period merely confined to contrasting Arabness with non-Arab origins or ancestries, since there was also an intra-Arab aspect. It is particularly notable that many of the Arab patronymics listed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb belonged to tribes that were traditionally understood as belonging to specifically southern Arabian (Yemeni-Qaḥṭānī) lineages.<sup>34</sup> This was largely in keeping with a longstanding tradition in Andalusī history, whereby leading and prominent individuals in society often claimed Yemeni or southern Arabian ancestry, usually from tribes that had settled in Syria during the course of the conquests and had a strong affiliation with the Umayyad dynasty. A further illustration of this trend is the fact that from the early 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century onwards almost all the major self-identified “Arab” dynasties in al-Andalus that exercised some form of sovereignty, such as the Banū ‘Abbād of Sevilla and the Banū Hūd of Zaragoza and Murcia, would claim this lineage. Indeed, even the Berber Almoravids would seize the opportunity to claim a Yemeni-Qaḥṭānī (and specifically Himyarite) Arab lineage, a demonstration of how malleable and potent genealogical claims could be.<sup>35</sup> The Nasrid case, however, was the only time in the entire history of the Islamic West of a

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<sup>34</sup> Within classical Arabic genealogical writing, the Arabs were traditionally divided into “northern” (‘Adnānī/Qaysī) and “southern” (Yemeni/Qaḥṭānī) groups (Ibn al-Farrā’, *Nuzhat al-Abṣār fī Faḍā’il al-Anṣār*, p. 103).

<sup>35</sup> Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-A’yān wa Anbā’ Abnā’ al-Zamān* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1998), eds. Yusuf ‘Ali Tawil and Maryam Qasim Tawil, 5: 485.

reigning dynasty emphasizing a specifically Khazrajite-Anṣārī ancestry. This underscores the importance of investigating the importance that an emphasis on this particular lineage played within the Nasrid articulation of a broader dynastic ideology.

The Anṣārī origins of the Nasrids was not entirely the creation of the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. There exists fragmentary evidence from the late reign of the first Nasrid ruler, Muḥammad I (r. 637/1238–671/1273) that illustrates that the Nasrids were promoting themselves as lineal descendants of the Anṣār as early as the 660s/1260s. In his “On the Virtues of the Anṣār” (*Nuzhat al-Abṣār fī Faḍā’il al-Anṣār*), a compendium of historical anecdotes and virtues of the Anṣār completed in Shawwāl 667/June 1269, the chief judge of Granada Abū Bakr b. al-Farrā’ described Muḥammad I as “the inheritor of the Yemenite nobility [of the Anṣār] and the one who shares with them in the Anṣārī lineage of Medina, our lord al-Ghālīb bi-llāh, the Holy Warrior, the Commander of the Muslims (*amīr al-muslimīn*) and the Champion of the Faith (*nāṣir al-dīn*) Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Naṣr.”<sup>36</sup> The existence of this text and its dedication to Muḥammad I allows us to definitely date Nasrid claims to Anṣārī descent to the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century. Additionally, this same text demonstrates the development of a mode of political legitimacy which placed an equal emphasis upon Anṣārī lineage and the militant defense of the faith, a phenomenon that will be examined further below. It is significant that nowhere in the text is there an attempt by Ibn al-Farrā’ to link the Nasrids with any particular clan or subgroup of the Anṣār, much less a specific individual. In fact, aside from a generic reference to Sa’d ibn ‘Ubāda as “a leader of the Anṣār and the Lord of the Khazraj,” neither he nor his son Qays are accorded any particular attention within the text that sets them apart from the other Anṣār or that departs from traditional narratives about them.<sup>37</sup> This fact, along with the absence of additional literary

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<sup>36</sup> Ibn al-Farrā’, *Nuzhat al-Abṣār fī Faḍā’il al-Anṣār*, p. 94.

<sup>37</sup> Ibn al-Farrā’, *Nuzhat al-Abṣār*, pp. 237–240.



or epigraphic evidence from the period, suggests that the Nasrid claim to Anṣārī descent was quite broadly defined in the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century.

The Alhambra provides additional insight into the broadly-defined nature of claims to Anṣārī descent in the Nasrid court around 700/1300. One of the oldest palaces constructed in the Alhambra, the Generalife, which dates to around 720/1320, also provides evidence of the emphasis on descent from the Anṣār. The north pavilion of this palace is inscribed with a poem by Ibn al-Jayyāb which proclaims that the Nasrid sovereign Ismā‘īl I was “the best of monarchs, Abū al-Walīd, chosen from the most supreme kings of Qatan, who followed in the footsteps of his honored ancestors, the defenders of the best of creation [Prophet Muḥammad] who was descended from ‘Adnān.” This inscription, which serves as one of the most important pieces of evidence about the articulation of new discourses of legitimation in Nasrid Granada following the rise of Ismā‘īl I (founder of the so-called “second” Nasrid dynasty, since he displaced the direct male descendants of Muḥammad I), illustrates that while there was clearly a claim to Anṣārī descent, it lacked specificity.

It was over the course of the following decades, during the early and mid 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century that the Nasrid dynastic claim to descent from the Anṣār was delineated further and specified as Khazrajī, through the particular line of Qays b. Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda. Throughout the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century (and well into the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>), Nasrid court secretaries, historians, litterateurs, and poets made repeated reference to the Anṣārī and specifically Khazrajī ancestry of the dynasty. The poetry of Ibn al-Jayyāb, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Zamrak, in particular, abounds with references to this genealogical claim. All three figures were court secretaries who became heads of the chancery in Granada, controlling the institution as chancellors between roughly 708/1309 and 793/1391. Moreover, their contemporaries Ibn al-Ḥajj al-Numayrī and Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī, both historians

and poets who held important positions within the Nasrid chancery, also upheld and defended the legitimacy of the Nasrid lineage, underscoring the link between chancery officials and the propagation of Nasrid dynastic ideology during this period. Even leading intellectuals in Nasrid Granada not specifically associated with the chancery celebrated the Nasrids' lineage. For example, the chief judge of Granada Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Bunnāhī (d. 793/1391), writing in the 770s/1370s stated that "sovereignty and kingship today is in the hands of the Banū Sā'ada [i.e. descendants of Sa'd b. 'Ubāda]." <sup>38</sup>

Poetry constitutes some of the richest evidence for the deployment of these claims and the manner in which they served as the legitimizing framework of the Nasrid dynasty. As the work of Patricia Crone, Martin Hinds, Tahera Qutbuddin and Suzanne Stetkevych has illustrated, a study of court poetry—especially when utilized alongside other literary and documentary evidence—can greatly illuminate a dynasty's representation, political ideology and aspirations, as well as notions of kingship and sovereignty. <sup>39</sup> These poems were read in elite and courtly circles across the Islamic West, copied in books and epistles and inscribed upon architecture, allowing its message to be transmitted widely far beyond the confines of the Alhambra and thus serving as a major vehicle of Nasrid dynastic ideology and propaganda. One of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's

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<sup>38</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, pp. 108, 251. The Mamluk historian and genealogist al-Qalqashandī (d. 1418), writing around 1400, noted that "the Banū Sā'ada were a major clan the Khazraj tribe" and mentions that the most renowned of their number was "Sa'd ibn 'Ubāda, the lord of the Khazraj" (Abū al-'Abbās Amad b. 'Alī al-Qalqashandī, *Nihāyat al-Arab fi Ma'rifat Ansāb al-'Arab* [Cairo: al-Shirika al-'Arabiyya li-l Tiba'a wa-l Nashr, 1959], ed. Ibraim al-Abyari, p. 281). It is notable that the usage *sayyid al-Khazraj* ("lord of the Khazraj") was also the specific epithet often employed when invoking Sa'd in the Nasrid context.

<sup>39</sup> Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds, *God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 30–42; Tahera Qutbuddin, "Fatimid Aspirations of Conquest and Doctrinal Underpinnings in the Poetry of al-Qā'im bi-Amr Allāh, Ibn Hānī' al-Andalusī, Amīr Tamīm b. al-Mu'izz, and al-Mu'ayyad al-Shīrāzī," in *Poetry and History: The Value of Poetry in Reconstructing Arab History* (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 2011), eds. Ramzi Baalbaki, Saleh Said Agha and Tarif Khalidi, pp. 195–246; Tahera Qutbuddin, *Al-Mu'ayyad al-Shīrāzī and Fatimid da'wa poetry: A Case of Commitment in Classical Arabic Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *The Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy: Myth, Gender and Ceremony in the Classical Arabic Ode* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), pp. 80–109, 144–179, 180–240, 241–282.

most celebrated panegyrics for Muḥammad V, entitled *Jāddaka al-Ghayth*, written in the 760s/1360s, affirms the king's virtues and proclaims that he "belonged to the lineage of Qays b. Sa'd" (*min banī Qays ibn Sa'd*) and was "a scion of the eminent Anṣār" (*sibṭ al-Anṣār al-'ula*).<sup>40</sup> Similarly, a poem composed by Ibn Zamrak for Muḥammad V praises him as "the son of the proud Himyarite kings of the the Khazraj, possessing a genealogy like the dawn that has arisen high" (*Ibn al-Mulūk al-Ṣayd min Al Khazraj wa dha nasab ka-l ṣubḥ 'azza musāmiya*) and the "heir of the Anṣār" (*wārith al-Anṣār*).<sup>41</sup> The emphasis on the Khazrajī lineage of the dynasty is also ubiquitous within the poetry of Ibn al-Jayyāb, particularly those dated to the reign of Yūsuf I.<sup>42</sup> Ibn al-Ḥajj al-Numayrī, in a poem also composed in the 760s/1360s for Muḥammad V, asserts that the sovereign was "descended from the Anṣār, the Supporters of the Prophet" (*sulālat Anṣār al-Nabī*) while another poem invokes his genealogy and states that "the family of Sa'd express pride in him [Muḥammad V]...they [the Nasrids] are from among the Khazraj whose swords have always staunchly defended the religion of guidance. Their mission is the same mission as that of the Anṣār, the Supporters of the Best of Creation" (*wa yaḥkharu minhu Āl Sa'd...min al-Khazrajiyīn aladhīna suyūfuhum tudāfi'u 'an dīn al-hudā kull mukhrith. Humu ma humu Anṣār Khayr al-Warā*).<sup>43</sup> Ibn al-Hājj further proclaims:

He is from the Khazraj whose family is from among the most noble of houses

A direct descendant of Sa'd the Great, the son of 'Ubāda

He inherited the glories which time cannot erase from Qays, the son of of Sa'd

Verily the Nasrids are the very best of dynasties and the signs [of their nobility]  
are the most firmly established

<sup>40</sup> For the full poem and its translation, see James T. Monroe, *Hispano-Arabic Poetry: A Student Anthology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 338–345.

<sup>41</sup> Monroe, *Hispano-Arabic Poetry*, pp. 346–365.

<sup>42</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, pp. 91, 96, 116

<sup>43</sup> Ibraim ibn al-Hajj al-Numayri, *Mazāyin al-Qaṣr wa Maḥāsin al-'Aṣr*, BL Or. 5670, 1v, f. 5r.

Their ancestors are the Anṣār, the Supporters of our Faith, the very people in whom the Prophet himself was proud.<sup>44</sup>

The panegyric written by the Nasrid poet-prince Ibn al-Aḥmar for Muḥammad V communicates the same message, claiming that the sovereign's descent from Sa'd b. 'Ubāda ("the protector of the Prophet and Lord of the Anṣār who became a Companion with his sword unsheathed") granted him distinction and pre-eminence over other kings.<sup>45</sup> Writing during the brief reign of Yūsuf II (r. 793/1391–793/1392), the Granadan courtier and secretary Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī celebrates the Nasrid sovereign as "the embodiment of the nobility (*sharaf*) of the Anṣār" as a consequence of his descent from Sa'd b. 'Ubāda.<sup>46</sup> In an earlier work, this courtier also describes Muḥammad V as "the inheritor of Anṣārī virtue and the pinnacle of Arab nobility" (*wārith al-fakhr al-anṣārī wa muntahā al-sharaf al-'arabī*).<sup>47</sup> In one poem recited for Yūsuf I and dated Dhū-l Ḥijja 738/June 1338, the chancellor Ibn al-Jayyāb refers to the Kingdom of Granada as "a Sa'dī Imamate" (*imāma sa'diyya*), a reference to Sa'd b. 'Ubāda, while the Nasrid secretary Ibn Simāk al-Āmilī describes it as "the Nasrid-Khazrajite monarchy" (*al-iyāla al-naṣriyya al-khazrajiyya*).<sup>48</sup> For his part, the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century secretary and scholar Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Juzayy states that the Nasrids are "descendants of Sa'd b. 'Ubāda, the Lord of the Khazraj and pre-eminent Chief of the Anṣār" (*min dhuriyyat sayyid al-khazraj wa kabīr al-Anṣār*).<sup>49</sup> During the early 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, the poetry of the Nasrid ruler Yūsuf III continued to emphasize this lineage as part of the legitimacy of the dynasty.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Ibn al-Hajj, *Mazāyin al-Qaṣr*, BL Or. 5670, f. 8r.

<sup>45</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 90–91.

<sup>46</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Fukāhāt al-asmār wa-mudhhabāt al-akhbār wa-al-ash'ār*, 63.

<sup>47</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuḥfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, f. 3r.

<sup>48</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, p. 105.

<sup>49</sup> Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Juzayy, *Kitāb al-Khayl: Maṭla' al-Yumn wa al-Iqbāl fī Intiqā' Kitāb al-Iḥtifāl* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1986), ed. Muhammad al-'Arabi al-Khattabi, p. 22.

<sup>50</sup> Yūsuf III, *Dīwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith*, p. 107

The Alhambra itself also provides ample evidence of this development with numerous references to the Khazrajī and Anṣārī descent of the Nasrids found inscribed throughout the palace. Inscribed on the left-hand niche of the “Hall of the Boat” in the Comares is a late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century poem proclaiming: “Indeed, the servants of my master Ibn Naṣr have been honored by God; for he is descended from the lord of the Khazraj, Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda,”<sup>51</sup> while an inscription on the Fountain of the Lions dedicated to Muḥammad V reads: “O you who are the inheritor of the Anṣār, a sublime legacy that outlasts the firmest mountains.” Moreover, an inscription on the Mirador of Lindaraja states unequivocally that “[the entire Alhambra] is the work of the Imam Ibn Naṣr, may God preserve his majesty among kings! His ancestors achieved nobility in antiquity when they gave shelter to the Prophet and his family,” a clear reference to the Anṣār of Medina in early Islam.

Among the earliest dateable inscriptions are two dedicated to Yūsuf I by the chancellor and chief minister Ibn al-Jayyāb (who also claimed Anṣārī ancestry), which further attests to an early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-c Nasrid articulation of a clear line of descent from Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda: “Majestic, valiant and generous king, an aid for he who asks, a help for he who hopes. He is of the family of Sa’d, and those who helped and sheltered the Lord of the Miraculous Ascension [the Prophet Muḥammad]” and “this [structure] shows us the face of Yūsuf like a brilliant sign in which all the beauties reach their fulfillment. He is of the glorious Khazraj, whose works for the good of the Faith are as bright as the sun.” One of Ibn al-Jayyāb’s poems, which proclaimed that “[Yūsuf I] is a majestic, valiant and generous king, an aid to he who asks and a blessing for he who hopes. He is of the family of Sa’d, of the Banū Naṣr, and the ones who supported and sheltered the Lord of the Ascension” (*min Āl Sa’d min Banī Naṣr wa man naṣarū wa āwū ṣāhib al-mi’rāj*)

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<sup>51</sup> The epithets “Lord of the Khazraj” (*sayyid al-Khazraj*) and “Lord of the Ansar” (*sayyid al-Anṣār*) are found throughout most of the traditional accounts about Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda.

was inscribed upon the Qalaura Tower of the Alhambra.<sup>52</sup> In addition to these literary references, the genealogical claim impressed itself in other direct ways, primarily in the increasing Nasrid tendency to name royal princes Qays or Sa'd in addition to the more commonly-bestowed names Muḥammad, Yūsuf and Ismā'īl.

Who were these two individuals with whom the Nasrids tied themselves so closely over the course of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century? According to traditional Islamic accounts, Sa'd b. 'Ubāda was as a noble warrior and one of the few individuals in the Arabian Peninsula with the ability to both read and write.<sup>53</sup> He was memorialized as an early and loyal supporter of Muḥammad in Medina, who fought in most of the early battles alongside the Prophet and who was often consulted by the latter about major decisions pertaining to the exercise of justice within the community.<sup>54</sup> Within these narratives about the early community, Sa'd's son Qays is also rather prominent and is represented as one of Muḥammad's leading councilors and confidants in Medina.<sup>55</sup> The Andalusī jurist and traditionist Abū 'Umar b. 'Abd al-Barr narrates that both Sa'd and his son Qays held such distinction that they were entrusted with bearing the Prophet's own standard during the conquest of Mecca.<sup>56</sup> The 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>-century Andalusī scholar Abū Muḥammad b. Ḥazm memorializes both Sa'd and Qays as leading members of the early Muslim community.<sup>57</sup> One of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own students, Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusantīnī (d. 810/1407), refers to Qays as one of the most loyal servants of Muḥammad, and narrates that he

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<sup>52</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, p. 97; Puerta Vilchez, *Reading the Alhambra*, p. 309.

<sup>53</sup> Muḥammad b. Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1997), ed. Muhammad 'Abd al-Qadir 'Ata, 3: 460–461; al-Dimyāṭī, *Akḥbār Qabā'il al-Khazraj*, 2: 636.

<sup>54</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuḥfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, ff. 60v–61r; Ibn al-Farrā', *Nuzhat al-Abṣār fī Faḍā'il al-Anṣār*, pp. 237–238; al-Dimyāṭī, *Akḥbār Qabā'il al-Khazraj*, 2: 638–639.

<sup>55</sup> For a concise distillation of the traditional (Sunni) perspective on both Sa'd b. 'Ubāda and Qays b. Sa'd as it stood during the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, see, al-Dhaabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, 1: 270–279, 3: 102–112.

<sup>56</sup> Al-Dimyāṭī, *Akḥbār Qabā'il al-Khazraj*, 2: 638. This is also emphasized by the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid scholar and secretary Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Juzayy ('Abd Allāh b. Juzayy, *Kitāb al-Khayl*, p. 22).

<sup>57</sup> Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat Ansāb al-'Arab*, p. 365.

was delegated the responsibility of maintaining law and order within the community (*wa kana bayna yadayhi ka al-shurṭī bayna yaday al-amīr*).<sup>58</sup> Following the death of the Prophet, Qays distinguished himself as a competent and effective general, as well as his strong partisanship for ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib during the First Civil War, serving as one of his leading generals against the Umayyads at the Battle of Siffin (37/657), a detail usually emphasized in Nasrid-era biographies of this figure.<sup>59</sup> In a strongly anti-Umayyad poem written by the Nasrid sovereign Yūsuf III in commemoration of the martyrdom of al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī at Karbala (61/680), the loyal service of Sa‘d and Qays to the Prophet are invoked, particularly their roles during the battles of Badr (2/624) and Hunayn (8/630), indicating the manner in which these individuals served as an important link between the Nasrids and the Prophet (and his family).<sup>60</sup> It also indicates the broader Sharifian cultural and religious milieu in which these Nasrid claims to descent from Qays b. Sa‘d were articulated and took shape, especially by the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Yet another element which undoubtedly enhanced the prestige of this particular lineage in the minds of Nasrid propagandists was the fact that the Khazraj were traditionally identified within traditional Arabic genealogical writings as distant relatives of the Prophet himself, with these writers often claiming that the mother of ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib (the Prophet’s paternal grandfather) was a member of this tribe.<sup>61</sup>

The Nasrid emphasis on their descent from Sa‘d ibn ‘Ubāda was communicated so successfully during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century that even individuals unaffiliated with the dynasty

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<sup>58</sup> Ibn Qunfudh al-Quṣanṭīnī, *Wasīlat al-Islām bi al-Nabī*, p. 70. This tradition is also narrated in al-Dhaabī, *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, 3: 103.

<sup>59</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuḥfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, f. 61r; Ibn al-Farrā’, *Nuzhat al-Absār fī Faḍā’il al-Anṣār*, p. 239.

<sup>60</sup> Yūsuf III, *Diwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith*, p. 133. For another strongly pro-Alid poem in commemoration of al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī by this Nasrid ruler, see Yūsuf III, *Diwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith*, p. 134.

<sup>61</sup> Szombathy, *The Roots of Arabic Genealogy*, pp. 96–97.

repeated (or even affirmed) the veracity of the claim. Writing in the 740/s1340s in Cairo, the Mamluk chancellor and historian Ibn Faḍlallāh al-‘Umarī (d. 749/1349) stated that the Nasrid emir Yūsuf I was “a descendant of Qays ibn Sa’d ibn ‘Ubāda.”<sup>62</sup> The Egyptian scholar Zayn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Bāsīt b. Khalīl al-Ḥanafī (d. 920/1514), who sojourned across the Islamic West, including Granada, during the late 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century also affirmed this particular Nasrid lineage, asserting that “the Banū al-Aḥmar, who have ruled al-Andalus for a considerable period of time, are originally from the famed town of Arjona and are descendants of Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda. This genealogy is accurate and has been authenticated by a number of trustworthy Andalusī scholars.”<sup>63</sup> Another important functionary at the Mamluk court, the historian, genealogist and court secretary Abū al-‘Abbās Amad al-Qalqashandī remarked in his *Qalā'id al-Jumān*: “Among the descendants of Sa’d ibn ‘Ubāda, the lord of the Khazraj, are the Banū al-Aḥmar, the kings of Granada in al-Andalus. The first of their rulers was Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Naṣr and sovereignty has remained in the hands of his descendants until the present, the ruling monarch being Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf [III] b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf [r. 811/1408–820/1417].”<sup>64</sup> This affirmation by al-Qalqashandī of the Nasrids’ descent from Sa’d ibn ‘Ubāda marks a departure from his statement in an earlier work where he appeared far more skeptical about the Nasrids’ lineage: “The Banū al-Aḥmar originate from Arjona, a frontier town in the vicinity of Cordoba, and they claim to be descended from Sa’d ibn ‘Ubāda, the lord of the Khazraj, but I could not establish the veracity of this genealogical descent (*wa lam aqif ‘ala nasabihim ilayhi*).”<sup>65</sup> Even ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b.

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<sup>62</sup> Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, *al-Ta’rīf bi-l Muṣṭalaḥ al-Sharīf*, p. 43.

<sup>63</sup> Zayn al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Bāsīt b. Khalīl al-Ḥanafī, *Kitāb al-Rawḍ al-Bāsīm fī Ḥawāḍith al-‘Umur wa al-Tarājīm* (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-Asriyya, 2014), 3: 76. For an overview of this author’s account of the Islamic West during the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, see Muhammad Abdulla Enan, “Riwāya Miṣriyya ‘an al-Maghrib wa-al-Andalus fī Awākhir al-Qarn al-Tāsi’ al-Hijrī,” *Revista del Instituto de Estudios Islámicos en Madrid* 15 (1970), pp. 95-111.

<sup>64</sup> Abū al-‘Abbās Amad b. ‘Alī al-Qalqashandī, *Qalā'id al-Jumān fī al-Ta’rīf bi Qabā'il ‘Arab al-Zamān* (Cairo: Dar al-Kitab al-Misri, 1982), ed. Ibraim al-Abyari, p. 94.

<sup>65</sup> al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A’sha*, 5: 251.



Khaldūn, usually cynical of Nasrid dynastic claims, nonetheless echoes Nasrid propaganda when he states: “the Banū al-Aḥmar are widely known as the Banū Naṣr and are descended from Sa’d ibn ‘Ubāda, the lord of the Khazraj,” a claim repeated by his student, the Cairene historian Taqī al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī.<sup>66</sup>

The emphasis on the specifically Khazrajī descent of the Nasrids, while repeated in a variety of historical and genealogical works in both the Islamic West and Mamluk lands during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries,<sup>67</sup> is notably absent from similar works from the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>. For example, the *Akḥbār Qabā’il al-Khazraj* (“The History of the Khazrajite Tribes”), a comprehensive history of the Khazraj tribe authored by the Egyptian genealogist ‘Abd al-Mu’min al-Dimyāṭī (d. 705/1306), nowhere mentions the Nasrids, despite the treatise’s concern with tracing descendants of the Khazraj from the 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century to the author’s own lifetime in the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, the *Zubdat al-Fikra fī Tārīkh al-Hijra*, written by the Mamluk Baybars al-Manṣūrī around 709/1309, makes no reference to the Khazrajī aspect and only describes Muḥammad I as a “descendant of the Anṣār” (*hūwa yantamī ilā al-Anṣār*).<sup>69</sup> This silence in both Nasrid and non-sources during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century on the Nasrids’ alleged descent from the Khazraj (and Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda specifically) lends credence to the ideas that this was a genealogical claim that was articulated during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, probably from the 720s/1320s onwards. While the aforementioned Generalife Palace inscription, dating to around 720/1320, makes no reference to the Khazraj or Sa’d, referring to Ismā’īl I only as a descendant of the Anṣār (in a general sense), other evidence from the second half of his reign does. Among the

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<sup>66</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Kitāb al-‘Ibar*, 4: 170; Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 549.

<sup>67</sup> Al-Dhaabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, p. 95.

<sup>68</sup> Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Mu’min al-Dimyāṭī, *Akḥbār Qabā’il al-Khazraj* (Medina: al-Jāmi’a al-Islāmiya bi-al-Madīna al-Munawwara, 2008), ed. Abd al-Aziz ibn Umar al-Bayti, 2 vols.

<sup>69</sup> Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdat al-Fikra fī Tārīkh al-Hijra*, p. 125.

most significant examples are the poem of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Amad al-Ḥasanī (famously known as Al-Uḥaymar al-Mālaqī),<sup>70</sup> a courtier of Ismā‘īl I, and a letter sent from his great nephew, the litterateur Ibn al-Aḥmar, both of which make clear reference to Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda as the king’s ancestor.<sup>71</sup> The fact that the lexical form of the Nasrid patronymic (“al-Khazrajī al-Anṣārī”) did not follow the conventions of individuals claiming descent from Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda, whose lineage was usually signified by the *nisba* “al-Sa‘ādī al-‘Ubādī,”<sup>72</sup> attests to the evolution of Nasrid genealogical claims in which the specific Khazrajite descent of the dynasty through the line of Qays b. Sa‘d was gradually emphasized.

Fewer individuals in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Granada placed greater stress on Nasrid genealogy than Ibn al-Khaṭīb, whose role as chief minister, chancellor and historian of the dynasty made him one of the most effective Nasrid propagandists. His writings and activities served not only to communicate the message, but to actively shape Nasrid dynastic ideology as well, promoting a holistic vision of the Nasrid sovereigns as just rulers, defenders of the faith, committed to patronizing knowledge and Arabic culture, in which their Anṣārī-Khazrajī descent was a key component. An important illustration of this representation is found within the preface to his “Garden of Acquaintance with the Nature of Noble Love” (*Rawḍat al-Ta‘rīf fi al-Ḥubb al-Sharīf*), completed in Granada around Jumādā I 2 769/December 1367, where he praises Muḥammad V as “the descendant of Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda, the lord of the Anṣār...our lord and master the Sultan and Knowledgeable Imam, the Holy Warrior, the Commander of the Muslims Abū ‘Abd Allāh, the son of our lord, the Commander of the Muslims Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf, the son of

<sup>70</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā'id al-Jumān*, pp. 235–239; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 150–155; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 62–64.

<sup>71</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā'id al-Jumān*, p. 238; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 153.

<sup>72</sup> For example, the Andalusī traveler Khālīd b. ‘Īsā al-Balawī lists the lineage of the Egyptian scholar Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, whom he met in Medina, as “al-Khazrajī al-Sa‘ādī al-‘Ubādī” (Al-Balawī, *Tāj al-Mafriq*, p. 293).

our lord, the Commander of the Muslims Abū al-Walīd Ismā‘īl b. Faraj b. Naṣr al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī.”<sup>73</sup>

Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s historical chronicles also place a heavy emphasis on the descent of the Nasrids from Sa‘d ibn ‘Ubāda. The “Poetic Enumeration of Dynasties” (*Raḡm al-Ḥulal fī Naẓm al-Duwal*) asserts: “The first of the Nasrid sovereigns was Muḥammad, whose full genealogy is as follows: Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khamīs b. Naṣr b. Qays al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī, who was a descendant of Sa‘d ibn ‘Ubāda, the Lord of the Anṣār.”<sup>74</sup> Meanwhile, his dynastic chronicle, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, presents the lineage of Muḥammad I as Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Khamīs b. ‘Aqīl b. Naṣr b. Qays al-Khazrajī al-Anṣārī.<sup>75</sup> In yet another historical chronicle, the “Deeds of the Notables” (*A‘māl al-A‘lām*), composed between 774/1372 and 776/1374 in his final exile in North Africa, Ibn al-Khaṭīb provides another variation: Muḥammad b. Naṣr b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khamīs b. ‘Aqīl al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī.<sup>76</sup> The chief judge of Granada (and Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s contemporary) Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī al-Bunnāhī, for his part, puts forward a slightly different genealogy for Muḥammad I: Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Naṣr b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khamīs b. ‘Aqīl b. Naṣr b. Qays b. Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda.<sup>77</sup> For his part, the Nasrid secretary Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī provides the lineage of Muḥammad I as: Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khamīs b. Naṣr al-Khazrajī.<sup>78</sup> This last variation is also provided by the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century secretary and scholar Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Juzayy.<sup>79</sup> Even though the lineage is traced back to Qays

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<sup>73</sup> Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, *Rawḍat al-Ta‘rīf fī al-Ḥubb al-Sharīf* (Casablanca: Dar al-Thaqafa, 2004), ed. Mohammed al-Kattani, p. 82.

<sup>74</sup> Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, *Raḡm al-Ḥulal fī Naẓm al-Duwal*, El Escorial MS 1776, 67r.

<sup>75</sup> Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya fī al-Dawla al-Nasriyya*, El Escorial MS 1776, 84r.

<sup>76</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al-A‘lām*, Fondation Roi Abd al-Aziz MS 205, pp. 188–189.

<sup>77</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 216.

<sup>78</sup> Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī, *Rawnaq al-Taḥbīr fī Ḥukm al-Siyāsa wa al-Tadbīr*, BNRMS K1121, p. 81.

<sup>79</sup> ‘Abd Allāh b. Juzayy, *Kitāb al-Khayl*, pp. 21–22.

b. Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda in all cases, the “abridgement” of the Nasrid genealogy in which only 6 or 7 names are provided to link Muḥammad I with Qays b. Sa‘d (a period spanning over half a millennium) indicates the imprecision with which these genealogies were constructed. This contrasts sharply with the detailed genealogy of the Banū Naṣr presented by the exiled poet-prince Abū al-Walīd Ismā‘īl b. al-Aḥmar, an important scholar-official in the Marinid court and an actual member of the Nasrid royal family, which is rather detailed. This individual traces his lineage back to Qays b. Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda as follows:

Abū al-Walīd Ismā‘īl, the son of the eminent nobleman (*al-ra‘īs*) Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf, son of the king and Commander of the Muslims al-Qā‘im bi-Amr illāh Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad,<sup>80</sup> son of the supreme and noble lord of Málaga Abū Sa‘īd Faraj, son of the nobleman (*al-amīr*) Abū al-Walīd Ismā‘īl, son of the nobleman Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf, known as “the Red” (*al-Aḥmar*), son of [the king and Commander of the Faithful al-Manṣūr bi-llāh Abū Bakr] Muḥammad, son of Aḥmad, son of Muḥammad, [son of Khamīs], son of Naṣr, [son of Muḥammad] son of Muḥammad, son of Naṣr, son of ‘Alī, son of Yaḥyā, son of Sa‘d, son of Qays, son of Sa‘d, son of ‘Ubāda of the Khazraj.<sup>81</sup>

This a vastly different (and lengthier) genealogy than that presented by either Ibn al-Khaṭīb or al-Bunnāhī, a reflection not only of Ibn al-Aḥmar’s preservation of an alternative genealogy from an earlier period of the Nasrid kingdom (his family was exiled to Morocco during the 720s/1320s). Its idiosyncrasies, such as the claim that the grandfather of Muḥammad was a caliph (!) named al-Manṣūr bi-llāh Abū Bakr Muḥammad, notwithstanding, its existence nonetheless attests to the important emphasis on the Nasrids’ descent from Qays b. Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda during the early decades of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>82</sup> It is clear that these variant genealogies

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<sup>80</sup> This individual, a brother of Ismā‘īl I, was the Nasrid prince who was enthroned as king at Andarax by ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā in the late 720s/1320s. He was the paternal grandfather of the historian and secretary Ibn al-Aḥmar (Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā‘id al-Jumān*, p. 307).

<sup>81</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā‘id al-Jumān*, p. 215. The additions in square brackets are from the version found in Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 19.

<sup>82</sup> I have not been able to identify this individual.

are the result of considerable leaps between generations in the family tree, which is not an uncommon feature of Arabic genealogical writing. Nevertheless, this lack of consistency in the narration of the lineage of the Nasrids illustrates the malleability of medieval Arabic genealogy, the imprecision with which this particular lineage was constructed, and raises the question of the degree to which the specifics surrounding the purported Nasrid descent from Qays b. Sa‘d were precisely defined, even by the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.

In order to dispel any doubts about the authenticity of the lineage that he advocates, Ibn al-Khaṭīb, tells his readers—rather disingenuously—that “it is well known among many scholars of history that the Naṣrid family is directly descended from Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda, Lord of the Khazraj and noble Companion of God’s Prophet, through his son Qays b. Sa‘d with many works being written proving [the Nasrids’] lineage from the latter.”<sup>83</sup> This is followed by the citation of a tradition from the (no longer extant) genealogical work of the 3<sup>rd</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>-century Andalusī historian Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Rāzī (d. 955) which relates that two of Sa‘d b. Ubāda’s descendants had settled in al-Andalus following its conquest.<sup>84</sup> Within Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s “Comprehensive History,” this discussion of Naṣrid descent is provided as a preface to a discussion of the career of Muḥammad I, the founder of the Kingdom of Granada, highlighting the importance and attention which the Granadan chancellor ascribed to the Anṣārī-Khazrajī lineage of the dynasty. The controversial nature of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s claims that the Nasrids were direct descendants of Qays b. Sa‘d is veiled by his attempt to validate this assertion by invoking the authority of the “science of genealogy” (*‘ilm al-ansāb*). However, a closer look at the extant genealogical literature from al-Andalus and elsewhere in the medieval Islamic world demonstrates that Ibn al-

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<sup>83</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 92. This reference suggests that there were earlier works devoted to the elaboration of the dynasty’s genealogical claims that were patronized by the Nasrid court, although these do not appear to be extant.

<sup>84</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 92–93.

Khaṭīb was not being entirely forthcoming. In the section on the Anṣār and their lineages in his work “The Lineages of the Arabs” (*Jamharat Ansāb al-‘Arab*), Ibn Ḥazm (d. 1064), arguably the most notable and influential genealogist in the history of al-Andalus, asserts that several of Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda’s descendants, from the lineage of his sons Qays and Sa’īd, settled in al-Andalus.<sup>85</sup> Ibn Ḥazm asserts that descendants of Qays b. Sa’d that settled in al-Andalus (specifically in the vicinity of Medina Sidonia) came from the line of his son Wattād b. Qays; no individuals named Naṣr, Qays or Khamīs—all of whom are key figures within the Nasrid genealogies—are mentioned in connection with the descendants of Qays.<sup>86</sup>

In addition to providing a lineage linking Muḥammad I directly to Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda, several lines are also devoted to presenting the genealogy of Sa’d himself, transcribed as “Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda b. Sulaymān b. Ḥāritha b. Tha‘laba b. Ṭarīf b. al-Khazraj b. Ḥāritha b. Tha‘laba b. ‘Umar b. Ya‘rub b. Yashjub b. Qaḥṭān b. Humaysa‘ b. Yumn b. Nabat b. Ismā‘īl b. Ibrāhīm,” thereby tracing this figure’s ancestry to the prophets Ishmael and Abraam.<sup>87</sup> Aside from several peculiarities in Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s reconstruction of Sa’d’s lineage from Khazraj,<sup>88</sup> it should be noted that in Arab genealogical treatises, including those produced in al-Andalus, the Khazraj were traditionally viewed as being descended from Qaḥṭān (the mythical ancestor of “southern Arabs”) rather than from ‘Adnān, through whom “northern Arabs” (including the politically-important Quraysh) traditionally claimed descent from Abraam.<sup>89</sup> The inclusion of this

<sup>85</sup> ‘Alī b. Ḥazm, *Jamharat Ansāb al-‘Arab* (Cairo: Dar al-Ma‘arif, 2010), ed. ‘Abd al-Salam Muhammad Harun, pp. 365–366.

<sup>86</sup> Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat Ansāb al-‘Arab*, p. 366.

<sup>87</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 92.

<sup>88</sup> Compare, for example, with Ibn Ḥazm, who traces Sa’d’s lineage as follows: Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda b. Dulaym b. Ḥāritha b. Abī Khuzayma b. Tha‘laba b. Ṭarīf b. al-Khazraj b. Sā‘ida b. Ka‘b b. al-Khazraj (Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat Ansāb al-‘Arab*, p. 365).

<sup>89</sup> According to earlier Andalusī sources, including the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>-century litterateur Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi and the late 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>-century Andalusī scholars Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Wālī al-Battī and Abū ‘Umar Yūsuf b. ‘Abd al-Barr al-Qurṭubī, the Khazraj belonged to the Azd, which medieval Muslim genealogists often considered a subgroup of the Qaḥṭānī Arabs through the line of Kalān ibn Sabā’ (Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, *al-Iqd al-Farīd*, 3: 319; Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad

seemingly minor detail, in which genealogical leaps are made between Muḥammad I and Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda, on the one hand, and between Qaḥṭān and Ishmael on the other shows that Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought not only to ennoble the Naṣrids by highlighting their descent from the Anṣār, but that he also attempts to link the founder of the dynasty with Abraam himself, thereby associating this singularly important Biblical/Qur’anic patriarch with the Naṣrid dynasty.<sup>90</sup> In doing so, Ibn al-Khatib was engaged in the sacralization of the Nasrid royal line as being directly descended from major prophets (*anbiya*’) as well as leading companions (*saaba*) of the Prophet Muḥammad. The construction of a genealogy in which the ancestry of the Prophet Muḥammad (identified in classical Arabic genealogies as a descendant of Ishmael) and the Nasrids intersected in some distant past may have provided further impetus for the tracing of Sa‘d’s lineage to Abraam. It is notable that Ibn al-Farrā’, the chief judge of Granada during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, also makes the argument that Qaḥṭān and “southern Arabs,” including the Anṣār, were also descendants of Ishmael.<sup>91</sup>

A particularly noteworthy, and largely ignored, element of Nasrid genealogies and constructions of lineage is their emphasis on both Qaḥṭān and Ḥimyar, which is already evident

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b. ‘Abd al-Wālī al-Battī, *Tadhkirat al-Albāb bi Uṣūl al-Ansāb* [Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Mawāhib, 2001], ed. Muḥammad Madī al-Mūsawī al-Kharsān, p. 121; Abū ‘Umar Yūsuf b. ‘Abd al-Barr al-Qurṭubī, *al-Qaṣd wa al-Umam fī al-Ta’rīf bi-Uṣūl Ansāb al-‘Arab wa al-‘Ajam, wa yalīhi al-Anābāh ‘ala Qabā’il al-Ruwāh* [Najaf: al-Maktaba al-Haydariyya, 1966], p. 112), a perspective also shared by Ibn Ḥazm (Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat Ansāb al-‘Arab*, p. 331). Although there were some medieval Islamic scholars, including the aforementioned Ibn al-Farrā’, who asserted that Qaḥṭān descended from Abraam, this claim was heavily contested and usually dismissed as a fabrication by classical scholars (Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī, Volume XXXIX: Biographies of the Prophet’s Companions and their Successors* [Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998], trans. Ella Landar-Tasserson, p. 130). According to the 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup>-century historian Ibn Sa‘d (Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, 3: 460) the correct lineage of Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda was Sa‘d b. ‘Ubāda b. Dulaym b. Ḥāritha b. Abī Khazīma (or Ḥazīma) b. Tha’laba b. Ṭarīf, which is the exact lineage transcribed by Ibn Ḥazm (Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat Ansāb al-‘Arab*, p. 331), the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century Egyptian genealogist Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Mu’min al-Dim’yāṭī (al-Dim’yāṭī, *Akhbār Qabā’il al-Khazraj*, 2: 635) and the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century historian Shams al-Dīn al-Dhaabī (al-Dhaabī, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 1: 270).

<sup>90</sup> For more on the claim of Naṣrid descent from the Anṣār, see Boloix, *De la Taifa de Arjona al Reino Nazarí de Granada*, pp. 110–121.

<sup>91</sup> Ibn al-Farrā’, *Nuzhat al-Abṣār fī Faḍā’il al-Anṣār*, pp. 103–109.

during the reign of Ismā‘īl I. Earlier generations of Andalusī authors, notably the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>-century historian and philosopher Abū al-Qāsim Ṣā‘id b. Aḥmad al-Andalusī (d. 462/1070), had emphasized how all the pre-Islamic Arab kings belonged to Qaḥṭān, while most of the non-Umayyad “Arab” dynasties exercising some form of sovereign authority in Andalusī history often claimed a Yemeni/Qaḥṭānī lineage.<sup>92</sup> The emphasis on the title “king” (*malik*) within the Nasrid context, which was used as frequently as other titles signifying royal authority such as *sulṭān*, *amīr*, *khalīfa* or *imām*, appears to be undergirded partially by this broader idea of pre-Islamic Arabian kingship. A poem composed by Ibn al-Jayyāb for Yūsuf alludes to this pre-Islamic royal heritage, proclaiming that “in ancient times, your Khazraj ancestors had attained distinction, eminence and esteem; long before the coming of prophecy [of Muḥammad], they had been glorious lords and sovereigns while mankind were merely lowly slaves” (*ammā al-qadīmu fa-Khazraju al-fakhrū al-ulā lahum ṭarīf makārimin wa talīd qabl al-nubūwwa lam yazālū sāda amlāka ‘izzin wa al-anāmu ‘abīdu*).<sup>93</sup> There was a long-standing literary tradition, which can be dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century of constructing a noble and epic “Arabian antiquity” that centered on Yemen as the foundation of pre-Islamic civilization.<sup>94</sup> As demonstrated by José Ramírez del Río, pre-Islamic Arabian epic was quite popular in al-Andalus, with its themes shaping poetry, literature, genealogy and political culture during the Umayyad, Amirid and Taifa periods.<sup>95</sup> These works highlighted the deeds of various southern Arab tribes, documented their various poetic compositions and genealogies, and celebrated exploits of the Himyarite sovereigns,

<sup>92</sup> Ṣā‘id b. Aḥmad al-Andalusī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Umam* (Beirut: Dar al-Talī‘a, 1985), ed. Hayat Bu‘alwan p. 111.

<sup>93</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, p. 115.

<sup>94</sup> Perhaps the earliest surviving work in this regard, which was heavily drawn upon throughout medieval Islamic history, is the *Kitāb al-Tījān fī Mulūk Ḥimyar* by ‘Abd al-Malik b. Hishām (d. 218/833).

<sup>95</sup> José Ramírez del Río, *La Orientalización de al-Andalus: Los días de los árabes en la Península Ibérica* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 2002), pp. 73–224.



including their mythical conquests of neighboring regions.<sup>96</sup> Even the Qur’anic figure of Dhū-l-Qarnayn, traditionally associated with Alexander the Great, was reimagined as an eminent Himyarite warrior-king from southern Arabia.<sup>97</sup> During the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, this tradition of writing about the ancient southern Arabian and Himyarite past was maintained. In the late medieval Andalusī context, this phenomenon, which was rooted as much in antiquarian tendencies as it was in the practical and political uses of genealogy, found its clearest expression in the monumental “Pre-Islamic History of the Arabs” (*Nashwat al-Ṭarab fī Tārīkh Jāhiliyat al-‘Arab*) by Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Mūsā b. Sa‘īd al-Andalusī.<sup>98</sup>

Did the Nasrids explicitly claim descent from pre-Islamic Arabian royalty, such as the Ḥimyarites? This certainly appears to be the case, based on both epigraphic and literary evidence. The aforementioned Generalife Palace inscription, penned by Ibn al-Jayyāb, refers to Ismā‘īl as a descendant of “the most supreme kings of Qaḥṭān” while another poem composed by this individual for Yūsuf I refers to the Nasrids as “the successors and descendants of their forefathers [in Medina], the Anṣār of al-Andalus, the Himyarite kings” (*a ‘qābuhum anṣāru andalus al-mulūk al-Ṣayd*); elsewhere, this Nasrid chancellor states “the Nasrids are the most ardent champions and supporters of the religion of true guidance. Their unceasing victories is a distinction and honor inherited across generations from their ancestors, the Himyarite kings” (*al-*

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<sup>96</sup> See, for example, Nashwān b. Sa‘īd al-Ḥimyarī, *Mulūk Ḥimyar wa Aqyāl al-Yaman* (Cairo: al-Matba‘a al-Salafiyya, 1975), eds. Al-Sayyid Ali ibn Isma‘il al-Mu‘ayyad and Isma‘il ibn Amad al-Jarafi, an epic poem (with extensive prose commentary) by the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>-century Yemeni grammarian and litterateur Abū Sa‘īd Nashwān b. Sa‘īd al-Ḥimyarī (d. 573/1178) celebrating the deeds of the Himyarites.

<sup>97</sup> Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Malik b. Hishām, *Kitāb al-Tījān fī Mulūk Ḥimyar* (Sanaa: Markaz al-Dirasat wa al-Abhath al-Yamaniyya, 1979), pp. 446–452; Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad al-Hamadānī, *Kitāb al-Iklīl min Akhbār al-Yaman wa Ansāb Ḥimyar* (Sanaa: Maktabat al-Jil al-Jadid, 1990), ed. Muhammad bin Ali al-Hawali, p. 34; al-Malik al-Ashraf ‘Umar b. Yūsuf, *Ṭurfā al-Aṣḥāb fī Ma‘rifat al-Ansāb* (Damascus: Matba‘at al-Taraqqi, 1949), ed. K. W. Zettersteen, p. 46; Nashwān al-Ḥimyarī, *Mulūk Ḥimyar wa Aqyāl al-Yaman*, pp. 96–113.

<sup>98</sup> ‘Alī b. Mūsā b. Sa‘īd al-Andalusī, *Nashwat al-Ṭarab fī Tārīkh Jāhiliyat al-‘Arab* (Amman: Maktabat al-Aqsa, 1982), 2 vols., ed. Nusrat Abd al-Raman.

*mulūk al-Ṣayd*).<sup>99</sup> A poem written by Ibn Zamrak for Muḥammad V half a century later praises the sovereign as “the son of the proud Himyarite kings of the Khazraj, possessing a genealogy like the dawn that has arisen high.”<sup>100</sup> A poem by the Nasrid emir Yūsuf III in the early 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century proclaims that “I am the direct descendant of the Himyarite kings” (*salīl al-Ṣayd min Āl Ḥimyar*).<sup>101</sup> This Nasrid engagement with pre-Islamic Arabian kingship as a form of legitimation is also reinforced by the testimony of the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Mudéjar traveler ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Sabāḥ (fl. 802/1400). Ibn al-Sabāḥ, originally from Xativa, passed through the Kingdom of Granada during the course of his travels and refers to the Nasrid sovereigns on different occasions as “the kings of Ḥimyar” (*mulūk Ḥimyar*) and to the Nasrid emir as “a descendant of the kings of Qaḥṭān and Himyar” (*ḥurr min aḥrār mulūk Qaḥṭān wa Āl Ḥimyar*), and the Nasrid kingdom as the last remnant of “Himyarite royalty” (*lam yabqa min mulūk al-Tabābi ‘a wa hum mulūk Qaḥṭān wa Āl Ḥimyar ghayra hadhā al-‘uqab Malik al-Andalus*).<sup>102</sup>

This reference to the Nasrids as descendants of the Himyarites becomes even more notable in light of the fact that there is a clear contradiction between their Himyarite and Anṣārī descent, at least from the perspective of classical Arabic genealogy. According to most traditional authorities, including the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>-century Andalusī scholars Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr and al-Battī (among others), the Khazraj were traditionally viewed as being descended not from the Himyarites but from Azd (through Kahlān b. Sabā’), a different line of southern Arabs which were associated with other pre-Islamic Arab kingdoms (the Lakhmids and Ghassanids).<sup>103</sup> As Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s highly implausible and inaccurate—even from the perspective of medieval Arabic

<sup>99</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, pp. 91, 96, 116, 121.

<sup>100</sup> Monroe, *Hispano-Arabic Poetry*, pp. 346–365.

<sup>101</sup> Yūsuf III, *Dīwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith*, p. 63.

<sup>102</sup> ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Sabāḥ, *Ansāb al-Akḥbār wa Tadhkirat al-Akhyār* (Rabat: Dar Abi Raḡraq, 2008), ed. Mohammed Bencherifa, p. 67, 70, 71–72.

<sup>103</sup> Al-Battī, *Tadhkirat al-Albāb bi Uṣūl al-Ansāb*, pp. 120–121; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Qaṣd wa al-Umam*, p. 112.

genealogy—lineage of the Nasrids makes clear, however, there was little concern with such technicalities in Nasrid political discourse. It is particularly interesting that, assuming there was an attempt on the part of the Nasrids to link themselves with pre-Islamic Arabian royalty, there was little effort on the part of Nasrid court poets, historians or others to connect their royal patrons directly with the Lakhmids, especially considering these were also known as the Banū Naṣr and there existed a well-known precedent (the Banū ‘Abbād of Seville) of claiming descent from them. It should be noted that, despite the repeated historical, genealogical and even antiquarian discourses about Qaḥṭānī/Yemeni descent in the Nasrid kingdom, there is no evidence that it was deployed in relation with broader apocalyptic traditions about the figure of the “Yemenite” (al-Qaḥṭānī), although Ibn al-Khaṭīb does preserve the document in which the Umayyad Caliph Hishām II designates ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Sanchuelo b. Abī ‘Āmir as his heir and refers to him as this apocalyptic figure.<sup>104</sup>

The claims of descent from Himyarite royalty were not necessarily unprecedented in Andalusī history. Already in the late 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century, the powerful chamberlain Ibn Abī ‘Āmir al-Manṣūr was described by the court poet Aḥmad b. al-Darrāj al-Qaṣṭālī (d. 421/1030) as “the king who descends from the eminent Himyarite kings (*al-malik salīl al-mulūk al-Ṣayd min Sirr wa Ḥimyar*).” Even in the late Middle Ages, the Nasrids were not entirely unique in their efforts to construct a genealogy which linked them to a prestigious and ancient Arabian origin. This emphasis on Arab and Yemenite descent was also taking place (as one would expect) within the Rasulid Kingdom in Yemen (626/1229–858/1454), particularly during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century when the scholar-prince al-Malik al-Ashraf ‘Umar b. Yūsuf (d. 695/1296) composed a treatise on Arab genealogy which placed heavy emphasis on southern Arabian/Qaḥṭānī lineages. Like the

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<sup>104</sup> For an English translation and discussion of the text of this extraordinary document, see Wasserstein, *The Caliphate in the West*, pp. 22–26.

Andalusi authors, who engaged with the idea of their own royal lineages as embodying a resurrection or revival of ancient Arabian kingdoms (such as the Himyarites or Lakhmids), this Rasulid sovereign devoted a considerable section to the Himyarites, while proclaiming his own dynasty's descent from the Ghassanid kingdom through the line of Jabāla b. al-Ayham, the last Ghassanid ruler in Syria who ruled into the mid-1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>105</sup> Although separated by a considerable distance and motivated by different concerns, both the Nasrids and the Rasulids were engaged in a complex and creative project of genealogical legitimization that linked their kingdoms and rulers with Qaḥṭānī tribal lineages and ancient southern Arabian royalty in the late medieval Islamic world. As such, they embodied the last significant example in the medieval period of Muslim dynasties that leaned heavily upon an Arab tribal lineage as a central component of their political legitimacy and self-representation. This was particularly important for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, whose grand chronicle of Islamic history (the “Deeds of the Notables”) stresses that the political power and royal fortune of the Arabs had long since dissipated across the world and had largely been replaced by the dispensation of the Turks and Mongols. In this scheme of history, the Nasrids represented the last remnant of the classical Islamic order.<sup>106</sup>

The emphasis on Arabness and Arab identity in the late medieval Islamic West was not a phenomenon restricted to the Nasrid kingdom. Both Ibn Marzūq and the Nasrid poet-prince Ibn al-Aḥmar invoked the alleged Alid/Sharifian descent of the Marinid dynasty during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, claiming that they descended from the Prophet Muḥammad through the line of al-Ḥasan b. Abī Ṭālib.<sup>107</sup> He also repeats the widespread genealogical legend that Zanāta, the Berber tribe

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<sup>105</sup> al-Malik al-Ashraf, *Ṭurfa al-Aṣḥāb fī Maʿrifat al-Ansāb*, pp. 89–90.

<sup>106</sup> This is further reflected in Ibn Khaldūn's reference to the Nasrids as “the remnants of the Arab political dispensation” (*min baqāyā dawlat al-ʿarab*) (Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 167).

<sup>107</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Rawḍat al-Nisrīn*, p. 17; Ibn Marzūq, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Ḥasan*, pp. 94–95. An indication of the widespread nature of this claim to Alid descent across the Islamic world is the fact that several dynasties, including

to which the Marinids belonged, “were a branch of the [northern] Arabs of Muḍar,” asserting that “Bar b. Qays b. ‘Aylān, the ancestor of the Zanāta, was an Arab and not a Berber (‘*arabī laysa bi-barbarī*).”<sup>108</sup> Similarly, the North African historian Ibn Abī Zar‘, quoting Abū ‘Alī al-Milyānī, traces the lineage of the Marinids back to Bar b. Qays b. ‘Aylān and describes the Zanāta as “undoubtedly Arabs (‘*arab ṣarīḥūn*)”.<sup>109</sup> The leading scholar-official Ibn Marzūq also stresses the purported Qaysī lineage of the Marinids (and Zanāta as a whole), while also adding .<sup>110</sup> The late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century court secretary Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Malzūzī proclaims that there was no doubt that the Marinid sovereigns were Arabs from Muḍar descended from Bar b. Qays,<sup>111</sup> a claim echoed in the writings of Ibn Simāk.<sup>112</sup> The latter also asserts that the Almoravids descended from Ḥimyar, quoting Prophetic hadith, al-Idrīsī’s “Book of Roger” as well as the Marinid secretary Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-Azīz al-Malzūzī to reinforce his argument.<sup>113</sup> Ibn al-Khatib’s “Deeds of the Notables” refers to the Almoravid ruler Yūsuf b. Tashufīn as al-Himyarī as well as al-Sanhājī. It was not uncommon during this period to see individuals with the *nisba* “al-Sanhājī al-Ḥimyarī.”<sup>114</sup> Nor was the notion of the “Arab origin” of the Berbers simply reflected within Andalusī texts or writings interested in promoting the notion of Arab pre-eminence, since the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-text “The Virtues of the Berbers” also perpetuates these

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those ruling the kingdoms of Mali and Kanem in sub-Saaran Africa (Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, *al-Ta’rīf bi-l Muṣṭalaḥ al-Sharīf*, pp. 44–47).

<sup>108</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Rawḍat al-Nisrīn*, p. 17. The Syrian historian Shams al-Dīn al-Dhaabī, writing around 730/1330, also states unequivocally that “the Marinids are Arabs from the vicinity of Fez” (*banū marīn ‘arab dhū ‘adad min zawāhir Fās*) (al-Dhaabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, p. 69). In contrast, his exact contemporary Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, the Mamluk chancellor, asserts that “the Marinids are Berbers” (*banū marīn min al-barbar*) (Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, *al-Ta’rīf bi-l Muṣṭalaḥ al-Sharīf*, p. 39).

<sup>109</sup> Ibn Abī Zar‘, *al-Anīs al-Muṭrib bi-Rawḍ al-Qirṭās*, p. 365.

<sup>110</sup> Ibn Marzūq, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Ḥasan*, pp. 93–94.

<sup>111</sup> al-Malzūzī, *Naẓm al-sulūk*, p. 67.

<sup>112</sup> Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī, *Kitāb al-Ḥullal al-Mawshiyya*, pp. 261, 283–284.

<sup>113</sup> Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī, *Kitāb al-Ḥullal al-Mawshiyya*, pp. 61–63, 279–282; al-Malzūzī, *Naẓm al-sulūk*, p. 48.

<sup>114</sup> Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim al-Anṣārī, *Bulghat al-Ummiyya wa Maqṣad al-Labīb fī-man kāna bi-Sabta fī al-Dawla al-Mariniyya min Mudarris wa Ustādh wa Ṭabīb* (Rabat: al-Matba‘a al-Malakiyya, 1984), ed. ‘Abd al-Wahhab bin Mansur, p. 24. For more on the author of this text, see Pierre Guichard, “Muḥammad al-Anṣārī,” *BA*, 1: 92–95.

discourses.<sup>115</sup> The link between ancient Arabia (especially Yemen) and the Berbers of North Africa, which has received considerable scholarly attention, was a long-established tradition within the Islamic world, and can be traced as early as the writings of Ibn Hishām (particularly his *Kitāb al-Tijān fī Mulūk Ḥimyar*) and Ibn al-Kalbī during the 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>116</sup> Similarly, the tracing of the origin of the Berbers to the Canaanite and Philistine populations of Palestine, famously promoted by Ibn Khaldūn and Abū ‘Alī Ṣāliḥ b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Gharnāṭī (d. ca. 725/1325),<sup>117</sup> fulfilled a similar function, which was to ascribe a Near Eastern origin to this group of people, incorporating them within the ancient Biblical and Qur’anic cosmos.<sup>118</sup> As Helena de Felipe has argued in her study on the construction of the Himyarite genealogy of the Almoravid ruler Yūsuf b. Tashfīn as part of a broader program of political legitimization:

The genealogical discourses of the three Maghribian dynasties – the Almoravids, the Almohads and the Marinids – are striking testimony to the value of genealogy as a factor in political and religious legitimacy. The Berbers were thus part of the Eastern Arab genealogical framework, using ancient traditions that sustained their

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<sup>115</sup> Anonymous. “Kitāb Mafākhīr al-Barbar,” in *Tres Textos Árabes sobre Beréberes en el Occidente Islámico*, pp. 223, 255–256. For the most important studies of these discourses about Berber origins and identity in the medieval Islamic West, see Helena de Felipe, “Berber Leadership and Genealogical Legitimacy: The Almoravid Case,” in *Genealogy and Knowledge in Muslim Societies: Understanding the Past*, pp. 55–70; Helena de Felipe, “Leyendas árabes sobre el origen de los beréberes,” *al-Qantara* 11 (1990), pp. 379–96; H. T. Norris, *The Berbers in Arabic Literature* (Norfolk: Longman House, 1982), pp. 32–43; Maya Shatzmiller, “Le mythe d’origine berbère: Aspects historiographiques et sociaux,” *Revue de l’Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 35 (1983), pp. 145–56; Maya Shatzmiller, “The Legacy of Andalusian Berbers in the 14th Century Maghreb: Its Role in the Formation of Maghrebi Historical Identity and Historiography,” in *Relaciones de la Península Ibérica con el Maghreb (siglos XIII–XVI)* (Madrid: CSIC and ICMA, 1988), eds. Mercedes García-Arenal and María Jesús Viguera, pp. 205–237; Maya Shatzmiller, “Ibn Khaldūn et la question berbère: quelques réflexions sur la clé du ‘Kitāb al-‘ibar,’” in *Ibn Khaldūn. Auge y declive de los imperios*, pp. 49–58.

<sup>116</sup> The various perspectives of the medieval Arabic authors on the topic is summarized in Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 6: 98–104. A near-contemporary perspective from the Mashriq can be found in writings of the Rasulid scholar-prince al-Malik al-Ashraf ‘Umar b. Yūsuf, who proclaims that the Berber tribes of Kutama, Sanhaja and Zanata (among others) were essentially branches of Yemenite Arab tribes, specifically Himyarite royalty (al-Malik al-Ashraf, *Ṭurfa al-Aṣḥāb fī Ma’rifat al-Ansāb*, pp. 12, 44, 46, 52), which also echoes the narrative found in Nashwān al-Ḥimyarī, *Mulūk Ḥimyar wa Aqyāl al-Yaman*, pp. 71–72.

<sup>117</sup> Abū ‘Alī Ṣāliḥ ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm, “Kitāb al-Ansāb” in *Tres Textos Árabes sobre Beréberes en el Occidente Islámico* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1996), ed. Muhammad Ya’la, pp. 37, 44 (Arabic pagination); Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 6: 104.

<sup>118</sup> This legend about the origins of the Berbers is also promoted by the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Tunisian scholar-official Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh al-Tijānī (al-Tijānī, *Riḥlat al-Tijānī*, p. 160). It was strongly critiqued by Ibn Marzūq, who insisted that Zanāta were Qaysī Arabs (Ibn Marzūq, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Ḥasan*, p. 94).

leadership. This genealogical knowledge was part of an extensive textual corpus circulating from East to West, which remained dormant until its use was required for the purposes of legitimation. It was, therefore, a dynamic genealogical discourse. Over time, the same historiographical resource could be returned to again and again and adapted according to political need.<sup>119</sup>

Following earlier tradition, Ibn Simāk also traces the genealogy of the Almohad caliphs to the Arabs of Qays, as does the author of the *Mafākhīr al-Barbar*.<sup>120</sup> As with Ibn Ḥazm, whose *Jamharat Ansāb al-‘Arab* strongly rejects the ascription of the myth of the Arab tribal or genealogical origin of the Berbers, Ibn Khaldūn critiques the various genealogical ideas in circulation about the Berbers during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, especially the notion that they were descendants of Himyarites or Muḍarite Arabs.<sup>121</sup> While these texts demonstrate that there remained a broader interest in the question of both Arab and Berber genealogy and ancestry in the Islamic West during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, they also reflect an important distinction in political legitimation among the post-Almohad dynasties.<sup>122</sup> While those Zanāta dynasties in North Africa followed the Almohad tradition of proclaiming a “northern” Arab (Qaysī), and even Qurashī, genealogy for their dynasties, the Nasrids—following earlier precedents in Andalusī history—insisted upon their alleged southern Arabian/Qaḥṭānī ancestry.

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<sup>119</sup> De Felipe, “Berber Leadership and Genealogical Legitimacy: The Almoravid Case,” p. 65.

<sup>120</sup> Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī, *Kitāb al-Ḥullal al-Mawshīyya*, p. 282; Anonymous. “Kitāb Mafākhīr al-Barbar,” in *Tres Textos Árabes sobre Beréberes en el Occidente Islámico*, pp. 257–258. For a detailed discussion of early Almohad strategies of genealogical legitimation during the reign of ‘Abd al-Mu‘min, see Maribel Fierro, “Las genealogías de ‘Abd al-Mu‘min, primer califa almohade,” *al-Qantara* 24 (2003), pp. 77–107.

<sup>121</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 6: 103–104. While enumerating the various legends of Berber origins, the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>-century Andalusī author Abū ‘Umar Yūsuf b. ‘Abd al-Barr also expresses his skepticism with the notion that the Berbers were descended from either Himyarite or Muḍarite Arabs, but gives credence to the idea that they descended from Canaanites who were expelled from the Near East by King David (Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Qaṣd wa al-Umam*, pp. 25–26).

<sup>122</sup> Earlier works included *Kitāb Ansāb al-Barbar* by Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Warrāq (d. 363/973), *Kitāb Ansāb al-Barbar wa mulūkihim* by Abū ‘Abd Allāh b. Abī al-Majd al-Maghīlī (d. after 470/1077), *al-Muqatabas min Kitāb al-Ansāb* by Abū Bakr b. ‘Alī al-Ṣanhājī al-Baydhaq (6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century).

Considering the array of ways in which the Nasrids mobilized genealogical claims as part of their broader program of political legitimation, the invocation of a *broadly* Anṣārī lineage during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries had immense symbolic value. While there is little doubt that, by the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, the Nasrids' promotion of their Anṣārī lineage was meant to be understood in its strictest tribal sense to indicate their descent from the Khazraj of Medina, it is equally apparent from the way that this patronymic ("al-Anṣārī") is deployed from the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century onwards that it was also intended to invoke a whole range of lexical, historical and religious associations. Throughout Andalusī history, the *nisba* (patronymic) "al-Anṣārī" was not merely tribal, but also functioned more broadly in al-Andalus as an honorific which could be bestowed upon individuals or groups who were viewed as supporters (*anṣār*) of God, the Prophet, and the Muslim community, especially in their role as defenders of the faith. In the tenth century, Mundhir b. Sa'īd, the chief judge of Córdoba during the caliphate of 'Abd al-Raḥmān III (r. 912–961), had even declared that whoever helped or protected (*naṣara*) the Prophet (and, by extension, Islam) was an *anṣārī*, independent of the age in which he lived or his tribal lineage. Supporting the faith and defending the faithful were therefore legitimate bases for claiming to be an *anṣārī*, thereby transforming this patronymic into an honorary designation bestowed upon those with a distinguished service to the faith. In a recent study of this phenomenon, Maribel Fierro suggests that this understanding was drawn from the etymological root of the word "anṣār" (n-ṣ-r) which means "to aid, to strengthen, to make victorious." As such, it was a term which was "understood within a thick web of semantic references regarding God's help to humankind." The increased prevalence of this lineage becomes evident when one reads through the various Andalusī biographical dictionaries from the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>



centuries, where the number of individuals who have the *nisba* al-Anṣārī appended to their names, often in conjunction with other Arab or Berber tribal lineages, increases exponentially.

It is in this broader context, in which the use of *al-Anṣārī* was broadly understood by most Andalusi Muslims as embodying a religious ideal and bestowing an honorary status upon its bearer, that the patronymic should be understood. A close reading of the texts produced in the Nasrid court during this period makes it clear that this is precisely the manner in which the notion of Anṣārī descent was continually invoked. The dual meaning of Ibn al-Jayyāb's poem for Yūsuf I, which describes the Nasrids as "*anṣāru andalus*," meaning both the supporters/defenders of al-Andalus and the lineal descendants of the Anṣār in al-Andalus, provides clear evidence of this.<sup>123</sup> As the last independent Islamic political entity in Iberia, to which many Muslims emigrated following the advance of the Christian Kingdoms and the failed Mudéjar uprisings between the 730s/1230s and 760s/1260s, Granada was re-imagined as the *dār al-hijra*, a refuge for Muslims fleeing from Christian rule. The phrase, often used synonymously with the town of Medina, derives from the Arabic word for emigration, "*hijra*," which signifies the early Muslim community's migration from Mecca, where they faced persecution, to Yathrib (subsequently, Medina), where the first Islamic polity under the leadership of Muḥammad took shape. The Nasrids, whose kingdom was host to a large number of Muslims from lands which had been conquered by Castile and Aragón, envisioned their role and that of their polity as reflecting that of the Anṣār in early Islam. In the broader religious context of late medieval Spain, the Nasrid emirate represented itself and was perceived by many Muslims, including those in Mudéjar communities, as the last refuge of Islam in the Iberian Peninsula with Granada itself as the "new Medina," a stalwart community of the faithful defending the Muslim

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<sup>123</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, p. 116.

community against the military threats of the “disbelievers.” This was complemented by a heavy emphasis on al-Andalus’ distinction as a “borderland of Islam” (*thaghr/ribāʿ*), as already seen in Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s description of the Nasrid kingdom,<sup>124</sup> an aspect which was particularly explicit in the writings of the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid secretary Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī.<sup>125</sup>

During the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, leading jurists and theologians in Granada, including Ibn al-Farrā’ and Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm b. Zubayr al-Thaqafī (d. 708/1308), represented the Nasrid dynasty as a fundamental pillar of the Islamic faith in the Iberian Peninsula. Ibn al-Zubayr even authored an apocalyptic treatise, “The Time and the Locale” (*al-Zamān wa al-Makān*), in which he declared that the Nasrids were the defenders of the entire Islamic world, predicting a Nasrid “reconquest” of Iberia from the Christian Kingdoms and even proclaimed that al-Andalus would be the site of the final battle between the forces of Christendom and Islam (led by the Nasrids) which would end with the victory of the latter.<sup>126</sup> Significantly, this was a treatise with which Ibn al-Khaṭīb (and many within the Nasrid court) were intimately familiar. Similarly, Ibn al-Farrā’ concludes his work on the virtues of the Anṣār with a supplication proclaiming that “by the grace of God, it is hoped that we, the people of al-Andalus (*ma‘shar al al-Andalus*), would continue to be the embodiment of the Prophetic hadith that states ‘there will remain a small band of individuals from among the People of the West that will remain steadfast upon truth and righteousness until God’s decree comes to pass.’”<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 84.

<sup>125</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuḥfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, ff. 6v–11v. This work cites popular traditions about the virtues of holy war as well as apocryphal hadith ascribed to the Prophet about the virtues of al-Andalus as a borderland of Islam.

<sup>126</sup> Aḥmad b. al-Zubayr al-Thaqafī, *al-Zamān wa al-Makān* (Casablanca: Matba‘at al-Naja al-Jadida, 1993), ed. Muhammad Bencherifa, pp. 81–113. The same work also has a substantial section devoted to the virtues of the Ansar.

<sup>127</sup> Ibn al-Farrā’, *Nuzhat al-Abṣār*, p. 363.

The composition and circulation of works from the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century onwards which emphasized the militant credentials of the Nasrids, representing them as defenders of the faith and just rulers who were seen as the “axis of the faith” (*quṭb al-milla*)—a phrase employed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb for Nasrid sovereigns in his writings—in the Iberian Peninsula facilitated a particular understanding of the Nasrid sovereign’s patronymic of al-Anṣārī. This drew upon the broader lexical and Qur’anic connotations of the term but was adapted to the particularities of the frontier context in order to reinforce the status of the Nasrid sovereign as defenders of the faith. In official documents, court poetry and literary works, the Nasrid sovereign was often referred to as “the pre-eminent holy warrior” (*al-mujāhid fī sabīl Allāh*), “the supporter/champion of the faith” (*nāṣir al-dīn/nāṣir al-milla*) and the “Leaders of True Guidance” (*imām al-hudā*), titles and descriptions which stressed the Granadan kings’ defense and leadership of the Islamic faith in the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>128</sup> The title “king of Islam” (*malik al-islām*) was also occasionally utilized.<sup>129</sup> These specific forms of titulature were also frequently applied to Marinid sovereigns both by their own courtiers as well as inhabitants of the Nasrid kingdom, especially between 1275 and 1350 when they were active involved in wars against Castile, with the case of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī, referred to as “the supporter/champion of the faith” (*nāṣir al-dīn*) being only the most well-known example.<sup>130</sup> In a dedication to a work on frontier warfare and holy war, Ibn

<sup>128</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, pp. 91, 120–121; al-Balawī, *Tāj al-Mafriq*, 1: 142. For an example from the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, see Luis Seco de Lucena, “Documentos Árabes granadinos: II. Documentos de las Comendadoras de Santiago,” *Al-Andalus* 9 (1944), p. 132.

<sup>129</sup> Most famously by in one of his war poems (Yūsuf III, *Dīwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith*, p. 5). The title “the king of Islam and the Muslims” (*malik al-Islām wa al-muslimīn*) was also applied to the Marinid sovereign Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī (al-Balawī, *Tāj al-Mafriq*, 1: 149).

<sup>130</sup> Al-Balawī, *Tāj al-Mafriq*, 1: 149. The same work also refers to the Marinid ruler Abū Yūsuf Ya’qūb, renowned for his military campaigns against Castile during the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, as “the frontier warrior, pre-eminent holy warrior and Commander of the Muslims” (*al-murābiṭ al-mujāhid amīr al-muslimīn al-mujāhid fī sabīl rabb al-‘ālamīn*) (Al-Balawī, *Tāj al-Mafriq*, 1: 149). An illustrative example of the usages of such titles from the Marinid court during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century is a treatise dedicated to Abū Ya’qūb Yūsuf in 701/1301 which refers to this Marinid ruler as “the divinely-supported and victorious holy warrior” (*al-mujāhid al-muẓaffar al-mu’ayyad*) and to his father, Abū Yūsuf Ya’qūb—renowned for his large-scale military campaigns against Castile in the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>

Hudhayl al-Fazārī praises Muḥammad V as “our lord and refuge, the protector of our faith and worldly affairs (*‘iṣmat dīnuna wa dunyāna*), the supporter of true faith and the pillar of the believers (*ẓaīr al-dīn wa ‘imād al-mu’minīn*), and God’s caliph (*khalīfat rabb al-‘alāmīn*)...who, following the example of the Prophet and his Companions, established holy war as his slogan/motto.”<sup>131</sup> Ibn Hudhayl adds that, as a result of the devastating military campaigns waged by Muḥammad V (between 767/1365 and 774/1372) against Castile, this sovereign inaugurated an era of security and peace in the Nasrid kingdom (*inbalaj ‘āmūd al-amān wa lāḥa mabsamuhu wa ‘ādat bihi jazīrat al-Andalus fī ḥirzin nazaghāt al-fitan*), successfully defended Granada’s populace from Christian aggression (*watā’ al-rūm wa kaffaa ‘an ghulawā’ihā*), and even subjugated enemy territory (*wa dhallaā ba’d istīlā’ihā wa kharrab diyarihā wa shattat aḥwālihā wa qatal ḥumātihā wa abṭālihā*).<sup>132</sup> These themes are also evident in the poetry composed by Ibn al-Jayyāb for Yūsuf I.<sup>133</sup> The status of the Nasrids as defenders of the faith and upholders of Islam was thus connected with their military activities. Significantly, Ibn Hudhayl provides a number of anecdotes about the bravery of the Anṣār and their role in the protection of Islam during the lifetime of the Prophet, citing a tradition ascribed to ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās which proclaims that “the swords were not unsheathed nor did the armies advance nor were the ranks of

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century—as “the supporter of the faith of the Lord of the Universe” (*nāṣir dīn rabb al-‘ālamīn*) (*Kitāb al-Imtā’ wa al-Intifā’ fī Mas’alat Samā’ al-Samā’*, BN MS Res. 246, f. 1v). Diplomatic correspondence from the Marinid court also attests to this, with the letter from Abū ‘Inān to Pedro IV of Aragón dated 755/1354 utilizing the titles “*al-mujāhid fī sabīl rabb al-‘ālamīn*” and “*nāṣir al-dīn*” for various Marinid sovereigns (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 100). See, also, the letters from Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī to Yūsuf I (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 93–94), a letter from Abū Sālim to Pedro IV dated Sha’bān 761/June 1360 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 110), the letter from Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz to Muḥammad V dated Shawwāl 768/May 1367 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 76).

<sup>131</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuḥfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, ff. 3r–3v.

<sup>132</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuḥfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, ff. 3v–4r. This entire preface (with the exception of the reference to the raids and conquests in Castile) is reproduced almost verbatim in Ibn Hudhayl’s dedication of his *Ḥilyat al-Fursān wa Shi’ār al-Shuj’ān* written for Yūsuf II (‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Ḥilyat al-Fursān wa Shi’ār al-Shuj’ān* [Cairo: Dar al-Ma’arif, 1951], ed. Muhammad ‘Abd al-Ghani Hasan, pp. 23–25)

<sup>133</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, pp. 115–121

soldiers arrayed until the conversion to Islam of the sons of Qīla, the Aws and the Khazraj, who are the Anṣār.”<sup>134</sup> Similarly, the poetry of Ibn al-Jayyāb stresses the singular role of the Anṣār in the rise, expansion and defense of Islam:

When the Prophet began his mission, he was rebelliously and jealously opposed  
by the leaders of misguidance from among his own relatives

It was the sons of Qīla [the Aws and the Khazraj] sallied forth to assist and  
support him

They passionately devoted their lives and souls in support of the Prophet, hoisting  
their battle-standards in support of his cause

They expended their wealth and unsheathed their swords in defense of the faith,  
as is well known, during the battles of Badr, [the siege of the Banū] Naḍīr and  
Khaybar

The Battle of Hunayn was a glorious testament to their loyalty and devotion, for  
they held their ground and charged forth even on the cusp of defeat and triumphed  
over the armies of polytheism

They are monks holding vigil in the prayer niche by night and lions [on the  
battlefield] by day

O Anṣār, verily you have been a pillar of guidance across the centuries and your  
determination and willpower is unparalleled

It is to you that the Prophet owes his life and it was among you that he was  
buried, with the blessed light of his tomb illuminating your homes

[...]

Following in their footsteps was their descendants the Anṣār of al-Andalus, the  
Himyarite kings from the sons of Naṣr, who supported and defended this land  
when it was on the brink of destruction and annihilation.<sup>135</sup>

These literary works sought to communicate that, like their Anṣāri ancestors, the Nasrids were  
brave warriors, staunch supporters of the faith and defenders of the Muslims. This image of the

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<sup>134</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuhfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, f. 60v.

<sup>135</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, pp. 115–117.

Nasrids was particularly evident in the historical representations and sacralization of Muḥammad I (“al-Ghālīb bi-llāh”) as the savior of al-Andalus and the reviver of Islamic power in the Iberian Peninsula within various writings and documents produced by scholar-officials within the Nasrid court. An illustrative example is the preamble of the oath of allegiance (*bay‘a*) of Ismā‘īl I, a document penned by the Granadan chancellor Ibn al-Jayyāb (and preserved by the chief judge of Granada, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī):

The evidence [for God’s mercy upon al-Andalus] is as evident today as it has been in the past, clearer than a flame upon an elevated banner. God saved this Peninsula from the snares of the disbelievers and brought it salvation at the very moment when it appeared to be on the brink of destruction by bringing forth as its leader al-Imām al-Ghālīb bi-llāh [Muḥammad I], the elect from the lineage of the Anṣār (*al-muntakhab min sulālat al-Anṣār*), the brave lion and the protector of honor, the one who established sovereignty and kingship by the brilliant sword and sharp spear. Indeed, he fulfilled his duty in defending al-Andalus for the sake of God and true belief and liberated it from the plundering hands of the worshippers of the Cross while making the true religion manifest and victorious. He fought his enemies to earn the favor of the Most Merciful and God rewarded this service by returning al-Andalus to the heights of its glory, eased its path to victory and annihilated its enemies. May God continue to bestow His mercy and favor upon him and make Paradise his eternal home. Kingship has triumphantly remained in the hands of his descendants while the enemies have been repeatedly vanquished.<sup>136</sup>

The religio-political discourse of sovereigns as “renewers of the faith and its institutions” (*mujaddid al-dīn*) in the Islamic West had important antecedents during the Almoravid and Almohad era. This continued into the post-Almohad period, with the dedication of the earliest version of Ibn Khaldūn’s referring to “the rightly-guided Almohad [i.e. Hafsid] caliphs who have served as Renewers of the Faith” (*al-khulafā’ al-rashidīn al-a’imma al-muwahḥidīn aladhīna jaddadū al-dīn*) being an important example.<sup>137</sup> This was also evident in the Marinid context,

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<sup>136</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, pp. 230–232. This theme of the Nasrids as saviors of al-Andalus is also echoed in Ibn al-Jayyāb’s aforementioned poem for Yūsuf (Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, p. 117).

<sup>137</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, BL MS Add 9574, f. 5v

with the chancellor Abū al-Qāsim b. Riḍwān recited a panegyric for the ruler Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in Rabī‘ I 773/September 1371 that proclaimed the latter to be “the righteous and glorious king, the reviver of the *sharī‘a*, its glory and institutions” (*fa-hūwa al-maliku al-ṣāliḥ al-‘alam al-riḍa muḥyī al-sharī‘a ‘izzuhā wa niẓāmuḥā*).<sup>138</sup> Similarly, in a work dedicated to Abū ‘Inān, the Marinid functionary and scholar Ibn Marzūq praises this ruler for his “restoration of the foundations and institutions of Islam” (*aḥyā [Allāh] bi-hi qawā‘id al-islām*) and for “reviving the righteous and exemplary practice of the pious caliphs” (*iḥyā’ sunnat al-khulafā’ al-atqiyā*).<sup>139</sup> It was within this longstanding tradition that many Nasrid chancellors, scholars and court secretaries were operating. A good example of this theme of the Nasrids as “renewers of the faith” can be seen in the work of Ibn al-Farrā’, writing during the reign of Muḥammad I:

Thanks be to God, in our own era the ordinances of the faith are upheld and maintained, legitimate and legal rights are protected, prosperity exists in abundance, and heresy and innovation are suppressed. This is all accomplished thanks to the blessed [Nasrid] rulers through whose efforts God has preserved the existence of Islam and maintained the lives of the Muslims in this Peninsula, restoring vigor and glory to the faith after its demise. By God’s help, they have pursued a righteous course in spending their wealth in defending the people and upholding the truth. May they be justly and amply rewarded for doing so! O God, just as you have bestowed upon them the distinction of an honorable lineage and have made them the means through which this blessed country has been reformed, I pray that you continue to support their kingship in this Peninsula and bless them with your infinite mercy<sup>140</sup>

This is also evident in Ibn al-Jayyāb’s poem for Yūsuf I, in which he proclaims that this ruler “revived God’s religion after its demise (*ba‘atht dīn Allāh min ‘ithrāthihi*) and bolstered [the message] of the Lord of the Ascension [i.e. the Prophet],” “illuminated the kingdom’s horizon with the light of the faith when previously the people had suffered under the burden of darkness

<sup>138</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 242–243.

<sup>139</sup> Ibn Marzūq, *Wāsitat al-‘Iqd al-Thamīn*, El Escorial MS 1167, f. 163r.

<sup>140</sup> Ibn al-Farrā’, *Nuzhat al-Abṣār*, pp. 363–364.

and oppression,” and “renewed the faith to its pristine condition.”<sup>141</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī asserts that, due to the extensive military campaigns waged by Muḥammad V, the glory of Islam was restored to the Iberian Peninsula (*wa ittaḍaḥa bi-hadhā al-qaṭr al-andalusī dīn al-islām bi-barakat dawlat hadhā al-baṭal al-humām*).<sup>142</sup> This is also evident from both literary and documentary sources from the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century. The compendium of poetry of Yūsuf III, whose throne name was *al-Nāṣir li Dīn Allāh*, for example, proclaims that “the Nasrids are the champions of the faith of true guidance” (*Āl Naṣr nāṣirī dīn al-ḥaqq*), and declares himself to be “the Champion of the Faith (*nāṣir al-dīn*) and the Imām who elevates monotheism (*al-tawḥīd*) over the Trinity.”<sup>143</sup> The role of the Nasrids as defenders of the faith was acknowledged and emphasized by other rulers in the Islamic West, as in the example of a letter from Hafsid Tunis which proclaims that “the [king of Granada] continues to proceed upon the noble path of his ancestors in prosecuting holy war, destroying and conquering the infidels, and bringing security to the believers.”<sup>144</sup> As part of their self-representation as guardians of Islam and protectors of the Muslim community was the insertion of clauses protecting Mudéjars in treaties with Christian powers, a phenomenon previously noted by Harvey.<sup>145</sup> One of the best examples of this from the reign of Muḥammad V can be found in his treaty with Pedro IV of Aragón, signed on Muḥarram 18 779/May 27 1377, in which it was declared that

Neither you [Pedro IV] nor your subjects will prevent any of the Muslims residing in your kingdom (*al-muslimīn al-sākinīn bi-bilādikum*) from departing for Muslim lands (*arḍ al-muslimīn*), both by land and sea, in complete security with their family, possessions and wealth, at any time, without the imposition of any taxes other than those established by custom. It will not be permitted for any of your

<sup>141</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, p. 91.

<sup>142</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuḥfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, f. 4r.

<sup>143</sup> Yūsuf III, *Dīwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith*, pp. 10, 21, 55.

<sup>144</sup> al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshā*, 7: 442.

<sup>145</sup> Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, p. 218.



officials, servants or subjects will harm them, confiscate their wealth or impose constraints upon them of any kind.<sup>146</sup>

Viewed in this broader light, the emphasis on the Anṣārī descent of the Naṣrids was not solely intended as a tribal designation but also sought to ascribe to the dynasty the broader connotations and associations of the patronymic. As such, when Ibn al-Khaṭīb and other scholars attributed Anṣārī lineage to Muḥammad I, the broader semantic, Qur’ānic and historical associations of the term “*anṣār*” were being invoked. Far from being a minor city-state on the fringes of the Islamic world, the usage of al-Anṣārī sought to communicate that Granada was a “New Medina,” a refuge for Islam in the Iberian Peninsula, with its rulers effectively acting as the representatives of God and the Prophet Muḥammad in defending the faith, upholding its institutions, beliefs and practices, and enforcing justice. As discussed in the second section of this chapter, this particular representation of the Nasrids was directly related to the representation of Nasrid sovereignty as a form of divinely-supported vicegerency (*khilāfa*).

Due to its central role as providing the legitimating framework of the dynasty, a broader engagement with the Arabic root “*n-ṣ-r*” is ubiquitous in the writings, titulature and poetry of the Nasrid period from the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century onwards. In addition to forming the root of the words *anṣār* (The Anṣār) and *naṣrī* (Naṣrid), this three-letter combination also itself forms a word, *naṣr*, which translates as “victory” or “support” in Arabic. Interestingly, Naṣr is listed in various Nasrid genealogies as the ancestor of Muḥammad I who was the first from the line of Qays b. Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda to settle in al-Andalus in the early 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century, but is a figure who is entirely absent from all pre-Nasrid histories, biographical dictionaries and genealogical treatises. As mentioned, the word “*naṣr*” has strong, underlying religious connotations and usually suggests

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<sup>146</sup> The full bilingual treaty is preserved in the Archive of the Crown of Aragón (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 161).

divinely-inspired victory or support. Perhaps the most significant anecdote within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings that seeks to invoke the religious implications of the term is an anecdote which he related regarding the entry of Muḥammad I into Granada. According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb when Muḥammad I entered Granada at sunset during

the last days of Ramaḍān...clothed in the garb of a holy warrior, the shoulders of which were torn...he was pushed towards the direction of the *miḥrāb* (semi-circular niche indicating the direction of Mecca) by the religious leaders, and then led (the people) in prayer, reciting the *fātiḥa* (Chapter 1 of the Qur'an), and 'When God's victory/help (*naṣr Allāh*) and triumph arrive' (Chapter 110), and "Proclaim He is the One and Only God" (Chapter 112). (Following the prayer), he arrived at the palace of Bādīs [b. Habūs; Zīrid ruler of the *taifa* of Granada between 1038 and 1073), holding candles in his hands.<sup>147</sup>

Note Ibn al-Khaṭīb's emphasis on Muḥammad's recitation of Chapter 110 of the Qur'an, known as "Sūrat al-Naṣr" (the Chapter of Divine Victory). It is probable that Ibn al-Khaṭīb incorporated the anecdote (with emendations) from the historical chronicle of the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century North African historian Ibn 'Idhārī, who narrates the same story, with slight variation.<sup>148</sup> The inclusion of this narration, which underscores Muḥammad's recital of this particular chapter of the Qur'an which speaks of divine aid/victory, specifically using the term "*naṣr*," within the text reflects two important phenomena. On the one hand, this narration indicates the instrumentalization of this narrative by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to reinforce the motif of "*n-ṣ-r*" and its interplay with the person of Muḥammad I (and his descendants), and the divine support that underpinned the emergence of the Naṣrid kingdom. On the other hand, it is a clear attempt by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to project onto an early 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century forms of legitimation and understandings of Nasrid royal authority that would not become prevalent in the Nasrid context until well into the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. The

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<sup>147</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badrīyya*, pp. 47–48; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa*, 2: 98–99. Ibn 'Idhārī's original narration emphasizes that Muḥammad I was girded with his sword as he led prayers, an attempt to highlight his primary function as a frontier warrior and the military foundation of his sovereignty.

<sup>148</sup> Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Idhārī al-Marrākushī, *Bayān al-Mughrib fī Akhbār al-Andalus wa al-Maghrib* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2009), ed. 'Abd Alla Muhammad 'Ali, 4: 419.

framing of this narration, which describes how Muḥammad was invited from Jaén, before leading prayers and reciting Sūra 110, and considering the significance of the “*n-ṣ-r*” motif throughout the text, strongly lends itself to the interpretation that the “victory/support of God” mentioned in the verses recited was intended to refer to none other than Muḥammad I himself. In accordance with Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s commitment to emphasizing the centrality of royal power, the sovereign is placed at the center of the story while the confederation of military elites and nobles that laid the foundation of the Nasrid kingdom are completely omitted. This triumphalist narrative of connecting the entry of Muḥammad I into Granada with the recitation of Sūra 110 is further reflected in the writings of Abū Muḥammad b. Juzayy, writing during the late reign of Muḥammad V, who adds an apocalyptic dimension to the rise of the Nasrids:

Muḥammad I recited Sūra 110 in the first prostration of the prayer, which prompted the learned scholar Abū al-Ḥasan Sahl b. Mālīk to proclaim [after the prayer] that “this was the last chapter of the Qur’an revealed to the Prophet of God. Verily, this man and his descendants will be the last sovereign dynasty to exercise dominion over this Iberian Peninsula.”<sup>149</sup>

The Nasrid dynastic slogan (or *shi‘ār*) “And, verily, only God is the true Victor” (*wa lā ghāliba illā Allāh*), which is attested on the coinage of Muḥammad I (known as al-Ghālib bi-llāh, or “The Victor/Conqueror, by the grace of God”) as early as the 630s/1230s, was also closely linked with the broader theme of *n-ṣ-r*, and appears to have been inspired by Q. 3:160, which states “If God supports you, none can defeat you. And if He abandons you, who else can support you? Therefore, let the believers place their trust in God” (*inn yanṣurkum Allāh fa lā ghālib lakum wa inn yakhdhulkum fa-man dhā alladhī yanṣurukum min ba’dihī wa ‘alā Allāh fa-liyatawakkal al-mu’minīn*). Although there are various legends that circulated about the slogan, including a particularly fanciful story in which it is ascribed to a moment of divine intervention

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<sup>149</sup> Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Juzayy, *Kitāb al-Khayl*, p. 23.

that contributed to the Almohad victory at the Battle of Alarcos (591/1195), the origins of the phrase remain obscure. As far as I am aware, it also does not appear to have been a phrase inscribed upon the architecture, coinage or banners of earlier Andalusī or North African dynasties. Since it represents the most significant and consistent element of Nasrid political legitimization, evident on coins, as well as in literary texts and diplomatic correspondence from the mid-7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century onwards, inspiring the throne name (“al-Ghālib bi-llāh”) of both the first and last Nasrid sovereigns, as well as others, it is worthy of closer consideration.

The inscription of the slogan upon the military banners, royal seals, ceremonial robes, documents, palaces (several hundred times in the Alhambra alone), mosques and coins of the Nasrid kingdom indicates the significance ascribed to it by the dynasty. There are several ways in which this can be interpreted. When read in light of broader discourses of political legitimization across the Islamic West, it appears as an assertion of the divinely-mandated nature of Nasrid sovereignty and rule, a proclamation that their military successes, the foundation of their power, were bestowed by God. It may also have been a proclamation that the rise of the Nasrids themselves was the divine instrument for the realization of the ultimate victory of Islam.

Since the inception of the Kingdom of Granada in the 630s/1230s, official documents and coinage almost exclusively refer to the Naṣrid dynasty as the Banū Naṣr, a name that holds the double-meaning in Arabic of “The Descendants of Naṣr” and “The Sons of Victory,” with the kingdom’s name (*al-dawla al-naṣriyya*) conveying the sense of “the victorious kingdom.” In contrast, the earliest (non-Nasrid) Arabic and Castilian sources for Nasrid history identify the founder of the dynasty as Muḥammad b. al-Aḥmar and his descendants as the Banū al-Aḥmar. The Andalusī historian and poet Ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī, one of the most important chroniclers of late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century al-Andalus, refers to Muḥammad I as “the ruler of al-Andalus in our time

Abū ‘Abd Allāh [Muḥammad] b. al-Aḥmar.”<sup>150</sup> Indeed, even later non-Nasrid sources in the Islamic West, such as al-Malzūzī,<sup>151</sup> Ibn ‘Idhārī, Ibn Marzūq,<sup>152</sup> Ibn Abī Zar‘, Ibn al-Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī<sup>153</sup> and Ibn Khaldūn, as well as those in Mamluk lands, often designate the Nasrids as the Banū al-Aḥmar; this is also reflected in the name of Ibn al-Aḥmar, the Nasrid poet-prince in the Marinid court. Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Abī Zar‘, writing in the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, remarked that “Ibn al-Aḥmar” was simply the sobriquet of Muḥammad I, whose name is provided as Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Naṣr.<sup>154</sup> Other sources, such as Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī al-Bunnāhī, the chief judge of Granada, states that it was a distant ancestor of the dynasty, ‘Aqīl (supposedly a grandson of Qays b. Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda), who bore the nickname “al-Aḥmar”.<sup>155</sup> Similarly, the Nasrid poet-prince and historian Ibn al-Aḥmar asserts that it was Yūsuf, the father of Muḥammad I, who was known as “al-Aḥmar.”<sup>156</sup> Ibn ‘Idhārī, writing at the close of the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, elaborates further and explains that the Nasrids were known as the Banū al-Aḥmar due to the dynasty’s association with the color red, which was manifest in everything from the garb worn by the sovereign to the heraldry employed.<sup>157</sup> This constitutes the only significant written contemporary evidence that the symbolism of the color red, which was linked with the dynasty’s name, may have played a notable role in early Nasrid political legitimization.

The color red, far from being an insignificant detail, was one which had been closely associated with the Almohads and, following the advent of Naṣrids, seems to have retained its

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<sup>150</sup> ‘Alī b. Mūsā b. Sa’īd al-Andalusī, *Ikhtisār al-Qidḥ al-Mu’alla fī al-Tārīkh al-Muḥalla* (Cairo: al-Hay’a al-‘Āmma li-Shu’ūn al-Maṭābī’ al-Amīriyya, 1959), ed. Ibraim al-Abyari, p. 22; ‘Alī b. Mūsā b. Sa’īd al-Andalusī, *Kitāb al-Jughrāfiyya* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Tijari, 1970), ed. Isma’īl al-‘Arabi, p. 167; Ibn Sa’īd al-Andalusī, *al-Mughrib fī Ḥulā al-Maghrib*, 1: 350.

<sup>151</sup> al-Malzūzī, *Naẓm al-sulūk*, p. 88.

<sup>152</sup> Ibn Marzūq, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Ḥasan*, p. 100.

<sup>153</sup> Ibn al-Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī, *al-Fārisiyya fī Mabādi’ al-Dawla al-Ḥaḥṣiyya*, p. 118.

<sup>154</sup> Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Abī Zar‘, *al-Anīs al-Muṭrib bi Rawḍ al-Qirtās*, p. 360.

<sup>155</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 216.

<sup>156</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā’id al-Jumān*, p. 215.

<sup>157</sup> Ibn Idhārī, *Bayān al-Mughrib*, 4: 371.

role as a deeply significant color in the kingdom of Granada. Most notably, in addition to being referred to as Ibn al-Aḥmar (“son of the Red One”), Muḥammad’s royal palace in Granada was the Alhambra/Qal’at al-Ḥamrā’ (“the Red Fortress”) and the most important diplomatic correspondence from the Nasrid sovereigns was written on red paper (the so-called *cartas bermejas*)<sup>158</sup> with a distinctive red seal attached.<sup>159</sup> The significance of this was recognized by al-Qalqashandī, who notes in his *Ṣubḥ al-A’shā* that the letter from Granada to Tunis composed in Jumādā I 765/February 1364 (penned by Ibn al-Khaṭīb) was “written on red paper” (*wa qad warada kitābihi fī waraq aḥmar*).<sup>160</sup> The Hafsid missive to the Nasrids, a response to this earlier letter, which is preserved by the Mamluk chancellor, is even more explicit about the significance of the color red: “by its red color we knew that it emanated from the Red Fortress-City (*al-ḥamrā*).”<sup>161</sup> This indicates that the Nasrids were continually associated with the color red, which was the emblem and symbol of their dynasty despite no longer referring to themselves as the Banū-l Aḥmar. Moreover, the figural representations in the contemporary Castilian devotional text known as the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* reflect this Nasrid association with the color red (Figure 3), while the 13<sup>th</sup>-c. Castilian chronicle known as the *Estoria de España* identifies Muḥammad I as “Maomad Auenalamar,” as does the Portuguese *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344*.<sup>162</sup> Even later 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century non-Nasrid sources make continual reference to the “Banū al-Aḥmar” with Muḥammad VI (r. 1360–1362) being referred to as *El Rey Bermejo* (literally “The Red King”) in Castilian chronicles, while the aforementioned Mudéjar traveler Ibn al-Sabāḥ uses

<sup>158</sup> For notable examples, see ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 32–34.

<sup>159</sup> For a discussion of the color red in connection with political legitimacy in al-Andalus, see Maribel Fierro, “Colors and the Quest for Political Legitimacy in the Islamic West,” in *And Diverse Are Their Hues: Color in Islamic Art and Culture*, (New Haven: Yale University Press 2011), ed. Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair, pp. 79–89.

<sup>160</sup> al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A’shā*, 7: 442.

<sup>161</sup> al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A’shā*, 7: 442.

<sup>162</sup> Alfonso X, *Primera Crónica General de España*, (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1977), ed. Ramón Menéndez Pidal, 2: 722; Pedro Afonso, *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344*, 4: 508–509.

the terms *al-Malik al-Aḥmar* (“The Red King”) and “Ibn al-Aḥmar” to refer to the Nasrid emir.<sup>163</sup> Although belonging to a collateral line of Nasrid princes (descended from a brother of Ismā‘īl I), the Nasrid poet-prince and historian Ibn al-Aḥmar designates the Nasrid kingdom as “our Aḥmarid and Nasrid polity” (*dawlatunā al-aḥmariyya al-naṣriyya*) and refers to its rulers as “our cousins, the Aḥmarid sovereigns and our family, the Nasrid sovereigns.”<sup>164</sup>

This emphasis on the color red contrasts sharply with the universal usage of “al-Anṣārī” or “Ibn Naṣr” in all writings, coinage, documents and epigraphy produced within the Nasrid court or by Nasrid scholar-officials. References to “Ibn al-Aḥmar” are completely absent from official documents from the Kingdom of Granada or any foreign correspondence with either the Islamic world or the Christian kingdoms, where the Nasrid sovereign is referred to as “Ibn Naṣr” or “Abennaṣar” from the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century onwards.<sup>165</sup> This is also evident within official documents produced in Castile, including four privilegiums of Alfonso X issued in Burgos, dated 1255 and 1260, in which Muḥammad I appears as one of the signatories and is identified as “Don Aboabdille Abennacar Rey de Granada vassalo del Rey.”<sup>166</sup>

Notably, however, this same body of diplomatic correspondence during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century also omits any reference to the alleged “Anṣārī” lineage or patronymic of the Nasrids, despite employing a wide range of titles for the rulers of Granada. These documents nevertheless place a heavy emphasis on the “n-ṣ-r” motif discussed above and invoke the role of the Nasrids as *fidei defensores*, which was itself closely related to the adoption of an Anṣārī patronymic. An

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<sup>163</sup> Ibn al-Sabāḥ, *Ansāb al-Akḥbār wa Tadhkirat al-Akhyār*, p. 67. It is highly possible that this author, living as he did in the Crown of Aragón, was directly translating the term *El Rey Bermejo* into Arabic.

<sup>164</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 19, 22, 120, 138.

<sup>165</sup> See the edited diplomatic correspondence and documents exchanged between Aragón and Nasrid Granada between 1291 and 1327 in Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, in which the Nasrid rulers from Muḥammad II to Muḥammad IV are referred to consistently as “Abennaṣar” (i.e. Ibn Naṣr).

<sup>166</sup> Archivo Municipal de Burgos, HI-116, HI -133, HI -135 and HI -138.

official letter drafted by the scholar-official Khalaf b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ghāfiqī al-Qabtūrī (d. 704/1304)<sup>167</sup> on behalf of Abū al-Qāsim al-‘Azafī, ruler of Ceuta, addresses Muḥammad I as “the honored prince and perfect holy warrior Abū ‘Abd Allāh, the son of the late and blessed commander Abū al-Ḥajjāj [Yūsuf] b. Naṣr...who has been endowed with the responsibility of upholding and protecting the monotheistic faith [i.e. Islam] in the Iberian Peninsula,” while another letter sent shortly afterwards describes Muḥammad I as “the occupant of the lofty Nasrid station...the one ennobled and honored with the protection of Islam with unsheathed sword and unfurled banners.”<sup>168</sup>

Figure 3. Depiction in the *Cantigas de Santa María* of Muḥammad I and his army. (Source: El Escorial T.I.1, f. 187r)



<sup>167</sup> al-Dhaabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, p. 37; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 2: 48.

<sup>168</sup> Khalaf b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ghāfiqī al-Qabtūrī, *Rasā’il Dīwāniyya min Sabta fī al-‘Ad al-‘Azafī* (Rabat: al-Matba’a al-Malakiyya, 1979), ed. Muhammad al-Habib al-Hila, pp. 125, 131.



The lack of references to “al-Aḥmar” within the literary, diplomatic, numismatic and epigraphic production of the Nasrids does not necessarily mean that the color red was an irrelevant aspect of the dynasty’s political legitimacy. References to the red battle standards and banners (*al-rāya al-ḥamrā*) of the Nasrids abound in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>169</sup> poetry, with a panegyric for Yūsuf I declaring that “when the red banner is unfurled, the people rush forth into battle.”<sup>170</sup> The prominence of red standards and heraldry was also noted by travel and geographical writing about the Nasrid kingdom, with the author of “The Book of Knowledge of All Kingdoms” (*El libro del conocimiento de todos los reinos*), for example, stating that the insignia of [the King of Granada] is a red banner inscribed with gold Arabic letters, like the one of Muḥammad, his prophet” (*las señales deste rrey son un pendon Bermejo con letras de oro aravigas como las traya Maomad su profeta*).<sup>171</sup> Despite this continued persistence of the color red, the association of the Nasrid dynasty with an Anṣārī genealogy was seen as such a significant aspect of dynastic legitimacy by the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century that it even influenced the dynasty’s very name, overriding all previous designations that they may have had. The decision to proclaim a distant ancestor, Naṣr, as the eponym of the dynasty further demonstrates that it was an association with the “n-ṣ-r” motif that strongly informed the Nasrids’ own self-representation.

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<sup>169</sup> See, for example, the poem of the Nasrid emir Yūsuf III proclaiming that “we [the Nasrids] are the lords of the unfurled red banners that bring victory” (Yūsuf III, *Diwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith*, p. 63) and another in reference to the Gibraltar campaign of 814/1411 in which he describes himself as “the possessor of the red banner which facilitates victory and is encircled by the defenders of the Nasrids” (Yūsuf III, *Diwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith*, p. 65). For more on the importance of the military and political struggle over Gibraltar in the *dīwān* of Yūsuf III, see Celia del Moral, “El Dīwān de Yūsuf III y el sitio de Gibraltar,” in *Homenaje al Prof. Darío Cabanelas Rodríguez, O.F.M. con motivo de su LXX Aniversario* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1987), 2: 79–96.

<sup>170</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 202.

<sup>171</sup> Anonymous, *El libro del conocimiento de todos los reinos (The Book of Knowledge of All Kingdoms)* (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999), trans. Nancy F. Marino, p. 22.

## An Ansāri Caliphate? The Caliphal Title in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-c. Nasrid Granada

A close reading of Nasrid historiography, diplomatic correspondence, poetry and epigraphy (including coinage) between the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century illustrates the manner in which the genealogical bases of legitimation, religio-political conceptions of authority, borderland dynamics and notions of Arabness were all deeply intertwined in Granada. It was this interplay of various ideas and discourses that served as the primary foundation for the utilization of the caliphal title within Nasrid Granada from about 720/1320 onwards. As argued within this dissertation, it was specifically the royal chancery in the Alhambra—the site in which artisans, litterateurs, kings, scholars, functionaries, philosophers and jurists converged—that many of these political discourses were conceived, articulated and disseminated. The interdependence between scholar-officials and the sovereign underpinned the concerted attempts of the former group to articulate a particular ideal of centralized royal sovereignty, in which the king (and not the nobility, jurists or a distant caliph) was the sole source of legitimate authority.

Chancellors, historians and scholar-officials in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century were heirs to a centuries-long political and philosophical discourse about kingship, sovereignty and caliphal authority that was molded by a variety of intellectual influences, as well as historical practice, and which was colored particularly heavily by preceding developments in both Iberia and North Africa. Specifically, Nasrid and Marinid court secretaries could refer to centuries of historical precedent of usages of the caliphal title (*khalīfa/khalīfat allāh/amīr al-mu'minīn*), as well as quasi-caliphal titles such as *amīr al-muslimīn* by different rulers in a variety of contexts across both Iberia and North Africa. Since the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century, if not earlier, there had been a strong emphasis on the theoretical necessity of strong, centralized kingship among court secretaries in al-Andalus. This is evident from the writings of the Córdoba litterateur Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, who devoted a

considerable portion of the first book of his monumental “The Unique Necklace” (*al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*) to an exposition of the nature, theory and practice of kingship, a section which opens with the proclamation that

“the sovereign (*al-sulṭān*) is the master of all affairs, the administrator of rights, the executioner of judgements and punishments and the axis around which worldly affairs and religion revolve. He is the sanctuary and shadow of God on earth and over His servants, who protects that which is inviolable, defends the oppressed, annihilates the oppressors and safeguards the fearful.”<sup>172</sup>

Four centuries later, Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi’s declaration would be reflected in the maximalist understanding of royal sovereignty that many within the chanceries of the Islamic West during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century sought to communicate within their own works. The legacy of the Umayyads, the complex politics of their rule and the various strategies of legitimation that surrounded their adoption of the caliphal title,<sup>173</sup> remained important well into the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century (and beyond), as is apparent from Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own historiographical corpus, which painstakingly preserves significant documents from the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> centuries. Among the most important of these historical examples was undoubtedly the Almohads, which was also within living memory since many Nasrid court secretaries and scholar-officials had begun their careers in the service of this dynasty. The Almohad aspiration to universal sovereignty and religious authority was underpinned by the claims of their rulers to be the only legitimate caliphs in the Islamic world. Their adoption of caliphal titles, which were publicly proclaimed, incorporated into official

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<sup>172</sup> Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, *al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, 1: 31.

<sup>173</sup> This has been well-studied by David Wasserstein, *The Caliphate in the West: An Islamic Political Institution in the Iberian Peninsula* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Maribel Fierro, “Sobre la adopción del título califal por ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III,” *Sharq al-Andalus. Estudios Arabes* 6 (1989), pp. 33–42; Janina Safran, *The Second Umayyad Caliphate: The Articulation of Caliphal Legitimacy in al-Andalus* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000); Janina Safran, “The Command of the Faithful in al-Andalus: A Study in the Articulation of Caliphal Legitimacy,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 30 (1998), pp. 183–198; and Gabriel Martínez-Gros, *L’idéologie omeyyade. La construction de la légitimité du Califat du Cordoue (Xe-XIe siècles)* (Madrid: Casa de Velazquez, 1992).

documents and foreign correspondence, minted on coins and inscribed on public monuments, entailed rejection of the legitimacy of both the Fatimid caliphate in Egypt and the Abbasids in Baghdad and a proclamation that the authority of the Almohad caliphate was sanctioned directly by God, through the mediation of Ibn Tūmart, recognized as the Infallible Maḥdī, ‘who served as God’s representative on earth. While this is not the place to discuss the particulars of Almohad political theory, it is important to highlight that the adoption of the caliphal title signified that the Almohad rulers were the preeminent authority within their own realms, enabling them to claim a degree of religious authority to complement their political power.

The Almohad caliphate is all the more significant considering that this was the first time in Islamic history that a dynasty not universally recognized as belonging to Muḥammad’s tribe of Quraysh had successfully established a caliphate that encompassed a substantial part of the Islamic world. Prevailing legal and theological opinion in medieval Islam, as well as custom, had determined that all candidates for the caliphate had to belong to the tribe of Quraysh (“The Imams [caliphs] are from Quraysh” as the oft-cited prophetic tradition proclaimed). Andalusī scholars such as Ibn Ḥazm repeatedly insisted in their writings that the caliphate was a preserve of the Quraysh.<sup>174</sup> Despite various genealogical strategies employed by Almohad rulers, including the idea that they were, in fact, descendants of Quraysh, this precedent of a relatively long-lived and successful Berber caliphate in the Islamic West had major implications, particularly in the redefinition of caliphal authority and the nature of royal sovereignty. While there has been a significant engagement with Almohad strategies of legitimation, the legacy of their reformulation of notions of sovereignty, as well as their usage of historiography, genealogy and material culture, including coinage, to communicate a particular dynastic ideology in the

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<sup>174</sup> A.M. Turki, “L’engagement politique et la théorie du califat d’Ibn Ḥazm,” *Bulletin d’Études Orientales* 30 (1978), pp. 221–251.

Islamic West in the following centuries has been less understood. A close reading of the surviving textual and material evidence clearly demonstrates that, far from being an insignificant phenomenon, both genealogical claims and caliphal titles played a major role in the development of dynastic ideology of the post-Almohad kingdoms, particularly the Nasrids, especially during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.

While there has been much discussion of the question of vassalage—the theoretical subordination of the Nasrids to Castile, formalized by the providing of military assistance, symbolic gestures of submission and the payment of gold—less attention has been devoted to delineating this dynasty’s own articulation and representation of their political authority and sovereignty. When Muḥammad I was proclaimed king in Granada in 635/1238, the Almohads in Marrakech and the Abbasids in Baghdad both concurrently claimed the title of caliph, with the Hafsid in Tunis proclaiming their independence from the Almohads and adopting the title of “supreme and pre-eminent commander” (*al-amīr al-ajall*). The earliest Nasrid coins indicate an engagement with this complex political reality as part of a broader attempt to articulate the dynasty’s political legitimacy. One of the dynasty’s earliest coins, a Hafsid-style gold dinar struck in Murcia and emblazoned with the Nasrid dynastic slogan “And, verily, only God is the true Victor” (*wa lā ghāliba illā Allāh*),<sup>175</sup> refers to Muḥammad I as “the Commander of the Muslims” (*amīr al-muslimīn*) and is inscribed with the Almohad tripartite declaration: “There is no God but God, Muḥammad is the Prophet of God, the Mahdī is the Imām of the Muslim Community (*lā ilāha illā Allāh, Muḥammad rasūl Allāh, al-Mahdī Imām al-umma*)” (Figure 4). Another Hafsid-style gold coin, struck in Granada, is inscribed with “the Mahdī is God’s Caliph”

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<sup>175</sup> The usage of the dynastic slogan on Nasrid coinage, as well as its appearance on Zayyanid and Marinid coins during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century (particularly during the reign of those rulers closely aligned with the Nasrids), is discussed in ‘Atif Mansur Muhammad Ramadan, *al-Kitābāt ghayr al-Qur’āniyya ‘ala al-nuqūd al-islāmiyya fī al-Maghrib* (Cairo: Maktabat Zara’ al-Sharq, 2002), pp. 205–214.

(*al-Mahdī khalīfat allāh*).<sup>176</sup> At least one of these type of gold coins, which were minted in Murcia, Granada and Málaga, explicitly recognized the supreme authority of Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Abī Ḥafṣ (r. 627/1229–647/1249), the founder of the Hafsīd kingdom in Tunis, whose legitimacy was rooted in his guardianship and preservation of Almohad Madīsm.<sup>177</sup> According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's student, Ibn al-Qunfudh al-Quṣanṭīnī, whose historical chronicle "On the Glorious Hafsīd Kingdom" (*al-Fārisiyya fī Mabādi' al-Dawla al-Ḥafṣiyya*) performed the same propagandistic service for the Hafsids as Ibn al-Khaṭīb's dynastic chronicles did for the Nasrids, the Andalusī cities of Seville, Almería, Jerez de la Frontera and Tarifa pledged their allegiance (*bay'a*) to the Hafsids in 643/1245.<sup>178</sup> Similarly, Ibn Khaldūn asserts that after initially recognizing the Almohad caliph Abū Muḥammad al-Rashīd (r. 630/1232–640/1242) in 636/1238, Muḥammad I pledged his allegiance to the Hafsīd sultan Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā.<sup>179</sup>

This textual and numismatic evidence indicates that, in sharp contradistinction to al-Mutawwakil b. Hūd (who sought to efface all traces of Almohad ideology), the early Nasrids were willing to maintain a degree of continuity for political expediency. There also survive several silver Almohad-style (square) dirhams,<sup>180</sup> struck in Granada, Jaén and Málaga during the

<sup>176</sup> Antonio Medina Gómez, *Monedas hispano-musulmanas: manual de lectura y clasificación* (Toledo: Diputación Provincial de Toledo, 1992), p. 499.

<sup>177</sup> Medina Gómez, *Monedas Hispano-Musulmanas*, pp. 499–500. Significantly, this Hafsīd ruler did not proclaim himself caliph but designated himself the "supreme and pre-eminent commander" (*al-amīr al-ajall*), a phrase which appears on Hafsīd-style dinars minted in Nasrid Granada during the reign of Muḥammad I; significantly, this title was an Almohad-era designation for the heir-apparent of the caliph. The first Hafsīd ruler to adopt the caliphal title was his son Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Mustanṣir bi-llāh, who was even briefly recognized as caliph in Mecca in 657/1258 (al-Qalqashandī, *Ma'āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma'ālim al-Khilāfa*, 2: 253; Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī, *al-Fārisiyya fī Mabādi' al-Dawla al-Ḥafṣiyya*, p. 120, 123).

<sup>178</sup> Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī, *al-Fārisiyya fī Mabādi' al-Dawla al-Ḥafṣiyya*, p. 109. See, also, Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 6: 311–313.

<sup>179</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 6: 313–314.

<sup>180</sup> For a discussion of Almohad coinage, its development and its role in political legitimation, see A. Prieto Vives, "La reforma numismática de los almohades," in *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes* (Madrid: Imprenta Ibérica, 1915), pp. 13–144; Salvador Fontenla Ballesta, "Numismática y propaganda Almohade," *al-Qantara* 18 (1997), pp. 447–462; Miguel Vega Martín, Salvador Peña Martín and Manuel C. Feria García, *El mensaje de las monedas almohades: Numismática, traducción y pensamiento islámico* (Cuenca: Ediciones de la Universidad de la Universidad de

first two decades of the reign of Muḥammad I that replace the third part of the Almohad declaration with the Nasrid dynastic slogan (Figure 5), a further testimony to the immense political-theological significance of this phrase since the inception of the Nasrid kingdom. Significantly, these silver coins are also inscribed with the generic phrase “the Abbasid caliph” (*al-khalīfa al-‘Abbāsī*), which is placed beneath “the Commander of the Muslims Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Naṣr.”<sup>181</sup> The inclusion of this phrase is in keeping with standard Andalusī practice since the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century, in which it was common to invoke the theoretical authority of the caliph on coinage, usually in the form of “The Imām ‘Abd Allāh,” as part of the legitimization of the dynasty’s authority in a particular locale; following the rise of the Almoravids, coins were minted that recognized this generic caliph as “al-‘Abbāsī.”<sup>182</sup> The particular manner in which these coins invoke the Abbasids, however, is an illustration of the influence of the coinage reform of the Banū Hūd, whose acknowledgement of the supreme authority of the Abbasids was part of a broader anti-Almohad basis of legitimacy promoted by al-Mutawwakil b. Hūd.<sup>183</sup> Unlike either Ibn Mardanīsh during the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century<sup>184</sup> or the contemporary Hudids, however, none of the coins minted in the name of Muḥammad I acknowledged any specific Abbasid

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Castilla-La Mancha, 2002); and Salvador Peña Martín and Miguel Vega Martín, “Con la guía del Corán: Crisis y evolución del discurso numismático almohade,” *al-Qantara* 27 (2006), pp. 477–527.

<sup>181</sup> Casto María del Rivero y Sáinz de Varanda, *La Moneda Árabe-Española* (Madrid: Imprenta de Estanislao Maestre, 1933), p. 184; Medina Gómez, *Monedas Hispano-Musulmanas*, p. 52; Francisco Codera y Zaidin, *Tratado de numismática árabe-española* (Madrid, M. Murillo, 1879), p. 236.

<sup>182</sup> The origins of this practice can be traced back to the coinage of the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>-century Taifa kingdoms, catalogued and studied by George C. Miles, *Coins of the Spanish Mulūk al-Ṭawā’if* (New York: The American Numismatic Society, 1954), and Antonio Prieto y Vives, *Los reyes de taifas: Estudio histórico-numismático de los musulmanes españoles en el siglo V de la Hégira (XI de J.C.)* (Madrid: Imprenta de E. Maestre, 1926). For a comprehensive study of this phenomenon, see Wasserstein, *The Caliphate in the West*, pp. 98–119; and François Clément, *Pouvoir et Légitimité en Espagne Musulmane à L’Époque des Taifas (Ve/Xie siècle): L’Imam Fictif* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1997).

<sup>183</sup> See, for example, the coins of Ibn Hūd minted in Seville and Cordoba which replace the Almohad declaration “the Madi is the Leader of the Muslim Community” (*al-madī imām al-umma*) with “the Abbasid [caliph] is the Leader of the Muslim Community” (*al-‘abbāsī imām al-umma*):

[http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/almohads\\_taifas.htm](http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/almohads_taifas.htm) ..

<sup>184</sup> Rivero y Sáinz de Varanda, *La Moneda Árabe-Española*, pp. 168–169. For an important study of the coinage of Ibn Mardanīsh, see Abigail Krasner Balbale “Political and Religious Authority in the Coinage of Ibn Mardanīsh,” in *Mediterráneos*, pp. 303–318.

caliph, only utilizing the most generic reference to the Abbasid caliphate (*al-khalīfa al-‘Abbāsī*). The particular forms of these Nasrid coins, their non-specific invocation of the legitimacy of the Abbasids of Baghdad thus provide both an illustration of the revival of long-established practices of political legitimation, as well as continuities in minting practices in the region. The short-lived Hudid kingdom in Murcia continued to strike their own pro-Abbasid coins concurrently with the Nasrids, with two surviving examples (minted in Murcia) from 649/1251 and 651/1253 being inscribed with the phrase “the Abbasid Caliph and Imām, the Commander of the Faithful” (*al-khalīfa al-imām al-‘abbāsī amīr al-mu‘minīn*).<sup>185</sup>

**Figure 4.** Gold dinar of Muḥammad I struck in Murcia (Source:

[http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/granada/IMG\\_8103%20-%20ok1.JPG](http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/granada/IMG_8103%20-%20ok1.JPG))



<sup>185</sup> [http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/almohads\\_taifas.htm](http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/almohads_taifas.htm) . For a discussion of the coins of the Banū Hūd, see Codera y Zaidin, *Numismática Árabe-Española*, pp. 225–229.



Figure 5.1. Silver dirham of Muḥammad I struck in Granada (Source:  
[http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/granada/IMG\\_0098.JPG](http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/granada/IMG_0098.JPG))



Figure 5.2. Silver dirham of Muḥammad I struck in Jaén (Source:  
[http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/granada/IMG\\_0718.JPG](http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/granada/IMG_0718.JPG))



Figure 5.3. Silver dirham of Muḥammad I struck in Málaga (Source: [http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/granada/IMG\\_0720.JPG](http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/granada/IMG_0720.JPG))



In the absence of substantial documentary or literary sources that would provide insight into Nasrid dynastic ideology during the early 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, the coinage provides some evidence of the various strategies of legitimation within the nascent Kingdom of Granada.<sup>186</sup> While many of these coins are illustrative of continuity with earlier Almohad or Hudid minting practices<sup>187</sup>—since coinage is conservative by nature—they also demonstrate that Muḥammad I was engaged in established Andalusí practices of seeking political legitimacy, namely by invoking the authority of a higher, theoretical authority (whether the Almohads or the Abbasids), while exercising *de facto* authority as sovereign, even adopting the title “Commander of the

<sup>186</sup> For a discussion of Nasrid coinage, see Antonio Delgado y Hernández, *Estudios de numismática Árábigo-Hispana* (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2001), pp. 341–358; Juan José Rodríguez Lorente, *Numismática nasrí* (Madrid: C. Castan, 1983); Medina Gómez, *Monedas Hispano-Musulmanas*, pp. 487–529; Codera y Zaidin, *Numismática Árábigo-Española*, pp. 230–240.

<sup>187</sup> For a comprehensive and detailed discussion of minting practices, inscriptions and legends on coins in the Almohad, Marinid, Hudid and Hafsīd context in order to place this discussion of early Nasrid coinage within broader perspective, see Harry W. Hazard, *The Numismatic History of Late Medieval North Africa* (New York: The American Numismatic Society, 1952), pp. 143–227, 263–285.

Muslims” and the throne name al-Ghālib bi-llāh (“the Conqueror by the grace of God”). By the end of the reign of Muḥammad I both the Almohads in Marrakech and the Abbasids in Baghdad had been eliminated, with only the Hafsids<sup>188</sup> and the Abbasids of Cairo remaining as caliphal claimants. Rather than acknowledge either, however, it appears that the Nasrids had established their own authority securely enough to refrain from including the name of any foreign sovereign upon their coins. According to Ibn Khaldūn, following the death of the Hafsid sultan Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā in 647/1249, the Nasrids “extricated themselves from the recognition of any higher political authority and proclaimed their independence” (*fa-aṭlaqa Ibn al-Aḥmar nafsuḥu min ‘iqāl al-ṭā’a wa istabadda bi-sulṭānihi*).<sup>189</sup> This is quite evident from the surviving coins from the reign of Muḥammad II, which lack any acknowledgement of a higher temporal authority, with earlier legends acknowledging the Abbasids or Hafsids being replaced instead with invocations upon the Prophet Muḥammad.<sup>190</sup> While theoretically vassals of the Castilian kings, this arrangement was never manifested on any Nasrid coinage, but considering that these were the same coins that were sent as tribute to Fernando III and Alfonso X, one wonders what these sovereigns and their treasurers (many of whom would certainly have known Arabic) thought about the various and ever-changing declarations that appeared upon them.

The unique status of the Nasrids as both vassals of Castile and a sovereign kingdom in their own right attracted the attention of their contemporaries in the Islamic world, leading to creative myths spreading about the origins of the Kingdom of Granada, with that provided by the Mamluk statesman and historian Baybars al-Manṣūrī being particularly notable:

“Ibn al-Aḥmar, whose name was Muḥammad b. Naṣr, was originally from the town of Jaén in al-Andalus and was a descendant of the Anṣār (*wa hūwa yantamī ilā al-Anṣār*). As to the story of his rise as a political force in al-Andalus, it is as

<sup>188</sup> al-Qalqashandī, *Ma’āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma’ālim al-Khilāfa*, 1:28

<sup>189</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 6: 314.

<sup>190</sup> Medina Gómez, *Monedas Hispano-Musulmanas*, p. 501.



follows: he was initially in the service of Manuel, the paternal uncle<sup>191</sup> of [King] Alfonso [X, r. 1252–1282]. When the kingdom of the Almohads—the descendants of ‘Abd al-Mu’min—was weakened and debilitated by the Marinid conquest of their territories [in Morocco], the people of al-Andalus rebelled against the Almohads in their lands and annihilated them all. Among the rebels in al-Andalus was an individual named Sayf al-Dawla b. Hūd, who took the title of caliph (*wa laqqaba nafsuhu al-khalīfa*) and attacked the territory of the Castilian king [Fernando III], which prompted the latter to send to him this Muḥammad b. Naṣr b. al-Aḥmar, an individual who embodies the old maxim that ‘everything can be injured and harmed by its own kind/genus, just as steel can be dented by a stronger metal.’ Ibn al-Aḥmar fought against Ibn Hūd and prevented his aggression and raids against the Castilian king, conquering many lands on the latter’s behalf while his own power grew immensely. When [Muḥammad I] eventually conquered Granada, consolidating and securing his position within it, he broke his allegiance to the Castilian king (*khala ‘ tā ‘at Alfunsh*) and established his own sovereign power over the lands under his authority (*wa istabadda bi-mā fī yadihi*), ruling for a long period of time. He died in 670 A [1271–1272 AD].<sup>192</sup>

This narrative, written by an individual who lived from the mid-7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century to the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, provides a particularly colorful perspective on the emergence of the Nasrids. While the rise of Muḥammad I is situated within the broader context of the devolution of Almohad power in the early 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century and a rival to Ibn Hūd is typical enough, the notion that he had been a vassal of Castile and a retainer of a Christian prince even before his emergence as a political or military force is quite unique. Considering that the network of informants that Baybars al-Manṣūrī drew upon for the history and affairs of the Islamic West were based in the Hafsīd or Marinīd kingdoms, this story reflects a distillation of the various narratives about the rise of the Nasrids that were in circulation among various circles in North Africa. It was rooted in the notion that the Nasrids were the ultimate opportunists for whom

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<sup>191</sup> It is unclear which Castilian prince is being referred to here. It is quite possible that Baybars had in mind Manuel the son of Fernando III and Lord of Villena (whose descendants remained politically important in Castile well into the late 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century and included the warrior-scholar Don Juan Manuel). It is also plausible that it was a conflation between the politically-significant figure of Alfonso of León (d. 1272), Lord of Molina and the paternal uncle of Alfonso X, and the name Manuel (the son of Fernando III).

<sup>192</sup> Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdat al-Fikra fī Tārīkh al-Hijra*, p. 125.

political expediency (*Siyāsa*) superseded any ties of religion, loyalty or honor. This was precisely the narrative that many Nasrid chancellors and court secretaries sought to counteract by representing their own sovereigns in a completely different light.

Following the reign of Muḥammad I, the Nasrids would never again formally acknowledge the suzerainty of another Muslim power, and beginning in the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century they began to utilize even more grandiose titles for themselves, including *khalīfa* and *amīr al-mu'minīn*. Did the usage of these titles suggest that the Nasrids had grand illusions of themselves as universal rulers of the Islamic world? Or should they be interpreted differently? As a partial answer to these questions, I would suggest that these terms were repurposed from their traditional meaning as “caliph” in the classical sense and refashioned as a synonym of divinely-mandated kingship within Nasrid propaganda.<sup>193</sup> While they are evident in court poetry, monumental inscriptions and literary dedications, it is significant that these titles were completely absent from all foreign correspondence, coinage, or documents intended for a non-Nasrid audience. This is a major contrast with the Marinids who, during the reign of Abū 'Inān (r. 748/1348–759/1358), regularly employed the title “Commander of the Faithful” (*amīr al-mu'minīn*) on coinage, official documents, epigraphy and in foreign correspondence.<sup>194</sup> In his

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<sup>193</sup> For early and classical Islamic discourses about caliphal authority, and particularly the title “God’s caliph” (*khalīfat Allāh*), see Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds, *God’s Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

<sup>194</sup> For Abū 'Inān’s usage of the title “Commander of the Faithful” in official correspondence, see the letters sent from this ruler to Pedro IV from 750/1349 to 759/1358 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 101–107). The only evidence of the title “Commander of the Faithful” being utilized in diplomatic correspondence earlier than the reign of Abū 'Inān derives from the Aragonese chancery, where two Latin missives, dated May 1293, to Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 19–20), two Romance-language letters sent to Abū al-Rabī' Sulaymān, dated May and March 1309 (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, pp. 413–416, 419–423), and one Romance-language letter to Abū Sa'īd 'Uthmān dated May 1323 (Masià i de Ros, *Jaume II: Aragó, Granada i Marroc*, p. 565) employ the title “Miramomolin” (i.e. *amīr al-mu'minīn*) for the Marinid ruler. Significantly, all other letters to the Marinids—including to these same sovereigns—from the Crown of Aragón utilize the title “Commander of the Muslims” (*amir almuçlemin*), suggesting that these usages were the consequence of scribal errors in which the titulature previously utilized for the kings of Morocco (the Almohads) was mistakenly applied to the Marinids.

historical chronicle of North Africa, the Nasrid secretary Ibn Simāk states that “Abū ‘Inān Fāris adopted the title “The Commander of the Faithful, the One Dependent on God” (*al-mutawakkil ‘alā Allāh amīr al-mu’minīn*).<sup>195</sup> An illustrative example of the role of the Marinid utilization of the caliphal title in diplomacy as well as the role of titles in establishing a hierarchical relationship between the various kingdoms of the Islamic West is the letter from Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz to Muḥammad V (dated Shawwāl 768/May 1367) granting the latter authority to negotiate a peace treaty with Pedro IV of Aragón on his behalf.<sup>196</sup> The disparity between the titulature of the Marinid sovereign (11 lines), referred to as “Commander of the Muslims” (*amīr al-muslimīn*) and “the pre-eminent holy warrior” (*al-mujāhid fī sabīl rabb al-‘ālamīn*) as well as the “pre-eminent Imam, Sultan, Caliph and King” (*al-ṣulṭān al-khalīfa al-imām al-malik*), and that of his Nasrid counterpart (5 lines), referred to primarily as the “eminent sovereign” (*al-ṣulṭān al-ajall*) and holy warrior (*al-mujāhid*), indicates how the caliphal title was deployed by the Marinids to assert their supremacy over the Nasrids (and other kingdoms).<sup>197</sup> The singular importance of titles in diplomatic protocol is further indicated by the chancery manual of the Mamluk chancellor Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, which acknowledges that the Hafside “referred to themselves as caliph, adopting proper caliphal titles were recognized as the Commander of the Faithful in his country (*lā yadda ‘ī ilā al-khilāfa wa yatalaqqab bi-alqāb al-khulafā’ wa yukhāṭab hbi-amīr al-mu’minīn fī bilādihi*),” yet nonetheless instructs Mamluk scribes and secretaries to refer to the ruler of Tunis as the “Qurayshite Imam, the Commander of the Muslims and Lord of the Almohads,” but never directly as caliph or Commander of the Faithful, titles reserved for the

<sup>195</sup> Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī, *Kitāb al-Ḥullal al-Mawshiyya*, pp. 274–275.

<sup>196</sup> ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 76.

<sup>197</sup> This status of the Marinids as the pre-eminent dynasty of the Islamic West is also reflected within the chancery manual of Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, which utilizes various grandiose titles to refer to the Marinid ruler Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī (Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, *al-Ta’rīf bi-l Muṣṭalah al-Sharīf*, pp. 39–40).

Abbasid caliph of Cairo.<sup>198</sup> The absence of the caliphal title in Nasrid correspondence with other kingdoms reflects the discretion and anxieties of the Nasrid emirs and their chancellors, who were cautious about propagating such grandiose claims to authority beyond the confines of their kingdom, probably in order to avoid antagonizing the Marinids or Hafsids, upon whom they were dependent for military and political support.

Within the context of diplomacy, the Nasrid sovereign continued to be referred to with the official titles *amir al-muslimīn* (Commander of the Muslims), *nāṣir al-dīn* (the champion/supporter of the faith) or *al-mujāhid fī sabīl Allāh* (The Holy Warrior), titles which, as I have argued above, were intended to invoke the militant credentials of the dynasty and their pivotal role as defenders of Islam. The secretarial manual of the Mamluk chancellor Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī makes this quite clear, when he instructs secretaries writing to the Nasrid court to refer to Yūsuf I as “the eminent, just, divinely-supported, victorious guardian of the frontier, defender of the faith, and holy warrior from the noble lineage of the Anṣār” (*al-ḥaḍra al-ʿaliyya al-saniyya al-sariyya al-ʿāliya al-ʿādiliyya al-mujāhidiyya al-muʿayyadiyya al-murābiṭiyya al-muthāghiriyya al-muẓaffariyya al-manṣūriyya baqīyyat shajarat al-fakhār wa khāliṣat salaf al-anṣār al-mujāhid ʿan al-dīn wa al-dhābb ʿan ḥawzat al-muslimīn nāṣir al-ghuzāt wa al-mujāhidīn*).<sup>199</sup> He also adds that the Nasrid sovereign should be referred to as “the essence of the glorious caliphate (*khulāṣat al-khilāfa al-muʿazzama*), the favorite of the blessed Imamate (*athīr al-imāma al-mubāraka*), the supporter of the Commander of the Faithful (*ẓaīr amīr al-muʿminīn*),” impressive titles to be sure but certainly not a recognition of Yūsuf I as God’s true

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<sup>198</sup> Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *al-Taʿrīf bi-l Muṣṭalaḥ al-Sharīf*, pp. 41–42.

<sup>199</sup> Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *al-Taʿrīf bi-l Muṣṭalaḥ al-Sharīf*, p. 43

representative (*khalīfa*) on earth, a distinction which Mamluk scholar-officials like Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī reserved for the Abbasid caliph in Cairo.<sup>200</sup>

The connection between Anṣārī descent and the caliphal title is most evident within the various dedications, poetry and literary texts produced by scholar-officials. The same texts that invoke the Anṣārī descent of the Nasrids usually insist on bestowing the caliphal title upon the Nasrid sovereigns, especially during the reigns of Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V. During the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, the caliphal title appears in various forms and contexts in Nasrid Granada, but the most common formulas are “*amīr al-muʿminīn*” (the Commander of the Faithful), “*khalīfat rabb al-ʿālamīn*” (Caliph of the Lord of the Universe), “*khalīfat allāh*” (God’s Caliph) and “*al-khalīfa al-Imām*” (the Imam-Caliph). In a poem recited for Yūsuf I on Shawwāl 1 741/March 1341, Ibn al-Jayyāb refers to the Nasrid ruler as “the caliph Yūsuf” (*al-khalīfa Yūsuf*), while also describing him as “ascending to the caliphate” (*wuliya al-khilāfa*) and “[possessor of] the glorious caliphate” (*izzu khilāfa*).<sup>201</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb praises the “magnificent justice of the caliph Yūsuf,” a poem that is approvingly cited for both its form and meaning by al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, the chief judge of Granada.<sup>202</sup> The Nasrid court secretary and poet Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī refers to Muḥammad V as “God’s caliph” (*khalīfat rabb al-ʿālamīn*),<sup>203</sup> and in a later work, written around 794/1392, refers to this sovereign’s son and successor Yūsuf II as “the possessor of the pre-eminent caliphate” (*dhū-l khilāfa al-ʿaliyya*).<sup>204</sup> In his preface to his medical work titled “On the Preservation of Health throughout the Seasons of the Year” (*Kitāb al-Wuṣūl fī Ḥifẓ al-*

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<sup>200</sup> Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *al-Taʾrīf bi-l Muṣṭalaḥ al-Sharīf*, p. 43

<sup>201</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Diwān*, pp. 108, 115, 117, 570. In a poem composed by Yūsuf III and later inscribed upon one of his palaces, he also refers to himself as “the caliph Yūsuf” (*al-khalīfa Yūsuf*) (Yūsuf III, *Diwān Malik Gharnāṭa Yūsuf al-Thālith*, p. 114).

<sup>202</sup> al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, *Rafʿ al-Ḥujub al-Mastūra ʿan Maḥāsini al-Maqṣūra*, 2: 669.

<sup>203</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuhfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, f. 3r.

<sup>204</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Fukāhāt al-asmār wa-mudhhabāt al-akhbār wa-al-ashʿār*, p. 62



*Ṣiḥḥa fī al-Fuṣūl*), completed on Dhū-l Ḥijja 25 769/August 11 1368, Ibn al-Khaṭīb praises Muḥammad V as “God’s caliph, descended from the eminent line of warrior-kings and rightly-guided caliphs” (*khalīfat rabb al-‘alamīn wa sulālat al-a‘imma al-mujāhidīn wa al-khulafā’ al-muhtadīn*).<sup>205</sup> Within his later recension of the “Comprehensive History,” redacted in 769/1368, Ibn al-Khaṭīb refers to Muḥammad V as “God’s caliph and the pillar of Islam” (*khalīfat allāh wa ‘imād al-islām*).<sup>206</sup> In a panegyric recited for Muḥammad V, the Granadan secretary ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq b. ‘Aṭīyya al-Muḥāribī describes the ruler as “God’s caliph (*khalīfat Allāh*) who occupies the throne of kingship in the Alhambra.”<sup>207</sup> For his part, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s eldest son, ‘Abd Allāh, who served as a secretary in the service of Muḥammad V describes the latter as “the Commander of the Faithful Muḥammad” (*amīr al-mu‘minīn Muḥammad*).<sup>208</sup> A marginal note, dated Rajab 829/May 1426, by the Nasrid chief judge and chief minister Abū Yaḥyā b. ‘Āṣim (d. 857/1453) on the manuscript of the “Comprehensive History” deposited in the College of Granada refers to the Nasrid sovereigns as “the Nasrid caliphs” (*al-khulafā’ al-naṣriyyīn*).<sup>209</sup> The usage of the caliphal title continued until the very end of the Nasrid kingdom, with a panegyric written for Muḥammad XII (“Boabdil”) addressing him as “the Commander of the Faithful” (*amīr al-mu‘minīn*).<sup>210</sup>

In addition to these explicit uses of the caliphal title, numerous other titles that hint at this status abound, particularly evident in the utilization of the aforementioned “Nāṣir al-Dīn,” “al-Manṣūr,” and “al-Nāṣir li Dīn illāh,” titles which in addition to being the throne names of

<sup>205</sup> Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, *Kitāb al-Wuṣūl fī Ḥifẓ al-Ṣiḥḥa fī al-Fuṣūl* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1984), ed. María de la Concepción Vázquez de Benito p. 7 (Arabic pagination; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kitāb al-Wuṣūl fī Ḥifẓ al-Ṣiḥḥa fī al-Fuṣūl*, BNRM D 652, f. 7r.

<sup>206</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 13.

<sup>207</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 140.

<sup>208</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, p. 282.

<sup>209</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 9: 326; al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 58.

<sup>210</sup> al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 6: 306.

previous caliphs and rulers, including the Umayyad Caliph ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III, are based upon the Arabic root *n-s-r* discussed above. It is notable and, I contend, highly uncoincidental that it was during the mid-late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century that Marinid and Zayyanid rulers also began to adopt the caliphal title, with almost all the major genres of writing (with the notable exception of jurisprudence and theological texts, which were often silent on this question) produced in this period reflecting this shift in political vocabulary. By the late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and early 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, the adoption of the caliphal title had become so commonplace across the Islamic West that the famous Mamluk court secretary al-Qalqashandī had to inform his readers, rather sardonically, that “in the Maghrib, rather than acknowledging a single caliph who invests kings with their authority, each king claims the title of caliph.”<sup>211</sup> This development within the Nasrid context can be specifically linked to six key individuals during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>: Ibn al-Jayyāb, Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Ibn al-Ḥājj, Ibn Zamrak, Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī and Ibn Simāk al-‘Amilī, all of whom were major figures within the Nasrid chancery. As noted in previous chapters, these men were all members of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s immediate intellectual circle who were closely bound together through friendship, teacher-student ties and networks of patronage, and it is their works, along with those of Ibn Marzūq, Ibn Ridwān and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn in Marinid Fez, and Yaḥyā b. Khaldūn in Zayyanid Tlemcen, in which the articulation and dissemination of this new vocabulary of sovereignty in the Islamic West during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century is most evident.

To date, there has been no serious or systematic attempt to grapple with the broader question of the usage of such titles within the Nasrid (or Marinid) context. But in a brief yet compelling article, Maria Jesús Rubiera Mata’s has sought to provide an overview the Nasrid

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<sup>211</sup> For Mamluk scholar-officials, such as Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī or al-Qalqashandī, the office of the caliphate was not synonymous with kingship, but was the source of legitimate authority which was then delegated to subordinates, with the relationship between kings and caliphs being carefully governed by a particular set of norms and conventions.

utilization of the caliphal title. She has been able to demonstrate that the usage of the title was closely connected to the ascension of the “second Nasrid dynasty” (r. 713/1314–897/1492) and, more particularly, with the developments occurring during the reigns of Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V.<sup>212</sup> This reinforces the notion, which I have attempted to stress in this chapter, that there was an important distinction between the way that the earlier Nasrids (from Muḥammad I to Naṣr) legitimated their political authority and the strategies of legitimation employed by their successors in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, who began to adopt a political vocabulary that sought to convey a different conception of kingship. Rubiera Mata investigates the titulature, epigraphy, poetry, and tombstones from the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century and draws the conclusion that, in adopting the title “*khalīfat al-raḥmān*” (Caliph/Deputy of the Most Merciful [God]), the Nasrids were making a broad political claim about their own legitimacy and sought to complement their renewed confidence with a newly-articulated vocabulary of political power. However, while raising the important question of the shift in political vocabulary, she does not explain the underlying political and ideological transformations responsible for this development. The primary contribution of her article is to suggest that, rather than viewing the employment of these terms as court panegyric or flowery rhetoric, the adoption of the caliphal title needs to be thought of as underpinning a new articulation of Nasrid dynastic ideology (“la doctrina oficial de la dinastía [Nazarí]”).

The usage of the caliphal title was not intended to imply a claim to the traditional, juridical caliphate with its far-reaching universalist aspirations. Rather, it was an assertion of the divinely-mandated legitimacy of the Nasrids, their role as upholders of Islam and defenders of the faith, as well as their absolute political independence. This reading is reinforced by the

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<sup>212</sup> Maria Jesús Rubiera Mata, “El Califato Nazarí,” *al-Qantara* 29 (2008), pp. 293–305.

surviving numismatic evidence. During the reign of Ismā‘īl I, the existing Nasrid (gold) coinage was reformed and began to be inscribed with the Qur’anic verse “Say, O God! Lord of power, Our god: Possessor of all sovereignty. You grant sovereignty to whomever You choose, You remove sovereignty from whomever You choose. You grant dignity to whomever You choose, and commit to humiliation whomever You choose. In Your hand are all provisions. You are Omnipotent.” (Q. 3:26). The inclusion of this particular verse on the coinage could be understood in light of the circumstances surrounding the accession to the throne of Ismā‘īl, who had overthrown Naṣr and inaugurated the rule of a collateral line of Nasrids (descended from Muḥammad I through the female line). However, since it was a mainstay of Nasrid gold coins for nearly 50 years (until the reforms of Muḥammad V who replaced the verse with Q. 3: 200),<sup>213</sup> this should be understood as a public and powerful proclamation by the Nasrids that legitimate authority rested with the king, since he held that position by the grace of God, “who granted sovereignty to whomever He chose.”<sup>214</sup> More broadly, it appears to be a rejection of traditional Islamic hierarchies of kingly or sultanic authority, in which a dynasty’s political legitimacy was understood in terms of delegation from a higher juridical authority (such as the Abbasid caliphate). The invocation of Q. 3:26, which affirms that sovereignty is directly granted by God, the Nasrids were proclaiming themselves to be God’s appointed rulers within their own realm. It is within this context that their emphasis on the caliphal title, as it appears in inscriptions, court documents, poetry, and literary works in 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Granada, should be understood. The

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<sup>213</sup> “O you who believe! Persevere in patience and constancy; vie in such perseverance; strengthen each other; and fear God; that ye may prosper” (Q. 3:100). The term *rābiṭū* utilized in this verse also carries strong militant overtones within this context and was likely understood within the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid context as a divine command to maintain vigilance over the frontiers of Islam and the prosecution of holy war (*jihād*), especially since this reform of the coinage occurred during the period of Muḥammad V’s most important conquests and raids in Andalucía.

<sup>214</sup> Medina Gómez, *Monedas Hispano-Musulmanas*, pp. 502–506.

inclusion of the formula “king by the grace of God” (*por la gracia de Dios*) in Romance-language chancery correspondence intended for the Christian kingdoms of Castile and Aragón also sought to convey this message.<sup>215</sup>

Perhaps the earliest and most important document that sheds further light on the evolution of ideas about royal sovereignty in Nasrid Granada is the oath of allegiance to Isma’īl I. This document, which was penned by the Nasrid chancellor Ibn al-Jayyāb in 714/1314, stated:

It is evident based on definitive proofs (*al-dalīl al-qāṭi* ‘) and clear demonstration (*al-burhān al-sāṭi* ‘) that establishing the Imamate is a condition from among the conditions of faith (*al-Imāma sharṭ min shurūṭ al-īmān*) and an obligation ordained by the eminent people (*farḍ maḥtūm min furūḍ al-a’yān*). It has been decreed by the injunctions of the Prophet Muḥammad that “the individual who dies without having pledged allegiance to an Imam dies as if he was an unbeliever from the Age of Ignorance.”<sup>216</sup> The Imamate has specific preconditions and requisites that are rarely combined within a single person and has certain privileges and distinctions that only those deserving it can rightly possess. It can be contracted in one of two ways: by the consensus of the Muslims (*ijmā’ al al-Islām*) or through appointment by a sovereign caliph (*istikhlāf al-khalīfa al-imām*). While both methods are legitimate and a source of guidance, the first is preferable, more distinguished and possesses a stronger foundation since this is the manner in which the Prophet (may the peace and blessings of God be upon him) transmitted his authority to the community when he learned that it was divinely guided and protected. Indeed, he did not specifically designate anyone to succeed him upon his death, even if this was the apparent meaning of his appointment of Abū Bakr to lead prayers in his absence. It is sufficient for us to be guided by his words and deeds and to follow his example and those of the prophets that preceded him. Even as we, the people of al-Andalus (*al-jazīra al-andalusiyya*) are separated considerably from the birthplace of Islam and are isolated in this distant land, encircled by a disbelieving enemy and an overflowing sea, caught between water and fire, let us continue to follow that clear example, in the footsteps of the righteous predecessors, and to endure and persevere in the service of God.

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<sup>215</sup> See, for example, the letter from Muḥammad III to Jaume II (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 1), a missive from Naṣr to Jaume II dated 710/1310 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 7), two letters from Muḥammad V to Enrique II and the Master of Calatrava dated 1369 (Enrique Toral and Fernández de Peñaranda, “Dos cartas del rey Maomad V de Granada,” *Boletín del Instituto de Estudios Giennenses* 140 [1989], pp. 53–55), a letter from Muḥammad V to Aznar Pardo (bailiff of Valencia) dated February 1 1381 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 28), an undated letter from Yūsuf III to Fernando I of Aragón (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 32) and correspondence between Nasrid sovereigns and Alfonso V of Aragón during the early 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 33–35).

<sup>216</sup> Prophetic tradition, preserved in Saih Muslim.

[...]

The evidence [for God's mercy upon al-Andalus] is as evident today as it has been in the past, clearer than a flame upon an elevated banner. God saved this Peninsula from the snares of the disbelievers and brought it salvation at the very moment when it appeared to be on the brink of destruction by bringing forth as its leader al-Imām al-Ghālib bi-llāh [Muḥammad I], the elect from the lineage of the Anṣār (*al-muntakhab min sulālat al-Anṣār*), the brave lion and the protector of honor, the one who established sovereignty and kingship by the brilliant sword and sharp spear. Indeed, he fulfilled his duty in defending al-Andalus for the sake of God and true belief and liberated it from the plundering hands of the cross-worshippers while making the true religion manifest and victorious. He fought his enemies to earn the favor of the Most Merciful and God rewarded this service by returning al-Andalus to the heights of its glory, eased its path to victory and annihilated its enemies. May God continue to bestow His mercy and favor upon him and make Paradise his eternal home.

Kingship has triumphantly remained in the hands of his descendants while the enemies have been repeatedly vanquished. The land of al-Andalus was illuminated and encompassed with brilliance until the day that kingship fell into the hands of one who failed to govern, shattering its glory, debasing the faith by abandoning holy war, squandering its wealth and treasury by filling the coffers of the enemies to the brim, granting the Christians absolute control of the frontier, unjustly and arbitrarily ruling over the Muslims and Islam, in the full knowledge that, if God did not prevent it, such contemptible and shameful conduct would only lead to the complete destruction of the true faith and its adherents. They remained in a lamentable and chaotic state between agreement and disagreement, vacillating back and forth and thrashing violently into one another. God then eliminated and severed this terrible diseased limb, leaving the misguided one in a state of failure and disappointment. The glory of Islam was then revived and made victorious by one possessing eminence, purity of lineage, virtue, fortitude, forbearance and a strong commitment to justice. He was the one who was the most qualified and entitled to be king, the most pre-eminent descendant of that noble and glorious Imām, the Commander of the Muslims and the Champion of the Faith, the most beloved of the Muslims, the Just Sovereign and Eminent King [Abū al-Walīd Ismā'īl].<sup>217</sup>

This text's emphasis on the obligatory nature of kingship (the Imamate), based on both scripture and reason, presents important evidence of the theoretical discussions about Nasrid sovereignty taking place within Granada during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. By proclaiming that consensus

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<sup>217</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, pp. 230–232.

conferred more legitimacy upon a ruler than his designation or approval by an establish caliph, Ibn al-Jayyāb was making an argument about the basis of Nasrid legitimacy. This narrative of kingship also brings together the disparate threads of Anṣārī descent, militancy, justice and vicegerency to represent the rise of Muḥammad I and Ismāʿīl as providential, an embodiment of divine mercy (*rahma*) in which the sovereign was essentially God’s instrument in the restoration and revival of Islam in the Iberian Peninsula. It is these broader notions that form the essential context for Ibn al-Jayyāb’s declaration that Ismāʿīl I was the “vicegerent/representative of the Most Merciful [God]” (*khalīfat al-rahmān*), a phrase inscribed on the Generalife Palace, providing the earliest epigraphic evidence from Nasrid Granada of the employment of the title *khalīfa*. Around 706/1306, Ibn al-Jayyāb recited a poem for Ibn al-Ḥakīm describing how “the caliphate had given [him] the reins of power and authority” (*inna al-khilāfa qad alqat maqālida ilayka*), providing an even earlier attestation for the usage of the term to refer to the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>218</sup> Moreover, two separate recensions of al-Bunnāhī’s literary treatise (*maqāma*) on the palm tree of the Alhambra—one preserved in a Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s “Comprehensive History” and another, later version in al-Bunnāhī’s *al-Iklīl*—illustrates the interplay between notions of caliphal authority, kingship and the Imamate. In the earlier recension, the Nasrids are referred to as the “pre-eminent Imamate” (*al-imāma al-ʿuẓma*), while the later version refers to the “lofty and pre-eminent Caliphate” (*al-khilāfa al-sāmiyya al-ʿuẓma*). This indicates the degree of interchangeability between the terms, while also reflecting an increased tendency during the later reign of Muḥammad V to emphasize the term caliph.

The novelty of this representation of the Nasrids as legitimate and divinely-supported Imāms of the Muslim community is especially apparent when contrasted with political treatises

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<sup>218</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, p. 110.

composed in the Mamluk lands, as in al-Qalqashandī's or al-Nuwayrī's exposition of the theory of the Imamate and caliphate, whose writings on the topic were largely a reaffirmation of classical perspectives on the topic such as that of al-Māwardī.<sup>219</sup> This is not to say that the writings of Nasrid court secretaries were characterized by a break with classical tropes or notions. Quite the contrary. The historiographical, poetic and literary (as well as epigraphic) production of Nasrid court secretaries, particularly Ibn al-Khaṭīb, sought to reinforce their emphasis on strong Nasrid kingship by engaging with the traditional Islamic discourses of sovereignty, which often stressed that the legitimate representative of God (*khalīfa*) would maintain ten obligations: 1) Preserving and maintaining the faith and its principles; 2) defending the faith and protecting the lives/property of believers; 3) fortifying and guarding the frontiers against the incursions and raids of the enemy; 4) the prosecution of holy war; 5) the maintenance of the legal ordinances of the faith and upholding justice; 6) implementing the prescribed punishments mandated by the religious law; 7) appointing upright and qualified individuals to office; 8) collecting the canonical taxes, while refraining from imposing any non-canonical fines or taxes; 9) the just and equitable disbursement of salaries and wealth from the treasury; and 10) actively and personally overseeing matters, without overly depending upon subordinates or delegates.<sup>220</sup> As both the above oath of allegiance, as well as the vast historiographical corpus of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, illustrates, these were precisely the principles that Nasrid court secretaries and chancellors sought to ascribe to the Nasrid sovereigns whom they served.

Ideas about kingship were transmitted textually, orally as well as visually through inscriptions and coinage. As public declarations that were prominently displayed, monumental inscriptions, in particular, were recognized as a potent medium for the representation of ideas or

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<sup>219</sup> al-Qalqashandī, *Ma'āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma'ālim al-Khilāfa*, 1: 28–80; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, 6: 3–7.

<sup>220</sup> al-Qalqashandī, *Ma'āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma'ālim al-Khilāfa*, 1: 57–62 (citing al-Māwardī).



promoting dynastic ideology. The importance of this form of propaganda during the medieval era is underscored by the fact that there are numerous examples in the history of the Islamic West of dynasties destroying the monumental inscriptions of their opponents for ideological reasons, with the Almohad erasure of Almoravid monuments and epigraphy in North Africa being the best example.<sup>221</sup> During the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, Ibn al-Aḥmar describes how the Marinid sovereign Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (r. 767/1366–774/1372) ordered the emendation of poetic inscriptions on the Zayyanid royal palace in Tlemcen which had been composed by the ruler Abū Ḥammū, an indication of the role of monumental epigraphy in the context of dynastic rivalry. According to Ibn al-Aḥmar, this Marinid sultan ordered the verses “this [monumental palace] was constructed by our ancestor, the eminent king, and we are among its inheritors” (*banāhā jiddunā al-malik al-mu‘allī wa kunā naḥnu ba‘ḍ al-wārithīnā*) to be replaced with “this was constructed by our ancestor, the rebellious and sinful tribal leader, and we are the very worst of inheritors” (*banāhā jiddunā shaykh al-ma‘āṣī wa kunā naḥnu sharr al-wārithīna*).<sup>222</sup> For the reign of Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V, the Comares Palace, adorned throughout with the poetry of Ibn al-Jayyāb, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Zamrak, is among the most emblematic constructions that illuminate the political ascendancy of the secretarial class and its relationship with royal power. The inscriptions emphasized the themes of military conquest, defense of the faith, Anṣārī genealogy and the caliphal authority of Muḥammad V. As Antonio Fernández-Puertas has argued, the Comares Palace functioned as the sovereign’s residence, the royal council chambers (*mashwar*) and the site of the royal chancery, with the façade (or *bāb*), finally completed in Rabi I 772/October

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<sup>221</sup> Martínez Núñez, “Ideología y epigrafía almohades,” in *Los Almohades: problemas y perspectivas*, 1: 6.

<sup>222</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Rawḍat al-Nisrīn*, p. 68.

1370, serving as the division between the two areas.<sup>223</sup> This structure and its history provides an illustration of the manner in which architecture embodied broader ideas of royal authority and sovereign power articulated by scholar-officials.

Funerary inscriptions and epitaphs constitute a particularly rich documentary source for Nasrid conceptions of sovereignty and modes of political legitimation during this period. These inscriptions were often prosimetric and composed by the head of the Nasrid chancery, thereby reflecting the most current language of kingship that was in circulation within the Alhambra at that moment. As Werner Diem has argued, Nasrid funerary inscriptions, in both their form and content, represent the exception to the broader rule of the genre in pre-modern Islamic history, in which epitaphs usually incorporated little more than basic information about the deceased such as their names and date of death.<sup>224</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, himself responsible for composing the epitaph of Yūsuf I, displayed a particular interest in these inscriptions, painstakingly “preserving” all examples that he came across (including those of the Nasrid kings Muḥammad I, Muḥammad II, Muḥammad III, Naṣr, Ismā‘īl I and Muḥammad IV) within his works, particularly his “Comprehensive History of Granada.” Although some of these funerary inscriptions have survived, they nonetheless pose serious methodological problems. Specifically, it remains unclear whether the epitaphs of earlier Nasrid sovereigns (especially Muḥammad I and Muḥammad II) date from the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century or were products of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Based upon the specific language utilized within them, they appear to date from the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century

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<sup>223</sup> Fernández-Puertas, *La fachada del Palacio de Comares*, pp. 3–8, 16–20, 27–30. This particular structure bears remarkable similarities to a similar façade in the Royal Palace of Sevilla, constructed for Pedro I during the same period.

<sup>224</sup> Werner Diem, “The Role of Poetry in Arabic Funerary Inscriptions,” in *Poetry and History: The Value of Poetry in Reconstructing Arab History*, p. 126. For a detailed study of Arabic epitaphs during the pre-modern era, see Werner Diem and Marco Schöller, *The Living and the Dead in Islam: Studies in Arabic Epitaphs*, 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004).

and reflect the attempt to impose a highly developed Nasrid dynastic ideology upon an earlier period. This is particularly clear from Ibn al-Khaṭīb's preservation of the epitaph of Muḥammad I, which he claims was inscribed with the title "Commander of the Faithful," a title not adopted by the Nasrid sovereigns until the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>225</sup> In contrast, Ibn al-Jayyāb's epitaph for Ismā'īl I provides a clearer and stronger reflection of discourses of legitimation during the third decade of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century:

"This is the tomb of the martyred sovereign, the conqueror of cities, the champion/supporter [*nāṣir*] of the religion of God's Chosen and Elect [the Prophet Muḥammad], the reviver of the righteous path of his ancestors, the Anṣār, the Just Imām, the eminent and brave, the warrior and worshipper, the one of pure ancestry, the most felicitous of kings in his dynastic fortune, waging war energetically in the service of God, the sword of holy war, the light of the lands, whose sharp sword was unsheathed in defense of true belief, whose heart was molded by the fear of the Most Merciful.." <sup>226</sup>

The emphasis on the defense of the faith and the generic reference to Anṣārī descent, among other things, provide an important indication of the contemporary provenance of this inscription.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> "This is the tomb of the greatest of rulers, the Glory of Islam, the Adornment of Creation, the Pride of Night and Day, the Savior of the Muslim Nation, the Axis of the Faith, the Light of the Divine Law, the Protector of the Prophetic Tradition, the Sword of Truth, the Protector of all beings, the Lion of War, the Destroyer of the Enemies, the one who sets things in order, the frontier warrior, the Destroyer of Armies, the Annihilator of Tyrants, the one who triumphs over disbelievers and rebels, the Commander of the Faithful, the Leader of the Rightly-guided and the Pious, the Defender of the Faith, the most illustrious of kings and sultans, al-Ghalib bi-Ila, the Holy Warrior Abū'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn Naṣr al-Ansārī. May God raise him to greatest heights of salvation and place him alongside the blessed prophets and the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous saints. He was born and had the mercy of God Almighty bestowed on him in 591 A.H. [1195 A.D.] and he died on Friday after the afternoon prayer on Jumādā II 29 671 [January 21 1273]. Praise to Him whose authority and dominion is eternal and who perseveres forever. There is no God but He, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful" (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 74–75).

<sup>226</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 113–114.

<sup>227</sup> The obverse of this epitaph was inscribed with a poem (trans. Marco Schöller):

May your tomb, O best of all rulers, be exclusively distinguished by a greeting (perfumed) like the east win that passed by Dārīn

It is a tomb where there lies a Nasrid Imām of right guidance and high rank in both the worldly and religious spheres

The notion that kingship constituted a form of divinely-mandated vicegerency was not necessarily novel in the Islamic world, since these discourses were rooted in debates about the caliphate dating back to the Umayyad era. For centuries, kingship (*mulk*) was seen as embodying sacral qualities, second only to prophecy [add some references]. The usage of the term *khalīfa* (and terms derived from the root *kh-l-f*) to refer to vicegerency or deputyship ultimately derives from the Qur'an, which utilizes these terms to refer to prophets, kings and humanity as a whole, especially in reference to their obligation to uphold God's will, implement His law, castigate His enemies and defend His people on earth. The Qur'an refers to Adam as God's representative who, despite the outrage of the angels, is endowed with a higher status and particular authority to execute the divine mandate on earth. Moreover, the Qur'an describes the Prophet-King David as God's representative (*khalīfa*) on earth (Q. 38: 27).<sup>228</sup> It was in this general sense of kingship as a form of divinely-endowed authority and deputyship that the Nasrid utilization of the term "caliph" should be understood. It is with this operative understanding of kingship-as-vicegerency that al-Bunnāhī, when narrating the succession to Yūsuf I, states that "on the day of [Yūsuf's] martyrdom, his eldest son succeeded to the caliphate."<sup>229</sup> This is further illustrated by a passage from Ibn Simāk al-ʿĀmilī's *al-Ḥulal al-Mawshīyya*, written around Rabi I 783/June 1381, which states that "God Almighty has preserved Islam through the perpetuation of the life and reign of

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He is Abū al-Walīd. Do you really have an idea of what a king he was, (a king) asking (God) for help, confident in God and trustworthy?

He was a ruler who possessed justice, overwhelming fortitude, generosity, the virtue of fear of God and fortunate traits of character.

How excellent was that which death made pass away, (namely his) nobility and the secret of (his) glory buried in this burial niche

What a tongue (he had), always swift to mention (the name) of God, and what a heart inhabited by love of God, etc." (Schöller, *The Living and the Dead in Islam*, 2: 436–440).

<sup>228</sup> All these verses are cited in 'Alī ibn Razīn, *Ādāb al-Mulūk*, pp. 32–33.

<sup>229</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 239.

our Lord, the Imām and illustrious Caliph [Muḥammad V] (*mawlānā al-Imām al-khalīfa al-a‘ẓam*)” and proclaims that “God Almighty blessed him and granted him favor by electing him as his representative on earth (*ikhtārahu li-l khilāfa fī arḍihi*). Verily, God Almighty preserves this kingdom and its wellbeing through the perpetuation of his rule and ensures the victorious manifestation and survival of Islam through his beneficence.”<sup>230</sup> He also refers to this Nasrid ruler as “our Lord, the Imām and the Caliph of God (*mawlānā al-Imām khalifāt rabb al-‘alāmīn*) al-Ghanī billāh, the Commander of the Muslims, the pre-eminent king and caliph (*kabīr al-mulūk wa qudwat al-khulafā’*), specifically chosen and distinguished by God, the Glory of Islam...”<sup>231</sup> Within the same work, Ibn Simāk asserts that Muḥammad V restored glory to al-Andalus through his military victories and unified the Muslims of Iberia and North Africa under one banner and in one cause.<sup>232</sup> A similar usage of the term is discerned in works authored within the Marinid kingdom throughout the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. In his dedication to his monumental work of history, the North African scholar Ibn Abī Zar‘ refers to Marinid sovereign Abū Sa‘īd ‘Uthmān as

our Lord, the Imam and Caliph (*al-khalīfa al-imām*), the champion of Islam who elevates it, the vanquisher of disbelief, the apex of justice and its distributor, the annihilator of tyranny and inequity, the King of the Age (*malik al-zamān*), the brilliant beacon of Islam and true faith, the Commander of the Muslims Abū Sa‘īd ‘Uthmān, son of our Lord, the Victorious Imam, the pious and austere king (*al-malik al-‘ābid al-zāhid*) who virtuously succeeded our Lord, the Just Imam and the staunch supporter of Truth (*al-imām al-‘ādil wa al-qā’im bi-l Ḥaqq*), the Commander of the Faithful (*amīr al-mu‘minīn*) Abū Yūsuf Ya‘qūb b. ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq... Indeed, God has established the Caliphate as a perpetual inheritance among his descendants until the Day of Judgement. Verily, he continues to revive the glory of the Caliphate, elevating its beacon and causing its light to shine brilliantly...<sup>233</sup>

<sup>230</sup> Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī, *Kitāb al-Ḥullal al-Mawshiyya*, p. 294.

<sup>231</sup> Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī, *Kitāb al-Ḥullal al-Mawshiyya*, pp. 290–291.

<sup>232</sup> Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī, *Kitāb al-Ḥullal al-Mawshiyya*, pp. 291, 293–282.

<sup>233</sup> Ibn Abī Zar‘, *al-Anīs al-Muṭrib bi-Rawḍ al-Qirṭās*, pp. 15–16.

Elsewhere in the same work, he refers to the same sovereign as “the rightly-guided caliph” (*al-khalīfa al-rashīd*).<sup>234</sup> The Syrian historian al-Dhaabī provides additional evidence when he states that “[the Marinid ruler] Abū Sa‘īd ‘Uthmān adopted the title Commander of the Faithful (*al-mulaqab bi-amīr al-mu‘minīn*).<sup>235</sup> These claims were even more explicitly promoted during the reigns of the Marinid rulers Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī and Abū ‘Inān, with Ibn Marzūq playing a particularly important role in articulating them within in his writings (particularly his *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Ḥasan*). Ibn Marzūq, a close associate of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and who had spent a considerable time in Granada during the 750s/1350s, appears to have been influenced by similar articulations of sovereignty taking place at the Nasrid court. In his “Central Pearl of the Precious Necklace” (*Wāsiṭat al-‘Iqd al-Thamīn*), a work (as illustrated in Chapter 2) dedicated to promoting Abū ‘Inān as a “learned king” and an eminent scholar (of hadith) in his own right, Ibn Marzūq praises the Marinid sovereign as “our lord, the Sultan and Imam, the eminent Caliph, the sixth of the five [Rightly-Guided] Caliphs and Imams, the conqueror of towns and countries, the upholder of religious knowledge and institutions, and the Commander of the Faithful” (*mawlānā al-sulṭān al-imām al-khalīfa al-hamām sādīs al-khulafā’ al-khamsa al-a’imma al-a’lām fātīḥ al-amṣār mukhkhilid al-maāthir al-dīniyya wa al-athār amīr al-mu‘minīn*).<sup>236</sup>

A poem from Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī’s reign described him as “the pre-eminent axis of sovereigns and the one who revived the caliphate through [his] knowledge and deeds” (*quṭb al-mulūk wa man aḥyā al-khilāfa fī ‘ilm wa fī ‘amal*).<sup>237</sup> In an official letter to Pedro IV dated Ṣafar 759/January 1358, the Marinid scholar-official Muḥammad b. al-Ḥājj al-Ḥusaynī describes Abū ‘Inān’s kingship as “the blessed Mutawakkilite caliphate (*al-khilāfa al-mawlawiyya al-*

<sup>234</sup> Ibn Abī Zar‘, *al-Anīs al-Muṭrib bi-Rawḍ al-Qirṭās*, p. 522.

<sup>235</sup> al-Dhaabī, *Dhayl Tārīkh al-Islām*, p. 70.

<sup>236</sup> Ibn Marzūq, *Wāsiṭat al-‘Iqd al-Thamīn*, El Escorial MS 1167, ff. 162v–163r.

<sup>237</sup> Al-Jaznā‘ī, *Janā Zarāt al-Ās*, p. 63.

*mutawakkiliyya*) that is God's extended shadow on earth and the lamp of justice that has illuminated the era."<sup>238</sup>

Similarly, the Marinid secretary and Master of the Royal Seal (*ṣāhib al-‘alāma*) Ibn Riḍwān describes Abū Sālim's kingship as "the lofty position of the glorious caliphate, whose light has illuminated the whole world by the power of God, and the Ibrāhīmī Imamate, through whose brilliance justice and nobility have been made manifest and the rightful sovereignty of the kings of Banī ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq has been upheld" (*fa-inna maqām al-khilāfa al-‘aliyya allati basaṭa Alla ‘alā al-basīta anwārihā wa al-Imāma al-Ibrāhīmiyya allati awḍaḥa al-sharaf wa al-‘adl athāruhā wa rafa‘ al-mulk al-ḥaqq fī mulūk Banī ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq manāruhā*), while preceding Marinid rulers are described as "the eminent caliphs who caused kingship to flourish" (*abā‘au al-khulafā’ al-a‘lām alladhīna zaā bihum al-mulk*).<sup>239</sup> Within a poem composed on the occasion of the *mawlid* for the ruler Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in Rabī‘ I 773/September 1371, Abū al-Qāsim b. Riḍwān declared that this sovereign was "the true caliph and the inheritor of kingship" (*wa hūwa al-khalīfa wārith al-mulk*).<sup>240</sup> In his dedication to his monumental encyclopedia of crafts, professions and institutions, the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century scholar-official Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī al-Khuzā‘ī<sup>241</sup> refers to the Marinid ruler Abū Fāris Mūsā (r. 786/1384–788/1386) as "our lord the Commander of the Faithful (*amīr al-mu‘minīn*) al-Mutawwakil ‘ala Allāh Abū Fāris Mūsā, the son of our lord the Commander of the Faithful (*amīr al-mu‘minīn*) al-Mutawwakil ‘ala Allāh Abū ‘Inān Fāris, the descendant of our sovereign lords the rightly-guided caliphs—the embodiment of bravery—and Marinid kings (*ibn mawālīnā al-khulafā’ al-rāshidīn usūd al-‘arīn*

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<sup>238</sup> ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 109.

<sup>239</sup> Ibn Riḍwān, *al-Shuḥub al-Lāmi‘a*, p. 53.

<sup>240</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 234.

<sup>241</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 249–253; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawḍa‘ al-‘Alāma*, pp. 62–64.

*wa mulūk banī marīn*).<sup>242</sup> This trend was also evident in the writings of Ibn al-Aḥmar, who describes Abū ‘Inān as “the Commander of the Faithful Abū ‘Inān Fāris, son of the Commander of the Faithful Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī, son of the Commander of the Faithful Abū Sa‘īd ‘Uthmān, son of the Commander of the Faithful Abū Yūsuf Ya‘qūb,” an illustration of the manner in which the usage of the caliphal title was backprojected across history and ascribed to previous Marinid rulers.<sup>243</sup> The Hafsids, as mentioned previously, had adopted the caliphal title as early as the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century by virtue of their claim to be the legitimate successors of the Almohads, a proclamation which is evident on coinage, official documents (including foreign correspondence)<sup>244</sup> as well as the prefaces of various literary works dedicated to them, as in the example of Ibn Khaldūn’s *Muqaddima*:

[this work] is dedicated to the Caliph, the Commander of the Faithful (*amīr al-mu‘minīn*) al-Mutawakkil ‘ala Rabb al-‘Ālamīn Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad, the son of the blessed emir Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad, the son of the sacred caliph (*al-khalīfa al-muqaddas*) Abū Yaḥyā, the descendant of the rightly-guided Almohad caliphs who have served as Renewers of the Faith (*al-khulafā’ al-rashidīn al-a‘imma al-muwaḥḥidīn aladhīn jaddadū al-dīn*).<sup>245</sup>

Despite the Hafsid and Marinid idiosyncrasies—which periodically imbued the term with universalist connotations—by the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, the term *khalīfa* or *khilāfa* was used as a synonym for kingship across the royal courts elsewhere in the Islamic West during this period.

<sup>242</sup> Al-Khuzā‘ī, *Takhrīj al-Dalālāt al-Sam‘iyya*, p. 23.

<sup>243</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā‘id al-Jumān*, p. 288.

<sup>244</sup> For examples of this, see the peace treaties between the Hafsids and the Crown of Aragón dated Jumādā II 686/July 1287 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 155) and Rabī’ I 701/November 1301 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 116); the correspondence between these two sovereigns (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 117–118, 121–122, and 124); a decree by Abū al-Baqā’ b. Abī Zakariyya Yaḥyā dated Jumādā II 709/December 1309 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 125); the correspondence between Abū Yaḥyā Zakariyya al-Liḥyānī and Jaume II between 711/1311 and 716/1316 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 126–127, 129, 135 and ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 9); a letter from al-Mutawakkil ‘ala Allāh Abū Bakr II and Alfonso IV dated Ṣafar 734/October 1333 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 138); and a missive from this Hafsid ruler to Pedro IV dated Shawwāl 751/December 1350 (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 139).

<sup>245</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *al-Muqaddima*, BL MS Add 9574, f. 5v.



Perhaps the most demonstrative example comes from the political treatise entitled “On Sovereignty and the Politics of Kings” (*Wāsiṭat al-Sulūk fī Siyāsat al-Mulūk*) authored by the Zayyanid ruler Abū Ḥammū Mūsā II, probably with the assistance and insight of his chief minister and councilor Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Khaldūn.<sup>246</sup> This text provides a clear definition of kingship and the usage of the term *khalīfa* in the context of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century Islamic West: “the King is the representative of God on earth (*al-malik khalīfat allāh fī arḍihi*), the one who is entrusted with establishing His will and the individual who has been endowed with sovereign authority to provide justice and enforce his laws”<sup>247</sup> Abū Ḥammū was born in Granada (around 723/1323) and raised in the Nasrid court at the Alhambra, where he came into close proximity with many of the chancellors, scholars and princes elaborating a specific language of sovereignty. Similarly, his chief minister and chancellor Abū Zakariyya b. Khaldūn (the younger brother of the famous historian) was an intimate member of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s intellectual and political network, providing yet another avenue for the diffusion of this new discourse of sovereignty between Granada and North Africa. The strong influence of Nasrid Granada on the Zayyanid kingdom, in particular, during this period is further evidenced from the Royal Palace in Tlemcen, particularly its Hall of the Royal Council (*mashwar*) that was expanded during this period, which was inscribed with *al-yumn wa al-iqbāl*, the same phrase that adorns the Alhambra in Granada. The idea of *khilāfa* as a synonym for kingship is also discernible in the various manuscripts, whether original works or copies, that were transcribed during this period. Various rulers in Islamic history, including the Spanish Umayyads before the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century, are referred to with the title *khalīfa*, highlighting the manner in which it was used interchangeably with the terms “king” or “sovereign ruler.”

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<sup>246</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawḍa’ al-‘Alāma*, p. 65.

<sup>247</sup> Abū Ḥammū Mūsā, *Wāsiṭat al-Sulūk fī Siyāsat al-Mulūk*, BNRMS D645, f. 3r.

There is also evidence of similarly unconventional usages of the title of *khalīfa* for sovereigns within the Mamluk context during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. In the dedication of his chronicle titled “The Royal Gift: A Chronicle of the Turkish Kingdom,” the warrior-scholar Baybars al-Manṣūrī describes the Mamluk sovereign al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn (r. 1293–1294, 699/1299–709/1309, 710/1310–1341) as “God’s caliph that manages the affairs of Islam and the Muslims” (*khalīfat rabb al-‘ālamīn ‘alā siyāsāt al-islām wa al-muslimīn*).<sup>248</sup> Elsewhere in the same work, Baybars preserves a poem that he composed dedicated to this Mamluk Sultan which declares that he was “victoriously enthroned in the vaulted hall of the caliphate.”<sup>249</sup> This is all the more interesting in light of the continued reign of the Abbasid caliphs in Egypt, who Baybars also acknowledges as caliphs throughout his works, which was a central component of traditional Mamluk strategies of political legitimation.<sup>250</sup> For the Persianate lands, Evrim Binbaş has illustrated how the term was reformulated and widely utilized within the Timurid context in

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<sup>248</sup> Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *al-Tuḥfa al-Mulūkiyya*, p. 24.

<sup>249</sup> Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *al-Tuḥfa al-Mulūkiyya*, p. 234.

<sup>250</sup> For a more traditional perspective on this question of Mamluk political legitimacy during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries, see Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad b. Khalīl al-Qudṣī, *Kitāb Duwal al-Islām al-Sharīfa al-Baiyya* (Beirut: al-Ma’had al-Almani li-l Abhath al-Sharqiyya, 1997), eds. Subhi Labib and Ulrich Harmann, pp. 99–100, in which this 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-century scholar, writing for a leading official within the Mamluk administration, proclaims the Mamluk Sultanate to be the most legitimate kingdom on earth, precisely because “its rulers are delegated authority by the explicit designation of those legally entitled and sanctioned by the Lawgiver [i.e. Muḥammad] to do so, specifically the Abbasids who are descendants of the Prophet’s paternal uncle” (*wilāyat [sultān Miṣr] aṣaḥḥu min wilāyat ghayrihi min al-mulūk fa-innau lā yuwalīhi al-ṣaltana illā man lau al-amr fī al-wilāya bi-naṣṣ al-shāri’ wa hum Banū al-Abbās ‘am al-nabī*), as well as their “guardianship of the holy sites and sanctuaries of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem as well as the tombs of the Prophets, the Companions of the Prophet, the eminent scholars who are the very pillars of the faith, the martyrs, and the righteous saints” (*khidmatuhu li-l ḥaramayn al-sharīfayn wa al-arḍ al-muqaddasa min masjid al-aqṣā wa al-ṣakhra al-musharrafa wa madāfin al-anbiya’ wa al-ṣaḥāba wa al-ṭābi’in wa al-a’imma al-‘ulamā’ al-‘amilīn al-mujtaidīn arkān al-dīn wa al-shuhadā’ wa al-awliyā’ al-ṣāliḥīn*). For a detailed discussion of the importance of the Abbasids for Mamluk political legitimacy, see Mona Hassan, *Longing for the Lost Caliphate: A Transregional History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), pp. 66–97; Mustafa Bannister, “‘Naught Remains to the Caliph but his Title’: Revisiting Abbasid Authority in Mamluk Cairo,” *Mamluk Studies Review* 18 (2014–2015), pp. 219–245; and David Ayalon, “Studies on the Transfer of the ‘Abbāsī Caliphate from Baḡdād to Cairo,” *Arabica* 7 (1960), pp. 41–59. A concise description of the primary aspects of Mamluk political ideology is provided in Broadbridge, *Kingship and Ideology*, pp. 12–16.

9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-century Iran and Central Asia,<sup>251</sup> while Christopher Markiewicz has contextualized its specific usage within the late 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> and early 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup>-century Aqquyunlu and Ottoman context.<sup>252</sup> Among the most significant examples from the Near East can be found in the writings of the Persian philosopher Jalāl al-Dīn al-Dawānī (d. 1502) who utilizes the caliphal title for Uzun Hasan in the mid-9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century in the same manner and form as it is used for the Nasrids from the reign of Ismā‘īl I onwards):

“The Majesty of the workshop of vicegerency, the emperor, the Jamshid-resembling king [Chosroes], recipient of the succor [supported by the heavens], [victorious over the enemy], the warrior (*ghāzī*) in the path of God, the striver in heightening the word of God, the one sent for the ninth century [i.e. *mujaddid*], the one qualified by excellent widespread actions, the greatest of kings [Chosroes] of the age, the grandest of the Caesars of the period, refuge of the rulers [Khaqans] of the time, the vicegerent of God (*khalīfat al-raḥmān*), the master of the age, the Sultan Abū al-Naṣr Ḥasan Beg Bahadur Khan...”<sup>253</sup>

Incidentally, as early as the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, the Castilian sovereign Alfonso X, within his *Siete Partidas*, had proclaimed that “kings, each one in his own kingdom, are the vicars/representatives of God, appointed over people to maintain them in justice and truth in temporal matters, just as the emperor does in his empire (*vicarios de Dios son los reyes, cada un en su regno, puestos sobre las gentes para mantenerlas en justiciar et en verdad quanto en lo temporal, bien asi como el emperador en su imperio*).<sup>254</sup> Similarly, Alfonso X’s grandson, Don Juan Manuel, in his *Libro del caballero et del escudero* (written early in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century) asserts that “on earth, kings effectively occupy the position of God, and their will is in the very

<sup>251</sup> İlker Evrim Binbaş, *Intellectual Networks in Timurid Iran: Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī and the Islamic Republic of Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 251–286.

<sup>252</sup> Christopher Markiewicz, *The Crisis of Rule in Late Medieval Islam: A Study of Idrīs Bidlīsī (861-926/1457-1520) and Kingship at the Turn of the Sixteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago PhD Dissertation, 2015)

<sup>253</sup> Quoted in Markiewicz, *The Crisis of Rule in Late Medieval Islam*, p. 344. I would like to thank John E. Woods from the University of Chicago for this emended translation, based upon Jalāl al-Dīn al-Dawānī, *‘Arz-nāma* (ed. Īrāj Afshār), pp. 3–4.

<sup>254</sup> Alfonso X, *Las siete partidas del Don rey Alfonso el Sabio, contejadas con varios codices antiguos por la Real academia de la historia* (Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1807), 2: 7 (Partida II, Título I, Ley V).

hands of God” (*los reyes son en la tierra en lugar de Dios et las sus voluntades son en la mano de Dios*), an indication of the manner in which the Nasrid reformulation of kingship in terms of vicegerency (*khilāfa*) was part of a broader political and philosophical discourse taking place across the Mediterranean world.<sup>255</sup>

Although it is evident that the usage of the term “caliph” and its lexical derivatives was not intended as a claim to universal sovereignty or, indeed, as an attempt to revive the traditional conception of the caliphate itself, its usage for the Nasrids had potentially subversive undertones, particularly in light of their specific genealogical claims. Following the death of Muḥammad in 10/632, Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda led a failed bid to lead the Muslim community, a fact which would define his legacy throughout Islamic history. Immediately following the death of the Muḥammad in 10/632, the traditional Islamic sources state that Sa’d was nearly proclaimed ruler of Medina by the Anṣār at the council of Saqīfa, but was thwarted in his ambition by the intervention of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭab, and Abū ‘Ubayda ibn al-Jarrah, all of whom belonged to the tribe of Quraysh.<sup>256</sup> It is widely reported that it was actually in response to Sa’d’s bid for the leadership of the community that the prophetic hadith asserting that “the caliphate belongs to the Quraysh” was first instrumentalized.<sup>257</sup> Following the elevation of Abū Bakr as Muḥammad’s successor or caliph (*khalīfa*), Sa’d refused to acknowledge the decision and, as long as he lived, would not recognize the authority or legitimacy of Abū Bakr or his successor ‘Umar, spending the rest of his life in exile in Syria before being assassinated (although the sources present conflicting accounts of the exact circumstances).<sup>258</sup> Qays b. Sa’d, for his part, was also a leading figure in

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<sup>255</sup> Quoted in Castro y Calvo, *El arte de gobernar en las obras de Don Juan Manuel*, p. 119.

<sup>256</sup> Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, *al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, 3: 322; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 2: 427; al-Qalqashandī, *Ma’āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma’ālim al-Khilāfa*, 1: 40–41.

<sup>257</sup> Al-Qalqashandī, *Nihāyat al-Arab*, p. 281; al-Qalqashandī, *Ma’āthir al-Ināfa fī Ma’ālim al-Khilāfa*, 1: 38.

<sup>258</sup> Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, 3: 462–464; Al-Dimyāṭī, *Akhbār Qabā’il al-Khazraj*, 2: 640–641; al-Dhaabī, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 1: 276–278; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 2: 427.

early Islam and became one of the champions of the claims of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and one of his most loyal supporters, even leading a large brigade of the caliph’s army against the Umayyads at the Battle of Siffin (37/657).<sup>259</sup> A descendant of Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda in al-Andalus, al-Ḥusayn b. Yahya b. Sa’īd b. Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda, whom Ibn Ḥazm mentions in his *Jamharat Ansāb al-‘Arab*, would even lead a major rebellion against the Umayyad emir ‘Abd al-Raḥmān I (r. 138/756–172/788) around Zaragoza in 165/782.<sup>260</sup> These traditions about Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda, a leading Companion of the Prophet and chieftain of the Anṣār who nearly became the first caliph, and his family was certainly not unknown to the Nasrids (or their contemporaries). Even works produced elsewhere in the Islamic world during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century remembered Sa’d in this way. A good example is the *Fuṣūl al-Fakhriyya*, a Persian genealogical treatise authored by Jamāl al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ‘Inaba (d. 825/1422), writing in Timurid Iran during the early 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, which identifies Sa’d b. ‘Ubāda as “the one to whom the Anṣār pledged their allegiance following the death of the Prophet. He was the Lord of the Khazraj” (*Sa’d [i]bn-i ‘Ubāda kih Anṣār kh’āstand kih bay‘at bā ū kunand ba’d az Payghāmbār, ṣalā Allāh ‘alayhi va ālihi va sallam, va sardār-i Khazraj būd*).<sup>261</sup> The memory of this council of Saqīfa remained an important theme in the literature and poetry of the Nasrid kingdom. A literary treatise written by the chief judge Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī, for example, recalls “the day of Saqīfa, when the leading noble of the Anṣār aspired to become caliph.”<sup>262</sup> Several verses of poetry produced in early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Granada, notably those composed by al-Uḥaymar al-Mālaqī for Ismā‘īl I, also make

<sup>259</sup> Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, 6: 121–122; Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat Ansāb al-‘Arab*, p. 365; Al-Dimyāṭī, *Akhhbār Qabā’il al-Khazraj*, 2: 643–645.

<sup>260</sup> Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat Ansāb al-‘Arab*, p. 365.

<sup>261</sup> Jamāl al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Inaba, *al-Fuṣūl al-Fakhriyya* (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i ‘Ilmī va Farhang, 1984), ed. Mīr Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Ūrmavī, pp. 48–49.

<sup>262</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 107.

reference to the fateful council of Saqifa that nearly elected Sa'd as ruler and links this event with the legitimacy of the Nasrid adoption of the caliphal title:

O Banū Naṣr, you have supported and made the Muslim community (*millat al-islām*) victorious after it had been abased and humiliated.

[...]

On the day of Saqifa you distinguished yourselves over all others when you attained the reins of leadership of the community (*aḥraztum yawm al-saqīfa qawdhā dūna al-anām wa qayduhā wa shikāluhā*)

But you obligingly and dutifully awarded this caliphate of God (*khilāfa allāh*) as a blessed gift to another [i.e. Abū Bakr]

Verily, the ones who give preference to others over themselves have embodied the virtue mentioned in the Qur'an,<sup>263</sup> so who can declare the proper course to be otherwise?

And when [the caliphate] declined and faded, you immediately sprung forth to rescue and revive it.<sup>264</sup>

In addition to being one of the earliest attestations of the grandiosity of Nasrid political-genealogical claims, this poem does a number of things. It sanctifies Sa'd b. 'Ubāda as the true successor of the Prophet who achieved distinction over the remainder of the Companions of Muḥammad by attaining leadership over the Muslims at Saqifa. Moreover, it inverts the traditional narrative of the succession to the Prophet and transforms this figure from a challenger

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<sup>263</sup> A reference to Q. 59: 9: "As for those [a reference to the Ansar] who provided [the Emigrants/*Muhājirūn*] with a home and a refuge, and were believers before them, they love those who emigrated to them, and find no hesitation in their hearts in helping them. In fact, they readily give them preference and priority over themselves, even when they themselves need what they give away. Indeed, those saved from the covetousness of their own souls, they are the ones that achieve prosperity."

<sup>264</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā'id al-Jumān*, p. 238; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 153–154.

and competitor to the Quraysh into the one who legitimately transmits leadership of the Muslim community to Abū Bakr. Finally, it directly justifies Nasrid claims to call themselves God's caliphs by asserting that their ancestors had attained this position during the early 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century before granting it away as a benefice. This highly subversive subtext to the Nasrid emphasis on the caliphal title may have been one reason why they decided not to aggressively propagate this claim beyond the walls of the Alhambra or the confines of the Kingdom of Granada.

During the Middle Ages, court panegyric followed specific thematic stylistic and thematic conventions. Noble lineage, just rule, success on the battlefield and wisdom are all traits that are found within the poetry, historiography, and political treatises produced within royal courts across the medieval world. This chapter has attempted to demonstrate the value in closely studying propaganda in its literary, numismatic, and epigraphic variations in order to understand the various discourses of political legitimation in which the Nasrids were engaged. I have hoped to show that across three or four generations, a group of scholar-officials and chancellors in Granada (all of whom were intimately connected through patronage, teacher-student ties or epistolary) played a central role in the formulation and deployment of specific ideas and vocabularies of sovereignty. It was the immense erudition of these scholars as philosophers, jurists, historians and belles-lettrists that enabled such a novel articulation of political legitimacy. As a result, Nasrid dynastic ideology found its clearest expression in the emphasis on notions of sacral sovereignty underpinned by a prestigious, distinctly non-Qurayshi genealogy. The distinctly courtly nature of this discourse about the Nasrids is evident from the fact that it contrasted sharply with the continued insistence of jurists and theologians on the unification of the Islamic world under a single Qurayshi leader. Moreover, the public nature of this discourse in

the Marinid realm was at variance with its confinement to the Alhambra and court circles in the Nasrid case.

This chapter argued for the often-overlooked importance of genealogy in complementing and reinforcing dynastic legitimacy in the Nasrid context, illustrating how the emphasis on an Anṣārī lineage (both literal and symbolic) aligned with the representation of Granada's kings as defenders of the faith, just rulers, and upholders of Islamic doctrine and institutions. This culminated in the frequent utilization of the title of *khalīfa* within Nasrid royal and courtly circles, which emphasized the divinely-mandated nature of sovereign authority. Ibn al-Khaṭīb was particularly influential in articulating, developing, and disseminating this specific conception of kingship. Dispensing with the notion that a local king or sultan was invested with legitimacy and authority by a universal, symbolic caliph, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his intellectual circle placed emphasis on the literal and lexical sense of the title's meaning as vicegerency. By providing a theoretical framework for the legitimate existence of multiple sovereign polities whose relationship was not based upon hierarchical notions of theoretical supremacy or caliphal authority Ibn al-Khaṭīb and other scholar-officials developed a novel conception of sovereignty. Their various creative strategies in legitimizing the Nasrids allows scholars to appreciate the manner in which a distinctly Andalusī response to the crisis of the mid-7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century—which witnessed the destruction of the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad and the Almohad caliphate in Marrakech—took shape. Rather than acknowledge a singular, central authority (such as the Hafsids or Abbasids in Cairo), Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his intellectual-political network sought to further strengthen this conception of dynastic sovereignty, emphasizing the sacral qualities of kingship while also infusing their respective sovereigns with the titles, regalia and authority previously enjoyed exclusively by caliphs during the classical Islamic period.



## **Chapter 5: Medicine and Authority: Ibn al-Khaṭīb as Physician-Minister**

As chancellor, Ibn al-Khaṭīb utilized his wealth and influence to patronize scholarship, intercede politically on behalf of many within his intellectual network and shape the foreign relations of the Nasrid kingdom. It was in his capacity as the royal physician, a position that brought him into even closer proximity with the sovereign and the royal family, that he was able to complement his own authority in the Nasrid court. As a physician, he had physical access to the king in a way very few people did, was responsible for maintaining the ruler's health, curing him of disease, and played a role in preparing his food. The essence of this particular doctor-patient relationship was trust and confidence. By entrusting the care of his body to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the sovereign was recognizing him as one of his most important advisers, an individual to be entrusted not only with most intimate details of the sovereign's body, secrets, and family, but someone who could be reliably invested with the administration of the kingdom. This interplay between Ibn al-Khaṭīb's dual role as a physician, entrusted with the king's health, and the custodian of the kingdom who administered the health of the body politic is evident throughout his writings.

This chapter seeks to explore the ways in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb's career and writings were molded by his knowledge and practice of medicine. It looks particularly closely at one major event, the Black Death, as a case study for examining this broader question. As the first major crisis that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was forced to confront in his new role as "Bearer of the Two Offices," studying the impact of the plague throughout the Nasrid kingdom provides an opportunity for investigating his role as physician-minister.

Although many historians of medieval medicine have focused on the technical scientific, surgical and epidemiological aspects of their subject, it is also important to think about medicine

(and physicians) as a social and political phenomenon. Practitioners of medicine within the medieval world should not be understood simply as “physicians” but as versatile individuals whose intellectual interests encompassed a diverse number of subjects. This meant that their treatises on medicine, while often following the conventions of the genre, often integrated material that provides important insights into their broader social and political role in society. Moreover, their writings illustrate the manner in which the medical and political were inseparable, insofar as the polity was thought of in corporatist terms, as a body, with its own health problems, themselves susceptible to medicine.

Throughout medieval history, many physicians held important courtly positions and even political authority. Their intimate relationship with princes, statesmen and nobles, some of whom they cared for and accompanied from the cradle to the grave, provided them with unique access to the corridors of power. No less a figure than Avicenna represents this intersection of statecraft, Aristotelian philosophy and the practice of medicine in the classical Islamic world. As healers in whose hands the lives of sovereigns often rested, their relationship with the rulers whom they served was undergirded by a level of trust and confidence that was rarely bestowed upon other royal councilors. In other words, their very function made them *privados* of royal princes. The relatively swift rise of Ibn al-Khaṭīb in less than a decade from a scribe in the chancery to the most intimate councilor of Yūsuf I was predicated upon his role as the king’s personal physician and private secretary. Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s medical education had brought him into contact with some of the most learned and knowledgeable individuals within the Nasrid court, with Ibn Hudhayl adopting him as his apprentice and ensuring that he was acquainted not only with the theory and practice of medicine, but also history, belles-lettres, rhetoric, astronomy/astrology and Aristotelian philosophy, fields of knowledge that were particularly useful within a courtly

context. The close relationship between the practice of medicine and statecraft had a particularly distinguished history in the medieval Islamic world, with the figure Buzurgmihr, the famed physician-minister of the Sassanid emperor Khusraw I Anūshīrwān (r. 531–579), being a prominent figure within courtly literature and mirrors for princes as the prototypical sage and councilor of kings.<sup>1</sup> The ubiquity of ancient Sassanian wisdom, as embodied by the figure of Buzurgmihr, in the many political treatises composed in both Marinid North Africa and Nasrid Granada indicates the continued importance of this tradition into the late Middle Ages.

As the work of Miquel Forcada on the figure of the “physician-philosopher” has demonstrated, the practice of medicine in al-Andalus during the Middle Ages cannot and should not be divorced from either ideology or sovereignty.<sup>2</sup> There are important demonstrations of the intersection between the practice of medicine, the delegation of royal authority and statecraft/governance throughout Andalusī history. This is evident as early as the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century, with the rise of the physicians Hasday b. Shaprut and ‘Arīb b. Sa‘īd (d. 370/980),<sup>3</sup> to political prominence in the Umayyad court during the reign of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III. Although largely renowned for his authorship of the Córdoba calendar, ‘Arīb b. Sa‘īd also distinguished himself as a leading historian.<sup>4</sup> His diverse intellectual pursuits as well as the interconnection between his role as a physician and his receiving royal favor, culminating in his appointment as both a

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Alī b. Razīn, *Ādāb al-Mulūk*, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Miquel Forcada, *Ética e ideología de la Ciencia: El médico-filósofo en al-Andalus* (siglos X–XIII) (Almería: Fundación Ibn Tufayl de Estudios Árabes, 2011), pp. 29–35.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marrakushī, *al-Dhayl wa al-Takmila*, 2: 118–119; Ángel C. López, “Vida y obra del famoso polígrafo cordobés del siglo X ‘Arīb ibn Sa‘īd,” in *Ciencias de la naturaleza en al-Andalus I* (Granada: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1990), ed. Expiración García Sánchez, pp. 317–47; Miquel Forcada, “‘Arīb b. Sa‘īd al-Qurṭūbī,” *EF*, (Brill: Brill Online, 2018), eds. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marrakushī, *al-Dhayl wa al-Takmila*, 2: 118. For a Spanish translation of his major historical chronicle, see ‘Arīb b. Sa‘īd, *La crónica de ‘Arīb sobre al-Andalus* (Granada: Impredisur, 1992), trans. Juan Castilla Brazales.

governor (of Osuna) and a secretary,<sup>5</sup> makes him a particularly interesting case of a physician-minister in medieval Iberia as well as a notable forerunner to Ibn al-Khaṭīb.

The case of Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Ṭufayl (d. 580/1185),<sup>6</sup> the physician-philosopher and councilor to the Almohad caliph Abū Yūsuf Ya‘qūb also provides an illustrative example of this phenomenon. This trend continued well into the late Middle Ages and across the Mediterranean world. Within the Crown of Aragón, for example, physicians such as Joan de Pròxita and Arnau de Vilanova achieved political prominence within the royal court.<sup>7</sup> The political dimensions of the practice of medicine and the prestige associated with it was particularly evident within the context of Jewish communities in Christian Spain. The Mallorcan Jewish scholar and physician Simón ben Zemah Durán (d. 1444), who emigrated to North Africa after 1391,<sup>8</sup> declared in his *Magen Avot*: “we recognize that it is the craft of medicine that enables us to live with honor and dignity in the land of Edom.”<sup>9</sup> In the Near Eastern context, ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī (d. 629/1231)<sup>10</sup> the physician-philosopher and councilor of the learned Abbasid caliph al-Nāṣir li Dīn Allāh (r. 577/1180–623/1225),<sup>11</sup> and Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh al-

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<sup>5</sup> Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marrakushī, *al-Dhayl wa al-Takmila*, 2: 118–119.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn al-Abbār, *Tuḥfat al-Qādim*, pp. 96–99; Ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī, *al-Mughrib fī Ḥulā al-Maghrib*, 2: 69; Lawrence Conrad, “An Andalusian Physician at the Court of the Muwaḥḥids: Some Notes on the Public Career of Ibn Ṭufayl,” *al-Qantara* 16 (1995), pp. 3–14; Lenn Goodman, “Ibn Ṭufayl,” in *The Literature of al-Andalus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), eds. María Rosa Menocal, Raymond P. Scheindlin, Michael Sells, pp. 318–330.

<sup>7</sup> Antoni Cardoner i Planas, *Història de la Medicina a la Corona d’Aragó (1162-1479)* (Barcelona: Editorial Scientia, 1973), pp. 95–96.

<sup>8</sup> For more on Simón ben Zemah Durán and his family, see Antonio Contreras Mas, *Los Médicos Judíos en la Mallorca Bajomedieval, siglos XIV–XV* (Palma de Mallorca: Miquel Font, 1997), pp. 79–97; and Isaac Epstein, *The Responsa of Rabbi Simón b. Zemah Durán as a Source of the History of the Jews in North Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1930).

<sup>9</sup> Cited in Contreras Mas, *Los Médicos Judíos en la Mallorca Bajomedieval*, p. 39.

<sup>10</sup> For an intellectual biography of this figure, see Cecilia Martini Bonadeo, *‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī’s Philosophical Journey: from Aristotle’s Metaphysics to the ‘Metaphysical Science’* (Leiden: Brill, 2013) and Paul Ghalioungui, *‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī: ṭabīb al-qarn al-sādis al-hijrī, shakhṣiyatuhu wa-injāzātuh* (Cairo: al-Hay’a al-Misriya al-‘Amma lil-Kitab, 1985).

<sup>11</sup> For a study of his reign, with particular attention to cultural and intellectual developments, see Angelika Hartmann, *An-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh : (1180-1225) : Politik, Religion, Kultur in d. späten ‘Abbāsidenzeit* (New York: De Gruyter, 1975).

Hamadhānī (d. 718/1318),<sup>12</sup> the chief minister and physician of the Il-Khans, also serve as singularly important examples of this broader phenomenon of the intersection between medicine and social status.

During the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries, physicians continued to be a prominent group of individuals within the royal courts of the Islamic West. Their importance within the Nasrid court, in particular, can be traced to the reign of Muḥammad II. The career of the royal physician (and astronomer) Ibn al-Raqqām and the manner in which he (and his son) established themselves as important councilors of the Nasrid sovereign Naṣr has already been discussed in previous chapters. Several of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own teachers, such as Ibn Hudhayl and Ibn al-Sarrāj, were leading figures in the Nasrid court and are described as possessing considerable wealth, influence and authority due to their role as the personal physicians of the Nasrid sovereign.<sup>13</sup> In addition to their primary function of maintaining the health of the king and his family, physicians were immersed in a number of intellectual disciplines and played an active in the governance and administration of the realm in both Nasrid Granada and Marinid North Africa.<sup>14</sup> The fields of

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<sup>12</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh al-Hamadhānī (d. 718/1318) was the son of a Jewish physician who converted to Islam and joined the court of the Il-Khanid sovereign Ghāzān. Rashīd al-Dīn was an expert in philosophy, medicine and history who held immense authority within the Il-Khanid kingdom, particularly during the reign of Oljeitu, before being executed. He was the father of Muḥammad b. al-Rashīd, another important Il-Khanid statesman (Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, 8: 81; al-Dhahabī, *al-ʿIbar*, 4: 46–47; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 139–140, 4: 84). For more on Rashīd al-Dīn, see Sheila S. Blair, "Patterns of Patronage and Production in Ilkhanid Iran: The Case of Rashīd al-Dīn," in *The Court of the Il-Khans, 1290–1340* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), eds. Julian Raby and Teresa Fitzherbert, pp. 39–62; Stefan T. Kamola, *Rashid al-Din and the Making of History in Mongol Iran* (Seattle: University of Washington PhD Dissertation, 2013); Fuʿad ʿAbd al-Muʿti al-Sayyad, *Muʿarrikh al-Maghūl al-Kabīr: Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍlallāh al-Hamadhānī* (Cairo: Dar al-Katib al-ʿArabi li-l Tibaʿa wa al-Nashr, 1967).

<sup>13</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 175.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, the Nasrid royal physician Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Sarrāj (d. 730/1330), described by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as an accomplished physician, litterateur and poet (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 160–162), and Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Bībīsh (d. 753/1352), an expert in medicine, belles-lettres and Arabic whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb encountered in Ceuta in 752/1351 and bestowed an *ijaza* upon him within the chancery (al-Anṣārī, *Bulghat al-Umniyya*, p. 35; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 27–31; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, p. 91; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 134; al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 7: 357–358). Two prominent examples of royal physicians in Marinid North Africa during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century are Muḥammad al-Sharīshī (d. 771/1369), who served as court physician during the reign of Abu ʿInān (al-Anṣārī, *Bulghat al-Umniyya*, pp. 51–52) and Muḥammad al-Jayyānī (d.

medicine and “the science of the stars” (astronomy/astrology) were closely aligned during this period, as the career of Ibn al-Raqqām illustrates.<sup>15</sup> The possession of this dual skill set, of healing and prognostication, enabled physicians to present themselves as an indispensable asset for princes and kings. The case of Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Anṣārī (d. after 764/1363),<sup>16</sup> a colleague of Ibn al-Khaṭīb who had also studied under Abū Zakariyya b. Hudhayl, provides an instructive example of this phenomenon. A prominent scholar in the Nasrid court in Granada, this individual is described as deeply learned in astronomy/astrology (*wa lahu baṣar bi-ṣinā‘at al-ta‘dīl wa jadāwal al-abrāj wa tadarriba fī aḥkām al-nujūm*), as well as medicine, with Ibn al-Khaṭīb explicitly stating that “it was because of these pursuits that he became attached to the courts of princes and kings” (*ta‘līqa bi-sabab hadhihi al-muntaḥalāt bi-adhyāl al-duwal*).<sup>17</sup> This statement reflects Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own recognition that a knowledge of both healing and celestial bodies was among the primary avenues for attaining proximity to rulers, particularly since both crafts were useful tools kingship. While such knowledge brought influence and proximity to royal power, it also posed immense dangers for its practitioners. Ibn al-Khaṭīb mentions, for example, that El Bermejo (the future Muḥammad VI) launched an attack against the Alhambra, overthrowing Muḥammad V, in Ramaḍān 760/August 1359 based on Abū Ja‘far al-Anṣārī’s prognostication that it would be an auspicious month to undertake the endeavor.<sup>18</sup> Upon his restoration to the throne in Jumādā 763/April 1362, Muḥammad V had this physician-astronomer imprisoned, violently whipped (nearly to death) and exiled—along with numerous

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790/1388), a physician and architect in Marinid Ceuta who also played an active role in military campaigns (al-Anṣārī, *Bulghat al-Umniyya*, p. 53).

<sup>15</sup> For an example of the intersection between astrology/astronomy and the practice of medicine in the Mamluk lands during the same period, see the career of Salāḥ al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Burhān (d. 743/1342), a leading court physician in Cairo (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 175–176).

<sup>16</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 205–206; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 180–181.

<sup>17</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 205–206; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 180.

<sup>18</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 205; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 181.

others—to Tunis in late 763/1362 due to the role he had played in facilitating the coup against this ruler.<sup>19</sup> For Ibn al-Khaṭīb, while Abū Ja‘far al-Anṣārī’s example was an illustration of the veracity of “the science of the stars” and its indispensability for statecraft, it also served as a cautionary tale for scholar-officials about the dangers and consequences of imprudently placing their own knowledge in the service of rebellion.

Nor was it solely their knowledge and practice of astrology that exposed physician-ministers to controversy, but their very knowledge of medicine itself. This was particularly the case for those individuals with an expertise in pharmacology, since their familiarity with the properties, concoction and administration of particular herbs and drugs, coupled with their immense proximity to the sovereign, opened them up to accusations of poisoning the sovereign. The life and career of Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh, the chief minister of the Il-Khans, provides a window into the dangers faced by physician-ministers who wielded immense power and enjoyed close proximity to the kings they served. Born the son of a Jewish apothecary who converted to Islam and joined the court of the Il-Khanid sovereign Ghāzān Khān, Rashīd al-Dīn was an expert in philosophy, medicine and history who held immense authority within the Il-Khanid kingdom, particularly during the reign of Oljeitu, before being executed in 718/1318.<sup>20</sup> Following the illness and death of Oljeitu, Rashīd al-Dīn was accused by his political enemies at court of assassinating the sovereign by administering particularly deadly doses of certain drugs to him.<sup>21</sup> While it was this individual’s accumulation of significant power, wealth and influence at the Il-Khānid court that exposed him to such controversy, it was his medical knowledge that provided the pretext for his political enemies at court to orchestrate his demise and execution. The case of

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<sup>19</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 205–206; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 181.

<sup>20</sup> Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, 8: 81; al-Dhahabī, *al-‘Ibar*, 4: 46–47; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 139–140, 4: 84.

<sup>21</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 139–140.

Rashīd al-Dīn, like many other physician-ministers in the medieval world, provides an instructive example of the manner in which the practice of medicine within a courtly context brought with it immense political opportunity and advantages for social mobility, while simultaneously exposing these individuals to various forms of danger.

Very few individuals in the late medieval Islamic West better understood or embodied the intersection between sovereignty, statecraft and medicine than Ibn al-Khaṭīb did. As described in Chapter 1, medicine was understood by this figure as part of a broader strategy for social mobility and underpinned his swift political rise. His earliest surviving work, “The Yūsufite Treatise on Medicine,” written around 742/1341, was a treatise on the maintenance of health dedicated to the Nasrid ruler Yūsuf I. Over the course of his career, Ibn al-Khaṭīb authored numerous medical treatises, almost all of which were written within a courtly context and dedicated to Nasrid or Marinid sovereigns.

As the chief minister of Granada as well as the royal physician, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was tasked with maintaining the health of the kingdom as well as its sovereign. This dual responsibility can be discerned from Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s writings, with a consistent integration of the vocabulary of politics into medical treatises while assimilating the language of medicine into his discussion of the polity. In doing so, he was participating in a long-standing tradition, traceable as far back as Plato,<sup>22</sup> in which the kingdom was understood as resembling a body, susceptible to medicine. Within the writings of Andalusī scholars, the term *tadbīr* (“management, administration, regulation”) is commonly utilized for both the governance/administration of the realm and the management of the body’s health. This is most evident in the widely disseminated late 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>-century treatise by the Andalusī mystic and scholar Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. ‘Arabī

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<sup>22</sup> Plato, *Republic* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1992), trans. G.M.A. Grube, p. 120.



(d. 638/1240) titled “The Divine Governance of the Human Kingdom” (*al-Tadbīrāt al-Ilāhiyya fī Iṣlāḥ al-Mamlaka al-Inṣāniyya*).<sup>23</sup> The treatise, written in Seville during the late 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century and which functions as both a mirror for princes as well as a spiritual guide for virtuous conduct, envisions the polity as a body and the human body as a kingdom. Ibn ‘Arabī stresses that both the body and the kingdom were characterized by the existence of “a sovereign,” “viziers,” “soldiers,” “secretaries,” and “emissaries,” and it was the harmony and coordination between them that resulted in just rule or health; similarly, discord and dissension would lead to collapse or disease.<sup>24</sup> Within this understanding, the sovereign of a kingdom and the soul in the body were identified with one another.<sup>25</sup> Just as the soul emanated from God to animate the human body, so too were kings God’s representatives on earth who ruled over polities, with the word “caliph” (*khalīfa*) being employed to refer to them:

Following the creation of His representative (*al-khalīfa*), God built a polity for him, his subjects, nobles and functionaries to inhabit. This was called the city of the human body (*al-jism wa al-badan*)...which is divided into four elements (*al-iṣṭiqsāt*, from Gr. Στοιχείο). The residence of the sovereign (*maskan al-khalīfa*) is known as the heart, the locus of authority...God Almighty also constructed a wondrous and illustrious palace on the most elevated part of this city and called it the brain, providing it with powerful instruments and mechanisms to govern the polity. These are the ears, eyes, nose and mouth. Within this illustrious palace are several bureaus, including the office of imagination, resembling a treasury where the taxes/wealth collected by the five senses are stored...and just as there are licit and illicit taxes, so too are their righteous and devious thoughts. In the very center of this wondrous palace is the bureau of contemplation, which receives everything processed by the office of imagination, accepting the authentic and rejecting the false. At the very back of this palace is the bureau of memory and recollection. The residence of the vizier, who is identified with the intellect itself, is located in the brain.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. ‘Arabī, *al-Tadbīrāt al-Ilāhiyya fī Iṣlāḥ al-Mamlaka al-Inṣāniyya* (Casablanca: Dar al-Thaqafa, 2015), ed. Muhammad ‘Abd al-Hayy al-‘Adluni al-Idrisi al-Hasani.

<sup>24</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī, *al-Tadbīrāt al-Ilāhiyya*, p. 77.

<sup>25</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī, *al-Tadbīrāt al-Ilāhiyya*, p. 89.

<sup>26</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī, *al-Tadbīrāt al-Ilāhiyya*, p. 89.

Such metaphors of the king as soul and the kingdom as body is also evident in writings from the Nasrid period, as illustrated by the panegyric recited for Yūsuf I by the Granadan judge and secretary Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. ‘Umar b. ‘Aṭīq al-Qurashī, which proclaims that “the Nasrids are like blessed souls that have given life to humanity while the people are like inanimate bodies; the subjects are the body and Yūsuf is its soul” (*ammā banū naṣr fa-arwāḥ bi-hā hayāy al-warā wa al-nās ka-al-aṣām wa al-qawm jismun Yūsuf hūwa ruḥawahu*).<sup>27</sup> For his part, Ibn al-Khaṭīb—steeped both in the medical-philosophical tradition as well as the writings of Ibn ‘Arabī—describes the human body “as an independent kingdom in its own right, with the heart as its sovereign.”<sup>28</sup> Similarly, the soul is described as

both unified and diversified through its various predispositions and characteristics, just as there is one, sole sovereign (*al-khalīfa*), whose judgement and decree is referred to variously as a legal ruling (*hukmān shar‘iyyān*) in the context of the judiciary (*al-qaḍā’*), a discretionary political decree (*hukmān siyāsiyyān ijtihādiyyān*) in the context of law enforcement (*al-shurṭa*), and an ordinance or statute (*hukmān ‘ādiyyān ‘amaliyyān*) in the context of everyday administration (*al-‘amal*).<sup>29</sup>

In light of his very real authority as both statesman and physician, it is this utilization by Ibn al-Khaṭīb of medical metaphors for kingship and governance (and vice versa) that invites closer examination. It was within his medical treatise titled “On the Preservation of Health throughout the Seasons of the Year” (*al-Wuṣūl li Hifẓ al-Siḥḥa fī al-Fuṣūl*), completed Dhū-l-Ḥijja 25 769/August 11 1368, that Ibn al-Khaṭīb most fully elaborates upon his ideas of relationship between kingship and governance on the one hand and the nature of the human body and maintenance of its health on the other, particularly in the following passage:

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<sup>27</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 163.

<sup>28</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kitāb al-Wuṣūl*, p. 73 (Arabic pagination).

<sup>29</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kitāb al-Wuṣūl*, p. 37 (Arabic pagination).

You should know that the entirety of the human body is a sovereign kingdom in itself, with the heart as its king, the brain as his delegated representative (*nā'ib*) empowered with governance and administration, the faculties of memory and contemplation as his treasurer and emissaries, the five senses as his troops who protect the kingdom and its provinces...<sup>30</sup>

Through the combination of the language of politics and medicine, Ibn al-Khaṭīb constructed a discourse about proper governance and administration, allowing him to underscore his own role as physician-minister, tasked both with maintaining the health and life of the Nasrid sovereign and the just administration of the realm. Writing in 771/1369–1370, Ibn al-Khaṭīb proclaims that during his tenure as chief minister he had “safeguarded the sovereign [Muḥammad V] by remedying the poison of rebellion” (*ḍamānan ‘an al-sulṭān bi-tiryāq sum al-thawra*).<sup>31</sup> This was a reference to the rebellion of noblemen in Granada, led by Abū al-Hasan ‘Alī b. ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. Naṣr and supported by leading members of the military.<sup>32</sup>

Andalusi authors also utilized metaphors that stressed the role of the king himself as a physician. Within his commentary on Plato’s *Republic*, the Almohad physician-philosopher Abū al-Walīd b. Rushd (Averroes) asserted that “just as it is only a physician who prescribes a drug, so it is the king who lies to the multitude concerning the affairs of the realm. That is because untrue stories are necessary for the teaching of citizens.”<sup>33</sup> This perspective reveals a great deal about both Averroes’ ideas of the importance of the physician, the notion of the body politic, and the role of the sovereign. In this metaphor, which is rooted in Plato’s original text, the sovereign—like the physician—is responsible for the overall wellbeing of the populace

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<sup>30</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kitāb al-Wuṣūl*, p. 73 (Arabic pagination).

<sup>31</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 446.

<sup>32</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 154–155.

<sup>33</sup> Abū al-Walīd Muḥammad b. Rushd, *Averroes on Plato’s Republic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974), trans. Ralph Lerner, p. 24. Another medical metaphor for the polity, with virtue equated with health and vice with disease, is employed in Averroes, *Averroes on Plato’s Republic*, p. 56.

(represented as a body) and, as such, has the authority to apply whichever tools or methods that he deems fit for betterment of the latter. Even while envisioning the ruler himself as a physician, the figure of the vizier remained central within such metaphors. According to the Andalusī scholar-official (and Marinid secretary) Abū al-Qāsim b. Riḍwān:

“The sovereign is like a physician and the subjects are like the patient and the vizier, for his part, embodies the role of the intermediary between the physician and the patient. If the intermediary is unreliable or untruthful, the health of the patient will be compromised. For if this intermediary seeks to murder one of the patients, he has only to misrepresent the symptoms of their illness, leading the physician to administer the wrong type of medicine, leading to the patient’s death. Similarly, the deceitful vizier distorts and misrepresents the truth of matters to the king. This is why it is fundamental for the vizier to be honest, upright in his faith, trustworthy in his conduct, knowledgeable of the affairs of the king’s subjects. The retinue of the vizier should also embody these traits of knowledge, integrity and sincerity.”<sup>34</sup>

In other words, the health of the body politic depended heavily on the conduct and virtue of the chief minister/vizier. These traditions, which were widely cited in political tracts and mirrors for princes in the late medieval Islamic West, thus emphasized the distinct role of the physician-minister as the individual simultaneously responsible for the administration of the sovereign’s health and the wellbeing of the realm, the “body politic.” Moreover, they reflect the importance of medical language of health and disease in thinking about the delegation of royal authority, whereby the vizier was envisioned as an intermediary between the “physician-sovereign” and the “body of the populace.” It is therefore not only within the broader tradition of medical writings, but in light of these conceptions of the “body politic” that Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s writings on the plague should be situated.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibn Riḍwān, *al-Shuḥub al-Lāmi’a*, pp. 188–189.

## “The Great Pestilence”: The Black Death in Nasrid Granada, 749/1348–751/1350

The Black Death had a devastating impact upon the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada.<sup>35</sup>

Although exact figures are difficult to ascertain, the Black Death took a heavy toll upon the Iberian Peninsula, with mortality rate estimates ranging from 25%–35%, with some cities experiencing an even higher death toll.<sup>36</sup> Between 749/1348 and 751/1350,<sup>37</sup> the spread of the plague (referred to as “the Great Pestilence,” *al-ṭā’ūn/al-maraḍ/la mortandad grande*) in the surviving sources) throughout the Kingdom Granada claimed the lives of thousands of individuals, including many leading members of its military, intellectual-administrative and political elite, effectively eliminating an entire generation of intellectuals and scholar-officials in both al-Andalus and North Africa.<sup>38</sup> Several of these scholars had been the close colleagues and

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<sup>35</sup> The most important studies on the Black Death include Robert S. Gottfried, *The Black Death: Natural and Human Disaster in Medieval Europe* (New York: The Free Press, 1983); Jean-Nöel Biraben, *Les hommes et la peste en France et dans les pays européens et méditerranéens*, 2 vols. (Paris: Mouton, 1975-1976); Ole J. Benedictow, *The Black Death, 1346-1353: The Complete History* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2004).

<sup>36</sup> For death estimates in Catalonia, which ranged from 25% to 66% of the total population in some regions, see Jeff Fynn-Paul, *The Rise and Decline of an Iberian Bourgeoisie: Manresa in the Later Middle Ages, 1250–1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 216–225, and Paul Freedman, *The Origins of Peasant Servitude in Medieval Catalonia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 161–164.

<sup>37</sup> In addition to the epidemic of 748/1348–751/1350 in Iberia, referred to here as the “Black Death,” there were additional outbreaks of plague throughout the late 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.

<sup>38</sup> To date, the most comprehensive work about the Black Death in the Islamic West is Mohammed Melhaoui, *Peste, contagion et martyre: histoire du fléau en occident musulman médiéval* (Paris: Publisud, 2005). For studies about the impact of the Black Death in the Kingdom of León-Castile and the Kingdom Aragón, see Ch. Verlinden, “La Grande Peste de 1348 en Espagne,” *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 17 (1930), pp. 103–114; J. Gautier-Dalché, “La peste noir dans les états de la Couronne d'Aragon,” *Bulletin Hispanique* 64 (1962), pp. 65–80; A. Ubieto, “Cronología del desarrollo de la Peste Negra en la Península Ibérica,” *Cuadernos de Historia* 5 (1975), pp. 47–66; Julio Valdeón, “La Muerte Negra en la Península,” *Cuadernos: Historia* 16. *La Peste Negra* 17 (1985), pp. 19–27; Christian Guilleré, “La peste noire a Gérone (1348),” *Annals de l'Institut d'Estudis Gironins* 27 (1984), pp. 87–161; Melanie V. Shirk, “The Black Death in Aragon, 1348-1351,” *Journal of Medieval History* 7 (1981), pp. 357–367; Robert-Henri Bautier, “Un nouvel ensemble documentaire pour l'histoire des pestes du XIV siècle: l'exemple de la ville de Vic en Catalogne,” *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, comptes rendu* (1988), pp. 432–456; Amada López de Meneses, “Documentos acerca de la pesta negra en los dominios de la Corona de Aragón,” in *Estudios de Edad Media de la Corona de Aragón* (Zaragoza, 1956), 6: 291–447; David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 231–249; William D. Phillips, “Peste Negra: The Fourteenth-Century Plague Epidemics in Iberia,” in *On the Social Origins of Medieval Institutions: Essays in Honor of Joseph F. O'Callaghan* (Boston: Brill, 1998), eds. Donald J. Kagay and Theresa M. Vann, pp. 47–62; Richard Emery, “The Black Death of 1348 in Perpignan,” *Speculum* 42 (1967), pp. 611–623; Richard Francis Gyug, *The Diocese of Barcelona During the Black Death* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1994); Richard Francis Gyug, “The Effects and Extent of the Black Death of 1348: New Evidence

mentors of Ibn al-Khaṭīb during his early years in the Nasrid chancery, and their deaths as “martyrs of the plague”<sup>39</sup> underpinned the urgency and tirelessness with which he worked to combat the plague, both as a statesman and as a physician/intellectual. Many of the victims of the Black Death were among Nasrid Granada’s leading functionaries, highlighting the plague’s ability to directly affect the kingdom’s administrative apparatus.<sup>40</sup> The Black Death’s impact upon the Marinid court of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī, on campaign in Ifrīqiya in 749/1348, was similarly devastating, with Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Muḥaymin al-Ḥaḍramī (d. Shawwāl 749/January 1349),<sup>41</sup> the royal chancellor, and Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Shu‘ayb al-Kiryānī (d. Dhū-l Ḥijja

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for Clerical Mortality in Barcelona,” *Mediaeval Studies* 45 (1983), pp. 385–398; J. Trenchs Odena, “El reino de Valencia y la Peste de 1348. Datos para su estudio,” in *Estudios de Historia de Valencia* (Valencia, 1978), pp. 23–71; Jaime Sobrequés Callicó, “La Peste negra en la península ibérica,” in *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 7 (1973), pp. 67–102; Satrunino Ruiz de Loizaga, *La peste en los reinos peninsulares: según documentación del Archivo Vaticano (1348-1460)* (Bilbao, 2009); Marcelino V. Amasuno Sárraga, *La peste en la corona de Castilla durante la segunda mitad del siglo XIV* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 1996); Bartolomé Bennisar, *Recherches sur les grandes épidémies dans le Nord de l’Espagne à la fin du XIVe siècle* (Paris: PU du Mirail, 1969).

<sup>39</sup> Following from a hadith ascribed to the Prophet Muḥammad preserved in the *Jāmi’ al-Saḥīḥ* of Muḥammad b. Ismā’īl al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870) that “the one killed by the plague is a martyr” (*al-maṭ’ūn shahīd*), victims of the Black Death were often referred to as “martyrs” throughout the Nasrid period.

<sup>40</sup> These included Ibn Burtāl (d. Ṣafar 750/April 1349); Abū ‘Bakr Muḥammad b. Manẓūr al-Qaysī al-Mālaqī (d. Ṣafar 750/April 1349) (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 101–103; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, p. 119); Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Qaṭṭān (d. Ṣafar 750/April 1349) (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 241–242; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, p. 133); and Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Fortūn al-Anṣārī (d. Shawwāl 750/December 1349) (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 226–227) in Málaga; Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Jayyāb (d. Shawwāl 749/January 1349) (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285) and Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥakīm (d. Rabī’ II 750/July 1349) (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 266–269; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 196–197) in Granada; Ibn al-Murābī’ (d. late 750/early 1350) in Vélez; Abū Ja’far Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Abd al-Mun’im al-Ṭanjālī (d. 750/1349) in Loja (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 109); and Ibn Luyūn in Almería (d. Jumādā II 750/July 1349) (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 80–81; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 421–432; García Gómez, “Los proverbios rimados de Ben Luyun de Almería,” p. 2).

<sup>41</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 11–18; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 224; Ibn Qunfudh, *al-Wafayāt*, p. 352.

749/February 1349),<sup>42</sup> the personal physician of the sultan, being among the most high-profile victims of the disease.<sup>43</sup>

The spread of the Black Death, which coincided with the instability in North Africa, also weakened Granada's economy, with Almería<sup>44</sup> and Málaga,<sup>45</sup> the kingdom's two major port cities, being among the hardest hit. According to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī, in Málaga alone the plague had claimed 1000 lives daily, while Ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī asserts that nearly 1500 people perished daily in some Iberian towns throughout 750/1349.<sup>46</sup> The plague's widespread nature and its tendency to indiscriminately claim thousands of lives led to increasing restiveness within the kingdom itself. That the Black Death's arrival in Nasrid Granada coincided with the disastrous unravelling of Marinid political order in North Africa and renewed military aggression by Castile led some to interpret the plague within an eschatological framework as one of the "signs of the End Times."<sup>47</sup> This provides merely an example of the politico-theological lens through which the plague was understood.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 272–277; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā'id al-Jumān*, pp. 335–343; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 254–255; Ibn Marzūq, *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Ḥasan*, p. 307. For an annotated Spanish translation of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's biography of Ibn Shu'ayb, see Fernando Nicolás Velázquez Basanta, "Abū l-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn Šu'ayb, poeta, tebib y alquimista fāsī en las páginas de la "Iḥāṭa" de Ben al-Jaṭīb," *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos. Sección Árabe-Islam* 42 (1993), pp. 305–315.

<sup>43</sup> Ibn al-Qāḍī, *Durrat al-Ḥijāl*, 1: 45. Another victim of the plague in Tunis was Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Jābir al-Qaysī (d. late 749/early 1349), one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's teachers (Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 163–165; Ibn al-Qāḍī, *Durrat al-Ḥijāl*, 2: 103).

<sup>44</sup> For a study of the impact of the Black Death upon Almería, see Pilar Lirola Delgado, Ildefonso Garijo Galán, and Jorge Lirola Delgado, "Efectos de la epidemia de peste negra de 1348-9 en la ciudad de Almería," *Revista del Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos* 32 (2000), pp. 173–204.

<sup>45</sup> María Isabel Calero Secall, "La peste en Málaga, según el malagueño al-Nubahi," in *Homenaje al Prof. Jacinto Bosch Vilá* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1991), 1: 57–72.

<sup>46</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, p. 167; Ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī, *Taḥṣīl Gharaḍ al-Qāṣid fī Taḥṣīl al-Maraḍ al-Wāfīd*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 57v.

<sup>47</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 165–166. For apocalyptic perceptions of the plague in Latin Christendom during the same period, see Robert E. Lerner, "The Black Death and Western European Eschatological Mentalities," in *The Black Death: The Impact of the Fourteenth-Century Plague* (Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1982), ed. Daniel Williman, pp. 77–105.

As elsewhere across Christendom and the Islamic world, the Black Death's arrival in Granada generated a multitude of responses.<sup>48</sup> While many in the Nasrid kingdom interpreted the plague as God's chastisement of the believers and turned towards prayers, fasting and other penitential acts to find solace,<sup>49</sup> several leading figures among the intellectual elite sought to better understand the disease in order to curb its destructive impact.<sup>50</sup> Among the most significant works about the Black Death in Nasrid Granada was a short treatise written by Ibn al-Khaṭīb entitled "Convincing the Inquirer about the Terrible Disease" (*Muqni'at al-Sā'il 'an al-Maraḍ al-Hā'il*),<sup>51</sup> dedicated to an analysis of the origins of the Black Death, its nature and the prevention of its spread.<sup>52</sup> This treatise was part of a dynamic set of discussions—legal, theological, ethical and medical—occurring in the Nasrid kingdom of Granada during the plague. The significance of the medical treatises, legal writings and historical anecdotes about the Black Death produced during this period was such that these writings continued to be referenced and

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<sup>48</sup> An overview of various responses to the plague in Christendom and the Islamic world, with annotated translations of relevant texts, is provided by John Aberth, *The Black Death: The Great Mortality of 1348–1350, A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2005). For a comparative analysis of the impact and perceptions of the Black Death in Christendom and the Islamic world, see Stuart J. Borsch, *The Black Death in Egypt and England: A Comparative Study* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005); Michael Dols, "The Comparative Communal Responses to the Black Death in Muslim and Christian Societies," *Viator* 5 (1974), pp. 269–287; Marie-Hélène Congourdeau and Mohamed Melhaoui, "La perception de la peste en pays Chrétien Byzantine et Musulman," *Revue des Études Byzantines* 59 (2001), pp. 95–124; Justin Stearns, "New Directions in the Study of Religious Responses to the Black Death," *History Compass* 7.5 (2009), 1363–1375. For an important study of the responses to the plague among physicians in Christendom, see Jon Arrizabalaga, "Facing the Black Death: Perceptions and Reactions of University Medical Practitioners," in *Practical Medicine from Salerno to the Black Death* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), ed. Luis Garcá-Ballester, pp. 237–288.

<sup>49</sup> For a description of public prayers, fasts and other penitential acts in Damascus during the same period, see Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, 14: 650–651.

<sup>50</sup> Melhaoui, *Peste, Peste, contagion et martyre*, pp. 135–159. Melhaoui also highlights the increased importance in the Islamic West of popular religious practices, such as the use of talismans, as a preventive measure against the Black Death.

<sup>51</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqni'at al-Sā'il 'an al-Maraḍ al-Hā'il*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 39r–48v. The treatise has also been published as *Muqni'at al-Sā'il 'an al-Maraḍ al-Hā'il* (Rabat, 2015), ed. Hayat Qara, pp. 65–82.

<sup>52</sup> For an early edition of this text, see M.J. Müller, "Ibnul-khatibs Bericht über die Pest," in *Sitzungsberichte der K. Bayerischen Akad. der Wissenschaften* (1863) 2: 1–33.



quoted in plague treatises authored throughout the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>53</sup> Significantly, many of the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century plague treatises are preserved primarily due to manuscript copies made during the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> centuries, underscoring the inseparability between the reception and survival of particular works during the Nasrid era.<sup>54</sup>

The plague's rapid spread and its ability to claim the lives of kings, intellectuals, peasants and administrators alike prompted Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the newly-appointed chief minister of Granada, to approach the question of the Black Death's origins, spread and prevention with urgency. Although he certainly understood the demographic scale of the devastation, it is important not to underestimate the degree to which, like many of his contemporaries, he interpreted it as a political and theological problem. He wrote and completed his *Muqni'at al-Sā'il*—a treatise lacking the usual literary flourishes and rhymed prose evident even in his other medical works—at some point in 750/1349–1350 according to his son 'Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb.<sup>55</sup> The latter work, along with Ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī's "A Detailed Explanation of the Plague" (*Taḥṣīl Gharaḍ al-Qāṣid fī Taḥṣīl al-Maraḍ al-Wāfid*)<sup>56</sup> and Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Shaqūrī's

<sup>53</sup> These include *al-Maqāla al-Hikmiyya fī al-Amrāḍ al-Wabā'iyya* by Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Haydūr al-Tādilī (d. 816/1413) and *Waṣīyyat al-Nāṣih al-Awad fī al-Taḥaffudh min al-Maraḍ al-Wāfid itha Wafad* by Abū 'Amr Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr b. Manẓūr al-Qaysī (d. 888/1483), both edited in Suzanne Gigandet, "Trois *Maqālāt* sur la peste," *Hespéris-Tamuda* 40 (2005), pp. 67–92; *Maqāma fī Amr al-Wabā'* by Abū 'Alī 'Umar b. 'Alī al-Sa'dī al-Mālaqī (d. after 844/1440), translated into Spanish by Fernando de la Granja in "La 'Maqāma de la Peste' del Alfaquí 'Umar de Málaga," *al-Andalus* 23 (1958), pp. 115–125; and *al-Ajwiba al-Tūnisiyya 'alā al-As'ila al-Gharnāṭiyya*, an exchange between Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Mawwāq al-Gharnāṭī (d. 897/1492) and Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Raṣṣā' al-Tūnisī (d. 894/1489) about the outbreak of plague in Granada in 886/1481. For the treatises by Ibn Haydūr and Ibn Manẓūr, see Cristina Álvarez Millán, "Tres opúsculos inéditos sobre la peste en un manuscrito magrebí," *Anaquel de Estudios Árabes* 3 (1992), pp. 183–188.

<sup>54</sup> Among these is a copy of al-Shaqūrī's *Taqyīd al-Nāṣih* copied in Ṣafar 877/July 1472 in Vélez, near Málaga (Álvarez Millán, "Tres opúsculos inéditos sobre la peste," pp. 185–186).

<sup>55</sup> The 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-c. Tunisian scholar Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Raṣṣā' al-Tūnisī (d. 894/1489) affirms that "I came across a statement by ['Abd Allāh] Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who wrote a commentary on [the *Muqni'at al-Sā'il*], mentioning that his father wrote a treatise about the plague consisting of five chapters during the year 750/1349–1350" (Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Raṣṣā' al-Tūnisī, *al-Ajwiba al-Tūnisiyya 'alā al-As'ila al-Gharnāṭiyya* [Beirut: Dar al-Madar al-Islami, 2007], ed. Muhammad Hasan, p. 163).

<sup>56</sup> Ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī, *Taḥṣīl Gharaḍ al-Qāṣid fī Taḥṣīl al-Maraḍ al-Wāfid*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 49r–105r, and also preserved in BNRD D455, fol. 1–55. For an overview of the treatise, see Suzanne Gigandet, "Abū Ḡa'far Aḥmad ibn Ḥātima et la Grande Peste de 749/1348 dans sa ville Almerīa," *Arabica* 53 (2006), pp. 143–152. For a

“Advice” (*Taqyīd al-Naṣīḥa*),<sup>57</sup> provides historians with one of most detailed contemporary reflections upon the plague from a medical perspective written in the Nasrid kingdom during the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, the Nasrid jurist Abū Sa‘īd b. Lubb also issued two important fatwas about the topic.<sup>59</sup> Several other major figures within the Nasrid kingdom wrote

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French translation, see Abū Ja‘far ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī, *La grande peste en Espagne musulmane au XIVe siècle* (Damascus: Ifpo, 2010), ed. and trans. Suzanne Gigandet. For a translation into Spanish, see Luisa Maria Arvide Cambra, *El Tratado de la Peste de Ibn Jatima (I): Cuestiones I-VI* (Berlin: Logos Verlag, 2014) and Luisa Maria Arvide Cambra, *El Tratado de la Peste de Ibn Jatima (II): Cuestiones VII-X* (Berlin: Logos Verlag, 2017). Excerpts of the treatise have been translated into English in Aberth, *The Black Death*, pp. 55–63.

<sup>57</sup> Al-Shaqūrī, *Taqyīd al-Naṣīḥa*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 106v–111r, and also preserved in BNM D455, fol. 56–111. For an edition of the Arabic text, see Suzanne Gigandet, “Trois *Maqālāt* sur la peste,” pp. 60–66, with a French translation in Suzanne Gigandet, “Trois *Maqālāt* sur la prevention des épidémies,” *Arabica* 52 (2005), pp. 255–263. An overview of this treatise is provided in Rachel Arié, “Un Opuscule Grenadin sur la Peste Noire de 1348: La ‘*Nasīḥa*’ de Muḥammad al-Ṣāqūrī,” *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Orientalistas* 3 (1967), pp. 189–199. Al-Shaqūrī, born in Segura (near Murcia), was a close friend and younger contemporary of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, as well as a student of Ibn Hudhayl. He served as physician in the Nasrid court during the reign of Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 177–179). Within his short treatise, al-Shaqūrī makes references to his “Confirmation of the Reports about the Plague” (*Tahqīq al-naba’ ‘an amr al-waba’*), a more comprehensive work about the Black Death that does not appear to have survived. For a biographical study of al-Shaqūrī, see Henri-Paul Renaud, “Un Médecin du Royaume de Grenade: Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣāqūrī,” *Hespéris* 33 (1946), pp. 31–64.

<sup>58</sup> For an overview of these texts, see Antonio Arjona Castro, “Las epidemias de peste bubónica en Andalucía en el siglo XIV: El médico granadino Ibn al-Jatib, pionero en señalar la idea del contagio en esta enfermedad,” *Boletín de la Real Academia de Córdoba, de Ciencias, Bellas Artes y Nobles Artes* 108 (1985), pp. 49–58. The plague treatises by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Ibn Khātima and al-Shaqūrī have recently been edited and published as *Thalāth rasā’il Andalusīyya fī al-ṭā’ūn al-jārīf* (Carthage: al-Majma’ al-Tūnisī lil-‘Ulūm wa-al-Ādāb wa-al-Funūn, 2013), ed. Muhammad Hasan. Similarly, several treatises about the plague were authored in Christian Iberia during the same period, most significant among which was the *Regiment de preservació de epidemia o pestilencia e mortaldats* of Mestre Jacme d’Agramont, written in Catalan in April 1348 at the request of the municipal council of Lleida; for a modern edition of this text, see J. Veny i Clar ed., “*Regiment de preservació de pestilència*” de Jacme d’Agramont (s. XIV). *Introducció, transcripció i estudi lingüístic* (Tarragona, 1971). Other texts written about the plague by Iberian Christians include the *Epistola et regimen de pestilentia*, written in Montpellier around 1348 by Alfonso of Córdoba (edited in K. Sudhoff, “Epistola et regimen Alphontii Cordubensis de pestilential,” *Archiv für Geschichte der Medizin* 3 [1909], pp. 223–226), and the anonymous *Tractatus de epidemia* written in Montpellier in May 1349. For an important Castilian plague treatise from the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, see Marcelino V. Amasuno, *Contribución al estudio del fenómeno epidémico en la Castilla de la primera mitad del siglo XV: El “Regimiento contra la pestilencia” de Alfonso López de Valladolid* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1988). Treatises about the plague written elsewhere in Christendom between 1348 and 1350 include the *Consilium contra pestilentiam* (written in Perugia in June 1348 by Gentile de Foligno), the *Consilium in magna pestilentia* (written by Giovanni della Penna around Naples in 1348), and the *Compendium de epidemia per collegium facultatis medicorum Parisi ordinatur* (a collection of treatises by the Faculty of Medicine in the University of Paris compiled in October 1348).

<sup>59</sup> Ibn Lubb’s two fatwas on the topic are preserved in Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Wansharīsī, *al-Mi’yār al-Mu’rib* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1981), ed. Muhammad Hajji, 11: 352–360. For a study of Ibn Lubb’s writings on the plague, which are placed in close conversation with those of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, see Justin Stearns, “Contagion in Theology and Law: Ethical Considerations in the Writings of Two 14<sup>th</sup> Century Scholars of Nasrid Granada,” *Islamic Law and Society* 14 (2007), pp. 109–129; Justin Stearns, “Enduring the Plague: Ethical Behavior in the Fatwas of a Fourteenth-Century Mufti and Theologian,” in *Muslim Medical Ethics: From Theory to Practice* (Columbia, S.C.:

about the plague, including Ibn Ṣafwān al-Mālaqī and Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Aslamī al-Bilyānī (d. 764/1362).<sup>60</sup> It is noteworthy that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was closely tied with all these individuals, since they all belonged to a broader intellectual network of scholar-officials in the Nasrid court bound together through their interests and pursuit of the rational sciences (including medicine). Aside from physicians, many contemporary scholars less concerned with the theory or practice of medicine, including the jurist Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī, the historian ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn, and the traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭa also preserved important information about the plague in the Islamic West. As one of the most devastating catastrophes of the age, the plague attracted the attention of these individuals, who not only sought to chronicle and document its spread, but to highlight it as an example of God’s absolute power and will in bringing about the destruction of such a large proportion of humanity.

The various writings about the plague illustrate that the close communication between physicians, historians and jurists—despite their continuous debates and disagreements about the nature of the disease— was instrumental in facilitating the circulation of knowledge about the Black Death. The plague treatises of both Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Khātima, historians as well as physicians, are also characterized by an interest in the plague as both a trans-regional and historical phenomenon, demonstrating the various ways that different types of knowledge were invoked to better understand the Black Death. Within his *Muqni‘at al-Sā’il*, Ibn al-Khaṭīb

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University of South Carolina Press, 2008), eds. Jonathan E. Brockopp and Thomas Eich, pp. 38–54; and Russell Hopley, “Contagion in Islamic Lands: Responses from Medieval Andalusia and North Africa,” *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 10 (2010), pp. 50–55.

<sup>60</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2:364–367; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 65–66. It remains unclear whether the recently re-discovered *Takmilat al-Aghrād fī Muzāwalat al-Amrād* (On The Elimination of Diseases), a treatise on diseases and their prevention by the pre-eminent Granadan physician and philosopher Ibn Hudhayl (d. 753/1352), who lived throughout the duration of the plague, can also be included within the same category of these Nasrid plague treatises. Once edited, the text (which unfortunately remains inaccessible) can most certainly shed light upon ideas about contagion and disease in mid-8th/14th century Nasrid Granada, thereby further illuminating the social and intellectual context for responses to the Black Death in Granada. For a short discussion of this treatise, see Hayat Qara, *Maqālat Muqni‘at al-Sā’il ‘an al-Maraḍ al-Hā’il*, p. 6.

stresses that the current epidemic was the worst in recorded history in terms of sheer scale.<sup>61</sup> Throughout his treatise, he invokes the importance of witness testimony about the disease (*al-akhbār al-mutawātira*) and drew heavily upon the observations and experiences of the North African traveler Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Baṭṭūṭa (d. after 770/1368), who had arrived in Granada in early 751/ 1350, quoting the latter's claim that the plague had spread westwards from China (*arḍ al-Khitā wa al-Ṣīn*) beginning around 734/1334.<sup>62</sup> Similarly, Ibn Khāṭima, writing around Dhū-l Qa'da 749/February 1349, notes that the plague arrived in Almería in Rabī' I 749/June 1348 and emphasizes that the pestilence was a phenomenon that transcended a single region or civilization: "it has been indisputably affirmed that, since this [plague] first appeared three years ago, it has remained unaffected by seasonal changes and has encompassed the vast majority of various geographical zones and perhaps even the entire world."<sup>63</sup> Drawing upon the testimonies of both Genoese and Aragonese Christian merchants with whom he conversed in Almería,<sup>64</sup> Ibn Khāṭima was concerned with documenting the spread of the plague across the Mediterranean and emphasizes the origins of the disease in China, but also cites the competing theory that it began in the Horn of Africa. Moreover, he stresses the historical manifestations of the plague by extensively citing testimonies of previous historians such as Abū al-Faraj 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200), Abū Marwān b. Ḥayyān (d. 468/1075) and Abū Ja'far Aḥmad b. Abī al-Fayyāḍ (d. 459/1067).<sup>65</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqni'at al-Sā'il*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 43v–44r.

<sup>62</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqni'at al-Sā'il*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 43v.

<sup>63</sup> Ibn Khāṭima al-Anṣārī, *Taḥṣīl Gharāḍ al-Qāṣid*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 58v.

<sup>64</sup> For a discussion of the Genoese merchant communities in the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada, see Olivia Remie Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World: Lodging, Trade and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 249, 297–298, 302–303.

<sup>65</sup> Ibn Khāṭima al-Anṣārī, *Taḥṣīl Gharāḍ al-Qāṣid*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 90v–92r. This concern with narrating the various plague epidemics in Islamic history is also evident in the plague treatise written by the litterateur Ibn Abī Ḥajala al-Tilmisānī in Cairo during the 760s/1360s (Ibn Abī Ḥajala al-Tilmisānī, *Daf' al-Naqma fī al-Ṣala 'ala Nabī al-Raḥma*, El Escorial MS 1772, 59v–76v) and in the plague treatise of Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī written around

The context of the Black Death, then, allows us to better appreciate how the community of letters in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Islamic West—scholars and officials closely tied with one another as a result of shared intellectual interests and professional responsibilities—not only transcended confessional and geographic boundaries, but was mobilized for specific purposes, such as disseminating information about the plague in order to more effectively combat its spread. Just as Ibn Khātima drew upon the observations of Genoese Christian merchants and Aragonese physicians during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century and the writings of Muslim historians from the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, Ibn al-Khaṭīb drew upon the testimony of travelers like Ibn Baṭṭūṭa and the knowledge of Jewish physicians in Castile, such as Joseph b. Waqqār, who was considered by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to be one of the leading intellectuals and foremost medical authorities of his day. Moreover, connections between these Andalusī Muslim scholars and itinerant Jewish physicians, such as Ibrāhīm b. Zarzāl,<sup>66</sup> highlights the relationship between broader intellectual networks and the dissemination of knowledge about the plague.

The close bond established among physicians within the Nasrid kingdom, in particular, was among the main factors that enabled the rapid dissemination of information about the disease and contributed to the collaborative effort to combat it. Ibn al-Khaṭīb, al-Shaqūrī and Ibn Khātima, all of whom were scholar-officials as well as physicians, drew heavily upon their

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898/1493 (Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Mā Rawāhu al-Wā'ūn fī Akhbār al-Ṭā'ūn* [Damascus: Dar al-Qalam, 1997], ed. Muhammad Ali al-Bar, pp. 181–213).

<sup>66</sup> This individual, a physician and astrologer, moved between Fez and Granada before settling in Seville during the reign of Pedro I, and was well-known to both Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn al-Khaṭīb. He is referred to in the *lḥāṭa* as “the eminent Jewish physician and expert in the science of the stars” (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-lḥāṭa*, 1: 402), while Ibn Khaldūn (who had known Ibn Zarzāl since his time in Fez in the 750s/1350s) famously referred to his observations about planetary conjunctions during his meeting with Timur outside Damascus in 1402. Significantly, he was also cited as a leading medical authority in al-Shaqūrī’s *Tuḥfat al-Mutawwasil wa Rāhat al-Muta’ammil*. It is possible that he was the father Moses ibn Zarzāl, a physician and poet of Enrique III of Castile (r. 1390–1406). There have been suggestions that the anti-Jewish tract by al-Shaqūrī, entitled *Qam’ al-Yahūdī ‘an ta’adi al-ḥudūd* (“Preventing the Jew from Exceeding the Legitimate Bounds”), may have been aimed at Ibn Zarzāl. One of Ibn Zarzāl’s students, Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf al-Qarmūnī, served as the royal physician of the Hafsid ruler Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Mustaṣṣir (r. 772/1370-796/1394) (Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī, *al-Fārisiyya fī Mabādi’ al-Dawla al-Ḥaṣṣiyya*, p. 178).

medical and historical knowledge in order to address the causes of the Black Death and advocate for practical solutions. An example of the tendency of these physicians to draw upon one another's experiences is exemplified by an anecdote, cited by al-Shaqūrī in his "Gift for the Seeker and the Repose for the Hopeful" (*Tuḥfat al-Mutawwasil wa Rāhat al-Muta'ammil*) about the exemplary conduct of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, praised as "the illustrious scholar, pre-eminent litterateur and statesman, and leading authority among the practitioners of medicine (*kabīr maharat al-aṭibbā'*) my lord (*sīdī*) Abū 'Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb."<sup>67</sup> The reference both highlights Ibn al-Khaṭīb's active role as a physician within Nasrid Granada, as well as his recognition as a leading authority within the field by his contemporaries.

In addition to the practical importance of citing one another's experience, it was also common for scholar-officials to communicate their medical knowledge and advice to one another through letters, as indicated by an epistle sent by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to a Nasrid physician when the former was away from the city and unable to attend to matters directly himself.<sup>68</sup> The different objectives, assumptions and approaches of each notwithstanding, the shared vocabulary and structure of the plague treatises written by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, al-Shaqūrī and Ibn Khātima—all bound together over a century later within a single manuscript codex (El Escorial MS 1785)—attests to a common intellectual culture among scholar-physicians in the Nasrid kingdom. Their writings about the Black Death also indicates a strong consciousness of themselves as physicians, whose writings were defined by a particular set of assumptions, norms, and texts. While this should not be confused with the (highly modern) notions of a medical "profession" or medical "expertise,"

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<sup>67</sup> Al-Shaqūrī, "Tuḥfat al-Mutawwasil wa Rāhat al-Muta'ammil," partially edited in Muhammad al-Arabi al-Khattabi, *al-Ṭibb wa al-aṭibbā' fī al-Andalus al-Islāmiyya: dirāsa wa tarājim wa nūṣūṣ* (Beirut: Dar al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1988), 2: 261. This work was commissioned by al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's teachers, and is preserved in the Royal Library/Hassaniyya in Rabat (MS 2337). Other unpublished medical tracts by al-Shaqūrī are preserved in BNRMS D1035, BNRMS 1680 and Hassaniyya MS 6323.

<sup>68</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqni'at al-Sā'il* (ed. Hayat Qara), pp. 10–12.

their works nonetheless enable scholars to appreciate the manner in which specialization in distinct forms of knowledge were mobilized as a form of authority in the Nasrid context. By insisting that an understanding of the plague fell strictly within the sphere of medical knowledge, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Khātima, al-Shaqūrī sought to emphasize the supremacy of their own observations and conclusions about the disease over that of other members of the intellectual elite. This was particularly the case for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who invoked and deployed his authority as a physician as part of his disagreements with prominent jurists and theologians in the Nasrid Kingdom.

One of the many challenges with which physicians addressing the nature of the plague had to contend were the long-standing theological assumptions that heavily informed the responses to the disease by many knowledgeable individuals in Nasrid society. As Michael Dols has noted in his study of the Black Death in the medieval Middle East, the attitudes of many medieval (and early modern) scholars in the Islamic world, drawing upon deep-seated theological notions and Prophetic hadith, stressed three main principles: that a believer should not enter nor flee from a plague-stricken territory, that death from the plague was a mercy from God that constituted martyrdom for the Muslim and divine punishment for the infidel, and the rejection of the idea of contagion.<sup>69</sup> Within the Nasrid kingdom, as elsewhere in the Islamic world,<sup>70</sup> the engagement with these ideas were a major part of discussions about the plague.

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<sup>69</sup> Michael W. Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 109. The emphasis on these three precepts is evident within the writings of the Syrian historian Abū Ḥaṣṣ ‘Umar b. al-Wardī (d. 749/1349), translated and studied in Michael W. Dols, “Ibn al-Wardī’s *Risāla al-naba’ ‘an al-waba’*, A Translation of a Major Source for the History of the Black Death in the Middle East,” in *Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History: Studies in Honor of George C. Miles* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1974), ed. Dickran K. Kouymjian, pp. 443–455. For a comprehensive treatment of the notion of contagion in the medieval and early modern Mediterranean, see Justin Stearns, *Infectious Ideas: Contagion in Premodern Islamic and Christian Thought in the Western Mediterranean* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).

<sup>70</sup> The plague treatise of Ibn Abī Ḥajala al-Tilmisānī (d. 776/1374), in particular, which was written in Mamluk Egypt during the 760s/1360s, includes a detailed discussion of these ideas, centered upon an interpretation of Prophetic hadith about the plague (Ibn Abī Ḥajala al-Tilmisānī, *Daf’ al-Naqma fī al-Ṣala ‘ala Nabī al-Raḥma*, El Escorial MS

Even physicians bitterly contested and argued about the nature of the disease with one another, with Ibn al-Khaṭīb (as discussed below) strongly arguing that it spread by contagion, while several of his contemporaries objected to the validity of this conclusion. Contagion was predicated on miasma theory, an idea in medieval (Galenic) medicine that stressed that disease was rooted in “corruption of the air” and that such diseases were transmitted by airborne particles (or “contagion”). Since the theory and practice of medicine was heavily predicated upon the ideas of Galen and Avicenna, for whom miasma theory was a cornerstone of their understanding of disease, physicians such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb inevitably clashed with their contemporaries, who ascribed the Black Death to other causes and produced alternative explanations.

Among Nasrid jurists and theologians, Abū Sa‘īd b. Lubb took the strongest and most unequivocal stance against the notion of contagion, deploying legal, theological, and ethical arguments.<sup>71</sup> As discussed below, many of his arguments may have been directed at Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself, whose views on contagion he would have been quite familiar with. For Ibn Lubb, the notion of contagion was, at best, an “unclear matter belonging to the realm of the unseen (*amr min umūr al-ghayb*), the reality of which was known only to God,”<sup>72</sup> but later elaborates and describes the concept as a relic of the “Age of Ignorance” (*al-jāhiliyya*) which should be rejected on theological grounds, based upon the explicit wording of authenticated hadith of the Prophet Muḥammad which declared that “there is no contagion (*lā ‘adwā*).”<sup>73</sup> According to Stearns, who has closely studied this scholar’s writings on the plague, Ibn Lubb was drawing upon the “central Ash‘arī theological argument of occasionalism, the belief that

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1772, ff. 2v–54v). For a general overview of juristic and theological approaches to the plague during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries, see Muhammad Hasan, *Thalāth rasā’il Andalusīyya fī al-ṭā’ūn al-jārif*, pp. 32–38.

<sup>71</sup> al-Wansharīsī, *al-Mi’yār*, 11: 352–360.

<sup>72</sup> al-Wansharīsī, *al-Mi’yār*, 11: 358.

<sup>73</sup> al-Wansharīsī, *al-Mi’yār*, 11: 354–356. For a detailed study of Muslim legal and theological debates regarding Prophetic hadith about contagion, see Stearns, *Infectious Ideas*, pp. 13–36.



God causes each and every action to occur and that two moments have no causal relation to each other” in order to reject the notion that the plague had causative power in and of itself.<sup>74</sup> The belief that the plague was caused by contagion, according to Ibn Lubb, would have subverted this fundamental theological position and undermined the idea of God’s omnipotence and absolute will. Ibn Lubb’s rejection of contagion should thus be specifically understood in light of his attempts to maintain the integrity of Ash‘arī theology as well as uphold the explicit wording of the Prophetic hadith.

The socially destabilizing consequences of the spread of the plague throughout the Nasrid kingdom was also directly addressed by Ibn Lubb. He stressed that the communal responsibility and duty to tend to the dying—“establishing the rights of a Muslim in tending to him while ill, washing his body and burying him is a legal obligation that cannot be neglected” (*farḍ lā yajūz ihmāluhu*)<sup>75</sup>—was binding upon every believer. Like many jurists writing during this period, Ibn Lubb upheld the legal prohibition of fleeing from (or entering) plague-affected areas,<sup>76</sup> but he was also deeply concerned about people deserting the sick and leaving them to fend for themselves.<sup>77</sup> The mutual mercy and affection that bound together the Muslim community, Ibn Lubb emphasized, should take priority over any fear of being infected, which, he stressed, would be the result of God’s will rather than contagion. In order to reinforce this broader point about the impermissibility of avoiding contact with the infected or fleeing from a plague-ridden region, Ibn Lubb emphasized that death from the disease brought with it the reward and blessing of

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<sup>74</sup> Stearns, “Contagion in Theology and Law,” pp. 119–122.

<sup>75</sup> al-Wansharīsī, *al-Mi’yār*, 11: 358.

<sup>76</sup> In contrast, the plague treatises of the Shāfi‘ī jurists Tāj al-Dīn Subkī (d. 771/1369) and Badr al-Dīn al-Zarkashī (d. 794/1392) explicitly permit Muslims to flee from the plague (Dols, *Black Death in the Middle East*, pp. 327–328)

<sup>77</sup> al-Wansharīsī, *al-Mi’yār*, 11: 353.

martyrdom, an opportunity that any believer should gladly welcome.<sup>78</sup> The assertion that Muslims should remain steadfast in the face of the plague and that they should tend to and show compassion for the infected, rather than abandon them, was underpinned by his broader emphasis upon the communal and ethical responsibilities of Muslim community. Ibn Lubb's perspective and arguments on the matter were immensely influential and convinced many within the Nasrid kingdom. Moreover, his fatwas on the plague continued to be cited (favorably) by Muslim scholars well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>79</sup> It is significant that the ethical component of Ibn Lubb's argument, with the emphasis upon the community's cohesion and the inhumanity of abandoning the sick, resembled other views of the plague across the Mediterranean, with the Florentine historian Matteo Villani (d. 1363) lamenting that "the cruel inhumanity of mothers and fathers abandoning their children, children abandoning their parents, brothers and relatives abandoning one another [is] a cruel and astonishing thing which is foreign to human nature and detestable to faithful Christians" (*questa inumanità crudele, che lle madri e' padre abandonavano i figliuoli, e i figliuoli i padre e lle madri, e l'uno fratello l'altro e li altri congiunti, cosa crudele e maravigliosa e molto strana dalla umana natura, ditestata tra' fedeli cristiani*).<sup>80</sup> Moved by the same anxieties as Ibn Lubb, Villani claims that the lack of concern for

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<sup>78</sup> Al-Wansharīsī, *al-Mi'yār*, 11: 357. This emphasis upon martyrdom was also a major theme in the plague treatises authored by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852/1449) and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) in Mamluk Egypt during the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century (Ibn Ḥajar, *Badhl al-Mā'ūn fī Faḍl al-Ṭā'ūn* [Riyadh: Dar al-Asima, 1411/1991], ed. Ahmad Isam Abd al-Qadir al-Katib; and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Mā Rawāhu al-Wā'ūn fī Akhbār al-Ṭā'ūn* [Damascus: Dar al-Qalam, 1997], ed. Muhammad Ali al-Bar). Ibn Ḥajar's *Badhl al-Mā'ūn* also extensively preserves much of the historical, theological and legal material relevant to discussions about the plague. For a short study of the *Badhl al-Mā'ūn*, see J. Sublet, "La peste prise aux rêts de la jurisprudence. Le traité d'Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī sur la Peste," *Studia Islamica* 33 (1971), pp. 141–150.

<sup>79</sup> Stearns, "Contagion in Theology and Law," p. 112.

<sup>80</sup> Matteo Villani, *Chronica* (Parma: Fondazione Pietro Bembo, 1995), 1: 12. This emphasis on the breakdown of social cohesion and bonds of kinship during the plague is also echoed in the opening pages of Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*: "some adopted a cruel, albeit more prudent, course of action and proclaiming that since there was no better remedy against the pestilence than to flee. Therefore, both men and women abandoned their own towns, their own homes, their kin and possessions and fled to the countryside, as if the wrath of God, which sought to punish the iniquity of mankind, would confine itself to the walls of the city and leave them unaffected, regardless

the infected undermined communal cohesion and was a characteristic foreign to true faith: “this inhumane conduct was begun by the infidels...but has now been emulated by faithful Christians” (*tra lli infedeli cominciò questa inumanità crudele...fedeli cristiani ne’ quali seguendo le nazioni barbere*).<sup>81</sup> It is not without its ironies that Villani’s claim that infidels had little qualms about abandoning the infected was written around the same time as Ibn Lubb issued his fatwa which displays a similar outrage.

Even though Ibn Lubb’s line of argumentation and his conclusions about the nature of the plague may have persuaded many individuals, laypeople and scholars alike, in Nasrid Granada, they were not universally accepted. While not arguing explicitly against Ibn Lubb, Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to defend the supremacy of medical knowledge in addressing the plague in the face of the theological or legal opinions offered by various scholars in Granada and North Africa. He deemed these perspectives not only counterproductive, but as responsible for perpetuating the spread of the disease and unwittingly causing thousands of deaths, declaring that “the fatwas of some jurisconsults [on the matter], whose sharpened pens have condemned countless individuals to death, have been as harmful to the community as the unsheathed swords of the Azāriqa,”<sup>82</sup>

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of where they might be...and citizens in the towns avoided one another and neighbors disregarded each other, while families rarely (if ever) visited one another. This tribulation had cast such fear into the hearts of all men and women that brothers abandoned their brothers, uncles their nephews, sisters their brothers and, even, wives their husbands. And, even more unbelievable, parents abandoned their children to their fate and did not tend to them, as if they were not their own” (*Alcuni erano di più crudel sentimento, come che per avventura più fosse sicuro, dicendo niuna altra medicina essere contro alle pestilenze migliore né così buona come il fuggir loro davanti: e da questo argomento mossi, non curando d'alcuna cosa se non di sé, assai e uomini e donne abbandonarono la propria città, le proprie case, i lor luoghi e i lor parenti e le lor cose, e cercarono l'altrui o almeno il lor contado, quasi l'ira di Dio a punire le iniquità degli uomini con quella pestolenza non dove fossero procedesse, ma solamente a coloro opprimere li quali dentro alle mura della lor città si trovassero, commossa intendesse, o quasi avvisando niuna persona in quella dover rimanere e la sua ultima ora esser venuta... E lasciamo stare che l'uno cittadino l'altro schifasse e quasi niuno vicino avesse dell'altro cura e i parenti insieme rade volte o non mai si visitassero e di lontano: era con sí fatto spavento questa tribulazione entrata ne' petti degli uomini e delle donne, che l'un fratello l'altro abbandonava e il zio il nepote e la sorella il fratello e spesse volte la donna il suo marito; e, che maggior cosa è e quasi non credibile, li padri e le madri i figliuoli, quasi loro non fossero, di visitare e di servire schifavano*).

<sup>81</sup> Villani, *Chronica*, 1: 12.

<sup>82</sup> The Azāriqa were an early Kharijite sect, known for deploying mass violence against other Muslims during the 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century. Since their name eventually developed into a byword for any Muslim who disregarded or ignored

regardless of the purity of their intentions in affirming the explicit meaning of the Prophetic traditions [about the plague].”<sup>83</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb lamented the “widespread ignorance and the lack of knowledge about [medical] matters among the majority of people” as one of the main reasons that the plague continued to spread.<sup>84</sup> While his plague treatise can be broadly characterized as a sharp polemic directed against many of Granada’s jurists and theologians, whom he viewed as vastly unqualified to address a phenomenon that was primarily medical, the *Muqni‘at al-Sā’il* was equally concerned with outlining and describing the origins, spread and prevention of the plague. Similar to many in Latin Christendom during the same period, Ibn al-Khaṭīb considered astrological causes, specifically planetary alignments, to be among the causes of the disease: “one of the causes of the plague are the movements of the celestial spheres, especially planetary conjunctions, which directly affect events on earth, as claimed by the leading practitioners of astrology (*ḥasbamā yaz‘amuhu arbāb sinā‘at al-nujūm*). It is the duty of the physician to follow their lead in these matters.”<sup>85</sup> Similarly, Ibn Khātima attributes a role to the motions of celestial spheres—which he insists were completely subject to the will of God—in causing the plague.<sup>86</sup> Although emphasizing that these astral motions to be secondary causes of the disease, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s integration of a discussion of astrology reflects his consideration of this science as a legitimate field of knowledge, while also indicating the close relationship between medicine, astronomy and astrology during the late Middle Ages.<sup>87</sup> Beginning his treatise by invoking the

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the inherent value of the lives of believers and committed unjust violence against them, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s likening of the jurists to this Kharijite sect was a particularly harsh critique that sought to underscore the disregard for human life inherent in their fatwas.

<sup>83</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqni‘at al-Sā’il ‘an al-Maraḍ al-Hā’il*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 42v–43r.

<sup>84</sup> <sup>84</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqni‘at al-Sā’il ‘an al-Maraḍ al-Hā’il*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 47v.

<sup>85</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqni‘at al-Sā’il ‘an al-Maraḍ al-Hā’il*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 39v.

<sup>86</sup> Ibn Khātimah al-Anṣārī, *Taḥṣīl Gharaḍ al-Qāṣid*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 55r–55v.

<sup>87</sup> For a discussion of the relationship between medicine and astronomy in Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s *al-Wuṣūl li Hifẓ al-Siḥḥa fī al-Fuṣūl*, see Rafael Muñoz Jimenez and Maravillas Aguiar Aguillar, “La importancia de los conocimientos de astronomía en medicina: en torno a un manuscrito árabe anónimo del *corpus* galénico,” *Qurtuba* 5 (2000), pp. 181–189. This close relationship between medicine and astrology has also been illustrated for the Mallorcan

authority of a field of knowledge (astrology) viewed as illegitimate and heretical by many jurists and theologians in the Nasrid court was undoubtedly an attempt by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to position himself, from the outset, as an unapologetic defender of the natural sciences. His ability to proclaim these controversial ideas openly and explicitly attests to his own secure position within the Nasrid court, the protection offered by his patrons (Yūsuf I and Riḍwān) and the continued support of his teacher, the philosopher and physician Ibn Hudhayl (d. 753/1352), who lived throughout the duration of the plague. Indeed, given the latter's vast knowledge of "the science of the stars" (*sinā'at al-nujūm*) as well as medicine, it is highly likely that Ibn al-Khaṭīb conferred with him on many of the questions he addresses in his writings about the plague. The discussion of astrological causes for the plague by both Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Khātima was a feature of their writings that shared much in common with contemporary Latin Christian writings about the disease, including those in Castile and Aragon.<sup>88</sup>

Throughout the treatise, Ibn al-Khaṭīb continually invokes his knowledge of medicine and his status as a physician and cites the leading authorities of medieval medical knowledge, including Avicenna, to refute what he deemed incorrect perceptions and assumptions about the nature of the plague. The arguments presented in the *Muqni'at al-Sā'il* rested entirely upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb's firm conviction that the plague was caused by putrefied or corrupt air and was spread by contagion (*al-'adwā*), with direct contact with infected individuals being the main reason for

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context during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries (Contreras Mas, *Los Médicos Judíos en la Mallorca Bajomedieval*, pp. 45–50) and for the Crown of Aragón during the late Middle Ages (Cardoner i Planas, *Història de la Medicina a la Corona d'Aragó*, pp. 206–227).

<sup>88</sup> Jean d'Avignon, a physician in the service of Pedro Gómez Barroso, believed that the conjunction of Mars and Jupiter which occurred on March 29<sup>th</sup> 1345 was among the main causes of the plague of 1347–48 (Arjona Castro, "Las epidemias de peste bubónica en Andalucía en el siglo XIV," p. 55), while the plague treatise compiled by the University of Paris in October 1348 (partially translated in Aberth, *The Black Death*, pp. 41–45) and the *Inventarium seu Collectorium in parte Cyurgicali Medicine*, written around 1363 by Guy de Chauliac (partially translated in Aberth, *The Black Death*, pp. 63–66) also stressed the link between the conjunction of Mars, Saturn and Jupiter on March 21 1345 and the pestilence. The *Regiment de preservació* of Jacme d'Agramont also briefly considers the possibility that the plague was caused by a planetary conjunction.

its spread. While the specific medical details of his treatise have been sufficiently analyzed elsewhere, it is nonetheless important to note that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's plague treatise constitutes the strongest defense of the idea of contagion during the Nasrid era.<sup>89</sup> In contrast, his contemporary and friend Ibn Khātima in Almería devoted his energies to a (lexical and medical) classification of the plague, documenting its spread across the Mediterranean and elaborating upon the treatment of the disease, while relegating the debate about contagion (which he rejects on theological grounds)<sup>90</sup> to a secondary matter within his *Taḥṣīl Gharaḍ al-Qāṣid*, by far the most detailed and comprehensive of all the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-c. Nasrid plague treatises.<sup>91</sup> Al-Shaqūrī's short treatise, on the other hand, does not address the question of contagion at all. Despite his explicit denial of contagion, Ibn Khātima nonetheless affirms the transmission of the disease through contact with the infected, drawing upon empirical evidence as well as medical knowledge, which distinguishes his interpretation from that of Ibn Lubb and making his position closer to that of Ibn al-Khaṭīb.<sup>92</sup>

For Ibn al-Khaṭīb, observation and empirical evidence (*al-tajruba wa al-istiqrā' wa al-ḥiss wa al-mushāhada wa al-akhbār al-mutawātira*) about contagion—the existence of which he considered incontrovertible and which he viewed as the underlying cause for the plague's

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<sup>89</sup> According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the Marinid scholar-official Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Abī Madyān was another contemporary that believed the plague to spread by contagion, and sought to fortify himself against it by secluding himself at Salé on Morocco's Atlantic coast (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqni'at al-Sā'il 'an al-Maraḍ al-Hā'il*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 42v).

<sup>90</sup> Ibn Khātimah al-Anṣārī, *Taḥṣīl Gharaḍ al-Qāṣid*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 63v–64r.

<sup>91</sup> For a study of the treatise (with partial translations of the text), see Taha Dinana, "Die Schrift von Ibn Khatima aus Almerian über die Pest," *Archiv für Geschichte der Medizin* 19 (1927), pp. 27–81; M. Antuña, "Abenjátima de Almería y su tratado de la Peste," *Religión y Cultura* 1 (1928), pp. 68–90; José Fermat Martínez, "Contribución al estudio de la medicina Española. El almeriense Aben Jatima," *Actualidad Médica* 44 (1958), pp. 499–513, 566–580; Luisa Maria Arvide Cambra, "Prescripciones Médicas de Ibn Jatima para el tratamiento paliativo en la enfermedad de la peste bubónica," *European Scientific Journal* 9 (2013), pp. 13–18.

<sup>92</sup> Ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī, *Taḥṣīl Gharaḍ al-Qāṣid*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 63v–64r. For an analysis of Ibn Khātima's interpretation of the plague, see Stearns, *Infectious Ideas*, pp. 82–85; and Melhaoui, *Peste, contagion et martyre*, pp. 174–182.

spread<sup>93</sup>—required the reinterpretation of particular theological principles and the explicit wording of hadith:

One principle that cannot be ignored is that if the senses and observation (*al-mushāhada*) oppose traditional evidence (*al-dalīl al-samʿī*), the latter needs to be interpreted, and the correct course in this case is to interpret it according to what a group of those who affirm contagion say (*bi-mā dhahaba ilayhi taʿifatun mimman athbata al-qawl bi-l-ʿadwā*). In the Law (*al-sharʿ*) there are many texts that support this (*muʿannīsāt ʿadīda*), such as his saying, may God pray for Him and grant him peace: "The sick should not be watered with the healthy," and the saying of the Companion: "I flee from the will of God to His will." This is not the place for prolixity on this subject (*fi dhālik al-gharaḍ*). The discussion, based on the Law (*sharʿan*), regarding the existence or non-existence of contagion, is not among the duties of medicine (*hadha al-fann*), but instead it arises only parenthetically and by way of example (*innamā jarā majrā al-jumal al-muʿtariḍa wa-l-muthul*), and this is analyzed in its place. To sum up (*wa biʿl-jumla*), to play deaf to such an inference is to be malicious (*zaʿāra*), it is blasphemy (*taṣāqur*) against God, and holding the lives of Muslims to be cheap. A group of pious people in the Maghrib [*al-ʿidwa*] have renounced [their previous view] to the people, bearing witness against themselves that they no longer give fatwas to this effect [i.e. not believing in contagion], in order to avoid being in the position of declaring it permissible for people to engage in suicidal behavior (*mustaqillīn mushhidīn ʿalā anfusihim bi-l-rujūʿ ʿan al-fatāwā bi-dhālik taḥarrujan min taswīgh al-ilqāʾ biʿl-yad ilā l-tahlukati*) [Reference to Q2:195]. God protect us from nonsense (*al-khaṭal*) and grant us success in both speech and action (*waqffaqanā fiʿl-qawl wa l-ʿamal*) (trans. Stearns)<sup>94</sup>

This aggressive attack against certain jurists and theologians within the *Muqniʿat al-Sāʿil* highlights Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own confidence due to the security of his position in the court in 750/1349, while also reflecting his own public role and responsibility as the leading physician in the Nasrid realm who was tasked with mitigating the impact of the pestilence in the kingdom. Towards the end of his *Muqniʿat al-Sāʿil*, Ibn al-Khaṭīb ascribes the continued spread of the

<sup>93</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqniʿat al-Sāʿil*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 42r–42v. In order to reinforce his argument that quarantine was one of the best defenses against the plague, he invokes the cases of Muslim prisoners in the dungeons of Sevilla and the nomadic Arabs of North Africa, both of whom he claims were unaffected by the disease, to demonstrate that their isolation from the infected prevented them from contracting the disease (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqniʿat al-Sāʿil*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 42v).

<sup>94</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqniʿat al-Sāʿil*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 43r; Stearns, "Contagion in Theology and Law," pp. 112–113.

plague throughout the Nasrid kingdom to “the transmission of the disease through repeated contact with the infected at funerals, exposure to their clothing and items, living in close quarters [with the infected], and overcrowding,” as well as “mismanagement, carelessness and lack of awareness [of the nature of the disease] due to widespread ignorance and the absence of knowledge about these matters among the masses.”<sup>95</sup> The declaration that congregation at funerals for the dead was among the major causes underlying the spread of the disease would have been particularly troubling to jurists such as Ibn Lubb, who, as outlined above, considered the last rites for the deceased to be among the most important communal obligations that remained binding upon the Muslim community.

Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own understanding the plague as being transmitted by contagion and his emphasis upon the preservation of human life (as opposed to Ibn Lubb’s discussion of communal responsibility and cohesion) underpinned his stance that the two main ways to prevent the spread of the disease was to stress the importance of avoiding all contact with infected individuals and advocating for unaffected individuals to flee from regions where the disease had spread, both stances which contradicted established theological and legal consensus on the subject among his contemporaries. The entire purpose of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s treatise was to underscore the wisdom of these two precautionary courses of action, while arguing that remaining in areas stricken by the plague or the maintenance of contact with the infected was tantamount to suicide, invoking the Qur’anic verse (Q. 2: 195) warning believers “not to contribute to your destruction with your own hands” (*wa lā talqū bi-aydīkum ila al-tahluka*). It is notable that this exact argumentation was explicitly rejected by Ibn Lubb, asserting that “to claim that contact with an individual from a plague-stricken region falls under the category of ‘contributing to destruction with one’s own

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<sup>95</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqni’at al-Sā’il* ‘, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 45v.



hands' is absurd" and claiming that this line of thought undermined the communal obligations of the Muslim community.<sup>96</sup> Although it is difficult to ascertain with precision the exact date of Ibn Lubb's fatwas on the plague, it is reasonable to assume that his criticism was directed against Ibn al-Khaṭīb, among others. Similarly, even if Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who wrote his *Muqni'at al-Sā'il* in 750/1349–1350, had completed his treatise prior to Ibn Lubb's proclamations on the subject, the close relationship between the two individuals, as outlined in the previous chapters, suggests that he was intimately familiar with the Granadan jurist's perspective on the matter.

Just as Ibn al-Khaṭīb strongly critiqued certain jurists and theologians for their views on the plague, Ibn Lubb attacked the religious credentials of physicians, including in his fatwa a quote from Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/889) asserting that "the physicians are the furthest people from true faith" (*al-aṭibbā' ab'ad al-nās min al-imān*).<sup>97</sup> This remark requires some elaboration. Although, as described above, physicians were often valorized in courtly literature, the public role of physicians in society, their close personal relationship with the sovereign, and the controversial intellectual subjects in which they were engaged (including astrology and philosophy) attracted a great deal of criticism in the late Middle Ages. The physician-minister Amīn al-Dawla Abū al-Ḥasan (d. 648/1250), the main councilor and favorite of the Ayyubid emir al-Sāliḥ Ismā'īl (r. 635/1237, 637/1239–643/1245) in Damascus, was referred to as "a Samaritan from Baalbek who outwardly proclaimed the Islamic faith," and condemned as tyrannical and devious.<sup>98</sup> There were similar polemics against physicians in al-Andalus. An important example can be seen in the poem of Abū Sa'īd Maymūn b. Khiyāra (d. 637/1239)

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<sup>96</sup> al-Wansharīsī, *al-Mi'yār*, 11: 357. It appears that Ibn Lubb's argument was aimed, at least explicitly, against the historic fatwa of Ibn Rushd al-Jadd (d. 520/1126), who deemed it permissible, even necessary, for individuals to avoid contact with people fleeing from plague-stricken regions.

<sup>97</sup> al-Wansharīsī, *al-Mi'yār*, 11: 354.

<sup>98</sup> Al-Dhahabī, *al-Ibar*, 3: 261.

attacking the physician ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥabīb as bringing about the demise of Islam and throwing the hearts of the believers into chaos.<sup>99</sup> Much of this criticism and hostility, in both medieval Christendom and the Islamic world, was rooted in the perception that the practice of medicine was a pursuit that was associated with non-dominant religious communities, whether Jews and Christians in the Islamic context or Jews in the Iberian Christian kingdoms.

In contrast to the strong attacks against physicians, the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Syrian traditionist and historian Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, in his compendium on medicine drawn from traditional Islamic sources, ascribes a quote to no less an authority than Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī stating that “aside from the [legal field knowledge delineating the] permissible and impermissible (*al-ḥalāl wa al-ḥarām*) there is no intellectual pursuit or field of knowledge more honorable (*anbal*) than medicine,” and stating that this eminent authority

would lament the neglect of Muslims towards the pursuit of medicine and would say: ‘[in doing so] they have abandoned one-third of all knowledge and delegated it to the Jews and Christians.’ He would also say ‘Verily, the People of the Book have surpassed us in their knowledge of medicine.’ It should be known that, in addition to his immense erudition in the religious sciences (*‘ilm al-sharī‘a*) and the Arabic language, al-Shāfi‘ī was quite learned in medicine. It is also the case that my own teachers Ibrāhīm al-Raqqī, Taqī al-Dīn b. Taymiyya, and ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Wāsiṭī all possessed a good knowledge of medicine.<sup>100</sup>

It is this broader controversy surrounding medicine and the role of physicians that colored the various writings about the plague in Nasrid Granada.

The vigorous debates around the plague in Nasrid Granada enable historians to better understand the broader scholarly culture in the kingdom, with individuals like Ibn al-Khaṭīb

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<sup>99</sup> Ibn al-Abbār, *Tuḥfat al-Qādim*, p. 245.

<sup>100</sup> Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *al-Ṭibb al-Nabawī* (Beirut: Dar Ihya’ al-‘Ulum, 1990), ed. Ahmad Rif’at al-Badrawi, p. 228. This work has been previously published (and misattributed to the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century physician and philosopher ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī) by Abd al-Mu’ti Amin Qal’aji as *al-Ṭibb min al-Kitāb wa al-Sunna* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma’rifa, 1986).

articulating a perspective based upon his role as a physician and a defender of the integrity of the natural sciences against the opinions of both jurists and theologians. While many modern historians have sought to juxtapose Ibn al-Khaṭīb's "empiricist" argumentation about the plague with the "traditional theological" perspective of his contemporaries, representing him as "a lone voice of reason in an age when few others had the courage to stand up to a religious establishment that, it is assumed, was oppressive and censorious," this framework is highly problematic for a variety of reasons.<sup>101</sup> Critiquing the tendency of modern scholarship to cast the arguments of Ibn Lubb and Ibn al-Khaṭīb as a reflection of the clash between dogma and reason, Stearns advocates a more productive interpretation that examines the ethical imperative underpinning the arguments of each scholar, an approach that enables us to better appreciate their perspectives on their own terms.<sup>102</sup> While this has been an important intervention and a necessary corrective to the problematic framing of the debate around the plague in Nasrid Granada, it does not fully account for their diametrically opposed views, the forceful manner in which they communicate their arguments, and their unwavering commitment to their respective understandings of the material world. Although both inhabited a similar socio-political space as leading intellectuals in Nasrid Granada and shared many of the same teachers, the perspectives of both Ibn Lubb and Ibn al-Khaṭīb were heavily informed by their own beliefs, public roles and the genre in which they chose to communicate their ideas.<sup>103</sup> Rather than necessarily reflecting a sharp dichotomy between the "intellectual sciences" and the "traditional sciences," it was Ibn al-Khaṭīb's role as Nasrid chief minister and royal physician writing a medical tract and Ibn Lubb's

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<sup>101</sup> Stearns, "Contagion in Theology and Law," p. 124.

<sup>102</sup> Stearns, "Contagion in Theology and Law," pp. 124–129.

<sup>103</sup> For an important article on the development of plague treatises as a distinct literary genre in medieval Islamic society, see Lawrence I. Conrad, "Arabic Plague Chronologies and Treatises: Social and Historical Factors in the Formation of a Literary Genre," *Studia Islamica* 54 (1981), pp. 51-93.

position as one of Granada's leading jurists and theologians issuing a *responsum* to be read by scholars and laypeople alike that accounted for much of the divergence in the arguments and perspectives evident in their writings. While the former was tasked with mitigating the catastrophic death toll of the plague and the maintenance of public order in the Nasrid kingdom, the latter sought to ensure that the conduct of believers was consistent with the legal, ethical and theological precepts of the *sharī'a*.

While the unapologetic defense of medical knowledge were among the main objectives of the *Muqni'at al-Sā'il*, Ibn al-Khaṭīb did not solely base his argument upon empirical evidence or medical realities, but also sought to supplement his conclusions with reference to Prophetic hadith, drawing on some of the same textual references as Ibn Lubb but offering a competing interpretation. It is particularly notable that Ibn al-Khaṭīb invoked an anecdote about some of the Prophet's companions fleeing from the plague in Syria as evidence of the permissibility of this course of action.<sup>104</sup> Rejecting the notion that belief in contagion was illicit according to Islamic law, Ibn al-Khaṭīb accused many of the '*ulamā*' of violating the principles of the *sharī'a* and undermining the value of the lives of believers, holding them directly responsible for the massive loss of life. Rather than reinforcing a sharp dichotomy between himself and the jurists, Ibn al-Khaṭīb strongly argued for the importance of re-interpreting Prophetic hadith allegorically in light of empirical evidence that contradicted its explicit meaning. He thus engaged in his own *ijtihād* (juristic reasoning and interpretation) and deployed his own legal arguments in defense of his medical conclusions.<sup>105</sup> This attempt to demonstrate the harmony of medical knowledge and

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<sup>104</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of this hadith, see Lawrence I. Conrad, "'Umar at Sargh: The Evolution of an Umayyad Tradition Plague," in *Story-Telling in the Framework of Non-Fictional Arabic Literature* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998), ed. Stefan Leder, pp. 488–528.

<sup>105</sup> Additionally, Stearns has noted that Ibn al-Khaṭīb invoked the principle of *maṣlaḥa* (the notion of the well-being of the Muslim community) in order to make his argument (Stearns, "Contagion in Theology and Law," pp. 117–119).

legal-theological precepts was characteristic of defenses of the field during this period. It also reflects Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own extensive education that allowed him to be well-versed in both the precepts of medicine and Islamic jurisprudence.<sup>106</sup> According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, knowledge (*'ilm*) was divided into two broad categories: the knowledge of religion(s) (*'ilm al-adyān*) and the knowledge of bodies (*'ilm al-abdān*):

The knowledge of bodies is arguably more imperative since it is foundational, with the seeker of knowledge being compelled to immerse himself in it prior to undertaking a study of the knowledge of religion(s). Indeed, the ultimate and underlying goals of the *sharī'a* (*maqāṣid al-sharī'a*) encompasses a variety of considerations that relate to the maintenance of the body and its health (*siyāsāt al-jism bi-ḥifẓ al-ṣiḥḥa*) and curing illness. This is a testament to the eminence of the craft of medicine.<sup>107</sup>

Although clearly considering medical knowledge to have a distinction among intellectual disciplines, Ibn al-Khaṭīb certainly did not think that jurisprudence/theology and medicine were mutually exclusive realms, but saw them as intimately connected. For his part, al-Shaqūrī, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's younger contemporary in the Nasrid court, asserted that “there is no concealing the ignorance of one who claims that the theory/practice of medicine (*al-ṭibb*) opposes God's will...verily, medicine is in accordance with God's will and was from among the things authorized by the Prophet of God... and should be considered a blessing from God and a mercy from Him,”<sup>108</sup> stressing that “the affirmation of medicine and the use of remedies were among

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<sup>106</sup> Another example of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's engagement in juristic reasoning, also within the context of a broader disagreement with legal scholars, can be found in his *Muthlā al-Ṭarīqa fī Dhamm al-Wathīqa* (On the Condemnation of the Notarial Profession) (Rabat: Dar al-Mansur li-l Tiba'a wa al-Waraqā, 1973), a short treatise composed in Sale (Morocco) around 762/1361 which strongly assailed the conduct of notaries and the legitimacy of the profession. Within the work, he marshals Qur'anic verses, Prophetic hadith and legal opinions to condemn what he perceived to be the increasing (and illegitimate) demand for exorbitant fees in exchange for notarial services in the Islamic West. For a study of this text and the legal dimensions of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings, see 'Abd al-Majid Turki, “Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb (713–776/1313–1374), juriste,” *Arabica* 16 (1969), pp. 155–211, 280–329.

<sup>107</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kitāb al-Wuṣūl*, p. 1 (Arabic pagination).

<sup>108</sup> Al-Shaqūrī, *Taqyīd al-Naṣīḥa*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 107r–107v.

the established practices (*sunan*) of the Prophet of God, while the honorable virtues and benefits [of medicine] are apparent to any rational individual.”<sup>109</sup> Moreover, like Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Khātima, al-Shaqūrī underscored the importance of deferring to the knowledge of physicians in medical matters, stressing the culpability of many non-physicians in the loss of life: “it is imperative that the people of faith and intellect (*ahl al-dīn wa al-‘aql*) who have been given authority over the affairs of the Muslims prevent the ignorant from harming the Muslims by administering treatments and remedies without the consultation of physicians...’verily whoever kills a human being for other than murder or corruption in the earth, it is as if he has murdered all of mankind’ [Q. 5: 32].”<sup>110</sup> Similarly, but in a more comprehensive manner, Ibn Khātima—a leading preacher in the Great Mosque of Almería, as well as a physician—also integrated a discussion of theology and hadith into his plague treatise which he sought to bring into harmony with his medical knowledge and observations.<sup>111</sup> The fact that Ibn Khātima later affirmed the doctrine of the non-existence of contagion while repeatedly insisting that the plague spread by infection and direct contact underscores his concerted efforts to reconcile medical knowledge with Islamic theology.<sup>112</sup> The writings of these three physicians demonstrates that it is not productive to proceed from the assumption of a strict dichotomy between “rational/empiricist” and “conservative/dogmatic” when assessing the divergent approaches to the Black Death in the Nasrid kingdom.

The massive impact and unabated spread of the plague, which claimed the lives of medical practitioners (such as Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Shu‘ayb al-Kiryānī in Tunis and Ibn Luyūn in Almería) and laymen alike, led many to question the relevance and authority of

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<sup>109</sup> Al-Shaqūrī, *Taqyīd al-Naṣīḥa*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 106v.

<sup>110</sup> Al-Shaqūrī, *Taqyīd al-Naṣīḥa*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 110r–110v.

<sup>111</sup> Ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī, *Taḥṣīl Gharaḍ al-Qāṣid*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 92r–105r.

<sup>112</sup> Ibn Khātima al-Anṣārī, *Taḥṣīl Gharaḍ al-Qāṣid*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 63v–64r.

medical knowledge in the context of the plague.<sup>113</sup> As a consequence of the perceived failure of medicine to curb the plague, many people within the Nasrid kingdom turned towards prayer and fasting to seek God's mercy or sought to protect themselves against the disease through the employment of talismans, while others utilized popular remedies as a means of combating the disease. This backlash against physicians is reflected in various sources across both Christendom and the Islamic world following the outbreak of the plague. The contemporary *Florentine Chronicle* of Baldassarre Bonaiuti (d. 1385), one of the most important accounts of the Black Death in Florence, which sheds light on the lack of confidence among many in the capabilities of physicians in light of the continued spread of the plague:

“neither doctor nor medicine was of any use, either because the diseases were not yet known or because doctors had never studied them, and there did not appear to be any remedy... There were no doctors to be had, because they died like everyone else. Those available wanted an exorbitant sum in hand before entering the patient's house, and once inside they felt his pulse with their faces turned away and inspected his urine from afar, holding strong-smelling substances to their noses.”<sup>114</sup>

Similarly, the Florentine chronicler Matteo Villani lamented that “doctors from across the world had no remedy or effective cure for this pestilential infirmity [of 1348], neither through natural

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<sup>113</sup> For a compelling example from 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-century Mamluk Egypt of the explicit rejection of medical perspectives about plague/disease by jurists and theologians, see Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Mā Rawāhu al-Wā'ūn fī Akhbār al-Ṭā'ūn*, pp. 147–149.

<sup>114</sup> Quoted in Katharine Park, *Doctors and Medicine in Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), p. 35. Similarly, Giovanni Boccaccio in his *Decameron* lamented the inability of physicians or medicine to deal competently with the plague and its consequences: “Neither the counsel of the physicians nor medicine was of any value or avail for the curse of this infirmity. Rather, many physicians and men of learning were ignorant of the nature of the disease and its causes...” (*A cura delle quali infermità né consiglio di medico né virtù di medicina alcuna pareva che valesse o facesse profitto: anzi, o che natura del malore nol patisse o che la ignoranza de' medicanti de' quali, oltre al numero degli scienziati, così di femine come d'uomini senza avere alcuna dottrina di medicina avuta giammai era il numero divenuto grandissimo*) For further discussion about responses to the plague in Florence, see John Henderson, “The Black Death in Florence: Medical and Communal Responses,” in *Death in Towns: Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead, 100–1600* (London: Leicester University Press, 1992), ed. Steven Bassett, pp. 141–147.

philosophy, medicine or astrology. To make money some went visiting and presented their arguments [about preventing the disease], but these only demonstrated through their patient's death that their craft was baseless and false" (*di questa pestifera infermità i medici in catuna parte del mondo, per filosofia naturale, o per fisica, o per arte di strologia non ebbono argomento né vera cura. Alquanti per guadagnare andarono visitando e dando loro argomenti, li quali per la loro morte mostrarono l'arte essere fitta e non vera*).<sup>115</sup>

It is within this context that the writings of the Nasrid physicians sought to restore the confidence of their audience, whether jurists/theologians or others, in the ability of medical knowledge to address the plague, while stressing that failing to heed the advice of physicians or follow their lead in treating the disease would have a catastrophic impact for society. The *Nasīḥa* of al-Shaqūrī, written in a clear, intelligible Arabic and devoid of the specialized medical terminology characteristic of both Ibn al-Khaṭīb's and Ibn Khātima's plague treatises, was especially concerned with convincing a lay audience that physicians were the only individuals capable of addressing the plague and mitigating its impact. These appeals on the part of physicians met with a varied degree of success, but nonetheless testify to the efforts of these individuals to legitimize their own status as physicians and communicate the importance of medical knowledge in categorizing, explaining and undermining the spread of the disease.<sup>116</sup>

After arriving in Almería in Rabī' I 749/June 1348 and spreading across the kingdom to Granada by 749–750/1349–1350 and Málaga in Dhū-l Ḥijja 750/March 1349, the Black Death

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<sup>115</sup> Villani, *Chronica*, 1: 13.

<sup>116</sup> According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, several jurists in North Africa had even renounced their previous edicts about the plague and refrained from questioning medical knowledge on the subject after having been presented with compelling evidence by physicians (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Muqni'at al-Sā'il*, El Escorial MS Arabe 1785, 43r). Moreover, research about 14<sup>th</sup>-century England has shown that, far from declining in prestige, respect for the specialization of medical knowledge and education increased in importance following the Black Death (William J. Courtenay, "The Effect of the Black Death on English Higher Education," *Speculum* 55 [1980], pp. 696–714).



claimed the lives of thousands of individuals across the Nasrid realm (although exact figures are difficult to ascertain). As discussed above, the demographic catastrophe was compounded by the fact that many leading Nasrid functionaries, military figures and intellectuals were among its main victims. The travelogue of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who visited Gibraltar, Ronda, Marbella, Málaga, Vélez and Granada during the early months of 751/1350, provides historians with a significant contemporary testimony about the recovery of the western half of the Nasrid kingdom from the Black Death. While his description of Granada remains rather short compared with his discussion of other regions that he visited, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's account suggests that by the early months of 751/1350 the threat of the plague in the western portion of the Nasrid kingdom had largely subsided. His account is replete with references to gatherings of scholars, congregations within the Great Mosque of Málaga and a flourishing economy and nowhere does he mention encountering any specific cases of infected or dead, noting only that "the plague was the only thing that people feared more than Alfonso XI."<sup>117</sup> The North African traveler arrived in al-Andalus shortly following the death of Alfonso XI in Muḥarram 751/March 1350 and met several scholars, including Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf al-Muntashāqirī in Ronda,<sup>118</sup> Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Ṭanjālī in Málaga, and al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, Abū Sa'īd b. Lubb, Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī and Abū 'Abd Allāh b. Juzayy.<sup>119</sup> Although Ibn Baṭṭūṭa makes no mention of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and notes that he was not granted an audience with the Nasrid emir Yūsuf I "due to an illness which had befallen him," the details provided within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's *Muqni'at al-Sā'il* makes it clear that he personally met and conversed with Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, even integrating several of

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<sup>117</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥla*, BnF MS Arabe 2291, 97v.

<sup>118</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa notes that his own paternal cousin, Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Yahya b. Baṭṭūṭa, was serving as chief judge of Ronda at the time (Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥla*, BnF MS Arabe 2291, 98v).

<sup>119</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥla*, BnF MS Arabe 2291, 98v–100r.

his observations about the plague into his treatise.<sup>120</sup> The absence of a description of the Alhambra and any mention of Riḍwān suggests that Ibn Baṭṭūta had met Ibn al-Khaṭīb, by then both chief minister and chancellor, not within the confines of the palace but while in the company of the other scholar-officials he encountered in Granada, many of whom were among Ibn al-Khaṭīb's closest associates.<sup>121</sup> Whether Yūsuf I was really suffering from an illness remains open to question, since no other contemporary source records this. It is plausible that Yūsuf I, on the advice of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, was exercising caution by secluding himself within the Alhambra in order to avoid contact with the plague or any infected individuals, especially upon realizing that even powerful sovereigns, such as Alfonso XI, were not immune from its deadly embrace.

The fact that no members of the Nasrid royal family were known to have perished during the plague reinforced notions of God's protection of the dynasty and strengthened the sovereign's own convictions that he was well-attended to by his court physicians and ministers.<sup>122</sup> Nevertheless, the plague had wrought major devastation across the kingdom, effecting significant demographic change in many Nasrid cities and eliminating entire generations of military commanders, administrative officials, and scholars. As with other regions across the medieval world, entire families and noble households were destroyed by the disease, greatly impacting the social and political order.<sup>123</sup> Paradoxically, the period coinciding with the

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<sup>120</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūta, *Riḥla*, BnF MS Arabe 2291, 99v.

<sup>121</sup> While Ibn Baṭṭūta mentions that he had met Abū al-Barakat al-Balafīqī in the home of the Nasrid jurist Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. 'Āṣim, it is unlikely whether Ibn al-Khaṭīb was present at this gathering since his description of the event is copied entirely from Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī's writings on the matter (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 273–274).

<sup>122</sup> In addition to Alfonso XI of Castile, another royal Iberian who apparently died from the plague was Queen Leonor of Aragón (d. October 1348), the wife of Pedro IV of Aragón (Pere III, *Chronicle*, p. 439)

<sup>123</sup> Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*, among other texts, lamented the plague's toll upon the nobility and stresses the consequences for the inheritance of properties and lands: "Alas, how many great palaces, fair estates, noble mansions which were once full of families, of noble lords and ladies, have been emptied of their inhabitants! How many memorable families, ample heritages, and famous fortunes were left without lawful heirs! How many brave

arrival of the plague and immediately following can also be considered one of the most dynamic periods of administrative transformation and cultural efflorescence in Nasrid history. As described in Chapter 3, the monumental construction projects of the Alhambra and the College of Granada, the concerted writing of dynastic court histories, and the patronage of scholars from across the Nasrid realm and North Africa were all major developments taking place in Nasrid Granada around 750/1349–1350.

Ibn al-Khaṭīb's authorship of the *Muqni'at al-Sā'il* is particularly significant since it highlights his dual roles as physician and statesman, since the plague's prevention fell within the realm of the maintenance of public order as well as medicine. The Black Death was the first major crisis in the Nasrid kingdom that Ibn al-Khaṭīb, appointed as chief minister in 749/1349, was forced to confront. Although Ibn Khaldūn's statement that "Ibn al-Khaṭīb's proximity to Yūsuf I exceeded that of all others" should be read with caution, it nevertheless speaks to his friend's unique role within the Nasrid court, that of physician<sup>124</sup> The strong personal bond and relationship that Ibn al-Khaṭīb established with Yūsuf was underpinned by his dual role as private secretary and physician, which provided him unique access to the Nasrid sovereign and members of the royal household, increasing his proximity to royal power.

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men, beautiful women and lovely youths [have perished] ... (*O quanti gran palagi, quante belle case, quanti nobili abituri per adietro di famiglie pieni, di signori e di donne, infino al menomo fante rimaser voti! O quante memorabili schiatte, quante ampissime eredità, quante famose ricchezze si videro senza successor debito rimanere! Quanti valorosi uomini, quante belle donne, quanti leggiadri giovani...*).

<sup>124</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344.

## **Chapter 6 The Limits of Loyalty: Ibn al-Khatib between Islamic Spain and North Africa, 755/1354-776/1374**

The previous chapters have attempted to shed light on the manner in which Ibn al-Khatib's influence and authority as chancellor, chief minister and physician in the Nasrid court was fashioned as part of a broader relationship with royal power as well as an expansive network of social and political ties. While examining the role of royal and local networks of patronage as major factors in shaping the production of knowledge, they have sought to illuminate the broader intellectual culture of the period and situate Ibn al-Khaṭīb within his social, political and cultural context. They explored how Ibn al-Khaṭīb's various roles—as a Granadan scholar-minister, chancellor, and chief minister—shaped his intellectual production, the progression of his political career and his historiographical representation of the Nasrid kingdom. More specifically, they sought to illustrate how his close ties with one particular sovereign (Yūsuf I) was instrumental in his remarkable rise from a scribe in the chancery as one of the leading statesmen in Nasrid Granada. Ibn al-Khaṭīb had served as Yūsuf's private secretary, ambassador, physician, closest advisor, and chief minister for the greater part of this king's reign. As such, much of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own authority and status was predicated upon his proximity, service and loyalty to this Nasrid sovereign over a period of 15 years.

This chapter takes as its starting point the cataclysmic moment of the assassination of Yūsuf I in 755/1354 and asks the broader question of how Ibn al-Khaṭīb negotiated his position, status and broader role within his social and political context following the death of this ruler. It examines the last two decades of Ibn al-Khatib's life, focusing on his relationship with both the Nasrid successors to Yūsuf I and the Marinids in North Africa to think about the evolution of his political career and writings in light of his increasingly fluid loyalties. The chapter explores his

transformation from a client and servant of the Nasrid dynasty into an itinerant scholar-official who sought to establish his own individual power and influence across the Islamic West, even as he continued to serve various rulers in both Granada and North Africa. Since these two decades encompassed the period in which his most significant writings on epistolary, statecraft and history took shape, an examination of this turbulent portion of his life highlights how the evolution of his political career and the various crises that he experienced left an imprint upon his ideas. While providing a critical reconstruction of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's career during this period, from the death of Yūsuf I in 755/1354 to his own assassination in Fez in 776/1374, this chapter traces Ibn al-Khaṭīb's continued strategic mobilization of his intellectual and social network of allies to constantly improve his political fortunes and secure both his and his family's future. It looks particularly closely at the letters that he exchanged with his broader network of scholar-functionaries and kings across the Mediterranean world to think about the question of loyalty, ties of obligation and individual strategies of survival in the Islamic West during this period.

The reign of Yūsuf I (r. 733/1333–755/1354) ended abruptly and violently when, at the age of 36, he was assassinated during the congregational 'Īd al-Fiṭr festival prayers in the Royal Mosque in the Alhambra on the 1<sup>st</sup> of Shawwāl 755/October 19 1354.<sup>1</sup> According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who stood only several feet away from Yūsuf I during prayers, the assassin struck the sovereign during the final prostration of the prayer with a dagger that he had concealed under his cloak. Although he cannot be identified, the assassin is referred to by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as a “lowly and evil madman” (*mamrūr min akhābīth al-sawaqa*), by al-Bunnāhī as “a wretch” (*shaqī*) and by Ibn Khaldūn as both “one of the rabble” (*ba'ḍ al-za'ānif*) and “an insane slave” (*'abd min*

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥah al-Badriyyah*, p. 135; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 174, 7: 344–345.

*‘abīd iṣṭabalahu muṣāb fī ‘aqlihi).*<sup>2</sup> While Ibn Khaldūn states that after he had struck Yūsuf, the assassin was put to death almost immediately by being “cut to pieces by the swords of [Yūsuf’s] royal bodyguard,”<sup>3</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb (an eyewitness to the event in question) asserts that the assassin was seized and interrogated but only uttered “gibberish and jumbled phrases” before he was publicly executed and his body burned.<sup>4</sup> In a recent study of the assassination, Francisco Vidal has argued that, regardless of the identity or character of the individual employed to carry out the act itself, the assassination was underpinned by political motives and may have been rooted in discontent among Marinid or North African elements (both in Fez and Granada) regarding Yūsuf’s policies or as an act of vengeance for a particular action, such as the Nasrid ruler’s alleged support of the rebellion of the Marinid prince Abū al-Faḍl against Abū ‘Inān.<sup>5</sup>

Although it has long intrigued historians of the Nasrid kingdom, the assassination’s underlying motives can only remain the object of speculation given the lack of detail in the surviving sources. However, the narrative of the assassination and its aftermath does provide several insights into the broader questions at the heart of this study, namely the question of loyalty and the representation of the ties between court secretaries, palace officials and the sovereigns whom they served. Throughout his account, Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to carefully highlight his own presence during this turbulent moment. He describes how he was among those who personally carried Yūsuf I to his chambers, shortly before the king succumbed to his wounds,<sup>6</sup> a detail that served to demonstrate that he remained by his sovereign’s side until the

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<sup>2</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 151v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 142; al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 238; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 344, 387. Ibn Ḥajar refers to the assassin only as a “crazy person” (*shakhṣ majnūn*) (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 4: 278).

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345.

<sup>4</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 151v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 333; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 135; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 462.

<sup>5</sup> Vidal, “El Asesinato Político en al-Andalus,” pp. 366–370. The rebellion of Abū al-Faḍl and Yūsuf’s disassociation from it, see Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 455, 545, 547–548.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 135.

moment of death. In a number of ways, death served as a powerful and intimate moment that bound together Yūsuf I and Ibn al-Khaṭīb. It was Ibn al-Khaṭīb who was tasked with composing the funerary oration and inscriptions of Yūsuf's tomb, preserved fully within the former's works, a final service for the sovereign that he had served for over two decades, during which time he had seen his own fortunes immensely transformed.<sup>7</sup> The deceased sovereign was commemorated by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as a fallen martyr of Islam (*shahīd*) and memorialized as “the Joseph of our kingdom, whose loss has transformed us all into Jacob in our mourning.”<sup>8</sup>

Yūsuf I left behind three sons: the eldest, Muḥammad, was the son of a Christian concubine (Buthayna), while the younger sons, Ismā'īl and Qays, were the sons of another Christian concubine (Rīm), with whom he had another four daughters (Fāṭima, Mu'mina, Khadīja and Shams).<sup>9</sup> On the same day that Yūsuf I was assassinated, the chamberlain Abū Nua'aym Riḍwān acted swiftly to secure the Nasrid elite's oath of allegiance (*bay'a khāssa*) for the sixteen-year old Muḥammad within the Alhambra, while ensuring that Rīm and her sons remained confined and heavily-guarded in one of the royal palaces.<sup>10</sup> Despite not officially holding the position of chief minister during the latter reign of Yūsuf I, Riḍwān, who is referred to by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as “the eminent elder and veteran statesman” (*shaykh al-dawla*), nonetheless remained the most powerful political figure in the Alhambra, commanding enough authority to ensure the relatively smooth succession of Muḥammad V. Ibn al-Khaṭīb asserts that he himself also played a leading role in the succession, stating that “kingship was bestowed upon [Muḥammad V] by my direct command (*ṣār al-amr ilā hadhā al-rajul bi-istid'ā' ishārati*),” and that it was he who was personally responsible for upholding his right to succeed Yūsuf I as

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<sup>7</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 333–338; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 135–138.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 338.

<sup>9</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 319; al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 239.

<sup>10</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 512, 2: 14; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 145; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 317, 345.

sovereign and administering the oath of allegiance (*wa amsaktu yadahu li-l nāss yawma'idh bādhilān fī tathbūt irthuhu jahdī*).<sup>11</sup> The circumstances of the elevation of Muḥammad V, like that of Muḥammad IV and Yūsuf I, demonstrates the influence and power wielded by palace officials within the Nasrid context in securing the succession of a particular prince.

Approximately three weeks later, the public oath of allegiance (*bay'a 'amma*) was administered in a formal ceremony in Granada in which all leading court officials, notables, military commanders, magistrates and nobles of the Nasrid kingdom were gathered on Shawwāl 22 755/November 9 1354.<sup>12</sup> This text was itself penned by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, in his capacity as chancellor, and is preserved in full within the latter's compendium of chancery documents and correspondence.<sup>13</sup> Both the authorship and preservation of this document by Ibn al-Khaṭīb reflects his various roles—as chancellor, historian and political thinker—in the Nasrid kingdom and the interconnection between them. The oath of allegiance is replete with terminology that illuminates the political theology and dynastic ideology within the Nasrid court as it existed at the death of Yūsuf I, specifically emphasizing the Anṣārī descent of the Nasrid dynasty and their role as defenders of the faith, as discussed in Chapter 4.<sup>14</sup> The text, which is written in rhymed prose, begins by affirming the supremacy of Islam and declaring that “God, the possessor of all sovereignty, grants kingship and glory to whom He wills” (*malik al-mulūk yū'tī al-mulk man yashā' wa ya'izzu man yashā'*),<sup>15</sup> before proceeding to celebrate the unique distinction of the

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<sup>11</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r.

<sup>12</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 464.

<sup>13</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 116–126. Ibn al-Khaṭīb also claims to have personally and physically been responsible for administering the oath (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 17).

<sup>14</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 120–124.

<sup>15</sup> As seen in Chapter 4, this phrase (from Q. 3: 26) had immense importance within the Nasrid context and was inscribed on all Nasrid coinage since this beginning of the reign of Ismā'īl I.



Iberian Peninsula as “the strange land” (*al-qaṭr al-andalusī al-gharīb*) that was conquered, populated and ruled by descendants of the Prophet’s family, supporters and close companions.<sup>16</sup>

The reference to al-Andalus as a “strange land,” which is evident in numerous Andalusī texts during the Nasrid era, was in keeping with a long-established tradition<sup>17</sup> and communicated the sense of spiritual alienation, geographic dislocation and anxiety felt by the Muslims of al-Andalus in the face of the advancing Christian kingdoms.<sup>18</sup> As Maribel Fierro has shown, the concept of “the strangers” (*al-ghurabāʾ*) carried a number of meanings among different groups in al-Andalus during the Middle Ages, gradually acquiring an activist dimension and was specifically instrumentalized within religio-political ideology by the Almohad era.<sup>19</sup> The specific context of its usage by Ibn al-Khaṭīb and the application of the term to the land of al-Andalus as a whole sought to communicate the notion that the Kingdom of Granada was a territory whose population was distinguished by true belief, steadfastness and a militant commitment to preserving Islam in the face of a far superior enemy.<sup>20</sup> Within the works, letters and documents crafted by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who repeatedly invokes this trope, the triumphalist representation of Nasrid Granada as the fortified frontier of Islam whose kings were the defenders of the faith was

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<sup>16</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 116–121. Other letters of Ibn al-Khaṭīb utilize similar formulations for al-Andalus, including *al-jazīra al-gharība* (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 5), *al-qaṭr al-waḥīd* (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 39), *al-waṭan al-gharīb* (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 463). Al-Bunnāhī also describes al-Andalus as “*al-jazīra al-gharība*” (al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 241).

<sup>17</sup> The term “strange” here is drawn from the Prophetic hadith, “Islam began as a stranger and shall return to being a stranger just as it began. So blessed be the strangers!” (*badaʾa l-islām gharīban wa sa-yaʾūdu gharīban fa-tūba li l-ghurabāʾ*), which enjoyed a wide circulation in the Iberian Peninsula since the 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> century (and would continue to be popular well into the Morisco period).

<sup>18</sup> Al-Abbadi, *El Reino de Granada en la Época de Muhammad V*, p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> Maribel Fierro, “Spiritual Alienation and Political Activism: The Ghuraba in al-Andalus during the Sixth/Twelfth Centuries,” *Arabica* 47 (2000), pp. 230–260.

<sup>20</sup> This concept pervades much of the chancery production of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, with a letter to the governor of Almería from 751/1350 referring to al-Andalus as “the lonely country that is completely surrounded by the disbelieving nations and overflowing seas (*al-qaṭr al-waḥīd al-munqaṭiʾ bayna al-umam al-kāfira wa al-buḥūr al-zākhira*)” (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 39). Similarly, in Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī’s treatise on frontier warfare, he asserts that “al-Andalus is exalted over all other nations by virtue of its being caught between an overflowing sea and a powerful enemy” (*bayna baḥr zakhkhār wa ʾadūwin jarrār*) (Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuḥfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, f. 11r).

frequently in tension with a strong sense of foreboding about the fragility of the entire endeavor of Muslim sovereignty in the Iberian Peninsula and the inevitability of Christian conquest. While the preamble to the oath of allegiance itself sanctifies the lineage of the Nasrids beginning with Muḥammad I (“the falcon of the Khazrajite tribe and pre-eminent warrior-king who worked tirelessly to establish the faith of the Prophet”), Ibn al-Khaṭīb conveniently omits his immediate successors in the male line (Muḥammad II, Muḥammad III and Naṣr) and leaps to the reign of Ismā‘īl I, who is praised in the strongest terms as

“the blessing of their kingdom, the caliph to whom obedience is naturally owed, renowned for his glory and bravery in both the West and the East, the Commander of the Muslims by absolute right, the embodiment of integrity and righteousness, whose authority, military power and conquests evoked fear among the Christian enemy. This was the blessed martyr Abū al-Walīd [Ismā‘īl], the son of the noble, sanctified, blessed and eminent lord Abū Sa‘īd Faraj b. Naṣr. [Ismā‘īl] was indeed the lord of all warrior-kings, the most pre-eminent of all the just caliphs and the one who exerted all his efforts in the defense of the faith. He revived the foundations of the faith and, with his light, eradicated the gloom of darkness<sup>21</sup> while glorifying Islam and defending it, dealing a smashing blow to the disbelievers on the frontier.”<sup>22</sup>

The text memorializes Yūsuf I (“the inheritor of the warrior-kingship of [Ismā‘īl] and the very best of kings”) as “the blessed martyr and caliph (*al-shahīd al-ṭāhir al-khalīfa al-imām*), whom we pray God elevates among the ranks of his blessed saints, prophets and martyrs.”<sup>23</sup> This oath of allegiance was crafted to leave little doubt as to the qualifications and legitimacy of the new king as the true and legitimate successor of Yūsuf I. Ibn al-Khaṭīb describes the particular circumstances in which the oath was administered:

[Following the death of Yūsuf] the lords of the royal council (*arbāb al-shūra*), by whose collective agreement and will the Imamate is legitimately bestowed as a covenant, whose number included the most senior scholars (*a‘lām al-‘ilm*), the defenders of Islam (*ḥamat al-Islām*) whose opinions held great value for both

<sup>21</sup> The phrase utilized here, *wa jalā bi nūrihi ghiyāhib al-dajjā*, carries a possible double-meaning whereby the term *al-dajjā* can also be understood as “the darkness of Mudéjarism.”

<sup>22</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 123.

<sup>23</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 123.

religious and worldly affairs, the trustworthy witnesses (*khalaṣ al-thiqāt*), and other leading figures from various factions of society (*wujūh al-ṭabaqāt*) convened in the seat of his kingship Granada to pledge allegiance to the inheritor of his sovereignty, his eldest son, our Lord and the pillar of our religious and worldly affairs, the eminent Sultan and the Just Imam, the Commander of the Muslims Abū ‘Abd Allāh [Muḥammad], on the basis of his right to succeed, his fulfillment of all the pre-conditions of the Imamate and embodying the perfect qualities of kingship...

[...]

All factions of society, elites and commoners, men of knowledge and men of the sword, eminent noblemen, the wealthy and the poor, and all the other people pledged allegiance to the sovereign, illustrating the solid foundation on which this covenant (*bay‘a*) rested. This oath of allegiance—which was an auspicious one, by the grace of God, free of all ambiguity, fulfilling all the conditions of excellence, and guaranteeing a felicitous outcome—was predicated on the same conditions that loyalty and allegiance was sworn to the Prophet. They pledged to maintain their absolute and unwavering obedience and commitment to [the king] from this day forth, abiding closely by the precepts of the Prophet and adhering to the community, to support [the king] whenever he sought aid in both peace and war and during times of hardship and ease, vowing to maintain their loyalty regardless of the circumstances, with God as their witnesses (and verily He is the best of witnesses). To confirm the administration of this oath and their allegiance to him, they placed their right hands within his, ensuring that it became a binding and unbreakable pledge of fealty. As God Almighty states: “Verily, those who violate such a pledge commit the violation to their own detriment. As for those who fulfill their pledge with God, He will grant them a great reward” [Q. 48: 10]. Indeed, God is the most truthful in maintaining his promises and warnings. The people extended their own hands to pledge allegiance [to the king], seeking the mercy of God as a reward for their sincerity, and placed their trust in God and asked him to bring forth His blessings: “O Lord, the gate of your mercy is a blessing for us during times of hardship, we have sought sustenance from the boundless sea of your generous bounty, your forgiveness is our protection whenever we commit sins, your greatness has enriched us, and by your boundless power you have shielded us. We beseech you, O Lord, to give victory to the living among us and have mercy upon the dead, to bestow gratitude upon us for all that you have given, to grant us only good upon the path on which you have guided us. O Lord, our country, encircled by an abundant, overflowing sea and terrible, powerful enemy, is isolated from the lands of Islam.<sup>24</sup> Among us are widows and

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<sup>24</sup> The theme of al-Andalus as besieged Muslim territory that was threatened by menacing Christians while being isolated from the Islamic world by the sea was an important trope since the early Middle Ages, especially within apocalyptic texts such as the *Kitāb al-Fitan* by Nu‘aym b. Ḥammād (d. 228/843). From the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century onwards, following the significant advance of the Christian kingdoms and their conquests of a considerable part of al-Andalus, it became more evident and was often encapsulated in the story, transmitted in legal works, historical chronicles and apocalyptic texts alike, of how the Umayyad caliph ‘Umar II had attempted to abandon the Iberian

the feeble, the decrepit and newborns. You are our Lord and we are your slaves. O Lord, please grant us only felicity from the one to whom we have pledged our loyalty and allegiance, grant him strength and protection, defend us from his enemy and yours, provide him with guidance and strengthen him to follow the path of justice and the illustrious path of his ancestors. O Lord, ensure that we fulfill our obligations to him. O Lord, we now look to him as our leader and we await the opportunity to be his faithful supporters in the fulfillment of his promise to aid those who serve you. O Lord, protect and guide him to fulfill the duties and obligations of the office with which you have endowed him and make our faith victorious by his hand. Verily, the one who finds you has not lost anything, the one who seeks you will never be disappointed, and the one who relies upon who will never be led astray. Amen Amen O Lord of the Universe!”

The following people have written their names in their own hand upon this document as a testimony and witness to their commitments and obligations by the norms and laws of religious and worldly affairs.” Written on Shawwāl 22 755/November 9 1354.<sup>25</sup>

The emphasis on the lords of the royal council, whose members included jurists, litterateurs, military commanders and merchants, demonstrates the deployment of concepts such as consensus (*ijmāʿ*) in discourses about royal legitimacy. It also illustrates an engagement with the classical category of “those with the power to loosen and bind” (*ahl al-ḥall wa-l ʿaqd*), by whose authority kingship was traditionally and legitimately contracted.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the inclusion of the signatures of the leading scholars, notables and nobles of the kingdom testifies to the role of the written word in the contract that governed the relationship between the sovereign and the political elite. The language of the final supplication reflects Granadan anxieties about the advancing Christian kingdoms and echoes the wording of the oath of allegiance to Ismāʿīl I

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Peninsula because he feared that its Muslim population would be too isolated from their co-religionists, surrounded as it was by the sea and Christians (Maribel Fierro, “Christian Success and Muslim Fear in Andalusī Writings during the Almoravid and Almohad Periods,” in *Israel Oriental Studies XVII. Dhimmis and Others: Jews and Christians and the World of Classical Islam* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1997), eds. Uri Rubin and David J. Wasserstein, pp. 155-178 pp. 160–161).

<sup>25</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 124–126.

<sup>26</sup> Although these discussions about consensus and consultative assemblies as underpinnings of royal legitimacy had always been restricted to the realm of theory, they remained important in shaping the representation of sovereignty throughout the late medieval period. See, among others, al-Qalqashandī’s extensive discussion of the proper and legitimate ways in which caliphal authority could be contracted, the role of the oath of allegiance, and the importance of consensus (al-Qalqashandī, *Maʾāthir al-Ināfa fī Maʾālim al-Khilāfa*, 1: 39–59).

in 713/1314, which affirmed that “we, the people of this Iberian Peninsula (*al-jazīra al-andalusiyya*) are separated considerably from the birthplace of Islam and are isolated in this distant land, encircled by a disbelieving enemy and an overflowing sea, caught between water and fire...”<sup>27</sup> In both cases, the role of the sovereign as defender of the faith, whose primary function it was to protect the frontiers of the kingdom, maintain justice and uphold the precepts of Islam, are stressed.

The oath of allegiance to Muḥammad V emphasized the status of the latter as Yūsuf’s “eldest son” and proclaimed that the Nasrid sovereigns “transmitted kingship from father to son,” omitting all mention of Muḥammad IV and constructing a smooth and uninterrupted succession from Ismā‘īl I to Yūsuf I to Muḥammad V in order to establish the latter’s right to rule on the basis of primogeniture.<sup>28</sup> The notion that primogeniture was a foundational principle that dictated Nasrid succession (which witnessed kingship pass to cousins, brothers as well as sons) was tenuous at best, but its emphasis within the text of the ceremonial oath indicates that there were increased efforts during the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century to make it a firmer principle. (These efforts included the common practice of imprisoning or exiling brothers and paternal uncles who could potentially challenge the authority of the reigning sovereign). This emphasis on the primacy of father-son succession was reinforced by the new style of coinage issued in Granada from the reign of Muḥammad IV onwards in which the monarch was listed as the direct descendant (in the male line) of all previous kings since Ismā‘īl I with the coinage of Muḥammad V, for example, reads “the servant of God, the amīr Muḥammad, son of the Commander of the Muslims Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf, son of the Commander of the Muslims Abū al-Wālid Ismā‘īl, of the Nasrid royal

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<sup>27</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 231.

<sup>28</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 122. The status of Muḥammad V as Yūsuf’s “eldest son” is also invoked by al-Bunnāhī (*al-Bunnāhī, al-Iklīl*, p. 239).

house (*ibn Naṣr*)” (see Figure 6)<sup>29</sup> This convention was also reflected within diplomatic correspondence and was a practice that continued (in both documents and coinage) until the very end of the Nasrid kingdom’s history.

Figure 6: Gold dinar of Muḥammad V struck in Granada (Source:

[http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/granada/IMG\\_8139%20-%20ok10.JPG](http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/granada/IMG_8139%20-%20ok10.JPG))



The repeated emphasis on primogeniture as a principle of succession may also have been necessary within the particular context in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb was writing due to the fact that Yūsuf’s eldest sons, Muḥammad and Ismā‘īl, were born only months apart,<sup>30</sup> with the Zayyanid chancellor Yaḥya b. Khaldūn, confusing their age and (inaccurately) claiming that Ismā‘īl was in

<sup>29</sup> Rivero y Sáinz de Varanda, *La Moneda Árabe-Española*, p. 185. The listing of the sovereign’s immediate royal ancestors to indicate father-son transmission of kingship was also a key feature of Almohad coinage during the 7<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> centuries. See, for example, two gold dinars minted during the reign of Almohad caliph Abū Yūsuf Ya‘qūb (r. 580/1184–595/1199): [http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/alomhads/IMG\\_0113.JPG](http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/alomhads/IMG_0113.JPG) and [http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/alomhads/IMG\\_0109.JPG](http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/alomhads/IMG_0109.JPG).

<sup>30</sup> Muḥammad was born on Jumādā II 22 739/January 5 1339 and Ismā‘īl on Rabī’ I 28 740/October 2 1339.

fact the elder of the two.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, as (‘Abd al-Raḥmān) Ibn Khaldūn notes, Yūsuf I may have indicated his preference for the succession of his second son Ismā‘īl “due to the great love that [Yūsuf] bore for this prince and his mother.”<sup>32</sup> It was in this context that the idea of primogeniture became a key part of the legitimation of Muḥammad V.

Muḥammad V was now the third consecutive Nasrid ruler to succeed to the throne before reaching adulthood and, as such, was under the influence of Riḍwān, who acted as regent during the early years of his reign. Referring to Riḍwān’s supreme authority during this period, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that upon Muḥammad V’s accession to the throne, “Abū Nu‘aym Riḍwān, the most eminent military commander and senior servant of the Nasrid house who held the most distinguished and illustrious rank (*qāma bi-bābihi bi-rasm al-ḥijāba al-qā’id al-mu’tamad bi al-tajilla al-makhṣūṣ bi al-qidḥ al-mu’allā min al-mazyā...baqyat rijāl al-kamāl min mashyakhat walā’ihim*) was appointed to the office of chamberlain (*ḥājib*).”<sup>33</sup> More accurately, since Riḍwān was the effective ruler of the kingdom as royal deputy (*nā’ib*) and chamberlain (*ḥājib*), a function that he had first exercised during the reign of Muḥammad IV, Riḍwān was able to exert his influence and power more openly during this period in his capacity as regent for the young sovereign.<sup>34</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb explains that Riḍwān maintained him in his post as chief minister (*al-ikhtisās bi-ism al-wizāra*), bestowed various offices and distinctions upon him, and effectively entrusted him to be his deputy in the governance of the kingdom.<sup>35</sup> Ibn Khaldūn reinforces the notion that Ibn al-Khaṭīb played a major role in the governance of the Nasrid kingdom during the

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<sup>31</sup> Yaḥya ibn Khaldūn, *Bughyat al-Ruwwād*, p. 242.

<sup>32</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 317.

<sup>33</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 141.

<sup>34</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 15.

<sup>35</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 16.

early reign of Muḥammad V, but also states that Riḍwān removed Ibn al-Khaṭīb from his position as private secretary (*kātib al-sirr*):

“the dynasty’s loyal servant, Riḍwān, who was the brilliant commander of the kingdom’s army and the guardian of the princes, exercised authority on behalf of [Muḥammad V] and was the real holder of power (*istabadda bi-l dawla*), confirming Ibn al-Khaṭīb as chief minister but appointing another as the private secretary<sup>36</sup> of Muḥammad V. He thus made Ibn al-Khaṭīb his deputy in managing the affairs of state and his effective partner in exercising control over the kingdom. During this period, the Nasrid kingdom was governed most effectively.”<sup>37</sup>

The specific use of the term *istabadda* is utilized within this context to mean the exertion of absolute control over the figure of the king, his officials and the royal administration. It is productive to closely consider Ibn Khaldūn’s broader point about the harmony between the various members of the royal administration and its relationship to effective statecraft and governance. Almost all the leading executive offices within the kingdom, including that of chamberlain, chief minister, chief judge, chancellor and commander of the military, were all held by the same individuals who had been appointed to these posts during the reign of Yūsuf I. Moreover, they all enjoyed a close bond of association with one another that was fomented as part of their shared experience as scholar-functionaries within the chancery and royal palace. More specifically, none were members of the Nasrid nobility or Granadan patrician families and all were intimately connected with Ibn al-Khaṭīb through either student-teacher relationships or other ties of patronage. The clearest example was the confirmation of al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī as chief judge, and (upon his death) the appointment of Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī to the position.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> If this was the case, then it certainly took place after Dhū-l Qa’da 755/December 1354, when Ibn al-Khaṭīb is referred to as both the chief minister and private secretary of Muḥammad V in an official missive sent to the Marinid court (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 464).

<sup>37</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 444. Despite Ibn Khaldūn’s claims to the contrary, Ibn al-Khaṭīb insists that he served, at least for a time, as the private secretary of Muḥammad V (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 16).

<sup>38</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 141–142; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 18.



While both were leading scholar-officials within the Nasrid kingdom, they were also two of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's most important teachers and intimate friends. On a related note, Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. 'Umar b. Raḥḥū (d. 782/1380), who had displaced the last of the Banū Abī al-'Ulā during the reign of Yūsuf I, was confirmed in his position as Commander of the Holy Warriors (*shaykh al-ghuzāt*).<sup>39</sup> This individual is represented favorably by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as a learned nobleman whose bravery and military skill were complemented by his knowledge of genealogy, courtly refinement and loyal service to Muḥammad V, whom he served as a royal councilor and trusted advisor and with whom he enjoyed a particularly close bond (*wa zādahu khuṣūṣiyyat mulāzamatihī majlis al-rifā' al-ma'rūḍa wa al-rusul al-wārīda wa ijāla qidāḥ al-mashwara*).<sup>40</sup>

The concentration of executive authority in the hands of Riḍwān, embodied in his function as the sole regent of Muḥammad V, made him the chief intermediary with royal power, so that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's authority and influence was tied directly with this figure. Ibn al-Khaṭīb makes it abundantly clear that his own authority was that of an "executive vizier" (*wazīr tanfīdhī*) who implemented the wishes and policies of the ruler (and chamberlain) rather than an individual to whom executive authority was fully delegated, a privilege that he claimed to have enjoyed during the reign of Yūsuf I. As such, he emphasizes his role as the leading confidant and councilor of Riḍwān (*fa-kuntu al-munfarid bi-sirrihi wa mafḍā hamīhi wa shifā' nafsihi*), recognizing that it was his proximity and loyalty to this individual that enabled him to wield such authority.<sup>41</sup> As discussed earlier in this dissertation, the bond of patronage and alliance between the two men was forged about fifteen years earlier, shortly following Ibn al-Khaṭīb's entry into the service of Yūsuf I under the tutelage of Ibn al-Jayyāb. Throughout his works, Ibn al-Khaṭīb

<sup>39</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 64–66; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 142; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 387.

<sup>40</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 16–17; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 142; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 387.

<sup>41</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 16.

articulates his relationship with Riḍwān in terms of companionship/friendship (*al-ṣuḥba*), patronage (*al-muwālāh*) and love (*al-tawaddud*), which are described as the underlying factors which led the chamberlain to entrust him with such a large degree of authority.<sup>42</sup> As such, although he found himself unable to replicate his relationship with Yūsuf I, which was underpinned by the strong personal bond between the two men, during the early reign of Muḥammad V, his proximity and loyalty to Riḍwān brought with it a substantial degree of authority. This demonstrates that the importance of ties between scholar-officials—often framed in terms of “brotherhood,” “love” and “friendship”<sup>43</sup>—were, at times, even more significant than individual bonds formed between an individual and the sovereign.

Loyalty certainly brought certain rewards. Writing around 763/1362, Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself states that his responsibilities between 755/1354 and 760/1359 were considerable and included, among other things,

standing at his side during official functions (*al-wuqūf ‘ala ra’isihi*) clasping his hand during formal ceremonies and the administration of oaths of allegiance (*al-imsāk fī al-tahānī wa al-mubāya‘ah bi-yadihi*), serving as his scribe (*al-kitāba*), producing and presenting chancery documents and foreign correspondence (*al-inshā’ wa al-‘arḍ wa al-jawāb*), attending royal council chamber meetings (*al-khil‘a wa al-mujālasa*), combining the office of the chancery with the title of vizier (*jāmi‘an bayna khidmat al-qalam wa laqab al-wizāra*), bestowed with an honorable and exalted military command (*mu‘azzaz al-khuṭaṭ bi-rasm al-qiyāda*), delegated full authority over Granada, including both the Alhambra and the city proper [in Riḍwān’s absence] (*makhṣūṣ bi-l niyāba ‘anhu fī al-ghayba ‘ala kull mā ishtamala ‘alayhi sūr al-qal‘a wa l-ḥaḍra*), and granted absolute authority over the governance and treasury of the kingdom, while being granted an ample salary (*muṭlaq umūr al-iyāla muḥkaman fī ashtātihi taḥkīm al-amāna muṭlaq al-jirāya*).<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-lḥāṭa*, 2: 16.

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, the letter sent from Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī to Ibn al-Khaṭīb following his designation as Nasrid ambassador to the Marinids in 752/1351 during the reign of Yūsuf I, which praised Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s rising fortunes as a blessing for the kingdom and spoke of their close relationship in terms of “friendship” and “love” (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-lḥāṭa*, 2: 167-168).

<sup>44</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-lḥāṭa*, 2: 17.

During the mid-750s/1350s, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was also appointed to an “exalted and honorable post as military commander and governor of Órgiva<sup>45</sup> (*al-qiyāda bi-‘umālat Urjiya*), with authority that matched the leading nobles of the kingdom (*wilāyat al-ru‘asā’ min qarābatihī*) and granted abundant wealth and land from the royal treasury and patrimony (*musawagh al-aqtā’ al-jamm min mustakhlaṣihī*).”<sup>46</sup> Although he claimed to have already held such a post during the reign of Yūsuf I, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s appointment to a specific military command deepens the understanding of the degree to which there existed a fluidity between executive civil and military authority within Nasrid Granada during this period, a fact which he sought to explicitly highlight: “I simultaneously held the offices of chancellor and chief minister while being distinguished with a military command (*jāmi‘an bayna khidmat al-qalam wa laqab al-wizāra mu‘azzaz al-khuṭaṭ bi-rasm al-qiyāda*).”<sup>47</sup> This statement underscores that the realms of “the sword” and “the pen” existed separately, but were only unified because he himself held both types of office. Ibn al-Khaṭīb describes this period of his career as the apex of his political career in which enjoyed a large degree of distinction and prestige within the Nasrid court.<sup>48</sup>

Reflecting upon his authority during the early reign of Muḥammad V, Ibn al-Khaṭīb proclaims

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<sup>45</sup> A small town located in the Alpujarras.

<sup>46</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 141. According to Ana Echevarría, “the Nasrid treasury was divided between the private patrimony of the dynasty (*mustajlas*) and the public treasury as such (*bayt* or *khizanat al-mal*). The two were quite clearly differentiated in principle, but interchangeable in practice, and the sultan’s private goods could be incorporated into the public treasury, just as goods belonging to the State could be acquired by the dynasty. The sultan’s patrimony consisted of rustic and urban properties, as well as money from taxes. Another entity in the organization of state finances was the treasury of the Muslim community (*bayt al-mal min al-muslimin*), formed by large and small rustic and urban properties, with numerous incomes, indivisible and inalienable patrimony and goods from religious endowments; in the capital it possessed shops, bath-houses, mill and furnaces, as well as areas of land in the *Vega*” (Echevarría, *Knights on the Frontier*, p. 40). It was from these various royal sources of wealth that Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s income and land was disbursed. For more on the *mustakhlaṣ*, see Emilio Molina López, “Más sobre el *mustajlas* nazarí,” in *Estudios árabes dedicados a D. Luis Seco de Lucena (en el XXV aniversario de su muerte)* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1999), eds. C. Castillo Castillo, I. Cortés Peña and J.P. Monferrer Sala, pp. 107–118 and Emilio Molina López, “El *mustajlas* andalusí (I) (s. VIII–IX),” *Revista de Centro de Estudios Históricos de Granada y su Reino* 13-14 (1999–2000), pp. 99–189.

<sup>47</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 17.

<sup>48</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al-A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r.

that he was bestowed with honors and distinctions that greatly expanded his own power and status in the Nasrid kingdom (*taḍā‘afa al-‘izz wa ta‘akada al-ra‘ī wa tamahḥaḍ al-qurb fa-naqalanī min jalasat al-muwājaha ilā ṣaff al-wizāra wa ‘āmalanī bi-mā lā mazīd ‘alayhī min al-‘ināya*), asserting that he “was granted the position of supreme distinction” (*wa aḥallanī al-mahāl alladhī lā fawqahu fī al-khuṣūṣiyya*).<sup>49</sup>

Although largely subordinate to Riḍwān, it is apparent Ibn al-Khaṭīb retained his post as chief minister and chancellor following the enthronement of Muḥammad V, while enjoying new privileges and influence as his authority over the fiscal and military spheres was augmented.<sup>50</sup> The immense wealth and power that he accumulated by the early reign of Muḥammad V is illustrated by the fact that, in addition to his residence in the old city of Granada,<sup>51</sup> he owned two mansions (*quṣūr*) in the Albaicín, one located in the Sharī‘a neighborhood (near the Elvira Gate), where he spent most of his time, and another in ‘Ayn al-Dam‘ (Ayndamar).<sup>52</sup> This mansion at ‘Ayn al-Dam‘ resembled a palace and was heavily ornamented, inscribed with verses composed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb and other leading Granadan scholar-officials, and possessed an impressive dome and fountain.<sup>53</sup> ‘Ayn al-Dam‘ was one of the wealthiest parts of Granada, located in the prosperous and fertile Vega de Granada,<sup>54</sup> and was home to many of the leading patrician families of the city, with the North African traveler Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (who claims to have visited the

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<sup>49</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 17.

<sup>50</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345; Qassabjī, *Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb*, p. 12; al-Harūt, *al-Rasā’il al-Dīwānīyya*, p. 175.

<sup>51</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb describes this residence as a luxurious house made of marble and located on the street inhabited by leading statesmen and functionaries in the old city of Granada (*dārī al-rukhāmiyya bi-zuqāq al-ru‘asā’ min al-madīna*) (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 114).

<sup>52</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r; Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, pp. 87, 90; Lirola Delgado, “La familia de Ibn al-Jatib,” p. 17. For a detailed description of the urban organization of Nasrid Granada, including the names and locations of specific neighborhoods, during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries, see Seco de Lucena, *La Granada Nazarí del Siglo XV*.

<sup>53</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 122–124; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Dīwān*, 1: 174.

<sup>54</sup> Emilio Molina López, “Un modelo de estructura y paisaje agrarios: la Vega de Granada según Ibn al-Jatib,” in *Ciencias de la Naturaleza en al-Andalus. Textos y estudios IV* (Granada: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1996), ed. Camilo Álvarez de Morales, pp. 257–264.

area) describing the area as “a hill covered with gardens and orchards, the like of which cannot be seen in any other land.”<sup>55</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb was highly conscious of his immensely distinguished status during this period and describes himself as “openly displaying his power and wealth (*ẓāhir al-jāh wa al-ni‘ma*).”<sup>56</sup> In enumerating his own possessions during this period, he states that they included: “luxurious clothing, precious books, sumptuous goblets and tableware, lavish furniture, beautiful glassware, perfumes, countless treasures, large estates and residences, vaulted halls, vast farmlands, numerous livestock, oxen, mules and horses, villages and gardens.”<sup>57</sup> These extensive holdings, which included significant amounts of property, luxury items and personal possessions, were paid for through a variety of means, as indicated in Chapter 3. Many of the estates, villages and properties, such as his palace at ‘Ayn al-Dam’, would have been part of royal lands that were granted to Ibn al-Khaṭīb as a reward for his loyal service. The remainder was financed primarily from the royal treasury, from which he received a considerable salary, and through wealth that Ibn al-Khaṭīb had accumulated over the years as a result of his service to Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V. In many ways, it reflected the ample reward and compensation that he had received in exchange for his loyal service to the dynasty. As Ahmad Mukhtar Abbadi has demonstrated, Ibn al-Khaṭīb possessed immense landholdings in the Nasrid kingdom of Granada and North Africa, and even appointed his colleague, the Andalusī scholar-official Abū ‘Amr b. al-Ḥājj al-Numayri, to purchase properties on his behalf in Egypt.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥla*, BnF MS Arabe 2291, 99v. Although never mentioning the Granadan chancellor within this account, it is highly likely that Ibn Baṭṭūṭa met Ibn al-Khaṭīb, possibly at this very ‘Ayn al-Dam’ mansion, while visiting the kingdom since the latter makes use of the North African traveler’s account of the origins of the Black Death in his *Muqni’ al-Sā’il*, a treatise authored at least five years before Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s travelogue was composed.

<sup>56</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 17.

<sup>57</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 443–444.

<sup>58</sup> Ahmad Mukhtar Abbadi, “Los Móviles Económicos en la vida de Ibn al-Jatib,” *al-Andalus* 20 (1955), pp. 214–221; Lirola Delgado, “La familia de Ibn al-Jatib,” p. 16.

Significantly, within his own “On the Norms of the Vizierate” Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that leading functionaries, especially chief ministers, were expected invest in land and property in a manner appropriate to their eminent status in society, as long as this did not lead to greed or compromise their effective governance of the realm.<sup>59</sup> Nor was his residence at ‘Ayn al-Dam‘ solely a vanity or ostentatious display of his power. The extramural or suburban villa had traditionally served throughout Andalusī history as an important site for the display of one’s privileged position in society, the location of various intellectual and cultural developments, as well as being the locus for the cultivation of important social and political ties. As Glair D. Anderson notes for the Umayyad era the suburban villa (or *munya*) “with its luxuriously appointed residential pavilions, and its fertile, watered gardens and orchards set off by strong enclosing walls from the surrounding landscape was the preferred setting for life among the powerful aristocrats of the Umayyad court. The villa served as container and stage for the activities which took place within its boundary walls—not only leisure pursuits such as hunting, fishing, conviviality, and the enjoyment of music and poetry, but also...the state’s official political events.”<sup>60</sup> For his part, Riḍwān resided, along with his family, within one of the palaces of the Alhambra, while Muḥammad V spent much of his time in his residence at the Generalife. Although Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s choice of residence in the Albaicín may appear to indicate a gravitation away from the center of power, the Alhambra, this does not appear to be the case.

During the reign of Muḥammad V, the chancery continued to be the most important institution over which Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s influence can be discerned most clearly, largely as a result of the significant number of surviving documents preserved throughout various manuscripts that

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<sup>59</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, El Escorial MS 554, f. 60r.

<sup>60</sup> Glair D. Anderson, *The Islamic Villa in Early Medieval Iberia: Architecture and Court Culture in Umayyad Córdoba* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2003), p. 4.

illuminate his distinct role and function in shaping Nasrid policy and encouraging closer cooperation with the Marinids, as discussed in Chapter 3. These were several individuals whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb adopted as his apprentices and protégés within the chancery (and judiciary), appointing them to various offices and endowing with a considerable degree of influence and authority. These included individuals such as Ibn Zamrak, Ibn Simāk, Abū Bakr b. Juzayy and Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, the latter two being sons of his two most important teachers and mentors who initiated him into the world of officialdom. As mentioned previously, around 759/1358 Ibn al-Khaṭīb appointed as his deputy within the chancery the scholar ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq b. ‘Aṭīyya al-Muḥāribī, a jurist and secretary who was an immensely learned and competent scholar-official. This figure, who was also pivotal in the transcription in many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s many works (including drafts of “The Comprehensive History”) was delegated a large measure of authority in the chancery.<sup>61</sup>

#### Catastrophe and Exile: Ibn al-Khaṭīb in Marinid Morocco, 760/1359–764/1362

Since his childhood, Ibn al-Khaṭīb had experienced the turbulent political climate of Nasrid Granada firsthand, whether in confronting the reality of Castilian military encroachment, the factionalism and civil strife within the city, or the frequency of regicide. The losses of his father and teachers upon the battlefield at Río Salado, many of his close friends and associates as a result of the Black Death and his greatest supporter and ally, Yūsuf I, to an assassin’s blade, had all left a major impression upon him. However, it was not until the year 760/1359 that he was personally and adversely affected by the political developments within the kingdom. During this period, the vicissitudes of Nasrid dynastic politics nearly ended Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s career and

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<sup>61</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 153.

even his life, destroying much of his acquired wealth and books, and forcing him into exile for the first time. These events forced him to contend with the insecurity of his own political position in the Islamic West. While he was unable to replicate the close relationship and proximity that he had enjoyed with Yūsuf I or with Riḍwān, which had underpinned his ascendancy within the Nasrid court, with any subsequent ruler, Ibn al-Khaṭīb successfully maneuvered himself through the complexities of North African politics between 760/1359 and 763/1362 before re-establishing himself as the chief minister of Muḥammad V following the latter's restoration as sovereign of Granada.

The cataclysmic event took place on Ramaḍān 28 760/August 21 1359, when the nobleman Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl b. Muḥammad b. Faraj, known as “El Bermejo” in the Castilian sources,<sup>62</sup> led a palace coup on that led to the assassination of Riḍwān and the exile of Muḥammad V.<sup>63</sup> This individual, born in Rajab 732/April 1332, was a member of the royal kin (*qarāba*) whose ambitions Ibn al-Khaṭīb continually warns against throughout his work, and was, in fact, the grandson of Muḥammad b. Faraj, the brother of Ismā'īl I, who was briefly established as ruler in Andarax (at the initiative of 'Uthmān b. Abī al-'Ulā) during the late 720s/1320s.<sup>64</sup> Further tying him to the royal family was the fact that he was married to a daughter of Yūsuf I (and half-sister of Muḥammad V), allowing him to increase his influence within the palace.<sup>65</sup> He conspired with members of the nobility (particularly the Banū Fihrī) and officials within the Alhambra, such as the chief of royal police al-Mūrūrī, to overthrow

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<sup>62</sup> In a similar fashion, he is referred to as “l rre vermiglio” in Italian (Villani, *Chronica*, 2: 414) and “El Rey Vermelho” in Portuguese (Pedro Afonso, *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344*, 4: 529). He is referred to throughout this chapter, wherever possible, as “El Bermejo” in order to avoid confusion with Muḥammad V,

<sup>63</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 317, 345; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 146; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 117, 3: 260; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 237. These events are recounted in detail in al-Abbadī, *El Reino de Granada en la Época de Muhammad V*, pp. 28–33.

<sup>64</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 237.

<sup>65</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 239; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 145; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 26; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 237.



Muḥammad V.<sup>66</sup> Along with 100 of his closest supporters and allies, El Bermejo stormed the Alhambra, assassinated Riḍwān in his quarters and enthroned as sovereign his brother-in-law Ismāʿīl, the younger son of Yūsuf I (and half-brother of Muḥammad V).<sup>67</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, among others, highlights the important role played by his mother-in-law Rīm, the concubine of Yūsuf I (and mother of Ismāʿīl II) in these events, stressing that she conspired closely with El Bermejo and provided him with the funds from the treasury to finance the coup.<sup>68</sup> The emphasis upon the alleged role of Rīm in the coup illustrates the dangers that Ibn al-Khaṭīb ascribed to powerful and ambitious concubines within the royal court, a theme that he emphasizes in his political writings. Muḥammad V, who only escaped with his life because he had been in the Generalife with his family, fled to Guadix, where he was granted refuge within its fortress.<sup>69</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that he was at his mansion near the Elvira Gate in Granada during these events, and describes how El Bermejo's allies arrived at his residence and escorted him to the Alhambra.<sup>70</sup> He explains how Ismāʿīl II was initially inclined to show him favor and maintain him in his offices, motivated by the loyal and effective service that Ibn al-Khaṭīb had devoted to the dynasty and by the close bond that had existed between the chancellor and his own father, Yūsuf I.<sup>71</sup>

Despite the favorable predisposition of the new sovereign, however, El Bermejo and other leading figures responsible for the coup argued that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was a major pillar of Muḥammad V's administration and remained a loyal and faithful servant of the deposed

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<sup>66</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 26.

<sup>67</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 317; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152v, 153r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 146; ; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 26–28; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 117–118; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 237; Villani, *Chronica*, 2: 413.

<sup>68</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 145; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 26; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 237.

<sup>69</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 317; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152v, 153r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 27; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 139, 146.

<sup>70</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 27; Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, p. 89.

<sup>71</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 443.

sovereign, and would thus exert all his efforts to ensure that the latter was restored to the throne and the conspirators executed.<sup>72</sup> As a consequence, on the orders of El Bermejo, the effective holder of power in the Alhambra, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was stripped of his offices, incarcerated and tortured.<sup>73</sup> Shortly thereafter, the *shaykh al-ghuzāt* Abu Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Raḥḥu was removed from his position and replaced by Idrīs b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā, indicating the intersection between dynastic politics and broader familial rivalries within the Nasrid court.<sup>74</sup> It is quite significant that Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s writings between 760/1359 and 773/1371, while he remained in the service of Muḥammad V, are largely silent about this attempt to transfer his loyalties and allegiance to Ismā‘īl II. This is only discussed in the autobiographical sections of the later recensions of the “Comprehensive History,” written in Muḥarram 771/August 1369, and in the “Deeds of the Notables,” written after 774/1372 when he had entered the service of the Marinids in Fez. His earlier works were characterized by an emphasis upon the injustice of the dethronement of Muḥammad V, an affirmation of his loyalty to the deposed sovereign, framing his imprisonment, torture and exile as an example of the trials and tribulations that he was willing to endure in the service of this sovereign. While there is little doubt that much of this expression of loyalty reflected Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s genuine devotion to upholding the claims of Muḥammad V, it is also apparent (based upon his own testimony) that he had contemplated abandoning this king at a critical moment to ensure his own political survival, a fact upon which his enemies would capitalize over a decade later.

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<sup>72</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 28; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 285.

<sup>73</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 443; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 445.

<sup>74</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 387. Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Raḥḥū fled to Castile and sought the protection of Pedro I following his removal from office, indicating the relative ease with which the nobility and military elite in Granada were able to find refuge across the frontier in times of conflict (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 262).

These events unfolded only several weeks after the enthronement of Abū Sālim Ibrāhīm (r. 760/1359–762/1361) as the new Marinid sovereign. This individual, a son of the Marinid ruler Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī, had resided in exile Granada under the protection of Yūsuf I and Riḍwān during the reign of his brother Abū ‘Inān, before placing himself under the protection of Pedro I in Sevilla.<sup>75</sup> The latter provided Abu Sālim with indispensable aid (including a small fleet and a considerable force) that allowed him to be enthroned as al-Musta‘īn billāh in Fez on Sha‘bān 15 760/July 12 1359.<sup>76</sup> It was this Marinid sovereign, who had maintained cordial relations with Muḥammad V in Granada,<sup>77</sup> who ensured the safe passage of both Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Muḥammad V to Morocco, with Ibn al-Khaṭīb even claiming that the Marinid sultan’s letter of intercession on his behalf was written in his own handwriting (*ta‘aṭṭafa al-sultān bi l-maghrib ilā shafā‘atin bi bi-khaṭṭihi*).<sup>78</sup> According to his narrative, Abū Sālim offered to recognize the new ruler and sign a peace agreement with him in exchange for the safe passage of *both* Muḥammad V and Ibn al-Khaṭīb, threatening retaliation if Ismā‘īl II did not comply.<sup>79</sup> For Ibn al-Khaṭīb, whose own testimony suggests that his rivals in the Alhambra, led by El Bermejo, planned to have him killed, this intercession ensured that his life was spared.<sup>80</sup> It established an important bond between himself and Abū Sālim that played a significant role in the evolution of his career, as will be explored below. Although this ruler’s motivations were varied, it appears that he was

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<sup>75</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 289–294; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 21; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 116; al-Abbadi, *El Reino de Granada en la Época de Muhammad V*, p. 26.

<sup>76</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 21–22; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 142–143; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 315–317; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 116–117; al-Abbadi, *El Reino de Granada en la Época de Muhammad V*, p. 26.

<sup>77</sup> Several letters exchanged between the sovereigns from Sha‘bān 760/July 1359 are preserved in Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 240–257.

<sup>78</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al- A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 147; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 27–28, 4: 444; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 317, 346; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286; Abbadi, *El Reino de Granada en la Época de Muhammad V*, p. 26.

<sup>79</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 444; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>80</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al- A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r; Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 235.

strongly encouraged to intercede on their behalf by his minister Ibn Marzūq, the effective holder of power in the Marinid court and a close friend of Ibn al-Khaṭīb who was strongly indebted to the latter for interceding on his behalf several years earlier.<sup>81</sup> The appointed Marinid ambassador to Granada was the leading scholar al-Sharīf al-Tilmisānī Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (d. 771/1370),<sup>82</sup> another close affiliate of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his intellectual circle.<sup>83</sup> This individual's efforts enabled Ibn al-Khaṭīb to rejoin Muhammad V in Guadix and proceed with him to Morocco, arriving in Fez on Muḥarram 6 761/November 28 1359.<sup>84</sup> The deposed sovereign's entourage which included Abu Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Raḥḥu and Ibn al-Khaṭīb, consisted of the sovereign's immediate family, a contingent of Nasrid knights, several palace functionaries, and a number of scholar-officials. Several months later, a number of other Granadan scholar-officials, including Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī and Ibn Zamrak also fled to Fez to rejoin the court of Muḥammad V.

Considering the fact that no previously-deposed Nasrid ruler or emir had ever successfully regained the throne, the decision by individuals such as Ibn Zamrak and al-Bunnāhī to accompany Muḥammad V into exile was perceived as a major demonstration of loyalty and would be amply rewarded upon his restoration to the Alhambra in 764/1362. For the majority of scholar-officials, however, the overthrow of Muḥammad V was simply part of the vicissitudes and turbulence of Nasrid dynastic politics. As such, many aligned themselves with the new

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<sup>81</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 324–325, 345–346; al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 193; Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, p. 56. The strong bond between Abū Sālim and Ibn Marzūq was first established while both men were at the court of Yūsuf I during the late 740s/1340s and early 750/1350s, where Ibn Marzūq acted as the advocate and councilor of the exiled Marinid prince. During Abū Sālim's campaign to take the Marinid throne, Ibn Marzūq accompanied and supported him, eventually being appointed his chamberlain and several other executive offices so that "the reins of effective power over the kingdom were in his hands" (Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 324–325).

<sup>82</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 317, 346; Yaḥyā b. Khaldūn, *Bughyat al-Ruwwād*, p. 120; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 118; Ibn Maryam, *al-Bustān*, pp. 311–338.

<sup>83</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 317, 346.

<sup>84</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 317, 346; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 147; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 28, 4: 444; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 118; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

regime, including both ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq b. ‘Aṭiyya al-Muḥāribī and Abū al-Barakāt al-Balaḥḥī who were appointed as Nasrid chancellor and chief judge of Granada respectively.<sup>85</sup> As mentioned above, ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq had been granted a large measure of authority over the chancery by Ibn al-Khaṭīb (and Riḍwān) and had essentially been the acting chancellor for several years prior to being officially appointed to the position during the reign of Ismā‘īl II. As Ibn al-Aḥmar indicates, ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq was rewarded by the new Nasrid ruler for his loyalty and services, “attaining immense power and wealth” (*wa nāla jāh makīn*).<sup>86</sup> Many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s colleagues in the Nasrid chancery found opportunity in the chaos of the regime change. The secretary and scholar Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Quṭba al-Dawsī, for example, (unsuccessfully) petitioned Muḥammad VI to appoint him as the new chancellor.<sup>87</sup> There were also some Nasrid scholar-officials, such as the Jewish physician-astrologer Ibrāhīm b. Zarzal, who joined the court of Pedro I in Seville following the turbulent events of Ramaḍān 760/August 1359.

The arrival of Muḥammad V to Abū Sālim’s court was a festive affair, with the leading dignitaries, scholars and tribal leaders of the Marinid kingdom in attendance.<sup>88</sup> This highly public affair provided Ibn al-Khaṭīb with the opportunity to compose a panegyric in which he lavishly praises the Marinid sovereign as “the best of kings” (*khayr al-mulūk*), the “Leader of truth” (*Imām al-ḥaqq*), and the “possessor of the glorious caliphate” (*al-khilāfa al-‘uẓma*) while

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<sup>85</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 138, 157. According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Juzayy and Abū al-Qāsim Salmūn b. ‘Alī b. Salmūn al-Kinānī (d. 768/1367) were also briefly appointed as chief judges of Granada during the reign of Ismā‘īl II.

<sup>86</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 138.

<sup>87</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 80.

<sup>88</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al- A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 28–29; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 118.

expressing immense gratitude for his role in interceding on behalf of Muḥammad V.<sup>89</sup> He specifically asks the Marinid sovereign to seek vengeance on behalf of the exiled Nasrid king and support him with both financial and military means.<sup>90</sup> The poem ends with Ibn al-Khaṭīb proclaiming his own indebtedness to Abū Sālīm for rescuing him from certain death and bestowing his favor and bounty upon him.<sup>91</sup> Like the panegyric recited in Fez during his diplomatic mission to Abū ‘Inān a few years earlier, this particular poem appears to have made a powerful impression upon the Marinid sovereign and his court. According to Ibn Khaldūn, who recited the poem at a gathering of scholars (*majlis*) in Cairo in Ṣafar 794/January 1392, when Ibn al-Khaṭīb delivered the line describing the plight of Muḥammad V “the entire court of Abū Sālīm began to weep profusely,” an illustration of both the poem’s content and its passionate delivery by its author.<sup>92</sup> It reflected Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s deployment of his rhetorical abilities in the service of statecraft and diplomacy, utilizing his immense learning and skill in the service of the Nasrid dynasty. The panegyric would become one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s most famous poems and was often preserved in full within his own works, as well as other contemporary and later sources.<sup>93</sup> Abū Sālīm provided the exiled Nasrid sovereign with a luxurious palatial residence in Fez and provided him and his household with a generous stipend while allowing him to maintain his royal dignities and titles.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 147–151; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 318–321, 346; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 118–121; al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 196–200. For a Spanish translation of this poem, see Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Historia de los Reyes de la Alhambra*, pp. 239–244.

<sup>90</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 150.

<sup>91</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 151.

<sup>92</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 121.

<sup>93</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r–153v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 147–151; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 318–321, 346; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 118–121; al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 196–200.

<sup>94</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 321; Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 121. For a detailed discussion of the exile of Muḥammad V and his court in Marinid Morocco, see al-Abbadi, *El Reino de Granada en la Época de Muhammad V*, pp. 35–53.

For his part, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was also generously treated by the Marinid sovereign. He granted the exiled chancellor “a lavish residence, a considerable living—consisting of a both lands (*iqṭāʾ*) and a large stipend (*jirāya*)—and a distinguished position in his court (*wa jaʿalanī bi-majlisihi saḍran*).”<sup>95</sup> During his first few months in Fez, Ibn al-Khaṭīb consolidated his ties with many of the scholar-officials at the Marinid court and gained the favor of Abū Sālim, an individual that he had known since the latter’s exile in Granada. He continued to compose various works, including a substantial book on medicine titled “A Work by a Physician for Those He Loves” (*ʿAmal man Ṭabb li man Ḥabb*), which he dedicated to the Marinid sovereign (referred to, once again, as “God’s caliph”).<sup>96</sup> This work was largely a reiteration of Books III and IV of Avicenna’s “Canon on Medicine” (*al-Qanūn fī-l ṭibb*) and cites several Andalusī medical authorities (such as Ibn Zuhr and Ibn al-Bayṭār), but also includes substantial commentary from Ibn al-Khaṭīb on various medical matters. The work provides the clearest illustration of his continued intellectual commitment and interest in medicine even in the midst of the larger political crises and affairs of state in which he was engaged. Despite being endowed with a considerable stipend, lands and influence in Fez, where he remained for several months, Ibn al-Khaṭīb, for reasons that remain unclear, sought permission to move to Salé. His justification was his desire to seclude himself from politics in order to focus on worship and writing.<sup>97</sup> The Marinid sovereign acquiesced to this request, issued a document in Rabi II 21 761/March 11 1360 granting Ibn al-Khaṭīb permission to travel freely throughout his kingdom<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 444; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 346; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿUqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 445; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>96</sup> Although I have not been able to acquire access to the copy preserved in the al-Qarawiyyin Mosque in Fez (cataloged under the number 607/40), it is possible that this is the royal manuscript of the *ʿAmal man Ṭabb li man Ḥabb* that was presented by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to Abū Sālim.

<sup>97</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 444.

<sup>98</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 453–455.

and secured for the Granadan chancellor a considerable and continuous stipend from the royal treasury. Shortly thereafter, in Rajab 761/June 1360, he interceded directly on Ibn al-Khaṭīb's behalf with the new regime in Granada to ensure that the latter's books, moveable property and wealth were delivered safely to Morocco.<sup>99</sup>

Although he was endowed with a considerable stipend, reunited with his family and part of his property, and eventually settled in Salé on the Atlantic coast, this series of events constituted the first major reversal of political fortune that Ibn al-Khaṭīb found himself facing and he consistently refers to his tribulations as a catastrophe (*nakba*).<sup>100</sup> Despite being the Nasrid chief minister and chancellor, he had been publicly humiliated, incarcerated and tortured.<sup>101</sup> His wealth, including many of his books, had been plundered and his various properties, including vast farmlands and large estates, confiscated by the royal treasury and parceled out to El Bermejo and his supporters.<sup>102</sup> He compared his situation with that of Ja'far al-Muṣḥafī, the chamberlain of the Umayyad caliph Hishām II who was displaced by Ibn Abī 'Āmir al-Manṣūr.<sup>103</sup> This comparison embodied Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own anxieties that, like Ja'far, he was an upwardly mobile scholar-official who lacked an independent power-base, source of wealth or significant links with the nobility, rendering his political status relatively precarious since it was predicated upon the patronage of the sovereign. Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that he left Granada in 760/1359 with his family "possessing only my life."<sup>104</sup> Seeking vengeance for the wrongs done to him and his

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<sup>99</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 346; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 445; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286; al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 193. The correspondence between Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Abū Sālim on this matter is preserved in Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 81–90.

<sup>100</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al-A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 147; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 28.

<sup>101</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 345.

<sup>102</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al-A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 28, 4: 443–444; al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 193; Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, pp. 89–91.

<sup>103</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 444. For a discussion of these events, see Ballestín Navarro, *al-Mansur y la dawla 'amiriya*, pp. 113–134 and Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal*, pp. 110–115.

<sup>104</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al-A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153r.



patrons, Ibn al-Khaṭīb turned to his longstanding and most effective weapon: the written word. While in the Marinid kingdom, he devoted his time to writing a history of the Nasrid dynasty, an intellectual autobiography, as well as various other works (discussed below). Ibn al-Khaṭīb's biography of Ismā'īl II (r. 760/1359–761/1360) depicts him as a completely powerless, naïve and feeble ruler who was under the absolute influence of El Bermejo.<sup>105</sup> The latter is consistently represented in the worst possible terms, often being referred to as “the traitor” (*al-ghādir/al-khā'in*) or “the impetuous rebel” (*al-mutawathib*), an indication of the importance of the language of loyalty and treason; this is also reflected in the writings of other Nasrid scholar-officials on El Bermejo.<sup>106</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb's panegyric for Abū Sālim shortly after arriving in Fez proclaimed that the “legitimate oath of allegiance [to Muḥammad V] was dissolved by means of betrayal (*al-ghadr*).”<sup>107</sup>

Significantly, the reign of Muḥammad VI is omitted entirely from Ibn al-Khaṭīb's *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, written between 761/1360 and 763/1362, indicating that he viewed the reign of this sovereign as completely illegitimate. Probably as a result of the bloody circumstances of his ascension to power, Muḥammad VI adopted the regnal title al-Ghālib bi-llāh,<sup>108</sup> evoking the founder of the Nasrid dynasty, although whatever other strategies of legitimation he adopted remain obscure. Ibn al-Khaṭīb's biography of Muḥammad VI describes him as an immoral, unrefined youth whose intimate associates included criminals and bandits from Granada's

<sup>105</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al-A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 152–153.

<sup>106</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 403; al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, p. 239.

<sup>107</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 149; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 318–321; al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 196–200.

<sup>108</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 77. This was the title that El Bermejo utilized in official documents and diplomatic correspondence, as indicated by letters sent to Pedro IV (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 73–74, 160). Significantly, this also appears to be the regnal title adopted by Ismā'īl I following his overthrow of Naṣr earlier in the century.

underworld.<sup>109</sup> However, Ibn al-Khaṭīb does not conceal the fact that El Bermejo did have considerable support among Granada's patricians (*a'yān al-ḥaḍra*) and nobles (*mashāyikh al-madīna*), with whom he collaborated closely both during the coup and during his own rule.<sup>110</sup> This is supported by the narrative of these events provided by Matteo Villani, a contemporary source writing in Florence whose account would have largely been based on the eyewitness testimony of Genoese merchants based in the Nasrid Granada, which describes Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl as "an influential and powerful nobleman with a considerable following (*Raisalem suo barone, uomo di grande animo e séguito*)," a statement which provides additional insight into the particular dynamic that facilitated the rise of this individual.<sup>111</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb specifically censures these patricians and noblemen for enabling the civil strife (*fitna*) that followed and condemns them for "having abandoned all reason and any sense of justice" for their failure to oppose El Bermejo.<sup>112</sup> He explicitly compares him to Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Jabbār, an Umayyad contender for the throne during the turbulent civil strife in Córdoba during the early 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>113</sup>

The strong noble and patrician support for Muḥammad VI/El Bermejo is indicated by the fact that his closest allies, whom he appointed as chief ministers to Ismā'īl II, belonged to the traditional military and political elite. The first, Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Abī al-Faṭḥ al-Fihri (d.

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<sup>109</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152r–152v. This hostile representation and negative characterization of El Bermejo is repeated by later sources that depended heavily upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings, such as Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 237.

<sup>110</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152r–152v.

<sup>111</sup> Villani, *Chronica*, 2: 413.

<sup>112</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152v. Villani explicitly states that El Bermejo drew upon his considerable supporters to enforce his claim to the throne, and notes that there was no opposition from the Granadan populace to his enthronement as sovereign following the assassination of Ismā'īl II (*col suo séguito efforza si fé coronare re, nonn essendo della schiatta e casa reale, e da tutti i regnicoli di Granata quasi spontaneamente fu ubbidito*) (Villani, *Chronica*, 2: 414).

<sup>113</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152r. For more the events of the "fitna" being referenced by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, see Peter C. Scales, *The Fall of the Caliphate of Córdoba: Berbers and Andalus in Conflict* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

762/1361)<sup>114</sup> belonged to one of the most powerful noble families in Granada (the Banū Fihri), who had played a major role in the governance and administration of the kingdom since the reign of Muḥammad I. The other, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Mas’ūd al-Muḥāribī, was a leading Granadan patrician and the son of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Muḥāribī, the distinguished chief minister of Ismā‘īl I, indicating the manner in which the rise of El Bermejo re-established the authority and privileged position of traditional elites in the Nasrid court. Ibn al-Khaṭīb condemned these chief ministers in the strongest terms, proclaiming that “there was no vizierate in the history of al-Andalus that brought more hardship or was more oppressive than these ones.”<sup>115</sup> Less than a year after the coup that dethroned Muḥammad V, El Bermejo assassinated Ismā‘īl II, the prince Qays (another son of Yūsuf I), the royal tutor ‘Abbād and a number of leading officials (including the Banū Fihri) on Sha‘bān 27 761/July 13 1360.<sup>116</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, whose informants in Granada kept him informed about developments in the Alhambra, condemned the Banū Fihri for their “treasonous behavior” (*al-khiyāna*) and took particular pleasure in celebrating their downfall and eventual assassination at the hands of their co-conspirator El Bermejo as befitting individuals who engage in such duplicitous conduct.<sup>117</sup> His writings on these matters provided Ibn al-Khaṭīb with the opportunity to elucidate and develop the concepts of loyalty, betrayal and treason as significant political categories that framed broader discourses about kingship.

Although remaining silent on the matter in all his other works, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s “Deeds of the Notables,” composed in North Africa between 774/1372 and 776/1374, by which time his

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<sup>114</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 152–153; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 183–184.

<sup>115</sup> This negative characterization of Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Fihri is also evident in Ibn Ḥajar’s account (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 238), indicating Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s influence in shaping the legacy of Muḥammad VI, his courtiers, and his reign.

<sup>116</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 154; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 237; Villani, *Chronica*, 2: 414.

<sup>117</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 153; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 402–403.

relationship with Muḥammad V had deteriorated completely, describes El Bermejo's military victory over a Castilian force near Guadix in Rabī' I 19 763/January 16 1362 as "an unparalleled accomplishment in which immeasurable spoils were taken and in which 1200 people, including eminent knights and leading noblemen, were taken prisoner and led through the narrow streets of Granada with their hands bound."<sup>118</sup> He asserts that it was this military defeat that prompted Pedro I to redouble his efforts to support Muḥammad V in reclaiming his kingdom, a narrative reinforced by Villani.<sup>119</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb's student, the historian Ibn al-Aḥmar, who was far more sympathetic to El Bermejo, also emphasizes the latter's strong anti-Castilian stance.<sup>120</sup> Another important factor motivating Pedro's support for Muḥammad V was El Bermejo's alliance with Aragón against Castile,<sup>121</sup> which was a major departure from traditional Nasrid diplomacy with the Christian Kingdoms.<sup>122</sup> While providing some insight into the reign of Muḥammad VI—especially when read alongside other sources, such as Villani and contemporary Aragonese sources—Ibn al-Khaṭīb's various accounts of this individual, who is represented as particularly villainous and barbaric whose rule "caused even the very institutions of kingship, royal authority and governance to fall into disarray," constituted nothing less than character assassination and propaganda. It contrasted sharply by the more sympathetic portrayals of his contemporaries such as the Nasrid poet-prince and historian Ibn al-Aḥmar, who praises (his cousin) Muḥammad VI in the strongest terms as a just sovereign and brave warrior who "revived the *sharī'a* and followed

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<sup>118</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152v. Among those taken prisoner after the battle was Diego García Padilla, the Master of Calatrava (Pedro Afonso, *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344*, 4: 529; Villani, *Cronica*, 2: 563–564).

<sup>119</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152v; Villani, *Chronica*, 2: 564.

<sup>120</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 79.

<sup>121</sup> Idrīs b. 'Uthmān b. Abī al-'Ulā, who had spent significant time in exile in Barcelona, served as an important intermediary with Aragón on behalf of Muḥammad VI, as indicated by surviving diplomatic correspondence (ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 71–72 and ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, Suplemento 27).

<sup>122</sup> ACA, Colecciones, Cartas árabes, no. 73–74, 160; Estow, "War and Peace in Medieval Iberia," in *The Hundred Years War: A Wider Focus*, pp. 163–165; al-Abbadi, *El Reino de Granada en la Época de Muhammad V*, pp. 43–45.

the path of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs.”<sup>123</sup> It is an illustration of the power of the written word in shaping the legacy of individuals, especially when the pen was wielded by as shrewd and vindictive an individual as Ibn al-Khaṭīb, that the predominant image of Muḥammad VI that has survived (even defining modern scholarly perceptions of this individual’s reign) is heavily dependent upon the Granadan chancellor’s narratives about him.<sup>124</sup> When wielded by as skilled an individual as Ibn al-Khaṭīb, whose writings about his enemies were rhetorically powerful while being often pervaded by satire and crude insults (for humorous effect), the written word served as a devastating weapon in a social, cultural and political context where reputation, honor and virtue were perceived as the most important assets possessed by noble and elite individuals. As will be seen below, this was a strategy that he continually employed against individuals that he believed had wronged or betrayed him.

Writing polemics against his political opponents was only one of many endeavors in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb was engaged while in the Marinid kingdom. He spent the first half of the year 761/1360 traveling across the Marinid kingdom, visiting the High Atlas Mountains,<sup>125</sup> Marrakech and Aghmat, and the Atlantic Coast, before settling in Salé in Rajab 761/May 1361. This journey was chronicled within his intellectual autobiography, the “The Shaking Off of the Travel Bag in the Comfort of Exile” (*Nuḥḍat al-Jirāb fī ‘Ulālat al-Ightirāb*), which was composed in Salé between 761/1360 and 763/1362. Although only two of its three volumes have survived, it contains invaluable information from Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s travels and experiences in al-Andalus and the Maghrib, providing specific details about various events, individuals and places. It constitutes a particularly rich source of information for the religious, geographic, and social

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<sup>123</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 77–80.

<sup>124</sup> For an illustrative example, see Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 237–238.

<sup>125</sup> For a discussion of his journey to the High Atlas, see María Jesús Viguera Molins, “Ibn al-Jatib visita el monte de los Hintata,” in *Homenaje al Profesor J. M. Fórneas Besteiro* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1994), 1: 645–659.

landscape of the late medieval Maghrib while also providing an important window into Ibn al-Khaṭīb's worldview during this critical moment in his life. It illustrates his encounter with important relics and monuments associated with Andalusī and Maghribī history, including the mosque of Ibn Tūmart in Tinmel,<sup>126</sup> the tomb of al-Mu'tamid b. 'Abbād,<sup>127</sup> the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>-century poet-prince of Seville, and the history and memoirs written by 'Abd Allāh b. Buluggīn, the last Zirid ruler of Granada.<sup>128</sup> The work also greatly illuminates the extent of his intellectual and political network of scholar-officials, kings, and statesmen by this point in his career, since it preserves many of the documents and letters composed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb (and those that he received) while in Morocco between 761/1360 and 764/1362. The historical, literary and stylistic aspects of work has recently been studied by Laila Jreis Navarro, whose close analysis of the *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb* examines the importance of epistolary and itinerancy as two major aspects of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life during his time in the Marinid kingdom.<sup>129</sup> The Granadan statesman's itinerancy is also evident in another work which was composed in Salé, "The Criterion of Selection in Enumerating Localities and Residences" (*Kitāb Mi'yār al-ikhtiyār fī dhikr al-ma'āhid wa-al-diyār*), which provides a description of the various towns and cities of both the Marinid and Nasrid kingdoms.

Upon settling in Salé in Rajab 761/May 1361, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was furnished with an estate and received a generous stipend from the Marinids. About four months after his arrival, however, tragedy struck again for Ibn al-Khaṭīb when his concubine (*umm walad*), Iqbāl, died on Dhū-l-Qa'da 6 762/September 7 1361.<sup>130</sup> While most scholars of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life have often

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<sup>126</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 49–52.

<sup>127</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 57.

<sup>128</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 56.

<sup>129</sup> Laila M. Jreis Navarro, *Entre las dos orillas: El viaje de exilio de Ibn al-Jāṭīb a través de su obra Nufāḍat al-ġirāb fī 'ulālat al-igtirāb* (Granada: University of Granada PhD Dissertation, 2016).

<sup>130</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb* 2: 205; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Dīwān*, 2: 505.

assumed that Iqbāl was both Ibn al-Khaṭīb's wife and the mother of his sons 'Abd Allāh, 'Alī and Muḥammad, his own writings about her provides evidence to the contrary. Significantly, he describes Iqbāl as "the mother of my two infant sons and my daughters,"<sup>131</sup> clearly indicating that she was not the mother of his three eldest sons ('Abd Allāh, 'Alī and Muḥammad), all of whom would have been nearing adulthood by this time. There is no surviving evidence about the identity of the mother of these three sons, all of whom were born before Rabī' II 757/May 1356. However, in light of the polemic against Ibn al-Khaṭīb by his enemies, in which they highlighted his inability to contract a fortuitous marriage to a woman from the established noble or patrician families, it is plausible that their mother had also been a concubine or a wife of humble origins. As for Iqbāl herself, very little is known about her, but it is clear that she was was a concubine or slave girl (possibly of Christian origins), who had been a member of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's household as early as 759/1358. The usage of the technical and juridical term *umm al-walad* indicates that she was not his "wife" (*zawja*). In classical Islamic jurisprudence *umm al-walad* (literally "mother of a son") is the specific legal designation of a slave-woman who gives birth to her master's son.<sup>132</sup> He describes her as his long-term companion and pillar of support who had struggled through the adversity of trials and exile alongside him:

On Dhū-l Qa'da 6 762 [September 7 1361], an event occurred which shook the foundations of my life. My concubine (*umm walad*) and mother of my two infant sons and my daughters died, in this land of exile and pavilion of longing, after enduring many tribulations. I was overcome with intense grief and mourning at her passing. Indeed, she was the most pre-eminent women of her time and was distinguished above all others by her immense generosity, patience, and in the perfection of virtue. She was well known for this among the people of both lands (*al-qaṭrayn*). I buried her in the garden adjacent to my residence in Salé,

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<sup>131</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufūdāt al-Jirāb* 2: 205.

<sup>132</sup> For an extensive discussion of the legal and social history of the concept, see Joseph Schacht, "Umm al-Walad," *EI*<sup>2</sup>, eds., P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs; and Marion H. Katz, "Concubinage, in Islamic law," *EI*<sup>3</sup>, eds. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson. For a thorough treatment of slavery, concubinage and law in the medieval Islamic world, see Kecia Ali, *Marriage and Slavery in Early Islam* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2010).

establishing an endowment (*hubs*) to ensure the presence of a reciter of the Qur'an at her tomb. I composed the following poem, which both mourns and celebrates her, which was as her epitaph:

My soul has been shaken, my unease has been heightened and grief has overtaken me following the loss of Iqbāl

She was my precious and beloved treasure when my times had betrayed me, and my pillar of support when I faced adversity

I placed her tomb in my own residence as a consolation for myself in the face of harsh reality

As a delightful monument that maintained the illusion that she remained with me, for how can I have any respite after her passing?

The Eternal God has poured forth rain [of blessings?] upon your tomb in this foreign land, and it remains a recipient of every downpour

You were my source of wealth and strength when my trials and tribulations did away with my riches, and you were my hope and longing

Now that your face has faded into the earth of Salé, I have no consolation

By God, my sorrow and misery will not dissipate

So wait for me, for love and longing have disquieted me and have made me restless and expeditious

Save me a place at your side for I will depart from this world [to join you] very shortly

The inversion of your very name is an augury that reveals my own future and fate.<sup>133</sup>

The final line of the poem embodies the various levels of meaning often employed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb within his writing. While Ibn al-Khaṭīb is alluding to the fact that the antonym of the word “Iqbāl” (‘to approach’ or ‘advance’) is “Idbār” (‘to retreat’ or ‘go back’), when the letters of the Arabic word “Iqbāl” are inverted, it becomes “lā baqā,” meaning “there is no

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<sup>133</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nuḥḍat al-Jirāb* 2: 205; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Dīwān*, 2: 505–506. For a literary analysis (and Spanish translation) of this poem, and its contextuation within the broader genre of elegiac poetry within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's corpus, see Saleh al-Zahrani, “La queja y la elegía, dos elementos fundamentales de la melancolía en el Dīwān de Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 57 (2008), pp. 402–407.



permanence,” alluding to the certainty of death. Both senses are intended by Ibn al-Khaṭīb in this context. It is clear from this passage and poem that he had a particularly close bond with Iqbāl and remained deeply devoted to her until her death in 762/1361. The poem illustrates the continued trauma of his experience of imprisonment (in Granada) and exile (in Morocco).

Among other things, it may have been this loss which prompted his increasing turn towards Islamic mysticism during this period of his life. During his exile in Salé and following his restoration as Nasrid chief minister in 763/1362, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s writings were marked by a stronger focus on Islamic mysticism and Sufism. This is most evident from his close association with Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. ‘Āshir (d. 765/1364),<sup>134</sup> considered a leading ascetic and mystic in Salé who was often referred to as a living saint (*walī*). One of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s students, Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusaṭīnī, describes this figure as “exceptional in his devotion, piety and ascetism” and an individual who was often frequented by both the saintly and pious, as well as sovereigns and statesmen.<sup>135</sup> A proclivity towards mysticism is also apparent from his composition of a work titled *The Invocation of Grace in Pondering the Secrets of Existence* (*Istinzāl al-Luṭf al-Mawjūd fī Sirr al-Wujūd*) and “The Garden of Acquaintance with the Nature of Noble Love” (*Rawḍat al-Ta’rīf bi-l Ḥubb al-Sharīf*) during his second tenure as chief minister. Although a concern with these broader themes can be discerned in his earlier works, with the “Comprehensive History” incorporating a considerable number of mystics and ascetics, they become more evident within his later writings. Moreover, his own activities in both North Africa and Granada between 761/1360 and 776/1374 included his endowment of several Sufi loges (*zawāyahs*), the composition of a number of mystical-philosophical treatises and an increased affiliation with leading ascetics and mystics.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Ibn Qunfudh, *al-Wafayāt*, pp. 365–366; al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Tīb*, 9: 206–209.

<sup>135</sup> Ibn Qunfudh, *Uns al-Faqīr wa ‘Izz al-Ḥaqīr*, pp. 42–43

<sup>136</sup> In addition to Ibn ‘Āshir, some of his associates during this period included Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusaṭīnī and Ibn ‘Abbād al-Rundī (Ibn Qunfudh, *Uns al-Faqīr wa ‘Izz al-Ḥaqīr*, pp. 123–124).

Although the ordeal of being imprisoned, having his power and wealth stripped from him, and the experience of exile undoubtedly shaped Ibn al-Khaṭīb's worldview in fundamental ways, this does not wholly account for his mystical tendencies. Rather than viewing Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings on the topic as a demonstration of his "conversion" to Sufism that can be reduced to a single set of experiences, as some have attempted to argue, it is more productive to interpret his mystical proclivities in light of the broader fact that the boundaries between the juristic, mystical, administrative, military and political classes had become increasingly fluid in the late medieval Islamic West. Many scholar-officials, including Ibn al-Khaṭīb, participated in various discourses, whether juristic, political, or mystical, throughout their careers. It should be recalled that Ibn al-Khaṭīb had been immersed in mystical philosophy since he was a child. The Nasrid kingdom had been an important center of Sufism since the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, which Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to document in his own "Comprehensive History of Granada." In addition to individual displays of public piety and ascetism,<sup>137</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb's historical and biographical writings stressed the importance of the circle of Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Sāḥilī (d. 735/1335)<sup>138</sup> and that of Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Maḥrūq (d. 701/1301),<sup>139</sup> as leading proponents of mystical ideas and rituals throughout the Nasrid kingdom. Ibn al-Khaṭīb consistently refers to these individuals as righteous saints (*al-ṣāliḥīn*) and sought to closely associate himself with them. He particularly admired the rising Shādhilī order,<sup>140</sup> whose greatest

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<sup>137</sup> See, for example, the cases of 'Ā'ishah bt. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Āṣim (d. 705/1305), who maintained a 20-year fast and resided in a mosque in Algeciras (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 2: 145), and Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ḥasnūn al-Ḥimyarī (d. 705/1305), originally from Baeza, referred to as a famous ascetic (*zāhid*) and "miracle worker" (*mashhūr bi-l karāmāt*) (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 3: 262).

<sup>138</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 3: 179, 196.

<sup>139</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 4: 121. This individual constructed an important lodge in Granada and is referred to as "the reviver of Sufism in al-Andalus." Ibn al-Khaṭīb also admired Ibn Maḥrūq's disciple, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Judhāmī (d. 727/1327), who is described as "the leader of the Sufis" (*shaykh al-ṣūfiyyah*) (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 4: 64).

<sup>140</sup> A particularly significant figure in the development of the Shādhilī order in the Islamic West was Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ja'far al-Sulamī (d. 750/1349). He had met Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh in Alexandria, becoming one of

champion in the Islamic West in the mid-8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century was Ibn ‘Abbād al-Rundī. Many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s teachers were associated with several of these circles of Sufis, and were themselves major proponents of mystical philosophy, asceticism and various forms of Sufi devotion. For example, Ibn al-Jayyāb had been a disciple of Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Sāḥilī, and authored numerous poems on asceticism and divine love are (preserved in his *dīwān* by Ibn al-Khaṭīb).<sup>141</sup> This was also the case for Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. Ṣafwān, whose mystical-philosophical tendencies, embodied within his poetry (which was also compiled by Ibn al-Khaṭīb), were renowned among his contemporaries.<sup>142</sup>

Fewer figures among Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s teachers exercised a greater degree of influence upon his conception and dedication to Sufism than Abu al-Barakāt al-Balafiqi. This individual was viewed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as reflecting the ideal scholar-official who also maintained a commitment to piety and upheld the ascetic ideal. This was one of the many reasons that Ibn al-Khaṭīb expressed his utter disappointment when Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafiqī accepted the appointment as chief judge of Granada during the reign of Muḥammad VI, since this indicated an acknowledgement of the political legitimacy of this ruler.<sup>143</sup> One particular site, Rābitat al-‘Uqāb (“The Eagle’s Lodge”), on a hill overlooking Granada, was an immensely important site within the writings of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and constituted a place of spiritual retreat as well as socialization

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his followers and joining the order. Al-Sulamī authored a major work, which Ibn al-Khaṭīb appears to have read, titled “The Book of Lights” (*Kitāb al-Anwār*) in which he wrote the biographies and compiled the writings of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh and Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 3: 190).

<sup>141</sup> Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, pp. 69–71, 79, 85–89, 99–101, 112

<sup>142</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 132–136. Another close associate of Ibn al-Khaṭīb during his early years in the Nasrid administration was Abū Ṭāhir Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ṣafwān al-Qaysī (d. 749/1348), a mystic who served as a preacher in one of Granada’s mosques during the reign of Yūsuf I. He wrote a commentary on al-Harawī’s *Manāzil al-Sā’irīn*, which Ibn al-Khaṭīb seems to have read and appreciated (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭah* 3: 236–239; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Awṣāf al-Nās*, pp. 119–120; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katībah al-Kāminah*, pp. 54–55; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 3: 191).

<sup>143</sup> Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, p. 52

for him and his close associates.<sup>144</sup> This affinity of many scholar-officials for Sufism, particularly its more institutionalized variations, illustrates the overlapping social spaces and intellectual culture of both mystics and statesmen. This did not mean the absence of serious tensions. Many ascetics looked negatively upon “the worldly men of politics” (*ahl al-riyāṣah*), such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb, whose power, wealth and ambition were viewed as contravening the essence of the Sufi path and the principles of asceticism (*zuhd*). Similarly, many jurists viewed certain ideas and practices associated with Islamic mysticism to be problematic, particularly when supported by leading political authorities. However, none of these avenues of critique prevented Ibn al-Khaṭīb from drawing upon the principles of mysticism for his own edification, promoting its more intellectual and philosophical manifestations, and even appropriating its power and prestige to buttress his own charismatic authority. As discussed below, this aspect of his life and writings would eventually be instrumentalized by Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s enemies in orchestrating his demise.

#### The Contradictions of Exile: Ibn al-Khaṭīb Triumphant, 763/1362–773/1371

Whether motivated by a “mystical turn,” his desire to distance himself from courtly life, or a multitude of other factors, the seclusion and solace of Salé enabled Ibn al-Khaṭīb to produce an extraordinary number of works between 761/1360 and 763/1362. Perhaps the most important historical work that he composed was the *al-Lamha al-Badriyya fī al-Dawla al-Nasriyya* (The Resplendence of the Full Moon: A History of the Nasrid Dynasty), a short book about the virtues

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<sup>144</sup> The Rābitat al-‘Uqāb is described by Ibn Baṭṭūṭah as “the famed and blessed lodge (*al-zāwiyah al-shahīrah al-mubārakah*)” (Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, *Riḥlah*, BnF MS Arabe 2291, 100r). In his account of his travels in Granada, the North African traveler claims to have visited al-‘Uqāb together with his host in Granada, “the pre-eminent Sufi master (*shaykh al-shuyūkh*) [of al-‘Uqāb], the eminent jurist and mystic, Abū ‘Alī ‘Umar b. Muḥammad b. Maḥrūq.” It is unclear whether the usage of *shaykh al-shuyūkh* within this context was an official title/position, as in the Mamluk lands, or an honorific. For an extensive discussion of the title of “*shaykh al-shuyūkh*” in the context of the emergence of Sufi institutions in Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt, see Hofer, *The Popularisation of Sufism*, pp. 43–48, 62–67, 74–78, 92–100.

of the city of Granada and the biographies and reigns of the Nasrid sovereigns, beginning with Muḥammad I and ending with Muḥammad V and narrating events from 635/1238 to 766/1364.<sup>145</sup> The work is essentially a panegyric dedicated to praising the Nasrid rulers of Granada but also provides important details about the social, political and intellectual history of the kingdom. Another historical work dating from this period, the *Raḡm al-Ḥullal fī Naẓm al-Duwal* (The Poetic Enumeration of Dynasties) consisted of a long rhymed poem (*urjūza*) with prose commentary of the history of the various Islamic dynasties since the 1<sup>st</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century, giving prominence to those that ruled in Iberia and North Africa. Like the “Resplendence of the Full Moon,” this was a work that he continually edited and expanded well into the late 760s/1360s. These works attempted to demonstrate his thorough knowledge of history, demonstrate his continued dedication to Muḥammad V, while also serving as an avenue of his own, distinct vision of history and politics. Significantly, he also authored a work titled “The Sweeping of the Shop after the Relocation of the Inhabitants” (*Kunāsat al-Dukkān ba’d Intiqāl al-Sukkān*), a collection of 25 important decrees and letters which he composed as chancellor during the reign of Yūsuf I. The work included documents and letters that sought to delineate the amiable political relationship that existed between the Nasrid and Marinid kingdoms for decades. The composition of this work was underpinned by Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own commitment to this alliance as well as his own complex and evolving loyalties, in which he remained devoted to the cause of Muḥammad V but had also entered the service of the Marinid sovereigns. It is to an examination of this delicate situation that this chapter now turns.

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<sup>145</sup> The work was completed on Muḥarram 30 765/November 8 1363, with one manuscript (Qarawiyyin MS 1491/80) containing the transcription date Tuesday 21 Rabi II 769/December 15 1367, illustrating that Ibn al-Khaṭīb later made emendations to the work.

How did Ibn al-Khaṭīb respond to his own precarious position as an exiled statesman and intellectual? It appears that Ibn al-Khaṭīb partially reconciled himself to the possibility that he would never again return to Granada. The experience of exile and dislocation played an important role in his works composed during this period, with much of his poetry and prose being permeated by the theme of “longing for the homeland” (*al-ḥanīn ilā al-waṭan*).<sup>146</sup> The composition of “The Comparative Virtues of Málaga and Salé” (*al-Mafākhara bayna Mālaqa wa Sallā*) during this period, in which he sought to demonstrate the superiority of Andalusī civilization and culture over that of North Africa, is one of the best reflections of his strong affinity with al-Andalus. It was through such writings that he articulated his own sense of identity, which, as Camilo Gómez-Rivas has illustrated, was imbued with a strong consciousness of his own position as an Andalusī Muslim in North Africa, with his time in Salé playing a “significant [role] in shaping his narrative of al-Andalus, complemented by the accumulated experience of banishment, exile, and refuge, which so characterized the Andalusī experience in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.”<sup>147</sup> This romantic nostalgia for al-Andalus, which never entirely dissipated, nonetheless gradually gave way to a strategic mobilization of his extensive rhetorical and intellectual abilities and the utilization of his considerable connections to rebuild his political career and guarantee his survival within his new context.

Muḥammad V was around 20 years old when he arrived in Fez. He found himself in an incredibly vulnerable position as an exiled sovereign whose entire existence depended upon the

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<sup>146</sup> For an example of this genre of “longing for the homeland,” see the poem recited by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to the Nasrid poet-prince Ibn al-Aḥmar (Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 25), himself an Andalusī émigré and exile to North Africa. For an extensive discussion and study of this genre of Andalusī poetry, see Ahmad Hajim al-Rabīʿi, *al-Ghurba wa al-Ḥanīn fī al-Shiʿr al-Andalusī* (Beirut: al-Dar al-ʿArabiyya li l-Muwasaʿat, 2013); Fatima Tahta, *al-Ghurba wa al-Ḥanīn fī al-Shiʿr al-Andalusī* (Casablanca: Matbaʿat al-Najah al-Jadida, 1993); and al-Wali, *al-Fitan wa al-Nakbāt al-ʿĀma*, pp. 297–308.

<sup>147</sup> Gómez-Rivas, “Exile, Encounter, and the Articulation of Andalusī Identity in the Maghrib,” p. 342.

favor of his Marinid hosts. It was during this critical moment that he required dependable and reliable councilors, who would advocate his cause, advise him on the proper course of action and maintain their loyalty to him. It was also precisely at this moment, only several months after arriving in Fez, that Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who, as chief minister, physician and chancellor to Muḥammad V and among the closest councilors to this sovereign's father (Yūsuf I), was expected to remain at his king's side, made the decision to travel around the Marinid realm before taking up residence in Salé (supported by a considerable Marinid stipend of 500 silver dirhams monthly). We need to examine the various motivations that prompted Ibn al-Khaṭīb, to leave the side of his king at the precise moment when his guidance and support would have been most expected. The Granadan chancellor explains that he decided to reside in Salé for a variety of reasons, including solace and comfort, the privilege of residing in a fortified coastal town (*ribāṭ*), a desire to refrain from political activity in favor of intellectual pursuits, as well as the honor and blessings associated with being within the vicinity of the royal mausoleum.<sup>148</sup> It should also be remembered that Ibn al-Khaṭīb, while still holding the offices of chancellor and chief minister, did not enjoy the same relationship with Muḥammad V as he did with Yūsuf I, especially since the chamberlain Riḍwān, Yaḥyā b. Raḥḥū, Muḥammad al-Sharīshī and others had displaced him as the sovereign's most intimate councilors between 755/1354 and 760/1359.

As such, his decision to leave Fez may not have necessarily been seen in terms of the cruel abandonment of his exiled king during his moment of utmost need (as his enemies at court would later accuse him) or as a result of his transformation into an agent of the Marinids, as some modern scholarship has suggested.<sup>149</sup> Nonetheless, by leaving Muḥammad V behind in Fez

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<sup>148</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 153v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 29. For a study of the Marinid royal mausoleum, see Henri Basset and E. Lévi-Provençal, "Chella: une nécropole mérinide," *Hespéris* 2 (1922), pp. 1–92, 255–316, 385–425.

<sup>149</sup> Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, pp. 96–98.

(although he remained in regular correspondence with him), he asserted his own independence, declaring himself not simply a servant of the Nasrids but a powerful statesman and influential intellectual in his own right. This is indicated by the utilization of particularly grandiose titles for Ibn al-Khaṭīb by various members of the Marinid court and the Marinid sovereign himself. In one of his letters to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Abū Sālim refers to him as “the eminent and illustrious noble lord, the prolific, eloquent and pre-eminent scholar Abū ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb” (*al-shaykh al-faqīh al-ajall al-asnā al-a‘azz al-aḥdha al-awjah al-anwah al-ṣadr al-aḥfal al-muṣanif a-balīgh al-a‘raf al-akmal Abī ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb*).<sup>150</sup> He was also referred to as “the pre-eminent statesman of al-Andalus and the Maghrib” (*ra’īs al-‘udwatayn*) by some of his contemporaries during this period. This exalted status, complemented by his strong connections with many scholar-officials in the Marinid court (cultivated both in Granada and through correspondence over the past two decades), granted him a strong sense of self-confidence within his Moroccan exile.

During his time in Morocco, Ibn al-Khaṭīb remained in regular correspondence with the Marinid sovereign and composing several panegyrics for him, including one commemorating his conquest of Tlemcen from the Zayyanids in Rajab 761/May 1360.<sup>151</sup> The language of these poems and letters illustrates the patron-client relationship that defined the bond between the two men. Throughout, Ibn al-Khaṭīb refers to himself as a servant (‘*abd*) and client (*mawlā*) of Abū Sālim, expressing gratitude to this sovereign for the many benefices (*ni‘ma*) that he had bestowed. Moreover, Ibn al-Khaṭīb frequently praises the Marinid sovereign in the strongest terms as “God’s *true* representative on earth,” language which would traditionally have been

<sup>150</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 86.

<sup>151</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 89–92; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 323–324.



reserved for the Nasrid sovereigns whom he served.<sup>152</sup> In the panegyric celebrating Abū Sālīm's conquest of Tlemcen, Ibn al-Khaṭīb proclaims that the Marinid sovereign was "my only true lord and sovereign" (*mawlāy al-ḥaqīqu wa sulṭānī*).<sup>153</sup> The recital and performance of these panegyrics in the presence of audiences of nobles, notables and princes, can be seen as a declaration of allegiance to the Marinid sovereign. Abū Sālīm was assassinated on Dhū-l Qa'da 22 762/September 23 1361 by his vizier 'Umar b. 'Abd Allāh, who enthroned as sovereign Abū 'Umar Tashufīn.<sup>154</sup> Several months later, in Ṣafar 763/December 1361, 'Umar b. 'Abd Allah also deposed this ruler and elevated Abū Zayyān Muḥammad, who had resided in Castile under the protection of Pedro I, to the throne in Fez.<sup>155</sup> Throughout this period, Ibn al-Khaṭīb enjoyed a privileged status within the Marinid kingdom, largely owing to the close political ties and personal ties that he had cultivated with the Marinid vizier (and kingmaker) 'Umar b. 'Abd Allāh.<sup>156</sup> His relationship with this individual, who had a direct hand in the assassination of Abū Sālīm and the imprisonment of Ibn Marzūq, two individuals to whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb essentially owed his life, was complicated to say the least.<sup>157</sup> While in Morocco he maintained a cordial public relationship with 'Umar, serving as one of his councilors and reciting panegyrics for him,<sup>158</sup> but within his works composed upon his return to Granada, Ibn al-Khaṭīb demonstrated

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<sup>152</sup> This particularly evident in Ibn al-Khaṭīb's letters to Abū Sālīm dated Rajab 24 761/June 10 1360, expressing gratitude to the Marinid sovereign for his generosity and patronage, and Sha'bān 17 761/July 3 1360, which celebrated the Marinid conquest of Tlemcen from the Zayyanids (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb* 2: 88–101).

<sup>153</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 100.

<sup>154</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 325–326; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 489–490. According to Villani, the assassination of Abū Sālīm was instigated by a conspiracy of Marinid nobles and Christian troops in Fez, who were opposed to several of the sovereign's policies, particularly his strong alliance with Pedro I and his support for Muḥammad V (Villani *Chronica*, 2: 545–546). This is also echoed by al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, who states that Abū Sālīm was assassinated by his own military commanders, including the Spanish Christian contingents (al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 122–123; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 32).

<sup>155</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 329–330; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 490; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 179.

<sup>156</sup> For the vizierate of 'Umar b. 'Abd Allāh, see Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 325–335.

<sup>157</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 325.

<sup>158</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb* 2: 280–282.

how he really felt about the vizier, condemning him as an “evil and treacherous wretch” for murdering Abū Sālim.<sup>159</sup> For political expediency, however, Ibn al-Khaṭīb publicly represented himself as a strong ally and loyal supporter of this vizier as long as remained in Morocco. As a consequence of his service, Ibn al-Khaṭīb describes how the Marinid vizier greatly expanded his privileges, increased his stipend, exempted him from taxation, among other things.<sup>160</sup> This elevated status was complemented by Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s particularly good relationship with Ibn Khaldūn (the Marinid chancellor),<sup>161</sup> Ibn Marzūq (the effective ruler of the kingdom before ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh),<sup>162</sup> Abū al-Qāsim ‘Abd Allāh b. Yūsuf b. Riḍwān (the Master of the Royal Seal),<sup>163</sup> Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Abī Madyan (the head of the royal administration),<sup>164</sup> and Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥajj al-Numayrī (a senior courtier and secretary), all of whom held senior executive positions within the Marinid administration and royal court.<sup>165</sup> Further evidence of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s acknowledgement of the possibility that he would never again return to Granada and, as such, needed to establish roots in Morocco is provided by the fact that he invested considerably in acquiring property on Morocco’s fertile Atlantic coast (Tamasna). This included purchasing an estate that neighbored the residence of none other than the judge and traveler Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Baṭṭūṭa.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 29.

<sup>160</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nuḡḍat al-Jirāb* 2: 283. The official royal decree (*ṣaḥīḥ*) issued by ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh granting Ibn al-Khaṭīb these privileges is dated Rabi II 10 763/February 6 1362 and is preserved within the latter’s “Comprehensive History” (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 456–457).

<sup>161</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 176–179, 184–186; Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, p. 82; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawḍa’ al-‘Alāma*, pp. 64–65.

<sup>162</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 156–160; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 115–127; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 324–325.

<sup>163</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 143–144, 160–164, 180–181, 222–223; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawḍa’ al-‘Alāma*, pp. 51–56.

<sup>164</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 262–263; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawḍa’ al-‘Alāma*, p. 47.

<sup>165</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Rawḍat al-Nisrīn*, pp. 39–43. For a study of the Marinid administration and its institutions, see Ahmed Khaneboubi, *Les Institutions gouvernementales sous les Mérinides (1258–1465)* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2008).

<sup>166</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nuḡḍat al-Jirāb* 2: 137–140.

The uncertainty about his own political future meant that Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought all possible avenues to secure the fortunes of his family (and particularly his sons). As with many scholar-officials and secretaries in the Nasrid era, Ibn al-Khaṭīb had exerted himself to ensure that his children received a comprehensive education, received sufficient recognition (particularly through the acquisition of *ijāzas*) and were well-prepared for careers as court secretaries and functionaries. While in Salé, he composed several didactic treatises and works in order to facilitate their education. One of these included *al-Siḥr wa al-Shi‘r* (“Magic and Poetry”), written for his eldest son ‘Abd Allāh, who was about 19 years old at this time. It was commonplace for leading scholars to author works on various subjects and dedicate them to their children. A good example from the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century Nasrid context is the *al-Anwār al-Saniyya fī al-Alfāz al-Suniyya*, a primer on Islamic jurisprudence and theology, consisting largely of sayings ascribed to the Prophet Muḥammad, written by the Nasrid chief judge Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Juzayy (d. 741/1340) for his son Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Juzayy.<sup>167</sup> Yet another didactic work authored by Ibn al-Khaṭīb during this period was “The Designation of Leadership: An Abridged Treatise on Politics” (*Takḥṣīṣ al-Riyāsa bi-Talkhīṣ al-Siyāsa*), a 600-verse poem on political ethics based on the precepts of the ancients (*al-‘ilm al-qadīm*). It was during this same period that Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s eldest son, ‘Abd Allāh, was enlisted in the Marinid chancery, working directly under the tutelage of many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s allies and friends in the royal administration.<sup>168</sup> Shortly thereafter, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s second son, ‘Alī (around 18 years old)

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<sup>167</sup> Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Juzayy, *al-Anwār al-Saniyya fī al-Alfāz al-Suniyya* (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm, 2010), pp. 25–240. The work was immensely popular throughout the Nasrid kingdom during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> centuries, with the Granadan scholar Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Qalaṣādī (d. 891/1486) writing a commentary on it (‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Qalaṣādī, *Lubb al-Azāhir al-Yamaniyya ‘ala al-Anwār al-Saniyya*, Great Mosque of Meknes MS 490). This manuscript was copied from an autograph of al-Qalaṣādī by Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Umar b. al-Ḥajj on Ramaḍān 23 876/March 4 1472.

<sup>168</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 10: 153.

was also appointed as a secretary in the Marinid court, being placed under the guidance of the former Master of the Royal Seal (*ṣāhib al-‘alāma*) Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Su‘ūd.<sup>169</sup> Upon his return to Granada and reappointment as chief minister in 763/1362, these sons of Ibn al-Khaṭīb would also be enrolled as secretaries in the Nasrid chancery. The efforts of Ibn al-Khaṭīb in integrating his sons into the royal administration, placing them under the tutelage of senior scholar-officials, paving the way for the establishment of their careers was a conscious replication of his own father’s strategy of introducing him to officialdom about three decades earlier.

During this period, then, Ibn al-Khaṭīb appears interested in the consolidation of his own position within the Marinid kingdom and the establishment of his sons in the royal administration under the patronage of ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh, while ostensibly remaining strongly committed to the cause of Muḥammad V. This is indicative of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s employment of diverse strategies to ensure his own political survival and that of his family. It is difficult to ascertain whether he had completely reconciled himself to the possibility that returning to Granada was unlikely, but it is apparent that Ibn al-Khaṭīb had taken major steps to secure a future for himself in the Marinid realm. Rather than framing this as an act of abandonment or betrayal of the exiled Nasrid sovereign, Ibn al-Khaṭīb represented his close ties and relationships with leading Marinid statesmen and kings as a major asset that could only assist Muḥammad V and his cause. Whether the latter saw things in a similar light remains unclear, but it is apparent that he soon became restless in his North African exile and on Shawwāl 17 762/August 20 1361, departed from Fez to Ceuta as part of a military campaign to regain his throne, an endeavor that was strongly supported (militarily and politically) by Pedro I of Castile.<sup>170</sup> As part of a complex set of negotiations between Pedro I, the Marinid vizier (and effective ruler) ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh

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<sup>169</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nuḥḍat al-Jirāb* 2: 346-350; Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, p. 96.

<sup>170</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 151.

and Muhammad V, the latter was granted possession of Marinid-ruled Ronda and neighboring fortresses in late 762/1361, which he used as a base of operations from which to slowly regain control of the Nasrid kingdom<sup>171</sup>. It was clear that Ibn al-Khaṭīb played a direct role in these developments given his close relationship with ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh, but it was Ibn Khaldūn who was instrumental in convincing ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh to grant Muḥammad V control of Ronda.<sup>172</sup>

Significantly, Ibn al-Khaṭīb remained in Salé and made no effort to rejoin Muḥammad V’s campaign. Within his own works, he seeks to deflect any accusation of his lack of commitment to this attempted restoration by describing how he was entrusted by the Nasrid sovereign with the task of taking care of the Nasrid prince Yūsuf (the future Yūsuf II) and other members of the royal family in the Marinid kingdom, who had remained behind as royal hostages under the “protection” of ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh:

[Muḥammad V] implored me in numerous letters to accompany him [in crossing the straits], but I insisted on remaining [in Salé] in repose and tranquility, avoiding the turbulent winds and vicissitudes of uncertain change, and abstaining from active service (*al-khidma*). I convinced him of my decision by pledging to him that I would rejoin him in the company of his son and the women of the royal household upon his restoration to the throne, while remaining his faithful deputy in all royal matters [in Morocco], exerting all my efforts in his cause. While expressing my desire and hope to see him again, in letters adorned with eloquence and skillful rhetoric, I also declared that I would travel eastwards to the House of God in order to avoid being ensnared and entangled in politics, and refrain from holding any office or rank. [Muḥammad V] was convinced by this but continued to seek my advice and consulted with me about how to proceed, so I exerted all my efforts in doing so.<sup>173</sup>

It was quite significant that Ibn al-Khaṭīb chose not to accompany Muḥammad V as he sought to regain his throne. His apprehension of the success of the enterprise is clear from the

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<sup>171</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 30.

<sup>172</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 346.

<sup>173</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 30; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 285.

above passage and the rest of his works composed while in Salé. Upon the restoration of Muḥammad V to Granada (and his own appointment as chief minister), many of his earlier writings on the matter were emended significantly to demonstrate his absolute commitment to the exiled Nasrid sovereign. Indeed, apart from the aforementioned passage taken from the *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb* (written in Salé), very little of the later recension of the “Comprehensive History,” completed in 769/1368, reflects his doubts and foreboding about the endeavor. While Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s enemies in the Nasrid court during the 760s/1360s and 770s/1370s would accuse him of betrayal for his failure to participate in the campaigns of 762/1361–763/1362, his rationale provided in the above passage was quite forthright. The 49-year-old Ibn al-Khaṭīb implies that his talents and skills were best deployed in the sphere of politics, propaganda and diplomacy rather than on the field of battle. The proclamation that he sought to avoid all appointments in politics, however, was less sincere, as indicated by his strategic establishment of alliances with leading functionaries and scholar-officials in the Marinid realm throughout his time in Morocco.

Irrespective of the underlying reasons for his continued residence in Salé, his main role during this period consisted of the important task of mobilizing Marinid support (and resources) and conducting propaganda on Muḥammad’s behalf. Among the most significant examples of this was the 200-line ode that he composed titled “The Gift of the Exiled in Celebrating the Imminent Victory” (*Manḥ al-Gharīb fī al-Faṭḥ al-Qarīb*), a work written in Salé in 762/1361 that simultaneously constituted a panegyric and letter of advice for Muḥammad V, while legitimating his endeavor and attempting to mobilize support for his cause.<sup>174</sup> It was a testament

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<sup>174</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 287–297. For a study and Spanish translation of this work see José María Contente, “La casida en lām de Ibn al-Jaṭīb titulada “al-manḥal-garīb fī l-faṭḥ al-qarīb”, (estudio y traducción anotada),” in *Actas de las II Jornadas de Cultura Árabe e Islámica, 1980* (Madrid: Instituto Hispano-Árabe de Cultura, 1985), pp. 73–117; and Ahmad Chafic Damaj, “Concepto de Estado en Ibn al-Jaṭīb: ¿Un reformador?” in

to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's loyalty to Muḥammad V that he deployed the fullest extent of his rhetorical and literary arsenal to advocate and justify the actions of this Nasrid sovereign as he sought to reclaim his kingdom. This was a particularly delicate task since Muḥammad V was so heavily supported by a Christian ruler in his efforts to regain his kingdom, and resided for a time under Pedro's protection in the Castilian town of Écija (near Sevilla).

It is undeniable that overthrow of El Bermejo and the restoration of Muḥammad V to the throne was an endeavor that succeeded largely due to the extensive support provided by Castile, particularly since Muḥammad V's own contingent of supporters never exceeded 300 knights.<sup>175</sup> The relationship between Pedro I and Muḥammad V continued to flourish in the years following the restoration of the latter to the Granadan throne. The Portuguese *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344* even refers to Muḥammad V as “a great friend and loyal servant of King Pedro (*rey Maffamede era muyto amigo e servydor del rey dō Pedro*),”<sup>176</sup> while Villani emphasizes the strong bond of loyalty and friendship upon which the vassalage and alliance was predicated:

“Muḥammad [V] recognized that it was as a result of the support of king Pedro of Spain that he was restored as ruler of Granada. In order to demonstrate his gratitude, he sent his ambassadors, delegating full power to them in representing both him and the realm, to king Pedro, offering the submission of the kingdom of Granada and acknowledging [Pedro] as his liege-lord and superior. Thus did king Muḥammad give homage and pledge fealty to [the king of Castile]. As a symbol of this submission, [Muḥammad V] sent [to Pedro] the banners and standards of all his cities and territories, lavish gifts, and—in addition to all this—liberated all the Christian captives and slaves in his realm. [Muḥammad V] did all this for his love of that king.

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*Actas del 1er Coloquio Internacional sobre Ibn al-Jatib* (Granada: Fundación Ibn al-Jatib de Estudios y Cooperación Cultural, 2007), pp. 76–85.

<sup>175</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 31; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 139–140, 154–155; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 261; al-Abbadi, *El Reino de Granada en la Época de Muhammad V*, pp. 45–53; Villani, *Chronica*, 2: 554–555, 564, 576. For a further discussion of this alliance between Muḥammad V and Pedro I, see Estow, *Pedro the Cruel of Castile*, pp. 205–210, 253–254; O'Callaghan, *Last Crusade in the West*, pp. 18–21, 25–26; and Paulino García Toraño, *El rey Don Pedro el Cruel y su mundo* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 1996), pp. 330–338, 467–468.

<sup>176</sup> Pedro Afonso, *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344*, 4: 529.

*(Maometto riconoscendo como per operazione de rre Piero di Spagna elli era ritornato nel suo reame di Granata, di presente mandò suoi ambasciadori co pieno mandato a rre Pietro, li quali li somissono I reame di Granata e da llui in vice e nome de rre Maometto come da superior lo riconobbono, e lo re Maometto ne feciono suo uomo, e omaggia liene fece, e in segno della somissione e reame a lloro usanza li mandò pennoni di tutte le sue buone città e terre; e oltre acquesto li present ricchi doni, e con essi tutti I Cristiani ch'erano in suo reame donato loro libertà per amore del detto re)."*<sup>177</sup>

This Nasrid embassy, which may have been identical with that led by Ibn Khaldūn to the court of Pedro I in Seville,<sup>178</sup> sought to consolidate the relationship between the two sovereigns. There are frequent references in the Iberian Christian sources to the strong alliance that existed between the two rulers, although—beginning in the mid-1360s/1360s—it was Pedro I who had become increasingly dependent on Muḥammad V. Indeed, this alliance became one of the primary criticisms of Pedro's rule in Castile, particularly following his granting permission to the Nasrids to raid and reconquer cities and towns in Andalucía that had recognized Enrique II as sovereign, a policy that had devastating consequences for the region.<sup>179</sup> The close alliance between the two sovereigns is indicated not only by their frequent diplomatic exchanges or the substantial military assistance that each provided to the other, but also by the testament of surviving inscriptions and architecture. It was following the restoration of Muḥammad V to Granada that this sovereign adopted as his coat of arms heraldry that was modeled upon that of the "Order of the Sash" (*Orden de la Banda*),<sup>180</sup> a Castilian royal chivalric order established by Alfonso XI in 1330; in turn, the Royal Palace of Pedro I in Seville was adorned with the Nasrid dynastic slogan

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<sup>177</sup> Villani, *Chronica*, 2: 576.

<sup>178</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 2: 391; Abdessalam Cheddadi, "À propos d'une ambassade d'Ibn Khaldūn auprès de Pierre le Cruel," *Hespéris-Tamuda*, 20-21 (1982–1983), pp. 5–23; Jean-Pierre Molénat, "Encore sur la rencontre d'Ibn Khaldun et de Pierre le Cruel à Seville (1363–1364)," in *Al-Rihla récit de voyage entre l'Orient et l'Occident* (Rabat: Kuliyat al-Adab wa al-'Ulum al-Insaniya, 2003), ed. Mohammed Hammam, pp. 17–22; Jean-Pierre Molénat, "Ibn Jaldūn ante Pedro I de Castille: el revés de un encuentro," in *Ibn Jaldūn. El Mediterráneo en el siglo XIV. Auge y declive de los imperios* (Granada and Seville: Fundación El Legado Andalusi, 2006), pp. 142–145.

<sup>179</sup> Estow, *Pedro the Cruel of Castile*, pp. 254–257.

<sup>180</sup> Basilio Pavón Maldonado, "Notas sobre el escudo de la Orden de la Banda en los palacios de don Pedro y de Muhammad V," *Al-Andalus* 37 (1972), pp. 229–232.



“And, verily, only God is the true Victor” (*wa lā ghāliba illā Allāh*). While such developments can be ascribed to the shared courtly ideals and culture of the period, in which the forms in which sovereignty was articulated and legitimated were often co-produced,<sup>181</sup> it is nonetheless apparent that this courtly culture was partly fashioned by the close relationship between these two sovereigns and their courtiers, including Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Ibn Waqqār and Ibn Zarzāl.

Throughout the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, the question of vassalage, mutual aid and alliance with Castile had always remained a controversial and uncomfortable one for scholar-officials, who often remained silent or vague on the matter within their works. At times, however, the legitimacy of this policy would be discussed, with the Granadan courtier and secretary Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, writing in the 760s/1360s, stating that

[As a general principle], no military assistance should be requested from the polytheists, nor should Muslims provide military aid to one faction of polytheists against another, for the Prophet of God said: “Verily, we do not seek the aid of any polytheist.” However, it has been argued that this refers only to the case of recruiting soldiers into the rank and file of the army, in order to safeguard against their deceit, treachery and sedition. However, it is permissible to utilize them for other military services, such as digging tunnels, destroying fortifications, operating siege engines and building weaponry. It has also been stated that it is permissible for the Imam to militarily support and receive military aid from disbelievers with whom he is at peace against those with whom he is at war, as a political stratagem. This is equally the case for non-Muslims residing under Muslim rule (*ahl al-dhimma*). It is permissible to pay these people a fee in exchange for their military service and assistance, just as it is permissible to do so in the case of Muslim volunteers.”<sup>182</sup>

Although never mentioning the Iberian context specifically, it was quite clear that Ibn Hudhayl had the Granadan-Castilian frontier in mind when writing this, particularly the alliance between Pedro I and Muḥammad V. This passage highlights the role of scholar-officials in deploying

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<sup>181</sup> For a discussion of the role of Arabic and Islamicate epigraphy and architecture in the political legitimation of Pedro I, see Julie Marquer, “Islam y propaganda política en la arquitectura de Pedro I de Castilla (1350-1369),” in *Mediterráneos*, pp. 291–302.

<sup>182</sup> Ibn Hudhayl al-Fazārī, *Tuhfat al-Anfus*, El Escorial MS 1652, f. 36r.

their knowledge of Islamic law and tradition to justify the particular policies of the kingdom. The various treatises, poems and letters that Ibn al-Khaṭīb authored while in the service of Muḥammad V also provide an illustration of this. The Granadan chancellor and chief minister, drawing upon his erudition and repertoire of rhetorical skill, attempted to justify and legitimize the vassalage and alliance with Pedro I, and even the surrender of Muslim territory and lands to this king, as necessitated by the greater good of ensuring the well-being and long-term survival of the Kingdom of Granada. Far from framing the campaign against Muḥammad VI as Christian-Muslim alliance against a rival Muslim ruler, Ibn al-Khaṭīb frequently emphasized how El Bermejo's reign was not only illegitimate since he was a usurper, but that his rule was detrimental to the well-being (*maṣlaḥa*) of Islam, deploying the concept of *maṣlaḥa* with he engages so often in his works. As such, the necessity of overthrowing him and restoring the proper political order—which he, naturally, identified with Muḥamad V, took precedence over any particular rulings or prohibitions about alliances with Christians that would normally have been emphasized. In one of his letters to the Hafsid ruler, for example, Ibn al-Khaṭīb made the argument that an alliance with the Castilians to invade and conquer the Nasrid kingdom from El Bermejo was necessary in order to ensure the Nasrid Kingdom's independence and survival in the face of Christian expansion. While certainly not naïve about the political motives of Pedro I, Ibn al-Khaṭīb claimed that the support of the Castilian sovereign constituted further evidence of the universal recognition—"even by the enemies of the faith"—of the absolute illegitimacy of Muḥammad VI. Even within these works, however, it is very clear that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was beset by a great unease about the dependence on military support provided by Pedro I, especially since this meant the surrender of numerous frontier fortresses and the reinstitution of Granada's status as a Castilian vassal kingdom:

The Castilians insisted that Muḥammad V cross from Ceuta to Spain on their ships, refusing any other option so that they could ascribe all credit for the outcome of the campaign belonged to their king [Pedro I]. Thus was the beginning of their attempt to engage deception and subterfuge, but [Muḥammad V] undercut this plan by bestowing large sums of money upon them. He boarded the ships with his entourage of noblemen and relatives, disembarking in Gibraltar—where he remained for an extended period of time exchanging letters with king of Castile (*malik al-rūm*)—before going, in the company of his Christian-born bodyguard (*mamālīk*) and leading nobles (*wujūh qarābatihī*) to meet the latter in person. The sovereign [Muḥammad V] went to great and excessive lengths to gain the favor [of Pedro], through humility, self-abasement and flattery...and pledged his allegiance to him, proclaiming that he would faithfully and loyally assist, support, and defend [Pedro] at all times (*wa a‘tahu ṣafaqat yamīnahu bi-l muṣāhara wa al-mu‘āḍada wa al-tahāluk*), loaning the Castilian king 30,000 dinars of pure gold and establishing as a condition that he would not fail to hand over all fortresses and towns conquered during the campaign, that peace would be established between them for the duration of their lives...<sup>183</sup>

The Nasrid sovereign’s court in Ronda consisted of the nobleman Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Kumāsha as chief minister, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī and Ibn Zamrak as secretaries and ‘Uthmān b. Yahyā b. Raḥḥū as military commander.<sup>184</sup> Despite some initial setbacks, Málaga and other towns/fortresses in the western part of the kingdom were conquered, Antequera, Loja, Comares, Vélez and Granada itself capitulated, and Muḥammad V successfully entered the Alhambra victorious on Jumādā II 20 763/April 16 1362.<sup>185</sup> After receiving word that the dethroned king had successfully conquered Málaga and was marching on Granada, El Bermejo had fled the city with his closest supporters<sup>186</sup> and a substantial amount of treasure) to Seville, seeking refuge in the Castilian court, but where he was assassinated, apparently personally, by

<sup>183</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nuḥḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 285.

<sup>184</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 152; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 31.

<sup>185</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al- A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 30, 4: 449; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 154; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 347; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 261.

<sup>186</sup> Including Idrīs b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā, the son of the powerful ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā, the Marinid prince and military commander who had played such a dominant role in Nasrid during the early 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. While avoiding the bloody fate of many of El Bermejo’s partisans at the hands of Pedro I, this individual was imprisoned alongside other leading Marinid military commanders (*ghuzāt*) and nobles, before escaping to Morocco in 767/1366, where he was eventually incarcerated once again and finally executed (in prison) in Fez in 771/1369 (Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 388–389).

Pedro I in Rajab 2 763/April 27 1362, along with his retinue, including several high-ranking Nasrid noblemen.<sup>187</sup> Seeking to legitimize the assassination, Ibn al-Khaṭīb states that El Bermejo did not have the necessary documents of safe-conduct (‘*ahd/wathīqa*’), which is reinforced by Pero López de Ayála: “El Bermejo came to [Pedro] without having first secured guarantees and safe-passage for himself.”<sup>188</sup> This is contradicted by Villani, who insists that El Bermejo was guaranteed safe-conduct by Pedro (*sotto la fidanza del salvacondotto*).<sup>189</sup>

Only four days after his re-entry into the city, Muḥammad V composed a letter—in his own handwriting, according to Ibn al-Khaṭīb—inviting his former chancellor and chief minister to rejoin him in Granada and resume his former duties.<sup>190</sup> This epistle<sup>191</sup> describes Muḥammad V’s re-entry into the Alhambra after an arduous campaign and praises Ibn al-Khaṭīb in the strongest terms, stressing his loyalty to the Nasrids, as well as his own distinguished status, knowledge, authority and eloquence:

our loyal and trustworthy supporter (*waliyunā fī Allāh*), whose true loyalty and devotion to us is well-known, in whom we have placed our absolute reliance, trust and confidence, our faithful defender and support whose nobility and honor we extol in the strongest terms, the learned, eminent nobleman (*al-wazīr al-jalīl*), the illustrious and exemplary scholar (*al-ṣadr*) of the age, the renowned, pre-eminent, distinguished, exalted, esteemed, famed, glorious and outstanding preacher and litterateur, the Imam of the Eloquent (*imām al-bulaghā*), the most out distinguished of preachers (*ṣadr al-khuṭabā*), the most learned of scholars (‘*alam al-‘ulamā*’), the most illustrious of statesmen (*kabīr al-ru‘asā*), the most beloved and loyal Abū ‘Abd Allāh, the son of the eminent nobleman (*al-wazīr al-jalīl*), the illustrious and distinguished, exalted, glorious, blessed, the righteous and sanctified martyr (*al-muqaddas al-shahīd*), the late Abū Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭīb.<sup>192</sup>

<sup>187</sup> Pedro Afonso, *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344*, 4: 529; Villani, *Chronica*, 2: 574–576; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 505; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 30; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al-A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152v; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 237–238. On the assassination of Muḥammad VI, see Vidal, “El Asesinato Político en al-Andalus,” pp. 381–386.

<sup>188</sup> Vidal, “El Asesinato Político en al-Andalus,” p. 383.

<sup>189</sup> Villani, *Chronica*, 2: 575.

<sup>190</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 449; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 346.

<sup>191</sup> This letter is preserved in full in the recension of the “Comprehensive History” completed around 769/1368 (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 447–450).

<sup>192</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 447–448.

This letter provides an indication that, despite Ibn al-Khaṭīb's failure to join Muḥammad V in the campaign to regain his throne, he was nonetheless recognized as "our beloved, whose loyalty cannot be doubted, our faithful supporter whose sincerity is well-known to us" (*al-ḥabīb alladhī lā yushakku fīhi wa al-khulāṣa alladhī na 'lamu ṣidq khulūṣihi wa taṣāfīhi*), and invited to partake in the fruits of victory (*'araḥnākum bi-dhālika li-tā' khudhū bi-ḥazikum min hādhihi al-masarrah al-kubrā*).<sup>193</sup>

#### Renewal and Restoration: Ibn al-Khaṭīb Triumphant, 763/1362–773/1371

After the restoration of Muḥammad V to the throne, Ibn al-Khaṭīb arrived in Granada, accompanying the Nasrid prince Yūsuf and other members of the royal family, on Sha'bān 20 763/June 14 1362.<sup>194</sup> He states that, at this stage, he had fulfilled all his obligations to the Nasrid sovereign and expressed to him a desire to retire from politics and perform the pilgrimage to Mecca (*Hajj*), but that Muḥammad V insisted that he be re-instated as chief minister even if for a period of only two years, since this would be the truest expression of his sincerity, loyalty and commitment to the faith.<sup>195</sup> The idea that Ibn al-Khaṭīb would better serve Islam in Granada than by performing the pilgrimage was an engagement with a longstanding trope and idea in the Islamic West that a strong commitment to fortifying the frontiers and waging holy war was a distinction of al-Andalus and the Maghrib that superseded the obligation to perform the pilgrimage.<sup>196</sup> This account of his restoration to the vizierate as a consequence of the insistence

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<sup>193</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 449.

<sup>194</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 30–31, 4: 444–445; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 346.

<sup>195</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 33–34, 4: 444–445.

<sup>196</sup> For a discussion of the discouragement, or even prohibition, of the pilgrimage among Maliki jurists in the medieval Islamic West, see Jocelyn Hendrickson, "Prohibiting the Pilgrimage: Politics and Fiction in Mālikī Fatwās," *Islamic Law and Society* 23 (2016), pp. 161–238.

of Muḥammad V—with Ibn al-Khaṭīb even claiming that the latter had composed the letter re-appointing him as chief minister in his own hand—was part of his autobiography written several years later (in Muḥarram 771/August 1369) and sought to illustrate that his return to Granada to serve as chief minister was an embodiment of loyalty to the Nasrid sovereign rather than a desire to maintain his hold on power.<sup>197</sup> Moreover, Ibn al-Khaṭīb employs medical metaphors of himself as physician curing a diseased body to describe his return to Granada as the fulfillment of an obligation towards both the king and the kingdom:

I went to [Muḥammad V] in Granada in the manner of a physician approaching his moribund patient, for the kingdom had all but collapsed. The treasury was emptied, the pillars of kingship had crumbled, titles remained but the offices and institutions to which they referred had deteriorated, and the condition of everything had changed beyond recognition. The officials and functionaries of the usurpers had spilled blood with insolence and impunity, and greedily followed their lower instincts, as is usual among rebels. If not for God's protection, this would have been the end of the kingdom. It was in this context that I embarked upon a mission to renovate and cure hearts, to reconcile people by bringing an end to feuds and enmity, comforting the helpless, consoling the fearful, keeping the troops satisfied, augmenting and enriching the treasury, and defending [the kingdom] against the enemies of the faith.<sup>198</sup>

On Ramaḍān 2 763/June 25 1362, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was officially re-appointed as chief minister of Granada, granted an array of dignities and bestowed with the title “Bearer of the Two offices” (*Dhū-l Wizāratayn*).<sup>199</sup> This decree, penned by Muḥammad V, was preserved in full within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's “Comprehensive History,” alongside a letter by the Nasrid sovereign, dated Jumādā II 24 763/April 20 1362 requesting Ibn al-Khaṭīb to return to Granada.<sup>200</sup> Both documents essentially constituted reflections of how Ibn al-Khaṭīb's social and political status

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<sup>197</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 28, 4: 444–445.

<sup>198</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A'māl al- A'lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 154r.

<sup>199</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 29.

<sup>200</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 447–452.

had been completely transformed since he had first entered the service of Yūsuf I. Ibn al-Khaṭīb was referred to by Muḥammad V as:

the supporter of his majesty (*walī maqāmihi*), the one who partakes in royal glory and eminence, the supreme statesman and pride of his kingdom (*kabīr dawlatihi wa fakhṛ mamlakatihi*), the foundation of his sovereignty (*mushayyid sulṭānihi*)...the standard-bearer of his vizierate, who governs with the power of his judgement and intellect, the pre-eminent learned nobleman (*al-faqīh al-ajall al-wazīr al-mathīl*), the illustrious, august, distinguished scholar, the Imam of Eloquence, the Knight of the Pen, the pride of leadership and master of statecraft (*fakhṛ al-riyāsa wa mudabbir falak al-Siyāsa*), the celebrated, honorable, accomplished, most beloved, loyal and devoted (*al-ḥabīb al-khālīṣ al-awadd al-asfā*) Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad...b. al-Khaṭīb, may God perpetuate his glory and preserve his pre-eminent rank.<sup>201</sup>

The usage of the term *walī* (pl. *awliyā*), as opposed to *khādim* or *mawlā*, is particularly significant here, since it was the term consistently utilized by the Nasrid rulers for their noble supporters, while palace officials and functionaries were usually referred to as *khādim* (pl. *khuddām*) or *mawlā* (pl. *mawālī*). Indeed, in the dedication of his “Yūsufite Treatise on Medicine,” written twenty years earlier in 742/1341, Ibn al-Khaṭīb had described himself as “the servant dependent on the king’s patronage/benefice and the one brought up since youth in his service (*‘abd ni‘matihi wa nash’āt khidmatihi*) Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Sa‘īd b. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb, may God grant him success as long as he maintains the favor of his sovereign majesty [Yūsuf I].”<sup>202</sup> This document from Muḥammad V, therefore, constituted a form of ennoblement, a recognition that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was not simply a palace official or functionary dependent upon royal patronage, but a powerful figure in his own right. Rather than framing the relationship in terms of patronage (*ni‘ma*), this decree emphasized loyalty, “love” (*widād/maḥabba*) and devotion as the primary bases of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s bond with the Nasrids, in

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<sup>201</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 450–451.

<sup>202</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Yūsufī fī al-Ṭibb*, Unpublished MS in Private Collection in Qatar, f. 1r (Farfur ed., *Mawsū‘at al-nafā’is*, p. 166).

general, and with Muḥammad V in particular. Moreover, the decree invokes Ibn al-Khaṭīb's antiquity of service to the dynasty:

He [Ibn al-Khaṭīb] was, may God preserve him, the administrator and manager of the kingdom [of Yūsuf I], his pillar of support who was endowed with the offices of executive authority and governance (*alqā ilayhi maqālīd al-mulk*), when he recognized him as the most illustrious of supporters (*ṣadr al-awliyā'*) and his truly loyal vizier/advisor who could be relied upon for the administration of the kingdom, a pillar to strengthen him by giving advice both privately and publicly. As a result, [Yūsuf I] bestowed upon him the Two Supreme Executive Offices [of chancellor and chief minister] (*qalladahu najād al-wizāratayn wa ḥallāhu bi-ḥulā al-riyāsatayn...wa nashara lahu liwā' al-wilāyatayn*), making him his right hand in governing the kingdom...and [Ibn al-Khaṭīb] effectively and faithfully administered the kingdom, becoming the embodiment of competent statesmanship and leadership...<sup>203</sup>

Unlike his first tenure as chief minister of Muḥammad V between 755/1354 and 760/1359, between 763/1362 and 773/1371 Ibn al-Khaṭīb held supreme authority over the civil, fiscal and military affairs within the kingdom.<sup>204</sup> This is indicated by Ibn al-Aḥmar's description of him not only as “the eminent military commander” (*al-qā'id*) and “chancellor” (*ṣāhib al-qalam al-a'lā*), but also as the “chamberlain” (*al-ḥājib*).<sup>205</sup> For his part, Ibn Khaldūn asserts that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was “delegated absolute control of the kingdom's governance” (*wa dafa 'a ilayhi tadbīr al-mamlaka...wa infarada Ibn al-Khaṭīb bi-l ḥall wa-l 'aqd*).<sup>206</sup> This is also reinforced within Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own autobiography, written in Muḥarram 771/August 1369, in which he states that “[Muḥammad V] entrusted me with the affairs of war and governance, granting me complete authority and supreme power over everything that his sovereignty extended, a state of affairs that continues to the present.” (*wa ṣādaqanī muqāraḍat al-ḥaqq bi-l jihād wa ramā ilay bi-dunyāh wa ḥakamanī fī-mā malakatuhu yadāhu wa ghallabanī 'alā amrihi li-hadhā al-*

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<sup>203</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 451.

<sup>204</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 34–36; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 347.

<sup>205</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 24, 138.

<sup>206</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 347.



‘*ahd*).<sup>207</sup> Moreover, Ibn al-Khaṭīb characterizes his own role in Granada during this period as “the guiding hand of royal policy and the governance of the kingdom” (*murā‘at al-Siyāsa al-sulṭāniyya*), thus underscoring his exercise of supreme executive authority in the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>208</sup> While having his considerable mansions and estates that had been confiscated by Ismā‘īl II and Muḥammad VI restored to him, Ibn al-Khaṭīb took up residence in one of the palaces of the Alhambra and sought to ensure that his own influence within the Nasrid court was absolute and unchallenged. He elevated his closest allies and friends while marginalizing, imprisoning or exiling those that he viewed as a threat to his power. This same period also witnessed the crumbling of patronage networks, friendships and alliances that he had worked diligently to establish over a period of three decades, which meant that Ibn al-Khaṭīb found himself struggling to navigate the new political reality in which he found himself.

Upon the restoration of Muḥammad V, punitive measures were imposed upon many of the courtiers and supporters of both Ismā‘īl II and Muḥammad VI, many of whom were expelled to North Africa by late 763/1362. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the most notorious example of such a recipient of the king’s wrath was the physician-astronomer Abū Ja‘far al-Anṣārī. This individual was accused of legitimating the coup against Muḥammad V, since it was he who had prognosticated to El Bermejo (the future Muḥammad VI) that Ramaḍān 760/August 1359 would be an auspicious month to undertake an attempt to seize the throne, an endeavor that ultimately succeeded.<sup>209</sup> As a result of his intimate association with this coup, upon the restoration of Muḥammad V to the throne, this physician-astronomer was imprisoned, violently whipped (nearly to death) and exiled—along with numerous others—to Tunis in late 763/1362

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<sup>207</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 34.

<sup>208</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 451.

<sup>209</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 205; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 181.

due to the role he had played in facilitating the coup against this ruler.<sup>210</sup> It was within this context that many of the senior administrative and political offices within the Nasrid kingdom were vacated and came to be filled with new appointees who had proven their loyalty to Muḥammad V during his exile and campaign to regain his throne.

On Muḥarram 3 764/October 23 1362, at the behest of Muḥammad V, Ibn al-Khaṭīb issued a decree appointing Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī as Chief Judge of Granada.<sup>211</sup> Shortly afterwards, he also appointed this individual as the preacher of the Great Mosque of Granada.<sup>212</sup> Another of his close associates, Ibn Zamrak, was appointed as Nasrid chancellor.<sup>213</sup> These individuals were thus amply rewarded for their loyal service and commitment to Muḥammad V, who they had accompanied to Fez and played an active role in his military and political campaign to regain his throne.<sup>214</sup> Unlike Ibn al-Khaṭīb, both Ibn Zamrak and al-Bunnāhī had remained with Muḥammad V throughout his exile in Fez and were among the first to join his campaign to retake the throne in 762/1361.<sup>215</sup> Although both appointment letters were penned by Ibn al-Khaṭīb and bestow lavish praise on these individuals, the decision to elevate them to these offices was likely made by Muḥammad V prior to Ibn al-Khaṭīb's return to Granada. Nonetheless, from Ibn al-Khaṭīb's perspective, both figures were reasonable choices. It would have been difficult for him to justify maintaining either Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī or 'Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Muḥāribī in their positions considering they were appointed by Muḥammad VI, whose policies, decrees and directives Muḥammad V sought to nullify and revoke. Moreover,

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<sup>210</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 205–206; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 181.

<sup>211</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, BN MS 5152, ff. 35v–38r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 80–83; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭib*, 7: 125–127; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 170.

<sup>212</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, BN MS 5152, ff. 38r–39r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 83–84; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭib*, 7: 129–130.

<sup>213</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, BN MS 5152, ff. 39r–40v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 84–86; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭib*, 7: 127–129.

<sup>214</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 37–38.

<sup>215</sup> García Gómez, *Ibn Zamrak*, pp. 36–42.

considering Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own close relationship with both al-Bunnāhī and Ibn Zamrak,<sup>216</sup> as well as their competence, political experience and demonstrated loyalty to the sovereign, they were also individuals in whom he could reasonably confide and entrust a considerable degree of authority. As events in Granada unfolded over the next decade would illustrate, it was a decision that he would eventually come to regret.

Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Raḥḥū, an individual who had also played a pivotal role as a supporter and confidant of Muḥammad V during his exile and restoration, was also reinstated as Commander of the Military (*shaykh al-ghuzāt*).<sup>217</sup> In stark contrast to his mentors Riḍwān and Ibn al-Jayyāb, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was far less successful at courting the favor and friendship of the Nasrid nobility and military elite. Nor was he particularly competent in establishing himself as a partial arbiter between various factions. Tensions quickly developed between him and Yaḥyā b. Raḥḥū, as well as his son 'Uthmān, whose influence and close relationship with Muḥammad V (which had been nurtured by years in exile), allowed this figure and his son to emerge as rival *privados* to Ibn al-Khaṭīb.<sup>218</sup> Ibn Khaldūn even asserts that 'Uthmān b. Yaḥyā b. Raḥḥū held effective power within the Nasrid court (*istibdād*) and had immense influence over Muḥammad V.<sup>219</sup> Since he was all too familiar with the precarity of his own authority and power, which was predicated on the favor and influence he enjoyed with the sovereign, Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought this individual's removal. To this end, within a year of his re-instatement as chief minister Ibn al-Khaṭīb orchestrated the political demise of the *shaykh al-ghuzāt* Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Raḥḥū and his son 'Uthmān. On Ramaḍān 13 764/June 26 1363, the latter was stripped of his offices,

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<sup>216</sup> This is attested by the praise that he lavishes upon each in the rescension of his "Comprehensive History" completed around 769/1367 (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭah*, 2: 300–314, 4: 88–100).

<sup>217</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 38.

<sup>218</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 346, 388.

<sup>219</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 347.

arrested and incarcerated before being exiled—along with his entire family—to North Africa.<sup>220</sup> He was replaced with another member of the Banū Raḥḥū, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Badr al-Dīn b. Raḥḥū, the commander of the military in Guadix and a particularly close ally of Ibn al-Khaṭīb who held the post until his death following the military campaign against Jaén in Muḥarram 769/September 1367.<sup>221</sup> The defeat of the rebellion of noblemen in Granada, led by Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. Naṣr and supported by leading members of the military, also provided the context for the further marginalization of the nobility.<sup>222</sup>

His power rivalry with many leading political and military figures for influence in the Nasrid court was reflected within his own writings from this period, which are characterized by an overt hostility towards the nobility. This tendency within his writings is most clear in his biography of Ibn Kumāsha, one of his chief adversaries in the Nasrid court for much of the 750s/1350s and 760s/1360s.<sup>223</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb frequently attacked Ibn Kumāsha in his historical writings, maligning his character and religious credentials while also seeking to cast major aspersions upon his loyalties to the Nasrids, even going so far as to accuse him of sharpening the dagger employed by Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl of Algeciras in the assassination of Ismā‘īl I.<sup>224</sup> By implicating this nobleman in the murder of Ismā‘īl I, portraying him as an opportunistic and deceitful mercenary, desirous of enriching himself with the wealth of the treasury, and even

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<sup>220</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 38; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, p. 155; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 347, 388; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 445–446; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286, 4: 262. After a period of brief exile in Alexandria, Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Raḥḥū returned to North Africa, where he remained prominent in dynastic and regional political developments until his death in 782/1380. His son ‘Uthmān joined the Hafsid court in Tunis, where he was appointed to a leading position on the royal council and as commander of the military, and remained there until at least 792/1390.

<sup>221</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, BN MS 5152, ff. 25r–27r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 66–69; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 38; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, pp. 73–75; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 390–391. Part of the decree appointing him to the office, penned by Ibn al-Khaṭīb, is preserved in al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 1: 432.

<sup>222</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya*, pp. 154–155.

<sup>223</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 31–33; 4: 74–77.

<sup>224</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al-A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 149r; ; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 31–33.

going as far as attacking him for cowardice on the battlefield, Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to legitimate his opposition to this figure. Significantly, Ibn al-Khaṭīb depicts Ibn Kumāsha as a traitor to the faith, describing him as inverting the natural order of proper belief and practice by actively seeking to reside under Castilian or Aragonese rule as a Mudéjar, a reference to his itinerant nature and exile in these courts.<sup>225</sup> Although these passages demonstrate the manner in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb's intellectual production was often employed to justify, complement or reinforce his hostility to particular individuals, they also demonstrate something more significant. It was part of a larger attempt to question the *modus operandi* of many noblemen in the Nasrid kingdom—both Andalusis and Berbers—many of whom were conversant in Romance, enjoyed distinction and favor among their counterparts in the Spanish Christian kingdoms, and spent a good deal of time (as hostages, mercenaries or emissaries) in Castile or the Crown of Aragón. This questioning of loyalties and disparagement of personal conduct was not restricted to noblemen with whom he was personally in conflict, since it was also characteristic of his biography of Abū Bakr 'Atīq b. al-Mawl (the assassin of Ibn al-Ḥakīm), whom he accused of joining the Castilian court during his youth and scandalously entering into an intimate relationship with the daughter of a Christian nobleman before opportunistically entering the service of the Marinid sultan Abū Yūsuf.<sup>226</sup> The pen, no less authoritative than the sword in Nasrid Granada, was thus wielded strategically by Ibn al-Khaṭīb in his various attempts to settle vendettas, defame his political enemies at court, promote the appointment of his allies to office, while seeking to undercut the traditional privileges of various members of the nobility. Given the recent ordeal endured by Muḥammad V of being overthrown and exiled by a confederation of Granadan noblemen and

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<sup>225</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 32–33.

<sup>226</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 60–61. Similarly, the leading nobleman Abū Thābit 'Āmir b. 'Uthmān b. Abī al-'Ulā is characterized as “the most abominable and cunning man of the era” (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 64, 319).

their patrician allies, and the failed rebellion of the nobleman ‘Alī b. ‘Alī b. Naṣr in Dhū-l Ḥijja 763/September 1362,<sup>227</sup> merely months after Muḥammad V was restored to his throne, such sentiments were highly influential and relevant. Nevertheless, Ibn al-Khaṭīb did have powerful allies among the nobility, such as ‘Alī b. Badr al-Dīn b. Raḥḥū, indicating that caution needs to be exercised in drawing too sharp a distinction between the nobility and *letrados/kuttāb* during this period.

As illustrated above, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s new titles, status and positions within the Nasrid kingdom constituted some form of ennoblement. Although never managing to fully integrate himself within the circle of the old nobility and patrician families, by the time he returned to Granada in 763/1362, Ibn al-Khaṭīb had become the patriarch of a major Nasrid administrative family, with three of his sons—‘Abd Allāh, Muḥammad and ‘Alī—enrolled in the chancery, serving as important courtiers of Muḥammad V, and holding a significant rank in the administration.<sup>228</sup> It was at some point between 763/1362 and 771/1369 that he also secured a prestigious marriage for his eldest son ‘Abd Allāh with a daughter of the Nasrid statesmen Abū al-Ḥasan b. Abī al-Ḥasan al-Qāsim.<sup>229</sup> This woman’s father, an influential and powerful figure in Nasrid Granada in his own right, belonged to the one of Granada’s oldest patrician families, the Banū Sahl b. Mālik, who had held leading political, military and judicial posts in the Granada and its environs since the 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>230</sup> Like the Banū al-Khaṭīb, they were closely tied to the

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<sup>227</sup> This noble rebellion, which began in Almería but quickly spread throughout the kingdom, was strongly supported by al-Dalīl al-Barkī, one of Muḥammad V’s ministers, who sought to elevate the ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. Naṣr to the throne. For a detailed discussion of this revolt (and Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s representation of it), see Victor de Castro León, “Contribución al estudio de la violencia en la dinastía Nazarí: El caso de Muḥammad III y Muḥammad V según Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección Árabe-Islam 67 (2018), 62–78.

<sup>228</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 347; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446. It appears that, at least for a time, ‘Alī b. al-Khaṭīb served as the private secretary of Muḥammad V, with a few of his letters penned on behalf of this sovereign preserved in Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 10: 226–238.

<sup>229</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 321; Lirola Delgado, “La familia de Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” p. 22.

<sup>230</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 320–321.

Nasrid dynasty through bonds of loyalty and service that stretched back at least three generations, with several members of the lineage playing prominent roles in the governance of the kingdom during the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>231</sup> Stressing the antiquity and prestige of this family's lineage, Ibn al-Khaṭīb underscores the significance of his son 'Abd Allāh's contracting this marriage by quoting from a congratulatory letter that Abū al-Barakāt al-Balaḥīqī which celebrated the union between the Banū al-Khaṭīb and the Banū Sahl b. Mālīk, described as "the most noble, esteemed, illustrious and ancient house."<sup>232</sup> The alliance with this powerful and wealthy family, secured by marriage, further reinforced Ibn al-Khaṭīb's pre-eminent position within the Nasrid kingdom, while also signifying the establishment of the Banū al-Khaṭīb as one of Granada's leading lineages.

As for Ibn al-Khaṭīb's second son, Muḥammad, al-Maqqarī claims that he did not pursue a career in administration or at the royal court, preferring instead to devote himself to worship and asceticism.<sup>233</sup> Upon closer examination, it becomes apparent that this was far from the case. A legal document pertaining to land ownership and water rights, translated into Romance by Castilian notaries in 1532 and preserved in the Archivo Municipal de Granada, sheds important light on this son of Ibn al-Khaṭīb.<sup>234</sup> This document, dated Rabī' II 14 770/November 26 1368,

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<sup>231</sup> Several members of this family are mentioned as leading Nasrid statesmen in the "Comprehensive History," including the patriarch of the family Abū al-Ḥasan Sahl b. Muḥammad b. Mālīk al-Azdī (d. 639/1242), as well as his descendants Muḥammad b. Sahl b. Mālīk al-Azdī (d. 670/1272), Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Abī al-Qāsim b. Mālīk al-Azdī, Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Sahl b. Mālīk al-Azdī (d. 721/1321), Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Sahl b. Mālīk al-Azdī (d. 731/1331) (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 320–322, 4: 277–295; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 104). Most of these individuals were also distinguished scholars in their own right, a further demonstration of the close relationship between learning, administration and political fortune in the Nasrid kingdom. The family's prominence continued into the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, with a member of this lineage, Abū al-Ḥasan Sahl b. Ibrāhīm b. Sahl (d. after 821/1418), is noted by al-Maqrīzī as a notable scholar who performed the pilgrimage (*ḥajj*) to Mecca and traveled widely in Egypt and Syria (al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 115).

<sup>232</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 1: 321

<sup>233</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 10: 142.

<sup>234</sup> Álvarez de Morales and Jiménez Alarcón, "Pleitos de Agua en Granada en tiempos de Carlos V. Colección de escrituras romanecadas," pp. 69–70.

pertains to the purchase of water rights of the communal water-course or reservoir (*acequia/sāqiya*) at ‘Ayn al-Dam‘ (Ayndamar). The specifics of the sale need not concern us here, but the representation of Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭīb within the contract warrants closer examination for the details that it provides about his titles, rank and social status:

On behalf of the illustrious and exalted statesman, noble, royal intimate (*privado*), military commander, and eminent nobleman by lineage (*hidalgo de linaje*) Muḥammad, the son of the pre-eminent senior, famed, glorious and learned nobleman and scholar, who was honored with the title Dhū-l Wizāratayn, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb al-Salmānī, his *mayordomo*, the honorable and distinguished noble Idrīs, son of the famed Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Janīn purchased... rights to the reservoir of ‘Ayn al-Dam‘ outside Granada (may God protect it).

*Conpro para el alguazil alcaide ensalçado, engrandeçido, nombrado, privado, estimado, noble, cunplido, hidalgo de linaje Mahomad hijo del señor alfaqui Viejo, noble cunplido, engrandeçido, nombrado, sabio, unico, de quien en tiempo se honro el de los dos alguaziladgos, Mahomad hijo de Abdalla Aben Alhatib el Almoní, su mayordomo, el maestre honrado, ilustre, noble, Ydriz hijo de el Viejo, onrado, que sea en gloria, Mahomad Aben Ydriz el Janin...y la cantidad de agua aqui es el agua del açequia de Ayndamar de la salida de Granada, que Dios guarde.*<sup>235</sup>

Far from being a reclusive ascetic, as al-Maqqarī suggests, this document clearly presents Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭīb as an influential statesman, wealthy nobleman and eminent member of the court of Muḥammad V. The document provides important evidence that while Ibn al-Khaṭīb governed the kingdom from his residence in the Alhambra, it was his son Muḥammad who was tasked with the managing the considerable family estates, vineyards and lands in the Vega de Granada. The term *hidalgo del linaje* utilized in the document is particularly significant because it reflects the attempts of the Castilian scribe or notary to accurately convey the original Arabic text’s description of the pre-eminent status of Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭīb (and Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself) individual in society, a further illustration of the

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<sup>235</sup> Álvarez de Morales and Jiménez Alarcón, “Pleitos de Agua en Granada en tiempos de Carlos V. Colección de escrituras romanecadas,” p. 69.



ennoblement of the Banū al-Khaṭīb in the Nasrid kingdom during the second reign of Muḥammad V.<sup>236</sup> The youngest of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's sons, 'Alī, was a learned scholar and accomplished litterateur, studying with some of the leading scholars of the era,<sup>237</sup> and became a leading courtier and intimate companion of Muḥammad V.<sup>238</sup> In addition to holding a notable position in the Nasrid royal administration, he appears to have accompanied Muḥammad V on some of his military campaigns and penned several royal proclamations on his behalf, some of which are preserved by Abū al-'Abbās al-Maqqarī.<sup>239</sup> In several respects, it was 'Alī who was groomed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to succeed him as the leading councilor and intimate (*privado*) of Muḥammad V.<sup>240</sup>

It was from this newfound position of power, wealth, influence and authority that Ibn al-Khaṭīb once again turned to the written word to legitimize his family's status. While it has already been seen how, within his own autobiographical writings, he stressed that he was descended from a long line of secretaries and functionaries in the service of the Nasrids and emphasized his family's antiquity as prominent scholar-officials throughout Andalusī history, it is also significant that he sought to transmit this authority to his sons. Ibn al-Khaṭīb composed significant biographies of each of his sons, integrating them into the "Comprehensive History" and other writings, preserved some fragments of their poetry and underscored their loyal service

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<sup>236</sup> For the late medieval and early modern Castilian representation of Nasrid aristocrats and nobles, see Clara Almagro, "¿Un hidalgo musulmán? La oligarquía nazarí desde un pleito de hidalguía castellano," *al-Qantara* 38 (2017), pp. 71–97. A detailed study of *hidalguía* and the broader socio-political context in which the idea was articulated during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries is provided in Michael J. Crawford, *The Fight for Status and Privilege in Late Medieval and Early Modern Castile, 1465-1598* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2014).

<sup>237</sup> Aside from his own father, some of his teachers were Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Jayyāb, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Marzūq, al-Sharīf al-Tilmisānī Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Yūsuf, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Maqqarī, al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī, Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī, Abū Bakr b. Shibrīn, Abū Ja'far b. Ṣafwān, Abū Ja'far b. Khātimah, indicating his immersion in a diverse number of scholarly disciplines (al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 10: 191).

<sup>238</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 10: 142, 226.

<sup>239</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 10: 226–238.

<sup>240</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 10: 142.

to the Nasrid dynasty as well as their status as emerging scholar-officials in the Islamic West.

His biography of ‘Abd Allāh, his eldest son, is particularly illuminating:

‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Sa‘īd b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Sa‘īd b. al-Khaṭīb al-Salmānī, known as Abū Muḥammad. For a history of his family, see the biography of his grandfather in this work. *His condition*: He was handsome, possessing a strong intellect, characterized by calmness and tranquility, preferring the solace of seclusion from people, rarely smiling, with beautiful calligraphic handwriting, and accomplished at prose composition. He was employed as a scribe for a few emirs in North Africa, reciting poetry at their court, being bestowed with offices, honors, lands and favor from them. After the turbulent events (*al-fitna*), he served as a secretary for the sovereign of his homeland (*sulṭān waṭānihi*) [i.e. Granada] and was appointed to an exalted position as a military commander (*mu‘azzaz al-khuṭṭa bi-l qiyāda*), and composed poetry for the Nasrid emirs. *His education*: He studied with the chief judge of Granada, the great teacher and preacher Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥasanī [al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī], and with the illustrious teacher and preacher Abū Sa‘īd Faraj b. Lubb al-Taghlibī. He demonstrated excellent knowledge of Arabic and, since his birth, received countless certificates of transmission (*ijāza*) from the scholars of both the Islamic West and the Mashriq.<sup>241</sup>

Ibn al-Khaṭīb then proceeds to provide examples of ‘Abd Allāh’s poetry and prose, including a letter composed while in the service of Muḥammad V in order to underscore his distinguished status.<sup>242</sup> Moreover, within the last biographical dictionary (ca. 774/1372) that he composed, Ibn al-Khaṭīb devotes a considerable biography to ‘Abd Allāh, then around 30 years old, which is even more laudatory.<sup>243</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s concern with bequeathing a particular legacy to his sons and securing their future is also reflected in his extensive public testament (*waṣīyya*) to his sons, advising them on the proper conduct of statesman, while also providing guidance on matters ranging from managing wealth to upholding their religious practice and maintaining a commitment to the pursuit of knowledge.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 436–438.

<sup>242</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 3: 439. An extensive biography and additional fragments of ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb is also preserved in Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 10: 143–154.

<sup>243</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 280–282.

<sup>244</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 10: 239–251. A manuscript of this testament is also preserved in the Qarawiyyin Library in Fez (MS Qarawiyyin 627/40).

Since his earliest years in the chancery, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was aware that many of his peers, such as Ibn Quṭba al-Dawsī and al-Bunnāhī, were equally his closest associates, colleagues and rivals.<sup>245</sup> Competition for political office and royal favor, as indicated throughout this dissertation, was among the most evident characteristics of courtly life during this period. Upon reaching the highest positions in the kingdom, individuals would jealously guard that distinction and authority, as seen in the cases of Ibn al-Ḥakīm, Ibn Maḥrūq and Riḍwān. Ibn al-Khaṭīb was no exception. This was particularly evident following the arrival to the Nasrid court in Rabi I 764/December 1362 of one of his closest friends and allies, the leading scholar-official and historian ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn.<sup>246</sup> The latter, who was granted one of the palaces of the Alhambra as his residence, became a close counselor of Muḥammad V, who grew fond of the North African scholar and begun entrusting him with major responsibilities, including appointing him as his ambassador to Pedro I of Castile in Seville.<sup>247</sup> For a variety of reasons, some of which remain unclear, Ibn al-Khaṭīb felt increasingly threatened that his own influence over the Nasrid sovereign was less than complete and—according to Ibn Khaldūn’s own autobiography—grew increasingly distant and less friendly towards his North African friend, which prompted the latter to depart from the kingdom in Jumādā I 766/February 1365.<sup>248</sup> Within his autobiography, Ibn Khaldūn places the blame for the tensions between himself and Ibn al-Khaṭīb on other secretaries and courtiers, which he claimed attempted (and succeeded) to incite the Granadan vizier against him, and increasingly perceive the political rise of his North African friend in the Nasrid court

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<sup>245</sup> See, for example, the letter from Ibn al-Jayyāb to Ibn al-Khaṭīb cautioning the latter against mistrusting Ibn Quṭba al-Dawsī (Ibn al-Jayyāb, *Dīwān*, p. 66).

<sup>246</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 83–86; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 2: 390–391.

<sup>247</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 85–90; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 2: 391; Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, pp. 122–125.

<sup>248</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 90–91; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 2: 391; García Gómez, *Foco de Antigua Luz*, pp. 229–230.

with concern.<sup>249</sup> In any case, Ibn Khaldūn departed the Nasrid kingdom while remaining on amiable and friendly terms with Ibn al-Khaṭīb.<sup>250</sup> Following his return to North Africa, Ibn al-Khaṭīb and Ibn Khaldūn remained in frequent contact and, no longer rivals for the affection and favor of the same king, their friendship was strengthened.<sup>251</sup> Ultimately, Ibn Khaldūn proved to be Ibn al-Khaṭīb's most ardent defender, both during his lifetime and after his death.

Even as he wielded immense executive authority, was responsible for the governance of the Nasrid kingdom and became more enmeshed in the court intrigue of the Alhambra, Ibn al-Khaṭīb remained committed to his writing, authoring a number of works during this period in life. It was during this period in the late 760s/1360s that Ibn al-Khaṭīb once again turned to his intellectual pursuits. He authored an important medical treatise titled “On the Preservation of Health throughout the Seasons of the Year” (*al-Wuṣūl li Hifẓ al-Siḥḥa fī al-Fuṣūl*), completed Dhū-l Ḥijja 25 769/August 11 1368, which was dedicated to Muḥammad V (referred to as “the fount of justice and God's caliph on earth”). It was also during this time that he completed a new draft of his “Comprehensive History of Granada,” as well as important political treatises, such as the “On the Norms of the Vizierate” (discussed in Chapter 2), which may also have served a didactic function in educating his own children, active secretaries in the Nasrid chancery, in the various facets of statecraft. It was during the height of his power as Nasrid chief minister that Ibn al-Khaṭīb also completed his autobiography, composed in Muḥarram 769/August 1369, which was incorporated into the “Comprehensive History.”<sup>252</sup> This extensive work (nearly 200 pages of printed text) included a detailed description of his genealogy and ancestors, a list of his

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<sup>249</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 90–91; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿUqūd al-Farīda*, 2: 391.

<sup>250</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 91–92.

<sup>251</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 134–140; Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 99–118, 124–134; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-ʿUqūd al-Farīda*, 2: 391; Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, pp. 122–125.

<sup>252</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 438–639.

teachers and works, and reproduced a large number of his writings (both poetry and prose), including his own chancery composition and epistles, as well as various letters and decrees that were addressed to him by the rulers, scholars and statesmen in the Islamic West. The act of writing such an extensive autobiography, as well as its incorporation into the “Comprehensive History of Granada” was envisioned by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as a deeply significant act:

The completion of this work [the “Comprehensive History”] was a virtuous act undertaken despite my extensive political and administrative responsibilities in governing the kingdom (*al-iltizām li-mura’āt al-Siyāsa al-sultāniyya wa al-irtibāʾ*)...which has preserved the immortalized accomplishments and deeds of the notable scholars and statesman [of Granada] after they have passed from this world, and made known their widely renowned virtues long after their own time. Verily, I have vied with them in the realms of scholarship and statecraft and in attaining a lofty rank (*nāfastuhum fī iqtihām tilk al-abwāb wa libās tilk al-athwāb*) and have sought to gather them all together even if only within a book. In composing this [autobiography], I have aspired to intimately associate myself with them and place myself in their company, demonstrating myself to be worthy of this status.<sup>253</sup>

Alongside his writing, he also patronized scholars and shaped the urban space of Granada. He invested some of his wealth as an endowment (*waqf*) in several Sufi lodges and constructed a small college.<sup>254</sup> Moreover, he oversaw the construction of the Māristān (Great Hospital) in Granada, completed in 767/1365.<sup>255</sup> As an institution, it can be compared with the Māristān al-Manṣūrī in Cairo, established by the Mamluk Sultan Qalāwūn in 683/1284, which functioned as both a hospital and institution of medical learning.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 438–439.

<sup>254</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>255</sup> For a study of this site, see Elizabeth Dean Hermann, *Urban Formation and Landscape: Symbol and Agent of Social, Political and Environmental Change in Fourteenth-Century Nasrid Granada* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University PhD Dissertation, 1996), pp. 150–58; J. A. García Granados, Fernando Giron Irueste and Vicente Salvatierra Cuenca, *El Maristán de Granada: un hospital islámico* (Madrid: Asociación Española de Neuropsiquiatría, 1989); Leopoldo Torres-Balbas, “El Maristán de Granada,” *Al-Andalus* 9 (1944), pp. 481–498.

<sup>256</sup> Petry, *Civilian Elite of Late Medieval Cairo*, p. 332.

His status as a leading historian and litterateur, as well as Nasrid Granada's pre-eminent chancellor, chief minister and ambassador, made Ibn al-Khaṭīb one of the most renowned Granadans in the late medieval Islamic world. His extensive corpus of surviving letters testifies to the close relationships that he established with scholars, nobles, mystics and kings from Seville to Cairo, shaping the diplomacy of the Nasrid kingdom with various powers in the Mediterranean but also forging his own reputation as a leading statesman and intellectual. One of the individuals in Cairo with whom he maintained particularly close relations was the litterateur Ibn Abī Ḥajala al-Tilmisānī (d. 776/1375).<sup>257</sup> This individual, who closely followed events in the Islamic West and composed a number of panegyrics for Marinid sovereigns and functionaries,<sup>258</sup> praised Ibn al-Khaṭīb in the strongest terms as the “defender of the faith” and the pre-eminent litterateur, statesman and scholar of the age.<sup>259</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, for his part, spoke highly of Ibn Abī Ḥajala and quotes extensively from his works, including *Dīwān al-Ṣabāba* and *Sakradān al-Sulṭān*. Moreover, since he never had the opportunity to partake in the “journey in search of knowledge” (*al-riḥla fī ṭalab al-‘ilm*), Ibn al-Khaṭīb wrote to Bahā’ al-Dīn Abū al-Baqā’ Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Barr al-Subkī (d. 777/1375), a leading Shafī‘i scholar who was appointed as chief judge (*qāḍī al-quḍāt*) in Cairo and Damascus,<sup>260</sup> in Muḥarram 768/September 1366 requesting a certificate of transmission (*ijāza*) from him.<sup>261</sup> As already seen, these were documents which were the embodiments of scholarly prestige and indicated continued links with the Mashriq. Al-Subkī’s response, dated Muḥarram 23 768/September 29 1366 praised Ibn al-

<sup>257</sup> Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farā'id al-Juman*, pp. 228–229; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 331; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 193.

<sup>258</sup> Ibn Abī Ḥajala al-Tilmisānī, *Dīwān Ibn Abī Ḥajala* (Amman: Dar ‘Ammar, 2010), eds. Mujahid Mustafa Bahjat and Ahmad Hamid Mukhlif, pp. 111–114, 159–160, 164, 195, 264–266, 277–283.

<sup>259</sup> Ibn Abī Ḥajala al-Tilmisānī, *Dīwān*, pp. 74–75, 118–120.

<sup>260</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 248–254; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 297–298; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm al-Zāhira*, 11: 110. The litterateur Ibn Abī Ḥajala al-Tilmisānī preserves a panegyric that he composed for this individual (Ibn Abī Ḥajala al-Tilmisānī, *Dīwān*, pp. 164–166).

<sup>261</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥanat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 164–167.

Khaṭīb as the pre-eminent litterateur and statesman of the Islamic West, lauded his “Comprehensive History” as “an incomparable and illustrious work,” but was decidedly non-committal on the question of granting the Granadan chief minister permission to transmit his works. Both Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s letter to al-Subkī and the latter’s reply were carefully reproduced in the “Deeds of the Notables” (*A‘māl al-A‘lām*).<sup>262</sup>

As this exchange demonstrates, the “Comprehensive History” was already known to scholarly and administrative elites in Mamluk lands during the 760s/1360s. Ibn al-Khaṭīb went to great lengths to ensure that many of his historical and biographical works were carefully copied, with the assistance of his students in the chancery, and sent to places like Tunis and Cairo to be deposited in various royal libraries, chancery archives and other repositories of learning across the Mediterranean. One of the most important destinations that Ibn al-Khaṭīb explicitly mentions was the *Khāniqāh* (or Sufi hospice) of Sa‘īd al-Su‘adā’. This was the oldest Sufi institutions (*khāniqāh*) in Cairo, established around 569/1173 by the Ayyubid sovereign Salāḥ al-Dīn Yūsuf b. Ayyūb (“Saladin”). As Nathan Hofer has shown, between its foundation in 569/1173 and 724/1325, this site “was the center of state-sponsored Sufism in Egypt and housed hundreds if not thousands of Sufis from all over the Muslim world.”<sup>263</sup> Due to its immense prestige, wealth and link with the leading military and civilian notables of Syria and Egypt (a fact attested in the writings of al-Maqrīzī, among others)<sup>264</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb considered its library to be a worthy location to house his most important mystical, historical and biographical works.

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<sup>262</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al-A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, ff. 65r–66r.

<sup>263</sup> Nathan Hofer, *The Popularisation of Sufism in Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), p. 36.

<sup>264</sup> Petry, *Civilian Elite of Cairo in the Late Middle Ages*, p. 327. For a comprehensive study of the Sa‘īd al-Su‘adā’ and its significance, see Hofer, *The Popularisation of Sufism*, pp. 35–102.

From the extant evidence,<sup>265</sup> it is clear that the works that Ibn al-Khaṭīb gifted as an endowment (*waqf*) to the Saʿīd al-Suʿadā included his monumental “Comprehensive History” and “The Garden of Acquaintance with the Nature of Noble Love,” his major work of mystical philosophy, among other treatises, epistles and books. The widespread reception of these works is indicated by the fact that they quickly became an authoritative source of knowledge among scholars and historians in Mamluk lands on the Nasrid kingdom, as well as political, social and cultural developments in the late medieval Islamic West. As late as the 11<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century, the famous North African historian and litterateur—and Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s greatest pre-modern biographer—Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Maqqārī asserts in his *Nafh al-Ṭīb* that he came across the physical manuscript of the “Comprehensive History” when he visited the Saʿīd al-Suʿadā, describing the many commentaries and marginal annotations of various leading scholars of Cairo during the late Middle Ages, including al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī and al-Sakhāwī on its pages.<sup>266</sup> The composition and dissemination of these works demonstrates Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s attempts to (consciously) establish himself as the foremost authority for the administrative, intellectual and political history of the Nasrid kingdom. The composition of biographical dictionaries fulfilled a similarly political function, which was to situate himself at the very heart of an extensive network of scholar-officials that played a central role in both the intellectual and administrative affairs of Granada. It further enabled Ibn al-Khaṭīb to portray himself as the inheritor of a long line of scholar-ministers across Andalusī history that included individuals such as Samuel b. Naghrīlla, Ibn Abī al-Khiṣāl (who, like Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself, held the title

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<sup>265</sup> The most important being a letter sent from Ibn al-Khaṭīb to Ibn Khaldūn in Jumādā I 769/December 1368, which enumerates the various works which he had completed over the past several years and describes how he sent copies of some of them, including the “Comprehensive History” and “The Garden of Acquaintance” to Cairo (Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 108–113).

<sup>266</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 9: 327–328.



“Bearer of the Two Offices”), Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb and Ibn al-Ḥakīm. It was particularly significant for Ibn al-Khaṭīb that the illustrious careers of these luminaries centered on the city of Granada itself.

Diplomacy and military campaigns were also both major avenues through which Ibn al-Khaṭīb shaped the history of the Nasrid kingdom during this period. This was most clear in his orchestration of some of the most effective Nasrid raids against Castile since the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century. While these military campaigns were ostensibly part of Muḥammad V’s military assistance to Pedro I against Enrique II, Ibn al-Khaṭīb represented these raids and conquests a defense of the faith and an aggressive act of militant *jihād* against Castile.<sup>267</sup> He issued letters to the North African kingdoms, as well as in directives and public proclamations to be recited by mosque preachers and others within Granada as early as Ṣafar 767/October 1365, enabling him to mobilize extensive forces to take part in these campaigns, which were personally led by the Nasrid sovereign.<sup>268</sup> The ambassadors appointed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb to oversee these important diplomatic missions to the North African kingdoms included some of the most high-profile scholars and officials in the Nasrid kingdom, including the “pre-eminent Sufi master” (*shaykh al-shuyūkh*) Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Maḥrūq, and Abū al-Barakāt al-Balafīqī.<sup>269</sup> These individuals successfully put forward powerful arguments and secured substantial military aid from both the Marinid and Zayyanid kingdoms. The consequences were devastating for Castile: in May/June 1366, the town of Iznajar was conquered, Utrera was attacked in Sha‘bān 768/April 1367, Jaén, Priego, and Baeza were all sacked in the Muḥarram 769/September 1367, and Ubeda was raided in Rabī‘ I 769/November 1367.<sup>270</sup> This was followed shortly afterwards by a devastating raid on

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<sup>267</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4, 176, 7: 339.

<sup>268</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, BN MS 5152, ff. 15r–20v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 49–57, 61–62.

<sup>269</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 61–62.

<sup>270</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 62–80, 146–178, 2: 63–64; Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 109–110.

Córdoba in Late 769/Spring 1368.<sup>271</sup> Following the death of Pedro I, Algeciras itself was conquered in Dhū-l Ḥijja 26 770/August 1 1369.<sup>272</sup> These campaigns, which wrought major destruction and led to thousands of men, women and children being taken captive, were represented by Ibn al-Khaṭīb not only in terms of a righteous holy war against disbelievers but as a Nasrid *reconquista* of sorts, with the term *istirjāʿ* (“reclamation” or “restoration” of lands) being frequently employed.<sup>273</sup> Many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s “letters of victory” to Muslim rulers in North Africa, Egypt and the Hijaz, composed in rhymed prose and high-style classical Arabic, communicated the large scale of these victories and were intended as an affirmation of the sovereign power of Muḥammad V and the heights to which the Nasrid kingdom had ascended. The letters and embassies to the North Africa rulers, particularly the Marinids and Hafsids, were often accompanied by some of the wealth, captives and banners seized during these campaigns. Moreover, in his letter to the Hafsid sultan Abū Ishāq Ibrahīm dated Rabīʿ II 3 770/November 15 1368 (the most famous of all his *fatḥnāmas*), Ibn al-Khaṭīb claims that the sack of Jaén was undertaken to avenge the sack of Alexandria by Peter of Cyprus.<sup>274</sup> Several of these letters, particularly the aforementioned letter sent to the Hafsids of Tunis, titled *Iftirās al-iṣāba ilā iftirāsh al-ināba*, was valued both for its content and style, were widely cited, transcribed and preserved in the works of many of the leading Muslim scholar-officials in the Mediterranean world, including Ibn al-Aḥmar, Ibn Khaldūn and al-Qalqashandī.<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 15–21; Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, p. 110.

<sup>272</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 203–205; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 339–340.

<sup>273</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 62–80, 146–215, 2: 15–28.

<sup>274</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 179–202. For Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s letter to the Mamluk sultan al-Ashraf Shaʿbān (r. 764/1363–779/1377) following the sack of Alexandria in Ṣafar 767/October 1365, see Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 295–303.

<sup>275</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 135–174; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr Farāʿid al-Jumān*, pp. 256–288.

### A Self-Imposed Exile? Ibn al-Khatib in the Marinid Court, 773/1371-776/1374

By 771/1369, Muhammad V had recaptured almost all Nasrid territories conquered by Castile during the preceding 70 years, devastating a large portion of the Kingdom of Castile in the process and establishing his reputation as a formidable political and military leader in his own right. These successes imbued this Nasrid sovereign with a renewed sense of confidence, exemplified by his adoption of the regnal title *al-Ghanī bi-llāh* (“The Prosperous by the Grace of God”) on Jumādā I 2 769/December 25 1367.<sup>276</sup> He also established a long-term peace agreement with Enrique II of Castile and established significant alliances with the Zayyanids and Hafsids in North Africa. As a testament to the establishment of his absolute sovereignty, Muḥammad V also desisted from paying any tribute or taxes to Castile after 771/1369.<sup>277</sup> To commemorate his restoration to the throne in 763/1362 and his many military victories between 766/1365 and 771/1369, Muḥammad V oversaw the massive expansion of the Alhambra palaces. He commissioned the construction of “The Felicitous Garden” (*al-Riyāḍ al-Sa‘īd*)—known today as the Palace of the Lions—and the *Mishwar*, completed the Comares Palace (built by Yūsuf I), and restored older parts of the Alhambra, including the so-called Puerta del Vino.<sup>278</sup> As chief minister, who exercised effective control over the Nasrid kingdom’s fiscal, administrative, political and military affairs, Ibn al-Khaṭīb played a major in all these developments. Indeed, while Muḥammad V spent much of his time on various military campaigns between Sha‘bān 767/April 1366 and Dhū-l Ḥijja 770/August 1369, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was the effective ruler of the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>279</sup> While he governed the kingdom, it is plausible that his sons, ‘Alī and ‘Abd

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<sup>276</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, p. 111.

<sup>277</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 4: 176; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 261; al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A‘shā*, 7: 442.

<sup>278</sup> Puerta Vilchez, *Reading the Alhambra*, pp. 36–136, 148–250.

<sup>279</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, p. 117.

Allāh in particular, would have accompanied Muḥammad V on campaign, allowing Ibn al-Khaṭīb to maintain his (indirect) influence over the sovereign.

As part of his consolidation of royal power and at the advice of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Muḥammad V also abolished the office of *shaykh al-ghuzāt* by 775/1374,<sup>280</sup> removing all Marinid princes from positions of military and political authority, effectively taking full control over military affairs and appointing his own sons and Christian-born freedmen (*mamālik*) as commanders of the army. This was a gradual process and began as early as 764/1363. Since his removal of the powerful Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Raḥḥū from office, Ibn al-Khaṭīb himself ensured the gradual weakening of the *shaykh al-ghuzāt*, bringing the office under tighter royal control.<sup>281</sup> Due to their independence and historic power as kingmakers in the Nasrid kingdom, which he meticulously documents throughout his writings, Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to ensure that the command of the military was dominated by loyal subjects of the king. As such, he oversaw the appointment of Muḥammad's eldest son, Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf, as effective commander of the military (*shaykh al-ghuzāt*), placing both Marinid and Andalusī contingents under his authority, as early as 765/1364.<sup>282</sup> Shortly afterwards, Ibn al-Khaṭīb issued another decree (*ṣaḥīr*) appointing Abū al-Naṣr Sa'd, another son of Muḥammad V, as a leading military commander over another large contingent of the Nasrid military traditionally commanded by Marinid princes (*al-katībah al-thāniyya min al-‘askar al-ghuzāt al-mushtamala ‘alā al-ashyākh min awlād Ya‘qūb kibār banī Marīn*), with the language of the decree stressing that he was granted absolute

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<sup>280</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 390; Manzano Rodríguez, *La Intervención de los Benimerines en la Península Ibérica*, pp. 366–369.

<sup>281</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 390.

<sup>282</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, BN MS 5152, ff. 30v–33r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 73–77; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 390, 393; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 9: 66–69.

authority over the Andalusī, as well as Marinid, forces under his command.<sup>283</sup> Ibn Khaldūn states explicitly that this decision by Muḥammad V to appoint royal princes and freedmen as commanders of the military, while removing Marinid nobles from these offices, was a decision that was strongly influenced by Ibn al-Khaṭīb.<sup>284</sup>

Around the same time as peace with Enrique II was being established, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's prior confidence about his pre-eminent position in the Nasrid court gradually came to be replaced by cynicism, apprehension and disquiet. The root cause of this appears to lie in the fact that many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own allies within the Nasrid court, including many of his own appointees, students and protégés such as Ibn Zamrak, had been transformed into his opponents. Much of the court intrigue certainly rooted in the ambitions of his students, particularly Ibn Zamrak, and had become increasingly frustrated by Ibn al-Khaṭīb's absolute hold on executive political power. However, it is important to note that his enemies did not constitute a monolithic group. They included jurists such as the chief judge al-Bunnāhī, protégés in the chancery such as Ibn Furkūn, as well as a number of patricians, noblemen and administrators who had found Ibn al-Khaṭīb to be a major obstacle to the realization of their own political ambitions.

The specific reasons for the tensions remain unclear, but Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings from around 771/1369 onwards reflect a sense of foreboding about the insecurity of his position and his lack of powerful allies in the Nasrid court.<sup>285</sup> While the machinations of his enemies at court certainly did little to allay his fears, it is clear that these sentiments were also rooted in his traumatic experience of being imprisoned, tortured and exiled less than a decade earlier. It was

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<sup>283</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, BN MS 5152, ff. 33r–35v; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 73–77; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 9: 69–71.

<sup>284</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 77–80; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 390, 393.

<sup>285</sup> Two letters penned by Ibn al-Khaṭīb and sent to Ibn Khaldūn in North Africa in Tlemcen on Rabī' II 14 770/November 26 1368 and in Rabī' II 771/November 1369 (Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 99–107, 116–118) are replete with language that clearly reflects his melancholy and sense of isolation in the Nasrid court during this period.

also based on the very real understanding of the precarious nature of his own authority as a scholar-official without any extensive blood, family or marriage bonds with the nobility and patricians of Granada. His familiarity with the bloody fate that met many non-noble Granadan chief ministers in the preceding decades—Ibn al-Ḥakīm, Ibn al-Maḥrūq and Riḍwān—also colored his own perception of the manner in which his own political status and position was tied directly with the sovereign, a bond of intimacy that he could not share or allow to be compromised.

The public and active role of Muḥammad V—who was now over 30 years old—in the governance and military leadership of the kingdom by about 772/1370 had important implications for Ibn al-Khaṭīb. The chief minister sensed that his influence with Muḥammad V was gradually dissipating, replaced instead with contempt and hostility. There are several clues that provide a window into the sources of this tension. While it was been suggested that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's overbearing personality and heavy-handed approach to advising the king may have contributed to the widening rift between the sovereign and his chief minister,<sup>286</sup> there may have been deeper reasons for the tension. Perhaps the most important was Ibn al-Khaṭīb's failure to recognize that Muḥammad V aspired to a very different type of rulership during his second reign than his first, when he elevated to power as a sixteen-year-old and placed under the guardianship of his chamberlain and chief minister. Although deeply learned and a patron of scholars, elevating them to the highest executive offices of the Nasrid kingdom, Muḥammad V was not simply a "learned king" who was content to spend his days being instructed in proper governance by his father's vizier. As the above details have sought to emphasize, he was an active ruler for whom military and political leadership were cornerstones of kingship. It was

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<sup>286</sup> Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, pp. 147–151.

partially these aspirations to take a leading role in the governance of the kingdom which witnessed the gradual erosion of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's influence and supreme executive authority in Granada. These tendencies on the part of the sovereign were encouraged by many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's rivals at court, who could only stand to benefit from his demise.<sup>287</sup> Writing in 771/1369–1370, Ibn al-Khaṭīb committed to writing his thoughts, apprehensions and anxieties about his second tenure as chief minister of Muḥammad V:

Since [becoming chief minister] I have diligently and faithfully pursued my duties without engaging in deceit, schemes and machinations nor have I obstinately clung to political office or sought to exercise more power than necessary...then I turned my attention to the construction of the Sufi lodge (*al-zāwiya*), a college (*al-madrasa*) and tomb (*al-turba*), being among the first to accomplish this as vizier—indeed, even the first to do so in the recent history of al-Andalus—so that God's grace would descend upon the sovereign. I have also spread peace and security throughout the realm, defended the frontiers, increased income from the collection of taxes (*tathmīr al-jibāya*), dealt justly with the holy warriors and soldiers, struggled against all neighboring kingdoms in the service of the welfare of Islam (*fī ṭhār al-maṣlaḥa al-dīniyya*), issued public proclamations from the pulpits, safeguarded the sovereign by remedying the poison of rebellion (*ḍamānan 'an al-sulṭān bi-tiryāq summ al-thawra*), and bettering the condition of the elite and the masses...verily, God will reward all those sleepless nights, toils and labor that I have spent in His cause, and not for any worldly benefit. Despite everything that I have done, the parched winds have ravaged forth, calling to evil, exposing all to misfortune, dominating the atmosphere with mistrustful glances. This is the fate of the one who has been plagued with the unenviable task of governing the common folk, those resentful and discontent with the bounties of the heavens, the murderers of prophets, the worshippers of lowly passions...and the situation has continued until the present.<sup>288</sup>

It was this increasingly hostile atmosphere in the Alhambra that finally compelled Ibn al-Khaṭīb to flee Granada for the friendly court of the Marinid sovereign Abū Fāris 'Abd al-'Azīz (r. 768/1366–774/1372). Both Ibn Khaldūn and his students Ibn Ḥajar and al-Maqrīzī emphasize that Ibn al-Khaṭīb became the target of court intrigue due to his extensive authority and influence in the Nasrid kingdom, and fled from the Nasrid kingdom due to his fearing for his life and

<sup>287</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>288</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 446–447.

future.<sup>289</sup> The numerous examples of previous Nasrid ministers who had swiftly fallen from royal favor or murdered by rivals—Ibn al-Ḥakīm, Ibn al-Ḥājj, Ibn Maḥrūq, and Riḍwān—must have been at the forefront of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's mind as he weighed his decision to cross the straits of Gibraltar.

It is apparent that Ibn al-Khaṭīb had been in close contact with this Marinid sovereign for the past several years.<sup>290</sup> For example, around 772/1370, Ibn al-Khaṭīb had written a letter to this ruler interceding on behalf of Ibn Marzūq, who had lost favor in the Marinid court and had migrated to Hafsid Tunis.<sup>291</sup> It also appears that this relationship motivated certain policies on the part of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, such as when he ordered the arrest and imprisonment of the exiled Marinid prince 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Yaflusān, who had been appointed Commander of the Holy Warriors (*shaykh al-ghuzāt*) by Muḥammad V.<sup>292</sup> The abrupt departure of Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his joining the court of a rival dynasty was exploited by his enemies at court, who accused him of betraying both the Nasrid sovereign and the kingdom, and set in motion a chain of events that culminated in the Granadan vizier's assassination in 776/1374. In order to better understand how Ibn al-Khaṭīb went from holding the most powerful office in the Nasrid kingdom to being condemned as a renegade and traitor within a period of three years, it is worth examining these events more closely.

On Jumādā II 1 772/December 10 1370, accompanied by his son 'Alī (himself a leading councilor and courtier of Muḥammad V) and a retinue of his own knights, Ibn al-Khaṭīb set out

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<sup>289</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 347; Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, p. 124; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>290</sup> In his capacity as Nasrid chief minister, Ibn al-Khaṭīb penned numerous letters to this ruler between 768/1366 and 773/1371, several of which are preserved in his extant works (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 1: 308–317, 375–387, 418–423).

<sup>291</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 144–149; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 2: 340–343.

<sup>292</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 347, 350, 391.



from Granada ostensibly to inspect the defenses and fortifications of the western part of the kingdom.<sup>293</sup> However, he set out for Marinid-ruled Gibraltar, whence he sailed to Ceuta, where he was warmly welcomed by leading Marinid dignitaries, and then made for Tlemcen (where the court of Abū Fāris was based), arriving there in Rajab 772/February 1371.<sup>294</sup> His possession of letters of safe-conduct from the Marinid sultan Abū Fāris, which ensured his passage to Ceuta, indicates that Ibn al-Khaṭīb had been in contact with this sovereign for several months before his departure.<sup>295</sup> Prior to crossing the straits, Ibn al-Khaṭīb sent a epistle to Muḥammad V emphasizing his years of loyal service, personal devotion to the sovereign and explaining the reasons for his abrupt departure.<sup>296</sup> Among these was his proclaimed desire to make the pilgrimage to Mecca (*ḥajj*), a request that had been denied by Muḥammad V several years earlier.<sup>297</sup> This aspiration to journey to the holy places in the Hijaz had become a consistent theme in Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings, which is evident as early as his letters composed in Málaga 744/1343, and was usually deployed during moments of moral or political crisis (the military advances of Alfonso XI in 744/1343, the campaign to restore Muḥammad V to the throne in 763/1362, the increasingly hostile atmosphere in the Nasrid court around 773/1371, and during his final imprisonment in Fez in 776/1374).<sup>298</sup> While this served as a pretext, there were more specific reasons for his flight from the Nasrid kingdom. The first, and most significant, was his very real concern for his life as his enemies in Granada sought his downfall. Considering the

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<sup>293</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 347; Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, p. 124; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>294</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 347–348; Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, p. 124; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446 Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>295</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, p. 124.

<sup>296</sup> This is preserved in Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 129–133. For a Spanish translation of this letter, see Ahmad Chafic Damaj, “El último viaje de Ibn al-Jaṭīb: Circunstancias, causas y consecuencias,” in *Entre Oriente y Occidente: ciudades y viajeros en la Edad Media* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2005), eds. Juan Pedro Monferrer Sala and María Dolores Rodríguez Gómez, pp. 119–122.

<sup>297</sup> García Gómez, *Foco de Antigua Luz*, pp. 239–241.

<sup>298</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Manẓūm wa al-Manthūr*, p. 101; García Gómez, *Foco de Antigua Luz*, p. 228.

immense power and influence that he wielded and the authority and wealth that he enjoyed in Granada, and the serious consequences that his departure would have, it was certainly not a decision that was taken lightly.

Some scholars, including Emilio García Gómez, have speculated that Ibn al-Khaṭīb's true loyalties were to the Marinids, a fact which underpinned the hostility of his enemies in the Nasrid kingdom and which prompted him to join the court of Abū Fāris 'Abd al-'Azīz.<sup>299</sup> Although he had long been an advocate of closer cooperation with the Marinids and proclaimed his loyalty to individual sovereigns (such as Abū Sālim) during his exile in North Africa, the "Marinid agent" hypothesis overlooks Ibn al-Khaṭīb's strong ties with Granada and his commitment to the Nasrid dynasty. It also privileges ideology and allegiance to a dynasty over Ibn al-Khaṭīb's more concrete and significant motivation of securing the political survival of himself and his family within a highly turbulent context. All of these factors—personal fear and foreboding, political opportunism, and the desire to make the pilgrimage—appear to have been important factors that influenced his decision to depart from Nasrid Granada and attached himself to the court of Abū Fāris 'Abd al-'Azīz.

Shortly after his arrival in Tlemcen, with the intercession of the Marinid ruler, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's family also arrived in Tlemcen from Granada. The warm reception that he found in the Marinid court was predicated not only on his longstanding loyalty to the dynasty, but also due to his close bond and political ties with many high-ranking figures within the royal administration, including the chancellor Ibn Riḍwān,<sup>300</sup> the secretary Abū Yaḥyā b. Abī Madyan<sup>301</sup> (the emissary

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<sup>299</sup> Molina López, *Ibn al-Jatib*, pp. 96–97.

<sup>300</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 254–260; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Rawḍat al-Nisrīn*, p. 44; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-Jumān*, p. 235.

<sup>301</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 128–129; Ibn al-Aḥmar, *Kitāb Mustawḍa' al-'Alāma*, pp. 47–48; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 348.

dispatched to Granada in 773/1371 to secure the passage of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's family to North Africa), and the chief minister Abū Bakr b. Ghāzī b. al-Kās (d. 779/1377) and Ibn Khaldūn.<sup>302</sup> Abū Fāris was the most effective Marinid ruler since Abū 'Inān, solidifying his control over most of Morocco, including the High Atlas, and conquering Tlemcen from the Zayyanids on Muḥarram 10 772/August 4 1370.<sup>303</sup> He was also able to break the power of the powerful vizier and kingmaker 'Umar b. 'Abd Allāh, whom he executed in Dhū-l Qa'da 768/July 1367.<sup>304</sup>

While in North Africa, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was granted a considerable stipend (*jirāya*), estates (*iqtā'*) and appointed to a distinguished rank in the Marinid court, enabling him to expand his authority and wealth in North Africa, purchasing extensive plots of land, orchards, gardens and estates.<sup>305</sup> Many of those in his retinue and those who had accompanied him to North Africa, including both scholar-officials and military commanders, were also granted positions, stipends and land by Abū Fāris 'Abd al-'Azīz.<sup>306</sup> By late 773/1371, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's enemies at the Nasrid court were clamoring for his blood, accusing him of a variety of misdeeds—ranging from corruption to heresy—and sought to convince Muḥammad V to punish his former vizier.<sup>307</sup> They specifically attacked what they deemed Ibn al-Khaṭīb's hypocrisy for failing to carry out his proclaimed aspiration of performing the pilgrimage to Mecca, and accused him of focusing instead on worldly matters such as lavish expenditures and expanding his own personal power and wealth. As one of the leading secretaries and statesmen in the service of the Nasrid sovereigns for nearly 40 years, acquiring an intimate familiarity with the workings of the

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<sup>302</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 124–129. For a biography of Abū Bakr b. Ghāzī, see al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 133–135.

<sup>303</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 335–342; Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 120, 123–124.

<sup>304</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 335–336.

<sup>305</sup> al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>306</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 348.

<sup>307</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 348.

Kingdom of Granada and the secrets of its sovereigns, his defection to the Marinids was strongly condemned by his political opponents, who depicted his actions as treason of the first order. It is indicative of the malleability of discourses of loyalty and allegiance during this period that, on one hand, itinerant scholar-officials serving a number of sovereigns within their lifetime—such as Ibn Khaldūn—were celebrated, while others could be accused of treason and sedition for doing so. Moreover, his ability to live in relative comfort in North Africa after having abandoned the Nasrid court in such a controversial manner led his enemies to seek vengeance and clamor for blood.

It was alleged that Ibn al-Khaṭīb had pledged to the Marinid sovereign to assist him in the conquest and annexation of the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>308</sup> Moreover, as an individual whose entire fortune and success was predicated upon the patronage and benefices of both Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V, who elevated him to the highest offices of state, his “defection” to the Marinids was viewed as a betrayal of the Nasrid dynasty and a violation of the personal bond of loyalty and allegiance to Muḥammad V that he was obligated to uphold. As a result, at the instigation of his political opponents at court and with the approval of Muḥammad V, in late 773/1371, the chief judge of Granada Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī condemned Ibn al-Khaṭīb as both a traitor and a heretic (*zindīq*), sentencing him to death in absentia, ordering that his books on philosophy, natural science and mysticism be publicly burned in Granada.<sup>309</sup> The declaration condemning Ibn al-Khaṭīb to death as a heretic was sent, along with numerous gifts, to Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz with a request—apparently with Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī himself as the emissary—that the Marinid sovereign extradite the former Nasrid chancellor to Granada to face the accusations, but

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<sup>308</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 350, 353; al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 225.

<sup>309</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 348; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446.

this was met with a staunch refusal.<sup>310</sup> According to Ibn Khaldūn, Abū Fāris stated that “if the charges (of heresy) against him were true, [Ibn al-Khaṭīb] should have been put on trial and accused while he remained in Granada, but as long as he remains under my protection, no one shall harm him.”<sup>311</sup>

The chief judge of Granada, once one of his most important allies and friends had become his greatest enemy. Ibn al-Khaṭīb and al-Bunnāhī, it should be recalled, had been close associates since a young age, sharing many of the same teachers in both Málaga and Granada and entered officialdom around the same time. They had lived through many of the same political events, survived both the Black Death and Castilian military assaults on the Nasrid kingdom, and even endured exile together in Morocco. As mentioned above, it was also Ibn al-Khaṭīb who had penned the decree appointing al-Bunnāhī as chief judge in 763/1362. As indicated by the various recensions of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s historical and biographical works, there was a considerable deterioration in the relationship between the two men over the years. One of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s early biographies of al-Bunnāhī, incorporated into an early version of the “Comprehensive History” during the mid-750s/1350s, celebrated his collegial bond with the latter and praised him as an erudite, generous, intelligent and distinguished scholar from an eminent family.<sup>312</sup> It is only thanks to al-Maqqārī’s careful reproduction of this earlier biography, which he copied from one of the many manuscripts of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s works that he encountered during his travels, that it is preserved. Within his later recension of the “Comprehensive History,” dating from 769/1368, Ibn al-Khaṭīb omits the previous formulas of praise and aggrandizement, replacing his earlier laudatory biography with a more sober portrait of al-

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<sup>310</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 348, 350; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>311</sup> al-Maqqārī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>312</sup> Al-Maqqārī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 8: 254–255.

Bunnāhī, described simply as “our companion (*ṣāhibunā*) Abū al-Ḥasan, the chief judge and preacher of the king’s mosque,” before proceeding to reproduce several fragments of his poetry and prose.<sup>313</sup> This biography illustrates that the two men remained close enough as late as 769/1368—three years before Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s departure from the Nasrid kingdom—for the latter to continue referring to the chief judge as “our companion” and be given access to his writings, from which much of the poetry and prose in the biography is transcribed. However, the omission of the earlier praise is notable and suggests that the bond between the two individuals was no longer as strong as it had been in 763/1362.

On Jumādā I 30 773/December 9 1371, al-Bunnāhī (writing on behalf of Muḥammad V) sent a missive to Ibn al-Khaṭīb in Tlemcen that condemned him in the strongest terms. The accusations ranged from major allegations of heresy and disbelief to a critique of the former chief minister’s alleged gross misconduct, nepotism and treasonous conduct.<sup>314</sup>

The work by Ibn al-Khaṭīb which served as the pretext for al-Bunnāhī’s accusations of heresy and disbelief against him was “The Garden of Acquaintance with the Nature of Noble Love” (*Rawḍat al-Ta’rīf bi-l Ḥubb al-Sharīf*). This work, completed in Granada around Jumādā I 2 769/December 1367 and dedicated to Muḥammad V, was an embodiment of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s ideas about mystical philosophy.<sup>315</sup> The treatise constitutes an exploration of the concept of divine love, utilizing the symbolism of a tree to illustrate the various precepts and branches of the mystical path and attaining proximity to God.<sup>316</sup> The second part of the “Garden of

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<sup>313</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 88–100.

<sup>314</sup> al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 212–223. For a Spanish translation of this epistle, see Nicolás Roser Nebot, “Epístola de al-Bunnāhī a Lisān al-Dīn,” *al-Qantara* 22 (2001), pp. 450–461.

<sup>315</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 111. The treatise has been closely analyzed and its preface translated into Spanish in Santiago Simón, *El Polígrafo granadino Ibn al-Jaṭīb y el Sufismo*, pp. 47–137. For an English summary of its contents, see Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabi in the Later Islamic Tradition*, pp. 176–184.

<sup>316</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rawḍat al-Ta’rīf*, p. 111–449.

Acquaintance” constitutes a type of historical encyclopedia of mysticism across history, with Ibn al-Khaṭīb providing a chronological narrative of the development of notions of divine love, while also providing an exposition of various ideas (and their advocates or practitioners) ranging from the ancient Greek philosophers to the early ascetics and juridical Sufis (such as Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazālī) of the classical Islamic period to the more controversial mystical philosophers of the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>317</sup> The work is permeated by neo-Platonic philosophy, particularly the writings, vocabulary and ideas of the 7<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>-century Andalusī mystical philosopher Muḥyī-l Dīn b. ‘Arabī (d. 638/1240), a controversial figure in the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>318</sup> Although critiquing what he deemed the more “extremist” varieties of monistic philosophical Sufism, Ibn al-Khaṭīb nonetheless provides an inclusive and charitable reading of the diverse groups of mystics described in his work and proclaims that all “lovers of God [were] seekers of truth, who strive to make sense of their passion and relate it to the surrounding world.”<sup>319</sup> It was this relativistic attitude towards “heresy” and his ample quotation from thinkers like Ibn ‘Arabī that provided his opponents with ample ammunition to condemn him. According to al-Bunnāhī himself, writing several years after the events in question:

Any work that incorporates any of the ideas or sayings of the philosophical schools that contradict the sacred law (*min madhāhib al-falsafīyya al-mukhālifa li-l sharī‘a*) must be formally examined [by jurists]. If it is found that the author of such works writes approvingly of these ideas and sentiments, but verbally denies it when accused, he must publicly swear and disavow these ideas or be imprisoned...and woe to the one who simply quotes the ideas or sayings of [the philosophical schools] in their works without approval or condemnation, they are liable for punishment since they have transgressed against the faith (*al-ṭa‘n ‘alā al-dīn*). Such works must be burned and suppressed (*ḥaḳīq bi-l taḥrīq wa al-zajār ‘an mithlih*). Indeed, God Almighty [in the Qur’an] has condemned that people who write treatises and books that become a source of misguidance of others: “Woe to them for what their hands have written!” [Q. 2: 79]. As we have already

<sup>317</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rawḍat al-Ta‘rīf*, p. 449–536. F

<sup>318</sup> Among his leading critiques were Abū Ja‘far b. al-Zubayr and Abū Ja‘far b. Khātimah (Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabi in the Later Islamic Tradition*, pp. 168–171).

<sup>319</sup> Knysh, *Ibn ‘Arabi in the Later Islamic Tradition*, p. 179.

been illustrated in the biographical entry about [the chief judge of Córdoba] Muḥammad b. Yabqā b. Zarb [d. 381/991]<sup>320</sup> in his treatment of the followers of [the Andalusī mystical philosopher] Ibn Masarra al-Jabalī [d. 319/931] in the year 350/961, he forced them to repent of their heresy and burned all Ibn Masarra's books and writings.

A similar case to this occurred in the city of Granada in the middle of 773 [December 1371], in which books authored by Muḥammad b. al-Khaṭīb on doctrinal and philosophical matters were publicly burned in the presence of the jurists, leading professors from the College, and the most eminent scholars. The fact that these books contained heretical ideas and statements necessitated their destruction and burning according to the sacred law. And it was done.<sup>321</sup>

While Nasrid Granada remained a place where the mystical philosophy continued to flourish throughout the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, this passage illustrates the ability of influential judges such as al-Bunnāhī to mobilize legal and theological discourses against their political enemies based upon their intellectual and philosophical ideas. Al-Bunnāhī's insistence that merely quoting the ideas of "heretical" philosophers and mystics was enough to warrant the burning of such books and the condemnation of their authors as impious (if not outright disbelievers) provided the primary justification for his proclamation that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was a disbelieving heretic (*zindīq*) whose works were legitimately burned. As will be seen below, the "The Garden of Acquaintance with the Nature of Noble Love" would be utilized once again by his political enemies (during his final trial in Fez) as a pretext for his excommunication, torture, imprisonment and execution.

While condemning many of his intellectual pursuits, including philosophy, as heretical, many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's enemies attacked his close association with controversial mystics and Sufis. Among these was Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Ibrāhīm b. Yaḥyā al-Barghawāṭī (d. 768/1366), an ascetic and mystic who was executed in Granada on the orders of Muḥammad V in Muḥarram 768/September 1366.<sup>322</sup> Al-Barghawāṭī, an émigré from Anfā (modern Casablanca) who settled

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<sup>320</sup> Al-Ḥumaydī, *Jadhwat al-Muqtabis*, p. 149; al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 91–95.

<sup>321</sup> al-Bunnāhī, *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pp. 210–211.

<sup>322</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭah*, 4: 427–431.



in Málaga, was a renowned Sufi who integrated himself within the broader community of mystics and ascetics in the Nasrid kingdom.<sup>323</sup> He was particularly known for quoting the *Manāzil al-Sā'irīn ilā al-Ḥaqq* by Khawāja ‘Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī of Herat (d. 481/1088) and the mystical poetry of Ibn al-Fāriḍ (d. 632/1234).<sup>324</sup> According to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, he failed to maintain proper discretion and would openly preach ideas deemed heretical, authoring a number of works on mystical philosophy, which led him into frequent conflict with many leading jurists in the Nasrid kingdom, including (presumably) the chief judge of Granada Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī.<sup>325</sup> Several of his writings were strong condemnations of the jurists and theologians of his day, and were characterized by a satirical and sacrilegious style.<sup>326</sup> He wrote a biting satirical critique of the Nasrid court of Muḥammad V, which led to his public execution in the sovereign’s presence.<sup>327</sup> Ibn Ḥajar preserves a marginal annotation left by Ibn Marzūq on Abū Zakariyyah al-Barghawāṭī’s biography that he had seen on a manuscript of the “Comprehensive History,” which states

“This disbelieving devil known as al-Barghawāṭī was executed by being publicly whipped to death by the author [Ibn al-Khaṭīb], even though they were once close companions. With his death, God relieved the believers and the world of his evil. There exists a difference in opinion on the specific reason for his execution.”<sup>328</sup>

This reveals both the immense hostility of the learned jurists and theologians to al-Barghawāṭī within Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own intellectual and social circles. It also indicates the displeasure and indignation of Ibn Marzūq regarding the close relationship that existed between this individual and the Nasrid chancellor, and (possibly) the patronage and protection once extended to him by

<sup>323</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭah*, 4: 427; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 4: 253.

<sup>324</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭah*, 4: 427; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 4: 253.

<sup>325</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭah*, 4: 427–428; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 4: 253.

<sup>326</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭah*, 4: 428–429.

<sup>327</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭah*, 4: 431.

<sup>328</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 4: 253.

the former. Another marginal annotation preserved by Ibn Ḥajar sheds additional light on the question of whether Ibn al-Khaṭīb ordered or personally carried out his execution:

“Alongside the aforementioned annotation by Ibn Marzūq, there was an additional written note in the handwriting of Ibn al-Khaṭīb responding to this: ‘Fear God, O Abū ‘Abd Allāh [Ibn Marzūq]! You were not present during these events nor have you relied upon any trustworthy or upright source for this information. Seek forgiveness from your Lord! O Ibn Marzūq, do not think that you yourself are protected from such deception and betrayal, so you should abandon such displays of impudence and insolence now that you are in exile.’”<sup>329</sup>

This response by Ibn al-Khaṭīb was likely written at some point between 773/1371 and 776/1374, following his departure from Granada. The strong disavowal of Ibn Marzūq, who is usually addressed by Ibn Khaṭīb with immense admiration and reverence, indicates the sharp disagreement between the two men on the status of al-Barghawāṭī as well as the circumstances surrounding his execution. Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s post-humous biography of the latter in the “Comprehensive History,” written around 772/1370, which indicates an ambivalence towards as well as a slight admiration for the executed mystic, reinforces this point. This marginal note, which attacks Ibn Marzūq for repeating unsubstantiated rumors and passing them off as fact, demonstrates that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was highly concerned by the circulation of allegations maligning his own conduct as chief minister of Granada. Moreover, since Ibn Marzūq states that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was once both a close companion of al-Barghawāṭī and his eventual executioner, the Granadan chancellor was concerned that his character and loyalty to his friends was being called into question. As Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to deny, in the strongest possible terms, any involvement in the execution of al-Barghawāṭī. It also appears that his rebuke of Ibn Marzūq was motivated, at least in part, by the latter’s excommunication (*takfir*) of al-Barghawāṭī, an individual whom

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<sup>329</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 4: 253.

Ibn al-Khaṭīb admired as a mystic and Sufi. Among other things, this exchange with Ibn Marzūq illustrates Ibn al-Khaṭīb's deteriorating relationship with former allies.

Shortly following Ibn al-Khaṭīb's abrupt departure from Granada, Ibn Zamrak, the former's protégé and one of the architects of his political demise, was appointed as the new Nasrid chief minister. Despite increased tensions, underpinned by Ibn Zamrak's own ambitions and aspirations, there is little concrete evidence of outright enmity between the two men around 773/1371. However, this changed dramatically in the aftermath of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's departure. It was Ibn Zamrak, along with other leading students and appointees of Ibn al-Khaṭīb in the chancery, that took the lead in publicly denouncing his actions as treasonous and urged Muḥammad V to seek vengeance. As described in Chapter 3, Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who served in the Nasrid administration as secretary, chancellor, treasurer and chief minister, had a major influence on the structure of many of its institutions. This is particularly the case for the chancery, to which Ibn al-Khaṭīb was responsible for enrolling, recruiting and appointing many of the leading secretaries of the mid-late 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. This patronage was understood as a benefice (*ni'ma*) bestowed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb upon these individuals. For their part, they were expected to demonstrate their gratitude (*shukr*) to Ibn al-Khaṭīb through public displays and by maintaining their loyalty to him. As demonstrated by Kevin Reinhart for the classical Islamic period in the Near East, "*shukr al-mun'im*" (thanking the benefactor), which often took the form of the composition of poetry in celebration of the virtues of the patron, should not be understood merely as a display of gratitude but was carried broader social (and even theological) implications, namely a (public) acknowledgement of "the claim that the benefactor has on the beneficiary."<sup>330</sup> The notion of *shukr al-mun'im* was well-established within courtly culture in al-

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<sup>330</sup> Kevin Reinhart, *Before Revelation: The Boundaries of Muslim Moral Thought* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), p. 110.

Andalus as early as the Umayyad era, with the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>-century Andalusī litterateur Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi devoting a section to it within his “The Unique Necklace,” summarizing the proper conduct that governed patron-client relations as follows:

“As is written in the Torah: give thanks to one who bestows anything upon you and bestow generously upon the one who expresses his gratitude to you (*ushkur li-man an‘ama ‘alayka wa an‘im ‘ala man shakarak*). It is necessary to extinguish any ingratitude for a benefice that has been bestowed (*kufṛ al-ni‘ma*), just as it is imperative to express one’s gratitude for it. It has also been said: ‘The one who (publicly) praises you has fulfilled their obligations and repaid your patronage.’”<sup>331</sup>

Just as one was expected to acknowledge the blessings bestowed by God through acts of thanksgiving and the maintenance of obedience, so too was the recipient of patronage contractually obliged to do so vis-à-vis their benefactor; a violation of either was viewed as constituting the highest form of ingratitude (*kufṛ*). Within the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century Islamic West, the language of loyalty and treason drew heavily upon this broader contractual understanding of patronage. Although the concept of “treason” or “breach of faith” (*khiyāna*) often framed discourses of disloyalty and betrayal, *kufṛ ni‘ma* constituted the supreme political-theological principle that animated the understanding of the severity of this charge. As an individual who had been transformed from a poet and scribe from a provincial family into the holder of the most powerful executive office in the Nasrid kingdom as a result of the favor of Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was expected to maintain his absolute commitment and loyalty to these sovereigns. The idea that he could simply transfer his loyalties to a new sovereign—the Marinid Sultan no less—was particularly reprehensible in this context. Similarly, for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the enmity and hostility towards him expressed by Ibn Zamrak, among others, during his last few years in Granada and in the period that followed was the highest form of betrayal and disloyalty, since many owed their status and positions to his own patronage.

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<sup>331</sup> Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, *al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, 1: 275.

Exacerbating an already precarious political situation for Ibn al-Khaṭīb was the death of his new sovereign lord and defender Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in Rabī‘ II 22 774/October 21 1372 died, and the accession of his four year-old son, al-Sa‘īd, to the Marinid throne.<sup>332</sup> The increased vulnerability of Ibn al-Khaṭīb led him to resort to the written word in order to defend his reputation and legacy, while attacking his political enemies. In response to the virulent attacks against his character, conduct and faith by al-Bunnāhī, Ibn al-Khaṭīb composed a scathing satirical critique of the chief judge titled *Khal‘ al-Rasn fī Amr al-Qādī Abī al-Ḥasan* (Exposing the Chief Judge Abū al-Ḥasan). While certainly not the cause for the enmity expressed by al-Bunnāhī towards Ibn al-Khaṭīb, the wide circulation of this treatise aggravated and inflamed the tensions between the two men.

Perhaps a more consequential work in this regard was “The Concealed Brigade of Biographies of Poets that we Encountered in al-Andalus during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> Century” (*al-Katība al-Kāmina fī man laqīnāhu bi-al-Andalus min shu‘arā‘ al-mā‘a al-thāmina*), a collection of 103 biographies of leading scholars, functionaries, and mystics in the Nasrid Kingdom during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century that was completed around Jumādā II 774/December 1372. The treatise utilizes historical writing and literary critique to harshly condemn many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s political opponents in Granada who he deemed directly responsible for his downfall. He is particularly critical of his former students and protégés, such as Ibn Zamrak and Ibn Furkūn, whom he accuses of personal betrayal and ingratitude (*kufṛ ni‘ma*) despite his patronage and immense support for them.<sup>333</sup> Both of these figures had been among Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s most intimate companions and protégés, with Ibn al-Khaṭīb, replicating the language of filial affection seen earlier in the case of Ibn al-Jayyāb, referring to each as “the one who is like my own son”

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<sup>332</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 348; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 2: 278.

<sup>333</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 282–288, 305–307.

(*maḥall al-walad*).<sup>334</sup> In a letter to Ibn Zamrak and his sons ‘Abd Allāh and ‘Alī, who had accompanied Muḥammad V to his winter palace in Almuñecar, Ibn al-Khaṭīb wrote one letter addressed to all three collectively, referring to them as his “loved ones” indicating that Ibn Zamrak was considered a member of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s larger household.<sup>335</sup> Similarly, Ibn Furkūn is referred to by Ibn al-Khaṭīb as his “foster son” (*rabībī*).<sup>336</sup> In order to illustrate the gravity of their betrayal, Ibn al-Khaṭīb incorporates the panegyrics written for him by these men into each of their biographies, including verses in which they pledge their eternal loyalty to him.

The work also demonstrates that some of his students and colleagues had remained loyal to him, such as Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. Juzayy, Ibn Simāk al-‘Āmilī and ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq b. ‘Aṭīyya al-Muḥāribī, as indicated by his sympathetic and praiseworthy biographies of them.<sup>337</sup> An anecdote preserved in al-Maqqarī illustrates that at least some in Granada attempted to preserve a more positive memory of Ibn al-Khaṭīb. In contrast to al-Bunnāhī’s accusations of misappropriation of funds from the treasury, repeated violations of the law, and nepotism, Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Ḥasanī (the son of al-Sharīf al-Gharnāṭī)<sup>338</sup> asserts that when Ibn Zamrak requested from Ibn al-Khaṭīb to be exempted from certain taxes, the latter proclaimed that “we did not become established as leading position within this palace except by levying these taxes and ensuring their collection (*mā istaqamnā fī hadhihi al-dār illā bi-ḥifẓ al-‘awā’id*).”<sup>339</sup> Such anecdotes served as instances of loyalty to Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s memory among his students who sought to undermine the attacks against him within the Nasrid court in the years following his

<sup>334</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 245. This language is also utilized by Ibn al-Khaṭīb in letters sent to Ibn Khaldūn, particularly from 766/1365 onwards (Ibn Khaldūn, *Riḥla*, pp. 99–113, 116–118).

<sup>335</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 212–215.

<sup>336</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, p. 305.

<sup>337</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 138–143, 269–272, 299–301.

<sup>338</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 301–302.

<sup>339</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyād*, 1: 59–60.

exile and assassination. The “Concealed Brigade” is particularly significant not only for the valuable poetry that it preserves but because it illustrates the deterioration of many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s alliances and personal relationships over the period of a decade, particularly since each entry can be contrasted with biographies of the same individuals that appear in the Granadan chancellor’s earlier works. This rhetorical offensive was also complemented by the composition of works that sought to defend his conduct and position. One of these was “The Noble Virtues of the Banū al-Khaṭīb” (*al-Mafākhir al-Ṭayyibiyya fī al-Mafākhir al-Khaṭībiyya*) which outlined the accomplishments of his family and ancestors, as well as his own. Although no longer extant, this short treatise sought to enumerate his noble pedigree and to emphasize that he descended from a long line of scholarly elites, military commanders and bureaucrats that had traditionally served the rulers of al-Andalus since the late 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century and intermarried with the leading Andalusī noble families. It sought to deflect accusations that his betrayal of Muḥammad V was worsened by the fact that Ibn al-Khaṭīb was an upwardly mobile scribe whose entire political career was predicated upon the support of the Nasrid dynasty and the patronage of its sovereigns.

Among the most monumental works that he composed during this period in North Africa was the “Deeds of the Notables” (*A’mal al-A’lam*), a work written between 774/1372 and 776/1374 that sought to legitimate the arrangement of strong viziers/regents and child kings as a ubiquitous phenomenon throughout Islamic history. It was written on behalf of the Marinid vizier Abū Bakr b. Ghāzī, who had become the effective ruler (*mustabidd*) of the Marinid kingdom, acting as regent on behalf of the minor son of Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.<sup>340</sup> This individual, who moved the Marinid court back to Fez, continued to patronize and protect Ibn al-Khaṭīb, adamantly refusing all Nasrid requests that the former chancellor be extradited to

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<sup>340</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 348–349; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 134, 2: 278.

Granada for trial and punishment.<sup>341</sup> It was in his “Deeds of the Notables” that he makes the strongest attempt to refute all charges of treason. In one of the later sections of the work, possibly authored in the last several months of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s life, he states:

“I have dedicated an entire section of this work to laying bare and elucidating the particulars of my current state and condition so that the one receiving word or hearing about my life after I have perished and the one who doubts my absolute sincerity and purity of intentions can attain some certainty about the details of my life. In doing so, I also seek to provide my own explanation and defense for my actions in my own words with clear proofs so that people will not uncritically accept the accusations and slanders that have been directed at me and so that no hand will be unjustly raised against me. And if anyone does so, at least I have freed myself of any responsibility for their actions and depended entirely on recompense and reward from the Most Merciful. I swear by God that none of what I will relate is false or slanderous since the one who engages in such deceit will be humiliated and disgraced in the fullness of time and by his contemporaries who bore witness to the events.”<sup>342</sup>

This attempt to clear his name strongly rejects that he had violated his compact with the Nasrid sovereign, declaring that he had served loyally and faithfully:

“I held a position of distinction as his chief minister and presiding over the affairs of the kingdom, serving as his royal counselor, encouraging the rigorous maintenance of his religious beliefs and practices and counseling him to live virtuously, sometimes by means of censure and reprimand (*al-‘itāb*) and other times through the citation of the Qur’an (*al-kitāb*). I fulfilled my responsibilities and duties to him until I was firmly resolved and determined to emigrate and travel (*ilā an tarajjaḥa ‘azmī ‘alā al-hijra wa i‘māl al-riḥla*).”<sup>343</sup>

This autobiographical section of the “Deeds of the Notables,” while complementing his intellectual and political autobiography in both the “Comprehensive History” or in “The Shaking of the Travel Bag,” also differed in significant ways. Unlike his earlier writings, the autobiography in the “Deeds of the Notables” is punctuated by strong declarations in which Ibn al-Khaṭīb proclaims his righteousness, emphasizes his virtuous conduct, and celebrates his major

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<sup>341</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 348, 350; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446.

<sup>342</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al- A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152v–153r.

<sup>343</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A‘māl al- A‘lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, 152v.



accomplishments. It constructs a narrative in which the central thread running through Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life is his absolute loyalty to the Nasrid dynasty and his personal devotion to Muḥammad V, a sovereign at whose birth he was present, whose elevation to the throne he ensured, who accompanied him into exile, and who served him faithfully following his restoration to the Alhambra. As Dwight Reynolds, writing about the genre of autobiography in medieval Islamic world more broadly, has observed, the authorship of such autobiographical texts was an attempt by prominent individuals "to write an account of their lives before others should do so, thus asserting control over the content and presentation of the material and preventing the spread of factual errors."<sup>344</sup> As an authoritative political statement which sought to justify his actions, provide an accurate version of events and exonerate him in the eyes of posterity, Ibn al-Khaṭīb's autobiography can be compared with "The Exposition" (*al-Tibyān*)<sup>345</sup> of the last Zirid king of Granada, 'Abd Allāh b. Buluggīn (d. after 483/1090). Significantly, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was presented this royal autobiography during his visit to Aghmat in Jumādā II 761/May 1360 and would have been quite familiar with its style and arguments.<sup>346</sup> Just as 'Abd Allāh b. Buluggīn attempted to do three centuries earlier, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was concerned with defending his conduct as a statesman in order to shape his own reputation and image for both his contemporaries and posterity. The biographies of the Ibn al-Khaṭīb's by Ibn Khaldūn, Ibn Ḥajar, al-Maqrīzī, al-Maqqarī and countless others between the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> centuries, which largely reproduced the narratives in the Granadan chancellor's own autobiographical writings, illustrates the latter's success in forging his own legacy.

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<sup>344</sup> Reynolds, *Interpreting the Self*, pp. 60–61.

<sup>345</sup> 'Abd Allāh b. Buluggīn, *Kitāb al-Tibyān* (Rabat: Manshurat 'Ukaz, 2011), ed. Amin Tawfiq Tibi. For an English translation, see 'Abd Allāh b. Buluggīn, *The Tibyan: Memoirs of Abd Allah b. Buluggin, Last Zirid Amir of Granada* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), trans. Amin T. Tibi.

<sup>346</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufaḍat al-Jirāb*, 2: 56.

There was also a practical necessity that underpinned his composition of this autobiography. Since he was facing very serious accusations of betrayal, heresy and injustice, Ibn al-Khaṭīb sought to commit to writing his testimony in order to proclaim his innocence at a time when it became increasingly apparent that his political fortunes had rapidly declined. It is to this final ordeal endured by Ibn al-Khaṭīb that this chapter now turns.

#### Ibn al-Khaṭīb's Trial and Execution, 776/1374

Beginning in 774/1372, Muḥammad V, realizing that diplomacy was futile in securing the extradition of his former chief minister, adopted an aggressive policy towards the Marinids. The complex series of political events that followed culminated in the direct intervention of Muḥammad V in North Africa, assisting a number of Marinid princes, logistically and militarily, in their rebellion against Abū Bakr b. Ghāzī.<sup>347</sup> The Nasrid sovereign played a key role in the enthronement of the Marinid prince Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad (a son of Abū Sālim), extending him substantial military<sup>348</sup> and political support, with one of the precondition for this assistance being the imprisonment and transfer of Ibn al-Khaṭīb to Granada.<sup>349</sup> This illustrates the immense value placed on the punishment of the Granadan scholar and statesman by his former lord. During the ensuing military confrontations, Nasrid military units—many of whom were commanded by Ibn al-Khaṭīb's enemies—pillaged, looted and destroyed many of his properties and estates in the vicinity of Fez.<sup>350</sup> On Muḥarram 7 776/June 18 1374, Abū al-‘Abbās entered Fez and was

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<sup>347</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 350; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 262; al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 226–229; García Gómez, *Foco de Antigua Luz*, p. 244.

<sup>348</sup> Two large military contingents were sent from the Nasrid kingdom, including one commanded by Yūsuf b. Sulaymān b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā (Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 352).

<sup>349</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 351–353; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 371, 3: 262; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 1: 58. Another significant condition was the return of all Marinid fortresses, including Gibraltar, to Nasrid control.

<sup>350</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 352.

enthroned as the new Marinid sovereign.<sup>351</sup> For reasons that remain unclear, Abū al-‘Abbās permitted Ibn al-Khaṭīb to continue residing in the royal palace-city of Fez, where he had sought refuge.<sup>352</sup> It is plausible that, just as Abū Bakr b. Ghāzī was able to secure amnesty for himself through the mediation of his cousin, Muḥammad b. ‘Uthmān b. al-Kās, the chief minister of the Marinid sultan Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad, an important figure in the Marinid court interceded on Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s behalf.<sup>353</sup> However, several days later, the sovereign had Ibn al-Khaṭīb arrested and imprisoned.<sup>354</sup> This decision was prompted by the Marinid nobleman Sulaymān b. Dāwūd (d. 781/1379), a leading member of the royal council of Marinid sultan Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad and one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s greatest opponents in the Marinid court.<sup>355</sup> Although this individual had been promised the powerful post of *shaykh al-ghuzāt* by Muḥammad V a decade earlier, it was Ibn al-Khaṭīb who intervened and denied him the appointment in 766/1365, declaring him unworthy of the position, leading to a long-term feud between the two.<sup>356</sup> It was shortly after Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s imprisonment that Ibn Zamrak, his former student and the newly-appointed Nasrid chief minister, arrived in Fez at the head of a Nasrid embassy sent to Fez by sent by Muḥammad V to congratulate the new Marinid sovereign and secure Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s return to Granada.<sup>357</sup> Recognizing that his fate was all but sealed, it was around this time (Muḥarram 776/June 1374) that Ibn al-Khaṭīb sent a lengthy and desperate plea, in the form of an elaborate and passionate poem, to the Zayyanid emir Abū Ḥammū Mūsā II requesting the latter to intercede on his behalf

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<sup>351</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 352–353; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 134.

<sup>352</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 353.

<sup>353</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 352–353; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 1: 134.

<sup>354</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 353; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>355</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 353–355. Sulaymān b. Dawūd was a powerful statesman, who had previously served as a leading military commander of Marinid contingents in al-Andalus, as chief minister of Marinid sultan Abū ‘Inān and as his general in the conquest of Constantine (Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 309).

<sup>356</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 353–355; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446.

<sup>357</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354.

with Muḥammad V.<sup>358</sup> Although it is plausible that this Zayyanid ruler, a learned king who was born and raised in Granada and whose chief minister and *privado* (Yaḥyā b. Khaldūn) was a close associate of Ibn al-Khaṭīb,<sup>359</sup> conveyed his message to Muḥammad V, the latter's decision to punish Ibn al-Khaṭīb for his perceived misdeeds remained unchanged.<sup>360</sup>

Rather than extradite Ibn al-Khaṭīb, as he had earlier pledged to Muḥammad V, Abū al-‘Abbās granted him a trial in Fez in Rabī‘ II 776/September 1374, delegating the decision about his fate to a council of senior judges and statesmen.<sup>361</sup> The trial took place in the royal council chambers of the Marinid palace, in the presence of Abū al-‘Abbās and his leading councilors (*fi majlis al-khāṣṣa wa ahl al-shūrā*).<sup>362</sup> Among the later were staunch enemies of Ibn al-Khaṭīb, such as Sulaymān b. Dāwūd, but is plausible that Abū al-Qāsim b. Riḍwān and Abū Yaḥyā b. Abī Madyan, some of his most long-standing allies and closest associates at the Marinid court, were also present. One of leading prosecutors at this trial was Ibn Zamrak.<sup>363</sup> The persuasive argumentation and evidence provided by Ibn Zamrak—drawn primarily from Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings on philosophy and mysticism—convinced several of the presiding judges (many of whom would have been among Ibn al-Khaṭīb's associates and colleagues during his time at the Marinid court) who publicly humiliated him and ordered that he be publicly flogged, tortured and imprisoned.<sup>364</sup> The work by Ibn al-Khaṭīb which provided the most ammunition for Ibn Zamrak was the “The Garden of Acquaintance with the Nature of Noble Love” (*Rawḍat al-Ta‘rīf*

<sup>358</sup> Yaḥyā b. Khaldūn, *Bughyat al-Ruwwād fī Dhikr al-Mulūk min Banī ‘Abd al-Wād* (Algiers: Dar al-Amal, 2007), ed. Bouzayyani al-Daraji, 2: 534–547; García Gómez, *Foco de Antigua Luz*, pp. 245–248.

<sup>359</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, 2: 140–143.

<sup>360</sup> García Gómez, *Foco de Antigua Luz*, p. 248. The poetic appeal to Abū Ḥammū is preserved in full by Yaḥyā b. Khaldūn (who would also be assassinated by his political enemies in 780/1378) in his *Bughyat al-Ruwwād* (Yaḥyā b. Khaldūn, *Bughyat al-Ruwwād*, 2: 534–547).

<sup>361</sup> al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446. The trial has been closely studied in María Isabel Calero Secall, “El proceso de Ibn al-Jaṭīb,” *al-Qantara* 22 (2001): 421–461.

<sup>362</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354.

<sup>363</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>364</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

*bi-l Ḥubb al-Sharīf*). It is likely that Ibn Zamrak would also have drawn upon Ibn al-Khaṭīb's other works on philosophy and medicine, particularly since it is in these genres of writing in which he openly attacks the jurists, emphasizes the value of the "learning of the ancients" (*ilm al-awā'il*) and repeatedly quotes the writings of controversial thinkers such as Ibn 'Arabī. Such works had provided al-Bunnāhī with ample evidence for his accusations of heresy directed against Ibn al-Khaṭīb, as seen above.

It appears that several of the judges at this trial found Ibn al-Khaṭīb to be innocent on charges of heresy. Although it is difficult to ascertain the identities of the judges who presided at Ibn al-Khaṭīb's trial, it is highly likely that their number would have included the chief judge of Fez, Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Ghassānī al-Burjī (d. after 776/1374). An Andalusian Granadan émigré to the Marinid court, this individual was a learned jurist and litterateur who had served in the Marinid administration since the reign of Abū 'Inān before being appointed as judge in Fez by Abū Sālim.<sup>365</sup> He developed a close relationship and friendship with Ibn al-Khaṭīb during the latter's first exile in Morocco (760/1359–763/1362), as indicated by letters exchanged between the two which are preserved in Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works and by Abū al-'Abbās al-Maqqarī.<sup>366</sup> The strongest evidence in favor of this individual's refusal to indict Ibn al-Khaṭīb at his trial is a marginal annotation on one of the manuscripts of the "Comprehensive History" in the hand of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's youngest son, 'Alī, who was present in Fez throughout his father's entire ordeal, describing Abū al-Qāsim al-Burjī as

"my lord and teacher (*sayyidī wa shaykhī*), the pre-eminent scholar of the Islamic West today, the one who achieved the highest ranks by deservedly being appointed leading preacher and chief judge, positions of which he is most worthy!

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<sup>365</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 2: 293–300; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 8: 202–209.

<sup>366</sup> An illustration of the of the continued friendship between the two men is Ibn al-Khaṭīb's laudatory biography of this figure in his biographical dictionary written in 774/1372 (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Katība al-Kāmina*, pp. 250–254).

May God Almighty preserve him! This was written by the one who cherishes him,  
'Alī b. al-Khaṭīb.<sup>367</sup>

Considering the harsh rebuke that 'Alī b. al-Khaṭīb often reserves for all those individuals who he felt did too little to assist his father during his moment of need, this strong praise suggests that Abū al-Qāsim al-Burjī was among those Marinid officials who sought to defend or intercede on behalf of Ibn al-Khaṭīb at his trial.<sup>368</sup> While al-Burjī's role (if any) at Ibn al-Khaṭīb's trial is impossible to establish, it is plausible that as a leading legal authority and judge in the Marinid capital, he would have been consulted on the matter. Although several judges at the trial issued declared that the charges and evidence against Ibn al-Khaṭīb warranted his execution on charges of heresy, it was far from a clear consensus.<sup>369</sup> According to surviving sources, he was specifically accused of being a "disbelieving heretic" (*zindīq*) and of advocating the doctrines of mystical incarnation (*madhhab al-ḥulūl*).<sup>370</sup> As a result, he was incarcerated in the dungeons of Fez while they deliberated.<sup>371</sup> While awaiting his final judgment, however, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was assassinated in his prison cell in Rabi II 776/September 1374.<sup>372</sup> The assassins were members of the retinue of the Marinid nobleman Sulaymān b. Dawūd.<sup>373</sup> According to both Ibn Khaldūn and al-Maqrīzī, these men, accompanied by "several leading enemies (*ghuramā*) of Ibn al-Khaṭīb that had arrived in Fez as part of the official Nasrid embassy to the Marinids," attacked Ibn al-

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<sup>367</sup> *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 8: 209.

<sup>368</sup> For an example, Ibn Ḥajar mentions a marginal annotation by 'Alī b. al-Khaṭīb on the biography of the Granadan jurist and mufti Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Ḥaffār (d. 811/1408), who is described as "perfidious and envious" in contrast with Ibn al-Khaṭīb's own positive biography of this individual in the *Iḥāṭa* (Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 51).

<sup>369</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446.

<sup>370</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 9: 322; Santiago Simón, *El Polígrafo Granadino Ibn al-Jaṭīb y el Sufismo*, pp. 88–92; Lirola Delgado, "La familia de Ibn al-Jaṭīb," p. 20.

<sup>371</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446.

<sup>372</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286; Knysh, "Ibn al-Khaṭīb," pp. 361–362.

<sup>373</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-'Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446; García Gómez, *Foco de Antigua Luz*, p. 249. Sulaymān b. Dawūd was a powerful statesman, who had previously served as a leading military commander of Marinid contingents in al-Andalus, as chief minister of Marinid sultan Abū 'Inān and as his general in the conquest of Constantine (Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 309).

Khaṭīb in his prison cell at night and strangled him to death.<sup>374</sup> Historians have seen this as an implicit reference to the leading role of Ibn Zamrak—the Nasrid emissary to Fez—in orchestrating the assassination, and perhaps even perpetrating the deadly act.<sup>375</sup> Following an unceremonious burial in Fez the following day, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s enemies had his body exhumed and burned.<sup>376</sup> This act of desecration was intended to forever mark Ibn al-Khaṭīb as a heretic. It was also intended to serve as a warning of the cruel fate that awaited all those who transgressed against nobles and kings. His charred corpse, vividly described by Ibn Khaldūn (who resided in the Marinid capital during these turbulent events), was then interred in the Bāb al-Maḥrūq cemetery outside Fez.<sup>377</sup> The brutal nature of the assassination and the desecration of his body led to a fierce condemnation of Sulaymān b. Dāwūd and his affiliates by many in Fez, indicating the strong sympathy that existed for Ibn al-Khaṭīb within the Marinid context.<sup>378</sup> His key role in the demise of Ibn al-Khaṭīb earned Sulaymān b. Dāwūd the approval of Muḥammad V, whose court he joined in 778/1376, being granted a seat on the royal council and other benefices.<sup>379</sup>

While the responsibility for his death was debated by contemporaries, for Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s closest friends, colleagues and family, there was no question that the primary culprit was Ibn Zamrak. This is particular evident from the marginalia written by Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s son Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Khaṭīb, reproduced by al-Maqqarī, on the biography of Ibn Zamrak in the Cairo manuscript of the “Comprehensive History”:

I [al-Maqqarī] have seen written in the handwriting of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī, the son of Lisān al-Dīn (may God have mercy upon him), in the margins of the biography of Ibn Zamrak in the “Comprehensive History”: “May God abase [Ibn Zamrak] and grant him what he deserves! In this biography, my father—his master—has

<sup>374</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446.

<sup>375</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>376</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>377</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 446; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286.

<sup>378</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354.

<sup>379</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 355.

lauded and praised him in glowing terms. Yet, [Ibn Zamrak] still killed [Ibn al-Khaṭīb] in the end (*wa lam yaqtulhu aḥad ghayruhu*)! May God protect us from the evil of those whom we treat graciously!” On the segment of [Ibn Zamrak’s] biography in which [Ibn al-Khaṭīb] states “he was righteous and upright,” [‘Alī b. al-Khaṭīb] wrote another marginal comment: “this wretched bastard (*al-waghd*) Ibn Zamrak is one of the greatest devils among secretaries (*min shayāṭīn al-kuttāb*). He is the son of a blacksmith from the Albaicín, murdering his father with his own hands, beating him to death. He is among the vilest servants of God in his upbringing, one of the ugliest and unpleasant men alive. My father had enrolled him in the royal chancery (*al-kitāba al-sultāniyya*). From the day that we departed from al-Andalus, he has acted with nothing but malevolence towards us. He was the reason for the death of my father (*wa hūwa kāna al-sabab fī qatl abī*), the author of this book, the very individual who raised him, educated him and employed him in the administration, as is well known. May God preserve us from the evil of those whom we treat graciously and rewards us with wickedness!”<sup>380</sup>

Al-Maqqarī also notes additional annotations by ‘Alī in which the latter describes Ibn Zamrak as a debauched pederast, “the filthy devil,” the “lowly son of a donkey driver and blacksmith,” a “plagiarist who stole [his poems] from Ibrāhīm b. Khafāja,” among other insults.<sup>381</sup> As can be seen, these sustained attacks against the character, knowledge and lineage of Ibn Zamrak were underpinned by his perceived role in murdering Ibn al-Khaṭīb. Mirroring broader discourses about the betrayal of one’s patron (*kufṛ ni‘ma*) evident in condemnations of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s abandonment of Granada for North Africa, ‘Alī (and others) specifically highlight the fact that Ibn Zamrak owed much of his fortune and power to Ibn al-Khaṭīb, yet murdered him anyways, an act constituting the epitome of betrayal. ‘Alī also critiques many of his father’s closest associates, such as Ibn Marzūq, for failing to come to his aid during his most critical hour, with al-Maqqarī stating:

[On the Cairo manuscript of “The Comprehensive History”], I saw a marginal comment written by ‘Alī b. al-Khaṭīb, itself being a commentary on an annotation by Ibn Marzūq [critiquing Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s biographical entry of Ibn Jābir al-Hawwārī], which read: “O esteemed Ibn Marzūq, your criticism would not have been uttered if my father was still alive, but it was written while he was dead and

<sup>380</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 10: 19.

<sup>381</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 10: 19–20. These marginal notes by ‘Alī b. al-Khaṭīb are also noted by Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 4: 190.



buried. This is the reality of this world, with a lack of loyalty being a common trait among people (*qillat al-wafā' shinshina ma'rūfa*), while contempt for the dead, it seems, is a particular characteristic of North Africans (*al-maghāriba*).<sup>382</sup>

Following his assassination/execution, Muḥammad V and his court engaged in what can only be called a form of *damnatio memoriae* of Ibn al-Khaṭīb. This is best illustrated by the writings of al-Bunnāhī. This individual, who had played such a central role in Ibn al-Khaṭīb's downfall, had earlier composed a literary epistle (*maqāma*) in which he had praised the latter by name, and which has been preserved in full within the copy of the "Comprehensive History" completed around 769/1368.<sup>383</sup> A later recension of this same epistle, however, by al-Bunnāhī from the late 780s/1380s excises all references or allusions to Ibn al-Khaṭīb.<sup>384</sup> Another major biographical dictionary from the late fourteenth century is the *Nathīr al-jumān fī shi'r min naẓamanī wa-ıyyāhu al-zamān* by Ismā'īl b. Yūsuf b. al-Aḥmar, an important literateur, poet and scion of the Nasrid royal family who resided in Fez and, for a time, one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's students.<sup>385</sup> It contains biographical entries for many of the most important poets and literary figures during the fourteenth century. It was compiled around 777/1375 and, notably, does not include any entry for Ibn al-Khaṭīb, probably as a result of the author's family ties with the Nasrids of Granada, for whom Ibn al-Khaṭīb was, at that time, a *persona non grata*. Similarly, the "Book on Horses (*Kitāb al-Khayl*) written by Abū Muḥammad b. Juzayy, one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's students, at some point in the 770s/1370s or 780s/1380s excludes all mention of him in

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<sup>382</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 10: 158–159.

<sup>383</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa*, 4: 95–100.

<sup>384</sup> Al-Bunnāhī, *al-Iklīl*, pp. 105–111.

<sup>385</sup> Ismā'īl b. Yūsuf b. al-Aḥmar, *Nathīr al-jumān fī shi'r min naẓamanī wa-ıyyāhu al-zamān* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risala, 1976), ed. Muhammad Ridwan al-Dayya.

the description of the reigns of Yūsuf I and Muḥammad V, even as he specifically lists the chief ministers of all the other Nasrid sovereigns.<sup>386</sup>

Although patronage networks facilitated the rise of scholar-officials and shaped their world in important ways, they did not guarantee their success or survival. Ibn al-Khaṭīb's fall from power was as dramatic as his extraordinary rise, illustrating the precarious position of scholar-officials as they navigated the turbulent politics of their time. He ended his life in exile in North Africa and was declared an enemy of the Nasrid dynasty that he had devoted his career to serving. Many of his works in Granada were publicly burned, his wealth and property confiscated and much of his epigraphic poetry on the Alhambra removed. While in his prison cell in Fez during the summer of 776/1374, awaiting the verdict on accusations of high treason and heresy, he was attacked and murdered by his Granadan rivals, including not only noblemen that he had crossed several years earlier but also individuals who had been among his closest friends and intimates only three years earlier. Following his unceremonious burial, his corpse was disinterred and burnt. His story, which was narrated in all its colorful detail by historians, jurists and litterateurs from West Africa to the Ottoman Empire in subsequent centuries, became a cautionary tale about the fate that awaited scholars who closely tied their fortunes to political power. Always seeking a way to outwit his enemies and, as ever, with an eye towards posterity, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was said by Ibn Khaldun to have loudly recited a poem—his final work—while awaiting his fate in the confines of his prison cell:

We were once powerful and illustrious but now we are merely bones

And we used to support and feed others but now we ourselves are nourishment

And we were like shining suns that travel high in the sky above,

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<sup>386</sup> 'Abd Allāh b. Juzayy, *Kitāb al-Khayl*, pp. 29–32.

But, lo, the suns have set and been lamented by the [orphaned] stars

Many a warrior armed with the sword was felled by a rain of sharp-pointed arrows

Many a lucky one was suddenly failed by his good fortune

Many a young nobleman, who used to don the royal mantle, was put in his grave wrapped in rags

So, tell the enemies: “Yes, Ibn al-Khatib is gone, but is there anyone who will not be gone one day?”

And tell those of you who rejoice at this news: “Only he who thinks he will never die can rejoice on a day like this!”<sup>387</sup>

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<sup>387</sup> Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh*, 7: 354; al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīda*, 3: 447; al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 231. This poem also appears, with some variations, in Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s own collection of poetry, although it remains unclear whether this was an addition of later manuscripts or reflects the content of the original compilation which he completed during his lifetime (Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Dīwān*, 1: 185).

## **Epilogue: The Afterlives and Legacy of Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb**

This dissertation has attempted to sketch a broad outline of the life and writings of Lisān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb, the most prominent Spanish Muslim historian, chancellor and philosopher during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, situating this figure within a larger network of itinerant scholars, statesmen and functionaries across late medieval Spain and North Africa. It provides the first comprehensive study in English of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's life, from his birth into a minor provincial family in the small town of Loja in 713/1313 to his rise as a physician and scribe in the Nasrid court, his transformation from a client and servant of the Nasrid dynasty into an itinerant scholar-official who sought to establish his own individual power and influence across the Islamic West, to his controversial assassination in Fez in 776/1374. It closely analyzed the letters that he exchanged with his broader network of scholars, nobles and kings across the Mediterranean world to think about the question of loyalty, ties of obligation and individual strategies of survival in the Islamic West during this period.

The history of Nasrid Granada, which produced some of the most important luminaries in the late medieval Islamic world, provides an illustrative example of how intellectual and cultural production accompanied periods of political change and transition in the medieval world. This dissertation has sought to highlight the manner in which the crisis and transformation that characterized the territorial fragmentation of Islamic Spain and North Africa contributed to the rise of a distinct class of scholar-administrators who reshaped the intellectual and political culture of the region. Rather than conceiving of the period as one of decline or stagnation, the innovative philosophical, historiographical and literary writings of court secretaries about society, politics and governance in Nasrid Granada provides a more productive way of thinking about the late medieval

Islamic West. It allows us to appreciate the social and political context of knowledge production by closely examining the lives of their authors and situate them within a broader network of scholar-ministers. I have hoped to show that it was the dual identities and role of many of these authors as both scholars and statesmen that shaped their writings, their statecraft and their conception of the world. Their theorization and chronicling of politics and the nature of legitimate authority was often underpinned by their status as recipients of royal patronage and their distinct experiences as statesmen as well as their specific intellectual commitments. By illustrating how Ibn al-Khaṭīb functioned on multiple levels as historian of “self” “kingdom” and “world,” I have sought to demonstrate how knowledge was deployed as a form of authority within the lives of these scholar-officials. Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s ruminations on society, history and politics enables us to place his thought within the context of a rising concern with governmentality, the expansion of royal power, and the evolution of historical writing in the late medieval world.

While certainly exceptional and extraordinary in a variety of ways, Ibn al-Khaṭīb represents as an important case study into the phenomenon of the scholar-minister during the medieval period. He followed in the footsteps of leading Spanish Muslim scholar-officials such as Abū Bakr b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Ibn ‘Amīra, Ibn Sa‘īd and Ibn al-Abbār, individuals who had exercised significant administrative and political authority while also being deeply involved in various intellectual and literary pursuits during the 13th century. Ibn al-Khaṭīb authored over 50 works, including historical chronicles, epistolography, biographical dictionaries, poetry, medical texts, and political treatises, throughout his career. His rise to power was part of a broader process in 14th-century Granada which witnessed the gradual concentration of executive political authority in the hands of the literary-administrative elite (*ahl al-qalam*/“men of the pen”) within the chancery at the expense of military commanders and noble families (*ahl al-sayf*/“men of the sword”), who had traditionally

held the position of chief minister since the inception of the Nasrid kingdom. Indeed, the fact that he was commonly memorialized by scholars and intellectuals simply as *Dhū-l Wizāratayn* (“Bearer of the Two Offices”), referring to his dual appointment as chancellor and chief minister, underscores the inseparability between Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s career and these broader institutional developments. This dissertation has illustrated his role at the intersection of intellectual and political developments and demonstrated how his literary production was closely intertwined with his function as a statesman. Given the centrality of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s writings as a source for much of the history of the late medieval—and, in some cases, early medieval—Islamic Mediterranean, I have sought to illustrate that his various works need to be understood not simply as repositories of knowledge but were inextricably tied to his own life and context. His historical writings were highly strategic, in the service of something, whether people, ideas or places, and often reflected his distinct circumstances.

As this dissertation has argued, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was the product of a distinct cultural, intellectual and social context, with many of his historical, philosophical and political interests being shaped and influenced by many of those around him. The vast intellectual-administrative network which Ibn al-Khaṭīb established throughout the late 730s/1330s and early 740s/1340s was strategically mobilized in order to further his political ambitions and shape the internal developments and foreign affairs of the Nasrid kingdom between 749/1349 and 760/1359. In addition to their political function, this dissertation has sought to shed new light on the important role played by scholar-officials—including Ibn al-Khaṭīb—in crafting a new language of sovereignty during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century. Through the experimentation with various concepts revolving around genealogy, kingship and caliphal sovereignty, the Nasrid kingdom was a participant in a broader trend that characterized the late medieval Islamic world. As such, it is

hoped that this dissertation will pave the way for a new understanding of the late medieval Mediterranean that brings the history of Islamic Spain into close conversation with similar developments in the Iberian Christian kingdoms, North Africa, the Mamluk sultanate, and the early Ottoman Empire. It illustrates the value of utilizing a multitude of sources, including texts from a variety of genres and languages, as well as material evidence, for the study of broader intellectual, social, cultural and political trends in medieval Mediterranean history.

What was Ibn al-Khaṭīb's particular legacy in the centuries after his death? Far from being an obscure figure, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was immensely renowned throughout the lands of the Arabic-speaking Mediterranean for centuries after his death. His legacy was heavily shaped by his admirers, such as Ibn Khaldūn and Abū al-‘Abbās al-Maqqarī, but owed much to the wide reception of his works in both the Islamic West and the Near East. Three key aspects of his legacy are worth considering: the reception of his vast corpus of writings on history, epistolography, medicine, politics, philosophy and poetry; the fate of his family; and the memorialization of his life and death.

Although largely remembered in the modern Arab world as a renowned poet, the pre-modern reception of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's writings illustrate that it was his writings on history, statecraft and medicine that attracted the most attention between the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Perhaps one of his most popular works was the “Comprehensive History,” which was already widely celebrated in his own lifetime, being lauded by the chief judge of Egypt Bahā’ al-Dīn al-Subkī as “an incomparable and illustrious work” as early as Muḥarram 768/September 1366.<sup>1</sup> As noted previously Ibn al-Khaṭīb began writing the this work in the 750s/1350s, with an early draft (in 7 volumes) being completed around 763/1362.<sup>2</sup> With the assistance of scribes in

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<sup>1</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *A’māl al- A’lām*, Hassaniyya MS 804, ff. 65r–66r.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nuḥdat al-Jirāb*, 2: 367.

the chancery, notably Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq b. ‘Aṭīyya al-Muḥāribī and Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Sharīshī, numerous drafts and complete copies were transcribed during the 750s/1350s and 760s/1360s. It is clear that Ibn al-Khaṭīb continued to make additions and emendations to the “Comprehensive History” until at least Rabī‘ I 771/October 1369.<sup>3</sup>

According to a note by the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-century Andalusī scholar Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Ḥaddād al-Wādī Āshī, an ornamented and calligraphic manuscript of the “Comprehensive History” was deposited in the library of the College of Granada during the reign of Muḥammad V, where it remained as an endowment (*taḥbīs*).<sup>4</sup> An important annotation on this codex by the chief judge and chief minister of Nasrid Granada, Abū Yahyā b. ‘Āṣim (d. 857/1453), in Rajab 829/May 1426, illustrates the widespread renown and reception that the work had attained by the early 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century:

There is no doubt that the “Comprehensive History of Granada” by the pre-eminent chancellor (*al-shaykh al-ra’īs*) Dhū-l Wizāratayn Abū ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb (may God have mercy upon him!) is one of the illustrious monuments of this Nasrid kingdom (may God preserve it!), and a cornerstone of its heritage...it is truly an extraordinary and unique work in both its theme and style of composition.<sup>5</sup>

This illustrates that, despite the *damnatio memoriae* of Ibn al-Khaṭīb in the court of Muḥammad V between the 770s/1370s and 790s/1390s, his reputation eventually recovered and he was memorialized as one of the Nasrid kingdom’s greatest scholars and statesmen. The popularity of the “Comprehensive History” throughout both the Nasrid kingdom and North Africa during the late Middle Ages and early modern period is indicated by the various manuscripts transcribed and

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<sup>3</sup> This was the date of the completion of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s autobiography, incorporated into the “Comprehensive History.” The continued emendations is also illustrated by the biographical sections of the El Escorial manuscripts, where he states, for example, in the biography of Ibn Khātimah: “as of this date, Sha’bān 12 770/March 22 1369, he is still alive.” Similarly, in describing Nasrid raids against Castile, he mentions that their attacks reached the suburbs of Sevilla in Rabī‘ I 771/October 1369

<sup>4</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 9: 325–326; al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 55.

<sup>5</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 9: 325–327; al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-Riyāḍ*, 1: 55–58.



annotated between 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> centuries. El Escorial 1673 was copied in Granada in Rabī‘ II 895/March 1490 and eventually became part of the Saadian royal library in Morocco, as indicated by the ownership mark of Muley Zaydān (r. 1012/1603–1037/1627), the son of Aḥmad al-Manṣūr.<sup>6</sup> El Escorial MS 1674, one of the oldest surviving fragments of the work, was copied Ramaḍān 15 806/March 27 1404 in Granada, while the manuscript preserved in the Real Academia de la Historia (RAH 34) was copied in 894/1489.

Al-Maqqarī mentions that although Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s writings were widely known and appreciated across the Islamic West during the 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century, his works, particularly the “Comprehensive History” had a more enthusiastic reception among readers in the Mashriq than those in North Africa.<sup>7</sup> One of the last major recensions of the work was completed by Ibn al-Khaṭīb in Rabī‘ II 769/December 1368 and sent as an endowment (*waqf*) to the *khāniqā* of Sa‘īd al-Su‘adā’ in Cairo. This would become the most celebrated manuscript of the text, being consulted by a number of leading scholars, including al-Taḳī al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī in 808/1405, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ṣuyūṭī in 868/1463–4, as well as Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, Shams al-Dīn al-Sakhāwī and Abū al-‘Abbās al-Maqqarī. The work was made even more popular in Egypt and Syria by Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Bashtakī (d. 830/1427),<sup>8</sup> a close companion of Ibn Khaldūn and al-Maqrīzī, who completed an abridgement of “The Comprehensive History,” which he titled “The Kernel of the Comprehensive History of the Eminent Litterateurs of Granada” (*Markaz al-Iḥāṭa fī Udabā’ Gharnāṭa*), in Ṣafar 793/January 1391)<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa*, El Escorial MS 1673, ff. 1r, 498r.

<sup>7</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 9: 324.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Durar al-‘Uqūd al-Farīdah*, 3: 81–82; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 9: 324–325. Al-Bashtakī was a prominent litterateur and poet from Cairo, who was renowned copyist of manuscripts. Curiously, he was an admirer of Ibn Ḥazm and a follower of the Zāhirī school of law, which may have prompted his interest in al-Andalus and its history.

<sup>9</sup> Several of the important manuscripts of this text include BnF Arabe 3347, BNRM D 2650, and Leipzig MS Volders 669.

Alongside the “Comprehensive History,” perhaps the most popular of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s compositions was the “Sweet Basil of the Secretaries” (*Rayḥanāt al-Kuttāb*), the work for which we have the most surviving manuscripts. This is reinforced by al-Maqqarī, who describes it as among the “most celebrated and well-known of his works.”<sup>10</sup> Numerous fragmentary and complete manuscripts of this compilation of letters, epistles and biographies have survived, primarily copied in Nasrid Granada and North Africa between the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> centuries. At least two copies transcribed in 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-century Granada have survived: the first (El Escorial 554), copied on Dhū-l Ḥijjah 5 873/June 16 1469, seems to have been transcribed from an autograph manuscript of Ibn al-Khaṭīb,<sup>11</sup> while the second (El Escorial 1825) was copied on Shawwāl 15 888/November 16 1483 by Aḥmad al-Baqanī al-Anṣārī in Granada.<sup>12</sup> The text enjoyed a particularly strong reception in Morocco between the 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century, and was appreciated particularly for its epistolographical and rhetorical value.<sup>13</sup> An important example is a manuscript of the text preserved in the British Library (BL Or. 2273), possibly transcribed during the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, which was read in the court the Saadian ruler Aḥmad al-Manṣūr in the late 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>14</sup>

As with the bulk of the Arabic manuscripts that comprise the El Escorial’s collection, many of the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript copies of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s works were once part of the Saadian royal library. This is particularly evident in the case of two manuscripts of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s “Magic and Poetry” (*al-Siḥr wa al-Shi‘r*), El Escorial 455 and El Escorial 456,

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<sup>10</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 9: 322.

<sup>11</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, El Escorial MS 554, f. 153v.

<sup>12</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, El Escorial MS 1825, f. 281 v

<sup>13</sup> For a partial list of the manuscripts of the *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb* preserved in different Moroccan libraries, see the Bibliography.

<sup>14</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*, BL Or.2273. The final folio of this manuscript (f. 146r) contains the transcription of a letter by this ruler dated Ṣafar 5 1005/September 28 1596, while the obverse of this folio (f. 146v) is comprised of what appears to be the ownership mark of a Saadian princess.

with each bearing ownership mark of the Saadian royal library, specifically the signature of the Saadian ruler Aḥmad al-Manṣūr (r. 986/1578–1012/1603).<sup>15</sup> A late 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript copy of the second volume of the “The Shaking Off of the Travel Bag in the Comfort of Exile” (*Nufāḍat al-Jirāb fī ‘Ulālat al-Ightirāb*) preserved in El Escorial (El Escorial 1755) also bears an ownership mark of the Saadian royal library.<sup>16</sup>

It was not solely royal princes or chancery officials who appreciated Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s works. A manuscript of “The Sweeping of the Shop” (*Kunāsat al-Dukkān*) preserved in El Escorial (El Escorial 1712) bears the ownership mark of the renowned North African jurist Abū al-‘Abbās al-Wansharīsī (d. 914/1508).<sup>17</sup> Among the most frequently-copied work in late medieval Nasrid Granada and early modern North Africa was Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s prosimetric historical composition, the “Poetic Enumeration of Dynasties” (*Raḡm al-Ḥulal fī Naẓm al-Duwal*).<sup>18</sup> The Nasrid chancellor’s medical works also received a considerable reception, including his plague treatise titled “Convincing the Inquirer about the Terrible Disease” (*Muqni’at al-Sā’il ‘an al-Maraḍ al-Hā’il*),<sup>19</sup> and his “On the Preservation of Health throughout the Seasons of the Year” (*Kitāb a-Wuṣūl li Hifẓ al-Siḥḥah fī al-Fuṣūl*).<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Siḥr wa al-Shi’r*, El Escorial MS 455, f. 3r; Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *al-Siḥr wa al-Shi’r*, El Escorial MS 456, f. 144v.

<sup>16</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Nufāḍat al-Jirāb*, Vol. II, El Escorial MS 1755, f. 1v.

<sup>17</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Kunāsat al-Dukkān*, El Escorial 1712, f. 1r.

<sup>18</sup> The most well-known examples are El Escorial 1776; El Escorial 1777; and Leipzig MS Vollers 668. The latter was copied ‘Abd al-Salām b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Yaznāsī al-Zarhūnī on Rajab 20 999/May 14 1591 in northern Morocco (f. 111v.). Copies transcribed in early modern North Africa include BNRMS D 82; BNRMS H 55; BNRMS J 33; BNRMS D 1299; BNRMS Q 172; BNRMS D 901; BNRMS D 763; BNRMS D 1383; Hassaniyya MS 695; Hassaniyya MS 1417; Hassaniyya MS 1584; Hassaniyya MS 11998; Fondation Roi Abdelaziz MS 171; and Liege University MS 5153.

<sup>19</sup> This was copied and bound alongside the plague treatises of al-Shaqūrī and Ibn Khātimah in El Escorial 1785. Another copy is preserved in the College of Arts and Sciences (*Kulliyat al-Adab wa-l ‘Ulūm*) in Rabat (MS 101).

<sup>20</sup> Manuscripts of this work preserved in Morocco include BNRMS D 1570; Hassaniyya MS 77; Hassaniyya MS 590; Hassaniyya MS 797; and Hassaniyya MS 979.

It was specifically Ibn al-Khaṭīb's monumental work on medicine, "A Work by a Physician for Those He Loves" (*ʿAmal man Ṭabb li man Ḥabb*) that appears to have been the most appreciated of his medical writings.<sup>21</sup> Two surviving copies, transcribed in Nasrid Granada during the 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century, received a broad circulation. The first, (BnF Arabe 3011) was copied on Dhū-l Ḥijja 22 894/November 16 1489 in Granada, and its various annotations in Arabic and Hebrew suggests it was read by several different individuals. Among the most important marginal notes that attests to this is an Arabic annotation from late 11<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century France, dated 1094/1683 which states "this book was read by Buṭrus b. Dīb al-Ḥalabī, the translator of the King of France (*tarjumān sulṭān faransāʾ*)."<sup>22</sup> The second manuscript (Leiden Or. 331) was copied on Rabīʿ I 15 886/May 14 1481, most likely in the Nasrid kingdom as well.<sup>23</sup>

While this very short overview has sought to demonstrate the multifaceted reception of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's works in both the Islamic West and the Mashriq, it is also important to consider the role played by his own sons in crafting this legacy. His son, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. al-Khaṭīb, was the most influential in this regard. Significantly, ʿAlī b. al-Khaṭīb continued to serve as a courtier in the Marinid court following the rise of Abū al-ʿAbbās, writing panegyrics for this ruler, indicating that—irrespective of the role this sovereign played in his father's death—he sought to secure his political future.<sup>24</sup> Shortly afterwards, however, ʿAlī traveled to Cairo, bringing several of his father's works with him, and was active as a litterateur and intellectual.<sup>25</sup> He died while traveling back way back to the Islamic West by sea, between 798/1396 and

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<sup>21</sup> Important surviving manuscript copies include BN MS 4929; Leiden MS Or. 331; Qarawiyyin 607/40; Hassaniya 4777; Hassaniya 3477; and BnF Arabe 3011.

<sup>22</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *ʿAmal man Ṭabb li man Ḥabb*, BnF Arabe 3011, f. 3v.

<sup>23</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *ʿAmal man Ṭabb li man Ḥabb*, Leiden Or. 331, f. 141r.

<sup>24</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 10: 154.

<sup>25</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 65–66; Al-Maqqarī, *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 10: 155; Lirola Delgado, "La familia de Ibn al-Jaṭīb," p. 22.

800/1398, either as a result of being shipwrecked or an attack by pirates.<sup>26</sup> In his monumental *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, al-Maqqarī frequently notes the many marginalia left on Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s manuscripts (particularly the copy of “The Comprehensive History” in the Sa‘īd al-Su‘adā’ *khāniqāh* in Cairo) by the latter’s son ‘Alī, indicating the important role played by the latter in the transcription, preservation and transmission of his father’s works.<sup>27</sup> Many of these also sought to honor and memorialize Ibn al-Khaṭīb, while attacking his enemies and opponents (as seen above in the case of Ibn Zamrak). While it is clear that at least one of his sons, ‘Abd Allāh, was removed from his offices in the Nasrid court and joined his father in exile in North Africa at some point in 773/1371, the ultimate fate of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s other children and descendants remains unclear.

The memorialization of Ibn al-Khaṭīb was greatly shaped by the writings of individuals such as Ibn Khaldūn and al-Maqqarī, as this dissertation has sought to illustrate. It was his assassination, however, that was a point of emphasis in the writings of many of his biographers and remained a major subject of controversy among Muslim writers in the late medieval and early modern Mediterranean. According to the Egyptian historian and jurist Shams al-Dīn al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497), for example, Ibn al-Khaṭīb was killed “legitimately killed by the sword of the *sharī‘a*” (*maqṭūl bi-sayf al-shar‘*).<sup>28</sup> Meanwhile, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s student Ibn Qunfudh al-Qusanṭīnī, writing around 807/1404 commemorates him as a martyr (*shahīd*).<sup>29</sup> Both Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn Ḥajar narrate a story, on the authority of the Nasrid ambassador to Castile or Aragón, Muḥammad al-Qaṣbānī, that “the Christian king (*malik al-franj*) [either Enrique II or Pedro IV], upon seeing a manuscript written in Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s handwriting and hearing his

<sup>26</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 66.

<sup>27</sup> Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 10: 155.

<sup>28</sup> Al-Sakhāwī, *Wajīz al-Kalām*, 1: 209.

<sup>29</sup> Ibn Qunfudh, *al-Wafayāt*, pp. 370–371.

eloquent words recited, wept profusely and declared ‘it is a major injustice that one such as he should have been murdered!’”<sup>30</sup> Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s demise and assassination continued to be discussed in scholarly and courtly circles in the Islamic world well into the 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Both the West African scholar Aḥmad Bābā al-Tinbuktī (d. 1036/1627)<sup>31</sup> and the Syrian historian Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ṭūlūn (d. 953/1546),<sup>32</sup> narrate biographies of Ibn al-Khaṭīb. For Aḥmad Bābā, in particular, the details of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s downfall and death provides an illustration of the potential fate of scholars that associate themselves with tyrannical and unjust rulers.<sup>33</sup>

It is due to his vast intellectual production, dynamic career as a scholar-statesman and his memorialization by his own students, many of whom went on to become some of the most important scholarly and political figures in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century Islamic West, that Ibn al-Khaṭīb bequeathed a substantial legacy to posterity. More than any other aspect of his life, it was his bridging of the worlds of learning, administration and kingship that enabled him to leave such a major impression upon the world that he inhabited while continuing to shape its interpretation until the present day.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāmina*, 3: 286–287.

<sup>31</sup> Aḥmad Bābā al-Tunbuktī, *Nayl al-Ibtihāj bi Taṭrīz al-Dibāj* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafa al-Diniyya, 2004), 2: 104–105.

<sup>32</sup> Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ṭūlūn, *Inbāʾ al-Umarāʾ bi Anbāʾ al-Wuzarāʾ* (Beirut: Dar al-Bashaʾir al-Islamiyya, 1998), pp. 78–83.

<sup>33</sup> Aḥmad Bābā al-Tunbuktī, *Jalb al-Niʿma wa Dafʾ al-Naqama bi-Mujānabat al-Wulāt al-Ḍalama* (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm, 2011), ed. Muhammad Benazzouz, pp. 189–193.

## Appendix I

### Timeline of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's Life

|                                           |                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| November-December 1273<br>Jumādā I 672    | Birth of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's father, 'Abd Allāh, in Granada.                                                                                                                  |
| June-July 1284<br>Rabī' II 683            | Death of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's paternal grandfather, Ṣa'īd b. 'Abd Allāh, in Granada.                                                                                           |
| 1308<br>709                               | Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Jayyāb appointed as Nasrid chancellor.                                                                                                            |
| January 16 1312<br>Ramaḍān 17 711         | Rebellion of nobleman Abū Sa'īd Faraj in Málaga against Naṣr. The former's son, Ismā'īl b. Faraj, is proclaimed as sultan.                                                |
| September 1312<br>Jumādā I 712            | Beginning of the reign of Alfonso XI of Castile-León.                                                                                                                     |
| November 15 1313<br>Rajab 25 713          | Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. al-Khaṭīb is born in Loja. Moves to Granada with his family several months later.                                                               |
| January 13 1314<br>Ramaḍān 25 713         | Revolt of Granadan populace against Naṣr and his chief minister Muḥammad b. al-Ḥājj.                                                                                      |
| February 14 1314<br>Shawwāl 27 713        | Entry of Ismā'īl b. Faraj into Granada and his enthronement as Ismā'īl I in the Alhambra two days later.                                                                  |
| February 19 1314<br>Dhū-l al-Qa'da 3 713  | Naṣr leaves Granada and moves to Guadix with his supporters, ruling independently with the support of Castile.                                                            |
| February 28 1314<br>Dhū-l al-Qa'da 12 713 | Ismā'īl I receives public oath of allegiance ( <i>al-bay'a al-āmma</i> ) in Granada.                                                                                      |
| April 14 1315<br>Muḥarram 8 715           | Muḥammad (the future Muḥammad IV) is born to Ismā'īl I and his Christian-born concubine 'Alwa in Granada.                                                                 |
| June 29 1318<br>Rabī' II 28 718           | Yūsuf (the future Yūsuf I) is born to Ismā'īl I and his Christian-born concubine Bahār in Granada.                                                                        |
| June 19 1319<br>Rabī' II 29 719           | Major Nasrid victory over Castilian forces at the Battle of the Vega. Both Castilian <i>infantes</i> Juan and Pedro, regents of Alfonso XI, are killed during the battle. |

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| November 16 1322<br>Dhū-l Qa‘da 6 722   | Death of deposed Nasrid emir Naṣr in Guadix.                                                                                                                             |
| July 17 1324<br>Rajab 24 724            | Ismā‘īl I conquers Huéscar. Possibly the first documented instance of Nasrid usage of gunpowder technology.                                                              |
| July 8 1325<br>Rajab 26 725             | Assassination of Ismā‘īl I in the Alhambra; enthronement of his son as Muḥammad IV.                                                                                      |
| August 1325<br>Ramaḍān 725              | Appointment of Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Maḥrūq as Nasrid chief minister and royal chamberlain.                                                                               |
| December 1326<br>Muḥarram 727           | Beginning of the conflict between Ibn Maḥrūq and ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā.                                                                                                 |
| January 1327<br>Ṣafar 727               | Rebellion of Nasrid prince Muḥammad b. Faraj (supported by ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā) in Andarax.                                                                           |
| November 6 1328<br>Muḥarram 2 729       | Assassination of Ibn Maḥrūq in the Alhambra.                                                                                                                             |
| August 30 1331<br>Dhū-l Qa‘da 25 731    | Enthronement of Marinid sultan Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī.                                                                                                                        |
| October 1331<br>Muḥarram 732            | Nasrid military, commanded by Abū Nu‘aym Riḍwān launches major raid against Guardamar.                                                                                   |
| 1331/1332<br>732                        | Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites a poem in the presence of Muḥammad IV, indicating his entry into courtly life. He was enlisted as a scribe in the royal chancery around this time. |
| September 16 1332<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 24 732 | Muḥammad IV crosses into Morocco to personally seek the assistance of Marinid ruler Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī.                                                                   |
| October 1332<br>Muḥarram 733            | Nasrid conquest of Priego.                                                                                                                                               |
| June 1333<br>Shawwāl 733                | Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. Zamrak is born in the Albaicín neighborhood of Granada.                                                                              |
| August 24 1333<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 12 733    | Conquest of Gibraltar by a joint Nasrid-Marinid force.                                                                                                                   |
| August 25 1333<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 13 733    | Assassination of Muḥammad IV near Algeciras. His body was transferred to Málaga and buried.                                                                              |



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| August 26 1333<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 14 733 | Oath of allegiance and enthronement of his half-brother Yūsuf I near Algeciras. Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites panegyric in the presence of Yūsuf I celebrating his accession to the throne. |
| September 1333<br>Muḥarram 734       | Appointment of Abū Nu‘aym Riḍwān as Nasrid chief minister                                                                                                                           |
| January 1 1336<br>Jumādā I 16 736    | Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites panegyric for Yūsuf I on the occasion of the solar New Year ( <i>nayrūz</i> ).                                                                                |
| July 20 1336<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 10 736   | Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites panegyric in the presence of Yūsuf I on the occasion of the Festival of the Sacrifice (‘Īd al-Aḍḥā)                                                           |
| April 29 1337<br>Ramaḍān 27 737      | Conquest of Tlemcen by Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī; end of reign of Zayyanid emir Abū Tashufīn I.                                                                                             |
| April 22 1338<br>Shawwāl 1 738       | Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites panegyric for Yūsuf I in the Alhambra on the occasion of the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast (‘Īd al-Fiṭr).                                              |
| June 29 1338<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 10 738   | Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites panegyric in the presence of Yūsuf I on the occasion of the Festival of the Sacrifice (‘Īd al-Aḍḥā).                                                          |
| October 28 1338<br>Rabī‘ II 12 739   | Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites panegyric for Yūsuf I on the occasion of the birth ( <i>mawlid</i> ) of the Prophet Muḥammad.                                                                 |
| January 1 1339<br>Jumādā II 18 739   | Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites panegyric for Yūsuf I on the occasion of the solar New Year ( <i>nayrūz</i> ).                                                                                |
| January 5 1339<br>Jumādā II 22 739   | Muḥammad b. Yūsuf (the future Muḥammad V) is born in the Alhambra.                                                                                                                  |
| June 19 1339<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 10 739   | Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites panegyric for Yūsuf I in the Alhambra on the occasion of the Festival of the Sacrifice (‘Īd al-Aḍḥā).                                                         |
| October 2 1339<br>Jumādā II 29 740   | Birth of Ismā‘īl b. Yūsuf (Ismā‘īl II).                                                                                                                                             |
| January 1 1340<br>Ramaḍān 21 740     | Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites panegyric for Yūsuf I on the occasion of the solar New Year ( <i>nayrūz</i> ).                                                                                |
| January 23 1340<br>Rajab 22 740      | Arrest and imprisonment of Abū Nu‘aym Riḍwān.                                                                                                                                       |

April 8 1340  
Shawwal 9 740

Marinid fleet, with Nasrid assistance, defeats Castilian naval force commanded by admiral Jofre Tenorio near Gibraltar. Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites panegyric for Yūsuf I to celebrate the victory

August 4 1340  
Ṣafar 9 741

Marinid sultan Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī, at the head of a large force, disembarks at Algeciras.

September 22 1340  
Rabī‘ I 29 741

Yūsuf I arrests and exiles to Tunis the *shaykh al-ghuzāt* Abū Thābit ‘Āmir b. ‘Uthmān b. Abī al-‘Ulā, replacing him with Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. ‘Umar from the rival clan of the Banū Raḥḥū.

September 23 1340  
Rabī‘ I 30 741

Marinid sultan Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī begins siege of Tarifa.

October 1340  
Rabī‘ II 741

Abū Nu‘aym Riḍwān released from prison and appointed as royal chamberlain (*hājib*).

October 30 1340  
Jumādā I 7 741

Major Castilian victory over a joint Marinid-Nasrid force at the Battle of Tarifa/Rio Salado. Death of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s father, brother and several of his teachers, including the chief judge of Granada on the battlefield.

August 15 1341  
Ṣafar 30 742

Alfonso XI conquers Alcalá la Real.

August 31 1341  
Rabī‘ I 17 742

Letter from Ibn al-Khaṭīb in Málaga detailing the conquests and advances of Alfonso XI in the Straits of Gibraltar. He describes his completion of “The Masterpiece of the Age: A History of the Nasrid Dynasty” (*Ṭurfat al-‘Aṣr fī Tārīkh Dawlat Banī Naṣr*). The “Yūsufite Treatise of Medicine” (*al-Yūsufī fī al-Ṭibb*) was also completed around this time.

May 17 1342  
Dhū-l Ḥijja 10 742

Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites panegyric for Yūsuf I in the royal palace in Málaga on the occasion of the Festival of the Sacrifice (‘Īd al-Aḍḥā), celebrating the king’s preparations for a naval campaign against Castile and Aragón.

July 22 1342  
Ṣafar 17 743

Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s eldest son, ‘Abd Allāh, is born in Granada.

February 27 1343  
Shawwāl 1 743

Ibn al-Khaṭīb recites panegyric for Yūsuf I in the Alhambra on the occasion of the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast (‘Īd al-Fiṭr).

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| April 1343<br>Dhū-l Qa‘da 743       | Nasrid conquest of Estepa and Benamejí, southeast of Sevilla. Ibn al-Khaṭīb participates in the campaign and recites panegyric for Yūsuf I outside the walls of Estepa.                                             |
| August 28 1343<br>Rabī‘ II 6 744    | Ijāza granted by Abū Ja‘far Aḥmad b. Ṣafwān (d. 763/1361) to Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his eldest son ‘Abd Allāh in Málaga.                                                                                                 |
| 1343<br>744                         | Completion of “Poetry and Prose” ( <i>al-Naẓm wa al-Nathr</i> ).                                                                                                                                                    |
| March 25 1344<br>Dhū-l Qa‘da 10 744 | Castilian conquest of Algeciras. Yūsuf I signs treaty with Alfonso XI, renewing vassalage and payments of tribute to Castile.                                                                                       |
| February 25 1345<br>Shawwāl 21 745  | Peace treaty between Marinids, Nasrids and the Crown of Aragón.                                                                                                                                                     |
| April 1347<br>Muḥarram 748          | Ibn al-Khaṭīb accompanies Yusuf I on his royal progress throughout the eastern half of the Nasrid kingdom. “The Travels of Winter and Summer” ( <i>Khatrat al-Tayf fi Rihlat al-Shita’ wa al-Sayf</i> ) is written. |
| September 1347<br>Jumādā II 748     | Marinid sultan Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī enters Tunis.                                                                                                                                                                      |
| March 1348<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 748       | Completion of the first recension of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s collection of poetry ( <i>dīwān</i> ).                                                                                                                         |
| April 1348<br>Muḥarram 749          | Major defeat of Marinid sultan Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī outside Qayrawan.                                                                                                                                                  |
| June 1348<br>Rabī‘ I 749            | The Black Death hits Almería and begins spreading throughout the Nasrid kingdom. Gate of Justice ( <i>Bāb al-Sharī‘a</i> ) of the Alhambra constructed.                                                             |
| Rabī‘ I 749<br>June 1348            | Beginning of the reign of Marinid sultan Abu ‘Inān Fāris.                                                                                                                                                           |
| November 8 1348<br>Sha‘bān 15 749   | Ceremony of the circumcision of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s sons.                                                                                                                                                               |
| January 1349<br>Shawwāl 749         | Death of Abū al-Ḥasan b. al-Jayyāb; Ibn al-Khaṭīb appointed as Nasrid chancellor and chief minister.                                                                                                                |

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| March 1349<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 750          | Black Death claims thousands of lives in Málaga. Death of Fāṭima bt. al-Aḥmar, daughter of Muḥammad II, mother of Ismā‘īl I (and grandmother of Muḥammad IV and Yūsuf I), in Granada. Ibn al-Khaṭīb composes her elegy and epitaph. |
| April 1349<br>Muḥarram 750             | The College of Granada ( <i>al-madrassa al-naṣriyya</i> ) is completed.                                                                                                                                                             |
| March 1350<br>Muḥarram 751             | Death of Alfonso XI; enthronement of Pedro I. Arrival of Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Baṭṭūṭa in the Nasrid kingdom.                                                                                                                    |
| March 13 1350<br>Muḥarram 3 751        | Ibn al-Khaṭīb sends letter to Marinid sultan Abū ‘Inān requesting military assistance against Castile.                                                                                                                              |
| June 19 1351<br>Rabī‘ II 23 752        | Death of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī in the High Atlas; his body transferred to Salé and buried in the Marinid royal mausoleum.                                                                                                               |
| July 1351<br>Jumādā I 752              | Ibn al-Khaṭīb sent as Nasrid ambassador to Marinid sultan Abū ‘Inān in Fez.                                                                                                                                                         |
| January 2 1353<br>Dhū-l Qa‘da 25 753   | Death of the philosopher and physician Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Hudhayl, one of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s most important teachers. Ibn al-Khaṭīb oversees his funeral and burial at the Elvira Gate of Granada                                  |
| August 25 1353<br>Rajab 24 754         | Ibn al-Khaṭīb sends letter of intercession on behalf of Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Marzūq to Marinid ruler Abū ‘Inān.                                                                                                               |
| October 19 1354<br>Shawwāl 1 755       | Assassination of Yūsuf I in the Royal Mosque of the Alhambra; enthronement of Muḥammad V.                                                                                                                                           |
| November 9 1354<br>Shawwāl 22 755      | Public oath of allegiance ( <i>bay‘a ‘amma</i> ) to Muḥammad V in Granada. Ibn al-Khaṭīb pens royal decree appointing Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. ‘Umar b. Raḥḥū as <i>shaykh al-ghuzāt</i> .                                            |
| December 1354<br>Dhū-l Qa‘da 755       | Ibn al-Khaṭīb sent as Nasrid ambassador to Marinid sultan Abū ‘Inān in Fez. Visits several towns and sites, including the tombs of the Banū Ishqalyūla in al-Qaṣr al-Kabīr (Alcazarquivir).                                         |
| December 14 1354<br>Dhū-l Qa‘da 28 755 | Ibn al-Khaṭīb granted an audience with Marinid sultan Abū ‘Inān.                                                                                                                                                                    |

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| January 1355<br>Muḥarram 756              | ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn appointed as the private secretary of Marinid sultan Abū ‘Inān.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| January 30 1355<br>Muḥarram 15 756        | Ibn al-Khaṭīb arrives back in Granada after successfully completing his diplomatic mission.                                                                                                                                                                              |
| May 1 1356<br>Rabī‘ II 29 757             | Ibn al-Khaṭīb spends time at Rābiṭat al-‘Uqāb, a Sufi lodge located outside Granada, with leading scholars, including Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Maqqarī and Abū ‘Alī Maṣṣūr b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Zawāwī. The latter awards <i>ijāza</i> to Ibn al-Khaṭīb and his three sons. |
| June 21 1356<br>Jumādā II 21 757          | Ibn al-Khaṭīb sends letter of intercession on behalf of Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Maqqarī to Marinid ruler Abū ‘Inān                                                                                                                                                    |
| January 1357<br>Muḥarram 758              | ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn removed from office and imprisoned by Marinid sultan Abū ‘Inān.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| December 1 1358<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 28 759     | Assassination of Marinid sultan Abū ‘Inān.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| July 12 1359<br>Sha‘bān 15 760            | Enthronement of Marinid sultan Abū Sālim in Fez. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn appointed as Abū Sālim’s private secretary.                                                                                                                                                   |
| August 21 1359<br>Ramaḍān 28 760          | Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl (El Bermejo) and co-conspirators attack the Alhambra, assassinate the royal chamberlain Abū al-Nu‘aym Riḍwān, and install Ismā‘īl II as sovereign. Muḥammad V flees to Guadix. Ibn al-Khaṭīb arrested, tortured and imprisoned.                      |
| September-October 1359<br>Dhū-l Qa‘da 760 | Due to intercession of Marinid sultan Abū Sālim, Ibn al-Khaṭīb released from prison and joins Muḥammad V in Guadix.                                                                                                                                                      |
| November 3 1359<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 11 760     | Muḥammad V and his retinue (including Ibn al-Khaṭīb) depart Guadix for Marinid Morocco.                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| November 16 1359<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 24 760    | Muḥammad V and his retinue (including Ibn al-Khaṭīb) sail from Marbella to Ceuta.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| November 28 1359<br>Muḥarram 6 761        | Arrival of Muḥammad V and his retinue (including Ibn al-Khaṭīb) in Fez.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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| Early 1360<br>Early 761          | Completion of “A Comprehensive Treatise on Medicine” ( <i>‘Amal man Ṭabb li man Ḥabb</i> ).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| March 11 1360<br>Rabī‘ II 21 761 | Marinid sultan Abū Sālim issues document granting Ibn al-Khaṭīb permission to travel throughout his kingdom. Ibn al-Khaṭīb begins his journey across Morocco, including the High Atlas.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| March-April 1360<br>Jumādā I 761 | Ibn al-Khaṭīb visits the High Atlas, including Tinmal, and is hosted by ‘Āmir b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī, the chief of the Hintāta tribe.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| May 1360<br>Jumādā II 761        | Ibn al-Khaṭīb visits Marrakech and Aghmat, visiting the tomb of the Andalusī poet-prince al-Mu‘tamid b. ‘Abbād                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| May 1360<br>Rajab 761            | Ibn al-Khaṭīb settles in Salé, devoting his time to writing. Works composed in Salé include “The Resplendence of the Full Moon: A History of the Nasrid Dynasty” ( <i>al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya fī al-Dawla al-Nasriyya</i> ); “The Poetic Enumeration of Dynasties” ( <i>Raḡm al-Ḥulal fī Naẓm al-Duwal</i> ); “A Rhymed Treatise on Aliments” ( <i>Urjūza fī-l Aghdhiya</i> ); “A Rhymed Treatise on Medicine” ( <i>Urjūza fī-l Ṭibb</i> ); “A Treatise on Antidotes” ( <i>al-Ma‘lūma ḥawl ‘ilāj al-sumūm</i> ); “The Sweeping of the Shop after the Relocation of the Inhabitants” ( <i>Kunāsāt al-Dukkān ba‘d Intiqāl al-Sukkān</i> ); “The Designation of Leadership: An Abridged Treatise on Politics” ( <i>Takḥṣīs al-Riyāsa bi-Talkhīs al-Siyāsa</i> ); “Magic and Poetry” ( <i>al-Siḥr wa-al-Shi‘r</i> ); “The Comparative Virtues of Málaga and Salé” ( <i>al-Mafākhara bayna Mālaqa wa Sallā</i> ); “The Criterion of Selection in Enumerating Localities and Residences” ( <i>Kitāb Mi‘yār al-ikhtiyār fī dhikr al-ma‘āhid wa-al-diyār</i> ); “The Shaking Off of the Travel Bag in the Comfort of Exile” ( <i>Nuḡāḍat al-Jirāb fī ‘Ulālat al-Ightirāb</i> ); “The Exemplary Manner of Disparaging the Notarial Profession” ( <i>Muthlā al-Ṭarīqa fī Dhamm al-Wathīqa</i> ); and “A Versification of the Luma” ( <i>al-Hulal al-Marqūma fī al-Luma‘ al-Manzūma</i> ). |
| May 20 1360<br>Rajab 3 761       | Marinid sultan Abū Sālim conquers Tlemcen; Ibn al-Khaṭīb sends him a letter and panegyric celebrating his victory.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| July 13 1360<br>Sha‘bān 27 761   | Assassination of Ismā‘īl II and his brother Qays by El Bermejo in the Alhambra. The latter is enthroned as Muḥammad VI.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

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| August 20 1361<br>Shawwāl 17 762        | Muḥammad V departs Fez for Ceuta, beginning the campaign to regain his throne.                                                                                         |
| September 7 1361<br>Dhū-l Qa‘da 6 762   | Death of Iqbāl, Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s concubine and mother of his two infant sons and daughters, in Salé                                                                     |
| September 22 1361<br>Dhū-l Qa‘da 21 762 | Marinid sultan Abū Sālim assassinated by his vizier ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh; Abū ‘Umar Tashufīn enthroned as sovereign. Ibn Marzūq stripped of his offices and imprisoned. |
| October 1361<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 762         | Ibn al-Khaṭīb meets Marinid vizier ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh in Salé.                                                                                                        |
| December 20 1361<br>Ṣafar 21 763        | Marinid vizier ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh enthrones Abū Zayyān Muḥammad as Marinid sovereign.                                                                                 |
| January 16 1362<br>Rabī‘ I 19 763       | Muḥammad VI defeats a Castilian force near Guadix.                                                                                                                     |
| February 1362<br>Jumādā I 763           | Pedro I and Muḥammad V join forces to assault El Bermejo in Granada.                                                                                                   |
| February 6 1362<br>Rabī‘ II 10 763      | Royal decree of Marinid sultan Abū Zayyān to Ibn al-Khaṭīb confirming the latter’s existing privileges.                                                                |
| April 16 1362<br>Jumādā II 20 763       | Muḥammad V re-establishes himself as king of Granada in the Alhambra.                                                                                                  |
| April 20 1362<br>Jumādā II 24 763       | Letter from Muḥammad V to Ibn al-Khaṭīb detailing his restoration to the throne and requesting the latter to return to Granada.                                        |
| April 27 1362<br>Rajab 2 763            | Muḥammad VI assassinated by Pedro I near Seville,                                                                                                                      |
| May 18 1362<br>Rajab 23 763             | Ibn al-Khaṭīb, accompanying the family of Muḥammad V (including the future Yūsuf II), departs Morocco.                                                                 |
| June 15 1362<br>Sha‘bān 20 763          | Ibn al-Khaṭīb arrives in Granada.                                                                                                                                      |
| June 25 1362<br>Ramaḍān 2 763           | Royal decree re-appointing Ibn al-Khaṭīb as chief minister, and bestowing upon him the title “Bearer of the Two offices” ( <i>Dhū-l Wizāratayn</i> ).                  |

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| September 1362<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 763         | Ibn al-Khaṭīb pens royal proclamation of Muḥammad V celebrating the suppression of the rebellion of al-Dalīl al-Barkī and Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Alī b. Naṣr in Almería.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| October 23 1362<br>Muḥarram 3 764         | Ibn al-Khaṭīb issues a decree appointing Abū al-Ḥasan al-Bunnāhī as Chief Judge of Granada. Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Zamrak appointed as Nasrid chancellor shortly thereafter.                                                                                                                                                              |
| December 26 1362<br>Rabī‘ I 8 764         | Arrival of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn in Granada.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| December 30 1362<br>Rabī‘ al-Awwal 12 764 | Major ceremony in the Alhambra commemorating the birth ( <i>mawlid</i> ) of the Prophet Muḥammad.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| June 26 1363<br>Ramaḍān 13 764            | Ibn al-Khaṭīb orchestrates the demise of one of his leading rivals, the <i>shaykh al-ghuzāt</i> Abū Zakariyya Yahyā b. Raḥḥū. The latter is stripped of his offices, arrested and incarcerated in Almuñecar before being exiled—along with his entire family—to North Africa. He was replaced with Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Badr al-Dīn b. Raḥḥū. |
| November 8 1363<br>Muḥarram 30 765        | Completion of “The Resplendence of the Full Moon: A History of the Nasrid Dynasty” ( <i>al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya fī al-Dawla al-Naṣriyya</i> ).                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| February 1365<br>Jumādā I 766             | Departure of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn from Granada.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 1365<br>766                               | Construction of the Great Hospital ( <i>māristān</i> ) of Granada.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| October 1365<br>Ṣafar 767                 | Ibn al-Khaṭīb issues call to arms, publicly proclaimed across the Nasrid kingdom and in Granada, to participate in military campaigns against Castile.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| March 13 1366<br>Jumādā 29 767            | Enrique, half-brother of Pedro I, proclaims himself king of Castile, initiating a new phase in the Castilian civil war.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| April 1366<br>Sha‘bān 767                 | Nasrid incursions into Castilian territory. Priego and other frontier towns/fortresses conquered.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| May 1366<br>Ramaḍān 767                   | Conquest of fortress of Ashr (near Archidona).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |



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| May 23 1366<br>Ramaḍān 12 767        | Ibn al-Khaṭīb composes a sermon, proclaimed throughout the Nasrid kingdom, intended to mobilize the populace of the Nasrid kingdom to participate in the war against Enrique II of Castile.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| August 30 1366<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 22 767 | Enthronement of Marinid sultan Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| September 1366<br>Muḥarram 768       | Ibn al-Khaṭīb corresponds with chief judge of Egypt Bahā’ al-Dīn Abū al-Baqā’ al-Subkī (d. 777/1375).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| April 3 1367<br>Sha‘bān 2 768        | Victory of Pedro I, heavily supported by English troops, over Enrique II at the Battle of Najéra.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| April 1367<br>Sha‘bān 768            | Nasrid raid against Utrera (near Sevilla).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| May 1367<br>Ramaḍān 768              | Ibn al-Khaṭīb composes letter, on behalf of Muḥammad V to Marinid sultan Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-Azīz describing the developments in the Castilian civil war and Nasrid incursions into Castilian territory, particularly the raid against Utrera.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| July 1367<br>Dhū-l Qa‘da 768         | Marinid sultan Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz executes ‘Umar b. ‘Abd Allāh and appoints Abū Bakr b. Ghāzī b. al-Kās as chief minister.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| September 1367<br>Muḥarram 769       | Nasrid raids against Jaén, Priego, and Baeza.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| September 26 1367<br>Muḥarram 30 769 | Ibn al-Khaṭīb composes letter, on behalf of Muḥammad V to Marinid sultan Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-Azīz describing the Nasrid attack against Jaén.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| October 1367<br>Rabī‘ I 769          | Nasrid raid against Ubeda. Muḥammad V adopts the regnal title “The Prosperous by the Grace of God” ( <i>al-Ghanī bi-llāh</i> ).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| December 25 1367<br>Jumādā I 2 769   | Letter from Ibn al-Khaṭīb to Ibn Khaldūn in which he provides an overview of recent developments in Iberia, including the Nasrid raids against Castilian territory. Ibn al-Khaṭīb also describes how he sent a copy of his “Comprehensive History” ( <i>al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa</i> ), along with several other of his work, to Cairo to be deposited in the <i>khāniqāh</i> of Sa‘īd al-Su‘adā’. Completion of “The Garden of Acquaintance with the Nature of Noble Love” ( <i>Rawḍat al-Ta‘rīf fī al-Ḥubb al-Sharīf</i> ). |

|                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Early 1368<br>Late 769               | Nasrid raid against Córdoba.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| November 15 1368<br>Rabī‘ II 3 770   | Ibn al-Khaṭīb composes lengthy letter, titled <i>Iftirās al-iṣāba ilā iftirāsh al-ināba</i> , on behalf of Muḥammad V to the Hafsid sultan Abū Ishāq al-Mustansir celebrating the Nasrid raids and conquests in Castilian territory. |
| March 23 1369<br>Sha‘bān 13 770      | Assassination of Pedro I by Enrique II.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| July 1369<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 770         | Ibn al-Khaṭīb pens call to arms, which is publicly proclaimed throughout the Nasrid kingdom, urging military mobilization in preparation for the campaign against Algeciras.                                                         |
| August 1 1369<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 26 770  | Nasrid conquest of Algeciras.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| August 11 1368<br>Dhū-l Ḥijja 25 769 | Completion of “On the Preservation of Health throughout the Seasons of the Year” ( <i>Kitāb al-Wuṣūl fī Ḥifẓ al-Ṣiḥḥa fī al-Fuṣūl</i> ).                                                                                             |
| March 23 1369<br>Sha‘bān 13 770      | Death of Pedro I; end of the Castilian civil war and beginning of the reign of Enrique II as sole ruler of Castile.                                                                                                                  |
| August 1369<br>Muḥarram 771          | Ibn al-Khaṭīb completes the autobiographical sections of the “Comprehensive History” ( <i>al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa</i> ).                                                                                                         |
| October 17 1369<br>Rabī‘ I 15 771    | Nasrid raid against Sevilla, Osuna and Marchena. Ibn al-Khaṭīb continues making emendations and additions to his “Comprehensive History” ( <i>al-Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa</i> ).                                                     |
| October 1369<br>Rabī‘ I 771          | Ibn al-Khaṭīb composes and sends letters detailing Nasrid conquests and raids in Castilian territory to the Sharif of Mecca and the Sharif of Medina.                                                                                |
| October 14 1369<br>Rabī‘ I 12 771    | Mawlid celebration in the Alhambra.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| December 12 1369<br>Jumādā I 12 771  | Completion of a new redaction of “On the Preservation of Health throughout the Seasons of the Year” ( <i>Kitāb al-Wuṣūl fī Ḥifẓ al-Ṣiḥḥa fī al-Fuṣūl</i> ), which incorporates the “Lexicon” ( <i>Mufradāt</i> ).                    |

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|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| October 1370<br>Rabī‘ I 772                      | Completion of the façade of the Comares Palace of the Alhambra.                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| November 1369<br>Rabī‘ II 771                    | Completion of “The Invocation of Grace in Pondering the Secrets of Existence” ( <i>Istinzāl al-Luṭf al-Mawjūd fī Sirr al-Wujūd</i> ).                                                                                                                                                     |
| August 4 1370<br>Muḥarram 10 772                 | Marinid sultan Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz conquers Tlemcen from the Zayyanids.                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| December 10 1370<br>Jumādā II 1 772              | Ibn al-Khaṭīb, accompanied by his son ‘Alī and a retinue of his own knights, secretly departs from the Nasrid kingdom and sails to Ceuta. Ibn al-Khaṭīb sends “farewell letter” to Muḥammad V, in which he explains and justifies his decision to depart Granada to the Nasrid sovereign. |
| February 6 1371<br>Rajab 19 772                  | Ibn al-Khaṭīb arrives in Tlemcen, joining the Marinid court of Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| April 18 1371<br>Shawwāl 1 772                   | Letter from Ibn Khaldūn to Ibn al-Khaṭīb describing the Marinid diplomatic mission—headed by Abū Yaḥyā b. Abī Madyan—to the Nasrid court to secure permission for Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s family (and moveable property) to be sent to Tlemcen.                                                   |
| November-December 1371<br>Jumādā I-Jumādā II 773 | Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s family arrives in Tlemcen from Granada. Edict of al-Bunnāhī condemning Ibn al-Khaṭīb as a heretic and disbeliever. Many of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s books, particularly those on philosophy and mysticism, are publicly burned in Granada.                                         |
| December 9 1371<br>Jumādā I 30 773               | Al-Bunnāhī (writing on behalf of Muḥammad V) sent a missive to Ibn al-Khaṭīb in Tlemcen that condemned him in the strongest terms, accusing him of treason and heresy ( <i>zandaqa</i> ).                                                                                                 |
| Summer 1372<br>Late 773                          | Granadan embassy to Marinid sultan Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, headed by al-Bunnāhī, requesting the extradition of Ibn al-Khaṭīb to Granada. Abū Fāris refuses.                                                                                                                              |
| October 21 1372<br>Rabī‘ II 22 774               | Death of Marinid sultan Abū Fāris ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. Effective rule of Marinid vizier Abū Bakr b. al-Ghāzī, governing as regent on behalf of the minor king al-Sa‘īd. Ibn al-Khaṭīb begins writing “The Deeds of the Notables” ( <i>A’mal al-A’lam</i> ).                                     |

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| November 1372<br>Jumādā I 774  | ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Khaldūn joins the court of Abū Bakr b. Ghāzī in Fez and is reunited with Ibn al-Khaṭīb                                                                                                                                                                       |
| December 1372<br>Jumādā II 774 | Ibn al-Khaṭīb completes “The Concealed Brigade of Biographies of Poets that we Encountered in al-Andalus during the 8th/14th Century” ( <i>al-Katība al-Kāmina fi man laqaynah bi-al-Andalus min shu‘arā‘ al-mā’a al-thāmina</i> )                                             |
| September 1373<br>Rabī‘ II 775 | Marinid prince Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad, supported militarily and politically by Muḥammad V, proclaimed sultan in Tangier.                                                                                                                                                          |
| June 18 1374<br>Muḥarram 7 776 | Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad enters Fez and is enthroned as Marinid sovereign. Ibn al-Khaṭīb arrested and imprisoned several days later.                                                                                                                                                |
| June 1374<br>Muḥarram 776      | Ibn al-Khaṭīb sends lengthy and desperate plea from Fez to Zayyanid ruler Abū Ḥammū Mūsā II in Tlemcen to intercede on his behalf.                                                                                                                                             |
| September 1374<br>Rabī‘ II 776 | Trial and assassination of Ibn al-Khaṭīb in his prison cell. After an unceremonious burial, his body is exhumed and burned by his enemies. His remains are interred in the Bāb al-Maḥrūq cemetery in Fez. Ibn Khaldūn crosses from Morocco to the Nasrid kingdom.              |
| December 1378<br>Ramadan 780   | Assassination of the Zayyanid chief minister Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā b. Khaldūn in Tlemcen.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| May 20 1629<br>Ramaḍān 27 1038 | Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Maqqarī (d. 1041/1632) completes “The Scented Breeze from the Cool Branch of al-Andalus and the History of its Statesman Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb” ( <i>Nafḥ al-ṭīb min Ghusn al-Andalus al-Raṭīb wa Dhikr Wazīraha Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb</i> ). |

## Appendix II

### List of Ibn al-Khaṭīb's Works

#### History and Biography

1-*A 'māl al-A 'lām fī man būyi 'a qabla al-iḥtilām min mulūk al-Islām wa-mā yata 'allaq bi-dhālika min al-kalām* (The Deeds of the Notables: A History of Muslim Underage Rulers). Written between 774/1372 and 776/1374 in Fez

2-*Awṣāf al-nās fī al-tawārīkh wa-al-ṣilāt* (The Description of the Notables in Written Histories and their Continuations). Written between 740/1340 and 760/1360, incorporated into the *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*.

3-*Al-Iḥāta fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa* (The Comprehensive History of Granada). Written between the 750s/1350s and late 760s/1360s in Granada, with some later emendations and additions.

4-*al-Katība al-Kāmina fī man laqīnāhu bi-al-Andalus min shu 'arā ' al-mi 'a al-thāmina* (The Concealed Brigade of Biographies of Poets We Encountered in al-Andalus during the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> Century). Written around Jumādā II 774/December 1372 in Fez.

5-*Al-Lamḥa al-Badriyya fī al-Dawla al-Nasriyya* (The Resplendence of the Full Moon: A History of the Nasrid Dynasty). Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé and Granada, with some later emendations and additions.

6-*Raḥm al-Ḥulal fī Naẓm al-Duwal* (The Poetic Enumeration of Dynasties). Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé, with some later emendations and additions.

7-*Al-Tāj al-Muḥalla fī Musājalat al-Qidḥ al-Mu 'allā* (The Ornamented Crown in the Competition of the Pre-Eminent). [Lost]. Written during the early reign of Yūsuf I, and already completed by the early 740s/1340s in Granada, with a copy deposited in the royal library in the Alhambra.

8-*Kitāb 'Ā'id al-Ṣila* (Addendum to the *Ṣila*). [lost]. Completed in the early 740s/1340s in Granada.

9-*Ṭurfat al- 'Aṣr fī Tārīkh Dawlat Banī Naṣr* (The Masterpiece of the Age: A History of the Nasrid Dynasty). [Lost]. Written before 743/1342 in Granada.

10-*Al-Iklīl al-Zāhir* (The Radiant Crown). [Lost]. Written during the early 740s/1340s in Granada.

11-*Al-Mafākhir al-Ṭayyibiyya fī al-Mafākhir al-Khaṭībiyya* (The Fragrant Incense on the Noble Virtues of the Banū al-Khaṭīb). [Lost]. Written around 774/1372 in Tlemcen.

## Medicine

12-*Maqālat Muqni 'at al-Sā'il 'an al-Maraḍ al-Hā'il* (Convincing the Inquirer about the Terrible Disease). Written around 750/1349–1350 in Granada.

13-*Urjūza fī-l Aghdhiya* (Rhymed Treatise on Aliments), also known as *al-Mu'tamada fī al-Aghdhiya al-Mufrada*. Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé.

14- *'Amal man Ṭabb li man Ḥabb* (A Work by a Physician for Those He Loves). Completed in early 761/1360 in Fez.

15-*Al-Wuṣūl li Hifẓ al-Siḥḥah fī al-Fuṣūl* (On the Preservation of Health throughout the Seasons of the Year). Completed on Dhū-l Ḥijja 25 769/August 11 1368 in Granada.

16-*Mufradāt* (Lexicon). Completed on Jumādā I 12 771/December 12 1369 in Granada, and incorporated into *al-Wuṣūl li Hifẓ al-Siḥḥah fī al-Fuṣūl*.

17-*Urjūza fī-l Ṭibb* (A Rhymed Treatise on Medicine). Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé.

18-*Al-Ma'lūmah ḥawl 'ilāj al-sumūm* (A Treatise on Antidotes). Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé.

19-*Al-Yūsufi fī al-Ṭibb* (The Yūsufite Treatise of Medicine). Completed around 742/1341 in Granada.

20-*Kitāb al-Bayṭara* (The Book of Veterinary Medicine). Completed around 743/1342 in Granada.

21-*Risālat Takwīn al-Janīn* (A Treatise on the Development of the Embryo). [Lost]. Completed before 769/1368.

## Mysticism/Philosophy

22-*Rawḍat al-Ta'rīf bil Ḥubb al-Sharīf* (The Garden of Acquaintance with the Nature of Noble Love). Completed around Jumādā I 769/December 1367 in Granada.

23-*Istinzāl al-Luṭf al-Mawjūd fī Sirr al-Wujūd* (The Invocation of Grace in Pondering the Secrets of Existence). Completed in Rabī' II 771/November 1369 in Granada.

24-*Risālat al-Mūsīqah* (Treatise on Music). [Lost]. Completed before 771/1369.

## Epistolary

25-*Kunāsat al-Dukkān ba'd Intiqāl al-Sukkān* (The Sweeping of the Shop after the Relocation of the Inhabitants). Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé

26-*Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb wa Nuj'at al-Muntāb* (The Sweet Basil of the Secretaries and the Sustenance of the Visitor). Written around 772/1370 in Granada, with later emendations and additions.

28- *Manḥ al-Gharīb fī al-Faṭḥ al-Qarīb* (The Gift of the Exiled in Celebrating the Imminent Victory). Written in Dhū-l Qa‘da 762/September 1361 in Salé.

### Politics

29- *Maqāma fī al-siyāsa* (A Treatise on Politics). Completed in the mid-760s/1360s in Granada, incorporated into the *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb* and the *Iḥāṭa fī Akhbār Gharnāṭa*.

30- *Al-Ishāra ilā Adab al-Wizāra* (The Allusion to the Rules Governing the Vizierate). Written between 768/1367 and 771/1370 in Granada, incorporated into the *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*.

31- *Bustān al-Duwwal* (The Garden of Dynasties). [Lost]. Composed in Granada before 760/1359.

32- *Takhṣīṣ al-Riyāsa bi-Talkhīṣ al-Siyāsa* (The Designation of Leadership: An Abridged Treatise on Politics). Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé.

### Belles-Lettres

33- *Dīwān al-ṣayyib wa-al-jahām wa-al-māḍī wa-al-kahām* (Compilation of Ibn al-Khaṭīb’s Poetry). Written between 748/1347 and 770/1369 in Granada and Salé.

34- *al-Siḥr wa-al-shi‘r* (Magic and Poetry). Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé.

35- *Jaysh al-Tawshīḥ* (The Army of Composition). Written during the 740s/1340s in Granada.

36- *Mafākḥara bayna Mālaqa wa Sallā* (The Comparative Virtues of Malaga and Sale). Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé, incorporated into the *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*.

37- *Tāfat man Jamm wa Nuqtat man Yamm* (The Trifles of the Compiler) [Lost]. Written in the 740s/1340s in Granada

38- *Futāt al-Khuwān wa Luqaṭ al-Ṣuwān* (Crumbs from the Table and Leftovers in the Cupboard). [Lost]. Written in Granada before 773/1371.

39- *Al-Durar al-Fākhira wa al-Lujaj al-Zākhira* (The Magnificent Pearls and the Depths of the Sea). [Lost]. Written in 744/1343 in Málaga.

40- *Abyāt al-Abyāt* (The Most Select of Poetic Verses). [Lost]. Unknown date of composition.

41- *Al-Manzūm wa al-Manthūr* (Poetry and Prose). Written in 744/1343 in Málaga.

42- *Ikhtīṣār Ṣiḥāḥ al-Jawharī* (Abridgement of Abū Naṣr Ismā‘īl al-Jawharī’s *Tāj al-Lughah* wa *Ṣiḥāḥ al-‘Arabiyyah*). [Lost]. Written before 755/1354 in Granada.

43- *Talkhīṣ al-Dhahab fī Iktiyār ‘uyūn al-kutub al-adabiyāt al-thalātha* (Precious Selections from the Three Books of Belles-Letteres). Written in the 740s/1340s in Granada.

44-*Dīwān Ibn al-Jayyāb* (The Collection of Ibn al-Jayyāb's Poetry). Written in the 740s/1340s in Granada.

#### Geography/Travel

45-*Khaṭrat al-ṭayf fi Riḥlat al-Shitā' wa al-Ṣayf* (The Travels of Winter and Summer). Written shortly after 748/1347 in Granada.

46-*Kitāb Mi'yār al-ikhtiyār fi dhikr al-ma'āhid wa-al-diyār* (The Criterion of Selection in Enumerating Localities and Residences). Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé, incorporated into the *Rayḥānat al-Kuttāb*.

47-*Nufāḍat al-Jirāb fi 'Ulālat al-Ightirāb* (The Shaking Off of the Travel Bag in the Comfort of Exile). Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé.

#### Miscellaneous

48-*Muthlā al-Ṭarīqa fi Dhamm al-Wathīqa* (The Exemplary Manner of Disparaging the Notarial Profession). Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé.

49-*Khal' al-Rasn fi Amr al-Qādī Abī al-Ḥasan* (Exposing the Chief Judge Abu al-Hasan). [Lost]. Written in Fez in 774/1372.

50-*Al-Ḥulal al-Marqūma fi al-Luma' al-Manzūma* (A Versification of Abū Ishāq al-Shirāzī's *Luma'*). Written between 761/1360 and 763/1362 in Salé.

51-*Al-Radd 'ala Ahl al-Ibāḥa* (A Refutation of the Libertines). [Lost]. Written around 769/1367 in Granada.

52-*Al-Ghīrah 'ala Ahl al-Hirah*. [Lost]. Unknown composition date.

53-*Ḥaml al-Jumhūr 'alā al-Sanan al-Mashhūr* (Inciting the Masses along the Well-Known Path). Written on Ramaḍān 12 767/May 23 1366 in Granada.

54-*Qat' al-falāt bi-akhbār al-wulāt* (An Account of Governors). Written in 762/1361 in Salé.

55-*Sadd al-Dharī'ah fi Taḥḍīl al-Sharī'ah* (On the Supremacy of the Religious Law). Written around 769/1367 in Granada.

56-*Waṣīyya* (Testament). Written around 770/1368 in Granada.

57- *Kitāb al-Bayzarah* (The Book of Falconry). Written before 760/1359 in Granada.

58- *Maḥāsin al-Khayl* (On the Virtues of Horses and Horsemanship). Written before 760/1359 in Granada.

59- *al-Nuqāyah ba'd al-Kifāyah* (Selection after Sufficiency). [Lost]. Composed before 740/1340 in Granada.



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