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At twenty-two years old, William Wright set out to transcribe and publish the travelogue manuscript of the medieval Muslim pilgrim, Abu 'l-Husayn Muhammad ibn Ahmad Ibn Jubayr. By all accounts, he accomplished his task masterfully. In 1852 the resources available to the young scholar were few, and studies of the Orient a far cry from modern Middle Eastern and Islamic scholarship. Prior to Wright’s efforts, Western scholars had hardly mentioned Ibn Jubayr’s travel account. Wright noted in his preface that at the time of publication he knew of only two orientalists, Reinhart Pieter Anne Dozy and Michele Amari, who had commented on Ibn Jubayr’s 1183-85 journey from Al-Andalus to Mecca and back.

At twenty-two years old, I have embarked on a task of much humbler proportions and worked in significantly more ideal circumstances. In the century and a half that has passed since Wright began his work, remarkable strides have been made in the study of Middle Eastern and Islamic cultures. Many more scholars have been able to access manuscripts of Ibn Jubayr’s account and interpret them. Due to the availability of new technologies and resources, I have been able to access many of these commentaries and conduct further research in a manner markedly different than even the most recent generation of historians.

Thus it has been my project to study works on Ibn Jubayr, comment on these sources, and attempt to augment the discussion. In the pages that follow, I bridge existing lacunae in the literature and analyze Ibn Jubayr’s travelogue as a whole. Over the course of his pilgrimage, the traveler was irrevocably changed by what he saw and experienced, and this personal development provides a

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2 Wright states that he knew only of Professor Dozy and M. Amari having previously worked on or cited Ibn Jubayr. Ibn Jubayr, *The Travels*, Wright, 20.
fascinating basis for analysis of Ibn Jubayr the individual and the medieval lands that he described. Ultimately, I seek to contribute to the burgeoning field of scholarship regarding the account of Ibn Jubayr’s pilgrimage, and hope that much more will be written on him soon.

In executing this study, I have relied primarily on R. J. C. Broadhurst’s 1952 English translation of the Arabic transcription of the manuscript. The work of Ian Richard Netton has also been integral to my thesis. The preeminent English authority on Ibn Jubayr, Professor Netton has compiled and edited more works related to Ibn Jubayr than any other author to date.

I would also like to express my sincerest gratitude to the History Department at Georgetown University. In particular, Professors Tommaso Astarita and Susan Pinkard have helped to make this effort possible with their encouragement and guidance.

Not long ago, I was unaware of the fact that cultural exchange between Europe, the Middle East, and the Maghrib took place during the Middle Ages, much less that this communication precipitated the revitalization of European intellectual life. With this study, I have come to truly appreciate the role that the hajj, or the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, played within this greater phenomenon. Compelling individuals to leave their homes for foreign lands, the hajj directly facilitated communication among peoples from all corners of the Islamic world. In the pages that follow then, I analyze Ibn Jubayr’s travel account within the broader context of this exchange.

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4 Maghrib, or Maghreb, means “West” in Arabic. Al-Andalus and Northwest Africa were together referred to as the Maghrib while Muslims controlled parts of the Iberian Peninsula, hence Ibn Jubayr considers himself a Maghribi.
Introduction

Abu ‘l-Husayn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Jubayr (1145-1217) was not an exceptional man. As a relatively ordinary, middle-aged Muslim, Ibn Jubayr was neither the first nor the last to leave Al-Andalus to perform the hajj. Admiring kings only from afar, the closest that Ibn Jubayr came to royalty were encounters with imperial tax collectors. Paradoxically though, it is precisely Ibn Jubayr’s lack of distinction that helped earn him repute throughout the Islamic world in his time. It also makes him the ideal subject of the present study.

A few years after returning from his journey, Ibn Jubayr circulated an account of his travels. For his contemporaries then, Ibn Jubayr’s Rihla, or travelogue, was an accessible description of the hajj written by a man to whom much of the Islamic world could relate. For the modern reader, the Rihla provides a first-hand account of twelfth-century Mediterranean and Near Eastern travel as described by a common pilgrim. A window into a complex period of conflict and convivencia, or coexistence, the Rihla documents how exchange took place not only across regions, but also amongst diverse cultures that alternately cooperated and conducted war against each other.

At times, Ibn Jubayr met the unfamiliar and seemed genuinely taken aback. At others, unfavorable circumstances, albeit in distant places, reinforced the Andalusian’s preconceived notions. Regardless, from the beginning to the end, Ibn Jubayr never ceased learning from his interactions, and took to heart the value of what he experienced. Like many pilgrims before him, Ibn

6 For more on Ibn Jubayr’s Rihla and the riha genre, see the section “The Rihla” below.
7 Ibn Jubayr’s travels were mostly confined to regions considered “Mediterranean,” with the exception of the Hijaz, the region of the Arabian Peninsula that includes Mecca and Medina. In order to include reference to Al-Andalus, the Christian territories of Norman Sicily and the Near East, the Maghrib, and the Islamic Near East, I primarily refer to the Mediterranean, with the understanding that the pilgrim’s ultimate destination was Mecca. For a study on how Muslims formed a conception of the Mediterranean as a sea and as a region, see Tarek Kahlaoui, “The Depiction of the Mediterranean in Islamic Cartography (11th–16th Centuries): The Suras (Images) of the Mediterranean from the Bureaucrats to the Sea Captains,” ProQuest, 2008, Paper AAI3309450, <http://repository.upenn.edu/dissertations/AAI3309450>. *I use the somewhat antiquated term “Near East” to differentiate between the modern “Middle East” and the much smaller region that Ibn Jubayr visited.
8 For discussion of the historiography of “convivencia,” see Michelle Hamilton, Representing Others in Medieval Iberian Literature (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 150.
Jubayr returned home a more mature, cultured Muslim. Unlike his predecessors though, Ibn Jubayr carefully recorded and then circulated an account of his trip, preserving the wisdom that he had acquired for posterity.

Thus I examine Ibn Jubayr's role within this greater context, and how he exemplified the manner in which exchange occurred across peoples and places in the twelfth-century Mediterranean world. In the chapters that follow I detail how interactions among groups affected change at the individual as well as community level. Synthesizing the explicit and implicit of Ibn Jubayr’s travelogue, I demonstrate how an individual’s concepts of community, diversity, and identity evolved over the course of his journey as a result of exposure to new cultures.

I begin with comments on the source material and historiography related to Ibn Jubayr, and proceed with an introduction of the Arabic ribla travel genre. After a brief literary analysis, an overview of the medieval Iberian, Mediterranean, and Near Eastern contexts follows in order to set the stage for the logistical side of Ibn Jubayr’s journey. For purposes of comparison, I next reference the accounts of contemporary travelers such as Naser-e Khosraw, Benjamin of Tudela, and Ibn Battuta.9 I then examine Ibn Jubayr’s motivations for travel and his initial conceptions of community, diversity, and identity. Analysis of the traveler’s encounters with new people, places, and cultures reveals the profound impact that these unique experiences had on Ibn Jubayr's most fundamental beliefs. I then consider the reception of Ibn Jubayr’s account and its influence. To conclude, I compare the pilgrim’s varied impressions, highlighting changes and continuities.

The Sources

The development of Middle Eastern and Islamic studies has transformed the scholarship on medieval Islamic empires of the Mediterranean and Near East. As a result, scholarship on Ibn Jubayr and the milieu within which he traveled has greatly increased in recent years. Commentary in many

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9 Naser-e Khosraw is also known as Nasir Khursaw.
languages addresses Ibn Jubayr’s varied interests. Ranging in subject matter from art history to medieval nautical nomenclature, these works speak to the broad utility of Ibn Jubayr’s account.\textsuperscript{10}

As of yet though, no attempt has been made to comprehensively analyze Ibn Jubayr’s \textit{Ribla} as a whole. Thus far, the scholarship has painted an incomplete picture of the significance of Ibn Jubayr’s writings. My intent here, therefore, is to synthesize the disparate themes discussed in the literature and expound upon them.

William Wright first transcribed and published Ibn Jubayr’s travelogue based on an Arabic manuscript housed at the library of the University of Leiden in 1852. Since then, many have taken up the task of translating and emending his work. In 1907, Michael Jan de Goeje published a revised second edition of Wright’s work based on the same manuscript.\textsuperscript{11} De Goeje praised Wright’s work, but offered different interpretations of the manuscript in some sections and added to Wright’s background and introductory information. Via Celestino Schiaparelli’s 1906 Italian translation, de Goeje learned of the existence of another manuscript of the travel account at the great mosque of Fez, but was unable to compare the two given time constraints before publication.\textsuperscript{12} Around the same time, an Egyptian Arabic version was published in Cairo.\textsuperscript{13} Between 1949 and 1955, Maurice Gaudefroy-Demombynes completed a French translation of de Goeje’s Arabic text in three volumes.\textsuperscript{14} R. J. C. Broadhurst translated and published an English version of de Goeje’s second

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\textsuperscript{10} Articles on these subjects can be found in \textit{Islamic and Middle Eastern Geographers and Travellers}, Ian Richard Netton ed. (New York: Routledge, 2007).
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The travelogue has since been translated into Spanish, Catalan, Urdu, Persian, and Russian as well.16 Despite the proliferation of translations since the mid-twentieth century, relatively little headway has been made in terms of emending the initial work based on the Leiden manuscript. Unfortunately, a confluence of factors is to blame for the lack of progress. The primary issue is that only a few known manuscript copies of the travel account remain, and of those, the quality is generally less than would be desired.17 Secondly, access to the manuscripts has been limited for reasons of storage in some cases, and religion in others (nonbelievers not being permitted in mosques).18 Nevertheless, the work that has been done mostly validates Wright and de Goeje’s original efforts. Given the length of Ibn Jubayr’s account—Broadhurst’s English version is more than 350 pages of text—points of divergence are relatively few. It is worth noting that similar physical limitations and difficulties apply to the other primary sources referenced in this thesis, including the accounts of contemporary travelers and the so-called biographical dictionaries of Iberia and the Near East. Treatment of the actual veracity of the content of all of the primary sources follows here below in more detail.

Naturally, more scholars took up Ibn Jubayr’s account as more translations came out.

Particularly since the 1990s, significantly more scholarship on the travelogue has been published,

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17 S. A. Bonebakker cites damage such as wormholes, missing pages, and water stains. Bonebakker, “Three Manuscripts of Ibn Jubayr’s Rihla,” in Islamic and Middle Eastern Geographers and Travellers, 174.
reflecting the growth in popularity of Middle Eastern and Islamic studies among Western scholars. Specifically, students of art history have reveled in Ibn Jubayr’s intricate descriptions of monuments, mosques, and other structures. Others have focused solely on the religious aspects of the text and have honed in on interactions with Christians. Despite the increase in attention given to the account, however, Ian Richard Netton maintains a virtual monopoly on works in English regarding Ibn Jubayr. The editor and author of many works related to the traveler, Netton’s work has focused on specific themes including religiosity and alienation.

Some challenges accompanied the accumulation of the source materials, both primary and secondary. Most significantly, the evolution of Orientalism has led to frequent revisions of accepted methods of transliteration. My searches have yielded the following iterations of the author’s name:

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Ibn Jubayr  Ibn Gubayr  Ibn Djubayr
Ibn Jubair  Ibn Gubair  Ibn Yubayr
Ibn Goubair  Ibn Giobeir
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“Ibn Jubayr” has become the most commonly employed English spelling of the traveler’s name in recent scholarship, so I use this version. Diacritical marks have been omitted for convenience. For further clarification of terms and alternative spellings, see the glossary. I discuss Ibn Jubayr’s use of terms such as “Frank” and “Rum” in Chapter II for they pertain to the discussions of religious relations and conceptions of “otherness” in the Middle Ages.

**Historiography**

Before interest in Middle Eastern and Islamic studies increased in the West in the latter half of the twentieth century, Orientalists worked with much more limited resources. Sometimes imposing bias onto their analyses and treating their subjects as exotic “others,” some Orientalists misrepresented the cultures that they studied. At the same time, however, many Orientalists endeavored to work impartially and describe their subjects fairly. In 1978, Edward Said published

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19 See Netton, *Islamic and Middle Eastern Geographers and Travellers.*
20 Netton, *Islamic and Middle Eastern Geographers and Travellers.*
Orientalism, a highly controversial critique of romantic Western portrayals of Asia and the Middle East. This drew much attention to the subject, and many authors continue to contest and respond to Said’s depiction of the Western construction of the Orient.\(^{21}\) For the purposes of this thesis, raising such antecedents helps to elicit careful reflection on the sources and the manner in which they were produced. Consideration of the historiographical frameworks within which Orientalists worked yields richer understandings of their productions.

Iberian historiography is plagued with controversies that similarly weigh on the utility of the scholarship. Especially since the fall of Francisco Franco’s fascist regime, divergent schools of thought have produced bitterly debated interpretations of recent as well as distant history. Post-Franco, the neglect of Spain’s seven hundred years of Islamic history has largely ended, and Spanish historians now devote much more attention to Andalusia, or Al-Andalus. Foreign scholars have also taken advantage of the opening up of archives and the generally more permissive atmosphere following the democratization of the Spanish government.\(^{22}\)

With regards to Ibn Jubayr’s time period, both Spanish and foreign scholars have reached varying conclusions on societal interactions. Characterization of the Reconquista, the so-called Christian reconquest of Islamic territory, remains fraught with political, racial, and religious implications.\(^{23}\) Depending on the author, relations among Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Iberia were contentious, cordial, or emblematic of a golden period of convivencia.\(^{24}\) Given the omnipresent nature of religious matters in Ibn Jubayr’s account, such contentious, ongoing discussions color attempts at interpretation of the pilgrim’s situation. I therefore restrict my analysis to Ibn Jubayr the


\(^{23}\) See Glick, Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages.

\(^{24}\) See note 8.
individual, and offer mere conjecture as to what his writings might indicate about Andalusian society.

Controversies aside, developments in Middle Eastern, Islamic, and Spanish historiography have benefited scholars and students alike, and resulted in the production of many new works. The revision of an encyclopedia article on Ibn Jubayr illustrates this trend. First published in Leiden in 1913, the *Encyclopedia of Islam* has long served as a highly regarded reference point for scholars of the Middle East. As the study of Orientalism has transformed, the *Encyclopedia* has expanded to reflect these changes. For example, whereas in the first *Encyclopedia of Islam*, the article on “Ibn Djubair” was a scant 257 words, in the second edition of 1954, the much-expanded article on “Ibn Djubayr” consisted of 928 words, providing the researcher with more details and many more references.\(^25\)

The *Rihla*

One of the reasons, if not the main reason, that Ibn Jubayr remains a topic of discussion today is the role that he played in inspiring and influencing an entire genre of Arabic writing—the *rihla*, or travel, genre. Although he was by no means the first Andalusian to embark on the pilgrimage, Ibn Jubayr was one of the first to diligently record the details of his journey and circulate them to a wider audience. As a result of what now seems like a relatively simple act—publishing a memoir or travel diary of sorts—Ibn Jubayr earned himself a place in history. The word *rihla* means travel or travelogue in Arabic, so because Ibn Jubayr’s account was the prototype for the travel genre, the pilgrim’s work came to be known as *the rihla*. It is now commonly referred to as the *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr. Further discussion of the reception of the *Rihla* follows in the concluding chapter, but it is worth noting at the outset that Ibn Jubayr’s account resonated with generations of Muslim pilgrims. Ibn Battuta has been called Ibn Jubayr’s “successor” in the genre and famously copied entire descriptions of cities into his own travelogue more than a century later. More recently, Ibn

\(^{25}\) Pellat, “Ibn Djubayr.”
Jubayr’s account has been included in modern collections of pilgrim accounts, and continues to garner attention more than eight hundred years later.26

**Style**

Although for hundreds of years Arab historians and compilers of biographical dictionaries praised Ibn Jubayr’s literary style, modern scholars such as J. N. Mattock have issued harsh critiques stemming from the traveler’s overuse of superlatives. While some of this effusive writing might be indicative of his conforming to twelfth-century writing styles, the excessive praise unfortunately causes the reader to gradually doubt the sincerity of Ibn Jubayr’s claims.27 After all, how many times can Ibn Jubayr reasonably have “never seen anything so beautiful/grand/magnificent, etcetera as the present mosque/monument/mausoleum?” Indeed, gratuitous repetition is the basis for much of the criticism of Ibn Jubayr’s account. After but a few pages it is readily apparent that Ibn Jubayr is a devout Muslim, for instance. Mention of almost anything praiseworthy in Ibn Jubayr’s mind necessitated many thanks to Allah. In fact, some of these expressions of gratitude are so long that Broadhurst took the liberty of setting them off with marks so that the reader can skip them.28 In other instances, similar, if not almost identical, descriptions make it difficult to discern Ibn Jubayr’s true feelings. The extent to which he is moved by a particular mosque in a specific city, for example, is not readily apparent if he has described another mosque similarly but a few days or weeks beforehand.


27 Mattock criticizes Ibn Jubayr saying that he uses unnecessary rhetoric, verbal flatulence, and praise, with the end result being an irritated reader. Ibn Jubayr’s writing turns the reader “from admiration for the author’s ingenuity to consideration of his choice of words and consequently to doubt of the sincerity of his descriptions.” Mattock, “The Travel Writings of Ibn Jubair and Ibn Batūta,” in *Islamic and Middle Eastern Geographers and Travellers,* 266.

Nevertheless, Muslim writers received Ibn Jubayr’s *Rihla* enthusiastically for a number of reasons with which the modern reader can certainly agree. The pilgrim’s descriptive abilities help the reader to imagine what Ibn Jubayr witnessed, from the mundane to the magnificent—men diving into springs of crystal clear waters, storms ravaging a ship’s masts, and crowds of pilgrims at candlelit sermons.\(^{29}\) It is no wonder, therefore, why readers from Al-Andalus, the Maghrib, and the Near East would have immediately been drawn to the traveler’s account.

Furthermore, Ibn Jubayr’s meticulous organization of his *Rihla* into months according to both the Islamic lunar and the European solar calendars set him apart from other writers. Whereas scholars have speculated that Ibn Battuta or his editor Ibn Juzayy merely added dates after the fact, it appears that Ibn Jubayr had to have kept careful records in order to be able to write with such detail and accuracy.\(^{30}\) While exceptional, the pilgrim’s almost obsessive calculation of the date can in part be attributed to the importance of particular dates in the Islamic calendar. Rituals took on more significance if they fell on certain days, such as Friday, the holy day of Islam. In Mecca, Ibn Jubayr described how fights arose over claims regarding the new moon.

In the watching for it [the new moon] the people were involved in a strange circumstance, and a remarkable fabrication; and a false utterance almost provoked the stones, not to mention else, to rebut and deny it…rising to behold what they could not see, and pointing at what they only imagined, such was their eagerness that the standing on Mount ‘Arafat should fall on Friday.

Ultimately, high judges needed to settle the matter.\(^{31}\)

Veracity

Before proceeding, it is important to note that not all of Ibn Jubayr’s account has been accepted as entirely factual. As with any memoir or account, it is entirely plausible that details might have been confused or that misinformation might have muddled Ibn Jubayr’s judgment now and


then. With regards to one passage Broadhurst noted that, “Ibn Jubayr is uncharacteristically careless in his description of the pyramids. For example there are six not five smaller pyramids, and the Sphinx faces the Nile not the pyramids.”32 Less forgiving, Netton concluded that in all likelihood Ibn Jubayr did not actually visit the pyramids, but probably felt it necessary to include their description because he was aware that they were considered one of the wonders of the ancient world.33 On the whole, though, Ibn Jubayr is taken to be a much more reliable source than fellow medieval travelers such as Ibn Battuta and Sir John Mandeville.34 Ibn Jubayr’s dating system and highly detailed descriptions have led scholars such as Ian Richard Netton and J. N. Mattock to conclude that he must have taken notes in order to be able to remember and organize his account so well, and Ibn Jubayr explicitly stated that he only recorded what he saw.35 Writing on the massive Qarafa cemetery, for instance, the pilgrim said that he could only comment on the tombs that he visited.36

Taking into account Ibn Jubayr’s reputation, style, and authority as a source, the journey that is the Rihla begins. During his two year and three month long adventure, Ibn Jubayr experienced a variety of situations that both surprised and transformed him. Through encounters with the unfamiliar, the pilgrim was forced to reconsider the values that he set out with and take comfort in the familiar. Developing a new sense of community, Ibn Jubayr came to appreciate his place in the Dar-al-Islam and respected status as a traveler. The hajj helped Ibn Jubayr to mature spiritually, and he returned to Granada a wiser man.

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34 C. F. Beckingham, “The Rihla: Fact or Fiction?” in Islamic and Middle Eastern Geographers and Travellers, 86-94.
35 See note 26.
Likewise, the *Ribla* informs and enlightens the reader. Detailing relations between different religious groups, unique cultures, and a wealth of other information, the pilgrim’s writings elucidate the complexities of the Age of Crusades. Moreover, what Ibn Jubayr did not include in his account compels the reader to question aspects of the current scholarship. Meticulously describing what he saw and heard, Ibn Jubayr preserved in his account a captivating glimpse at twelfth-century travel in the Mediterranean world.
Chapter I: Background and Logistics

Al-Andalus, the Mediterranean, and the Near East

When Ibn Jubayr set sail in 1183, he left behind a territory with a rich history of many cultures. By the time that Arab and Berber forces from North Africa swept through Iberia in 711, the peninsula already bore the impressions of Phoenician, Roman, and Visigothic conquerors. During the following seven centuries of Islamic rule, outsiders continued to influence Al-Andalus. Fleeing the 756 Abbasid slaughter of the Umayyad dynasty in the East, Abd-al-Rahman I escaped to Iberia and declared himself ruler. In 929, his descendant Abd-al-Rahman III declared himself Caliph of Granada and established Umayyad independence from the Eastern Islamic empire. In the early eleventh century, though, the caliphate disintegrated into a series of small kingdoms called taifas. Plagued with in-fighting, the taifas struggled to repel the growing Christian threat from the north, the Reconquista. Inviting Berber Almoravid forces in from North Africa in 1086 to help ward off the advance, the taifas unknowingly welcomed in an occupying force. Not long afterward, another Berber dynasty from North Africa, the Almohads, unseated their predecessors and set out to repel virulent Christian forces. The Almohads ruled Al-Andalus from 1147 to 1212—the majority of Ibn Jubayr’s life—till defeat by King Alfonso VIII at the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa led to a reemergence of the taifas.

Throughout the centuries of Islamic rule leading up to Ibn Jubayr’s time, communities of Christians and Jews lived alongside Muslims, although more peacefully at times than others. Unlike

37 Debate continues on the extent to which Muslims perpetuated the legacies of these previous conquerors. Some scholars, particularly under Franco’s regime, characterized Muslim achievement as essentially an extension of Roman innovation. Glick, Islamic and Christian Spain, xx.
39 “Spain,” Encyclopedia Britannica.
during earlier periods of toleration and coexistence, in the twelfth century tensions among religious groups increased in conjunction with the southward progress of the Christians. Under Abu Ya ’qub Yusuf (1163-84) and Abu Yusuf Yaʿqub al-Mansur (1184-99), the Almohads sought to restore conservative fundamental Islam to Al-Andalus, and they succeeded in raising western Islam to the zenith of its power. Introducing severe religious measures, the Almohads forced many Christians and Jews to either convert or emigrate, compelling many northward and to the Near East.\(^{40}\) In rapid succession then, the Iberian Peninsula saw numerous Islamic regimes come and go, with varying impacts on the interactions among religious groups. Due to our lack of information about Ibn Jubayr’s pre- and post-pilgrimage life, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which he interacted with Christians and Jews in Al-Andalus, but it is possible to extract at least some information from the *Rihla*. Indications of how his religious background affected Ibn Jubayr come across in how he relates stories about Christians and how he describes his encounters with them. Below I detail the most representative of these instances.

Upon leaving Iberia, Ibn Jubayr entered a Mediterranean world that was similarly beset with fluctuating relations among not only religions, but also political factions within those religions. The conflict between the Christian Emperor Frederick I (1152-90) and the Lombard League alliance of northern Italian cities ended with the Peace of Constance in 1183.\(^{41}\) The Byzantine Emperor Andronicus (1182-85) was killed during a rebellion in 1185 and succeeded by Emperor Isaac II.\(^ {42}\) Islamic empires also underwent regime changes at this time, and after 1170 the Sunni Abbasid Empire based in Baghdad reclaimed ascendance from the moribund Shi’ite Fatimid Caliphate of

\(^{40}\) “Spain,” *Encyclopedia Britannica.*


In the meantime, Ibn Jubayr’s revered Sultan of Egypt and Syria, Abu ‘l-Muzaffar Yusuf ibn Ayyub, commonly known as Salah al-Din, (1174-1193) set about consolidating power and established himself as the preeminent Muslim leader against the stalwart Crusader Christian kingdoms of the Levant.44

As the above events indicate, complex politics and religious relations characterized this Age of Crusades. Ibn Jubayr’s descriptions attest to the tense nature of traveling through these warring territories. The turmoil did not subside after he returned, either, and the protracted conflicts between Muslims and Christians flared up again around both of the pilgrim’s latter trips eastward. In 1191 the Muslim garrison gave up its siege at Acre and Pope Innocent III issued the call for another crusade in 1213-15.45 “The soldiers engage themselves in their war, while the people are at peace,” Ibn Jubayr remarked.46 Even the traveler’s telling of apocryphal news from Constantinople regarding possible regime change there from Christian to Muslim conveys the sense of gravity attached to political events. “This conquest if it be true, is one of the greatest portents of the Day of Judgment,” Ibn Jubayr solemnly proclaimed.47 For Ibn Jubayr and much of the medieval Mediterranean world, religion and politics were indelibly linked.

Cultural Exchange

Conflicts notwithstanding, cultural exchange among these diverse regions and peoples continued in the twelfth century and beyond. Particularly after the Islamic conquest of Iberia in the eighth century, ties between the West and Near East strengthened. Trade, the pursuit of knowledge, and the desire to perform pilgrimages compelled Christians, Jews, and Muslims to travel. Ibn Jubayr

44 Salah al-Din is commonly known as Saladin in English. The Levant, or Greater Syria, generally refers to Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel, Palestine and Cyprus.
wrote about Muslims from the West who had ended up in the Levant, noting where they settled and how they were treated in their adopted lands. In Damascus, Ibn Jubayr described “those benefices that provide Maghrib strangers lonely in these lands with means of support, such as an imamate in a mosque, lodgement in a school with expenses paid…” Such institutions facilitated relocation, temporary or otherwise, within the Islamic empires for Muslims. By way of contrast, the aforementioned religious upheavals and expulsions of Al-Andalus forced some—Muslims of the wrong faction, Christians, or Jews—to flee their homes and in some cases never return.

As a result of all of the movement, goods and ideas spread. Indeed, historians have deemed the Mediterranean the “lake” of the Islamic empires during the Middle Ages.49 In “The Importance of the Rihla for the Islamization of Spain,” Michael Karl Lenker cited records of continuous travel between the West and East throughout the seven centuries of Islamic rule of Al-Andalus.50

Illustrative examples abound. With the ninth-century arrival of Ziryab, a Persian musician from the court of Harun al Rashid in Baghdad, eating practices in Iberia changed dramatically. Credited with introducing Eastern refinement and rules of etiquette to Iberia, Ziryab is also reputed to have established the order of courses.51 Ibn Jubayr’s contemporary Ibn Rushd (1126-1198), commonly known as Averroes, was known throughout the Islamic world as well as Europe for his commentaries on Aristotle.52 Books were deemed prized possessions and rulers employed spies to

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50 Lenker, “The Importance of the Rihla,” 68.
scout the whereabouts of new or rare publications. Our very own Ibn Jubayr quotes the travel account of the Persian Naser-e Khosraw (1004-1088).

Contemporaries

During the High Middle Ages, Muslims, Christians, and Jews alike traveled throughout the Mediterranean world for a variety of reasons. While we know of the existence of most of their written travel accounts only via reference in other documents, a few have survived and provide interesting points of comparison to Ibn Jubayr. The Jew Benjamin of Tudela, for instance, left Andalusia in 1168 for the northern coast of the Mediterranean, Baghdad, and Egypt for reasons unknown. Describing far-flung Jewish communities, he contrasted their ways of life with his established notions of justice and religiosity, much like Ibn Jubayr did when commenting on other schools of Islam in the East.

Two Muslim travelers, Naser-e Khosraw and Ibn Battuta, frequently bookend Ibn Jubayr in collections of pilgrim accounts, and discussion of one invariably invokes the other two. A Persian Shi’ite Muslim who set out to perform the hajj in 1047, Naser-e Khosraw produced a travel account that was well known during the Middle Ages. Similarly to Ibn Jubayr’s account and its influence over the riha genre, Khosraw’s Safarnameh, or travelogue, set the tone for one thousand years of Persian travel writing. Unlike Ibn Jubayr though, Khosraw avoided the hajj caravan because he preferred anonymity to security. As a result, the Persian ran into trouble with bandits that robbed him blind. In light of such a story of misfortune, Ibn Jubayr’s profuse laudatory remarks about the organized caravans that he traveled with seem all the more apt. In further contrast to the Andalusian, Khosraw devoted only a few pages to description of Mecca. Ibn Jubayr, on the other hand, recorded

53 Lenker, “The Importance of the Rihla,” 96.
54 Wolfe, One Thousand Roads to Mecca, 8.
56 Wolfe, One Thousand Roads to Mecca, 11.
practically everything that he saw, heard, and thought in the holy city. Regardless of their differences, Ibn Jubayr liked and knew Khosraw’s narrative well enough to quote it.57

About one hundred and fifty years later, in 1325, Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Abdullah Al Lawati Al Tanji Ibn Battuta, also known as Ibn Battuta, left what is now Morocco for what would end up becoming a lifelong journey filled with adventures. Working as a civil servant in India and claiming to have reached China, Ibn Battuta went far beyond Ibn Jubayr’s geographic scope, but the initial motive was the same – the hajj. In what have been described as acts of laziness, Ibn Battuta borrowed passages directly from Khosraw and Ibn Jubayr. In other instances, scholars claim that Ibn Battuta simply made up descriptions based on what he heard.58 Whether or not Ibn Battuta faced much criticism for the plagiarism and fiction is unclear because his account did not achieve the same degree of recognition in the Islamic empires as those of Khosraw and Ibn Jubayr. Nineteenth-century Romantics are in fact the ones responsible for igniting interest in Ibn Battuta.59

Ibn Jubayr

Within this context of religious relations and cultural exchange then, we can begin to understand Ibn Jubayr—who he was, where he came from, and where he went. In 740, not long after the initial Islamic conquest, Ibn Jubayr’s ancestors first settled in Iberia.60 Four centuries later, Ibn Jubayr was born in 1145 in the Emirate of Balansiya (now known as Valencia). As a young man, Ibn Jubayr studied religious sciences and belles-lettres at Játiva where his father worked as a civil servant. Ibn Jubayr also earned himself a government position, and at the time of his departure for

57 Wolfe, One Thousand Roads to Mecca, 11.
Mecca served as secretary to the Almohad governor of the kingdom of Granada, Abu Sa‘id ‘Uthman b. ‘Abd al-Mu‘min.61

At the outset of his journey in 1183 then, Ibn Jubayr was a middle-aged Sunni Muslim from an established Andalusian family. Self-identifying as a Westerner, or a Maghribi, and a subject of the Almohad dynasty, Ibn Jubayr proudly recalled his roots when traveling at great distances from home.62 I discuss these identities and specifically how he might have been shaped by twelfth-century Al-Andalus at length below. Distinguished by his literacy and government post, Ibn Jubayr was still hardly a remarkable figure materially or intellectually within the educated class of Al-Andalus and the Islamic empires. The traveler deferred to the authority of other, apparently more prominent learned men, citing their books and seeking out their sermons as he moved through the Levant.63 The traveler also made no mention of special treatment and readily admitted that his mode of travel was decidedly more modest than that of the notables whom he encountered along the way. Ibn Jubayr lamented, “As for him whose means fall short of these conveniences of travel, he must bear the fatigues of the way which are but a part of the chastisements (of God).”64 Relative discomfort aside, Ibn Jubayr returned to the East twice more after his initial pilgrimage, in 1189-91 and in 1217, though regrettably little information about these later trips exists. In addition to the Ribla, only two of Ibn Jubayr’s poems survive, one from time spent in Egypt during his second trip and the other of origins unknown. Ibn Jubayr never returned from his last journey, and died in Alexandria on November 29th, 1217.65

61 Pellat, “Ibn Djubayr.”
64 Broadhurst wrote in the Introduction that he used parentheses to add words necessary to complete the meaning of a sentence in English. Ibn Jubayr, The Travels, Broadhurst trans., 22, 182.
The Journey

Ibn Jubayr left Granada on February 3, 1183, in the company of the physician Abu Ja’far Ahmad ibn Hassan. From the south of Al-Andalus the pair sailed to Egypt on a Genoese ship, ascended the Nile, and joined a caravan bound for the Red Sea. After another perilous sail, Ibn Jubayr finally arrived at Mecca and completed his primary objective, the hajj. From there, the pilgrim moved on to Medina and joined a caravan of Iraqis bound for Baghdad. Traveling through the ancient cities of Mosul and Nineveh, the traveler then came upon Aleppo and then Damascus. Passing through Crusader Jerusalem, Ibn Jubayr caught another Genoese ship at Acre headed homeward, but shipwreck threw him upon the shores of Sicily where Norman King William II arrived just in time to deliver him to safety. From Sicily, Ibn Jubayr finally managed to catch another ship and arrived back in Granada on May 3, 1185.66

Motivation for Travel

Speculation about the motivation for Ibn Jubayr’s travel currently centers on an account centuries removed from the original journey. For reasons unclear to me, many scholarly works about Ibn Jubayr refer directly or indirectly to the seventeenth-century historian Ahmed Mohammed al-Maqqari’s Naḥf al-Tib.67 In his section on Ibn Jubayr, al-Maqqari relates a story whereby the governor of Granada compelled Ibn Jubayr to drink seven cups of wine, an act prohibited by the Quran. Upon realizing the anguish that this had caused his pious secretary, the governor filled the seven cups with gold coins, which Ibn Jubayr then supposedly used to finance his journey of expiation. In this way, the wine incident is cast as the catalyst for the entire hajj journey. In his account, however, Ibn Jubayr never once mentions the wine incident and offers the reader no alternative motive for his

travel other than the hajj. In fact, the *Rihla* opens with little fuss at all, lurching forward into the substance of the trip with hardly a glance backward or indication of some sort of regret.

Inexplicably, while scholars writing on Ibn Jubayr express concern over the verisimilitude of a few minor sections of the *Rihla*, they seem not to heed their own advice in al-Maqqari’s case and readily accept his story without qualification, despite the suspicious fact that earlier authors and historians failed to mention it entirely before al-Maqqari. Making a point unrelated to the wine incident on al-Maqqari’s reliability, Wright noted that the historian’s article on Ibn Jubayr was copied almost entirely from the earlier Arab historian al-Maqrizi. It appears, therefore, that Wright implicitly acknowledges yet does not critique the fact that al-Maqqari added the wine narrative to al-Maqrizi’s article. Pellat in the authoritative *Encyclopedia of Islam* article on Ibn Jubayr repeats the alleged motive, as do seemingly all subsequent writers on the pilgrim. Oddly enough, rather than critiquing the wine story or Wright’s apparent negligence, Ian Richard Netton questioned the judgment of Ibn Jubayr himself, employing Islamic legal reasoning to conclude that Sharia law would not have held the pilgrim accountable for his actions based on the coerced nature of the act.

Questions of historical accuracy aside, the unjustified reliance on al-Maqqari unduly discounts the weight of the hajj as a catalyst for any Muslim in a position to perform it. Subsuming the hajj beneath the need to make reparation, the wine story neglects the fact that it is the duty of all Muslims to perform the hajj at least once, provided that they are healthy, sane, and endangered neither by war nor epidemic. From the Islamic conquest of Iberia through the completion of the Reconquist a in 1492, pilgrims continually embarked on the sacred journey to the East to visit the Holy Cities of Islam.

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69 Pellat, “Ibn Djubayr.”
71 Lenker, ”The Importance of the Rihla,” 68.
Rather than accept with approbation the wine and pilgrimage as expiation story therefore, I prefer instead to rely on the text for clues as to Ibn Jubayr’s motivation for travel. Based on what he wrote, it is clear that Ibn Jubayr was first and foremost a pilgrim determined to fulfill his religious duty and perform the hajj. The traveler spent nine months of his two year and three month long journey in Mecca, and the relevant sections of his memoir are directly proportional. Ibn Jubayr wrote at length about the sermons and lectures that he attended there, the religious rites that he performed, and the conversations that he had with other pilgrims. In addition, he spent much time detailing the structure, decoration, and history of the Holy Cities, so the reader cannot help but gain a sense of appreciation for the beauty of the spaces that the pilgrim occupied for so long. Even in sections entirely unrelated to Mecca and Medina, Ibn Jubayr’s effusive and unceasing praise of Allah is enough to convince any reader of the pilgrim’s piety. There is hardly a need to reaffirm his religious devotion by way of an apocryphal story.

Ibn Jubayr’s search for knowledge is another motivating factor, and is central to the analysis of his place within a context of cultural exchange. The traveler was keen to learn, and thought that others should do the same. “Let him move to these lands [Syria] and leave his country in the pursuit of knowledge,” the traveler advised young men.72

Although the hajj served as the primary impetus for Ibn Jubayr’s travels (regardless of whether or not we accept the wine drinking story), the search for knowledge constituted much more than a merely auxiliary goal. In reality, the two were indelibly linked. The desire to accumulate religious wisdom, acquire new books, and gather new information was a fundamental part of any journey east or west for all travelers. At a time when knowledge and religion were so inextricably intertwined, it made sense that pursuit of one went hand in hand with the other. Benjamin of Tudela, mentioned above, sought out remote Jewish communities on his trip, comparing and

recording their different habits and insights into his religion. Examples of other medieval travelers who pursued religious wisdom and the latest information abounded. Focusing specifically on Andalusians, Michael Karl Lenker went so far to assert that trips to the Near East to study abroad in fact trumped pilgrimages in importance. While for Ibn Jubayr the hajj was certainly his main motivating factor, along the way he noted numerous occasions when he and his companion sought out famous religious scholars, attended lectures, and visited sheikhs. Similarly, in his everyday interactions Ibn Jubayr actively engaged fellow pilgrims and travelers hoping to glean information on a wide variety of topics. As might be expected, this curiosity served the traveler well, for he was able to confirm and deny news, debate his religion, and observe novel practices, all the while accumulating information that he otherwise might never have come across had he stayed home in Granada.

Logistics

The itinerary of Ibn Jubayr’s two year and three month long journey reflects the multifaceted nature of his trip. Traveling by boat, by camel, and on foot, Ibn Jubayr visited not only Mecca and Medina, but also the most popular tourist and intellectual destinations of his day. In Cairo, Alexandria, Damascus, and Acre Ibn Jubayr marveled at richly decorated mosques, mausoleums, and monuments of all kinds. Discussion of the ways in which the pilgrim scrutinizes and compares these bigger cities follows below.

Additionally, the manner in which Ibn Jubayr reached his destinations and visited such sites gives us clues as to who Ibn Jubayr really was. From Al-Andalus, pilgrims could either embark on a

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75 Lenker, "The Importance of the Riḥla," 189.
long land journey across North Africa, or take the more expensive yet supposedly faster sea route.77

Either way, the western pilgrims converged in Cairo, sometimes joining groups from Senegal and Timbuktu.78 They next made further route selections as they continued southward toward the Hijaz.

The tumult of the Age of Crusades presented a strong impediment to travel anywhere at this time. In frustration at one point Ibn Jubayr exclaimed that the Andalusian qadis, or Muslim judges, were right to declare dispensation from the duty due to the danger.79 As a result of the potential perils, caravan pilgrimage travel was a serious and organized affair. Under the leadership of specially appointed local leaders, caravans left from every medieval Islamic enclave. The scale of these retinues seriously impressed Ibn Jubayr and he remarked that:

This assembly of ‘Iraqis, together with the people from Khurasan, Mosul, and other lands who were united in the company of this Emir of the Pilgrimage, formed a multitude whose number only God Most High could count. The vast plain was teeming with them. You could see the earth shake giddily because of them, and form waves through their great number…80

Accompanied by military escorts, the caravans provided protection and security for all, but the journey was dangerous no matter what the method or where it originated. By sea, storms and shipwreck constituted very real threats. Poor Ibn Jubayr endured them both and almost lost his life in the process. By land, raiding bands of nomads made their living almost exclusively during the pilgrimage season around the Islamic lunar month of Dhu al-Hijjah. Poaching on passersby, these desert raiders would literally strip travelers naked and leave them to wander to safety or perish in the punishing sun.81 In fact, weather and the elements could also pose real threats. Traveling mostly at night, caravans avoided the most brutal afternoon heat, yet needed to constantly fill water reserves fueling Ibn Jubayr’s quasi-obsessive notation of water sources. Small oases and little villages

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81 See Wolfe, One Thousand Roads to Mecca, 5-13.
otherwise entirely dismissible in the grand scheme of things received repeated laudatory remarks for possessing deep wells of sweet water. The details of the town Ra’s al-‘Ain’s water supplies, for example, take up half of the town’s three-page long description.\footnote{Ibn Jubayr, \textit{The Travels}, Broadhurst trans., 252.}

The measures taken to safeguard against these dangers factor significantly into how Ibn Jubayr perceived leaders. Princesses, emirs, the sultan, and caliph all receive praise in the \textit{Ribla} for advancing the cause of pilgrims through donations, public works, and tax exemptions. Outside of Baghdad, Ibn Jubayr benefitted from the presence of royalty in his caravan and traveled under the protection of the Princess Saljuqah bint Ma’ud’s armed guards.\footnote{Ibn Jubayr, \textit{The Travels}, Broadhurst trans., 239.} In the town of al-Hillah, while the pilgrims were away in Mecca, the Caliph al-Nasir li din Ilah surprised them and ordered the construction of a bridge to aid their return passage. Needless to say, the pilgrims were shocked and extremely grateful when they learned of the Caliph’s generosity.\footnote{Ibn Jubayr, \textit{The Travels}, Broadhurst trans., 221.} Indeed, gratitude was due. Wells and military details were matters of life and death.

Given the significantly more arduous and lengthy nature of the trip, performing the hajj during the Middle Ages cost much more then than it does today. Therefore, lack of resources was likely the most significant deterrent for pilgrims at this time. Among those who went though, naturally there were still great differences. Within the caravans, it was easy to distinguish wealthy leaders from poorer pilgrims simply by noting their accommodations.\footnote{As I note above, no one truly impoverished could have embarked on the hajj in the first place, though robbery, taxes and even unpredictable travel circumstances could render someone penniless. See the example of Naser-e Khosraw in Wolfe, \textit{One Thousand Roads to Mecca}, 5-13.} Ibn Jubayr described the ostentatious encampments of royals that went up at every stop much like impressive moving palaces.\footnote{For an example, see the description of the encampment of the Emir of Iraq, Ibn Jubayr, \textit{The Travels}, Broadhurst trans., 181.} In spite of the fact that Ibn Jubayr was seemingly content with his situation, it is still hard
to imagine that the secretary was not the slightest bit envious. After all, he could not lounge and relax on his camel shaded from the sun like the royals with whom he traveled.

**Exegesis**

What, then, does all of the aforementioned mean when it comes to forming an impression of Ibn Jubayr the individual? At once nothing and everything, depending on the manner of evaluation. One could hone in solely on the text itself and take a literal approach, dissecting nothing more than what Ibn Jubayr clearly expressed. The value of such an approach is obvious. Examining only the record limits the possible dangers of uninformed conjecture and the imposition of modern value judgments on a very different period. At the same time though, incorporating into the analysis background information such as the cultural situation in Al-Andalus provides a significant contextual framework that adds depth to the process.

Both methods of exegesis provide valuable strategies for deriving some sense of who Ibn Jubayr the man was. Therefore, in this thesis I employ both types and compare the results. As might be expected, how Ibn Jubayr identified explicitly differs markedly from what he expressed implicitly. In this way the first, solely text-based approach yields a plethora of material ripe for examination. With regards to the second approach, considering the cultural milieu in which Ibn Jubayr made these expressions adds new layers of meaning to the already complex associations. Only through synthesis of the different methods of exegesis then, is it possible to make sense of Ibn Jubayr’s evolving perceptions of others and interwoven identities. The traveler was a complicated and interesting man, and became even more so during his pilgrimage.

Thus the background, textual, and logistical information demonstrate the complex nature of Ibn Jubayr’s journey. Coming from a territory with layered religious and political relations, Ibn Jubayr entered a Mediterranean world similarly rife with complexity and conflict. Despite the danger,
however, the pilgrim survived the journey and was able to achieve his goal of performing the hajj. In
the next chapter, I begin to unpack how Ibn Jubayr’s adventures truly affected his perceptions.
Chapter II: Diversity, Discovery, and the Unfamiliar

“Concerning the foods, fruits, and other good things, we had thought that Spain was especially favoured above all other regions. So it was until we came to this blessed land and found it overflowing with good things,” Ibn Jubayr wrote of the markets at Mecca. A seemingly simple statement, the real utility of this quote lies in the fact that it is one of Ibn Jubayr’s few explicit comments on the development of his beliefs. Nonetheless, I argue in this chapter that this was, in fact, but one example of Ibn Jubayr’s many encounters with the unknown that eventually helped to change his conceptions of religion and culture.

Over the course of his two year and three month long journey, the pilgrim came across groups the likes of which he had never seen before. Heretical sects of Islam, Christian crusader kingdoms, and marauding bands of desert tribesmen all piqued Ibn Jubayr’s interest and compelled him to try to describe their unusual behavior. Hence, amidst descriptions of the unfamiliar, religious differences predominate, and with good reason. Religion was indelibly linked with both individual and community identity during the Middle Ages.

Religion was not, however, the only distinguishing characteristic of the peoples that Ibn Jubayr met during his travels. Ethnic and geographic diversity also fascinated the traveler. Cultural differences abounded. Pilgrims to Mecca, for instance, flocked to the Holy City from as far away as Persia, India, and Africa. They came from all walks of life, representing the educated and uneducated, cultured and uncultured. In this section on diversity and discovery, therefore, I show how traveling through far off lands and meeting people from such unfamiliar traditions affected Ibn Jubayr to the core. Beyond predictable, reactive comments, many of Ibn Jubayr’s statements reflect thoughtful insight and, at times, real concessions.

Religion

Throughout Ibn Jubayr’s travel account, religion serves as the primary distinction among the groups of people that the pilgrim encountered on his trip. Notably, Islam maintains ecumenical tolerance and respect for some so-called infidels, or non-believers; all Muslims are charged with respecting the \textit{Ahl al-Kitab}, or People of the Book—Jews and Christians—because of their ties to the tradition of Abraham.\footnote{Netton, “Preface,” in \textit{Golden Roads}, x.} Ibn Jubayr expressed this abstract level of respect when he wrote, “We read in the chronicle of Ibn al-Mu’lli al-Asadi that in this cave prayed Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Lot and Job—upon them and upon our noble Prophet be the choicest blessings and peace.”\footnote{Ibn Jubayr, \textit{The Travels}, Broadhurst trans., 96.}

In Islamic controlled territory, communities of Jews and Christians paid the \textit{dhimmi}, a tax, in return for security.\footnote{See Broadhurst page 251 for an example of a Christian town that pays the dhimmi.} These communities were then allowed to select their own leaders and manage the majority of their own affairs. This arrangement helped to spawn peaceful living conditions within the Islamic empires and the convivencia of years past in Al-Andalus. As was described above though, the arrival of the Almoravids and later the even more conservative Almohads disrupted some of these peaceful living arrangements.\footnote{See note 8 of Chapter I on the discussion of convivencia, and the first section of Chapter I for more on the changes brought about by the Almoravid and Almohad conquests.} Nonetheless, real parallels existed between Al-Andalus and where Ibn Jubayr traveled. The pilgrim could not have helped but notice the similarities between the Islamic kingdoms of Al-Andalus that relied on Christian court officials, and the Norman kings of Sicily who employed Muslims.\footnote{“The Haj and Other Journeys of ibn Jubayr (b. 1145) From ar-Rihla,” in \textit{Other Routes}, 56.} Indeed, this was but one of the many observations that Ibn Jubayr made about Christian-Muslim relations throughout the entirety of the \textit{Rihla}. Interestingly though, the traveler never mentioned meeting a single living Jew.\footnote{An old Jewish habitation is described on Broadhurst page 27. On page 86 Ibn Jubayr calls the dome next to that of the well of Zamzam “Jewish” and “named after the Jews”. The dome is then mentioned again on page 96. On page 206 Ibn Jubayr mentions the Confederates, leaders of the Jewish tribe Banu ‘l-Nadir, in reference to the fact that the Prophet Muhammad drove them out of Medina and held Mecca against them.}
Judaism

Given the importance of Jewish communities in Al-Andalus and the regions that Ibn Jubayr visited, this omission is actually quite surprising, and it is unclear why Jews go entirely unmentioned. In Other Routes: 1500 Years of African and Asian Travel Writing, Tabish Khair suggested that perhaps Jews were so thoroughly integrated into Andalusian and Near Eastern societies that they did not merit separate mention. Other authors such as Elka Weber, Ian Richard Netton, and Michael Wolfe did not even mention the omission, even though their writings on Ibn Jubayr deal specifically with the religious aspects of the Ribla.

With regards to Khair’s explanation, it is certainly true that in many cases medieval Jews adopted the Arabic language, Arab styles of dress, and served as esteemed members of Islamic communities and courts. Examples of this assimilation exist from Al-Andalus, Sicily, and the Near East. Some Jewish communities in the north of the Iberian Peninsula even maintained the Arabic language and aspects of Arab culture up to one hundred years after Christian conquest. Given how much attention Ibn Jubayr devoted to his own religion and its many variants, however, I am reticent to accept the idea that he merely overlooked the familiar.

Alternative explanations, nevertheless, are equally unappealing. Considering how historians such as Thomas Glick characterize the regions that Ibn Jubayr visited as religiously interactive communities, it seems rather unlikely that throughout the entirety of his two year and three month long journey, the pilgrim never encountered a single Jew worth writing about, one of

accomplishment, or one of infamy. What remains plausible then, is the possibility that a meeting or meetings with Jews could have coincided with events that Ibn Jubayr deemed more significant, so he recorded those instead. This seems far-fetched, though, given the minutiae that the traveler describes throughout the *Ribla*. If the smallest of details were worth a word, why would a person, or in this case an entire groups of persons, not have been? There is also the possibility that Ibn Jubayr harbored a bias against Jews, and that this partiality explains his omission of any record of their existence. The absence of military conflict between Muslims and Jews might also fit into the explanation.

Whatever the case may be, Ibn Jubayr's conspicuous silence on the Jews is pertinent to the analysis of his reflections on Islam and Christianity. In other words, what the pilgrim did not record is in some ways just as important as what he did record. Whatever caused the devotee to write on Islam and Christianity, be it the shock of the unfamiliar or the comfort of the familiar, that catalyst simply did not exert the same influence when it came to the Jews.

**Islam**

On the many varieties of Islam, on the other hand, Ibn Jubayr wrote prolifically. Within Islam, the primary division between Sunni and Shia Muslims turns on the debate over who ought to have succeeded the Prophet Muhammad as the leader of the Islamic community. Sunni Muslims hold that the four caliphs chosen after Muhammad (and those selected thereafter) were the rightful leaders. Like most Andalusian Muslims, Ibn Jubayr was a Sunni. Shias, on other hand, believe that Muhammad’s son-in-law, Ali, should have been selected as the first rather than the third caliph. Unlike Sunnis, Shias hold that the ruler of Islam ought to be a direct descendant of Muhammad and Ali.

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98 See Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages*.
99 Bearing in mind the twelfth-century Almohad expulsions of Jews in Al-Andalus. See the section Al-Andalus, the Mediterranean and the Near East above.
Sufis are yet another group that follows a mystical and ascetic approach to Islam. Some Sufi orders identify as either Sunni or Shia, while others simply refer to themselves as Sufi. Although other secondary works such as Netton’s comprehensive *Islamic and Middle Eastern Travellers and Geographers* make only a few, brief references to the nature of Ibn Jubayr’s later life and travels, in *Other Routes*, Khair claims that, after returning to Al-Andalus, Ibn Jubayr became a religious sage and writer “of both pessimistic and Sufi bent.” Khair goes on to describe the pilgrim’s last two journeys to the East as pilgrimages and states that Ibn Jubayr then settled in Alexandria as a sheikh, or learned leader in a Sufi community.100 Pellat, on the other hand, merely stated that Ibn Jubayr stopped in Alexandria to teach.101

Within the Sunni or Shia traditions, most Muslims further identify according to madhabs, or schools of jurisprudence. Sunnis constitute the majority of Muslims and associate with four major madhabs: Maliki, Hanbali, Hanafi, and Shafi’i. Each of the madhabs advocates for different methods of interpreting the Quran and the hadiths, sayings or acts ascribed to the Prophet Muhammad. For the most part, adherence to the madhabs can be explained geographically. Ibn Jubayr, like most inhabitants of Al-Andalus and the Maghrib, identified himself as a Maliki Muslim.102

Along the way, and especially during his long stay in Mecca, Ibn Jubayr was frequently exposed to adherents of the other major madhabs. Curious as always, the traveler seized the opportunity to observe their novel customs and behaviors. He described hearing the sermons of imams, or prayer leaders, from each of the madhabs in rapid succession, the Shafi’i imam leading, followed by the Maliki and Hanbali at the same time, then finally the Hanafi. During evening prayers, all four imams pray concurrently due to time constraints. In some cases, the differences between the sermons and accompanying rituals were stark. The Hanafi imam, for example, is

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100 “The Haj and Other Journeys of Ibn Jubayr (b. 1145) From ar-Rihla,” in *Other Routes*, 55-56.
101 Pellat, “Ibn Djubayr.”
102 I discuss Ibn Jubayr’s identity at length in Chapter IV.
described as the most splendid, blessed with the most candles and adornments, because of his large Persian congregation. The Maliki imam, on the other hand, has the fewest candles and is described as the poorest because Malikism is much less common in the Near East.\(^{103}\)

Some of the Muslims that Ibn Jubayr met in Mecca did not fit neatly within the standard madhab divisions. At the coastal village Jiddah Ibn Jubayr described the inhabitants as “Sharifs, ‘Aliites, Hasanites, Husaynites and Ja’farites.”\(^ {104}\) In addition to more moderate Muslims, Ibn Jubayr also met adherents of sects that he deemed heretical.\(^ {105}\) “Let it be absolutely certain and beyond doubt established that there is no Islam save in the Maghrib lands,” the pilgrim wrote. He went on, “There they follow the clear path that has no separation and the like, such as there are in these eastern lands of sects and heretical groups and schisms.”\(^ {106}\) Earlier, he had also noted that, “The greater number of the people of these Hejaz and other lands are sectaries and schismatics who have no religion, and who have separated in various doctrines.”\(^ {107}\) Keeping in mind Ibn Jubayr’s somewhat hyperbolic tendencies, even a tempered rendition of his statements would still render the Maghrib the golden standard of orthodoxy. Ibn Jubayr viewed the proliferation of sects and splinter groups of Muslims in the Near East as indicative of some sort of religious malaise, and perhaps also laxity on the part of religious leaders. Particularly in contrast with the strictures of the Almohads, this tolerance of, or perhaps inability to react to dissenting groups reflected the degenerate state of Near Eastern Islam.

In fact, these sects sometimes posed real threats to mainstream Islam. Consequently, exceptional events became important to the collective conscience of each of the more moderate madhabs. When describing Mecca, Ibn Jubayr cursed the Qarmata, or Carmathians for having

\(^{105}\) Netton, “Basic Structures and Signs of Alienation in the *Rihla* of Ibn Jubayr,” in *Islamic and Middle Eastern Geographers and Travellers*, 212.
broken the sacred Black Stone. An Isma’ilite sect of Shi’ite Muslims, the Carmathians captured Mecca in 930 and took the Black Stone to Bahrain. Later on Ibn Jubayr explained the ways of a sect called the Zaydis. Stating that the nobles of Mecca follow this unorthodox tradition, Ibn Jubayr described them as “blaspheming Rafidites,” equating them with “rejectors” of the three caliphs preceding ‘Ali.

Furthermore, some Muslims such as the Saru Bedouin tribe simply did not possess what Ibn Jubayr regarded as religious sophistication. Much as today many who identify as “religious” only rarely attend services, in the Middle Ages some Muslims did not devote themselves wholeheartedly to the regular practice of their religion. Although some of his comments might reasonably cause the reader to expect otherwise, for the devout Ibn Jubayr, divergence from strict orthodoxy was not necessarily an unforgiveable offense. In fact, Ibn Jubayr employed an interesting metric for evaluating the gravity of a Muslim’s theological wanderings. Whether or not a tribe was hostile toward pilgrims, more or less in contact with urban centers, and demonstrating concerted efforts at religiosity all weighed into Ibn Jubayr’s evaluative processes. The pilgrim rightfully recognized that perceived roughness and lack of exposure to religious institutions did not diminish someone’s capacity for faith.

Islam and Politics

As the background section of Chapter I describes, tensions between Sunni and Shia Islamic empires produced fractious relations and exacerbated the difficulties of uniting against Christian crusaders. In 1070, a major power shift transformed the Near East when the Sunni Abbasid Empire took over the caliphate from the Shia Fatimid Empire based in Cairo and moved the capital to

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110 I examine the ways of the Saru tribe in more detail in Chapter V.
Baghdad. Despite the move, the increasingly moribund caliphate struggled to maintain influence.

Not long before Ibn Jubayr’s travels therefore, Sunni Salah al-Din made a successful bid to consolidate power in the region, and unlike his weaker predecessors, the Sultan was able to mount a serious campaign against the stalwart Crusader states of the Levant. Concerns about the divisions of Islam were not limited to the Near East, however. In the Maghrib and Al-Andalus, anxiety over the spread of Shia Islam in North Africa helped reinforce the reforming agendas of the Sunni, Maliki Almoravids and Almohads. Ibn Jubayr would in all likelihood have been well aware then of the tensions that sectarian divisions produced even before he landed in Alexandria.

While traveling, then, Ibn Jubayr took note not only of the deeply riven sectarian milieu, but also of Salah al-Din’s military efforts to overcome it. Scholars such as Ian Richard Netton and Elka Weber have duly noted Ibn Jubayr’s unrestrained admiration for Salah al-Din as the ruler of a lawful regime and enemy of the infidels. “The memorable acts of the Sultan, his efforts for justice, and his stands in defence of Islamic lands are too numerous to count,” the pilgrim wrote of his hero. And that is but one example of the effusive praise. Ibn Jubayr went so far as to even underplay Salah al-Din’s failings or shortcomings, describing the Sultan’s attack on the castle Kerak in 1184 as less of a failure than it really was.

Yet to be considered though, is the more nuanced significance of Ibn Jubayr’s praise. In conjunction with remarks contrasting home and the Near East, the degree to which Ibn Jubayr revered Salah al-Din seems to indicate that the Sultan represents a real departure from the rulers

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111 Netton, “Basic Structures and Signs of Alienation,” in Islamic and Middle Eastern Geographers and Travellers, 212.
114 See Ibn Jubayr, The Travels, Broadhurst trans., 31-5, 40, 42-3, 45, 4-9, 63, 71-3, 92, 251, 269, 298, 311-2 for more examples.
with whom Ibn Jubayr was more familiar, namely the governor that he served in Granada and the ruling Almohad forces in Al-Andalus. For Ibn Jubayr, Salah al-Din is the standard-bearer of Islam, taking up the Prophet’s call to *jihad*, or war against the infidels.\textsuperscript{116} By way of comparison, other Islamic rulers appear either incompetent or unwilling to challenge the Christian threat. Back home in Al-Andalus, the Almohads struggled merely to maintain their current holdings and in Sicily, Muslim rulers succumbed to the invasion of the Normans.

Thus, it does not seem far-fetched to conclude that such strong expressions of admiration—notably made without equivocation—reveal Ibn Jubayr’s growing dissatisfaction with his home situation and the *Dar-al-Islam*, or the world of Islam. Upon experiencing first-hand the real differences that Salah al-Din’s generous policies made, Ibn Jubayr realized the inferiority of his domestic circumstances, and those that many Muslims endured throughout the Mediterranean. The reader is left to wonder, therefore, how Ibn Jubayr re-adjusted to Al-Andalus after his return. Is it possible that he described to his governor Salah al-Din’s standardization of previously gouging tax policies, for instance? Or might the governor have read about them after the dissemination of Ibn Jubayr’s travelogue? It is uncertain whether or not the governor reacted to such information and enacted new policies as a result.

**Christianity**

Within and beyond *Dar-al-Islam*, Ibn Jubayr interacted with Christians of all sorts. Combatants and non-combatants, western Europeans and Byzantines, the Christians that Ibn Jubayr came across were many and diverse in their own right. Just as within the Islamic empires different traditions predominated, depending on where Ibn Jubayr was, he observed the habits and behavior of unique groups of Christians. What the traveler gradually discerned in some cases reinforced his

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\textsuperscript{116} Interpretations of the Quranic verses regarding *jihad* are highly controversial. Salah al-Din acted as though *jihad* signified military engagement of the enemy. For more on Saladin, see H. A. R. Gibb, “The Achievement of Saladin,” in *Islamic and Middle Eastern Geographers and Travellers*, 48-60.
preconceived notions of Christianity, and in others truly surprised him. The pilgrim had much to learn from the infidels.

In the first place, the two religions were ostensibly at war. Pope Urban II launched the Crusades in 1095, and as we have already seen, that effort continued through Ibn Jubayr’s lifetime. Pope Innocent III called for another Crusade in 1213, between Ibn Jubayr’s second and third journeys to the Near East.\textsuperscript{117} Christians were not, however, constantly at war with Muslims throughout this Crusade era. Ibn Jubayr’s remarks on the enslavement of Muslims by Christians, and his later mention of Christians enslaved by Muslims signified neither a complete denigration of relations between the religions nor a constant state of danger.\textsuperscript{118} Ibn Jubayr visited Christian controlled territories and emerged entirely unscathed, as did numerous other Muslims. Naturally, in certain areas travelers were more at risk than others, and Ibn Jubayr expressed an awareness of this fact, “Beware, beware of entering their lands.”\textsuperscript{119} For the most part, however, travelers were able to pass through enemy territory unharmed. “The soldiers engage themselves in their war, while the people are at peace,” the civilian aptly remarked.\textsuperscript{120} Indeed, the greatest danger that Ibn Jubayr faced while traveling on a Genoese ship amongst “thousands” of Christians was the weather.\textsuperscript{121} Intercultural trade and travel continued in the Mediterranean world during the Middle Ages despite the conflicts.\textsuperscript{122} Moreover, military confrontations were by and large limited to combatants. Few as they are in proportion to the many written, the examples that follow begin to reveal the extent to which relations between Christians and Muslims were at the same time complex and simple. It is no accident that Ibn Jubayr developed a sort of multi-layered understanding of Christianity and religiosity generally.

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item 118 Ibn Jubayr, \textit{The Travels}, Broadhurst trans., 27, 314, 322.
\item 119 Ibn Jubayr, \textit{The Travels}, Broadhurst trans., 322.
\item 121 Ibn Jubayr, \textit{The Travels}, Broadhurst trans., 325.
\item 122 Netton, “Basic Structures and Signs of Alienation,” in \textit{Islamic and Middle Eastern Geographers and Travellers}, 209.
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Verbalizing some of his entrenched biases, Ibn Jubayr employed interesting language to describe what he saw and heard. During the Middle Ages, different terms were used by Muslims to distinguish between Eastern and Western Christians. “Rum” signified a Byzantine or Christian from the Near East while “Frank” indicated that the Christian came from Europe or the West. Travelers from Italy were referred to as Rum or identified by their city-state of origin. In addition to the basic labels though, Ibn Jubayr also used colorful language to convey how he felt about rulers or groups of Christians. Taking issue with their belief in the Trinity, Ibn Jubayr sometimes called “followers of the Cross” the more derogatory (according to some) “polytheists.” In other instances, the pilgrim derided Christian consumption of pork, which is proscribed by Islam, and called Christians pigs or swine.123

It is worth considering how, when describing the eight gates of Damascus, Ibn Jubayr wrote about the beliefs of Christianity entirely without derision, “it is said that Jesus—upon whom be (eternal) peace—will descend there (when He comes in glory).”124 To some extent, the pilgrim respected, as Islam prescribed, Christianity the faith. His tolerance, nonetheless, only extended so far, and when it came to the subject of militant Christianity, Ibn Jubayr naturally expressed strong opinions. Furthermore, Ibn Jubayr viewed groups and individual Christians differently depending on the context in which he encountered or heard about them. “Among the misfortunes that one who visits their [Christian] land will see are the Muslim prisoners walking in shackles and put to painful labour like slaves,” Ibn Jubayr bemoaned while traveling through the crusader kingdoms.125 Later on though, in Tyre, his awe at seeing a Christian wedding party in the streets was unparalleled.

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123 See Broadhurst page 322 for an example.
An alluring worldly spectacle deserving of record was a nuptial procession which we witnessed one day near the port in Tyre....She was most elegantly garbed in a beautiful dress from which trailed, according to their traditional style, a long train of golden silk....Proud she was in her ornaments and dress, walking with little steps of half a span, like a dove, or in the manner of a wisp of cloud. God protect us from the seduction of the sight.\textsuperscript{126}

At this point the reader gets the sense that Ibn Jubayr was forced to reflect on the humanity of the so-called enemy. Instead of seeing Muslims in shackles march by, Ibn Jubayr witnessed a street celebration common to people of all religions. It appears that this parade, like the former, might have really jarred the pilgrim, but in a completely different manner. The way that he described the bride, the woman parading before him could very well have been a Muslim, and in fact, this relates to the fear of temptation that I discuss below.

**Christians and Governance**

As with the case of Saladin, Ibn Jubayr’s preconceived and evolving views on authority also related to how he viewed Christian rulers and peoples. Similarly to how the different Islamic traditions are relevant to Ibn Jubayr’s portrayal of Salah al-Din, the varied beliefs of Christian rulers impacted how Ibn Jubayr viewed such figures. A militant Christian to be feared, for instance, King Baldwin IV of Jerusalem and his mother are described as a pig and sow respectively.\textsuperscript{127} Muslims loathed the fact that Baldwin maintained Christian control over Jerusalem and Acre, and the location of Baldwin’s crusader strongholds in the middle of the Levant lent them real geopolitical significance. King William of Sicily, on the other hand, held court over a liberal kingdom of an entirely different character. Ibn Jubayr consequently described him in a distinct manner.


Their King William, is admirable for his just conduct, and the use he makes of the industry of the Muslims, and for choosing eunuch pages who all, or nearly all, concealing their faith, yet hold firm to the Muslim divine law. He has much confidence in Muslims, relying on them for his affairs, and the most important matters,...His ministers and chamberlains he appoints from his pages, of whom he has a great number and who are his public officials and are described as his courtiers. In them shines the splendour of his realm.\footnote{Ibn Jubayr, The Travels, Broadhurst trans., 340.}

While still potentially militant—Ibn Jubyr mentioned the readying of a naval fleet—the Arabic speaking King William was practically the antithesis of Baldwin, accommodating and relying on Muslims in his court.\footnote{Ibn Jubayr, The Travels, Broadhurst trans., 341, 354.} Rather than stomp out the Islamic and Arab influences of the previous Islamic rulers of Sicily, King William’s reign was a showcase for Islamic craftsmanship and intellect. As such, when the King personally came to view the shipwreck that was Ibn Jubayr’s vessel, the pilgrim lavished praise on the sovereign for helping the destitute travelers get to shore.\footnote{Ibn Jubayr, The Travels, Broadhurst trans., 337-8.}

Paradoxically, the pilgrim also commented on how Muslims were in some ways better off under Christian rulers than Muslim ones. His embarrassment was apparent when he wrote, “The Muslim community bewails the injustice of a landlord of its own faith, and applauds the conduct of its opponent and enemy, the Frankish landlord, and is accustomed to justice from him.”\footnote{Ibn Jubayr, The Travels, Broadhurst trans., 317.} Ibn Jubayr similarly noted that in Messina, Sicily, “The Muslims live beside them [Christians] with their property and farms. The Christians treat these Muslims well and ‘have taken them to themselves as friends’ (Quran XX, 41).”\footnote{Ibn Jubayr, The Travels, Broadhurst trans., 339-40.} Muslims, however, are commanded by the Quran to move out of territory that falls into the hands of infidels. Thus the humiliation was two-fold in the eyes of a pious observer such as our traveler. Ibn Jubayr explained,
There can be no excuse in the eyes of God for a Muslim to stay in any infidel
country, save when passing through it, while the way lies clear in Muslim lands. They
will face pains and terrors such as the abasement and destitution of the
capitation...there is also the absence of cleanliness, the mixing with the pigs.\textsuperscript{133}

In many instances therefore, upon entering Christian territory that had previously been controlled by
Muslims, Ibn Jubayr wished for speedy recovery of what was lost. “May God exterminate (the
Christians in) it and restore it (to the Muslims),” he wrote of Acre.\textsuperscript{134}

**Formulating His Opinions**

Taken in sum then, these comments convey an abundance of information about Ibn Jubayr’s
attitude toward not only the places that he visited and the people that he saw, but also Al-Andalus
and the Mediterranean world generally. In the first place, Ibn Jubayr’s immediate and visceral
reactions reveal entrenched feelings of hostility toward infidels. Charged with malice and punctuated
with derogatory names, many of Ibn Jubayr’s statements leave no doubt as to their meaning. The
reader is supposed to know that Ibn Jubayr is a devout Muslim that looks down on Christians.

Other characterizations of Christians, nonetheless, appear to be the products of more
thoughtful reflection and analysis. The comments on the security of Muslims under Christian rulers,
for example, come twenty-three months into the journey, and reflect a real concession.\textsuperscript{135} It must
have pained Ibn Jubayr to admit as much, but he felt compelled to do so anyway given how
apparent the facts were.

What is more, it seems that while traveling in Christian ruled territories, Ibn Jubayr was
somewhat more considerate. The wedding party example demonstrates that when surrounded by
Christians, the pilgrim was apparently less inclined to pass wanton judgments or devalue the
experience as a whole. In some instances, therefore, it is clear that Ibn Jubayr was forced to

\textsuperscript{133} Ibn Jubayr, *The Travels*, Broadhurst trans., 322.
\textsuperscript{134} Ibn Jubayr, *The Travels*, Broadhurst trans., 318.
recognize the humanity of his sworn enemy, although at least some disparaging language was always necessary, lest anyone think him seduced by the ways of the infidels.

In rare moments of revealing personal expression, the pious Muslim explicitly stated his fear of temptation. It is clear that he viewed Christianity—its knights and their chivalry—as a real threat not only to Islam, but to his own convictions. The pilgrim knew that it was imperative that he not let his natural curiosity about the enemy overrun his sensibilities, especially given what he had seen and heard during the pilgrimage. In Tyre he related the story of the Muslim that converted,

The devil increasingly seduced and incited him until he renounced the faith of Islam, turned unbeliever, and became a Christian...He had been baptized and become unclean, and had put on the girdle of a monk, thereby hastening for himself the flames of hell, verifying the threats of torture, and exposing himself to a grievous account and a long-distance return (from hell).137

The meaning of such fears is telling, for Ibn Jubayr must have had legitimate reason for concern if he repeatedly and adamantly refuted the Christian way of life. As the aforementioned comments have shown, in some instances, Christians actually trumped the Muslim rulers’ ability to provide security, and that in and of itself could have been enough to trouble the devout pilgrim. Additionally, Ibn Jubayr might have again been expressing discontent with the fractious disunity of the Islamic community as a whole. Whereas Christians, while diverse, presented a seemingly united crusading and militant front, Muslims could hardly agree on basic taxation policies, much less religious unity. At the same time though, Ibn Jubayr was obviously excited and intrigued by having the opportunity to be in such close proximity to Christians. He seized the chance to observe and critique them.

Within the larger framework of religious relations and divisions then, Ibn Jubayr carefully observed meaningful differences amongst people of all sorts. Describing unique groups of people, Ibn Jubayr highlighted some aspects while criticizing others, simultaneously revealing some of his

136 Netton, “Basic Structures and Signs of Alienation,” in Islamic and Middle Eastern Geographers and Travellers, 217.
own biases and inclinations. Undoubtedly, religion was Ibn Jubayr’s primary preoccupation and main focal point when it came to identifying others, but his evaluations did not stop there. Maintaining respect at the abstract level for the Christian faith and the dictates of Islam, the pilgrim noted the sometimes significant differences amongst Muslims and Christians, and consequently reevaluated how he felt about the respective groups. In the following chapter, I examine how alongside, and in some ways because of, the divisive and sectarian milieu, Ibn Jubayr managed to discover the real sense of community that the hajj ultimately affords.
Chapter III: Community and the Familiar

The hajj is a physical and spiritual journey, and during the Middle Ages, it was a dangerous one at that. In order to embark on the pilgrimage, Muslims had to be ready to surrender themselves over, mind and body. Trusting ships’ captains, caravan leaders, and desert guides, pilgrims placed their lives in the hands of infidels and co-religionists alike. Traveling through distant lands, the journeyers had no choice but to seek out the help of any and all capable of smoothing the way and providing guidance.

Thankfully, there were many willing and able to lend a helping hand where Ibn Jubayr traveled. Although at times assistance cost a fair amount, at others, generosity overwhelmed the pilgrim. Along the way, Ibn Jubayr recorded when Andalusians, Maghribis, Muslims of all sects, and even Christians contributed to the betterment of his situation. While familiarities provided welcome respite from the unknown, Ibn Jubayr also frequently remarked on how pleasantly surprising strangers were. Across the lands that the pilgrim visited, language facilitated communication with these disparate groups and helped Ibn Jubayr to transcend cultural boundaries.

Unsurprisingly then, as a result of such generosity, Ibn Jubayr gradually changed his expectations. The farther he traveled, the more he discovered how humans could break down territorial, cultural, and spiritual borders. Hardship and good times fomented bonds with all kinds of people, and in turn these experiences impacted the traveler’s conceptions of community, belonging, and what would now be considered social justice. Ibn Jubayr’s understanding of inter-personal relations among many different groups strengthened with every day that passed.

Language

Language, in that it made these various experiences possible, played an integral role in determining how Ibn Jubayr related to the lands that he visited and the people that he came across. While medieval Christendom attempted to navigate the tumult of numerous languages, Muslims
interacted primarily in Arabic and Persian.\textsuperscript{138} Islam prescribes that the Quran must be read in Arabic, so wherever the Islamic empires conquered, the language spread. Unlike the Latin of the European Christian clergy and educated classes, Arabic was truly the language of the Muslim public.\textsuperscript{139} Describing nightfall prayers in Mecca during Dhu L’Hijjah 579 (March 16 – April 13, 1184), Ibn Jubayr emphasized that a preacher from Khurasan spoke in both Arabic and Persian, “employing them together with a lawful magic of rhetoric.” The next night, a Hanafi sheikh also used both languages, “moving hearts to rapture, and, after overwhelming them, setting them on fire with emotion.”\textsuperscript{140} The way that Ibn Jubayr characterized what he saw, it seems as though there were no language barrier between the clergy and lay people of Islam. Language was a unifying constant throughout the Islamic empires. No matter what one’s position in life was, to study Arabic was to bring oneself closer to God.

As a result of this linguistic homogeneity, Ibn Jubayr was able to understand and communicate with the many different peoples that he encountered. He only mentioned a few times when fellow travelers employed other languages, and the most notable of those instances was when a Muslim spoke the Rumi language to communicate with Christians.\textsuperscript{141} Although it is easy for the modern reader to take for granted the fact that Ibn Jubayr related the content of foreign imams’ speeches, the pilgrim’s ability to connect with other Muslims from distant lands and distinct backgrounds was a fundamental element of his experience abroad. Moreover, language helped to bring the corners of the Islamic world together spiritually.

\textsuperscript{138} I distinguish here between Christians of Europe and the small, Arab Christian populations of the Near East and Maghrib. My general remarks on Christianity here refer to the former.
\textsuperscript{140} Ibn Jubayr, The Travels, Broadhurst trans., 186-7.
\textsuperscript{141} Ibn Jubayr, The Travels, Broadhurst trans., 27.
The Hajj

In the abstract sense, the hajj has many meanings for the pilgrim. Simultaneously communal and individual, the duality of the hajj’s purpose signifies that it requires a careful balancing act of expectations. The pilgrim does not go the way alone. Undertaking the spiritual journey of a lifetime, the pilgrim also knowingly participates in what is much more than just an individual adventure. The historic Islamic institution that is the pilgrimage has over time become a mass rite involving ever increasing numbers of pilgrims. Ever since the Prophet Muhammad first led the Farewell Hajj and pronounced the Ka’ba the House of God in 632, Muslims have performed the rite every year without fail. From every corner of the Islamic world, pilgrims have followed the designated routes and assembled for communal rites and public sermons. When Ibn Jubayr set out in 1183 then, he left of his own volition to become yet another part of this institution. Seeking spiritual fulfillment as well as the opportunity to commune with the Dar al-Islam, the traveler would have hoped to satisfy personal and communal goals like the multitudes that had come before him.

As the above examples have shown, in the *Ribla* Ibn Jubayr did not frequently convey much emotion. He was an apt describer of the facts, of what he saw before him, but was generally guarded about his innermost feelings. It is impossible, therefore, to ascertain with much certainty how connected Ibn Jubayr felt with the rest of his fellow pilgrims. Yet based on his interactions, it is likely that he developed a genuine appreciation for the impressive array of people that converged on Mecca, Alexandria, Damascus, and the other major travel destinations around the hajj season. The *Ribla* reveals that the pilgrim met travelers from all corners of the Dar-al-Islam. Surely these interactions affected Ibn Jubayr and caused him to reflect on at the very least the impressive territorial expanse that was the Islamic world. Moreover, for Ibn Jubayr not to have been awed by the attractive powers of this great religious rite would have, if anything, been a convoluted sort of hypocrisy. After all, Ibn Jubayr had felt the need, and perhaps the desire, to travel huge distances
and go to great lengths to deepen his spirituality. The traveler might have been awed by the physical journeys that brought together so many diverse groups and beings to embark on spiritual journeys. It is possible that Ibn Jubayr was struck by the fact that he was communing with an entire religion when he completed the religious duty incumbent upon all Muslims. Centuries later, one can only speculate.

On the real, concrete level, the Ribla provides more certainty about the actual goings on of the pilgrimage. When performing the hajj, the pilgrim must be prepared to endure all of the logistical difficulties discussed in Chapter I. The historic significance of this religious duty might well have provided the reassurance necessary for departure during a time of spasmodic warfare. As was mentioned above in the Logistics section of Chapter I, even when jurisprudents absolved Muslims of their hajj duty because of the danger, devotees like Ibn Jubayr pressed on anyway. The fact that pilgrims were willing to undertake the journey despite the risks seems to signify more than just extreme devotion. This persistence could, in reality, be but another indicator of the enduring sense of community and faith in the Dar al-Islam that Muslims possessed at this time. Despite the lack of documentation of exactly how many pilgrims performed the hajj, accounts such as Ibn Jubayr's Ribla and the biographical dictionaries of Al-Andalus give the impression that performing the hajj was by no means an unusual event during the Age of Crusades. With the assistance of Near Eastern Muslims, and aboard Christian ships, Andalusian pilgrims continued to travel eastward in spite of the danger. Without this facilitation, the trip would have been nearly impossible. So from virtually the moment that Ibn Jubayr left home, he entered into a state of relative vulnerability. From there on out, he would have to trust those with whom he traveled, and those helping to make the trip happen.

144 I revisit the popularity of medieval travel from Al-Andalus and the hajj in Chapter V.
As a result, Ibn Jubayr was understandably sensitive to how different communities treated the pilgrims passing through. On numerous occasions he noted their good and bad deeds. Apparently though, judging from his expressions of surprise, at first the pilgrim did not expect much. Some cases would have certainly been surprising, whatever his expectations might have been. Describing the return of pilgrims to Damascus, Ibn Jubayr related how the townspeople in the place of bread, “gave them dirhams, and did other remarkable things, the opposite of what we were accustomed to in the Maghrib.” The pilgrims were greeted with a similar welcome in Baghdad as well.  

Taking into account the exceptional nature of this story, it is still interesting that Ibn Jubayr would go so far as to say “the opposite.” Without more information, it is unclear whether or not he means to imply that Maghribi Muslims were unresponsive of pilgrims, or that they were merely ambivalent towards them. Regardless, it is entirely plausible to conclude that Near Eastern townspeople were in this instance kinder than Ibn Jubayr was disposed by his Andalusian upbringing to expect. Another story supports this conclusion:

It is strange how the Christians round Mount Lebanon, when they see any Muslim hermits, bring them food and treat them kindly, saying that these men are dedicated to Great and Glorious God and that they should therefore share with them.  

If Ibn Jubayr had not expected to see and hear of such kindness from Muslims, he certainly did not anticipate it coming from Christians. Yet another example of the complex relations among peoples of the Near East and Mediterranean, this story, like the one before it, exemplifies the paradoxes that challenged Ibn Jubayr’s untraveled mindset.

In addition to generosity aimed specifically at pilgrims and the religious, Ibn Jubayr also took note of institutions within the Islamic community that assisted strangers and travelers of all sorts. The zakat, or the tax imposed on all Muslims, was used to assist the marginalized of society and Ibn Jubayr praised how Salah al-Din directed some of it toward the needs of Maghribi travelers:

One of the Sultan’s most generous acts was the allotting of two loaves daily for each of the Moorish ibna’ al-sabil [sons of the road], whatever their number;…every day two thousand loaves or more…were regularly distributed…He was insistent with those in charge of this that when the fixed sums were inadequate, they should draw upon his private purse."

Beyond such reassurances guaranteed personally by the Sultan, zakat endowments funded institutions like hospitals in the more populous centers and schools throughout the Near East where the needy could receive attention for free or close to nothing.

In many cases, the health and education services that towns and cities provided went above and beyond Ibn Jubayr’s expectations. He made careful comparisons too, noting the numbers of hospitals, mosques, and schools funded in a particular city. At the great mosque of Damascus, “The Malikites have a zawiyah [or corner] for study in the west side, and there the students from the Maghrib, who receive a fixed allowance, assemble. The conveniences of this venerated mosque for strangers and students are indeed many and wide.” Ibn Jubayr was quick to point out special accommodations made for Maghribis, but his attentions did not end with them. He made clear that the poor and marginalized from other regions could also receive support from the Muslim community. He wrote, “If in all these eastern lands there were nothing but the readiness of its people to show bounty to strangers and generosity to the poor, especially in the case of the inhabitants of the countryside (it would be enough).” Generally, Ibn Jubayr gives the reader the impression that almost anyone could receive support from the Islamic community.

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It is important, however, to qualify this image, lest we allow ourselves to romanticize an exaggerated sort of medieval Islamic welfare state. Without concrete numbers it is difficult to discern how truly widespread the benefits that Ibn Jubayr describes actually were. The pilgrim provides us with some clues, giving the aforesaid specific number for daily bread distribution in Alexandria, and the number of hospitals, schools, and mosques in the cities and towns that he visits. Further analysis of when and where Ibn Jubayr mentions welfare systems reveals that the more urban centers of concentrated populations provided much greater support for those in need. Rural outposts or desert watering holes, by way of contrast, appeared to be little more than stopovers for those not belonging to the immediate community. Beyond water replenishment services, it seems, a destitute stranger could not expect to find the same institutions as one might in Damascus, for instance.

It is similarly difficult to make quantitative judgments about the perceived security of urban centers and rural villages. Again, it is possible to extrapolate from the frequency with which Ibn Jubayr mentioned security concerns in cities as opposed to oasis towns, but this amounts to little in terms of conclusive evidence one way or another. Furthermore, the dangers might well have been of such a different nature that comparison is rendered moot.

The earlier mentioned case of the Shia pilgrim Naser-e Khosraw illustrates how dangerous travel at this time could be, and the callousness with which one might be greeted after enduring adversity. Attacked by a group of desert bandits, Khosraw and his handful of fellow travelers survived their ordeal and managed to stumble into the nearest town. Rather than greet them with alms and open arms, however, the townspeople almost kicked them out and left them to fend for themselves because they looked so bedraggled. Aid after misfortune was not a sure thing.\footnote{Wolfe, \textit{One Thousand Roads to Mecca}, 5-13.}
Uncertainties about the extent and accessibility of services and security notwithstanding, it is possible to draw several conclusions about Ibn Jubayr’s perceptions of welfare assistance, and consequently, of community. Primarily, there is the sense that Ibn Jubayr believed that were something to happen to him, he could and would receive some sort of help. In urban centers with sophisticated support networks, resources would obviously be more readily available than in distant rural watering holes. Generally though, Ibn Jubayr concluded that he was more likely to receive help than he previously thought. The above analysis also illuminates the pilgrim’s thoughts on why he would receive assistance. He had seen and heard instances in which it did not matter whether those in need were Christians or Muslims, so neither his Muslim nor his Maghribi affiliations were necessarily required for him to receive aid. These revelations shocked Ibn Jubayr.

Not all of his discoveries were pleasant ones, however. One of the particularly negative logistical aspects of travel during this time was the largely unregulated network of taxes. At various points throughout their journeys, travelers had to attempt to navigate through roughly administered checkpoints with their belongings intact. Indeed, at one point Ibn Jubayr became so frustrated with the rampant corruption and injustice of these taxes that he went on a veritable rant. Practically robbing the pilgrims of their belongings, the customs officers at Jiddah had no qualms demanding outrageous sums that significantly undermined any type of previous fiscal planning on the pilgrims’ part. Understandably, Ibn Jubayr was extremely disturbed by the situation and made explicit his rage. Shifting his critique, Ibn Jubayr then proceeded to launch into a damning condemnation of unjust Muslims:

The lands of God [i.e. Islamic lands] that most deserve to be purified by the sword, and cleansed of their sins and impurities by blood shed in holy war are these Hejaz lands, for what they are about in loosening the ties of Islam, and dispossessing the pilgrims of their property.
Finally, the pilgrim concluded that, were the revered Salah al-Din to know, he would be outraged.\footnote{Ibn Jubayr, \textit{The Travels}, Broadhurst trans., 72.}

Rather than dismiss the event as an uncharacteristic demonstration of temper, it is important to view it as an expression of real emotion laden with implications. In fact, the outburst illustrates a great deal about what Ibn Jubayr views as acceptable, normal, and just. In the first place, Ibn Jubayr’s harsh words undoubtedly reveal a sense of real disillusionment and frustration. He was virtually defenseless against the actions of a corrupt few, and had no recourse for rectifying the injustice. In this case, the nearest sources of authority were the ones abusing their power, and as a result Ibn Jubayr could not turn to them for help. Salah al-Din obviously had more important matters to contend with. But alas, it became clear that this was not the case, as Salah al-Din had attempted to account for just this sort of situation with his comprehensive tax reforms. The officials were flouting the measures that the Sultan had enacted with pilgrims such as Ibn Jubayr in mind. Nonetheless, Ibn Jubayr was a mere nobody in the grand scheme of things and the ruler far too distant for anyone to consider the confiscation of the pilgrim’s property a serious infraction of the law.

It is understandable, therefore, that Ibn Jubayr expressed such dissatisfaction with his circumstances. Not only had the policies of his hero failed him, but the pilgrim was also forced to question whom he could trust. Additionally, the timing of the event only six months into the journey likely caused a fair amount of stress. If Ibn Jubayr had to suffer such searches and seizures with any frequency at all, he could very well have ended up as destitute as the beggars on whom he had already remarked so frequently. Ibn Jubayr certainly would have been aware of the tolls and taxes before this episode, so it is perhaps plausible to interpret at least some of his comments about the generosity of native populations toward beggars, strangers, and travelers as indicative of his fear that
he too would end up desperate and dependent at some point. This occasion would have only confirmed and deepened that fear.

The Familiar

Naturally, the stresses of travel induced by events like the above gradually wore on the traveler. Although Ibn Jubayr might have felt spiritually rejuvenated after reaching Mecca, it is clear from his account that both before and after completing the hajj the logistics of travel were sometimes exasperating. Having to constantly adapt to new surroundings and take in unfamiliar cultures understandably wore on the pilgrim. Like any traveler would, therefore, Ibn Jubayr sought comfort in the familiar and those with whom he could immediately relate, such as other Maghribis or Malikis. Coming upon a group of Maghribis while sailing by the island of Favignana, Ibn Jubayr and his Andalusian companion rejoiced at their good fortune for they had not seen the pilgrims since Mecca.152 The chance occurrence greatly heightened their excitement and anticipation of finally returning home.

References to home provide more subtle hints at Ibn Jubayr's growing weariness, and their frequency increases as the account moves along.153 Interestingly, many of these references come not in the form of explicit longing, but rather as comparisons. Because the Andalusian city of Jaen looked similar to Qinnasrin, a town outside of Aleppo, Ibn Jubayr wrote, the inhabitants of Qinnasrin felt comfortable settling in Jaen and made it their home. Ibn Jubayr added that this settlement pattern was common, but did not specify whether or not it was common only for Arabs of the Near East moving to Al-Andalus, or also for Andalusians in the opposite direction.154 Thus the reader is left to wonder as to where Ibn Jubayr might have obtained this information. Did it come from conversations with the residents of Qinnasrin while on his trip, or from the immigrants

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153 For Ibn Jubayr’s references to Al-Andalus see Broadhurst 26, 72, 248, 251, 253, 264, 268-9, 350, 362, 365.
that had moved to Jaen? Ibn Jubayr's assertions indicate a couple of possibilities for how he obtained his information. Either he had traveled through the towns on his way east, which the travelogue indicates is the case with Jaen, or he had been advised of the similarities and accepted that intelligence as true. Regardless, seeing towns and villages similar to Al-Andalus must have comforted Ibn Jubayr, and he probably would have been proud that Arabs of the Near East had also come to regard his home as their own.

Followers of the Cross

The Christian pilgrimage, by way of contrast, was very different from the hajj during the Middle Ages. In the first place, Christians were drawn to multiple destinations—Santiago de Compostela, Rome, Jerusalem, and the many sites boasting relics of important saints. Reacting to papal calls for crusades, Christian pilgrims also seemed to take on a more militant sense of purpose when traveling. Even poor Christians felt as though they were contributing to efforts to retake the Holy Lands via their presence and strength in numbers. Pilgrims to Jerusalem actually made up a significant portion of the army of King Louis VII of France, for example, during the Second Crusade. Knighted crusaders also stopped in Jerusalem or Rome on their way back from battle in order to marry pilgrimages to their military pursuits. Some Christian pilgrims actually hoped to die before returning home believing that they were better situated to await the resurrection of Jesus in Rome or Jerusalem. The imagery of Santiago de Compostela too, was that of a Christian knight who fought against the Moors. The site came into existence as a pilgrimage destination only after the saint's remains were stolen away from the lands of the infidels and safely returned to Christian hands in the ninth century.

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The experiences and motivations of Christian pilgrims, therefore, contrasted greatly with those of Ibn Jubayr. Whereas Muslims were drawn to one destination—Mecca—by a religious duty, Christians sought out relics and undertook pilgrimages for different reasons. Answering the call to crusade, some committed themselves to both spiritual and militant pilgrimages. Ibn Jubayr, on the other hand, recognized that he traveled in the midst of an ongoing conflict without taking on a personal stake in the actual fighting. For him, there was not an overriding concern about his contribution to the military effort. Assisted by the Dar-al-Islam, Ibn Jubayr concerned himself with reaching Mecca and left the fighting to his hero, Salah al-Din.

In contrast to the themes of disunity and antipathy that Ibn Jubayr’s description of political and religious relations conveyed in the last chapter, the pilgrim’s remarks on assistance and familiarity give the impression that he at times felt a sense of real belonging and security. Knowing that he could hope for assistance while far from home helped to inject some peace of mind into what was a dangerous and tiring journey. Taking comfort in similarities with Al-Andalus, Ibn Jubayr reminisced about his distant homeland, especially after stressful encounters with an unregulated tax network and officials willing to exploit it. Additionally, he sometimes found the ways that the Near East was different from Al-Andalus to be reassuring. The pilgrim found local populations much more accommodating and welcoming than he had originally anticipated.

In this way, Ibn Jubayr’s expectations evolved as he traveled. Through ease and hardship, the pilgrim developed a new sense of community. Ibn Jubayr discovered that to be a Muslim meant to belong to the diverse and extensive Dar-al-Islam. Even more significantly, he learned that to be a traveler meant to belong to a respected group of people to whom help was sometimes offered, if not always guaranteed. Ultimately, his experiences compelled him to endorse travel to the great eastern
cities: “Whoever of the young men of the Maghrib seeks prosperity, let him move to these lands and leave his country in the pursuit of knowledge and he will find many forms of help.”\(^{157}\)

Chapter IV: Identity

Characterizations of Ibn Jubayr

Scholars such as Elka Weber and Ian Richard Netton have thus far primarily described Ibn Jubayr in terms of the “others” with whom he interacted. Ibn Jubayr was a Muslim hence Christians were the enemy. Ibn Jubayr was a Maliki Muslim therefore Rafites were the blasphemers, and so forth. On numerous occasions, however, the traveler demonstrated that he was so much more than what these basic labels imply. When Ibn Jubayr’s sensitive and reflective qualities come through, it is clear that he was capable of real empathy and insight. Furthermore, he did not passively sit back and accept the modus operandi as such. He actively questioned the dicta of the different societies that he traveled through without taking for granted things that others might simply overlook. When observing the only day reserved for women to visit the sacred Ka’ba in Mecca, for example, Ibn Jubayr thoughtfully remarked that,

> It was their grandest, most splendid and solemn day…Yet on the whole, in comparison with the men, they are wretched and cheated. They see the venerated House and may not enter it, they gaze upon the blessed Stone but cannot touch it, and their lot is wholly one of staring and feeling the sadness that moves and holds them.

Sensing the injustice of the situation, Ibn Jubayr was uncomfortable with the notion that faithful Muslims were marginalized at the holiest of sites solely because of their gender. The pilgrim was clearly capable of transcending prescribed cultural mores when noting his situation relative to others. Consequently, analysis of his conception of self demands thorough exhaustion of both the apparent and more complicated aspects of his journey.

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160 To clarify, this is to say that Islamic twelfth-century cultures did not afford women the same status in society as men. Ibn Jubayr never mentions female students, for example, only men. For that matter, the pilgrim hardly discusses women at all, and in many ways perpetuates the very cultural norms that he sees as unjust.
In a few respects then, I disagree with Elka Weber’s claim that Ibn Jubayr formed his identity primarily in contradistinction to the identities of the “other.” With such a reading, she stalled at the beginning of a promising analysis and ended up belittling Ibn Jubayr’s insightful nature. Yes, he recognized how different he was from Christians, rich royals, and the desperately poor. This acknowledgement, however, did not determine all of who he was. In the first place, Ibn Jubayr’s sensitive and evaluative capabilities erode the image of the pilgrim as a mirror reflecting stereotypical cultural reactions. The analysis in Chapter III of Ibn Jubayr’s evolving opinions on Near Eastern and Mediterranean cultures further supports this depth of character. Interactions with “others” impacted and developed his fundamental beliefs, but did not entirely obliterate them. The traveler returned to Al-Andalus a changed man certainly, but not so much so that he was beyond recognition. As I discussed above, Ibn Jubayr made numerous statements throughout his account identifying with Maghribis, for instance. Although what he experienced affected this identity by degrees, it nevertheless remained a constant throughout the journey.

Taken at face value, therefore, Weber’s thin characterization of Ibn Jubayr as the “self” discovering identity vis a vis “others” seems like the projection of a preconceived agenda. It unfortunately appears to be the imposition of a generic evaluative structure on a lengthy account too nuanced to allow for a succinct reduction. A mere few pages of analysis simply do not do Ibn Jubayr justice.

I am similarly skeptical of Ian Richard Netton’s portrayal of Ibn Jubayr as alienated by symbols of Christianity. Although there is certainly some value in highlighting the recurrent significance of particular symbols, I do not agree with Netton’s conclusion that a sense of alienation underwrites Ibn Jubayr’s encounters with Christians and consequently, his identity as a Muslim. I think that Netton, like Weber, discounted the appreciation that Ibn Jubayr developed for Christians,

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or the “other,” as human beings with feelings and emotions just like him. To reduce Ibn Jubayr’s perception of Christianity to a façade of symbols with outwardly projected meanings seems to hollow out the complex depth of Ibn Jubayr’s impressions. As the previous chapters and above analysis illustrate, the pilgrim developed multi-layered understandings of Christians, Christianity, and religion. To broadly label Ibn Jubayr’s impression of Christianity as alienating, therefore, is to misjudge Ibn Jubayr’s perceptual maturity. In fact, this characterization appears to be an anachronistic romanticization of the medieval Christian-Muslim clash as it manifests itself in Ibn Jubayr’s Ribla.

Beyond the aforementioned concerns, there are a number of other problems with Weber and Netton’s readings as they relate to Ibn Jubayr’s identity. The way that Weber stopped at the superficial leaves unanswered the questions relating to Ibn Jubayr’s internalization and externalization processes. Are there distinguishable differences in indicators of Ibn Jubayr’s identity, for instance, after he witnesses the Christian wedding party go by? In and of itself, such a question requires the definition of what Ibn Jubayr’s identity indicators might be. Only after a careful dissection of the frequency, timing, and location of Ibn Jubayr’s remarks may what are now accepted as clichés of travel writing or shortcut evaluative structures be considered.

A New Construction of Identity

The preceding chapters have illustrated how Ibn Jubayr’s perceptions of community and diversity changed over the course of his journey in conjunction with how he related to the unfamiliar and familiar. Similarly, Ibn Jubayr’s pilgrimage experiences affected his identity. The way that he viewed and expressed himself evolved as his maturity developed and he gained the wisdom of travel. Exposure to different cultures and new places definitively affected how Ibn Jubayr conceived of himself, and consequently how he projected his thoughts and beliefs outwardly. In other words, Ibn
Jubayr’s developing identity reflected how he processed what he went through, saw, and whom he met.

Interestingly, the way that Ibn Jubayr identified himself differs significantly from what a modern reader might expect. Whereas a traveler might nowadays first state age, nationality, and ethnicity or race, Ibn Jubayr hardly mentions these concepts, focusing instead on what is more important to him—religion, his home government, and his ties to the West.

To begin with the traveler’s positive statements then, requires examination of his explicit affiliations with groups. Ibn Jubayr was a subject of the Almohad dynasty that ruled over Al-Andalus and North Africa, and a proud one at that. “There is no justice, right, or religion in His sight except with the Almohades,” Ibn Jubayr declared.163 He was also though, a Maliki Muslim, a Maghribi, and an Andalusian. In other words, one could think of Ibn Jubayr as identifying with a number of interrelated groups, each with its own unique characteristics, yet still intertwined. Ethnically and geographically, Al-Andalus was in some sense European, but it was also considered part of the Maghrib, or the Islamic West. Religion-wise, most Maghrbis were Maliki Muslims.164

Thus throughout the text, Ibn Jubayr explicitly reminded the reader of his various and overlapping loyalties and what they signify. As an Almohad subject, Ibn Jubayr believed himself to be more pious, more devout, and more committed to his faith than the schismatic Near Easterners, for example.165 He also expressed real pride in his Maliki faith, despite its modest presence in Mecca. As a Maghrbi though, Ibn Jubayr exhibited the humility and insecurity of a stranger in foreign lands. Open to help and pleased by offers of generosity, Ibn Jubayr the Maghrbi praised those same indigenous populations that he also condemned religiously. As an Andalusian, Ibn Jubayr’s travel sentiments are even more apparent for he expressed longing and reminisced about his homeland.

165 See the Chapter II section on Islam.
Harking back to the beauty of Al-Andalus, the pilgrim recalled what he left behind when the places he visited reminded him of home.

While Ibn Jubayr referenced these identities throughout his account, it is his more general identification as a Muslim that truly pervades the Ribla. The text is, after all, ultimately a record of his Islamic pilgrimage, his hajj. As the themes of the previous chapters illustrate, at least at the outset, Ibn Jubayr’s identification as a Muslim defined many of his experiences and perspectives. In numerous other instances, when the pilgrim’s spirituality played a more minor role, it still factored into his interactions and way of thinking. In reality, therefore, detailing the subtleties of Ibn Jubayr’s frequent associations with Islam is beyond the scope of this thesis. Instead, I seek merely to analyze the general significance of Ibn Jubayr’s expressions of religiosity.

Essentially, synthesizing what Ibn Jubayr says and writes about religion reveals a composite and developing religious identity. Increasingly over the course of the travel account, this identity evolved out of seemingly dichotomous sentiments. Ibn Jubayr was a pious Almohad, of that there is no doubt. But he was not a fanatical defender of Islam incarnate, and became disillusioned with some of its adherents. More accurately put, Ibn Jubayr did not defend the ugly reality of corrupt institutions and lax practitioners. Particularly in light of the positive things that he discovered about Christians over the course of his trip, his disappointment was apparent. As such, his condemnation of impurity was harsh and decisive. At the same time though, Ibn Jubayr did not assert himself as a religious authority, and made deepening his spirituality one of the main priorities of his journey (in addition to the hajj, of course). He sought out reclusive sheiks and valued interactions with religious sages of various sects. Thus Ibn Jubayr’s religious identity functioned on a few different levels: his spirituality with regards to his faith and specific loyalties, his disdain for the impure manifestations of Islam in people and institutions, and lastly, his continuous pursuit of religious knowledge despite the grim reality. Ibn Jubayr’s religious identity was complex. I revisit the matter below.
Beyond these few explicit associations—Almohad, Maliki, Maghrabi, Andalusian, and Muslim—Ibn Jubayr did not state outright who he was or what he thought of himself. The explicit, though, also involves the implicit, and what the pilgrim did not say remains important. The above consideration of Ibn Jubayr’s lack of comment on Jews underscores this point. Were this analysis to focus only on these few affiliations, entire elements of his general mentality, personality, and ultimately, his true identity would remain unclear. To further clarify then, consideration ought to be given to more than just his declarative statements.

Besides Ibn Jubayr’s proclamations of loyalty and religious devotion, his descriptions also convey valuable clues relating to how he identified himself. By pointing out the Bujat “type of Sudanese living in the mountains,” for example, Ibn Jubayr revealed his consciousness of unique regional group identities. His subsequent association of particular characteristics with that group demonstrated his familiarity with the reputation of the Bujat.166 It made sense then, when he later expressed consciousness of belonging to a group with a certain reputation. The accursed Franks, for instance, at one point charged only the Maghrabis in Ibn Jubayr’s pilgrim group because of the misdeeds of previous generations, and the pilgrim complained that he had no say in the matter.167 Another example of this relationship is Ibn Jubayr’s position on education. Were it unimportant to him, surely he would not take the time to point out a boy of the Saru tribe’s lack of education.168 Hence how Ibn Jubayr classified other peoples, populations, and religions related to how he identified himself.

In addition to the times when he declared and observed group associations, there were actually many times when Ibn Jubayr implicitly identified himself with specific groups. However

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166 Ibn Jubayr, The Travels, Broadhurst trans., 64.
obvious it may be, it is worth mentioning that Ibn Jubayr was a man, and conscious of it. Stylistically, this awareness comes across in the way that he awkwardly presented information about the women that he saw and heard about. As the above example illustrates, the pilgrim interrupted his narrative to highlight the fact that there were specific restrictions imposed on women’s ability to practice the faith. Given the infrequency with which Ibn Jubayr mentioned women, this interjection stands out as something that obviously struck him as noteworthy.

The few times when he did describe women, Ibn Jubayr employed a slightly different tone. Conveying an air of reverent respect, Ibn Jubayr’s description of the princess Saljuqah bint Mas’ud, for instance, differed markedly from the more analytic way that he wrote about male rulers. The princess at one point ran away for a night and held up the entire pilgrim caravan. Rather than express frustration or indulge in speculative gossip though, Ibn Jubayr simply related what people were saying and employed his standard deferential line, “But none can know such hidden things save God.” Later on, Ibn Jubayr praised the princess for her good works and even admitted that he joined the crowds marveling at her at a religious service. Her earlier transgression was not brought up again. Whereas with the men Ibn Jubayr included his own interpretations of their policies and actions, positive or negative, with women, the pilgrim appeared more reluctant to issue normative judgments.

In terms of the pilgrim’s intellect, were the reader to not know that Ibn Jubayr was a secretary in Al-Andalus, it would still be possible to discern that he was an educated man via textual clues. Ibn Jubayr traveled to Mecca for spiritual enrichment and to fulfill his religious duty, but also actively pursued knowledge of all kinds, hence his careful observation of the nautical tactics of Genoese sailors and admiration of architectural details of buildings of all sorts. The way that Ibn Jubayr described education seems to indicate that he valued it not just as a good for himself, but also

for others. His statements praised education and the pursuit of knowledge, deeming them worthwhile pursuits of any young man (notably, Ibn Jubayr only said men here.) 171

Ibn Jubayr’s attention to detail also relates to how he valued education. Just as the way that he tallied hospitals and welfare services speaks to his interest in Near Eastern and Mediterranean systems, the way that Ibn Jubayr carefully described madrasas, or religious schools, reflected his appreciation for education. In fact, one of the aspects of Near Eastern generosity that fascinated him so much is the way that madrasas were endowed to support the education of poor and foreign students. 172

Indeed, the preceding chapters have drawn some attention to the pilgrim’s material interests. As the logistics section of Chapter I demonstrated, Ibn Jubayr was fully conscious of his economic situation relative to that of others. The pilgrim at times expressed a longing for the simple comforts of which travel had deprived him, and then of course reveled in them when he had the chance. The pilgrim also took great pleasure in the novelty of new physical items such as the fruits of al-Ta’if that he discovered in Mecca. 173 Aesthetics also interested Ibn Jubayr and he noted the splendors of many buildings, monuments, and mosques. Detailing dimensions and decorations, Ibn Jubayr compared the grandeur of what he saw from town to town and factored it into his value estimations of each place.

Thus Ibn Jubayr was a man of many interrelated identities. In addition to the explicit associations that he claimed for himself, Ibn Jubayr expressed his masculinity, value for education, and affinity for material goods just like any other twelfth-century man might have—through descriptions and implicit meanings. The interplay between Ibn Jubayr’s different identities, therefore, shaped how Ibn Jubayr reacted to what he saw. Meanwhile, those same discoveries and experiences

impacted his perspective on his own situation. Seeing women marginalized at the Ka’ba, made the pilgrim reflect on his luck at being a man.
Chapter V: Conclusion

The Saru

To introduce my conclusion, I analyze Ibn Jubayr’s descriptions of the Saru tribe. Besides Christians generally, the Saru elicited more description than any other group noted in the *Ribla*. Ibn Jubayr’s main entry on the tribe spans over five pages in Broadhurst’s translation. For the purposes of analyses, I focus on a brief excerpt on the Saru that succinctly demonstrates Ibn Jubayr’s observational and analytic abilities. Encompassing both unique and recurrent themes, this characterization of the Saru Bedouins came from a point in the trip at which Ibn Jubayr had already acquired some travel experience and wisdom, yet still had more to learn. The traveler’s subsequent mentions of the tribe illustrate the evolution of his views that took place over the course of his trip. The following analysis illustrates that they intrigued Ibn Jubayr to such an extent that he felt compelled to meticulously detail their ways.

First bringing up the Saru seven months into his journey during Jumada L’-Ula (August 22 – September 20, 1183), the pilgrim commented on the tribe at length during Rajab (October 20 – November 18, 1183). By this time, Ibn Jubayr had been traveling for some time and had already begun to develop new opinions and perspectives due to his exposure to new cultures. Later on in the *Ribla*, Ibn Jubayr recalled the Saru, comparing other groups to them as if they had become a sort of reference point for the pilgrim.

Every year during the three months of Rajab, Sha’ban, and Ramadan the Saru tribe traveled to Mecca to sell the bounty of their land and perform the umra, the so-called “lesser pilgrimage” that Muslims who live near to Mecca perform annually. Bartering their foodstuffs for cloaks that local Meccans produced, the Saru ensured the survival of the desert Holy City. Logically then, Ibn

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Jubayr’s first mention of the tribe gave their origin as the mountain of Sarat in Yemen and listed the many foods that they brought with them, some familiar and some new.175

The second time that the pilgrim brought up the Saru, he launched into a lengthy description of their customs and values. First elaborating on their role as victuallers of Mecca, Ibn Jubayr then succinctly raised the issues of ethnicity, the advantages of city life, and religious practices:

> These people are pure Arab, and eloquent of speech. They are brusque and robust, and have not been nourished by the comforts of city life, nor have they been polished by the urban manner. The religious laws do not direct them in their affairs, and you will find among them no devotionary practices beyond that of good intention.176

Interestingly, Ibn Jubayr hardly ever mentioned race or ethnicity in the Rihla, yet chose to point out that the tribe is Arab and deem it a positive quality in this instance. He described the style of bows that the tribesmen use to defend themselves as Arab a few pages later, and included commentary from pilgrims that traveled with them praising their protection.177 Perhaps, therefore, the earlier mention of ethnicity reflects the importance of this latter protective quality. Another possibility is that the comment reveals Ibn Jubayr’s affinity for the Arabic language. The pilgrim recognized in the Saru some natural quality of eloquence, and a few pages later remarked on the education of the tribe. Despite the fact that the Saru did not receive formal schooling, Ibn Jubayr was astonished with the intelligence of one of their young boys. Moreover, as I mentioned in Chapter IV, language served as an important unifying factor for the Dar al-Islam, because unlike Christians with their many tongues, Muslims primarily communicated in Arabic and Persian.178 At this point in his journey then, Ibn Jubayr might still have only been coming to appreciate the gravity of the connecting factor. That he could understand and communicate with a tribe from a remote

region of Yemen could very well have taken him aback and inclined him to like them more than he might have a Hindi speaking group, for instance.

Next, Ibn Jubayr alluded to his preference for city life and urban comportment, noting the Saru people’s lack of manners while suggesting that he admired their hardy appearance. Indeed, the previous chapters have shown how Ibn Jubayr valued and meticulously recorded the welfare and religious institutions available to city dwellers. Yet the effect of this description leaves the reader with the sense that the qualities of desert tribes in comparison to those of city dwellers were thought provoking. Ibn Jubayr, the secretary from Granada, probably would not have described himself as robust or brusque, but these qualities rendered the Bedouins interesting and struck him as noteworthy. This is not to say that Ibn Jubayr pitied the Saru people or spoke condescendingly when he commented on their rural origins. Earlier on, for example, the traveler’s sympathy for a group of mountain dwellers was apparent when he lamented that “they lead a life so wretched as to break the hardest stone in compassion.”179 The pilgrim’s characterization of the Saru is distinct. He did not feel sorry for the tribe; rather, he seemed to be captivated and charmed by the unique ways of these people.

The last part of the quote deals with religion and also involves previously mentioned observations, for it relates to Ibn Jubayr’s toleration of different degrees of orthodoxy. Forgiving them their loose interpretations of Islam’s laws, Ibn Jubayr actually afforded the Saru some measure of respect. When later describing their impatient crowding into the Holy House and failure to perform certain rites, Ibn Jubayr expressed shock, but credited their enthusiasm and attempts at religiosity instead of condemning them. They did not promote heretical beliefs like some of the schismatics toward whom he expressed such disdain.

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With the passage of time, the pilgrim’s opinions on the Saru naturally changed, and exposure to other groups of people mitigated his views on their comportment and unorthodoxy. “The manner of entry of the Yemenite Saru into the blessed House in the fashion we have described was staid and composed compared with that of these barbarous-tongued foreigners,” Ibn Jubayr wrote of pilgrims from Iraq and Khurasan.180 His surprise was evident, as was the marked revision of his original opinion. Five months on from his main characterization of the tribe (Dhu ‘L-Hijjah 579/ March 16 – April 13, 1184), Ibn Jubayr had gained a dramatically different perspective thanks to the rowdiness of others.

Hence Ibn Jubayr’s description of this one group of people is indicative of many of the fascinating aspects of his travelogue. The subtleties of his comments hint at his preferences and normative valuations of different groups. Displaying his observational and analytical skills, the sections of the Ribla that deal with the Saru also showcase Ibn Jubayr’s willingness to adjust his opinions. The pilgrim reevaluated based on his experiences and acquired a more realistic perspective as a result. Encounters such as these helped to broaden Ibn Jubayr’s knowledge set and inform his future judgments.

Lessons Learned

To transition to a general review of the Ribla requires a return to Granada. At the beginning of his journey, Ibn Jubayr was undoubtedly excited about what was to come, yet probably never guessed that his hajj would turn into such an adventure. Surviving shipwreck and eluding the dangers of the desert, Ibn Jubayr evaded the perils of his journey only after some stress-inducing moments of uncertainty. Dangers aside though, the hajj allowed Ibn Jubayr to learn from experiences that he never could have had back home in Al-Andalus. The pilgrim covered virtually all of the main destinations of the medieval Mediterranean world, and visited the great centers of

learning of the Near East. Most importantly, the pilgrim completed his spiritual journey, and fulfilled his religious obligation to visit Mecca. Performing the hajj enabled Ibn Jubayr to deepen his spirituality and commune with the Dar al-Islam.

Not all of what he experienced, however, was pleasant. Jarring instances such as the corrupt tax collection scheme in Jiddah disillusioned the traveler. As a result, he became wary of the disunity and discord of Islamic territories. In contrast with the perceived unity of the militant Christian front, the politics of Islam seemed inferior, and naturally, that upset Ibn Jubayr. What he commented on with even more condemnation though, was the degenerate state of Islam that he observed in the Near East. Idealizing Almohad Malikism as the epitome of religious orthodoxy, Ibn Jubayr cursed the lands that he visited as overrun with schismatics and heretics.

Specifically then, it is easiest to describe Ibn Jubayr’s evolving understandings of various themes in terms of different levels. Ibn Jubayr’s multifaceted conceptions of Islam and Christianity, for instance, encompassed issues ranging from leadership to cultural interactions to personal loyalties. Throughout his trip, the pilgrim synthesized and drew meaning from distinct events and encounters. Gradually, how Ibn Jubayr conceived of diversity, community, and identity changed as his notions of the familiar and unfamiliar developed. Ibn Jubayr returned home a wiser man.

At times, the pilgrim found the political systems of the Mediterranean and Near East exasperating. A victim of tax corruption and observer of discord, he had every right to be perturbed by what he saw. Moreover, coming from a land constantly threatened by Christians, the pilgrim might have hoped for reprieve within the Islamic empires, only to be disappointed. Indeed, much of this optimism could have come from the high regard in which Ibn Jubayr held Sultan Salah al-Din. The many references to the ruler’s righteousness and good deeds in the Ribla give the reader the impression that Ibn Jubayr idealized Salah al-Din, despite, or perhaps even because of the reality that

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he saw. Viewing the sultan as the embodiment of jihad, or religious war, Ibn Jubayr envisioned Salah al-Din as a sort of reincarnation of what the moribund caliphate used to represent for the Islamic world—religious guidance and political leadership. It might have simply been too much for Ibn Jubayr to admit that such an ideal did not exist in Al-Andalus or the Near East, hence his continued veneration of Salah al-Din.

Idealizations and disappointments notwithstanding, exposure to different leadership styles revolutionized the way that Ibn Jubayr thought of rulers. The way that he expressed shock at the multiculturalism of King William II of Sicily’s court, for instance, indicated that Ibn Jubayr had never seen or heard of such collaboration among groups before. Salah al-Din’s generous welfare policies similarly impressed the pilgrim as he considered how he might at some point need the services. The Christian ruler, King Baldwin IV, on the other hand, served as the foil to all of the goodness and unity that Salah al-Din represented. Reminding Ibn Jubayr that Islam and Christianity were still engaged in spasmodic warfare, passing through King Baldwin’s territory caused the traveler to deliver a stream of curses and insults.

With regard to toleration, nevertheless, Ibn Jubayr was pleased to find that Christians and Muslims could get on with their daily lives while their standard bearers faced off in battle down the road. Testifying to the peaceful living situations of Sicily and the Near East, Ibn Jubayr was impressed by the fact that populations could live without fear in each other’s lands. His pleasure at such a discovery though, only went so far as he gradually realized that in some cases Muslims fared better under Christian rulers than under their coreligionists. The embarrassment that the pilgrim felt was obvious.

Internally, Ibn Jubayr’s travels affected his personal identity in such a way that he returned home a distinctly more informed Muslim. Interacting with coreligionists of different sects problematized but also reinforced the views that Ibn Jubayr held going into the trip. Meanwhile, the
aforementioned exposure to political corruption and success impacted how the pilgrim conceived of Muslim leaders. Generally, Ibn Jubayr's experiences impacted how he related to the Dar al-Islam, the world of Islam. Traveling for such an extended period of time allowed Ibn Jubayr to truly appreciate the diversity of Muslims as well as contextualize his own set of beliefs within twelfth-century Islam. This appreciation, while not necessarily as comforting as his previous state of relative ignorance, did not diminish his sense of belonging to the Dar al-Islam. Ibn Jubayr began his journey a pious Muslim and ended it changed, but still devout.

Similarly, Ibn Jubayr's attitudes toward Christianity evolved on different planes. Maintaining his respect for Christianity the religion, as Islam prescribes, Ibn Jubayr ended up adjusting his opinions on Christian individuals and leaders as he was exposed to their tolerant and sometimes even generous ways. Discovering that some Muslims felt better off under Christian rulers than Muslim ones, Ibn Jubayr was forced to concede that Christians were owed their due. The pilgrim learned too that where he traveled politics were at least to some extent divorced from the everyday living situation of individuals. “The soldiers engage themselves in their war, while the people are at peace,” the pilgrim wrote. Although Ibn Jubayr probably still thought of the infidels generally as his avowed enemies, he came to appreciate that Christians were in many regards similar to Muslims. Scenes like the Christian wedding parade in Tyre gradually eroded Ibn Jubayr's preconceived notions and helped him to recognize that the infidels were humans too.

After the Trip

Unfortunately, the lack of information on Ibn Jubayr after his return to Granada hampers discussion of what long-term effects the journey might have had on him. Writing on Al-Andalus and travel to the East, Michael Karl Lenker claimed that study abroad was a sort of prerequisite for

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obtaining a government or high-level religious position.\textsuperscript{183} Extended study in Al-Andalus could be substituted, he stated, but those who traveled to study in the Near East were afforded a special social status upon return. Lenker went on to characterize the hajj as complementary to these study trips to the Near East, taking place either after or as a mere extension of the initial educational trip.

Ibn Jubayr, however, appears to defy this paradigm. When he left for the hajj at thirty-seven years old, he was already secretary to the governor of Granada. Moreover, Ibn Jubayr stayed in Alexandria his third and last trip eastward, dying months after his arrival. With regards to motivation, therefore, it is possible to speculate that Ibn Jubayr was less concerned with securing a different position back home than he was with performing the hajj. He certainly might have been interested in earning academic prestige—his careful inclusion of the names of the notable scholars that he talked to hints at this possibility—but his primary impetus seems to have been religious duty. Perhaps too, Ibn Jubayr simply enjoyed traveling and seized his chances. Without knowledge of his background, it is difficult to tell if he had traveled previously or where else he might have visited before his journey to the East.

Another issue with Lenker’s emphasis on the reputation that study abroad conferred is that it undermines one of the basic premises of the hajj—completion of the so-called fifth pillar of Islam distinguishes returnees forever. Hajjis, as the pilgrims were called upon return, were afforded great respect for having successfully endured the arduous and physically demanding journey and for their demonstration of real devotion to Islam. When Ibn Jubayr returned to Al-Andalus safely then, it is likely that he was esteemed for having risked his life in the name of religious devotion regardless of whether or not he had other motives.

Why Ibn Jubayr undertook the hajj and when he did so also relates to the question of why he recorded his journey. If one believes that he set out to perform the hajj with the auxiliary goal of

\textsuperscript{183} Lenker, “The Importance of the Rihla,” 305.
achieving at least some degree of preeminence, one might also be inclined to think that he wrote his account with the hopes of it being widely disseminated and read. Indeed, it appears that Ibn Jubayr’s Rihla was known across the Maghrib and the Near East. In appendices of the Rihla transcription, Wright included the text of references to Ibn Jubayr that had survived up to that point and were known to Western scholars in 1852. In 1907, De Goeje added entries that had come to light in the meantime and wrote that Ibn Jubayr’s Rihla gained him a considerable literary reputation among his contemporaries. These testimonials to Ibn Jubayr’s reputation included articles written by historians, references in later pilgrims’ accounts, and writers’ descriptions of cities that borrowed from Ibn Jubayr. Above I also mentioned how the fact that more than one hundred and seventy years later Ibn Battuta directly copied passages of Ibn Jubayr’s Rihla attests to the latter’s enduring and widespread legacy.

For these reasons, Ibn Jubayr is now regarded as the father of the riḥla, or travel genre of writing in Arabic. Inspiring generations of wanderers to record their experiences, Ibn Jubayr earned a place in history simply by writing an account of his travels. Only a handful of pilgrims had done so before him, including the above-mentioned Persian Naser-e Khosraw, but none won the same level of recognition as Ibn Jubayr. Many, if not most, of the scholars that have written on Ibn Jubayr deem his Rihla the prototype of the genre and claim that it influenced countless pilgrims after him.

Style and descriptive skill certainly contributed to the establishment of the pilgrim’s legacy, but it would be interesting to investigate further whether or not his social status was also a factor. As I highlight above, Ibn Jubayr described his material situation in comparison with others and was unafraid of admitting his inferiority and insignificance relative to rich royals. Nevertheless, Ibn

Jubayr’s education and place as a civil servant back in Granada would have distinguished him from the illiterate general population. This intellectual ability though, still might not have diminished his wider appeal, particularly given Islam’s veneration of the pursuit of knowledge as a means of deepening one’s faith. In this regard, Ibn Jubayr exemplifies Islamic virtue. Moreover, without additional information it is impossible to tell exactly with whom Ibn Jubayr was “popular.” It might very well have been that only those of the learned ulama class of Muslim scholars knew and wrote of Ibn Jubayr. Whatever the case might have been, at least some Muslims valued his account enough to replicate and preserve copies of it in the Maghrib and Near East.

Thus Ibn Jubayr’s relative significance in the centuries after his death raises a puzzling question—why did his reputation eventually diminish? Was his simply a case of time passing and other travelers inheriting his position? Unlike, Ibn Jubayr, Ibn Battuta was not popular or well known until the nineteenth century, so although in modern collections they are oftentimes grouped together, Ibn Battuta cannot be considered a potential successor.\(^\text{187}\) Nonetheless, other journeyers of repute followed in Ibn Jubayr’s footsteps and recorded their travels. Some went on to have their accounts published as well, but it is also difficult to discern whether these other manuscripts were well known enough to take the place of Ibn Jubayr’s \textit{Rihla}.\(^\text{188}\)

While these questions are certainly germane to the Western study of Middle Eastern travel writing, it actually remains unclear as to whether or not the same may be said of Middle Eastern historiography. In fact, when Wright wrote in 1852 that he knew of only two professors who had written on Ibn Jubayr in 1852, he meant that those were the only Western professors.\(^\text{189}\) Michael Wolfe, by way of contrast, claimed that Ibn Jubayr’s account has remained influential for Muslim travelers since its original dissemination. He wrote that it is classically associated with Naser-e


\(^{189}\) Ibn Jubayr, \textit{The Travels}, Wright, 20.
Khosraw and Ibn Battuta’s travelogue, and gives the impression that it never actually left the collective Middle Eastern consciousness.\textsuperscript{190} I offer no definitive answer as to whether or not this is the case; rather I merely hope that a future study could attempt to bridge the gap and clarify for Western scholars whether that is true.

What direction, then, might Western scholarship take if and when scholars further engage Ibn Jubayr’s account and finally give it its due? I have here attempted to engage briefly with the larger themes of diversity, community and identity, yet this approach serves merely as an antecedent for potential future studies. The specific issues raised by each of the broader topics are many, and the details and nuances of the pilgrim’s account abound. Accordingly, I am fully confident that further study could more thoroughly engage with the subtleties over which I have hardly skimmed. A full literary analysis of the account, for instance, could build on J. N. Mattock’s initial work and prove invaluable as a complement to a more traditional historical examination of the \textit{Rihla}’s political, social, and economic themes.\textsuperscript{191} Changes in style and shifts in tone indiscernible to the untrained (or unconcerned) eye could be indicative of Ibn Jubayr’s reactions to events and interactions with groups, for example. Greater attention might also be directed toward the question of why Ibn Jubayr did not write about encounters with Jews. Additionally, clarification of the wine story’s connection to the \textit{Rihla} could help clear up or exacerbate uncertainties as to Ibn Jubayr’s motivation for departure.

More than eight hundred and thirty years after Ibn Jubayr returned to Granada, the \textit{Rihla} raises interesting questions about both medieval and modern expectations, societal interactions, and personal development. Both the expected and unexpected aspects of the travel account offer a

\textsuperscript{190} Wolfe, \textit{One Thousand Roads to Mecca}, 3.
\textsuperscript{191} Mattock, “The Travel Writings of Ibn Jubair and Ibn Batūta,” in \textit{Islamic and Middle Eastern Geographers and Travellers}, 265-272.
wealth of information for investigation, and provide an engaging literary experience for scholars and students alike. Most significantly, Ibn Jubayr’s work inspires the reader to travel and reflect.

Regardless of how future scholars choose to take up the *Rihla*, as interest in the Middle East and Maghrib continues to increase, Ibn Jubayr’s story will influence travelers and readers for generations to come.
Appendix A – Glossary

- Ahl al-Kitab – People of the Book, Jews and Christians
- Al-Andalus, Andalusia – Parts of the Iberian Peninsula that were under Islamic control from the eighth to fifteenth centuries
- Ali – (d. 661) The third caliph after the Prophet Muhammad
- Caliph – Religious and political leader of the Dar-al-Islam
- Convivencia – Coexistence
- Dar-al-Islam – The World of Islam
- Dhimmi – Christians or Jews living under Islamic rule who paid a tax in return for security
- Frank – A Christian associated with Europe, or the West
- Hadith – A saying or act ascribed to the Prophet Muhammad
- Hajj, haj, hadjdj – The Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina
- Hanbali – One of the major schools of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence; founded on the legal principles of Ahmad ibn Hanbal
- Hanafi – One of the major schools of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence; founded on the legal principles of Imam e Azam Abu Hanifa an-Nu’man ibn Thabit
- Hijaz – The region of Saudi Arabia that includes Mecca and Medina
- Imam – A Muslim leader of worship
- Levant, Greater Syria – The region including Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel, Palestine and Cyprus.
- Madhab – Islamic school of jurisprudence
- Madrasa – Islamic religious college
- Maliki – One of the major schools of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence; founded on the legal principles of Malik ibn Anas
- Naser-e Khosraw, Nasir Khursaw – (1004-1088) Medieval Persian traveler
- Qadi – A Muslim judge who rules in accordance with Islamic religious law, or sharia
- Qarmata, Carmathians – An Isma’ilite sect of Shi’ite Muslims
- Reconquista – The so-called Christian reconquest of Islamic controlled Al-Andalus
- Ribla – The travelogue of Ibn Jubayr
- rihla – The travel genre inspired by Ibn Jubayr’s Ribla; travelogue
- Rum – A Byzantine or Christian from the Near East
- Safarnamah – travelogue
- Salah al-Din, Saladin, Abu ‘l-Mu’azzar Yusuf ibn Ayyub – (1137/1138-1193) Sultan of Egypt and Syria
- Shafi’i – One of the major schools of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence; founded on the legal principles of Al-Shafi’i
- Shia Islam – The second largest branch of Islam; Shia Muslims believe that Ali should have been elected the first rather than the third caliph after the Prophet Muhammad
- Sheikh – An Islamic scholar
- Sunni Islam – The largest branch of Islam
- Zawiyah – Corner for study
Appendix B – Itinerary

According to the Islamic lunar calendar*

8th of Shawwal to the end of Dhu ‘l-Qa’dah 578
February 4 – March 27, 1183
- Granada, Jaen, Alcaudete, Cabra, Ecija, Osuna, Jeliver, Arcos, Casma, Tarifa, Alzacar, Ceuta, the Spanish coast, islands of Ibiza, Majorca, Minorca, Cape St. Mark in Sardinia, past Sicily and Crete, Alexandria

Dhu ‘l-Hijjah 578
March 28 – April 25, 1183
- Alexandria, Damahur, Sa, Birmah, Tandata, Subk, Malij, Qalyub, Munyah, Dajwah, Cairo, Misr

Muharram 579
April 26 – May 25, 1183
- Askun, Munyat ibn al-Khasib, Ansina, Jabal al-Maqlah, Manfalut, Usyut, Abu Tij, Ikhmim, Manshat al-Sudan, al-Bunyanah, Dashnah, Dandara, Qina, Qift, Qus

Safar 579
May 26 – June 23, 1183
- al-Hajir, Qila’ al-Diya’, Mahatt al-Laqita’tah, al-‘Abdayn, Dinqash, Shaghib, Amtan, Mujaj

Rabi’ al-‘Awwal 579
June 24 – July 23, 1183
- al-‘Ushara’, al-Khubayb, ‘Aydhab, the Red Sea, the island ‘Ayqat al-Sufun

Rabi’ al-Akhir 579
July 24 – August 21, 1183
- Ubhur, Jiddah, al-Qurayn, Mecca

Jumada ‘l-Ula 579
August 22 – September 20, 1183
- Mecca

Jumada ‘l-Akhirah 579
September 21 – October 19, 1183
- Mecca

Rajab 579
October 20 – November 18, 1183
- Mecca

Sha’ban 579
November 19 – December 17, 1183
• Mecca

Ramadan 579
December 18, 1183 – January 16, 1184
• Mecca

Shawwal 579
January 17 – February 14, 1184
• Mecca

Dhu ‘l-Qa’dah 579
February 15 – March 15, 1184
• Mecca

Dhu ‘l-Hijjah 579
March 16 – April 13, 1184
• Mecca, al-Zahir, Batn Marr, ‘Usfan, Khulays, Wadi al-Samk, Badr

Muharram 580
April 14 – May 13, 1184

Safar 580
May 14 – June 11, 1184
• al-Qantararah (Hisn al-Bashir), Zariran, al-Mada’in (near the palace of Chosroes), Sarsar, Baghdad, al-Harba, al-Ma’shuq, Samarra, Takrit, al-Judaydah, al-‘Aqr, al-Qayyarah, al-Uqaybah, Mosul, ‘Ain al-Rasad, al-Muwaylihah, Judal

Rabi’ al-Awwal 580
June 12 – July 11, 1184
• Nasibin (Nisibis), Dunaysar, Tell al-‘Uqab, al-Jisr, Ra’s al-‘Ain, Burj Hawa, Harran, Tell ‘Abdah, al-Bayda, Qal’at-Najm, Manbij, Buza’ah, Aleppo, Qinnasrin, Tell Tajir, Baqidin, Tamanni, Hamah, Hims (Emessa), al-Mash’ar, al-Qarah, al-Nabk, Khan al-Sultan, Thaniyat al-‘Uqab, al-Qusayr, Damascus

Rabi’ Al-Akhir 580
July 12 – August 9, 1184
• Damascus

Jumada ‘l-Ula 580
August 10 – September 8, 1184
• Damascus
Jumada ‘l-Akhirah 580
September 9 – October 7, 1184
  • Damascus, Darayyah, Bayt Jann, Banyas, al-Masiyah, al-Astil, Tibnin, Acre, al-Zib, Iskandarunah (Iscandelion), Sur (Tyre), Acre

Rajab 580
October 8 – November 6, 1184
  • Acre, the Mediterranean

Sha’ban 580
November 7 – December 5, 1184
  • The Mediterranean, the Greek Archipelago, coast of Crete, in sight of Sicily

Ramadan 580
December 6, 1184 – January 4, 1185
  • Calabrian coast of Italy, Straits of Messina, Messina, Cefalu, Termini, Qasr Sa’d (Castel Solanto), Palermo, Alcamo, Hisn al-Hammah, Trapani

Shawwal 580
January 5 – February 2, 1185
  • Trapani

Dhu ‘l-Qa’dah 580
February 3 – March 4, 1185
  • Trapani

Dhu ‘l-Hijjah 580
March 5 – April 3, 1185
  • Trapani, island of Favignana, south of Sardinia, island of Galita

Muharram 581
April 4 – May 3, 1185
  • Ibiza, Denia, Cartagena, Murcia, Lebrilla, Lorca, al-Mansurah, Caniles di Baza, Guadix, Granada

*Broadhurst gives this formula for approximating a conversion of the Muslim lunar calendar to the western solar calendar.

A. H. (Muslim calendar year) – (3 A.H./100) + 621 = A.D.
Appendix C – Maps

Al-Andalus (1150)

Green represents Islamic ruled territory. Christian kingdoms ruled above the black line.

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