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Ibn Ḥayyān

Ibn Ḥayyān, Abū Marwān Ḥayyān b. Khalaf b. Ḥusayn b. Ḥayyān b. Muḥammad b. Ḥayyān b. Wahb b. Ḥayyān al-Qurtubī (377–469/987–1076), was an historian and *adīb* (belletrist), and author of a general history of al-Andalus from the Arab conquest up to his time. He traced his descent from an Andalusī ancestor who converted to Islam in the second/eighth century, at the hand of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān I (r. 138–72/756–88; Fierro, 74), the heir to the Marwānid line within the Umayyad dynasty and the founder of the Marwānid amirate (138–316/756–929) in al-Andalus thus giving rise to an indigenous *mawālā* (client, pl. *mawālī*) lineage. Ibn Ḥayyān’s father, Khalaf, rose to prominence in the wake of the ascent to power of Ibn Abī ‘Āmir al-Manṣūr (327–92/938–1002), the *ḥājib* (chamberlain) of the third Marwānid caliph, Hishām II (r. 366–99/976–1009), who became the de facto ruler of al-Andalus. This took place at the end of the fourth/tenth century, thanks to the new opportunities the ‘Āmirid regime offered to the lower echelons of the Marwānid bureaucracy

(*khidma*). Ibn Ḥayyān’s education took place in the ‘Āmirid household, where he, along with al-Manṣūr’s children and the sons of the Córdoba elite, was taught by eminent scholars, among them Ibn Abī l-Hubāb (d. 400/1009), Ṣā’id al-Baghdādī (d. 417/1026), and Ibn al-Faraḍī (d. 403/1013). Following the contemporary Andalusī cultural model (Mohedano, 358), Ibn Ḥayyān’s education was centred on philology (*luḡha*) and *adab* (belle-lettres), both disciplines deeply influencing his historical writing. The collapse of the ‘Āmirid regime (399/1009) exposed Ibn Ḥayyān to the trials of what he would later portray as the “Berber *fitna* [discord],” a powerfully biased characterisation of the ensuing period of civil strife, concluded by the abolition of the Marwānid caliphate and the establishment along new fault lines of regional powers (*ṭā’ifa*, “faction, local power,” *mulūk al-ṭawā’if*, “party kings”). It also inspired him to write a history of al-Andalus that spanned the period from the Arab conquest in 92/711 to his own time. After many years spent in relative seclusion, teaching *adab* and *luḡha* to Córdoba youth while attending to his historical project, Ibn Ḥayyān was