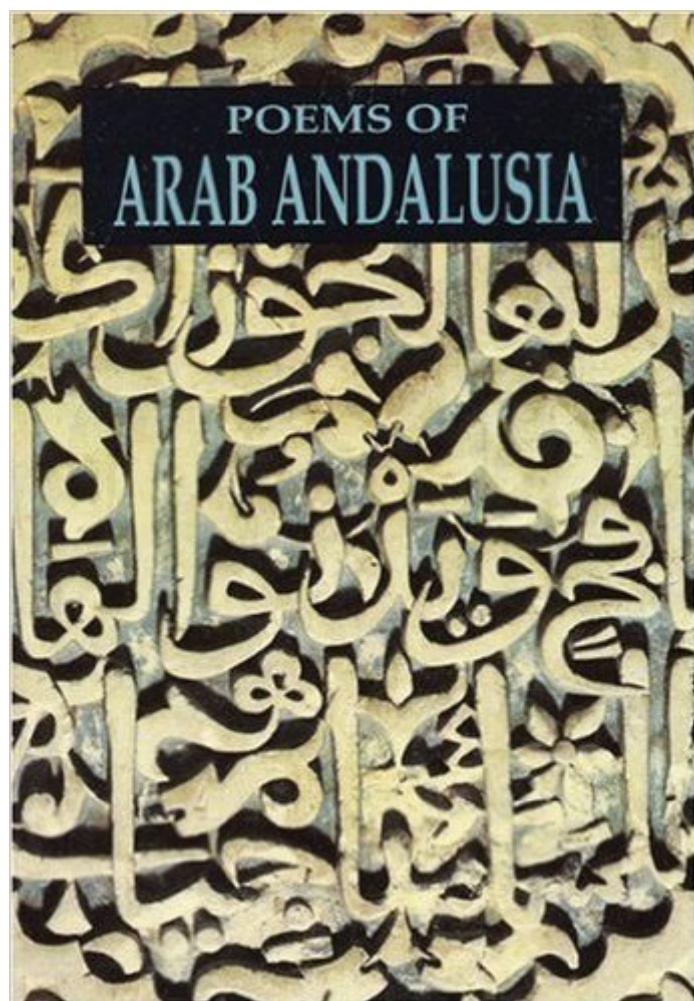


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Poems Of Arab Andalusia



Synopsis

These poems, from the astonishing 10th- through 13th-century civilization in Andalusia, are based on the codex of Ibn Sa'id, who wanted poems "whose idea is more subtle than the West Wind, and whose language is more beautiful than a fair face." Spanish readers have long been enchanted by their enduring appeal through the versions by Emilio García-ámez. This poetry of Arab Andalusia made a profound impact on Spain's Generation of '27. Rafael Alberti says that it "was a revelation for me and had a great influence on my work, but above all influenced the work of Federico García Lorca.

Book Information

Paperback: 96 pages

Publisher: City Lights Publishers; 59715th edition (January 1, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0872862429

ISBN-13: 978-0872862425

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.3 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (10 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #637,269 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #93 in Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Regional & Cultural > African #163 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Regional & Cultural > European > Spanish #206 in Books > Literature & Fiction > World Literature > Middle Eastern

Customer Reviews

I love poetry and I love the history of al-Andalus, so I raced through this book. The poetry is both beautiful and moving. Franzen's introduction states that this is a translation from a translation (Arabic to Spanish to English) so purists who speak either Arabic or Spanish may want to track down these poems in either the original or the first-remove. I do not speak either Arabic or Spanish and so cannot testify to Franzen's fidelity to the Arabic verse. I preferred Franzen to A.J. Arberry's more direct translation, however. Franzen's translations definitely work as emotionally powerful poetry.

What a wonderful selection of poems - each a gem with its own perfection: "her modesty turns / turns pearl into carnelian" or "The skin of the sky / is as smooth as the pelt / or the river". Certainly

the frequent references to wine and love remind one that the poetry has an Arab origin. But there is also a sense of non-Arab place as in "The Valley of Almeria". The poems witness Spain as the border - a moving border - between the Arab and European worlds. As such, this too slim volume provides context for both Spanish and Arabic poetry.

So much of the world would relegate Arabs to an intellectual and cultural dustbin, not realizing that at one time Spain's Andalucia -- like Baghdad and Damascus -- were the world's intellectual centers while central Europe wallowed in the Dark Ages. This collection goes a long way in restoring Arab poets to their rightful place in the great literature of the world, providing the lover of poetry with a mesmerizing feast of complex and extended metaphors. Highly recommended to say the least!

The poems were originally in Arabic, then Spanish by Garcia Gomez and now in English. Although the poems are still fresh, and thoughtful, it is better to know the command of early Arab poetry. As well, don't be disappointed my Muslim brothers and sisters, it is not "Islamic poetry" as I thought when I purchased it. Many of the poems are love stories as well. The content is very diverse, and that is nice as well, along with some well known Spanish poets that we have all heard of before makes the book a nice keepsake. If you are a poetry lover I would get the book anyway, where else can you get a text with Andalusian poets in English. I would definitely recommend WISDOMS OF ISLAM if you would like a wonderful book in content, spiritual odes, and real love! For Allah that is!

I used this book as a resource for my term paper in an Islamic history course. My focus is how Jews, Christians, and Muslims developed a cultural and social renaissance in Islamic Spain. This book was the most beautiful. The poems put at ease. Most are great love poems that are highly recommended to read to a loved one. The nostalgia you feel takes you back to witness the cultural scene that had developed there is breathtaking. A great book for anybody to read or use in their studies.

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