



BRILL



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ENTANGLED GAZES: THE POLYSEMY OF THE NEW GREAT MOSQUE OF GRANADA

On July 10, 2003, the Comunidad Islámica en España (CIE, or Islamic Community in Spain)—founded and still largely composed of Spanish-born converts, not immigrants—inaugurated a mosque complex under the name of the Great Mosque of Granada (*al-Masjid al-jāmi‘ bi-Gharnāta*). The complex includes an interior courtyard with an ablution fountain, leading to the façade of the sanctuary; a minaret on the north and a garden on the south of the upper portion of the site; and a house for the imam and the Centro de Estudios Islámicos (Center for Islamic Studies) on the descending north slope (figs. 1–3). Dignitaries from Muslim countries and delegates from European Muslim communities attended the ceremony, along with the local, national, and international press.¹ The construction of mosques in contemporary Europe and the United States is almost always a subject of controversy, but in Granada, the capital of the last Muslim kingdom in what is now Spain, the event took on a special cast. *El País*, the leading national daily, reported that the CIE had succeeded “in obtaining ... something that they did not have since the time of Boabdil’s surrender of the city to the Catholic Monarchs in 1492.”² In an interview with *Al-Ahram Weekly*, an English-language paper published in Cairo, members of the CIE also spoke of the “return of Islam to Spain,” stating that the mosque would become “the centre for the revival of Islam in Europe.”³ Meanwhile, the editorial page of *ABC*, a conservative national daily, echoing at once the notion of Islam’s surrender then and of its return now, asserted that fundamentalist doctrines would be taught at the mosque, concluding that “given our foolish complacency,” it would be no surprise “if one day, not too far away, we’ll have to start a new Reconquest.”⁴ At the inauguration ceremony, however, a

representative of the mayor’s office made appeasing remarks inflected by a particular historical perspective when he emphasized the need for “defending the values of coexistence [*convivencia*] and tolerance,” citing the Albayzín, the neighborhood where the new mosque was built, as an example of “perfect harmony” and a place of “cultural and religious encounter.”⁵

So if, as elsewhere, the recent wave of Muslim immigration and its xenophobic backlash certainly mark contemporary Spain, the accounts of the inauguration, whether conciliatory or inflammatory, extend the context some five hundred years to an earlier period of Muslim presence unique in Western Europe. Whereas in general, mosques built in the twentieth century in Europe have perpetuated a postcolonial ideology through the use of “alien” or “adopted” forms, as Nebahat Avcıoğlu has cogently argued,⁶ the situation in Granada is distinguished by the availability of prominent local Islamic architectural models and a complicated history in which Muslims are neither alien nor adopted in any simple sense.

In Granada, then, the new building was “immediately charged with heavy symbolic meaning,” constituting what Pierre Nora has theorized as a “lieu de mémoire,” or memory-site: a point at which collective memory is evoked to construct and maintain “the monumental edifice that was the nation.”⁷ Was the mosque to be a reminder of an eight-century-long disruption in the continuous history of Christian Spain, or to represent the alternative continuity of a hybrid identity? The opposing views on the historiography of medieval Muslim Spain expressed on the occasion of the inauguration recall the terms of a debate initiated in the 1950s by Spanish historians that has continued to influence the views



Fig. 1. Great Mosque of Granada, courtyard and façade of the sanctuary. (Photo: Olga Bush)



Fig. 2. Great Mosque of Granada, garden of the mosque, looking northeast. (Photo: Olga Bush)



Fig. 3. Great Mosque of Granada, Center for Islamic Studies, façade. (Photo: Olga Bush)

of intellectuals, politicians, and the public at large. On one side, Américo Castro embraced the hybridity of Spanish ancestry and culture, highlighting the contribution of the Muslim past to Spanish modernity, while Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz rejected the notion of the “continuity” of the historical narrative of Spanish civilization, arguing that Muslim domination caused an irreparable “interruption” that lasted eight hundred years.⁸ These perspectives continue to be marshaled today by all sides—the “Maurophiles,” the “Maurophobes,” and the Muslim community—transforming the discourse on Spain’s relation to its Muslim present into a debate about its Muslim past.⁹ Gil Anidjar argues that as long as al-Andalus “has been hardened into a historiographical object,” the tendency to idealize the past—either as the glory of Muslim al-Andalus or the glory of Christian Reconquest—comes at the expense of the present.¹⁰ At the inauguration the gazes on the past were entangled, and the present-day building faded from view.

To see the mosque anew requires a theory of the gaze that goes beyond the customary opposition of subject

and object.¹¹ Thus one needs to consider it not only as an *object* of the gaze—whether from the privileged frontal position of the Christian majority or the marginalized, anamorphic perspective of Spain’s neo-Muslims—but also as an alternative *subject* position of a distinct scopic regime. For the new mosque, as an agent in the construction of viewership and an embodiment of multiple, diverse relationships, is as much a place to gaze *from* as to gaze *at*. The real battle was for the privileged view from atop the Albayzín hill situated directly across from the Alhambra, the Nasrid palatial complex on the opposing Sabika hill and Spain’s most-frequented tourist attraction (fig. 4).

Abdulhasib Castiñeira, director of the new mosque, framed the debate in explicitly visual terms when he declared: “There is a garage-mosque and a basement-mosque. The Great Mosque of Granada is on top of the mountain, plainly visible, facing history, and in the place most visited in Granada.”¹² His statement recalls that the CIE, initially small in numbers and limited in funds, had previously worshipped in existing residential or commercial spaces in the Albayzín. At the same time,



Fig. 4. Alhambra, view from the minaret of the Great Mosque of Granada. (Photo: Olga Bush)



Fig. 5. Alhambra, view from the Mirador of the Church of San Nicolás. (Photo: Olga Bush)

he intimates a formerly clandestine character to the neo-Muslim presence. Now the community was to be highly visible, with an institutional home that would be an architectural landmark. From there, “facing history,” meant, literally, facing the Alhambra.

Yet a curious misrecognition in Castiñeira’s remark serves to locate more precisely the point of tension concerning the site. The summit of the Albayzín is *not* the “place most visited in Granada.” Castiñeira conflated what one gazes *at* with where one gazes *from*, precisely because he was entangled in a neighboring gaze. The most-visited point from which to gain a sweeping panoramic view of the Alhambra is the Mirador of San Nicolás, a belvedere named for the adjacent Church of San Nicolás, which stands no more than some 18 meters (20 yards) from the new Great Mosque of Granada (figs. 5 and 6).

The battle was joined. As is to be expected, the home page of the website of the Fundación Albaicín (Albayzín

Foundation), a branch of city hall, features a view of the Alhambra.¹³ Much less expected: it is the garden of the mosque that has been selected as the belvedere in the photograph. Yet the accompanying text omits all mention of the mosque, referring only to the general area of the Church of San Nicolás and so giving the misleading impression that the photograph represents the view from the Mirador of San Nicolás. Thus mobilized, accommodated, or contested, the visuality of the new mosque merges aesthetics with politics.

THE SITE

The mosque’s site at the summit of the Albayzín hill, measuring more than 2,000 square meters,¹⁴ occupies a special place within the city’s topography and history. Archaeologists and historians consider the site to be the point of origin of the city of Granada, dating back to the



Fig. 6. Albayzín, Granada, view from the Alhambra with the Church of San Nicolás and its Mirador, and the Great Mosque of Granada east (right) of the church. (Photo: Olga Bush)

Oppidum Iliberri, an Ibero settlement of the second half of the seventh century before the common era.¹⁵ Although continuously inhabited during the Roman period, the next significant occupation of the site took place during the eleventh century, when the city (*madīna*) of Gharnata was ruled by the Zirid dynasty (1013–90). A Zirid fortress, known as the old fortress (*al-qaṣaba al-qadīma*), incorporated the Roman settlement and extended farther along the hill's ridges (figs. 7 and 8).

Under the rule of the Nasrid dynasty (1238–1492), the Albayzín hill comprised many neighborhoods, each with its mosques, communal ovens, wells, baths, markets, and shops. The Albayzín was densely populated—with thirty mosques, 14,000 houses, and a population of 40,000¹⁶—until Granada's fall in 1492 to the Christian Monarchs (the Reyes Católicos, Ferdinand and Isabella) and the subsequent exodus of the Muslim population. Further transformations took place after the Moriscos—the Muslims who remained in the city after the Christian Reconquest and who, contravening the articles of capitulation, were forcibly converted to Christianity after a rebellion in 1500—were expelled from the city and the Iberian Peninsula after another uprising in 1568–71. New Christian residents repopulated the Albayzín, consolidating small Morisco properties into large estates. Mosques were demolished or transformed into churches.

In the *Plataforma de Ambrosio Vico* (1611), one of the earliest graphic renditions of the Albayzín hill, several houses, possibly of Nasrid or Morisco origin, are depicted on or near the site (fig. 9). This image also shows the site's proximity to the Church of San Salvador to the northeast and the Church of San Nicolás to the west, which was among the twenty-three mudéjar churches begun in 1501 under Cardinal Pedro González de Mendoza to accommodate the converted Moriscos. Like many others, it was built on the foundations of a demolished mosque.¹⁷ The Church of San Salvador now stands on the site of the Great Mosque of the Albayzín, of which the Almohad patio is the only vestige. In his engraving, Ambrosio Vico also identified a Hospital of the Moriscos close to the site of the new mosque. After the Expulsion, the hospital was given to the Order of Augustinos Descalzos, which built a convent there (it is now a *carmen*,

or large private house with a garden).¹⁸ The barren land adjacent to the mosque's site on the east in Vico's image later served for the construction of the Convent of the Tomasas in 1676, one of many new convents founded in the seventeenth century that further changed the urban fabric. The Convent of the Tomasas, which still functions as such, was built on terrain that slopes steeply downward from the mosque's site.

Archaeological excavations have shown that part of the site served as a cemetery shared by the Church of San Nicolás and the Church of San Salvador from the early sixteenth century until the early nineteenth century.¹⁹ A photograph of the Albayzín taken from the Alhambra by Jean Laurent circa 1879–80 shows the site occupied by the thick vegetation of a garden and the high walls that delineate the property on the south and east sides.²⁰ A house adjacent to the garden on the west side can also be discerned in this image. From the end of the nineteenth through the first half of the twentieth century, the site was a private property that changed hands several times; by then it comprised two houses and a large garden.²¹ A document from 1890 states that the property belonged to Enrique Linares García, a dealer in antiquities and an avid photographer of the Alhambra. In 1911 he solicited a municipal permit for the construction of a house that he wished to call Carmen de los Moriscos.²² The name he intended for his house is characteristic of that period, when some of the estates in the Albayzín were reconstructed as orientalist fantasies, adding another historical layer to the neighborhood's character. Linares García planned to hire Ángel Casas Vílchez, an architect renowned for his public buildings in the center of Granada as well as for orientalist reconstructions in the Albayzín, such as Carmen de la Media Luna, which still stands. There is no evidence, however, that a house was erected on the site at that time. Nonetheless, during the 1950s the property had a house on it, documented as Carmen de los Moriscos when it passed to a new owner.²³ More recently, another prominent citizen, Manuel Sola Rodríguez-Bolívar, mayor of Granada from 1953 to 1968, owned this residence.

In 1981, when the CIE purchased the site from Rodríguez-Bolívar's son,²⁴ much of the Albayzín was in a state of abandonment. The CIE was not the only group to take



Fig. 7. Part of the defensive walls of the Zirid fortress known as the old fortress (*al-qaṣaba al-qadīma*) in the vicinity of the Great Mosque of Granada, near Plaza Larga, Albayzín, Granada. (Photo: Olga Bush)



Fig. 8. Defensive walls of the Zirid fortress on the western slope of the Albayzín, Granada. (Photo: Olga Bush)



Fig. 9. Detail of *Plataforma de Ambrosio Vico* (1611), plan of Granada drawn by Ambrosio Vico and engraved by Francisco Heylan. The Church of San Nicolás is indicated with capital letter “T”; two adjoined houses that occupy the site of the future mosque stand east of the church’s apse. (After Juan Manuel Barrios Rozúa, *Guía de la Granada desaparecida* [Granada: Editorial Comares, 1999], fig. 16).

advantage of the resulting low real estate prices. Many foreigners and some Spaniards from outside of Granada began to rehabilitate houses, attracted by the favorable market, the vista onto the Alhambra, and the opportunity to create residences in a large urban quarter that had preserved its medieval layout.²⁵ In 1994, UNESCO declared the Albayzín a World Heritage Site. During the second half of the 1990s, the international recognition of the neighborhood’s cultural significance became an impetus for a new surge in the rehabilitation of residences, often as rental properties to accommodate the swelling waves of tourists. Despite all the changes, the Albayzín continues to be perceived and experienced by visitors and inhabitants, and promoted by regional and municipal cultural entities, as a unique living environment in which medieval and early modern structures continue to be inhabited. Indeed, public wells, though no longer in use, still punctuate the narrow streets, and Plaza Larga continues to serve as an open-air market for

local residents, as it did in the medieval period (figs. 10 and 11). More than eighty houses constructed or rebuilt by the Moriscos in the sixteenth century have been preserved in the neighborhood,²⁶ which in 2009 had 8,277 residents.²⁷ Medieval monuments, early modern churches, and picturesque views of the city and of the luxuriant, verdant gardens of *cármenes* terraced along the hillside bring visitors to explore the Albayzín. The Mirador of San Nicolás is the main tourist destination. From this belvedere, spectacular panoramic vistas open onto the Alhambra, the city below, and the mountains of the Sierra Nevada. In third place after the Alhambra and the Cathedral of Granada with regard to the number of visitors, the Albayzín is a key historical, cultural, and, therefore, economic asset to the city.²⁸

To evaluate the neighborhood’s potential for the tourist industry, the Ayuntamiento de Granada (Municipal Offices of Granada) undertook an exhaustive study of the Albayzín’s urban plan culminating in a 1990



Fig. 10. *Aljibe* (cistern), Plaza of San Salvador, Albayzín, Granada. (Photo: Olga Bush)



Fig. 11. Plaza Larga, Albayzín, Granada. (Photo: Olga Bush)

report titled “Plan Especial de Protección y Reforma Interior” (PEPRI, or Special Plan for Protection and Internal Reform), which became the foundation for all further studies.²⁹ One concern of the PEPRI, namely historic preservation, is of particular interest here. According to this study, there were 2,560 buildings in the Albayzín, of which 322 were recognized for their architectural or artistic value, or for their ambient value as examples of vernacular architecture; 42 percent of these edifices predate 1920.³⁰ A more recent comprehensive study of 2005 states: “Now is the moment to develop initiatives of recuperation or maintenance on behalf of collective memory and of strategies of cultural management of available cultural resources to generate initiatives for promotion of *new* cultural products that lend themselves to consumption by Granadan tourism.”³¹ Among many historical narratives and their visualizations, the “Moorish” past continues to be of great value, both to regional institutions for cultural preservation and to regional political parties, for promoting the uniqueness of Andalusia and thus strengthening the tourist economy and giving Andalusia some leverage in the competition for federal subsidies.³²

The desire of the residents at large to share in the uniqueness of the past—whether appreciating the culture that includes the figure of a “historic Moor” or instrumentalizing it for the “consumption of the ‘Arabness,’” to cite the terms of anthropologist Mikaela Rogozen-Soltar³³—does not extend to the present and to the presence of today’s Muslims. On the contrary, in the context of recent, large-scale immigration from North Africa, Moroccan immigrants are perceived as “the embodiment of the ghost of the medieval Moor.”³⁴ Nevertheless, the impetus for the preservation of cultural heritage, including important vestiges of the Muslim artistic past, prevails. In this process of revitalization, and in conjunction with the UNESCO declaration, two important municipal laws were promulgated that would govern the design of the new mosque. First, to obtain a city permit for construction, all properties in the Albayzín have to be excavated and archaeological finds thoroughly documented. Second, new buildings in the Albayzín have to “harmonize [with the] typical or traditional character [of the neighborhood].”³⁵ The excavations of the site of the future mosque made clear that

such harmony was a vexed question in the multilayered Albayzín. What type, and which tradition? Harmonize with what, or whom?

THE FORMATION OF THE NEO-MUSLIM COMMUNITY

To situate the underlying question of national identity, which intersects with Islam with a special urgency in the twenty-first century, one must look back to a pivotal moment in Spanish history in the last quarter of the preceding century, namely, the death of Francisco Franco in 1976. Toward the end of Franco’s dictatorship, a process of democratization began that eventually brought freedom of religion and speech, thus opening Spain to cultural, religious, and political diversity. In Granada in 1975, a small group of mostly left-leaning, university-educated young Spanish men, in search of both a spiritual path distinct from Catholicism and a societal model distinct from the capitalist West, gathered around Shaykh ‘Abdalqadir as-Sufi al-Murabit (the designation *al-Murābiṭ* is derived from the name of the Almoravid dynasty, which ruled Granada from 1088 to 1166).³⁶ Born in Scotland in 1930 as Ian Dallas, Shaykh ‘Abdalqadir as-Sufi al-Murabit converted to Islam in 1967 in Fez, Morocco, and came to be a charismatic leader and the founder of the first modern Muslim communities in several cities of Andalusia. Under his leadership, that group of young Spaniards accepted Islam, forging a Sufi-leaning community of the Maliki school. Among the tenets espoused by Shaykh ‘Abdalqadir as-Sufi al-Murabit and his followers, known as Morabitunes (literally, People of the *ribāṭ*, or the Fortress), was the return of Islam to Spain.³⁷

In that initial period of the formation of neo-Muslim communities in Spain, especially prior to Franco’s death and immediately afterward, conversion to Islam was an act of dissent and political resistance to fascism and the “ideology of the National Catholicism.”³⁸ The neo-Muslims espoused a commitment to religious and social pluralism as a cornerstone of democratization, which they grounded in a firmly held view that Islam brings political reform in the name of equality and justice. They also held an idealized vision of medieval

al-Andalus as “an exceptional social experiment” in *convivencia*, that is, peaceful coexistence, which, many continue to believe, could be undertaken once again.³⁹ The former position has been expressed through cross-cultural conferences, including an annual international conference on Islamic feminism.⁴⁰ The latter, in which al-Andalus is viewed as a “recovered memory,” has led many neo-Muslims to speak, even now, of “reversion” instead of “conversion.”⁴¹

At the same time, spurred on by the resurgence of regionalism throughout Spain, many members of the socialist and communist parties, as well as liberal intellectuals, viewed conversion to Islam as the means to recuperate collective Andalusian identity in their struggle for regional autonomy, which had been suppressed under Franco. Combining their political agenda and their historical vision, neo-Muslims took a leading role in the founding of new regionalist political organizations. This regionalist movement had representative groups throughout Andalusia, such as Frente para la Liberación de Andalucía (Front for the Liberation of Andalusia) and Jama'a Islámica de Al-Andalus (Muslim Community of al-Andalus), founded in 1978 and in 1980, respectively, sometimes involving only neo-Muslims but often with the participation of non-Muslims.⁴² By 1989 fourteen Islamic associations joined to form the Federación Española de Entidades Religiosas Islámicas (FEERI, or Spanish Federation of Islamic Religious Entities), and in 1992 FEERI merged with the Unión de Comunidades Islámicas de España (Union of Islamic Communities of Spain), founded in 1990,⁴³ to form the Comisión Islámica de España (Islamic Commission of Spain), an institutional entity that could represent the Spanish Muslim community to the State.⁴⁴ In the same year, the Comisión Islámica de España signed an agreement, “Acuerdo de Cooperación” (Accord for Cooperation) with the Socialist government of Felipe González in which the legal rights of the Spanish Muslim community were articulated.⁴⁵

While within two decades of their formation, the neo-Muslim communities of Spain had achieved a consolidated representation at the national level, the same period witnessed many local splits along religious and political lines.⁴⁶ From the very outset the neo-Muslims of Granada comprised several groups, among them the

members of the CIE who relocated to Granada from other cities in the region; a commune of hippies, from the mountains of the Alpujarras, that was receptive to the tenets of Islam; and a group that belonged to Shaykh 'Abdalqadir as-Sufi al-Murabit's al-Murabitun movement.⁴⁷ They tended to dress in djellabas and turbans, making themselves into the exoticized objects of the gaze of their Christian neighbors, even if their places of worship were inconspicuous.⁴⁸ Islam generally appeared in the streets as disparate individuals rather than as a constituted group with an institutional face. The non-Muslim residents generally identified the neo-Muslims as “Sufis” and expected that, like the hippie communes, the “Sufi” community would be transitory, leaving no lasting impact on the city.⁴⁹

By the early 1980s the followers of the shaykh in Granada had already divided into several groups, with separate masjids in existing buildings—the figurative, if not literal, garage mosques and basement mosques of the Albayzín.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, the visibility of the neo-Muslims began to grow when they started to move into the neighborhood of lower Albayzín known as Calderería. At that time, this area adjoining the center of the city was dilapidated, depopulated, and frequented by drug addicts. The neo-Muslims began the rehabilitation of Calderería, renovating houses and setting up shops there.⁵¹ With the increasing immigration of Muslims to Spain in general and to Andalusia in particular, coming from Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, and especially Morocco, the visibility of Muslims could no longer remain peripheral, either to the Christian neighbors in Granada or to the tourists frequenting the new stores and tea shops of the Calderería.

It was the vision of Shaykh 'Abdalqadir as-Sufi al-Murabit to construct a new Great Mosque for the city, and he facilitated the initial funding. Although the Spanish government has always provided financial support to the Catholic Church (including religious education, social and charitable work, and artistic heritage within its 280 museums, 130 cathedrals, and nearly a 1,000 monasteries and nunneries), Muslim communities have been largely excluded from the state's budget.⁵² The one exception has been making Islamic instruction available at public schools, articulated in the “Acuerdo de Cooperación” of 1992 but put into effect only in

2005.⁵³ So it was that the Morabitunes, a group that continued to follow the shaykh,⁵⁴ sought financial support for the building project from foreign governments and individuals from abroad. The historical importance of Granada as a symbol of the last bastion of medieval Muslim power in Europe and of its flourishing cultural achievements, emblemized by the Alhambra, resonated globally then and now.⁵⁵ Hence, aided by the shaykh's connections, the Morabitunes were successful in securing funds: first from Libya for the purchase of the land, and later from Morocco, Malaysia, and the United Arab Emirates for the construction of the mosque. Constituted under the name Sociedad para el Retorno del Islam en España (Society for the Return of Islam in Spain), the Morabitunes purchased the site at the summit of the Albayzín in 1981. By 1985 the group had taken the less militant name Comunidad Islámica en España (CIE), and it had raised sufficient funds for the erection of the mosque and also for the purchase of another property in the Albayzín for the construction of a center for teaching and cultural activities.

DESIGNING THE MOSQUE

As the CIE gathered sufficient strength and financial support to initiate the process of building a new mosque at the summit of the Albayzín, a struggle erupted between Granada's neo-Muslims and their neighbors. Visuality was the crux of the conflict. While the height and volumes of buildings were at stake, the garden and the minaret, the principal sites for gazing *from* and gazing *at*, respectively, became the focal points of controversy. Design and redesign of the buildings and of these two elements in particular aimed at addressing the contentious issues.

Several early designs for the new mosque envisioned a building of imposing height and proportions.⁵⁶ In one of the early undated drawings (which I am designating Design 1), the mosque is conceived as a fortified enclosure, reminiscent of a medieval *ribāṭ*, with its massive volumes projecting high above the surrounding landscape.⁵⁷ One is tempted to conjecture that visuality here bespeaks social psychology or ideology, that is, a communal feeling of being a minority under siege or a

vanguard in the restoration of Islam in Western Europe. What is more certain, however, is that from the time of this very preliminary (and unrealized) design and through the many subsequent transformations, visuality was the field for making claims—and contesting them—to a local genealogy for the Muslim community. At this stage, the reminiscence of the *ribāṭ* recalls the Almohad reign in twelfth-century al-Andalus and, more specifically, its manifestation in the Albayzín, where the minaret of the Almohad Masjid al-Ta'ibin (Mosque of the Converts) still stands, having been incorporated into the Church of San Juan de los Reyes as a bell tower.⁵⁸ The pertinence of the name of the Masjid al-Ta'ibin to a new community of converts draws attention to Nora's assertion that "lieux de mémoire" combine material and nonmaterial elements.⁵⁹ Hence, it has also been noted that the *ribāṭ*-like structure links the new architectural project to the oldest extant minaret in the Albayzín: the remains of the Zirid Masjid al-Murabitin (Mosque of the People of the *ribāṭ*), likewise incorporated as a bell tower into the Church of San José.⁶⁰ The former minarets—significant visual markers in the lower part of the Albayzín—operated visually as material elements, while the names of these medieval mosques resonated with the CIE as a community of converts, many belonging to the al-Murabitun movement (figs. 12 and 13).

Another undated drawing (Design 2) shows the south side of the site occupied by a large mosque, while on the northern, downward slope of the site stands a complex of linked buildings organized around an open courtyard. It is possible that a school, a cultural center, and a house for the imam were planned for some of these structures. The buildings' volumes, simple geometric forms, and flat roofing indicate a preference for modern forms (fig. 14). Despite the Modernist predilection, the imposing masses of all of the structures, but especially of the mosque and minaret, are evocative of the first Almohad-inspired design. The portico on the south side of the sanctuary and the minaret of impressive height and proportions here figure prominently at the edge of the high platform on the south side, facing the Alhambra. A monumental, two-tower gate separates the mosque from the rest of the complex and gives entry to the school-cultural center and auxiliary buildings linked to it. This gate is mirrored on the long axis by a massive two-tower



Fig. 12. Minaret, Masjid al-Ta'ibin (Mosque of the Converts) (Church of San Juan de los Reyes). (Photo: Olga Bush)



Fig. 13. Minaret, Masjid al-Murabitin (Mosque of the People of the *ribāt*) (Church of San José). (Photo: Olga Bush)



Fig. 14. Drawing of the Great Mosque of Granada, Design 2, n.d. (Drawing: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)

façade that gives access to the school–cultural center from the street below the site and, hence, independent of the entrance to the mosque.

Yet another early proposal (Design 3) was conceived in 1982–83 by Ian Whiteman, a British convert to Islam who spent time in Granada in the early 1980s.⁶¹ The drawings show the site with its buildings, courtyards, and a garden enclosed by a wall (figs. 15 and 16). The mosque is projected as a hypostyle building of irregular plan, with aisles parallel to the qibla wall and with a *maqṣūra* (lattice screen enclosing the area of the mihrab and minbar in early mosques) delineated by its cupola. The mosque's exterior south wall, which gives access to the sanctuary and faces the Alhambra, is framed by an arcaded portico that transforms the wall of the building into an exterior screen-façade, recalling a similar solution in the previous design. Here the portico extends beyond the façade and links the mosque with the tall, massive volume of the minaret. Whiteman's design draws on visual references to the sanctuaries of the early Umayyad mosques. Nonetheless, the site's irregular configuration and the placement of the minaret in a prominent position at some distance from the mosque necessitated a structure to link them—the portico. The resulting overall design was rendered typologically and spatially incongruent with Umayyad models.

As in the case of Design 2, it is noteworthy that Whiteman placed the minaret at the south end of the site (here at the southeast corner instead of southwest), closest to the Alhambra and also directly above the steepest part of the south slope. The height and proportions of the minaret were thus emphasized, visually dominating the approach of visitors climbing toward the Church of San Nicolás and its Mirador. The sanctuary's façade, situated on the north side, opens onto a square courtyard with a peristyle. On its north side the courtyard provides access to another building. A minaret, similar to that of the mosque, albeit reduced in proportions, stands in close proximity to the east of the second building. This second, smaller minaret suggests that the building was probably conceived as a madrasa for the community. The absence of a cultural center from this design might be explained by the fact that the community purchased another parcel of land elsewhere in the Albayzín for this very purpose. Hence the lower part of the site, as shown in the design, is occupied by a large garden that extends down the north slope.

In 1984, three members of the CIE, all architects by training, with Manuel Pastor as the head of the group, offered what appears to be a new architectural proposal (Design 4) (figs. 17 and 18).⁶² Here the mosque occupies the high ground on the south side of the site. The T-plan



Fig. 15. Ian Whiteman, axonometric drawing of the Great Mosque of Granada, Design 3, 1982–83. (Drawing: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)

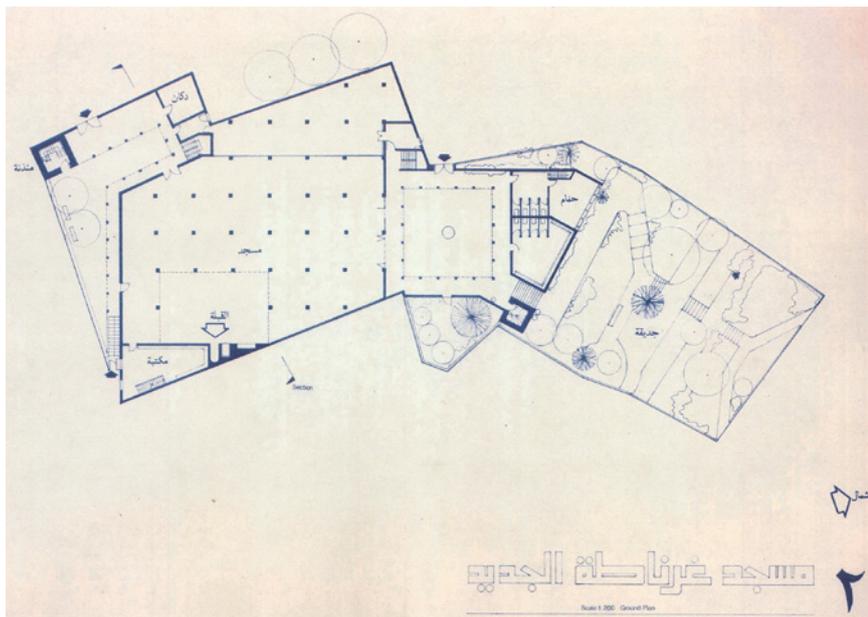


Fig. 16. Ian Whiteman, plan of the Great Mosque of Granada, Design 3, 1982–83. (Plan: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)

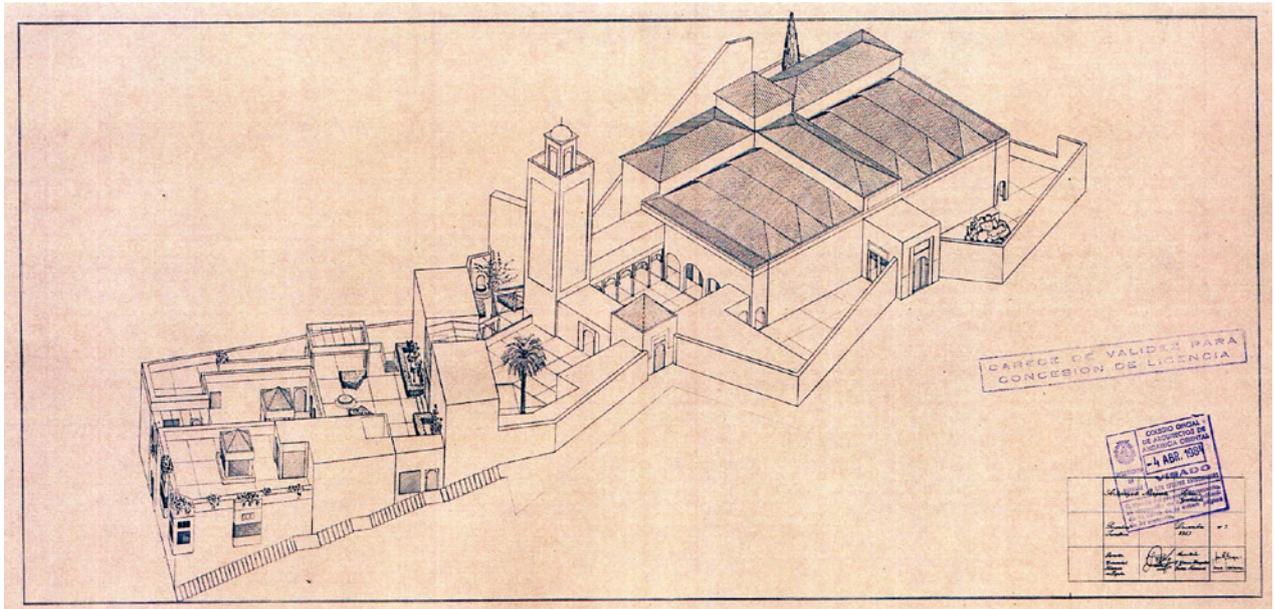


Fig. 17. Drawing of the Great Mosque of Granada, Design 4, 1984. (Drawing: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)

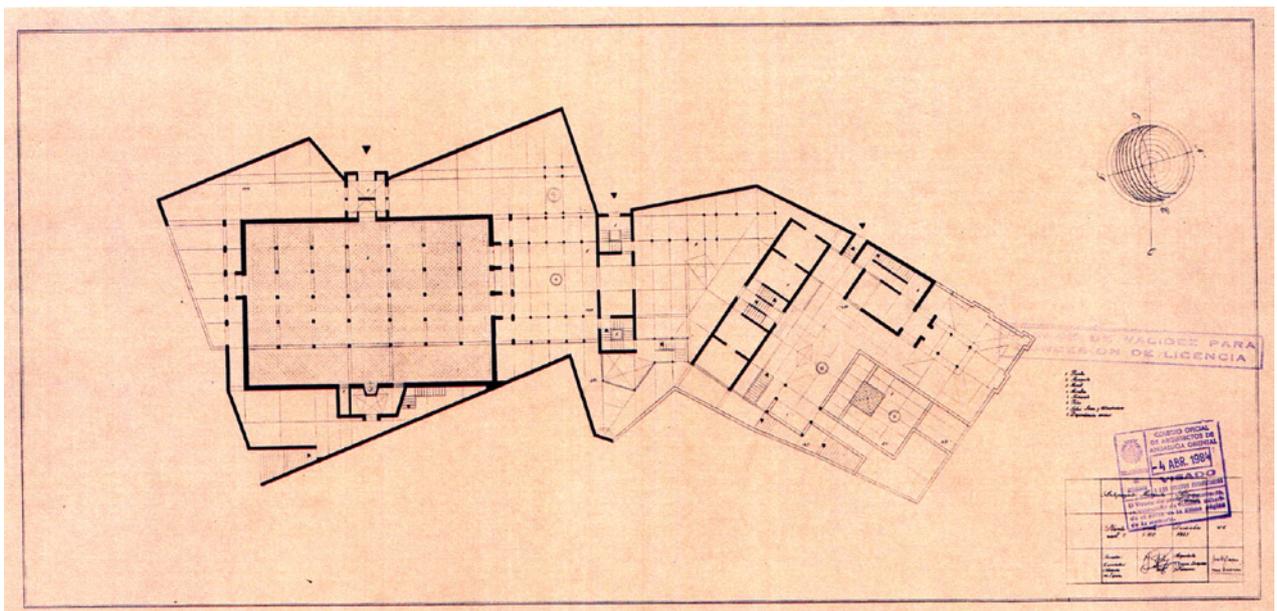


Fig. 18. Plan of the Great Mosque of Granada, Design 4, 1984. (Plan: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)

hypostyle is marked by the elevated roofing over the central nave and the qibla aisle, as well as over the bay of the mihrab, and is emphasized further by the projecting portal of a monumental gate. Aligned with the mihrab on the longitudinal axis of the building, the gate serves as the main entrance to the mosque. A courtyard with a peristyle adjoining the sanctuary's north side affords an entrance to the sanctuary and to the rest of the complex. Although in this proposal the massive minaret of formidable height is reminiscent of Almohad models and so, in this respect, echoes the earlier designs, its placement drastically changes the overall conception of the complex. The minaret is located on the north side of the courtyard and is aligned with a pavilion-gate on the northwest side that serves as a secondary entrance to the site, providing access to the garden and auxiliary buildings on the northern, lower slope. The portico on the exterior of the sanctuary on the south side, similar to that in Designs 2 and 3, articulates the mosque's façade that faces the Alhambra at a nearly even topographical level on the opposing hill, highlighting the visual relationship between these sites. The minaret, towering over the buildings, clearly marks the division between the upper south slope with the mosque and the downward north slope of the site. On the north side, much like in Design 2, a monumental two-tower gate gives access to buildings organized around an open space. Aside from a projected house for the imam, the precise function of the buildings remains unclear, since a school and a cultural center were to be constructed elsewhere.

In contrast to Design 3, this proposal underscores typological affinities not simply with the early medieval mosque architecture of the Umayyads but specifically of the Umayyads of al-Andalus. The recollection of some features of the Great Mosque of Córdoba inscribes the CIE in the historical narrative of al-Andalus as the rightful heirs of the Cordoban caliphate. Visually the design controverts the chronological, (art-) historical continuum by situating the new mosque as a structure in a history that predates the palaces and oratories of the Alhambra. Ideologically, this architectural narrative allows the CIE's disassociation from the Nasrids, the last, defeated dynasty of al-Andalus.

None of these designs were presented to the Área de Urbanismo del Ayuntamiento de Granada (Department of Urbanism of the City of Granada) for study and the eventual approval of a building permit, nor were they exhibited to the public at large. All thus represent the internal search of the community for the expression of its identity. Although unfamiliar with those designs of the mosque complex, by 1984 political opposition to the project had been organized. The Asociación de los Vecinos del Albayzín (Association of the Neighbors of the Albayzín) asked the Área de Urbanismo to rezone the site and thus preclude the construction of the mosque. It was the results of the excavations conducted on the site in 1985 that brought the implicit battle of the gazes clearly into view.

THE BATTLE OF THE GAZES

Two crucial archaeological findings came to light in 1985, both on the south side of the site, the area that now corresponds to the space of the mosque's public garden. First, remains of an Ibero wall and material evidence of habitation (pottery and glass shards) from the same and later, Roman periods were uncovered on the west side of this area. Second, to the east vestiges of two large houses were found, one facing the Alhambra, the other adjoining the first on its north side.⁶³ On the basis of the north-south orientation of the houses, both organized around a central courtyard, and their construction materials and techniques, scholars dated these buildings to the fifteenth or sixteenth century,⁶⁴ which is to say that they are of Nasrid or Morisco origin. The prominence of the site and the size of the houses suggest inhabitants of high social status. The two sets of archaeological findings, Ibero-Roman and Nasrid-Morisco, were measured and recorded.⁶⁵ The question of which past should meet the gaze of the present at this site was now posed materially by the archaeological evidence.

In the charged atmosphere of continuing struggle over the site's zoning,⁶⁶ and having depleted its funds due to the expense of an obligatory excavation campaign, the CIE found itself obliged to sell a property elsewhere in the Albayzín that had been purchased for the

construction of a school and a cultural center. A long hiatus in the project then ensued.

In 1991, the CIE contracted a renowned Granadan architect, Renato Ramírez Sánchez, whose local knowledge and standing would prove crucial in negotiating the legal terrain. Having also raised funds depleted by the 1985 excavations, the CIE was ready to move forward. Ramírez Sánchez rejected all earlier proposals, explaining to the CIE that they were out of keeping with the character of the Albayzín and would never be approved by the city.⁶⁷ He had the advantage of a clear point of reference with regard to the urban design in the neighborhood articulated in the PEPRI-Albayzín, which had been adopted in the city in 1990. Instead, he conceived a mosque of less imposing proportions, on a rectangular plan, with roofing that articulated the qibla wall and the aisles perpendicular to it, and with a pitched roof over the projecting mihrab (figs. 19 and 20).

Architectural style was not the only concern for Ramírez Sánchez. He envisioned a different relationship among the elements of the complex, with a view both to the historical Albayzín and to contemporary political sensitivities. First, he moved the minaret of the mosque from its prominent position in the earlier designs at the south end of the site, facing the Alhambra and looming over the main access to the Mirador of San Nicolás, to the back—that is, the northern end of the site—and aligned it with the oratory's longitudinal axis. In its new location, the lower part of the minaret is concealed behind the volume of the mosque, diminishing the visual impression of its height. Second, he moved an expanded garden to the south end of the site (the cultural center remained on the northern, downward slope). In contrast, Designs 2 and 3 had a carefully laid-out garden on the lower, north side. In those earlier designs, the interior gardens embedded within the mosque enclosure harmonized with one history of the Albayzín, that is, with the Nasrid and Morisco garden typology that continued through the modern period and is still seen in some private homes in the Albayzín. The interior gardens, however, were discordant with another history, that of nineteenth- and twentieth-century orientalism, in which the Alhambra was made the object of the exoticizing gaze from a belvedere-like garden of private

estates, similar to the open space of the Mirador of San Nicolás.

The change in the location and dimensions of the garden in Ramírez Sánchez's 1991 design proved welcome to the city, which had stipulated the creation of a space "equivalent in proportions to that of the Plaza of San Nicolás" (that is, of the mirador) and "with ample vistas" onto the Alhambra, hence a garden-mirador that could be a benefit to the whole neighborhood and its tourists.⁶⁸ A plan to include gardens with "free public access" was unanimously ratified by the governing board of the CIE on June 9, 1994.⁶⁹ However, the minaret became the focal point of great contention when the design was presented to the public in 1993 as part of Ramírez Sánchez's "Estudio de Detalle" (Detailed Study), which set the specific features of the buildings within the outlines of the urban plan of the Albayzín, as determined by the PEPRI. In this design, despite its placement, the structure of the minaret soared over the compact volume of the mosque and the whole site of the complex. More significantly, its immediate proximity to the Church of San Nicolás was taken as a visual challenge. Anticipating concern about the relative heights of the minaret and the bell tower of San Nicolás, Ramírez Sánchez had included a drawing comparing the two and demonstrating that the volumes of the mosque, including the height of the minaret, were substantially smaller than those of the church (fig. 21). That demonstration proved insufficient.

Further word needs to be said about the context of public debate. A series of major cultural events made 1992 "Spain's Year": the quincentennial commemoration of the Reconquest of Granada by the Catholic Monarchs and of Columbus's first voyage to the Americas; the World Expo in Seville; the Olympic Games in Barcelona; and the signing of the Maastricht Treaty on the formation of the European Union with the designation of Madrid as Cultural Capital of Europe.⁷⁰ These events were largely intended to recognize Spain's emergence as a democratic European nation and its foundational role in European modernity. These two points intersected with the reexamination of Spain's medieval history—and of course its relationship with its former colonies, which is less pertinent to the present discussion. Spain vigorously promoted the vision of *convivencia*, and

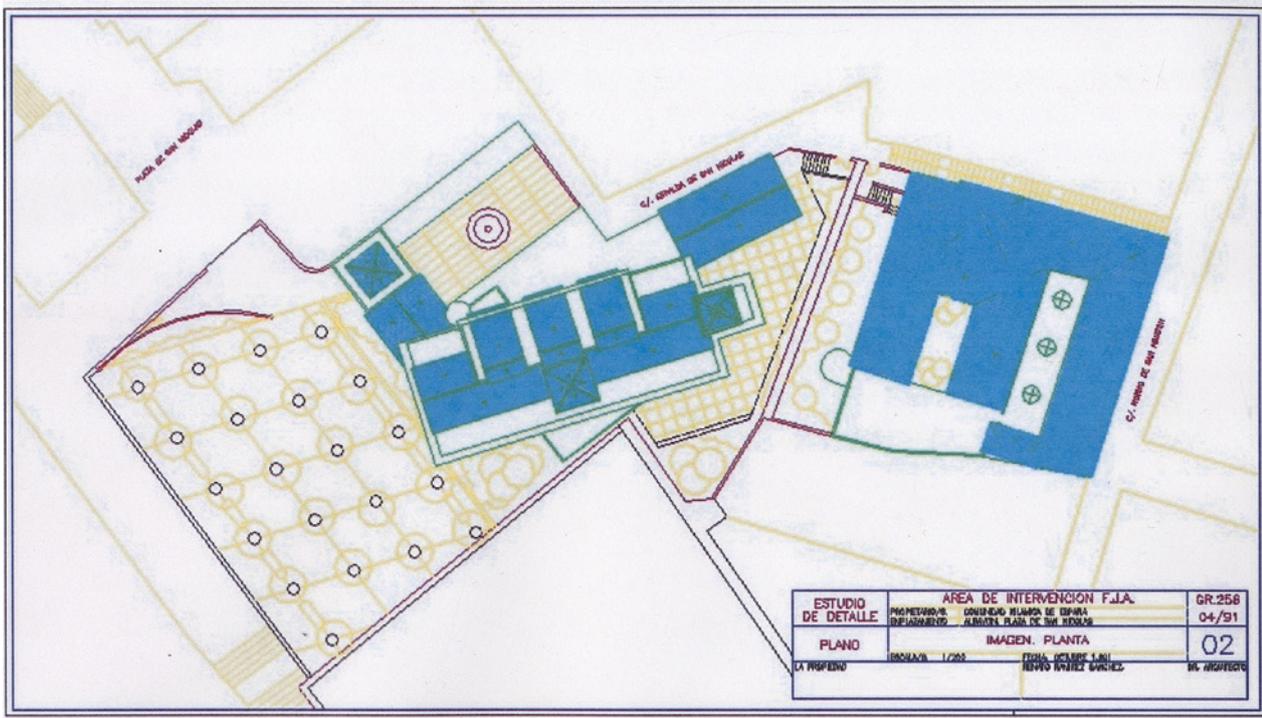


Fig. 19. Renato Ramírez Sánchez, plan of the complex of the Great Mosque of Granada, 1991. (Plan: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)

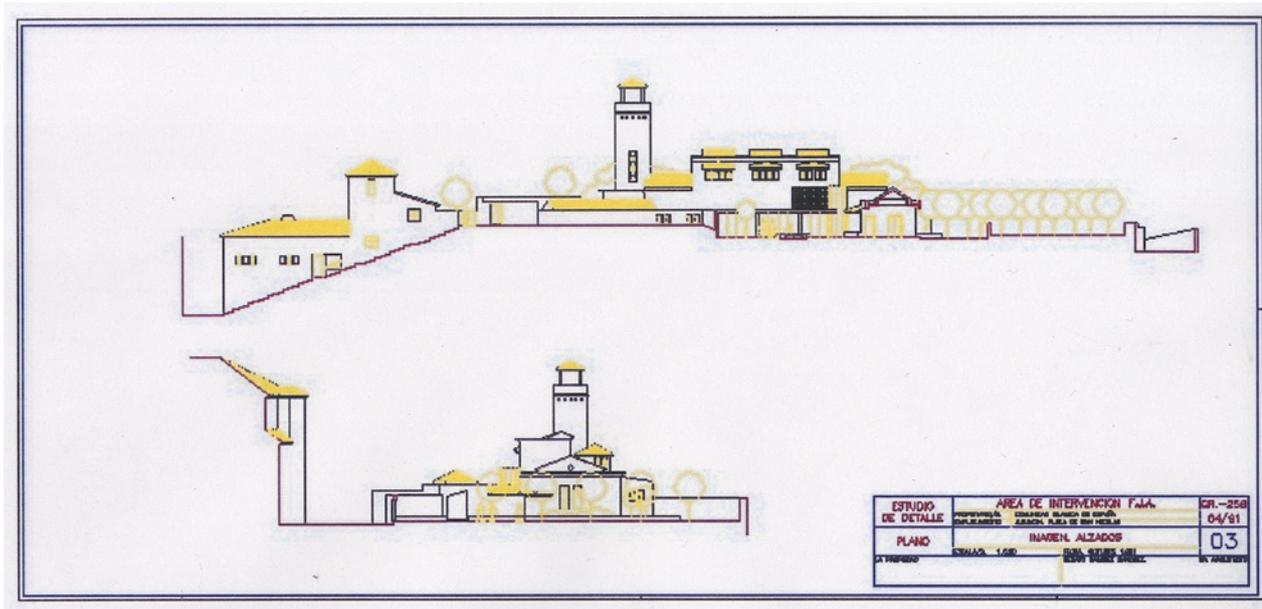


Fig. 20. Renato Ramírez Sánchez, elevations of the Great Mosque of Granada: top, west elevation of the Center for Islamic Studies and of the mosque; bottom, south elevation of the mosque with a partial elevation of the southeast end of the Church of San Nicolás, 1991. (Elevations: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)

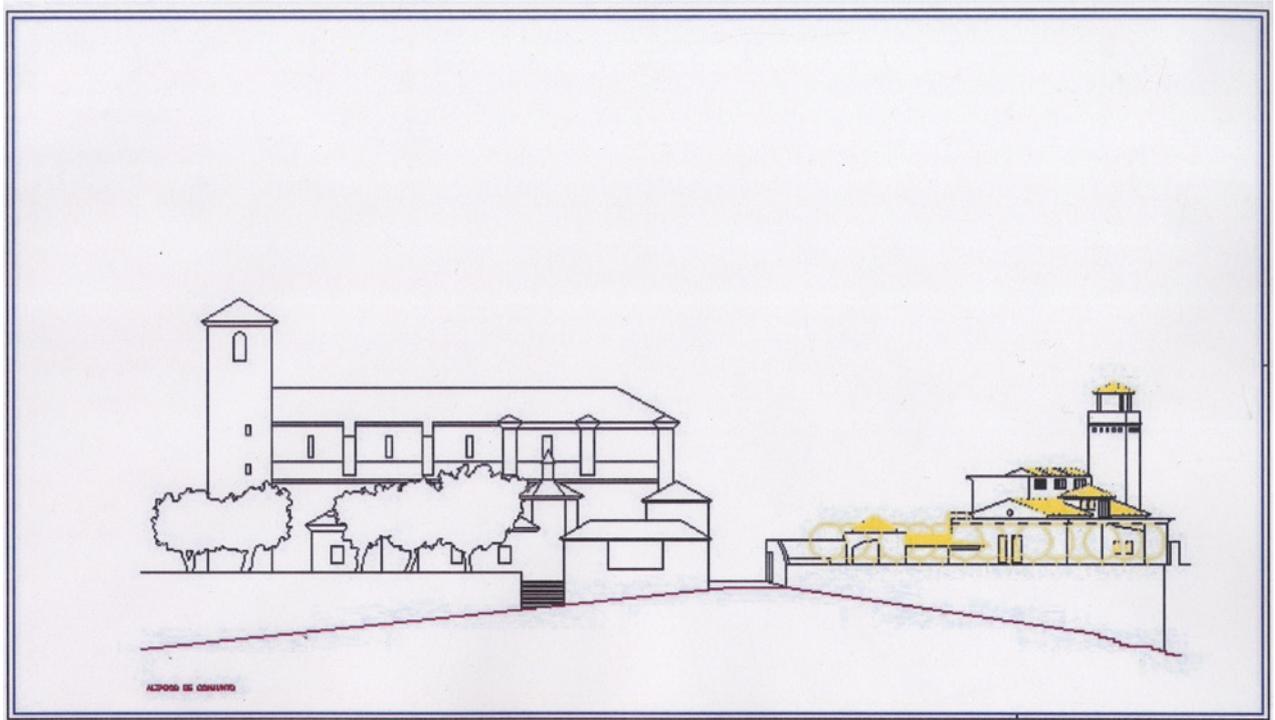


Fig. 21. Renato Ramírez Sánchez, drawing of the Church of San Nicolás and the Great Mosque of Granada, comparing their south elevations. (Drawing: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)

various initiatives focused on Muslim and Jewish heritage as a platform for tolerance in the present. For instance, a major exhibition, *Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain*, was presented by the Alhambra and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; the Centro Cultural Islámico (Islamic Cultural Center) was inaugurated by King Juan Carlos in Madrid; and the edict expelling the Jews from Spain was formally rescinded by the king. Nevertheless, the Christian Reconquest completed in 1492 was also commemorated amid growing social opposition to the rapidly increasing immigration of North Africans. Thus while on the national level the Sephardic Diaspora was celebrated in Madrid's synagogue and in Toledo,⁷¹ Granada continued to hold an annual citywide festival on January 2, El Día de la Toma (The Day of the Taking), marking the date when the Nasrid capital was taken by the victorious Catholic Monarchs.⁷² The heightened awareness of the history of Granada that informed the reaction of the public to the mosque was articulated explicitly in terms of visibility in the

Refundido de la Ley del Suelo (Revised Law of Land Usage) of June 26, 1992, which stipulates: "Constructions in places adjacent to or forming part of a group of buildings of artistic, historical, and archeological character, whether vernacular or traditional, will have to harmonize with the same."⁷³

It was in this climate that debate about the mosque, focusing on the minaret, became the stuff of daily news in Granada.⁷⁴ The local newspaper, *Ideal*, reported that nearly two hundred neighbors, led by the Asociación de Vecinos del Albayzín, gathered at the first public meeting to discuss Ramírez Sánchez's "Estudio de Detalle." Recalling the language of the Refundido de la Ley del Suelo, they objected on the grounds that "the traditional environment of the Albayzín neighborhood had to be maintained and protected" and that the mosque "would radically change the sociocultural environment of the San Nicolás belvedere."⁷⁵ Their position was expressed, in part, as an architectural critique. In the course of the formal process of public commentary, one of the

allegations stated that the type of the minaret “breaks with the profile of the neighborhood.”⁷⁶ But this objection was easily overturned. As the lawyer for the CIE pointed out in later court proceedings, “The base, the height and the volumetric form [of the minaret] are similar to the tower of the Church of San José, except for, logically, the addition for the bells”⁷⁷—that is, the former minaret of the Masjid al-Murabitin in the lower Albayzín.

The greater obstacle had deeper roots than the question of architectural style. When the Asociación de Vecinos spoke of the need for “protection,” it implied that the neighborhood was under attack, and at times it said so overtly: “If we allow this, they [Muslims] will end up taking the city.”⁷⁸ Similar remarks have been voiced publically time and again in Spain, equating Muslims with immigration, immigration with a rise in crime, and Islam and its believers with terrorism, especially after the 2004 bombing in Madrid.⁷⁹ In the immediate context of the discussion of Ramírez Sánchez’s design, the potential attack was characterized by the Asociación de Vecinos as “radical change” and its target was what they called the “tradition”⁸⁰—the one-and-only tradition of Catholic Spain, not the reconstructed hybridity of medieval al-Andalus. For the Christian residents, that tradition had been shaped by parochial education and embodied in the collective memory of the neighborhood as the public settings for processions and other religious festivities.⁸¹ It needs be emphasized that the objection of the Asociación de Vecinos to the mosque project was *not* expressed as opposition to the democratic principle of the freedom of religion for Spain’s Muslims. The issue was the perception and use of public space, or what it called the “sociocultural environment” of the mirador. This last term is crucial, for the mosque is not strictly speaking a public space, but in referring to the belvedere, the Asociación de Vecinos was clearly thinking of the summit of the Albayzín as a public viewing point.

The tradition to be protected was the Christian gaze. The height of the bell tower of San Nicolás had defined a Christian regime of visibility for half a millennium. As the highest point in the Albayzín, the bell tower embodied the privileged gaze at the Alhambra from a Christian vantage point looking down figuratively, if not literally,

upon the emblem of the conquered and converted people (see fig. 5). Moreover, those looking back from the Alhambra inevitably sought the bell tower to orient their gaze at the once Muslim quarter of the Albayzín (see fig. 6). As a memory-site, the area around San Nicolás stood for the enduring supremacy of the Christian Reconquest.

In more recent history—indeed, within living memory—this area became emblematic of the reaffirmation of Catholicism. San Nicolás was one of many churches in the Albayzín and elsewhere in the city that were badly damaged in anticlerical violence during the Second Spanish Republic (1931–36). A fire set to the building in August 1932 consumed the ceiling of *artesonado* (assembled of numerous wooden elements cut in geometric shapes) and the interior decoration but left the exterior walls and the bell tower standing.⁸² Two religious institutions within the immediate vicinity of the Church of San Nicolás, the Convent of the Tomasas and the Church of San Salvador, sustained severe damage in 1933 and 1936, respectively.⁸³ In 1936, in an article titled “The Albayzín Is Christianized,” *Ideal* reported on municipal efforts to restore the religious patrimony—churches, convents, and stone crosses placed near their façades, all dating to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—in the “red neighborhood” of Granada of the recent past.⁸⁴ The efforts were stalled by the Civil War (1936–39) but resumed shortly thereafter, and by the end of the 1940 many churches had been restored.⁸⁵ In addition to the Church of San Nicolás, the freestanding stone cross in front of its façade and a medieval *aljibe* (cistern) nearby were restored, creating an ensemble of distinct structures of historical significance in which the Muslim past was included but as a decidedly minor element (fig. 22). The same location became the example, par excellence, of a project to create public spaces with panoramic views of the Alhambra and the city below.⁸⁶ In addition to the Mirador of San Nicolás, belvederes were constructed at other key locations of the Albayzín, including the Mirador of San Cristóbal, with its church and large, freestanding cross on the west side of the crest of the hill. The crosses mark these privileged viewpoints as the subject position of a Christian gaze, triumphant over Republican “reds” and medieval Muslims alike.

Some fifty years later, the controversy over the politics of the gaze—both *at* and *from*—was captured in



Fig. 22. Area of the Mirador of San Nicolás: Church of San Nicolás, its Mirador, and the freestanding stone cross, Albayzín, Granada. (Photo: Olga Bush)

Ideal, which cited the negative impact on the view of the Churches of San Nicolás and of San Salvador and the neighbors' right to panoramic views of the Alhambra.⁸⁷ Eventually the matter was resolved not only by addressing the height of the buildings but also by excavation that lowered the terrain at the summit of the mosque's site by 1.5–2.0 meters (between 5 and 6 1/2 feet).⁸⁸ The excavation had the correlative effect of reducing the level of the platform of the mosque complex, including the minaret, to that of the base of the Church of San Nicolás.

In that light, the visual impact of the minaret was deemed so crucial that the city government made its approval of the "Estudio de Detalle" contingent upon a most unusual measure. The CIE was required to erect a full-scale model of the minaret in situ. As the lawyer for the CIE would later argue before the Tribunal Superior de Justicia de Andalucía (Superior Court of Justice of Andalusia) in opposing a similar call for the building of

a full-scale model of the whole mosque complex (an objection upheld by the court): "The full-scale reproduction of the totality, not only of the Mosque, but also of the Cultural Center, as opponents demand, would not only have been unjust, but also unnecessary, since the graphic documentation is more than sufficient for qualified persons ... to decide." In the case of the minaret, however, the full-scale model was in fact built at the CIE's expense, so that the divided public at large and not only those "who have the competence to decide"⁸⁹ could join the battle of the gaze (figs. 23 and 24). City residents and officials took to inspecting the model from many locations throughout Granada, and especially from the Alhambra,⁹⁰ with photographs appearing in many publications. In the course of the ensuing debate, Ramírez Sánchez submitted a "Proyecto Básico" (Basic Project), the stage in the process of review that follows upon the "Estudio de Detalle," in January 1994. Upon review the following month, the Servicio Técnico



Fig. 23. Full-scale model of the minaret for the Great Mosque of Granada under construction. (Photo: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)



Fig. 24. Completed full-scale model of the minaret for the Great Mosque of Granada, to the east (right) of the Church of San Nicolás. (Photo: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)

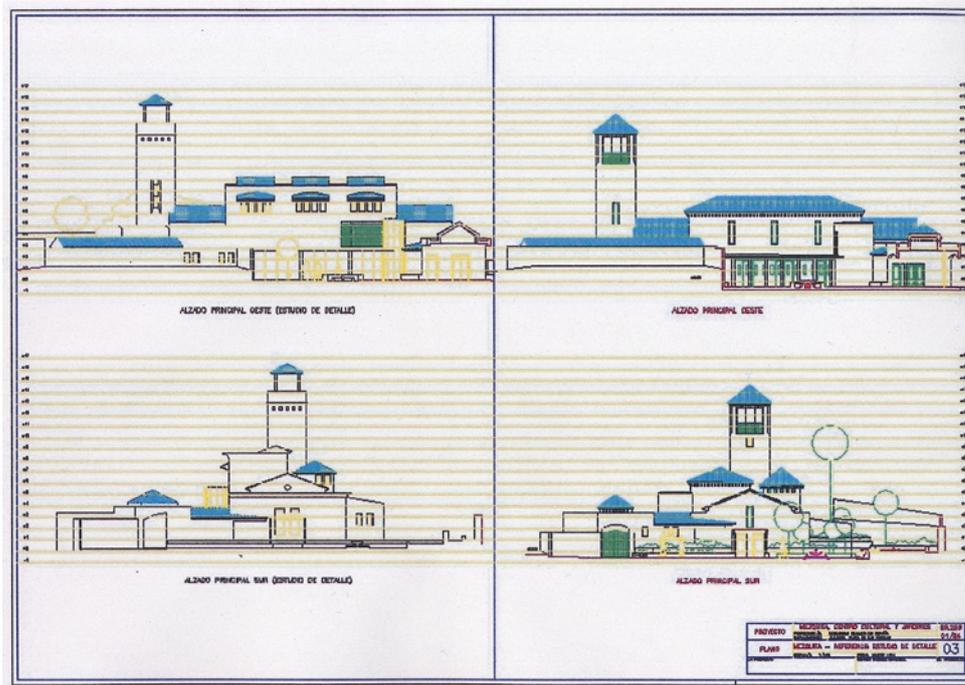


Fig. 26. Renato Ramírez Sánchez, drawing of the Great Mosque of Granada, comparing west and south elevations, designs of 1991 and 1994. (Drawings: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)

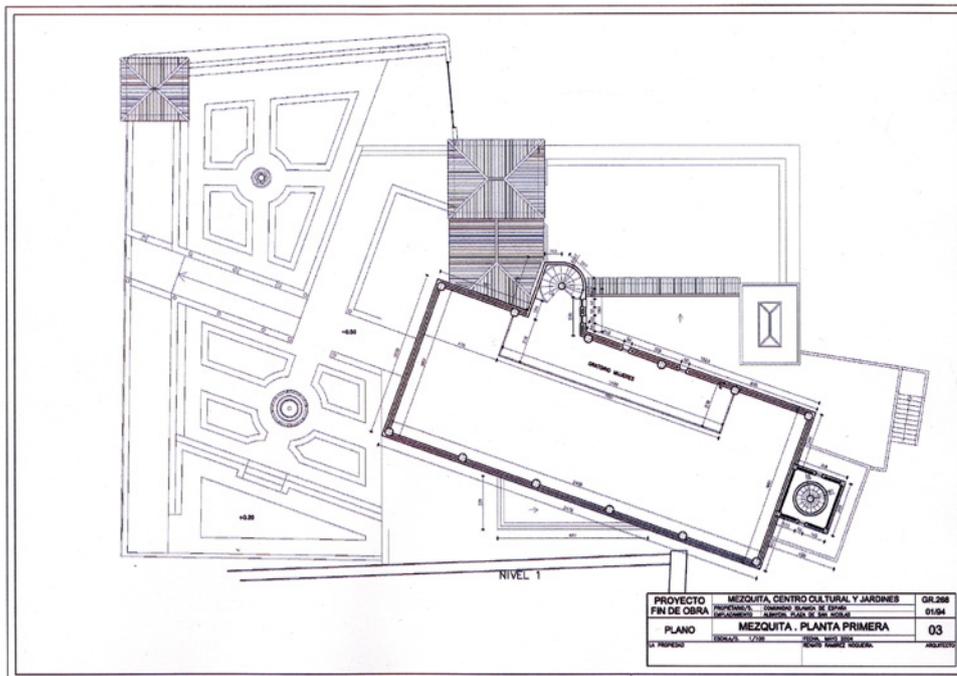


Fig. 27. Renato Ramírez Sánchez, plan of the Great Mosque of Granada, 1994. (Plan: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)

The new archaeological team, working on behalf of the city, found the results of the 1985 excavations inadequate: “The information extracted from archaeological activity ought to be qualified as poor” because, the new report declared, “the chronological period best documented is the Islamic.”⁹⁷ In light of the Proyecto de Arqueología Urbana de Granada (Project of Urban Archaeology of Granada), initiated in 1994 and establishing clear criteria for the interpretation of archaeological data and the articulation of hypotheses for further investigations, a different approach was proposed for the new excavations. Since during the preceding decade few structural vestiges that could be dated to the Ibero period were uncovered elsewhere in the Albayzín and the remains of the Ibero wall had been found on the site of the future mosque, the archaeologists proposed extensive excavations on the site. Thus the new campaign, financed jointly by the city and the CIE, moved farther north to the area where the Zirid wall of the *al-qaṣaba al-qadīma* was (and remains) plainly visible east of the site. It was presumed that the wall once cut across this parcel of land, but the goal of the new campaign was not the unearthing of further Zirid remains. Rather, in the understanding that the early Muslim walls would have been built atop or near Ibero-Roman constructions, this latter evidence was the new goal.

Indeed, the new excavations uncovered the vestiges of Ibero walls and structures of unprecedented dimensions and in an unparalleled state of preservation.⁹⁸ The uncovered Ibero wall measured 5–7.5 meters (16 feet and 5 inches to 24 feet and 7 inches) in width, 30 meters (98 feet and 5 inches) in length and more than 4 meters (13 feet) in height. Taking into consideration the topography of the site, the location of the wall at the crest of the hill, the construction techniques and materials, and the lack of domestic structures there, it was concluded that the wall belonged to the fortified enclosure of the Ibero Oppidum Iliberri. In addition to material culture from Ibero and Roman periods, a small portion of the channel of an aqueduct that belonged to the Roman settlement and the remains of a Zirid wall were uncovered. Because the mosque complex could not be made to fit between the excavation areas on the north and south sides of the site, a decision was called for: Which

past should be preserved, the Ibero on the north side, or the Nasrid-Morisco on the south side, or both, or neither?

The city government proposed a solution, suggesting that the CIE relocate the mosque complex to the outskirts of Granada.⁹⁹ The neo-Muslim community rejected that literal marginalization, claiming its “right to the city.”¹⁰⁰ Hence, upon the archaeologists’ recommendation, the Área de Urbanismo and an office for historical preservation stipulated that the CIE was allowed to proceed with the building project on the condition that a portion of the Ibero wall be conserved in situ and left accessible for viewing. The remainder of the wall had to be interred in a space free of construction. To comply, the architect was required to relocate the footprint of the mosque 4 meters (13 feet) to the south.¹⁰¹ The preservation of a small triangular area wherein some vestiges would remain accessible also diminished the overall area for potential construction.

Curiously, in the final design, and hence, at present, the portion of the Ibero wall is not visible from any public space; the public can access it only through the Centro de Estudios Islámicos. There are no signs on nearby streets directing tourists to the view of the wall, nor is there much information in tourist literature about this material evidence of the origins of the city. It is an all but inevitable inference, therefore, that the decision to preserve the wall served an ideological, rather than an archaeological, need to frame the Muslim heritage and present-day use of the site within an older, non-Islamic history. This particular construction of visibility—what shall be seen and what invisible? what consigned to the historical archive and what forms an intentional memory-site?—reinforced a certain narrative of national identity.

The opposite decision was made with regard to the Islamic constructions on the site. The vestiges of the Nasrid-Morisco houses that were unearthed in 1985 were reinterred under the present-day garden.¹⁰² The archaeological justification was clear. By 1995, rigorous efforts of architectural historians and architects under the leadership of Antonio Almagro Gorbea and Antonio Orihuela Uzal of the Escuela de Estudios Árabes in Granada (School of Arabic Studies, a branch of the national research institution, the Consejo Superior de

Investigaciones Científicas, or Higher Council of Scientific Research) were under way to identify and rehabilitate houses constructed or rebuilt by the Moriscos in the sixteenth century in the Albayzín. Over the course of two decades, more than eighty houses were identified, and nearly half of them were rehabilitated; all but three are privately owned.¹⁰³ The preservation of the foundation walls of the Nasrid-Morisco houses on the site would have added little to the Islamic cultural heritage of the city. Likewise, the Zirid remains uncovered in the excavations of 1995 were insignificant alongside the well-preserved expanse of the same Zirid wall on the west side of the Albayzín and its gates and towers within close proximity to the site of the mosque, all standing in plain view.

Even so, the acquiescence of the CIE in the definitive reinterment of the Nasrid-Morisco archaeological evidence calls for further comment. “Facing history,” in the words of Castiñeira at the time of the inauguration of the mosque,¹⁰⁴ did not mean simply gazing at the hardened historiographical object of Anidjar’s admonition, but rather taking up a subject position in the present in relation to that history.

BUILDING THE PRESENT, FACING THE FUTURE

The excavations were completed in February 1995, but the outcome of the legal action initiated by the Real Academia de Bellas Artes was still pending. Nevertheless, in 1996, a defiant CIE laid the ceremonial stone of the qibla wall on the site. Foreign dignitaries from the Middle East—many of them sponsors of the project—were in attendance, raising the profile of the story of the fifteen years of delay and catapulting the CIE and the mosque project to the center of local, regional, national, and international attention once again. The Tribunal Superior de Justicia de Andalucía ruled in favor of the city government and the CIE on June 12, 2000, removing the last legal obstacle, and construction of the mosque commenced in 2001.¹⁰⁵ When the new mosque complex was finally inaugurated in 2003,¹⁰⁶ the sense of the community’s accomplishment resonated far and wide in Spain and among Muslim communities around the world.

In Ramírez Sánchez’s definitive design the pergola in the garden was eliminated. With the exception of the minaret and signage in Spanish and Arabic identifying the building as a mosque, the resulting complex is a deliberately unassuming architectural contribution much in harmony with the character of the Albayzín. It is a building of modest proportions with a whitewashed exterior, and, like many of the nearby *cármenes*, it is surrounded by a wall of medium height, although with openings that allow the garden to be seen from the adjoining streets (figs. 28 and 29). Unlike the private *cármenes*, however, and in keeping with the agreement between the CIE and the city, the garden of the mosque is open to the public, which is also invited to cultural events staged there under the sponsorship of the neo-Muslim community. The Centro de Estudios Islámicos, dedicated to teaching and cultural activities and open to “all interested parties,” as indicated on the mosque’s website,¹⁰⁷ can be accessed independently of the mosque’s enclosure from a façade on the Calle de los Hornos, a street below the CIE property (see fig. 3).

If the exterior aspect of the mosque was the result of a protracted battle of the gaze embedded in preexisting historical, political, and cultural narratives, activated, challenged, and adapted by the building’s design, the appearance of the interior of the mosque was never an issue for public discussion. Whatever fears the public may have harbored with regard to the activities inside the mosque complex, the sanctuary, as ritual space, was shielded from the public gaze. Visitors can make their way through a covered passage that leads from the public garden into the courtyard of the mosque with its ablution fountain, and they can glimpse the sanctuary from the doorway except during daily prayers, but entry into the sanctuary proper is normally prohibited to non-Muslims.¹⁰⁸

The sanctuary presents a unified space: the mihrab is situated on the short axis opposite the entrance and the women’s gallery above the doorway; double glass doors stand on the long axis on the south wall, opening onto the garden (fig. 30). The decoration of the sanctuary, designed by Karim Viudes, an artist and a member of the CIE, functions as a Muslim memory-site, for here the gaze of the community is not entangled with that of its often oppositional neighbors. The decoration of the

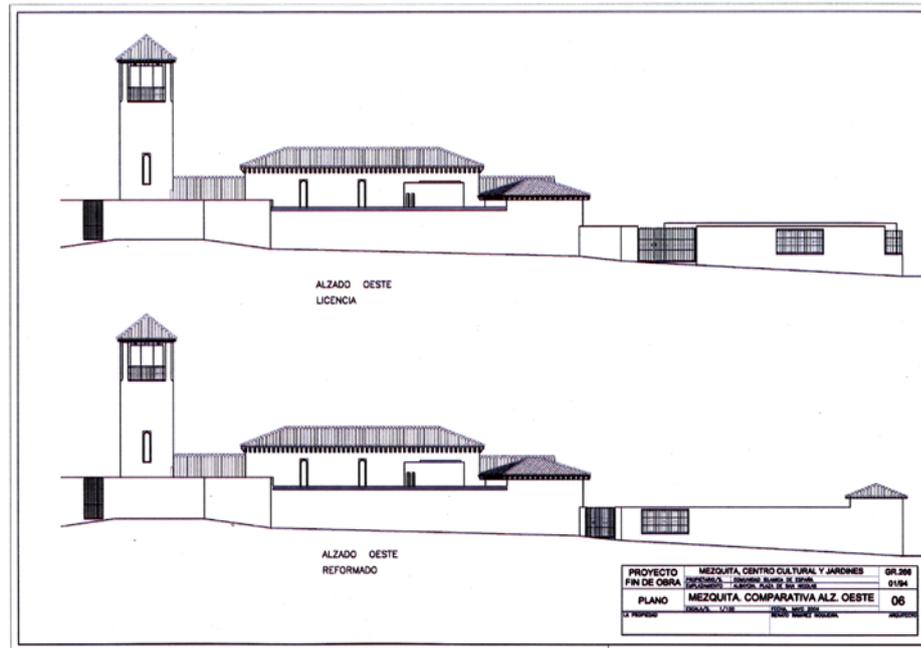


Fig. 28. Renato Ramírez Sánchez, final design of the Great Mosque of Granada, west elevation. The drawing on the top shows additional alterations to the wall of the garden. (Drawings: courtesy of Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada)



Fig. 29. Great Mosque of Granada, exterior, view from the west. (Photo: Olga Bush)



Fig. 30. Great Mosque of Granada, sanctuary, interior, looking south. (Photo: Olga Bush)

mihrab refers to the Great Mosque of Córdoba (fig. 31), and the marble veneer used on the qibla wall offers an analogy to that of the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, thus recalling crucial buildings in the early history of the Umayyads and so claiming a place in the legacy of the dynasty at the height of its power. Yet the wood paneling of the qibla was made from cedar from the Atlas Mountains, and the ceramic tile mosaic in the ablution fountain in the courtyard was crafted by artisans from Fez (fig. 32). These Moroccan references may well recollect the Nasrid-Marinid (that is, Iberian–North African) connection of the past, but also—and this is crucial—bring the present into view.

Beyond the arts, profound ties link today's Spanish neo-Muslim and Moroccan communities: to date, the imams of the new mosque have been Moroccan; many of the neo-Muslims have Moroccan spouses; Morocco is a destination for the community's spiritual and educational trips; the ruling house of Morocco had a chief role in financing the construction; and the largest Muslim immigrant group in Spain is from Morocco. Even more significant is the neo-Muslims' perceptions of themselves as the spiritual and even biological descendants

of the expelled Moriscos. While some Spanish converts think that their family traditions confirm their Morisco ancestry, others who immigrated to Granada from Morocco assert that their family originated in al-Andalus.¹⁰⁹ At the same time, when numerous Moroccan descendants of the exiled Moriscos are denied entry to Spain,¹¹⁰ the neo-Muslims might be viewed ideologically and symbolically as virtual "returnees." As a married neo-Muslim couple in the Albayzín sums up the situation: "We are old Moors and new Muslims."¹¹¹ Thus the interior of the mosque inscribes the neo-Muslim community not only into the trajectory from the early Umayyad to the last, Nasrid dynasty, but also from the history of al-Andalus to its contemporary connections to Morocco.

The mosque has become the focal point in the visual field of the determination of the neo-Muslim community of Granada to live Spanish lives, as a continuation of, rather than relegated to, the history of al-Andalus. Anidjar has argued that as long as al-Andalus is "the name of a lost world, the absence of place and the loss of context," in the perception of tourists, scholars, and the people of Granada, we will be continually "exporting



Fig. 31. Great Mosque of Granada, sanctuary, qibla wall. (Photo: Olga Bush)



Fig. 32. Great Mosque of Granada, courtyard, ablution fountain. (Photo: Olga Bush)



Fig. 33. Alhambra, view from the garden of the Great Mosque of Granada. (Photo: Olga Bush)



Fig. 34. Great Mosque of Granada, view from the Alhambra. (Photo: Olga Bush)

to the past that which is still living, even if under impossible conditions.”¹¹² Al-Masjid al-jami‘ bi-Gharnata has enabled the congregation, its neighbors, and its visitors to envision new possibilities, now that the Alhambra, reconstructed as the object of the gaze *from* the sanctuary and its adjoining public garden, is also a subject position from which to gaze *at* a living Muslim community made visible in its mosque (figs. 33 and 34). When members of that community say, in the present tense, “We are al-Andalus,”¹¹³ they articulate that reciprocal gaze: facing the past, facing the future.

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NOTES

Author’s note: I am greatly indebted to the many individuals in Granada who facilitated my research on this project, spent many hours in formal interviews and informal conversations, shared their personal stories, and made archival documents available to me for consultation: Abdes Salam Gutiérrez Fraguas and Ahmed Bermejo, Fundación Mezquita; Fidel Castellano Moliné, Renato Ramírez Nogueira Estudio de Arquitectura, Granada; Yusuf Idris Martínez Fernández, Concepción de la Torre de Benito and Myriam Font Ugalde, Escuela de Estudios Árabes, Granada; Pablo Jesús Casado Millán, Diputación de Cultura; José Tito Rojo, Universidad de Granada; Javier Piñero, Archivo Histórico Municipal; Batul Hernández López; the members of the Asociación de Vecinos del Albayzín; and the staff of the Departamento de Urbanismo, Ayuntamiento de Granada. Unless otherwise noted, the translations throughout are mine.

1. www.turismoyarte.com/regiones/andalucia/granada/mezquita_mayor.html (accessed July 12, 2012).
2. Alejandro V. García and Javier Arroyo, “Una mezquita para Granada,” *El País*, July 9, 2003, http://elpais.com/diario/2003/07/09/ultima/1057701601_850215.html (accessed July 18, 2012).
3. Omayma Abdel-Latif, “Back in Spain—with a Difference,” *Al-Ahram Weekly*, no. 650 (August 7–13, 2003), <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2003/650/fe1.htm> (accessed April 10, 2012) (emphasis added).
4. Jorge Trías Sagnier, “Una mezquita inquietante,” *ABC*, July 14, 2003, http://www.abc.es/hemeroteca/historico-14-07-2003/abc/Opinion/una-mezquita-inquietante_194722.html# (accessed July 12, 2012).

5. Álvaro Calleja, “Granada inaugura la mayor mezquita de Europa cinco siglos después de la expulsión musulmana,” *ABC*, November 7, 2003, http://www.abc.es/hemeroteca/historico-11-07-2003/abc/Sociedad/granada-inaugura-la-mayor-mezquita-de-europa-cinco-siglos-despues-de-la-expulsion-musulmana_194025.html (accessed July 12, 2012).
6. Nebahat Avcioglu, “Identity-as-Form: The Mosque in the West,” *Cultural Analysis* 6 (2007): 97. Avcioglu’s incisive contribution also serves as a critical introduction to the vast body of scholarship on mosques built in Europe and the United States in the twentieth century and into the present. For an overview of several new mosques built in Spain, see Jennifer Roberson, “Visions of al-Andalus in Twentieth-Century Spanish Mosque Architecture,” in *Revisiting al-Andalus: Perspectives on the Material Culture of Islamic Iberia and Beyond*, ed. Glaire D. Anderson and Miriam Rosser-Owen (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 247–69. Roberson includes a brief discussion of the Great Mosque of Granada (262–69).
7. Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*,” *Representations* 26 (1989): 22, 11, respectively.
8. The seminal views of the two principal antagonists may be found in Américo Castro, *España en su historia: Cristianos, moros y judíos* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1984), and Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz, *El Islam de España y el Occidente* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1974). For a summary of the debate and its impact on twentieth-century politics, see Hishaam D. Aidi, “The Interference of al-Andalus: Spain, Islam, and the West,” *Social Text* 87 (Summer 2006): 67–88. See also Simon Doubleday, “Introduction: ‘Criminal Non-Intervention’: Hispanism, Medievalism, and the Pursuit of Neutrality,” in *In the Light of Medieval Spain: Islam, the West, and the Relevance of the Past*, ed. Simon R. Doubleday and David Coleman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 1–32.
9. There is a growing body of scholarship, especially in the past two decades, on the discourse of Islamophobia, national identity, and Muslim immigration to Spain, as well as on the role of al-Andalus in the collective imaginery within that discourse. For instance, see Hishaam Aidi, “The Interference of al-Andalus” and Hishaam Aidi, “Let Us Be Moors: Islam, Race, and ‘Connected Histories,’” *Middle East Report* 229 (2003), www.merip.org/mer/mer229_aidi.html (accessed April 10, 2012).
10. Gil Anidjar, “Futures of al-Andalus,” *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 7, 3 (2006): 225–29.
11. See the seminal work of Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (London: Tavistock, 1972), as well as Alfred Gel, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), and Alfred Gel, *Art’s Agency and Art History*, ed. Robin Osborne and Jeremy Tanner (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007). Barbara Johnson, *Persons and Things* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), has also proved highly suggestive for this discussion.
12. Hajj Abdulhasib Castiñeira, “La comunidad musulmana de Granada, un ejemplo de integración positiva,” *Jornadas*

- sobre Convivencia Vecinal y Espacio Público, Ayuntamiento de Zaragoza, Concejalía de Acción Social y Mayor, *La Casa de las Culturas, Zaragoza*, April 15–16, 2008, <http://www.mezquitadegranada.com/index.php?id=lacomunidadmu sulmanadegran> (accessed May 1, 2012).
13. Patronato Municipal Fundación Albaicín-Granada, www.albaicin-granada.com/seccion.php?listEntrada=18 (accessed July 15, 2012).
 14. Pablo Jesús Casado Millán, Cristóbal Pérez Bareas, Margarita Orfila Pons, Auxilio Moreno Onorato, Antonio J. Hoces Prieto, Fátima Pérez de Baldomero, Manuel Moreno Quero, and María Liébana Sánchez, “Nuevos aportes para el conocimiento del asentamiento ibérico de Iliberri (Granada),” in *Actas del Congreso Internacional: Los iberos, príncipes de Occidente, sección I, Sagunto*, ed. C. Aranegui Gascó (Barcelona: Prodisa, 1998), 138.
 15. For the reports of the archaeological excavations of the site, see Isidro Toro Moyano, Ángeles Rodríguez Fernández, and María Ángeles Villareal Jiménez, “Excavación de Urgencia en el Solar de la Calle Espaldas de San Nicolás s/n del Barrio del Albayzín (Granada),” *Anuario Arqueológico de Andalucía* 3 (1985): 155–60; Casado Millán et al., “Nuevos aportes,” 137–44.
 16. Joaquín Bosque Maurel, *Geografía urbana de Granada* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1988), 78, cited in Francisco Javier Rosón Lorente, “¿El Retorno de Tariq?: Comunidades etnoreligiosas en al Albayzín granadino” (PhD diss., Departamento de Antropología Social, Universidad de Granada, Granada, 2008), 128, <http://biblioteca.ugr.es> (accessed August 5, 2012).
 17. Manuel Gómez Moreno has suggested that the Church of San Nicolás replaced a mosque, known from a historical text as *azitiní* mosque, and that on a street called Cuesta de las Cabras, which passes below the garden of the new mosque and leads to the Church of San Nicolás, there was another mosque, which he identified as the mosque “*gima Cachara*.” Manuel Gómez Moreno, *Guía de Granada* (Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 1998), 2:263, 1:433, respectively. Gómez Moreno’s identification of the mosques is based on historical records of properties whose taxes supported pious foundations, first of the Nasrids and then, after the Reconquest, of the parish churches. For historical records in general and for the Church of San Nicolás in particular, see María del Carmen Villanueva Rico, *Hábices de las Mezquitas de la Ciudad de Granada y sus Alquerías* (Madrid: Instituto Hispano-Árabe de Cultura, 1961), 1:121.
 18. *Ibid.*, 1:68–70; Fernando Acale Sánchez, *Plazas y paseos de Granada: De la remodelación cristiana de los espacios musulmanes a los proyectos de jardines en el ochocientos* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2005), 91–94; Montserrat Castelló Nicás, *La renovación urbana en el Albaicín* (Granada: Editorial Comares, 2003), 73.
 19. Remains of seventy skeletons have been documented. Auxilio Moreno Onorato and Pablo Jesús Casado Millán, “La intervención arqueológica de urgencia realizada en el solar c/Espaldas de S. Nicolás, s/n (sede de la futura mezquita) (Barrio del Albaicín, Granada), abril 1996,” excavation report filed with the Área de Urbanismo del Ayuntamiento de Granada.
 20. Rafael Garófano Sánchez, *La Andalucía del Siglo XIX en las Fotografías de J. Laurent y Cía* (Almería: Junta de Andalucía, 1999), no. 86.
 21. The description of the property’s dimensions and the names of its owners can be found in the office of the Registro de la Propiedad Número Uno de Granada. The documents indicate that at an unspecified date two separate properties under the registry numbers 15342 and 11416 were combined and registered as one under the new number 22540.
 22. “1890. C.00735.0008 (Servicios. Cementerio), Clas.: 3.08.07.05” and “1911. C.02238.0137 (Servicios. Fomento/Obras y Urbanismo), Clas.:3.01.01.01),” Archivo Histórico Municipal, Ayuntamiento de Granada. I am grateful to Javier Piñero, the archivist at the Archivo Histórico Municipal, for making the documents pertaining to the property available to me for consultation.
 23. “1952. C.03156.0575 (Servicios. Fomento /Obras y Urbanismo), Clas.: 3.01.04.10,” “1957. C.03198.0993 (Servicios. Fomento /Obras y Urbanismo), Clas.: 3.01.04.10,” and “1959. C.03226.0510 (Servicios. Fomento /Obras y Urbanismo), Clas.: 3.01.04.10,” Archivo Histórico Municipal, Ayuntamiento de Granada.
 24. Rosón Lorente, “¿El Retorno de Tariq?,” 403.
 25. On the gentrification of the Albayzín with its potential for “orientalism” and its impact on the tourist industry, see *ibid.*, 286–316.
 26. Antonio Orihuela Uzal states that “approximately half of these houses have been rehabilitated in the last three decades.” Antonio Orihuela Uzal, “Casas moriscas de Granada,” online bulletin of the Asociación de Vecinas y Vecinos “Bajo Albayzín,” September 8, 2008, www.albayzin.info/Principal.htm (accessed May 5, 2012). Orihuela Uzal is preparing a monograph on this topic.
 27. “Distribución de la población de Granada por barrios y distritos, Padrón 2009,” Ayuntamiento de Granada (2009), [http://www.granada.org/obj.nsf/in/GBBNKKJ/\\$file/PORSEXO.pdf](http://www.granada.org/obj.nsf/in/GBBNKKJ/$file/PORSEXO.pdf) (accessed June 8, 2012).
 28. Julio César Cabrera Medina, “El turismo en el Albaicín,” in *El Albaicín en la encrucijada*, ed. Juan Carlos de Pablos (Granada: Universidad del a Granada, 2005), 196–222, esp. 199.
 29. For an analysis of the PEPRI, see Castelló Nicás, *La renovación urbana*, 182–89.
 30. Juan Carlos de Pablos, “El uso residencial del Albaicín,” in *El Albaicín en la encrucijada*, ed. Juan Carlos de Pablos, 72–124, esp. 123. Among recent studies on various aspects of Albayzín’s urbanism, the topics addressed in *El Albaicín en la encrucijada* are of special interest for my article. It should be noted, however, that the impact of the neo-Muslim and Muslim communities is mentioned only in passing in the analysis of the neighborhood’s economy—the businesses

- in the Calderería that cater mainly to tourists. Although the edited volume was published in 2005, it is a result of a project by the sociologists of the University of Granada that was undertaken in 2000 while the mosque was still under construction.
31. Cabrera Medina, "El turismo en el Albaicín," 215 (emphasis added).
 32. Among studies of the commercialization of medieval history in Spain, see Giles Tremlett, "Foreword: 'Welcome to Moorishland,'" in *In the Light of Medieval Spain*, ed. Doubleday and Coleman, xi–xix. Tremlett points out that the tourism industry "accounts for 11 percent of the country's domestic product" (xii).
 33. Mikaela Rogozen-Soltar, "Al-Andalus in Andalusia; Negotiating Moorish History and Regional Identity in Southern Spain," *Anthropological Quarterly* 80, 3 (Summer 2007): 863–86. On the festivals of Moros y Cristianos (Moors and Christians) in Valencia, Andalusia, and Castilla-La Mancha, see, for instance, Daniela Flesler and Adrián Pérez Melgosa, "Battles of Identity, or Playing 'Guest' and 'Host': The Festivals of Moors and Christians in the Context of Moroccan Immigration in Spain," *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 4, 2 (2003): 151–68; Roland Baumann, *The "Moors and Christians" of Valor: Folklore and Conflict in the Alpujarra (Andalusia)* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI, 1995); Henk Driessen, "Mock Battles between Moors and Christians: Playing the Confrontation of Crescent with Cross in Spain's South," *Ethnologia Europaea* 15, 2 (1985): 105–15.
 34. Daniela Flesler, "Contemporary Moroccan Immigration and Its Ghosts," in *In the Light of Medieval Spain*, ed. Doubleday and Coleman, 116. In addition to this article, the following is also especially insightful: Daniela Flesler, *The Return of the Moor: Spanish Responses to Contemporary Moroccan Immigration* (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2008).
 35. "Asesoría Jurídica Servicio de OO.PP y Urbanismo, Ayuntamiento de Granada, expediente 288/94, 1 de marzo de 1994," 1, article 1a, Archives of the Ayuntamiento de Granada.
 36. In the last three decades the studies on the emergence of Islam in Spain and on the perceived impact of both the neo-Muslim and the immigrant Muslim communities have proliferated. For an overview, see Marvine Howe, *Al-Andalus Rediscovered: Iberia's New Muslims* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012). A succinct analytical summary of the history of the neo-Muslim communities in Andalusia, the development of their organizations, and institutional interactions with the state is Lisa Abend, "Spain's New Muslims: A Historical Romance," in *In the Light of Medieval Spain*, ed. Doubleday and Coleman, 133–56. On the formation of different neo-Muslim communities in Granada, see David Coleman, "The Persistence of the Past," in *ibid.*, 163–75. Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," provides a nuanced anthropological study of interactions between the neo-Muslims and their neighbors within the framework of historicizing collective memory in the context of the Albaicín.
 37. Some critics and scholars accuse Shaykh 'Abdalqadir as-Sufi al-Murabit of anti-Semitic views and of being a Holocaust denier. See, for instance, Tomás Navarro, *La Mezquita de Babel: El nazismo sufista desde el Reino Unido a la Comunidad Autónoma de Andalucía* (Granada: Ediciones Virtual, 1998), 61–64; Coleman, "Persistence of the Past," 166; Howe, *Al-Andalus Rediscovered*, 17–130. An examination of the shaykh's ideology lies beyond the scope of this article.
 38. Abend, "Spain's New Muslims," 134.
 39. *Ibid.* See also "La Reconciliación de España con su historia," on the website of the Great Mosque of Granada, www.mezquitadegranada.com/islam-en-al-andalus/lareconciliacindeespaacon.html (accessed April 26, 2013).
 40. Abend, "Spain's New Muslims," 138–39, 148.
 41. *Ibid.*, 142.
 42. Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 75–98.
 43. Abend, "Spain's New Muslims," 143–45; Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 365–66.
 44. For a more nuanced analysis of the institutional representation of Spanish Muslims in their negotiations with the Spanish government and the "Convenio de Cooperación," an agreement signed in 1992, in which the rights of Muslim communities are articulated, see Abend, "Spain's New Muslims," 144–46; Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 366–71.
 45. For a summary of this accord, see Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 369–374.
 46. Among studies on al-Andalus as a political project for these parties, see Alicia Del Olmo Garrudo, "Liberación Andaluza: Un proyecto musulmán para Andalucía," *AWRĀQ: Estudios Sobre el Mundo Árabe e Islámico Contemporáneo* 18 (1997): 157–70; Christiane Stallaert, "El movimiento neomusulmán y el intento de (re)construcción de una identidad andaluza/andalusí," *Religión y Cultura* 1 (1999): 189–96; Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 75–98.
 47. Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 333–42, 351–64.
 48. I am grateful to Yusuf Idris Martínez Fernández, Escuela de Estudios Árabes, Granada, for conversations over the many years of my research in Granada and for an informal interview in June 2012 about the history of the community.
 49. Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 384–87.
 50. Castiñeira, "La comunidad musulmana de Granada." See also Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 351–64, 393–98; Coleman, "Persistence of the Past," 163–75.
 51. Martínez Fernández, interview. See also Coleman, "Persistence of the Past," 174; Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 338–44, 355–64.
 52. Abdennur Prado, "Sobre la Situación Jurídica del Islam en España," May 19, 2005, www.webislam.com/noticias/43786-sobre_la_situacion_juridica_del_islam_en_espana.html (accessed June 27, 2012). For the implications of Spain's federal law with regard to the Muslim minority (Acuerdo de Cooperación entre el Estado Español y la Comisión Islámica de España), promulgated as Law 26/92 on November 10, 1992, and other government initiatives, see Ricardo Zapata-Barrero, "The Muslim Community and Spanish Tradition:

- Maurophobia as a Fact, and Impartiality as a Desideratum," in *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach*, ed. Tariq Modood, Anna Triandafyllidou, and Ricardo Zapata-Barrero (London: Routledge, 2006), 143–61.
53. Abend, "Spain's New Muslims," 133.
 54. In Coleman's view, the term "Morabitunes" was understood by those who opposed the mosque as "intentionally provocative and symbolically loaded." Coleman, "Persistence of the Past," 166. It has been noted that the CIE of Granada did not join other Muslim communities of the city in 1999, when it formed the Concejo Islámico de Granada (Islamic Council of Granada), the official body to represent all Muslims to the municipal authorities. Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 372.
 55. A nostalgic perspective on al-Andalus as a "paradise lost," articulated in much scholarly and popular writing, relegates al-Andalus to the past in the construction of both personal and collective narratives. For an example of a personal reflection on the sense of belonging to historic al-Andalus, see Rana Kabbani, "Behind Him Lay the Great City of Cordoba," *Third Text Asia* 3 (Spring 2009): 23–26. For an analysis of al-Andalus as a paradise of coexistence in contemporary popular film and literature, see Denise K. Filios, "Expulsion from Paradise: Exiled Intellectuals and Andalusian Tolerance," in *In the Light of Medieval Spain*, ed. Doubleday and Coleman, 91–114.
 56. Drawings and plans have been preserved by the Renato Ramírez Nogueira architectural firm in Granada. I am deeply indebted to Abdes Salam Gutiérrez Fraguas, the secretary of the Fundación Mezquita, one of the CIE's founding members, who was in charge of the construction of the mosque in the 1990s, for relating to me his knowledge of the history of the community and of the different phases of the mosque project in an interview conducted in June 2012. I wish to extend my gratitude to him for giving me his permission to access the archival architectural drawings and documents preserved in the firm of Ramírez Nogueira. I also wish to acknowledge Fidel Castellano Moliné of Ramírez Nogueira's architectural firm, who generously put the archival materials at my disposal and shared his understanding of the firm's various designs. Documentation of the decision-making process (e.g., minutes of internal discussions of the CIE) in the evolution of the design is lacking.
 57. The records preserved in the firm of Renato Ramírez Nogueira have not preserved the name(s) of the architect(s) responsible for this design, nor could Fidel Castellano Moliné or Abdes Salam Gutiérrez Fraguas identify them.
 58. Juan Castilla Brazales and Antonio Orihuela Uzal, *En busca de la Granada andalusí* (Granada: Editorial Comares, 2002), 120–22.
 59. Pierre Nora, "Preface to the English-Language Edition," in *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, ed. Pierre Nora (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 1:xvii.
 60. Castilla Brazales and Orihuela Uzal, *En busca de la Granada*, 47–49.
 61. I am grateful to Hanna Whiteman, who communicated to me that her father made one of the early designs for the mosque. A drawing that corresponds to Design 3, dated by Ian Whiteman to 1982–83, can be seen on the designer's website, <http://www.ianwhiteman.com/architecture.html> (accessed February 18, 2014).
 62. Gutiérrez Fraguas, interview.
 63. Toro Moyano, Rodríguez Fernández, and Villareal Jiménez, "Excavación de Urgencia"; José Javier Álvarez García, "Informe sobre el seguimiento arqueológico en las labores de construcción de la mezquita, centro cultural y jardines en la Plaza de San Nicolás en al Albaycin (Granada), 9 de febrero, 1995, expediente #288/94, Área de Urbanismo, Ayuntamiento de Granada." I thank Pablo Jesús Casado Millán, the archaeologist who conducted the second excavation on the site in 1995, for clarifying the findings of both excavation campaigns, bringing to my attention all published materials, and allowing me to consult unpublished reports in the Área de Urbanismo del Ayuntamiento de Granada.
 64. Toro Moyano, Rodríguez Fernández, and Villareal Jiménez, "Excavación de Urgencia"; Moreno Onorato and Casado Millán, "La intervención arqueológica."
 65. Toro Moyano, Rodríguez Fernández, and Villareal Jiménez, "Excavación de Urgencia," 157–58.
 66. For a summary, see Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 479–80.
 67. Gutiérrez Fraguas, interview, confirmed by Fidel Castellano Moliné.
 68. "A la Sala de lo Contencioso Administrativo del Tribunal Superior de Justicia de Andalucía, sesión segunda recurso 177/95, Hechos de la Contestación a la Demanda, Área de Urbanismo, Ayuntamiento de Granada," Archives of the Ayuntamiento de Granada.
 69. The "Certificación de Acuerdo," signed by Nicolás Serrano and Moisés Gutiérrez (that is, Abdes Salam Gutiérrez Fraguas), on June 9, 1994, is included in the "Expediente 4728/91, Ayuntamiento de Granada no. 3320, 20 de enero, 1994," 42, Archives of the Ayuntamiento de Granada.
 70. Granada—along with Salamanca, Santiago de Compostela, and Córdoba—competed with Madrid for this designation. Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 328. For a detailed analysis of the significance of "Spain's Year" in the process of transforming Spain into a modern nation, see Tony Morgan, "1992: Memories and Modernities," in *Contemporary Spanish Cultural Studies*, ed. Barry Jordan and Rikki Morgan-Tamosunas (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 58–67.
 71. Morgan, "1992: Memories and Modernities," 61–62.
 72. The discussion of the origins of this celebration and the analysis of its underlying political and cultural impulses go beyond the scope of this article. For an anthropological analysis of the celebration and its repercussions within the growing Muslim communities, as well as for a summary of counterproposals—a "Day of Reconciliation," for instance—see Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 422–68.

73. Quoted in "Asesoría Jurídica Servicio de OO.PP y Urbanismo, Ayuntamiento de Granada, expediente 288/94."
74. For a discussion of the opposition to the mosque championed by journalists and intellectuals in the national press and other publications, see Coleman, "Persistence of the Past," 163–75.
75. *Ideal*, August 10, 1993, quoted in Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 408. For a more complete history of the litigation mobilized by the Asociación de Vecinos del Albayzín against the construction of the mosque, see *ibid.*, 402–22.
76. "A la Sala de lo Contencioso Administrativo del Tribunal Superior de Justicia de Andalucía, sesión segunda, recurso 177/95, Área de Urbanismo, Ayuntamiento de Granada," Archives of the Ayuntamiento de Granada.
77. *Ibid.*
78. From an interview quoted in Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 408.
79. Such fears were conditioned by the statements made by foreign jihadists and Spanish politicians, such as José María Aznar. See Aidi, "Interference of al-Andalus," 80–85.
80. See n. 76 above.
81. For an analysis of the impact of Catholic education and religious celebrations on the formation of the collective memory of the residents of the Albayzín during the twentieth century, see Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 148–70, 207–15.
82. Castelló Nicás, *La renovación urbana*, 121–23.
83. *Ibid.*, 122.
84. M. Antequera, "El Albayzín se cristianiza," *Ideal*, September 20, 1936, 10, quoted in Castelló Nicás, *La renovación urbana*, 122–23. Stone crosses were placed in front of other churches in the Albayzín (San Gregorio Alto, San Cristóbal, de la Victoria, San Ildefonso) as well as in small public plazas, among them Cruz de Quirós, Cruz de la Rauda, and Cruz de Piedra. Juan Manuel Barrios Rozúa, *Guía de la Granada desaparecida* (Granada: Editorial Comares, 1999).
85. On urban renovations and the recuperation of the national patrimony in the Albayzín under the leadership of Antonio Gallego Burín, during his tenure as mayor of Granada, see Castelló Nicás, *La renovación urbana*, 135–50.
86. The creation of the Mirador de San Nicolás and the restoration of its structures were executed by the Granadan architect Francisco Prieto-Moreno. Castelló Nicás, *La renovación urbana*, 123–25, 135–50.
87. The article is discussed in Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 408–9.
88. Gutiérrez Fraguas, interview.
89. "A la Sala de lo Contencioso Administrativo del Tribunal Superior de Justicia de Andalucía, sesión segunda recurso 177/95, Hechos de la Contestación a la Demanda."
90. "Informe de los Servicios Técnicos, 24 de febrero 1994," "Informe de la Comisión Mixta de Seguimiento del Plan Especial de Protección y Reforma Interior Albayzín, Ayuntamiento de Granada, expediente 288/94, 24 de febrero de 1994," and "Asesoría Jurídica Servicio de OO.PP y Urbanismo, Ayuntamiento de Granada, expediente 288/94, 1 de marzo de 1994." See also the litigation between the Real Academia de Bellas Artes and the CIE, titled "Sentencia Núm. 838 de 2.000. Sala de lo Contencioso Administrativo, recurso 177/95, Tribunal Superior de Justicia de Andalucía," and the rejoinder by the CIE's lawyer, "A la Sala de lo Contencioso Administrativo del Tribunal Superior de Justicia de Andalucía, sesión segunda, recurso 177/95, Hechos de la Contestación a la Demanda, Área de Urbanismo, Ayuntamiento de Granada." All the documents cited above have been preserved in the Archives of the Ayuntamiento de Granada. I am grateful to the Ayuntamiento de Granada for making them available to me for consultation.
91. "Asesoría Jurídica Servicio de OO.PP y Urbanismo, Ayuntamiento de Granada, expediente 288/94, 1 de marzo de 1994."
92. For a summary of crucial dates in the process of obtaining a building permit, see "Sentencia Núm. 838 de 2.000, Sala de lo Contencioso Administrativo, recurso 177/95." For one of the first publications on historical Albayzín that includes the discussion of the mosque project, published before the mosque was constructed, see Gabriel Pozo Felguera, *Albayzín, Solar de los Reyes* (Granada: Caja General de Ahorros de Granada, 1999), 141–46.
93. "Sentencia Núm. 838 de 2.000, Sala de lo Contencioso Administrativo, recurso 177/95."
94. Coleman, "Persistence of the Past," 171.
95. On the positions of these institutions, see Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 412.
96. Recorded in the judgment, "Sentencia Núm. 838 de 2.000, Sala de lo Contencioso Administrativo, recurso 177/95."
97. Álvarez García, "Informe sobre el seguimiento."
98. *Ibid.* For a summary of findings from the Ibero period excavated in the Albayzín from 1981 to 1995 and an analysis of the Ibero structures on the site of the future mosque, see Casado Millán et al., "Nuevos aportes," 137–44.
99. Avcıoğlu points out that in many European cities mosques have been banished beyond the city limits. This "solution" purports to promote "a more 'passive' presence of Islam," enabling the preservation of the "traditional" [i.e., Western] architectural character of the cityscape. See Nebahat Avcıoğlu, "The Mosque and the European City," in *Islam and Public Controversy in Europe*, ed. Nilüfer Göle (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2013), 57–68.
100. I refer here to Henri Lefebvre's work, in particular to *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford, U.K., and Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1991). Similar disputes have occurred recently in many Spanish cities, among them Torrejón de Ardoz (Castilla), Lleida, Torroella de Montgrí-L'Estartit, Badalona (Cataluña), and Zamarraga (País Vasco). These cases have received extensive coverage in national and regional press. For a scholarly analysis of debate in Badalona, see Avi Astor, "Memory, Community, and Opposition to Mosques: The Case of Badalona," *Theory and Society* 41, 4 (July 2012): 325–49.
101. "Ref/Licencia Urbanística para la construcción de la Mezquita, Área de Urbanismo, Sección de Licencias,

- Negociado de Obras Mayores, expediente 288/94, 23 de marzo de 1994," Archives of the Ayuntamiento de Granada. This major change is recorded in Renato Ramírez Nogueira, "Proyecto Final de Obra Mezquita, Centro Cultural y Jardines, Plaza de S. Nicolás y c/Horno de S. Agustín, Albaycín, Granada, Memoria," which was made available to me by the architectural firm of Renato Ramírez Nogueira.
102. Pablo Jesús Casado Millán, interview with author, June 2012; Gutiérrez Fraguas, interview.
 103. On the Nasrid and Morisco houses in the Albayzín, see *La Casa Nazarí de Zafra*, ed. Antonio Almagro Gorbea and Antonio Orihuela Uzal (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1997); Antonio Almagro Gorbea, Antonio Orihuela Uzal, and Carlos Sánchez Gómez, "Casas moriscas de Granada," published on September 8, 2008, on the website of the Asociación de Vecinas y Vecinos, Bajo Albayzín, www.albayzin.info/Principal.htm (accessed March 5, 2013); Carlos Sánchez Gómez, Antonio Orihuela Uzal, and Antonio Almagro Gorbea, "La casa nazarí de la calle del Cobertizo de Santa Inés, n. 4, en Granada," *Cuadernos de la Alhambra* 28 (1992): 135–66; Castilla Brazales and Orihuela Uzal, *En busca de la Granada*; Antonio Orihuela Uzal, *Casas y palacios nazaríes, siglos XIII–XV* (Barcelona: Lunberg Editores, 1996); Antonio Orihuela Uzal, "The Use of Wood in Morisco Houses in the Sixteenth Century," in *Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Construction History*, ed. Malcolm Dunkeld, James Campbell, Hentie Louw, Michael Tutton, Bill Addis, and Robert Thorne (Exeter, U.K.: Short Run Press, 2006), 3:2363–78; Antonio Orihuela Uzal, "The Andalusí House in Granada (Thirteenth to Sixteenth Centuries)," in *Revisiting al-Andalus*, ed. Anderson and Rosser-Owen, 169–91.
 104. Castiñeira, "La comunidad musulmana de Granada."
 105. "Sentencia Núm. 838 de 2.000, Sala de lo Contencioso Administrativo, recurso 177/95."
 106. Architect Renato Ramírez Nogueira, the son of Renato Ramírez Sánchez, finalized the construction of the mosque and certified that the building complied with all of the conditions for the urban development in the Albayzín as stipulated in the PEPRI-Albayzín. This certificate is available for consultation in the archives of the Renato Ramírez Nogueira's architectural firm and in the offices of the Ayuntamiento de Granada.
 107. Great Mosque of Granada website, <http://www.mezquita-degranada.com/sobre-la-mezquita.html> (accessed April 30, 2013).
 108. I am grateful to Abdes Salam Gutiérrez Fraguas and Ahmed Bermejo for granting me permission to study the interior of the mosque and take photographs for this essay. I wish to thank Batul Hernández López for facilitating my visits to the mosque and for many interesting conversations in the summer of 2012.
 109. Beebe Bahrami, "A Door to Paradise," *City and Society* 10, 1 (1998): 127–28. On the politics of the collective memory of the Moriscos, see Mary Elizabeth Perry, "Memory and Mutilation: The Case of the Moriscos," in *In the Light of Medieval Spain*, ed. Doubleday and Coleman, 67–90.
 110. Aidi, "Interference of al-Andalus," 76. Aidi quotes Muhammad ibn Azuz Hakim, a Moroccan historian, who traced more than seven thousand surnames of Andalusí origin in Tetuan alone. For an analysis of Andalusian identity among the descendants of the Moriscos in Rabat, see Beebe Bahrami, "Al-Andalus and Memory: The Past and Being Present among Hispano-Moroccan Andalusians from Rabat," in *Charting Memory: Recalling Medieval Spain*, ed. Stacey N. Beckwith (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000), 111–43.
 111. Quoted in Bahrami, "Door to Paradise," 127.
 112. Anidjar, "Futures of al-Andalus," 228.
 113. Quoted in Rosón Lorente, "¿El Retorno de Tariq?," 75.