

The Ottomans and Spain: Culture and Commerce between Anatolia and Andalusia, 14th – 17th centuries

An Illustrated Lecture by Walter B. Denny
Distinguished Professor of Art History
University of Massachusetts at Amherst

American Friends of Turkey
Turkish Embassy, Washington DC
Wednesday October 28, 2015
6:30-7:30 PM

Opposite Ends of the Mediterranean



But in a broader, pan-Eurasian perspective, they are in the same
Mediterranean neighborhood



In the 14th century: a hemmed-in Nasrid emirate heavily investing in culture;
a vigorous Ottoman empire concentrating on territorial expansion



Two European “Portraits”

Muhammad V, Nasrid Emir, r. 1354-59 and 1362-91

Murad I Hüdavendigâr, Ottoman Sultan, r. 1362-89



14th Century “Hüdavendigâr Eyaleti” -- Bursa

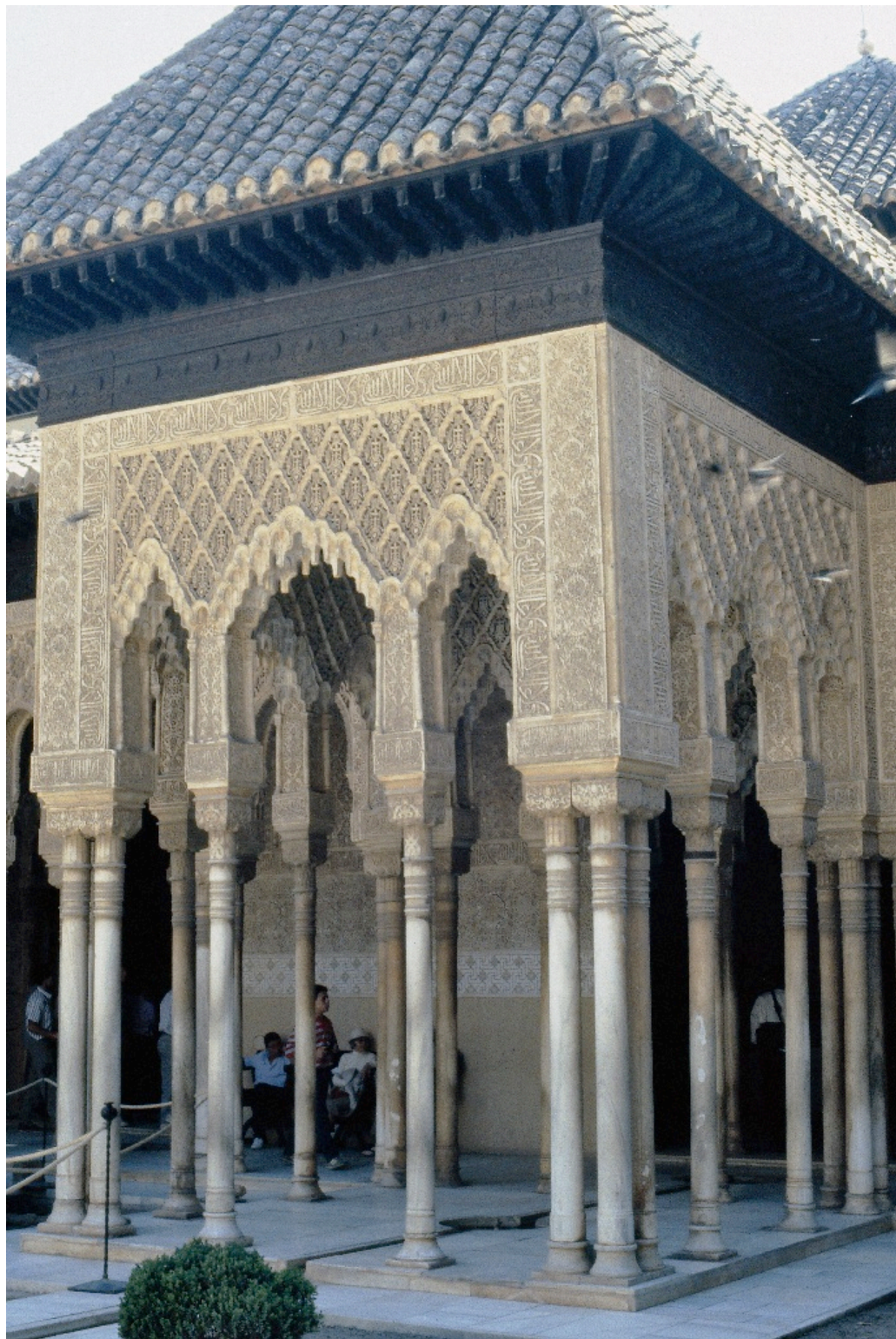


16517. P. Z. - BROUSSE. VUE PRISE DE L'ECOLE MILITAIRE.

14th century Nasrid Granada: The Alhambra on the Sabika Hill







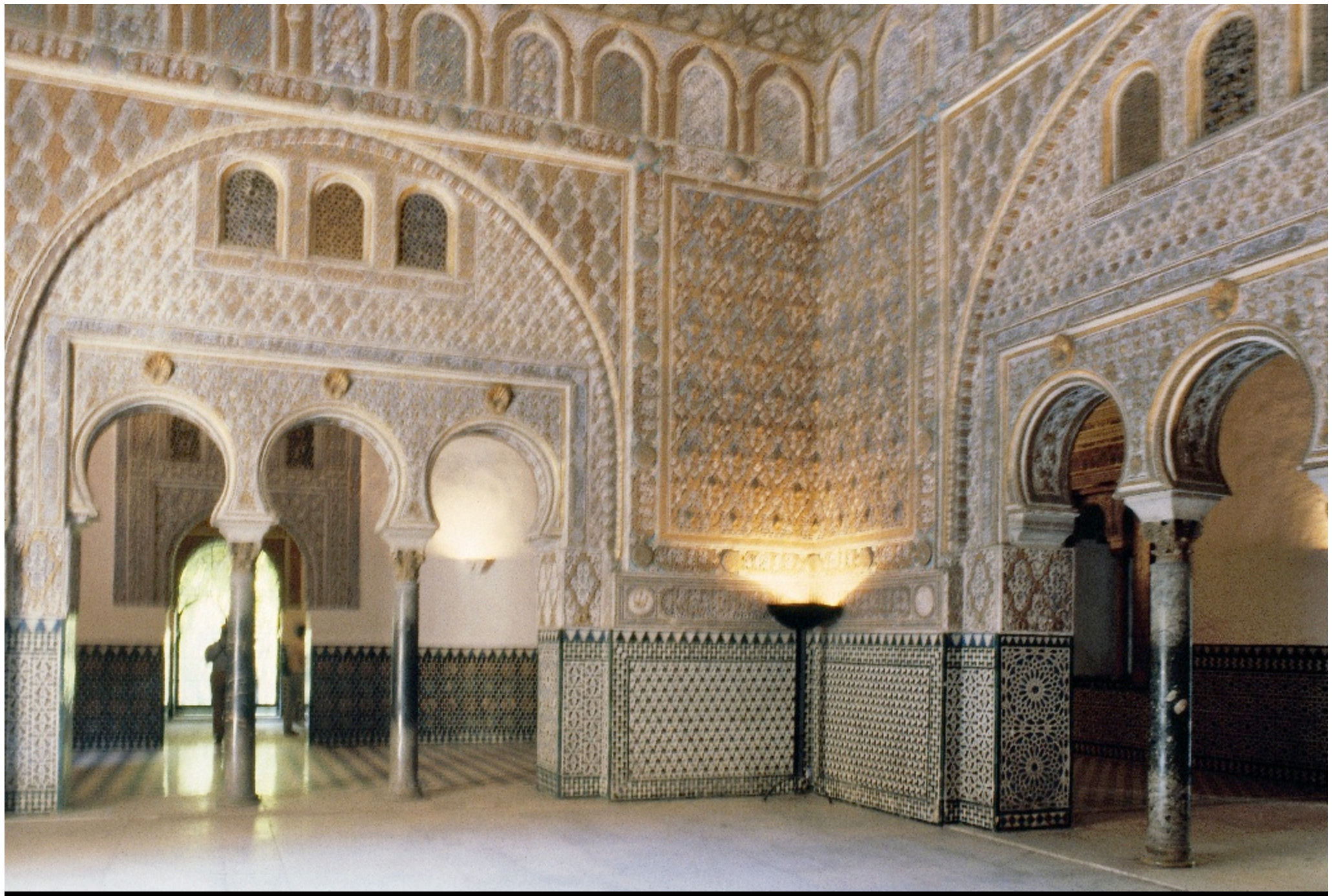






14th century Mudejar Seville: Nasrid style under Castilian patronage









Nasrid Luxury Silks: Where did the fiber come from?





The Nasrid Legacy: Mudejar Ceramics

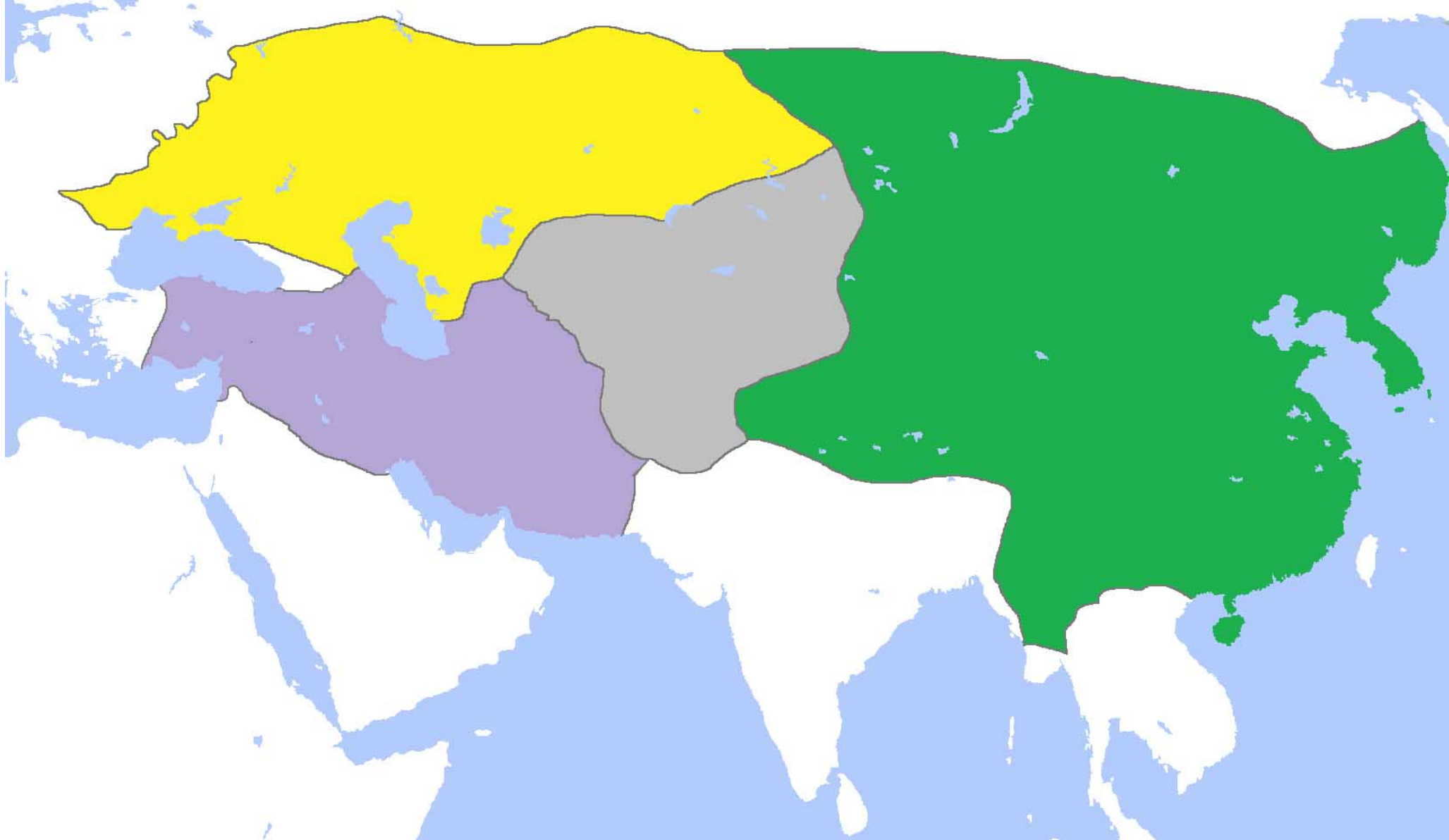
The premier luxury ceramics in the Mediterranean in the 14th century



Mediterranean Art and Commerce in the 14th Century



Looking East to China in the 14th Century : The Silk Roads and the Mongol Empire



Yuan Dynasty Commerce with the Islamic World: Silk and Porcelain





14th c. Yuan silks are shipped
to Turkey where they inspire
14th c. Anatolian carpets

14th c. Anatolian carpets are shipped to Spain
where they inspire
14th c. Spanish carpets

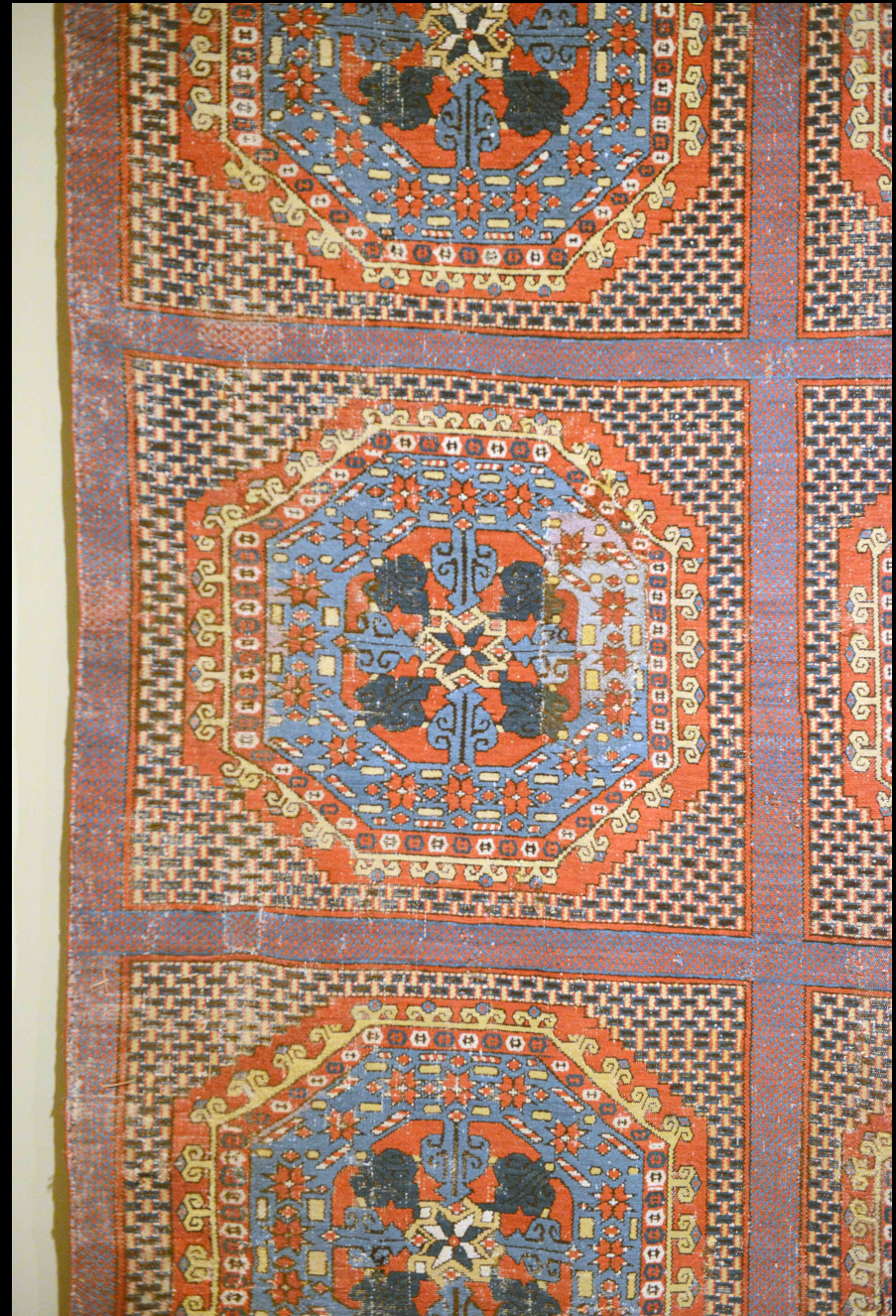


What is especially interesting about the early Iberian-Anatolian artistic commerce and artistic influence is that it appears to be largely from east to west (Spain having lots of wool but no carpet-weaving tradition), and that despite the prestige and power of the fully mature Nasrid high court style, it leaves no impact on Turkey, while the commercial products of Anatolian looms leave a major impact on Spain.

But the Spanish weavers (left) use a strange and entirely different knotting technique from that used in their models, the Anatolian carpets (right)



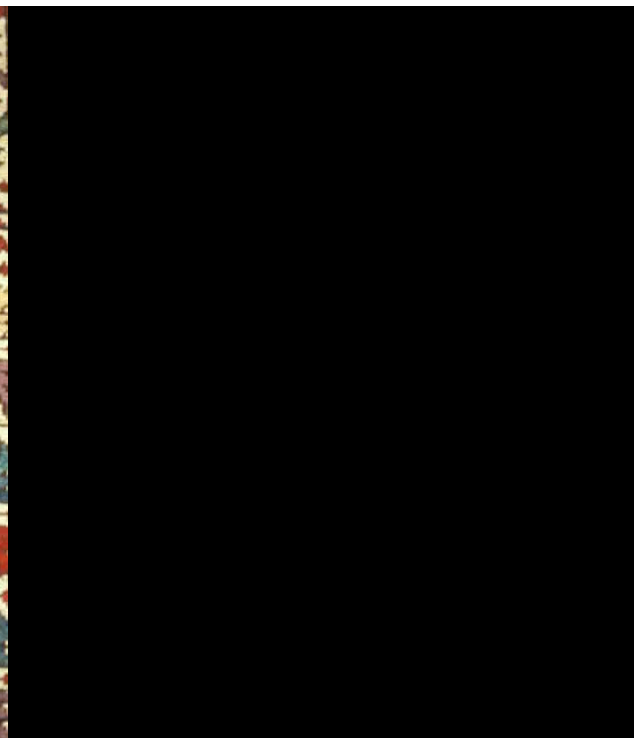
By the early 15th century, Spanish weavers (right) are adapting the full repertoire of Anatolian designs, such as the famous “large-pattern Holbein” rugs from Anatolia (left)





“Small-Pattern Holbein” Carpets from Anatolia (right) copied in Spain (left)





Yet another Anatolian carpet
pattern (above) copied by
Spanish weavers (right)



The large number of Spanish copies of Anatolian carpets clearly established that Spanish weavers were seeking to make products using their local wool that could compete with the popular Turkish carpets in the Mediterranean economy.

But recently some evidence has emerged suggesting that in the matter of artistic inspiration, the east-west carpet inspiration and commerce was not a completely one-way street

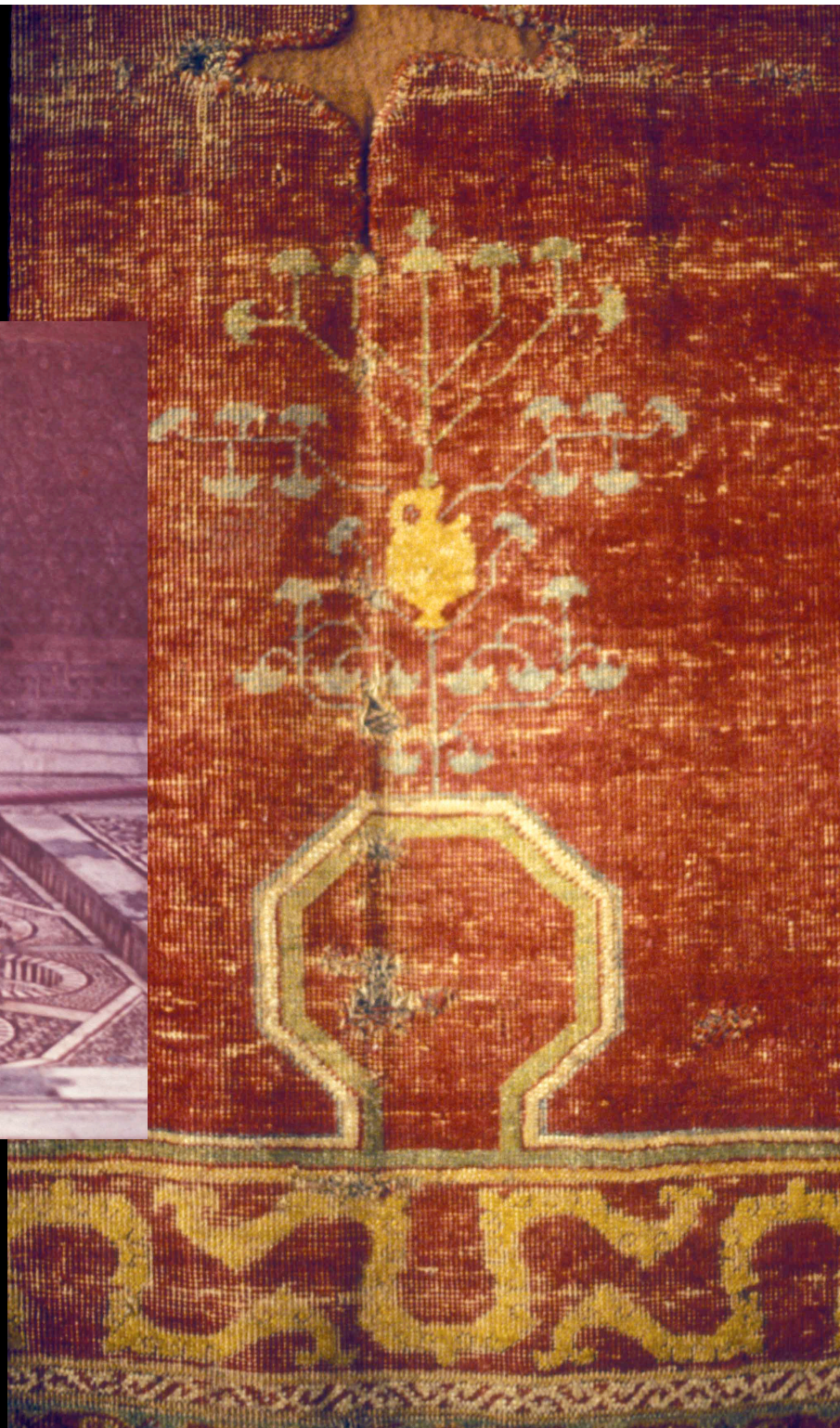
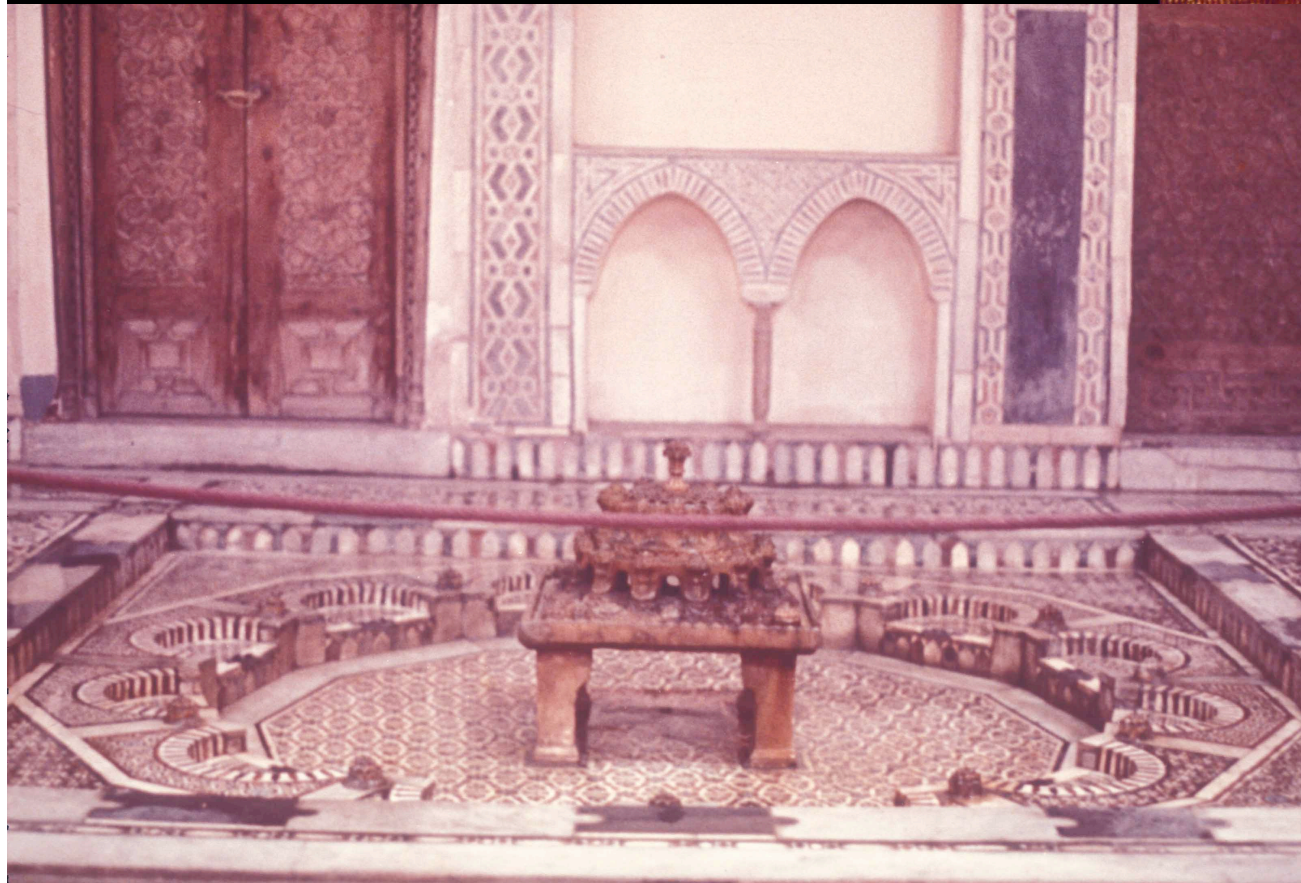
First case study: the famous “Bellini” design in Anatolian carpets of the 16th century:
what does it mean?







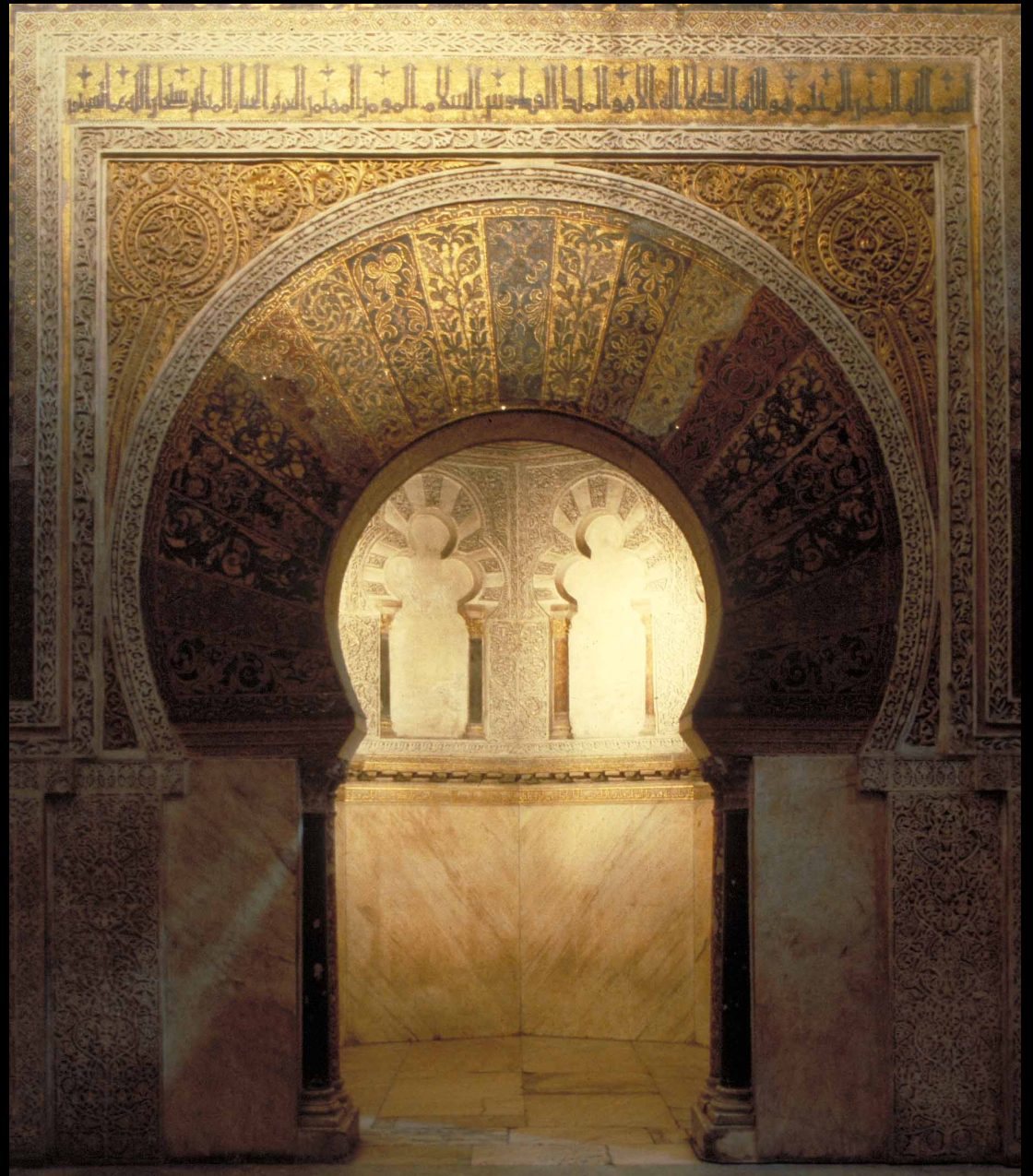
A fountain basin?



A Chinese mountain?



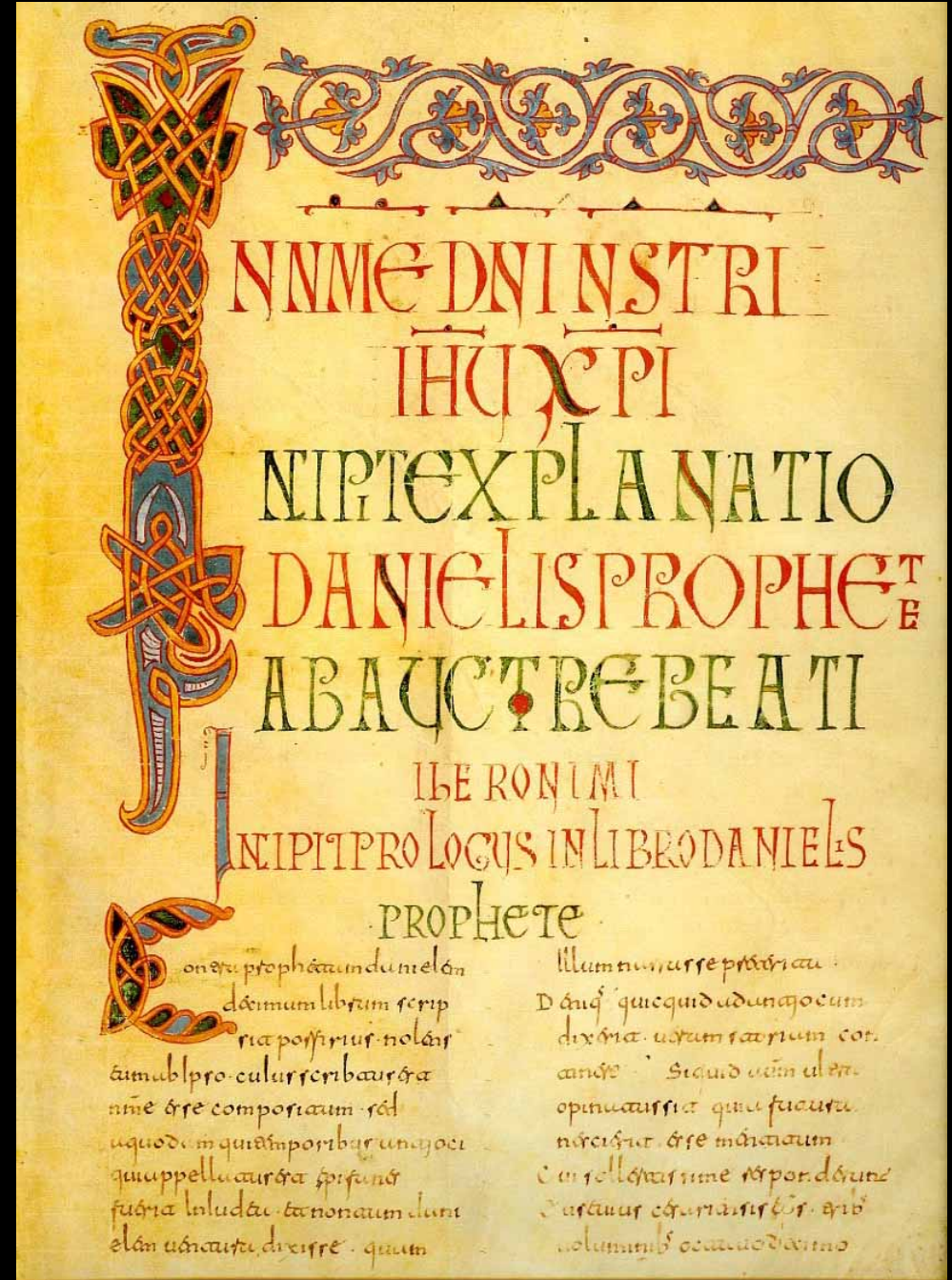
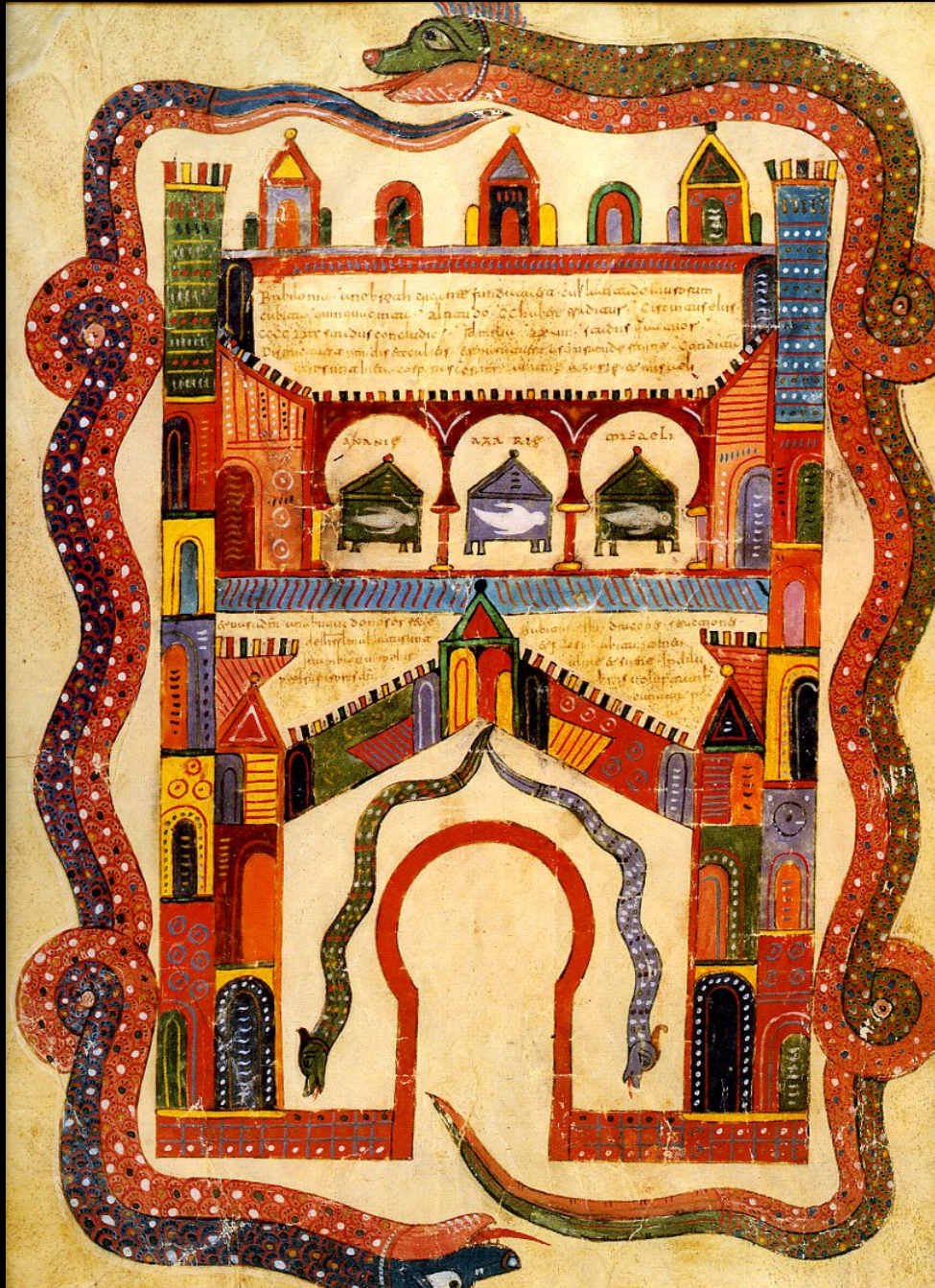
There is a much simpler explanation: a
Spanish horse-shoe arch



The horse-shoe arch is the iconic Spanish architectural form, also leaving a major impact on architecture of the Maghreb (Morocco and Algeria).



The Morgan Library Beatus of 940: a depiction of Babylon in Mozarab art during the great age of the Cordoba caliphate. The arch represents a portal.





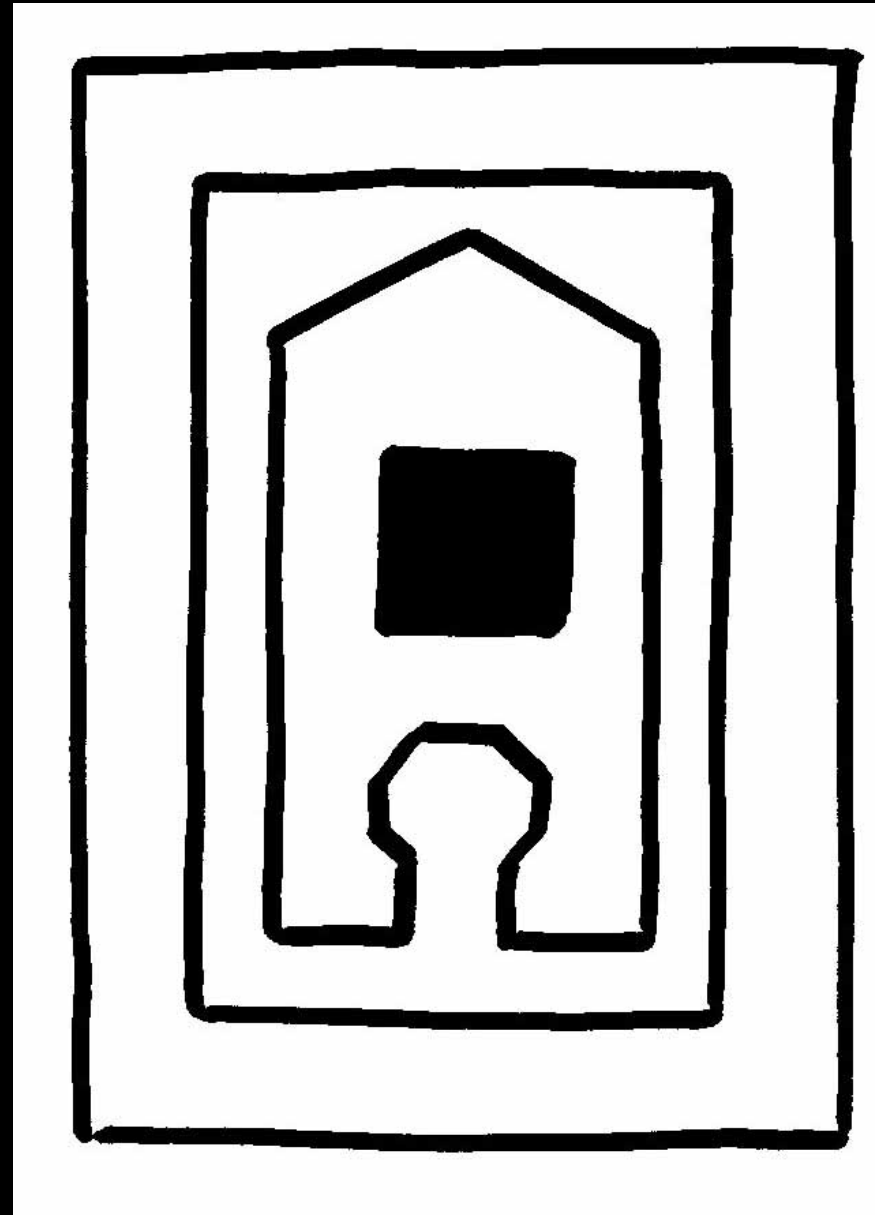
Later “double-ended Bellini” Anatolian carpets from the 17th and 18th centuries



The question is, how do we get from 10th-century Iberia (left) to 16th-century Anatolia?



A theory of west-to-east transmission after 1492 is based on the remarkable similarity between the Turkish *seccade* or prayer rug and the Jewish *parokhet* or Torah curtain, and on the large-scale migration of Iberian Sephardim to the Ottoman Empire after 1492.



The *Parokhet* and the *Seccade/Sajjadah*: Near-Identical Forms and Meanings



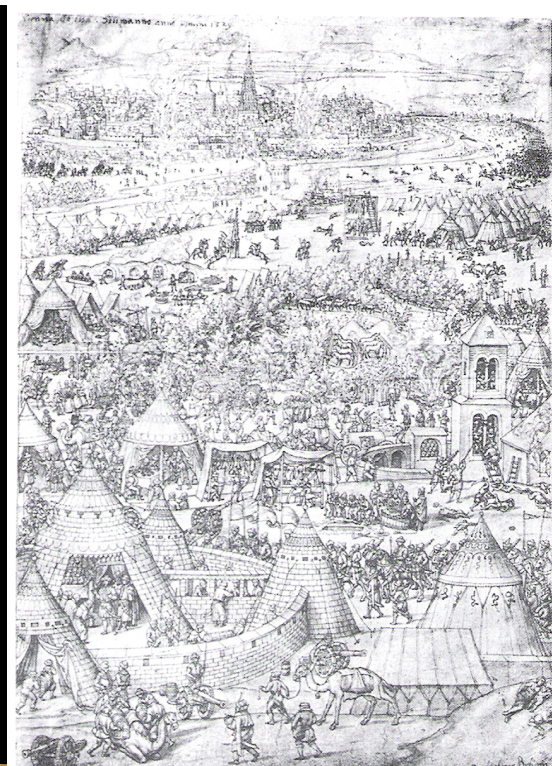


Ottoman-Habsburg Rivalry -- two Great 16th-century Adversaries:
Süleyman *Kanuni* and Charles V (aka Charles Quint, Şarlken)



The “Ottoman Lake” and the Balkans: Theaters for Conflict and Commerce

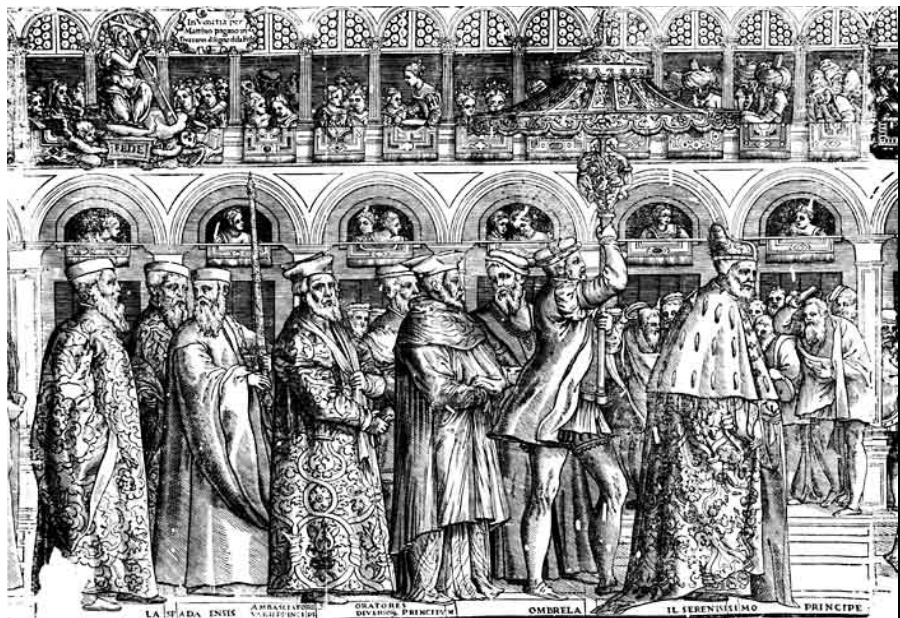






East-west commerce continues through war and peace in the 16th century

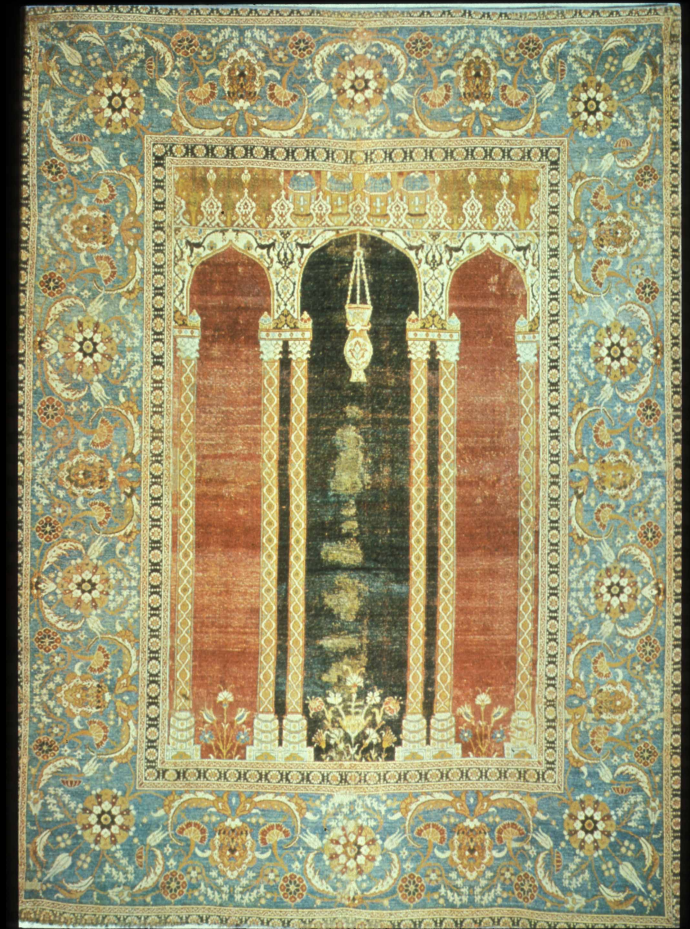
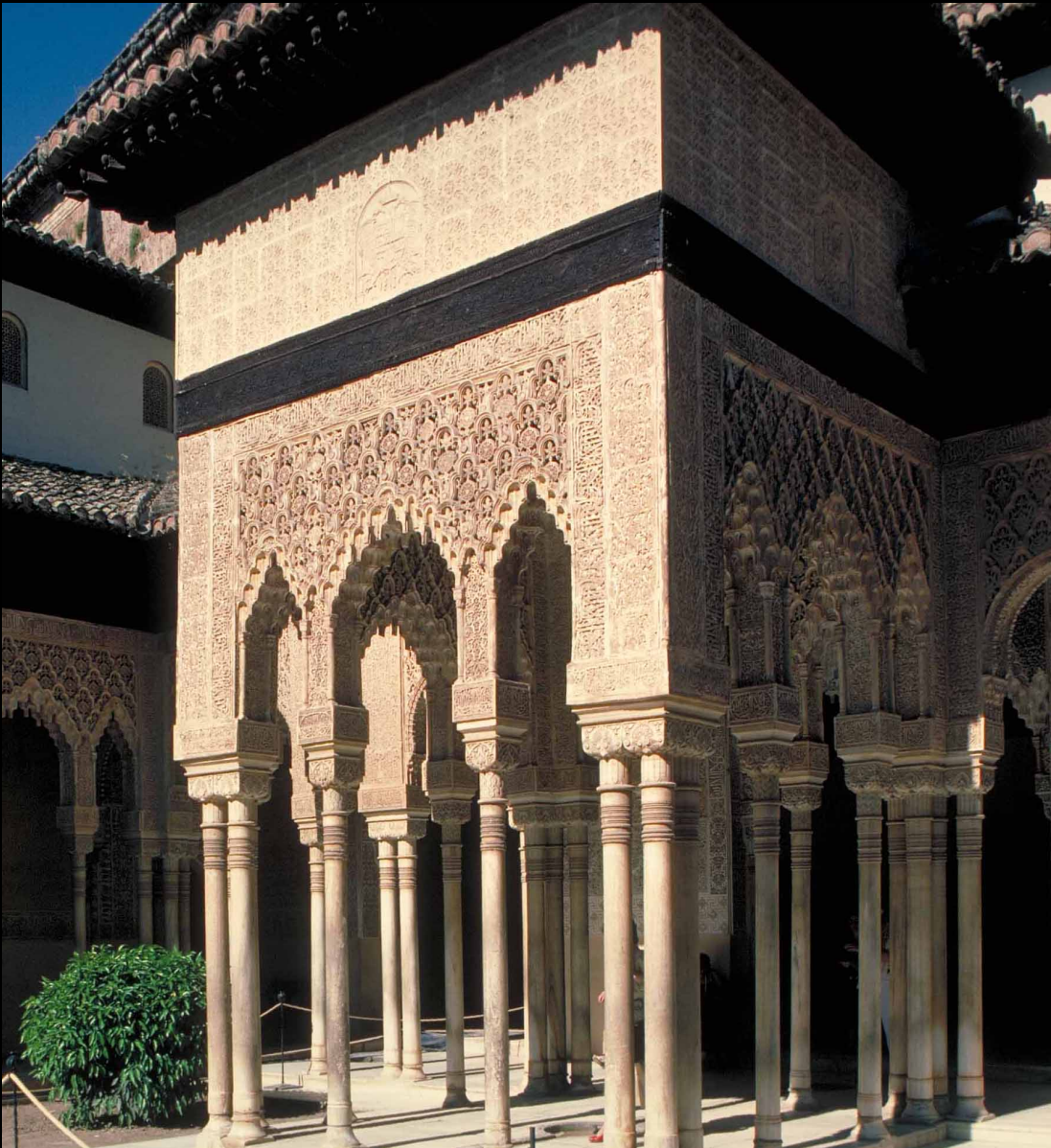




The coupled-column Ottoman prayer rug: an iconic Ottoman artistic form, invented in the 2nd half of the 16th century in İstanbul, with a long heritage in Anatolian carpet weaving. But where does the architecture come from?



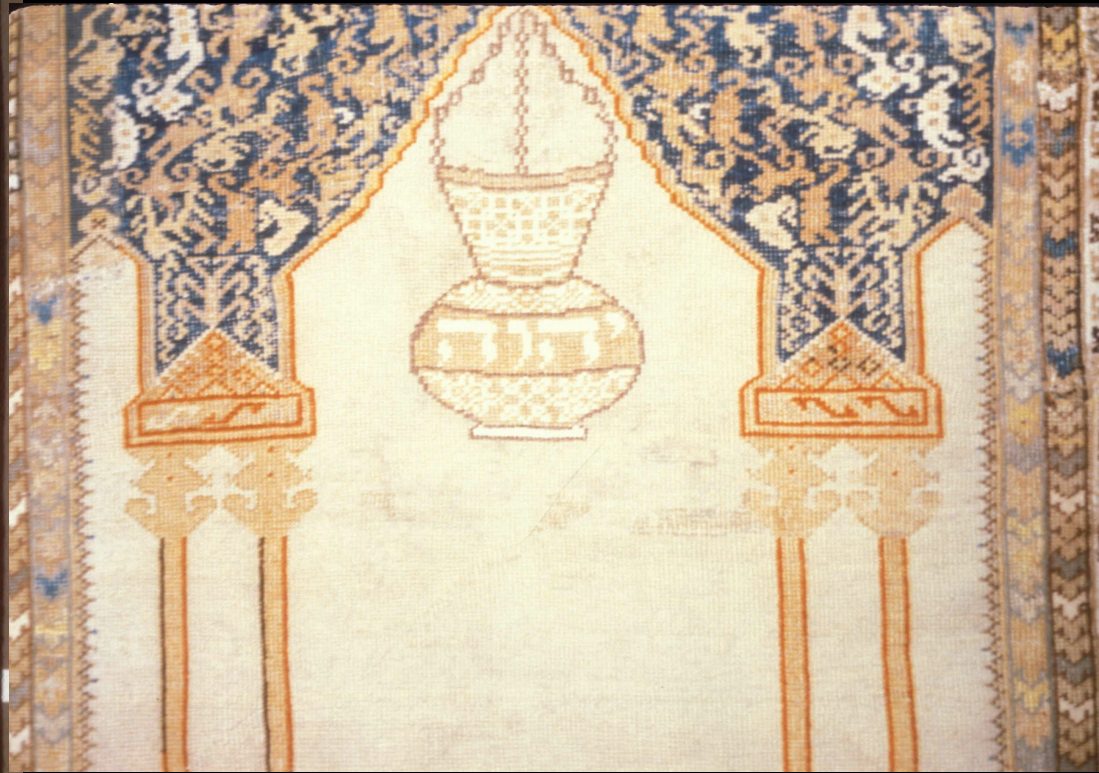
Once again, Nasrid Spain is the probable source, and the Sephardic eastward migration of the early 16th century is the probable means of transmission







There are two much later post-scripts to our story. One is from the Jewish Museum in New York City, a carpet woven in Gördes in Anatolia, probably around 1800.



“A dedication of Judah of Avila to the
holy congregation Seville, an offering
of remembrance for the soul of my
daughter Gracia of Avila in the year
(chronogram) 5368 = CE 1607-08”



What is the meaning of the 1608 date, 100 years after the major Sephardic migration to Turkey, but probably about 200 years before the weaving of the carpet?



The other postscript, even more recent, is much more familiar.





The Mediterranean: a commercial and artistic “neighborhood”
for millennia past, for today, and for the future.





29 EKİM
CUMHURİYET BAYRAMINIZ KUTLU OLSUN