

## **The Alhambra and The Arabian Nights**

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**Abstract.** Washington Irving was one of the first American men of letters to win international fame as an author. The contribution that Irving made to the world of literature cannot be disputed. He wrote different genres of literature, one of which was the "romance." His interest in romance writing was part of his temperament but it was further kindled by his first stay in Spain between 1826-1832, during which time he wrote *The Alhambra* (1832). Actually, he wrote the book in the old Arabian palace itself where he absorbed the spirit and feeling of the East as conveyed in the writings and architecture of the Arabs who has lived there many centuries earlier.

On reading Irving's *The Alhambra*, the reader familiar with *The Arabian Nights* will not fail to discern similarities between the two works. This research will try to establish the influence of *The Arabian Nights* on *Alhambra* by tracing the various aspects of similarities between the former tales and the latter "legendary scraps." These similarities are divided mainly into three categories: general influence of the "romantic" characteristics of *The Arabian Nights*; certain common factors; and close similarities between specific stories. Thus, finally, the research establishes and proves a link between *The Arabian Nights* and *The Alhambra*.

On reading Washington Irving's *The Alhambra*,<sup>(1)</sup> the reader familiar with *The Arabian Nights* will not fail to discern the similarities between its tales and Irving's "legendary scraps," as Irving called them in his work *Alhambra*.<sup>(2)</sup> What factors did they have in common? And how did the Arabian tales influence Irving's work? That is what this essay will attempt to analyze.

As Irving indicates in *Alhambra*, he wrote the book in Spain, actually in the old

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(1) Washington Irving, *The Alhambra*, ed. W.T. Leneham and A.B. Myers (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983).

(2) Irving, p. xxiv.

Arabian palace itself, where he absorbed the spirit and feeling of the East, as conveyed in the writings and architecture of the Arabs who had lived there many centuries earlier: Irving wrote other legends, which were later published in 1835 as a third series — to complement *A Tour on the Prairies* and *Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey* — under the title *Legends of the Conquest of Spain*. In 1849 George P. Putnam published a revised edition of the series which Irving called *The Crayon Miscellany*.<sup>(3)</sup> Yet at this time the *Legends of the Conquest of Spain* were withheld, perhaps to be published later with other Spanish narratives. Irving never got to doing that, and these legends were published after his death in 1866, in the first volume of *Spanish Papers*.<sup>(4)</sup>

Yet these sketches do not possess the oriental legendary spice *Alhambra* offers. In these sketches Irving's concern is more historical; he was interested in "the wars between the Spaniards and the Arabs"<sup>(5)</sup> rather than in the legendary details of oriental gothicism that he presented beautifully in *Alhambra*. Therefore these sketches will not be dealt with in this essay, as they do not represent Irving's presentation of "Arabian romance" (*Alhambra*).<sup>(6)</sup>

Irving's interest in the Orient coincided with a general interest in Europe. Like many knowledgeable readers of his generation, Irving was well aware of the revival of the study of the Orient in the German literary world, as well as the discoveries of the scientists of the French Academy in Egypt in 1798 and 1799. Both helped to stimulate an impression of the Near East as a world of romance and mystery. His personal feeling was reflected in a letter he wrote to Henry Brevoort from London, on August 15, 1820, in which he described the "men of talent" he met in John Murray's drawing room, one of whom was the famous Egyptologist, Giovanni Battista Belzoni:

... I have been very much pleased also with Belzoni, the traveller, who is just bringing out a personal narrative of his researches, illustrated with very extraordinary plates [...] There is the interior of a temple, excavated in a hill, which he discovered & opened; which had the effect on me of an Arabian tale. There are rows of gigantic statues, thirty feet high, cut out of the Calcarious rock, in perfect preservation. I have been as much delighted in conversing with him and getting from him an account of his adventure feelings, as was ever one of Sindbad's auditors....<sup>(7)</sup>

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(3) Washington Irving, *The Crayon Miscellany*, ed. Dahlia Kirby Terrell (Boston: Twayne Publisher, 1979), pp. xvii–xli.

(4) Washington Irving, *Miscellaneous Writing: 1803–1859*, 2, ed. Wayne R. Kine (Boston: Twayne Publisher, 1981), pp. 180–273.

(5) Washington Irving, *Letters*, ed. R.M. Aderman et al., 4 vols. (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1979) IV, 14–16.

(6) Irving, *Alhambra*, p. 32.

(7) Irving, *Letters*, I, 592.

But it was the Andalusia of Spain that kindled his imagination the most. And where in Andalusia could that occur but in Granada and Alhambra?

Before living in Alhambra in 1829, Irving had the good fortune, in February 1826, of staying with the American Consul in Madrid, Obadiah Rich, who had a library rich in Spanish and Arabian materials. He also visited the libraries of Madrid and Seville where he frequently took notes.<sup>(8)</sup> It could be argued that the notes he took from books in Rich's library and from the libraries of Seville and Madrid and perhaps from his reading of *The Arabian Nights* — as will be shown later — gave Irving the backbone around which he built *Alhambra*.

It is worth mentioning that Irving acknowledged that parts of his "legendary" stories were related to him by his Spanish guide, Matteo Ximenes, and by passing strangers recounting stories at night around the fire.<sup>(9)</sup> This oral tradition was passed on from one generation to another, perhaps from their Arabian ancestors. But a more substantial source than oral tradition is needed to establish a relation. As will be shown later, there are more similarities than oral tradition can account for.

What is most intriguing is Irving's own words describing his "legendary scraps." He wanted to write what he called "... Something in the Haroun Alraschild style that should have a dash of that Arabian spice which pervades everything in Spain."<sup>(10)</sup>

"Haroun Alraschid'[s]" *Arabian Nights* was obviously what Irving was referring to. By "Haroun Alraschid'[s] style" one can assume that Irving meant a style reflecting a fascination for the creative imagination, an imagination that suits character, plot, and setting to the fancy-woven domain of legendary expression. This expression is displayed in various aspects, some of which are:

(a) A fascination with local color, reflected in the description of setting, environment and people in pictorial details, as for example in the "Legend of The Two Discreet Statues":

... This was a little black-eyed girl about twelve years of age, named Sanchica ... She played about him as he worked in the gardens, danced to his guitar as he sat in the shade, and ran as wild as a young fawn about the groves and alleys and ruined halls of the Alhambra.

(8) "Washington Irving's Madrid Journal 1827-1828 and Related Letters," ed. Andrew B. Myers, *Bulletin of the New York Public Library*, 62 (August, 1958), 409. Irving went to Spain in 1826 because he was asked by Mr. Alexander Everett to translate the voyages of Columbus (*Letters*, II, 168). For two years he stayed in Madrid, where he wrote *Columbus*, and then he toured Andalusia. In May 1829 he returned to Granada, where the Governor allowed him to stay in the Alhambra palace till July 1829 (*Letters*, II, 441-42).

(9) Irving, *Alhambra*, pp. xxv, 31-32.

(10) *Ibid.*, p. xxiv.

It was now the eve of the blessed St. John, and the holiday-loving gossips of the Alhambra, men, women, and children, went up at night to the mountain of the sun, which rises above the Generalife, to keep their midsummer vigil on its level summit. It was a bright moonlight night, and all the mountains were gray and silvery, and the city, with its domes and spires, lay in shadows below, and the Vega was like a fairy land, with haunted streams gleaming among its dusky groves. On the highest part of the mountain they lit up a bale fire, according to an old custom of the country handed down from the Moors...<sup>(11)</sup>

(b) A fantastically extravagant and romantic conception of sentiment, whether it be love, hatred, sadness or happiness, as for example in the “Legend Of The Three Beautiful Princesses”:

Mohamed was making one of his usual left-handed blunders. In the tumult and agitation of this blustering scene, the veils of the three princesses has been thrown back, and the radiance of their beauty revealed; and in prolonging the parley, the King had given that beauty time to have its full effect. In those days people fell in love much more suddenly than at present, as all ancient stories make manifest: it is not a matter of wonder, therefore, that the hearts of the three cavaliers were completely captured; especially as gratitude was added to their admiration: it was a little singular, however, though no less certain, that each of them was enraptured with several beauty. As to the princesses, they were more than ever struck with the noble demeanor of the captives, and cherished in their breasts all that they had heard of their valor and noble lineage.<sup>(12)</sup>

(c) Preoccupation with the supernatural elements and Gothic aspects of romanticism, as for example in the “Legend of the Arabian Astrologer”:

So saying he seized the bridle of the palfrey, smote the earth with his staff, and sank with the Gothic princess through the center of the barbican. The earth closed over them, and no trace remained of the opening by which they had descended... .

From time to time the sound of music, and the tones of a female voice, could be faintly heard from the bosom of the hill; and a peasant one day brought word to the king that in the preceding night he had found a fissure in the rock, by which he had crept in, until he looked down into a subterranean hall, in which sat the astrologer, on a magnificent divan, slumbering and nodding to the silver lyre of the princess, which seemed to hold a magic sway over his senses.<sup>(13)</sup>

(d) And above all, great interest in suspense for entertainment purposes. After all, this latter characteristic is what kept Shahrazad alive! As for example in the “Legend Of The Three Beautiful Princesses”:

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(11) *Ibid.*, p. 229.

(12) *Ibid.*, p. 182.

(13) *Ibid.*, pp. 118-19.

... the gentle little Moorish maid stood doubting and wavering on the verge of elopement; tempted by the sweetness of the sin, but terrified at its perils.

Every moment increased the danger of discovery. A distant tramp was heard. "The patrols are walking their rounds," cried the renegado; "if we linger, we perish. Princess, descend instantly, or we leave you."<sup>(14)</sup>

These characteristics are all obvious to any reader of *The Arabian Nights* or *Alhambra* legendary stories. Yet what is important is not only to establish a general influence already acknowledged by Irving himself in the quotation mentioned previously but also to seek deeper links between the two works.

Did Irving in his letters refer to or mention any oriental elements in his background in the years before *Alhambra* was published in 1832? A reference was made in the year 1823, when Irving wrote to his publisher, John Murray, the following letter:

... among other things I feel an inclination to take hold of the Ms Arabian tales which you once put into my hands. I think I could not employ my mind more originally [...] I have always felt an inclination towards those Mss: and a persuasion that I could make them worth your publishing. If you should feel inclined to hand them over to me Mr. Newton will take charge of them and forward them. I should not wish to be known, however, that I was employed upon them — [but] until they were ready for publication.<sup>(15)</sup>

In his book, *Washington Irving and The House of Murray*, Ben H. McClary suggests that Murray could have found the Rev. Edward Forster's translation of *The Arabian Nights* among the papers he acquired from William Miller, who published an edition of the stories in five volumes.<sup>(16)</sup>

Two questions present themselves here: (1) Why did Irving concern himself with manuscripts when Forster's published book was available? (2) What did he want to do with these manuscripts?

The answer can only be speculative. First, a manuscript would be easier to work with or take from as it might cite sources or notes that the author may not care to record in his book. Second, Irving might have wanted to write his own *Arabian Nights* translation and was preparing to do so,<sup>(17)</sup> with the tales in *Alhambra* being just a trial run of a work already in progress.

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(14) *Ibid.*, p. 190.

(15) Irving, *Letters*, pp. 2–16.

(16) Ben H. McClary, ed., *Washington Irving and The House of Murray: Geoffrey Crayon Charms the British, 1817–1856* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1969), p. 48.

(17) Before leaving the *Alhambra* for London on his way to America, Irving packed his papers in "three trunks" (McClary, p. 133). Parts of his papers were published after his death in 1866, and the rest was published in *Miscellaneous Writing 1803–1859*.

Another speculative theory is that these manuscripts might have been related to a certain work by Lord George Byron, who was known to be fascinated by the Orient. John Murray was Lord Byron's publisher, and in 1831 he published *The Bride of Abydos* — the original title of which was *Zuleika* — and offered Byron “a thousand guineas for the copyright of his [Byron's] last two Oriental Tales.”<sup>(18)</sup> *The Giaour* and *The Bride of Abydos*. Also, Murray published *Don Juan* between 1819 – 1822, close to the time Irving wrote his letter to Murray in 1823. Perhaps Byron found some manuscripts which interested him and which he used in *Don Juan*, a work partly set in Spain and in Constantinople; thus they could have contained Moorish and oriental elements.

One point worth mentioning here is that Murray “repeatedly, to Byron's great vexation, allowed his manuscript to be in hand for an unusual time, and hence arose differences and misunderstanding between poet and publisher.”<sup>(19)</sup> This habit of Murray may lead one to suspect that the manuscripts Irving was referring to might have been Byron's, and that he might have seen them on one of his visits to Murray's office. But again these are only speculations and have to remain so, as only speculations and have to remain so, as only Irving knew the purpose of these manuscripts.

Yet one thing remains an established fact, and that is that Irving did possess and read Forster's translation of *The Arabian Nights*, before 1823, as it was the latest English translation to precede the publication of *Alhambra* in 1832.

Although the “Arabian Spice” permeates *Alhambra*, it is difficult to savor the individual varied spices, to pinpoint the ingredients. How did the reading of *The Arabian Nights* influence Irving's *Alhambra*, and to what extent? This is what the remainder of this essay will attempt to answer.

The lengthy nature of both works and the scope of this essay do not allow a section by section comparison, for *Alhambra* is in one volume and Forster's *Arabian Nights*<sup>(20)</sup> is in four. Also, Irving could have been influenced by the spirit and style of Forster's *Arabian Nights* rather than by borrowing certain specific parts. Yet the *Arabian Nights*' influence was more than a writer's reflection of an admiration.

Upon reading the “legendary” parts in *Alhambra*, a reader who is familiar with the *Arabian Nights* cannot but notice certain common factors:

#### I. A shared interest in specific style, usage, forms and perception:

(18) Leslie A. Marchand, *Byron: A Portrait* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 157.

(19) Karl Elze, *Lord Byron: A Biography* (London: John Murray, 1872), p. 265.

(20) Edward Forster, *The Arabian Nights*, trans. 4 vols. (Philadelphia: J. & A. Y. Humphreys, 1812).

A. Common attraction to romantic behavior and dark Gothic elements of Romanticism. Witness Forster's *Arabian Nights*, "The History of the Second Calendar, The Son of A King"

The Genius gave me no time to answer these questions; nor indeed should I have been able to do so, as his dreadful presence made me entirely forget myself. He took me by the middle of my body, and dragging me out of the chamber, sprang into the air, and carried me up towards heaven with so much force and celerity, that I was sensible of the great height to which I had ascended, before I was aware of the distance I had travelled in so short a space of time. He then descended towards the earth; and having caused it to open, by striking his foot against it, he sunk into it, and I instantly found myself in the enchanted palace...<sup>(21)</sup>

Irving's *Alhambra*, "Governor Manlo And The Soldier":

"'Hold fast,' said he, 'my steed goes like the wind.'

"'Never fear me,' said I, and so off we set.

"From a walk the horse soon passed to a trot, from a trot to a gallop, and from a gallop to a harum-scarum scamper. It seemed as if rocks, trees, houses, everythings, flew hurry-scurry behind us.

...In this way we went up hill and down dale; by towers and cities, all buried in deep sleep, and across mountains and plains, and rivers, just glimmering in the starlight.

"....'Here we are,' said he, 'at the end of our journey.' I looked about, but could see no signs of habitation; nothing but the mouth of a cavern.... We passed along a steep winding way, that descended into the very bowels of the mountain. As we pushed on, a light began to glimmer up, by little and little, like the first glimmerings of day, but what caused it I could not discern. It grew stronger and stronger, and enabled me to see everything around. I now noticed, as we passed along, great caverns, opening to the right and left, like halls in an arsenal...<sup>(22)</sup>

The two narratives are different, and one cannot but notice that Irving, always the observant traveller, brings in precise descriptive details. Yet there is the common use of supernatural means of conveyance, the speed, the distance covered and the descent into the mysterious underworld, as well as the bewildered attitude of the narrator, who is taken on a journey unaware of its outcome or end.

B. Preoccupation with forces that control the Universe, that is, fate; with special reference to the use of astrologers in fear of the future.

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(21) Forster, I, 153.

(22) Irving, *Alhambra*, pp. 216-17.

### Forster's "The History of The Third Calender, the Son of a King":

...At the end of nine months I was born to the great joy of all the family. My father having observed with the greatest exactness the moment of my birth, consulted the astrologers, who answered, "Your son shall live without any accident or misfortune till he is fifteen; but then run a great risk of losing his life, and will not escape from it without much difficulty. If, however, he should have the good fortune not to perish, his life will continue many years..."<sup>(23)</sup>

Astrologers are also used in Irving's *Alhambra* in the "Legend of the Arabian Astrologer," the "Legend Of The Three Beautiful Princesses," the "Legend of Prince Ahmed Al Kamel," and "The Pilgrim of Love." It is from the latter that the following extract is taken:

There was once a Moorish King of Granada, who had but one son, whom he named Ahmed, to which his courtiers added the surname of Al Kamel, or the perfect, from the indubitable signs of superexcellence which they perceived in him in his very infancy. The astrologers countenanced them in their foresight, predicting every thing in his favor that could make a perfect prince and a prosperous sovereign. One cloud only rested upon his destiny, and even that was of a roseate hue; he would be of an amorous temperament, and run great perils from the tender passion. If, however, he could be kept from the allurements of love until of mature age, these dangers would be averted, and his life thereafter be one uninterrupted course of felicity.<sup>(24)</sup>

The reader will undoubtedly notice the similar use of astrologers, the fairly joyful life predicted for both princes, and the fear of a certain peril that the princes are fated to face, and finally the "happily ever after" once the peril is escaped.

C. Mutual fascination with and frequent use of the supernatural element, as for example the use of spells over buried treasures in Forster's "The History of Aladdin, or the Wonderful Lamp"<sup>(25)</sup> and Irving's "Legend of the Moor's Legacy".<sup>(26)</sup> Also, in common with this category is the use of magical flying carpets and wise talking birds. Although the flying carpet is a rather universal supernatural motif, it probably became so because of the popularity of the *Arabian Nights*.

First presented here are the extracts that deal with the flying carpet, and then those of the wise talking birds. Forster's "The History of Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Pari-Banou":

... that only by sitting upon this carpet you will be instantly transported, together with the

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(23) Forster, I, 180.

(24) Irving, *Alhambra*, p. 129.

(25) Forster, IV, 1-123.

(26) Irving, *Alhambra*, pp. 159-173.



carpet itself, to whatever place you wish to go; and you will find yourself in that spot almost in a moment, without being stopped by any obstacle whatever.<sup>(27)</sup>

Irving's "Legend of Prince Ahmed Al Kamel":

These words were scarcely from his lips, when the carpet rose in the air, bearing off the prince and princess. The king and the physician gazed after it with open mouths and straining eyes until it became a little speck on the white bosom of a cloud, and then disappeared in the blue vault of heaven.<sup>(28)</sup>

In his treatment of the motif of the wise talking bird, Forster does not specify the kind of bird, yet Irving's bird is an owl. Note that both birds are sources of knowledge and help to the hero. Forster's bird in "The History of Two Sisters, Who Were Jealous of Their Younger Sister" speaks for almost four pages, but the following quotation is just a few lines that solve the mystery for the king:

"These women," answered the bird, "were jealous of the honour and happiness you had bestowed upon her in preference to themselves."<sup>(29)</sup>

Irving's bird in the "Legend of Prince Ahmed Al Kamel" is as talkative as Forster's, yet note Irving's humor and superior treatment of motif in the words of the owl:

"Hearken, O prince, to what I shall relate. We owls, you must know, are a learned body, and much given to dark and dusty research. During my late prowling at night about the domes and turrets of Toledo, I discovered a college of antiquarian owls, who hold their meetings in a great vaulted tower where the royal treasury is deposited..."<sup>(30)</sup>

Both Irving's and Forster's birds perform the role of the messenger (*deus ex machina*). They are the outsiders that bring the hero to an awareness and understanding of the whole situation and hence solve his problems, and by doing so they bring the lovers back together to a "happy ever after."

From the preceding examples, it is clear that both authors present genies carrying the heroes through the heavens in great speed and force. Both present dark caves descended to by supernatural means, where there are horrors or treasures guarded by supernatural powers. Both authors present astrologers and fortune tellers as an important motif that influences the stream of events or the attitude of the hero. Both use spells, curses, flying carpets and talking birds as tools of the supernatural element.

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(27) Forster, IV, 288-9.

(28) Irving, *Alhambra*, p. 150.

(29) Forster, IV, 397.

(30) Irving, *Alhambra*, p. 148.

Both Forster's *Arabian Nights* and Irving's *Alhambra* reflect a strong romantic interest in local history and regional folklore and the customs of their respective settings. Indeed Irving's fascination with the Arabian-Spanish culture and folklore did evidently influence his legends. Throughout *Alhambra* Irving's creative imagination is tinted by his surroundings and consequently his stories reflect the Moorish-Spanish folklore, which beautifully suited his temperament bent, as it is, towards romanticism and sentiment. Irving's creativity and originality come from his specific ability to utilise details to fit his own surroundings in Spain and, more specifically, in Alhambra.

By living in the Alhambra itself — as pointed out earlier — he absorbed a lot of the spirit of the place, so that he was able, as a creative writer, to turn his narratives that were influenced by the *Arabian Nights* to “ingenious composites of Irving-cum-Ignotus”,<sup>(31)</sup> as the following passage from the “Legend of the Rose of The Alhambra” exemplifies:

A small garden, [i]nclosed by a trelliswork of reeds overhung with myrtle, lay before the tower. Opening a wicket, the page passed between beds of flowers and thickets of roses to the door. It was closed and bolted. A crevice in the door gave him a peep into the interior. There was a small Moorish hall with fretted walls, light marble columns, and an alabaster fountain surrounded with flowers. In the center hung a gilt cage containing a singing bird; beneath it, on a chair, lay a tortoiseshell cat among reels of silk and other articles of female labor, and a guitar decorated with ribbons leaned against the fountain.

Ruyez de Alarcon was struck with these traces of female taste and elegance in a lonely, and, as he had supposed, deserted tower. They reminded him of the tales of enchanted halls current in the Alhambra; and the tortoiseshell cat might be some spell-bound princess.<sup>(32)</sup>

II. having presented similarities that are rather subtle, but not too subtle to be ignored, there is yet another similarity that will convince the reader of Irving's indebtedness. This is the close similarity between two specific stories, Forster's “The History of the Amours of Camaralzaman, Prince of the Isle of the Children of Khaledan, and of Badoura, Princess of China”<sup>(33)</sup> and Irving's “Legend of Prince Ahmed Al Kamel”.<sup>(34)</sup> The various similarities, and the lengthy nature of the legends, evident from the long titles themselves, will not allow a presentation of extracts.

The points of similarity are:

(31) *Ibid.*, p. xxiv.

(32) *Ibid.*, p. 194.

(33) Forster, III, 222–300.

(34) Irving, *Alhambra*, pp. 125–51.

A. The heroes and heroines of both stories are living in seclusion due to orders from their respective fathers, who fear for their future.

B. The heroes and the heroines are brought together by an external factor. Again fate plays its role:

1. Forster's hero and heroine meet because of the genies Maimoune and Danhasch, who bet on which of the two is the more beautiful.
2. Irving's hero and heroine know of each other through the talking birds that help them exchange letters and pictures.

Note that both factors are supernatural.

C. Both hero and heroine have tokens from their beloved to prove the reality of love versus an imaginative dream. Forster's tokens are exchanged rings; Irving's are letters and pictures.

D. Both heroines suffer from an incurable sickness due to separation from beloved ones. An both fathers of the sick princesses offer a great reward for the one who cures their particular daughter.

E. Both heroes disguise themselves to cure their princesses. Forster's hero is disguised as an astrologer, and Irving's as a "Bedouin Arab," who has great skill in casting away evil spirits, a rather clever shift.

F. Both heroes cure their beloved on sight. Although Irving's hero escapes with his princess, Foster's does not.

G. The fathers of both princesses are furious at the lovers' deceit and reject their daughters' lovers. Yet both consent to their marriage when they realize that their daughters' lovers are greater in wealth and strength than they themselves are.

Irving ends his story here, but Forster, having the luxury of the lengthy *Arabian Nights*, goes on to the story of his hero's and heroine's children. What is worth mentioning here is this same technique of linking stories through a continuation of lineage used throughout the *Arabian Nights* and also employed by Irving in "Legend of The Three Beautiful Princess" and "Legend Of The Rose Of The Alhambra."

In conclusion, a link has been established between *Alhambra* and *The Arabian Nights*. Thus in accordance with Stanley T. Williams' words that *Alhambra* is "truth-

fully Oriental in coloring, intimate in spirit,”<sup>(35)</sup> it can also be said to be truthfully influenced by *The Arabian Nights*. And that may, after all, be what Irving himself wanted, as he said in “Palace of the Alhambra”:

It is impossible to contemplate this scene [the Alhambra] so perfectly Oriental without feeling the early associations of Arabian romance, and almost expecting to see the white arm of some mysterious princess beckoning from the gallery, or some dark eye sparkling through the lattice. The abode of beauty is here, as if it has been inhabited but yesterday....<sup>(36)</sup>

Thus finally a close examination of Forster’s *Arabian Nights* and Irving’s *Alhambra* will indicate that Irving was influenced by the former work and did borrow from it. Yet for the sake of fairness, one must point out that he did it with graceful taste. He added his own flavor of “romance” and his love of Arabian culture in Spain. He was able, like a master craftsman, to weave the various threads of different ages — the Haroun Alraschid period and Arab rule in Spain — into a beautiful “legendary scrap” dedicated to Alhambra, the great Arabian monument of the Orient in the West.

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(35) Stanley T. Williams, *The Spanish Background of American Literature*. 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), vol. 1, pp. 1–64.

(36) Irving, *Alhambra*, pp. 32–33.

## أثر ألف ليلة وليلة على كتاب واشنطن إير/فنج الحمراء

لليلى عبدالسلام الفارسي

أستاذ مساعد، قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، كلية الآداب، جامعة الملك سعود، الرياض،

المملكة العربية السعودية

ملخص البحث. يعتبر واشنطن إير فنج من أوائل الكتّاب الأمريكيين الذين حصلوا على شهرة أدبية عالمية. إن إسهامه في عالم الأدب لا يمكن تجاهله، فقد كتب أنواعاً عدة من الأدب، منها القصص الرومانسي. وكان اهتمامه بالقصة الرومانسية جزءاً من شخصيته. وفي زيارته الأولى لأسبانيا زادت فترة مكوثه فيها بين (١٨٢٦ - ١٨٣٢م) وفي قصر الحمراء نفسه مكث فترة من الزمن وتأثر بروح الشرق وأحاسيسه وألف رواية الحمراء عام ١٨٣٢م.

عند قراءة كتاب إير فنج الحمراء لا يسع أي قارئ لديه معرفة بألف ليلة وليلة إلا أن يلاحظ التشابه بين الكتّابين. وسيحاول هذا البحث أن يثبت أثر ألف ليلة وليلة على الحمراء وذلك بتتبع النواحي المشابهة بين قصص كل من الكتّابين. وتنقسم هذه النواحي إلى ثلاثة أوجه: تأثير عام لخصائص الرومانسية الموجودة في ألف ليلة وليلة، وبعض العوامل المشابهة، ثم التشابه الدقيق بين القصصين بالذات. وبهذا ينتهي البحث إلى إثبات الصلة بين العملين الأدبيين، كما يثبت تأثير الشرق على كتاب واشنطن إير فنج.