The Institute

RESEARCH, TEACHING AND DISSEMINATION

The School of Arabic Studies is a research institute belonging to the Spanish National Research Council (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, CSIC), the main public research institution in Spain and the third in Europe.

The School was created in 1932 with the purpose of “protecting and supporting Arabic studies in Spain”. During its first years the School was administered by a Governing Board from the University of Granada and, later on, by the CSIC from the year of its creation in 1939 until today.

The School was initially housed in the so-called Casa del Chapiz, the largest and most important Morisco house in Granada that originally formed part of a 14th century Nasrid almunia (aristocratic country estate). In 1939, the building was declared a National Monument and ten years later it was acquired by the state in a partially ruined condition. The architect Leopoldo Torres Balbas was in charge of its restoration.

Nowadays, the School has two headquarters, the one already mentioned in Casa del Chapiz; and a second one in Carmen de los Mínimos, a recently constructed building that opened in 2007. Standing close to each other, both offices are located in the Albaicín district of Granada (declared a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO) where the Group of Philology, Historiography and Tectical Criticism and the Laboratory of Archaeology and Architecture of the City (LAAC) carry out their work, supported by the services of the Library-Archive department.

The School focuses its research work on the study of the history of al-Andalus using Arabic sources and, on the other, it concentrates on Islamic Archaeology and Architecture. Apart from teaching Master’s and PhD courses, the School also supervises PhD theses and Master’s dissertations, produces publications, and organises specialised courses and lecture series, etc.
The Group of Philology, Historiography and Textual Criticism is a research team belonging to the CSIC. Ever since its creation, it has been housed inside the so-called Casa del Chapiz, the main building of the School of Arabian Studies.

The group’s research lines are related to the study of Islamic culture and civilization through its written manifestations, with special interest in al-Andalus, standing out for its multidisciplinary approach as regards the processes for editing, translating and interpreting manuscripts. Its working lines are as follows:

**Philology** examines Arabic sources and Christian texts in al-Andalus, focusing on preparing a “Catalogue of Islamic and Christian texts in al-Andalus, focusing on studying agronomy, diet and medicine in al-Andalus, with the purpose of learning about the techniques, types, products and cultivation methods employed during this period; the study of the culture through diet, including its cuisine, economic and scientific connotations; and the analysis of the evolution of Arabic medicine from the beginning until the Morisco period.

**Epigraphy** centres its efforts in cataloguing inscriptions from the Alhambra and Generalife palaces, as well as other monuments bearing Arabic epigraphy.

**Law** addresses the study of political history, economy, society, law and institutions in Granada during the Nasrid and Morisco period.

**Natural Sciences** concentrate on studying agronomy, diet and medicine in al-Andalus, with the purpose of learning about the techniques, types, products and cultivation methods employed during this period; the study of the culture through diet, including its cuisine, economic and scientific connotations; and the analysis of the evolution of Arabic medicine from the beginning until the Morisco period.

**Prescopigraphy** involves studying the almasti in al-Andalus (PUA), a group of specialists in Islamic religious knowledge, with the aim of producing a database containing information on all the figures from al-Andalus mentioned in Arabic biographical dictionaries.

**Historiography** examines Arabic sources and Christian texts in al-Andalus, focusing on preparing a “Catalogue of Islamic and Christian texts in al-Andalus, focusing on preparing a “Catalogue of Islamic and Christian texts in al-Andalus, focusing on studying agronomy, diet and medicine in al-Andalus, with the purpose of learning about the techniques, types, products and cultivation methods employed during this period; the study of the culture through diet, including its cuisine, economic and scientific connotations; and the analysis of the evolution of Arabic medicine from the beginning until the Morisco period.

**Prosopography** involves studying the almasti in al-Andalus (PUA), a group of specialists in Islamic religious knowledge, with the aim of producing a database containing information on all the figures from al-Andalus mentioned in Arabic biographical dictionaries.

**Laboratory of Archaeology and Architecture of the City**

The Laboratory of Archaeology and Architecture of the City (LAAC) (Code HUM-104, Andalusian Research Plan) is a research group, whose members mostly belong to the CSIC and the University of Granada and University of Seville. The laboratory is housed inside Carmen de los Mártires, a building that has belonged to the School since the creation of LAAC, in 2007, following the merge of two research groups, “Hispano-Muslim Architecture” (1989) and “Medieval Islam: history, archaeology and heritage conservation” (2003).

The Laboratory’s research lines are related to the archaeological and historic study of Islamic architecture and urbanism, specially related to al-Andalus, working predominately with a multidisciplinary approach. Its working lines are as follows:

**Medieval Archaeology** addresses the study of the morphogenesis of Islamic urban development using stratigraphy for the unitary analysis of subsol and structures (Archaeology of Architecture).

Al-Andalus Architecture comprises the typological study of lower class and courtier dwellings, their origins and evolution.

**Conservation and Restoration** studies historic, architectural and archaeological heritage, starting with the early stages of documentation and analysis, and ending with its dissemination and the intervention project.

The work associated to the documentation, topographic and photogrammetric surveys of buildings and archaeological sites, together with the creation of infographics and virtual reconstruction, has been a research process on its own, positioning the School as a leading centre in its field, both in Spain and abroad. At present, the laboratory has its own Photogrammetric & Infographic Scientific-Technological Service, which provides assistance to other entities.

**Library / Archive**

Ever since the School Library was created in 1932, it has provided the centre’s research activity with an essential support service by managing and facilitating the access to specialised resources that enable researchers to perform their work. It is linked to the CSIC Library and Archive Network, thus also converting it into a resource service for the other libraries in the network, while benefiting at the same time from their collections and resources. The School Library is also available for users outside the CSIC community who are carrying out research activities in fields within the teaching, academic or professional world.

All manuscript collections and part of the old repository have been digitalised and can be accessed via the Manuscrita.CSIC and Simurg portals.

Thanks to the service of Archivo Delegado at Digital.CSIC and the organisation of cultural activities and bibliographical exhibits, the library also actively collaborates in disseminating the results of the scientific research carried out in the School.

The nature and subject of the collections are directly linked to the institute’s teaching and research lines, which revolve around Arabic and Islamic studies with special attention to al-Andalus, and include an ample number of books, printed and electronic journals, graphic materials (photographs, maps, etc.) and archive documentation.

The library houses an interesting collection of 134 Arabic manuscripts divided into 63 volumes, among which Ibn Laynû's _Agriculture Treatise_ (Almuta, 1348) is of notable importance. Its old repository (16th – 19th centuries) comprises representative works from the beginning of Orientalism and European and Spanish Arabism, with some items that are of special value due to their beauty, as well as their scientific and bibliographic interest.

The library also provides assistance to other entities.