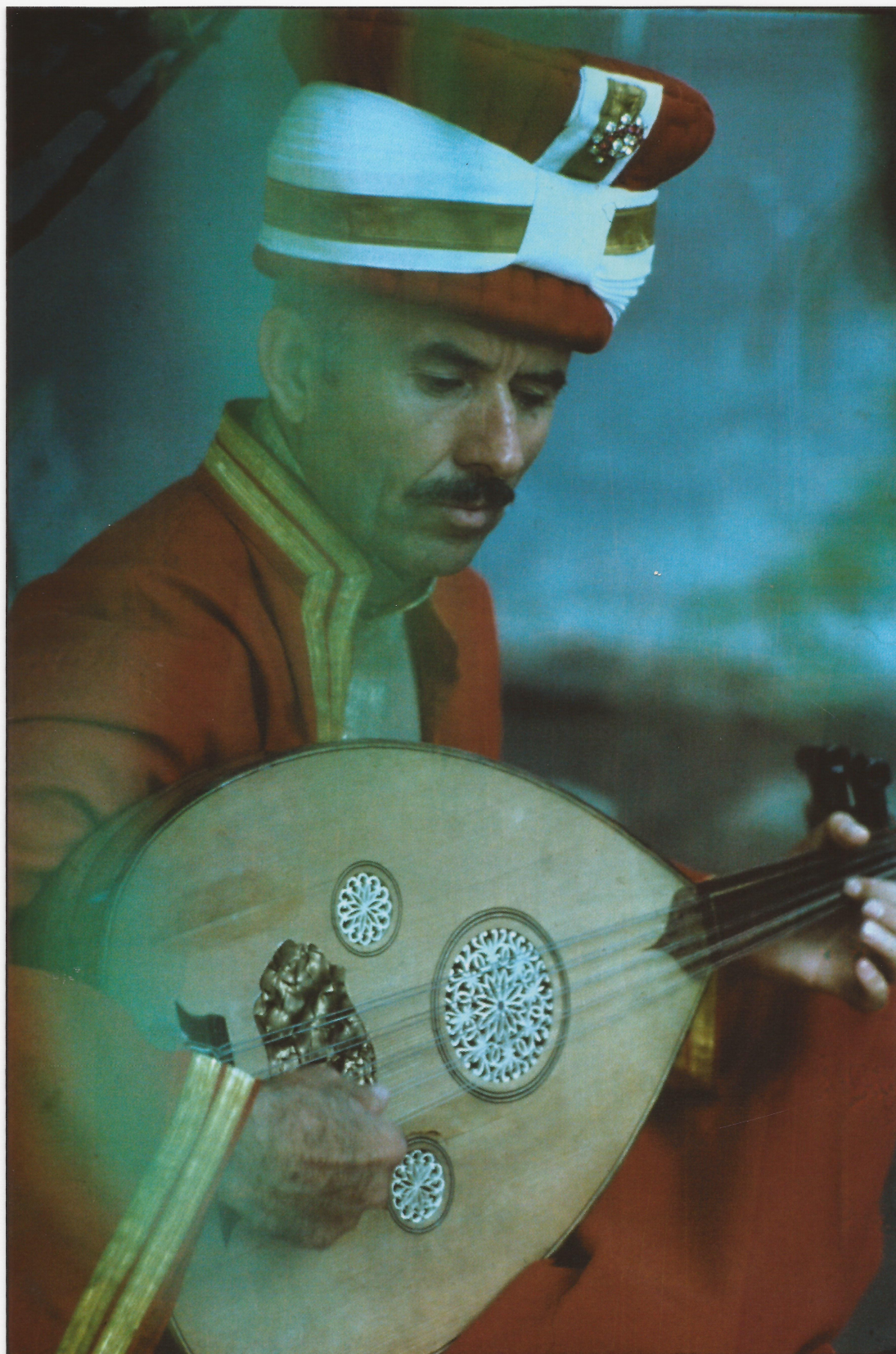




Libraries of Cordoba

In the eighth century a new and independent Muslim kingdom was established by the Umayyads in Spain. Its capital city, Cordoba, became a center of learning and intellectual life and was widely known as a city of bibliophiles (people who love books). The most celebrated library in Cordoba was run by Caliph al-Hakam II al-Mustansir (A.D. 961-976). Al-Hakam, who was an accomplished scholar, sent bookbuyers all over the Muslim Empire to find books for his library. Library clerks, many of them women, carefully hand-copied the books while calligraphers and bookbinders created beautiful text and cover designs. Al-Hakam's library was said to have contained more than 400,000 books, whose titles filled a 44-volume catalog. The people of Cordoba also collected books for their homes. Those who owned large, personal libraries were regarded as important figures in Cordovan society.

Document 0



Music of Muslim Spain

The music of Muslim Spain, which combined musical styles from all over the world, was an important achievement during the Golden Age of Muslims. Europe's first music conservatory (school) was established in Cordoba by an Arab named Ziryad, a slave liberated from Baghdad. Musicians from all over Central Asia and Africa were hired by royal courts to entertain royalty and important visitors, such as wealthy merchants. These musicians developed a distinct style of music from the patterns and rhythms of poetry that combined the styles of classical Arab and native Spanish cultures. In fact, poets and musicians worked together to create songs about love, nature, and glorious achievements of the empire. By the eleventh century, this music was so popular that the courts of the caliphs and other rulers competed to see whose musicians produced the most pleasing songs. The instruments most often used in this music included: the *oud*, a short-necked string instrument that is the ancestor of the guitar; the *rebab*, an instrument brought to Spain by Middle Eastern musicians that resembles a violin; the *ney*, a simple wood flute; and the *darbuka*, a goblet-shaped drum made of pottery. The origins of many instruments, including the oboe, trumpet, violin, guitar, harp, and percussion instruments can be traced to this music of Muslim Spain.

Note: Play CD Tracks 1 and 2 and listen to the two examples of Arabic music.

Document P