



From Granada to Berlin

The Alhambra Cupola

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ISBN	9783862068319
Publisher	Verlag Kettler
Binding	Paperback / softback
Territory	World excluding Germany, Austria, Switzerland
Size	240 mm x 170 mm
Pages	196 Pages
Illustrations	67 color, 11 b&w
Name of series	CAHIM - Connecting Art Histories in the Museum
Price	£38.00

- Comprehensive biography of the Alhambra cupola
- Includes extensive new research
- Part of the series *CAHIM – Connecting Art Histories in the Museum*

This book is the story of an extraordinary survivor from the Alhambra palace in Granada, Spain: the Alhambra cupola, now in the Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin. The cupola, a ceiling crafted from carved and painted wood, was made to crown an exquisite mirador in one of the earliest palace buildings of the Alhambra. The book is the cupola's biography from its medieval construction to its imminent redisplay in Berlin. It traces the long history of the Alhambra through the prism of the cupola, from the Muslim craftsmen who built it, to its adaptation by the Christian conquerors after the fall of Granada in 1492, to its creation as a heritage site. The cupola was sketched by artists from across Europe, before it was dismantled by a German financier and taken to Berlin in the 19th century. It witnessed the dramatic events of the 20th century in Germany and was eventually bought by the Museum in 1978. In recent decades, the new visibility of the cupola to the wider public has prompted questions about the object and its movement from Granada to Berlin. Its removal from the Alhambra and the complex reasons behind this loss are central to this biography. Setting the cupola within the wider context of Islamic heritage, it considers the role of collecting practices in the transformation of living monuments into heritage sites in the 20th century. This book presents a focused study of this unique object that cuts across academic disciplines and geographic boundaries to reveal a new perspective on the legacy of Islamic art in Europe and its continuing relevance today.