



The Most Magnificent Mosque

Books Reviewed:

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Reviewer:

[Clive Barnes](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

In a world whose political divisions are often described in religious terms, and in which Islam is often portrayed as a source of antagonism to liberal values, it is good to have a picture book that recognises the common inheritance of the 'People of the Book' - Jews, Christians and Muslims - and that, implicitly at least, gives proper credit to Islam's record of religious toleration. The book carries its message lightly. It is set in Cordoba at the end of the period of Moorish rule in Southern Spain in the thirteenth century. The mischief of three boys - one of each religion - in the gardens of the Great Mosque causes the Caliph to sentence them to work for three months with his gardeners. Years later, when the boys are men of substance in their respective communities and the city is in the hands of a Christian King who wishes to pull down the Mosque, they come together to ask for the building and its gardens to be preserved. With a jaunty text and bright, lively illustrations that acknowledge Islamic and European art traditions, Jungman and Fowles celebrate our common humanity, the irreverence of childhood, and the beauty, joy and solace contained in all of the great faiths. No, it's not the whole story; but it's a part that needs to be told, particularly to children, at this time of apparently deepening divisions.

Running Order:

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