

Introduction to the Study of Islamic Iberia, Its Fortification & Settlement

Following the death of General Franco in 1975, Spain underwent a dramatic transformation which saw the rise of regional and provincial aspirations replace the centralist ideals of the fascist system. From the 1980s onwards the ideologically conditioned precepts of cultural uniformity and *'nacionalcatolicismo'* that the country and her people had been subjected to for 40 years, rapidly gave way to a gradual yet profound process of decentralisation, which in turn gave rise to new questions being asked about the nature of Spain as a cultural entity. As part of this process, some of Spain's autonomous communities embarked on a search for interpretations of the past which allowed the formation of distinct identities, whereas others conducted the study of their history with a more centripetal outcome in mind. In particular the 800 year-long Islamic presence on the Iberian Peninsula has had, and still has, a great deal of influence on the self-perception of many Spaniards and the study of this highly relevant period, and in particular archaeology, has at times been instrumentalised to serve political aims rather than scientific ones.

The notion of Spain as a cumulus of various distinct cultural entities that require cohesion can be traced back as far as the days of the Visigothic king Liuvigild (525–589), and efforts to unify and centralize the Iberian Peninsula appear to have been one of the great ever-recurring themes of Spanish political history. Even as late as the 1950s, at the height of the Franco period, the eminent Spanish philosopher Jose Ortega y Gasset had remarked that 'Spain is a series of watertight compartments rather than a nation' (Dobson 1989, 86). Part of the reinvention process which Spain has been undergoing over the last 30 years or so, and the consequent re-examination of the Iberian Peninsula's historiography, has been the emphasis being placed on the Islamic era, the age of al-Andalus, which lasted from AD711–1492. Today, the great questions are: what influence, if any, could Islam have had on the creation of the nation we call Spain? Or, put rather more directly, how much of *'Hispanidad'* is in fact 'Moorishness'? The answers to these questions have often reflected the political alignment of a given scholar, and this has in turn led to highly differentiated attitudes in the various regions of the Iberian Peninsula. Mallorca, for example, has tended to fall into the more conservative camp, leading to an academic focus concentrating on Classical and Christian archaeology and characterised by a comparative disinterest in the three hundred years of Andalusian presence there.

In recent years a number of useful and often very insightful retrospectives have been produced by some of the main actors in Spanish medieval archaeology (Lloret 2012;

Carvajal 2014), and the current consensus tends to be that the discipline has developed greatly over the last three or four decades, and that as result of the highly dynamic and varied approaches to the study of Islamic Iberia the region has probably become one of the best understood in the entire Islamic world. The evolution of the discipline as whole, however, was not always a harmonious one accompanied as it was by many discussions which, in some cases, still hold sway today. In this sense, the debates that have led to our current understanding of Andalusian society, its political structure and the functions of one of its only physical remains, its fortresses, have dominated the discourse on medieval Spain for the best part of the 20th century. It is therefore not surprising that the state of the question regarding Andalusian archaeology has, at times, been so heavily politicised that it has become difficult to determine how of much of what we think we know is, in fact, opinion. Consequently, it will be necessary to provide a brief introductory summary of these debates to clarify the epistemological background to the questions which this study aims to address.

1.1 Researching Islamic Iberia: problems and challenges

Among the earliest holistic studies on al-Andalus was that carried out by Jose Antonio Conde in 1844. In his book *Historia de la dominación de los árabes en España* he presents the creation of al-Andalus as a beacon of civilisation and enlightenment in the midst of the cultural wasteland that was medieval Europe (Conde 1844). This romantic view of Andalusian Iberia as the primer for Europe's great cultural achievements in later centuries was not disliked in Spain for most of the 19th century. In the last decade of the 19th century, however, the national sentiment on the peninsula changed fundamentally. The influential Arabist and historian Francisco Simonet, for instance, saw in Islam a corrupting influence, and in his 1897 publication on the history of the mozarabs he praises at great length those Spaniards (i.e. Christians) who endured Islamic rule and preserved the 'national spirit and the culture of the Spain of Antiquity' (Simonet 1897, 7). Simonet, while highly critical of Conde's romantic ideas of al-Andalus, was a great supporter of the famous Dutch Arabist Reinhard Dozy, who himself had argued for a reverse influence of Spanish culture on Islam, rather than the other way around. He argues, at great length, that the great poets, historians, geographers, *etc.* of Cordoba and Toledo were mostly of Spanish 'race', who only spoke Arabic for reasons of convenience (Dozy, cited in Simonet 2005 87).

Francisco J. Simonet was a defender of the wide-spread view that ‘Arabic civilisation was not proprietary but ‘borrowed’ and that even the great civilization of the Arabs of the East was that of the Christian peoples they had subdued. Simonet, along with other writers such as Renan, Lassen, Neve argued that the Arabs could not have introduced any significant culture in the regions they conquered, as their culture was simply not developed or complex enough to have survived those of the cultures they dominated. Their view was, in a nutshell, that the Arabs dominated militarily, but never culturally -a view which to many, such as Rosa Maria Rodriguez Magda, has still not completely lost its appeal (Rodríguez Magda 2008).

Rodríguez Magda’s recent, and highly praised, study on the historiography of al-Andalus has highlighted some of the main concerns of many modern writers on the subject. Both in Spain and abroad there has in recent years been a revival of the ‘pro’ al-Andalus stance, concentrating in particular on the Caliphate of Cordoba, as one of the greatest periods in human history (Menocal 2002). Rodríguez Magda argues that many of these writers, apart from utterly misconstruing an otherwise well documented historical period, have other, ‘darker’, motifs often linked to either the re-Islamization of Andalusia, or, indeed, the complete secession of the autonomous community from Spain as a whole. Andalusian socialists such as Blas Infante (1885–1936) had since the early 20th century used Spain’s Islamic period as an identifier of a distinct national sentiment that aims at independence from Madrid (Rodríguez Magda 2008, 78). Infante’s forays into Andalusian independence have more recently been taken up by neo-Islamist groups who, over the last 30 years, sought to reclaim Andalusia’s Islamic identity, some of whom have recently coalesced into political parties on either side of the ideological spectrum such as the Partido Socialista Unificado de Andalucía (PSUA) and the Izquierda Nacionalista de Andalucía (INA). For the vast majority of modern Spaniards, however, al-Andalus remains a foreign country; a localised parenthesis in the Christian history of the Iberian Peninsula which left some impressive architecture but had only a minor impact on the culture.

1.1.1 The Medieval Spains of Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz and Américo Castro

Clearly, then, al-Andalus is still a loaded subject to many modern Spanish scholars and politicians. Simonet’s notion that the Arabs lacked a substantial culture of their own and were instead forced to absorb that of the peoples they conquered still prevails to some extent in the present discourse on the nature of Andalusian settlement of Iberia. Certain factions of Spanish scholarship see in the territorial organisation of al-Andalus the influence of the Christian polities of Europe, arguing that the Emirs of al-Andalus emulated the feudal lords and their systems of territorial exploitation and constructed their castles and fortifications for the same reasons as their northern

counterparts. While this view is being refuted by most foreign (and many Spanish) scholars, it will be necessary to briefly examine this debate in greater depth as it is the varying degrees of impact attributed to the Moors in Spain that have defined the study of Iberian history, and identity, as a whole. It makes sense, therefore, to begin with the long-lasting dispute between Américo Castro and Claudio Sánchez Albornoz -a debate which more aptly than any other represents the recurrent anxiety to make sense of Spain’s complicated past.

The debate began during the mid-20th century with the view propounded, and largely accepted by the Spanish scholarly community, of Sánchez Albornoz’s theories and his claim that only a very small minority of Spaniards converted to Islam during the eight centuries of Muslim rule in Spain and that most Muslims were instead assimilated into “Spanish” culture (Sánchez Albornoz 1947). The following year, however, Américo Castro published a differing view (1948). In his opinion, it was not so much that Hispano-Romans and Jews had refused to convert to Islam, but rather that it was the amalgamation of all three religions and cultures which lead to the creation of ‘Spaniards’ as a cultural concept in the first place. In 1949 Sánchez Albornoz countered yet again with *Spain, A historic Enigma* (Sánchez Albornoz 1956). In it Sánchez Albornoz exposed his view that Spanish culture and identity were traceable continuously as far back as the pre-Roman days of the Celt-Iberians and the city-state of Numantia. For him, the peoples of the Iberian Peninsula were ‘heirs to a common tradition and at any given period of medieval history shared a common historical experience’ (Sánchez Albornoz 2000). Around the same time Menéndez Pidal in reference to the Christian “re-conquest” talks about how the ‘...pure and unfettered religious spirit gave impetus and *national* aims to the re-conquest, (...) fusing into one ideal the recovery of the Gothic states for the Fatherland’ [my emphasis] (Menéndez Pidal 1966, 143–144). Castro’s view of Spanish culture, however, found supporters not only abroad, but also in Spain among such writers as Ignacio Olagüe, who’s book *La Revolución Islamica en Occidente* received a wide readership in France under the title *Les Arabes n’ont jamais envahi l’Espagne* (Olagüe 1969). Olagüe argued that there never was an Islamic invasion *per se*, but that the Arian population of southern Spain saw in the Muslims across the Straits a natural ally as fellow Unitarians and therefore beckoned them across the Straits to help them in their plight against the Visigoths. This view of Islam as freeing Spaniards of their Germanic overlords has had, and still has, great resonance among converts to Islam and the Andalusian nationalist movement (Rodríguez Magda 2008, 83). Aspects of this view have more recently been taken up again by Gonzalez-Ferrin, who argues that there is no real distinction to be made between that which are commonly called Greco-Latin and Arab-Islamic cultures and postulates that they are all simply part of the same ‘oriental’ cultural package. Further, he criticises those who regard the Greco-Latin influence upon the West as positive (versus seeing the Islamic impact as inherently

negative) as disingenuous and historically inaccurate, and in a rare and welcome moment of communicative clarity states that the distinction is in effect a moot point '*como si no fuera todo parte de lo mismo*' (Gonzalez-Ferrin 2011, 107). Gonzalez-Ferrin's views have received a lukewarm attention among many Spanish academics and have been severely derided by the political right as 'islamophile' and 'white-washing Islamic history'.

For Américo Castro the Visigoths were not Spaniards and modern Spain owed them little. Instead, he sees the roots of Spain and Spanish culture in the theory of *Convivencia*, which argues that Spain as a cultural entity stems from the peaceful coexistence of Jews, Muslims and Christians and the resulting blend of their cultures (Castro 1971; Mann et al. 1992; Fletcher 1994), while for Sánchez Albornoz and others the Goths represented a link in an unbroken chain of defenders of the Spanish identity on which Islam never left so much as a dent.

1.1.2 Pierre Guichard on Islamic tribalism and Spanish identity

In the mid-1970s the French historian and archaeologist Pierre Guichard presented a new hypothesis which clashed substantially with both, the traditionalist view of Sánchez Albornoz and Menéndez Pidal, and that of the defenders of Castro's *Convivencia* theory (Guichard 1976a; Guichard 1976b; Guichard 1977).

Being influenced by the structural-functionalist theory of social anthropology, Guichard argued that the Islamic and Christian civilizations were based upon opposing principles of organization at all levels of society and that therefore the Muslims could not have been 'hispanized', as hitherto stated by Sánchez Albornoz. He was, however, also opposed to Castro's view of Spain as a melting pot of cultures, arguing that the differing principles of organisation in systems of descent (patrilineal vs bilineal), the organization of kin groups (corporate descent groups vs bilateral kindreds), and marriage patterns made it impossible for any syncretisation or even fusion to have happened (Guichard 1976a; Benco and Boone 1998). Throughout much of his work Guichard argued that the cultural, social and demographic impact of Islam was much greater than the traditionalists had wanted it to be (Guichard 1976a; Bazzana et al. 1988; Soto et al. 1990; Guichard 2002; Guichard 2008). The reasons for this, in addition to the ones outlined above, can be summarized as follows: Firstly, Arab and Berber concepts of clan endogamy discouraged intermarriage with indigenous peoples and therefore limited the cultural assimilation that could have taken place. Secondly, Guichard states, the segmentary lineage organisation of Bedouin tribes encouraged the defence, self-sufficiency, and growth of these tribes once they arrived on the Iberian Peninsula. And thirdly, basing himself on his archaeological findings in the regions of Valencia and the Sierra Nevada, he argues that the number of immigrating Muslims, especially that of North African Berbers was larger than hitherto expected,

somewhere in the hundreds of thousands and not in the few tens of thousands as believed by the traditionalists (Guichard 1976a, 456–457). Therefore, the Muslim community very quickly became a demographic majority on the Peninsula.

The role of the woman in Muslim communities also differed greatly from that of the Hispano-Roman or Visigothic societies. The strength of a tribe was measured by its capacity to defend its honour, which was itself quantified in its ability to retain its women by endogamic methods and by 'capturing' women from other groups (Ahmed and Hart 1984, 277; Manzano 2006, 131). By turning the woman into a passive subject of a conception of honour based on the prestige of the clan's agnate links, the tribe tended to impede women's movement, contact with outsiders and the compulsory wearing of the veil. It stands to reason, therefore, that social conditions such as these made it very difficult for any meaningful cultural assimilation to have occurred between Christians, Jews and Muslims. If anything, they may in fact have accelerated the process whereby Islam imposed itself as the dominant religion on the Iberian Peninsula as it was forbidden for Muslim women to marry into non-Muslim families, whereas a Muslim man could have as many non-Muslim wives as he was effectively able to maintain.

1.1.3 Critiques of structural-functionalist anthropology: Chelhod, Manzano and Epalza

While there is little doubt that Guichard's hypothesis has fundamentally rearranged our conception of the society of al-Andalus and its impact on the future creation of a "Spanish" state, it has come under fire from sociologists and anthropologists alike, who consider it to be overly simplistic or even 'banal' (Gallissot 1987, 65). Indeed, it calls to attention that since Guichard's first publication on the matter our understanding of what exactly a 'tribe' and a 'clan' actually have not advanced a great deal. Defined by Guichard as the grouping of the descendants by the male line of one specific ancestor there would be a qualitative but no quantitative difference between clan and tribe. Manzano argues that in Guichard's view tribes evolve in a manner similar to fractals, in that the different segments into which tribal groups subdivide themselves constantly reproduce on an ever-decreasing scale the very patrilineal and endogamic model from which they stem, as though each of them was a smaller link in a chain of consanguinity (Manzano 2006, 133).

Chelhod, in the second edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Chelhod 1979) and talking specifically about Yemen, states that the segmentary model is an idealised conception of a primitive Islamic society. He believes that historians have been too trusting of the claims of ancestry of clans and tribes, ignoring the fact that there is a difference between the ideological representations which certain groups make of themselves and the real structures to which their social organisation conforms. More recently Mikel de Epalza has criticised the readiness with which

many scholars take the rather hierarchical tribe-clan-family model as paradigmatic and universal, calling it 'naïve and misleading' (Rubiera Mata and Epalza 1987, 35). Neither de Epalza nor Chelhod fundamentally dispute the tribe-clan-family model, but they do warn from taking it too seriously in stating that the divisions between clans or tribes were much more permeable and less defined than the groups may themselves admit. Indeed, the findings in this study indicate that during the 11th century the hinterland tribal communities of Mallorca appear to have begun evolving a meta-identity which clearly superseded that of the traditional segmentary model expounded by the French school.

More accurate demographic data, resulting among other sources from archaeological excavations has led to questions regarding the level of conversion by Jews and Christians to Islam (Gutiérrez Lloret 1996; Gutiérrez Lloret 2001; Manzano 2006, 127–128). Outside Spain it was widely assumed that the easy conquest of Iberia had been followed by a rapid Islamisation of the indigenous population, although the evidence for this was wholly inferential (Glick 2005). Indeed, in Spain this question had for long been avoided in the traditionalist camp, until in 1979 Richard Bulliet presented a 'conversion theory'. The main body of his data was drawn from biographical dictionaries, a series of volumes dating from the 10th century onwards containing biographies of *Ulamā* (learned individuals who stood out for their in-depth knowledge of the Islamic sciences), which allowed Bulliet to determine that in many families of Christian or Jewish origin Islamic names became increasingly common over time (Bulliet 1979).

1.2 Other debates on the socio-political realities of Medieval Iberia: conversion and settlement

So far, this section has outlined some of the main discussions and disagreements among scholars which have had a fundamental role in shaping our view of the Iberian Peninsula during the Middle Ages. There are, however, a number of ancillary arguments which have branched off from the main topic of Islamic/Christian integration which shall be briefly presented over the following pages.

1.2.1 On conversion to Islam: Bulliet and Glick

In view of recent discussions, it has become clear that Bulliet's theory of conversion has been widely misunderstood in the scholarly community, most notably by Glick, who may be credited with spreading Bulliet's idea in the first place but profoundly misinterpreted his results (Glick 1995a). The basis of Bulliet's hypothesis is based on notions of innovation diffusion and therefore determines that the rate of conversion is logarithmic and transmitted by contagion, graphically represented by a logistic curve. In essence, few adopt Islam at first, but as more do the probability of others following increases, thus growing almost exponentially. From Bulliet's study it is possible to determine that the rate of conversion is

slow until the 10th century, when less than a quarter of the eventual converts were already converted. The 'explosive' period coincides with the reign of Abd al-Rahman III and his establishment of the Caliphate of Cordoba in 929. Torres Balbás' attempt to determine the approximate population of Cordoba during the year 1000 by studying the successive expansions of the great mosque of Cordoba (Torres Balbás 1971), a method considered by Fletcher to be 'impressionistic' (Fletcher 2003, 37), may in this light reflect not just the growth of population of the Andalusian capital, but also the rate of conversion to Islam in this period. In terms of the religious distribution of the population of the Peninsula this has led Glick to make a number of assumptions regarding the spread of Islam: parting from the premise that there were some seven million Hispano-Romans in Spain in 711 and that their numbers remained relatively level throughout the 10th century, by 912 there would have been about 2.8 million indigenous Muslims (*Muwalladun*), plus Arabs and Berbers. At this point the Christians would have still greatly outnumbered the Muslims. However, by 1100 the number of *Muwalladun* would have risen to an approximate majority of 5.6 million, leading the Muslim population to becoming the demographic majority of Iberia (Glick 2005, 10). These calculations, however, are faulty when one considers that logistical adoption curves are always based on the total number of *eventual* adopters and not of the total number of *potential* adopters (Bulliet 2009). Hence, according to Bulliet by the year 1100 some 80% of those who would eventually convert would have already done so, and not, as Glick suggests, 80% of Iberia's total population. Glick's mistake has led many scholars to believe that the non-Muslim population of al-Andalus was therefore no larger than 20% of the total, -a figure which will have to be reviewed.

It is worth noting at this point that religious conversion was only one aspect of exposure to Islam. Conversion could also be linguistic, cultural and social because it involved the adoption of the Arabic language and Islamic cultural practices (Glick 1995b). This process of cultural conversion to Arabic habits and customs has to some extent been demonstrated by the archaeologist Gutiérrez Lloret who has established that the adoption of Islamic social practices in both urban and rural contexts is signalled by the appearance of distinctive glazed, polychrome food-vessels and serving forms from the late 9th and 10th centuries onwards (Gutiérrez Lloret 1992, 9–22). Pottery studies, however, have had a somewhat turbulent history in Spanish Islamic archaeology over the last 35 or so years. What started off with the inspired intentions of Rossello Bordoy to establish a new system of classification for the pottery of Palma de Mallorca, was soon criticised by others, namely Helena Kirchner, but also by Rossello Bordoy himself as having strayed too far from the spatial and temporal contexts for which his initial system had been intended (Rossello Bordoy, 1999; 24). Carvajal (2014:324) states that for much of the 80s and 90s pottery continued to be studied 'within the confines of morphological description and typological

classification', and that questions regarding quantification and technology continue to go largely ignored or are dealt with in a superficial manner. It is evident, then, that despite the efforts of Kirchner and others proposing methodological advances based on the research common in other European countries, even in the first two decades of the 21st century 'no concrete or systematic attempts have been made to apply different perspectives to research on Andalusí pottery'.

1.2.2 On Islamic settlement and Christian re-settlement: Kennedy and Fletcher

Of particular relevance to our understanding of medieval Mallorca is the debate surrounding the nature of settlement and administration of conquered territory in al-Andalus. In this sense, to contend that the relations between the Arab elites of al-Andalus and their Berber and *Muwallad* subjects were often strained, would be something of an understatement. In her discussion on the integration of conquered peoples into the Islamic community, Patricia Crone states that 'throughout the Umayyad period *walā* [clientage] was the only mechanism for the attachment of newcomers to the conquest society. Being adherents of an ethnic faith the Arabs were not always willing to share their God with the gentile converts, and being conquerors they were usually unwilling to share their glory with defeated enemies – both problems to which clientage provided an apt solution' (Crone 2003, 49). A form of clientage, however, which clearly still left ample room for dissent.

The many internal conflicts, rebellions and uprisings within the *Dar al-Islam* as a whole find their reflection at a smaller but no less bloody scale on the Iberian Peninsula. In particular the discontent of the Berber population, who after all made up over 2/3 of the army of Tariq ibn Ziyad and Musa ibn Nusayr and who conquered Visigothic Spain, became one of the recurring themes of Andalusí history. Its origins are commonly traced to the year 740 in North Africa, when a severe drought had worsened what were already severe economic problems brought about by excessive taxation and leading to a Berber revolt against Arab domination. The uprising quickly spread to al-Andalus where the Berbers began to demand better lands, a participation in positions of power and equal treatment as Muslims (Marín-Guzmán 1995, 186). The uprising was promptly crushed by the Syrian armies sent by caliph Hisham I, but it marked the beginning of an ever-recurring pattern of rebellions and uprisings which were to plague the Andalusí state until its dissolution in the early 11th century.

Indeed, excessive taxation and the demand for better lands appear to have been the primary source of discontent among the Berbers who were regularly treated as second class citizens, despite the fact that most of them had already converted to Islam prior to the conquest of the Iberian Peninsula. It is worth pointing out that some noteworthy sources have claimed that the unequal land

distribution between Arabs and Berbers was, in fact, due to a preference by the Berbers to inhabit the more arid regions, akin to their ancestral homelands in the Maghreb (Ibn 'Idhārī et al. 1951), a view that continues to inform certain views of the on-going debate on the subject.

Among the valuable additions to the bibliography on Islamic Iberia of the last decade one must point out Hugh Kennedy's book on Muslim Spain and Portugal (Kennedy 1996), which partly addresses the important issue concerning the settlement patterns of the earliest Arab and Berber invaders. Relying largely on (Chalmeta 1994, 259–268), but also reflecting the views expressed by Ibn 'Idhārī in the 13th century, Kennedy states that the early territorial organisation of al-Andalus, in which Arabs occupied the fertile river plains and Berbers the comparatively arid mountain ranges, was not politically motivated but a 'natural' progression from the habitats they had occupied in their respective homelands (Kennedy 1996, 16–17). This statement has been contended by Richard Fletcher, who sees the Berbers as being treated as second-class citizens in al-Andalus and therefore forced to settle in less fertile lands (Fletcher 1994, 27). Fletcher relies greatly on the work carried out by Roberto Marín-Guzmán, who has provided some of the most insightful and comprehensive research on the subject of social relations and popular uprisings in al-Andalus to date (Marín-Guzmán 1990; 1995; 1996). In Guzmán's view there is little doubt that excessive taxation and general mistreatment on the part of the Umayyad elites are the prime cause for the perennial uprisings by the Berber communities, and the claim that the Berbers in fact 'preferred' to live on less fertile lands appears somewhat cynical in this context. It should be noted, however, that even revered robing-hood like figures such as the rebel Umar ibn Hafsun, probably also pursued ulterior motives beyond merely fighting for the freedom of his people. Ibn Hafsun was likely the most famous of all the early non-Arab leaders and rebels in al-Andalus. Of likely *muwallad* origin himself, at a young age he joined a band of brigands and outlaws in southern Iberia and, gradually rising through the ranks, established the centre of his growing forces at the fortress of Bobastro. At the height of his power Umar ibn Hafsun dominated large parts of southern al-Andalus, having accrued over 70 fortresses and an army of followers willing to fight and die for the promise of factual independence of the Umayyad state. Ibn Hafsun's recruits came from among the disenfranchised Berbers and *muwalladun*, and until shortly before his death in 917 he was successful in developing a powerful opposition and potential alternative to Abd al-Rahman III's gradually consolidating Emirate of Cordoba. Marín-Guzmán (Marín-Guzmán 1994) convincingly proposes that far from being a *bona fide* freedom fighter for the cause of the poor and disenfranchised, ibn Hafsun was himself driven by personal ambition, as may be illustrated by his apostasy from Islam and conversion to Christianity, ostensibly only to receive the much-needed support of the King of Castile, Alfonso. This was to cost him important support from among his own *muwalladun* followers.

This early relation between Arabs and Berbers is of great importance to our understanding of Andalusi political history more generally as it goes a long way to explain the origins of the successive civil wars or *fitan* (Sg. *fitna*), which shook al-Andalus during the following centuries, as well as the apparent rift between the rural and urban spheres in more peripheral regions such as the Balearic Islands. We shall, therefore, pay close attention to Berber-Arab relations in the course of this study as they also expected to have played an important role in the dynamics of state-formation and the creation of a Mallorcan identity.

In the case of Mallorca, it would appear that the hinterland was predominantly settled by Berbers from the outset. While only 19.26% of all known Andalusi place names in Islamic Mallorca denote a tribal or clanic name, the majority of these appear to be of Berber rather than Arabian origin (G. Rosselló 2007a, 85), suggesting a continuation of the ethnically segregated territory found on the mainland. The city, Madīna Mayūrqa, was the home of the elites which, certainly during the 10th century, were almost exclusively Arab in origin. This study suggests that rather than being forced to live in the rural areas, the Berber *ajṅād* (tribal groups) may have in fact chosen to put as much distance between themselves and the, usually, Arab authorities as possible, in an attempt to evade excessive taxation and intervention. In particular the period coinciding with Abd al-Rahman III's counter-insurgency campaigns against Ibn Hafsun and his *muwallad* uprising during the early 10th century, may have seen early waves of migrants of Berbers and other recent converts making their way to the Islands in order to escape from likely reprisals, and thus laying the foundation for the centrifugal tendencies which we observe among Mallorca's rural population over the coming three centuries. Indeed, the successive conquests of the island by Almoravids, Almohads and others are likely to have further contributed to this separation between hinterland and city as shall be observed in greater detail in the following chapter.

The topic of resettlement of the land conquered by the Christians, in particular during the 12th and 13th centuries has also been a subject of much discussion. It is clear from numerous medieval sources that the conquerors encountered severe difficulties in finding willing settlers to move to the newly acquired territories. In 1231 James I of Aragon, self-styled crusader and conqueror of the Balearic Islands and the Kingdom of Valencia, went so far as signing generous treaties with the inhabitants of Muslim Menorca in order to persuade them to re-settle in Mallorca (James I of Aragon 2003). Indeed, one could argue that the long lull in major Christian conquests on the mainland between the early 13th and the late 15th centuries is due to the growing awareness that the conquered lands would only be worth as much as they could produce. With no one willing to resettle to these lands they would ultimately only be a cost.

1.2.3 The emergence of landscape archaeology in the study of medieval Spain

Carvajal, in his excellent 2014 review of the evolution and current state of the Archaeology of al-Andalus discusses at length the interplay between ideology and science within Spanish scholarship during the second half of the 20th century. He notes that among the profound changes which Spain underwent during the 1970s, and particularly after the end of the fascist regime, came the introduction of Marxist perspectives such as world system theory, which were fundamental to the historical re-evaluation of al-Andalus. Prior to the 70s primary sources were studied almost exclusively by arabists and orientalist, who focused mainly on producing translations of texts which upheld the established national narratives. From the 70s onwards, however, more profound textual analyses began to become more common, and authors such as Chalmeta set out to introduce historical materialist approaches and social models informing research into the history of Islam elsewhere in Europe (Chalmeta Gendron 1973).

Among the few architectural features to have survived the 'Reconquista' the castles of al-Andalus are often the best preserved, though relatively few remain in their original form. Apart from a few examples such as Gormáz and Baños de la Encina, large fortresses in strategically important locations were often heavily modified to cope with new threats (such as artillery) or adapted to the personal requirements of the lordly class that took ownership after their conquest. Both these factors can be said to have had similar effects on the architectural transformations of the Spanish castle, as war and the lordly need for representation went hand in hand throughout much of medieval Europe. In the case of the more minor fortifications erected by Andalusi communities throughout the Iberian hinterland, their small size, remote location and relative strategic irrelevance often made them unattractive to the conquering lords, resulting in their abandonment and eventual collapse. While the bad state of preservation of Islamic Iberia's architectural heritage is most certainly regrettable, the early abandonment of many sites has provided archaeologists with the invaluable advantage of undisturbed contexts, clearly datable material culture and a comparatively clear stratigraphy due to the lack of later disturbance. In this sense the castles of rural al-Andalus are a largely untapped source of information which has only recently begun to be exploited.

Today, in the vast majority of cases, Islamic remains in Spanish castles are limited to foundation works, cisterns and other water-related features such as channels, settling tanks and wells. Only a fraction of the vast number of Arab/Berber fortifications which once dotted the Andalusi countryside still stand to roof height. This marked lack of standing remains can for the most part be attributed to certain material preferences which distinguished the architecture of the Christian and Islamic cultural spheres. It may be argued that certain Christian ideas

about permanence and temporality dictated the Spanish preference for construction in stone, whereas their Islamic counterparts generally preferred construction in rammed earth, known in Spain as *tapial* or *tapia* from the Arabic *tabiyya*. Nevertheless, the differences between Andalusí fortresses and the castles of the Christians went far beyond the choice of materials employed in their construction, their entire societies being founded on fundamentally differing principles of organisation. As outlined above, the tribal/segmentary social structure prevalent throughout the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa stood in a stark contrast to the more seigniorially organised polities of northern Europe and notions of identity, honour and power were identified along highly distinct lines. There is no doubt, therefore, that these differences profoundly affected the understanding and definition of community, society and state in either culture, and must hence have permeated into the more material world of architecture. Fortifications, as expressions of power structures and social hierarchies, are consequently reflections of social realities which, when observed in detail and in their political context, can contribute a great deal of information on their builders, and the socio-political milieu within which they functioned.

In European architectural history the term ‘castle’ has come to be associated not only with a certain type of military structure, but also with the ruling class that resided therein and that drew its power from the exploitation of a largely disenfranchised peasantry. ‘Feudalism’ is probably the term most commonly linked to the system of territorial control that gave origin to the castle, and it is inseparably attached to the image of the proprietary lord who resides within it. To some the castle has become the very embodiment of a dark and violent age, an ‘ominous spectacle’ (Bisson 1994, 142), the tool of domination *par excellence* without which lordship was not possible. While there is still a fair amount of debate on the matter, it can be said with reasonable certainty that the same feudal or seigniorial system one encountered in 10th, 11th and 12th century Catalonia, France or Italy did not have a direct analogue in the Islamic world, and it is therefore prudent to use the term ‘castle’ exclusively for the Christian structures, and calling their Islamic counterparts either by their Arabic names (*hisn*, *qasr*, *qala’at*, etc...) or referring to them simply as ‘fortifications’ when a clearer definition is not possible or inconvenient. This study will, nevertheless, examine in closer detail the potentiality of seigniorial systems having been established within the segmentary societies of al-Andalus as certain aspects of this debate remain active.

The emergence and extensive application of landscape archaeology in Spain during the 1980s has done much to further our understanding of the ethnic make-up of rural al-Andalus. As it stands, there is currently little dissent within the Spanish scholarly community that the discipline of medieval archaeology on the Peninsula as a whole, is a young one, and some authors identify its origins with the ‘effervescent’ (Lloret 2012, 33) Congreso de Arqueología Medieval Española, held at Huesca in 1985. It is then that

the positivist and profoundly descriptive approaches that characterised the discipline during much of the 20th century are said to be finally, or at least gradually, left behind. It is also in the context of this congress that questions begin to be asked for the first time as to how the field ought to be defined: are we talking about medieval archaeology, Islamic archaeology or an archaeology of the Iberian Peninsula – questions which continue to entertain with lively discussion even in the early 21st century.

The study of Andalusí fortifications has been at the centre of this development and for a little over 30 years a number of archaeological studies have been carried out, dedicated not so much to the study and description of isolated fortified settlements, but rather to establishing the general schemes of settlement in al-Andalus as a whole. Particularly longer campaigns such as the excavations carried out at the isle of Saltes in the Guadalquivir delta near Huelva, have yielded some interesting results and have contributed to our understanding of settlement in the periphery of Andalusí polities (Bazzana and Cressier 1989; Bazzana et al. 1993; Bazzana and García 2005). The origins of this shift in the approach to castles and their function can be traced to the early 1970s. Indeed, since Toubert’s study of the castle in 10th century Lazio and his resulting *Incastellamento* thesis, the study of the castle has expanded far beyond that of the traditional military perspective and has become an integral part of the settlement history of medieval Iberia (Toubert 1973). By the late 1970s architectural historians and archaeologists had begun to study the castle as a socio-political institution rather than as monuments or military structures (Guichard 1976a; Bazzana 1983; Bazzana et al. 1988; Malpica Cuello 1996; Malpica Cuello 1998).

Toubert’s *Incastellamento* is based on the observation of two parallel and near simultaneous developments in 10th-century Lazio. On the one hand he discovered evidence for a significant increase in castle building while at the same time observing a complete re-organisation of the rural population, which began clustering around the newly built castles, which, in turn, imposed ‘feudal’ obligations on the villages within their jurisdiction. It should be noted, however, that there are those who have pointed out that the reorganization of the rural population of the Latium towards the high ground into fortified villages, known as *castelli*, did not always require the agency of a lord, or indeed the previous existence of a fortress, and therefore the resettlement may have been of a much more voluntary nature than Toubert had suggested (Francovich and Hodges 2003). Nevertheless, Toubert’s *Incastellamento* has been regarded as the prime physical expression of the establishment of the seigniorial system, and it may therefore be stated that this was the moment when research passed through the stage of investigating castles solely as monuments to the study of the space that they controlled.

Glick had, to some extent, applied Toubert’s model of *Incastellamento* to 11th-century Catalonia (Glick 1995a) and some archaeologists also believe to have detected

an *Incastellamento*-like process occurring in eastern al-Andalus during the early-mid 10th century (Azuar Ruiz 1982; Glick 2005). The exact dynamics of this process in al-Andalus are not clearly understood, and whether it allows for any connections to the Christian progression towards a seigniorial order has been a topic of much discussion among scholars of medieval Spain (Azuar Ruiz 1982). While Ación Almansa makes rebellious groups inside the Caliphate responsible for the rising number of fortifications built in the period (Ación Almansa 1985, 15), Hugh Kennedy has argued that this increase of castle building, rather than being determined by domestic concerns, is, in fact, the result of the Fatimid exploits in North Africa, which threatened the Andalusian coasts and is, therefore, not an expression of a 'feudalisation' of the Islamic hinterland, but rather demonstrates the high degree of political and administrative centralisation established under the Caliphate of Cordoba (Kennedy 1996, 96). The findings presented in this study indicate that the increased construction of fortifications in Islamic Iberia cannot be attributed to the growth of a landed elite or aristocracy though, on the other hand, it is also not possible to identify the threat of the Fatimids as the sole reason for this castle-building process. Instead, centrifugal forces within the tribal groups of al-Andalus are the most likely authors of these buildings.

From archaeological enquiry and the evaluation of historical sources it has become clear that in al-Andalus the role of fortifications differed fundamentally from those of Central Europe, and that their connection with the rural habitat was much deeper than the simplicity of their architecture had initially led scholars to believe. The segmentary organisation of Andalusian society into tribes, clans and families determined that the power structures of Islamic Iberia differed greatly from those of Christian Europe, and in this sense, the role of fortifications in either cultural sphere was naturally to differ substantially as well. It is today commonly accepted that the *hisn* was part of a system of hinterland control commonly referred-to today as the *hisn/qarya complex* (fortress/village system), as first outlined by Pierre Guichard (Guichard 1976a). Guichard's findings indicated that Andalusian rural communities built communal fortifications which were used in times of stress, and which had the parallel function of serving as administrative hubs for the central authority of the state via the *qā'id*, an appointed individual who usually resided in the fortress. In many cases a given *hisn* could evolve into becoming a settlement in its own right, as at Siyasa (modern Cieza), taking on further administrative and political competences as its demographic weight increased (Navarro and Jiménez 2007a).

The research into the hinterland of al-Andalus has brought forth the first detailed studies into the Islamic fortifications of Islamic Iberia and their connection with the surrounding territory, underlining the importance of the *hisn* in the administration of the Andalusian territory and indicating that the successor polities to the Caliphate of Cordoba (the so-called *Taifa* kingdoms from the Arabic *Muluk al-*

tawaiif) were in fact highly centralised states with a high degree of control over their surrounding territory. Indeed, another author of the French school, Patrice Cressier, determined that more often than not every territorial unit of administration or *juz* had its own *hisn* which oversaw tax-collection and general administration (Cressier 1984). Yet, despite its apparent universality on the mainland, this system of hinterland control, the *hisn/qarya complex*, appears not to have existed in Mallorca or the other Balearic Islands. Despite its high demographic density and relatively large area (3600km²) the Island of Mallorca appears to have had only three *hisn*, and all of these find their origins in Antiquity and were merely reused by the Moors. Instead of large-scale fortifications the most common types of fortification in Mallorca appear to have been isolated towers and fortified store houses, usually located within, or close to, a given settlement. The archaeology and the medieval sources, namely the *Repartiment*, the *Kitāb Tarij Mayūrqa* and the *Remembrança*, hint at a hinterland that was fortified not by the communal *hisn* which protected the surrounding territory in a centralising manner, but one where each village took charge of its own defensive requirements and appeared thoroughly detached from the central authority.

1.3 Fortress and village: the *hisn/qarya* complex and its existence in Mallorca

During the mid-90s the discussion surrounding the role of the fortress in al-Andalus was renewed with Glick's book *From Muslim Fortress to Christian Castle* (Glick 1995a) and his findings in the area of Valencia. The roots of the intense discussions to which Glick's research eventually led have been described by Sonia Gutierrez Lloret, who argues that its origins lie in the fact that initially it was not the archaeological record that led to the development of the new historical models regarding migration, tribalisation, and agricultural colonisation and 'castral territory' but that the new research approaches stemmed instead from a re-interpretation of the written sources. While admitting that these new historiographical practices proved to be tremendously innovative to Iberian scholarship of the 1980s, she also contends that they became very constraining on the development of a new archaeology, which still regarded itself as a sort of 'hand-maiden of history' was still busy proving historical hypotheses rather than 'refuting' them (Lloret 2012, 40).

Of Glick, a specialist in the hydro-archaeology of Islamic irrigation systems, it may be said that he favoured the archaeological methodology of proposing speculative paradigms, and can be quoted as stating that 'nowhere in the world has historical archaeology played a more pivotal role in the rewriting of a nation's social and cultural history [than in Spain]' (Glick 1995a, 12–13). In reference to the architectural he describes the Arab/Berber fortresses of al-Andalus as defensive constructions that provided refuge for surrounding villages but more commonly served as hubs of economic and social activity in the countryside and as 'administrative centres for a tributary polity' (Glick

1995a, 42). In an attempt to synthesise all previous results and discoveries Glick states that in al-Andalus the *qarya* constituted the basic unit of fiscal income of the state, and normally, depending on topography and demographics, every *hisn* controlled between 7 and 10 *qūra* and their irrigated territories. On average in southern and eastern Spain every *hisn* controlled an area of approximately 90–120km², within which every *qarya* controlled an area between 72 and 90Ha (Glick 2007, 39–41). While it is clear that these figures must vary substantially throughout the peninsula the academic community today considers the *hisn/qarya* complex to be applicable in a greater or lesser degree to the entirety of al-Andalus throughout the Islamic period. By general consensus the exception to this rule appears to have been the island of Mallorca, where indeed the system of territorial administration, if there was one, must have differed substantially from that of the mainland as we find no fortified settlements other than the *Madīna* (and the possible exception of the *Almudaina* of Artá, examined in chapter 6), and the rural fortifications we find appear not to be associated directly with any particular settlements or in fact the *Madīna* (Bazzana et al. 1988; Kirchner 1997; Kirchner 1998; Glick 2007, 44). The political fabric of the Mallorcan hinterland appears disjointed in itself and dislocated from the urban centre, and indeed it would appear that there were no larger or medium sized urban nuclei other than the *Madīna* but that instead the peasantry lived in discreet tribal communities dispersed over the landscape according to their agricultural or pastoral practices. In a short article from 1996 Helena Kirchner described the demographic organisation of the Mallorcan countryside as ‘networks of *qūra* without *husūn*’ (Kirchner 1998, 450), suggesting that the rural population organised itself in small independent groups dispersed around the hinterland with no clear relationship towards each other or any of the fortresses which, she suggests, were exclusively temporary refuges for sporadic use with no permanent occupation. A recently discovered medieval source (al-Mahzūmī 2008), supports this view of a hinterland thoroughly detached from the centre, at least for the decade leading up to the Christian conquest of 1229, and it is likely that in earlier periods such as the time around the Pisano-Catalan raid of 1113–1115 a similar state of affairs existed. However, considering that in some cases, such as Alaró, castles defined the name of the surrounding territory and villages therein, suggest that at least in the early days, during the 10th century, the island was administered radially from the centre out via the fortresses that were already there, namely Alaró, Santueri, *Hisn Bulānsa* (Castell del Rei) and possibly *Qastil al-Uyūn* (Castuleyon/Randa). It is worth repeating at this point that the Christian *Repartiment* of the early 13th century (Soto 1984; G. Rosselló 2007a) mentions a large number of structures of seemingly ‘military’ origin such as towers (Alborratx, Alboraiet), small castles (Castellet de Bunyola, Castellet d’Esporles) and strongholds (Puig d’en Escuder) which, while they are not mentioned expressly in King James I’s chronicle of the island’s conquest (James I of Aragon 2003), it is stated that those Muslims who resisted the conquest held out in mountain strongholds

until their eventual surrender in the summer of 1231. This is in part demonstrated by the archaeological record, as for example at Puig de n’Escuder, where substantial amounts of Almohad pottery dating to the early 13th century have been recovered (Calvo et al. 1997).