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0521822343 - The Victors and the Vanquished: Christians and Muslims of Catalonia and Aragon, 1050-1300

Brian A. Catlos

Excerpt

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## INTRODUCTION

La tolerancia, la ocasional simbiosis de las creencias, cuadra bien con haber iniciado su vida el hispano-cristiano a caballo sobre su creencia, el caballo de Santiago.

Américo Castro<sup>1</sup>

¿Tolerancia hispano-cristiana medieval? Sí; pero tolerancia de las minorías, no del pueblo, sacudido por la pasión y enfervorizado por la guerra divina.

Claudio Sánchez Albornoz<sup>2</sup>

In 711, when Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād led his modest contingent of Berber and Arab forces across the Straits of Gibraltar, he could hardly have imagined that within a few years almost the whole of the Iberian peninsula would be drawn into the *dār al-Islām* (“the Islamic world”). Within the following two centuries al-Andalus – Islamic Iberia – was to become the western pole of the Muslim world, not only geographically, but also commercially and culturally. Rising from *de facto* to formal independence in 929 under ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III (912–961), its capital, Córdoba, was among the most important urban centers west of the Indus, rivaled only by Cairo, Constantinople, and Baghdad. So it was to remain until 1031 when a series of civil wars and revolts concluded, heralding not only the Caliphate’s demise but the beginning of the end of Islamic domination of the peninsula. Almost immediately the *mulūk al-ṭawā’if* (or “*Taifa* Kingdoms”), a constellation of “sectarian” principalities dominated by local and Berber factions, sprang up to fill the power vacuum, vying with each other for a greater share of Andalusí territory. This period of Islamic political disunity coincided with an era in which the peninsula’s Christian

<sup>1</sup> “Tolerance, the accidental symbiosis of beliefs, fits well with the fact that the Hispano-Christian began his life mounted astride his beliefs, Santiago’s horse . . .”: A. Castro, *España en su historia* (Barcelona: Crítica, 1983 [1948]), p. 565.

<sup>2</sup> “Medieval Hispano-Christian tolerance? Yes; but tolerance on the part of the minorities, not of the [Hispano-Christian] people, [who were] driven by passion and inflamed by holy war”: C. Sánchez Albornoz, *España: un enigma histórico*, 2 vols. (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1956), 1, p. 299.

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powers, clinging tenuously to the mountainous fringes, entered a period of greater unity and determination and began expanding into Muslim territory.

This Christian “Reconquest” soon picked up pace, leading in 1085 to the surrender of Toledo, the first major Andalusī city to fall into Christian hands.<sup>3</sup> Compelled by their own inefficacy, the *taifa* rulers grudgingly called for aid to their Islamic neighbors to the south, the Almoravids. Help came in greater measure than either anticipated or desired, and the advent of these Berbers signaled the demise of the *taifas* and the beginning of a long century of Maghribī hegemony. Whether domination came at the hands of Iberian Christians or foreign Muslims, the independent history of al-Andalus had come to end. By the late thirteenth century the Almoravids’ successors, the Almohads, had been driven out of Iberia, and independent Islamic Spain<sup>4</sup> had been reduced to the rump Kingdom of Granada, which lived out most of its history as a vassal state of Christian Castile. In 1492 the kingdom was deprived of even the illusion of autonomy when the “Catholic Monarchs,” Fernando of Aragon and Isabel of Castile, accepted its submission. Finally, in 1496, the last king, Abū ‘Abd Allāh (“Boabdil” in Castilian), discontented with the small fief which his Spanish lords had left him, pulled up stakes and headed for Islamic shores.

The history of Islamic Spain (Al-Andalus) is not synonymous with the history of the Muslims in Spain, and the inhabitants of Iberia did not become an Islamic people with their conquest in the early eighth century. Rather, in the centuries that followed, as Christians emigrated, Muslims immigrated and, as the great majority of the native population (nominally Catholic with a sprinkling of Arians, pagans, and Jews) converted and adopted the outward manifestations of Arabic culture, the Visigothic Iberian society was gradually transformed into an Islamic one. Likewise, the later Christian conquest did not mark the immediate demise of Muslim society. Almost universally the conquering rulers endeavored to persuade Muslim inhabitants to stay on as subjects, tempting them with offers of self-administration and social and judicial autonomy. Many – in all likelihood the majority – accepted, and these people and their descendants became known as *mudéjares*.<sup>5</sup> Living on in their ancestral

<sup>3</sup> Coimbra (Ar. Qulumriya), an important town of the Western March, had fallen in 1065, while Barbastro had been taken temporarily in 1064.

<sup>4</sup> In this work “Spain” is used in a geographical sense as a synonym of Iberia; no modern political connotation is intended or should be imagined.

<sup>5</sup> The word *mudéjar* refers to Muslims in Iberia who lived under Christian rule. Apparently derived from the Arabic *mudajjān* (“those who stayed”), the word is not attested before the late sixteenth century. See J. Corominas, *Diccionario crítico-etimológico castellano e hispánico* (Madrid: Gredos, 1981), s.v. *mudéjar*.

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lands for centuries, most were eventually forced to convert to Christianity, after which they were designated as *moriscos*.<sup>6</sup> Maintaining their identity, they continued to live as a people apart until as late as 1613, when the last stragglers from the mass exile first proclaimed in 1610 were expelled from the realms of Aragon.<sup>7</sup>

The present study focuses on Muslims of Catalonia and Aragon living in the lands of the Ebro River watershed, a topographically varied expanse of more than 40,000 square kilometers (a little smaller than modern Denmark).<sup>8</sup> Here, as the rivers and streams empty out of the high Pyrenean valleys, their beds open abruptly on to a broad arid plain, which in summer months recalls Africa more than Europe – the slow Ebro playing the part of the Nile. The lands to the south of the river present a similar landscape, as the watercourse descends a series of broad plains marked by rugged *sierras*, occasionally opening into hollow *cuenclas* ideal for cultivation and defense. Further south, past Teruel, the river-scarred hills undulate towards what was to become the Kingdom of Valencia.<sup>9</sup> As the Ebro meanders towards Tortosa the land comes into higher relief, rising into uplands once rich in woodland resources, before emptying into the sea through its silty, ever-growing delta. The river course itself is remarkably level, descending little more than 500 meters along almost its entire length; from Tudela to Mequinenza, a stretch of some 250 kilometers, it descends only 200 meters.<sup>10</sup> Navigable from Tortosa to the Mediterranean, it is the only major Iberian river which flows eastwards. This made it an ideal conduit for goods and ideas, connecting the north of the peninsula to the world beyond. The climate, typically Mediterranean, is dry and hot, well suited to dry farming, olive and viticulture, as well as highly productive irrigated farming on the alluvial plains. The range in altitude and attendant climatic variety also make transhumant husbandry viable.

<sup>6</sup> *Morisco* derives from the Latin *maurus* ("Maghribian"). See J. Zurita, *Anales de la Corona de Aragón*, 9 vols. (Zaragoza: Institución "Fernando el Católico," 1967–1970 [1562]), 1, p. 6. The use of the word "Moorish" is misleading when used with reference to the peoples of the Western Maghrib or to the Muslims of al-Andalus, who are more accurately referred to as Andalusis.

<sup>7</sup> The Muslims of Castile and Andalusia were ordered to convert or depart in 1502; the "Moriscos" were expelled in 1609.

<sup>8</sup> The section of the Ebro upriver from Tudela falls out of the logical bounds of this study, and is not considered.

<sup>9</sup> The major towns (along with their hinterlands) included in this study are: Alcañiz, Barbastro, Calatayud, Daroca, Huesca, Jaca, Lleida, Tarazona, Tarragona, Teruel, Tortosa, and Zaragoza. Tudela is considered in the period immediately after its conquest, before it became part of the Kingdom of Navarre.

<sup>10</sup> N. Dupré, "La Vallée de l'Ebre dans l'Espagne romaine," *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez* 9 (1973): 135.

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The geographic unity of this territory has contributed to a historical coherence which justifies its consideration as a socio-geographic unit. In Roman times the zone comprised the heart of the Province (later, Archdiocese) of Tarraco, a region which was referred to through the fourteenth century as “Celtiberia.”<sup>11</sup> When Muslim administration filled Visigothic vacuum, these territories, corresponding roughly with Arabic geographers’ sixth “climate” (*iqlīm*) of “Hispania” (*al-Asbāniyya*) and with the Mozarabic metropolitan of Tarakūna, came to be known broadly as the *Thaḡhr al-Aqṣā*, the “Furthest March.”<sup>12</sup> Whether ruled as a region or fragmented into smaller “city-states” or personal domains, the region maintained a coherence evidenced by its periodic reconsolidation. Most important from the point of view of the present study, however, is that these lands comprise the heart of what became the Crown of Aragon, the dynastic aggregate of Christian principalities which dominated the area for the five centuries after its conquest: territories conquered roughly between 1085 and 1160, the first great period of Catalan and Aragonese expansion.<sup>13</sup> The common era of conquest justifies their treatment as a unity, since they were absorbed under quite similar circumstances by Christian powers with similar institutional and social configurations. The period treated by this study covers the middle of the nine-hundred-year Muslim presence in this area; it marks a transformational as well as a temporal mid-point, being the era in which the majority of the area’s Muslim population became Christian subjects.

My intention here is to examine the effects of the Christian conquest on the indigenous Islamic population, which was defined at once by its military subjugation, its status as “infidel” and enemy, and its value as a base of settlement, taxation, trade, and industry. I am interested in exploring the nature of *mudéjar* society as it existed in the thirteenth century as an ethnic, cultural, and economic phenomenon. How did Islamic society react to the process of conquest? Did it remain stable and “healthy”? That

<sup>11</sup> According to the *Crónica de once reyes* Celtiberia stretched from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean, from the Ebro to the Montes Universales (near Albarracín). (*COR*, pp. 229–30). For Zurita, the region included the whole of the Jalón and the Jiloca: Zurita, *Anales de la Corona de Aragón*, I, p. 147, doc. 45; cf. *PMG*, I, p. 318, chap. 563.

<sup>12</sup> See F. J. Simonet, *Historia de los mozárabes de España*, 4 vols. (Madrid: Turner, 1983 [1897]), IV, pp. 808–810, docs. 5.1, 5.2, 5.3. Qalqashandī placed Zaragoza in the fifth climate; al-Qalqashandī, *Subḥ al-aṣḥa fī kitābāt al-inṣā*, Valencia: Anubar, 1975, p. 43. The area of Lleida and Tortosa was also known as the *Thaḡhr al-Aṣḥā*, “the Upper March.”

<sup>13</sup> The Crown of Aragon, sometimes referred to as the “Catalano-aragonese Crown,” was an imprecise dynastic aggregate whose core territories included the Kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia and the Counties of Catalonia, but included variously Roussillon, the Balearics, Montpellier, parts of Provence, Sardinia, Sicily and parts of Italy, other Mediterranean islands and parts of modern Greece and Tunisia.

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is to say, had it successfully adapted to the conditions of the conquest, or was it locked into a process of irretrievable and “inevitable” decline? What relationship did it have with its pre-conquest antecedents? I would like to determine also the degree to which *mudéjares* as individuals were discriminated against under Christian rule – and to consider to what extent they might have *felt* marginalized. Did opportunities for social and economic advancement cease to exist with the Christian conquest, or did the new set of circumstances merely mean that dynamic *mudéjares* were forced to adapt? Did *mudéjares* live as marginalized “foreigners,” or as integrated subjects? The strategies which *mudéjar* individuals and groups used to survive and prosper under Christian domination is key to understanding these issues, as are the links which individuals and groups had with adherents of the other two faiths which also existed in the Crown. This was the period in which *mudéjar* society was born and matured, and a closer analysis of this period is indispensable for understanding its later history.

A study as broad as the present one must draw on a range of historiographic traditions. The general history of the Crown of Aragon and of Spain, more specific area and local studies, the history of Islamic Spain and North Africa, and the tradition of minority and *mudéjar* studies in Iberia and the Crown all converge in the study of the Muslims of the Ebro Valley. Neither Zurita (sixteenth century), the forbear of all historians of the Crown, nor his successors focused on the Muslims directly in formulating their histories of Catalonia, Aragon, and Valencia, although the Muslims’ protagonism, first as enemies and later as subject people, could not be all together ignored.<sup>14</sup> It was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that historians began to take an active interest in al-Andalus and in the minorities of medieval Iberia. Pioneers of the study of Islamic religion and society in the West and of the subject peoples of Christian Spain include de las Cagigas, Dozy, Simonet, Ribera, and Lévi-Provençal, each of whom made contributions to the historiography of the Ebro region through their studies of the whole peninsula.<sup>15</sup> In their era a tradition of editing Latin and Romance documents also blossomed in the former Crown under archivists such as de Bofarull, and was carried on into the twentieth century by the likes of Ramos y Loscertales, Font i Rius, Lacarra, Canellas, and Ubieto Arteta. A parallel

<sup>14</sup> One exception is the anonymous sixteenth-century “Orígenes de la Casa de Granada,” based on Zurita and the *Primera Crónica General* (RAH, Salazar 9/195).

<sup>15</sup> See the Bibliography for relevant works by the authors in this section.

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undertaking with Arabic and Hebrew texts also got under way under Dozy, Lévi-Provençal, and, later, Millás, Vernet, Bosch Vilá, and Huici Miranda: literary historians who were drawn primarily to intellectual, scientific, and cultural history.

In the early decades of the twentieth century Spain's terrible struggle to define itself as a modern nation was complemented by a polarisation of peninsular historiography, in particular regarding the role of minorities. The dominant intellectual camps were championed by two literary historians, each of whom ended his career in exile from Franco's regime. Américo Castro saw Spanish history as process of synthesis in which Christianity, Islam, and Judaism interacted in a relationship of *convivencia*, while Claudio Sánchez Albornoz perceived the driving force to be the "Eternal Spaniard," a historical presence discernible from Roman to modern times and realized through a series of confrontations with foreign invaders.<sup>16</sup> Overburdened by ideological biases and undermined by methodological inadequacies, their works were more a gauge of the trends of modern Spanish cultural self-expression than medieval historical realities. In both cases the process of inter-religious interaction tended to be viewed as the meeting of monumental systems – Christianity, Islam, and Judaism – personified as characters in a grand historical drama.<sup>17</sup>

The intellectual log-jam which resulted from that polemic broke up in the 1970s, coinciding with the publication of two monumental English-language syntheses of medieval Iberian history, in one of which O'Callaghan focused on Castile as protagonist, while in the other Hillgarth emphasized the politico-cultural diversity of the peninsula. A decade later Bisson published his overview of the history of the medieval Crown of Aragon, while the study of Islamic Spain benefited from the French historians associated with the Casa de Velázquez in Madrid, notably Urvoy, Cressier, and Lagardère. In the late 1980s and 1990s Spaniards such as Marín and Fierro took inspiration from Bulliet's techniques and began to use Arabic biographical dictionaries as a source for Andalusi social history, while Afif and Viguera elaborated the basic history of the caliphal and taifa periods in the Ebro, building on the work of Bosch Vilá and Lacarra. The sociological spirit of the Casa de Velázquez, so evident in Guichard's work on Valencia, was complemented by an interest in archeology, taken up also by Miquel Barceló in Barcelona,

<sup>16</sup> For a recent appraisal of Sánchez Albornoz see R. Pastor de Togneri, "Claudio Sánchez Albornoz y sus claves de la historia medieval de España," *Revista de Historia Jerónima Zurita* 73 (1998): 117–131.

<sup>17</sup> See T. F. Glick and O. Pi Sunyer, "Acculturation as an Explanatory Concept in Spanish History," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2 (1969): 136–154; J. N. Hillgarth, "Spanish Historiography and Iberian Reality," *History and Theory* 24 (1985): 23–43.

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who has concentrated on irrigation and agricultural systems. In North America anthropological and technological perspectives are most evident in the work of Glick, whose studies of acculturation and technological diffusion bridge al-Andalus and Christian Spain.

As a sub-discipline, *mudéjar* studies can be traced back to Burns's seminal works of the late 1960s, inspired by an American fascination with "frontier society," translated to the Kingdom of Valencia. This perspective contrasted with Guichard's, a disjunction which was to characterize the controversies between the "Continuists" and their opponents in the decades to follow. Close on Burns's heels, Lourie began to produce a series of articles among which figure important works on *mudéjares* and Jews in the Catalano-Aragonese lands of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The religious minorities also attracted the interest of Riera y Sans, who has unearthed a number of spectacular documents. A major study by Boswell, who examined the Muslims of the mid-fourteenth-century Crown, was produced in the 1980s, a decade which coincided with a blossoming of interest in *mudéjares* among Catalan and Aragonese historians.<sup>18</sup> Following the path of Ledesma, Ferrer i Mallol began to work extensively on *mudéjares* in Catalonia and Valencia. More Catalan historians followed, producing a series of local studies by Mutgé, Basáñez and others. In Aragon itself, an emphasis on administrative and economic history led researchers there to approach the *mudéjares* primarily by way of broader analyses of the whole kingdom, a trend reflected in the work of Sarasa and Laliena. Concurrently, the Jewish communities of Catalonia and Aragon became the subject of intensive study by Romano, Blasco and Assis.

In North America, interest in *mudéjares* and minorities grew steadily in the 1990s, reflected in the work of Burns's disciples and in Meyerson's study of the Muslims of late medieval Valencia. Most recently Nirenberg's work on early fourteenth-century communal violence has been among the first to resist the tendency to present Islamic society strictly in terms of an "Other," a perspective which has dominated *mudéjar* studies as a consequence not only of the nature of Christian documentation but also of the prismatic effect of the "Orientalist" attitudes of Western scholarship. New works by emerging historians, such as Hames, Miller, Klein, and Blumenthal, continue to explore promising new methodological perspectives regarding minorities in the Crown of

<sup>18</sup> Thaler's (unpublished) dissertation represents an attempt to write a history of the Aragonese *mudéjares*, but is burdened by serious problems and inconsistencies, and is most certainly obsolete from a methodological perspective: D. F. Thaler, "The Mudejars of Aragón during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries," Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1973.



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Aragon.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, Aragonese and Catalan *mudéjares* of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries remain an under-analyzed and misunderstood social group. My own efforts, as represented here, belong firmly to the socio-anthropological tradition, and it is my aim to take the comparative and interdisciplinary approach further in an attempt to shake off (as much as my own subjectivity permits) the shackles of Orientalism, to de-reify the Islamic society of the Crown and to analyze it as one mode of social identity within the complex whole of medieval Catalano-Aragonese society.

The sources upon which this study is based are primarily archival, apart from the earliest period. Whatever Islamic archives may have existed have not survived, and sources for the shape of the Muslim society of northern Spain in this era are limited for the most part to the Islamic histories of al-Andalus (which emphasize Córdoba) and works of geography. Relevant Christian documents for this period are rare. With the conquest, however, the documentary picture brightens: the twelfth century yields parchments and letters of the Kings of Aragon and the Counts of Barcelona as well as copious records of ecclesiastical foundations, particularly monasteries and Military Orders. Numerous though these documents are, they are largely limited to records of property transfers. The quantity and range of documentation increases spectacularly from the mid-thirteenth century when, under Jaume I (1213–1276), the Royal Chancery of the Crown was reorganized, and detailed records of outgoing correspondence were kept. This collection, housed at the Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, together with parchments, royal letters, court proceedings, and financial accounts, is almost without parallel in richness and variety for the study of medieval Europe; many decades will pass before historians have “exhausted” it in any sense. Spain’s municipal, ecclesiastical, national, and royal archives also continue to yield “new” treasures, and in any event familiar sources are in need of constant reappraisal and reinterpretation as new historiographical perspectives and methodologies develop.

But royal chancery documents and land transfer charters are not the only records at our disposal. The Christian expansion acted as a catalyst for Christian legal development: the administration of new lands entailed the articulation of new laws. Thus, the local *cartas-pueblas* (population charters) and *fueros* (Lat. *fora*, Cat. *furs*, “laws”) which appear at this time

<sup>19</sup> Reviews of recent trends in *mudéjar* historiography include: D. Nirenberg, “The Current State of Mudéjar Studies,” *Journal of Medieval History* 24 (1998): 381–389, and R. I. Burns, “Mudéjar Parallel Societies: Anglophone Historiography and Spanish Context, 1975–2000,” in *Christians, Muslims and Jews in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*, ed. M. D. Meyerson and E. D. English (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000): 91–124.



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constitute a valuable source for the history of *mudéjares*, particularly the handful of Muslim surrender agreements which survive. Finally, Christian literary sources – official and unofficial chronicles and memoirs – furnish anecdotal evidence which adds color to the canvas of the period. Apart from these various written records, archeological remains and material culture, representative arts, and toponymy (addressed here through secondary studies) are also valuable sources.<sup>20</sup>

The bulk of the research on which this study is based was undertaken in 1996–1997, primarily in Barcelona at the Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó; the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid was valuable primarily for the 1100s as well as the Military Orders and ecclesiastical organizations in later centuries. Smaller local archives and cathedral collections helped to fill in gaps, and the numerous published documentary collections were also extremely useful. Initial investigations yielded my doctoral dissertation, “The Victors and the Vanquished: Christians and Muslims of the Ebro Valley, ss. XI–XIII,” (Toronto: 2000), which is the foundation of this book; over the last two years I have revised the text and carried out supplementary research.<sup>21</sup>

The studies of the *aljamas* of the Ebro region and the work of Boswell and Ferrer provide us with the basics of *mudéjar* administrative organization (at least in the towns), but the approach generally taken by both local and broad studies has tended to treat the Muslims of Christian Aragon and Catalonia in isolation, a perspective which runs the risk of failing to situate their collectives within the larger context of the Crown and of treating the community as if it were in stasis, unaffected by the currents of the larger society around it. Readers may yield to a essentialist temptation to idealize Islamic society and imagine that each *mudéjar* community reflected such a form. The tendency to study *mudéjares* in isolation has been aggravated by an apparent reluctance of historians to draw comparisons from other minority situations, both medieval and modern.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, the very designation “*mudéjar* studies” suggests the

<sup>20</sup> Few notarial records appear until the fourteenth century, and none which offers material for the present study.

<sup>21</sup> Blanca Basáñez's *regesta*, *Las morerías aragonesas durante el reinado de Jaime II. Catálogo de la documentación de la Cancillería Real. I (1291–1310)* (Teruel: Instituto de Estudios Turolenses, 1999), published after my own research had concluded, helped extend this study into the first decade of the fourteenth century.

<sup>22</sup> Lourie and Nirenberg are both aware of the importance of examining the *mudéjar* situation within a larger context (see E. Lourie, “Anatomy of Ambivalence. Muslims under the Crown of Aragon in the Late Thirteenth Century,” in *Crusade and Colonisation: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Medieval Aragon*, Aldershot: Variorum Reprints, 1990, Essay VII, pp. 75–76), but such a comparative methodology is not advocated by all historians of *mudéjares* (see J. Boswell, *The Royal Treasure. Muslim Communities under the Crown of Aragon in the Fourteenth Century*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977, p. 324).

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adoption of a dangerously blinkered perspective. Although one may set out to study this society and the individuals who comprised it on the basis of their religious affiliation, it would be imprudent to assume that that is how they saw *themselves* in any given situation. In the medieval Crown of Aragon religious identity may have been the single most important defining characteristic, but it was not the only one. If we are to understand the workings of medieval society we must endeavor to look beyond the strict bounds of religious affiliation; we must avoid letting the parameters which we have chosen to characterize this people restrict the range of data we examine or determine the conclusions that we draw from it.

It is the aim of the present work not only to study *mudéjar* society and Christian–Muslim interaction in the period in question, but also to contribute to a methodology which broadens the context of *mudéjar* studies, calling into question some truisms and exploring new avenues of comparison and analogy. All of this I hope will not only lead to a more sophisticated and accurate picture of twelfth and thirteenth-century *mudéjar* life, but also contribute to the general study of minority–majority interaction. The field of ethno–religious social and institutional history in Iberia continues to evolve, with advances in archeology, the discovery and utilization of new sources (*fatwā* and Muslim sermon literature, for example) and the application of non-traditional methodologies and perspectives (economic models such as “game theory” and paradigms of biological evolution).<sup>23</sup> It is my own ambition – and the reader will be left to decide whether I have achieved it – that the present work contribute to our understanding of *mudéjares* not only in a descriptive sense but also on a conceptual level, to push a little farther down the trails scouted out by pioneers like John Boswell.<sup>24</sup>

The approach taken here is three-pronged, and a distinct methodology is adopted in each section of this book. The first part, “Muslim Domination of the Ebro and its Demise (700–1200),” comprises a description of the pre-Conquest society, building on the work of modern historians and archeologists and drawing primarily on published contemporary documents and literature. It moves through a wide range of topics, taking a thematic approach which deviates from a strictly chronological structure. The evidence cited is taken primarily from the Ebro region, but analogous material from elsewhere in the peninsula is used where appropriate.

<sup>23</sup> A *fatwā* (pl. *fatāwā*) is a *responsum*, the opinion of a Muslim jurist on a given point of law, normally relating to a concrete case which may be either factual or hypothetical, and which is considered to be valid by those individuals who recognize the authority of the jurist in question.

<sup>24</sup> See Burns’s review of Boswell’s *Royal Treasure* in *Speculum* 54 (1979): 548.