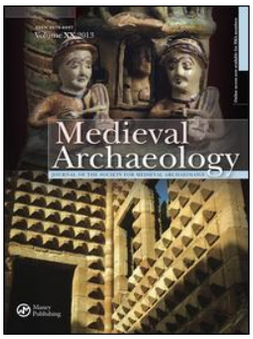

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JOSÉ C CARVAJAL

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Review Article
The Archaeology of Al-Andalus: Past, Present and Future

By JOSÉ C CARVAJAL[1]

THIS PAPER PRESENTS AN OVERVIEW of the archaeology of al-Andalus (the Arabic name for Islamic Spain and Portugal), from its beginnings in the late 1970s to the present day. Innovative approaches and challenging theoretical stances made the archaeology of al-Andalus the spearhead of medieval archaeology in Iberia between the 1980s and 1990s. A problematic, and often conflicting, relationship between archaeology and history has characterised medieval archaeology in Spain since its inception, however, and a new awareness of these problems is emerging. This paper reviews past and current attitudes to such challenges and reflects on the future needs of the discipline. It also reflects on the politics of archaeology and on the role of medieval archaeology in revealing social change, which has until now been underrated.

Al-Andalus is the name of the Islamic part of Iberia in the Middle Ages (Fig 1). Geographically, al-Andalus included at its largest extent most of the Iberian Peninsula, the Balearic Isles and even parts of southern France, but its territory became progressively reduced by the advance of the Christian kingdoms of the north of the Peninsula in the process that has been termed *Reconquista*. Al-Andalus was the result of the Islamic invasion of Iberia in AD 711, and its end was marked by the conquest of the kingdom of Granada in 1492 by the Crown of Castile. However, direct descendants of the Muslims — forcibly converted to Christianity (*Moriscos*) — maintained their customs and habits for more than a century until they were finally expelled in 1617.

The archaeology of al-Andalus is a crucial subject within medieval archaeology in Spain and Portugal. Indeed, it is considered by many to have been at the core of medieval archaeological research in Iberia, because the questions, theories and methodologies that shaped the discipline from its inception in the late 1970s to the critical decades of the 1980s and 1990s were developed by specialists working on al-Andalus. Today, however, other fields of study within medieval archaeology are probably better placed to revitalise the discipline, methodologically as well as theoretically, and to inspire new directions for the archaeology of al-Andalus.

Given that recent publications have detailed the history and complexities of Iberian medieval archaeology in general and the archaeology of al-Andalus in particular,[2] it would

[1] Honorary Research Fellow, University of Sheffield, Department of Archaeology. Currently Lecturer in Islamic Archaeology at UCL Qatar, PO Box 25256, 2nd Floor, Georgetown Building, Hamad bin Khalifa University, Education City, Doha, Qatar. *j.c.lopez@ucl.ac.uk*

[2] Due to the fact that the archaeology of al-Andalus has developed as a branch of medieval archaeology in Portugal and Spain, it is not possible to find any work in Portuguese or Spanish that deals with it separately. For a review of the archaeology of al-Andalus, one needs to refer to general reviews of medieval archaeology (eg Quirós and Bengoetxea 2006; see also Boone 2009 and Glick 1995 on the archaeology of al-Andalus more generally). Methodological aspects have been addressed in Carvajal and Jiménez 2011 and Martín 2011. About the academic and social impact of the discipline, see Gutiérrez 2011; 2012, 41–3; and Quirós 2009.

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FIG 1
Map of the Iberian Peninsula with indication of the limits of al-Andalus in different periods and of important medieval cities. *Map drawn by José C Carvajal.*

seem redundant to repeat their findings here. Instead, I will focus on an aspect that has been largely ignored: the complicated and sometimes difficult relationship between archaeology and other disciplines, particularly history. In the following section I will present an overview of the archaeology of al-Andalus that emphasises the important linkages between the different debates with which it was concerned — not all of them within academia. It should be emphasised that this paper puts forward a personal point of view — that of an 'insider' in the archaeology of al-Andalus, although with the benefit of experience in other fields.[3]

PART ONE: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The birth of medieval archaeology in the late 1970s was the result of a combination of factors: the happy coincidence of a generation of remarkable scholars; the incentive provided by a variety of theoretical and methodological debates in Europe; and a political situation that invited innovative thinking and the challenging of established knowledge structures. An examination of some of these elements in some detail can give us a better perspective on developments throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

THE ISLAMIC PRESENCE IN THE HISTORY OF SPAIN[4]

Between the 1970s and the 1990s the archaeology of al-Andalus became the cornerstone of medieval archaeology in Spain due to a combination of political and social

[3] I have attempted to present a reasonable number of references in this article, enough to justify my point of view, but not too extensive to create confusion. Readers interested in more detailed discussions of these issues should check the references of note 1 as a starting point.

[4] Even if the histories of Spain and Portugal run parallel in the Middle Ages, the imperial past of the two nations is remarkably different and has inspired separate, if similar, attitudes towards their Islamic past. Due to my own background, I will focus my text on Spain.

circumstances that led to the introduction of the discipline in Spain, mainly from France and Italy.[5] The inception of medieval archaeology in Spain drew on the existing critical mass of history and archaeology, but it also had an explicit political agenda. In order to understand what early scholars were trying to achieve and how their work has influenced current practices, we need to consider the political context of a moment in which the historical origins of the Spanish nation itself were being redefined.

The medieval process of expansion and the final victory of the Catholic polities from the north of Iberia over the Islamic ones in the south are well known. Not so well known, however, is the long (and ongoing) history of the reconciliation of Spain with its Islamic inheritance. The earliest attempts can be found in the 18th century, but the key debates unleashed in the late 19th century, when the Spanish *Regeneracionismo* (an intellectual movement that can be roughly translated as 'impulse to regenerate') questioned the imperial identity of the Spaniards and initiated a debate on the *Nature of Spain* (the *Ser de España*).[6] In very simple terms, the question was: 'why was Spain different in its development to other European nations?'. Among the many topics involved in this debate (eg Right vs Left, Catholicism vs anticlericalism, Castilian centralism vs peripheral nationalisms), the consideration of Spain's Islamic past was essential. The roots of this Spanish identity crisis can be traced back to the formation of Spain as a single entity. By the start of the 16th century what had previously been a number of different 'feudal' states consolidated into a single political union, which defeated the last Islamic state in Iberia and became the centre of a global empire. This was not only a period of foundation, but also a moment of political prominence that acquired mythical proportions in Spanish nationalist discourse since its emergence in the 18th century.[7] One consequence of the 19th-century *Regeneracionismo* was a reaffirmation of Spanish nationalism during the following century, taken to an extreme level under Franco's dictatorship (1936–78).

Two core assumptions of nationalist discourse are the continuity of Spanish identity through history, and the Spaniards' right to occupy Iberia without consideration of other peninsular nations. A key idea supporting these claims is the existence of a direct link between the Catholic Visigothic kingdom and the Spanish monarchy. In the Middle Ages the kings of Asturias contended to be the legitimate successors of the Visigothic kings, who ruled over the whole of Iberia.[8] This claim was eventually upheld by the kings of Spain, later becoming a foundation myth of Spanish nationalism. After many historical debates[9] the nationalist paradigm reached its full expression with Claudio Sánchez Albornoz,[10] according to whom, although a sense of the Spanish 'spirit' emerged from the interplay between people and land, the true Spanish identity was forged during the Middle Ages, in the fight against Islam.[11] Moreover, Spanish Islamic society was believed to be fundamentally different from the rest of Islam because religion was seen as never more than a veneer in Iberia. The implications are twofold: first, Andalusi Muslims were Spanish rather than Muslims;[12] and, second, Islam was foreign to the Spaniards, and therefore

[5] The Casa de Velázquez (a French School in Madrid) initiated a very important programme of historical and archaeological research regarding al-Andalus from the late 1970s. The Italian organisation of medieval archaeology, whose work was disseminated through the journal *Archeologia Medievale* was the other inspiring element for Spanish medieval archaeology.

[6] García Sanjuán 2012, 187; 2013.

[7] The first scholar to use the term 'mythical' in reference to nationalism was J Caro Baroja 2004, 34 (cited in Taibo 2007, 23). See Taibo 2007, 23–4 for an explanation of the selection of historical events which support this historical discourse.

[8] Barbero and Vigil 1978, 232–78.

[9] Cf García Sanjuán 2013.

[10] Sánchez Albornoz 1973 [1956].

[11] Ibid, 99–188.

[12] Ibid, 189–240.

their conversion to Islam was never deep. In short, for some individuals and groups who followed a nationalistic belief, the essence of Spain could be no other than Roman Catholic.[13]

When Franco's regime eroded in the 1970s, the introduction and flourishing of foreign ideas followed, including an increasing Marxist influence. Consequently, many elements of nationalist discourse came under scrutiny and politics and scholarship became further entangled. Many researchers questioned the meta-historical Spanish identity developed by Sánchez Albornoz. Not surprisingly, the role of Islam in the Spanish past was reconsidered and al-Andalus received significant academic attention between the late 1970s and 1990s. At a time when medieval archaeology as a modern discipline was coming into its own in Spain and elsewhere in Europe, it was inevitable that al-Andalus would be revisited by archaeologists.

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF AL-ANDALUS: INITIAL CONCERNS

As noted above, until the 1970s, scholars considered the significance of al-Andalus through its role in the construction of Spanish national identity. From that moment onwards, however, al-Andalus was freed of this constraint to become, for the first time, a historical entity worth studying in its own right. This did not mean that such a pursuit was independent from other political interests. In a way, the study of al-Andalus was taken over by scholars aiming to present alternatives to the established monolithic view of Spanish history. Their endeavour was inspired by the feeling that al-Andalus was part of a shared history in Iberia, and that the history of Iberia was not only the history of Spain.

Another change introduced in the late 1970s was the attention paid by historians and archaeologists to the primary sources of al-Andalus history. Before then, primary sources were almost exclusively studied by orientalists, whose work consisted mainly of translations of texts in support of existing historical narratives,[14] or pure literary studies.[15] From then on, some authors started to develop deeper historical analyses of texts, introducing historical materialist approaches as well as social models informing medieval studies and research into the history of Islam elsewhere in Europe. Pedro Chalmeta's in-depth analyses of the formation and economy of al-Andalus in relation to the wider framework of the history of Islam[16] exemplify this new trend, but are by no means isolated cases.[17] Moreover, historians began to recognise the importance of primary sources, particularly the material evidence provided by archaeology.

The introduction of Marxist perspectives — and particularly of world system theory — was instrumental in the historical re-evaluation of al-Andalus. While earlier scholars had considered al-Andalus a 'feudal' society, not very different from other contemporary Iberian formations, the new generation of researchers strived to understand al-Andalus in its own specific terms.[18] Samir Amin's concept of tributary mode of production[19] was adopted as a useful way to articulate this difference. Amin suggested that feudal societies were peripheral developments to the tributary societies, in a world system where the core social formations were found in Egypt, the Near East and the Far East. His model was disseminated in Spain in 1974 through a partial translation edited and

[13] Ibid, 241–99.
[14] Eg Lévi-Provençal 1950; García Gómez and Lévi-Provençal 1980.
[15] Eg García Gómez 1952.
[16] Some of his major works are 1973; 1975; 1994.
[17] To quote only some relevant works about different topics: Marín 2000; Fierro 1987; Vallvé 1978; 1986.
[18] Ie Sánchez Albornoz. See note 10.
[19] Amin 1973.

introduced by Miquel Barceló, who proposed that al-Andalus should be considered a tributary-mercantile social formation.[20] Barceló was particularly interested in the structure of tributary social formations as proposed by Amin, where peasant society and the state were seen to constitute two separate political and historical planes. Soon after, Reina Pastor tackled the question of the difference between Islamic and Christian cultures in the socio-economic sphere,[21] something that her own mentor, Sánchez Albornoz, had dismissed. From an eminently Marxist perspective and basing her work on written sources, Pastor analysed the socio-economic structure of the town of Toledo before and after its conquest by the feudal kingdom of Castile in 1085. She linked the different results of her analysis with Amin's concepts. However, Barceló's interpretation developed aspects of Amin's work that had more impact in later scholarship, particularly in archaeology.

The most formidable challenge to the status quo, and more directly to Sánchez Albornoz's theories, came from the French historian and archaeologist Pierre Guichard in his book *Al-Andalus*.[22] Guichard's thesis used ethnographic models and a particular interpretation of written and material sources to present Andalusi society as based on tribal relations. Guichard was breaking the taboo that assumed (explicitly since Sánchez Albornoz) that Andalusi society was not significantly different from its Christian Iberian counterpart. Guichard even suggested that the tribal society of Arabs and Berbers influenced significantly the social structures of the weakened post-Roman Western world, a point later stressed by Barceló: 'the tribal environment produces tribes'.[23] This line of thinking would be influential in opening up al-Andalus research, and Guichard's book is considered the main historiographical event in the field at this time.

METHODOLOGICAL RENEWAL

The late 1970s and 1980s saw important methodological changes that were instrumental in shaping Spanish medieval archaeology. Three study areas underwent particular development: pottery; castles; and irrigation systems.

Pottery

I have reviewed elsewhere the impact of innovative approaches to the study of pottery in the late 1970s,[24] and a lengthy discussion of the topic here would be redundant. It is, however, important to note that this was the moment when the theoretical and methodological bases for pottery analysis in al-Andalus were established. For the first time, ceramics were not analysed exclusively from an art historical and aesthetic point of view, but mainly for the contribution that they could offer to the understanding of the technology and society of al-Andalus from an archaeologically contextualised perspective.[25] In this shift of approach there were echoes of the works of John Hurst and the Medieval Pottery Research Group in the UK, as well as of the French studies of Gabrielle Démians d'Archimbaud and of the advances in the morphological classification of Roman pottery in the Mediterranean.[26]

[20] Amin 1974. Barceló's proposal is in the prologue.
[21] Pastor 1975.
[22] Guichard 1976. Barceló was the translator. He managed to get it published earlier in Spanish before the first French edition appeared in 1977.
[23] Barceló 1986, 245, my translation.
[24] Carvajal and Jiménez 2011. More detailed information can be found in Rosselló 1999 and Salvatierra and Castillo 1999.
[25] The most relevant contribution of these years are Rossello 1978; Bazzana 1979; 1980; and Zozaya 1982.
[26] Especially Hayes 1972.

Castles

The study of medieval architecture, particularly monumental architecture, has a long ancestry in Spain.[27] Novel approaches in the 1970s led to a focus on domestic structures,[28] as well as (and perhaps most importantly) rethinking castles not only as fortifications, but as social and political centres in wider territories. This discussion was inspired by the *incastellamento* debate in Italy, initiated when Pierre Toubert suggested that castles in Italy (and specifically Lazio) emerged in the 9th/10th centuries as the materialisation of a 'feudal' social structure, on the basis of his study of medieval documents.[29] Subsequent archaeological research offered alternative explanations based on the material record.[30] At a broader level, this controversy became a confrontation between archaeologists and historians about the value of archaeological evidence. This situation was echoed in Spain, where scholars studying relationships between castles and territories explicitly linked their positions with the debate on *incastellamento* in Italy.[31]

Irrigation systems

Partly as a reaction against the focus on castles, Miguel Barceló started to develop an original methodology now known as 'hydraulic archaeology'. Barceló felt that the study of al-Andalus required a focus on peasant society. He therefore proposed to draw attention to the places where peasant presence was likely to be more evident, that is, spaces of agrarian production. Since the agriculture of the Islamic period was characterised by irrigation, study of technological development and the physical conditions of irrigation practices offered a good chance to understand the social logic of peasant life. Barceló first reflected on this matter in his influential *Arqueología Medieval. En las afueras del 'medievalismo'*,[32] which was followed by a series of articles by the author and his collaborators proposing a new methodological approach to the topic.[33] Barceló's team has not only produced a number of valuable studies,[34] but also had a significant impact on other researchers.[35]

ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE HISTORICAL DEBATE

The first medieval archaeology theorists were, in effect, a generation of historians, most of them explicitly using Marxist perspectives.[36] This circumstance is worth remarking upon, because it partly explains why in the late 1970s many historians 'took the trowel' and embraced archaeology as a way to engage with historical questions that could not be satisfactorily answered through the study of written documents alone. They were searching for the *people without history*, and material culture seemed to be the key.[37] We may now be aware of the drawbacks of this perspective,[38] but without such attempts an archaeology of al-Andalus would not exist today. In this respect it is remarkable what little interest the new discipline raised among university archaeology departments more generally.

[27] Quirós 2009, 174–5.
[28] The most important publication here is Bazzana 1992.
[29] Toubert 1973.
[30] An overview of this debate can be found in Francovich and Hodges 2003, 18–26.
[31] Two important examples are Bazzana et al 1988 and Acién 1992.
[32] Barceló 1988.
[33] See the studies collected in Barceló et al 1996.
[34] See recent overview in Kirchner 2009.
[35] Recent examples include Jiménez 2007; Martín 2011; and many of the studies collected in Kirchner 2010.
[36] I am excluding here the methodological 'fathers' of the pottery studies of the late 1970s, ie Rosselló, Bazzana and Zozaya, who show no explicit Marxist influence in their work.
[37] Eg Barceló 1988; 1992; 1994.
[38] Moreland 2010, 276–301.

The research agenda of medieval archaeology was set by historians, who were searching for data to answer their particular questions and to verify their interpretative models. It is paradoxical that these scholars were convinced of the potential for archaeology to shed new light on historical questions, while simultaneously limiting its potential to do so. Although the archaeological research carried out in the last 30 years is very rich and original, it was always filtered through the interests of the historians who directed it.

Pottery studies: rise and decline

The first 20 years of ceramic research largely consisted of attempts to create a system of classification more or less inspired by Guillermo Rosselló's work on the pottery of Palma de Mallorca.[39] The idea behind these endeavours was to find a model that could work as a comprehensive morphological classification of Andalusi ceramics in order to devise an absolute chronology. It was criticised first by Helena Kirchner,[40] and later by Rosselló himself, who stated that use of his initial system had strayed too far from the temporal and spatial context for which it was intended.[41] A different approach to pottery studies developed when regional networks of production and consumption started to be considered. Pottery became useful in site and regional characterisations, when ceramic studies started to offer glimpses into the contextual variation of vessel shapes and styles.[42] Some studies went further, using the spatial distribution of pottery as a means to investigate variability at a number of scales — from micro–features within a single site[43] to settlement patterns across an entire region.[44]

Nonetheless, pottery has continued to be studied within the confines of morphological description and typological classification. This is only one step away from the ideographic use of objects. Questions of quantification or technology were ignored or dealt with in a very superficial manner:[45] some studies offer examples of rudimentary quantification,[46] while others make sweeping generalisations supported by insufficient observations on ceramic technology, in particular on glazing methods, modelling or firing techniques.[47] As early as the 1980s, H Kirchner attempted to address these issues by proposing methodological advances based on the research methods then current in other European countries,[48] although these suggestions were not generally heeded. More recently, Kirchner has rightly explored the character of ceramic technological innovation within the wider context of social change.[49] Other authors have also suggested alternative methods on quantification and technological analysis,[50] but their proposals have again been received with apathy. In spite of these individual efforts, no concrete or systematic attempts have been made to apply different perspectives to research on Andalusi pottery.

[39] Rosselló 1978 is the inspiring work; for a summary of this debate, see Salvatierra and Castillo 1999.
[40] Kirchner 1988, 88–104.
[41] Rosselló 1999, 24.
[42] Eg Fuertes 2005; Gómez 1992; Gutiérrez 1988; Retuerce 1998; and all the studies presented in Caballero et al 2003.
[43] Eg García Porras 2001; Motos 1991; Pérez 2003.
[44] Eg Castillo 1998; Carvajal 2008; Gómez 1998; Gutiérrez 1996; Jiménez 2007.
[45] Which were being addressed in other countries: eg Arnold 1985; Cuomo di Caprio 1985; van der Leeuw 1976; 1993; Orton et al 1993; Peacock 1982; Rice 1987.
[46] Eg Motos 1991; García Porras 2001; Pérez 2003.
[47] Eg Bazzana 1979–80 for insufficient discussion on glazing methods; Acién 1989 for misuse of modelling methods and their social implications; and Gutiérrez 1996 for sweeping conclusions on firing conditions observed on pottery.
[48] Kirchner 1988.
[49] Kirchner 2008.
[50] Eg Carvajal 2008; 2009; Fernández 2008; Jiménez and Carvajal in press; Malpica et al 2010; Malpica et al in press.

Pottery studies in Spain seem to have become increasingly a matter of technical expertise rather than a source of genuine archaeological investigation. At university level, students undertake ceramic analysis only as a secondary specialisation and rarely as a principal field of expertise. It is being progressively abandoned by academics and left in the hands of freelance archaeologists who lack the time and the resources to advance new methods or theories.

Landscape archaeology and Andalusi society

Research focused on wider territories has evolved rapidly, encouraged by theoretical developments in landscape archaeology and by the availability of new technologies — most notably GIS and CAD. This field of study is having major implications for our understanding of Andalusi history and is therefore important to address in more detail here.

As described earlier, after Amin's and Guichard's work in the late 1970s, tributary modes of production and tribalism became key issues in the debate on al-Andalus.[51] In the late 1970s the dominant interpretation of Andalusi society was that of a 'society without lords', in stark contrast to the 'feudal' systems of the Christian north. Castles (*ḥuṣūn* in al-Andalus) naturally became the focus of attention, as they were the place where the spheres of state, overlords and peasants intersected.[52] Guichard's initial work of 1976 inspired the archaeological study of the castles of al-Andalus by French scholars. This research suggested new models for understanding the social logic behind the creation of castle districts. Rather than being imposed by a class of overlords, as Toubert had suggested in Italy, it was instead proposed that Andalusi castles resulted from agreements between state authorities and peasant communities, thus leaving no space for the role of 'feudal' lords. The main supporting evidence was the strategic situation of castles in places that connected networks of agricultural communities predating the fortresses themselves, as has been shown by Patrice Cressier in the Alpujarra region of the Nasrid kingdom of Granada.[53] Another important piece of evidence was the *baqqār*, an external wall enclosing land next to the castle, which aimed specifically to protect the inhabitants of surrounding settlements and their possessions (usually livestock). The architectural study of castles showed that the *baqqār* was an element of castle architecture.[54] While this line of research was certainly exciting, it has seen little development in the last ten years, and the interests of archaeologists seem to have shifted again to the architectural elements of castles. This is perhaps due to the widespread use of software enabling production of architectural reconstructions that find a wider popular acceptance (and funding) than burdensome landscape studies, but also because of the growing interest of archaeologists in the spaces of production (see below).

Meanwhile, in what became known as hydraulic archaeology, Barceló took Guichard's proposals of an Andalusi tribal society even further. In 1986 he had already pointed out that the 'peasant' society of al-Andalus would have become 'tribal' due to the influence introduced by Muslim migrants (Arabs and, especially, Berbers) to Iberia. This influence

[51] For a good overview of these concepts and their impact in the debate, see García Sanjuán 2006; 2012.

[52] It is important to bear in mind that the concept of 'castle' in al-Andalus (*ḥiṣn*) and the debate that it has stirred has very little in common with the desert castles (*quṣūr*) of the Middle East (Bilad al-Sham). Researchers in al-Andalus have regarded castles as intermediate points in the networks that link peasant settlements with towns, whereas the debate on Middle Eastern desert-castles has focused more on their erection and use by the early Islamic aristocracy, their position in relation to routes of communication, and the origins of their architectonic characteristics.

[53] Cressier 1984; 1999; 2001.

[54] Bazzana et al 1988. See also Guichard 2001.

was manifested in the adoption of production processes and irrigation techniques. Al-Andalus was seen as a segmentary society,[55] a concept that Barceló borrowed from David M Hart's work on the social structures of the Aith Waryaghar of the Moroccan Rif.[56] Unfortunately, later anthropological discussions on the segmentary model have not been noted by Spanish scholars and the model has not been duly revised[57] — an issue which has been criticised by Eduardo Manzano.[58] Manzano has proposed the replacement of this model by that of factionalism, an explanation of the dynamics of early Islamic polities developed by Patricia Crone.[59] I would argue that such a replacement is unnecessary, however. There has been some debate, but most authors suggest modifications to the segmentary model rather than its complete discard.[60] Crone's ideas are perfectly compatible with segmentation when the latter is understood from a cognitive perspective.[61] In other words, we should consider that segmentation does not explain the content of the social structure, but the way in which agents conceive its dynamics.

The state in al-Andalus

A major research question for historians has been the role of the state in Andalusi society and, as we shall see, this has had a major impact upon the work of archaeologists. There was a flaw in Guichard's and Barceló's theories, at least in the view of historians concerned with the state: they did not explain satisfactorily how political power worked in al-Andalus. Barceló addressed this question in studies based on written sources and some limited archaeological evidence, mainly coins.[62] According to Barceló, the construction of the Umayyad state — the legitimate institution of political power in al-Andalus — occurred in parallel with the development of segmentary society. This meant that, to a certain extent, the state developed as a non-intrusive institution that became adapted to the conditions of a 'society without lords'. Nonetheless, some issues were left unexplored, including the critical question of what happened to pre-Islamic society. It is hard to assume that it became completely embedded in segmentary dynamics and was irrelevant to this historical process. A related question concerning the pre-Islamic inheritance is what happened to the structures of Visigothic power in the face of the Islamic state?

In his search for the remains of pre-Islamic society, Manuel Acién developed a strategy for the study of material culture that included both pottery[63] and castles.[64] Through these, he progressively developed the concept of Islamic social formation. He was inspired by Christopher Wickham's seminal article on 'The other transition'.[65] Also influenced by Samir Amin and drawing on his ideas on social formations and tributary and 'feudal' modes of production, Wickham suggested that different modes of production could coexist in the same social formation and could be differentiated through mechanisms used by elites to extract surplus from producers. He associated the 'feudal' and tributary modes of production respectively with rent and tax within the late Roman Empire. Acién followed these ideas in his most influential work *Entre el feudalismo y el Islam*,[66] where he proposed a

[55] Barceló 1986.
[56] Hart 1976.
[57] Cf Tobolka 2003.
[58] Manzano 2006, 132–46.
[59] Crone 1980.
[60] Tobolka 2003, 106–9.
[61] Maynard 1998.
[62] See the collected studies in Barceló 1997b.
[63] Acién 1986.
[64] Acién 1992.
[65] Wickham 1984.
[66] Acién 1994a.

model of Islamic social formation in which a tributary mode of production (ie based on tax) was prominent. But this formation contained the remnants of the Visigothic society as well, which were articulated through the rent collected by social elites (ie organised in a 'feudal' mode of production). Acién's previous archaeological work was instrumental in the development of this theory, for he had focused on the opposition between the pre-Islamic and the Islamic societies — now identified with 'feudal' and tributary modes of production — in terms of material culture. His oppositions were quite reductionist; for example, he proposed that two technological traditions of pottery production, one hand-made and one wheel-made, reflected the two societies.[67] In the field of landscape studies, Acién identified two main types of fortress that he believed had been erected during different historical periods. He postulated that the first type of fortifications was the result of an early process of *incastellamento* in Iberia before the Islamic invasion (that is, a process of castle building led by landlords). Thus, between the 5th and 8th centuries a network of fortresses was created as the material manifestation of a (very early) 'feudal' mode of production. Between the 8th and the 10th centuries, however, the rulers of the Islamic state imposed their authority over this alternative power structure by building a parallel network of strongholds, resulting in the second type of fortification. Once again Acién presented the contrast between the two societies in terms of two parallel sets of material culture.[68]

Acién's systems of opposition and its insights were well received by historians in general and by some archaeologists, like Sonia Gutiérrez.[69] Amongst his harsher critics were Barceló, who considered that the concepts of 'state' and 'modes of production' were being used ahistorically,[70] and Virgilio Martínez Enamorado, who believed that the interpretation of the material evidence was forced.[71]

Acién's concept of Islamic social formation was further redefined by John Haldon's *The State and the Tributary Mode of Production*.[72] Haldon contested Wickham's opposition between rent and tax as diagnostic of different modes of productions,[73] a point that Wickham himself eventually acknowledged.[74] More importantly, Haldon observed that it was not possible to characterise a society on the basis of its predominant mode of production alone.[75] Acknowledging that his two basic theoretical foundations had been questioned, Acién redefined Islamic social formation according to four superstructural elements:

a) hegemony of the private over the public sphere;
b) supremacy of the urban over the rural world;
c) a political philosophy unique to Islamic social formation and that is contained in a theory of knowledge developed by Muslim thinkers like al-Fārābī or Ibn Rushd (Averroes); and
d) a characteristic set of material culture.[76]

Instead of choosing examples from his previous work to illustrate this last element — the most relevant for our purposes — Acién drew on different material, particularly

[67] Acién 1986.
[68] Acién 1992; 1994a, 82–7.
[69] Eg Gutiérrez 1996. But cf the more recent work by Gutiérrez et al 2003, where her support for these ideas is not so evident.
[70] Barceló 1997a, 11–14.
[71] Martínez Enamorado 2003, 534–53.
[72] Haldon 1993.
[73] Ibid, 63–9, 75–87.
[74] Wickham 2005, 60.
[75] Haldon 1993, 87–109.
[76] Acién 1998.

architectonical decoration as a manifestation of the Islamic ideological matrix.[77] The archaeological research involved in this discussion is indeed shallow, and based mainly on secondary interpretations of other sources. More problematic, however, is that Acién took to the extreme his former reductionist proposals: he suggested no less than a total correlation between Islamic society and Islamic state supported by arbitrary links between material culture and political organisation. In negating the autonomy of society from the state, he was taking the prevalent view among historians and therefore implicitly relegating archaeology to the role of the 'handmaiden of history'. Recently, Gutiérrez has attempted to build on this model by introducing the archaeological evidence it previously lacked. In pursuit of making this interpretation archaeologically solid, Gutiérrez considered evidence from Tudmir (south-east Spain), including settlement (urbanism and houses) and material from the religious and cultural sphere (buildings, cemeteries and evidence for the use of the Arabic), as well as the chronology of artefacts (coins, metalwork and ceramics). Nobody can ignore the validity of such a processual approach in establishing relationships between the elements under study, but the historical and cultural narrative that Gutiérrez proposes here can be questioned. What she offers is a description of elements of Andalusi culture from periods in which it is assumed, by means of extra-archaeological sources, that Islamicisation is ongoing or complete. Just as Acién was doing, Gutiérrez represented Islam with a set of material elements without any critical assessment of their connection.[78] This is in itself not so different from one of Edward Said's definitions of Orientalism: a discourse that takes the place of the reality under observation.[79] For this reason it is questionable whether Acién's theory can be transformed into an archaeological model. Acién's work unquestionably represented a major historiographical achievement, following Guichard's ground-breaking contribution, but its archaeological implications need to be revised and refined. Indeed, all the relevant features of this theory assume an unverified and simplistic correlation between extremely abstract historical concepts and material culture. It offers a narrative that it is easy to understand and criticise by historians, but which does not offer an easy way forward for archaeologists. In sum, Acién's theory involves a return to purely historical models in al-Andalus research, with the attendant risk that archaeology will continue to be perceived as an ancillary discipline.

PART TWO: CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

The years between 1978 and 2008 (when the current economic crisis started) were the most productive for the archaeology of al-Andalus. This is evident in the remarkable number of publications and the boom in systematic archaeological research projects.[80] However, these years also witnessed the emergence of some problems which need to be addressed in the future.[81] In essence, the archaeology of al-Andalus faces three main issues.

MEDIEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY: CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

Two important medieval archaeologists have already complained about the lack of academic recognition for the subject. Juan Antonio Quirós has remarked that, in spite of the growth that this research field has experienced, very few university programmes or positions are explicitly dedicated to medieval archaeology.[82] Gutiérrez has complained

[77] Ibid, 961–8.
[78] Gutiérrez 2007.
[79] Said 1978, 2.
[80] Quirós 2009, 173.
[81] An introduction to these issues is offered by Quirós 2009, 186–7.
[82] Ibid, 177.

about the fact that archaeology is still viewed as a technique used to produce data for historians.[83] Quirós has also expressed a similar concern in his demand for theoretical and methodological reflection within the discipline, in order to rise above the paradigms generated by historians.[84] These grievances are in fact very similar to those that Barceló voiced in 1988,[85] and to those that I used to listen to during my education in the University of Granada. Has nothing changed since?

In the sections above I have explained how the different archaeological theories and methodologies used for the study of al-Andalus have been linked to historians' questions since the onset. When archaeology was not 'productive' in answering such questions, it was relegated to a second division. The study of pottery, for example, has been pushed into the background, perceived as a technical skill that is needed but which should not constitute a principal occupation for scholars. Something similar can be observed in the evolution of Acién's work, which started from the study of material culture but eventually became a historical theory in which archaeology was afforded an illustrative role. Today, it is possible to talk about al-Andalus with minimal reference to the archaeological debate,[86] despite the intentions of the founders of medieval archaeology. However, in congruence with studies like those of Thomas Glick and James Boone,[87] the main themes of the debate on al-Andalus emerged from studies of material culture. How is this paradox possible?

The failure of the archaeology of al-Andalus to become a recognised field of academic research is related to the role that it has been forced to play since the development of medieval archaeology in Spain. Instead of developing research directions that take into account multiple lines of evidence, scholars chose to focus on parts of the material record that they thought significant for their narratives.[88] While there is no doubt that some research can be written in this way, it is not a sustainable archaeological strategy in the long term. Hence the first and most fundamental problem of medieval archaeology in Spain is the lack of an autonomous research agenda. Here I wish to emphasise the word 'autonomous' as opposed to 'independent'. I am not contending that medieval archaeologists should be absolutely independent of medieval historians; rather, I am arguing for the creation of a pluridisciplinary research framework. In the field of al-Andalus this has been achieved by orientalists and historians, for example, but archaeologists have not been able to develop the potential of their discipline because they have been subordinated to the research priorities of others. It is important to clarify that the problem here is not so much about establishing barriers between academic disciplines as about bringing them down. In other words, the problem of medieval archaeology is not that it has been practised by historians, but that it has been managed by people who conceived archaeological research as less complex than it actually is.

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE ECONOMIC BUBBLE

In the 1980s the young Spanish democracy created the current system of heritage management. Many professional archaeologists working today were also educated in this period. The new legal framework on heritage was established in 1985.[89] This introduced

[83] Gutiérrez 2012, 39–41.
[84] Quirós 2009, 187.
[85] Barceló 1988, 73–87.
[86] Cf García Sanjuán 2006; 2012.
[87] Glick 1995; Boone 2009.
[88] Gutiérrez 2012, 39–41 shows a clear awareness of this problem.
[89] Ley 16/1985 de Patrimonio Histórico Español.

the need for rescue archaeology and led to the legalisation of freelance archaeology.[90] The situation was further complicated after the 1998 land deregulation,[91] which boosted the activity of developers in Spain to spectacular levels.[92] Such an expansion created an exceptionally large demand for archaeological work that exceeded the capacity of universities, and the number of contract archaeologists grew considerably. In the following section I will address the uneasy relationship between academia, contract archaeology and heritage management, but now I will focus on a different result of this unexpected growth. The increasing number of activities arguably resulted in a relaxation of quality control practices by authorities already affected due to the lack of a common research framework. The sheer volume of archaeological material was so massive that it overwhelmed the storage capacity of some institutions (for example, in the case of the provincial museums of Seville and Granada). The problem is particularly acute with medieval and later material, because most rescue archaeology happens inside historical towns. Much archaeological information thus awaits analysis and integration into historical and archaeological syntheses. As things stand, the potential of this information can be grasped only by scanning the abundant pages of grey literature. Processing these materials in the future will require a tiresome process involving bureaucracy, archive consultation, material records classification and, of course, luck.

HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY: AN UNEASY RELATIONSHIP

Since the beginning of Spanish democracy, archaeology witnessed difficulties in the relationship between its academic and heritage management sectors. This was especially the case in medieval and post-medieval archaeology because of the amount of work focused on historic towns. Academics, heritage managers and contract archaeologists had problematic interrelationships, with complaints from academics concerning the lack of research principles in freelance archaeological practice a commonplace, especially since the start of the real estate bubble in 1998.[93] Yet it is also true that many freelance archaeologists and heritage managers pay more attention to the social impact of archaeological work.[94] Some regional or local administrations have dealt better with these social aspects of medieval archaeology than in academia, at least in terms of engagement with the wider public. After all, in the last 30 years many museums, interpretation centres and exhibitions dedicated fully or in part to medieval archaeology in general and to al-Andalus in particular have been opened, especially in places where monumental remains of the period call for interpretation. Therefore, although it is true that pure research was often not the first priority of heritage managers and freelance archaeologists, they were arguably more successful in achieving a social impact than academics. Archaeology for public consumption, where the archaeologist is viewed as a technician or a manager, is an area of growth while, on the other hand, academia remains more closed.[95]

It is vital for all stakeholders in heritage management and in academia to reach agreements that set minimum principles of control, quality and training. The management of archaeology in Córdoba is a good example. In this historic city, coordination between the town council and the Department of Archaeology of the University of Córdoba has ensured the conservation and availability of a good archaeological record and spectacular

[90] By freelance archaeologists, in this article I mean those archaeologists who receive a salary for their work and are not part of academic or administrative institutions. They can be part of archaeological companies or not.
[91] Ley 6/1998 sobre régimen de suelo y valoraciones.
[92] Naredo 2010, Rodríguez Alonso 2011.
[93] Eg Acién 1992, 27; 1994b; Salvatierra 1994.
[94] Eg Domínguez et al 1994.
[95] Cf Rodríguez 2009.

research in recent years.[96] Although this particular model in Córdoba has its detractors,[97] it is difficult to deny that this kind of coordination is essential to develop a successful model of archaeological research and management. Academic archaeologists are an important link here. Gutiérrez, herself a university professor, has criticised what she has termed 'self-absorbed archaeology': an archaeology that does not care for the social side of the study of the material, but only for the academic capital of the scholars involved.[98]

From this reflection, we can move on to consider a different sort of tension — that affecting academia itself. A foreign scholar has commented on the latent violence in debate within Spanish academia.[99] An archaeology conceived as an ancillary discipline to solve historical problems hinders the development of a critical and integrated vision of material culture as the source of a network of evidence from which to reconstruct past conditions of life. This vision is a basic need of a collegiate approach to archaeological practice. A good example of the need for change has been set in the South of Portugal, where the recent CIGA (*Projecto de sistematização para a cerâmica islâmica do Gharb al-Ândalus*: 'Project for the systematisation of Islamic pottery in the west of al-Andalus') offers an interesting start,[100] different to any system proposed by a single party.

PART THREE: TOWARDS THE FUTURE

In the first two parts of this paper I hope to have shown how the medieval archaeology of al-Andalus reflects the social and political concerns of its first generation of scholars. Spanish society is now in a deep process of change and it is difficult to know what the future holds for the archaeology of al-Andalus, although some general observations can be made.

The advance of the archaeology of al-Andalus has been significant and has made this civilisation the best studied Islamic region of the Middle Ages. Not only academics, but Spaniards in general have learnt about the Muslims of al-Andalus and have felt a sense of pride and a proximity towards them for the first time in their history. The younger Spanish generations that grew up in the Spanish democracy show interest on al-Andalus as part of their own heritage, and many scholars and students are eager for new knowledge about this civilisation. Many young medieval archaeologists look for innovative research approaches and it is commonplace to find them studying in European universities and importing new techniques and methodologies into Spain.

In this context, the cases of zooarchaeology and human osteoarchaeology are very relevant, for they have had very little impact in research on the Middle Ages in Spain, which is unfortunate given the potential that these disciplines have for interpretation of the modes of life of the different cultures that coexisted in Iberia. The brief examples highlight the potential of these approaches: Simon Davis has revealed the cultural impact of different cultures on sheep and cattle biometrics during the Islamic and later Christian periods in Portugal,[101] and José Antonio Faro et al have documented the earliest known Islamic necropolis in Iberia (713–70).[102] In this cemetery 150 skeletons of both sexes and all age groups were documented. The dental mutilations of two female individuals point

[96] See the journal *Anales de Arqueología Cordobesa* and the many high quality publications available at <www.arqueocordoba.com>.
[97] CNT-Córdoba 2010.
[98] Gutiérrez 2011; 2012, 41–3.
[99] Wickham 2005, 47.
[100] Bugalhão et al 2010.
[101] Davis 2008.
[102] Faro et al 2007–08.

to an African provenance for the group.[103] This evidence, combined with the early chronology, suggests that the archaeologists have identified a group of invaders that entered Iberia in the 8th century. Results like these have galvanised students and inspired them to pursue bioarchaeological research in medieval contexts.

These advances not only influence students, however. Another important recent development in the discipline is the attempt to create a common methodological framework in the archaeological study of medieval agrarian landscapes by combining different forms of landscape archaeology, bioarchaeological disciplines and dating techniques. An example of this is the collectively edited volume *Por una arqueología agraria* ('Towards an Archaeology of Agriculture').[104] This contains a contribution that establishes protocols for future studies,[105] although one feels disappointed that these reflect separately the interests of the different scholars who contributed to the work, rather than offering a common approach to the same problem.[106] It is nevertheless a first step in the right direction, especially since no other single protocol has been established in other topics of research, as the example of pottery studies shows. All the systematisation proposals failed to satisfy the needs of the different archaeologists (except in the recent case of CIGA, mentioned above), and the questions of quantification or of technological characterisation were never properly addressed.

The quality of the work on al-Andalus developed in Spain and Portugal has not passed unnoticed by foreign scholars. Along with the active French participation with the Casa de Velázquez, there have been debates with Italians, English, Americans and Polish. It is important that this exchange between Iberian and foreign scholarship continues and expands, because the histories of Portugal and Spain need to be understood within wider frameworks. This would be beneficial for Iberian researchers, but also for wider scholarship. The recent publication of Marcus Milwright on Islamic archaeology[107] met with criticism in a review by Jorge Eiroa, among other things for its ignorance of the Iberian debate on al-Andalus.[108]

WHERE DOES THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF AL-ANDALUS BELONG?

Is the archaeology of al-Andalus part of Islamic archaeology? Although most archaeologists would immediately answer positively, for the archaeologists of al-Andalus the answer is less clear. For most, al-Andalus should be studied within the wider framework of the Middle Ages. While there are good historical, methodological and theoretical reasons to make this case, I would resist considering the archaeology of al-Andalus — or indeed of any Islamic region during the Middle Ages — as 'medieval' beyond the chronological meaning of the term. In this objection I am calling for the consideration of the actual significance of the period in terms of Islamic history.[109] I am concerned here with the proper characterisation of the presence of Islam as a religion in al-Andalus, which is, after all, its main link with the rest of the Islamic world. The archaeology of the Islamic societies should not be reduced to medieval or post-medieval archaeology.

Archaeologists of al-Andalus usually do not regard themselves as part of the field of Islamic archaeology. For example, Eiroa, in his reflection on Milwright's book, suggests that the tag of Islamic archaeology should simply be dropped, as it is reminiscent of an

[103] Romero et al 2009.
[104] Kirchner 2010.
[105] Ballesteros et al 2010.
[106] Admitted by the authors: ibid, 198.
[107] Milwright 2010.
[108] Eiroa 2011, 187–8.
[109] Cf Varisco 2007.

obsolete and Eurocentric perspective.[110] I would agree with Eiroa on this last point and would support his contention of the need to reject a concept that is quintessentially Orientalist. However, I also acknowledge the necessity of a term to encompass a group of related fields of research that are evidently linked to one another but which are also distinctly different. This is basically Milwright's own definition,[111] very similar to the one used in the recently launched *Journal of Islamic Archaeology*.[112] These definitions emphasise the contingent character of the expression 'Islamic archaeology'. At the same time, they make the concept compatible with other fields of research, which can enrich the studies undertaken with alternative points of view. For example, the fields of Islamic archaeology and historical archaeology can engage in a fruitful exchange of concepts, and the archaeology of al-Andalus can be considered at the same time Islamic and medieval archaeology. However, it is important to counterbalance the implicit essentialism of Milwright's concept of Islamic archaeology; Insoll's 'archaeology of Islam' offers a good opportunity to do this.

THE 'ARCHAEOLOGY OF ISLAM' IN AL-ANDALUS: TOWARDS AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF IDENTITIES

If there is a research area that Spanish scholars of the archaeology of al-Andalus have been hesitant to engage with, it is religion. From the Marxist standpoints of the founders of medieval archaeology in Spain, and from those of their successors, religion can only be equivalent to ideology. Barceló stated this reservation in a famous article in which he dismissed the term Islamicisation as one used only by scholars interested in the expansion of the power of state.[113] This relationship was sanctioned by Acién when he coined the term 'Islamic social formation' to define al-Andalus.[114] We have seen above how this model escaped archaeological scrutiny, in spite of recent claims of S Gutierrez (see above). In order to find Islamicisation in the archaeological record, we need to define it in a way that is appropriate.

In this sense, Insoll's concept of the 'archaeology of Islam'[115] is highly relevant. Insoll proposes a conceptual framework that conceives the archaeology of a religion (in this case Islam) as the analysis of how the religious dimension of human existence is manifested in the practices of daily life. Although Milwright accuses Insoll of 'assigning overarching religious identities to the excavated material',[116] I think that the case is exactly the opposite: Insoll is proposing a focus on certain questions, not an alternative to Islamic archaeology. Insoll proposes an archaeology of religion that aspires to understand the connection of belief and practice in historical societies, while Milwright conceives a total archaeology that aims to understand past societies dominated by Islamic regimes as historical polities. Leaving aside the deeper implications of both conceptions, I do not see why the overarching field of Islamic archaeology as defined by Milwright cannot accommodate the more restricted field of the 'archaeology of Islam'.

Insoll's work offers promised avenues for researching connections between the religious dimensions of Islam and everyday practices in al-Andalus.[117] In this way a new

[110] Eiroa 2011, 188.
[111] Milwright 2010, 3.
[112] <*www.equinoxpub.com/journals/index.php/JIA*> [accessed 20 August 2014].
[113] Barceló 1997c.
[114] Some objections were made by García Sanjuán 2006, 131–7; 2012, 214, but they are minor questions in which the equivalence between religion and ideology was not really questioned.
[115] Insoll 1999.
[116] Milwright 2010, 7–9.
[117] Carvajal 2013.

paradigm for the archaeology of al-Andalus could be developed on more solid archaeological grounds, less focused on the big narratives of confrontation that have attracted scholars in the past. The use of an autonomous archaeological perspective in connection with history and Arabism can go beyond the traditional limits of the discipline. From the archaeology of Islam we can understand al-Andalus as an Islamicised society (that is, a society where Islam influences everyone, not only Muslims). From here, archaeological studies of different identities in al-Andalus, whether religious (Jews, *Mozárabes*, *Mudéjares*, *Moriscos*) or not (Arab and Berber tribes, groups of migrants from different regions, social class, gender) could be pursued. In this way, the archaeology of Islam would become a base from which we can better understand the complex relations between different identities in al-Andalus.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has endeavoured to present a summary of past and current archaeological research and professional practice in the study of al-Andalus in the Middle Ages. As an insider in the discipline I cannot (and should not even try to) remain completely objective, but three points have emerged that are of particular importance.

- The archaeology of al-Andalus was an essential starting point and a source of inspiration for medieval archaeology in Spain and Portugal. Today it is increasingly clear that al-Andalus should be studied not only in the framework of Iberian medieval archaeology, but also within a variety of geographical and intellectual frameworks, including the archaeology of other Islamic areas.
- The archaeology of al-Andalus has developed so fast that its contribution to historical research is arguably reaching its limit. The need for theoretical and methodological renovation within the discipline is urgent.
- A reconsideration of the role of archaeology within Spanish society is urgently required. This concerns not only specialists in al-Andalus and, indeed, in medieval archaeology, but also practitioners of archaeology and heritage management in general. Archaeologists of al-Andalus should participate in this debate, as their role in reflecting on the past of the Iberian countries is of fundamental importance. One vital point of this debate concerns the role of academic archaeology and its links with heritage management and freelance archaeology.

It would be unfair, however, not to conclude that studies of the Iberian past in the Islamic period have experienced a phenomenal boost in the last 35 years, to the point that few people can ignore the relevance of Islam in Iberia. Al-Andalus is still turned into a myth, for good or for bad,[118] but the availability of data, studies and contrasting opinions is much greater today than previously, and readily available education on these topics offers people chances to be aware of their heritage and to challenge vested interests that affect it. I have had the occasion to experience a case that illustrates this last point. In 2007, a number of dwellers of the little village of Nívar, near Granada, stood up in defence of a nearby archaeological site, El Castillejo, which had been doomed to be destroyed and buried by a new suburb that had been planned and licensed without archaeological control. Their brave actions, which initially lacked any kind of institutional support, have transformed El Castillejo into a protected site that has been partially excavated and studied and contains great potential for research in the future.

[118] Unfortunately, there are still supporters of the old paradigm of clash of civilisations. See García Sanjuán 2013, 91–100.

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Résumé

L'archéologie d'al-Andalus: passé, présent et avenir *par* José C Carvajal

Cet article fait un tour d'horizon de l'archéologie d'al-Andalus (nom arabe donné à l'Espagne et au Portugal islamiques), depuis ses prémices à la fin des années 1970 jusqu'à nos jours. Des approches innovantes et des positions théoriques controversées ont fait de l'archéologie d'al-Andalus le fer de lance de l'archéologie médiévale entre 1980 et 1990. Or, un rapport problématique et souvent conflictuel

entre archéologie et histoire a caractérisé l'archéologie médiévale en Espagne depuis ses débuts, et une nouvelle sensibilisation à ces problèmes est en train d'émerger. Ce papier examine quelles attitudes passées et présentes ont permis de faire face à ces défis et réfléchit aux besoins futurs de la discipline. Il réfléchit également aux liens entre la politique et l'archéologie et au rôle jusqu'à présent sous-estimé de l'archéologie médiévale, qui permet de révéler l'évolution sociale.

Zusammenfassung

Die Archäologie von Al-Andalus: Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft *von* **José C Carvajal**

Dieser Artikel bietet einen Überblick über die Archäologie von al-Andalus (arabischer Name für das islamische Spanien und Portugal) von ihren Anfängen in den späten 1970er Jahren bis heute. Innovative Ansätze und anspruchsvolle theoretische Positionen machten die Archäologie von al-Andalus zwischen den 1980er und 1990er Jahren zum Vorreiter der Archäologie des Mittelalters. Eine problematische und oft konfliktreiche Beziehung zwischen Archäologie und Geschichte ist jedoch seit ihren Anfängen ebenfalls charakteristisch für die Archäologie des Mittelalters in Spanien, und es entsteht gerade ein neues Bewusstsein für diese Probleme. Dieser Artikel überprüft vergangene und gegenwärtige Einstellungen zu solchen Herausforderungen und überdenkt die zukünftigen Bedürfnisse dieser Disziplin. Er überdenkt auch die Politik der Archäologie und die Rolle der Archäologie des Mittelalters bei der Aufdeckung sozialen Wandels, die bisher unterschätzt wurde.

Riassunto

L'archeologia di Al-Andalus: passato, presente e futuro *di* José C Carvajal

Questo studio presenta una panoramica dell'archeologia di al-Andalus (nome arabo della penisola iberica musulmana), a partire dai suoi inizi verso la fine degli anni '70 del secolo scorso fino a oggi. Nel decennio tra il 1980 e il 1990 l'archeologia di al-Andalus si era conquistata un posto di avanguardia nell'archeologia medievale per i suoi approcci innovativi e per gli orientamenti teorici. Fin dagli inizi l'archeologia medievale in Spagna è stata caratterizzata dal rapporto problematico e spesso conflittuale tra archeologia e storia, tuttavia sta emergendo una nuova consapevolezza di questi problemi. Questa pubblicazione passa in rassegna gli atteggiamenti passati e presenti di fronte a tali sfide e riflette sulle esigenze di questa disciplina in futuro. Riflette inoltre sulle politiche dell'archeologia e sul ruolo che l'archeologia medievale riveste nel portare a conoscenza i cambiamenti sociali, ruolo che finora è stato sottovalutato.