Pierre Guichard’s *Les Musulmans de Valence et la Reconquête (XIe–XIIIe siècles)* examines the hinge period of Muslim and Christian domination in Andalusi Levant and, thus, presented an obvious model for a study of the Muslims of the lands of the Ebro watershed in that same era undertaken by myself exactly thirty years after Guichard began his own investigations. In configuring and researching my own dissertation, Guichard’s study pointed towards an initial conceptual framework and addressed what stood out as key issues in understanding the transformation of that Muslim society. Foremost among these was establishing a social, economic and political status ante quem—mudéjar society cannot be adequately understood without an appreciation of its antecedent. Thus the broad themes by which Guichard characterized Muslim society: ethno-cultural, organizational, and fiscal character would have to be explored, as would the socio-political character of the Islamic Ebro region.

1 See P. GUICHARD, *Les Musulmans de Valence et la Reconquête (XIe–XIIIe siècles)*, Damascus, Institut Français de Damas, 1990-91, 1, p. 7. A revised version of my dissertation (Toronto, 2000), which focused on the effect of the Christian conquest on Islamic society in the Ebro Valley and which I began researching in 1996, is to be published by Cambridge University Press as *The Victors and the Vanquished: Christians and Muslims in Catalonia and Aragon, 1050–1300* (ca. 2003). Naturally, Guichard was not the only historian to influence this project. The works of Robert I. Burns, Elena Lourie, John Boswell, María Luisa Ledesma Rubio, Carlos Laliena Corbera, Maria Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, David Nirenberg and many others contributed to my conceptualization of the study, but it was Guichard’s comparative study of pre- and post-conquest society, and his socio-anthropological approach which seemed to me to be the most appropriate model to follow.

2 Even the most convinced “cataclysmist” historians would acknowledge at least the relevance of this. Philippe SÉNAC best represents this group, although several Aragonese historians also hold the position that Christian conquest destroyed the previous Islamic society in all of most of the important senses. See Sénac’s remarks “Poblamiento, hábitats rurales y sociedad en la Marca Superior de al-Andalus”, *Aragón en la Edad Media*, 9 (1991), p. 401.

3 The four chapters (VIII–XI) of Guichard’s “Seconde Partie: La Population musulmane du _arq_ al-Andalus” examine the social configuration of Islamic Valencia, under the headings “Les données ethno-culturelles,” “L’organisation générale du peuplement: _madina, hisn, qarya_,” “La morphologie
The my own work, however, would correspond approximately to Guichard’s final section of Les Musulmans, entitled, “La Société Musulmane valencienne face à la Reconquête”, in which the impact of the Christian conquest and colonization on the native Muslim population is examined. Indeed, the comprehensive and exhaustive nature of Guichard’s study and its thematic similitude to my proposed topic seemed at times as much of a discouragement as an inspiration—Les Musulmans would be tough act to follow.

But it soon became obvious that despite their geographical and historical proximity the Islamic societies of the Ebro (corresponding to the Thaghr al-Aqsa’ or “Furthest Frontier”) and Valencia (Sharq al-Andalus) present two quite different panoramas for the historian. Mercifully, my own study would be sufficiently distinct from Guichard’s as to spare it from suffering from direct comparison to his monumental opus. Part of the difference is a function of the source material. For instance the paucity of historical-literary sources for the last century of Muslim domination in Valencia is even more pronounced in the case of the Ebro region. Despite the renaissance which Zaragoza enjoyed as a consequence of the disintegration of the Caliphate in the early eleventh century, it produced startlingly little historical literature which has endured. Far from the Umayyad capital of Cordoba, home to an independent native dynasty destined for extinction (the Banu Hud), only fleetingly implicated in the Almoravid project and never held by the Almohads, the Thaghr was for the most part beyond the view of Andalusi and Maghribian historians. Nor has the Ebro valley been the subject of the energetic archaeological and hydrological investigations which have become a hallmark of the historiography of the Levantine coast. Finally, and most significantly, the wealth of documentation des sites fortifiés et ses implications socio-politiques,” and “Le fait communautaire et le rapport fiscal à l’état.” His third part, “La Système Socio-Politique Musulman” investigated formal administrative, fiscal and judicial structures.

4 The overlap is not exact. Guichard’s study concludes more or less with the 1270s, whereas my own research on post-conquest Muslim society emphasizes the period from 1270 to 1300.


6 Afif Turk sketched out a political history of the taifa of Zaragoza based on the available literary and numismatic evidence; its strict adhesion to the chronological of political events reflects the sparse nature of the records of the region. See A. TURK, El reino de Zaragoza en el siglo XI de Cristo (V de la Hégira), Madrid, Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos, 1978.

7 Some local studies have been carried out by Laliena and other Aragonese historians. The most recent and comprehensive of these is J. A. SESSMA MUÑOZ, J. F. UTRILLA UTRILLA and C. LALIENA CORBERA, Agua y paisaje social en el Aragón medieval. Los regadíos del río Aguasvivas en la Edad
created by the Christian conquerors in the wake of the occupation of the Sharq, which has been particularly illuminating for the study of the pre-conquest society, has only the most tenuous of counterparts in the Ebro. In Valencia, the *Llibre del Repartiment* records the sharing out of the captured lands and provides a candid snapshot of *Sharqi* society at the moment of its transformation. For the lands of the Ebro watershed no such documents exist. What survives is a handful of brief surrender agreements negotiated between the Christian conquerors and the vanquished Muslims along with a rather more sizable body of documentation relating to the granting, sale and redistribution of agricultural lands and urban properties which had been held by Muslims and subsequently confiscated, abandoned or sold in the wake of the Christian victory. The terse and sketchy nature of these records precludes any sort of detailed “reconstruction” of pre-conquest land tenure even for the few locales where a considerable set of such records survive. The cartularies and parchments of the convents of the military and monastic orders of the Ebro and Jalón valleys provide further material, but these too tends to be unelaborated in nature and uneven in temporal and geographical distribution.

*Media, Zaragoza, Confederación Hidrográfica del Ebro/ Ministerio de Medio Ambiente, 2001; also noteworthy is M. ARENILLAS PARRA et al., La presa de Almonacid de la Cuba. Del mundo romano a la ilustración en la cuenca del Río Aguasivas, Zaragoza, Gobierno de Aragón, 1996. But there has been little work comparable to that carried out under the aegis of the Casa de Vélázquez or by Miquel Barceló and his disciples on Balearic and Valencian lands.*

*Four surrender agreements survive: Naval (1099), Tudela (1115), Borja (1122), and Tortosa (1148), and the thrust of a fifth agreement, that of Zaragoza (1118), can be deduced from references in the Tortosa text. See B. CATLOS, “Secundum suam suam nam. Muslims and the Law in the Aragonese ‘Reconquest’”, *Mediterranean Studies*, 7 (1998), pp. 13–26. Aside from these royal agreements (or comital, in the case of Tortosa) a number of analogous treaties between military and ecclesiastical orders and local Muslims also survive.*

*Substantial numbers of eleventh-century documents have survived for locales such as Huesca (see for example, A. DURÁN GUDIOL, Colección diplomática de la catedral de Huesca, Zaragoza, Instituto de Estudios Pirenaicos, 1965–69, and C. LALIENA, Documentos municipales de Huesca: 1100–1350, Huesca, Ayuntamiento, 1988; but their imprecision frustrates attempts to appreciate the pre-Conquest land tenure and production system. Moreover, they do not comprise adequate “sets” for statistical or quantified analysis. Simone TEIXEIRA’s unpublished doctoral dissertation, El dominio del monasterio de Veruela: La gestión de un espacio agrario andalusí, Doctoral Thesis, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 1995, represents such an attempt for the lands of the Sierra de Moncayo.*

*Some of this material resides in local and regional archives, but the bulk has been preserved in the Clero section of the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid; a considerable amount has been edited and published.*

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Given this documentary and historiographical situation, the Thaghr al-Aqṣa' represents even more of a palimpsest than does the Sharq al-Andalus. The result is that many of the avenues of investigation which Guichard followed for Valencian lands in *Les Musulmans* can only be traced with difficulty for the Ebro region. The scarcity of archival material for the period immediately following the Christian occupation coupled with the comparative lack of archeological studies makes it much more difficult to approach questions relating to irrigation practices, which illuminate not only systems of production, but the social systems which they both reflected and articulated. The same holds true for the administrative structures; the character of the *rahal* and the nature of the "*hisn-qarya* complex" —the singular most important manifestation of Andalusi social, economic and administrative structure—for Aragon and New Catalonia remain in an obscurity mandated by an absence of evidence. Another of Guichard's investigative tools, toponymical analysis, also proves of much more limited use in Aragon and New Catalonia than in Valencian lands. Following Guichard's work on place-names and taking into account documentary and archeological and material evidence, one can make the case for significant Berber settlement in certain areas of the Thaghr, specifically, in the region south of the Ebro (such as in the watershed of the Aguas Vivas river). But it is more difficult to determine the significance of Berber settlement here in social, ethnic and economic terms. There is a little evidence to support any contention regarding the persistence of Berber identity, particularly regarding early settlers, who in the centuries between the Muslim conquest and the Christian occupation may have been completely acculturated to the local Andalusi/Thaghri norms. Similar challenges face a historian endeavoring to take a position on the question of "occidental" versus "oriental" social structures —another pillar of Guichard's

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11 The exception to this trend can be seen in the work of André Bazzana for the region of Huesca. See, for example A. Bazzana, P. Cressier, and P. Guichard, *Les châteaux ruraux d'al-Andalus. Histoire et archéologie des husûn du sud-est de l'Espagne*, Madrid, Casa de Velázquez, 1988, as well as P. Sénac, "Du *hisn* musulman au *castrum* chrétien", in *De Toledo a Huesca. Sociedades medievales en transición a finales del siglo XI (1080-1100)*, Zaragoza, Institución "Fernando el Católico," Universidad de Zaragoza, 1998, pp. 113–30. For irritation, see the works cited above in n 7.


13 To my understanding it has not been established, for instance, that Berber settlers in the Thaghr maintained tribal ties with their kin in North Africa as did some, particularly late-arriving, Maghribis elsewhere in the peninsula (for example the Zirids of Cordoba and Granada), seem to have done.
work—in the Thaghr\textsuperscript{14}. Without question the region was thoroughly Islamicized and Arabized culturally by the eleventh-century, and there is convincing evidence for the currency of Arabo-Islamic concepts of kinship and family among certain classes, but it remains unclear as to how deeply these structures penetrated lower social strata, which in areas of low Arab and Berber immigration may have continued to be dominated by native social configurations\textsuperscript{15}. Indeed, it is possible that individuals in the Thaghr adopted the outward manifestations of the “Oriental” family only when and if they rose into strata where these social structures functioned as a model, much in the same manner that converts to early Islam adopted or manufactured Arabic lineages to which, strictly speaking, they did not pertain. On the other hand they may have represented little more than superficial mannerisms used in specific social contexts.

In the face of the discouraging picture painted by the sources for the Thaghr and the relative abundance of material relating to the Sharq, one might be tempted—in the absence of contrary evidence—to adopt Guichard’s conclusions out of hand and assume that they held for this region also\textsuperscript{16}. But to do so, convincing as his findings are, would be to ignore the very different historical circumstances of the two regions, both as regards the pre-Conquest Muslim society and the nature of Christian colonization itself\textsuperscript{17}. In fact, the character of the mudéjar experience of the Ebro presents a marked contrast to the dynamic of Christian-Muslim interaction in Valencia, and it is worthwhile exploring the differences between these two cases\textsuperscript{18}. The Ebro region, for

\textsuperscript{14} Here I refer to, of course, P. GUICHARD’s \textit{Structures sociales ‘orientales’ et ‘occidentales’ dans l’Espagne musulmane}, Paris, Mouton, 1977.

\textsuperscript{15} Arabo-Islamic culture does not always spread as a complete package; components such as a Arabic language, endogamous marriage practices, a sense of tribal and clanic identity, irrigation techniques, transhumant traditions, Islamic doctrinal elements, \textit{et cetera}, may or may not have been transferred successfully to host societies. The same can be said for Berber culture.


\textsuperscript{17} Bonnassie, for example, found Guichard’s work to be so comprehensive as to rather hastily dismiss the need for further study on the mudéjar population of Catalonia proper: “Para terminar, debemos citar el caso de las escasas aljamas musulmanas que subsistieron tras la conquista. La documentación que las menciona es muy pobre, y se han estudiado poco. Dado que su destino no fue distinto del de las comunidades musulmanas del País Valenciano, es preferible remitir a la tesis monumental de Pierre Guichard, donde este tema es ampliamente tratado” (P. BONNASSE, \textit{Del esclavismo al feudalismo en Europa occidental}, Barcelona, Crítica, 1993, p. 263).

\textsuperscript{18} The final chapter of \textit{Royal Treasure} reviews some of the characteristic differences between
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instance, did not see a single ‘ethnic’ uprising or episode of Islamic-based resistance to Christian rule, whereas Valencia was won only after a drawn out campaign which was followed, in turn, by a prolonged period of rebellion. This difference cannot be accounted for merely by the argument that most of the ‘ulama’ of the March had fled to Valencia, taking Islamic learning and the militant spirit with them. Careful archival reading confirms that Islam in the Ebro was not dealt a death-blow by the Christian occupation; it persevered, both on popular and official levels. Further, it has been established that the porous Valencian border would not have acted as a barrier to prevent savants or agitators from journeying to and raising their co-religionists elsewhere in the Crown. Nor were the Muslims of the Ebro incapable of resistance or insurrection, as their activities as bandits or as soldiers in municipal militias confirms and their propensity to resist taxation demonstrates.

To a great extent the difference between the colonial experience of the two regions lies in the manner in which Muslim and Christian society approached each other, which is rooted strongly in the historical circumstances of each region’s conquest. For Burns this is reflected in the relative readiness of the Christian colonizers to adapt native Muslim cultural forms, specifically in architecture. Mudéjar building styles, in particular geometrically patterned porcelain and glass inlaid brickwork, is emblematic of the architecture of late medieval Aragon, but it is a style which is notably underrepresented in neighboring Valencia. Christian Valencian society may not have had the confidence to borrow so freely from a conquered population whose attitude towards the newcomers was frequently hostile. For them, such borrowing would have implied a public compromise of their identity, and the lowering of social and cultural defenses. Part of this difference in attitude can be attributed to the relative demographic balance of the two realms. In the twelfth century Aragon and New Catalonia had absorbed through settlement any population surplus which the Christian principalities had enjoyed as a consequence of the


20 Mudéjar tax resistance in the Ebro is documented and analyzed in ibid., “Chapter Three: The Financial and Judicial Administration of Mudéjar Society.”

improving climatic conditions, agricultural techniques and other post-millennial factors.

Although opinions vary as to whether there was a Muslim exodus from the Ebro region, it is clear that by the thirteenth-century there were clearly sufficient numbers of Christians in the former Thaghr to make their domination a social rather than merely an administrative fact\textsuperscript{22}. The Muslim population, on the other hand, was a minority sufficiently large and enjoying such “constitutional” guarantees that while they were indeed resigned to recognize the permanency of Christian rule in the region, they would not have felt that they were a marginalized and threatened underclass, either economically or ethnically\textsuperscript{23}. Given the balance of population and power, the broad economic integration, and the sense of security enjoyed by members of each of the two religious groups, there would have been little impetus for Muslims to respond aggressively to their domination\textsuperscript{24}. The evidence for Valencia, however, paints a different picture. There integration was low and in the decades following the conquest relatively few settlers (compared to the Ebro region) arrived\textsuperscript{25}. Not only had

\textsuperscript{22} Laliena is one of a number of Aragonese historians who argue for a dramatic Muslim depopulation in the wake of the conquest. He justifiably cautions against depending on the “urban” surrender documents to interpolate conditions in the countryside, but offers little by way of evidence to support the contention of a mass exodus in the wake of the conquest. See, for example C. Laliena, “La antroponimia de los mudéjares: resistencia y aculturación de una minoría étnico-religiosa”, in \textit{L'Anthroponymie. Document de l'histoire sociale}, Rome, École Française de Rome, 1998, p. 143. In fact, the balance of evidence, including the documentation of the late-thirteenth century, supports the view that a substantial Muslim population did indeed remain in Aragon in the wake of Alfonso's campaigns.

\textsuperscript{23} By “constitutional” guarantees I refer to the privileges which had been negotiated in the surrender documents and which were periodically confirmed, elaborated, extended or defined in subsequent agreements with sovereigns and intermediary seigniorial rulers. Most important, of course, was mudéjares fundamentally direct relationship with the monarch, which preserved in principle their as a community to exist.

\textsuperscript{24} The documentary evidence of the second half of the thirteenth century confirms the considerable degree of social and economic integration of mudéjares in the Ebro region, indicating that they enjoyed a relatively high level of confidence as a group. This is one of the principle theses of my forthcoming monograph, \textit{The Victors and the Vanquished}. Unlike the Muslims of Valencia, the mudéjares of the Ebro did not live with a constant fear of deportation hanging over them. See Guichard, \textit{Les Musulmans}, II, p. 468; id., \textit{Al-Andalus frente a la conquista}, pp. 638-639.

\textsuperscript{25} In Valencia, more than the Ebro, the image of “islands” Christian settlement amidst a “sea” of Muslims holds true. [See Guichard, \textit{Les musulmans}, II: 452.] The problem of a lack of documentary evidence referring to Muslim populations in the seigniorially administered lands of Valencia (ibid., II: 452) also holds true for Aragon (see for example, Laliena, “Expansión territorial, ruptura social y desarrollo de la sociedad feudal en el valle del Ebro, 1080–1120,” in \textit{De Toledo a Huesca}, Zaragoza, 1998, pp. 208-209.
the population surplus which Old Aragon and Catalonia enjoyed been reduced by twelfth-century colonization in the Ebro region, but the insecure Kingdom of Valencia would have offered higher risks and less appeal to potential settlers. Those who did come tended live in self-contained settlements, physically separated from the native Muslims. Social contact was limited and economic integration was less profound in Valencia, where relations between Christians and Muslims appear to many historians to have conformed more strictly to a relationship of agrarian exploiters and a marginalized underclass.

The available sources for the respective post-Muslim periods of the Thaghr and the Sharq reflect another profound difference in the circumstance of the two conquests—in the intervening century Christian administration had been elaborated and transformed to a dramatic extent. While the Aragonese and Catalan expansion of the 1100s were each in important senses manifestations of a “dynastic project,” there was a strong “accidental” component. Indeed, the energy and resolve displayed by Alfonso I in his campaign in the Jalón and Jiloca regions were largely a reaction to the threat which Castilian pretensions posed. Ramon Berenguer’s determination to take Lleida and Tortosa was prompted by similar concerns regarding Aragon. Likewise, his successes were very much a result of the disfunction of the “Islamic state” in the region. Further, neither the royal court nor the local Church in the era of Alfonso I or Ramon Berenguer IV had administrative apparatus adequately equipped to deal with the circumstances of the conquest. Secular and religious institutions

26 In Aragon and New Catalonia ghettoization was initially not deliberate, and does not come to be expressed in policy until the close of the thirteenth-century. The surviving surrender documents of the Ebro region show that Muslims were given a year to remove their residence from some of the walled towns, but this represents a security measure rather than an expression of sectarian segregation per se. Muslims continued to own intramural properties and over the following century residentially mixed neighborhoods and towns were not uncommon.

27 It is not my intention to oversimplify the complex and varied Muslim-Christian relations of post-conquest Valencia. In fact, I am convinced that this image of *mudéjar* society—of the “quien no tiene Moro, no tiene oro” variety—is based on popular observations of late medieval Valencia and Aragon, some two centuries after the period in question.


29 Alfonso VI, of course, had been poised to strike a determined blow against Zaragoza following his conquest of Toledo in 1085, when the arrival of the Almoravids forced him to postpone this campaign. After Alfonso I of Aragón died without heirs, Alfonso VII of Castile claimed title over the “Kingdom of Zaragoza.”

in Aragon and Catalonia were developing as the conquest unfolded, and the *ad hoc* decisions which were adopted at that time played at least as great a role in forming policies as did coherent long-term goals. Thus the Christian conquerors of that era were disposed to make concessions to the conquered peoples which may not have been offered in the thirteenth century. Nor did Aragonese and Catalan institutions present the aggressive front in the twelfth century which they did during the thirteenth. The parish network, which became a sort of Christian vanguard in Valencia, did not coalesce until well after the period of the Ebro conquests. In the lands of the Thaghr ecclesiastical institutions, including Military Orders and monastic houses, were compelled to work with their Muslim subjects, and in many contexts (such as taxation) adopted an inclusive rather than exclusive attitude towards them. The improvisational nature of Christian policy in respect to Muslim communities in the twelfth-century meant that the *aljamas* of the Ebro developed independently and organically, in response to local conditions, rather than as the result of any coherent policy on the part of the conquerors. By the time of the Valencian conquest feudal institutions had more clearly developed and were therefore deliberately imposed.

The physical integration of Christians and Muslims as neighbors and partners in irrigation and agriculture would have fostered further accommodation. In New Aragon and Catalonia, economic integration in local markets and in land tenancy agreements put Christian and Muslim individuals in situations in which their goals coincided and in which a certain level of co-operation would have resulted in mutual benefit. As *mudéjares* were drawn into the Christian

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31 Burns, *Crusader Kingdom*, p. 54. In Valencia, the Church efforts to subject *mudéjares* to ecclesiastical taxation (see Guichard, *Les musulmans*, II, p. 468, id., *Al-Andalus frente a la conquista*, p. 638) were more concerted, and the Muslims here lacked the century or so worth of precedents which supported the case to the contrary in the Ebro region.

32 This is expressed in the tax disputes which Aragonese *mudéjares* who were associated with Military Orders frequently contested (with the support of the Orders in question) with their own *aljamas*. See Catlos, “Ambigüitat jurisdiccional: Els mudéjars i la justícia de la Corona d’Aragó al segle XIII,” in Thomas F. Guck, ed., *Minorías musulmanes i la justícia reial en la Corona d’Aragó*, in press.


34 Land exchange documents from the twelfth-century Ebro region show that Christians and Muslims owned and exploited neighboring parcels of land which utilized the same irrigation systems - in such circumstances mutual accommodation would have been imperative.
economy and administration, secondary effects must have rippled through their society; elements such as family structure and relationships of informal authority cannot have remained unaffected. As for the Kingdom of Valencia, which seems to have been rather more polarized ethno-demographically, interdependence—both in the direct sense, as a result the joint or parallel exploitation of lands using shared irrigation structures, and in the indirect sense, as a result of the existence of ethnically heterogeneous local labor and commodities markets—would have been commensurately lower\(^35\). As a consequence of this difference in character between the two zones of colonization, in Valencia social, economic and cultural sharing would have been lower, and both Muslims and Christians would have been encouraged to view each other almost exclusively as competitors, and to adopt a rigid and defensive, or even reactionary, posture, \textit{vis-à-vis} members of the rival ethno-religious group.

But even before the Christian conquest, there were likely definite socio-cultural differences between the Thaghr al-Aqsa' and the Sharq al-Andalus which would have contributed to a distinct attitude on the part of the natives of each region towards the conquerors. For instance, whatever Berber settlement may have occurred in the Ebro region, the Levantine coast was the subject of a much stronger Maghribian influence, and one which was constantly renewed, not only by the arrival in turn of the Almoravids and the Almohads, but also by the continual maintenance of family and commercial relations between Muslims of the \textit{Sharq} and their relatives on the Mediterranean's southern shores. And whereas there had normally been a buffer zone isolating the Sharq and the Christian principalities of the Pyrenees, the Thaghr was by definition a place of contact with the \textit{dar al-Harb}\(^36\). Hence, from the time of the Emirate and the era of Roland the local rulers on both sides of the divide were linked by economic, tributary and family ties, which at times provided more compelling motives for political action than did religious orientation. On the popular level contact across the frontier was both bellicose and beneficial. Both the Islamic Ebro and Levant were characterized by societies “mal armés,” but whereas the Sharq was dependent on relations with the Maghrib for military security, the Thaghr was dependent on ties with the Christian states\(^37\). Further, given the

\(^35\) For the displacement of Valencian Muslims, see GUICHARD, \textit{Les Musulmans}, II, pp. 455–464; \textit{id.}, \textit{Al-Andalus frente a la conquista}, pp. 621–633.

\(^36\) \textit{Thaghr} means “frontier.”

unrest, insecurity and political instability which typified the Thaghr in the
decades leading up to its conquest. Muslim populations, which often were
prepared to accept unorthodox political authority (sultân) in the name of security
(provided that religio-juridical autonomy was respected), were likely to see
Christian overlordship—which they may well have regarded as temporary—as an acceptable development38. Even after the occupation had become clearly
permanent many mid- and lower-status Muslims may have not felt great
inconvenience as a consequence of the initially unintrusive Christian presence.

On the other hand, the ruling elite would have indeed departed the Thaghr;
whatever intermediary status its members may have been granted (as for
example at Tudela and Tortosa), it would have become obvious by no later
than the 1170s that the administrative niche which they had occupied would be
filled by Christian officials39. They had become obsolete. In departing, this
group would have been accompanied by the most radical Islamic elements,
who would have been encouraged to flee the sound of Church bells in the
Thaghr for the safe-haven of the Islamic Sharq not only because of any objections
they might have had to living as Muslims under the authority of Christian
“idolators” but also because with the displacement of the Islamic ruling class
by a Christian one, their source of patronage and of social prestige (at least in
an aristocratic context) would have evaporated40. Undoubtedly the settlement
of these refugees in the Sharq contributed to a local culture which perceived of
the Catalan and Aragonese enemy in more clearly sectarian terms. Thus the
departure of this class would have contributed to a certain docility in the mudéjar
society of the Ebro, while inspiring a rather more reactionary character in that
of the Kingdom of Valencia. This, along with the limited Christian presence
discussed above, and the relative absence of socio-economic interdependence

38 The most obvious example is that of the Fatimid caliphate, a shî‘i regime occasionally
administered by Christian wazîrs, which ruled an overwhelmingly sunni population.

39 The text of the Tudela and Tortosa agreements suggests that local Muslim leaders were planning,
at least initially, on remaining. For the treaties see T. Muñoz, Colección de fueros municipales y
cartas pueblas de las [sic] reinos de Castilla, León, Corona de Aragón y Navarra, Valladolid, Lex
Nova, 1977, p. 416, and P. de Bofarull, Colección de documentos inéditos de la Corona de Aragón,
Barcelona, Montfort, 1850, IV, pp. 130–135 (56).

40 Opinion among the ‘Ulamâ’ varied on this point, with some advocating the necessity of flight,
others defending the right to stay. See M. I. Fierro, “La emigración en el Islam: conceptos antiguos,
Minorities: the Juristic Discourse on Muslim Minorities from the Second/Eighth to the Eleventh/
between members of the two groups did indeed engender a situation which provoked resentment and encouraged rebellion. When uprisings did occur, Christian authorities responded with determination, provoking a series of displacements which, in Guichard’s analysis, ruptured the structures of the tributary society of the Islamic Sharq. In Valencia, the intermediate treaties which Jaume I made with local leaders preserved this tributary character initially, a disjunction with the Christian system which persevered, engendering tension, until it was “corrected” through the cataclysmic mechanism of revolt and repression. In the Ebro, however, local Muslim leaders (to be distinguished from aljama leaders) seem to have disappeared almost immediately, making for a less traumatic transition to a feudal society, and preventing the development of an ideology of organized resistance.

But all of the proceeding should not disguise the fact that, as different as they may have been, the respective mudéjarization of the Ebro watershed and Andalusi Levant under Christian rule were manifestations of the same general phenomenon—a process of conquest and colonization carried out by a common imperial agency (Aragon and Catalonia, initially separately, and ultimately united). The native populations which submitted shared the same basic ethnocultural orientation and maintained strong social, economic and cultural ties—even, to some degree, a “national” consciousness as Andalusis. In each case a “society organized for war,” collided with a society organized for irrigation.

41 Smith holds that “When the dominant section is also a minority, the structural implications of cultural pluralism have their most extreme expression, and the dependence on regulation by force is greatest,” a proposition that is reflected in the unruliness of Valencian mudéjares and the quiescence of their Aragonese and Catalan counterparts: M. G. Smith, “Social and Cultural Pluralism”, in Africa. Social Problems of Change and Conflict, San Francisco, Chandler, 1965, p. 72, reprinted from Annals of the New York Academy of Science, 83 (1959–60), pp. 763–777.

42 See Guichard’s arguments in Al-Andalus frente a la conquista cristiana, 613–646 (XIX: “Los efectos de la colonización cristiana y de la señorialización: la destrucción de las estructuras tributarias musulmanas”) and 647–656 (“Del sistema tributario musulmán al régimen feudal cristiano”). The dynamic of dislocation which he describes distinguishes the Valencian experience from that of the Ebro region.

43 After the suppression of the Valencian revolts the kingdoms mudéjares lived under the shadow of immanent expulsion (see Guichard, Les musulmans, II, p. 468; id., Al-Andalus frente a la conquista, p. 638); their counterparts in the Ebro region did not, and thus enjoyed a greater degree of confidence and security.

Indeed, historians who have examined the differences between the post-Conquest Thaghr and Sharq occasionally fail to acknowledge the degree to which the regions remained linked after their conquests45. Mudéjares of the two regions continued to practice the same Islamic religion, share Arabic as a spoken and sacred language, and enjoyed a mobility which would have facilitated continued contact among Muslims in the constituent realms of the Crown of Aragon46. No physical or cultural barriers separated these populations; and the documentation confirms that Muslims had social and economic ties which crossed the border between the kingdoms and counties —just as the Christians did47. Each of the two societies made a remarkably smooth transition from Muslim to Christian rule which, as Guichard concludes, suggests a transformation rather than a rupture of the concept and apparatus of authority48. Valencian and Ebro mudéjarismos were indeed distinct, but their basic foundations and the general circumstances of their development as colonial societies were similar49.

45 Boswell, for instance, exaggerates the cultural, social and economic isolation of Ebro mudéjares in relation to those of the Kingdom of Valencia. Boswell, The Royal Treasure, pp. 398–400.

46 Reports of the demise of Arabic as a vernacular among Aragonese mudéjares have been greatly exaggerated. Muslims of the region continued to generate Arabic literature and documents; the absence of references in the Christian documentation to translators or to problems of communication reflects the widespread Romance bilingualism which undoubtedly characterized mudéjares here.

47 For example, the best known Aragonese mudéjar clan, the Bellidos of Zaragoza, had interests in Valencia. 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, chap. VII, pp. 34, 36–399, 42 and 46–47. The Bellidos’ ‘international’ activities are not exceptional, the documentation of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century confirms that many mudéjares carried had social and economic relationships with their co-religionists in other parts of the Crown.


49 As Arrow points out, the character (“codes”) of analogous institutions will vary according to the historical circumstances of their foundation.: K. Arrow, The Limits of Organization, New York, 1974, p. 56. A parallel of the Ebro-Valencia dichotomy is found in the modern Middle East, in the differing responses to Israeli colonialism on the part of ‘Arab Israelis’ and the inhabitants of what were until recently the ‘Occupied Territories.’ At least until the intifada of 2000, Arab Israelis, who came under Israeli political control with the founding of the state, responded very differently to their situation than did their countrymen who came under occupation as a result of the later wars. Although subjected to restrictions on the basis of ethnicity, Arab Israelis adapted by acculturating and participating in society to the degree permitted. The inhabitants of the ‘Territories,’ on the other hand —absolutely marginalized, under military rule, and faced by a militant colonialism— comprised an overwhelming majority excluded from participation in the state. Like the Levantine Muslims, it was these who tended to respond violently to Israeli colonial pressure and to express their resistance in the language of religious ideology.
Hence, Guichard’s *Les Musulmans* is of enduring importance (as its present translation into Castilian testifies) not only for the historiography of the medieval Kingdom of Valencia and its *mudéjares*, but for the colonized Muslim population elsewhere in the Crown of Aragon and Iberia and, indeed, for the study of minorities of the middle ages in general. The debates surrounding Guichard’s fundamental approach and perspective which have raged since the original publication may not have yet been decisively resolved, but neither have his conclusions been discredited. On the contrary, archeological investigations have tended to bolster his position and strengthen the case for his particular conception of Islamic society in the Sharq al-Andalus and its transformation under Christian rule. To the extent that the social, political, economic and cultural conditions of the conquest of the Thaghr al-Aqsa’ can be said to be similar, Guichard’s findings are applicable through analogy: the *mudéjar* society of Aragon and Valencia are specific instances of a general process, but one in which their important differences should not be obscured in the service of constructing a broader argument.\(^{50}\)

\(^{50}\) Indeed, both exhibit a combination of ‘organic convivencia’ (cf. C. SÁNCHEZ-ALBORNOZ, *España: un enigma histórico*, Buenos Aires, Editorial Sudamericana, 1962, II, p. 178) and “pactism” (see GUICHARD, *Les musulmans*, II, p. 469; id., *Al-Andalus frente a la conquista*, pp. 639-640) in which the persistence of the minority society was sustained by a complex web of interests on the part of the subject people and the various powers, agents and institutions of the dominating society—a dynamic which one might hazard to qualify as conveniencia. See B. CATLOS, “Contexto y ‘conveniencia’ en la Corona de Aragón: Propuesta para un modelo de la interacción social de grupos étnico-religiosos,” in this issue of the *Revista d’Història Medieval*. 312