This volume is conceived as a series of arguments in favour of the historicity of the Islamic conquest of the Iberian Peninsula in 711, refuting the arguments of some scholars who deny it ever took place. This—now old—controversy, laid aside years ago, seems to have been rekindled by the eleventh centenary of the conquest, celebrated in 2011.

The origins of the debate, if it is truly worthy of the term given the lack of impact the theory had at the time, go back to the publication of *Les arabes n’ont jamais envahi l’Espagne* (Paris: Flammarion, 1969) by Ignacio Olagüe (1903–1974). Olagüe’s principal idea, unambiguously proclaimed in his title, was that the Arabs never occupied the Iberian Peninsula and that the Arab chronicles’ claims that they had done so were later inventions. In 1974, Pierre Guichard refuted the theory, which he considered completely unfounded, with a series of sound arguments in his “Les Arabes ont bien envahi l’Espagne : les structures sociales de l’Espagne musulmane” (in *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 6, 1974, pp. 1483–1513), putting an end to any debate in academic circles and relegating the theory to less scientific spheres. There, however, it survived, intermittently revived by novelists, journalists and the like, as part of a flourishing genre alongside the Templars or the Kabbalah in a mixture of conspiracy theories and esoteric themes (which, as García Sanjuán correctly states, often become bestsellers).

In 2009, Maribel Fierro, in her characteristically elegant style, returned to this theme, delving into the figure and ideology of Olagüe himself, and his links to the origins of the JONS, a Fascist political party which sowed terror in the years running up to the Spanish Civil War and even more so after the triumph of General Franco’s coup d’état and in the forty years of dictatorship that followed (“Al-Andalus en el pensamiento fascista español: La Revolución islámica en Occidente de Ignacio Olagüe”, in *Al-Andalus/España. Historiografías en contraste, siglos XVII-XXI*, ed. Manuela Marín, pp. 325–349, Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2009). In addition, the 2011 eleven-hundredth anniversary of the Islamic Conquest served as an excuse for the organisation of numerous conferences and the publication of various studies bringing up to date our knowledge of the events of 711. Notable among the latter is the collective volume *711. Arqueología e Historia entre dos mundos* (Alcalá de Henares: Museo Arqueológico Regional, 2011), which brought together the work of many of the most prestigious historians and archaeologists working on al-Andalus.
In his *La conquista islámica*, García Sanjuán draws on this and other material to construct a refutation of the theories of those who would deny that the Islamic conquest ever took place, principally, Ignacio Olagüe himself, and González Ferrín, author of a volume entitled *Historia General de Al Ándalus: Europa entre Oriente y Occidente* (Córdoba: Almuzara, 2006) in which he echoes Olagüe’s controversial theories one after the other.

García Sanjuán’s first chapter, by far the longest, is dedicated to a ferocious critique of what he terms negationism. After a brief review of the main spheres where the theory has survived (literature, cinema and the press), he launches into a merciless attack on the two aforementioned authors, in an avalanche of disparaging remarks which rather disconcert the reader in search of scientific debate. To give just a few examples, Olagüe is repeatedly described as a *pseudo-historian* (“seudohistoriador”, pp. 76, 99, 120, 133, 139, 273, etc.), or on another occasion as an *amateur dilettante and unlettered falsifier* (“aficionado, dilettante, indocumentado y falsario”, p. 118); González Ferrín as a *dilettante and upstart* (“diletante y advenedizo”, p. 141) and his arguments as *lies and fallacies* (“patrañas y falacias”, p. 129) or a *succession of fallacies, fabulations, untruths and distortions* (“sucesión de falacias, fabulaciones, inverosimilitudes y tergiversaciones”, p. 257). Such verbal excesses reach their highpoint when García Sanjuán compares the negation of the 711 conquest with Holocaust denial (pp. 70–71), a frivolous if not downright unfortunate comparison. Among all the disparaging remarks thrown at Olagüe, it is particularly striking to see constant references to his Basque origins—mentioned some 57 times, and on occasions as many as three times on one page, e.g., on p. 105—the context seeming to suggest that this too is regarded as a fault.

The next three chapters are devoted to the rejection of the main arguments of the so-called negationists: the supposed absence of coetaneous accounts of the conquest; the consideration of early Islam as a variant of Arianism rather than as a new religion; and the radical minimisation of the demographic contribution of extra-peninsular contingents in the centuries immediately following 711.

Thus, in the second chapter, he confronts the question of the supposed lack of contemporary evidence for the invasion. He does so with great solvency calling on a range of different source materials, above all the coins and lead seals minted during the conquest and the references to invasion in coetaneous Latin chronicles. To all this he adds arguments in favour of the validity of the Arab sources, despite their late composition, based on their author-compilers’ principle of strict fidelity to their sources, which he likens to “cut and paste” (“se asemeja a lo que hoy llamamos ‘corta y pega’, sin introducir apenas modificaciones”, p. 206), an extremely optimistic evaluation which ignores the input of the compiler when choosing which material to cut and paste. In theory the