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## PREFACE

Medieval Archaeology is a discipline which has been increasingly developed in the international scientific community in recent years. The most important congresses have been:

- *Medieval Europe 1992* in York (England)
- *Medieval Europe 1997* in Bruges (Belgium)

These international conferences produced interesting pre-printed papers where we can have contacts with many research projects taking place in diverse European countries. Contributors are working in Museums, Universities, Administration, etc. and at the same time are involved in projects concerning varied topics.

We must mention here another more specialized kind of international meeting, like the very well-known *Château Gaillard* with the oldest tradition; and the much more recent *Ruralia*, now with their third proceedings published, as well as many other meetings not specifically centred around the Middle Ages.

The main aim of these meetings is the exchange of knowledge, the progress of our discipline, and personal contact with researchers from the whole of Europe.

In the same direction and with similar proposals Teachers of Medieval Archaeology have been organizing symposia since 1990, as an idea of Prof. Hans Andersson from Lund University (Sweden).

In this book, we collected many articles written by participants in the last symposium, which took place in Séville (29th September-2nd October, 1999). The lectures were organized in four sections, namely:

- 1) University learning in Medieval Archaeology.
- 2) General Questions in Current Research.
- 3) Specific Research Projects.
- 4) Medieval Archaeology in the Iberian Peninsula.



## CONCLUSION

En guise de conclusion nous pouvons dire que le programme de la Tour d'Albon tourne autour de deux pôles, les buts éducatifs et les buts scientifiques. Pour les premiers nous sommes convaincus de l'intérêt que ce programme international présente pour les étudiants. En ce qui concerne l'aspect scientifique, personne ne doute de l'importance du site d'Albon pour nos connaissances de l'évolution d'un site dynastique dans cette partie de l'Europe, mais nous sommes aussi très conscients qu'il faudra encore plusieurs campagnes de fouilles avant que les résultats présentés obtiennent un caractère définitif.

## MEDIEVAL FORTIFICATIONS IN THE PROVINCE OF SEVILLE (ANDALUCÍA, SPAIN)

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Our knowledge of Medieval fortifications in the Iberian peninsula is surprisingly poor. As regards southern Spain, or Andalusia, the existing studies and publications may be described as scarce. Only after 1986 did research groups, financed by the regional government or foreign institutions like the Casa de Velázquez (C.N.R.S., France), enable archaeological projects related with fortification and territory to be set up.

Since 1989, the Medieval History Department of Seville University has been developing a research project<sup>1</sup> supported by the Andalusian Education Department (Consejería de Educación y Ciencia) and the Andalusian Culture Department (Consejería de Cultura-Dirección General de Bienes Culturales), both of which form part of the regional government (Junta de Andalucía).

<sup>1</sup> M. Valor Piechotta, S. Rodríguez Guzmán, "Las fortificaciones medievales en el Aljarafe sevillano", *Anuario Arqueológico de Andalucía/1991*, 1993, II, pp. 363-373. M. Valor Piechotta, "La poliorcética medieval en el Reino de Sevilla", *Investigaciones Arqueológicas en Andalucía*, Huelva, 1993, pp. 747-754. "Una aproximación a la arquitectura militar de la segunda mitad del siglo XIII", *IV Congreso de Arqueología Medieval Española*, Alicante, 1994, II, pp. 415-422. "Las fortificaciones medievales en el reino de Sevilla", *Arqueología en el entorno del Bajo Guadiana*, Huelva, 1994, pp. 645-655. M. Valor, N. Casquete de Prado, "El castillo de Cumbres Mayores (Huelva). Una aproximación a la arquitectura militar de la segunda mitad del siglo XIII", *Historia, Instituciones y Documentos*, 1994, 21, pp. 473-499. M. Valor, "Avance sobre los resultados de la prospección arqueológica de superficie de las fortificaciones medievales de la Vega de Sevilla. Campaña 1993", *Anuario Arqueológico de Andalucía/1993*, 1997, II, pp. 159-169. "Las fortificaciones de la Banda Gallega: algunos ejemplos de las provincias de Huelva y Badajoz y del Alentejo portugués", *La fortaleza medieval. Realidad y símbolo. Actas de la XV Asamblea General de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales*, Murcia, 1998, pp. 91-108. "Las defensas de Carmona", *Archivo Hispalense*, 1997, LXXX, pp. 597-635. M. Valor, J. López, N. Casquete de Prado, "Intervención Arqueológica de Apoyo a la restauración en el Proyecto Entorno del Castillo de Cortegana (Huelva)", *Anuario Arqueológico de Andalucía/1995* (en prensa). M. Valor, "Aproximación à les fortifications d'al-Andalus pendant le Haut Moyen Age", *III Symposium for Teachers of Medieval Archaeology*, Caen (Normandía, Francia), 1996, Caen, 1999, pp. 177-200. "Las fortificaciones medievales en la bailía de Setefilla (Sevilla)", *I Congreso de Castellología Ibérica (Aguilar de Campoo. 1994)*, Palencia, 1998, pp. 723-760. Castillo de Cote. *Intervención Arqueológica de Urgencia*, Memoria de Excavación depositada en 1999 en la Delegación Provincial de Cultura de Sevilla. M. Valor Piechotta et alii, "El proyecto de investigación: entorno del castillo de Cote", *Actas de las III Jornadas de temas Moronenses*, Morón de la Frontera, 1998, pp. 15-36.

In this project, the first aim was to draw up an inventory of fortifications, including city walls, castles and towers. This was fundamental because of the limited number of previous publications on this subject. Therefore, our starting point was the analysis and study of each of the single cases still remaining. The research method we have followed is that of archaeological survey, which involves:

- 1) The study of written sources and general literature in this province.
- 2) An inventory of graphic documents: maps, plans, photos, etc.
- 3) Survey and analysis of each example.
- 4) Search for and study of similarities in the Iberian peninsula and the Magreb.

One of the first decisions to be made was the definition of the territorial limits of this inventory. If we use historical criteria, we would see completely different limits between the province which exists now (defined in 1833) and the one which dates from the Middle Ages. However, if we go back to the Medieval limits of Seville's territory, we also find many changes. If we simplified this reality, we could refer to two main periods, namely:

- The Muslim, or Andalusí period.
- The Medieval Christian period, defined after 1255.

Finally, we decided to use the present-day limits for our investigation. Therefore, we are dealing with an area of 1.400.043 hectares, which has to be divided into smaller areas, using criteria based on the division made by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture<sup>2</sup>. The districts, called comarcas, are seven in all, namely: Sierra Norte, Vega, Aljarafe, Marismas, Campiña, Sierra Sur and Sierra de Estepa (Fig. 1). These units are essentially based on data derived from physical geography, which is also a logical division in the historical sense.

The Province of Seville, according to the *Inventory of European Cultural Heritage* (*Inventario de Patrimonio Cultural Europeo*<sup>3</sup> or I.P.C.E), has a total of 84 fortifications in its register: 12 city walls, 48 castles, 22 towers and 2 fortified manors (Fig. 2).

In spite of the fact that such a large number of Medieval fortifications in Seville are listed, the inventory remains incomplete. Nevertheless, this publication can be regarded as a useful starting point for our research, The initial ob-

<sup>2</sup> Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación. Consejería de Agricultura y Pesca de la Junta de Andalucía, *Mapa de Cultivos y Aprovechamientos de la Provincia de Sevilla*, Madrid, 1986.

<sup>3</sup> Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, *Inventario de Patrimonio Cultural Europeo. España. Monumentos de Arquitectura Militar*, Madrid, 1968.



Fig. 1. The province of Seville, its location in the Iberian peninsula and its division into agrarian areas.

jective of this study, therefore, is the working out, correction and completion of this corpus.

Two factors, which constantly and decisively determine Medieval military buildings in this geographical area, must be taken into account previously, namely:

- 1) The fixing of a **chronological framework** to which our research will be circumscribed. This task must be regarded as an essential premise. The two main periods in question are:

- Fortifications between 711 (Muslim Conquest) and 1009 (end of Omeyyad reign).
- From 1000 to 1500.



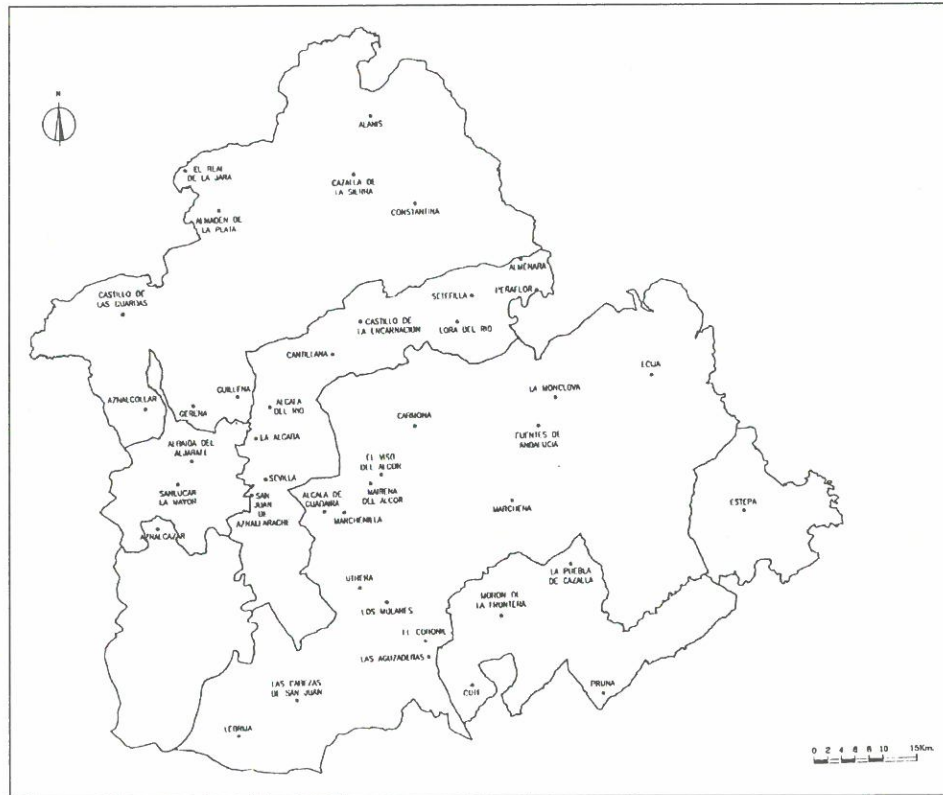


Fig. 2. Some of the Medieval fortifications located in different agrarian areas (M. Valor, 2001).

Most of the fortifications still remaining belong to the latter period. There is no doubt that fortifications were used before, but practically no traces of any from the early Middle Ages are to be seen now.

2) **The geographical factor** is also of great relevance. If a map of the Province of Seville is studied in depth, three well-defined areas will be differentiated:

- The Northern area: Sierra Morena.
- The Central Area: The Guadalquivir Valley.
- The Southern Area: Sierra Subbética.

Each area has its own logic-determining factors. For instance, the central area is the most densely populated, and, at times, no break in continuity can be found between Prehistory and the present time. On the other hand, the mountainous areas are thinly populated, although some fortified settlements of a certain significance can be found. In the case of Sierra Morena, these are connected to mining activities.

On analysing this splendid heritage from the chronological point of view, the following conclusions can be drawn:

## 1. FORTIFICATIONS UP TO THE END OF THE FIRST MILLENNIUM

We are dealing with different political situations in al-Andalus: pre-Omeyyad period and Omeyyads. Few remains belonging to these periods can be found. Regarding the province as a whole, the following cases can be confirmed:

1.1. *Previous fortifications*, which in some cases were re-used. These pre-Islamic fortifications have Prehistoric origins in certain cases, such as Setefilla castle (Lora del Río); in other cases, the origin could be Roman, such as Alcalá del Río. The same situation could apply to city walls, such as those found in Écija, Carmona or pre-Almohad Seville.

1.2. *Ex-novo fortifications*. There are already two examples, but only archaeological excavation could find more cases that evidently must exist.

The foundational enclosure of the Alcazár of Seville, built during the Omeyyade Emirate. It is a building which evidently belongs to the Syrian tradition, not only because of its layout, but also because of its general conception. The building materials used are stone ashlars, most of which are re-used from Roman buildings. It consists of a square, flanked by slightly protruding small towers, which are evenly distributed along the four flanks, with four larger corner towers (Fig. 3).

In Carmona, we find a few remains of Omeyyad fortifications in the Alcazár and in the city walls.

Many more fortifications from these centuries must exist, but we need data provided by archaeological excavations.

## 2. FORTIFICATIONS BETWEEN 1000 AND 1500

This is a lengthy period with a complicated development, for the following reasons:

- Many buildings still exist.
- The written sources are particularly abundant, especially in the Late Medieval centuries.
- The cultural change from a Muslim to a Christian civilization.

### 2.1. Andalusí Fortifications

We are dealing here with a long period, extending from the 11th century (1009= to the 13th [1236 or 1248]). Two different phases can be identified:



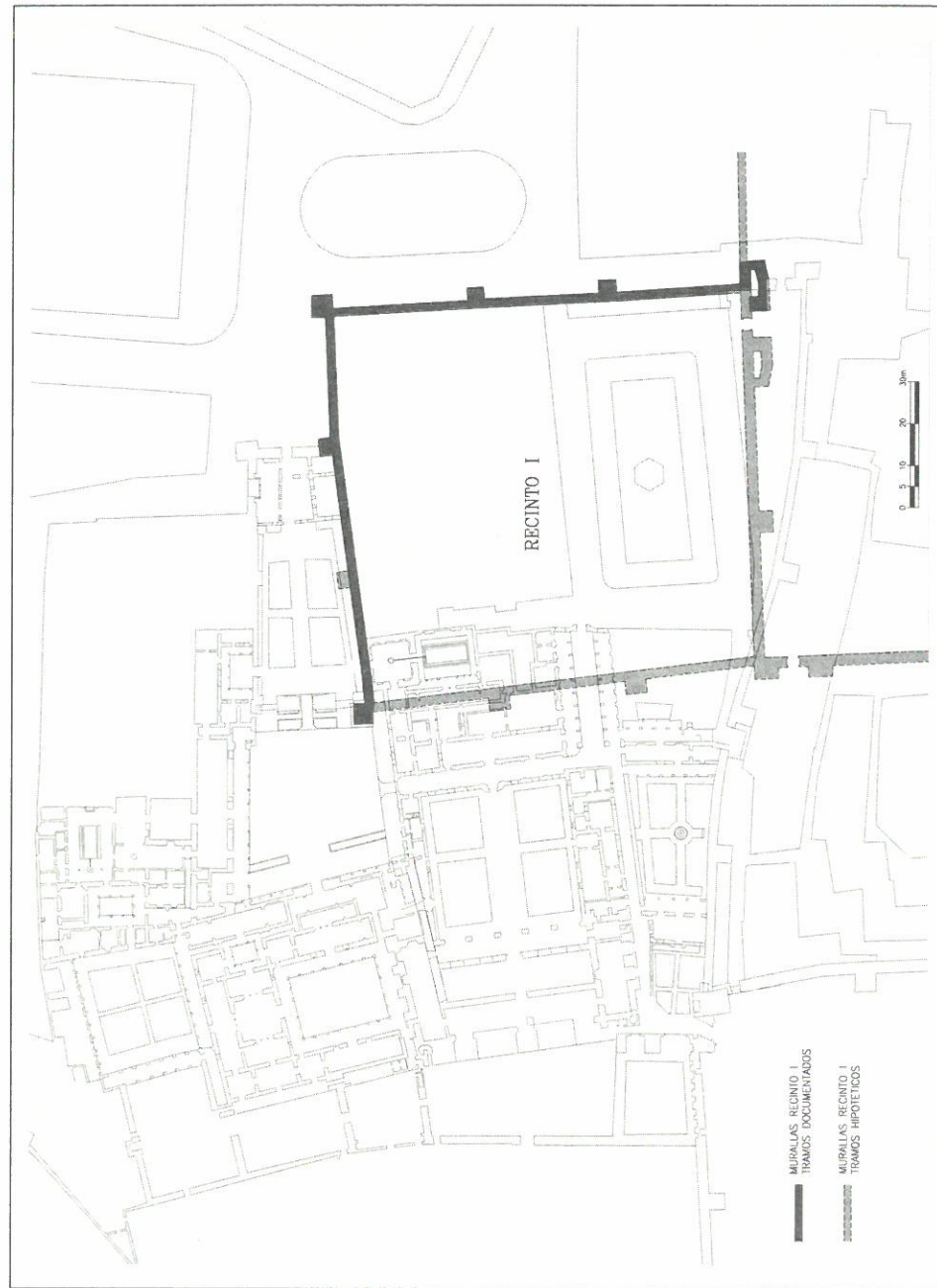


Fig. 3. First urban castle of Seville. From M. Tabales, "Investigaciones en el Alcázar de Sevilla. Apuntes sobre evolución constructiva y espacial", Apuntes del Alcázar de Sevilla, 2000, n° 1, pp. 13-45.

A) The 11th century until the first half of the 12th century; in political terms the Taifa kingdoms and Almoravid kingdom. The 11th century is the most important phase when the territory of al-Andalus was divided into many small kingdoms. This situation brought about substantial changes in settlement, as well as a renovation of old fortifications, and the construction of new ones on hilltops. This process is known to the Italians as *incastellamento*. After this, the castles were to be a permanent characteristic of rural settlement in al-Andalus.

Not enough archaeological research has been done in order to determine the impact of this century, although hopefully, in a few years' time, we will be better equipped to understand this aspect, not only for castles, but also for city walls.

An example dated in this period is a castle called Cote (Montellano) in the south of Seville, which was excavated by a team from Seville University in 1998. It is a small rectangular castle adapted to the top of a mountain, with a splendid overview of the surrounding territory. The castle and a cistern (43 m<sup>3</sup>) were built in the 11th century: the Taifa period (Fig. 4).

The Almoravids dominated al-Andalus for half a century (57 years, between 1090 and 1147). At present, we can not identify any fortifications from this period in the Seville area, but we know, through the written sources, that some buildings were renovated, namely the case of the city of Seville.

B) Mid-12th century (1147) until mid-13th century (1248): the Almohad empire. Intense building activity took place during this period, especially between 1171 and the Christian conquest of the territory between 1240 and 1248. In these years, the Almohads and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Taifa kingdoms built significant fortifications,

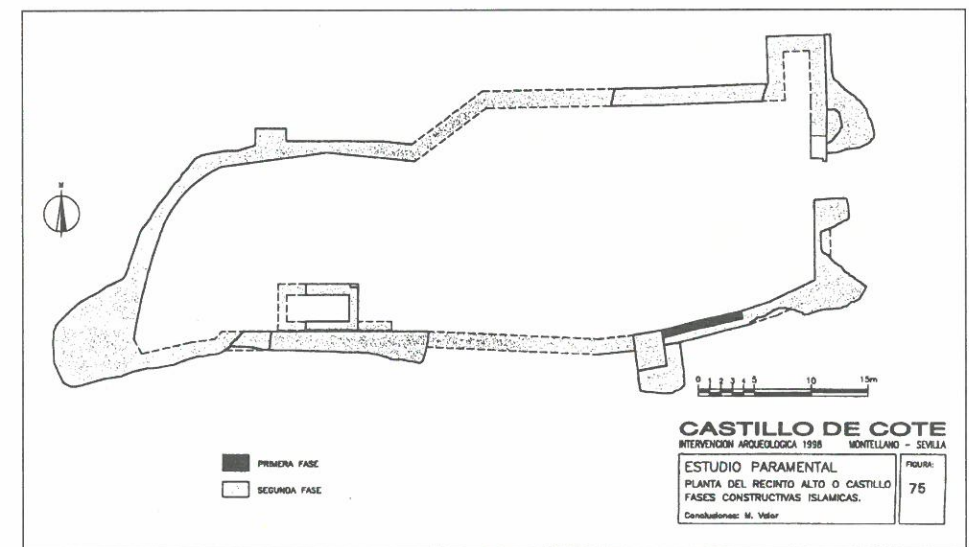


Fig. 4. Islamic Cote castle, enclosure and cistern (M. Valor, 1998).



which were designed to defend the frontiers, not only in a linear way, but also in depth (roads, navigable rivers, and fertile valleys). Likewise, real castle walls were also built for the protection of relevant urban centres. The clearest example of this is the city wall of Seville (Fig. 5), which at that time was the capital city of the Almohad Caliphate in al-Andalus.

Many ex-novo examples still exist. The following categories can be discerned:

- Small castles, intended as itinerary castles, located on river banks or mountain passes (Plate 1).
- Castles with a walled village. In Arabic they are known as a *hisn* with an *al-qasar*, and are also located on main communication routes and in fertile valleys (Fig. 6).
- City walls, ex-novo ramparts in urban centres with an earlier origin. The specific characteristic of this type is their huge size, which is the case of Seville (Plate 2).

All these fortifications have a common building design. *Tabiya* (a kind of mortar) is the building material mainly used (Plate 3). Regarding their structure, clear differences can be found between fortifications located in rural areas and city walls; the latter are much more elaborate and effective.

Examples of fortifications which still exist from this period are:

- City walls: Seville, Écija, Marchena and (partially) Carmona.
- Castles: Cantillana, Lora del Río, Peñaflor, Almenara (Peñaflor); La Encarnación (Villanueva del Río and Minas), Sanlúcar la Mayor, Alcalá de Guadaria.
- Towers: a few examples around Seville.

It can be stated that fortifications were built around the important urban centre, in the vicinity of the Guadalquivir river and in fertile valleys close to Seville.

## 2.2. Christian Fortifications

These are fortifications built from the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, when the Christian conquest of the lower Guadalquivir valley began, to 1500, which is considered as the chronological end of the Middle Ages. Significant changes in typology may also be found throughout this lengthy period, which comprises about two and a half centuries. Likewise, it can be confirmed that the evolution of military architecture occurs somewhat later than in other parts of Europe.

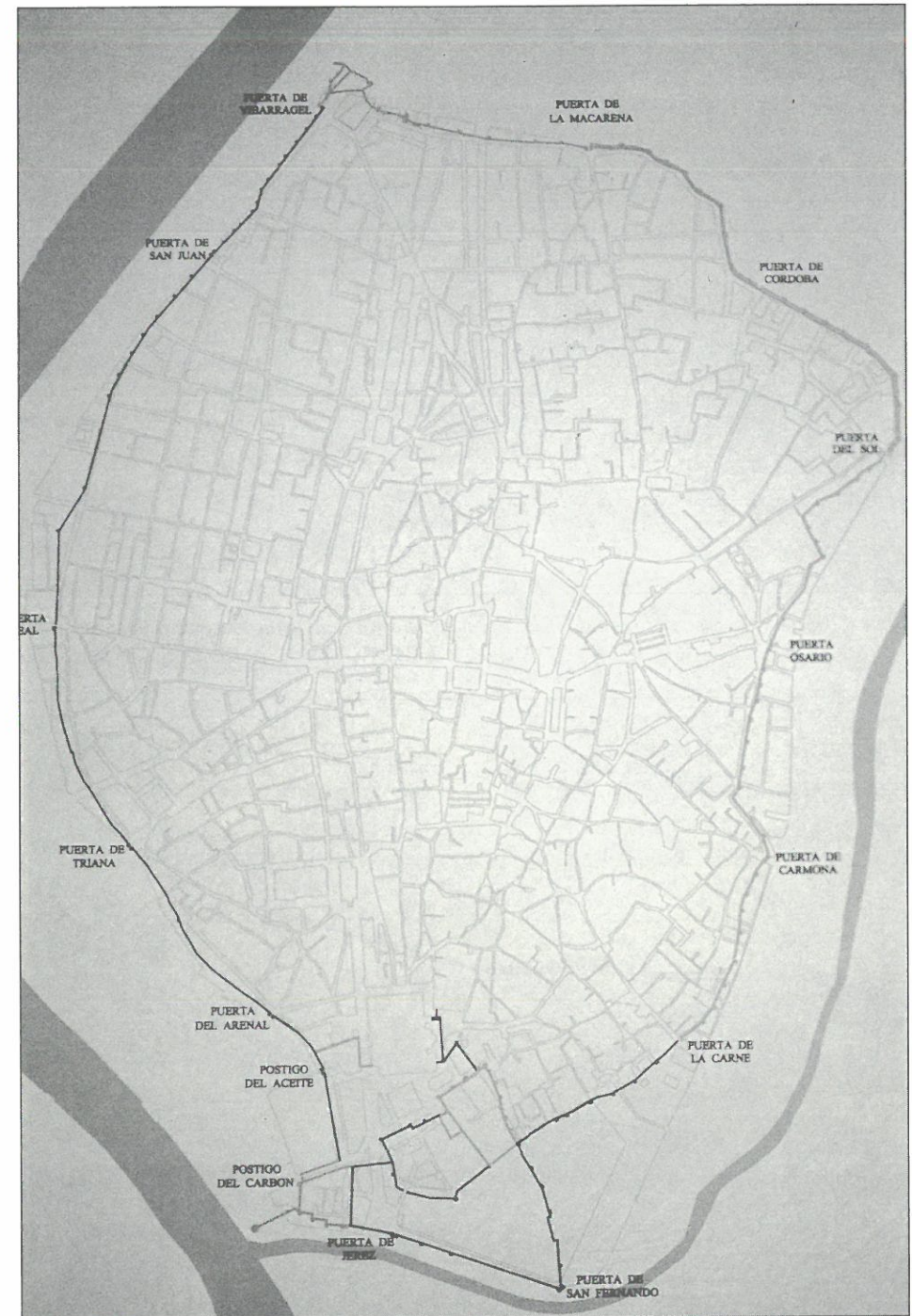


Fig. 5. Seville's city walls. Still existing walls in black and proposed circuit in beige (M. Valor, 1999).





Plate 1. Itinerary castle of Lora del Río. Pre-islamic settlement with preserved Almohad walls (M. Valor, 1994).

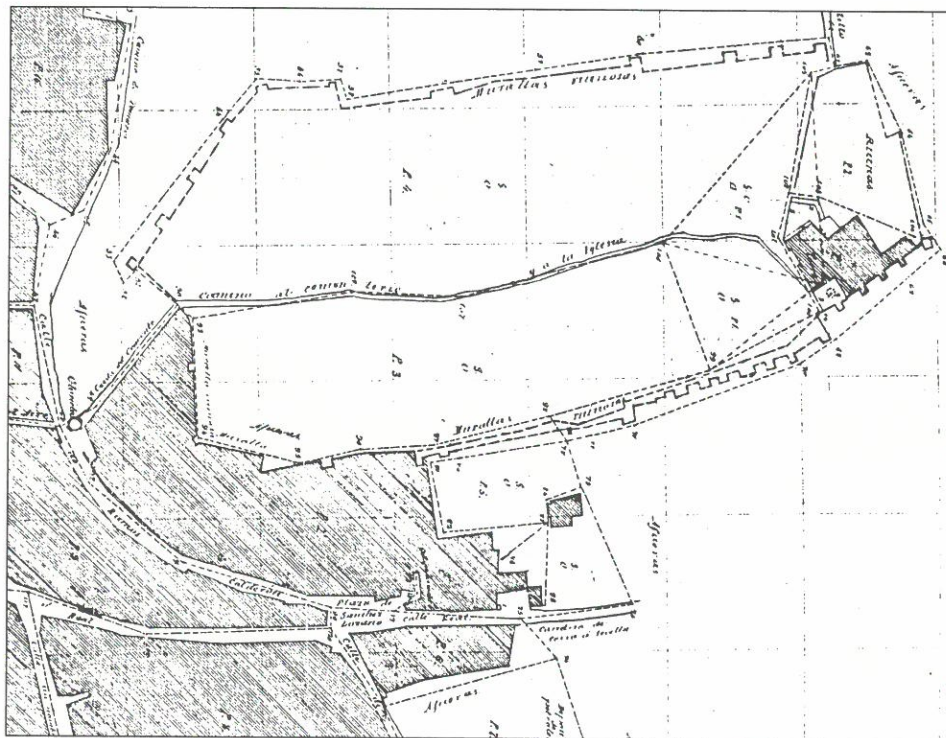


Fig. 6. Hisn of San Juan de Aznalfarache, a castle with alcázar (M. Valor, 1994).



Plate 2. Two towers of Seville's alcázar: The Silver and the Gold Towers (Carlos Ortega, 1998).



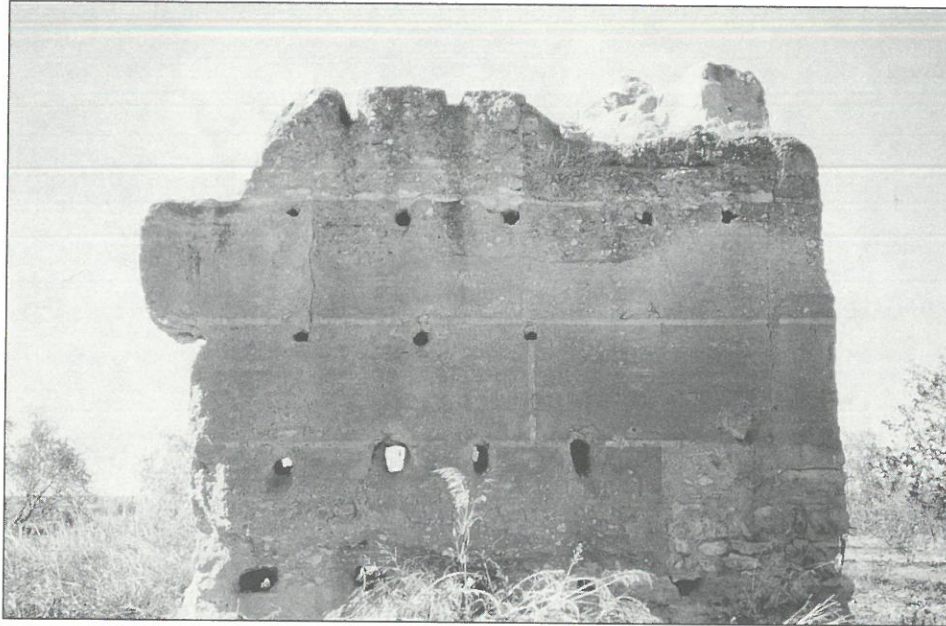


Plate 3. Tower made in *tabiya*, in the south of Seville city (M. Valor, 1998).

It was during this period when most of the fortifications were built, probably for an obvious reason, as follows:

In the Andalusí period, a great distance had separated this territory from the Christian border. Therefore, fortifications were only built in major cities of the region, as well as in places defending communication routes, and those located in important economic areas, such as mining areas or fertile valleys.

This situation altered in the Castilian period, and the lower Guadalquivir valley became a frontier area with the kingdoms of Granada and Portugal. Both borders conformed to natural geographical accidents, such as the Baetic mountain range in the former case and the Sierra Morena in the latter. The fact that the lower Guadalquivir valley was a borderland led to the rebuilding of existing fortifications, to which so many new features were added that the Islamic origin sometimes became unrecognisable. On the other hand, the *ex-novo* building of many castles made it possible for areas which had hitherto remained empty to be filled up. This process, stretching from the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century to the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup>, was the result of an initiative taken by kings and military orders, and was to bring about the emergence of a most varied typology of fortifications. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the nobility was to take the initiative. Fortifications were also built after this date, but were within the framework of a completely different historical situation. During the last third of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the reinforcement of some old fortifications or the building of new ones was the result of the continual struggles which occurred between different factions of the nobility. These new buildings or reinforcements are halfway between Medieval fortifications and bastions.



Plate 4. Cote *dojon*, constructed in the centre of the Islamic castle (M. Valor, 1997).

A) *The second half of the 13th century.* This is a very interesting period, during which the co-existence of completely different building styles has been demonstrated<sup>4</sup>. Such styles range from the Gothic, which may be found in fortifications constructed by the Castilian royal family (Plate 4) to fortifications within the Almohad tradition (Plate 5). This coexistence of different building styles after the Christian conquest is a relevant aspect which, logically, can be seen much more clearly in religious architecture. The mosques, which were transformed into churches, are good examples of this.

B) *From the second quarter of the 14th century to the middle of the 15th century.* The lower Guadalquivir area near the border with the Kingdom of Granada was re-organized specifically in the course of the 14th century. This process is not specified in any explicit project, but, nonetheless, if we analyse the colonisation charters which were granted to noblemen and peasants, we find that a series of advantages were systematically offered to them, provided they fulfilled their specific obligations of colonizing and defending the lands conceded to them.

As a result of the surveys carried out, we have found that these fortifications have many architectural features in common, such as the building design, the use of *tabiya*, and the type of towers –much larger than before– with a residential function. There are many examples in existence, such as Aguza-

<sup>4</sup> M. Valor Piechotta, "Una aproximación a la arquitectura militar de la segunda mitad del siglo XIII", *IV Congreso de Arqueología Medieval Española*, Alicante, 1994, II, pp. 415-422.





Plate 5. Albaida del Aljarafe tower, built by a son of the conqueror, king Fernando III (M. Valor, 1992).

deras Castle (Plate 6), and Mairena del Alcor Castle (Fig. 7). Both of these examples are newly-built castles, but there are also examples of pre-existent fortifications which were re-built, which is the case of Setefilla Castle in Lora del Río (Fig. 8).

C) *The second half of the 15th century.* This building period may be defined well by means of two features:

- The abundance of written sources, as opposed to previous stages.
- Fortifications were built in a specific style, that of a military architecture halfway between Medieval fortifications and bastions. Battlements with different kinds of gun loops can be found. The castle of Mairena del Alcor is a good example of this (Plate 6).

To conclude, we need archaeological excavations in order to ascertain aspects such as continuity, evolution, inside-wall structures, and an archaeological survey in order to establish the territorial limits, the relationship between castles and villages (*alquerías*), the environment and its changes during the Middle Ages, etc. At present, we can trace a picture of the heritage still existing, as well as its condition and its stages of conservation.

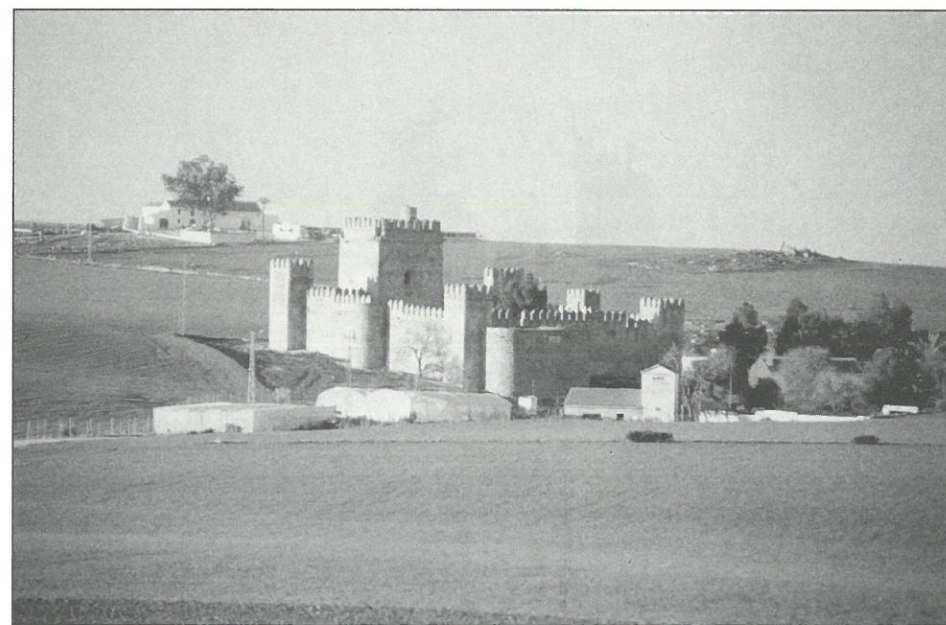


Plate 6. Las Aguzaderas castle in El Coronil (M. Valor, 1994).



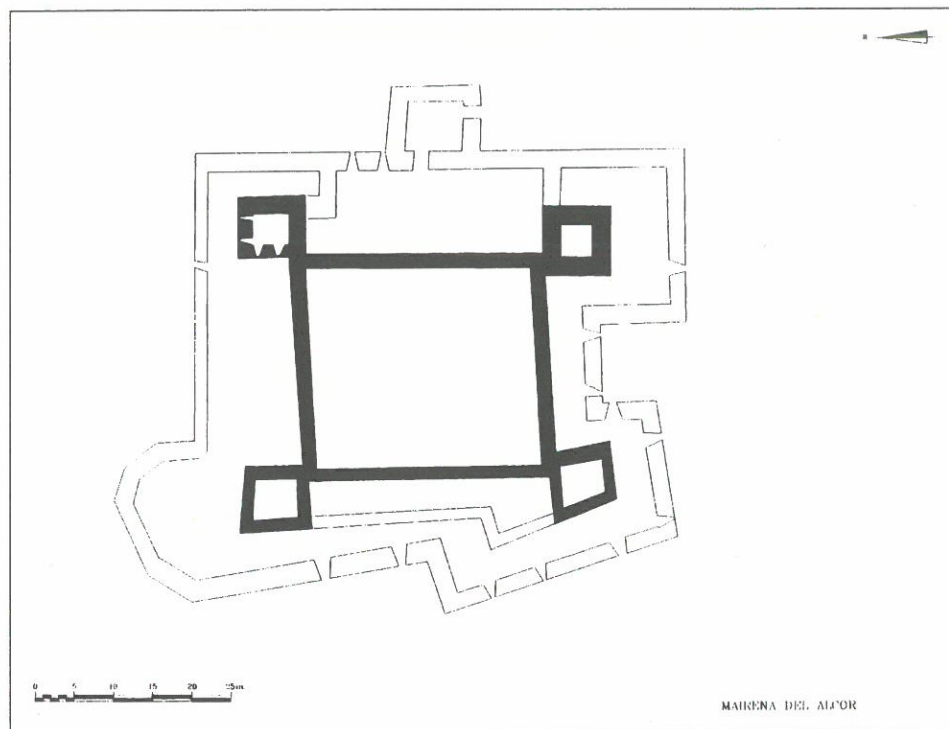


Fig. 7. Mairena del Alcor castle. In black outer-wall dating from the 15th century; in white the 14th century castle (M. Valor, 1994).



Plate 7. Mairena del Alcor outer wall, dating from the 15th century.

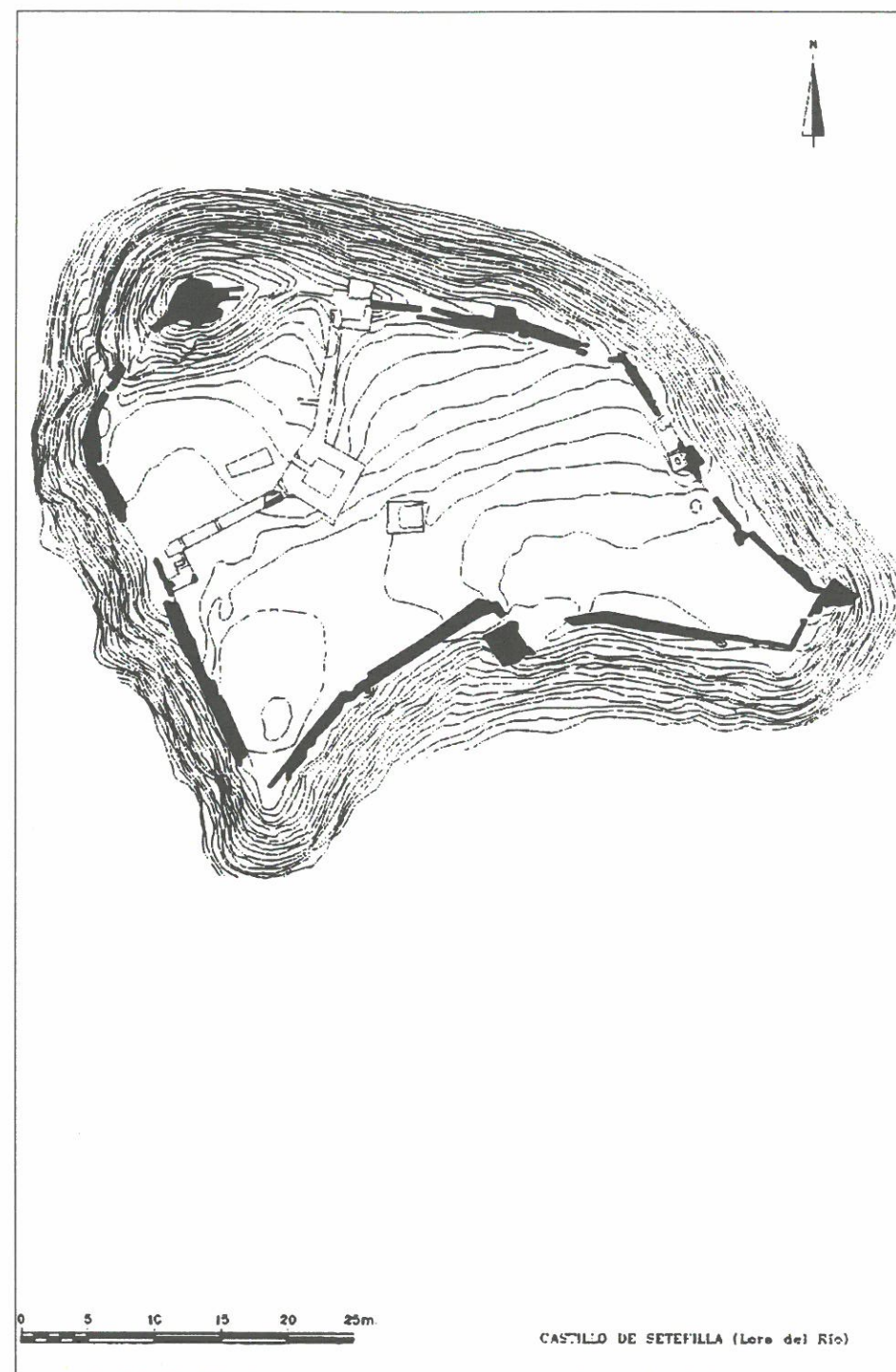


Fig. 8. Setefilla castle. In white the 14th century inner-wall, in black the pre-Christian fortification (M. Valor).



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