

## Rebel Fortresses and Local Identities in Ninth-Century Al-Andalus

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Fortresses (*husun*, sing. *hisn*) in al-Andalus were rural units which crucial for military defense, protection and administration of the surrounding villages, and tax collection from local inhabitants. Some *husun* were places of permanent residence, while others were fortified constructions for refuge in case of danger. Local people had close ties with a particular fortress which protected them, taxed them and controlled the area. These close ties with a *hisn* developed a sense of identity, since rural communities were attached to a particular fortress. Rebels in ninth-century al-Andalus controlled fortresses and strengthened the local identities around the *husun*, as a way to weaken the political unity of al-Andalus and to be able to claim autonomy in particular regions. This essay aims to situate the *husun* within the context of political, economic and social realities of ninth-century al-Andalus. [Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: [journal@transformativestudies.org](mailto:journal@transformativestudies.org) Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2011 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]

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