

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE SPANISH CONQUEST BY TARIQ BIN ZIYAD: A CRITICAL HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS IN A GLOBAL HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Jusmiati*, Hasaruddin, Syamzan Syukur

Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, Indonesia

Abstract

This study aims to reconstruct the Spanish conquest by Tariq ibn Ziyad in 711 CE through a global historical and critical historiographic approach. This study is motivated by the dominance of classical historiographic narratives that tend to present the conquest as a mere heroic story, without considering the complexity of the social, political, and geopolitical contexts that underlie it. This study uses a qualitative method with a historical-critical approach through literature study, source criticism, and comparative analysis of Islamic and Western historical narratives. The results show that the Spanish conquest was not merely a military expansion, but part of the geopolitical dynamics of the Mediterranean region influenced by the internal crisis of the Visigoth Kingdom, adaptive military strategies, and social interactions with local communities. In addition, this event had a significant impact on shaping the interconnectedness of civilization between the Islamic and Western worlds, particularly in the fields of science, culture, and politics. Thus, this conquest needs to be understood as a multidimensional and interconnected historical process. This research emphasizes the importance of a critical historiographic approach and a global perspective in the study of Islamic history to produce a more contextual, integrative understanding, free from narrative simplification.

Keywords: Spanish conquest; Tariq ibn Ziyad; Global history; Critical historiography; Islamic civilization.

INTRODUCTION

History records that the entry of Islam into Andalusia was a major event that marked a new chapter in the spread of Islam in Western Europe. This process occurred during the reign of Caliph Al-Walid ibn Abdul Malik of the Umayyad Dynasty (705–715 CE), centered in Damascus. At that time, Islamic power had spread to various regions, both East and West. Before crossing the European continent, Islamic forces first succeeded in controlling the entire North African region, which then served as an important base for further expansion.

The success of the control of North Africa became a starting point for Muslims to continue their expansion into the Iberian Peninsula, a region that was at that time controlled by the Visigoth Kingdom, where, before the invasion, this region was often hit by internal conflict and political instability, which became a gap for Islamic troops to enter. In historical records, the three main figures who played a major role in the conquest of Spain were Tharif bin Malik (the initial pioneer of the expedition to Spain), Thariq bin Ziyad (conqueror of Spain), and Musa bin Nushair (the messenger) (Pratama et al., 2026).

In 711 AD, Islam first spread to Western Europe, specifically from Gibraltar to the Iberian Peninsula, formerly known as Andalusia (classical Spain). Andalusia was known as a region predominantly inhabited by Christians from the Visigothic Kingdom, renowned for its strong military system. This kingdom held sway over Andalusia for a long time, influencing various aspects, including politics and economics. However, the Christian glory of the Visigothic Kingdom did not last long in Andalusia, as it was eventually overtaken by Muslims (Putra, 2021).

*Correspondance Author: jusmiati569@gmail.com

Article History | Submitted: 12 June 2026 | Revised: 22 July 2026 | Accepted: 25 July 2026 | Publish: 31 July 2026

HOW TO CITE (APA 6th Edition):

Jusmiati, Jusmiati., Hasaruddin, Hasaruddin., Syukur, Syamzan. (2026). Reconstruction of the Spanish Conquest by Tariq bin Ziyad: A Critical Historiographical Analysis in a Global Historical Perspective. *Juspi: Jurnal Sejarah Peradaban Islam*. 10(1), page.281-291

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.30829/juspi.v10i1.30223>

The conquest of Spain in 711 CE by Tariq ibn Ziyad was a monumental event in world history, marking the beginning of Islamic civilization in Western Europe. This event is not only understood as a mere territorial expansion, but also as the starting point for intense interaction between the Islamic world and the West, encompassing political, social, and intellectual aspects. In classical historical narratives, this conquest is often depicted as a spectacular military victory supported by high religious fervor, thus forming a strong heroic image in Islamic historiography (Badri Yatim, 2008).

However, interpretations that overemphasize the heroic aspect tend to overlook the complexity of the historical background surrounding it. The internal conditions of the Visigothic kingdom in Spain, which was experiencing political crisis and internal conflict, were important factors that helped open up opportunities for the successful expansion of Muslim forces. Furthermore, power dynamics in North Africa under the Umayyad Caliphate also played a significant role in driving expansion into Europe. Therefore, this conquest must be understood as part of a broader political configuration, not simply as a stand-alone military event.

Furthermore, Tariq ibn Ziyad's conquest of Spain also had long-term implications for the development of global civilization. The presence of Islam in Andalusia served as a crucial bridge in the transfer of knowledge, technology, and culture from the Islamic world to Europe. This interaction subsequently contributed to the intellectual awakening in Europe that ultimately led to the Renaissance. Therefore, this event is relevant not only in the context of Islamic history but also in world history as a whole.

Previous studies have extensively discussed the conquest of al-Andalus from political, military, and civilizational perspectives. For example, (Maulana, R., & Prasetia, 2022) explain that the Muslim expansion into the Iberian Peninsula was not merely a military invasion but also involved political negotiations with local elites dissatisfied with Visigothic rule. (Efendi, J. R., 2025) demonstrate that the establishment of Islamic rule in al-Andalus initiated long-term transformations in governance, education, and intellectual development. Nevertheless, these studies primarily focus on historical description and political development, while limited attention has been given to critically comparing Islamic and Western historiographical traditions or interpreting the conquest within a broader global historical framework.

Despite the growing body of literature on the conquest of al-Andalus, several research gaps remain. First, most previous studies primarily present descriptive narratives of military events rather than critically examining how those narratives were constructed within different historiographical traditions. Second, only limited attention has been paid to comparing Islamic and Western historiographical interpretations of the conquest. Third, existing studies rarely employ a global historical perspective that situates the conquest within broader Mediterranean geopolitical networks and intercivilizational interactions. These gaps indicate the need for a more critical and integrative reinterpretation of the conquest.

The novelty of this study lies in integrating critical historiography with a global historical perspective to reinterpret the conquest of Spain by Tariq ibn Ziyad. Rather than merely reconstructing historical events chronologically, this study analyzes the formation of historical narratives, compares Islamic and Western historiographical traditions, and positions the conquest within the broader dynamics of Mediterranean history and intercivilizational exchanges.

Accordingly, this study aims to reconstruct the conquest of Spain by Tariq ibn Ziyad through a critical historiographical approach and a global historical perspective. Specifically, this study analyzes the historical background of the conquest, examines the role and leadership of Tariq ibn Ziyad, evaluates the military and geopolitical factors underlying the conquest, and assesses its long-term contribution to the development of Islamic and global civilization.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design using a historical approach to reconstruct the conquest of Spain by Tariq ibn Ziyad through the perspectives of critical historiography and

global history. The historical approach was selected because it enables the systematic examination of past events by evaluating historical evidence, interpreting diverse historical narratives, and reconstructing historical processes based on credible sources.

This research relies on library research as the primary method of data collection. Data were obtained from several historical sources. Secondary sources consist of scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and academic publications discussing the conquest of al-Andalus, Islamic civilization, historiography, and global history. References were selected based on their academic relevance, credibility, and contribution to the research objectives.

The research was conducted through several systematic stages. First, historical sources relevant to the conquest of Spain by Tariq ibn Ziyad were identified and classified according to their origin and historiographical tradition. Second, external criticism was applied to examine the authenticity, authorship, chronology, and credibility of the selected sources. Third, internal criticism was conducted to evaluate the consistency of the information, identify potential biases, and compare differing interpretations presented by Islamic and Western historians. Fourth, the verified historical evidence was interpreted within its broader political, social, and geopolitical contexts using a global historical perspective. Finally, the findings were synthesized through comparative historiographical analysis to reconstruct the conquest as a multidimensional historical process rather than merely a military event.

Data analysis followed the stages of historical research proposed by Kuntowijoyo and Dudung Abdurrahman, including source criticism, interpretation, historiographical reconstruction, and analytical comparison. This analytical framework enabled the study to evaluate not only the factual dimensions of historical events but also the construction of historical narratives within different historiographical traditions. Consequently, the study offers a more contextual, critical, and integrative understanding of the conquest of Spain and its significance within the broader development of Islamic and global civilization.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Background of the Spanish Conquest by Tariq bin Ziyad

Before conquering Spain, Muslims had already conquered North Africa and made it a province under the Umayyad dynasty. Complete control of North Africa occurred during the reign of Caliph Abd al-Malik (685-705 CE). Caliph Abd al-Malik appointed Hasan ibn Nu'man al-Ghassani as governor of the region. Then, during the reign of Caliph al-Walid, Hasan ibn Nu'man was replaced by Musa ibn Nusayr, during which Musa ibn Nusayr expanded his territory by occupying Algeria and Morocco.

Furthermore, he also completed his conquest of the former Barbarian territories in the mountains, forcing them to pledge their loyalty and not to cause chaos as they had done previously. Once these territories were fully under Muslim control, Muslims began to focus their attention on conquering Spain. Thus, North Africa became a stepping stone for Muslims in conquering Spain (Sewang, 2015).

Historically, it is recorded that social and political conditions were the cause and path of the conquest of Andalusia (Spain). Before the arrival of Islam, the Andalusia region was controlled by the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans and Vandals, before finally falling into the hands of the Visigoths for more than two centuries. 5th century AD Andalusia was still under Western Roman rule. After that, Spain was controlled by the Visigoths, a Germanic tribe who moved from India to European territory in search of pastures and a source of income or livelihood (Wijaya & Roza, 2024).

The Andalusian region (Spain) is a peninsula that serves as a gateway to the Mediterranean Sea. After triumphing in North Africa, Islamic armies sought to continue their expansion into mainland Europe. Spain was then ruled by a small Visigothic autocracy under King Roderick (Akhmad Saufi and Hasmi Fadillah, 2015). They were a savage tribe inhabiting one of the provinces of the Roman Empire. The term savage tribe indicates that before successfully conquering a region, they lived their lives moving from one region to another. Their lives depended on nature. It was not

uncommon for them to commit brutal acts when encountering a village, robbing and killing the inhabitants of that area (Sari, nd).

They were fond of waging war against other groups they perceived as enemies. The Visigoths conquered Spain in the 5th century AD. Early in their reign, they succeeded in ensuring a safe and orderly society. This situation led the Spanish people to support them. This support allowed them to rule the region for 200 years. However, after a long period of rule, the Visigoth rulers took actions that forced them to leave Spain.

The nobles and wealthy individuals close to the rulers indulged in a life of luxury and sensuality. This fueled the Spanish people's hatred of the Western Gothic ruler. During Roderick's reign, the already deteriorating social conditions did not improve. In fact, they worsened due to Roderick's cruel and merciless rule. Poverty became commonplace in Spanish society. Furthermore, robbery, violence, insults to honor, and rape occurred in almost every corner of the country. These various factors contributed to the Islamic forces' ability to control Spain (Sari, nd).

The Spanish conquest in the early 8th century CE cannot be separated from the geopolitical context surrounding the Mediterranean region at that time. Islamic power under the Umayyad Dynasty had reached North Africa after a long process of expansion and territorial consolidation. Meanwhile, the Visigothic kingdom in Spain was in a state of political instability due to internal conflicts, power struggles, and weak leadership legitimacy. This situation created a strategic opportunity for external powers to enter and seize power. Thus, the conquest was not a sudden event, but rather part of the interconnected regional political dynamics between North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula (Badri Yatim, 2008).

The opportunity to conquer Andalusia (Spain) was wide open, the Visigoth rulers had lost the support of the population due to their corrupt, inefficient, and intolerant government. The people of Andalusia were severely oppressed by the Visigothic kings, chieftains, nobles, and priests. Many Andalusian residents who could not bear the suffering under Visigoth rule sought refuge in North Africa. Even the Governor of Ceuta, Julian, openly invited cooperation with Musa ibn Nushair to end Visigoth rule in Andalusia (Basori, 2006).

The idea of conquering Andalusia arose after Julian offered aid to the Muslims or after they requested that the sons of Vitiza (sons of the last Visigothic king) return to rule Andalusia and avenge Roderick, who had violated his daughter. In fact, the fact is that Julian, the ruler of Ceuta, was in contact with Tariq ibn Ziyad and Musa ibn Nusayr when Musa ibn Nusayr (Governor of Africa) was considering conquering Andalusia. This contact arose after the conquest of Tangier, which was opposite Andalusia. Therefore, it is natural that Musa ibn Nusayr considered Andalusia as an additional objective.

In the conquest of Andalusia, three important figures played a major role: Tharif ibn Malik, Tariq ibn Ziyad, and Musa ibn Nushair. Tharif acted as a pioneer and scout. He led an army of 500 men, including several horsemen, across the strait separating Morocco and the European continent using four ships provided by Julian. Musa ibn Nushair appointed Tariq ibn Ziyad as commander to conquer Andalusia with 7,000 troops (Wijaya & Roza, 2024).

The first conquest began in 711 AD when an army led by Tariq ibn Ziyad crossed the Strait of Gibraltar. This crossing became a significant historical symbol, marking the beginning of the entry of Islamic power into Western Europe. Upon landing, the Muslim army immediately engaged the Visigoth army led by King Roderick. A major battle took place in the Guadalete region, which ended in victory for the Muslim forces. This victory paved the way for the relatively short capture of key cities such as Cordoba, Toledo, and Seville (Philip Khuri Hitti, 2014).

Following the victory, Tariq ibn Ziyad reported to Musa ibn Nusayr and requested additional troops. Musa ibn Nusayr then sent 5,000 additional soldiers, bringing the total Muslim force to approximately 12,000. Although this was significantly smaller than the Visigothic army of over 100,000, victory was still in the hands of the Muslims due to their well-thought-out strategy and strong jihadist spirit.

The conquest of Spain by Tariq ibn Ziyad was not only a military expansion, but also the beginning of the introduction of Islamic values into Western Europe. Within a short time, many territories previously under Christian Gothic rule fell to Muslims. The local population, previously oppressed by the feudal system of the Visigothic kingdom, began to accept Islamic rule because it was considered more just and tolerant of various religious groups. Therefore, this conquest is not merely seen as an invasion, but also as a social and political transformation that brought a new order to Iberian society (Pratama et al., 2026).

From the perspective of critical historiography, the conquest of Spain cannot be interpreted solely as the result of military superiority. Classical Islamic historians generally portray the conquest as a divinely inspired victory that reflected the expansion of Islamic civilization. In contrast, many modern historians argue that the rapid collapse of the Visigothic Kingdom was strongly influenced by internal political fragmentation, succession disputes, and declining royal legitimacy. Therefore, the conquest should be understood as the outcome of both external military operations and internal political instability.

From a global historical perspective, the conquest also represented an important stage in the integration of the western Mediterranean into a broader network of political, economic, and cultural interaction. Rather than functioning as an isolated military campaign, it connected North Africa, the Iberian Peninsula, and the wider Mediterranean world within a dynamic process of intercivilizational exchange.

History of the life of Tariq bin Ziyad

His full name was Tariq bin Ziyad bin Abdullah bin Walghu bin Warfajum bin Naighas bin Masthas bin Bathusats bin Nafzah. He was related to the Barbarian Nafzah tribe. Although there are differences of opinion among lineage experts regarding Tariq bin Ziyad's origins, whether he was from the Arab or the Amazigh people, the majority of historians support the belief that Tariq bin Ziyad came from one of the main Amazigh tribes in the Maghreb, known today as Morocco (Putra, 2021).

Furthermore, there are differing opinions regarding Tariq bin Ziyad's initial status, with some sources stating that he was once a *mawla* (client or former slave) of Musa bin Nushair. This status actually indicates the existence of social mobility within the early Islamic power structure, where individuals with high military capacity and loyalty could occupy strategic positions without relying on lineage. From a classical and modern historiographic perspective, this phenomenon reflects the inclusive character of the Umayyad military system, which opened up space for the integration of various ethnic groups (Khaldun, 1990;) and (Blankinship, 1994).

Tariq ibn Ziyad was born in 50 AH/670 AD and died in 102 AH/720 AD. The spirit of Islamic power that inspired him then made him an extraordinary warrior in world history. From infancy, he was raised by his father, Muhammad Badr. Tariq was known as a skilled horseman and very brave. Physically, he had a strong body, with light brown skin (Wijaya & Roza, 2024).

From a young age he was raised in a pious family environment by his Muslim father during the reign of Uqbah bin Nafi' (Arab commander and conqueror during the Umayyad Caliphate). The spirit and fire of Islam that spread some time later became a powerful warrior in world history (Putra, 2021).

From an educational perspective, Tariq bin Ziyad did not undergo formal education as is commonly understood in modern times, but rather was shaped by early Islamic educational traditions based on the internalization of religious values, social experience, and military training. He grew up in an Islamized environment, thus gaining an understanding of the Quran, the ethics of leadership, and the concept of jihad, which became the ideological foundation for Islamic expansion. In Islamic historiography, the character formation of figures like Tariq is more practical—through direct experience in the social and military arenas—than through institutional education. (Kennedy, 2007).

He became widely known while fighting under Musa ibn Nushair, the governor of North Africa of the Umayyad Dynasty. It is said that Tariq ibn Ziyad was initially a slave who was later freed by Musa ibn Nushair because of his prowess in warfare and leadership. After his release, he quickly rose through the ranks of the military hierarchy and was eventually appointed as one of Musa ibn Nushair's trusted commanders (Wijaya & Roza, 2024).

Tariq ibn Ziyad's military career began to stand out when he was under the command of Musa ibn Nushair in North Africa. In this position, he demonstrated extraordinary strategic abilities, both in understanding the geopolitical situation and in managing a multi-ethnic army. The trust placed in him, leading to his appointment as governor of Tangier and military commander, demonstrated his leadership abilities, not only technical but also political. This success was also supported by his ability to build alliances with local groups dissatisfied with Visigothic rule in the Iberian Peninsula (Collins, 1989).

Tariq ibn Ziyad's success as a conqueror was inextricably linked to his leadership qualities. He was known as a charismatic leader capable of building collective solidarity among his troops through a powerful ideological approach and rhetoric. In the Battle of Guadalete, for example, Tariq's leadership was able to integrate religious motivation with rational and adaptive military strategy. From a global historical perspective, Tariq's figure reflects the synthesis of religion, politics, and the military that characterized Islamic expansion during the classical period (Kennedy, 2007).

Overall, the life of Tariq ibn Ziyad demonstrates the transformation of a figure from a slave background to a central actor in the history of the Islamic world. He is not only a symbol of military success, but also a representation of the social, political, and religious dynamics underlying early Islamic expansion. Therefore, studying his life is important not only in the context of military history but also in understanding the process of the formation of Islamic civilization across regions (NSM & T. Sudjatnika, 2024).

The historical image of Tariq ibn Ziyad has been constructed differently across historiographical traditions. Classical Islamic historiography frequently presents him as an ideal Muslim commander whose military achievements reflected religious devotion and moral leadership. Modern historiography, however, tends to place greater emphasis on structural factors, including Umayyad administrative organization, military logistics, and regional political conditions. Consequently, Tariq ibn Ziyad should be understood not merely as a heroic individual but also as an actor operating within broader institutional and geopolitical structures.

Strategy for Success in the Conquest of Spain by Thariq bin Ziyad

The conquest of Andalusia in 711 CE by Tariq ibn Ziyad was a significant milestone in the history of Islamic expansion, demonstrating the integration of military strategy, geopolitical precision, and the social dynamics of local communities. This expedition took place within the context of the Umayyad Dynasty under Caliph Al-Walid, with administrative and military support from the Governor of North Africa, Musa ibn Nusayr. Prior to the conquest, the Iberian Peninsula was under the control of the Visigoth Kingdom, which was experiencing an internal crisis characterized by power struggles, political instability, and sharp social inequality. This situation created a strategic gap that Islamic forces exploited to make initial penetration with relatively weak resistance, so that the conquest did not take place entirely through open military confrontation, but also through exploiting the unstable socio-political situation (Putra, 2021).

In the context of military strategy, Tariq bin Ziyad demonstrated highly adaptive tactical skills by prioritizing a pattern of rapid and targeted attacks on strategic areas. The landing of troops in the Gibraltar region—later known as Jabal Tariq—was a decisive initial step in controlling the access route to Andalusia. This strategy was followed by control of coastal areas as a logistics and communications base, before gradually expanding inland. This approach not only demonstrated the efficient use of limited military resources but also reflected careful planning and a deep understanding of the geography of the operational area. Thus, the initial success achieved was not

solely the result of troop courage, but rather the fruit of a systematic and measured strategy (Putra, 2021).

In addition to military strategic excellence, leadership played a central role in the expedition's success. Tariq ibn Ziyad was known as a charismatic leader capable of building collective solidarity among his troops, who came from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including Arabs and Berbers. His famous pre-battle speech symbolized the power of rhetoric, which instilled values of courage, sacrifice, and religious faith in his troops (Wijaya & Roza, 2024).

Furthermore, the success of the conquest was inseparable from the flexibility of the tactics applied on the battlefield. In facing the numerically superior Visigothic army, Tariq ibn Ziyad did not choose a direct frontal confrontation, but instead used a more dynamic approach by exploiting the enemy's weaknesses in coordination and communication. This was clearly evident in the Battle of Guadalete, where the Visigothic army experienced internal chaos that led to a crushing defeat and the death of King Roderick. This defeat was a crucial turning point because it caused the collapse of the Visigothic political leadership structure, thus accelerating the process of control of the region by Islamic forces. Following the victory, many cities in Andalusia chose to surrender without resistance, indicating that the initial military victory had broad psychological and political effects (Dahlan, 2016).

In addition to military strategy and leadership, the success of the conquest of Andalusia was also greatly influenced by the social conditions of the local community. Dissatisfaction with the Visigothic system of government, which tended to be discriminatory, particularly against minority groups such as the Jews, created a situation where some communities lacked strong loyalty to the rulers. In some cases, these groups even provided indirect support to the Islamic forces as an alternative to a more just form of rule. This demonstrates that the success of the conquest was determined not only by external forces but also by the internal dynamics of the conquered society. In other words, the expansion of Islam in Andalusia took place within the context of complex social interactions between the conquerors and the local community (NSM and T. Sudjatnika, 2025).

Another supporting strategy was the coordination between Tariq ibn Ziyad and Musa ibn Nushair. Following Tariq's initial success, Musa sent additional troops to strengthen control over the conquered territories. This collaboration demonstrated the synergy between field leadership and higher administrative authorities, allowing for simultaneous expansion and consolidation of the territories. Logistical and military support from the Umayyad center of power was also crucial in maintaining the stability of the newly conquered territories, while also preventing the possibility of rebellion or counterattacks from the enemy (Aiman Abu Khair, Jihan Fahira, 2014).

From a broader perspective, Tariq ibn Ziyad's conquest of Andalusia not only brought political and military success, but also paved the way for the development of Islamic civilization in Western Europe. Andalusia then developed into a relatively inclusive center of science, culture, and interfaith interaction. The intellectual traditions that developed in this region contributed significantly to the development of science in Europe, especially during the Renaissance. Therefore, this conquest can be understood not only as territorial expansion, but also as a process of civilizational transformation that had a long-term impact on global history (Badri Yatim, 2013).

Thus, Tariq ibn Ziyad's successful conquest of Spain was the result of a combination of interrelated strategies, ranging from effective military strategy, charismatic leadership, weak internal enemy conditions, and social support from the local community. This analysis demonstrates that Islamic expansion during the classical period cannot be reduced to a purely military narrative but must be understood as a multidimensional phenomenon simultaneously involving political, social, and cultural aspects.

The success of the conquest should also be interpreted within the broader geopolitical transformation of the Mediterranean during the early eighth century. The expansion of the Umayyad Caliphate created interconnected political and commercial networks extending from the Middle East and North Africa to the Iberian Peninsula. Consequently, military expansion was accompanied by the movement of administrative institutions, commercial relations, intellectual traditions, and cultural practices that reshaped the western Mediterranean world.

The Impact and Legacy of the Spanish Conquest by Thariq bin Ziyad

The conquest of Spain in 711 CE by Tariq ibn Ziyad was a significant event that brought about major changes in world history, particularly in the Al-Andalus region. This event not only brought positive impacts in the form of civilizational advancement, but also left a number of negative impacts as a consequence of military expansion and power dynamics. In general, the legacy of this conquest encompasses various fields such as politics, socio-culture, science, economics, and inter-civilizational relations, which can still be felt today (Wijaya & Roza, 2024).

Politically, the positive impact of this conquest was the birth of a relatively inclusive and organized Islamic government system, particularly under the Umayyad Dynasty in Andalusia. This government was able to create stability by accommodating non-Muslim groups through a system of protection (*ahl al-dhimma*), which provided space for the continuation of a pluralistic social life. However, on the other hand, there were negative impacts in the form of internal conflict and power struggles among the Muslim elite itself, as well as tensions with the Christian kingdoms in the north that triggered the centuries-long Reconquista process. This conflict demonstrates that despite efforts at political integration, the reality of power remains characterized by instability and struggles for dominance (Mawardi, 2024).

From a social and cultural perspective, this conquest had a positive impact in the form of the creation of a multicultural society known as *convivencia* , where Muslims, Christians, and Jews lived side by side in one social space. This interaction gave rise to a rich cultural acculturation, reflected in language, art, music, and intellectual traditions. Modern Spanish, for example, has absorbed many Arabic vocabulary as a strong evidence of Islamic influence. However, negative impacts also emerged in the form of social stratification between the ruling class and the local community, as well as certain restrictions on non-Muslim communities in certain periods. Thus, although relative harmony was achieved, social relations remained within the framework of a power hierarchy (NSM & T. Sudjatnika, 2024).

In the field of science, the positive impact of the conquest of Andalusia was significant, as the region developed into a center of world scholarship during the Middle Ages. Figures such as Ibn Rushd and Al-Zahrawi made significant contributions to philosophy, medicine, and science. The translation of scientific works from Arabic to Latin paved the way for the transfer of knowledge to Europe, which then sparked the Renaissance. However, on the negative side, this development of science was not entirely equitable and was more concentrated in certain urban centers, thus maintaining an intellectual gap between urban and rural areas (Marwah Maulana Sidik, et al., 2025).

In the economic and technological fields, this conquest had a positive impact in the form of advances in agricultural systems, trade, and irrigation technology. Muslims introduced various new techniques such as canal systems and efficient water management, as well as new agricultural commodities that increased productivity. Trade activity also flourished, making Andalusia one of the important economic centers in Europe. However, its negative impact was seen in the tax burden imposed on non-Muslim communities and the unequal distribution of economic resources in some regions, which in the long term could trigger social discontent (Yamani, 1992).

In terms of architecture and cultural heritage, the conquest left a profound impact, one that remains visible today. Buildings such as the Mosque of Cordoba and the Alhambra symbolize the glory of Islamic civilization in Andalusia, combining elements of aesthetics, spirituality, and technology. This legacy inspired the development of European and modern architecture. However, a negative impact was that many Islamic buildings underwent changes in function or were even destroyed during the Reconquista, leaving some of this heritage unpreserved (Khaldun, 1990b).

The legacy of the Spanish conquest is also inseparable from the broader dynamics of Islamic-Christian relations in the Mediterranean region. The decline of Umayyad power in Andalusia, which began to appear in the 11th century and was marked by the fall of Toledo to Alfonso VI in 1085 CE, occurred almost simultaneously with the weakening of Islam's position in the eastern Mediterranean region due to the seizure of Jerusalem by the Seljuq Dynasty, a situation that later contributed to the outbreak of the Crusades at the end of the 11th century. Studies on the

Crusades show that the faltering power of Islam in Spain was one of the factors that encouraged the courage of European Christian powers to reclaim territories previously under Muslim rule, both on the western and eastern fronts of the Islamic world (Sri Nilawati, Hasaruddin, 2024). This phenomenon further strengthens the argument that the conquest and decline of Islam in Spain cannot be understood in isolation, but rather as part of a network of geopolitical and religious interactions that connected various fronts of the Islamic world during the medieval period.

Modern historiography increasingly recognizes that the legacy of al-Andalus cannot be reduced either to an idealized narrative of peaceful coexistence or to a narrative of continuous religious conflict. Instead, historical evidence suggests that relations among Muslims, Christians, and Jews varied across different periods and political contexts. This perspective allows a more balanced understanding of al-Andalus as a dynamic society characterized by both cooperation and conflict. Such an interpretation contributes to contemporary discussions on intercultural dialogue, religious pluralism, and the historical foundations of Mediterranean civilization.

Overall, Tariq ibn Ziyad's Spanish conquest yielded a complex civilizational legacy, reflecting the interplay between progress and conflict. Its positive impacts were seen in advances in science, culture, and inclusive social systems, while its negative impacts emerged in the form of political conflict, social inequality, and power dynamics. This legacy remains relevant today, particularly in the context of discourses on tolerance, religious moderation, and intercivilizational dialogue, which are crucial issues in modern global society (Badri Yatim, 2008).

Comparative Historiographical Perspectives

This study demonstrates that Islamic and Western historiographical traditions construct the conquest of Spain through different interpretative frameworks. Classical Islamic historians predominantly emphasize religious legitimacy, military leadership, and the expansion of Islamic civilization. In contrast, many Western historians focus on political fragmentation within the Visigothic Kingdom, administrative transformation, and broader Mediterranean geopolitics. Rather than treating these perspectives as mutually exclusive, this study argues that both provide complementary explanations that together produce a more comprehensive reconstruction of the conquest.

The application of Ibn Khaldun's classical conceptual framework as a tool for critical historiographic analysis, as demonstrated in the study of the consolidation of power of the Abbasid Dynasty during the time of Abu Ja'far al-Mansur, shows that the idea of *ashabiyah* (group solidarity) can explain how an Islamic political-military force united diverse ethnic and social elements under one common leadership (Sopyan H, Ahmad M. Sewang, Hasaruddin, 2025). The same principle is relevant to understanding the conquest of Andalusia by Tariq ibn Ziyad, where the solidarity of troops consisting of Arab and Berber elements was successfully built through charismatic leadership and strong religious legitimacy. Thus, the use of the classical Islamic historiographic framework consistently enriches the critical analysis of the events of Islamic expansion, both on the eastern and western fronts of the Islamic world, while at the same time confirming the methodological relevance of the comparative historiographic approach carried out in this study.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the conquest of Spain by Tariq ibn Ziyad should be understood as a multidimensional historical process rather than merely a military victory or a heroic narrative. The findings demonstrate that the success of the conquest resulted from the interaction of several factors, including the political fragmentation of the Visigothic Kingdom, the strategic leadership of Tariq ibn Ziyad, the administrative support of the Umayyad Caliphate, and the broader geopolitical dynamics of the western Mediterranean. By applying critical historiography, this study also shows that historical narratives concerning the conquest have been constructed differently within Islamic and Western historiographical traditions, each emphasizing different aspects of the same historical event. The principal contribution of this research lies in integrating a critical historiographical approach with a global historical perspective. This combination provides a more comprehensive interpretation of the conquest by situating it within interconnected political, cultural, and

intellectual developments across the Mediterranean world. Consequently, the study contributes to the enrichment of Islamic historiography and demonstrates the relevance of interdisciplinary approaches for understanding the complexity of historical events beyond conventional military narratives.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. It primarily relies on library research and is based mainly on published historical literature. Although classical historical sources were considered, the research does not involve extensive examination of original Arabic or Latin manuscripts. Future studies are therefore encouraged to incorporate a wider range of primary sources, comparative manuscript analysis, and digital historical methods to produce a more comprehensive reconstruction of the conquest of al-Andalus. Overall, this study confirms that the conquest of Spain by Tariq ibn Ziyad represents not only an important episode in Islamic history but also a significant chapter in global history, illustrating the interconnected development of civilizations through political interaction, cultural exchange, and intellectual transmission across regions.

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