

Spain 1157–1300

A Partible Inheritance

Peter Linehan

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To all my Spanish friends,
but to some more than others

A strange period this, in which the most brutal of realities
went together with the most mannered and delicate
literary culture! (L. P. Harvey, *Islamic Spain*, 170)

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Preface

Spain between 1157 and 1300 was a large land of mostly small places. The *domus municipalis* of Bragança, a place within our area until shortly before the beginning of our period, and an example of the sort of democratic gathering place distributed along the frontier where the clergy of Sepúlveda came together to harry their bishop up hill and down dale,¹ measures just seventeen paces across from corner to corner.

As the enigmatic land of three religions whose Christian kings were neither anointed nor crowned, Spain tended to be thought of by northerners in vertical terms. But how the Greek geographer Strabo had done so was as ‘an ox-hide extending in length from west to east, its fore-parts towards the east, and in breadth from north to south.’² And that was the basis of the description of the boundary of a property sold by Domingos Martins in 1220 as lying along ‘the road that goes from Coimbra to Málaga’,³ that is, along an Atlantic to Mediterranean axis. To that extent, the peninsula continued to think of itself horizontally, in accordance with a Visigothic orientation.

But *only* to that extent. For reasons to be explained I have refrained from treating the histories of the kingdoms of Castile and Aragón either as uncoupled parts of a Visigothic whole suspended in 711 or as anticipating the union of the two thrones in 1469. That strategy, by contrast with the procedure of Castile’s own thirteenth-century historians for whom all lordships other than Castile-León’s were illicit and therefore to be relegated to appendices,⁴ has determined the arrangement of the chapters of this

¹ Below, 23.

² *The Geography of Strabo*, 3.1.3, Loeb transl., II. 5.

³ ‘... de strata que vadit de Colimbria ad Malaga’: Lisbon, Instituto dos Arquivos Nacionais Torre do Tombo, S. Cruz de Coimbra (Antiga C. E.), docs. partic. mc. 16, no. 13.

⁴ Below, 5, 163.

volume. The same goes for Navarre and al-Andalus, whose incorporation into the story presents particular problems, as do the inter-relationships of its intersecting ethnic-religious and political planes.

One problem about the Crown of Aragón, as the battle of Muret demonstrated, is that the natural affinities of part of it were not with Spain at all but, despite the failure of all previous attempts to establish a regime straddling the Pyrenees, with Languedoc. Connoisseurs of the counterfactual may wish to reflect that it was only on account of a couple of chance deaths that Catalonia remained associated with Spain at all.⁵

On the face of it there is no better reason for running the histories of thirteenth-century Aragón and Castile together than for treating thirteenth-century Aragón and France likewise. An all-Iberia treatment in this period begs various questions, the artificiality of which will be referred to at various points in what follows.⁶

A different type of problem is the partiality of the chroniclers, which I hope I have had an eye for.

These days it is probably necessary to explain that the author of this book is a Christian. If a Muslim or a Jew had written it, it might have been a different book. But so might it have been if another Christian had done so. And all three of those hypothetical volumes would have been about the same place as this one.

I had not intended to crawl all over the political and diplomatic particulars of the Spanish kingdoms between 1150 and 1300 or to revisit facts of the matter already rehearsed in my contributions to three volumes of the *New Cambridge Medieval History*. But somehow narrative kept breaking in, with the consequence that the story sometimes gets chronologically ahead of itself.

The development (I had almost written the progress) of historical studies in Spain during the forty years since the death of Franco is probably already a subject for historical study. Scanning the shelves – and the tables and the floors – of Cambridge's incomparable University Library in search of grain amongst the chaff, I observe the inexorable development (or progress) spreading fungus-like week by week. Blackwell's ration of words might have been exhausted on the bibliography alone. In an exercise such as this the

⁵ Below, 84.

⁶ Examples of twelfth-century battles being refought into the twentieth include the Aragonese Ubieta Arteta's accusation of 'pancatalanismo' against M. Coll i Alentorn for laying claim to Huesca and other places which had always belonged to Aragón (*Hist. de Aragón*, 184 n. 14) and the Catalan Soldevila's lament in 1962 at the 'still disastrous consequences' of Alfonso II's cession of Murcia to Castile in 1179 (*Hist. de Catalunya*, 314; below, 35).

urge for completeness – for the latest monograph, the latest opened archive, the latest article – would be fatal. The cautionary tale of Lord Acton should remind us that history can only be done by cutting corners. So all sorts of interesting aspects of the period, all sorts of subjects – Berceo, Ramon de Penyafort, space (*espacio, espace*), Ramon Lull, pilgrimage, street-smells, castles and cathedrals, Military Orders, Vidal de Canellas, ‘Society’ itself⁷ – will be found either to have been neglected or to be missing altogether. For what is not missing – and some will think the coverage of Alfonso X disproportionate; plainly I do not – I wish to thank friends and colleagues in Spain and elsewhere for keeping me in the picture by sending me copies of their works. For that and numerous other kindnesses I am indebted to Paco Bautista, Maria João Branco, Inés Fernández-Ordóñez, Raphael Loewe, Avi Shartiel and Juan Miguel Valero. The late John Crook, Francisco Hernández, Magnus Ryan and Teo Ruiz all read drafts of part or all of the thing. None of what is wrong with it is down to them. As well as John Lynch, successive History editors at Blackwell, for whose departure from the firm I may be partly responsible, have been heroically patient with my dilatoriness.

The society organized for war, as it has so often been described, was also a society disorganized by war. Whether it was also a society in crisis I do not say, though since societies everywhere have always been in crisis I have avoided using the word in the pages that follow.

Biblical quotations are from the King James Version. Unless otherwise indicated, all other translations are my own.

PAL
1 April 2007

⁷ Over the previous thirty years historiographical fashions had changed, Beryl Smalley remarked in 1983. At the earlier date it had not been ‘thought desirable to add “and Society” to one’s title’: *Study of the Bible*, vii.

Chronology

- 1151 treaty of Tudején
- 1153 Poblet established and affiliated to Cistercian Order
- 1157 Death of 'the Emperor' (Alfonso VII); accession of Sancho III of Castile, Fernando II of León
- 1158 May: treaty of Sahagún; August: death of Sancho III; succession of two-year-old Alfonso VIII
- 1162 August: Ramon Berenguer IV buried at Ripoll; primitive version of *Gesta comitum Barcinonensium* compiled there; accession of Alfonso II
- 1164 Order of Calatrava instituted
- 1166 March: Synod of Segovia
- 1169 November: majority of Alfonso VIII of Castile
- 1170 Alfonso VIII marries Eleanor of England; Order of Santiago instituted
- 1172 June–July: siege of Huete
- 1174 majority of Alfonso II of Aragón
- 1177 September: capture of Cuenca
- 1179 March: treaty of Cazola;
May: papacy recognizes kingdom of Portugal
- 1187 loss of Jerusalem
- 1188 Cortes of León; Corts of Girona
- 1192 compilation of *Liber feudorum maior* completed
- 1195 July: battle of Alarcos
- 1196 April: death of Alfonso II of Aragón; succession of Pedro II; papacy recognizes kingdom of Navarre
- 1204 November: Pedro II crowned and knighted at Rome by Innocent III
- 1207 May: *Cantar de Mio Cid* written down

- 1209–47 Archbishop Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada of Toledo
 1210 study of Aristotle's works on natural philosophy banned at Paris
 1212 July: battle of Las Navas de Tolosa
 1213 September: battle of Muret; death of Pedro II of Aragón; succession of Jaime I
 1214 September: death of Alfonso VIII
 1215 Fourth Lateran Council
 1216–17 papal confirmation of Order of Preachers
 1217 June: death of Enrique I of Castile; succession of Fernando III
 1224 Castilian Great Leap Forward commences
 1229 December: reconquest of Mallorca
 1230 combination of León and Castile
 1231 reunion of Aragón and Navarre considered
 1234 Ramon de Penyafort compiles Gregorian decretals; Fernando III's imperial ambitions revealed; death of Sanç VII of Navarre; succession of Count Thibaut IV of Champagne as Teobaldo I
 1236 June: reconquest of Córdoba
 1238 September: reconquest of Valencia
 1247 rebellion of al-Azraq
 1248 August: establishment of Aigues-Mortes; November: reconquest of Seville
 1250 translation of *Lapidario*
 1252 May: Alfonso X succeeds Fernando III
 1254 Alfonsine law-code, *Fuero real*
 1255 Alfonsine law-code, *Espéculo*
 1256–8 translation of *Picatrix*
 1256–65 first version of *Siete Partidas*
 1257 Alfonso X elected German emperor
 1258 May: treaty of Corbeil
 1259 February: translation of *Libro de las Cruces*
 1260 summer: African crusade (capture and loss of Salé)
 1262 mid-June: marriage of Infant Pedro of Aragón and Constanza of Hohenstaufen
 1262–72 Alfonsine Astronomical Tables constructed
 1263 July: Jewish–Christian debate at Barcelona
 1264–6 Mudéjar revolt in Murcia and Andalusia
 ?1265–74 Alfonsine *Cántigas de Santa María*
 1270 work on Alfonsine histories begins
 1272–3 rebellion of Castilian nobility

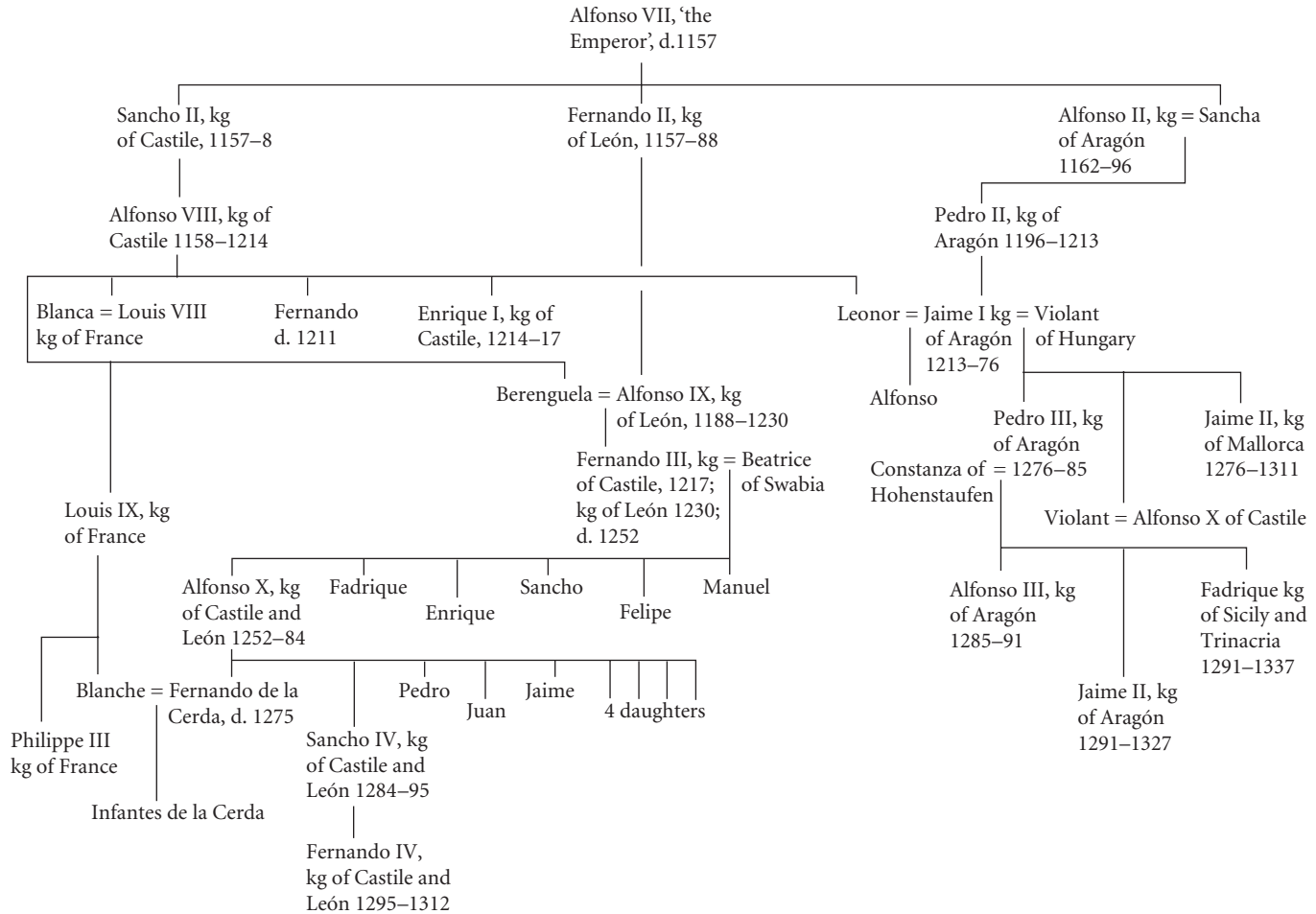
- 1274 work on Alfonsine national history interrupted
- 1275 May: Gregory X rejects imperial claim of Alfonso X; death of Fernando de la Cerda
- 1276 July: abdication and death of Jaime I; succession of Pedro II
- 1276–9 intensive period of Alfonsine translations
- 1277 Alfonso X dies to death Infante Fadrique and Simón Ruíz de los Cameros
- 1278 Infante Sancho co-rules with Alfonso X
- 1282 March: Sicilian Vespers;
April: 'Cortes' of Valladolid'; rising of Infante Sancho; work on Alfonsine national history resumed
- 1283 October: General Privilege of Union of Aragón conceded
- 1284 April: death of Alfonso X; succession of Sancho IV
- 1285 spring: French crusade invades Corona de Aragón;
November: death of Pedro III of Aragón; accession of Alfonso III
- 1287 January: conquest of Menorca;
August: Privileges of the Union
- 1291 May: death of Alfonso III; Jaume II succeeds to thrones of Aragón and Sicily
- 1295 April: death of Sancho IV; accession of bastard child Fernando IV
- 1295 summer: Cortes of Valladolid; Castilian *coup d'état*
- 1301 legitimization of Fernando IV
- 1302 treaty of Caltabellotta

Abbreviations

AC	<i>Archivo de la catedral</i>
ACA	Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Barcelona
AEM	<i>Anuario de Estudios Medievales</i>
AHDE	<i>Anuario de Historia de Derecho Español</i>
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid
BAE	<i>Biblioteca de Autores Españoles</i>
BEC	<i>Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes</i>
BFW	Böhmer
BHS	<i>Bulletin of Hispanic Studies</i>
<i>Book of Deeds</i>	Jaume I of Aragón, <i>Llibre dels Fets</i>
BRABL	<i>Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona</i>
BRAH	<i>Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia</i>
CAI	<i>Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris</i>
CAX	<i>Crónica de Alfonso X</i>
CAXI	<i>Crónica de Alfonso XI</i>
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis (Turnhout)
CFIV	<i>Crónica de Fernando IV</i>
CHE	<i>Cuadernos de Historia de España</i>
CIC	<i>Corpus iuris canonici</i> : see Friedberg
CLC	<i>Cortes de los antiguos reinos de León y de Castilla</i>
CLHM	<i>Cahiers de linguistique hispanique médiévale</i>
CLCHM	<i>Cahiers de linguistique et de civilisation hispaniques médiévales</i>
CM	Lucas of Tuy, <i>Chronicon mundi</i>
CSIV	<i>Crónica de Sancho IV</i>
CSM	<i>Cantigas de Santa María</i>

<i>Docs.JI</i>	<i>Documentos de Jaime I de Aragón</i>
<i>DrH</i>	Rodrigo of Toledo, <i>Historia de rebus Hispanie</i>
<i>EE</i>	Alfonso X, <i>Estoria de España</i>
<i>EEM</i>	<i>En la España medieval</i>
<i>EEMCA</i>	<i>Estudios de la Edad Media de la Corona de Aragón</i>
<i>ES</i>	<i>España Sagrada</i>
e-spania	http://www.e-spania.paris-sorbonne.fr
F.	Fuero
<i>GE</i>	Alfonso X, <i>General estoria</i>
<i>HS</i>	<i>Hispania Sacra</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>Ldf</i>	<i>Llibre dels fets</i> (orig. of <i>Book of Deeds</i> , ed. Smith & Buffery)
Lucas of Tuy	<i>Chronicon Mundi</i>
MGH, SS	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores
<i>MHE</i>	<i>Memorial Histórico Español</i>
<i>MiöG</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung</i>
<i>NCMH</i>	<i>The New Cambridge Medieval History</i>
<i>Part.</i>	Alfonso X, <i>Siete Partidas</i>
<i>PCG</i>	<i>Primera Crónica General</i>
<i>RABM</i>	<i>Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos</i>
<i>RdLA</i>	Rodríguez de Lama, <i>Alejandro IV</i>
<i>RdLU</i>	Rodríguez de Lama, <i>Urbano IV</i>
<i>REDC</i>	<i>Revista Español de Derecho Canónico</i>
<i>RFE</i>	<i>Revista de Filología Española</i>
<i>RIS</i>	<i>Rerum Italicarum Scriptores</i>
<i>SDSCL</i>	Domínguez Sánchez, <i>Clemente IV</i>
<i>X</i>	<i>Liber Extra</i>
Zurita	<i>Anales de la Corona de Aragón</i> (cit. by book and chapter)

Tree showing some of those mentioned in these pages





Map 1 Spain in the thirteenth century.

Source: based on J. Edwards, *The Monarchies of Ferdinand and Isabella* (Historical Association pamphlet), p. 4.

Past and Present

In its description of the four major routes from France to Santiago de Compostela, the French author of the twelfth-century Pilgrim's Guide contained in the so-called *Liber Sancti Jacobi* proceeded on the *Guide Michelin* basis that a country is what it eats and drinks. Accordingly, travellers through Navarre were warned against quenching their thirst from its rivers. Rivers in Navarre were poisonous. Further west the water was safer. There, though, fish and meat were both best avoided. Bread was another matter. Estella, for example, had excellent bread, wine, meat and fish. (But since Estella was more French than Spanish, that was not to be wondered at.)

The inhabitants of the regions through which travellers were condemned to pass were also evaluated. With their alarming grunts that passed for language, those of the bosky Basque country (apples and milk tolerable; high mountains; fine views of France from the top) were barbarians. The Navarrese were worse. Like the Basques, the Navarrese would kill a Frenchman for a penny. Like the Scots (to whom they were thought to be related), they went naked below the knees. A bestial people, they lived and ate like pigs, scooping up food from the common trough. Being more prone to bestiality than to theft, when they secured their mules they padlocked their haunches together rather than attaching their legs to a gatepost. Their very name betrayed the malignity of their origins (*Navarrus: non verus*: not straight; in a word, brigands). Once out of Navarre, matters improved, but only somewhat. For the Castilians were prone to viciousness, and even in Galicia (the region of this troglodytic peninsula which most nearly approximated to polite, that was to say to French, society), even there, the inhabitants were liable to fly off the handle.¹

¹ *Liber S. Jacobi*, 502–23. On the evidential value of the *Liber* and the circumstances of its composition: Hohler, 'A Note on Jacobus'; Díaz y Díaz, 58–60, 67–9.

Most of which had been said before:

Northern Iberia, in addition to its ruggedness, not only is extremely cold, but lies next to the ocean, and thus has acquired its characteristic of inhospitality and aversion to intercourse with other countries; consequently, it is an exceedingly wretched place to live in.²

Observed from without, Spain was therefore an easy enough country to characterize. If Gervase of Tilbury, writing in the early years of the thirteenth century, was to be believed, what distinguished Spaniards was the tightness of their trousers (not a good sign in a land opposed to restrictions to procreation).³ And fifty years later or thereabouts, another Englishman, the monastic chronicler Matthew Paris, voiced the opinion (which he attributed to King Henry III) that, in addition to being the scum of mankind, Spaniards were deformed in appearance, despicable as to social graces, and detestable in their moral behaviour.⁴

From the opposite point of view the wider world was characterizable too. Indeed, to the high-ranking Castilian civil servant, Diego García, the opportunity proved irresistible. In 1217 he delivered himself of a virtuoso performance on the subject. It was not people's moral behaviour that interested the chancellor of the king of Castile. In the case of the Scots, it was not even their dress. Rather than short-skirted, for Diego García Scots were, by definition, studious, just as Poles were serene, Normans amiable, Englishmen smart, Sicilians grave, Ethiopians pious, Hungarians bandits, and Irish dealers in tall stories. And so on, and so on, some of which may have borne a passing resemblance to early thirteenth-century reality, just as the author's estimation of the inhabitants of the peninsula itself may have done, of Galicians as chatty, Leonese as eloquent, rural *campesinos* as great trenchermen, Castilians as warriors, *serranos* as hard, Aragonese as constant, and Catalans as cheerful.⁵

All of which is illuminating, so far as it goes (particularly the ethnic emphasis to which we will return at the end of Chapter 8). But it does not go far enough. It does not take into account Spain's image of itself at the time of its 'loss' to the Muslim, as recorded in Alfonso X's national history in the 1270s, as a place enclosed with its inhabitants wrestling Miltonically

² *The Geography of Strabo*, 3.1.2, Loeb transl., II. 3.

³ *Otia imperialia*, 299. The loose dress of Muslims was recommended by Ramon Lull on grounds of both comfort and hygiene: Hillgarth, *Spanish Kingdoms*, 168.

⁴ *Chronica Majora*, V, 450.

⁵ *Planeta*, 178.

to redeem themselves from the original sin of its last Visigothic king.⁶ Nor, instructive though they are, do the Pilgrim's Guide and *Planeta* provide a substitute for the chronicle of the age which students of the history of twelfth-century León and Castile so singularly lack. For the period between 1147, when the chronicler of Alfonso VII laid down his pen, and the date in the 1220s when the author of the so-called 'Anonymous Latin Chronicle' seems to have begun work, we possess no account at all of contemporary events in the central peninsular kingdoms. Nor evidently did the thirteenth-century historians. When they reached this stage of their story they turned to epic material. Bitty and episodic annals apart, our knowledge of these years has to be pieced together from surviving documentary material, which, in a land whose central records were lost in the fourteenth century, means only that fraction of the documentation that students have had the energy to seek out in the archives of beneficiaries. Only for the 1280s and 1290s – and even then only patchily – do we possess for the kingdom of Castile fiscal records of the quantity and calibre that historians of medieval England and France take for granted.

The causes of this long spell of historiographical amnesia in the west of the peninsula, contrasting as it does so strikingly with the activity of the first half of the twelfth century, remain to be identified.⁷ In Catalonia it was a different story. There, not only has the region's ample documentation been preserved in a central repository, but also, at the beginning of our period, in about 1162, monks of the monastery of Ripoll compiled the primitive version of the *Gesta comitum Barcinonensium* ('Deeds of the Counts of Barcelona'), that 'spinal column of Catalan historiography' which traced the county's independence to Count Wifred the Hairy's prowess in protecting it from the Saracen thralldom which the Carolingian ruler had proved incapable of doing. The confection of the *Gesta* was timely for more than one reason. Count Wifred (so called, the Chronicle reports, because he was 'hairy in places where hair doesn't usually grow') had died in about 897. Catalan independence was therefore a good half-century more advanced than the Castilian variety, wrested by the counts of Castile from the kings of León. Moreover, since Wifred's descendant, Count Ramon Berenguer IV of Barcelona, had inherited his mother's rights to the county of Provence, the interest in the Midi that the king of France was beginning to exhibit in 1154 may have seemed unhealthy. When he and Louis VII had met in that year, in the course of the Capetian's high-profile pilgrimage to Santiago, the count would have been aware of

⁶ *PCG*, c. 558 (p. 311a₃₈): '... cerrada toda en derredor: dell un cabo de los montes Pirineos que llegan fasta la mar, de la otra parte del mar Oceano, de la otra del mar Tirineo'.

⁷ Reilly, 252; Linehan, *History*, 246–7.

the other's earlier scheme to invade the peninsula. On that occasion, having made such a poor job of harrying Islam in the East during the Second Crusade, he had contemplated trying again in the West, all without so much as the by-your-leave of Spain's Christian rulers. With the 'Song of Roland' twelfth-century Europe's collective refrain, this was all too typical.⁸

To Spaniards the French were intolerable. By the account of some of them, rather than suffering defeat at Roncesvalles, Charlemagne had reconquered Spain from the Moors 'as far as Córdoba', whereupon the locals had then lost it again.⁹ One of the recurrent themes of this book will be the strength of the Spanish response that such vaingloriousness elicited. As our story begins, the figure of Bernardo de Carpio, the fictitious nephew of Alfonso II of Oviedo, was beginning to develop. This was the man who saw Charlemagne off when, in the words of the so-called *Historia Silense* (probably written between 1108 and 1119), 'as is the way with the French, corrupted by gold and without a bead of sweat on him raised in saving Holy Church from the barbarians, Charlemagne went home'.¹⁰

To return to Catalonia. Historiography provided Catalonia with some compensation for the comparative disadvantage associated with its remoteness from the pilgrim road, for the lack of those hooligans and subversives from northern Europe who in certain circumstances might become the heroes of Christendom's southern frontier. It provided its count with the sort of ideological underpinning that the king of Castile would be seen to be seeking in the 1180s.

In the absence of such evidence as that with which their colleagues to the north are so generously provided – the writings of Walter Map and Robert of Torigni, the Pipe Rolls – historians of twelfth-century Spain have become accustomed to concentrating their attention instead on such issues as the direction in which rivers run, the topography of mountains and plains, and the shock to the system of butter-tolerant northerners at the heights of the Despeñaperros pass as they encountered the blinding light of al-Andalus and entered an olive-based economy. The contrasts were extreme; the mountainous region between Toledo and Ávila was appropriately described by the papal chancery in 1216 as 'alpine'.¹¹ In this connexion the reach-me-down

⁸ Coll i Alentorn, 187–91; *Gesta comitum Barcinonensium*, 5; Bisson, 'Essor de la Catalogne', 459–62; *Gesta comitum Barcinonensium*, 4.; Miret i Sans; Linehan, *History*, 276–7.

⁹ Defourneaux, *Les Français en Espagne*, 273. As late as the 1270s the (French) Master-General of the Dominicans, Humbert de Romans, was repeating the *canard*: *Opusculum tripartitum*, 193, 206.

¹⁰ Defourneaux, *Les Français en Espagne*, 258–316.

¹¹ AC Toledo, I.4.N.1.12 (Mansilla, *Honorio III*, no. 19). Similarly in 1188: Rassow, 6.

categories of modern French historical scholarship have proved useful and the experience of those Frenchmen who came to Castile in 1212 to fight for the Cross can be prayed in aid: the former for insights which have helped to liberate the subject somewhat from the costive limitations of documentary minutiae; the latter for the warriors' disappointment on being denied the booty they sought, which, combined with their capitulation to heat and diarrhoea, caused them to return home even before battle had been joined.¹²

Armies also marched on their stomachs. The author of the Pilgrim Guide had a point: if bread mattered, so did gastric fluxes. Whatever other perils it may have had in store for twelfth-century pilgrims, at least the journey westward towards Santiago was through terrain recognizable as familiar, adorned with such features as trees and grass, sheep and rivers. The rivers may have been poisonous, but at least they were wet. By contrast, such foreigners as crossed the Tagus in the years after 1212 found themselves in a desert. In those same years Castilian historians were engaged in putting the peninsular past in order and perfecting an account of it that has remained in place ever since. In the very structuring of their presentation of the period with which this volume will be concerned, Castile's thirteenth-century historians betrayed their conviction that within the Spanish peninsula Castile alone enjoyed political legitimacy. By the archiepiscopal author of the first general history of Spain since the beginning of history itself and the compilers of the earliest exercise in royal historiography alike, the kings of Navarre, Aragón and Portugal were treated as interlopers, faring even worse than the rulers of al-Andalus. Whereas both in Archbishop Rodrigo of Toledo's *De rebus Hispanie* and Alfonso X's *Estoria de España* the history of the Muslim south was integrated with that of the Castilian north, the rulers of the other Christian kingdoms were treated as peripheral figures and accorded only walk-on parts. It was only when, and only in so far as, particulars of their past were required in order to make sense of the story of the modern descendants of the paladins of Spain's Gothic period, when they made either love or war with them for example, that their very existence was so much as acknowledged.¹³

It is a version of that hierarchical arrangement that will be adopted in this attempt to convey to an English-speaking readership some sense of this multi-dimensional complex. The alternative would have been two or three (or twenty or thirty) self-standing chapters to be fitted together by the reader as best he or she might. It will be for others to judge whether

¹² Vicens Vives, *Manual*, 143–53; Barrios García, *Estructuras agrarias*, 81–109; below, 54.

¹³ Fernández-Ordóñez, *Las Estorias de Alfonso el Sabio*, 23–4.

for that readership a Crown of Aragon-centred or an al-Andalus-centred, or even a Navarre-centred, approach to the history of a century and a half, during which in territorial terms the kingdoms of León and Castile, first independently and then combined, loomed largest on the peninsular scene, might have made better (as opposed to more politically correct) sense. However, there could be no justification for anything more than a version of such an arrangement. For reasons to be explained, strict adherence to it as an organizational principle would be perverse and anachronistic. In the course of the 1180s, as Catalan scribes were being instructed to refrain from dating documents by the French regnal year, the king of Castile had abandoned his Gothic credentials, by the 1230s the Castilian chronicler (and chancellor) had written the Goths out of the story, and in the 1280s the official history followed suit, drawing a line at the year 711 and crediting the recovery of the peninsula from Islam not to the descendants of that discredited clique but to subsequent generations of its indigenous inhabitants.¹⁴

According to the fourteenth-century statutes of the Spanish College at Bologna, the term ‘Spain’ was to be understood ‘in the large sense of the word’, as meaning ‘all the kingdoms beyond the Pyrenees.’ But that was not an agreed definition. Provençal troubadours tended to distinguish ‘Espanha’ from Aragón and to reserve the term ‘espanhol’ for the inhabitants of the kingdoms of Castile and León. In the *Liber provincialis* of the Roman Church the dioceses of Calahorra and Pamplona were identified as being ‘on the way into Spain and Castile’, in 1258 a visiting Norwegian delegation treated ‘Castile’ and ‘Spain’ as interchangeable terms, and in 1282 a German political theorist remarked that, although Spain had many kings, only one of its kingdoms was actually called ‘the kingdom of the Spaniards’.¹⁵

That is why there is no better justification for combining the thirteenth-century histories of Aragón and Castile than for combining those of Aragón and France. Despite occasional posturing by both parties, the diplomatic record provides nothing adequate. In Martínez Ferrando’s catalogue of more than two thousand documents in the Aragonese registers relating to the kingdom of Valencia, only one entry concerns Alfonso X of Castile.¹⁶

The refusal of the custodians of medieval Spain’s historiographical tradition to admit the existence of the kingdoms which had sprung up since 711

¹⁴ Below, 38, 233–4; Catalán, *De Alfonso X al Conde de Barcelos*, 153; Martin, ‘Contribution de Jean d’Osma’.

¹⁵ Martí, 132; Alvar, *La poesía trovadoresca*, 292–301; Cambridge, St John’s College, MS. G.9. fo. 6ra; Guzmán y Gallo, 49–51; Alexander of Roes, *Memoriale*, 115 (‘tamen unum dicitur regnum Hispanorum’).

¹⁶ Madrid, 1934 (noted Burns, ‘Warrior neighbors’, 151).

has vitiated all subsequent attempts to tell the story that follows. Now more than ever of course, and of course rightly, that view of the past is rejected. Yet its influence lingers on, further complicating the task every modern historian of the period confronts as he or she embarks upon the history of a land in which a malign fate ensured that from time to time all its rulers simultaneously bore the same name. In the bemused words of one recent observer of the Iberian scene, ‘the mid-1150s saw three kingdoms established in Christian Spain, with an Alfonso growing old in Castile, an Alfonso in the prime of his life in Portugal, and a small Alfonso growing up to be heir of Aragon, all dedicated to spread moderate confusion among the Muslims of their own day, and extreme confusion among historians until the end of the world.’¹⁷

After the Emperor

In fact, when our story begins in the mid-1150s Christian Spain was home to not three but five kingdoms. In 1134 an illegitimate member of the Navarrese royal house had resuscitated the kingdom of Navarre by having himself acclaimed king at Pamplona. Garcia Ramírez IV, ‘the Emperor’s dear son-in-law’, had been conspicuous at the siege of Almería in 1147, the last significant feat of Christian arms for which ‘the Emperor’ himself, as he was forever known after his ‘imperial coronation of 1135, Alfonso VII of Castile-León, had been principally responsible.’¹⁸ Although over the next century and a half Castile and Aragón would both strive to expunge it, when the emperor died in 1157 the kingdom of Navarre persisted in remaining on the peninsular map, resistant to each of its intermittently powerful neighbours and backing on to the southern extremities of the recently established Angevin Empire.

This made four, and the division of Castile-León on Alfonso VII’s death in 1157 made five. Eighty years on, after the two kingdoms had been reunited, an anonymous chronicler (in all likelihood Juan de Soria, royal chancellor and bishop) ascribed the ‘unhappy’ division of the kingdoms to the ‘sins of men’. But this was wisdom after the event. It was not the view of either of the chronicler’s episcopal contemporaries, Lucas of Tuy and Rodrigo of Toledo, for both of whom the division of the kingdom was simply in accordance with customary practice. In 1157 division of the ‘empire’ into

¹⁷ Brooke, 319.

¹⁸ Reilly, 184; ‘Prefatio de Almaria’, ed. Gil, lines 286–8 (trans. Barton and Fletcher, 260). For the imperial coronation: Linehan, *History*, 235–7.

its constituent kingdoms had been allowed for in political calculation for almost a decade. In 1148 Alfonso VII addressed both his sons as kings, before the end of his reign the Infantes Sancho and Fernando, the future rulers of Castile and León, were both issuing royal charters in their own names, according to the troubadour Peire d'Alvernha, some of those who bewailed the emperor's death were only simulating grief. By the 1280s when the Alfonsine History was being improved, subversive sentiments such as these had been suppressed. But although that History's imaginative compilers conjured up an affecting account of the deathbed scene, replete with tales of the great and the good swooning at the prospect of the emperor's demise, and with Archbishop Raymond of Toledo, described as the king's inseparable companion 'both on the frontier and at home', very much to the fore, not even then was it suggested that there had been anything unnatural about León and Castile going their separate ways in 1157.¹⁹

Whether the division was also for the best would be for later generations to debate and determine, according to the then prevailing wisdom. To *Spanish* nationalists down the ages, for example, the separation of Castile and León between 1157 and 1230 has appeared a catastrophe because for them the principal item on the cosmic agenda has always been the annihilation of Spanish Islam. Equally imbued as they were with the confessional programme embodied in historiography ever since the ninth-century *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, to nationalist writers of the ages of Fernando III and General Franco alike, any deviation from the road to peninsular unification was by definition an 'absurd' step in the wrong direction.²⁰ To Castilian and Leonese nationalists of the present generation, the generation of the *autonomías*, by contrast, the question is rather whether the line that Alfonso VII drew between the two kingdoms before his death in August 1157 was drawn in the right place.

That was the question that exercised Alfonso's two sons, Sancho III of Castile and Fernando II of León, when they met at Sahagún in May 1158. According to the 'Castilian' Rodrigo of Toledo, Fernando at once offered to do homage for his kingdom, only to be rebuffed by Sancho on the grounds that it would be unbecoming for any son of so great a father to do homage to anyone. This was symptomatic of the hypersensitive obsession with hierarchy that was to characterize the dealings of all Spain's kings, their heirs and their heirs' siblings throughout this period and beyond. It was also a put-down. So too was the archbishop's report that the king of León

¹⁹ *Crón. latina*, c. 7; Lacarra, 'Lento predominio'; Escalona, 531; González, *Alfonso VIII*, I, 664–5; Reilly, 229; Alvar, *Poesía trovadoresca*, 39–40; *CM*, IV, 77; *DrH*, VII, 11; *PCG*, 662ab.

²⁰ Thus González Jiménez, 'Fernando III legislador', 114.

arrived at Sahagún smelling of the farmyard, causing his elder brother to insist on his taking a bath before they sat down to dinner together. What D. Rodrigo's authority was for this story we do not know. But, unless it was his own invention, it reflected Castilian disdain of uncouth provincials such as is recited to this day by smart *madrileños*. Fernando may not have forgotten the slight when in August 1158 his fastidious brother died, leaving him master of the field. According to the Leonese Lucas of Tuy, Fernando II was all things to all men, energetic, very pious, a king everyone preferred to love than to fear, and (if that has a sinister ring to it) at least not notorious as his son Alfonso IX would be for his treatment of those who crossed him. Even so, the possibility has to be allowed for that, like his son after him, he harboured memories of the insult and that it remained with him and influenced his actions in the years to come.²¹

The agenda that Sancho and the deodorized Fernando settled down to at Sahagún in May 1158 (which Rodrigo of Toledo, incidentally, fails to mention) concerned the institutionalization of the division of their father's empire. But for one particular, the treaty of Sahagún might have exercised an influence equivalent to that of the treaty of Tudején of January 1151. Then Alfonso VII and Ramón Berenguer IV had combined to partition the kingdom of Navarre and agreed their respective zones of future reconquering activity in the south and south-east. Having sworn eternal collaboration against all-comers (other than their uncle Ramón Berenguer) and eternal enmity against the king of Portugal, at Sahagún the brothers planned the partition of the 'land of the Saracens' in the south and south-west. Portugal was to be expunged and Seville shared between them. Fernando was to have the territory towards the Atlantic as far as Lisbon; Sancho everything as far as Granada.²² In 1158, therefore, it was already the consensus that Seville was the terrestrial meridian of Christian ambition.

The treaty of Sahagún completed the pragmatic division of the peninsula that had been initiated at Tudején. At Nájima three months earlier Sancho had surrendered the kingdom of Zaragoza to Ramón Berenguer and his successors in return for homage and Aragonese recognition of Castile's primacy of honour. The new king of Castile was perhaps contemplating a crown-wearing in the style of his father's of 1135, with the Aragonese ruler of Zaragoza in an appropriately servile ceremonial role.²³ Now, in the same rationalizing spirit, he sought to bring order to the Tierra de Campos, the untidiest stretch of the border between Castile and León. With

²¹ *DrH*, VII. 13 (cf. González, *Fernando II*, 30–1); *CM*, IV. 79; below, 39–40.

²² Miquel Rosell, nos. 29, 44; González, *Alfonso VIII*, I, 775–6; Reilly, 219.

²³ Miquel Rosell, no. 36.

its pre-existing mosaic of jurisdictions and loyalties, this region was to remain a trouble spot until the end of the century and beyond. In 1158 Fernando had recently evicted the Catalan counts, Ponce de Minerva and Ponce de Cabrera, and Osorio Martínez, from areas he deemed to be part of his kingdom. By the treaty of Sahagún Sancho acknowledged his brother's claim in return for the latter's undertaking to allow the Castilians to retain their holdings within the disputed area as 'temporary fees', and in May 1158 there was no reason why this arrangement should not have held.

There was even some prospect of making headway in the 'land of the Saracens' itself. As Juan de Soria remarked in the next century, Alfonso VII had been 'fortunate in taking places, less so in keeping them'.²⁴ Easy come, easy go. Similar things would be said after Seville was reconquered a century later. The chronicle of Alfonso's own reign reveals why this was so. His reign had been marked by a series of spectacular sorties south and sieges successfully completed. But he was overstretched, his lines of communication were over-extended. Places quickly taken were as soon lost. Almería, whose capture in 1147 had been the toast of Europe, was recovered by the Almohads in the month of the Emperor's death.

Hence the significance of the only other event of Sancho III's reign mentioned by the chroniclers. The emperor had entrusted the Templars with custody of Calatrava, the fortress at the gateway to Andalusia that he had conquered in 1147. But ten years later, with an Almohad counter-attack believed to be imminent and the Templars unable to provide for its defence, the place was returned to Sancho III. Whereupon Raimundo, the Cistercian abbot of the Navarrese monastery of Fitero, brought a party of volunteers there from Toledo to oppose the enemy and, when the enemy did not materialize, constituted them as a religious confraternity which in 1164 was affiliated to the Cistercian order and provided with a version of the Cistercian rule dedicating them to warfare both defensive and offensive. Thus was founded the Order of Calatrava, the first of the Spanish Military Orders, to be followed in 1170 by Fernando II of León's establishment of the Order of Santiago, an order dedicated to the same purpose but differing from the other to the extent that its knights were lay-brothers and therefore allowed to marry. The two rules were approved by Pope Alexander III in 1164 and 1175 respectively. Whereas in Aragón the Templars and Hospitallers remained dominant, the kingdoms of Castile and León were now provided with indigenous military orders charged, in the words of the pope's commission to the Order of Santiago, with the task of 'fighting always against the enemies of Christ's cross for the defence of Christendom'. Here were

²⁴ *Crón. latina*, c. 5.