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***El rei-cavalleresc: Chivalry, Crusade and the
Conduct of War in James I of Aragon's
Llibre dels Fets***

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Abstract

As a chivalric text, the *Llibre* contains many rich thematic seams. This dissertation, however, will focus on James's chivalric kingship in action; the extent of his commitment to the idea of crusading; and on what light the text can shed on the nature of conduct of warfare in Iberia.

The first chapter discusses James's chivalric ideology and how he implemented this both in his dealings with his subjects and also on the battlefield. It will focus on his perception of what constituted honourable conduct and how he applied this in a practical sense. Through the analysis of this theme I will show how James's instructive stories illustrate his perception of chivalric kingship in action and highlight how the *Llibre* is such a rich chivalric text. As already mentioned, literature on this theme, especially in English, is sparse.

The second chapter analyses James's attitude to crusading. It argues that although the *Llibre* rarely makes overt reference to the tenets and vocabulary of crusading, it nonetheless portrays James as a consistent and devoted supporter of crusade and makes clear that this exercised a great influence on his conduct. Although Burns and Smith have gone into depth in analysing James's piety, still very little is known about his attitude and ideological commitment to crusading, in spite of the fact that his crusading endeavours were many and frequently successful.

The third chapter illustrates how the *Llibre* can be used to demonstrate the developing laws and customs pertaining to the conduct of war in Iberia in the thirteenth century. Warfare was subject to more exacting legislation in Spain than anywhere else in contemporary Europe and I will show how the text can be used to contextualise and develop this theme. To do so I will make frequent reference to the more theoretical *Siete Partidas* written by James's son-in-law Alfonso X 'el Sabio' of Castile.¹

The main purpose of this work, however, is to illustrate how these themes are all intrinsically linked to one another by James's perception of chivalric kingship. The *Llibre* should be read as one of the most important and instructive chivalric texts of the thirteenth century. James's military renown as a crusader, conqueror and strategist preceded him even in his own time, but through his chronicle we can see that he aspired to be remembered for more than just his victories, but also the manner in which he achieved them. Jean Flori bestowed upon Richard the Lionheart the epithet '*le roi-chevalier*' (the 'king-knight' or 'knightly king'), which though certainly an apt description of this illustrious warrior's life, might just as easily be applied to define the deeds of James I 'the Conqueror' king of Aragon.

¹ Alfonso X of Castile wrote a highly detailed civil code in seven volumes called the *SietePartidas* (Seven Levels), the second of which deals with secular society; *Las SietePartidas Volume 2: Medieval Government*, ed. R. I. Burns, trans. S. P. Scott, 5 vols. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001).

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List of Abbreviations

<i>ACA</i>	<i>Archivo de la Corona de Aragon</i>
<i>CJI</i>	<i>The Book of Deeds of James I of Aragon: A translation of the Medieval Catalan Llibre dels Fets</i> , tr. D. J. Smith and H. Buffery (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010)
<i>CDI</i>	<i>Colección de documentos inéditos del archivo general de la Corona de Aragon</i> , ed. P. de Bofarull y Mascaró et al., 42 vols. (Barcelona, 1847-1973),
<i>CSJDP</i>	<i>The Chronicle of San Juan de la Peña: A Fourteenth-Century Official History of the Crown of Aragon</i> , Tr. Nelson, L. H (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991)
<i>DJI</i>	<i>Documentos de Jaime I de Aragon</i> , 5 vols., eds. A. Huici Miranda M.D. Cabanes Pecourt (Valencia: Anubar, 1976-82)
<i>Diplomatarium</i>	<i>Diplomatarium of the Crusader-Kingdom of Valencia: The Registered Charters of Its Conqueror, Jaume I, 1257-1276</i> , ed. R. I. Burns, 4 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985)
<i>Joinville</i>	<i>Joinville & Villehardouin: Chronicles of the Crusades</i> , tr. C. Smith, (London: Penguin, 2008)
<i>Siete Partidas</i>	<i>Las Siete Partidas Volume 2: Medieval Government</i> , ed. R. I. Burns, trans. S. P. Scott, 5 vols., (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001)

Introduction: *El rei-cavalleresc*¹

‘Truly *stupor mundi*’ is how the late Robert I. Burns described the life and career of King James I of Aragon (1213-1276) and a brief record of his life shows that he is deserving of this illustrious cognomen. James’s greatest gift to posterity, however, was neither his conquests nor his administration, but a piece of literature, his autobiography, the *Llibre dels Fets* (‘Book of Deeds’), a first person account of his life and achievements.² This is an incredibly rich and unique text: it is the only autobiography of a medieval king, other than a fourteenth century imitation written by Peter IV ‘the Ceremonious’ (one of James’s descendants). ‘No king in history ever revealed himself better to posterity’, and despite previous debate, historians are now agreed that it is undeniably King James who is doing the revealing.³ As Soldevila argued, who else could the author be? Why would they (other potential authors) have written the work as if they were the king himself? And how would anyone else have had such an intricate knowledge of the king’s life?⁴ Scholars, however, are less certain as to when James completed his work with most postulating that it was constructed in stages from the 1240s until the end of his life.⁵

The purpose of the *Llibre dels fets*, as James states in his preface, is to inform his successors of the great deeds that he had managed to achieve through God’s grace, and thus to demonstrate to them how they too might achieve similar renown by following his example.⁶ It is, for all intents and purposes, an instruction manual in chivalric kingship in action written for the benefit of his heirs. As James’s career progresses, we observe the development of his talent as a strategist, the growth of his maturity as a knight and the consolidation of his authority as king. But the great drama of the chronicle lies in the accounts of the king’s role in battle, the storming of castles, and conquests of strongholds. In order to stress the king’s *auctoritas* and consolidate his chivalric reputation as a knight, the *Llibre* meticulously describes all those military actions in which the king emerges strengthened and conveniently leaves out or skirts round those where he does not.⁷ James seems most at home when he is excitedly describing his military campaigns. He takes great pleasure in recounting raiding and, in particular, siege warfare, of which he had much

¹ An adaption and translation into Catalan of Jean Flori’s description of Richard I ‘*Richard Cœur de Lion: le roi-chevalier*’. J. Flori, *Richard Cœur de Lion: le roi-chevalier* (Paris: Payot, 1999).

² *Llibre dels Fets del rei En Jaume*, ed. J. Bruguera, 2 vols. (Barcelona: Barcino, 1991); for an excellent English translation see: *The Book of Deeds of James I of Aragon: A translation of the Medieval Catalan Llibre dels Fets*, tr. D. J. Smith and H. Buffery (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2010). I have used this translation extensively throughout, but have also consulted the original when necessary for precision and clarity. All references to the *Llibre* hereafter will use the abbreviation *CJI* followed by chapter number in brackets (these are the same in both editions).

³ T. Bisson, *The Medieval Crown of Aragon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 84.

⁴ F. Soldevila, *Les quatre grans croniques* (Barcelona: Editorial Selecta, 1971), p. 36-37; For a discussion regarding how the *Llibre* has been studied both as an epic history and as literature see J. Aurell, *Authoring the Past: History, Autobiography, and Politics in Medieval Catalonia*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), pp. 40-54.

⁵ D. J. Smith, ‘James I and God: Legitimacy, Protection and Consolation in the *Llibre Dels Fets*’, *Imago Temporis. Medium Aevum*, 1 (2007), pp. 107-108; R. I. Burns, ‘The Spiritual Life of James the Conqueror, King of Arago-Catalonia, 1208-1276: Portrait and Self-Portrait’, *Catholic Historical Review*, 62 (1976), p. 6.

⁶ *CJI*, (1)

⁷ J. Aurell, *Authoring the Past: History, Autobiography, and Politics in Medieval Catalonia* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2012), p. 51.

experience.⁸ Large sections of the *Llibre* read almost as a guidebook for the prosecution of war in the period.⁹

The fact that the text is so rich in such detail and that it is the unique voice of a crusading king might lead one to imagine that historians of chivalry have made much of it as a source. Surprisingly, however, this has not been the case, at least where Anglo-Saxon and French scholars are concerned.¹⁰ One reason for this perhaps lies in language: medieval Catalan is simply not as accessible to the majority of scholars as is medieval French or Latin. The second factor is geographical: the English-speaking world tends to look first to France and the Anglo-Norman realm, and secondly to Germany and Italy for its examples of the norms of medieval Christendom, a trend that may well have been encouraged by Elena Lourie's 'Society Organized for War' thesis. The argument that the political-military development of Iberia was acutely and locally unique, essentially severs it from pan-European scholarship, which is unhelpful given the many parallels that can be drawn from the practice of war on both sides of the Pyrenees.¹¹ These reasons in themselves, however, do not provide a wholly satisfactory explanation for the neglect of the *Llibre*. Another factor then is perhaps the aims and approaches of historians themselves. Both Richard Kaeuper and Maurice Keen, for example, are trying to build a case for the independence of knightly piety (as separate from the conventional piety of the Church) within the paradigms of chivalry, and the evidence of the *Llibre* does not always conform to their intended interpretations. Kaeuper, in his book *Holy Warriors: The Religious Ideology of Chivalry*, asks the question of whether knights accepted the claim of merit through crusading or rather through 'quotidian' squabbles over vengeance, property, or the armed service owed to a superior lord. He then tells us that personal statements by crusading knights are rare, before citing some that back his proposition; the first comes from the chronicle *De Expugnacione Lyxbonensi*, which recounts the siege of Lisbon (1147).¹² This chronicle puts words into the mouth of Hervey de Glanville, leader of the Anglo-Norman force, as he urges the knights of

⁸ There are countless examples of James engaging in siege warfare dispersed throughout the *Llibre*, but perhaps one of the most interesting comes at the siege of Lizana. Here James personally took control of aiming and firing a *Fenevol*, a kind of stone-caster, with which he states that he managed to disable the opposing *Brigola* by hitting and 'opening its box' which was full of stones and used as its counterweight. *CJI*, (463).

⁹ For an analysis of James's campaigns, military tactics and strategy as described in the *Llibre* see: D. J. Kagay, 'Jaime I of Aragon: Child and Master of the Spanish Reconquest', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 8 (2010), pp. 69-108.

¹⁰ The *Llibre* is not referred to in the following otherwise excellent works on chivalry, despite the fact it is strewn with evidence that could be well used to punctuate the arguments of these authors: M. Keen, *Chivalry* (Newhaven & London: Yale University Press, 1984); R. W. Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors: The Religious Ideology of Chivalry* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); M. Strickland, *War and Chivalry: The Conduct and Perception of War in England and Normandy 1066- 1217* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); J. Flori, *Croisade et chevalerie: XIe-XIIe siècles* (Paris: De Boeck & Larcier, 1998); D. Barthelemy, *La mutation de l'an mil a-t-elle eu lieu? Servage et chevalerie dans la France des X^e et XI^e siècles* (Paris : Fayard, 1997). Though John France does make more significant use of it in J. France, *Western Warfare in the age of the Crusades: 1000-1300* (London: UCL Press, 1999), this work concerns more the practice of war in the period rather than its conduct or ideas of chivalry. Robert Burns does touch upon chivalric themes in R. I. Burns, 'Spiritual Life', pp. 1-35, but the primary subject of this work is James's piety. The same can be said of Damien Smith's essay, D. J. Smith, 'James I and God', pp. 105-119. Aurell primarily analyzes the text in context with other Catalan epic histories of the period (Aurell, *Authoring the Past*, pp. 40-54).

¹¹ E. Lourie, 'A Society Organized for War: Medieval Spain', *Past & Present*, 35 (1966), pp. 55-75.

¹² Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors*, p. 81.

his multi-national army to remain united. Kaeuper argues that de Glanville uses language referring to shame and dishonour rather than piety to get through to these knights: 'it seems equally obvious that in the pressure of the moment their [the knights'] vocabulary is more likely to turn to shame and honour, to the "sin" of disloyalty, than to more abstract theological arguments or terminology.'¹³ Indeed, the *Llibre* is a 'rare' personal response from a crusader, but it is not picked up by Kaeuper, presumably because it is not fully amenable to his argument. Yes, James does employ the same knightly language relating to prowess and dishonour as the *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi* puts into the mouth of Hervey de Glanville; but he also fused it with the deeply religious language that Kaeuper is trying to expunge from knightly piety. For James, as a king answerable only to God, a knight and a veteran of several crusades, the two strands were intertwined: shame in battle would not only bring him personal infamy; it would also be dishonourable to God, whose work he was carrying out through his deeds.

Themes and Approaches

As a chivalric text, the *Llibre* contains many rich thematic seams. This dissertation, however, will focus on James's chivalric kingship in action; the extent of his commitment to the idea of crusading; and on what light the text can shed on the nature of conduct of warfare in Iberia.

The first chapter discusses James's chivalric ideology and how he implemented this both in his dealings with his subjects and also on the battlefield. It will focus on his perception of what constituted honourable conduct and how he applied this in a practical sense. Through the analysis of this theme I will show how James's instructive stories illustrate his perception of chivalric kingship in action and highlight how the *Llibre* is such a rich chivalric text. As already mentioned, literature on this theme, especially in English, is sparse.

The second chapter analyses James's attitude to crusading. It argues that although the *Llibre* rarely makes overt reference to the tenets and vocabulary of crusading, it nonetheless portrays James as a consistent and devoted supporter of crusade and makes clear that this exercised a great influence on his conduct. Although Burns and Smith have gone into depth in analysing James's piety, still very little is known about his attitude and ideological commitment to crusading, in spite of the fact that his crusading endeavours were many and frequently successful.

The third chapter illustrates how the *Llibre* can be used to demonstrate the developing laws and customs pertaining to the conduct of war in Iberia in the thirteenth century. Warfare was subject to more exacting legislation in Spain than anywhere else in contemporary Europe and I will show how the text can be used to contextualise and develop this theme. To do so I will make frequent reference to the more theoretical *Siete Partidas* written by James's son-in-law Alfonso X 'el Sabio' of Castile.¹⁴ Through his analysis of surrender treaties from crusader Valencia, Burns does at times use the *Llibre* to address this issue, it

¹³ Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors*, pp. 81-82.

¹⁴ Alfonso X of Castile wrote a highly detailed civil code in seven volumes called the *SietePartidas* (Seven Levels), the second of which deals with secular society; *Las SietePartidas Volume 2: Medieval Government*, ed. R. I. Burns, trans. S. P. Scott, 5 vols. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001).

must be remembered here that it was not his intention to specifically address this subject, but instead to chart the highly complex process of socio-economic development and assimilation in post-conquest Valencia.¹⁵

The main purpose of this work, however, is to illustrate how these themes are all intrinsically linked to one another by James's perception of chivalric kingship. For James, crusading represented the apogee of honourable conduct, and material gain (as delineated by Iberian codes pertaining to the conduct of warfare) was the natural reward for honour through prowess on the battlefield. The *Llibre* should be read as one of the most important and instructive chivalric texts of the thirteenth century. James's military renown as a crusader, conqueror and strategist preceded him even in his own time, but through his chronicle we can see that he aspired to be remembered for more than just his victories, but also the manner in which he achieved them. Jean Flori bestowed upon Richard the Lionheart the epithet '*le roi-chevalier*' (the 'king-knight' or 'knightly king'), which though certainly an apt description of this illustrious warrior's life, might just as easily be applied to define the deeds of James I 'the Conqueror' king of Aragon.

I will use other contemporary Catalan epic histories such as the chronicles of Bernat Desclot, Ramon Muntaner and San Juan de la Peña and also documental sources from James's crown archives and papal letters to corroborate evidence from the *Llibre*.¹⁶ I will also make regular reference to contemporary Iberian definitions of chivalry as espoused by Ramon Lull (c. 1232–c. 1315) and Alfonso X '*el Sabio*' in the *Siete Partidas* (1221–1284), along with developing in more detail an interesting comparison with James's kingly contemporary Louis IX of France (1214–1270) using Joinville's chivalric biography.¹⁷ In terms of key secondary works, this dissertation owes a considerable debt to the works of

¹⁵ R. I. Burns, 'How to End a Crusade: Techniques for Making Peace in the Thirteenth-Century Kingdom of Valencia', *Military Affairs*, 35 (December 1971), reprinted in: R. I. Burns, *Warrior Neighbours: Crusader Valencia in its International Context*, *Collected Essays of Fr. R. I. Burns*, ed. E. Perry (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2013); R. I. Burns, *Islam under the Crusaders: Colonial Survival in the Thirteenth-Century Kingdom of Valencia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973); R. I. Burns, *Medieval Colonialism: Postcrusade Exploitation of Islamic Valencia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

¹⁶ *Cronica de Bernat Desclot*, ed. M. Coll I Alentorn (Barcelona: Edicions 62 'la Caixa', 1982). Very little is known about the life of Desclot other than what he reveals to us in his chronicle. It is believed that he was from Roussillon and that his chronicle was most likely written around the time that Peter III of Aragon conquered Sicily in 1282. Desclot's chronicle is the second of the four Catalan Grand Chronicles, the others being the '*Llibre dels Fets*', the chronicle of Ramon Muntaner and the Chronicle of Peter IV of Aragon; *Crònica de Ramon Muntaner*, ed. Vicent Josep Escartí, 2 vols. (Valencia: Institutio Alfons el Magnànim, 1999). Ramon Muntaner (c. 1270-1332) was a soldier who wrote a chronicle of his life which also covers the reign of James I; *CSJDP*. The Chronicle of San Juan de la Peña was written in the monastery of the same name at the behest of Peter IV as an official history of Aragon c.1370. The crown of Aragon is incredibly well documented, many of these records remain unpublished and unexplored in the Archivo de la Corona de Aragon in Barcelona. I was, though, able to draw upon two excellent editions of published documents and charters: *DJI* and *Diplomatarium*. I take final responsibility for all translations from these texts, though I would also like to thank two colleagues, M. T. Garden and Dr F. K. Young for their help with Latin, and Professor M. Rojas Gabriel for clarification of the Catalan.

¹⁷ Ramon Lull, *The Book of the Order of Chivalry*, tr. N. Fallows (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013). Ramon Lull, a onetime troubadour knight from Majorca, became a prolific scholar in later life and wrote a famous text on chivalry; *Joinville & Villehardouin: Chronicles of the Crusades*, tr. C. Smith (London: Penguin, 2008). Jean of Joinville (1224 – 1317) wrote a chivalric biography of his patron king Louis IX of France with the express purpose of having his pious master canonised.

Ernest Belenguer, José Goñi Gaztambide and particularly to the collected works of Fr. Robert Ignatius Burns.¹⁸

Before turning to the major themes of this study, however, it is important to provide by way of context a brief outline of the life and career of James I of Aragon.

Contextual overview

‘Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who knows all things, knew that our life would be so very long that we would be able to do a great deal of good works with the faith we had within us.’¹⁹

Born in Montpellier in 1208, James was crowned king of Aragon in 1213, at the age of five, after his father Peter II’s untimely death at the battle of Muret at the hands of Simon de Montfort. The orphan king then fell into the hands of his father’s conqueror and was only restored to his people through the diplomatic intervention of Pope Innocent III. From then on James spent his youth in the care of the Knights Templar at their foreboding fortress at Monzon in upper Aragon. This formative period had a profound influence on both his future spiritual and military development.

During James's minority powerful factions emerged in the kingdom of Aragon and his own position was often precarious. After leaving Monzon in 1217, his kingdom witnessed almost perpetual civil war until he finally came to terms with his nobles in 1227. This untied his hands to embark upon the invasion of Majorca in 1229, completing the conquest, along with reducing Menorca to a client kingdom by 1231. Thereafter he turned his attention inland to take advantage of the disintegration of Almohad power in Valencia. The conquest of the kingdom can be divided essentially into three co-ordinated stages with a later unexpected reprisal. The first, between 1231 and 1235, saw James secure the northern half of the kingdom. The second half began with James showing steadfast resolution in the conquest of Borriana in 1236 and culminated in the fall of Valencia itself in 1238. The final stage, 1239-46, saw the addition of lands south of the river Xúquer to James’s new kingdom. It was during these campaigns that James demonstrated his talents as a general most prominently, not just on the battlefield, but also in his ability to plan, fund and provision subsequent campaigns deep into enemy territory. James preferred strikes at important local strongpoints to pitched battles; once these strongholds fell he would enter into negotiations with the lesser towns and castles of the region.²⁰ James was not, however, able to enjoy his Valencian conquests for long as during 1247-58 he was forced into putting down a series of rebellions in Valencia, the most formidable led by his most implacable foe al-Azraq.

¹⁸J. Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia de la Bula de la Cruzada en España* (Vitoria: Editorial del Seminario, 1958). Goñi Gaztambide’s work is still the best and most comprehensive study of crusade in Iberia; E. Belenguer, *Jaime I y su Reinado* (Lleida: Milenio, 2008). Though not strictly a biography, Belenguer provides the best and most up to date account of James’s life and career that I have found. All translations from Spanish secondary histories are my own; Fr. R. I. Burns devoted much of his academic life to the study of Valencia in the latter thirteenth century and all students of this subject owe an enormous debt to his exacting scholarship.

¹⁹ *CJI* (1).

²⁰ For examples see: *CJI* (134-136) for Morella, (159-171) for Borriana, (333-360); For an in-depth analysis of James’s campaigns, military tactics and strategy as described in the *Llibre dels Fets* see: Kagay, ‘Jaime I: Child and Master’, pp. 69-108.

Whilst campaigning in Valencia, however, James was forced to somewhat neglect his rights in Languedoc and the treaty of Corbeil signed with France in 1258 shows his resignation to the irrepressible advance of Capetian power in the region.

In 1266-68 he led his last successful major campaign in aiding the king of Castile against Muslim rebels in Murcia. The 1260s also, however, witnessed the return of civil strife in Aragon and the 1270s brought a further wave of Muslim rebellions and wars with his barons. These years also saw his attention turn to the Holy Land, but embarrassingly he had to abort an expedition there in 1269 and little ultimately came of his participation at the Council of Lyons in 1274. By this point James was relying increasingly heavily on his son, Prince Peter, to do much of his campaigning, but he too was active to the last, exiting life in July 1276 as he had lived it, in the saddle against his enemies.

James's long reign coincided with much socio-economic change, not just in his realms, but also throughout Christendom. In this period the Argo-Catalan realm experienced the return of Roman Law, much encouraged by the king, which itself underpinned the increasing centralisation of royal power through more sophisticated methods of administration (the increasing use of royal parliaments and courts) and taxation. The economy also grew with increasing Catalan involvement in Mediterranean trade through the commercial centre of Barcelona. The king was obviously not directly responsible for all of this, but he was actively involved in many of these spheres.

1. Chivalric Kingship in Action:

The aim of this study is not so much to discuss the strategic or tactical dimension of James's wars, but rather the principles governing their conduct. It is, therefore, fitting that we begin by addressing the principle which he would wish us to believe inspired his conduct both on the battlefield and in his dealings with his subjects: chivalry. James reigned during a flowering of chivalry; though not all kings in this period were necessarily good soldiers, almost all were at pains to acquire something of a chivalric reputation.¹ Chivalry is a complex word whose meaning encompasses the concept of an armed elite, a style of war and a code of military behaviour in which individual honour reigns supreme. In chivalric society there were different ranks from the king down to the humble knight, and the lesser did service for the greater, yet there was a community of shared values and all members of this community rejoiced in the title of 'knight'.² Though such values were, by James's time, ubiquitous and relatively standardised throughout Christendom, it is pertinent that we turn to Iberian sources for our examples and definitions.

Ramon Lull (c. 1232–c. 1315), the one-time troubadour knight from Majorca and later renowned and prolific scholar enumerated the key virtues of chivalry as 'justice, wisdom, charity, loyalty, truth, humility, fortitude, hope and prowess.'³ His contemporary, Alfonso X of Castile (1221–1284), believed the four chief virtues of a knight to be 'prudence, fortitude, temperance and justice.'⁴ Alphonso, James I of Aragon's much lectured son-in-law, had been the recipient of James's own views on the key virtues of kingship, which were similar to those of Lull and may very well have informed Alphonso's work.⁵ In a meeting at Tarazona in 1269, James advised Alfonso that he must always keep his word; that he must abide by the charters that he makes, and that he must be just and give justice openly.⁶ He adds, however, that he must retain all of the people under his lordship, but, if he cannot, then he must give greater priority to the Church and the ordinary people at the expense of knights,

'because God loves the people more than knights... And if he could retain all parts, that would be better, but if not, then he should retain these two, for with them he could destroy the others.'⁷

This latter comment offers an insight into James's own prejudices against the nobility and also into the distinctive nature of royal power: the fact that James can even consider advising an alliance of crown, clergy and common people as a potential bulwark against the knightly class tells us much about the potency and significance of the citizen militias in the grand scheme of thirteenth century warfare in Iberia. No twelfth or thirteenth century king

¹ France, p. 39.

² France, *Western Warfare*, p. 53.

³ Ramon Lull, p. 47.

⁴ *Siete Partidas*, 2:21: (4).

⁵ For a general overview of chivalry in the Middle ages, see M. Keen, *Chivalry*; For its religious dimension and knightly piety, see Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors*; For a discussion of *Llibre dels Fets* as a chivalric text see Aurell, *Authoring the Past*, pp. 40-54; Burns, 'Spiritual Life', pp. 1-35.

⁶ James was indeed at Tarazona in December 1269. J. Miret y Sans, *Itinerari de Jaume I "El Conqueridor"* (Barcelona: INST^e EST. CATALANS, 2004), p. 234.

⁷ *CJI* (498).

of England or France could have soberly considered counselling likewise. Nor was this merely a throwaway comment from James: he tells us earlier how he threatened his recalcitrant barons at the *Cortes* of Zaragoza in 1265 with the use of the municipal militias of the realm, noting ‘I have all the towns of Aragon and Catalonia that would be against you, and concerning warfare they are as skilled as yourselves.’⁸

From James and Alfonso we can deduce that the virtues of justice, honour and the defence of legal right were paramount in their idealised visions of what constituted ‘chivalric kingship’. And there are certainly some wonderful examples of James embodying such kingly virtues in the *Llibre* - the most famous being his allegorical protection of the weak by his refusal to break camp at Borriana until a swallow that had nested on his tent pole had flown off with her fledglings. Here, the king stated that ‘since she had come under my protection,’ he was honour-bound to defend her.⁹

This metaphor is certainly consistent with how James portrayed the sincerity of his protection offered to Moors who had submitted to his rule. He tells us that he fiercely defended their rights and punished anyone who harassed them. After the surrender of Valencia in 1238 he pursued and harried his vassal Guillem d'Aguiló who had plundered Moorish property ‘because [he] violated my law that the Saracens live under my protection.’¹⁰ Moving from the theme of protection to justice, James informs us that he promptly restored the Muslim property whilst drawing attention to his sincerity by stating that the Moors ‘recognised that it grieved us’.¹¹

It was also most likely to highlight his credentials as a defender of right and a champion of the weak that James includes the story of his protection of the widowed Aurembiax, countess of Urgell, whose lands had been seized by Guerau de Cabrera. Here he has the lawyer Guillem Sasala address him:

‘God, my lord, has put you in His place, so that you may give justice and reason to those who cannot find either; and the countess requests that you defend her rights.’¹²

The defence of legitimate right was a God-given duty of a king and James is at pains to show us that he was up to the task here and throughout the text.¹³

A further concern of the *Llibre* is its commitment to firm but fair justice, and it is to highlight this that James tells us of a ‘notorious’ incident of forged coins in Tarzona in 1267.¹⁴ After proving the guilt of one of the principal malefactors (a priest named Marquéz) the king lectures him:

‘you have done wrong, to God and to me, your natural lord, when you have denied the truth... and if you deny the truth, and I can prove it, you will fall under the Penalty

⁸ *CJI* (397).

⁹ *CJI* (215).

¹⁰ *CJI* (306).

¹¹ *CJI* (306).

¹² *CJI* (34-35).

¹³ D. J. Smith, ‘James I and God’, p. 113.

¹⁴ James was in Tarazona in September 1267. Miret y Sans, *Itinerari*, p. 402; *CJI* (466-471).

of justice. And if you tell me the truth you will be able to find mercy in me, since by the truth one finds mercy from God and earthly Lords.’¹⁵

Marquéz thus admitted to everything, giving away his co-conspirators into the bargain. James then promptly had the leaders drowned, as he readily admits, whilst doing justice to the lesser actors as he ‘saw was fitting’.¹⁶ The king’s words here can also be corroborated by the documentary evidence as the sentence survives.¹⁷ Again, this story is surely included to be instructive. Not only does it highlight the importance of natural right and the justice one might expect in breaching this, but also how the king’s right and laws are divinely ordained.

James, however, also found it difficult to always live up to chivalric standards and betrayed himself in his memoirs to be at times cruel, pompous, gluttonous and self-righteous. Indeed, his cruelty is shown on occasion throughout the text. For example, at the siege of Cullera he personally placed an artillery piece so that if it missed its target it would instead hit an area only inhabited by women and children.¹⁸ He even took pleasure at the death of one of his own sons, Fernando Sanchez, who had rebelled against him and was subsequently drowned by his half-brother, Prince Peter, when trying to escape in disguise from Pomar castle. James recalls: ‘this greatly pleased us when we heard it.’¹⁹ He of course, does not tell us of his most scandalous action, the removal of the bishop of Girona’s tongue, allegedly for revealing his confessions.²⁰ However, other than this, James reveals the rest to us freely and ‘nowhere in the *Llibre* does he seem beyond his times as gratuitously cruel.’²¹

James’s vainglory is even more prevalent in the text: he constantly reminds us, sometimes erroneously, of just how young he was when achieving a certain glorious feat, or conversely, near the end of the text, he recounts Jean de Grailly stating at the Council of Lyons that ‘the king is not as old as people said, since he can still give a great lance-thrust to a Turk’, after a display of fine horsemanship from James.²² His love of food and drink is also divulged throughout, showing us that he did not conform to the view of Lull, and later Charny, that temperance was a key chivalric virtue. This may well have something to do with the fact that he spent a lonely and hungry youth in the care of the Templars at Monzón.²³ Lastly, not unsurprisingly, given its purpose as a book of instruction for his heirs, James takes pleasure in self-righteously lecturing those around him, most tellingly, his son-in-law Alfonso X of Castile and his own son and heir Prince Peter.²⁴

It is in its depiction of chivalry, however, in a purely military sense as a code of conduct for the battlefield, where the *Llibre* is most edifying. In this regard, the most important themes to be developed are what it tells us about prowess and individual bravery on the battlefield, the qualities required of a commander and what constituted dishonourable

¹⁵ *CJI* (470).

¹⁶ *CJI* (471).

¹⁷ J. Zurita, *Anales de la Corona de Aragon*, ed. A. Canellas López, 9 vols. (Zaragoza: Institución el Católico, 1975-80), 3: (72).

¹⁸ *CJI* (196).

¹⁹ *CJI* (550).

²⁰ R. I. Burns, ‘Spiritual Life’, p. 5.

²¹ Burns, ‘Spiritual Life’, p. 26.

²² *CJI* (535).

²³ For an account of James’s time with the Templars at Monzón see E. Belenguer, *Jaime I*, pp. 48-50

²⁴ *CJI* (498, 499 and 563).

conduct.²⁵ It should also not be forgotten here, that because of his long minority and the independence this afforded his barons, it was imperative for the stability of his reign that James could be trusted to prosecute war successfully; kingly displays of valour and skill on the battlefield were a necessary incentive for his magnates to follow him.²⁶

Indeed, prowess on the battlefield was the ‘key to honour and the most essential chivalric trait’.²⁷ In a society dominated by intermittent warfare, commanders required their knights to show extreme courage in the face of the enemy, to desire glory on the field and to stand by their lord, even when all seemed lost. It was, however, perhaps even more imperative that a king display these qualities, for if he wished to encourage and persuade his followers to risk their lives, he had to fight in the front rank and show that he was prepared to risk his life as well.²⁸ John France has argued that, in chivalric terms, a commander’s strategic ability mattered far less to contemporaries than his individual battlefield exploits. He provides the career of William the Marshal as a primary example: he was a model of individual prowess who exemplified the chivalric ideals of his age and class; but there is little evidence that he ever displayed real ability as a battlefield commander.²⁹

The most vivid illustration of James displaying individual prowess can be taken from his description of the siege of Valencia. Here, James was hit by a cross-bow bolt but made light of this wound so as not to dishearten his men:

‘By the will of God, the arrow did not go right through our head, but the point drove halfway into my forehead... Yet we wiped the blood off, with the silk cloak that we were wearing, and we went along laughing so that the army would not be alarmed.’³⁰

This highly coloured account was corroborated when James’s remains were exhumed in 1835 after the sacking of the monastery at Poblet where they lie. Not only was there a large wound found in James’s skull, but his skeleton was also exceptionally large for the period and thus supported the veracity of Desclot’s famous description:

‘This King of Aragon, James, was the most comely of all men and was greater in stature by a handbreadth than any other. And he was well favoured and sound in all his limbs. And his countenance was broad and of a ruddy colour and his nose was long and straight and his mouth large and well-shaped. And he had large teeth, exceeding white, which seemed like pearls. And his eyes were black and his hair was bright as strands of gold. And he had broad shoulders and a tall and shapely body. And his arms were of goodly length and well-formed and his hands were fair and his fingers slender. And he had strongly sinewed thighs and legs of great length and straightness and of large girth. And his feet were of goodly size and form and richly shod. And he was exceeding valiant and of mighty prowess in arms and bountiful in

²⁵ For an explanation of what was meant by ‘prowess in arms’ and ‘the vocabulary of honour’ see Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, pp. 98-104.

²⁶ France, *Medieval Warfare*, p. 145.

²⁷ Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors*, p. 5; Geoffroi de Charny, *A Knight’s Own Book of Chivalry*, ed. R.W. Kaeuper, tr. E. Kennedy (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), p. 21.

²⁸ France, *Medieval Warfare*, p. 139.

²⁹ France, *Medieval Warfare*, p. 141.

³⁰ *CJI* (266).

giving. And he was gentle towards all men and of great mercy. And his heart and soul were set on warfare with the Muslims.’³¹

Here, James provides the perfect example to illustrate Kaeuper’s dual strands of soteriology in chivalry: fighting Satan, ‘*imitatio Christi*’ through warfare against the Muslims and in so doing enduring suffering or ‘*Passio*’.³² Kaeuper however, in keeping with the practice of the majority of scholars of chivalry, does not look to Iberia for his examples.

To contextualise what James tells us, an important point of reference is Jean of Joinville’s *Life of Saint Louis*, king of France and a contemporary of James.³³ Like James, Joinville too emphasises prowess on the battlefield as ‘the most essential chivalric trait’, and the most obviously effective way of displaying prowess was through personal bravery.³⁴ It is clear that for James and Joinville personal bravery in the face of the enemy was virtuous even when it potentially jeopardised the overall success of their ventures, so long as the action was successful. James notes that his impetuosity to get to the forefront of the action during the battle for Majorca brought him a scolding from Guillem and Roman de Montcada who berated him that in risking his life he risked the entire enterprise: ‘What if by chance you had got yourself killed?’³⁵ Likewise, Joinville tells us of Louis showing a similar disregard for his own life on the battlefield when landing in Egypt.

‘When the king got word that the standard of St Denis had landed he strode quickly across the deck of his ship, and, undeterred by the objections of his companion, the legate, he leapt into the sea... When he came to land and saw the Saracens... he set his lance under his arm... and would have charged at them if the preudommes... had allowed it.’³⁶

It is not just through his own conduct that James eulogises bravery, though this is certainly his most consistent example; he also shows his admiration for this virtue in others. When discussing the siege of Borriana (1233) James recalls the gallantry and courage of Don Bernat Guillem. Wounded by an arrow, which, we are told, was removed by James himself, James then dismissed him to recover in the safety of the camp. Don Bernat responds, ‘Lord, I will not do it, as I will get better here as quickly or quicker than if I were in camp.’ James valorises these words in his response: ‘we recognised that he was showing great courage, so we permitted it.’³⁷ Making light of wounds is also a theme of Joinville’s chronicle and at one point he plays down the seriousness of his own injuries, stating that he was fine as he ‘was *only* wounded in five places’.³⁸ Whether these incidents happened in reality or not matters

³¹ Desclot, (12).

³² ‘Christ’s prowess joins his suffering... Two strands of soteriology overlap... Knightly imaginations could identify with each.’ Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors*, p. 130.

³³ Joinville, pp. 141-336.

³⁴ The quote is from Richard Kaeuper’s introduction to Geoffroi de Charny’s *A Knight’s Own Book of Chivalry*. Geoffroi de Charny (c. 1300 – 1356) a French knight and author of at least three works on chivalry. He was a knight in the service of King Jean II of France and a founding member of the Order of the Star, an order of chivalry founded on 6 November 1351 by Jean II of France similar to the Order of the Garter (1347) by Edward III of England. Charny, p. 2.

³⁵ *CJI* (64).

³⁶ Joinville, (161).

³⁷ *CJI* (173).

³⁸ Joinville, (241).

little; what is important is that they show the type of battlefield behaviour that James perceived as admirable and desirable in his vassals.

What differentiates James and Joinville's Louis from other chivalric authors such as Charny – who focus almost entirely on individual knightly prowess – is the obvious emphasis they place on the role and example of the commander.³⁹ Ramon Lull cautions that chivalry was not a licence to do stupid things: 'chivalry and valour cannot be joined together unless there is wisdom and common sense.'⁴⁰ Here, Alfonso X agrees, stating that though valour is the paramount virtue of the commander, he must also exercise caution:

'Those who act in this manner [impetuously] show that they are imprudent, and do not pay proper attention to what they have to do before they act; therefore, generals should be cautious, and examine undertakings before they engage in them.'⁴¹

What separates James from Louis, however, is that he combined individual prowess with a proven track record of successful generalship. As one historian has commented, Louis's 'actual conduct of military affairs was deeply flawed.'⁴²

For James, bravery and prudence on the battlefield were not mutually exclusive, with the success of his actions testimony to this. It is at the siege of Balaguer in October 1228 that he first reveals to us his prescience as a commander. Quite delightedly he recalls telling Guillem de Montcada, that 'guile is worth more than force', after revealing that he had secretly been negotiating with the townspeople to surrender behind the back of their commander. Such guile would become a feature of James's future campaigns.⁴³ Later in the text, when describing an attack on Cullera in 1235, James shows equal pleasure when recalling the surprise and thankfulness of his army when he was able to provide them with the use of a *fenevol* (a stone throwing siege engine) as a result of his forward planning: 'better the man who guesses beforehand than he who has to find out afterwards', he reminisces.⁴⁴

James's ability to think quickly in calculating the extent of the danger before rushing headlong in to meet it, was, in his opinion, one of his greatest virtues. The marriage of the two is best illustrated during the siege of Borriana in 1233. One night the Saracens sallied out to set fire to several hundred hurdles that James had had assembled around the moat as screens for the attackers. He was swift and decisive in meeting the danger:

'And as quickly as possible, we put our purpoint over our shirt, not waiting on anybody to put our large tunic on us... we went running right to the hurdles.'⁴⁵

His actions here were not rash, because they were successful – he had quickly and successfully calculated the risk. They did, however, display the qualities that he believed

³⁹ As kings not only are they expected to set an example by their personal bravery and prowess, but also through their leadership and strategy.

⁴⁰ *Ramon Lull*, p. 49.

⁴¹ *Siete Partidas*, 2:23: (26).

⁴² France, *Medieval Warfare*, p. 39.

⁴³ *CJI* (43).

⁴⁴ *CJI* (193).

⁴⁵ *CJI* (172).

should be embodied by a commander: personal bravery, quick thinking and decisiveness.⁴⁶ Incidentally they are also the talents that have drawn fighting men to their commanders since time immemorial.

James also makes clear to his readers that a commander must set an example for his troops. After a hard fought campaign to take the frontier fort of El Puig de Cebolla in January 1238, the king planned to leave the position to take care of business elsewhere. When his vassals got wind of this, they too began making their excuses and preparations to depart. This troubled James greatly. He felt as though his 'labours were like those of a spider, as having done so much there, we could now lose it all in an instant.'⁴⁷ To avert this disaster he not only elected to winter at the fort himself, but also sent for his wife and daughter to do likewise in order to convince his timorous magnates of the sincerity of his intentions.⁴⁸

James's final instruction on 'chivalric kingship' is, however, the diametric opposite of honour through prowess: a warning regarding the torturous dangers of shame and dishonour. The shame that James is most concerned with is that of failing in his enterprises; here he is specifically warning his heirs of what they must be wary of. Nowhere in his chronicle does he tell us of his failed expedition to Peníscola in 1225, but we know that it happened; and its very omission is surely testament to the lasting scar and aspersions it cast on James's sense of his own honour.⁴⁹ Some indication of how James must have felt about abandoning this expedition is revealed by his deep distress at the very thought of abandoning his later siege of Borriana in 1233: he simply could not 'return to Catalonia and to Aragon with greater shame' than if he did not capture the town.⁵⁰ He would actually have rather been injured by an arrow in such a way that he would not die, but would give him a just reason to retreat and stand before the people with his honour intact.⁵¹ Things became so desperate that he even tried to make this happen by twice exposing himself to the defenders so that he might get wounded.⁵² This may seem an extreme reaction to the prospect of retreat, but evidence from James's thirteenth century contemporaries show that his fears were not misplaced. The *Siete Partidas* states that commanders must think very carefully before committing to an action, for if they fail they will incur shame, which 'men must carefully shun on all occasions.'⁵³ Joinville famously recalled a badly injured knight (his nose was hanging off from a sword blow), Everard de Siverey, who felt that he had to ask permission from the even more wounded and incapacitated Joinville, to leave the battlefield in order to

⁴⁶ The *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*, records a similar decisive feat of arms performed by Richard the Lionheart storming the beach at Jaffa: 'So on the king's command the galleys were driven towards the shore. With no armour on he threw himself into the sea first, up to his groin, and forced his way powerfully onto dry land.' *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*, trans. H. Nicholson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997), p. 355; Joinville similarly recalls Louis's IX's courage and quick thinking being decisive at Damietta: 'all should have been lost that day had it not been for the king' – six Turks seized his horse and were leading him away when he delivered himself 'by slashing them with great strokes of his sword'. *Joinville*, (236).

⁴⁷ *CJI* (236).

⁴⁸ *CJI* (236-238); Similarly, Joinville describes how staying in the East and sharing the lot of his army was the only honourable option available to Louis IX after the failure of his crusade. (427)

⁴⁹ *DJI* 1: (70 & 71).

⁵⁰ *CJI* (167).

⁵¹ *CJI* (169).

⁵² *CJI* (174); Similarly, Richard of Devizes records Richard the Lionheart at Messina 1191 threatening to remove the belts of knighthood of any knight who fled. *Chronicle of Richard of Devizes*, tr. J. A. Giles (Cambridge, Ontario: In Parentheses Publications Medieval Latin Series, 2000), p. 102.

⁵³ *Siete Partidas*, 2:23: (VI).

fetch and bring him back help: ‘my lord, if you think that neither I nor my heirs will incur reproach for it, I will go and fetch you help from the Comte d’Anjou.’⁵⁴ This incident indicates just how acutely dishonourable retreat from battle could be, not just to the reputation of the individual, but also to his family and heirs. Furthermore, those who dishonoured themselves through their misdeeds in arms were expected to make amends to redeem their honour. During a siege conducted in the Nile Valley campaign, Joinville recalls how a wooden covered dam was destroyed and burned by Saracens on the Comte d’Anjou’s watch. As a result, a new one would not be put in place until it was Comte d’Anjou’s turn again so he could make amends for his shame.⁵⁵

The adverse effects that acts of cowardice could have on a man’s standing in society are sharply revealed by the case of Count Stephen of Blois’s departure from Antioch during the First Crusade.⁵⁶ Orderic Vitalis notes that Stephen

‘was an object of contempt to almost everyone, and was continually reproached because he had fled disgracefully from the siege deserting his glorious comrades who were sharing in the agonies of Christ.’⁵⁷

Clearly, deserting one’s lord on the battlefield was cause enough for great shame, but it seems that doing so when engaged in holy war was the ultimate ignominy in the chivalric pantheon. James feared dishonour and shame above all else and despised others who brought it upon themselves. One of the few times that he displays genuine anger in the *Llibre* is in his recollection of an encounter with a crossbowman fleeing from the fray during the siege of Valencia. He seemed unharmed and James was incensed. He raged:

‘You foul smelling villain, how could you abandon your lord? By Christ, you can never have done a worse thing! Dismount from your horse.’

He then humiliated the crossbowman by removing his horse, weapons, his purpoint and his iron cap and leaving him with nothing but a tunic.⁵⁸

Both Ramon Lull and Alfonso X provide us with justification for James’s actions here. The *Siete Partidas* states that one may lose the honour of knighthood if he ‘flies from the battlefield; or abandons his lord...’⁵⁹ Lull comments that ‘there is no such office that has been made that cannot be unmade.’⁶⁰ He proceeds to state that knights who fear more desperately for the strength of their body when they flee from battle and forsake their lord, no longer ‘practise the office of the knight because of the villainy and weakness of their courage.’⁶¹ It is most likely however, that James chose to bring this particular story to our attention not just because he wished to highlight the dishonour one incurs by fleeing the battlefield, but also because it carries the double dishonour, as outlined in the *Siete Partidas*,

⁵⁴ Joinville, (226).

⁵⁵ Joinville, (209-212).

⁵⁶ Strickland, *War and Chivalry*, p. 122.

⁵⁷ *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and tr. M. Chibnall, 6 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968-1980), 5: pp. 324-325.

⁵⁸ *CJI* (229).

⁵⁹ *Siete Partidas*, 2:21: (25).

⁶⁰ Ramon Lull, p. 48.

⁶¹ Ramon Lull, p. 49.

suffered by the soldier for abandoning his lord. Of course, James has much to say about those whom he felt had betrayed him – his long reign began and ended in civil war and he is only too happy to use the *Llibre* to name and shame the perpetrators. He dealt with these betrayals with characteristic ruthlessness. James's mercilessness in dealing with those who betrayed him was, however, firmly rooted in contemporary chivalric values. Indeed, Ramon Lull argued that a lord who did not destroy a traitor had no business calling himself a lord (or even a man for that matter) at all.⁶²

On first reading, it would be easy to conclude that much of what James tells us regarding his exploits is more evocative of the chivalric deeds of the fictional knights of the Arthurian Grail Cycles prevalent in the French speaking world at the time, than of thirteenth century military reality.⁶³ Maurice Keen notes that 'in such stories the quest of seeking adventure and the simultaneous quest for union with God is fused together,' words which would also provide a succinct, but accurate summary of the *Llibre*.⁶⁴ Kaeuper adds that 'virtually all [such] romances present fighting and suffering as meritorious,' and provides the example of Sir Gawain in *The Story of Merlin*, from the *Vulgate or Lancelot Grail Cycle*, where Sir Gawain had engaged in single combat and 'had already been so badly battered that he suffered from it forever thereafter'; much like James, the proof lying in his exhumed skull.⁶⁵

Nevertheless, despite such extra-textual corroboration, we must also remain acutely aware when dealing with the text, that James I of Aragon is both the hero and author of this story and he rarely misses an opportunity to remind us of this fact. Indeed, the heroic actions of others are even written out of the narrative entirely if he felt that they had the potential to obscure his own. He barely describes the battle of El Puig (devoting two short paragraphs to it), which was the most important engagement in the conquest of Valencia, as he himself was not present.⁶⁶ Fuller descriptions can, however, be found in Desclot and the Chronicle of San Juan de la Peña, which describes the intervention of St George and an army of celestial knights who supposedly ensured that not a single Christian was killed. Desclot, however, records the number of Christian dead to be three knights and forty-seven foot soldiers.⁶⁷ Similarly, there is no mention in the text whatsoever of the deeds of James's son Peter who conducted two very successful campaigns against the Moors of Murcia in March and June of 1265, and which are noted by Ramon Muntaner.⁶⁸ Other than the king himself, the only actors who have any meaningful and recurring influence on the narrative are God and his second wife Queen Yolanda, in that order of importance.

In relaying events thus, James seems to betray himself as suffering from a degree of one-upmanship that is characteristic of the insecure; he always has to go one better than those around him. During the siege of Majorca, he tells of a Saracen *algarrade* (a stone throwing siege engine) that was the 'best that has ever been seen', and which could 'fire over

⁶² 'And the lord who does not destroy his traitor, what shall he destroy, and why is he a lord, a man or anything?', *Ramon Lull*, p. 52.

⁶³ Aurell argues however, that the popularity of these fictional tales had not penetrated into Catalonia: 'there is for instance, no Catalan version of the texts such as the many legendary narratives connected to the Arthurian cycle that appeared in France and England.' Aurell, *Authoring the Past*, pp. 2-3.

⁶⁴ Keen, *Chivalry*, pp. 60-61.

⁶⁵ Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors*, p. 102.

⁶⁶ *CJI* (218).

⁶⁷ *CSJDP*, (35); *Desclot*, (49).

⁶⁸ *Muntaner*, 1: (13 & 14).

six tents and penetrate into the army.’⁶⁹ He then trumps this Moorish engine by saying: ‘but one of our trebuchets that we brought by sea fired further than any of theirs.’⁷⁰ Similarly, James boasts that though he was in the last boat of the fleet to set sail for Majorca, by the first watch, ‘we found ourselves ahead of all the others.’⁷¹ As examples such as these permeate the text, it is only sensible that James’s chivalric pretensions should be handled with cautious scrutiny.

This however, is not an issue that is unique to the *Llibre*, but rather to all epic histories of the age. For example, like James, Joinville was also writing his history with a clear purpose, the canonisation of King Louis IX, and therefore undoubtedly took liberties when depicting the piety of his hero.⁷² Despite this, just as there can be no serious dispute as to James’s prowess, so too, it cannot be claimed, that Louis was not abnormally pious; the corroborating evidence simply bears too much weight.⁷³ Incidentally, we can find proof of both assertions in two letters from Pope Clement IV written to James in 1266. In the first, the pope strenuously condemned his bigamous living with Doña Berenguera Alfonso, advising that he should instead follow the pious king of France’s example. In the second, whilst again admonishing James for the same errors, Pope Clement could not help but allude to his prowess in arms:

‘You who overcame external enemies, have insufficiently overcome internal [enemies]. For what value is it to prostrate kings in the field, and to be vilely subjugated by a maidservant or servant in the home? Conqueror of so many enemies, by your own flesh you are thus conquered.’⁷⁴

Despite piety being the primary theme of Joinville’s chronicle, chivalry is an imperative secondary one, and as we have seen, many similarities can be drawn with what James has to say on the matter. Indeed, when dealing with chivalry as a battlefield code, the factual accuracy of these sources matter less than their intention: it is not so important that James and Louis acted exactly as he or Joinville describe, but that through their commentary one can piece together an idealised code of conduct for the thirteenth century battlefield.

Overall, the *Llibre* provides us with some invaluable first-hand evidence of chivalric kingship in action in the thirteenth century. James’s instructive stories clearly illustrate how

⁶⁹ *CJI* (69).

⁷⁰ *CJI* (69).

⁷¹ *CJI* (57).

⁷² Joinville’s Louis is portrayed as pious to the point of impracticality. In the heat of battle divine intervention is regularly petitioned, often with an elaborate ritual performed at the most inopportune time – when the Saracens were hurling Greek fire at his wooden camp Louis’s advice was ‘...for all of us to fling ourselves on our elbows and knees each time they hurl their fire at us, and pray to our saviour to preserve us in this hour of peril.’ *Joinville*, (193); His religious observance in his daily life as described is also quite unfeasible: every time the king spoke he crossed his mouth as if to evoke the power of the holy spirit, and that when he was held prisoner by the Egyptians ‘the Saracens said the king was the most steadfast Christian that could be found. In proof of this they instanced that every time he left his tent he placed himself crosswise on the ground, and made the sign of his cross all over his body.’ *Joinville*, (367).

⁷³ Indeed as stated above, Louis’s piety was well known throughout Christendom, and was used by Pope Clement IV as a positive example for James to follow in a letter rebuking his licentious ways. *Documentos de Clemente IV (1265-68) referentes a España*, ed. S. Domínguez Sánchez (León: Universidad de León, 1996), (56).

⁷⁴ *Documentos de Clement IV*, (56,74); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia de la Bula de la Cruzada en España*, p. 200; ‘Spiritual Life’, pp. 26-27.

he perceived a king should rightly behave towards his subjects, dispense justice, and most importantly, conduct himself on the battlefield. Regardless of its precise authenticity,⁷⁵ James's account gives clear illustration of how the key chivalric virtues of honour through prowess, the duty of the commander, and the avoidance of shame, could, and more importantly, should, be applied in a practical sense. Such evidence, especially when contextualised by other contemporary epic histories, gives us the necessary examples with which we can illustrate and develop the more theoretical contemporary works on the subject.

There is, however, one key theme of chivalric kingship, that has as yet escaped our attention, and it is perhaps the most important of all: the theme of crusade. By the thirteenth century every noble in Christendom worth his salt endeavoured to forge a reputation as a successful crusader, and it is indeed no coincidence, that Richard the Lionheart, Frederick II and Louis IX are remembered equally for their chivalric exploits and as leaders of major crusades. If it was a king's chivalric duty to defend his patrimony and rights, then surely as one of God's anointed regents on earth, he was under the even greater obligation to defend and serve his heavenly Lord.

⁷⁵ It is worth reiterating here though that we can corroborate the majority with documentary and archaeological evidence.

2. The significance of crusade in the *Llibre dels Fets*:

‘We wish to speak of good works, and good works proceed from and belong to Him.’¹

The majority of the ‘deeds’ recounted by King James I of Aragon in his own account of his life were officially sanctioned Crusades and it was through the completion of these ‘good works’ that he believed that he was carrying out the will of God.² We have evidence of James taking the cross on numerous occasions from his failed expedition to Peñíscola in 1225,³ to the Council of Lyons in 1274, near the end of his days.⁴ James was even the subject of a crusading indulgence himself, as in 1222 Pope Honorius III granted full remission of sins to all those who would come to the young king’s aid in the event of a Muslim attack on his kingdom during his minority.⁵ On the face of it, therefore, it would appear that crusade exercised a greater influence on James’s life than any other external factor. Yet he only mentions once throughout the *Llibre* any direct tenet or institution of crusading – ‘taking the cross’⁶, despite there having been several obvious opportunities for him to have done so (at this point James had been on at least three crusades). Such neglect prompted Jose Goñi Gaztambide to ask: ‘where in his chronicle does he mention the support that he received from the Pope?’⁷ It is, therefore, the aim of this chapter to analyse the crusades of James I of Aragon through the lens of the *Llibre*, to look into why he makes little reference to the direct tenets of crusading and, most importantly, given the fact that he is inconsistent in this, to ascertain why James lays stress upon themes of crusading as and when he does. To answer this question, James’s campaigns against the Moors will be broken down chronologically, beginning with Peñíscola in 1225 and concluding with the Second Council of Lyons in 1274, as well as thematically.⁸ First, however, it is necessary to set the context of the religious nature of warfare against the Moors in Iberia within the wider historiographical debate concerning what actually constituted a crusade, and of the relationship between crusading and the *Reconquista*, and vice versa.

The *Reconquista* and Crusading in Medieval Iberia

¹ *CJI*, (48).

² For historiographical interpretations of King James’s relationship with God as described in the *Llibre dels Fets* see: Burns, ‘Spiritual Life’, pp. 1-35; Smith, ‘James I and God’, pp. 105-119.

³ J. F. O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), p. 89.

⁴ *CJI*, (527-542).

⁵ *La Documentación Pontificia de Honorio III (1216-1227)*, ed. D. Mansilla (Rome: Instituto Espanol de Estudios de Historia eclesiástica, 1965), (298-99, 309), nos. 404 (15 June, 1222), 419 (22 November, 1224).

⁶ *CJI*, (241).

⁷ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 169; though published in 1958 Goñi Gaztambide’s meticulous chronicle of the history of crusade in Spain remains the definitive work in this field. I have, therefore, consulted it regularly throughout this chapter. All English translations are my own however.

⁸ As there are common crusading themes concurrent throughout the *Llibre* there will obviously be a degree of overlap. For example, James’s involvement in the Murcian Crusade 1264-66 will not be scrutinised separately as the relevant themes will be dealt with when evaluating James’s Valencian campaigns and his attempts to crusade in the Holy Land.

The first problem is to disentangle what has long been termed the *Reconquista* from crusade in Spain. The historiographical debate concerning the *Reconquista* is deep and complex. Much like the terms 'feudalism' and the 'Byzantine Empire' it is not one that was used by contemporaries and therefore was not defined by them. The traditional view, advanced in the nineteenth century by Martin Rios and built upon in the twentieth by Ramon Menendez Pidal is a nationalist and romantic interpretation depicting the *Reconquista* as a war of common Christian struggle to eject the Muslims who had conquered Iberian Christendom in the eighth century.⁹ In this interpretation the northern kings of 'Asturias-Leon-Castile' saw themselves as the uninterrupted heirs of the defeated Visigoths and thus took up the fight against Islam in the name of Spain, the Church and common struggle. Reconquest hence permeated the following seven centuries of frontier warfare and thus molded and defined the Spanish nation.¹⁰ This centralist and nationalistic interpretation obviously appealed to the Franco regime and remained pre-eminent until the mid-twentieth century.¹¹

It was, however, strongly disputed in the 1970s in the groundbreaking works of Abilio Barbero and Marcelo de Vigil who set about dismantling it from its foundations. They argued that the Northern regions of Asturias, Cantabria and the Basque Country could not possibly be seen as the heirs of the Visigoths as they had been their implacable enemies, just as they had been the enemies of the Romans before them. Therefore, what happened in Asturias after this date should not be seen in terms of a reconquest of lost lands, but as a continuation of what had been happening there for several centuries hitherto: resistance against an aggressive and expansionist power; but where once this power had been the Romans and later the Visigoths, it was now the Moors.¹² Josep Torró took this line of argument a stage further advocating that the term *Reconquista* should itself be banned, not just because of its historical inaccuracy, but also because of the nationalist ideology it underpins.¹³ Yet the phrase is still much used by academics, despite the fall of Franco and the discrediting of the traditional historiography.

Garcia Fitz explains that one reason it has remained in common parlance is because modern historians have employed it in a neutral sense to encapsulate the process of territorial expansion staged by the peninsular Christian kingdoms at the expense of al-Andalus during the Middle Ages. For these historians, he argues, socio-economic reasons such as the growing European economy from the eleventh century and the development of the feudal nobility were the main driving forces of expansion, not the idea of reclaiming lost land or

⁹ For an excellent and in-depth summary of the historiographical debate surrounding the nature of the *Reconquista* see: F. Garcia Fitz, 'La Reconquista; un estado de la cuestión', *Clio e Crimen: Revista del Centro de Historia del Crimen de Durango*, 6 (2009), pp. 142-215; For interpretations in English see: W. J. Purkis, 'Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Perspectives on State-Building in the Iberian Peninsula', *Reading Medieval Studies*, 36 (2010), pp. 57-75; D. W. Lomax, *The Reconquest of Spain* (London & New York: Longman, 1978).

¹⁰ R. MenéndezPidal, *Los Españoles en la Historia* (Madrid: S.L.U. Espasa Libros, 1991), pp. 172-176; O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, p. 3.

¹¹ Garcia Fitz, 'La Reconquista', p. 147.

¹² J. Faci, 'La obra de Barbero y Vigil y la Historia Medieval Española', *"Romanización" y "Reconquista" en la Península Ibérica: Nuevas Perspectivas*, eds. M. José Hidalgo, D. Pérez y Manuel J. R. Gervás (Salamanca: 1988), pp. 33-40.

¹³ J. Torró, 'Pour en finir avec la "Reconquête". L'occupation Chrétienne d'al-Andalus, la Soumission et la Disparition des Populations Musulmanes (XIle-XIIIe siècle)', *Cahiers d'histoire. Revue d'histoire critique*, 78 (2000) pp. 79-97, pp.83-84.

religious motivations.¹⁴ Garcia Fitz, however, then counters this line of reasoning by arguing that if it was simply a political-military processes, ‘why then use the term *Reconquista* with all the problems it brings when other more neutral terms such as conquest or annexation would suffice?’ He answers that it is because of the ideological implications of the word: speaking of *Reconquista* is not only speaking of an ultimate victory, but one which is justly given.¹⁵ The pillars of this ideology, he argues, which were well known to contemporaries, were those of just war and holy war. Both had been developing in Spain in conjunction with, but also independent to, the ideas of crusade as espoused by the reform Church from the mid eleventh century. For Garcia Fitz, the Reconquista was presented as an ideological construct that made the peninsular war against Islam a justified activity:

‘it seems clear that the concept of *Reconquista* is not only effective, but its use should remain operational. This is because this single term remains, without further explanation, the best way to explain the military expansion of Christian Iberia at the expense of Western Islam, coated and driven by a militant ideology rooted in the principles of just war and holy war.’¹⁶

Regardless of whether there was any truth in the argument, Hispanic sources from at least the ninth to the fifteenth century argued with fluctuating degrees of intensity that the monarchs and populations of the Christian north were the legitimate heirs of the Visigoths and, as such, had the legal right and historic obligation to recover what had belonged to their ancestors.¹⁷ The *Reconquista*, however, was not a monolithic programme with clear goals or set institutions, but a series of often unconnected campaigns, conducted over seven centuries, against an ever-changing foe. It was a long-term process that ‘evolved and was shaped by the influence of successive generations’, that unfolded with fluctuating fortunes, in changing political religious, social and economic circumstances.¹⁸ Between the ninth and eleventh centuries, the Christians in Spain were mostly on the defensive and thus the chroniclers of this period barely touched upon the theme of reconquest. By contrast, in the twelfth century, amidst changing political circumstances, the possibility of reconquest became very real and hence its ideology began to infiltrate the pages of Christian chronicles with greater frequency.¹⁹

But however closely associated they were ideologically, crusading and the *Reconquista* cannot be seen as synonymous. As Christopher Tyerman points out, a crusade was an event and the *Reconquista* was a process: ‘crusaders conquered, but if they subsequently settled, they did not do so as crusaders.’²⁰ Crusades, on the other hand, can be more clearly defined, having a clear goal and a set of institutional practices and spiritual privileges. Though these were not strongly defined initially, they became more or less standardised by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. There are, however, those who believe that what Iberian historians term as crusades were not true crusades at all. Instead they see

¹⁴ Garcia Fitz, ‘La Reconquista’, p. 154.

¹⁵ Garcia Fitz, ‘La Reconquista’, p. 161.

¹⁶ Garcia Fitz, ‘La Reconquista’, p. 201.

¹⁷ Garcia Fitz, ‘La Reconquista’, p. 162.

¹⁸ O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, p. 4.

¹⁹ O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, p. 18.

²⁰ C. Tyerman, *Gods War: A New History of the Crusades* (London: Penguin, 2006), p. 655.

them as campaigns of frontier conquest driven primarily by political and economic considerations. Tyerman argues that 'crusading did not set the military and political agenda, but followed it...[remaining] secondary or complementary to secular considerations and an older association of Christian conquest with religious war.'²¹ There is much truth in this and many Spanish scholars would agree with him. Garcia Fitz argues that while crusade ideology certainly augmented Iberian concepts of holy war, these ideas not only predated it, but also surpassed it with the *Reconquista* developing its own secular ideology of salvation.²² Goñi Gaztambide agreed with this view, at least in part, reasoning that the reconquest was certainly influenced by political, territorial and economic motives, but he adds the important caveat: 'were not also the oriental crusades, including the first, motivated by the same forces?'²³

Those who promote the argument that only crusades to the Holy Land, and in particular, to Jerusalem, can truly be considered as such are known as 'traditionalists': they include the scholars Carl Erdmann, Paul Rousset, Hans Eberhard Mayer and, to a certain extent, Christopher Tyerman.²⁴ Rousset believed that though the 'Iberian crusades' had papal encouragement, a degree of international character, because of French participation, and were also part of a general Christian offensive against Islam, they were not true crusades because they lacked the intention of delivering the Holy Land and were driven more by material motivations than spiritual. Furthermore Mayer argues that the wars in Spain were holy wars, but not true crusades: they were instead 'a substitute for crusade' for those who lacked the means or the will to go to the East.²⁵ These theories are contested by the 'pluralists', who believe that the crusades, wherever they were directed, were clearly definable military expeditions. So long as they adhered to certain institutional practices, they could be directed against the enemies of the faith wherever the pope felt that it was threatened. Jonathan Riley-Smith, the standard-bearer of the pluralists, believes crusading to be underpinned by three key institutional principles: the taking of the cross at a public ceremony where the crusader swore a vow to go on and complete a military expedition; papal leadership, whereby those taking the cross were answering a call that could only have been made by the pope; and the indulgence, in which the pope outlined the spiritual privileges a crusader would obtain on the completion of his vow.²⁶ Thus, for the pluralists, if these conditions were met in Iberia, then the expedition was a true crusade. Riley-Smith goes on to state that by the 1140s the crusades – be they against the Wends in Eastern Europe, the Moors in Spain, or the Zhengids in the Holy Land – were one comprehensive enterprise, conducted by 'several regiments of one Christian army'²⁷. Tyerman, however, contests Riley-Smith's ideas, arguing that much of what we assume to have been the institutional practice of crusading was not institutionalised at all until the papacy of Innocent III (1198-1216), and that prior to this, concepts such as the indulgence were vague and malleable and,

²¹ Tyerman, *God's War*, p. 666.

²² Garcia Fitz, 'La Reconquista', p. 181-195.

²³ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 36.

²⁴ C. Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of the Crusade*, tr. M. W. Baldwin and W. Goffart (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); P. Rousset, *Histoire des Croisades* (Paris: Payot, 1957); H. E. Mayer, *The Crusades*, tr. John Gillingham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972).

²⁵ Mayer, *The Crusades*, pp. 19-20.

²⁶ J. Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades* (London: Macmillan, 1977), pp. 13-15.

²⁷ Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades*, p. 30.

therefore, difficult to define.²⁸ It is important to note here, however, that the expeditions of James I of Aragon were all prosecuted in the aftermath of Innocent III's pontificate, and that from this point on, historians agree that there was a clear institutional framework that regulated crusading.

Riley-Smith's thesis, first published in 1977, was very important in influencing how historians, particularly in the English-speaking world, viewed the nature of the crusades; but it is worth noting that much of what he assumed, at least where Iberia was concerned, had already been argued by Goñi Gaztambide in his comprehensive *Historia de la Bula de la Cruzada en España* published in 1958. Like Riley-Smith after him, Goñi Gaztambide postulated that not every holy war was a crusade, but only those with certain characteristics distinguished by the institutions of the indulgence, the cross, the promulgation of a bull, preaching, and certain privileges outlined for the participants - privileges that first appeared in the provisions of 1095 at Clermont and were returned to in subsequent expeditions. However, he goes on to state that some expeditions considered by the Church as crusades only met some of the above criteria, 'therefore, the question is, which were the essentials?'²⁹ He answers by defining the key institutional tenets of crusading to be papal direction and the indulgence. Thus, only expeditions endorsed by the Church, with a specified indulgence, even if they did not have other attributes associated with crusading, were authentic crusades. Essentially, 'the Crusades were an indulgenced holy war'³⁰, the critical components being: 'official recognition from the Church and the indulgence'.³¹

Both pluralists and traditionalists, however, accept the fact that crusading fundamentally affected and changed the nature of warfare in Iberia. While Goñi Gaztambide argues that there was always a significant element of holy war evident in the campaigns of reconquest, highlighting ancient practices such as the king of Asturias having his army blessed by a prelate with a gold cross before proceeding out to meet the Moors, it was only after the Clermont appeal of 1095 that the campaigns began to take on a more unified religious character.³²

From the middle of the eleventh century to the middle of the twelfth the Christian reconquest made important advances following the disintegration of the Umayyad Caliphate at the same time that crusading ideas were introduced into the peninsula. Crusading influence came about as a consequence of the opening up of the peninsula to French and papal influences in the eleventh century with the principal vehicles being: the introduction of Cluniac monasticism, the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela and cross-Pyrenean intermarriage between royal houses.³³ Goñi Gaztambide and O'Callaghan would point out, however, that the relationship was reciprocal; that what was happening in Spain also had an influence on the Papacy's thinking with regards the Holy Land. As Goñi Gaztambide asserts, 'In the mind of Urban II the *Reconquista* and crusade to the Holy Land were two parts of the same plan; both distinct enterprises, but running in parallel to the same goal.'³⁴ Evidence for this can first be taken from the siege of Barbastro 1064-65 where Pope Alexander II offered

²⁸ C. Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (London: Macmillan, 1998).

²⁹ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 45.

³⁰ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, pp. 44-46.

³¹ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 60.

³² Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 34.

³³ O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, p. 24.

³⁴ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 62.

a plenary indulgence, ‘an indulgence in the strictest sense.’³⁵, consisting of ‘the remission of penance for confessed sin’, for all who took part.³⁶ MenéndezPidal went so far as to famously comment that here: ‘The pope launched a crusade before the crusades.’³⁷ Goñi Gaztambide concurs: ‘Alexander II ‘transformed the Spanish holy war into a true crusade.’³⁸ While this commutation of penance was not technically an indulgence remitting the temporal punishment due to sin, it is worth remembering that the terms of the indulgence granted in subsequent crusading bulls in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries were also ambiguous with regards to the spiritual benefits they provided. Though Tyerman is critical of MenéndezPidal’s throwaway phrase³⁹, it should surely be acknowledged that

‘Alexander II not only lent papal encouragement to the war against the Muslims in Spain, but also recognised for the first time that the sins of those taking part in it would be remitted and the penance imposed by a confessor would be satisfied by their participation.’⁴⁰

From this point on the Papacy maintained a vested interest in promoting the struggle against Islam in Spain and was at pains to grant the participants the same privileges as were offered to those journeying to the Holy Land. The first example of this comes from 1089 when Urban II granted the same spiritual benefits to those who helped restore the diocese Tarragona as to those who went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem⁴¹.

After the success of the First Crusade, crusading in Spain came to be regularly equated with crusading to the East and there are many examples of the papacy offering the same spiritual privileges, in terms of the indulgence granted. These include the First Lateran Council in 1123 where Calixtus II acknowledged that one could gain crusading privileges in both East and West.⁴² Almost a century later, at the Fourth Lateran Council, Innocent III was asked by the Spanish prelates in attendance whether the indulgence that he had formulated for the Holy Land would apply in Iberia and he replied to them that it would.⁴³ Here, Goñi Gaztambide adds, that this was the testament (regarding Spain) that he left to his successors which they applied faithfully.⁴⁴ In practice, the evidence supports Goñi Gaztambide; the Fourth Lateran provisions were issued to both James I of Aragon⁴⁵, prior to his conquest of Majorca - through the Papal legate Jean d’Abbeville; and to Fernando III of Castile, prior to his conquest of Cordoba in 1231.⁴⁶ Equally, whenever there was a development in terms of

³⁵ *Epistolae pontificum Romanorum ineditae*, ed. S. Loewenfeld, (Leipzig: Veit, 1885), 43, (83); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 50-51.

³⁶ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 50-51.

³⁷ R. MenéndezPidal, *La España del Cid*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1947), 1: p. 147.

³⁸ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 51.

³⁹ Tyerman, *God’s War*, p. 660.

⁴⁰ O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, p. 25-26.

⁴¹ *La documentacion pontifica hasta Inocencio III (936-1216)*, ed. D. Mansilla (Rome: Instituto Espanol de Estudios eclesiásticos, 1955), (31, 33, 50 –53); Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 57.

⁴² *Conciliarum oecumenicorum decreta*, ed. G. Alberigo (Freiburg: Herder, 1962), (167-168); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 76-77.

⁴³ *La documentacion pontifica hasta Inocencio III*; Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 134.

⁴⁴ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 134.

⁴⁵ *Les registres de Grégoire IX. 2 vols*, ed. L. Auvray (Paris: Bibliothque des Écoles Fracaises d’Athenes et de Rome, 1896-1955), 1: (268); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, pp. 157-158.

⁴⁶ *Grégoire IX*, 1: (385).

the nature or scope of the crusading indulgence to the Holy Land, this development was also applied post haste to crusading in Iberia. For example, papal protection was offered to wives and children of crusaders in Spain soon after it was granted to the Holy Land. Indeed, largely due to the proximity of the infidel in Iberia, and the fact that crusading in the peninsula became almost endemic there, this theatre sometimes even took the lead in pioneering the formulation of crusade ideology. In 1118 Pope Gelasius II offered, through his legate, Archbishop Bernard of Toledo, the remission of sins, not only to the warriors who took part in the siege of Zaragoza, but also to those who contributed to the construction of the church and the maintenance its clergy.⁴⁷ The granting of an indulgence to the faithful who offered not their bodies, but their gold in the service of Christ was an entirely new element in crusading bulls, but also one which would later become an integral feature.⁴⁸

Furthermore, through simple geographical and cultural proximity to France, such developments in crusading ideology permeated into Aragon and Catalonia more rapidly and in a less diluted form than to the rest of Spain. Though Linehan has argued that papal reformers did not have much success in promoting their Fourth Lateran ideologies in Spain in general in the early thirteenth century, he does, however, suggest that their agents were more active, and enjoyed greater success, in Aragon than anywhere else in the peninsula.⁴⁹

Therefore, it is clear that the papacy viewed what was happening in Iberia as just one part of a wider, more general assault on the Islamic world, over which they wished to retain as much control and jurisdiction as possible. Though the Holy Land generally took priority, and, more often than not, was the catalyst for developments elsewhere, the fact that on so many occasions the papacy sought to promote equality of status across the theatres, by continually granting the same spiritual benefits, adds weight to the Pluralist argument. Just as, in Riley-Smith's words, 'contemporaries, of course, knew perfectly well what a crusade was'⁵⁰, so too Iberian crusaders knew that they were such and the conditions that made them so. It is in these terms, and with this definition, that the expeditions of James I of Aragon will be analysed.

Crusading in the *Llibre dels Fets*

'The worthy King James,' the *Chronicle of San Juan de la Peña* tells us, 'wishing to emulate his predecessors, began to wage war against the Saracens, in order to announce his intention of destroying the Saracen nation and converting it to the faith of the Cross.'⁵¹ If, however, crusading was James's paramount concern in his wars, then one might expect him to acknowledge the fact in his *Llibre* that his campaigns were religious expeditions sanctioned by the papacy, and that reference to practices such as taking the cross would permeate the work; they do not. We have evidence of James taking the cross on numerous occasions, but not from him.

This lack of acknowledgement of papal support for his campaigns is a theme taken up by Goñi Gaztambide, who rightly poses the question of James: 'Where in his chronicle

⁴⁷ *Gelasius II, Epistolae*. PL 163: 508 (10 December 1118); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, pp. 73-75.

⁴⁸ O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, p. 37.

⁴⁹ P. Linehan, *The Spanish Church and Papacy in the 13th Century*, (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1971), p. 20-62.

⁵⁰ Riley-Smith, *What Were the Crusades*, p. 12.

⁵¹ *CSJDP*, p. 64.

does he mention the support that he received from the Pope?’⁵² The answer is very rarely. This was not, however, through a lack of reverence on James’s part for the Papacy, or for any particular pope – he is consistent in neglecting to mention papal support throughout. Indeed, despite receiving several stern scoldings from Clement IV for his somewhat licentious living, James, when he does mention the papacy and Universal Church, does so with due respect and veneration.⁵³

Instead, the reason for this absence lies in the nature of the warfare in which he and his contemporaries waged against the infidel in Iberia. Campaigns against neighbouring Muslim states were both regular and habitual for the kings of Castile and Aragon in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and as the majority of these campaigns were elevated in status to crusades by a succession of accommodating popes, crusading became endemic in the peninsula. Moreover, from a young age, almost every adult male of note and influence that James had encountered would most likely have been on one or more crusades. He himself was descended from a royal line that could boast of a service to God that was second to none: his great ancestor, Alfonso I of Aragon ‘the Battler’ (1104-34) was inspired more by the crusading ideal than any of his Spanish contemporaries.⁵⁴ His own father, Peter II (1196-1213), who the *Chronicle of San Juan de la Peña* points out was surnamed ‘*the Catholic*’ because he was a supporter of the Church, had also been the hero of Las Navas de Tolosa, the great Christian victory over the Moors in 1212, though ironically he was later killed fighting a French crusading army at Muret.⁵⁵ Such ideologies and institutional practices must surely have been drummed into him from an early age during his time in the custody of the Templars at Monzón (1214 – 1216); at this point he owed not only his throne, but perhaps also his life to the intervention of the Church.⁵⁶

The spiritual privileges of warfare against the infidel in Iberia would have been well known and obvious to both James and to his intended audience. There was, therefore, no need to spell them out to his contemporaries either, for they would have been well known to them too, far more so than they would have been to the men of Louis IX’s France, or to that of any other people whose experience of crusading lay almost exclusively in the intermittent campaigns to the Holy Land. With this in mind, it is perhaps more expedient to ask why does James discuss or stress the theme of Crusade as and when that he does in the *Llibre*? Though he is quite silent when it comes to the institutional practices of taking the cross, papal bulls and indulgences, he is far more forthcoming in his use of crusading language and imagery throughout. To answer this question in a structured manner, James’s campaigns that we know to have been crusades need to be analysed in conjunction with what he said about them in the *Llibre*.

James’s first experience of crusading came in 1225 when, as a young man of seventeen, he targeted the coastal town of Peñíscola, which lay just thirty miles to the south of Tortosa; it was to be a sobering experience for him. We have clear evidence from his crown archives that he took the cross at an assembly at Tortosa in April of that year at which

⁵² Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 169.

⁵³ *Documentos de Clemente IV*, (53, 74).

⁵⁴ O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, p. 56.

⁵⁵ *CSJDP*, p. 64.

⁵⁶ D. Swift, *The Life and Times of James I the Conqueror King of Aragon, Valencia, and Majorca, Count of Barcelona and Urgel, Lord of Montpelier* (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press: 1894).

he is recorded to have stated: 'we have assumed the cross to attack the barbarous nations.'⁵⁷ He also proclaimed the Peace and Truce of God throughout his realms and asked this assembly of Catalan nobles and prelates to give him aid and counsel 'to promote the affair of the cross.'⁵⁸ We know nothing about this campaign from the *Llibre*, undoubtedly because the siege of Peñíscola terminated in dismal failure, and thus ended, at least for the time being, James's dreams of conquering the kingdom of Valencia.⁵⁹ This was hardly the stuff with which to begin a book of great deeds. This honour instead fell to what James considered to have been his greatest achievement – the conquest of Majorca.

Again, we know here that James both took the cross and proclaimed the Peace and Truce of God throughout his realms prior to campaigning, but again he does not reveal this information to us himself. We do, however, have the account of Bernat Desclot, which confirms that James took the cross at Lleida in March 1229. He states that James

'gave the cardinal [Jean d'Abbeville the Papal Legate] a bit of lace that he had fashioned into a cross and the cardinal stitched it to James's clothing. Then the bishop of Barcelona and the archdeacon and the sacristan, and other nobles who had come with the king took the cross from the hands of the cardinal'.⁶⁰

Indeed, on this occasion, the indulgence here was granted by Gregory IX through his legate, Jean d'Abbeville, who happened to be in Iberia on a mission to bring the Spanish church up to Fourth Lateran standards.⁶¹ Though it was not his primary purpose for being there, d'Abbeville had been instructed by the pope to 'grant the accustomed indulgences', 'if an army shall be organised in that region against the Moors'.⁶² This indulgence was drafted in quite an ambiguous form so that it could be used anywhere in Spain that d'Abbeville thought appropriate, and further highlights the commitment of the papacy to the promotion of crusade in Iberia.⁶³

It is in his description of the Majorcan campaign 1229-31 that James is most forthcoming in his references to the tenets of crusading ideology and most obvious in his employment of its language. This part of the *Llibre* is littered with religious imagery, and James's Majorcan campaign is presented to have been divinely ordained from its inception.

When on 21 December 1228 he unveiled his invasion plans to a *Cort* of his magnates at Barcelona he stated, 'for we wish to speak of good works, and good works proceed from and belong to Him.'⁶⁴ This is a clear expression that James regarded the expedition as having a spiritual nature, led by God, through James as his conduit on earth. The king's speech is then answered by the Archbishop Aspàreg of Tarragona who expressed (or James has him express) the same sentiment. 'Our Lord, who is Lord of you and us, has given you the will to pronounce these good words.'⁶⁵ The crusading imagery then reaches a crescendo with the

⁵⁷ *DJI*, 1: (67).

⁵⁸ O'Callaghan, *Reconquest*, p. 89.

⁵⁹ *DJI*, 1: (70 & 71).

⁶⁰ *Desclot*, (30-31).

⁶¹ P. Linehan, *The Spanish Church and Papacy in the 13th Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971).

⁶² *Grégoire IX*, 1: 160, (268); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 158; O'Callaghan, p. 90.

⁶³ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia* p. 158.

⁶⁴ *CJI*, (48); see also *Desclot*, 14-26.

⁶⁵ *CJI*, (49).

bishop of Barcelona quoting Matthew 17:5, '*Ecce, Filius Meus dilectus, qui in corde Meo placuit*'⁶⁶, and finishing with:

‘And the same may be said of you, that you are a son of our Lord, at such a time as you wish to pursue the enemies of the Faith and of the cross.’⁶⁷

The crusading nature of the expedition is spelled out by James as he addresses his fleet before embarking on the voyage to Majorca:

‘And we set out on this voyage in the faith of God and for those who do not believe in Him, going against them for two reasons: to convert them or to destroy them, and to return that kingdom to the faith of Our Lord.’⁶⁸

It is worth noting here that the crusading spirit that James has his clergy express at the *Cort* of Barcelona is confirmed in sentiment if not verbatim by Desclot, who has the archbishop of Tarragona state that what James will do for God is also for the benefit of all Christendom. Desclot next records the bishop of Barcelona saying that ‘the conquest is a great honour for all of Christianity and will be of great benefit for us and for all that come after us.’⁶⁹ Later in the campaign, before the battle of Porto Pí, the bishop of Barcelona reiterates to the army the spiritual benefits they may expect if they die in battle: ‘those who die in this deed will do so in the name of our Lord and they will receive paradise.’⁷⁰ In the aftermath of this battle James touches upon another of the key themes of crusading, *passio* (suffering) and *imitatio Christi* (following the ways of Christ), which also came to influence chivalry’s religious context. The idea that the warrior, through his suffering for Christ on the battlefield was in some way following *His* ways by imitating *His* passion.

When James heard that his second-in-command Guillem de Montcada had lost his life he said to his soldiers: ‘worthy men, these nobles died in the service of God and in our service.’⁷¹ Desclot also tells of similar sentiments expressed by James’s army prior to siege of Majorca: ‘Just as Jesus Christ willingly died for them, everyone was willing to die for Jesus Christ if it were necessary.’⁷²

In the morning, prior to the final attack on the city of Majorca itself James recounts that his army heard mass and received ‘the body of Jesus Christ’.⁷³ He then entreated his men to prosecute the attack, but reports that at first, they would not move. Anguished at the

⁶⁶ *CJI*, (54) ‘Lo, a voice in the cloud said, “This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased”’. Speeches that prelates would have made in Latin are written in this language in the *Llibre*.

⁶⁷ *CJI* (54).

⁶⁸ *CJI* (56).

⁶⁹ *Desclot*, (15 & 18).

⁷⁰ *CJI*, (62).

⁷¹ *CJI*, (68); St Bernard of Clairvaux provided an interesting summary of the holy warrior as a martyr for God: ‘For he does not feel his own wounds when he contemplates those of Christ. The martyr stands rejoicing and triumphant, even though his body is torn to pieces; and when his side is ripped open by the sword, not only with courage but even with joy he sees the blood which he has consecrated to God gush forth from his body.’ Bernard of Clairvaux ‘Sermons in Cantica Cantorum’ 61. 8, tr. E. Auerbach, in *Literary Language and Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. 70 – 71; For further analysis of the religious context of knightly piety see Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors*, pp. 52-66.

⁷² *Desclot*, (45).

⁷³ Now called Palma de Mallorca.

disobedience of his army, James ‘called upon the mother of God,’ asking her to appeal to her son on his behalf to prevent him and his army from being dishonoured.⁷⁴ After this he called on them a further three times to attack and they eventually began their march shouting: ‘Santa Maria! Santa Maria!’⁷⁵ James’s devotion to Mary is certainly an important and a common theme of the *Llibre*: he regularly beseeched her in his prayers and honoured her with numerous churches and altars built in her name. After the capture of Murcia in 1266 he comments that ‘in all the great towns that God has granted unto us to win from the Saracens we have built a church to Our Lady Saint Mary.’⁷⁶ His dedication was shared by many of his crusading contemporaries, including Louis IX of France and Joinville. They believed that by entreating Mary with their suffering, she, as a mother, would show pity and intercede with her Son on their behalf.⁷⁷

The theme of Mary as the warrior’s protector is also taken up in the *Poem of the Cid* (c. 1140 - 1207).⁷⁸ When the Cid is leaving Burgos to go into exile he calls upon her: ‘O Glorious Virgin, protect me as I depart, and help and succour me night and day.’ Likewise for James, Mary served as his patron and protector and he would do her great honour through his deeds.⁷⁹

It was also during the climactic moments of the siege of Majorca that James makes his first and only reference in the *Llibre* to miraculous or divine aid during his campaigns.⁸⁰ St George (the patron saint of Aragon), he tells us, was seen by the Saracens leading the Christian charge into the breach. It is important to also stress here however, that James does not admit himself to having seen the apparition, but assumes that the ‘white knight, with white weapons’, must have been St George, as James had ‘found it written in histories that in other battles between Christians and the Saracens he has been seen many times’.⁸¹

James’s reticence here is interesting. He clearly wanted his expedition to be linked through St George to other legendary Christian endeavours, such as the Battle of Antioch (1098), where the same saint had reputedly led the armies of the First Crusade to an unlikely victory, but he also cannot quite bring himself to say that he personally had seen something

⁷⁴ *CJI* (84).

⁷⁵ *CJI* (84).

⁷⁶ *CJI* (450).

⁷⁷ Joinville was certain that Mary had come to Louis’ aid at Damietta: ‘And you may be certain that she did help us, and would have helped us more if we had not angered her and her son.’ *Joinville*, (597-598).

⁷⁸ *The Poem of the Cid*, tr. R. Hamilton and J. Perry (London: Penguin Classics, 1984). Though *The Poem of the Cid* recounts the deeds of the eleventh century Castilian warrior Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar ‘*El Cid*’ (c. 1043–1099), scholars believe that the written version dates from the early thirteenth century; there is however still debate as to the exact date and authorship, however, we would be on relatively safe ground in asserting that it is almost a contemporary work.

⁷⁹ For a general discussion regarding Mary as the warriors’ patron see: Kaeuper, *Holy Warriors*, ch. 7, pp. 131-167.

⁸⁰ Indeed, there is only one other clear reference to anything miraculous occurring in the *Llibre*. In December 1264 James convoked a *Cort* at Zaragoza with the purpose of persuading the Aragonese baronage to aid him in his crusading ambitions in Murcia. He tells us that during proceedings a Franciscan friar from Navarre arose and told a story about a vision that one of his brothers had had in which an angel told him that one king would save all Spain from the Saracens. When the brother asked him which king that would be the angel replied ‘that it was the king of Aragon who had the name James.’ It is worth noting here, however, that James does not claim to have seen the vision personally and starts his next chapter, with Don Jimeno de Urrea retorting ‘that visions were all very well, but that they (the visions) would come to our presence and deliberate upon whatever we said.’ This may well have been the opinion of James himself as he commented afterwards that Don Jimeno had ‘spoken very well’. (389-390).

⁸¹ *CJI*, (84).

that he had not. The *Chronicle of San Juan de la Peña* endorses and expands on this episode: 'many of the saints aided him [James] and his subjects fighting for him when he struggled against the Saracens.' It also provides evidence of a further spectral intervention of 'St George and an army of celestial knights' at the later battle of el Puig in 1237, with whose aid 'the Christians gained the day without one of them dying'.⁸² Conspicuously, James makes no reference to this happening.

Indeed, James's reluctance to endorse the miraculous is certainly at odds with most other contemporary accounts of crusading. Joinville displays no such caution in his biography of St Louis, where God, Mary and the saints regularly intervene on the crusaders' behalf. This is perhaps because of the fact that the majority of contemporary accounts of crusading were written by churchmen who had an obvious interest in promoting the celestial above the secular, or, as in Joinville's case, the chronicle was written partly with an ecclesiastical audience in mind – Joinville was writing in part to promote the canonisation of Louis IX and with Louis's military record on crusade leaving much to be desired, he needed all of the celestial help that he could get.

James, however, believed that he had a unique and personal relationship with God, whose 'good works' he was carrying out through his deeds. Emboldened and secure in the protection of the Mother of God, his patron, he clearly did not feel compelled to share his glory with any celestial army. Therefore, though James neither tells us that he took the cross prior to embarking on his campaign nor that his enterprise was the subject of two papal bulls⁸³, it is clear from the pious language and religious imagery that he uses to describe it, his Marian devotion, and his uncharacteristic allusion to divine intervention, that the conquest was spiritually motivated.

Yet while his piety here seems beyond doubt another motivation is clearly evident; his pride. According to Desclot, pride was the original cause for the invasion of Majorca. He relates how in 1228 two Catalan ships had captured a galley belonging to the King of Majorca, who retaliated by seizing two ships from Barcelona and imprisoning their crews. On a demand by James for reparation, the Moorish sovereign consulted the merchants of Pisa, Genoa, and Provence, who were on the island, who pointed to James's failure at Peñíscola⁸⁴ and counselled the rejection of his demands. The Emir acted on this advice and followed up his refusal by asking: 'who is the king who makes such a request?' The question provoked the retort: 'the son of that King of Aragon who conquered the Moors in that great and famous battle of Ubeda [Las Navas de Tolosa].' The Emir's envoy barely escaped with his life.⁸⁵ Though such an exchange may seem small reason for the launching of a dangerous seaborne invasion, it was a slight to James's honour, as well as a challenge to his power and authority, and as we have seen, James feared dishonor above all else.

An anecdote he gives later regarding al-Azraq, his greatest and longest-standing Moorish adversary, helps us to contextualise his feelings towards the snub he may have received from the King of Majorca. King Alfonso X of Castile was out hunting in Alicante where he happened to meet al-Azraq and a party of Moorish warriors. When Alfonso asked them if they knew how to hunt, al-Azraq replied that, 'if he wanted, he would hunt castles

⁸² *CSJDP*, p. 66.

⁸³ Gregory IX proclaimed the Crusade again in November 1229 to encourage continued support. O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, p. 91.

⁸⁴ James had tried and failed to take the Muslim town of Peñíscola in 1225, *Desclot* (14).

⁸⁵ *Desclot*, (14).

of the king of Aragon.’ When James found out these words, he was quite furious, but later delighted in recounting that

‘when we had taken from al-Azraq all that he had and we had expelled him from our land, we remembered these words; and we had a letter written to the king of Castile... And we let him know that we had taken sixteen castles from al-Azraq in eight days, and that we knew how to hunt in the way that we related to him.’⁸⁶

James himself does not mention this diplomatic incident as a pretext for Majorca’s conquest, but he nevertheless reveals his pride and practical adoption of crusade to achieve this worldly objective. When presenting his aims to his assembled nobles he gives three reasons why it is both in their and his interests that the expedition is a success: honour, ‘you and we increase our worth’; glory, ‘will seem a marvellous thing...’ and crusade, ‘for you will have taken a land and kingdom in the sea there where God wished to fashion it.’⁸⁷ It is perhaps revealing, one may argue, of James’s personal motivations that crusade is cited last of his three reasons for going. Thus it may seem that James’s personal honour (‘worth’ and ‘glory’) came first and the service of God last. This interpretation, however, fails to take into account how vitally important service to God through deeds of arms was in procuring honour and renown in the thirteenth century. For James, the themes of secular glory and religious idealism were inseparable during his conquest of Majorca.⁸⁸ Norman Housley advises caution when dealing with the motivations of crusader kings. He argues that kings carried obligations of rank that made their experience of crusading different from that of others, making it difficult to disentangle their dynastic ambitions from their spiritual stimuli. He states:

‘In the case of those Crusades that were commanded by crowned rulers we face a different set of issues. Such leaders did not regard it as wrong to conquer while they were engaged in God’s work.’⁸⁹

In this, James was no different. By conquering Majorca he would certainly increase his worldly honour and renown, but in doing so he was also honouring God as the earthly conduit for *His* divine will. For James it was impossible to disentangle the two.

This theme is perhaps best explained by an interesting anecdote concerning James’s voyage. A violent storm in the Mediterranean threatened to end the campaign almost before

⁸⁶ *CJI*, (377).

⁸⁷ *CJI*, (47); The word ‘worth’ has not quite been directly translated, but is probably derived from the old Catalan word *ualtres*. The original text reads ‘*la primera que uos ne ualtres mes e nos*’, which taken in context of what follows might be better translated as ‘renown’.

⁸⁸ It is interesting to note here the argument of Burns who states that ‘another common misapprehension is that economic advantage cancels out spiritual motivation, as though the two were mutually opposed or as though the one diminished and weakened the other... Historians need to ponder the phenomenon of multiple motivation. In any case, this objection proves too much, since economic gain as well as power and glory were prominent even in the Eastern crusades from the beginning without jeopardizing their status as Crusades.’ R. I. Burns, ‘The Many Crusades of Valencia’s Conquest (1225-80): An Historiographical Labyrinth’, *On the Social Origins of Medieval Institutions*, p. 171.

⁸⁹ N. Housley, *Contesting the Crusades* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2009), p. 86

it had even begun. James, in panic, offered up a prayer that shows us just how interconnected he believed his secular glory and the honour due to God to be:

‘...Lord, my Creator, help me... in this very great peril, so that this very important deed which I have begun is not lost. Since not only would the loss be mine, but Yours would be the greater loss, as I have undertaken this voyage to exalt the faith that You have given me, and to subdue and destroy those who do not believe in You.’⁹⁰

Here James is clearly trying to bargain with God, outlining the fact that he was merely carrying out His will and, therefore, the dishonour of failure would be of greater harm to God and to the faith than it would be to him. It also reveals the unique two-way relationship that James obviously felt that he, as a sovereign, enjoyed with God – a theme that will be developed further forthwith. Of the three aims presented to his barons prior to the conquest – honour, glory and crusade – one can see, that for James, the service of God did not come last, but first, second and third. For if he increased his ‘*worth*’ through conquest, or achieved great glory in battle against the Saracens then God too, in James’s reasoning, would be equally honoured. A very similar attitude can be seen in Richard of Devizes’ account of Richard I’s crusade, and especially the speech given to Richard on having to retreat from Jerusalem in 1192. Devizes has Richard lament:

“O God, said he, “O God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? For whom have we foolish Christians, for whom have we English come hither from the furthest parts of the earth to bear our arms? Is it not for the God of the Christians? O fie! How good art thou to us thy people, who now are for thy name given up to the sword; we shall become a portion for foxes. O how unwilling should I be to forsake thee in so forlorn and dreadful position, were I thy lord and advocate as thou art mine! In sooth my standards will be despised, not through my fault, but through thine; in sooth not through any cowardice of my warfare, art thou thyself, my King and my God, and not Richard thy vassal.’⁹¹

James is never more ebullient in equating his deeds with the will of God than in his descriptions of the Majorcan campaign.⁹² From the unveiling of his invasion plans at the *Cort* in Barcelona in December 1228 to the completion of his conquest, the *Llibre* is full of crusading imagery. The same themes are returned to later on in his descriptions of his subsequent wars with the Saracens, but never to the same extent or with the same feverish intensity. Why is this? James does not explicitly tell us, so any answer must be based on educated speculation, but there are several possible reasons.

⁹⁰ *CJI* (57).

⁹¹ *Devizes*, pp. 61-62.

⁹² It is not just in the *Llibre* that these sentiments are recorded with such intensity, but also in the chronicle of Desclot. *Desclot*, (14-47); Alvaro Santamaria has argued that James’s spiritual fervour in the enterprise was shared not just by his nobles, but also by the ordinary soldiers on his expedition. A. Santamaria, ‘La Expansion Politico-Militar de la Corona de Aragon bajo la direction de Jaime I’, *X Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragon* (Zaragoza: Institucion ‘Fernando El Catolico’, 1979), pp. 104-105. Santamaria most likely uses Desclot and not the *Llibre* as his main source here, as though both sources are saturated with crusading imagery in their description of the Majorcan campaign, it is only in Desclot that such feelings are attributed to knightly class as well as the prelates and James himself.

The fact that Majorca was James's first success against the Moors after his failure at Peñíscola in 1225 must have meant that it always retained special importance in his memory. His age of just twenty-one years old when he accomplished these deeds, must also be considered; for we often recall the exploits of our youth through a prism of idealism. More important, however, is the fact that the conquest of Majorca was a seaborne invasion, making it unique in relation to the rest of his victories against the Moors. The crossing of the Mediterranean meant that the risk of disaster and dishonour involved in this campaign was far more acute when compared with an attack across a land border. In this regard the Majorcan campaign more closely resembled a crusade to the East than an Iberian one. None of James's immediate ancestors or Castilian contemporaries had achieved a similar feat. Even his father Peter II, the hero of Las Navas de Tolosa, had not campaigned against the infidel across the sea. James seems aware of this fact. At the *Cort* of Barcelona that preceded the invasion he has the Count of Empúries state that the conquest of Majorca would 'be the best deed that the Christians have carried out in a hundred years.'⁹³ This was obviously also the opinion of James himself. The greater the risk involved – James's fleet was almost destroyed in a storm before it set off – also perhaps led him to feel that his success owed more to the will of God.

Furthermore, James also shows us throughout the *Llibre* that he was acutely aware of the pre-eminence in esteem of crusading to the East. He attempted to campaign there three times, but despite his best intentions, was never able to successfully lead an expedition.⁹⁴ Majorca was thus as close as he got to campaigning against the infidel across the sea, and it is possible that he places greater emphasis on the crusading nature of this campaign to exonerate his subsequent failed attempts to reach the Holy Land.

After the conquest of Majorca, explicit references to crusading ideology become sparser in the *Llibre*. This is not to say that themes such as carrying out the 'will and work' of God and James's Marian devotion are forgotten, but that they just become less concentrated and overt. In the period that followed, however, James was busier than ever in fighting the infidel. Primarily he was engaged in the conquest of Valencia and later Murcia in the period 1232 - 1266. The conquest of the Kingdom of Valencia involved three military campaigns, each of them official crusades, conducted between 1232 and 1244 and a further protracted war against the Muslim rebel al-Azraq, which was also elevated to the status of a crusade. This did not conclude until 1258.

Some Iberian historians, however, such as Vicente García Edo and Pierre Guichard, have been quite reluctant to concede the appellation of crusade to James's Valencian campaigns and have cautiously put the term within quotation marks whenever referring to it to show this. Their argument is that James's campaigns here were more wars 'of national or political expansion'⁹⁵ that were only crusades because 'they bore that title on paper, that is to say as the result of papal bulls issued *al respect* and nothing more.'⁹⁶ Pierre Guichard sees

⁹³ *CJI*, (48).

⁹⁴ James came closest in 1268 when he actually put out to sea with an invasion force but had to turn back after encountering a storm. He is at pains to tell us why he was unsuccessful here. *CJI* (477-492); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 210.

⁹⁵ V. García Edo, 'Actitud de Jaime I en Relación con los Musulmanes del Reino Valencia Delante los Anos de la Conquista (1232-1245)', *Ibn al-Abbar polític i escriptor arab valencia (1199-1260) Actes del Congrés Internacional Ibn al-Abbar i el seu temps* (Valencia: 1990), p. 294.

⁹⁶ P. Guichard, 'Participation des méridionaux a la Reconquista dans la royaume de Valence' in *Islam et Chrétiens du Midi (XII – XIV's)*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, 18 (Toulouse, 1983), p. 124.

the crusading aspect of the Valencian conquest as a single action coming late, subservient to its secular origins and not affecting its progress. This however, is to ignore the evidence of the continual, but intermittent, papal involvement and support that shall be detailed below. Burns strongly contests these claims, stating that ‘their misunderstanding derives from expecting crusades to be single large enterprises’. He adds that popes had ‘always encouraged the Spanish kings to crusade on their own borders, to their own self-interest and with their own resources, with no thought that this attitude diminished the crusading essence of the war.’⁹⁷ The conquest of Valencia itself ‘involved not only a crusade but at least seven separate crusades.’⁹⁸

Again, however, though we hear all about the sieges and campaigns, one would not know these expeditions were crusades simply by reading the *Llibre*. A similar pattern also emerges regarding the joint Aragonese-Castilian venture to destroy rebel Moors in Murcia 1264-66.⁹⁹ We have very clear evidence, however, of the ecclesiastical assistance that James received. James initiated things by asking for papal support for his invasion of Northern Valencia in 1232. Pope Gregory IX was happy to acquiesce, sending to Aragon ‘the sign of the cross and conceding the remission of sins’.¹⁰⁰ Later, to add impetus, on 9 August 1233 the same pope encouraged the archbishops of Tarragona, Bordeaux, Auch and Narbonne to preach the crusade in their dioceses. This time, the indulgence granted was specifically equated with that conceded to crusaders to the Holy Land and fixed for a term of 3 years.¹⁰¹

James’s progress in this period was, however, stymied by internal conflicts with the fiercely independent Aragonese baronage. The first example of this appears at the siege of Borriana, an important fortress in Northern Valencia. Things were not going to schedule and his uncle, the conservative Don Ferdinand, advised lifting the siege due to the paucity of currency and resources. James could not bring himself to countenance a course of action so damaging to his honour. He recalled how he would rather be injured by an arrow than retreat in dishonour.¹⁰² These struggles with the nobility were destabilising his crusading endeavours to such an extent that he felt compelled to ask the pope for help in taming his recalcitrant vassals. Gregory IX duly responded with a bull issued on 24 April 1235 that demanded peace in Aragon and for the nobles to renew the struggle against the Moors under James for another five years or suffer spiritual consequences. If necessary, he would even preach a crusade against the rebels themselves.¹⁰³

The Valencian crusade resumed in 1237 after James had taken the cross at a *curia generalis* at Monzón in front of the bishops of Tarragona, Barcelona, Zaragoza, Vich, Tortosa and Tarazona, but his enthusiasm was again dampened by the contrariness of his vassals.¹⁰⁴ The conflict revolved around the strategic point of Puig de Cebolla. James was utterly determined to hold onto it, seeing it as vital for future conquest of Valencia itself;

⁹⁷ Burns, *Many Crusades*, pp. 169-171,

⁹⁸ Burns, *Many Crusades*, p. 169.

⁹⁹ O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, p. 106.

¹⁰⁰ ACA, *Bulas pontificias*, legajo 5, (10); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 163; O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade* p. 100.

¹⁰¹ *Grégoire IX*, 1: 824, (1490-91); Goñi Gaztambide, p. 164; O’Callaghan, p. 101.

¹⁰² *CJI* (169).

¹⁰³ *Grégoire IX*, 2: 39, (2527-28) Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 164.

¹⁰⁴ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 164.

while his nobles, who according to James were influenced primarily by their own economic interest, wished to abandon it for the time being.¹⁰⁵ Don Blasco, advised withdrawal:

‘...we see that you do not have such riches that you can sustain so great an enterprise as you have begun... For the more that place costs if the matter is not successful, the worse it will get for you and us.’¹⁰⁶

Here again, James looked to the Pope to intercede on his behalf and Gregory IX was once more happy to oblige.¹⁰⁷ Thus, Gregory issued ecclesiastical censures to compel the nobles back into allegiance. He extended his protection to James until the ‘business of the cross’ was completed and threatened those who opposed him with excommunication and interdict.¹⁰⁸

It is most interesting to note here James’s robust employment of crusading ideology and imagery in his arguments with his vassals over their (as he perceived) erroneous strategy. The theme of his personal honour and glory is once more seamlessly tied in with the honour due to God. On the prospect of leaving the hill of *El Puig* James writes: ‘we feared two things: one that it would grieve God... the other, the shame of this world...’¹⁰⁹ Later he admonishes his nobles for daring to put the state of their finances before the continuation of God’s work: ‘...we had not thought we would receive such advice from them, for what we did in the service of God.’¹¹⁰ It is also during these protracted arguments that James directly mentions for the first time an institutional practice of crusading – taking the cross. He reminds his vassals that they had ‘promised to help us when we held the *Cort* at Monzón and took the cross before us.’¹¹¹ It seems, therefore, quite probable that James picks up the theme of Crusade again at *El Puig* in order to shame his nobles into action against the Moors there. By disobeying his will they were, by James’s assessment, also acting not just against their natural lord, but also contrary to the will of God, and he was utterly dismayed at the fact that they could not see it.

James returns to the same tactic later when trying to convince his clergy at a *Cort* in Barcelona in 1264 to follow him in his unpopular policy of aiding the king of Castile against the Moorish rebels of Murcia. He asked them: ‘What will you gain if the churches where Our Lord and His mother are worshipped are lost through ill fortune, and Mahomet is worshipped there?’¹¹² He continues, comparing God’s dominion to that of ‘*kings*’: ‘And if what belongs to we kings is lost, you can well understand that what is yours will not be restored...’¹¹³ Later that year at a *Cort* in Zaragoza James deployed the same argument to try to convince his reluctant nobles to aid him again in Murcia, claiming, with no evidence of papal authority, that they would do more good there than they could in Outremer:

¹⁰⁵ *CJI*, (232) – (242).

¹⁰⁶ *CJI*, (233).

¹⁰⁷ ‘The pope had a great interest in keeping the king’s hands free to fight the infidel.’ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 164.

¹⁰⁸ *Grégoire IX*, 2: 880-881, 905, Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 166 - 168; O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, p. 103.

¹⁰⁹ *CJI* (239).

¹¹⁰ *CJI* (234).

¹¹¹ *CJI* (241).

¹¹² *CJI* (384).

¹¹³ *CJI* (384).

‘...if we were to go to Outremer, we would not do a third part of the great mercy we do in defending what God has given to the king of Castile and to us.’¹¹⁴

He then goes on to reveal the potential damage that these rebellions might do to his honour: ‘...this is something from which we could receive shame and harm..’, before adding, ‘...if he [the king of Castile] loses his land, we could lose ours’, thus showing his cognisance as a strategist; but also, again, closely combining the subject of his own secular honour with the honour of God.

For James, his vassals saw the expansion of the kingdom purely in terms of their own economic gains, this is juxtaposed with the way in which he portrays his own perception of things - for glory and for God. This is consistent with the feelings he expresses towards his nobles and knights throughout the *Llibre*.¹¹⁵ The early and late years of his reign were dominated by civil war and even during times of peace he enjoyed a fragile relationship with his Aragonese barons. It is little wonder, therefore, that he uses his chronicle to vent a little steam in this regard.

The clearest indication of how the nobles fitted into James’s worldview can be gleaned from the somewhat patronising advice that he offered his son-in-law, King Alfonso X of Castile. James counsels him to try to retain all of the people under his lordship, but if he could only retain two then the Church and the common people were preferable to the knights.¹¹⁶ It can, therefore, be plausibly argued that in the times that James most strongly stresses the theme of crusade after Majorca, he does so in order to disgrace his nobles: to highlight their perfidy and to show that by disobeying his will, they were acting against nature.

One discrepancy in the *Llibre* regarding James’s crusades is his treatment of his campaigns against the Valencian rebel al-Azraq (1247-1258). It is not just that he is reluctant to discuss the nature of these campaigns, but the fact that he barely discusses them at all that is interesting; and what he does tell us is also deliberately misleading. It took James eleven years to subdue the rebellion, but he devotes only fourteen short chapters to it in the *Llibre*.¹¹⁷ Once more the papacy was forthcoming with aid and support, perhaps to a greater extent than ever before, but once again, one has to look beyond the *Llibre* to find this out. Pope Innocent IV launched a crusade against al-Azraq in November 1248 after James had petitioned him.¹¹⁸ Innocent also offered James financial aid through granting him a twentieth of all clerical rents in his lands for a year. Furthermore, he ordered the suspension of the collection of money owed to the Church for the protection of the Holy Land from within

¹¹⁴ *CJI* (388).

¹¹⁵ At the same *Cort* at Zaragoza in 1264 James recorded with particular spite his contempt for the nobles of Aragon, especially when compared to the men of Catalonia. He told them that Catalonia was ‘the best kingdom in Spain, the most honoured and the most noble,’ and since these men had offered to help him in his endeavours then so too should the men of Aragon. *CJI* (392).

¹¹⁶ *CJI* (498).

¹¹⁷ For an in-depth description of al-Azraq’s rebellion and James’s response see: R. I Burns, ‘The Crusade Against al-Azraq: A Thirteenth-Century Mudejar Revolt in International Perspective, *Warrior Neighbours: Crusader Valencia in its International Context, Collected Essays of Father Robert I. Burns* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), pp. 219 - 250; R. I. Burns, ‘A Lost Crusade: Unpublished Bulls of Innocent IV on al-Azraq’s Revolt in Thirteenth Century Spain’, *Catholic Historical Review*, 74 (1988), pp. 440-9.

¹¹⁸ *La documentación de Inocencio IV (1243 – 1254)*, ed. A. Quintana Prieto, 2 vols. (Rome: 1987), 2: (557-9); Burns, ‘Crusade against al-Azraq’, p. 96.

James's lands for three years, so that these resources could be used to fund the war against al-Azraq.¹¹⁹

We can also tell, from the frequency and intensity of papal concern that the war against al-Azraq did not go well for much of its duration. A long letter from Pope Innocent IV to the archbishop of Tarragona dated 22 March 1250 highlights papal anxiety at the obviously fraught state of affairs in Valencia. It states that the pope felt 'stabbed through by a spear' to realise how the Muslims were, 'persecuting' the faith relentlessly, labouring 'with their usual persecution in cruelty to extinguish it' and to eliminate 'its worshippers from the face of the earth. King James battles with tireless efforts in those regions against the aforesaid hosts, not sparing person and resources, an athlete for protecting the orthodox faith and for extending Christian worship.' The pope then ordered the archbishop to preach the crusade,

'both by yourself and through other prudent and decent secular or religious clerics in order to rouse with frequent exhortations the faithful throughout Catalonia and the regions of Spain under the jurisdiction of the said king to battle against those hosts alongside the king.'

Innocent then confirmed 'that the indulgence and privileges, which are granted to those rescuing the Holy Land on all the king's subjects who personally go with the king against these enemies.'¹²⁰

In all, Burns has compiled and documented no less than fifteen papal bulls addressing al-Azraq's rebellion, thus highlighting the acuteness of the threat to James's realms, and the crusading nature of his response.¹²¹ James says very little about this papal support, and indeed of the war itself, probably because it was messy, protracted and not without its fair share of set-backs – hardly the stuff of 'great deeds'.¹²² What is interesting for this study, however, is James's decision to expel all of the Muslims from Valencia in the wake of al-Azraq's rebellion; a policy contrary to his customary tolerance of his Muslim subjects, but perhaps explicable in the context of the rebellion.

In January 1248 James swore to expel all of the Muslims of Valencia, even those who had not risen against him. He then has the bishop of Valencia respond by telling him that his name will be: 'renowned in all of the world' and that he could not 'give greater joy to the Pope nor to the Church in Rome than by doing this.'¹²³ James is quite misleading here, however, contrary to what he tells us in the *Llibre* there is little evidence of a concerted attempt to force a mass exodus of Muslims from the region in this period.¹²⁴ Indeed, Burns argues that 'though the crusaders, from the king down, had deployed fierce rhetoric... they had in fact gone to extraordinary lengths to retain in place every Islamic community and

¹¹⁹ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 184-185.

¹²⁰ ACA, *Bulas pontificias*, Innocent IV, leg. 11, (54), (22 March 1250).

¹²¹ These sources are compiled in: Burns, 'Crusade against al-Azraq', pp. 219-254; Burns, 'A Lost Crusade', pp. 440-9.

¹²² Burns, *Crusade against al-Azraq*, pp. 219-250; But perhaps also, as Smith suggests, James felt deep seated resentment for al-Azraq who he referred to as 'al-Azraq our traitor' and 'al-Azraq our betrayer' in his documents. Smith & Buffery (eds.), *The Book of Deeds*, p. 271, note. 118; *Diplomatarium*, 2: (79, 85, 91).

¹²³ *CJI* (366).

¹²⁴ R. I. Burns, 'Immigrants from Islam: The Crusaders' Use of Muslims as Settlers in Thirteenth-Century Spain', *American Historical Review*, 80 (1975), pp. 21-42.

Islamic farmer or craftsmen.’¹²⁵ The reason for this was economic. The Aragonese had expanded too far and too fast; the prosperity of the new feudal lords of Valencia was utterly dependant on the maintenance of a large and skilled indigenous population.

Under pressure from the papacy to deliver on his promise, however, James managed to persuade his prelates and cities to acquiesce somewhat, but, probably to his secret relief, his barons stood firm; for it was they who stood to lose the most from any expulsion of the Muslim population.¹²⁶ Not only did this give James an excuse for failing to follow through with what would have been an ultimately ruinous policy, but it also allowed him to blame the baronage in the *Llibre*.

‘Why does this [the expulsion of the Valencian Muslims] not please you? ... you should not leave off from advising me according to God... for even though your revenue will be reduced, mark well how great is the mercy that you and I will do there.’¹²⁷

The obstinacy of his nobles provided the perfect excuse and opportunity to both uphold his reputation as a Christian champion by blaming them for the failure of the expulsion policy, and to preserve the economic vitality of his new kingdom by retaining its skilled population. This is certainly consistent with the recurring theme of James presenting himself as the valiant crusader king triumphing in spite of the machinations of his miserly Aragonese baronage. It is again to highlight this fact, and to exonerate James for failing in his promise to expel the Saracens from Valencia, that he stresses crusading ideology in these chapters.

Planned Expeditions to Outremer

The last important crusading theme developed in the *Llibre* is that of James’s desire to lead a successful expedition to Outremer.¹²⁸ He has received criticism – both from contemporaries and historians – for failing to do so, and it was perhaps to justify his failure that he devotes a substantial portion of *Llibre* to this subject. According to O’Callaghan and Goñi Gaztambide, James first considered crusading in the Holy Land in the mid-1240s by responding favourably to the call of Pope Innocent IV at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1245.¹²⁹ He was however, thwarted by al-Azraq’s rebellion in 1247. James made a more concerted effort to go in 1268, however, and though he did not make it there himself, a portion of his expedition, including two of his sons, did.¹³⁰

After the conclusion of James’s Murcian Crusade in 1266 his hands were freed to answer the call of Pope Clement IV who was most anxious about the fate of the Holy Land after the rise to power of Sultan Baybars in Egypt.¹³¹ James I of Aragon, however, was probably the last Christian sovereign that he had in mind as his champion. In this period

¹²⁵ Burns, ‘Immigrants from Islam’, p. 21

¹²⁶ Burns, ‘Immigrants from Islam’, p. 40

¹²⁷ *CJI*, (366)

¹²⁸ For wider context see: P. J. O’ Banion, ‘What has Iberia to do with Jerusalem? Crusade and the Spanish route to the Holy Land in the Twelfth century’, *Journal of Medieval History*, 34 (2008), pp. 383-95.

¹²⁹ Burns, *Bulas pontificias*, legajo 8, no. 20 (18 March 1246); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, pp. 184-187; O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, pp. 107-108.

¹³⁰ *CJI* (477 – 493); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, pp. 208 – 227.

¹³¹ *Les registres de Urbain IV*, ed. J. Guiraud (Paris: 1900-1904), 4 vols., Reg. Vat., 28, f. 20-21, (4 October, 1263); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, pp. 208-209.

James was criticised heavily by Pope Clement for living bigamously with his lover Doña Berenguera Alfonso of Castile.¹³² In order to marry Doña Berenguera, James had asked the pope to grant him a divorce from his wife, Teresa Gil de Vidaure; who he had falsely claimed had contracted leprosy. Clement rejected James's request and rebuked him, saying that what he asked was: 'contrary to God, abominable to the angles and monstrous to men.'¹³³ Even when sending him felicitations (February 1266) for his crusading endeavours in Murcia, Clement still managed to turn his congratulatory message into a rebuke for his bigamy.¹³⁴

It is fascinating to note, that it is here that James makes his first and only overt reference to the possible direct spiritual benefits of his deeds for himself - the idea of crusade as penance, not just for sin, but for his sins specifically. Of his conquest of Murcia he wrote that he hoped that it would act as a counterweight to his sin of living bigamously with Doña Berenguera Alfonso. He stated that: '...we would serve God so well that day and in that conquest that He would pardon us,' and that, '...returning it [Murcia] to the Christians should count for us'¹³⁵. In the eyes of Pope Clement IV, as we have seen, it did not.¹³⁶ Indeed, the pope managed to chill James's crusading fervour by informing him that: 'I want you to know that the Crucified does not accept services from one who, soiled with an incestuous union is crucifying him anew.'¹³⁷ Here, Burns argues, was the 'first and only time that James's balancing act of sins of flesh and good deeds went into disequilibrium.' Conceivably, therefore, it is from a position of unique and fleeting self-doubt that James wished to place emphasis on the spiritual nature of his deeds. He sought to remind everyone, including himself, of the meritorious nature of his achievements as a counter-weight to his very public sins. 'Fame versus shame were obviously and even obsessively important to the conscience-stricken king.'¹³⁸

By January 1268, although still reluctant to preach a crusade to the Holy Land that involved James, Clement IV, due to the lack of interest from other quarters, found it necessary to seek his help.¹³⁹ James attributed both his reasons for going and the failure of his expedition of 1269 to divine will. His interest was rekindled, he tells us, when he received a message from the 'King of the Tartars' via his kinsman Jaime Alaric.¹⁴⁰ It suited his customary braggadocio to mention that: 'they [the Mongols] had never sent a message of friendship to any Christian king except to us... if they had chosen to send a message only to us among all the others, it seemed a work of God... and since God wills it, we cannot receive harm.'¹⁴¹

James set off from Barcelona on 4 September but his fleet encountered 'a terrible storm from the East', which apparently lasted for seventeen days, forcing his return. He tells

¹³² Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 200; Burns, 'Spiritual Life', pp. 26-27.

¹³³ *Clemente IV*, (56).

¹³⁴ *Clemente IV*, (74); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 200; Burns, 'Spiritual Life', pp. 26-27.

¹³⁵ 'que serviríem tant Deu en aquel dia e en aquella conquesta, quens perdonaria'. *CJI* (426); 'e aquela merce [that the good work/mercy] que nos feyem de conquerir aquel Regne e tornar a chrestians [that we would do in conquering that kingdom and returning it to the Christians] quens ualria [would count for us]. *CJI* (426)

¹³⁶ *Documentos de Clemente IV*, (56); Burns, 'Spiritual Life', pp. 20-21.

¹³⁷ *Documentos de Clemente IV*, (56); Burns, 'Spiritual Life', pp. 20-21.

¹³⁸ Burns, 'Spiritual Life', pp. 20-21.

¹³⁹ *Documentos de Clemente IV*, (71); Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 211.

¹⁴⁰ Jaime Alaric was a Christian envoy who had been at the court of the Mongol Khan Abaqa Khan; Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 211.

¹⁴¹ *CJI* (476-477).

us how sailors who had made the journey to the Holy Land ‘twenty-five or twenty-six times had never seen such bad weather as that.’ Ultimately though he put down his failure to God’s will: ‘It appears that Our Lord does not will us to cross to Outremer.’¹⁴² Despite this eleven of his ships and two of his sons did make it to Acre where they achieved nothing of note.¹⁴³

James was condemned throughout Christendom for his failure. The continuer of the Chronicle of William of Tyre wrote that he endured: ‘great shame and great reproach’.¹⁴⁴ Of his return, probably to repudiate such criticism and to reaffirm his commitment to crusade, James wrote: ‘We do not know what people will say, but Our Lord knows that we were forced here in this matter and that nothing in the world has ever grieved us as much or more.’¹⁴⁵ Burns points out however, that he was very keen to provide his excuses: ‘Poor James!’ He laments,

‘No one believes him then, and no one believes him now. The truth seems that he was unable to break with his mistress to whom he returned, and the fear that God might be finally out of patience despite his service.’¹⁴⁶

This was certainly the opinion of many of his contemporaries. Smith concurs, citing the number of concessions of castles, towns and goods by James to Doña Berengüera at this time shows that she certainly was not far from his thoughts.¹⁴⁷ It is also interesting to contrast James’s decision here with that of the young James forty years before at Majorca. The fledgling king had put his trust in God and the Virgin to protect him and his army, ordering his sailors to pass through the storm against their better judgement.

Despite this, one cannot help but feel that James was right to feel hard done by by this criticism. He had at least shown a genuine and durable interest in crusading to the Holy Land, despite the fact that the Iberian rulers of the time were generally considered to have been exempt from this because of their more immediately pressing duty of combatting Islam at home. His actions in this regard compare favourably with those of his son-in-law, Alfonso X of Castile, who did not respond to the call of the pope in 1255 or 1268.¹⁴⁸ Indeed, James had shown a greater interest in Outremer than any of his recent forebears, or for that matter, any king of Castile-Leon, who, Goñi Gaztambide comments, were not ‘seduced by the pull of the Holy Land’.¹⁴⁹ Of his Iberian contemporaries only Theobald I & Theobald II of Navarre, who took part in the Crusade of 1239 and the Eighth Crusade in 1270 respectively, could claim a better pedigree with regards to commitment to the Holy Land.¹⁵⁰ Even then, it must be remembered that Theobald I’s situation was very different from the kings of Aragon and Castile. He was in reality a French noble – he had been count of Champagne until inheriting Navarre in 1234 - and he was from a line of illustrious ancestors with an impeccable eastern crusading pedigree. His father had been elected leader of the Fourth Crusade, his grandfather had been on the Second Crusade and his uncle had been King of

¹⁴² *CJI* (485-489).

¹⁴³ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia* pp. 214 – 215.

¹⁴⁴ Burns, ‘Spiritual Life’, p. 20.

¹⁴⁵ *CJI* (491).

¹⁴⁶ Burns, ‘Spiritual Life’, p. 20.

¹⁴⁷ Smith & Buffery, *The Book of Deeds*, p. 340, note. 56.

¹⁴⁸ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 220.

¹⁴⁹ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, p. 220.

¹⁵⁰ Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia*, pp. 170-178 & 216-219.

Jerusalem. Also, Navarre did not border any Muslim state and therefore his opportunities to crusade in Iberia were limited when compared to Aragon and Castile. James, on the other hand, was from a line of famed Iberian crusaders.

James thus stresses the theme of Crusade in the *Llibre* in the late 1260s for two reasons: firstly, to remind us, and himself, of his deeds as a counterweight to his great sin of living bigamously with Doña Berenguera Alfonso; and secondly, and perhaps more crucially, to justify his actions in not reaching the Holy Land and to remind his readers of his commitment to that most important endeavour. James returned to this theme one last time when he was invited by Pope Gregory X to attend the Second Council of Lyons (May 1274).¹⁵¹ Here he again outlines his commitment to Outremer: ‘I will encourage those who have no desire to serve our Lord... and I will have much to say and do so much to achieve this.’¹⁵² He then goes on to outline a strategy to the assembled princes and prelates of what he perceived was the course of military action to take to aid the Holy Land pledging that he himself will go with 1,000 knights and financially support the venture with tithes.¹⁵³

James dedicates nineteen chapters of the *Llibre* to his meeting with the pope at Lyons – five more than he gives to his eleven years of war and crusade against al-Azraq. His motives here were certainly to promote his commitment to crusading in the East to erase the shame of 1269; but also because, he was quite in awe when meeting a pope for the first time and obviously wished for this meeting to be recorded sympathetically for posterity. At the Council of Lyons, James, at the ripe old age of sixty-six, campaign grizzled, at the height of his fame and brimming with self-confidence, met a pope for the first time in his life and, it seems, was somewhat star-struck by the experience. He was certainly very excited to receive confession from Gregory X: ‘because we have never seen a pope before you...’.¹⁵⁴ Indeed, James retains a high degree of reverence throughout the *Llibre* for the office held by the heirs of St Peter. He shows particular admiration for Innocent III - who it must be remembered, instituted much of the crusading apparatus and impetus from which he benefited – saying of him that he ‘was the best Pope, so much so that from the time that we compose this book going back a hundred years there has not been so good a Pope in the Church of Rome.’¹⁵⁵ This pope had been instrumental in securing the infant James’s release and return to Aragon from the clutches of Simon de Montfort in 1214¹⁵⁶, so James’s appreciation is perhaps understandable here. The later entry at Lyon however, shows us that James’s high esteem extended beyond gratitude to a great man, to the office that he held.

In summing up this chapter it is important to reiterate that it is most likely the case that James only once references the institutional mechanisms of crusading because such practices would have been clearly obvious to his audience – he did not need to spell it out each time that he took the cross or received a papal bull. It is nevertheless clear from the religious language and imagery that he uses throughout the *Llibre* that he felt that his deeds were divinely inspired and spiritually motivated.

¹⁵¹ *Documentos de Gregorio X (1272-1276) referentes a España*, ed. S. Domínguez Sánchez (León: Universidad de León, 1997), (75).

¹⁵² *CJI* (527).

¹⁵³ *CJI* (531).

¹⁵⁴ *CJI* (542).

¹⁵⁵ *CJI* (10).

¹⁵⁶ *CJI* (10), *CSJDP*, p. 61.

It is however, in the description of his Majorcan campaign that he is most vigorous and concentrated in his employment of themes that we would associate with crusading, and his pages here are littered with its language. He strongly emphasises his Marian devotion, references possible celestial intervention and is more intense in relating his conquest to the will of God than at any other point. It is here too that James most overtly outlines arguably the most important theme of the *Llibre* – the seamless integration of his secular honour through conquest with the honour of God through crusade. It is perhaps because of the nature of the Majorcan conquest – a risky seaborne invasion which likened it somewhat to an eastern crusade – coupled with recollections of his youthful idealism, that James retold these deeds with a greater stress on the crusading ideal than he did for his later campaigns.

After Majorca the most prominent reason for James placing emphasis on crusading seems to have been to contrast his commitment to God and good deeds with the worldly desires of his miserly barons. This theme is one which is developed through his Valencian campaigns 1232-44 and returned to when he discusses the joint Castilian and Aragonese Crusade against Murcia 1264-66. Similarly, the crusade against al-Azraq 1247-58 seems to have been mentioned to shame his nobles. James faced a barrage of criticism from the Papacy at this point for failing to follow through with his promise of expelling the Valencian Muslims. His barons' refusal on economic grounds to enforce his will here allowed James to portray them as the main impediment to the successful execution of this policy. It was quite clear however, that James, for the same fiscal reasons espoused by his vassals, had no real desire to implement it in full himself.

James returns to the theme of crusade when discussing his failure to campaign in the Holy Land. Heavily criticized for this by contemporaries, the *Llibre* seeks to offer an apologia for his actions in this regard. It was also immediately prior to James's main attempt at going East in 1269 that he was under serious censure from Pope Clement IV for the sin of living bigamously with Doña Berengueria Alfonso. It was thus perhaps also from a position of unique self-doubt that James wished to place emphasis on the spiritual nature of his *deeds* here, hoping that they would '*count*' for him.¹⁵⁷ He needed to remind his audience, and perhaps himself, of the magnitude of his achievements as a counter-weight to his sins. Lastly, James highlights the issue of crusading for a final time when discussing his participation at the Second Council of Lyon 1274. Again he does this to remind us of his commitment to the Holy Sepulchre, but also because he seems to have been genuinely in awe of meeting a pope for the first time in his life and wished to provide a fitting record of this meeting for posterity.

Therefore, though it can plausibly be argued that, at least in general terms, Iberian monarchs were more influenced by the evolving Iberian ideology of holy war than by crusade *per se*, this seems not to have been the case for James I of Aragon. International in outlook and in line with the greatest chivalric kings of the age, James was fully and deeply committed to the idea of crusade; his embarrassment at failing to reach the Holy Land is surely testament to the fact that he recognised its multi-national significance. Though at times he may have had ulterior motives for placing emphasis on this theme in the *Llibre* his commitment to prosecuting God's will through feats of arms comes through genuinely. Where his worldly feats against the Moors enhanced his earthly renown and reputation, he also almost incessantly reminds us that in carrying out his deeds he was the conduit for God's will on earth. To James it seems, there was no distinction: both constituted integral pillars of

¹⁵⁷ *CJI* (426).

his perception of 'chivalric kingship'. His spirituality was unique – he believed that he had a very personal relationship with God, and as Burns concludes 'He was a sinner, yes; and he did mean to go to confession and to sort out his life; but as a spiritual man he had deeds to attend to; God understood.'¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ *Burns*, 'Spiritual Life', p. 35.

3. The *Llibre dels Fets* and the Conduct of War:

‘The nobles of Spain thoroughly understood warfare, as they constantly lived in it.’¹

Having analysed the influence of crusading on James’s campaigns we now turn to look at how, according to the *Llibre*, he was influenced by and adhered to contemporary laws of war, to ascertain what light the *Llibre* sheds on these evolving regulations and to determine how they marry with the chivalric purpose of the text.

James’s chronicle is particularly important in light of the development and increasing sophistication of the laws which governed warfare in Iberia by the mid-thirteenth century. In an influential study, Elena Lourie presented the argument that warfare in Spain, and therefore its governing principles, evolved along a different trajectory from the rest of Christendom. This was largely due to the geopolitical factors of a centuries-old and ever-fluctuating frontier with al-Andalus, and the militarised frontier societies that this engendered.² Lourie argues that the type of warfare practiced by Christian kingdoms on the frontiers of Iberia came to bear a far greater resemblance to that employed by the Muslim societies which they mirrored than to their western co-religionists. She reasons that the Muslim tactics of the border fortification (*ribat*) and incessant frontier raiding were copied by the Christians to the extent that ‘the Reconquest can even be represented as essentially five long centuries of marauding raids’. As a result of this frontier raiding culture and the obvious requirements of speed and mobility to successfully prosecute it, a new class of commoner knight, the ‘*caballero villano*’ developed into one of the most important military classes in medieval Spain. These knights were privileged not because of their birth, but because they were useful; and they became ever more useful and numerous as the frontier ebbed southwards.³ The organisation, command, and discipline of such raids, moreover, received detailed attention in the statutes of the frontier towns.⁴ In both Muslim and Christian societies, ‘the practice of slavery was firmly established, and operated alongside the ransoming of prisoners, a convention facilitated by the comparatively developed monetary economy and urbanization.’⁵

Differing greatly from the norms of Capetian and Plantagenet lands,

‘entry into their ranks was solely the result of acquiring a horse, inheriting one or having it thrust upon you. And exit was just as casual. The un-replaced loss or sale of one’s horse would reduce one to the ranks of the tax-paying infantry’.⁶

¹ *Siete Partidas*, 2:27: (II)

² E. Lourie, ‘Society Organized for War’, pp. 55- 75

³ Lourie, ‘Society Organized for War’, p. 55

⁴ Lourie, ‘Society Organized for War’, p. 68; James F. Powers goes into great detail in his analysis of these charters in his book of the same name. J. F. Powers, *A Society Organized for War: the Iberian Municipal Militias in the Central Middle Ages, 1000-1284* (Berkeley: 1988), pp. 162-187

⁵ M. Strickland, ‘The Vanquished Body: Some Comparisons and Conclusions’, eds. M.I. Fierro & F. García Fitz,

El Cuerpo Derrotado: Cómo Trataban Musulmanes y Cristianos a los Enemigos Vencidos: Península Ibérica, ss. VIII-XIII (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2008), p. 535

⁶ Lourie, ‘Society Organized for War’, p. 58

Though there is much truth in these arguments, Lourie's thesis is perhaps too sweeping and simplistic. After all, the prosecution of war in Iberia bore more similarities than differences to that practiced in Western Christendom. Reading the *Llibre* it is clear that battles were extremely rare (James fought only two) and that sieges were common and they were almost always preceded by marauding raids of enemy territory - a pattern of war that essentially mirrored practice in the Anglo-Norman and French world.⁷ We can also draw parallels between the citizen militias of Iberia and their French or Italian counterparts, and with the *caballeros villanos* and the French mounted sergeants-at-arms. John France argues that in France,

'The communal movement, there [in France] as elsewhere, was an armed movement in which... city dwellers must have been clearly aware of the need to defend themselves against those from without the walls.'⁸

Indeed, one might also describe the fractured world of eleventh century France as a 'society permanently organised for war'. There was certainly perpetual fighting, but the difference it seems lay in the organisation and recorded regulation, as warfare in Iberia became regulated in a most sophisticated and unparalleled manner.⁹ This was not just because of a permanent military frontier as, after all, the Norman Vexin was also a permanent military frontier for nearly two centuries and we do not witness the same level of regulation there. The frontier between Christian Iberia and al-Andalus was unique in duration, but more importantly, it was cross-cultural and this better explains developments there.

Elaborate rules were drawn up for the recruitment, discipline, indemnification for losses and wounds received, intelligence and counter-intelligence when on the march and above all - the subject of the most meticulous regulations - the division of the spoils.¹⁰ It is within this context that the *Llibre* will be examined to shed light upon the nature of the laws of war regarding the division of spoils and the treatment of the vanquished.

Conduct of War: the division of spoils and treatment of the vanquished

'Gain is something which all men naturally desire to secure, and especially those who engage in war; first, on account of the expense which they incur; second, because they expose themselves to great dangers on account of it.'¹¹

Though the *Llibre* is rich in providing us with practical examples with which we can flesh out Alfonso X's theoretical and legalistic dictums on the conduct of war, there are perhaps none as precise and informative as James's description of an incident involving the arrival of two ships, during the preliminary stages of the siege of Borriana.¹² 'Meanwhile two galleys arrived from Tarragona', James begins his narrative,

⁷ For a detailed analysis of the prosecution of western warfare in the period see France, *Western Warfare*, pp. 1-166; For its regulation and conduct see Strickland, *War and Chivalry*.

⁸ France, *Western Warfare*, p. 63

⁹ Powers, *A Society Organized for War*

¹⁰ Lourie, 'Society Organized for War', p. 69

¹¹ *Siete Partidas*, 2: (26)

¹² *CJI* (164)

‘one belonging to Bernat Santaeugénia, the other to Pere Martell. We did not have any galley, and feared the king of Valencia might arm two or three galleys to attack the provisions that came from Tarragona and Tortosa. And the sailors and those who were wise in matters of the sea advised us that we should retain those galleys and on no account allow them to leave.’¹³

James’s description of what followed reveals to us not only the limitations of his own authority over the free-men of his realm, but also the paramount importance of material reward in holding together the society in which he lived. Despite James’s pleas – ‘we besought them in every way possible’ - to the honour of Bernat Santaeugénia (a noble) and the good will of Pere Martel, a ‘good townsman’, that they give up their vessels for the king’s use in the siege, they steadfastly refused until James agreed to pay them ‘sixty thousand sous’.¹⁴

What James records himself to have said at this juncture is most illuminating, not least because of the recurrence of one of his favourite fictions, the idea that he had no previous history of disappointment in Valencia.¹⁵ The fact that he failed to take Peñíscola in 1224 once again slips from his recollection here. He also returns to the theme of collective aggrandisement. By handing over their ships, Bernat and Pere would aid their lord in his success and thus share in his glory. By not doing so they would aid his enemies and share his shame. James begged them,

‘you must always look to my honour I ask you, for God, and because you are my subjects, not to wish me such great harm and dishonour’.

Here again, he equates the potential success of his own fortunes with the glory of God.¹⁶

Bernat and Pere, however, remained unmoved and held out for material compensation. Despite the chivalric nature of the text, James had to attempt to appeal not just to his subjects’ sense of honour, but also to their avarice to secure their acquiescence with his wishes. This fusion of honour and material gain is a theme taken up by the *Siete Partidas*, which sums up this carrot-and-stick approach succinctly: the extraordinary act merits a reward for the valorous individual, but the brave deed is often a matter of opportunity. This opportunity, if seized, merited a reward but similarly deserved punishment if unjustifiably shunned.¹⁷

From here, however, things only become more complex and ultimately revealing; for James simply did not have the means to pay these merchants what they desired ‘then and

¹³ *CJI* (163); Pere Martell was a member of the Barcelona merchant class and Bernat Santaeugénia a Catalan magnate, both were involved in the Majorca expedition and had been well rewarded there. *Codex Catalá del Llibre del Repartiment de Mallorca*, ed. Ricard Soto Company (Mallorca: Conselleria d’Educació, 1984), 3r, 25v, 30v, 55r, 55v.

¹⁴ *CJI* (164).

¹⁵ ‘Let us leave aside the harm and dishonour I and all my army would receive... this is the first place I have besieged in the kingdom of Valencia. And for me to leave here? I would not do it’. *CJI* (164)

¹⁶ (164 - 165).

¹⁷ *Siete Partidas*, 2:27: (2).

there', instead only being able to offer a paltry 'one thousand sous'.¹⁸ He then tells us that he offered them pledges, but that they would not accept these if he did not include as surety the masters of the Temple and the Hospital.¹⁹ However, as one might expect of men of their time, place and exalted station, the masters of the foremost military orders of the kingdom were unwilling to play the part of pawns in this game, unless of course, their own interests were also buttressed by the king. Roman Patot, the master of the Temple, suggested the compromise that if James confirmed 'in charters and privileges' all that they held from the king, he and the master of the Hospital would act as surety for him in his dealings with the Catalan traders.²⁰ And so James reluctantly agreed, got his two ships in the end and the siege of Borriana was ultimately successful.²¹

It is, however, the obstacles through which he had to navigate that are most interesting to us. They disclose that the foundations of thirteenth century Iberian society rested not just upon the knightly principles of honour through prowess, as it seems James would wish us to believe, but also on the potential for individual advancement and material gain, and that the two were not mutually exclusive. The extract is also telling in that it shows that the security of James's own royal authority rested in part on his ability to facilitate this for his vassals.²² The near contemporary *Poem of the Cid* concurs that a commander's hold on power was inextricably linked to his ability to aggrandise his followers: 'Those who serve a good master are always well off'. It may, though, have been more hopeful of James appealing in these terms to Bernat Santa Eugènia than Pere Martell; being a merchant and not a knight Pere was not bound by the same codes of conduct that Bernat would have been. Indeed, James seems to recognise this distinction when addressing the pair, reserving the adjective of 'honourable' solely for Bernat.

The fact remains here, however, that irrespective of the differing nature of such relationships, it is obvious that neither permitted James to commandeer these ships without consent, and that consent required significant compensation. This is much removed from the draconian methods employed by James's near contemporary, King John of England, when he too needed to appropriate ships to fight a foreign power in 1208. In John's case, the enemy was Philip Augustus of France, and he seems to have made no appeals to the honour or the good will of his subjects as he instructed the men of all maritime districts to have their ships ready to sail from Portsmouth on 1 June. Any vessels that were not provided

¹⁸ He even considered 'pawning' some of his horses to raise the capital, but reasoned 'now is not the time for pawning horses'. *CJI* (165).

¹⁹ *CJI* (165).

²⁰ *CJI* (165); this is another example of where we can prove James to be as good as his word in the *Llibre* through analysis of crown documents. Charters that he issued at Borriana confirm that both the Hospitallers and the Templars were compensated in the manner that he suggests they would be in the text. At Borriana on 15 June 1233 he confirmed all the privileges of the Hospitallers granted by his predecessors. *DJI*, 1: (182). Then, in a charter dated 22 June 1233, he conceded to the Templars the castle of Xivert and a portion of the town of Borriana: 'we give [donamus] to you, master of the order of the Temple, and your brothers, the castle which is called 'Xuverth' [Xivert] in the land of the Saracens'. *DJI*, 1: (183); finally in a charter, again from Borriana, dated 25 July, James granted a section of the town [quandam partem ville de Burriana] which he had newly conquered [noviter acquisite]. *DJI*, 1: (185).

²¹ Between 15-22 July 1233. Miret, *Itinerari*, p. 105.

²² *Poem of the Cid*, (74); The ability of the Cid to aggrandize his followers is perhaps the paramount theme of the poem – see referenced examples. *Poem of the Cid*, (25, 40, 45, 68); later in the *Llibre* James even tells us of a knight who comes to him 'with good news' and asks for a reward for his trouble. James tells him that he 'will give him a reward according to the [nature of] the news that he brought. *CJI* (193).

voluntarily were to be seized and dire consequences threatened for disobedience. Indeed, Gervase of Canterbury tells us that several men of the Cinque Ports were ‘hanged and others put to the sword.’²³

The division of the spoils of war was the subject of the most meticulous regulations.²⁴ Such spoils ranged from endowment of an estate to a great magnate, trade concessions to a merchant, to a share of booty gained on campaign ‘in the form of cattle, slaves, moveables and even food-stuffs’ to all those who participated.²⁵ Along with Alfonso’s *Siete Partidas* we have much documentary evidence in the case of town *fueros*, *furs* and *cartas pueblas*, which specify the exact nature of who should expect what reward and why.²⁶

By the twelfth century large collections of municipal regulations for warfare were gathered into charters, which were awarded to a series of towns in a manuscript grouping often referred to as a ‘family’.²⁷ Indeed, these groups of related charters or ‘families’ antedate the *Siete Partidas* by at least a century and must have provided a legal basis for much of Alfonso’s dictats. The Cuenca-Teruel ‘family’, for example, was the first to describe the system which had evolved for the division of booty, to be followed by the Coria Cima-Coa charters from Leonese Extremadura shortly thereafter.²⁸ Alfonso X gives us an insight into the contemporary rationale behind this increasingly complex system of laws governing the spoils of war:

‘where property that is obtained by conquest is appropriated according to justice, two advantages result from it; first, it prevents discord from arising among men; and second, it enables them to be paid with what is in their possession.’

He continues, saying that this rule should especially be followed in war as men have suffered hardships ‘which give them reason to think that they are entitled to a liberal share, and this is eminently just.’²⁹ ‘The hope of booty did more than secure men and equipment for the battlefield, however; it also gave them the incentive to excel’ and is therefore intrinsically linked with the underlying theme of honour through prowess in war.³⁰ Booty constituted the chief enticement – beyond reputation – to act honourably under such conditions. From the

²³ *The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols. (London, Longman’s & Co., 1880), 2: (101-2); M. Morris, *King John: Treachery, Tyranny and the Road to Magna Carta* (London: Hutchinson, 2015), p. 171.

²⁴ For a detailed account of the precise nature of such rules and indemnities that are not discussed forthwith in this chapter see: *Siete Partidas*, 2:23-30; Lourie, ‘Society Organized for War’, Powers, ‘*Society Organized for War*’, pp. 162-183.

²⁵ Lourie, ‘Society Organized for War’, p. 69.

²⁶ J. F. Powers, ‘Two Warrior Kings and their Municipal Militias: The Townsman-Soldier in Law and Life’, ed. R. I Burns, *The Worlds of Alfonso the Learned and James the Conqueror* (Los Angeles: The Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, University of California, 1985), p. 97.

²⁷ Scholars of medieval Iberia have grouped together related groups of municipal town charters granted to the towns in Aragon, Castile, Leon, and Portugal, calling these groups families. To do this they compare the military law established in such charters and then identify the identical or nearly identical components of the laws granted to particular towns, and thus group the municipal charters with such similar laws into families. One famous example is the Cuenca-Teruel family of charters. Powers, *Society Organized for War*, p. 10.

²⁸ Powers, *Society Organized for War*, p. 165.

²⁹ *Siete Partidas*, 2:26: (27).

³⁰ Powers, *Society Organized for War*, p. 177.

beginning of a campaign to its conclusion, those who had rendered special service could expect due repayment from the booty taken on that campaign.³¹

Such documents, along with the *Siete Partidas*, therefore, can be used to help us contextualise what light the *Llibre* sheds on the nature and practice of the division of the spoils of war in this period. James's two major campaigns – Majorca and Valencia – and what they tell us about the division of lands amongst the greater magnates will be analysed first, before our focus shifts to moveables and raids, and lastly to surrender terms and the treatment of the vanquished.

Division of lands and immoveable property

What the *Llibre* tells us about the division of lands regarding the conquest of Majorca is important, not least because it was carried out almost entirely by James's Catalan subjects. There is much less evidence, in terms of extant municipal charters, for the development of sophisticated laws governing war in Cataluña than there is from the kingdom of Aragon.³² This is not to say that similar practices were not followed there, just that their legal implications have been left largely unrecorded.³³ Nevertheless, the text provides some pertinent examples which seem consistent with the Castilian-Aragonese charters and the laws of the *Siete Partidas*.

The first reason that James gives for the invasion of Majorca is so that he and his vassals might increase their 'worth' (renown).³⁴ The implication here is that they may increase their status and material wealth. This can be deduced in part from the fact that it is, according to James, the Barcelona merchant Pere Martell who first suggests Majorca as a potential conquest. Smith argues that Pere's presence in this chapter is to remind the reader that a commercial push from Catalan burghers were perhaps as important as dynastic ambition in motivating the expedition.³⁵ Belenguer concurs, emphasising the mercantile interests of Barcelona as the driving force behind the Majorca expedition.³⁶ Indeed, Martell and others like him did very well out of its conquest.³⁷

Later when describing the *Cort* at Barcelona in December 1228 James addressed for the first time the potential division of spoils that a successful invasion of Majorca might yield.³⁸ He tells us that the assembled nobles suggested that he should prepare a charter 'according to which the division of lands and moveable goods that we gained with them would be agreed.'³⁹ It was decided that according to the resources ('knights, armed men, ships, galleys, vessels and the armament that would go in them') provided for the expedition

³¹ Powers, *Society Organized for War*, p. 177.

³² Powers notes that though there is evidence for the growth of a military militia tradition in upper Ebro valley, it was customary for the counts of Barcelona to rely upon a more typically feudal military establishment, which was slow to draw on towns as a military resource. Powers, 'Two Warrior Kings', p. 97.

³³ Powers, *Society Organized for War*, p. 63.

³⁴ *CJI* (47).

³⁵ Smith & Buffery (eds.), *The Book of Deeds*, p. 69.

³⁶ Belenguer, *Jaime I*, pp. 85-86.

³⁷ Pere Martell clearly served the king well in this expedition as he was generously rewarded in the *Repertiment de Mallorca*. *Codex Catalá del Llibre del Repartiment de Mallorca*, ed. Ricard Soto Company (Mallorca: Conselleria d'Educació, 1984), (3r, 30v, 55r, 55v).

³⁸ The dates of charters and documents issued by James tell us that he was in Barcelona from at least 19 to 30 December 1228. *DJI*, 1: (109 – 115).

³⁹ *CJI* (55).

James would compensate each man accordingly so long as they served him ‘loyally’, thus again links the prospect of material reward with preserved honour.⁴⁰ James’s words here can be confirmed by charters issued from the *Cort*, one stating that ‘we will give you a just share according to the number of soldiers and armed men which you bring with you.’⁴¹ This seems to be in keeping with the emerging common practice of the period and is consistent with the maxims of Alfonso X who stated that the division of booty ‘should be made according to the number of men, arms and armour and horses, which those composing the army or foraging party bring with them.’⁴²

The division of Majorca is well documented in both archival sources (the *liber de repartiment*) and in secondary literature. From this we can deduce that James was more or less as good as his word regarding the nature of the division, and also obtain an interesting insight into the dual nature of the societies of his realms: it seems that James was content to follow the Iberian model whereas the great magnates of Cataluña divided their portions as feudalities along the French model.⁴³ The island was essentially divided up into eight parts, four of which reverted to the king and four to the greatest magnates.⁴⁴ Once again it is revealing to observe here that the *Llibre* is proved correct in its detail as during a dispute with his barons over land at Majorca James tells us ‘we have half of the land’.⁴⁵ Each part was then divided up into *caballerías*⁴⁶ (shares) which were distributed by James according to the amount of soldiers, equipment and provisions brought by the magnates, prelates, militias and military orders. According to Alan Forey the total amount of *caballerías* was nearly 13,450, with the largest single assessment going to the king, who was rated at 5,674½ *caballerías*; the next largest going to Nuyo Sanc, Gastoneto de Moncada, the bishop of Barcelona, and the count of Ampurias in that order.⁴⁷ The Templars received the fifth largest share of 525½ *caballerías*, just under a twenty-fifth of the whole.⁴⁸ This is interesting as it shows James breaking with the promise of his great-grandfather, count Ramon Berenguer

⁴⁰ *CJI* (55).

⁴¹ ‘We will give you a just share according to the number of soldiers and armed men which you bring with you.’ The rest of this charter concerns just what these potential spoils will be: ‘states’, ‘castles’, ‘houses’, ‘lands deserted and inhabited’, ‘with their rents and possessions, movable and fixed’. *DJI*, 1: (113).

⁴² *Siete Partidas*, 2:26: (28).

⁴³ It is interesting to note here that in the contemporaneous *Poem of the Cid* the Catalans under Roman Berenguer IV are referred to as Franks ‘*Los Francos*’. *Poem of the Cid*, (58).

⁴⁴ *Colección de documentos inéditos del archivo general de la Corona de Aragon*, ed. P. de Bofarull y Mascaró et al., 42 vols. (Barcelona, 1847-1973), 11: (116); A. J. Forey, *The Templars in the Corona de Aragon*, (Durham: 1973), pp. 32-33; Belenguer, *Jaime I*, p. 111.

⁴⁵ *CJI* (96).

⁴⁶ Alfonso X tells us that because ‘it was suggestive of warlike deeds, they [the ancients] gave the name *caballería*, to the portion of the booty to which each [man] was entitled.’ *Siete Partidas*, 2:26: (28)

⁴⁷ Both Bernat de Santa Eugènia and Pere Martell (the men that James needed to barter with to obtain their ships at Borriana in 1233) were well rewarded in the *repartiment* of Majorca. Bernat received 254 *caballerías* making him a substantial landholder. *Codex*, 25v. Pere Martell received 40 *caballerías*, 5 *jovadas* and other concessions and privileges including farmsteads. *Codex*, 3r, 30v, 55r, 55v; According to Ricard Soto and Antonio Mas, one *jovada* (or *jovate*) was the equivalent of 16 acres. R. Soto & A. Mas, ‘Els Repartiments De Mallorca: Diversitat De Fonts I D’Interpretacions Metrologiques’, ed. E. Guinot & J. Torró, *Repartiments a la Corona D’Aragó: Segles XII – XIII* (Valencia: University of Valencia, 2007) pp. 82-83

⁴⁸ For a record these donations of *cabalerías* see the *Codex Catalá del Llibre del Repartiment de Mallorca*: for king James: 4v/5r, 8r, 9r, 10v, 12r, 12v, 15v, 17v, 24v, 26v, 27r, 27v, 28r, 28v, 29r/29v, 30r, 34v, 39r/40v, 41r/41v, 41v/45r, 49r/50r, 52v/54r, 55v/56r, 57/59v, 60/61v, 62v, 63/65v, 67v/68r, 71r, 71/73r, 74v/75r, 75v, 76r, 78v, 81v, 82r, 82v/83v, 85r/85v, 86r, 87v/88v, 90r. For Nunyo Sanc: 25r, 26v, 27r, 27v, 29r, 34v/35v, 45v, 48r/48v, 83v, 86r, 86v/87r, 88v/89r, 89v. For Gastonet de Montcada: 25r, 27r, 28v. For the bishop of Barcelona: 25r, 27r, 27v, 28r, 28v, 29r, 29v, 30r, 36v, 83v. *Codex*; *CDI* 11, (3 – 6).

IV in 1143 that the Templars be rewarded with one fifth of all future conquests by the counts of Barcelona in Iberia.⁴⁹ James's decision not to honour this, however, was both pragmatic and consistent with the spirit of the time, whereby magnates and militias were compensated according to their status and the size of their forces.⁵⁰

How James divided and organised his half share of the island in comparison with what the great Cataluñan magnates did with the other four parts is also of interest. Despite the fact that James could draw little upon the interior citizen militias of upper Aragon for the conquest of Majorca, he was able to draw upon substantial militia, and more importantly, naval forces from the coastal towns of Tarragona, Girona, Marseilles and Barcelona.⁵¹ Guillem Rosselló Bordoy has shown that these townsmen were rewarded for their service with lands from James's share, ranging from the smallest contribution, coming from Zaragoza, which received 2.5 *caballerias*, to the largest, Barcelona and Marseilles, which received 876 and 637 *caballerias* respectively.⁵² In total, Belenguer notes, James distributed 13,647 hectares and a third of the houses in the city of Majorca to the urban communities of Cataluña and Occitania that had aided the conquest. They were also afforded freedom of taxes, with the exception of the tithe in recognition of the king's sovereignty.⁵³ He argues further that this contrasted with the conduct of the magnates who distributed land as feudalities to other lesser knights who had participated in the conquest. These feudalities were then tithed a tenth part of their harvest and were obliged to perform knights' service with barded horses (*prestar caballo armado*).⁵⁴

Though it was most likely for pragmatic reasons, relating to the size of the contingents his vassals and militias might bring on future campaigns, that James promoted the principle that their reward should be proportional to their commitment, it is also perhaps indicative of his pragmatism that the one time that he broke with this maxim at Majorca was a calculated decision ultimately taken to safeguard his future interests. The Hospitallers had arrived too late to take part in the expedition but petitioned the king to give them some land.⁵⁵ James recalls that he was very well disposed to Hugh de Forcalquier whom he had made 'master [of the Hospital] in our land... he was a man we loved very much.'⁵⁶ Hugh told James that he feared dishonour for his brothers if it was assumed that they had not taken part in such a good deed as the conquest of Majorca. James promised to satisfy his honour 'willingly and gladly', but admitted that this would not be easy as the land had already been

⁴⁹ In all count Ramon Berenguer IV's compact with the Templars gave them: the castles of Monzón, Mongay, Barbará, Chalamera, Belchite, and Remolins and royal rights in Corbins; a tenth of royal revenues and in addition 1,000s annually from royal dues both in Zaragoza and in Huesca; a fifth of all future lands conquered from the Moors; and exemption from certain taxes. *CDI*, 4: (43).

⁵⁰ The *repartimiento* of Seville after its capture by Fernando III in November 1248 followed a similar pattern; *Repartimiento de Sevilla*, 2 vols., ed. J. Gonzáles (Madrid: CSIC, 1951); Powers, *Society Organized for War*, p. 107.

⁵¹ Powers, *Society Organized for War*, p. 51.

⁵² These figures are taken from transcription of the latin codex of Majorca Cathedral dated 5 September 1307 published by Guillem Rossello Bordoy in 2006. G. Rossello Bordoy, 'Mallorca 1232: Colectivos Urbanos, Órdenes Militares y Reparto del Botín', *Aragon en la Edad Media*, 19 (Zaragoza: Uniuersidad de Zaragoza, 2006), pp. 461-465; they can, however, also all be located on the same page of the *Codex Catalá del Llibre del Repartiment de Mallorca. Codex*, 31r.

⁵³ Belenguer, *Jaime I*, p. 112.

⁵⁴ Belenguer, *Jaime I*, pp. 112-113.

⁵⁵ *CJI* (95).

⁵⁶ *CJI* (95).

divided and some of the recipients had returned home.⁵⁷ However, he found his assembled magnates ‘very ill-disposed’ to compensating the Hospitallers who had not contributed anything to the conquest.⁵⁸ James assuaged their fears by promising that any remuneration for the Hospitallers would come out of his own share. His reasons here, as he describes them, were purely practical, for of Hugh de Forcalquier and his order he says ‘it is not a good idea to get on the wrong side of a man such as this and an order such as this.’⁵⁹ James, therefore, coolly and rationally weighed up the pros and cons of either maintaining a principle that it was perhaps in his interests to uphold, but was becoming accepted practice anyway, or losing the support of a powerful international order. He wisely chose the former. We witness again here another instance where the chivalric opposites of honour and shame are linked with material reward.

This incident is also useful, however, as it allows us to tentatively ascertain how much a share of land was worth in relation to the number of knights brought on campaign. James tells us that his nobles agreed that the Hospitallers would be given a share ‘corresponding to thirty knights’, which was ‘the same share as the Temple’.⁶⁰ Therefore, if we take their final share of 301 *caballerias*⁶¹ we can perhaps deduce that one knight equated to 10 *caballerias*. Unfortunately however, the *Llibre* cannot be fully trusted in this instance as the figures show that the Templars actually received a significantly larger share than the Hospitallers (525.5 *caballerias*), not the same amount as claimed by James.⁶²

By the middle of the twelfth century it had become a common practice among Christian rulers in Spain to anticipate conquests from the Moors and to make grants of territory which still lay in Moorish hands.⁶³ It is clear that this was the case regarding the division of Valencia. Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of the conquest James makes explicit reference that prior division had occurred: ‘we examined the charters detailing the donations we had made.’⁶⁴ Belenguer, however, talks here of a complicated drawn out and evolving process of division, whereby there were essentially three books of *repartiment*, or three stages in which the division of lands were recorded, representing the changing realities of who actually held the land.⁶⁵ He states further that James created the first document that exists concerning these books when camped at the foot of El Puig in June 1237 as a means to attract volunteers to his small army there.⁶⁶ In it donations were made in the abstract before

⁵⁷ *CJI* (95).

⁵⁸ *CJI* (96).

⁵⁹ *CJI* (96).

⁶⁰ *CJI* (97).

⁶¹ Rossello Bordoy, ‘Collectivos Urbanos’, p. 464; *codex*, 1r, 2r, 3r, 8v, 22r, 25v, 26r.

⁶² Rossello Bordoy, ‘Collectivos Urbanos’, p. 464; *codex*, 3r/3v, 5r, 8v, 24v.

⁶³ Forey, *Templars*, p. 24; examples of the development of this custom can be taken from promises made regarding Tortosa: Raymond Berenguer III had promised the city to Artal, count of Pallars; Alfonso I stated in his will that if he captured it he would give it to the Hospitallers, *CDI* 6: (2); in 1136 Raymond Berenguer IV gave it in fee to William of Montpellier, who ten years later left it to his son, *CDI* (IV. 53-4, doc. 220); in 1146 the count of Barcelona granted the lordship of the city, together with the castle called the Zuda and a third of the city’s revenues, to the seneschal William Raymond of Moncada; *CDI* 4: (51); and at about the same time the Genoese were assigned a third of the city by the count. *CDI* 4: (141). After the capture of Tortosa only the last two of these grants were taken into consideration.

⁶⁴ *CJI* (284).

⁶⁵ Belenguer, *Jaime I*, pp. 140-142.

⁶⁶ Belenguer, *Jaime I*, p. 140; Evidence from the *Liber del Repartiment de Valencia* confirms this as there are over 100 donations of obviously as yet unconquered land recorded for the year 1237. *Libre del Repartiment del Regne de Valencia*, ed. M. Cabanes Pecourt & R. Ferrer Navarro (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1979), 1: (1-107).

Valencia had been conquered. Therefore, once it was conquered and many of James's army did not want to settle in the city or within its jurisdiction, the original book was obsolete, as many of the original inheritors had sold their benefices to others who would arrive much later before even obtaining them themselves. More than one hundred of the names of the first beneficiaries had not taken possession of their concessions in the aftermath of the conquest.⁶⁷ A further reason given by Belenguer for the practice of prior division was that it helped to prevent uncontrolled looting once a town fell.⁶⁸

In its description of the division of Valencia the *Llibre* is valuable for several reasons. It again emphasizes the dual nature of James's realm. On the third day after the conquest, James tells us, he set about dividing the houses with the archbishop of Narbonne and the great magnates and clerics. He then goes on to specify that he also gave portions to the 'corporations of the cities [citizens militias], each according to the company and the men-at-arms they had sent'.⁶⁹ This is confirmed by the *Libre del Repartiment*, which tells us that the citizens of both the towns of Aragon and of Cataluña were well rewarded.⁷⁰ The fact that James acknowledges them alongside the magnates and prelates also highlights their significance.

It is however, what the *Llibre* tells us regarding the potential pitfalls of prior division that is most interesting. James states that once his partitioners had set about the task of dividing up the land of Valencia it quickly became apparent that he had made more donations than there was land available to give. He was of course quick to cast off the blame here, citing 'trickery' for the mistake, obviously to preserve his honour.⁷¹ He then tried to appoint two of his household who were versed in law to act as partitioners.⁷² The barons were not happy with this decision, wishing instead that the dividers came from their own ranks: 'for though they may be good and well versed in the law, it does not pertain to them to divide it. Rather you should appoint the most honourable men that you have here.'⁷³

This incident is symptomatic of one of the key themes of the *Llibre*; the tension between crown and magnate. Indeed, Smith argues that during this period there was a great surge in scholars from Cataluña going to Bologna to study law, which in turn greatly increased its adoption in their homeland on their return. Roman law tended to strengthen the position of the king in relation to pre-existing feudal custom. The fact that James portrays his nobles here and at other times to be distrustful of lawyers is just one facet of his wider theme of portraying them as untrustworthy in general.⁷⁴ Burns similarly argues that James was able to use the recently conquered Valencia as a 'lever in his struggle to rise from feudal suzerain to Roman-law king'.⁷⁵

The barons, however, got their way regarding the partitioners, who were ultimately selected from within their ranks – 'two nobles and two bishops'.⁷⁶ James's version of what

⁶⁷ Belenguer, *Jaime I*, p. 141.

⁶⁸ 'The first book was to prevent dire feudal consequences' is my direct translation of Belenguer's Castilian. Belenguer, *Jaime I*, p. 141.

⁶⁹ *CJI* (284).

⁷⁰ *Libre del Repartiment*, 1: (17-72, 323-435).

⁷¹ *CJI* (285).

⁷² Don Assalit de Gúdar and Don Jimeno Pérez de Tarazona (his Steward in Aragon). *CJI* (286).

⁷³ *CJI* (286).

⁷⁴ Smith & Buffery (eds.), *The Book of Deeds*, p. 58.

⁷⁵ Burns, *Medieval Colonialism*, p. 15.

⁷⁶ *CJI* (286).

happened next succinctly encapsulates several key themes: honour and shame, the perfidious incompetence of his vassals, and James's inflated opinion of his own abilities - in this case his cunning. When he told his lawyers that he had agreed with the nobles' plan for the division they were distraught and plead with him not to go through with it as '[they] would receive dishonour'. James then took a self-satisfied tone in telling them that 'they are not thinking straight', and that they should leave matters to him as he will 'protect them from dishonour'. He proceeded to explain to them his cunning plan of letting the barons try to divide the land in the knowledge that they would fail and have to return it to him and allow his lawyers to do it. And this, according to James, is exactly how things proceeded.⁷⁷

Obviously we cannot take James's word verbatim here, but we do know that there were problems with the division of land that continued into 1240, to the extent that the whole process was revised. As Belenguer notes, a meeting of the king's advisors proposed to 'reduce the extent of the donations and readjust completely the *repartiment*,'⁷⁸ with the revised book dividing the city into *Barrios* (areas) according to the origins of the settlers.⁷⁹ This seems to tie in with James's last words to his partitioners on the matter: 'you shall reduce the *jovate* to six *cafizes* [from 12 to 6]'.⁸⁰ Powers agrees, stating that substantial *Barrios* were awarded to the towns of Aragon and Cataluña, but the *repartiment* did not really happen as recorded in the *Liber del repartiment* as many who were given concessions simply did not arrive to take them.⁸¹ This fact is confirmed by documentary evidence as on 17 June 1240 James issued a proclamation from Xàtiva where he reserved the right to claim the benefices of those who had not arrived to take them up and 'do as he pleased with them, despite what the charter said.'⁸² From the same document we can also infer that James was becoming frustrated with the evolving nature of the *repartiment* as he stated that this division in 1240 should be 'perpetual, valid forever and ultimate.'⁸³ As a result of this Belenguer concludes that *repartiment* of Valencia, as represented in the *Liber*, did not represent a permanent reality, but a reflection of a moment for the city corresponding to 1238-1240.⁸⁴

Regarding the division of lands and immoveable property, we can thus observe two crucial themes from the *Llibre*: a very pragmatic approach to division from King James and a commitment to preserving the link between material reward and preserved honour. From the division of Majorca we have seen that James, undoubtedly for practical reasons concerning future campaigns, strove to uphold the principle of proportional reward. Yet equally, he would not stick rigidly to this principle if it were not in his interests to do so – as

⁷⁷ *CJI* (287-289).

⁷⁸ Belenguer, *Jaime I*, p. 142.

⁷⁹ Belenguer, *Jaime I*, p. 142.

⁸⁰ *CJI* (289)

⁸¹ 'While we cannot be certain of the causes, either the Aragonese towns had no excess population available to claim the substantial barrios and households in Valencia awarded to them by Jaime in the Repartimiento of that city, or the townsmen of the Cordillera simply did not want to come. Zaragoza and Tarazona managed to utilize only about forty percent of the households allotted to them, Daroca under thirty-five percent and Calatayud less than twenty. Teruel was the only town, Catalan or Aragonese, to attain fiftyfive percent residency, while a small district bordering between the allotments of Teruel and Daroca reached only two percent.' Powers, *Society Organised for War*, p. 82.

⁸² 'non fuerunt vel non venerint termino eisdem assignato; quorum talium hereditates possimus, quibuscunque voluerimus, dare, non obstante aliqua carta quam inde a nobis habuerunt; mandates baiulo et curie Valencie quod contra predicta non veniant nec venire faciant aut permitant...'. *DJI*, 2: (310).

⁸³ 'quod ultima divisio ista perpetuum valeat et habeat perpetuo...'. *DJI*, 2: (310).

⁸⁴ Belenguer, *Jaimie I*, p. 142.

in the case of rewarding the non-participant Hospitallers with land there. From Valencia we can learn that it was common practice to anticipate major conquests in this period of the *Reconquista* and that land was sometimes divided accordingly beforehand. In light of this we can also learn that this pre-division could cause problems once the land was captured should there not be enough of it to reward ones followers according to prior promises. Most important, however, is the continual development of the theme whereby reward is fused with honour. Despite the non-participation of the Hospitallers in the capture of Majorca, James wished to reward them for serving him loyally in the past in the expectation of their future honourable service, while the Hospitallers themselves felt that they would incur shame should they not receive a share of the spoils. Conversely, the Templars and magnates feared dishonour should James compensate the nonparticipant Hospitallers from their own hard-won shares. According to the *Llibre* at least, James managed to resolve the matter whilst preserving the honour of all interested parties. For James, material reward was the natural by-product of chivalrous conduct and chivalrous conduct the natural vocation of the warrior.

Division of moveable property

‘How well he had rewarded his own vassals. He had enriched them all, knights and foot soldiers – you could not have found one poor man among them. Those who serve a good master are always well off!’⁸⁵

Thus *El Poema del Mio Cid* praises its protagonist Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar, after his conquest of Valencia. As already noted, booty was the paramount concern of frontier Iberian society in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and also perhaps a key driving force of the *Reconquista* itself. However, as both the nature and composition of this society encouraged independent frontier action such as raids and ambushes by relatively small feudal hosts or citizen militias, booty and gain, when referred to in the municipal charters and the *Siete Partidas*, did not so much pertain to lands and property that one might hope to acquire as the result of a great conquest such as that of Majorca, Valencia or Seville; but to moveables: treasure, livestock, military ordinance and prisoners.⁸⁶ The extract above, from the *El Poema del Mio Cid*, not only defines the principle theme of that work, but also perfectly encapsulates the spirit of twelfth and thirteenth century Iberian warfare in reality. ‘The taking and dividing of booty provided the climax of all successful warfare.’⁸⁷ It is easy to see why this was the case. As we have seen, booty not only encouraged men to prosecute war, but also to conduct themselves honourably on the battlefield. Alfonso X sets out several reasons for this: ‘it makes good men ambitious always to become better’; ‘so men expose themselves to danger to achieve rank’; ‘so that men avoid committing acts that might discredit them’.⁸⁸ Here we see again the intrinsic and deep rooted link between the chivalric or meritorious

⁸⁵ *Poem of the Cid*, (74).

⁸⁶ For an explanation of the development and institutionalisation of these practices through the twelfth century charters and thirteenth century Alfonsine codes see Powers, *Society Organized for War*, pp. 162-168

⁸⁷ Powers, *Society Organized for War*, p. 165.

⁸⁸ *Siete Partidas* vol: 2, Title XXVII, Laws (II – VI).

conduct that was expected of a man on the battlefield and the material reward he may expect for such behaviour.⁸⁹

Both the *Siete Partidas* and the municipal charters also describe in detail the compensations men should expect to receive should they incur injury on campaign. ‘The greatest fees went to injuries that caused permanent disability, including the lost opportunity to earn future booty in combat’. Powers provides a comparison table of the different fees stipulated in the twelfth century municipal charters and the *Siete Partidas* noting that the higher fees afforded by the thirteenth century Alfonsene code may be because of inflation. Once again the *Llibre* provides us with priceless examples of how these legal principles may have operated in practice. The division of moveable property after the capture of the city of Majorca (modern Palma) as described in the *Llibre* – the only time that an auction is referred to in the text – makes it clear why such stringent laws existed regarding the division of spoils. We must be cautious here, however, when applying general principles as established in the Castilian and Aragonese municipal charters and *Siete Partidas* when discussing the conduct of James’s largely Catalan force at Majorca, as we simply do not have the evidence that the same rules applied. We can, though, deduce from the examples provided in the *Llibre* that similar customs were expected.

The *Siete Partidas* tells us,

‘that when a town or fortress is taken by storm or stratagem, soldiers should not stop for plunder until they have taken the entire town and are masters of the fortifications.’⁹⁰

After this they should deliver to the king the place that they have taken, by putting him in possession of all fortifications. Once this had been done it is then advised that all moveable property should be gathered and rewards given to those who displayed exceptional courage or valour and compensation paid to the injured. After this the king or commander was entitled to one fifth of all booty (the *quinto*).⁹¹ Once this had been taken everything else should then be handed over to *quadrilleros*⁹² (dividers) who must then put all of the booty up for auction.⁹³ Once the booty had been sold the *quadrilleros* were expected to give

⁸⁹ Powers, *Society Organized for War*, pp. 168 – 169; for exactly what the *Siete Partidas* has to say on this matter see *Siete Partidas* vol: 2, 25 (Rewards and Reparations).

⁹⁰ *Siete Partidas*, 2:26: (19).

⁹¹ *Siete Partidas*, 2:26: (19); though James does not tell us what percentage of the spoils he received at Majorca the near *Poem of the Cid* provides us with evidence that supports this assertion from the *Siete Partidas*. After the capture of Valencia the Poem tells us that ‘The Cid commanded his fifth share of the booty to be set apart.’ *Poem of the Cid*, (74).

⁹² Though not explicitly mentioned in the *Llibre* the role of *quadrillero* seems to have been extremely important regarding the division of booty. According to the *Siete Partidas* they had to be men of the highest repute and were tasked not just with the distribution and record keeping of the spoils, but also to ensuring that this settlement was maintained. *Siete Partidas*, 2:26: (19, 20, 32); Their role is clearly referenced in the *Poem of the Cid* when it states after a successful ambush: ‘...ordered those charged with the task to distribute all this wealth, writing down every man’s share.’ *Poem of the Cid*, (25).

⁹³ *Siete Partidas*, 2:26: (20); for a description of the auction process see *Siete Partidas*, 2:26: (29 – 34). See also: Powers, *Society Organised for War*, pp. 165 – 167; Though evidence of such an institutionalised approach to the division of booty outside of Iberia is sparse, we do know from Villehardouin’s account of the Fourth Crusade that all booty captured during the sack of Constantinople was commanded to be ‘gathered together and shared equally between the Franks and the Venetians.’ ‘Those found guilty of

everyone in the army his share of the money according to what he was entitled; as with the division of lands, each man's entitlement was proportional to the amount of arms, men and animals which he had brought with him.⁹⁴

This, it seems, is what should have happened at Majorca, but it is clear that things did not go according to plan for James here. It is obvious that after the city's capture the booty was not divided according to custom and that James lost control of his army as a result. The fact that James's unfailingly self-aggrandizing chronicle even hints at this suggests that the situation there must have been quite critical, at least for a time. After the city was taken the bishops and nobles demanded that there was an 'auction' of the 'Moors and the booty' that had been captured. Though James states that he himself counselled against this, wishing instead to complete the conquest of the island before dividing the spoils, ultimately he acquiesced to the wishes of his nobles.⁹⁵ It is most likely that James had custom on his side here, as the *Siete Partidas* advises that booty should not be divided until three days after a battle to allow for the pursuit and ultimate destruction of the fleeing enemy.⁹⁶

James then describes that there was further disagreement regarding how the booty should be divided, with the king arguing for a quick division, so that the men 'will be happy', but the nobles demanded an auction and again got their way.⁹⁷ According to James the auction lasted from Carnival until Easter.⁹⁸ Grave problems occurred, however, when the knights and militiamen were not given their share, which they were entitled to by law in Aragon and, it would seem, by custom at least in Cataluña:

'And when it was finished the knights and the people thought each would be given a share, and each awaited a share, since they did not want to pay for their share. And the knights came together with the people and said all over town: "This is wrong! This is evil".'⁹⁹

And so they rioted and sacked the house of Gil de Alagón (a noble who had conducted the auction).¹⁰⁰ According to James the riots persisted for a number of days and were not brought under control until he promised the men that 'we would give them their share.'¹⁰¹

Given all that we know about the nature and purpose of the *Llibre*, the loss of control of his army at Majorca is a remarkably candid admission for James to make, and it does not take a massive leap of the imagination to infer from the text that things most likely got quite ugly here.¹⁰² Nevertheless, the fact that the blame for what occurred is not really directed at the rioters, but at the nobles and their greed and bad council, is certainly consistent with other episodes we have observed. It seems, though, that James, as the commander of the

stealing met with severe justice – a good number were hanged.' *Joinville & Villehardouin: Chronicles of the Crusades*, tr. Caroline Smith, (London: Penguin, 2008), pp. 5-135, (252 – 254).

⁹⁴ *Siete Partidas*, 2:26: (27).

⁹⁵ *CJI* (89).

⁹⁶ *Siete Partidas*, 2: 26: (1-4, 15).

⁹⁷ *CJI* (89).

⁹⁸ 17 February 1230 – 7 April 1230.

⁹⁹ *CJI* (90).

¹⁰⁰ *CJI* (90).

¹⁰¹ *CJI* (91).

¹⁰² For a description as to what may have taken place at Majorca after the fall of the city see Belenguer, *Jaimie I*, pp. 98 – 102.

army, was most to blame here because ultimate responsibility for overseeing a fair division lay with him.¹⁰³ Therefore, with regards to the division of spoils, we can deduce that there were established customs, well known to Catalans and Aragonese alike, and that there may be dire consequences should they be seen to have been applied unfairly. After all, the idea of a fair partition is the foundation and basis of all of the Iberian codes relating to this division.¹⁰⁴

The most common type of warfare in twelfth and thirteenth century Iberia was the small scale raid with the dual purpose of both ravaging an enemy's lands and the enrichment of the raiders. Raiding enemy territory is a principle theme of the *El Poema del Mio Cid* and the contemporary fame and popularity of this work is testimony to the habitual nature of this type of warfare. It is only natural, therefore, that James wished to present himself as an effective commander of raids in the *Llibre*, which, as one might expect, is littered with examples of his successes here.¹⁰⁵ It is not, however, the historicity of these raids as they are described that concern us; for unlike the division of lands, which are well documented, it is much more difficult to corroborate what the *Llibre* tells us about raiding and the division of moveable property. Indeed O'Callaghan states that though 'the spoils of war contributed mightily to economic growth... the evidence can hardly be quantified, as the chronicles speak in general terms of booty taken.'¹⁰⁶ The *Llibre* is no different here, talking of booty generically and unquantifiably.

The most frequently referenced type of booty obtained by James's armies in the *Llibre* is that of enemy captives.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, one might deduce from the text that the success of a raid could be directly judged by the number of prisoners that it managed to procure. For example, during the Borriana campaign of 1233, James tells us that he feared great dishonour if he returned from a large raid 'having done no more harm than taking sixty male and female Saracen captives'.¹⁰⁸ What we can learn here though pertains less to the division of spoils than to what can be deduced regarding the treatment of the vanquished.

Before proceeding onto this final theme, however, it is perhaps worth reiterating the key points brought to the fore regarding the procurement and division of moveable property. The auction at Majorca as described by James not only provides a valuable example of a process described theoretically in the *Siete Partidas* and municipal charters, but also reveals how deeply rooted the custom of a fair division of the spoils – based on the proportionality of what an individual had committed to the enterprise – was in the contemporary mind-set, even in sparsely documented Cataluña. Also, what James is prepared to admit to us regarding the consequences of a potentially unfair division – which were almost certainly far graver

¹⁰³ Of a commanders responsibilities here the *Siete Partidas* tells us that commanders of horse and foot should 'show great affection' to good foot soldiers: 'honour them in word and deed, and divide with them the booty which they take together'. *Siete Partidas*, 2:22: (7).

¹⁰⁴ 'General reasons given for fair division of booty in war: therefore, the ancients, for the reason they thought that the removal of contention from among the troops and the direction of it against the enemy was one of the most beneficial things in warfare, established the rule that when any cause of dispute arose relative to booty obtained by making war the proper way to divide it should be considered, in order that not only the division of booty might be equitably made, but that the securing of it might not be hindered, through discord arising concerning it.' *Siete Partidas*, 2:26: (21).

¹⁰⁵ For examples of successful raids as described in the *Llibre dels Fets* see: *CJI* (102-103, 192-198, 202-205, 225, 283, 317).

¹⁰⁶ O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade*, p. 146.

¹⁰⁷ See *CJI* (198, 196-204, 225, 317) for examples.

¹⁰⁸ *CJI* (197).

than he lets on – hammer home the importance of behaving in accordance with such established customs. However, though the *Llibre* devotes substantial chapters to raiding and the procurement of booty, what it tells us here is largely generic, unquantifiable and in line with other contemporary or near contemporary chronicles.¹⁰⁹

The treatment of the vanquished: captives, ransom and surrender terms

A more fruitful use of the text can come from an analysis of what it tells us about the status of Muslim prisoners. Strickland argues that the practice of enslaving infidel prisoners of war and the resulting legal status of captives was one of the defining features of warfare in medieval Iberia and a crucial differential when comparing it with practices common in the rest of Western Europe after the eleventh century. He states that ‘the legality of enslaving non-Christians offered far greater flexibility for exploiting the financial potential of captives and made the consequences of defeat all the more severe’.¹¹⁰ James Brodman agrees arguing that ‘since warfare in twelfth-century Spain pitted Christians against Muslims, the usual prohibitions against enslavement of co-religionists clearly did not apply. For Muslims and Christians alike, capture meant a life of slavery’.¹¹¹ The *Siete Partidas* makes a clear distinction between what it refers to as ‘prisoners’ and ‘captives’. According to the text a prisoner is someone ‘who confesses the same religion’ as his captor and should, on account of this, be treated well and ‘suffer no bodily harm’. Captives, however, as men who embrace ‘another belief’ can be ‘put to death’, subjected to ‘cruel punishments’, or made use of as slaves, ‘compelling them to perform such arduous tasks that they will prefer death to life’.¹¹²

Yvonne Friedman counters that while this may have been the case in the early phases of the *Reconquista*, by the thirteenth century Spanish society was less dependent on slave labour than the Latin East. In the Holy Land,

‘the Franks [were] heavily engaged in erection of defensive works; consequently, they were reluctant to forfeit Muslim captives in exchange for Christian ones who could not be utilized similarly’.

She argues that this was simply not the case in contemporary Iberia where the victorious Christians would use Muslim captives as a means of exchange.¹¹³ Add to this the fact that ransom prices ‘frequently exceeded what could be gained in the slave auctions, redemption became an attractive option to both captor and captive’.¹¹⁴

This commitment to ransoming captives can be corroborated by the establishment and flourishing growth of redemptionist orders such as the orders of Santiago (1180) and of Merced (1230) in Iberia. Friedman argues that the main reason that the redemptionist orders

¹⁰⁹ For a succinct description of other examples of near contemporary raids along the frontiers of al-Andaluz and the type of booty procured see: J. W. Brodman, *Ransoming Captives in Crusader Spain: The Order of Merced on the Christian-Islamic Frontier* (Pennsylvania: The University of Pennsylvania, 1986), p. 3.

¹¹⁰ Strickland, ‘Vanquished Body’, p. 557.

¹¹¹ J. W. Brodman, ‘Municipal Ransoming Law on the Medieval Spanish Frontier’, *Speculum*: 60, (1985), p. 318.

¹¹² *Siete Partidas*, 2:29: (1).

¹¹³ Y. Friedman, *Encounter Between Enemies: Captivity and Ransom in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, (Leiden: Brill, 2002), p. 210.

¹¹⁴ J. W. Brodman, ‘Municipal Ransoming Law’, p. 318.

became far more entrenched in Spanish society than in the Latin East is because ‘the meritorious deed of ransoming captives was considered more essential in *Reconquista* Spain than in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem’.¹¹⁵ She reasons further that another cause for this might be that the established orders of the East (the Hospital and the Temple) may not have wanted new ones on their territory.¹¹⁶ This, though, surely cannot have been the case, as it was those same orders who were the leading players in Aragon and Cataluña when the order of Merced was established there in 1230. Her first point, however, is backed by evidence from Brodman who has shown, through studying the municipal charters, that there was a long-standing communal commitment by the citizen militias to their members which led to a strong feeling of responsibility to captives.¹¹⁷

It is clear from the *Llibre* that a very high premium was placed on the procurement of captives, but it seems not so much because of their potential value as slaves, but for their worth as hostages to be ransomed or exchanged. Perhaps the most blatant, but certainly not the only, example of this in the text, can be taken from a series of events that followed the capture of the Tower of Montcada in 1235. James tells us here that after the fall of the tower, he had some Saracen men in his retinue choose for him one hundred of the best Muslim prisoners from among the ‘one thousand one hundred and forty-seven’ captives; with the word ‘best’ here pertaining to their ransom value.¹¹⁸ In the subsequent chapter James then records the capture of a further sixty Muslims from the town of Museros, who he states were ‘worth more alive than dead’.¹¹⁹ The reason for this, as James subsequently describes, was not their value as slaves, but their worth as prisoners to be ransomed or exchanged. In this case these sixty captives were exchanged for Guillem d’Aguiló, the nephew of Guillem Saguàrdia, who was a magnate in James’s retinue.¹²⁰ Lastly, James informs us that he was able to ransom the original one hundred captives from the Tower of Montcada for ‘seventeen thousand *bezants*’, which he was able to use to pay the merchants who had funded his campaign and were now ‘pressing [him] for money’.¹²¹

Indeed, as Brodman has shown, James’s commitment to the recovery of Christian prisoners can be evinced by his patronage of the Mercedarians in his lands, who were committed to this purpose.¹²² This being said, however, much like James’s commitments to other principles, such as the proportional division of spoils, it was subservient to a practical

¹¹⁵ Friedman, *Encounter Between Enemies*, p. 197.

¹¹⁶ Friedman, *Encounter Between Enemies*, p. 197.

¹¹⁷ ‘The municipal commitment to ransoming is revealed in the *fueros*, in which the towns accepted responsibility to compensate captives for their lost possessions, to protect various property and legal rights, and to assist in the actual process of redemption. In so doing, the towns laid the institutional basis for all subsequent Spanish ransoming. J. W. Brodman, ‘Municipal Ransoming Law’, p. 319; For a full overview see J. W. Brodman, ‘Municipal Ransoming Law’, p. 318-330.

¹¹⁸ *CJI* (202).

¹¹⁹ *CJI* (203).

¹²⁰ *CJI* (204); Both Guillem d’Aguiló and Guillem Saguàrdia had taken part in the siege of Borriana in 1233 and in Tarragona in January 1235 which suggests that Guillem d’Aguiló must have lost his liberty in early 1235. *Les quatre grans croniques*, Soldevila, p. 289.

¹²¹ ‘And we would have got thirty thousand bezants had we kept them a month longer; but we had to give them up for such a small amount because the merchants were pressing us for the money we had borrowed from them to provide for the needs of the army.’ *CJI* (205).

¹²² Brodman, *Ransoming Captives*, p. 33; In a charter where he granted the Mercedarians the monastery of Sant Vicent in Valencia James even referred to himself ‘as the patron and founder of the Order’, which although not technically true, at least for the second assertion, tells us that he was very much in favour of their work. *DJI*, 3: (685).

commitment to his own advancement and interest. To illustrate this point we might refer to an illuminating and candid story revealed in the text regarding the siege of Xátiva in May 1240. Here, James tells us that he began the siege with the sole intention of liberating the Christian hostages held there, but once he saw the stronghold, he decided that he wanted to take the fortress so much, that he refused to abandon the siege even when the defenders offered to give up the prisoners: ‘our desire to take Xátiva was greater than our desire to recover the knights.’¹²³ He even records that he went as far as lying to Don Rodrigo Lizana, whose cousin was one of the captives, that the Moors ‘did not wish to deliver them.’¹²⁴ As we have seen, this is certainly consistent with the other examples whereby James’s interests have overridden his principles.

In contrast, there is only one explicit reference to the enslavement of a substantial number of defeated Moors¹²⁵; and it must be stated here, that it seems to have been very much an exception that went against the grain of James’s general and preferred practice. In the aftermath of the conquest of Majorca James tells us:

‘concerning the Saracens of the island who had gone up into the hills, we enslaved them to do with them what we wished, and we gave them to whomsoever wanted them, so that they could live on the territory as slaves.’¹²⁶

This extremely matter-of-fact sentence is worth contextualising however. Firstly, it is only the Moors of the island who held out in the mountains after the initial conquest that James is referring to here, which perhaps explains his tone. After all, what else might they expect? Secondly, the sentence comes after several paragraphs of James explaining how good his relations were with the defeated Moors who had surrendered to him:

‘ever since we made this pact with them, we have obtained as much gain or more than was then agreed... And every year we receive from them, without needing to ask for it such things as they collect for us.’¹²⁷

It must be said that the latter extract is far more in keeping with the general tone and purpose of the *Llibre* with regards the treatment of Muslim captives. Belenguer, however, is of the opinion that the lot of Majorca’s Muslims was far more draconian than James is prepared to let on; he guesses that few Moors remained on the island at all and that perhaps only one thousand retained their liberty.¹²⁸ He does, though, argue that Majorca was the exception rather than the rule regarding how James treated his Muslim captives, perhaps because it was an island and difficult to defend.¹²⁹ Antoni Mas agrees, professing that ‘if one

¹²³ *CJI* (319).

¹²⁴ *CJI* (321).

¹²⁵ There are, however, references where it is at least implied that Christians had been sold into slavery by the Moors. For example the knights who James initially wished to recover at Xátiva initially could not be redeemed, not because the Muslim ruler did not want to exchange them, but because the Moors who had bought them were refusing to sell them to him. *CJI* (318).

¹²⁶ *CJI* (124).

¹²⁷ *CJI* (121-123)

¹²⁸ Belenguer, *Jaime I*, pp. 114-115.

¹²⁹ Belenguer, *Jaime I*, p. 115.

thing characterises the conquest of Majorca with respect to the other Catalan/Aragonese conquests, it is its destructive character.¹³⁰

The question that remains to be answered here is why does the *Llibre* devote so much more time to its description of ransoming captives than their enslavement and what can we learn here regarding the conduct of war? The is rooted in both Iberian reality and the nature of the text. It is certainly true, as Brodman has proved, that there was a long-standing custom and commitment of the Iberian militias to redeem their members who had been taken as captives, with the exchange of Muslim prisoners the most expedient means of doing this. By the thirteenth century this custom was codified in the *Siete Partidas*. It is also true that the victorious Christian kingdoms were in greater need of capital than labour, with James himself being perennially short of funds. These reasons, based on the evolution of custom, however, do not reveal the full picture; for this we must look to the nature and purpose of James's chronicle.

Primarily, the *Llibre* is a book of chivalry applied to the practical context. It can be argued that there was a gradual evolution in the conduct of cross-cultural warfare between Muslims and Christians in this period, influenced by prolonged association and developing codes of chivalry. Contemporary chronicles both from Iberia and the Latin East describe how a mutual respect and understanding had developed between enemies who had shown what they considered to be meritorious conduct. For example, Ambroise, in his account of Richard the Lionheart's crusade says of the Muslims of Acre that 'had they not been infidels no better people could ever have been seen.'¹³¹ Similar sentiments are also expressed in *El Poema del Mio Cid* towards the *campeador's* Moorish foes. When *El Cid* left the fortress of Alcocer it is said that 'the Moors were sorry to see him go'. They exclaimed, 'you are going, Cid, may our prayers go before you! We are all satisfied with the way you have treated us.'¹³² The *Llibre* itself, as we shall soon observe in more detail, is strewn with examples of James enjoying cordial relations with his enemies. He punished harshly those who broke his truces with the Moors, spoke highly of Muslim vassals, and prided himself on his knowledge of Muslim custom, taking great care not to break their laws.¹³³

Such attitudes are not those of the fundamentalist crusader. The development of late twelfth and thirteenth century chivalric ideals had a great bearing not just on the conduct expected of one's own forces, but also on how an enemy should be treated, co-religionist or not. This, along with the socio-economic factors described hitherto, and as the result of centuries of cross-cultural pollination along the Iberian frontier, goes some way to explaining why, by James's time, ransom of Moorish prisoners seemed preferable to enslavement.

The final and overriding concern here though, is one of practicality. It was James's intention, and by the end of his life a reality, that he would control nearly as much former

¹³⁰ A. Mas Forners, 'Conquesta i creació del regne', *Historia de les illes Balears* (Barcelona: 2004), vol. 2, p. 32

¹³¹ Ambroise, *Estoire de la Guerre Sainte*, tr. M. Ailes, 2 vols. (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003) 2: (5060-5097).

¹³² *The Poem of the Cid*, (46).

¹³³ In 1225 James dealt harshly with Don Pedro Ahones for breaking truce: 'we ask you and we command you, that you respect these truces and you don not break them'. *CJI* (25). As revealed hitherto James tells us on what good terms he remained on with the Moors of Menorca after its capture. *CJI* (121); His desire to express his understanding of Moorish practice and custom is also a perennial theme: for example, during the negotiations for the surrender of the castle at Almenara he sent the defenders a crane to eat, 'but alive, so that they can kill it in their custom.'

Muslim territory as the Christian lands that he had inherited. It was simply not in his interests to enslave or evict vast swathes of the human resources of his newly conquered lands. As we have seen from the attempted *repartiments*, Aragon and Cataluña simply did not have the surplus populations to make this viable. Valencia was the richest and best administered region of Spain and James needed to retain the services of the people who made it so. It would, therefore, have been self-defeating for him to describe acts of wanton injustice meted out to people, who, by the end of his life, made up a large and highly taxable proportion of his subjects. These arguments can be further vindicated by an analysis of James's approach to surrender agreements.

Surrender Agreements

‘To watch King Jaume at his negotiations is to comprehend better a contemporary attitude toward crusade and Muslims. What charters, laws and privileges reveal in an abstract way, these very human scenes illustrate graphically.’¹³⁴

It is evident that James faced two alternatives when arranging terms: he could either expel or enslave his Muslim opponents according to the laws of war; or he could come to accommodation with them by guaranteeing their religious freedoms and traditional customs, integrating them into his kingdom as subjects.¹³⁵ There is evidence from the *Llibre* and crown documents that supports both courses of action. Indeed, as the evidence regarding the status of the *Mudejars*¹³⁶ in conquered Valencia is relatively sparse – especially when we consider how well documented James's reign was – it used to be common among historians to assume that subject Moors had been expelled, or at best that they had stayed on in urban areas only as oppressed serfs. Menedez Pidal tells us that in contrast to the Cid's benign treatment of *Mudejars*, the victorious monarchs of the thirteenth century – James I of Aragon and Ferdinand III of Castile – confiscated Moorish estates and expelled them from their lands only allowing them to stay in rural areas and only because they were essential there.¹³⁷ Francisco Fernandez y González has also upheld this view, believing that conciliatory pacts with the defeated Moors were the exception rather than the rule in the kingdom of Valencia.¹³⁸ More recently, however, scholars such as Burns and José Vicente Gómez Bayarri have contested this interpretation. Let us consider the evidence.¹³⁹

The two most striking examples of surrender described in the text are Borriana 1233 and Valencia 1238. Borriana was the key to Northern Valencia and thus an incredibly important prize for James. Indeed, this was the scene where he had to bargain with Pere Martel and Bernat Santauegènia for their ships, and also where, when it looked as though he may fail in his endeavours, he revealed that he was prepared to make himself the target of

¹³⁴ Burns, 'How to End a Crusade', p. 130; For a full description of James's methods in negotiating peace see, Burns, 'How to End a Crusade', pp. 115-130.

¹³⁵ Burns, *Islam under the Crusaders*, pp. 137-138.

¹³⁶ Muslims living in Christian Iberia.

¹³⁷ R. Menedez Pidal, *La España del Cid* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1947), 2: p. 524.

¹³⁸ F. Fernandez y González, *Estado social y político de los mudejares de castilla, considerados en si mismos y respect de la civilización española* (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1866), pp. 264-265.

¹³⁹ Burns, *Islam under the Crusaders*, pp. 117-142; J. W. Gómez Bayarri 'Sobre le Repoblación Valenciana Leyes Musulmanas: (Siglos XIII-XV)' *Revista de la CECEL*, 12, (2012), pp. 51-76.

Muslim archers, so as wounded he might lift his siege with dignity.¹⁴⁰ When James finally took the town it is clear that the inhabitants were expelled: 'it was agreed that they should all leave... with what they could carry on their backs and in their hands.'¹⁴¹ Though this is not in keeping with the cosmopolitan and conciliatory image presented in other chapters, it is worth remembering that Borriana had put up stiff resistance for 'two months',¹⁴² yet the population was not enslaved and there is no evidence of the city being sacked. A negotiated expulsion was perhaps the best compromise for James here. The defenders had taken things too far to have any hope of reasonable terms and it also allowed James, whose own supplies were short, to obtain control of a well provisioned citadel in an orderly manner. He tells us that the town was well stocked with bread 'which would be of benefit to those who guarded the frontier'. Also, that he did not wish to risk storming it because of the disputes and lawlessness that this might cause amongst the 'Catalans and the Aragonese and the many foreign people who were there'; indicating both the tension within his realm and reminding us that his campaign was a crusade.¹⁴³

An even more valuable prize than Borriana was Valencia itself, where surrender negotiations followed a similar pattern. King Zayyan had put up robust resistance and when this had been overcome James wanted matters brought to a speedy conclusion. To retain control of the situation he promised safe conduct out of the city as far as Cullera for the defeated Moors. As at Borriana, he reasoned that if he had to take the town by force 'great disputes' would arise between the men of the army 'over vile assets or belongings'.¹⁴⁴ According to James, his nobles 'went pale, as if somebody had wounded them straight to the heart', when presented with the surrender as a *fait accompli*, as it denied them the opportunity of plunder.¹⁴⁵ On the third day after the surrender the *Llibre* states that 'some fifty thousand men and women' departed Valencia, and despite the fact that James had to 'wound fatally, men who wished to rob the belongings of the Saracens and seize some Saracen women and children', he says that they only lost 'a thousand sous in value, so well did [he] have them protected until Cullera'.¹⁴⁶ Burns, however, states that many of the more enterprising crusaders 'bypassed the convoy penetrating into the Islamic zone beyond the point of safeguard to fall upon the refugees in the mountain passes.'¹⁴⁷

The pattern that seems to develop here is one in which Muslim populations were generally expelled from their towns and homes to make way for their Christian conquerors. Further evidence for expulsion can also be gleaned from James's proclamations of eviction of all of the Moors of his realms in 1248 during the al-Azraq rebellion; but as shown hitherto, there is little evidence that he ever made good on such threats.

On closer examination, however, it can be shown that the expulsions of Borriana and Valencia were the exception rather than the rule and that conciliation and integration were James's preferred *modus operandi*. The surrender treaty for Valencia itself does not just corroborate the *Llibre* in telling us that the Moors received safe passage to Cullera, but also

¹⁴⁰ *CJI* (156-178).

¹⁴¹ *CJI* (177-178).

¹⁴² *CJI* (178).

¹⁴³ *CJI* (178).

¹⁴⁴ *CJI* (278).

¹⁴⁵ *CJI* (281).

¹⁴⁶ *CJI* (283).

¹⁴⁷ Burns, *Islam Under the Crusaders*, p. 7.

shows that James was in fact, even more lenient here than suggested, as it also allowed Moors to stay if they wished:

‘We promise that you and all Moors can leave safe and sound with your weapons...Or those who want to stay can be safe and sound... For seven years we will not make damage, misfortune or war on land or sea, nor allow this to happen against Cullera... And if anyone does so, we will put it right.’¹⁴⁸

Yet, even if the entire Muslim populations of Borriana and Valencia were expelled and some pillaged on their departure by opportunistic crusaders, their lot would still have been superior to that of many others on the wrong side of a protracted thirteenth century siege. It was not uncommon for entire garrisons to be slaughtered and towns sacked; Edward I of England’s sacking of Berwick in 1298 being a prime example.

Other charters show greater attempts at conciliation and also common themes of freedom of religion and retention of established (Moorish) custom. Both Burns and Gómez Bayarri identify seven in particular: Xivert (Templars, 1234), Eslida (royal, 1242), Uxó (royal 1250), Xátiva (royal, 1252), Silla (Hospitallers, 1258), Tales (Peter of Castelnou, 1260), and several peace treaties issued by James and his successor Peter III after the rebellions of 1275-76 (royal, 1276-79).¹⁴⁹ In origin half of them are royal, deriving from James or Peter, one is baronial, and two come from military orders. Two are surrender pacts from the crusade, three are arrangements after the revolts of 1248 and 1275-76, and two are settlement charters designed to attract Muslim immigration.¹⁵⁰ Though their circumstances might be different, their charitable stipulations are broadly similar with regards to religious tolerance, property rights and royal protection. Furthermore, as they span more or less the entire period of James’s involvement in Valencia, when taken as a set they provide strong evidence for the uniformity of his approach to the vanquished there.

The Uxó peace treaty, is particularly useful in showing how James’s policy of conciliation remained consistent, even after the strain of the rebellions. The *Llibre* tells us that when the men of Uxó indicated to James that they wished to surrender after the fall of Almenara in March 1238, a charter was made ‘respecting their law and their customs, such as they were accustomed to have in the time of the Saracens.’¹⁵¹ Though this charter does not survive, we can infer that its terms must have been at least as generous as those of 1250 – which reassured the Moors of their civil, legal and religious customs – after the town had surrendered for a second time.¹⁵²

Further evidence of James’s conciliatory policy can be found in his description of negotiations at Almenara during the same campaign of 1238. When the Moorish delegates each asked for an inheritance of three *jovates* of land along with thousands of livestock and luxurious cloths for ‘their relatives to wear’, James happily agreed, stating: ‘as the old

¹⁴⁸ *DJI*, 2: (273).

¹⁴⁹ Xivert: *Cartes de Poblament Medievals Valencianes*, ed. E. Guinot (Valencia: Servei de Publicacions de la Presidencia) 1991, (10); Eslida: *DJI*, 2: (354); Uxo: *DJI*, 2: (547); Xativa: *DJI*, 3; Silla: *DJI*, 3: (766); Tales: *Cartes*, Guinot, (117); *Cartes*, Guinot, pp. 350-357; Burns, *Islam Under the Crusaders*, pp. 118-124; Gomez Bayarri, ‘Re población Valenciana’, pp. 51-67.

¹⁵⁰ Burns, *Islam Under the Crusaders*, p. 124.

¹⁵¹ *CJI* (60).

¹⁵² *DJI*, 2: (547).

proverb says: “He who does not give what grieves him, does not get what he wants”.¹⁵³ The chapter concludes with James self-satisfactorily describing his knowledge of Moorish custom by sending them a live crane to eat.¹⁵⁴ The fact that such descriptions are relatively common in the text and that James’s tone when describing them is self-congratulatory, shows that he wished to present a cosmopolitan image of his kingship.

His benign treatment of the vanquished can be further corroborated in his description of the Murcia campaign of 1264-66. Here, the king was at pains to point out to the Moors of Murcia how well they might be treated should they surrender to him without resistance. To get the point across he cited his good treatment of the Muslims of Valencia who had come to his mercy and were able to ‘practice their religion just as if they were in the lands of the Saracens’, thus implying that his benevolent reputation preceded him.¹⁵⁵ If James was draconian in his treatment of his Muslim enemies, he certainly went to elaborate lengths to conceal this in his chronicle.

Why then did James proceed thus, even after promising the pope that he would expel all of the Saracens from his lands? Gómez Bayarri argues that because his goals regarding the resettlement of conquered territory were not met he had to take lenient and conciliatory measures in order to maintain the Muslim population to ensure the sustainability of his new kingdom.¹⁵⁶ This sits well with James’s pragmatism, and is certainly a very significant factor; but it is not the only one. Belenguer reminds us here that chronicles and charters can only at best provide an idealised and prescribed account of the past, and that what they say can often be challenged by circumstantial evidence. He reasons that we need only look to the numerous *Mudejar* revolts of the 1240s, 1250s and 1270s, to realise that this was not a time of social integration in Valencia. Muslim rights and customs may have been guaranteed, but they nevertheless remained second class citizens in the new Christian society; itself a copy of the islamic *dhimma*, which by its division of peoples by their faith inherently encouraged separation not integration. Therefore, the true extent of the reality of James’s conciliation remains clouded.

The fate of Xàtiva perhaps best illustrates Belenguer’s point. At first, according to the chronicle at least, it was treated kindly, but later joined the rebellions with the ultimate result being the expulsion of the Muslim population. Xàtiva – ‘the key to the kingdom [of Valencia]’ – was obviously important to James as he besieged it three times (1239, 1240 and 1244).¹⁵⁷ After the second in 1240, he demanded that the *alcaid*¹⁵⁸ hand over either Xàtiva or the castle of Castelló. The *alcaid* promised him Castelló and also swore to become James’s vassal.¹⁵⁹ In late December 1243, however, the Moors of Xàtiva counter-raided a marauding party led by James’s vassal, Don Rodrigo Lizana, the governor of Valencia, making off with his booty.

Subsequently, James summoned the *alcaid* to appear before him and reminded him of the terms of their relationship as written in their charters. James mentions something here of the nature of such charters, stating that they were ‘divided equally’, ‘according to a. b. c.’,

¹⁵³ *CJI* (244).

¹⁵⁴ *CJI* (244).

¹⁵⁵ *CJI* (436-444).

¹⁵⁶ Belenguer, *Jaime I*, pp. 232-236.

¹⁵⁷ *CJI* (317-322, 324-327, 333-337, 338-342, 345-356, 360, 362, 365, 367, 368).

¹⁵⁸ Muslim ruler of Xàtiva.

¹⁵⁹ *CJI* (327).

with *alcaid* retaining one part and he the other.¹⁶⁰ The *alcaid* then refused to accept James's choice of Don Ferdinand as a judge for the case, which bemused James whose law and custom dictated that superior lords have the right to appoint judges in such cases. The whole episode revealed the two sides' lack of understanding of each other's laws and customs. As a result James besieged Xátiva for a third time, capturing it in August 1244.¹⁶¹ Thus, the final centres of resistance in southern Valencia were persuaded to surrender also, with the Moors there allowed to 'remain in the kingdom.'¹⁶² It was only after they joined the revolts of 1248 that James decided to expel the Moors of Xátiva. Even here, however, he is at pains to express the humanity of the expulsion. Fearful of being robbed on their departure the Muslims promised James half of their moveable property in return for their safe passage. The king is most ardent in his emphasis that he had already promised them his protection and thus,

'to take advantage of them, when they were losing their houses, their inheritances and their homeland, and after we had given our word to them that they might leave safely and securely from our land? On no account did we wish to do so. For we were pained at the harm we were doing them; and our heart could not bear the idea that we should give them further pain on top of that by taking anything from them that they were carrying.'¹⁶³

As with regards to the treatment of captives, James's perception of chivalry is prominent here. The chronicle is full of examples of him going out of his way to relay his understanding of Muslim custom and to tell us of his merciful and benign treatment of his vanquished enemies – of which the expulsion of the Moors of Xátiva is a most striking illustration. His notion of Chivalric Kingship clearly entailed an understanding and fair treatment of one's foes, and this in part explains his actions; perhaps not always in reality, but certainly as they have been described to us in his chronicle.

The overall impression given by the *Llibre* with regards to surrender terms is therefore, one of magnanimity and tolerance. Even the expulsions of Moorish populations at Borriana, Valencia and Xátiva are described with feeling and humility. It also must be remembered here that each of these towns had put up stiff resistance that could easily have led to terrible consequences. The reasons for James's actions were twofold. Primarily they are rooted in pragmatism; as Bayyari has described, his inability to resettle the conquered territory with Christians meant that he had to come to some sort of understanding with the Moorish inhabitants for the sustainability of the kingdom. Furthermore, quickly negotiated surrenders, such as those achieved at Valencia and Borriana, allowed the king to retain control of the situation at the expense of his vassals who were hungry for the spoils of pillage. It is likewise clear, though, that ideological impulses were also a factor. James's descriptions of his dealings and treatment of vanquished Muslims were grounded in his concept of

¹⁶⁰ *CJI* (334); Charters were written on the same a-b-c sheet by scribe on a single parchment in bilingual interlinear form, separating the two by letters of the alphabet across the page, so that both parties could prove authenticity of his version by fitting it to that of the other signatory. *Burns*, 'How to End a Crusade', p. 125.

¹⁶¹ *CJI* (354-365).

¹⁶² *CJI* (360).

¹⁶³ *CJI* (369).

chivalry. However, as Belenguer has shown, the fact that Moorish Valencia was in a state of almost perpetual rebellion for much of James's reign, tells us that the conciliatory veneer of the *Llibre* masks the reality of a somewhat uneasy and fissiparous accord.

Conclusion:

The *Llibre dels Fets* is without doubt one of the most instructive and authoritative sources for the study of medieval chivalric kingship in action. Not only is it a vernacular work written by a warrior, but its royal authorship means that it offers us a singularly unique insight into the nature of a king's perceptions of authority and of conduct in war.

We have seen how the text provides an invaluable instruction as to how James believed a king should conduct himself with regards to his subjects, the application of his laws and most importantly on the battlefield. Through James's edifying stories we observe that the key force driving his behaviour in every aspect of his authority is the buttressing and preservation of his honour through the application of what he perceived to be chivalric kingship. In this regard the accuracy of James's chronicle matters far less than its sentiment, just as the primary purpose of the *Llibre* is to guide his heirs in kingship rather than to instruct them in history. It is, however, through James's description of conduct on the battlefield where the text provides its greatest instruction. Through his anecdotes and examples we learn how the key aspects of chivalry – honour through prowess, the role of the commander, the importance of loyalty and the avoidance of shame – should be put into practice.

It is also evident that James regarded crusading to be the ultimate expression of regal honour. Though he is not forthcoming in revealing papal involvement in his campaigns and rarely mentions key tenets of crusading such as the taking of the cross, it is nonetheless clear from his deployment of religious language and imagery that he felt his endeavours to be divinely inspired. This comes across throughout the *Llibre*, but it is most concentrated and overt during his description of his conquest of Majorca. This was perhaps because it was his first success against the Saracens, coming as it did after his failure at Peñíscola in 1224, and he may have remembered it through a prism of youthful idealism. It is also highlighted by the deep and obvious shame James felt in having to abandon his expedition to the Holy Land in 1269 and also by the reverence he expresses in meeting the pope for the first time at the Council of Lyons in 1274.¹ For James, there was no distinction between his secular honour, achieved through his conquests, and the honour due to God who was his superior lord. Indeed, it was most likely to highlight the perfidy of his own vassals that he returns to the theme of crusade during the Valencian campaign. In telling us that the thought of abandoning his position at *El Puig* made him fear two things, the first that 'it would grieve God' and the second that he would incur 'the shame of this world', James is seamlessly integrating his own fortunes with those of God.²

His perception of his relationship with God is, however, illustrated most plainly when he recalls frantically praying during a Mediterranean storm that threatened to sabotage his invasion of Majorca. He reasoned and bargained that it would be God and not himself who would suffer the greater loss if the conquest was not successful. For James, his deeds against the Moors not only enhanced his earthly renown but were also, as he frequently reminds us, the will of the Lord for which he was the mere conduit. This fusion of secular and celestial honour was integral to his ideal of chivalric kingship.

¹ *CJI* (476-477, 542).

² *CJI* (239).

The *Llibre* is also an extremely useful source in helping us understand how the laws of war were applied in Iberia in a practical sense in the thirteenth century. This is especially so when it is contextualised and analysed in conjunction with the more theoretical and near contemporary *Siete Partidas*; while the latter offers the legal principle, James's chronicle can be used to provide us with an insight into how things may have proceeded in practice. Through its descriptions of the division of lands and booty we can observe two themes: the king's pragmatism and commitment to emerging legal principles, and also the link between material reward and preserved honour. If we take the Majorca campaign as an example, it is clear that James wished to both uphold the emerging legal principle that reward be proportional to investment (of troops and resources) and also be used as incentive to encourage men to behave honourably and excel in battle.³ When, however, these interests were in conflict it is evident that James preferred to reward honour and loyalty over upholding principle. This is best evinced by the fact that he donated a substantial portion of land to the Hospitallers after the capture of Majorca despite the fact that they had not participated in the campaign itself; a calculated decision in acknowledgement of their previous loyalty and in expectation of their future honourable service.

The marriage of pragmatism and chivalric pretences can also be observed in James's dealings with his Islamic enemies. His failure to resettle newly conquered Valencian territory with Christian colonists caused him many problems. James's immediate need to maintain the economic viability of his new kingdom meant that draconian policies directed at its predominantly Muslim population were out of the question, even if he had favoured them. This, coupled with his desire to outmanoeuvre his barons with quickly negotiated surrenders with his foes, goes some way to explain the largely benevolent nature of his policy towards them. However, any explanation rooted solely in pragmatism cannot be wholly satisfactory here. The gradual evolution of the conduct of cross-cultural warfare between Muslims and Christians, influenced by developing codes of chivalry must also be taken into account. Contemporary chronicles both from Iberia and the Latin East describe how a mutual respect had developed between enemies of different faiths. Indeed, the *Llibre* is strewn with examples of James going out of his way to relay his understanding of Muslim custom and to tell us of his merciful and benign treatment of his vanquished enemies. Thus chivalric kingship, in James's perception, clearly entailed the fair treatment of one's foes, even if they did not share his faith. His actions regarding his defeated enemies can therefore also be explained, in part, by his idealism. Though this was perhaps not always the case in reality, it is certainly as they have been described to us in his chronicle.

Taken as a whole, the *Llibre* reveals a very idealistic yet pragmatic author. James had a clear vision of kingly conduct and this is presented to us through how he chronicles his dealings with his subjects, his enemies and his God. Though at times forced to compromise on idealism, his overriding principles of preserving honour (largely his own), avoiding shame and carrying out the will of the Lord are preeminent in the text. These are the key pillars of his chivalric kingship and the instructions that he wished to leave his heirs.

³ *CJI* (55)

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