

Notes and Documents

A Forgotten Crusade: Alfonso VII of León-Castile and the Campaign for Jaén (1148)

Abstract

Between 1147 and 1149 the rulers of the realms of Christian Iberia conducted a series of victorious campaigns against the Muslims of the peninsula. Although it has been widely assumed that Alfonso VII of León-Castile remained militarily inactive during 1148, Christian and Muslim sources, notably the *Anales Toledanos* and the *Ibar* of Ibn-Khaldūn, indicate that the emperor led an unsuccessful expedition to capture Jaén in that year; and that he sought papal encouragement for his efforts. The Jaén crusade should be viewed in the context of a general Christian offensive backed by the papacy to destroy the power of Islam.

ON 25 OCTOBER 1147, near Dorylaeum in Central Anatolia, a crusading army under the leadership of Conrad III of Germany was annihilated by a force of Seljuk Turks. The catastrophic defeat marked but the first in a series of embarrassing military reverses, culminating in the aborted siege of Damascus in the summer of 1148, which ensured that the Second Crusade, in which so many people—not least Pope Eugenius III and Bernard of Clairvaux—had invested such great hopes, was to end in depressing and humiliating failure.¹ Yet, in the aftermath of the crusade, as both propagandists and critics of the expedition sought to explain the failure of the campaign in the Near East, men could at least console themselves with the fact that on the other side of Europe, in the Iberian peninsula, the struggle against Islam had recently yielded a number of signal victories.² On 17 October 1147, an army led by Alfonso VII of León-Castile (1126–57) had combined with forces from Barcelona, Genoa, Montpellier and Navarre to conquer the prosperous port city of Almería.³ The following week, indeed only the day before the disaster at Dorylaeum, Afonso Henriques of Portugal (1128–85), supported by a contingent of German, Flemish and Anglo-Norman

¹ H. E. Mayer, *The Crusades*, trans. J. B. Gillingham (2nd edn, Oxford, 1988), pp. 93–105.

² On reactions to the failure of the crusade to the East, see G. Constable, 'The Second Crusade as seen by contemporaries', *Traditio*, ix (1953), 266–76.

³ Caffaro, *De captione Almerie et Tortuose*, ed. A. Ubieto Arteta (Valencia, 1973), pp. 21–30; 'Prefatio de Almaria', ed. J. Gil, in *Chronica Hispana saeculi XII, Pars I, Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Medievalis* (henceforth CCCM), lxxi (Turnhout, 1990), pp. 249–67. On the Almería crusade, see J. A. Tapia Garrido, *Almería musulmana (711–1147)* (Almería, 1976), pp. 367–458.

crusaders, had captured Lisbon.⁴ To crown matters, in July 1148 Count Ramón Berenguer IV of Barcelona (1131–62) had linked up once more with a Genoese fleet, as well as with a contingent of the crusaders from northern Europe who had fought at Lisbon, and after a patient six-month-long siege had overrun Tortosa, at the mouth of the Ebro estuary; and in October of the following year the count of Barcelona had extinguished the Muslim presence in the Ebro valley by capturing Fraga, Lérida and Mequinenza.⁵

The Iberian conquests of 1147–9, which in the eyes of contemporaries formed part of a concerted struggle against the enemies of Christendom by a single Christian 'pilgrim army', and were deemed worthy of record by annalists and chroniclers as far afield as Scotland and Germany, were merely the climax of what had been an increasingly daring policy of expansion by the rulers of the Christian realms of the peninsula during the first half of the twelfth century.⁶ That military offensive had been encouraged by a burgeoning crusading enthusiasm among some of the leading secular and ecclesiastical figures of Christian Spain, matched by a gradual realization that the authority of the Berber Almoravid empire in al-Andalus (Muslim Spain) was on the wane, offering perhaps the best opportunity for a generation to push back the frontiers of Islam.⁷ Alfonso I 'the Battler' of Aragon (1104–34) had shown the way by leading a number of successful campaigns into the Ebro valley, most famously with the capture of Zaragoza in 1118; and his namesake Alfonso VII, the self-styled emperor of the neighbouring Christian kingdom of León-Castile, had kept up this momentum by regularly raiding into al-Andalus during the course of the eleven-thirties and forties.⁸ It was almost certainly Alfonso VII whom Pope Eugenius III had in mind in his letter *Divina dispensatione* (II), issued at Troyes on 11 April 1147, where he explicitly compared the activities of the anonymous *rex Hispaniarum*, who 'contra Saracenos de partibus illis potenter armatur, de quibus iam per Dei gratiam saepius triumphavit', with the kings and princes who were then

⁴ *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi: the Conquest of Lisbon*, ed. and trans. C. W. David (New York, 1936). On the background to the Lisbon expedition, see J. Phillips, 'St. Bernard of Clairvaux, the Low Countries and the Lisbon letter of the Second Crusade', *Jour. Eccles. Hist.*, xlviii (1997), 485–97.

⁵ Caffaro, pp. 30–5. The sources for the conquest of Tortosa are examined by R. Hiestand, 'Reconquista, Kreuzzug und heiliges Grab. Die Eroberung von Tortosa 1148 im Lichte eines neuen Zeugnisses', *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kulturgeschichte Spaniens*, xxxi (1984), 136–57. For the conquests of 1149, see P. de Marca, *Marca Hispanica sive limes Hispanicus* (Paris, 1688; repr. Barcelona, 1972), pp. 547, 755; 'Anales Toledanos I', ed. E. Flórez, *España Sagrada*, xxiii (Madrid, 1767), 390.

⁶ Constable, pp. 226–35, 257–60.

⁷ On the introduction of the ideology of crusade into the peninsula, see J. Goñi Gaztambide, *Historia de la bula de la cruzada en España* (Vitoria, 1958); R. A. Fletcher, 'Reconquest and crusade in Spain, c.1050–1150', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, 5th ser., xxxvii (1987), 31–47; M. Bull, *Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade: the Limousin and Gascony, c.970–c.1130* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 96–114.

⁸ C. Stalls, *Possessing the Land: Aragon's Expansion into Islam's Ebro Frontier under Alfonso the Battler, 1104–34* (Leyden, 1995), pp. 35–40; M. Recuero Astray, *Alfonso VII, emperador: el imperio hispánico en el siglo XII* (León, 1979), pp. 118–21, 163–83. The latter may now be supplemented by B. F. Reilly, *The Kingdom of León-Castilla under King Alfonso VII, 1126–57* (Philadelphia, Pa., 1998), which appeared after this article went to press.

planning to liberate the Eastern Church and with the German magnates who were preparing expeditions against the pagan Wends in the Baltic.⁹

Ultimately, however, what had brought about the precipitous collapse of Almoravid power in the Iberian peninsula had been not so much the zeal of the increasingly hawkish rulers of the realms of Christian Spain, as the activities of the Berber Almohads in Morocco, who, from their base at Tinmal in the Atlas mountains, had engaged in a bitter struggle for ascendancy with the Almoravids, spanning a quarter of a century, which was to culminate in the fall of the capital Marrakesh to the Almohad caliph, 'Abd al-Mu'min, in March 1147.¹⁰ The disintegration of the Almoravid regime in Morocco during the course of the eleven-forties was accompanied by a commensurate decline in its power in the peninsula. Between 1144 and 1147 Almoravid political authority in al-Andalus fragmented, to be replaced by a plethora of successor states—some fourteen of them—whose leaders promptly sought to establish themselves as independent dynasts. Among the former Almoravid high command, only Yahyā b. Ghānīya in Seville made any determined attempt to uphold the old order, but with markedly little success.¹¹

It was against a background of profound political turmoil within Muslim al-Andalus and heightened crusading enthusiasm within Christendom as a whole, which itself had been triggered by the fall of Edessa in December 1144 and by the subsequent call to arms by Pope Eugenius III and Bernard of Clairvaux in 1145–7, that the Christian states of the peninsula launched their co-ordinated assault on the Muslim south in the summer of 1147. The following year, buoyed by their successes at Almería and Lisbon, the screw was turned yet tighter on the Muslims of al-Andalus, when Ramón Berenguer IV of Barcelona besieged Tortosa. However, it has been widely assumed that Alfonso VII of León-Castile temporarily suspended all military activity against the Muslim south during 1148.¹² Professor Bernard Reilly has

⁹ Eugenius III, 'Epistolae et privilegia', *Patrologia Latina*, cxxx 1203–4.

¹⁰ On the rise and fall of the Almohad empire, see A. Huici Miranda, *Historia de España, época almohade* (2 vols., Tetuán, 1956–7); M. J. Viguera Molins, *Los reinos de taifas y las invasiones magrebies (Al-Andalus del XI al XIII)* (Madrid, 1992), pp. 205–328; H. Kennedy, *Muslim Spain and Portugal: a Political History of al-Andalus* (1996), pp. 196–272.

¹¹ 'What with the Christians of every denomination who assailed his frontiers, and what with the Moslems of Andalus themselves, who showed everywhere symptoms of disaffection and wished to rid themselves of the Almoravides, that chieftain [Ibn Ghānīya] was unable to stem the torrent of calamity and misfortune which broke out more furiously than ever in the fair domains of Islam. At last, when the peoples of Andalus saw that the empire of the Almoravides was falling to pieces . . . they waited no longer, and, casting away the mask of dissimulation, broke out into open rebellion against their African rulers. In the same manner as at the overthrow of the house of Umeyyah the provinces of their vast empire had been parcelled out among their generals and governors, so now every petty governor, chief, or man of influence, who could command a few followers and had a castle to retire to in case of need, styled himself Sultan, and assumed the other insignia of royalty; and, as the historian ibn Khaldūn has judiciously remarked, Andalus offered the singular spectacle of as many kings as there were towns in it' (Al-Makkarī, *History of the Mohammedan Dynasties in Spain*, trans. P. de Gayangos (2 vols., 1840–1), ii. 309–10; cf. Kennedy, pp. 189–95).

¹² See, for example, L. García de Valdeavellano, *Historia de España: de los orígenes a la baja Edad Media* (2nd edn., 2 vols., Madrid, 1955), i. 451; J. A. Tapia Garrido, *Almería musulmana (1147–1482)*

observed, 'in all probability the great effort against Almería in 1147 had exhausted both his purse and his subjects'.¹³ Indeed, Alfonso VII's activities during much of the year in question remain shrouded in mystery.¹⁴ True, for the first few months after the fall of Almería the emperor's movements may be followed fairly closely. On 25 November 1147, Alfonso VII was with his followers at Baeza on the River Guadalquivir, where he made a grant of property to García Pérez in recognition of his loyal service and of the prominent role that the Leonese noble had played in the recent campaigning.¹⁵ By Christmas Day, the royal army, accompanied by King García Ramírez IV of Navarre, had returned in triumph to Toledo.¹⁶ During the early months of 1148 Alfonso VII travelled widely within the heartland of his kingdom: on 3 February the emperor was in Segovia where he carried out an exchange of properties with his mistress the Countess Urraca Fernández; by 17 February the court had moved north to Palencia where it remained until at least 1 March.¹⁷ On 24 March the emperor and his entourage had reached Burgos, and by the end of the month Soria.¹⁸ On 5 April Alfonso VII held talks with the count of Barcelona at Almazán, perhaps with a view to agreeing a common strategy for the forthcoming season's campaigning; and on 25 April the emperor and his count may have been in Toledo, although the charter of that date is of disputed authenticity.¹⁹ But then the scent goes

(Almería, 1978), p. 7; E. Díaz and P. Molina, 'Las campañas de Alfonso VII en Andalucía: un precedente de la conquista de Córdoba', in *Andalucía entre Oriente y Occidente (1236-1492): Actas del V coloquio internacional de historia medieval de Andalucía* (Córdoba, 1988), pp. 63-70; B. F. Reilly, *The Contest of Christian and Muslim Spain, 1031-1157* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 214, 218.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

¹⁴ Recuero, pp. 226-7.

¹⁵ 'Facta carta . . . quando preminatus imperator redibat de Almaria, quam tunc cum auxilio lanuensium ceperat et iuri christianorum submiserat' (*Colección diplomática del monasterio de Sahagún (857-1300)*, iv, ed. J. A. Fernández Flórez (León, 1991), pp. 202-3).

¹⁶ Santiago de Compostela, Archivo de la iglesia parroquial de Sar, pergaminos. The court was still in Toledo on 28 Dec. 1147 (F. J. Hernández, *Los cartularios de Toledo: catálogo documental* (Madrid, 1985), no. 59).

¹⁷ *Documentos de la iglesia colegial de Santa María la Mayor de Valladolid*, ed. M. Mañueco Villalobos and J. Zurita Nieto (3 vols., Valladolid, 1917-20), i. 194-6; *Colección documental del archivo de la catedral de León (775-1230)*, v, ed. J. M. Fernández Catón (León, 1990), pp. 241-4; *Patrimonio cultural de San Isidoro de León: documentos de los siglos X-XIII: Colección diplomática*, ed. M. E. Martín López (León, 1995), pp. 69-73; *Documentos de los archivos catedralicio y diocesano de Salamanca (siglos XII-XIII)*, ed. J. L. Martín Martín and others (Salamanca, 1977), pp. 98-100. It is also possible that the court visited Salamanca in Feb. 1148. A diploma of Alfonso VII dated 13 Feb. 1147, if genuine, could only have been issued in 1148, since it cites the emperor as ruling Almería, conquered in Oct. 1147, and is witnessed by Count Pedro Alfonso, who was raised to that rank in Jan. 1148, and the Empress Berenguela, who died in Feb. 1149 (*La documentación del Tumbo A de la catedral de Santiago de Compostela: estudio y edición*, ed. M. Lucas Alvarez (León, 1997), pp. 267-9).

¹⁸ Recuero, p. 226 n. 191; *Colección diplomática medieval de la Rioja*, ed. I. Rodríguez y Rodríguez de Lama (4 vols., Logroño, 1976-92), ii. 227-8.

¹⁹ 'Facta carta en Almacan . . . comite Barcinonensi Reymundo Berengarii tunc ibi existente presente et habente cum Imperatore colloquium' (*Colección diplomática del monasterio de Fitero (1140-1210)*, ed. C. Monterde Albiac (Zaragoza, 1978), p. 368; *El Tumbo de San Julián de Samos (siglos VIII-XII)*, ed. M. Lucas Alvarez (Santiago de Compostela, 1986), pp. 474-6; cf. M. Lucas Alvarez, *El reino de León en la alta Edad Media: las cancellerías reales (1109-1230)*, v (León, 1993), p. 172).

cold. Although a number of forged charters, purportedly issued in 1148, have come down to us, we have no firm record of Alfonso VII and his entourage until 9 September 1148 when the emperor was reportedly at Calatava; and he then disappears from view again until 30 January 1149 when he may be traced once more at Toledo.²⁰

The surviving narrative sources for the period are equally of little help in establishing Alfonso VII's movements during the latter part of 1148. Unfortunately, the prose account of the emperor's reign, the *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*, which may have been compiled by Bishop Arnaldo of Astorga c.1150, cuts off in 1147, just as the Almería campaign was about to begin; and the truncated poetic account of the Almería crusade which is attached to the prose chronicle amounts to little more than a lavish tribute to the principal lay magnates who took part in that campaign.²¹ The major chronicles of the first half of the thirteenth century, the *Chronicon Mundi* of Lucas bishop of Tuy, the anonymous *Crónica latina de los reyes de Castilla* attributed to Bishop Juan of Osma, and the *De rebus Hispanie* of Archbishop Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, similarly pass over the events of 1148 in silence.²²

There is one Christian source, however, that sheds some precious light on Alfonso VII's activities during the course of 1148. The so-called *Anales Toledanos Primeros*, which are principally devoted to the history of the peninsula from the Muslim conquest down to A.D. 1219, is the first of three sets of annals which were probably compiled in or near the city of Toledo between the mid thirteenth and late fourteenth centuries.²³ Under the year 1148 there is the following entry:

Dixo Abengama al Emperador que fuese con él, è quel daric à Jahen, è quisolo prender à trayzon, è fue con el Conde Manrich, è prisieronlo alla, è otros Ricos-Omes muchos con el à trayzon; mas despues murió Abengama, è los que los guardaban dieronlos de mano al Conde è à todos los otros, Era MCLXXXVI.²⁴

²⁰ Lucas Alvarez, *Las cancellerías*, pp. 171-3; E. Cal Pardo, *El monasterio de San Salvador de Pedroso en tierras de Trasancos: colección documental* (La Coruña, 1984), pp. 240-1; Rodríguez y Rodríguez de Lama, ii. 230.

²¹ 'Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris', ed. A. Maya Sánchez, in *Chronica Hispana saeculi XII, Pars I*, pp. 109-248; 'Prefatio de Almaria', *ibid.*, pp. 249-67. On the authorship of the *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*, see S. Barton and R. Fletcher, *The World of El Cid: Chronicles of the Spanish Reconquest* (Manchester, forthcoming).

²² Lucas of Tuy, *Chronicon Mundi*, ed. A. Schottus, *Hispania illustrata*, iv (Frankfurt, 1638), pp. 1-116; *Crónica latina de los reyes de Castilla*, ed. L. Charlo Brea (Cadiz, 1984); Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, *Historia de rebus Hispanie sive Historia Gothica*, ed. J. Fernández Valverde, CCCM, lxxii (Turnhout, 1987).

²³ 'Anales Toledanos I-III', pp. 381-423. See J. Porres Martín-Cleto, *Los Anales Toledanos I y II* (Toledo, 1993); cf. F. Maíllo Salgado, 'Del nudejarismo de los Anales Toledanos Segundos', *Studia Historica: Historia Medieval*, vii (1989), 209-13.

²⁴ 'Abengama told the emperor that he should go to him and that he would give him Jaén, and he wished to capture him by treachery, and Count Manrique went with him, and they captured him there, and many other magnates with him by treachery; but afterwards Abengama died, and those who guarded them allowed the count and all the others to go free. Era MCLXXXVI [A.D. 1148]' (*Anales Toledanos I*, p. 389).

The revelation that some time during 1148 the Almoravid governor Ibn Ghānīya had offered to surrender Jaén to Alfonso VII, but that the former had later gone back on his word and had treacherously captured a number of the emperor's magnates, including Count Manrique Pérez de Lara, is not recorded by any other Christian chronicler or annalist. Indeed, the most recent commentator to examine the *Anales Toledanos Primeros* has declared that little credence should be attached to the entry, which he dismisses as being little more than a mere *relato juglaresco*, or troubadour's tale, which was later incorporated by the annalist.²⁵

However, the testimony of the annal for 1148 is amply supported in its essentials by the account provided by the Arab chronicler Ibn Khaldūn (1332–1406), whose monumental *Kitāb al-'Ibar wa-dīwān al-mubtada' wa-l-khabar*, which includes a history of the Arabs from the time of Muhammad to his own days, gives a relatively detailed and seemingly well-informed guide to the turbulent events that unfolded in al-Andalus during the eleven-forties.²⁶ According to Ibn Khaldūn, in 1148 the beleaguered Ibn Ghānīya, facing renewed pressure upon his dominions by Alfonso VII, to whom he had already ceded Baeza and Ubeda, entered into negotiations at Ecija with the chief of the Almohad army in al-Andalus, Barraz b. Muḥammad al-Masūfī. As a result of this, Ibn Ghānīya agreed to cede Córdoba and Carmona to the Almohads, on condition that he be allowed to keep the lordship of Jaén for himself. Once the Almohad caliph, 'Abd al-Mu'min, had approved this treaty, Ibn Ghānīya took possession of Jaén, whereupon the city was besieged by Alfonso VII. However, the latter was ultimately forced to abandon the siege when, by a stratagem, Ibn Ghānīya succeeded in capturing a number of the emperor's counts whom he imprisoned in Alcalá la Real. Once the siege had been lifted, Ibn Ghānīya made his way to nearby Granada, the only remaining Almoravid stronghold in the peninsula, where he died in January 1149.²⁷ Later that same year, Jaén

²⁵ Porres Martín-Cleto, p. 127.

²⁶ Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-'Ibar wa-dīwān al-mubtada' wa-l-khabar*, ed. S. Zakkar (8 vols., Beirut, 1981). A translation of the historical part of *'Ibar* is to be found in *Histoire des Berbères et des dynasties musulmanes de l'Afrique septentrionale*, trans. W. M. Baron de Slane, rev. edn. P. Casanova (4 vols., Paris, 1925–56). See M. Shatzmiller, *L'Historiographie mérinide: Ibn Khaldūn et ses contemporains* (Leiden, 1982), pp. 47–92.

²⁷ 'Pen Jant ces événements, le roi chrétien [Alphonse II de Castille] avait contraint Yahya-Ibn-Ali-Ibn-Ghanīa à s'enfermer dans Cordoue, et après avoir porté le ravage dans les états de ce prince, il le força à lui céder Baéza et Ubeda. Il s'empara aussi de Lisbonne, Tortosa, Lerida, Fraga, Sainte-Marie et plusieurs autres forteresses de l'Espagne musulmane. Il exigea ensuite d'Ibn-Ghanīa une augmentation de tribut ou bien la cession de Cordoue. Cette demande mit le chef almoravide dans la nécessité d'implorer le secours des Almohades: il écrivit à Berraz-Ibn-Mohammed, et ayant obtenu une entrevue avec lui à Ecija, il consentit à mériter l'appui du khalife par l'échange de Cordoue et de Carmona contre Jaen. Quand Abd-el-Moumen leur eut envoyé la ratification de ce traité, Ibn-Ghanīa alla prendre possession de Jaen où il se vit bientôt assiégé par le roi chrétien. Il parvint alors, par un stratagème, à faire prisonniers plusieurs comtes qui étaient au service du roi, et les enferma dans la Calā-t-Ibn-Said. Aussitôt que ce monarque eut levé le siège de la ville, Ibn-Ghanīa alla trouver Meimoun-Ibn-Yedder le lemtounide, qui se tenait à Granadé avec un corps de troupes almoravides et l'invita à suivre son exemple en établissant des relations avec les Almohades.

was delivered to the Almohads and prayers were said for the caliph in the city mosque.²⁸

Ibn Khaldūn's narrative speaks volumes for the invidious position in which Ibn Ghānīya found himself by the summer of 1148. Only the previous year, hopeful that Almoravid power in the peninsula might yet be shored up, Ibn Ghānīya had responded to the first major invasion of al-Andalus by the Almohads by ceding Baeza and Ubeda to Alfonso VII in return for his military support. But the dramatic Christian victories at Almería and Lisbon in October 1147 had demonstrated that a strategy of rapprochement with the Christian north was not viable, while renewed Almohad military pressure in the south-west of the peninsula during the first half of 1148 rapidly led Ibn Ghānīya to conclude that his own position was no longer tenable.²⁹ The negotiations with Barraz, which Ibn Khaldūn refers to, presumably took place some time during the early summer of 1148, for in a letter sent from Marrakesh by 'Abd al-Mu'min to Ibn Ghānīya on 27 August 1148, the caliph declared that he had already learned of the latter's willingness to join the Almohad cause and promised him that if he joined his *taifa*, or party, he would be assured of a prominent position among the Almohad élite.³⁰

Both the author of the *Anales Toledanos Primeros* and Ibn Khaldūn were writing some considerable time after the events they described. Yet, their accounts of the brief siege of Jaén in 1148 find a surprising echo in a charter issued on 22 October 1148 by the Leonese magnate Count Osorio Martínez.³¹ The document in question records the grant by the count of some property in Mansilla to one Juan Juliánez and his wife Sol Nicoláez in recognition of their loyal service; but of particular interest for our purposes is the dating clause to the charter, which records, among other things: 'Regnante imperator Illefonus in tota Hispania et in Baeza et in Almaria. Imperatrix regina Berengaria similiter regnante. Maior domino de ipso imperatore comite don Ponze. Alferaz Nuno Pedrez qui iacet preso in Geen'. That is to say, at the time the charter was redacted, the *alférez*, or leader of the emperor's military household, Nuño Pérez, the brother of the Count Manrique named by the Toledan annalist, was still a prisoner in Jaén. However, just as the *Anales Toledanos Primeros* indicate, the death of Ibn Ghānīya shortly afterwards saw the release of the Christian hostages: by

Il y mourut dans le mois de Châban 543 (décembre-janvier 1148-9), y son tombe . . . s'y voit encore' (Ibn Khaldūn (trans.), ii. 187-8). See Huici Miranda, i. 156-7; F. J. Aguirre Sádaba and M. C. Jiménez Mata, *Introducción al Jaén islámico (estudio geográfico-histórico)* (Jaén, 1979), pp. 209-10. Ibn Abī Zar' gives the date of Ibn Ghānīya's death as 8 Jan. 1149 (Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawḍ al-Qirtās*, trans. A. Huici Miranda (2 vols., Valencia, 1964), p. 383).

²⁸ Ibn Abī Zar', p. 383.

²⁹ Ibn Khaldūn (trans.), ii. 187.

³⁰ E. Lévi-Provençal, 'Un recueil de lettres officielles almohades', *Hespéris*, xxviii (1941), 1-80, at pp. 23-4.

³¹ León, Archivo Histórico Diocesano, Fondo Gradefes, no. 60; partially edited by A. Calvo, *El monasterio de Gradefes: apuntes para su historia y la de algunos otros cenobios y pueblos del concejo* (León, 1936-45), pp. 306-7.

30 January 1149, Nuño Pérez may once more be traced at the court of Alfonso VII.³²

Considered together, therefore, the *Anales Toledanos Primeros*, the account of Ibn Khaldūn and the charter of Count Osorio Martínez indicate that far from being militarily inactive in 1148, as has been suggested, Alfonso VII was determined to keep up the pressure on the Muslim south. Indeed, the importance that the emperor attached to his expedition to al-Andalus that year may be further gauged from the fact that he evidently took pains to secure papal backing for his latest military venture. In a letter dispatched to Alfonso VII on 27 April 1148, at Langres, Pope Eugenius III assured the emperor that 'quod utique attendentes, petitiones tuas pro expeditione contra infidelium tyrannidem facienda, libenter admisimus'.³³ 'Clearly', Professor Giles Constable has observed, 'at some time before this Alfonso had asked the Pope to approve his plans for a crusade'; although to which campaign the pope was actually referring in his letter has never, until now, been firmly established.³⁴ It is possible that the emperor's crusading plans were first discussed at the *colloquium* he held at papal behest with his nobles and bishops at Palencia in February 1148, although the principal purpose of the meeting was to discuss the trinitarian doctrine of Gilbert de la Porrée, bishop of Poitiers.³⁵ The emperor may have kept the pope informed of his military intentions via those of his bishops, such as Navarro of Coria, who attended the Council of Rheims in March 1148, and subsequently, perhaps, via Nicholas Breakspear (later Pope Adrian IV), who was almost certainly present in the east of the peninsula in 1148–9, possibly acting as the pope's unofficial legate.³⁶

To sum up, Alfonso VII's expedition against Jaén in the summer of 1148, like the campaigns to conquer Almeria, Lisbon and Tortosa, should be viewed in the context of a general Christian offensive backed by the papacy to destroy the power of Islam in the peninsula. The Jaén episode remains obscure, but given its ignominious and inglorious outcome it is perhaps

³² Rodríguez y Rodríguez de Lama, ii. 230. On the career of Nuño Pérez, see S. Barton, *The Aristocracy in 12th-century León and Castile* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 269–70.

³³ Eugenius III, *Patrologia Latina*, clxxx. 1345–7.

³⁴ Constable, p. 258; cf. Goñi Gaztambide, p. 85.

³⁵ 'Facta carta Palencie . . . quando prefatus imperator habuit ibi colloquium cum episcopis et baronibus sui regni, de uocatione domini Pape ad conciliu[m]' (*Patrimonio cultural de San Isidoro*, p. 72). On the matters discussed at Palencia, and at the meeting held in Braga that same year, see A. García y García, 'Concilios y sínodos en el ordenamiento jurídico del Reino de León', in *El reino de León en la alta Edad Media*, i (León, 1988), pp. 353–494, at pp. 437–9.

³⁶ Eugenius III, *Patrologia Latina*, clxxx. 1345–7. According to Pope Eugenius's letter, Alfonso VII was particularly keen that the bishops and abbots of his realm should attend the Council of Rheims on 27 March 1148, although few in the event did: 'Quia vero episcopos et abbates regni tui ad uocationem nostram, tanquam devotus et humilis filius, Remensi interesse concilio uoluisti: benevolentiae tuae gratias exhibentes, precum tuarum consideratione devicti, eos qui non uenerunt, a suspensionis sententia relaxamus'. On the presence of Nicholas Breakspear in the peninsula in 1148–9, see P. Kehr, 'Das Papsttum und der katalanische Prinzipat bis zur Vereinigung mit Aragon', *Abhandlungen der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Philosophisch-historische Klasse (1926), pp. 90–1; cf. Constable, p. 262.

unsurprising that it was not widely reported, either in Christian narrative sources or in the products of Alfonso VII's chancery, normally so keen to trumpet the emperor's military successes to the world.

The Jaén débâcle notwithstanding, Alfonso VII was to lead his armies into al-Andalus with increasing frequency during the final years of his life.³⁷ On 27 January 1151, at Tudején, the emperor and Ramón Berenguer IV of Barcelona agreed a treaty which prefigured nothing less than the dismemberment of all the territories of al-Andalus between the two rulers.³⁸ But the treaty never came to fruition. Although Jaén itself was again besieged in the summer of 1151, the campaign was a failure, and a projected expedition against Seville had to be called off when a crusading army from overseas failed to make an appearance as planned.³⁹ Not only was the emperor unable to secure the military support from overseas which might have enabled him to complete his conquests in al-Andalus, but in 1156-7 the Almohads conducted a series of major offensives which led to the evacuation of all the Christian-held strongpoints south of the Sierra Morena, including Almería itself, towards the end of August 1157.⁴⁰ These military reverses and the death of Alfonso VII, on 21 August 1157, brought to a close nearly half a century of expansion by the Christian realms of the peninsula. Another two generations were to elapse before the conquest of the Guadalquivir valley would once again become a practical proposition.

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³⁷ Recuero, pp. 186-98; Reilly, pp. 218-23. Early in 1149 Alfonso VII entered into negotiations with the *taifa* ruler of Valencia, Ibn Mardanish, perhaps with a view to agreeing a joint campaign against the Almohads, and the presence of 4 Genoese consuls at the Leonese court on 15 Feb. 1149 suggests that further military co-operation with the Italian commune was also being mooted, although there is no record of any expedition by the emperor that year (Recuero, pp. 183-4; Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS. 13,093 fos. 125-126v).

³⁸ *Liber Feudorum Maior*, ed. F. Miquel Rosell (2 vols., Barcelona, 1945), i. 39-42.

³⁹ 'Facta carta . . . quando imperator iacebat super Gaen expectando naues Francorum que debebant uenire ad Sibiliam' (24 Aug. 1151) (Hernández, no. 81).

⁴⁰ A. Huici Miranda, 'Un nuevo manuscrito de "al-Bayān al-Mugrib": Datos inéditos y aclaraciones sobre los últimos años del reinado de Alfonso VII, el Emperador', *Al-Andalus*, xxiv (1959), 63-84.