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Dominicans, Muslims and Jews in the Medieval Crown of Aragon

ROBIN VOSE

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DOMINICANS, MUSLIMS AND JEWS IN THE MEDIEVAL CROWN OF ARAGON

With their active apostolate of preaching and teaching, Dominican friars were important promoters of Latin Christianity in the borderlands of medieval Spain and North Africa. Historians have long assumed that their efforts to convert or persecute non-Christian populations played a major role in worsening relations between Christians, Muslims and Jews in the era of crusade and *reconquista*. This study sheds new light on the topic by setting Dominican participation in celebrated but short-lived projects such as Arabic language *studia* or anti-Jewish theological disputations alongside day-to-day realities of mendicant life in the medieval Crown of Aragon. Whether in old Catalan centers like Barcelona, newly conquered Valencia or Islamic North Africa, the author shows that Dominican friars were on the whole conservative educators and disciplinarians rather than innovative missionaries – ever concerned to protect the spiritual well-being of the faithful by means of preaching, censorship and maintenance of existing barriers to interfaith communications.

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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK
Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521886437

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First published in print format 2009

ISBN-13 978-0-511-53724-0 eBook (Adobe Reader)

ISBN-13 978-0-521-88643-7 hardback

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To Owen, Ryley and Kim
with love

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book began as a doctoral dissertation, with initial research in Spain, France and Italy funded through a SSHRC/CRSHC doctoral fellowship along with generous support from the University of Notre Dame. A Medieval Academy fellowship and funding from the Newberry Library Consortium allowed me to attend a 2002 Summer Institute in the Spanish and Hispanic-American Archival Sciences at the Newberry Library in Chicago. In 2003–4 I was privileged to teach in the congenial history department at Wittenberg University, an experience which greatly facilitated and enriched my work. Since 2004 I have been a member of the equally welcoming history department at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick (Canada). Long walks to and from campus over the St. John River footbridge, with cormorants and bald eagles circling overhead, undoubtedly added their own special qualities to my comprehension of medieval history even if this is not immediately evident in every chapter.

I can only hint here at debts I owe to colleagues, friends and family. My advisor Olivia Remie Constable gave consistently excellent advice and guidance. I also worked with a dissertation committee composed of scholars whose expertise in a variety of fields is matched only by their dedication to sharing that expertise with others: Paul Cobb, Michael Signer and John Van Engen. The Notre Dame Medieval Institute, its students and its directors provided a place like no other to encourage open-minded and challenging studies of the Middle Ages. All my teachers at Notre Dame, Toronto and McGill provided insights and inspirations along the way; I would like to mention in particular Mark Jordan, Kathleen Biddick, Dayle Seidenspinner-Núñez, Mark Meyerson, Jane McAuliffe, Jacques Waardenburg, Walter Goffart, Donald Little, Faith Wallis and Nancy Partner. I also had the privilege of studying, for an all too brief period, with Sabine MacCormack and the late fr. Leonard

Boyle. The depth of analysis and diversity of opinions I encountered under their tutelage was truly remarkable.

Other debts have piled up around the world: thanks to J.N. and Nina Hillgarth, David Abulafia, David Nirenberg, Robert I. Burns, Jill Webster, Adnan Husain, Larry Simon, Charles Burnett, Wout Van Bekkum, Scott Van Jacob, Harvey (Haim) Hames, Paola Tartakoff, Amanda Power, Rosa and Josep Pardina, Brian Catlos and Núria Silleras-Fernández for advice and conviviality. Josep Baucells Reig at the Arxiu Capitular de Barcelona, Bernat Juan Rubi at the Arxiu Capitular de Mallorca and the staff of the rare book room at the University of Barcelona were helpful and generous, as were librarians at the Universities of Notre Dame, Wittenberg and New Brunswick. Finally, I am grateful to have had splendid opportunities to present my ideas at the Illinois Medieval Association, a conference on "Post-Colonial Moves" at the University of Miami, the Society for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies, the International Congress on Medieval Studies, the Medieval Academy and the "Christlicher Norden/Muslimischer Süden" conference at the Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule Sankt-Georgen in Frankfurt.

It was family that kept me (marginally) sane throughout the writing process, and family that kept me rich in love and support. Neither the damp winds of winter in Mallorca nor the lake-effect snows of northern Indiana could chill the glowing warmth they provided. Kim Jones made me laugh, sigh, dance and think. Owen Vose and Ryley Jones gave me new perspectives with which to see the world. All three, along with my parents John and Nancy Vose and other family members, patiently and graciously indulged my curiosity and supported me in reaching my goals. Thank you.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACA	Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Barcelona
ADP	Arxiu Diocesà, Palma de Mallorca
AFP	*Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid
ARM	Arxiu del Regne de Mallorca, Palma de Mallorca
ARV	Arxiu del Regne de València
AST	*Analecta Sacra Tarraconensia*
ASV	Archivio Segreto Vaticano
BN	Bibliothèque National, Paris
BUB	Biblioteca Universitaria de Barcelona
BUV	Biblioteca Universitaria de València
CHR	*Catholic Historical Review*
Diago	F. Diago, *Historia de la Provincia de Aragon de la Orden de Predicadores* (Barcelona, 1599; repr. Valencia, 1999)
EV	*Escritos del Vedat*
Llibre dels fets	James I of Aragon, *Llibre dels fets del rei en Jaume*, ed. J. Bruguera (Barcelona, 1991); tr. D. Smith and H. Buffery as *The Book of Deeds of James I of Aragon* (Aldershot, 2003)
MOFPH	*Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Historica*
Mansi	J.D. Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, new edn., 58 vols. (Paris, 1907–27)
Opera Omnia	Thomas Aquinas, *Opera Omnia*, 25 vols. (Parma, 1852–73; repr. New York, 1948–50)
Régné	J. Régné, *History of the Jews in Aragon: Regesta and Documents (1213–1327)*, ed. Yom Tov Assis (Jerusalem, 1978)
Ripoll	T. Ripoll, ed., *Bullarium Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum*, 8 vols. (Rome, 1729–40)

Sbaralea	J. Sbaralea *et al., Bullarium Franciscanum Romanorum Pontificum*, 7 vols. (Rome, 1759–1904)
SCG	Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* (Rome, 1888)
SSOP	J. Quétif and J. Échard, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1719–23; repr. New York, 1959–61)
ST	Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 5 vols. (Ottawa, 1941–5)

Biblical citations are taken from the Vulgate edition as printed at Paris by Berche et Tralin (1882); English translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

NAMES AND TERMINOLOGY

A book written in English about many different regions in a pre-modern time whose "national" boundaries were as fluid as its dialectical orthography is bound to offend readers with a special interest in linguistic consistency. Since I am not such a reader myself, making no claims to specialization in such fields as Catalan or Arabic onomastics, I have not felt compelled to dwell on the matter. My approach has rather been eclectic and practical, guided by a hope that the result will be comprehensible to primarily anglophone audiences. Personal names have for the most part been given in Anglicized form: James instead of *Jacme*, *Jaime*, *Jaume*, *Iacobus* or any of the other variants found in medieval and modern texts. Surnames are generally given as they surface in primary sources. Latin surnames seem more appropriate than vernacular versions for ecclesiastics who normally appear in Latin documents; vernacular alternatives are given in parentheses at times. I apologize in advance if I have caused any confusion by discussing Raymond Martini instead of *Raimundus/Ramon Martí*, or John of Podio Ventoso rather than *Johannes/Joan Puigventós*, to cite but two examples. No attempt has been made to transliterate Arabic or Hebrew according to modern scholarly norms, and diacritics have often been omitted. Given that my focus is on medieval Dominican perceptions of their world I felt it acceptable to err on the side of simplification as they tended to do (thus Ali for '*Alī*). I have also included garbled medieval readings ("miramolin" for *amīr al-mu'minīn*) in some cases; to "correct" them would be to occlude part of the story.

I have sought to use place-names that would be reasonably identifiable to most readers. Rome for *Roma* is an obvious concession, and Cordoba for *Córdoba* is common; more contentious perhaps is my use of Catalan Lleida for *Lérida*, but then Bugia for Algerian *Bougie/Bijaya*. I did not mean to make any nationalist or other political points through toponymy; I merely used terms I personally found to be simple and recognizable, among the many variations available in each case. Wherever

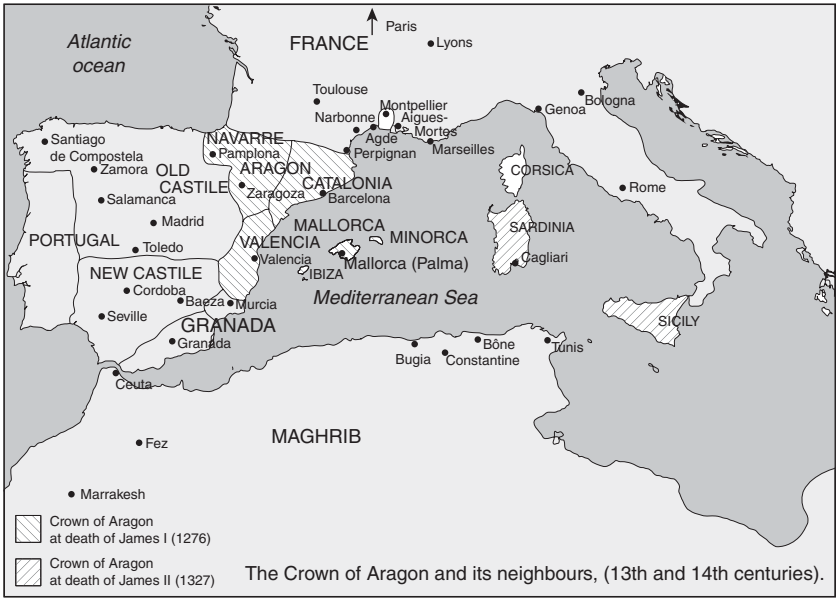
confusion might arise I have tried to provide alternative spellings in parentheses.

Most egregious undoubtedly are the problematic uses of "Aragon" and "Aragonese" which will be found herein. The "Crown of Aragon" is a historians' fiction, conveniently designating territories united under kings of Aragon but including at various times such distinct polities as the kingdoms of Valencia, Mallorca, Sicily and Sardinia, the Counties of Barcelona and Urgel, and the Lordship of Montpellier.[1] "Aragon" and "Catalonia" were two of its regions, and today both are Autonomous Communities within the Spanish federation; each had an important and distinct medieval vernacular. To call medieval Catalans or Valencians "Aragonese" is strictly wrong, and potentially insulting to some, but they *were* subjects of the king of Aragon; furthermore, by the fourteenth century Dominicans from Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia and even Mallorca (though no longer subject to the king of Aragon in the latter case) were all members of their Order's Aragonese Province. To be consistent and accurate here would be extremely clumsy. In compromise, friars and others have often been called "Aragonese" simply as a means of identifying their belonging to that Province (formerly part of the Province of Spain) and/or being subject to a king who included "Aragon" among his titles. Similar difficulties emerge with designations of "Spanish," "French," "Almohad" or "Hafsid," but I again crave the reader's indulgence in glossing over any resulting oversimplifications.

Finally, a note about religious terminology. One person's convert is another's apostate or renegade. Archaic and potentially derogatory words such as "infidel," "saracen," "marrano" (and of course the subjective theological categories of "truth"/"error") are inevitable in a study of medieval Dominican friars and their relations with non-Christian peoples. These relations, though sometimes relatively benign, were hardly egalitarian or open-minded by modern standards. Needless to say, I in no way mean to endorse medieval bigotry or intolerance of any form by repeating such words in the pages that follow. The sentiments presented here are those of historical characters who felt strongly about their belief systems. My goal is to present their world as fully and accurately as possible for the purpose of historical comprehension – not as fuel for anachronistic polemic or apologetic religious arguments.

[1] T. Bisson, *The Medieval Crown of Aragon: A Short History* (Oxford, 1986) provides a helpful introduction to the subject.

MAPS



Map 1. The Crown of Aragon and its neighbors, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (after O.R. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 108)

Map 2. Dominican convents in the Province of Aragon, to 1330 (after R.I. Burns, *Crusader Kingdom of Valencia*, Harvard University Press, 1967. Reprinted in R.I. Burns and Paul Chevedden, *Negotiating Cultures*, Brill, 1999, p. 12)

INTRODUCTION

Baruch Teutonici, Jewish resident of Toulouse in southern France, was a desperate man in the summer of 1320. On the fifteenth of June he survived the devastating experience of being dragged from his study by an angry mob of Christian rioters, pushed through narrow streets past lifeless bodies of friends and neighbors and thrust into the imposing brick and stone cathedral of St. Stephen. There he was forced to accept baptism at knife point. A month later, Baruch stood before an inquisitorial tribunal trying to explain why he wanted permission from bishop Jacques Fournier to reject his baptism and return to the Jewish faith. After weeks of testimony and deliberation, Baruch's request was denied and he began to receive formal instruction in the beliefs of Christianity. By the end of September, he had publicly resigned himself to living the rest of his life as a Christian named John.[1]

Baruch's case was tragic, but by the early fourteenth century incidents of violence against Jews – including forced conversions – were hardly a novelty in the Christian-dominated lands of western Europe. Historians such as R.I. Moore have suggested various factors which led to the emergence of a "persecuting society" in the medieval west, one in which Jews, Muslims and others deemed to be outside the normative boundaries of Christian society increasingly came to face persecution from their neighbors.[2] Whatever the causes, such a society can clearly be said to have existed by the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As Baruch knew firsthand, persecution took both legal and extra-legal forms. It could aim to

[1] Trial record in J. Duvernoy, *Le registre de l'inquisition de Jacques Fournier* (Toulouse, 1965), vol. I, 177–90, tr. with analysis by S. Grayzel, "The Confession of a Medieval Jewish Convert" in *Historia Judaica* 17 (1955), 89–120. On the massacres of the so-called Shepherds or Pastoureaux see Y. Yerushalmi, "The Inquisition and the Jews of France in the Time of Bernard Gui" in *Harvard Theological Review* 63:3 (1970), esp. 328–33 and D. Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence* (Princeton, 1996), 43ff.

[2] R.I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society* (New York, 1987).

remove offending "alien" bodies by a whole variety of means, ranging from murder and physical expulsion to more or less peaceful efforts to promote conversion. Baruch managed to avoid death in 1320 only to face a ritualized obliteration of his Jewish identity by means of baptism and conversion, at first through naked force and finally (if the inquisition's evidence is to be believed on this point) through a long process of preaching and catechesis. Whether Baruch ultimately became John willingly as a result of successful Christian proselytism, or despairingly, having exhausted all avenues for appeal, remains a matter for conjecture.[3]

There is more to the story, however. In the course of his testimony, Baruch mentioned several Christians who had expressed sympathy for his plight and others from whom he expected to receive protection. These included the Dominican friar Raymond of Junac, lieutenant to the Lord Inquisitor of Toulouse, whose advice was sought by Baruch and his friends after news of attacks on nearby Jewish communities first reached their city. In the midst of Baruch's own ordeal, he claimed to have asked his tormentors to take him to the local Dominican convent – where he hoped to find a friar named Jacob Alamanni, "thinking to himself that if he could come into the hands of the said friar, who was a good friend of his, he would be saved from death without being baptized."[4] Of course Baruch may have exaggerated the extent of his friendship with the Dominicans to ingratiate himself with the court. Nevertheless it seems that he saw the friars at least potentially as allies who would oppose attempts to secure irregular forced conversions.[5]

We are thus presented with a complex situation. Some Christians in this period obviously felt justified in trying to rid their world of religious "outsiders" by any means necessary. Others, like Jacques Fournier, did not reject coercion in religious matters as long as this was kept within established legal bounds (the whole point of Baruch's trial was to determine

[3] According to the inquisition register, Baruch protested that "he did not know what the Christians believed and why they believed … unless, therefore, it could be shown through his Law and Prophets that what the Christians believe is in accordance with the Law and the Prophets, he would not want to believe in or hold to the Christian faith and would rather die than give up Judaism" (Grayzel, "Confession," 114). Bishop Fournier agreed to explain Christian theological principles in a series of debates; these are described in some detail and consistently depict Baruch as a vigorous advocate for Judaism. Still, in the inquisitors' version of events the Jew was eventually brought around to a full and voluntary conversion. Grayzel is understandably skeptical, arguing that Baruch simply gave up after stalling for as long as he could (Grayzel, "Confession," 103).

[4] Grayzel, "Confession," 106. Grayzel's assumption that Alamanni was German, like Baruch, is incorrect – Alamanni is a common Occitan regional name. Jacob Alemanni (*Iayme Aleman*), perhaps the same man, served as Aragonese Provincial Prior from 1315–1320 (F. Diago, *Historia de la Provincia de Aragón de la Orden de Predicadores* [Barcelona, 1599; repr. Valencia, 1999], fols. 27r–v).

[5] Gaillard de Pomiès, Dominican lieutenant to the Lord Inquisitor of Carcassonne, was Fournier's assistant at the trial and could easily have verified Baruch's claim.

whether he should be legally considered a duly baptized Christian, subject to compulsory indoctrination and acceptance of Christian dogmas; if he was still a Jew then the inquisitors would have little or no jurisdiction over him). Among the latter, there were still further divisions. Fournier, a busy Church official who would later become pope Benedict XII, was willing to devote a great deal of energy to completing Baruch's conversion through theological argumentation. He may have done so in the hope that other Jews could be similarly swayed to accept Christianity.[6] Yet Dominican friars such as Raymond of Junac and Jacob Alamanni played no role in preaching to their non-Christian neighbors; at least nothing was said to that effect in the trial testimony, and Baruch's belief that friar Jacob would actually intervene to prevent his baptism certainly suggests that he did not see his "friend" as an over-zealous missionary.

This book examines the different ways in which members of an influential organization within the medieval Latin Church, the Dominican Order of Friars Preacher (OP), chose to interact with their non-Christian contemporaries. In particular, it asks whether, how and to what extent Dominican friars in the foundational first century of their Order's existence actually dedicated themselves to converting, persecuting or otherwise interfering with Jewish and Muslim populations in the multicultural lands of the western Mediterranean basin. How typical, for example, were friars Raymond of Junac and Jacob Alamanni with their apparently benevolent laissez-faire attitude toward Jews like Baruch? Were such approaches liable to change over time or in different circumstances? What were the ideological and practical factors underlying the friars' decisions? The topic is complex but important, providing as it does one of the keys to understanding medieval inter-religious and majority–minority relationships generally.

The Toulouse friars' apparent lack of missionary fervor might strike modern observers as odd, clashing as it does with their Order's nearly ubiquitous reputation. The Dominicans have long held a special interest for scholars concerned with the history of interactions between religious communities in the later Middle Ages. Along with the Franciscans, they have at times been presented as the "missionary" arm *par excellence* of the medieval Latin Church – a band of highly trained and innovative scholar-preachers dedicated to the conversion of all heretics, Muslims,

[6] Baruch claimed that "he wielded no slight authority among the Jews of those parts," and so his (allegedly) voluntary conversion might have been expected to serve as a model for others. A Jew named "Master David" was indeed present during the disputations as Baruch's translator and religious advisor; several unnamed "recently baptized Jews" were similarly present in addition to the regular Christian officials, all of whom could have repeated the substance of the debate to other audiences (Grayzel, "Confession," 114).

Jews and pagans to the one "true" religion of orthodox Roman Catholic Christianity. Where brute force might characterize crusaders' approaches to religious Others in the Holy Land, on the Iberian frontier or in combat against home-grown heretics, the legacy of the mendicant friars has offered a more intellectual alternative. A succinct but detailed statement of the Preachers' presumed emphasis on study and dialogue is provided by fr. William Hinnebusch OP in the *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*:

> Considering the evangelization of the pagans an essential part of the order's apostolate, Dominic sent missionaries to the frontiers of Europe … By 1225 the friars were in touch with the Moors and Jews of Spain and had gone into northern Africa. As a prerequisite for their missionary work they studied the oriental languages … Urged by Raymond of Peñafort, the Spanish province established language schools at Tunis, Murcia, Játiva, and Barcelona … Not only language schools but also books helped the missionaries. Thomas Aquinas wrote his *Summa contra gentiles* partly to assist friars who were preparing for the missions … Raymond Martini, an outstanding orientalist, prepared treatises, especially *Pugio fidei* and *Capistrum judaeorum*, to aid the friars in their contacts with the Jews. Pablo Cristiani, a converted Jew, debated with his former coreligionists.[7]

Here we have the main pillars on which the medieval friars' reputation for missionary work has been based. Further research by scholars such as Robert Chazan, Benjamin Kedar, Robert I. Burns and John Tolan has helped to clarify details of this work, insofar as it can be reconstructed from the available evidence.[8] An important variation on the theme was also advanced by Jeremy Cohen, who argued in *The Friars and the Jews* that medieval Dominicans (and their close associates the Franciscans) developed a new concept of rabbinic Judaism as heresy. For these friars old rationales for tolerance could now be abandoned; their goal was henceforth the total elimination of Jews from Christian Europe. This could be achieved through conversion, but Cohen suggested that many friars were also content to fan the flames of religious hatred – working hand in glove with crusaders, inquisitors and the marauding Pastoureaux rioters of Baruch's day to use violence where words failed.[9]

[7] W. Hinnebusch, *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* (New York, 1984), vol. IV, 252, s.v. "Dominicans." More than two full columns fall under the subheading "missions."

[8] R. Chazan, *Daggers of Faith: Thirteenth-Century Christian Missionizing and Jewish Response* (Berkeley, 1989); B.Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission: European Approaches toward the Muslims* (Princeton, 1984); R.I. Burns, "Christian-Islamic Confrontation in the West: The Thirteenth-Century Dream of Conversion" in *American Historical Review* 76 (1971), 1386–434; J. Tolan, *Saracens* (New York, 2002), esp. 233–55.

[9] J. Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews* (Ithaca, 1982). Cohen does not discuss the Pastoureaux specifically, as his focus is on the thirteenth century. Nor does he focus on Dominican attitudes toward Islam, though these are discussed to some extent in his analysis of Raymond Penyafort's policies in the Crown of Aragon (pp. 106–7).

Dominicans of the Iberian peninsula, and in particular those active in the eastern Iberian lands collectively known as the Crown of Aragon, have provided scholars with their most important examples of Christian approaches to Jews and Muslims in the "persecuting society" of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This is in part because medieval Iberia presents a setting in which friars actually did find themselves facing significant Jewish and Muslim populations on a regular basis. If ever missionary ideals were to be worked out in practice, here was the opportunity. Researchers have therefore turned again and again to examine the careers of outstanding and intriguing Dominicans who can be shown to have had some degree of antagonistic contact with non-Christians in the region: in particular the above-mentioned Raymond Penyafort (*Peñafort*), Raymond Martini and Paul (*Pablo*) Christiani.

Penyafort, Martini and Christiani (among others) will be discussed at length in the following chapters, but I will also suggest that excessive attention to such exceptional characters has tended to distort the historical goals and activities of the medieval Dominican Order as a whole. Previous scholarship has tended to focus almost exclusively on a small body of polemical and apologetic writings associated with these friars, while important background details and contexts have been overlooked. It is only by closely studying all aspects of a period – its political, social and economic concerns as well as its religious ideals as stated in particular genres of literature – that one can hope to obtain a clearer understanding of Jewish–Dominican and Muslim–Dominican relations.

It is for this reason that I too have chosen to focus on the Dominican Order in its Iberian and broader western Mediterranean context. The Spanish Province of the Dominicans, and especially that portion which was to become the separate Province of Aragon after 1300, does indeed provide an important and relatively well-documented opportunity for a case study. The Province comprised intricate networks of friars who encountered Christians, Jews and Muslims in a variety of contexts. It will be noted, of course, that I do not intend to limit my study very rigidly to the geographical or politically defined Crown of Aragon, as my opening reference to Baruch of Toulouse (a city very much separated from the Arago-Catalan sphere of political influence by 1320 yet still related in cultural terms) should make clear. It was one of the Dominicans' distinctive features that they were mobile and in regular contact with neighboring or even far-flung convents – thus Toulouse and Thomas Aquinas will be almost as much a part of this study as Barcelona and Raymond Martini.

The Franciscan Order offers an alternative avenue for analysis, though it does not occupy quite as emblematic a place in the historiography of Christian–Jewish and Christian–Muslim relations as the Dominican. I am

indebted to the important work of scholars such as E. Randolph Daniel and Jill Webster who have covered that particular field.[10] The enigmatic "doctor of missions" Raymond Llull, with all his Franciscan connections, was also closely related to the Dominicans and cannot be ignored, having generated plenty of specialized studies.[11] These will be considered in their place. Similarly, I have taken into account a wealth of scholarship on contemporary mendicant missions to the Muslim and Mongol East, which provide important points of reference and comparison for the western Mediterranean experience.

Dominican activities in eastern Iberia, south-western France and the closely related North African Maghrib nevertheless remain the focus of this book. These lands witnessed a remarkable shift in the thirteenth century, as Christian forces gained territory and maritime dominance at the expense of Muslim rulers (the process known somewhat anachronistically as the *reconquista*).[12] The king of Aragon's conquest of Mallorca (1230) and Valencia (1238) were two major milestones; like Castile's seizure of Cordoba (1236) and Seville (1248) these established Christian regimes as leading powers in the region. They also hastened the decline of the Almohad caliphate which had previously dominated western Muslim territories on both sides of the Mediterranean. The result was a virtually unprecedented period in which Christian rulers began to rule over large populations of Muslims as well as Jews.[13] As it happened, this thirteenth-century transition also coincided with the creation of the Dominican Order; it thus offers a rather special circumstance in which the first few generations of Iberian Friars Preacher were obliged to find their way and invent their own roles. It was a troubled yet exciting and intriguing time, when all possibilities were open.

[10] E.R. Daniel, *The Franciscan Concept of Mission in the High Middle Ages* (1975; repr. St. Bonaventure, 1992); J. Webster, *Els Menorets* (Toronto, 1993); J. Webster, "Conversion and Co-Existence: The Franciscan Mission in the Crown of Aragon" in L. Simon, ed., *Iberia and the Mediterranean World of the Middle Ages* (Leiden, 1995), vol. I, 163–78.

[11] Including R. Sugranyes de Franch, *Raymond Lulle, docteur des missions* (Schöneck-Beckenried, 1954); cf. J.N. Hillgarth, *Ramon Lull and Lullism in Fourteenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1971; references here are to the revised Abadia de Montserrat edition, *Ramon Llull i el Naixement del Lul. lisme* (2001); A. Bonner, *Selected Works of Ramon Llull* (Princeton, 1985) and H. Hames, *The Art of Conversion* (Leiden, 2000).

[12] The complexities of this term are analyzed in J. O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain* (Philadelphia, 2003), esp. 3–22.

[13] Muslims had already been under Aragonese domination in the Ebro valley for over a century before the fall of Mallorca. Such *mudéjars* were also present in Castile, Sicily and the Levant (see J. Powell, ed., *Muslims under Latin Rule, 1100–1300* [Princeton, 1990]). The scale of subject Muslim population at Valencia, which continued to dwarf that of the immigrating Christians for generations to come, remains anomalous. Jewish status under Christian rule was also well established, yet subject to change in this new context.

Conversions did occur in this setting, as they always have when different faith communities come into sustained contact with one another. Furthermore, some medieval Christians did entertain hopes that mass conversions were imminent – whether regionally as a result of political maneuvering, or globally as part of the divinely ordained sequence of apocalyptic events. Yet my research has revealed little if any evidence to suggest that medieval Dominicans encouraged such conversions by engaging in widespread or sustained campaigns of proselytism. Dominicans and other representatives of the institutional Latin Church in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries simply did not see conversion of Muslims or Jews as a significant part of their undertaking at the local level. Instead, when they took notice of local non-Christians at all, it was because they were concerned that fluidity of religious identity and experience should be more strictly limited and controlled.

Far from encouraging conversions, in other words, the medieval Church of the *reconquista* era sought for the most part to discourage over-familiar contacts from forming across religious divides. Policies of partial segregation were adopted in some cases. The writings and even verbal utterances of Jews and Muslims might be examined to ensure that they did not endanger Christians or the Christian faith by casting aspersions or raising theological doubts. If these measures did not suffice, polemics and apologetics might be composed and preached to challenge the unbelievers and defend the claims of Christianity for the benefit of the faithful. Medieval Dominicans were among the chief architects and executors of such efforts to protect the Christian community – their flock, as they saw it, or "the Lord's Vineyard" – from any possible blight as a result of excessive exposure to unbelievers. From Christian Toulouse, Montpellier and Barcelona to newly colonized Valencia and Mallorca, and even in Muslim-ruled cities like Marrakesh and Tunis with their small Christian minorities, the Friars Preacher adapted their methods to local circumstances. In some areas Christian beliefs were considered secure enough to permit lesser degrees of division and scrutiny. Always, however, the friars' primary aim was the protection and nurturing of the faithful rather than conversion of unbelievers.

My challenge to established notions of a medieval Dominican "missionary" movement will be presented on the basis of primary-source evidence in the chapters that follow, but it is also important to consider the historiographical origins of the more traditional view. A consensus that the Middle Ages were an important period for Dominican missionizing has developed over time. It began in the sixteenth century, when Dominicans (as well as Franciscans and, later, Jesuits) were first beginning to travel among previously unknown peoples in Africa, the

Americas and Asia. Colonial conditions in some of these areas resulted in mass conversions, challenging friars like Bartolomé de las Casas to address the theology of mission with a growing sense of urgency.[14] Newly developed humanist proselytizing techniques were even brought back to Spain itself, where they were briefly tried on Valencian Moriscos under archbishop Juan de Ribera (1568–1611).[15]

It was at precisely this same time that Dominican scholars began to undertake their first systematic studies of the Order's history. At the end of the sixteenth century, curious friars were turning to long-forgotten archival records in a quest for evidence of their predecessors' noteworthy achievements. Fired by the spirit of the times, these early modern Dominican researchers were naturally interested in finding medieval precedents for their own missionary activity. The Valencian friar Francisco Diago in particular saw mission as one of his Province's special callings, and he soon discovered signs to confirm that his forefathers in the Crown of Aragon had enjoyed a long and glorious history of preaching to Jews and Muslims. His harvest of evidence for such missions was poor and hard-won, consisting of no more than a few references to language study, visits to Africa and polemical exercises (a few written treatises and at least one public debate). It was enough, however, to ground the seemingly uncontroversial assumption that missionary work had always been a central element in the friars' lives.

Dominican mission history as initiated by Diago thus rested on a "maximalist" approach which has dominated the field ever since. Less a methodology than a tendency, maximalist research here involves careful sifting of available evidence in order to find any possible traces of mendicant involvement in mission work. Anti-Jewish disputations, anti-Islamic polemical tracts, programs for the study of oriental languages, visits to Muslim rulers – all have been marshaled to support the unquestioned idea that medieval Dominican missionary ventures must have flourished. Over the centuries, these evidentiary points have been passed down as *loci communes*, well known to every specialist.[16] Having surveyed the resulting compilations, and with due regard for the fragmentary nature of surviving documentation, scholars working from a maximalist perspective further posit that these points represent merely the tip of an evangelical iceberg. For every known episode of language study or disputation, one

[14] See for example Las Casas' *De unico vocationis modo omnium gentium ad veram religionem* (tr. F. Sullivan, *The Only Way* [New York, 1992]).

[15] B. Ehlers, *Between Christians and Moriscos: Juan de Ribera and Religious Reform in Valencia 1568–1614* (Baltimore, 2006).

[16] All the points made by Hinnebusch in the passage cited above, for example, were already identified in Diago's *Historia*.

can imagine that there must have been many more incidents that simply failed to be recorded.

The resulting myth remains powerful, for it fits well with a number of narratives. First of all, and as originally formulated, it contributes to the Dominicans' self-image as an intellectual vanguard at the forefront of Christian missions to unbelievers.[17] In less positive terms, the same formulation was accepted by Edward Said when he identified the friars' studies as representing the first stage of Western Orientalism.[18] For other observers the missions were relatively hopeful instances of medieval Christians transcending religious hatred to bring their gospel message to Muslims and others in a spirit of peace (if not understanding).[19] The friars' presumed goal of eliminating religious difference by converting non-Christians has also been related to their wider role in the elaboration of a persecuting, inquisitorial and ultimately anti-semitic society in medieval Europe.[20] The friars' putative missionary activity thus forms a key part of discussions ranging from general medieval histories and histories of the Dominican Order to studies specifically examining Christian tolerance or intolerance of Jews, Muslims and other non-Christian peoples. Since the phenomenon of mendicant mission lends itself to so many interpretations, there has been little cause to question its existence in the first place.

Without seeking to overcompensate by adopting a "minimalist" position, I have revisited these *loci communes* in a more skeptical fashion by paying closer attention to their historical context. Rather than seeing isolated individuals and incidents as evidence of long-term realities, I suggest that they should most often be studied as discrete characters and events occurring in the midst of changing political, socio-economic, theological and intellectual circumstances. Taking these circumstances into consideration can reveal motivations and meanings behind any given episode of Dominican contact with Muslims and Jews which may

[17] See for example the Dominican J.M. Coll's polemically tinged articles, written in the wake of the Spanish Civil War, on "Escuelas de lenguas orientales en los siglos XIII y XIV" in *AST* 17–20 (1944–7) and "San Raymundo de Peñafort y las Misiones del Norte Africano en la Edad Media" in *Missionalia Hispanica* 5 (1948), 417–57. A similar triumphalist (and colonialist) tendency can be found among Franciscans: A. López, *Obispos en el Africa septentrional desde el siglo XIII* (Tangiers, 1941). Hinnebusch's more balanced position, already clear in his *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* article, is elaborated in his two-volume *The History of the Dominican Order* (Staten Island, 1966).

[18] E. Said, *Orientalism* (1979; repr. New York, 1994), 49–50.

[19] Daniel, *Franciscan Concept*, 5–6. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, shows how peaceful mission could be interwoven with the violence of crusade.

[20] Heinrich Graetz, pioneer of nineteenth-century Jewish history, already wrote of "gloomy and evil-minded" friars like Raymond Penyafort, dedicated to the conversion of Muslims and Jews because of their hatred for unbelievers (*History of the Jews* [1863; tr. B. Loewy, Philadelphia, 1894], vol. III, 597–605). Jeremy Cohen's work has greatly refined this approach.

have little to do with proselytism. Such a methodology has already been adopted by several researchers working with the rich archival resources of the Crown of Aragon, though none has yet undertaken a close study of the Dominicans.[21]

My approach also stresses the importance of textual context. The medieval Dominicans' archival, narrative and other records must be read as much as possible in their entirety, as self-representations that convey a sense of their authors' own ideals, priorities and experiences. Instead of merely highlighting references to Dominican contacts with Muslims and Jews, I ask how these references fit into the larger framework of the friars' writings. Are they really signs pointing to a widespread phenomenon of missionary preaching? To what degree did the commitment of resources to missionary ventures actually emerge as an issue within the Order? What other dimensions to the friars' work among Muslim and Jewish populations may have been emphasized at the time? The answers to these questions reveal the mirage-like quality of modern appeals to an iceberg of missionary activity.

Records compiled by the first generations of Dominican friars, while in some instances surviving only in fragmentary form, substantially and accurately represent the reality of their work as they perceived it. The friars carefully recorded their deployments of manpower, educational and textual resources. They ensured the preservation of documents concerning their legal rights and financial dealings. They also compiled accounts intended to publicize exemplary achievements claimed by the Order and its saints. Finally, they expressed their theological ideals in written form. Taken together, these sources clearly illustrate the Dominicans' world as they saw it: an imagined landscape of pastors and flocks, vineyards and cultivators, withered deserts of infidelity and well-armed fortresses of faith. In such a world non-Christians were potentially threatening, but more often inconsequential and utterly marginal.

The Crown of Aragon boasts an exceptionally good fund of sources for the study of medieval Dominicans, especially when compared with neighboring regions such as Castile or Provence.[22] The kingdom itself is unique in medieval Europe for having maintained a large-scale royal archive on paper from an early date, thus providing extensive background material

[21] I have been much influenced by David Nirenberg's discussion of methodology in *Communities*, 3–17. Recent work by R.I. Burns, Jill Webster, Brian Catlos and others in this field continues to demonstrate the value of detailed and localized social histories based on archival research.

[22] On the Castilian Dominicans see F. García-Serrano, *Preachers of the City* (New Orleans, 1997). For the Dominicans of Provence, see the articles in *L'ordre des Prêcheurs et son histoire en France méridionale*, special edition of *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 36 (2001) and M.-H. Vicaire, *Les prêcheurs et la vie religieuse des Pays d'Oc au XIIIe siècle* (Toulouse, 1998).

for the study of Jewish–Christian and Muslim–Christian relations.[23] On occasion Dominicans appear in these royal registers, though the very infrequency of their recorded altercations with non-Christians is a preliminary hint that such contacts were rare. Episcopal archives are similarly important, and many have yet to be examined with the necessary thoroughness to determine their value in the study of medieval Dominican life.[24] Papal registers provide yet another set of data, very plentiful for the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and conveniently available in a number of collections.[25]

Medieval chroniclers occasionally mention Dominicans. In the Crown of Aragon one of the most interesting thirteenth-century chronicles was written by king James I himself (r. 1213–76) as a sort of autobiographical memoir.[26] This *Llibre dels fets* is revealing both for what it says about the Dominicans and for what it does not say; again there are no references to Dominican missions at all.[27] A further dimension to James' work was added after his death, however, when a Dominican friar named Peter Marsili was commissioned to translate the *Llibre* into Latin (1313). Peter apparently added an entire section to the royal chronicle in praise of his Order and its leading lights – especially the former master-general Raymond Penyafort, whose canonization was under consideration at the papal curia. If it is authentic, this early fourteenth-century addition provides important insights into the aspirations and self-perceptions of medieval Aragonese Dominicans.[28]

[23] R.I. Burns, *Diplomatarium of the Crusader Kingdom of Valencia, the Registered Charters of Its Conqueror Jaume I, 1257–1276* (Princeton, 1985), vol. I, *Society and Documentation in Crusader Valencia*, provides an introduction to this resource.

[24] Episcopal registers, like royal ones, recorded local conflicts. Conditions in some Spanish episcopal archives have at times made it difficult to conduct extensive research; undoubtedly more evidence relating to the medieval Dominicans will be uncovered there in the future.

[25] Particularly relevant is the Dominican Order's four-volume *Bullarium*, compiled by master-general Thomas Ripoll (Rome, 1729–40). Some documents relevant to the Dominicans (including a few not found in Ripoll) are printed in the seven volumes of Sbaralea's *Bullarium Franciscanum Romanorum Pontificum* (Rome, 1759–68). Bulls from the Archivio Segreto Vaticano (on CD-ROM) were also consulted for this study.

[26] Critical edn. by J. Bruguera, *Llibre dels fets del Rei en Jaume* (Barcelona, 1991), vol. II; tr. D. Smith and H. Buffery, *The Book of Deeds of James I of Aragon* (Aldershot, 2003).

[27] The 1263 Barcelona disputation, for example, is not even mentioned in this chronicle despite the fact that the king is known to have initiated it and participated in it. Either James did not think it important enough to be included, or he deliberately sought to keep it from being associated with his memory. Most of his comments about the Dominicans involve their assistance to his forces in times of war, or their disapproval of his sexual exploits.

[28] Peter's questionable additions are the source of some key assertions regarding Penyafort's commitment to external mission (M.D. Martínez San Pedro, ed., *La crónica latina de Jaime I* [Almería, 1984], 401–70). The earliest surviving MS to contain additions concerning Penyafort and the Dominicans is now at the Biblioteca de Catalunya in Barcelona (MS 1018). The fact that this MS dates to the end of the sixteenth century (when Penyafort's sainthood was once more at issue)

The Dominicans also left archives of their own, though unfortunately many of these were destroyed in subsequent upheavals and revolutions. Most Spanish monasteries survived the Napoleonic occupation only to be expropriated by government officials in the 1830s. Many of their archives suffered losses at this time. Those which remained were eventually nationalized and deposited in the Archivo Histórico Nacional, aside from documents retained at the last minute by the Valencian government which are now at the Arxiu del Regne de València in Valencia City. A noteworthy exceptional case is the archive from St. Dominic's convent in Mallorca. This collection of approximately 700 parchment documents (for the medieval period alone) has remained largely intact and is now preserved at the AHN in Madrid.[29] Though dealing for the most part with financial transactions, they provide a fascinating glimpse of the mundane side of life at the convent. Another exception is Barcelona, where the Aragonese Province's leading convent once stood. Only a few medieval manuscripts survived a devastating fire in 1835, but the Dominicans of St. Catherine's in Barcelona had taken the precaution of copying many of their earlier records into paper cartularies in the eighteenth century. These massive tomes escaped the fire and are today kept at the University of Barcelona.[30]

Included among the Barcelona documents are crucial *acta* of the Aragonese Province's yearly Chapter meetings. These are not complete, but they do cover much of the early fourteenth century, and all have now been published.[31] Provincial Chapter *acta* provide a record of educational assignments for the friars as well as other information such as deaths, promotions, conflicts, policy decisions and so on. They are an invaluable source for understanding Dominican life in the medieval Crown of Aragon, and they also show what types of information were deemed worthy of record by contemporary friars.

Dominican and other Church historians, beginning with Francisco Diago in 1599, preserved further medieval documentation by copying it into their texts. This is especially true of Mallorcan friar-historians such as Domingo Manera, whose 1733 *Relación histórica de los varones ilustres y*

raises suspicion that the additions are late. Further analysis is needed to explore the possibility that Francisco Diago, a zealous promoter of Penyafort's 1601 canonization, may have had something to do with the alteration.

[29] Section *clero*, carpetas 75–107 cover the period from 1212 to 1351.

[30] Especially important are the *Lumen Domus* (3 vols., BUB MSS 1005–7), and BUB MS 241.

[31] *Acta* for thirteenth century Spain: R. Hernández in "Pergaminos de Actas de los Capítulos Provinciales del siglo XIII de la Provincia Dominicana de España" in *Archivo Dominicano* 4 (1983), 5–73 and R. Hernández, "Las primeras actas de los capítulos provinciales de la Provincia de España" in *Archivo Dominicano* 5 (1984), 5–41. *Acta* from the Province of Aragon (1302–51): ed. A. Robles Sierra in "Actas de los Capítulos Provinciales de la Provincia Dominicana de Aragón de la Orden de Predicadores, Correspondientes a los Años …" in *EV* 20–3 (1990–3), 237–85.

cosas memorables del Real Convento de Santo Domingo is a rich compilation of earlier materials.[32] Important notes concerning medieval Dominican authors were further compiled by Jaques Quétif and Jacques Échard in their *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum* (1719–21). Friar Jaime Villanueva's twenty-two-volume *Viaje literario a las iglesias de España* (first published 1803–6) contains observations of many Dominican convents and their collections on the eve of expropriation, thus providing still more clues to reconstruct whatever documentation might have been lost.[33]

Finally, there are the medieval Dominicans' own historical, hagiographical and theological compositions. These are again revealing both for what they say and for what they omit. Aside from Peter Marsili's possible additions to the *Llibre dels fets*, the earliest friars tended to record their order's history in the form of saints' *vitae*.[34] Of these only one, an anonymous *vita* composed in the early fourteenth century to help in the promotion of Raymond Penyafort's canonization, makes even a brief reference to possible missionary ventures in the western Mediterranean.[35] In terms of theological writings, Raymond Martini's corpus of apologetic and polemic works comprises the Aragonese friars' crowning achievement. Martini's arguments against Judaism (*Pugio fidei*, *Capistrum judaeorum*) and Islam (*Explanatio simboli apostolorum*, as well as the *De seta Machometi* and *Vocabulista in Arabico* if their attribution to him is accepted) make them especially relevant to this study. Better-known texts by Thomas Aquinas and Raymond Penyafort will also be examined to contextualize Martini's writings.

Non-Christian writers might be expected to provide views of the friars and their activities from another perspective. This is true to a limited extent, but it is the lack of comment on Dominicans and their alleged

[32] Diago, *Historia*. Manera's manuscript is in the Biblioteca Bartomeu March in Palma de Mallorca. See also D. Moll and T. Febrer, *Historia de las Grandezas del Real Convento de Santo Domingo, Orden de Predicadores, de Palma, en la Ciudad de Mallorca* (*c.* 1754; now MSL 179–81 at the Arxiu Diocesà in Palma).

[33] Vol. XVIII, for example, includes a description of the Barcelona convent and its holdings (176–208). Villanueva was especially interested in medieval manuscripts; on his work see the article by L. Galmes in *Diccionario de Historia Eclesiastica de España* (Madrid, 1975), vol. IV, 2762.

[34] Most important are Jordan of Saxony's mid-thirteenth-century *Libellus de principiis Ordinis Praedicatorum* (tr. S. Tugwell, *On the Beginning of the Order of Preachers* [Dublin, 1982]) and Gerard de Fracheto's slightly later *Vitae Fratrum* (ed. B. M. Reichert in *MOFPH*, vol. I). These are collective biographies or collections of *exempla* rather than *vitae* in the traditional sense, but they had a similar inspirational and didactic function; see J. Van Engen, "Dominic and the Brothers: *Vitae* as Life-foming *exempla* in the Order of Preachers" in K. Emery and J. Wawrykow, eds., *Christ among the Medieval Dominicans* (Notre Dame, 1998), 7–25. Later medieval quasi-hagiographical collections such as Bernard Gui's *Catalogus magistrorum* reveal little about the provinces of Spain or Aragon, and still less about mission or any other form of interaction between Dominicans, Jews and/or Muslims.

[35] *MOFPH*, vol. VI/1, 19–37.

mission that is once again most striking in these sources. Aside from Nachmanides' *Vikuach* and some rabbinic *responsa* such as those of Solomon Ibn Adret, there are few mentions of Dominicans in extant thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Hebrew literature. This may have resulted from fears of censorship, though refugees in Islamic lands could certainly have written more about Dominican preaching campaigns back home if they had seen fit to do so. The *Shevet Yehudah* (written in exile by a Spanish Jew *c.* 1520) does not shy away from mentioning persecutions suffered under Christian rule, including well-known instances of religious disputations at Barcelona in 1263 and Tortosa in 1412–16. It leaves the impression that the latter were remembered as rare and traumatic events rather than regular occurrences.[36] On the Arabic side, mentions of Dominican friars are practically non-existent. Treaties occasionally note the rights of Christians residing in Muslim cities to be attended by their monks (*ruhban*), and these probably included Dominicans at times. One polemical text by Muhammad al-Qaysi mentions a debate between a captured Muslim and a Christian priest, but the very unique and remarkably vague character of this literary work make it an exception that proves the rule.[37] Thus far I have found no clear, specific mention of mendicant preaching among Muslims of North Africa, Spain or elsewhere in the writings of Ibn Abi Zar', Ibn Khaldun or any other medieval Arabic chroniclers.[38]

These varied sources have permitted a wide-ranging yet often detailed examination of the Aragonese Dominicans' lives and ideals. Chapter 1 examines the overall Dominican concept of apostolic "mission" in the medieval period. Drawing on theological traditions, the first generations of friars elaborated a missionary theory which was universal in scope, leaving the question of target audience undefined. At the same time, the Order was founded with the explicit intention of combating sin and heresy among Christians and this was to remain ever its chief concern. Despite occasional efforts to promote "external" mission to

[36] Solomon Ibn Verga, *La Vara de Yehudah*, tr. M.J. Cano (Barcelona, 1991). Section 40 (*La Vara de Yehudah*, 168–89) focuses on the Tortosa disputation, with a brief interlude to describe the Barcelona disputation – summarized in vague terms and inaccurately dated by Ibn Verga to the reign of king James' father Peter (d. 1213).

[37] P.S. Van Koningsveld and G.A. Wiegers, "The Polemical Works of Muhammad al-Qaysi (fl. 1309) and their Circulation in Arabic and Aljamiado among the Mudejars in the Fourteenth Century" in *Al Qantara* 15 (1994), 163–99.

[38] Ibn Abi Zar' wrote *c.* 1326 on the history of Morocco where Dominicans are known to have been active on occasion (text ed. and tr. A. Huici Miranda, *Rawd al-Qirtas* [Valencia, 1964]). Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) is likewise silent on the subject, though he was quick to note instances of Christian intervention in Maghribi affairs. See for example his discourse on Christian mercenaries in *The Muqaddimah*, tr. F. Rosenthal (1958; rev. edn. Princeton, 1967), vol. II, 80–1 and passages in the *Kitab al-ibar*, tr. de Slane as *Histoire des Berbères* (1852–6; repr. Paris, 1925–56), vol. IV, 32–4, 37, 40 and *passim*.