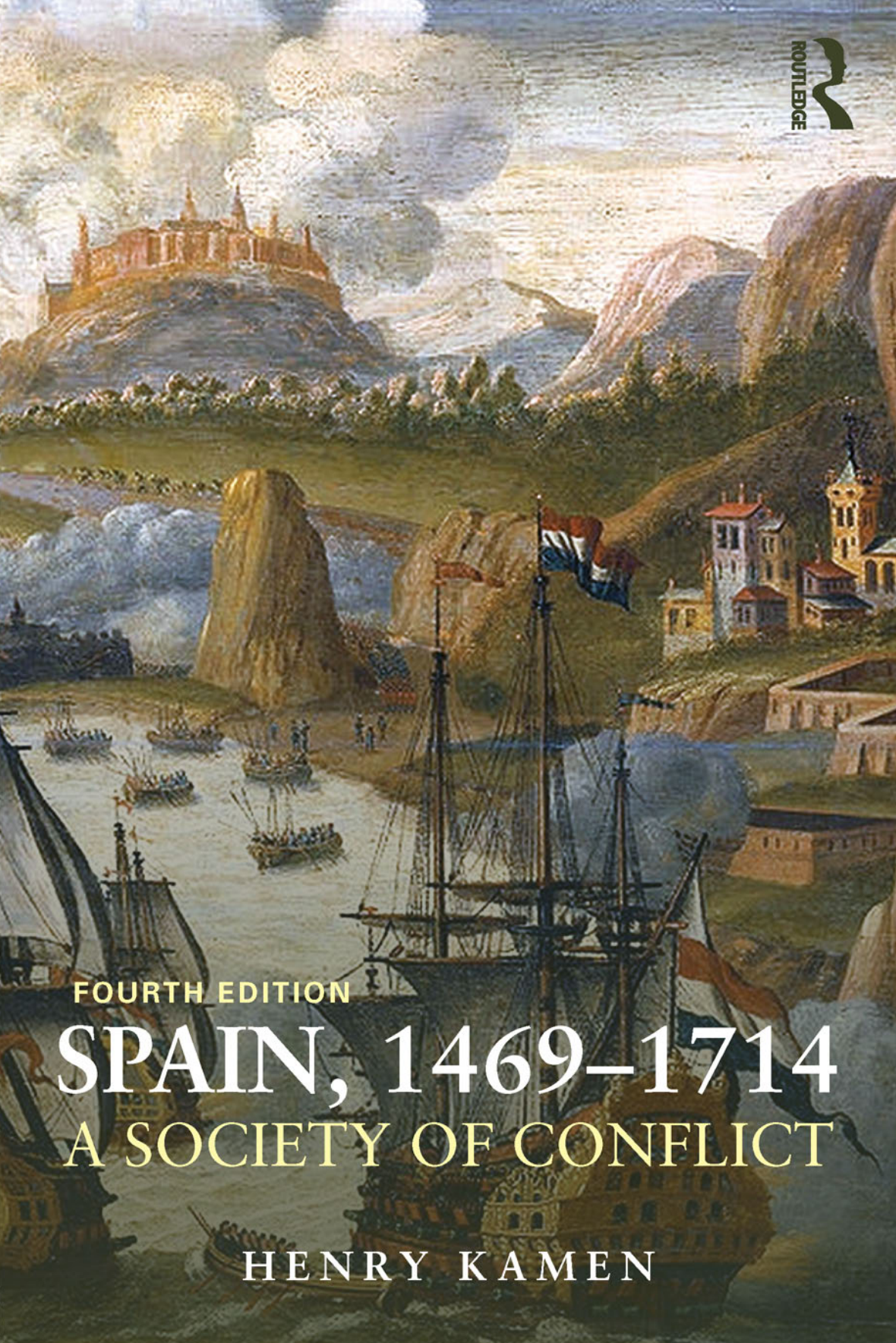
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FOURTH EDITION
SPAIN, 1469–1714
A SOCIETY OF CONFLICT
HENRY KAMEN

Spain, 1469–1714

For nearly two centuries Spain was the world's most influential nation, dominant in Europe and with authority over immense territories in America and the Pacific. Because none of this was achieved by its own economic or military resources, Henry Kamen sets out to explain how it achieved the unexpected status of world power, and examines political events and foreign policy through the reigns of each of the nation's rulers, from Ferdinand and Isabella at the end of the fifteenth century to Philip V in the 1700s.

He explores the distinctive features that made up the Spanish experience, from the gold and silver of the New World to the role of the Inquisition and the fate of the Muslim and Jewish minorities. In an entirely rewritten text, he also pays careful attention to recent work on art and culture, social development and the role of women, as well as considering the obsession of Spaniards with imperial failure, and their use of the concept of 'decline' to insist on a mythical past of greatness. The essential fragility of Spain's resources, he explains, was the principal reason why it never succeeded in achieving success as an imperial power.

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Henry Kamen obtained his doctorate at Oxford and has been a professor at universities in Britain, Spain and the United States. He is Emeritus of the Higher Council for Scientific Research, Spain, and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, London. An eminent authority on Spanish history, he has written over twenty studies in the field, including *Philip of Spain* (1997), *Spain's Road to Empire* (2002), *The Escorial* (2010) and *The Spanish Inquisition* (new edition, 2014).

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A society of conflict

Fourth edition

Henry Kamen

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First edition published 1983 by Pearson Education
Second edition published 1991 by Pearson Education
Third edition published 2005 by Pearson Education
Fourth edition published 2014

by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Kamen, Henry.
Spain, 1469-1714: a society of conflict / Henry Kamen. -- Fourth edition.
pages cm
Includes bibliographical references and index.
1. Spain--History--Ferdinand and Isabella, 1479-1516. 2. Spain--History--House of Austria, 1516-1700. 3. Spain--History--Philip V, 1700-1746. I. Title.
DP161.K35 2014
946'.04--dc23
2013036253

ISBN: 978-0-415-74007-4 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-408-27193-3 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-1-315-79792-2 (ebk)

Typeset in Sabon
by Taylor & Francis Books

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Preface to the fourth edition

The first edition of this textbook was published thirty years ago, and later editions benefited from partial revisions. The present text has been entirely rewritten to take account of modern scholarship, making it in every way a new book both in content and in approach. I am grateful to the many colleagues whose advice and criticism have helped to produce it.

'Spain' did not exist as a political unity for most of the period, so I refer specifically to 'Castile' where the term is more appropriate. Terms and place names are normally given in Castilian (e.g. Cortes of Catalonia, not Corts), with occasional exceptions where English usage (e.g. Saragossa) and modern practice dictated otherwise. The word 'Aragon' used alone refers to the region with its capital at Saragossa; 'crown of Aragon' refers to the totality of the realms in the east of the peninsula. Spanish accents are often omitted for convenience. Money in the fifteenth century is reckoned in maravedís; for subsequent centuries it is reckoned for convenience in ducats (375 maravedís = 1 ducat), and in the eighteenth in escudos (roughly the same as a ducat). See the note on coinage on p. xiii.

H. K.

Maps

Glossary

Alcabala Castilian sales tax, levied at about 10 per cent for most of this period.

Alcalde Elected or nominated local magistrates.

Aljama A word of Arabic origin, the ghetto in which Moors or Jews lived apart from their Christian neighbours.

Almojarifazgo Word of Arabic origin applied to the customs duties in the south of Spain, particularly those of Seville.

Alumbrados Illuminists, groups of mystics who minimised the role of the Church and of ceremonies.

Arbitristas Writers who drew up *arbitrios* or proposals for economic and political reform.

Asiento A contract; in particular, contracts by financiers (*asentistas*) to supply money to the crown.

Audiencia See under *Chancillería*.

Auto de fe 'Act of faith', the ceremony at which accused were sentenced by the Inquisition, either in public or in private. The burning of heretics was never technically part of an *auto*, but took place afterwards.

Baldío Uncultivated common land which was technically owned by the crown.

Beata Term applied to women who dedicated themselves to a solitary religious life, within or without a religious order.

Caballero Knight or gentleman, member of the lower nobility, usually propertied.

Capa y espada Literally 'cloak and sword', a description referring to the military background of certain public officials.

Censo Used here to refer to the annuities drawn (by *censalistas*) from loans made to individuals or to public bodies; the word also has other meanings.

Chancillería Term applied to the Castilian high courts in Valladolid and Granada; other high courts were called *Audiencias*.

Ciutadà Honrat A 'distinguished citizen', the highest civic rank, equal to nobility, granted by major towns in the crown of Aragon, especially Barcelona, Saragossa (where called *ciudadano honrado*) and Valencia.

Consulta A report summarising the deliberations of each meeting of the governing councils, and sent to the king for information or action.

Converso Term applied particularly to Christianised Jews but also to converted Muslims.

Corregidor Crown-appointed civil governor in main Castilian towns.

Cortes The parliament of each realm, normally consisting of three estates, except for Aragon which had four. By the late sixteenth century the Cortes in Castile consisted of only one estate, representing eighteen towns.

Despoblados Depopulated villages.

Diputación In the crown of Aragon, standing committee of the Cortes, with members appointed from each estate. In Barcelona the *Diputación* was also known as the *Generalitat*. In this book the word *Diputados* refers to members of the Diputación.

Ducat (***ducado***) See note on coinage on p. xiii.

Encabezamiento System of tax collection by which a region would agree on the total of taxes to be paid (the main constituent tax would be the *alcabala*, q.v.), but exercise full local control over assessment and collection.

Encomienda In medieval Spain, a grant of land by the king, usually on condition that the holder (*encomendero*) assist in defence. The military orders held several such *encomiendas*. In America the *encomienda* was a grant not of land but of the labour service of Indians.

Fueros The laws and privileges of the non-Castilian provinces of Spain.

Generalitat See under *Diputación*.

Germanía The union or 'brotherhood' of the rebels in Valencia under Charles V.

Hábito Insignia of knighthood, a member of one of the military orders.

Hermandades System of 'brotherhoods' practised by some Castilian towns as a form of police force.

Hidalgo One who has the status of nobility (*hidalguía*), but without denoting rank. In practice, *hidalgos* were the lowest level of the ladder of noble ranks.

Indulgence Remission by the pope of punishment in purgatory; it was granted in return for good works or prayers.

Jornada Royal outing.

Juro Annuity paid out of state income for loans to the crown. Holders of *juros* were *juristas*.

Letrado University graduate in law, the backbone of the upper levels of Church and state bureaucracy.

Limpieza de sangre 'Purity of blood', freedom from any taint of Jewish blood.

Maestrazgos 'Masterships' of the military orders.

Maravedí See note on coinage on p. xiii.

Mayorazgo Entail, settlement restricting the alienation of or succession to a noble estate.

Medio general Under Philip II, financial arrangement whereby debts to financiers were converted into long-term *juro* payments.

Meseta Plateau.

Millones A tax on basic consumer items, principally meat, wine, oil and vinegar, and voted regularly by the Cortes of Castile as a *servicio* (q.v.) from 1590 onwards.

Montañeses From the highland areas.

Morisco A christianised Muslim – term used from the sixteenth century.

Mudéjar A Muslim living under Christian rule.

Procurador Delegate of the towns in the Castilian Cortes.

Pronunciamiento Nineteenth-century term for a military coup.

Pueblo Village or town.

Regidor Town councillor.

Remensa In Catalonia, the money payment (*remença* in Catalan) by which a serf purchased his liberty. *Remensa* peasants were those who up to the fifteenth century were subject to personal redemption.

Señorío 'Lordship', applied particularly to jurisdiction over an area.

Servicio A 'service' or grant of taxes made by the Cortes, and renewable only by them.

Tercio Elite regiment in the Spanish army; in the sixteenth century it was composed of 3,000 men divided into 10 companies of 300 soldiers each.

Título Member of the titled aristocracy of Castile.

Trace italienne Developed in Late Renaissance Europe, a star-shaped fortification with angular ramparts constructed to protect walled cities.

Valido Chief minister or 'favourite', sometimes referred to as a *privado*.

Vellón See note on coinage on p. xiii.

A note on coinage

In their decree of 1497 the Catholic kings decreed equality between the three large-denomination gold coins of Spain: the *excelente* or ducat of Castile, the *excelente* of Valencia and the *principat* of Catalonia. Each realm continued to have separate coinage and currency, though in practice Castilian coins proliferated. In the realms of the crown of Aragon the units were pounds, shillings and pence (*libras*, *sueldos* and *dineros*). In Castile from 1497 the main gold coin was the ducat, the main silver coin the *real*, the main *vellón* (a mixture of copper and silver) coin the *blanca*. Accounting in Castile was, however, done not in these coins but in *maravedís* (coins normally issued in units of two). A blanca, for example, was equivalent to half a maravedí, a real to 34 maravedís, a ducat to 375 maravedís. By the sixteenth century the government moved to keeping accounts in ducats. From 1537 a new gold coin, the *escudo*, was minted and gradually replaced the ducat, which, however, continued to be used as a unit of account. Where the ducat had been worth 11 reales or 375 maravedís, the escudo was worth 10 reales or 340 maravedís, though its value continued to change in subsequent coinages. After the coinage debasements of Philip III, so-called vellón coins gradually ceased to contain any silver and ended up as copper coins. Treasury accounts normally reckoned vellón and copper currency in ducats, and silver (for payments outside Castile) in escudos, but since the eventual difference in value between the two was fractional, accounts came to be kept indifferently both in ducats and in escudos. American bullion was normally reckoned in pesos. The American silver peso was valued at 272 maravedís, and the gold peso at 450 maravedís.

Prelude

A semi-arid, thinly populated peninsula at the southern extremity of Christian Europe, the Iberian lands had played little part in the life of the continent. In the eighth century they seemed yet more marginal to Europe, after Muslim invaders swept up from north Africa through the straits of Gibraltar and left the imprint of their civilisation on all the lands south of the river Duero and those bordering the Pyrenees. By the tenth century the emirate of Córdoba was a thriving empire in the region known as Al-Andalus, with an ordered administration and culture, active commerce and industry, and an agriculture made more efficient by extensive irrigation. Exotic foods (such as oranges) entered the Spanish diet; Arabic language and literature made their mark on culture, even among the *Mozarabes*, the Christians living under Muslim rule. The Mozarabs, complained a Christian contemporary, 'know only the language and literature of the Arabs, read and study Arabic books with zeal, and proclaim aloud that their literature is worthy of admiration'. The Jewish minority were frequently persecuted but survived under Muslim rule: as 'people of the book', they were tolerated and became valuable urban artisans and traders. Jewish culture (the language used was Arabic) flourished, the most notable representative being the philosopher Maimonides (d. 1204).

Coexistence between three religions and cultures was an uneasy one, for Christians and Muslims never treated the faiths under their rule on equal terms. Political alliances were made. The most celebrated medieval Christian hero, the Cid, became in 1094 ruler of the Muslim kingdom of Valencia, proof that two different civilisations could coexist even in the midst of war. Later, when Christians began to conquer Muslim territory in Castile, they continued to advance both through war and through alliances. The so-called 'Reconquest' was never an exclusively religious crusade. Frontiersmen were driven by zeal for land, no less than for religion. Even at the height of the Reconquest, it was possible for Ferdinand III of Castile (d. 1252), who extended Christian rule to the Mediterranean and the Atlantic by conquering Murcia and Cadiz, to call himself 'King of the Three Religions'. Throughout this period a large Muslim population survived in Christian territory. Known as *Mudéjares*, they were valued particularly for their skill in craftsmanship and the creation of Islamic art for Christian patrons.

At the end of the Middle Ages, nations in Europe were still in the process of being formed: they might have a name (France, Spain) but they lacked frontiers, a common government and a shared language. Different regions might pool their interests for reasons of security, as happened in 'Spain', where the crown of Castile and the crown of Aragon combined to protect themselves against internal chaos and an external threat from the Muslim emirate of Granada. By the fourteenth century, Iberia was a complex grouping of societies nurtured in war but aware of the need to coexist. The large land mass of the peninsula, embracing wholly different climates and geography, helped communities with differing traditions to survive in relative isolation. In Aragon, for example, the Mudejar peasants lived by the drier lands near the river Ebro, which they used for irrigation, while the Christian peasants lived in the rainier mountain lands. Distances between settlements reduced the possibility of conflict and made coexistence easier: a subsequent traveller in Aragon commented that 'one can walk for days on end without meeting a single inhabitant'. Communities survived with strongly local loyalties and culture, linking up with other regions only for trade and, if they were of the same faith, for marriage. In these communities and villages, social acceptance depended on mutual respect, on repute within the local society, on good opinion or 'honour'. Although repute also came to be identified with success in arms and with the Reconquest, it never lost its basic and most important meaning of good opinion within the community of one's kinfolk and one's home region. By extension, there was also a degree of respect between communities, despite the savage clashes of late medieval warfare and the bitter divisions of loyalty, lasting from generation to generation, between and even within societies.

With the virtual isolation of the Muslim territory of Granada after the last great Reconquest campaigns in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and the absorption of the Jewish communities into an aggressive, expanding Christian body, the three peoples of the medieval epoch drifted away from mutual understanding. Jews, for example, were more and more looked upon as aliens, and in 1391 there were massacres in their ghettos (*aljamas*) in Seville, Toledo, Valencia and other cities. Important sections of the Jewish elite were forced into the Christian religion, where some managed to rise to prominence. At various levels, particularly in smaller communities and towns with long traditions of coexistence, understanding might still survive. A Czech traveller in 1466 was astonished to find that in the household of the count of Haro there were 'Christians, Muslims and Jews, and he lets them all live in peace in their faith'. But political and religious developments, particularly in the large cities, were working to undermine mutual respect; and only a few were prepared to speak openly in favour of the cultural heritage shared with Islam and Judaism.

At the very time that community relationships in the peninsula were being subject to change, Spaniards were introduced to three heady external ventures. The first of these was a closer association, based on dynastic marriage, between the crowns of Castile and of Aragon; it was a union that helped give substance to the notion of 'Spain'. The second was a series of military campaigns directed

in the first place against the Muslims of Granada, and then beyond the peninsula, against Muslims on the coast of Africa. The final venture involved expansion overseas into the Atlantic and towards the unknown continent of the New World. The last of these proved to be the most innovating experience: the era of discovery uprooted families, created new horizons and affected the stability of traditional society. The attitudes set in motion by these three ventures were so unprecedented that it is difficult to see the epoch as simply an extension of the medieval past. Already, it was a new age.

But it was an age beset by uncertainties, for there was little that bound Spaniards together as a nation. At a Church council that met in the Swiss city of Basel in 1434, a Castilian prelate declared that Castile itself consisted of 'diverse nations and different languages'. Four centuries later, in 1887, Juan Valera observed:

> if we define the concept of nation by today's criteria, then one cannot say there was a Spanish nation before the end of the fifteenth century. I would go further and say that if by nation we understand a single state with a single political body, we have not yet become a nation and perhaps will never be one.

All European countries – among them, Spain – were in pre-industrial times made up of endless diversity, a never-ending variety of peoples, customs, languages, foods, drinks, dress, weights and measures, attitudes, religious practice, soil, plants, animals, climate. Those local experiences were, far more than the unreal concept of 'Spain', the real substance of social, political and religious life. 'In the Spanish monarchy', wrote Baltasar Gracián in 1640, 'where there are many provinces, different nations, diverse languages, dissimilar attitudes and varying climates, great capacity is required in order to preserve and to unite.'

The monarchy itself also lacked precision. Machiavelli in *The Prince* (1513) referred to Ferdinand of Aragon as 'king of Spain', but he was using the word 'Spain' in the same way as he wrote of 'Italy', a broad geo-political concept that was in reality only a combination of small states. 'Spain' did not figure in the official titles of a ruler of the peninsula. That did not stop writers from using the word, because – like 'Italy' – it was obviously a convenient way to refer to the shared experiences of those who lived there. In these pages our primary attention is to the king and the world of politics, but the shared experiences are of no less importance, and there was seldom much agreement over them. As Spain extended the sphere of its activity and moved into the modern era, there developed among its people serious differences of opinion over the treatment of minorities, over the colonisation of America, over the war in the Netherlands, over the Inquisition, and indeed over every aspect of their role in the world.

This then is the story of a complex nation that was caught up unexpectedly into a global role for which it was never adequately prepared and which it made heroic efforts to fulfil, with consequences that altered the face of world civilisation but created deep internal fissures that persisted throughout the period and have continued in some measure down to today.

1 The Catholic Monarchs 1469–1516

Politics 1469–1517

After centuries developing their individual character, the different realms of Spain began to come together as a stable political unit only towards the end of the fifteenth century. The most powerful of them was the crown of Castile, which had no lack of continuous internal problems. The accession of a child, Juan II, to its throne in 1406 began a period of instability that the great nobles exploited freely. When Henry IV succeeded his father Juan II as king in 1454, the nobles felt strong enough to dispute his power and the ensuing civil wars in Castile (1464–80) came to centre on the problem of the succession. A group of nobles led by Alfonso Carrillo, archbishop of Toledo, supported the rights of Henry's half-sister Isabella, who was recognised by Henry in September 1468, apparently on condition that she marry the elderly king Alfonso V of Portugal. Other nobles, led notably by the powerful Mendoza family, supported Henry's infant daughter Juana (b. 1463), known as La Beltraneja because it was rumoured (without any proof, as historians now agree) that her real sire was the king's favourite Beltrán de la Cueva. In search of allies, Carrillo committed Isabella (in January 1469) to marry the son of King Juan II of Aragon, related by marriage to Isabella's supporters the Enriquez family.

The marriage was celebrated in secret on 18 and 19 October 1469 in Valladolid: Isabella was eighteen, her husband Ferdinand, titular king of Sicily, a year younger. It did not seem an auspicious event. Ferdinand, caught up in civil wars in Aragon, had made his way overland to Valladolid in disguise and with only a tiny escort. The couple were cousins and it was necessary to receive a papal dispensation for them to marry. The pope had promised to grant it but dithered; his legate in Castile went ahead and issued the desired permission, which the pope subsequently validated. It was a delicate situation, for there was powerful opposition to the marriage. The king of France, Louis XI, had been hoping to secure Castile by a union between his brother and Isabella. When Henry IV heard of the event he disowned Isabella and in 1470 recognised Juana as his heir, but his death in 1474 eased the crisis. Isabella was crowned queen of Castile in Segovia on 13 December 1474, the first step in a long upward struggle for the throne. Alfonso of Portugal invaded Castile the following spring, promised to

marry Juana, and was recognised as lawful king by a section of the nobility. French troops invaded from the north.

Anarchy returned to Castile. Cardinal Pedro González de Mendoza and other great magnates had in 1473 moved to join Isabella, but in reaction Mendoza's rival Carrillo turned against her, and the powerful marquis of Villena put his strength behind Juana. The resources and energy of Ferdinand proved to be of crucial importance. Over the next few years he helped to collect troops, make alliances and capture towns. Alfonso suffered a reverse at the battle of Toro in March 1476 (the church of San Juan de los Reyes in Toledo was erected in thanks for this victory) and Juana's cause quickly crumbled: by the end of 1476 most nobles had submitted to Isabella. Meanwhile the crown of Aragon had troubles of its own. Faced by a revolt of the political authorities in Catalonia (1462–72) against his rule, Juan II of Aragon began to secure foreign support, most spectacularly through the 1469 marriage of Ferdinand but even more effectively through agreements with Naples and Burgundy (1471). At the end of a short siege, the king in October 1472 entered Barcelona.

The crowns of Castile and Aragon were already related dynastically. When the old Aragonese royal house died out in the early fifteenth century, an agreement known as the Compromise of Caspe (1412) placed Ferdinand of Antequera, from a junior branch of the Castilian ruling house of Trastámara, on the throne of Aragon. From this date both kingdoms were ruled by the same dynasty, and a common destiny did not seem impossible. The chronicler Bernáldez recalled that during the 1460s in Castile 'the children took little flags, and riding on willow sticks would say, "Flag of Aragon, flag of Aragon!" And I too said it, many times.' But aspirations to unity were tenuous, in view of the deep differences between the realms.

In the wake of the capture of Zamora and Burgos, and the success against Portugal at Toro, Ferdinand and Isabella summoned a Cortes to meet at Madrigal in April 1476. This assembly of the clergy, nobles and municipal representatives of Castile was important not only for demonstrating that Isabella had the firm support of the political nation, but also for the fundamental administrative reforms it initiated. The civil wars however were not yet over, and the court – which had no fixed capital at this period – moved southward with the monarchs to continue the work of pacification. In this year Isabella sent a demand to the Muslim king of Granada for renewal of the customary tribute, and received the ominous reply that 'we no longer mint gold, only steel'. The queen was informed in those weeks of other possible problems in the south. During her stay in Seville in 1477 she was impressed by the testimony of a friar, Alonso de Hojeda, about the presence of heresy in the region: a direct result was the establishment some time later of a new Inquisition.

France made peace in October 1478, four months after the birth to Isabella of an heir, Juan. The civil wars in Castile effectively came to an end when representatives of Castile and Portugal agreed to a peace treaty (Alcaçovas, September 1479) ending hostilities and renouncing all claims on each other. There was peace also in Aragon, where in January 1479 Juan II died and was succeeded by

Ferdinand as king. By the end of 1479, therefore, the title of Ferdinand and Isabella to the respective thrones of Aragon and Castile was secure. Juana 'la Beltraneja' retired into a convent in 1480 in Portugal, continuing in vain to proclaim her rights until her death in 1530.

In 1480 the monarchs were in a position to make far-reaching decisions on matters of state. A Cortes of Castile was summoned in January to Toledo, where alienated royal property was reclaimed for the crown and *corregidores* were instituted. In September, at Medina del Campo, Isabella issued the first commissions for the Inquisition to begin its work. Ferdinand at the end of the year summoned the Cortes of Aragon for 1481: he, Isabella and prince Juan spent from April to December 1481 visiting the Cortes and then the cities of Saragossa, Barcelona and Valencia in order to swear to the laws and obtain oaths of loyalty to the prince as heir to the realms. All this activity arose from Ferdinand's scrupulous concern to ensure absolute legitimacy for his and Isabella's rule: already in July 1476 he had sworn at Guernica to maintain the laws of the Basques.

With the restoration of royal authority, the monarchs turned their attention to the Muslim kingdom of Granada. In December 1481 Muslims had seized the frontier town of Zahara: this provided the excuse for a counter-attack, and in February 1482 Christian forces captured the town of Alhama. Hostilities developed into the ten-year war that ended with the fall of Granada. Ferdinand assumed active leadership of the campaign, though the slow war did not prevent lengthy absences from the front on business in the north. Early in 1486 the monarchs were first confronted by Christopher Columbus, anxious to explain his projects for exploration. After repeated refusals, Columbus was finally promised financial support from officials of the crown of Aragon (notably Luis de Santángel) and on 17 April 1492 received a commission from Ferdinand and Isabella.

In the early months of 1492 – a year justly famous in Spain's history – two epoch-making events occurred. On 2 January the city of Granada capitulated to the Catholic Monarchs. Then on 30 March, in the same city, the monarchs signed a decree expelling the Jews from all Spain. They spent the latter part of this and most of the subsequent year in the crown of Aragon, principally in Barcelona, where early in December the king was victim of an assassination attempt. He was feverish for a fortnight and it cost him several weeks to recover from the stab wound, but with Isabella's help he continued to manage affairs of state. In January 1493 he signed the treaty by which the king of France returned to Catalonia the frontier counties of Roussillon and Cerdagne. In March a letter from Columbus arrived, announcing that he had returned from his voyage; and in mid-April the navigator was received by the rulers in the city. In November the king and queen headed back to Castile.

The death of Isabella at Medina del Campo on 26 November 1504 threatened the association of the two crowns, since Ferdinand was obliged as a consequence to renounce his title of king of Castile. Isabella's will specified as heir her eldest surviving child, Juana, at the time in the Netherlands with her husband the

archduke Philip of Austria. The will also stated that in Juana's absence, or if she proved 'unwilling or unable to govern', Ferdinand could act as regent until Juana's elder son Charles came of age. Both parents may already have been aware of signs of mental instability in their daughter; they were also reluctant to let control of Castile pass into foreign hands. Ferdinand had Philip and Juana proclaimed as rulers of Castile, and confirmed it in the Cortes at Toro in January 1505; but he also made the Cortes confirm his own regency. Aware of his weakening hold over a realm where many nobles resented the interference of 'the old Catalan', he strengthened his hand elsewhere by marrying in March 1506 the king of France's niece, Germaine de Foix. The marriage brought him French support and the prospect of a male heir whom he might conceivably also try to set on the throne of Castile. Six weeks later Philip and Juana returned from abroad to Castile. Ferdinand met them in June at the village of Villafáfila, north of Zamora. In two hostile interviews, Ferdinand conceded the government to Philip and agreed to withdraw to Aragon. Both men also agreed to exclude Juana because of 'her infirmities and sufferings, which for the sake of her honour are not specified'. Only hours later, Ferdinand protested against the agreement as being injurious to his daughter's rights; he returned to Barcelona and set sail in September for Naples.

Within the month he received news of the sudden death (25 September) at Burgos of Philip, who was only twenty-eight years old. He did not, however, return to the peninsula until the summer of 1507. By then Juana's mind had snapped under the strain of Philip's death: she refused to be parted from his coffin, and in February 1509 retreated with it over the wind-swept countryside to the isolated fortress of Tordesillas. Cardinal Cisneros, regent from 1506 to 1507, acted in the name of the nobles and invited Ferdinand back to resume the duties laid down by Isabella's will in the event of Juana's incapacity. In October 1510 the king took the oath as governor of Castile in the Cortes at Madrid.

The partnership of Castile and Aragon was now assured; but only by accident. Germaine de Foix's son, born in 1509, survived only a few hours; had he lived, he would have become king of an independent Aragon and the partnership would have evaporated, perhaps for ever, an eventuality that Ferdinand must have foreseen. Perhaps to compensate for the fact that both Castile and Aragon would pass to Juana's elder son Charles, Ferdinand lavished attention on Charles's younger brother Ferdinand, who unlike Charles was born (in 1502) in Spain and brought up as a Spaniard.

In the nine years during which Ferdinand was sole ruler of Spain, the realms developed successfully but separately. Aragonese who hoped to see more of their king were bitterly disappointed, for Ferdinand spent virtually all his time in Castile, particularly in Valladolid, now the administrative centre of the realm. It was a logical decision, since Castile was supplying the men and money for important conquests in Navarre and North Africa, and was the main backer of expeditions to America. Ferdinand took a close interest in the New World and supported the issue in 1512 of the Laws of Burgos, which regulated the

exploitation of native labour there. Aragon was by no means neglected: Cortes of the realms were held there in 1510, 1512 and 1515.

Ferdinand never entirely recovered from an illness of early 1512. Journeying southwards in Castile at the end of 1515 he was overtaken by a further illness and died in the Extremaduran town of Madrigalejo (23 January 1516). Cisneros assumed the regency again, on behalf of Charles of Ghent. It was an extremely unstable situation. Nobles who had been kept in order by Ferdinand took up their arms, but the cardinal proved an able governor. In 1516 he sent troops into Navarre to quell a rebellion and demolish several castles; crushed a plot led by the Mendoza duke of Infantado and other great lords; and in 1517 began the recruitment of a permanent militia of some 30,000 men to act as the core of a royal army. When the hostile nobles demanded on what authority he acted so harshly, he pointed to his militia and cannon: 'these', he said, 'are my authority'. Many Spaniards would have preferred prince Ferdinand as their next ruler rather than the unknown Charles. Uncertainty was heightened by the drift to Charles's court at Brussels of place-seekers, among them many corrupt advisers of the late king against whom Cisneros warned Charles. The relatively peaceful transition to a new dynasty would have been unlikely without the cardinal's firm hand.

Expansion in Europe 1469–1517

Soon after the successful battle of Toro (1476), the sovereigns intervened in a dispute with the Portuguese over possession of the Canary Islands, a distant territory off the Atlantic coast of Africa. In 1479 at Alcaçovas, Portugal renounced all rights to the islands, thereby surrendering what was then a mere stopping-place to Africa but turned out to be a valuable link with the New World. In the 1480s various Castilian adventurers, among them Alonso Luis de Lugo, were helped by Genoese financiers and Portuguese settlers, and began to occupy the islands, of which the three largest (Grand Canary, Palma and Tenerife) were by around 1500 secured for the crown of Castile.

The enmity with Portugal was succeeded by cooperation and subdued rivalry. Isabella's eldest daughter and namesake was married to the heir of Portugal in 1490, but he died the following year and the monarchs consented to the widow's marriage early in 1497 to her late husband's cousin, Manoel, the new king of Portugal. The possibility that their issue might inherit the thrones of Spain and so unite the whole peninsula under Portugal was only a distant one, since the Infante Juan was still alive. The latter, however, died in October 1497; it was a bitter blow that prostrated the monarchs. Isabella was brought from Portugal and recognised as heir, but died the year after, 1498; her infant son, the next heir, died in 1500. This unfortunate sequence of deaths left as heir the next child of the Catholic Monarchs, Juana, who had in 1496 married Philip the Fair, archduke of Austria. The couple came south from the Netherlands in 1502 to take the oath of succession: it seemed that fate was conspiring to pass the crowns of Spain to a foreign head.

The partnership of Castile and Aragon committed the former to take part in the traditionally ambitious foreign policies of the Aragonese kings, whose principal enemy at this period was France. Disputes centred on Catalonia's northern provinces of Cerdagne and Roussillon, under French occupation since 1462 and firmly reoccupied by them in 1475. As part of his system of international alliances, in March 1489 in the Treaty of Medina del Campo, Ferdinand promised his youngest daughter Catherine to the English heir, prince Arthur. The formal marriage was not celebrated till 1501, because of the extreme youth of both partners. Anti-French in intention, the treaty was intended to help Henry VII of England invade Brittany while Ferdinand marched into Cerdagne. The military intervention was a failure, but France was now turning its interest towards Italy, and ceded both Cerdagne and Roussillon to Spain by the Treaty of Barcelona (January 1493).

After the conquest of Granada and the expulsion of the Jews, the Catholic Monarchs moved to affirm themselves on the international scene. From the 1480s Ferdinand had given occasional help to his brother-in-law, king Ferrante of Naples. Ferrante's father, Alfonso the Magnanimous, had ruled until his death in 1458 over a large maritime empire comprising Aragon, Sicily and Naples, and the three realms continued to have close links despite their division among members of the family. When the French under Charles VIII invaded Italy in force in 1494, pursuing a claim to the throne of Naples, an obvious threat to Aragonese interests was created. It was the beginning of a long era of Franco–Spanish rivalry in Italy.

Charles VIII reached Naples in 1495. Professing indignation at a French occupation that injured the rights of the pope, since Naples was a papal fief (that is, the pope was by tradition its overlord and rulers of the territory accepted their authority from him), Ferdinand made plans to intervene. In 1495 an alliance with the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian provided for the marriage of Maximilian's son Philip with the princess Juana (1496) and of his daughter Margaret with the Infante Juan (1497). In March 1495 both Spain and the empire joined a Holy League, which included England, the papacy and other Italian states, against the French invasion: it was one of the great triumphs of Ferdinand's diplomacy. The same month a force of Castilian soldiers, led by Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, landed in Naples in order to help the young Ferrante II, who had succeeded his grandfather in January. A remarkable series of victorious campaigns, which led to the expulsion of the French by the summer of 1496, earned Córdoba the title of 'Great Captain' and the gratitude of the pope.

Subsequent peace negotiations between France and Spain, however, served as a cover for schemes of further intervention in Italy. By the Treaty of Granada (November 1500) Ferdinand and the new (since 1498) French king, Louis XII, who was now more interested in Milan, agreed to divide the kingdom of Naples, which was by this time hopelessly unstable under its fifth king within three years. In the summer of 1501 French troops from the north and Castilians from the south took possession of their prey; but the victors quarrelled and for most of 1503 the Great Captain was occupied in driving the French out,

winning notable victories at Cerignola (April) and the river Garigliano (December). In March 1504 France finally recognised Ferdinand's sovereignty over Naples. Thereafter the kingdom became a dynastic possession of the king; it belonged to him personally and not to 'Spain', and was governed through his viceroys who directed its affairs on behalf of the crown of Aragon.

The free hand enjoyed in Naples by his first viceroy, the Great Captain, was soon sharply curtailed by Ferdinand during a visit in 1506–07. The king was deeply concerned about the possibility of a complete separation of Castile (now ruled by Philip I) from Aragon, and was in no way prepared to suffer in addition the loss of Naples, which had been won for him by Gonzalo de Córdoba, whose success and popularity he distrusted. The Great Captain was allowed to retire to his estates in Granada, where he died in 1515. Thereafter Naples was governed through viceroys on behalf of the crown of Aragon. If the Granada wars were Spain's first step towards empire, the Italian wars were the first step towards international expansion. Spaniards dominated Italy for over two hundred years, with profound consequences for the history of that peninsula.

The last major territorial acquisition of Ferdinand was Navarre. For a few years after the death of Isabella, the king's policy inclined towards France, mainly because he feared the implications of a Germanic Habsburg succession. In 1512 a dispute over the succession to Navarre, involving the claims of Ferdinand's wife Germaine de Foix against those of the French-supported Albret family, induced Ferdinand to send in a small army under the duke of Alba. A hand-picked Navarrese Cortes proclaimed Ferdinand as ruler, but in 1515, at the Cortes of Burgos, the king preferred to associate the realm with the crown of Castile while still preserving its formal independence from both Castile and Aragon.

Ferdinand committed Spain to a foreign policy that it pursued throughout the sixteenth century: containment of French interests, domination of the western Mediterranean, repulsion of the Turkish advance. Alliances with England, the emperor and the papacy were all designed to secure the first of these aims: temporary leagues with France were undertaken only out of sheer expediency, to secure Naples, for example, or to achieve a balance against Habsburg Castile. By the addition of Cerdagne, Roussillon and Navarre, Ferdinand gave Spain security on its northern frontier for a century and a half. In the Mediterranean, where the crown of Aragon had held Sardinia and Sicily since 1409, possession of Naples made the ruler of Spain immediately into the dominant influence in the Italian peninsula and a powerful force in southern Europe.

French interests in Milan were the only serious obstacle to Spanish hegemony. Campaigns against the Turks were less dramatic but none the less frequent. In 1481 Ferdinand contributed seventy Castilian ships to the league that expelled the Turks from Otranto; and in 1501 a naval and military force under the Great Captain helped Venice to recover from the Turks the fortress of St George in Cephalonia, off Greece. At home the war against Islam was pursued with vigour in Granada and in north Africa, where the conquests were doubly important for the Catalans, to whom Ferdinand granted trading rights as if to

compensate them in Africa for their effective (but only temporary) exclusion from direct trade with America.

The foreign policy of the Catholic Monarchs was undeniably aggressive. Though the direction and decisions were largely those of Ferdinand, the resources used were principally those of Castile. It was therefore in effect a joint foreign policy, drawing on the one hand from Castile's military traditions and superiority in men and money, on the other from the active Mediterranean aspirations of the old Aragonese empire. To further their policy the sovereigns made highly effective use of dynastic alliances and diplomatic missions. Dynastic links were forged with the empire (through Juana) and England (through Catherine); they were the basis of the successful dynastic claims to Naples and Navarre; they also, thanks to the marriage of Catherine's elder sister María to King Manoel in 1500, justified the annexation of Portugal later in the sixteenth century. Only good fortune prevented the whole edifice collapsing when death laid low one heir after another and finally placed the succession on the head of a foreign-born prince, Charles of Ghent.

Ferdinand was one of the pioneers of the European diplomatic system. Previously European rulers had sent out agents and ambassadors on a temporary basis, with a specific mission in mind. In 1487 a Castilian ambassador, Rodrigo González de Puebla, was sent to London: except for one interval, he remained there for over twenty years. Ferdinand in this way extended the practice of resident ambassadors, hitherto common only among the Italian states, to form part of the normal relationship between European states. By the 1490s the Spanish rulers had resident diplomats in England, Rome, Venice, Brussels and in the Holy Roman Empire. The ambassadors were drawn from the class of educated administrators, usually nobles, university-trained lawyers and clergy. Though their salaries were paid by the Castilian exchequer, they were recruited from all the nations ruled by the crown and their loyalty was directly to the crown rather than to the territory from which they came. González de Puebla, who arranged the marriage of Catherine of Aragon and promoted the Holy League of 1495, was a former Castilian corregidor and of Jewish origin. In general, envoys were made resident only in states allied to the crown: their expert reports and negotiations helped Ferdinand to build up a diplomatic service which was second to none in Europe, and laid the groundwork for his successes in foreign policy. In spite of its defects – unpaid salaries, poor communications, the absence of any ministers to guide policy – it was of crucial help to the emergence of Spanish power.

In 1514 Ferdinand claimed that 'the crown of Spain has not for over seven hundred years been as great or as resplendent as it now is'. Aragon and Castile made distinct contributions to this power. Isabella in her testament asked her successors to 'devote themselves unremittingly to the conquest of Africa and to the war for the faith against the Moors', and it was principally the Castilian cleric Cisneros who carried on the Reconquest tradition, with the capture on the north African coast of small towns such as Mers-el-Kebir (1505), the Peñón de Vélez (1508) and Orán (1509). Later, in 1510, a force led by general Pedro

Navarro captured Bougie and Tripoli and imposed its 'protection' on Algiers. In a statement of 1510 the king declared that the Cisneros conquests did not belong to Aragon but to Castile, and that, on the other hand, 'the conquests of Bougie and of Tunis belong to Aragon'. The words show clearly that, thirty years after the personal union of Ferdinand and Isabella, there was no union of territory or of imperial conquests.

Despite his repeated declarations against Islam – the historian Peter Martyr reported in 1510 that 'for him the conquest of Africa is an obsession' – Ferdinand seems to have been less concerned with Africa than with his destiny in Christian Europe. His aspirations to recover Jerusalem from the Turk were probably strengthened by a message in 1515 from a visionary nun, the Beata de Piedrahita, that 'he was not to die until he had won Jerusalem', but they cannot be taken seriously. In the end, the effective gains of external activity seemed to go to Castile rather than to Aragon. There was a real partnership between the two crowns in foreign policy, but Castile, by dint of its superior resources in population and royal income, came to play the bigger part in an imperial destiny whose origins had been in great measure Aragonese.

Unity and disunity in Spain

The marriage treaty drawn up for Ferdinand and Isabella early in 1469 laid down the basic limits to Ferdinand's future authority in Castile. He was to respect the customs of the realm; all appointments and acts were to be in accord with the queen's wishes; he was to reside in the realm, and pursue the reconquest of land from the Muslims; and all public decisions were to bear the signatures of both partners. By the agreement reached at Segovia in January 1475, after the proclamation of Isabella, the formal precedence of Castile over Aragon was maintained but effective equality was conceded to Ferdinand: the monarchs' heads were to appear jointly on all coins, they were to dispense justice jointly, the arms of both realms appeared together on seals and banners. The motto which they later adopted – 'Tanto monta, monta tanto/Isabel como Fernando' – emphasised the equal balance between the sovereigns, which Isabella confirmed in April 1475 by granting her husband full powers to act without her in Castile as though she were present.

The marriage did not, and could not, create a new united Spain. In the fifteenth century the word 'Spain' referred, as it had done in medieval times, to the association of all the peoples in the peninsula, and had no specific political meaning, any more than the words 'Germany' or 'Italy' had for the peoples of those nations. The writer Diego de Valera, in a work dedicated to Isabella in 1481, wrote that 'Our Lord has given you the monarchy of all the Spains', by which he also meant Portugal. Because of its imprecision the Catholic Monarchs never used 'Spain' in their official title, calling themselves instead 'King and queen of Castile, León, Aragon, Sicily … counts of Barcelona … ', and so on.

Both the rulers took great care to perfect their political partnership. All their recorded decisions were made in full agreement, even when one happened to the

absent; 'for', as Isabella's secretary and chronicler Hernando del Pulgar wrote, 'though necessity separated their persons, love held their wills together'. The love no doubt came under strain, in the contrast of character between the uncompromising, devout and chaste Isabella and the worldly, flexible and frequently unfaithful Ferdinand, whose political deviousness earned him praise in Machiavelli's *Prince* (1513). The queen's exceptional ability was noted by all contemporaries and served her well in the difficult years of civil war, while Ferdinand's leadership in foreign policy and warfare profited from his greater experience of the world outside Spain.

Beyond the personal union, no attempt was ever made to disturb the complete autonomy of Castile and Aragon, and the achievement of a united Spain was never an objective of the Catholic Monarchs. Minor reforms, such as easing transport of goods between the realms in 1480, or decreeing equality, from 1497, between the three principal gold coins of Spain (the *excelentes* of Valencia and Castile and the *principat* of Catalonia), helped economic exchange. But all the customs barriers between each realm remained fully in force, and their institutions were kept entirely separate.

Differences between the kingdoms of the peninsula must be sought in their medieval past. In Castile the weakness of royal authority was caused less by feudal tensions than by the virtual absence of feudalism. The Muslim invasions had destroyed the early medieval beginnings of a feudal baronage. Christian resettlement of the Duero valley was begun by small settlers not dependent socially or juridically on any great lord. Constant warfare against the invaders strengthened this evolution of a society of small proprietors who were also obliged, by the insecurity of the frontier, to be armed with a sword and a horse. The authority and lands of the king of Castile advanced during the great Reconquest campaigns, but there was little need for contracts between the crown and the warrior nobles, since these could be rewarded directly from the conquests without having to depend on the crown for reward. The great independent military orders – of Santiago, Calatrava and Alcántara – carved out huge territories for themselves in the frontier lands of New Castile. The 'fief', which created a bond of dependence between warriors and their prince, and which is the institution most commonly associated with European 'feudalism', was consequently very rare in Castile.

Castile evolved as a society under arms. By the later Middle Ages the early society of small proprietors was giving way, as the frontier advanced southwards, to one of warlords controlling fairly broad areas of land with a primitive, often pastoral, type of economy and with settlers who accepted protection as 'vassals'. The stagnation of Reconquest from the end of the twelfth century allowed society to consolidate, and political relationships began to take on some of the forms known elsewhere in Europe: the concept of 'homage' by vassals to their lord, for example, was imported from France. At the same time, the kings of Castile tried to extend their influence by granting to select nobles 'immunities' or rights to exercise within their estates virtually royal powers over justice and finance. This made sense for a period when the crown had no bureaucracy of its own,

but tended eventually to make the lord's territory or *señorío* in practice independent of the king.

The relative absence of institutional feudalism within Castile freed the crown from binding obligations to its vassals, but at the same time gave the nobles considerable autonomy. Royal power therefore necessarily relied on close cooperation with the magnates. This was critically important in times of war, but even in peace the rulers preferred to make laws with the consent of the full political nation in Cortes. In addition, they could rely on the support of the Church, which had been under close crown control since the beginning of the Reconquest.

In contrast to an essentially non-feudal Castile, in the east Catalonia experienced full-blooded feudalism because of its position as an outpost of the Carolingian empire in the ninth century. Here by the twelfth century the count of Barcelona was a prince served by feudatories who held territory of him and swore fealty. A baron had vassals who paid homage and fulfilled duties, while he in turn had to protect them. One consequence of this system of mutual obligations was that the political nation, when it met in Cortes, insisted on the prince's contractual duties to protect the laws. There was a correspondingly greater emphasis in Catalonia and the Aragonese lands on the upholding of the Constitution.

The crowns of Castile and Aragon thus evolved in different ways, had differing ideals and distinct institutions. The crown of Aragon was a federation made up of the separate realms of Catalonia, Aragon, Valencia, Mallorca and Sardinia. Each realm was governed independently, with its own laws (*fueros*), its own Cortes (composed of the three estates of Church, nobles and towns; though Aragon also had a fourth estate, of the gentry), its own language (Catalan was the majority tongue in Catalonia, Valencia and Mallorca) and its own coinage. To the union of the crowns Aragon brought a great imperial and commercial tradition. In the fourteenth century the Aragonese empire, at its broadest extent under Alfonso the Magnanimous (d. 1458), stretched through the Mediterranean as far as Greece. Barcelona, where Catalonia's first maritime code, the famous *Llibre del Consolat de Mar*, was drawn up, became the centre of a trading system with outposts in the Levant and north Africa. During the century a drastic fall in the population of Catalonia, caused by waves of epidemics, precipitated a crisis within the crown of Aragon, which some historians have interpreted as a general decline, though the evidence for this has been convincingly questioned. It is true that Barcelona faced financial difficulties and its inhabitants shrank in number, but this contraction occurred mainly during the civil wars (1462–72), when the city of Valencia expanded in size and took over Barcelona's trade, while Genoese merchants moved in to control sectors of the relatively undeveloped trade of southern Castile. The Catalan population crisis also affected the feudal peasantry; nearly one-third of these were tied to the soil or subject to feudal exactions (the six *malos usos* or 'evil customs'), and were known as 'redemption' peasants (*de remensa*) after the custom obliging them to buy their freedom if they wished to move from their lord's land. When political problems

in Catalonia broke out into the revolt against Juan II from 1462 to 1472, the *remensa* peasants joined the conflict as a way of airing their grievances.

The substantial differences between Aragon and Castile may be considered under six headings. First, Castile was much larger: its land mass was nearly four times the area of the mainland crown of Aragon, with a corresponding superiority in natural resources and wealth. Second, Castile contained nearly 80 per cent of the population of peninsular Spain: with a total Spanish population of under 7 million in about 1530, Castile had possibly over 5 million, while the crown of Aragon had a little over 1 million, distributed fairly evenly between the three realms. The highest density of population, unlike in modern times, was in the centre and not the periphery of the peninsula. The most sparsely populated realm was Aragon, with little more than five inhabitants per square kilometre, whereas central Castile had about twenty-one. The three largest cities were in Castile: Seville and Granada, with about 50,000 people each in the 1480s, and Toledo with 30,000. In Aragon the capital cities were Valencia with about 30,000 in 1500, Barcelona with 25,000 and Saragossa with 15,000.

Third, Castile was in essentials a united state with a single government: it had one Cortes, one tax structure, one language, one coinage, one administration and no internal customs barriers. All this, added to its size and population, gave it greater political initiative in the peninsula than Aragon. Castilian unity was, of course, in many ways superficial. The three Basque provinces of Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa and Álava recognised the sovereignty of the king of Castile but were otherwise effectively independent, with their own laws and institutions and with customs barriers that separated them from Castile. The northern realms of the Asturias and (from the early sixteenth century) Galicia had regional governments known as *juntas generales*. Elsewhere in Castile local privileges and aristocratic influence often reduced state authority to impotence. Despite all impediments, the crown of Castile experienced no serious obstacles to a long-term extension of its authority over the various autonomous units within it.

Fourth, Castile had larger and more powerful trading structures (most notably, the *Mesta*), which managed the bulk of Spain's external trade and guaranteed Castile's preponderance in any economic association with Aragon. The wool trade, which made the Mesta powerful, also promoted the business of the Cantabrian ports united in the 'Hermandad de las Marismas' ('the marsh fraternity'), an association of seafaring towns comparable only to the German Hanse. Linked with all these was the thriving mercantile city of Burgos. The significant volume of Castile's northern trade, particularly to England, the Netherlands and France, disproves the old image of a backward, non-capitalist and war-orientated Castile contrasted with a commercially progressive Aragon.

Castile, in brief, was a society expanding both militarily and economically. The fifth of the aspects to be noted is its dynamism. By the early fifteenth century Castilian ships and commercial agents were active in the western Mediterranean, where formerly the Catalans had been supreme. Emerging out of the fires of civil war, Castile under Isabella maintained its impetus for change and expansion: the momentous events of 1492 confirmed and extended its primacy.

Sixth and finally, there was a contrast in political systems that tipped the balance of power in favour of Castile. In the crown of Aragon the three Cortes often met simultaneously in the same city (in *Cortes generales*), but in separate sessions; more frequently, they met separately in their own realms. Restrictions on the king's legislative power in Aragon were symbolised by a famous oath that the Cortes in Saragossa are alleged to have taken when swearing allegiance to the king in the sixteenth century: 'We who are as good as you swear to you who are no better than we, to accept you as our king and sovereign lord, provided you observe all our liberties and laws; and if not, not.' The oath probably never existed in this provocative form, but its terms closely reflected the contractual relationship between ruler and ruled. In both Saragossa and Barcelona in 1283 the crown agreed that all future laws must have the approval of the Cortes. The realms of Aragon were a limited, contractual monarchy in which the king at his accession swore to maintain existing laws (commonly called fueros) and could not legislate without the agreement of the estates (*brazos*). He was, indeed, subject to the law, according to a later (1622) Catalan claim: 'the laws we have are compacted between the king and the land, and the prince can no more exempt himself from them than he can exempt himself from a contract'. In each of the realms a permanent standing committee of the Cortes, called the *Diputación* and made up of two representatives from each estate, supervised the laws and general administration when the Cortes was not in session. The Catalan equivalent, known as the *Diputació* or *Generalitat*, became particularly important in the government of Catalonia. The king's power to raise taxes, recruit soldiers and legislate was severely restricted in the eastern realms.

In Castile, by contrast, although the king usually took care to act through the Cortes, from the fourteenth century onwards it was recognised that the crown had full authority (*poderío real absoluto*) to make and unmake laws. Ferdinand consequently found his freedom of action in Castile a welcome alternative to the restraints imposed in Aragon. This, no less than his promise to reside in the western realms, explains why in a total reign of thirty-seven years he spent less than three in Aragon proper, only three in Catalonia and a mere six months in Valencia. During the campaign against Granada he was absent from Catalonia for eleven years, and relied on a new system of viceroys to govern in his place.

It is possible to argue from all this that the union of the crowns may have been unfavourable to Aragon. Not only was the king now an absentee; new conquests, such as Navarre, were added to Castile; new territories, notably America, were made a Castilian preserve; and new imperial institutions, such as the councils and the diplomatic service, were dominated by Castilians. 'Now', Barcelona had announced to Seville in 1479, 'we are all brothers'; but the brotherhood was not destined to be one of equals, and provoked tensions that endured throughout Spain's modern history. The Aragonese were aware of the imbalance: Ferdinand himself reminded the Catalan Cortes in 1495 and 1503 that Castilian resources had paid for the conquests in southern Italy that expanded the crown of Aragon.

From another perspective, however, there may have been fewer imbalances than we think. During the reign there was a profound advance towards cooperation between the crowns in four major areas: in the lengthy war campaign against Granada, in the pursuit of a common religious policy through the Inquisition and the expulsion of the Jews, in a joint military and foreign policy in Italy, and in the acceptance of a shared political control within the territories of peninsular Spain. Despite differences of approach at many points, it was an experiment in collaboration unequalled at that time in Europe.

The conquest of Granada

Immediately after consolidating their authority the monarchs turned their attention to Granada. Throughout the century the frontier with the Muslim emirate had experienced regular incidents and attacks, interrupted by uneasy truces and payments of tribute by Granada to Castile. Everyday contact was normal: trade continued, prisoners were regularly exchanged through official mediators, on both sides ballads were composed about the chivalry of frontier heroes. In Granada the emir Abu'l-Hasan Ali ruled over a territory of some half a million people, a powerful nation but rent by political and clan divisions. The capture of the frontier town of Zahara by Muslim forces in December 1481 provided the excuse for a full-scale campaign by the Christians of Andalusia, who in February 1482 retaliated by seizing Alhama. Over the next ten years the Catholic Monarchs committed all their resources to the struggle.

Civil war among the rulers of Granada helped the Christians. Abu'l-Hasan's son Muhammad (known to the Christians as Boabdil) rebelled against his father, was captured by Christians in 1483 and agreed to become a vassal of Ferdinand. The emir was in 1485 dethroned by his brother al-Zagal, who was in turn ousted from Granada in 1487 by Boabdil and withdrew into the eastern half of the kingdom, where he held out against the Christians until the end of 1489. By this date most of the territory was conquered and Ferdinand expected Boabdil to surrender Granada to him. When he refused to do so, a long and costly siege of the city (April 1491 to January 1492) was begun. The besieged saw defeat as inevitable; a surrender was negotiated, Christian troops were let in secretly on 1 January to ensure a peaceful hand-over, and on 2 January 1492 the Catholic Monarchs approached at the head of their army to receive the keys of the city.

The war of Granada was full of episodes in which the gallantry and chivalry of combatants reflected the best ideals of medieval warfare. The deeds of Rodrigo Ponce de León, marquis of Cadiz, seemed to recall those of the Cid. But the campaigns were no mere continuation of the medieval Reconquest: Christian ideology was now more aggressive, Christian warfare more destructive. The brutal enslavement of the entire population (15,000 people) of Málaga after its capture in 1487 gave hint of a new savagery. For a decade the conflict harnessed the energies of the entire population of southern Spain in providing soldiers, food and supplies: the inevitable state of emergency provoked a huge rise in prices in Andalusia. It was a total effort by one civilisation to subdue another.

It is possible that the complete conquest of Granada was not at first contemplated, but by the end this was certainly the objective. Isabella took only a nominal part in the campaign, leaving the military command exclusively to Ferdinand (she apparently hated bloodshed, and disliked bullfights; after seeing a bullfight she determined, in her own words, 'never to see one again in all my life'). The monarchy's prestige was enormously enhanced by the war, which took on the status of a European crusade. Thousands of volunteers came from other parts of the peninsula, and French, Swiss and English volunteers figured among the many foreigners. The naval forces that patrolled the sea consisted of Catalan and Italian vessels. The newly imported artillery was managed by Germans and Italians. Money to pay for costs came not only from Castile but also Aragon and from the pope, through Genoese bankers in Seville who handled the transactions. The fall of Granada in 1492 was a high point in Castile's military history, but it was also made possible by help from the rest of Spain and Western Europe. The pope granted funds and gave Ferdinand a huge silver cross that was carried before the troops. From 1488 many of the soldiers wore crusader crosses on their uniform, and in 1486 the monarchs sought divine aid at the shrine of St James at Compostela. The religious element was deliberately cultivated in official propaganda, though this does not call in doubt the pious motives of the crown. In 1481 Ferdinand declared that his aim was 'to expel from all Spain the enemies of the Catholic faith and dedicate Spain to the service of God'. In 1485 he claimed that 'we have not been moved to this war by any desire to enlarge our realms, nor by greed for greater revenues'.

The campaign, which took the form of skirmishes and small sieges (there were no battles), encouraged the emergence of a more permanent army. Royal forces were still made up, as in medieval times, of soldiers recruited by vassals. Ferdinand's army came from four main sources: the troops of the great magnates (Cardinal Mendoza in 1489 supplied 1,000 horse and 1,000 foot); the gentry and their dependants; the militia of the hermandad towns; and soldiers, including Swiss mercenaries, raised by the crown. The forces were regrouped each year at the start of the campaign, so that no permanent standing army existed. Nor were the levies organised or paid on a common basis. Many contingents owed loyalty only to the lord who had raised them, and not to the king. When an attempt was made to deploy elsewhere the soldiers under the duke of Medinaceli, he protested:

> Tell the king my lord that I came to serve him with the men of my household, and that I shall not serve in the war unless accompanied by my men, nor is it reasonable for them to serve without me at their head.

By 1489, according to Pulgar, 'the host numbered 13,000 horse and 40,000 foot soldiers'. All the organisation was carried out by the crown, which through these long years of conflict established an unquestioned control over the armed forces. The lessons, both logistical and tactical, were put to use in the subsequent wars in Italy, where the commanders Gonzalo de Córdoba and Gonzalo de

Ayora adapted their experience of the Granada campaign. In one essential respect the Granada army was superior to all its predecessors: heavy artillery, used regularly from 1487 so that by 1491 the army had over 200 units, was able to demolish medieval fortifications and ensured victory over the Moorish towns, which had no cannon. The absence of any significant naval forces was the only weak point in an otherwise overwhelming Christian superiority. The failure of other Muslim powers to come to the help of Granada can no doubt be explained by their awareness that the cause was hopeless. By contrast, the various peoples of Spain forgot their differences in a struggle that contributed, more than any other event of the reign, to a common loyalty to the crown. 'Who would have thought', observed Peter Martyr of Anghiera when he visited the Christian army,

> that the Galician, the proud Asturian and the rude inhabitant of the Pyrenees, would be mixing freely with Toledans, people of La Mancha, and Andalusians, living together in harmony and obedience, like members of one family, speaking the same language and subject to one common discipline?

The cost of the war could never have been borne by the crown alone, which was able to draw on two extraordinary sources: papal bulls of crusade, and grants by the hermandad. In 1482 Sixtus IV issued a bull of crusade (*cruzada*), granting special spiritual favours to those who contributed to or took part in the Granada campaign. The bull was renewed in subsequent years. Innocent VIII in 1485 made an added concession of one-tenth of the revenues of the Church in Spain: this too was later renewed. The total income from the papal grants was substantial: some 800 million maravedís between 1484 and 1492. 'Without such subsidies', reported Guicciardini, 'this king would not have taken Granada'. Over the same period the monarchs were drawing on funds voted by the Junta de Hermandad: from 1482 to 1490, the crucial war years, the grants totalled 300 million maravedís.

The religious minorities of Castile were made to contribute to costs; from 1482 to 1491 the Jews paid some 58 million, but the Mudejars being poorer paid less. To some degree the war also financed itself: the sale of slaves from Málaga realised over 56 million for the crown. Loans, which were seldom resorted to before 1488 and were taken mainly from city councils and grandees, became important in the closing stages of the campaign; from 1489 to 1491 over 315 million maravedís were borrowed. Since it was impossible to repay such large sums quickly, from 1489 the loans were converted into annuities (*juros*) at an interest rate of 10 per cent: it was the beginning of a national debt. Among those who loaned money were the duke of Medina-Sidonia with 17 million and the Mesta with 27 million.

When Granada fell the event was hailed by an eyewitness as 'the most distinguished and blessed day there has ever been in Spain'; though a Muslim commentator in Egypt saw it as 'one of the most terrible catastrophes to befall Islam'. Ferdinand's triumphant message to Rome, that

> after so much travail, expense, death and bloodshed this kingdom of Granada, which for 780 years was occupied by infidels, has been won to the glory of God, the exaltation of our Holy Catholic Faith, and the honour of the Apostolic See

was echoed by acclamation throughout Europe. A grateful Alexander VI in 1494 (a year when he needed Spain's help against the French) bestowed on the sovereigns the title of *Los Reyes Católicos*.

In legal terms, Granada was not 'conquered'; rather, it agreed on 'capitulations', common in warfare in medieval times. Its inhabitants were guaranteed their customs, property, laws and religion; they kept their own officials, to be supervised however by Castilian governors; and those wishing to emigrate were allowed to do so. Of the original half-million Muslims in the realm, 100,000 had died or been enslaved, 200,000 emigrated and 200,000 remained as the residual population. Many of the elite, including Boabdil who had been given the area of the Alpujarra mountains as a principality, found life under Christian rule intolerable and passed over into north Africa. As Boabdil set off into exile he reined back his horse to take a final look at the city he had lost, and could not restrain his tears. An oral tradition records that his mother scolded him: 'You do well to weep like a woman for what you could not defend as a man!' To this day the place where he stopped is known as 'the last sigh of the Moor'.

Reorganisation of the territory was entrusted to Íñigo López de Mendoza, second count of Tendilla and later first marquis of Mondéjar; Church affairs were put under fray Hernando de Talavera, Isabella's Jeronimite confessor who was now created first archbishop of Granada. Corregidors were appointed to the chief cities and a Chancillería fixed (1505) in Granada. Contrary to what is commonly asserted, the kingdom was not handed over to the great magnates. Only a few areas, mainly those with a heavy Muslim population, were granted as señoríos; and even this involved jurisdiction over justice and taxation rather than over the soil. Towns granted to nobles rarely had more than 200 vassals, and were more usually small villages.

The war years left their mark. In 1524 the Venetian ambassador Andrea Navagero noted that, 'except for a few lords, there are no people in Granada with large incomes'. At the same time a deluge of landless Christian peasants swept in, most of them from other parts of Andalusia. Some 40,000 immigrants settled in the kingdom over the period 1485–98. The town of Antequera, which had only 200 families prior to 1480, had 3,500 by the early sixteenth century. The new peasants assured some continuity in agriculture, but could not prevent an economic crisis caused by Muslim emigration and the collapse of traditional trade to north Africa.

Tensions between the Mudejars and their new rulers came to a head over religion. As archbishop, Talavera encouraged conversions by means of charitable persuasion, respect for native culture and the use of Arabic during religious services. Tendilla, by his scrupulous respect for their customs, also earned the loyalty of the Mudejars. Cisneros, who had been archbishop of Toledo since 1495,

was impatient at the slow progress of conversions, and in 1499 when the monarchs were in Granada asked for permission to pursue a more rigorous policy. The new phase of compulsory conversion, often with mass baptisms, provoked a brief revolt in December 1499 in the Albaicín, the Mudejar quarter of Granada, which was appeased only through the good offices of Tendilla and Talavera.

Isabella, however, gave her support to Cisneros, who was able to report in January 1500 that 'there is now no one in the city who is not a Christian, and all the mosques are churches'. The victory of the new harsh policy in Granada signalled the end of the old tradition of mutual respect between the civilisations of the peninsula. Ferdinand sympathised with Tendilla's outlook, and it is significant that for a generation no attack was made upon the Muslims of Aragon. But in Castile there was no mistaking the trend of events.

The forced conversions precipitated another revolt in January 1500 in the Alpujarras; it lasted for three months and was put down with difficulty. Cisneros's view now was that by rebellion the Mudejars had forfeited all rights granted by the terms of capitulation, and they should be offered a clear choice between baptism or expulsion. His personal preference was 'that they should convert and be enslaved, because as slaves they will be better Christians'. Over the next few months the Mudejars of Granada were systematically converted by force; a few were allowed to emigrate. By 1501 it was officially assumed that the kingdom had become one of Christian Arabs – the *Moriscos*. Though granted legal equality with other Christians, they were forbidden to carry arms and subjected to growing pressure to abandon their racial culture. A huge bonfire of Arabic books, ordered by a royal decree of October 1501 and not specifically by Cisneros, was held in Granada. It was the end of the capitulations and of Muslim al-Andalus: 'if the king of the conquest does not keep faith,' lamented the former imam of the mosque at Granada, 'what can we expect from his successors?'

With Granada apparently converted, Isabella was not inclined to tolerate Muslims elsewhere in her realms. On 12 February 1502 all Mudejars in Castile were offered the choice between baptism and exile. Virtually all of them, subjects of the crown since the Middle Ages, chose baptism since emigration was rendered almost impossible by stringent conditions. With their conversion Islam vanished from Castilian territory, and continued to be tolerated only in the crown of Aragon. By repeating a step that had already been taken against the Jews, Isabella abolished plurality of faiths in her dominions but also created within the body of Christian society the wholly new problem of the Moriscos.

Many Mudejars had thought that by accepting baptism they would be left in peace. From about 1511, however, various decrees were passed encouraging them to abandon traditional cultural practices. These steps were taken further by the authorities in Granada in 1526, when all the distinctive characteristics of Morisco civilisation – the use of Arabic, their clothes, their jewellery, ritual slaughter of animals, circumcision – came under attack. What was lacking was a disciplinary body to enforce the rules. It was accordingly decided to transfer the local tribunal of the Inquisition from Jaén to Granada.