

**Battle-Seeking Commanders
in the Later Middle Ages:
Phases of Generalship in
the War of the Two Pedros**
Donald J. Kagay
Albany State University

Thanks to the influence of the imperial military writer, Vegetius, it has long been understood that in the Middle Ages defense operations were much preferred to those of an offensive nature.¹ In the Iberian Peninsula with long stretches of extremely fertile coastline divided from the interior by bleak grasslands and harsh uplands marked by the absence of readily accessible water,² the maxim of holding one's fire and waiting the enemy to make a mistake seemed a prudent one. Because the Iberian landscape was even further dominated by strategically placed fortresses, all warfare in the region, no matter who engaged in it, was normally of a much reduced scale. The principal combat technique was the "lightning raid" (*algara, aciefa, cabalgada*), unleashing on the landscape what one modern military historian has called a "war of erosion."³ This regime of raiding normally existed without pitched battles,

¹*Vegetius: Epitome of Military Science*, trans. N.P. Milner (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 1996), 116 (III:26); *Maurice's Strategikon: Handbook of Byzantine Military Strategy*, trans. George T. Dennis (Philadelphia, 1984) 15, 118 (I:3; XI:2); Donald J. Kagay, "The Defense of the Crown of Aragon during the War of the Two Pedros (1356-1366)," *The Journal of Military History* 71 (2007): 12-13; Edward N. Luttwak, *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), 58-59.

²Richard Ford, *A Hand-Book for Travellers in Spain and Readers at Home*, ed. Ian Robertson, 3 vols. (Carbondale, Ill., 1966), 2:606-8, 3:1302-4, 1319-20; Karl Baedeker, *Spain and Portugal: Handbook for Travelers* (Leipzig, 1913), 160, 167; Naval Intelligence Division, *Spain and Portugal*, 3 vols. (London, 1941), 1:108, 137; W. B. Fisher and H. Bowen-Jones, *Spain: An Introductory Geography* (New York, 1966), 47.

³Ana Echevarría, *Knights on the Frontier: The Moorish Guard of the Kings of Castile (1410-1467)*, trans. Martin Beagles (Leiden, 2009), 52-59. Francisco Garcia Fitz, *Castilla y León frente al Islam: Estrategias de expansión táctica militares (siglos xii-xiii)* (Seville, 1998) 65-66; Manuel Rojas Gabriel, "La capacidad militar de la nobleza en la

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but instead put a force of under 1000 horsemen in enemy territory for under a week. The aim of such operations was to produce maximum damage with minimum risk.⁴ This was done by having the raiding force constantly on the move while dealing heavy blows to enemy territory by damaging settlements, destroying crops, rustling livestock, and taking numerous prisoners.⁵ One fifteenth-century observer aptly described the effect of such raiding in the following terms: “we destroyed and burnt wherever we went, so that nothing was left behind us, for all was devastated.”⁶

Even when larger armies took to the field, the same geographical determinants clearly affected the way in which they were maneuvered. As in the Latin East, campaigns were conducted “without battles,” centering, instead, on castles and fortified urban sites.⁷ Even these kind of expeditions, however, involved unforeseen risk, such as the demise of Alfonso XI of Castile (r.1312-1350) at the siege of Gibraltar, not from a battlefield wound, but from

frontera con Granada: El ejemplo de Don Juan Ponce de León, II conde de Arcos y señor de Marchena,” *Historia, Instituciones, Documentos* 22 (1995): 500-1.

⁴Manuel Rojas Gabriel, *La frontera entre los reinos de Sevilla y Granada en el siglo XV (1390-1481): Un ensayo sobre la violencia y sus manifestaciones* (Cádiz, 1995), 16-17.

⁵Archivo de la Corona de Aragón[ACA], Cancillería real, Registro[R] 46, f. 283v; R. 236, f.222; Andrés Giménez Soler, *Don Juan Manuel: Biografía y estudio crítico* (Zaragoza, 1932), 339, 359-60 (docs. 155, 186); María Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, *Entre la Paz y la Guerra: La corona catalano-aragonesa y Castilla en la baja Edad Media* (Barcelona, 2005), 324; Juan Torrers Fontes, *Instituciones y sociedad en la frontera murciano-granadina* (Murcia, 2004), 175, 481-82; Manuel Rojas Gabriel, “La nobleza como élite militar en la frontera con Granada: Una reflexión,” in *Actos del congreso de frontera oriente nazarí como sujeto histórico (s.XIII-XVI): Lorca, Vera 22 á 24 de Noviembre de 1994*, ed. Pedro Segura Artero (Madrid, 1997), 184-85.

⁶*Diary of Jörg von Ebingen*, trans. Malcolm Letts (London, 1929), 37-38; Echevarría, *Knights*, 58.

⁷Christopher Marshall, *Warfare in the Latin East, 1192-1291* (1992; reprint, Cambridge, 1995), 184, 207.

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a bubonic plague infection.⁸ Rather than putting oneself in such danger, most commanders took the safe course of defending their frontiers and avoiding battle unless absolutely necessary. Unlike some of Christian Spain's greatest reconquest figures such as Fernando III of Castile (r.1217-1252) and Jaume I of Aragon (r.1214-1276) who looked on the conflict with Muslim *Hispania* as a "war fought in partnership with God" by combatants willing to die "in God's service,"⁹ most Iberian commanders would wait out an adversary, even one who had crossed his border and did damage to his realm. Though opposed to modern views of chivalry in the Middle Ages, this cautious course was very much in line with such medieval Spanish political and military theorists as Juan Manuel (1282-1348) who counseled intelligent caution above vainglorious rashness for all who engaged in the unpredictable venture of war.¹⁰

I.

The longest and most destructive war of fourteenth-century Iberia had nothing to do with the reconquest, but was caused by a series of territorial disputes between the Christian ruling houses of Castile (the dominant power of the central and southern portions of the Peninsula) and the Crown of Aragon (a ruling coalition of eastern Spanish states whose

⁸Philip Ziegler, *The Black Death* (New York, 1969), 113-14.

⁹*The Book of Deeds of James I of Aragon: A Translation of the Medieval Catalan Llibre dels Feys*, trans. Damian Smith and Helena Buffery (Aldershot, Hampshire, 2003), 188 (chap. 207); Robert I. Burns, S.J., "The Spiritual Life of James the Conqueror of Arago-Catalonia, 1208-1276: Portrait and Self-Portrait," *The Catholic Historical Review* 62 (1976): 18.

¹⁰García Fitz, *Castilla*, 311-12; Echevarría, *Knights*, 57.

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control stretched across the Pyrenees and into the Mediterranean).¹¹ The two polities with similar languages and cultures also had a long history of dynastic connections and disputes dating back into the thirteenth century. With the unexpected death in 1275 of Fernando de la Cerda, the oldest son of Alfonso X of Aragon (r.1252-1284), his two sons, the so-called *infantes de la Cerda*, attempted to recover the Castilian throne for their family by manipulating and being manipulated by the Aragonese crown.¹² The bad feelings that simmered between the Castilian and Aragonese royal families eventually burst into open war in 1296 over the issue over Murcia, the rich Muslim principality below Valencia. Jaume I had conquered the region in 1265-1266, but had turned it over to his son-in-law, Alfonso X.¹³ After three decades during which the Aragonese and Castilian who had helped conquer Murcia languished under Castilian rule, Jaume II of Aragon (r.1291-1327) invaded the region in 1296, rapidly conquered all of it down to the Segura River.¹⁴ Though the Murcian question was eventually settled by the pact of Torrellas in 1304, the region remained a international

¹¹For general histories of these two opponents, see *España cristiana: Crisis de la reconquista*, vol. 14 of *Historia de España*, ed. Ramon Menendez Pidal, 37 vols. (Madrid, 1963-1984); T.N. Bisson, *The Medieval Crown of Aragon: A Short History* (Oxford, 1986); Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1975).

¹²Eloy Benito Ruano, "El problema sucesorio de la corona de Castilla a la muerte de don Fernando de la Cerda," in *VII centenario del Infante Don Fernando de la Cerda. Jornadas de Estudios Ciudad Real, abril 1975* (Madrid, 1976), 217-25; María Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, "Causes i antecedents de la guerra dels dos Peres," *Boletín de la Sociedad Castellonense de Cultura* 43 (1987): 446-50.

¹³Juan Torres Fontes, *La reconquista de Murcia en 1266 por Jaime I de Aragón* (Murcia, 1987); Josep-David Garrido i Valls, *Jaume I i el regne de Múrcia* (Barcelona, 1997).

¹⁴ACA, Cancillería real, Cartas reales [Pedro IV], no. 679; Bonifacio Palacios Martin, "La frontera de Aragón con Castilla en la época de Jaime I," in *X Congreso de historia de l corona de Aragón* (Zaragoza, 1975), Comunicaciones 1-2, 480-81; Giménez Soler, *Juan Manuel*, 231 (doc. 7); Jeronimo Zurita, *Anales de la Corona de Aragón*, ed. Angel Canellas Lopez, 8 vols. (Zaragoza, 1967-1985), 2:499-503 (V:xxi); Josep-David Garrido i Valls, *La conquesta del sud Valencià i Múrcia per Jaume II* (Barcelona, 2002), 38-50

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hot-spot dominated for the next five decades by over-mighty subjects such as Juan Manuel and Prince Ferran (1329-1363), the royal *infante* important in Aragonese and Castilian affairs until mid-century.¹⁵

The immediate lurch into a general state of war between Castile and Aragon in 1356 took place after five years of deepening tension. Though accepting the young Castilian king, Pedro I (1350-1366/69) as “a brother whom we greatly love and prize,” Pere III of Aragon (1336-1387) soon came to distrust his royal counterpart as a *provocateur* willing to use anyone or anything to have his way.¹⁶ Distrust gave way to war in August, 1356 when Catalan privateers captured two Piacenzan merchantmen which stood at anchor in the Castilian port of San Lucas de Barrameda. Since Piacenza was allied to Genoa which had been at war with Aragon for two years, the Catalan captain felt that the two vessels were legitimate prizes.¹⁷ Unfortunately, Pedro did not share this opinion.

Within days of the incident, Pedro had written a scathing letter accusing the Aragonese ruler of waging dastardly war against Castile on several fronts.¹⁸ Pere punctually responded to these complaints, adding a few grievances of his own against the enraged

¹⁵Garrido i Valls, *Conquesta*, 81-85; Donald J. Kagay, “The Dynastic Dimension of International Conflict in Fourteenth-Century Iberia,” *Mediterranean Studies* 17 (2008): 78-79.

¹⁶ACA, Cancillería real, R. 1030, ff. 9v-10; Ferrer i Mallol, *Entre*, 587-89; Kagay, “Conflict,” 80-83.

¹⁷Pero López de Ayala, *Coronica del rey don Pedro*, ed. Constance L. and Heanon M. Wilkins (Madison, Wisc., 1985), 83 (6th year, chap vii); Pere III of Catalonia (Pedro IV of Aragon), *Chronicle*, trans. Mary Hillgarth, ed. J.M. Hillgarth, 2 vols. (Toronto, 1980), 2:495-96 (VI:3).

¹⁸ACA, Cancillería real, R. 1379, ff. 12v-13v; Pere, 2:496-99 (VI:3).

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Castilian king.¹⁹ With peace seemingly out of the question at any cost, the Aragonese sovereign announced to his realms that he intended to “personally go to the frontier...[inflicting] such damage... [as possible] on the king of Castile,...his lands, and people.”²⁰ For a number of reasons he had not fully understood at the time, Pere did not make good on this defiant pledge for some nine years. During this time, he weathered one Castilian attack after another, but never forgot this burning desire to unleash “cruel war” on his “principal adversary.”

As year after year of intermittent conflict slowly passed away, one personage at least, the pope, attempted to establish peace with the Christian portions of the Iberian Peninsula. After the establishment of a truce in the spring of 1357 and its rapid violation by Pedro, a papal legate took the process back to the drawing-board and, by May, 1361, led Aragonese and Castilian negotiators to agree to a treaty at Terrer. This “final, loyal, and true peace” was in effect for less than a year when the Castilian king again acted to overturn it.²¹ After another two years of campaigning that brought him no closer to final victory, Pedro worked with an associate of the legate to get the Aragonese to the bargaining table. The result was yet another treaty of peace promulgated at the Valencian city of Unicastillo in June of 1363.²²

II.

¹⁹ACA, Cancillería real, R. 1379, ff. 13v-15v; Pere, 2:500-3 (VI:4).

²⁰ACA, Cancillería real, R. 1380, f. 23; Kagay, “Defense,” 22.

²¹Ayala, 97-98 (10th year, chap. ii); Ángeles Masía de Ros, *Relación castellano-aragonesa desde Jaime II a Pedro el Ceremonoso*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1994), 2:460, 462, 464-65, 468-67, 473-74 (arts. 1-2, 11, 19-21, 28, 34, 37).

²²Ayala, 136-37 (14th year, chap. v); Zurita, *Anales*, 4:464-67 (IX:xlvi); Pere III, 2:538 (VI:34).

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After the pact of Unicastillo had lost its power to halt the Aragonese-Castilian war in the late-summer of 1363, the commencement of hostilities was quick in coming. The focus of war-making in the last years of the conflict (1364-1365) inexorably shifted southward into the realm of Valencia that during Muslim times had been known as “the ornament of the world” from its agricultural and commercial richness.²³ These last years of the War of the Two Pedros, marked as they were by large-scale and complex military operations across the hinterland of Murcia and southern Valencia, allow the modern investigator to assess the generalship of two very different types of military and state leader.

To gain even a simple idea of Pere and Pedro as warriors and administrators of war, one must take into account the propaganda mounted by the Aragonese king and the ultimate victor in Castile, Enrique de Trastámara. The picture that remains of Pedro is somewhat like a reflection in a broken mirror. The legitimate son of Alfonso XI could thus be portrayed by one modern authority as a person “resplendent as a hero in the battlefield”²⁴ while being characterized by contemporary authors as an “unfit monarch” who made warfare a boundless source of vengeance gratification.²⁵

Though Pere was remarkably careful in fashioning the portrait of himself he

²³Maria Rosa Menocal, *The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christian Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain* (Boston, 2003).

²⁴Antonio Ferrer del Rio, *Examen histórico-crítico del reinado de Don Pedro de Castilla* (Madrid: C. Monier, Editor, 1854), 108.

²⁵Louise Mirrer-Singer, *The Language of Evaluation: A Sociolinguistic Approach to the Story of Pedro el Cruel in Ballad and Chronicle* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 1986), 84; Julio Valdeon Baroque, *Enrique II de Castilla: La guerra civil y la consolidación del regimen (1366-1371)* (Valladolid, 1966), 96-99.

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bequeathed to posterity, the image of the Aragonese ruler as a military leader is a difficult one to get at. The ambivalence modern investigators have about Pere as a leader of troops is perhaps due to a clear military evolution that took place during the Castilian war. In the first weeks of the conflict, he seems to reflect the over-the-top patriotism of a character in a nineteenth-century political opera. Within days of the war's beginning and on several occasions in next several years, he announced he "was making a bee-line (*via directa*)" to the frontier and asked all of his people to accompany him.²⁶ As the war dragged on and the king's frustration escalated, he once told one of his parliaments that he was ready to muster for an immediate attack on Castile the members of the assembly "on horseback, on foot, or only with the shirts on their backs."²⁷ Such campaigns of national righteousness did not take place, however, and Pere fell back on a "certain realism" that had long marked Iberian kingship.²⁸ As a constant seeker of "things profitable and honorable," the Aragonese king soon saw that regnal and personal survival in a conflict in which he was militarily outclassed comprised both of his long-term goals.²⁹ Perhaps Pere's own assessment of his military attainments give us as good a picture as any: "we have as great a will and heart as any knight

²⁶ACA, Cancillería real, R. 1379, f. 177v; R. 1380, f. 171v; Kagay, "Defense," 28.

²⁷Donald J. Kagay, "A Government Besieged by Conflict: The Parliament of Monzón (1362-1363) as Military Financier," in *The Hundred Years War: A Wider Focus*, ed. L.J. Andrew Villalon and Donald J. Kagay (Leiden, 2005), 130.

²⁸David A. Cohen, "Secular Pragmatism and Thinking about War in Some Court Writings of Pere III *el Cerimoniós*," in *Crusaders, Condottieri, and Cannon: Medieval Warfare in Societies around the Mediterranean*, ed. L.J. Andrew Villalon and Donald J. Kagay (Leiden, 2003), 25.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 22; Pere III, 2:456 (V:3).

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to defend our crown and kingdom.”³⁰

III.

To gain a better-defined picture of the two men’s generalship beyond the pall of personal or contemporary estimates, we must turn squarely to the record of the campaigns in which they fought. In these sieges, raids, and direct conflicts, how did Pere and Pedro stand on in engaging each other in battle and was this attitude constant or variable during their careers? To use the language of modern military theory, were the two commanders engaged in the strategy of battle avoidance that John Gillingham, referring to the theories of Vegetius, claims the vast majority of medieval captains embraced? Or could their military endeavors be interspersed with clear examples of battle-seeking activity, a strategy that Clifford Rogers claims many commanders across medieval Europe occasionally chose to follow.³¹ Or, finally to echo Andrew Villalon’s term, were they “battle-willing?” that is, disposed “to risk the wager of battle under the right circumstances.”³² To come to some conclusion, albeit general, concerning the martial stance of the “two Pedros,” it will be

³⁰*Epistolari de Pere III*, ed. Ramon Gubern, 1 vol. to date (Barcelona, 1955), 1:143 (doc. 20); *Parlaments a les corts catalanes*, ed. Ricard Albert and Joan Gassiot (Barcelona, 1928), 24; Kenneth Fowler, *The Great Companies*, vol. 1 of *Medieval Mercenaries*, 1 vol. to date (Oxford, 2001), 157.

³¹John Gillingham, “Richard I and the Science of War in the Middle Ages,” in *War and Government in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of J.O. Prestwick*, ed. J. Gillingham and J.C. Holt (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1984), 78-91; reprinted in *Medieval Warfare 1000-1300*, ed. John France (Aldershot, Hampshire, 2006), 299-312; Clifford J. Rogers, “The Vegetian ‘Science of Warfare’ in the Middle Ages,” *Journal of Medieval Military History* 1 (2002): 1-19; idem, “The Offensive/Defensive in Medieval Strategy,” in *XXII Kongreß der Internationalen Kommission für Militärgeschichte Acta 22: Von Crécy bis Mohács Kriegwesen im spätem Mittelalter (1346-1526)* (Vienna, 1997), 158-71

³²L.J. Andrew Villalon, “Battle-Seeking, Battle-Avoiding, or Perhaps Just Battle-Willing? Applying the ‘Gillingham Paradigm’ to Enrique II of Castile,” Paper delivered at International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, July 16, 2009.

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necessary to interrogate the evidence of the war's last campaigns and then compare it to the military activity of the Aragonese and Castilian rulers in the first years of the conflict.

The last phase of the long war between Castile and Aragon began in the fall of 1363 with the disintegration of the treaty of Unicastillo. Fearing his adversary would take advantage of the frontier zone between southern Valencia and Murcia that had been held by the now-deceased Prince Ferran,³³ Pere frantically began to resupply fortresses while reshuffling captains and garrisons across the region from Elche to Crevillente to Elda.³⁴ Unfortunately, these last-minute efforts that included sending the crown-prince, Joan, into the southern Valencian theater of operations did little good in holding off massive raids led by Pedro out of Murcia and across the Segura River in December, 1363.³⁵ These interlinked Castilian successes eventually put Valencia's capital in jeopardy and spurred Pere into mounting a large relief force. A decisive battle between the Aragonese and Castilian armies seemed in the offing. The operations to follow, however, proved to be a strange type of dance in which Pere doggedly lurched toward this final struggle and Pedro just as assiduously avoided it.

IV.

³³Ferran was killed on July 16, 1363 at the Valencian city of Castellon de la Plana when Pere decided to effect his half-brother's arrest for treason {Kagay, "Dynastic Dimension," 95}.

³⁴ACA, Cancillería real, R. 1194, f. 98; R. 1385, ff. 175v-76; R. 1386, ff. 57v, 67r-v; R. 1572, ff. 23v-24, 28v-29; María Teresa Ferrer i Mallol, "La organització militar en Catalunya en la Edad Media" Extra no. 1 (2001): 488-89 (doc. 177); eadem, "The Southern Valencian Frontier during the War of the Two Pedros," in *Hundred Years War*, 107-8.

³⁵ACA, Cancillería real, R. 728, f. 163; R. 1192, f. 94; Ferrer i Mallol, "Southern Valencian Frontier," 108.

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The Valencian campaign—one of the largest in war—began in March, 1364, when an unofficial Valencian representative, a Franciscan missionary, sounded an “alarm” (*viafós*) in Pere’s court at Sesa near Huesca. Because of a “dangerous scarcity of food” in the southern capital, Pere, a “king who dearly loved his subjects,” rushed to gather a force that would open provisioning links to Valencia, even if this meant confronting the Castilian king who had established himself at the Valencian dockyards (*gran*) to block the passage of all supplies into the city.³⁶ In comparison with recent Iberian campaigns, the size of the clashing forces was much greater than normal. Pere commanded an army of 1722 horse and 16,000 foot while Pedro was in charge of a force almost twice as large that contained a corps of 6000 horsemen. Even the Castilian fleet of some sixty vessels dwarfed Pere’s naval arm of ten Catalan galleys.³⁷

When the jockeying for advantageous positions began in the last days of April, 1364, Pere seemed to be destined as the clear victor. By occupying the *gran*, the Castilian king could stem the tide of supplies flowing into Valencia and, in effect, closed off the Guadalaviar River to Pere’s ships. Pedro could then use the *gran*’s sheltered harbor as an anchorage for his vessels and escape zone in case the fighting went against him.³⁸ Pere attempted to unsettle his adversary’s plan by advancing from northern Valencia with two

³⁶Pere III, 2:544-45 (VI:40); Ayala, 141 (15th year, chaps. i-ii).

³⁷Pere III, 2:546-48 (VI:40); Ayala, 142 (15th year, chap. iii).

³⁸For lay-out of Valencia and its surroundings, see Robert Ignatius Burns, S.J., *The Crusader Kingdom of Valencia: Reconstruction on a Thirteenth-Century Frontier*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass, 1967), 1:16.

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contingents, neither of which lit fires during the trek to disguise their positions. Leaving Burriana on April 28, the Aragonese vanguard under cover of darkness captured a Castilian barricade on the Palencia River that emptied into the Mediterranean outside of Murviedro. With this surprise defeat by a much smaller force, the Castilian garrison commander informed Pedro by smoke signals of the Aragonese advance. Let down by his spies who had “no news of the king of Aragon,” the Castilian king, uncertain where the next attack might come, rapidly broke camp at the *grau* and moved his forces up the coast to Murviedro. If battle had ensued because of this troop movement, Pedro’s desertion of his advantageous position at Valencia’s dockyard might have been considered a crucial strategic error.³⁹ Yet even though the two forces, now scrambling for position, gave every indication that bloody combat was imminent, at least one of their commanders had other ideas.

Shortly after the Aragonese advance guard had captured the Castilian barricade, the main section of Pere’s army joined it and, by dawn of April 29, the unified force arranged itself “in good order between Murviedro and the sea.”⁴⁰ Though a sloping beach may not have been the best choice for a battlefield, the effect of Pere’s many experienced captains and his own “daring and manly spirit” maintained the Aragonese formations for two full hours, during which the Aragonese were occupied by a frontal attack by 600 Muslim light cavalry (*jinetes*).⁴¹ Though these kinds of probing attacks were usually a mere prelude for

³⁹Pere III, 2:547-48 (VI:40); Ayala, 141-42 (15th year, chap. ii).

⁴⁰Ayala, 142 (15th year, chap. iii).

⁴¹Ibid.; Pere III, 2:550-51 (VI:41-42); Zurita, *Anales*, 4:499-504 (IX:liv).

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larger battles in medieval warfare, such was not to be the case in this instance. Though Pere had given his opponent “an opportunity for battle,” Pedro, whose main force was now nearby, refused combat and moved his troops into Murviedro. This left the royal road and Valencia’s dockyard basically open to the Aragonese advance. Saved from slow starvation by Pere’s troops and transports, the people of Valencia gave them a riotous welcome. Though Pedro hurled large numbers of Muslim cavalry against the city in the following days, these forces were easily beaten off and a major battle, it seemed, was again avoided.⁴²

When the juggernauts prowling the Valencian landscape seemed to have attained success in sidestepping each other yet again, Pere got galling reports from the Valencians of Pedro’s insulting views concerning his military competence and was again hell-bent for battle. What the Castilian king objected to about his adversary was his use of secrecy and guile to get in position before Murviedro. According to Pedro, Pere had acted in a dishonorable way “by approaching as an *almogàver*.”⁴³ Referring to the mountain troops who lived off the land in Jaime I’s Valencian campaign and eventually become some of the most feared troops in the Mediterranean,⁴⁴ Pedro was openly asserting that the Aragonese king was not living up to the accepted norms of contemporary warfare. Furious at this affront, Pere openly—even gaudily— took his army out of Valencia on May 2 and left no doubts about

⁴²Ayala, 142 (15th year, chap. iii); Pere III, 2:551-52 (VI:42-43).

⁴³Pere III, 2:552 (VI:44).

⁴⁴*The Chronicle of Muntaner*, trans. Lady Henrietta Goodenough, 2 vols. (London, 1921), 1:22-23, n. 19; David Agustí, *Los almogávares: la expansión mediterránea de la Corona de Aragón*. (Madrid, 2004).

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his intentions. Openly moving up the coast road, Pere broke his journey at Jaume I's final camp in the Valencian campaign, Santa Maria de Puig. By May 4, he pitched camp at Puçol, a few miles to the south of Murviedro. Before setting out on this righteous expedition, Pere had sent a messenger to Pedro assuring him that he wanted to fight and his army would in the Castilian king's sight by the weekend. Once established at Puçol, he sent two Castilian prisoners who bore a written challenge for Pedro "to come out to do battle." When the challenged ruler showed no signs of readying his troops for combat, Pere returned to Valencia, no doubt openly exuberant at having shown up his enemy, but perhaps with some secret relief.⁴⁵

The last martial aftershocks of the Valencian campaign took place down the coast in the bay of Cullera and across the mouth of the Júcar River. The fleets of the two monarchs had entered the fray in the days after Pere's Puçol operation. An armada of thirty Catalan galleys under the command of the viscount of Cardona came up against a much larger Castilian-Portuguese fleet consisting of seventy vessels. When Cardona took his ships up the Júcar to avoid being overpowered, Pedro took this as a heaven-sent opportunity to bottle up the Catalan squadron whose maneuverability was severely restricted in the narrow river. In an attempt to prevent their escape, the Castilian king sank three of his ships at the river's mouth. To offset this Castilian advantage, Pere moved a portion of his army from Valencia to Cullera, and from his position on the riverbank was able to thwart Castilian

⁴⁵Pere III, 2:552-53 (VI:44).

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attacks and aid in his fleet's ultimate escape.⁴⁶

In the midst of this action, the unpredictable Mediterranean climate intervened. The balmy trade winds of mid-summer that normally blew to the north and west changed abruptly into a stiff easterly gale that began to buffet the Castilian fleet and threatened to blow it onshore where Pere's forces would make short work of any floundering Castilian vessels. With all the land moorings and most of the anchor cables sheered by the tempest, Pedro took action that seemed completely out of character for him. Appealing to the Almighty, he bargained his safety for a promise to "go on pilgrimage and free prisoners."⁴⁷ With this divine mark of climatological disfavor, the Castilian king seemed to tire of Valencian campaigning—at least temporarily. Leaving a sizeable garrison at Murviedro, he journeyed back to Castile through Canet and Segorbe. Pere's enthusiasm for war making was hardly sated by his adversary's departure, however, and in late June, 1364, he overpowered the Castilian garrison in the town of Liria and then swung to the east where he unsuccessfully invested Pedro's muscular outpost at Murviedro. The Aragonese sovereign then sought a provisional respite from fighting, not because he had tired of it but due to pressing financial problems that made the paying of military salaries extremely difficult.⁴⁸

⁴⁶Pere III, 2:553-54 (VI:45); Ayala, 142 (15th year, chap. iii); Zurita, *Anales*, 4:505-6 ((IX:lv).

⁴⁷Pere III, 2:554 (VI:45); Ayala, 142 (15th year, chap. iii). For mooring devices, see Robert I. Burns, S.J. "Gegna: Coastal Mooring in Crusader Valencia," *Technology and Culture* 47 (2006): 777-86. For Mediterranean wind directions, see Fernand Braudel: *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds, 2 vols. (New York, 1966), 1:257.

⁴⁸Pere III, 2:554-56 (VI:45-46); Ayala, 142-43 (15th year, chap.v). For Pere financial difficulties, see Donald J. Kagay, "War Financing in the Late-Medieval Crown of Aragon." *Journal of Medieval Military History*.

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Pere had barely returned to Barcelona in time to hear the verdict read out against his “trusted counselor,” Bernat de Cabrera, who after a three-month trial on July 22 was declared guilty of treason by betraying the “great and special credit” which the Aragonese king had bestowed on him. For this obscure and open-ended charge that generally implied unproven collaboration with Pedro of Castile, Cabrera was beheaded at Zaragoza on July 26.⁴⁹ It was hardly ironic, then, that shortly after the death of this high-placed casualty of the Castilian war his royal master was again called to the battlefield. Receiving reports concerning Pere’s siege of Murviedro in late-June, Pedro re-gathered his host and entered Aragon at Calatayud in early August. For the next few weeks, he focused his energies on the attack of Castellhabib, a small village near Teruel. This former Castilian outpost had shortly before been rocked by a bloody insurrection of its Aragonese population that resulted in the death of the Castilian governor. The violence at Castellhabib was one of many such contemporary incidents in which Aragonese villagers rose up against Castilian representatives. Burning to avenge his appointee, Pedro ringed the village with siege engines and captured it after two days of all but constant artillery fire.⁵⁰ Though little record survives of his vengeance against the ruling class of Castellhabib, it was undoubtedly severe.

Pere’s progress into the war zone was a fairly leisurely one. He moved through Zaragoza to Teruel and was established at the hamlet of Mora de Rubielon in mid-October

Forthcoming.

⁴⁹Kagay, “Treason,” 39, 48; J.B. Sitges, *La Muerte de D. Bernardo de Cabrera: Consejero del rey D. Pedro IV de Aragón* (Madrid, 1911), 68-69.

⁵⁰Ayala, 143 (15th year, chap. vi); Ferrer i Mallol, “Southern Valencian Frontier,” 108.

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when he was visited by representatives of Castellhabib who asked for immediate royal help. Before he could tender it, however, the outpost had fallen to the Castilians. Shadowing Pedro's march to the southeast that eventually brought into his hands several Valencian outposts such as Ayora, Pere in a series of forced marches over the next few weeks moved his forces to the coast at Vila-real and proceeded southward—skirting around the capital—to Torrent and Alcira. During this grueling passage that was only completed in just over a month, Pere's troops were constantly harried by Castilian outriders.⁵¹

From December 1, 1364, Pere and Pedro were again bound in a series of parallel maneuvers that again seemed destined to lead to the battlefield. The Aragonese force at Alcira consisted of 3000 horsemen and “many crossbowmen and lancers.”⁵² Pedro at Elche commanded 7000 horse and 40,000 foot.⁵³ The objective of both commanders was “the key to [Pere's] realms,” Orihuela, a small town on the Segura River that was in “great peril...from a scarcity of food.”⁵⁴ Since his adversary was between him and this Aragonese outpost, Pere was determined to move from northern to southern Valencia as quickly as possible. Leaving Alcira on December 1, he went down the coast to Gandia and then turned inland to Alcoy. For the next two days, he rushed his troops through Favarella and Saix. Then turning his

⁵¹Pere III, 2:558-60 (VI:48); Ayala, 143 (15th year, chap. vi).

⁵²Pere III, 2:563 (VI:52).

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid., 2:560 (VI:48-49); ACA, Cancillería real, R. 1211, f. 63v; Ferrer i Mallol, “Southern Valencian Frontier,” 109.

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troops southward through a “waste and desert” that nevertheless teemed with game, the king led his army on La Matanza, a large plain to the west of Orihuela. In this wide-open zone, Pere’s scouts caught sight of a battalion of 1000 knights commanded by the Castilian king himself. Rapidly drawing up his troops in battle array, Pere impatiently waited for four hours for looming combat that never materialized. Moving his men off the higher ground on to a lower position, Pere was informed by his outriders that the main body of the Castilian army was nearby. When Pedro left the region without offering any threat whatsoever, Pere was free to advance to Orihuela where he received a hero’s welcome.⁵⁵

Despite this happy respite, Orihuela’s situation worsened markedly in the next few months. Though characterizing the town’s residents as “good people...who so valorously and courageously have safeguarded our affairs...for which they have gained great fame,” Pere did not adequately provision the urban fortresses. As a result, the Orihuelans surrendered to yet another Castilian attack in 1365.⁵⁶ Pedro’s influence within the southern Valencian theater of operations quickly began to fade as all of northern Iberia fell under the influence of mercenary captains seeking fresh employment after the peace treaty of Brétigny (1360).⁵⁷ When Enrique de Trastámara, a mercenary in his own right, began to expand his company with some of these fresh troops, his half-brother seemed to lose interest in the Aragonese conflict while engaging in a struggle for his very throne. In the midst of this political ennui,

⁵⁵Pere III, 2:563-67 (VI:52); Ayala, 143 (15th year, chap. vii).

⁵⁶ACA, Cancillería real, R. 727, ff. 164-65v; R. 1210, ff. 47r-v; R. 1211, f. 63v; Ayala, 143 (15th year, chap. vii); Ferrer i Mallol, “Southern Valencian Frontier,” 109.

⁵⁷Ferrer i Mallol, “Southern Valencian Frontier,” 109-110.

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Castilian garrisons and settlers in captured Aragonese and Valencian outposts lost confidence in their king's ability to protect them and began to return to their homeland.⁵⁸ Following hard on these desertions, Pere's subjects who had lost their homes because of the Castilian conquests began to stream back across the frontiers to reclaim them.⁵⁹ As was so often the case in such situations, the return of the natives caused legal complexities over property titles and municipal jurisdictions that would not be resolved for years.⁶⁰

V.

The large Valencian campaigns of the Castilian war, though unlike the smaller and lesser developed actions of the conflict's earlier years, were important sounding boards of its two principal commanders' willingness to engage in or avoid battle. When compared, these series of expeditions show how the basic martial attitudes the two kings possessed in 1364-1365 had changed from the war's beginning in 1356.

Pedro I of Castile had already experienced war during his campaigns along the Straits against Granada and the Merinids.⁶¹ In the first years of the conflict with Aragon, he appeared supremely confident in his own leadership and in the ability of his troops. He also appeared disdainful of Pere's standing as a commander and of the over-all toughness of the

⁵⁸Ibid., 110.

⁵⁹Ibid., " 111.

⁶⁰Ibid..

⁶¹For Alfonso XI's military career, see Nicolás Agrait, "Monarchy and Military Practice during the Reign of Alfonso XI of Castile (1312-50)," (Ph.D. diss., Fordham University, 2003).

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Aragonese army. This trust in final victory is apparent in the Castilian king's way of fighting in the war's first years. Thoroughly depending on his captains, Pedro had no fear in dividing his forces that then cut wide swathes through enemy territory before reassembling.⁶² One example at the end of this phase is instructive. When the Castilian king decided to violate the Peace of Terrer in 1362, he moved without hesitation to attack the strong Aragonese frontier-town of Calatayud. Once he had invested the site with a large army and battered it with artillery, he waited for the reaction of his rival. Sending messengers to the Aragonese court at Perpignan, he announced that he would give Pere forty days to relieve Calatayud. Sitting down to await an Aragonese response that could have included pitched battle, Pedro did not have long to wait. Within a few days, his adversary had to write to the desperate Calatayud garrison and admit that he could not relieve them. They, thus, were given permission to surrender without incurring a charge of treason.⁶³ Pedro, it seemed had learned that, despite Pere's bombastic talk about taking the fight to the enemy in the first year of the war, the Castilian army could operate in enemy territory for long periods without facing a sizeable Aragonese force and certainly without ever laying eyes on Pere himself.

Pedro's transition from this confident battle-willingness to the avoidance of even the hint of serious combat springs from a personal insecurity that was increasingly exacerbated by the very person of his half-brother, Enrique de Trastámara. Without totally unbiased documentation, it is impossible to tell if Pedro's cruelty was the result of mental imbalance

⁶²Kagay, "Defense," 18-20.

⁶³Ibid., 28-29.

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or part of a conscious strategy for political dominance.⁶⁴ What the historical record points to, however, is that the Castilian king, after long years of what he considered as national and personal betrayal, stood out as a “fierce spirit more inclined to rigorous vengeance than to clemency,”⁶⁵ This royal personality trait may not have come to dominate the Castilian body politic as it did, but for the brutalizing effect of the war on a monarch who seemed to see traitors in every class of his subjects. These, then, were the years in which Pedro executed his own brother, Fadrique, and his principal adviser, Gutier Fernandez de Velasco, for the unsubstantiated charge of conspiring with the Aragonese.⁶⁶ It was also the era in which Pedro executed garrison commanders such as Juan Alfonso de Benavides after surrendering helplessly surrounded outposts after holding off enemy attacks for weeks on end.⁶⁷ While an argument (however weak) could be advanced that these deaths were necessary to maintain order and contribute to the war effort, the non-judicial murder of Prince Ferran’s mother and brothers as well as Enrique’s younger brothers can only be attributed to the king’s desire to avenge himself on his dangerous rivals whom he seemed unable to harm

⁶⁴Neurologist Gonzalo Moya who examined Pedro I’s remains in 1968 claims that his speech impediment and “indecisiveness” (*abulia*) may have been the result of a cerebral palsy the king suffered from since his adolescence [Gonzalo Moya, *Don Pedro el Cruel. Biología, política y tradición literaria en la figura de Pedro I de Castilla* (Madrid, 1974); Estow, *Pedro*, xxxiii, 198].

⁶⁵Zurita, *Anales*, 4:289 (IX:I).

⁶⁶Ayala, 90-92 (9th year, chaps. ii-iii), 116-7 (11th year, chaps. xvi-xvii); Estow, *Pedro*, , 84, 190-92.

⁶⁷LJ, Andrew Villalon, “The War of the Two Pedros: An Overview of the Conflict,” (paper presented at the 35th annual meeting of Medieval Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Mich., May 5, 2000).

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personally, no matter how hard he tried.⁶⁸ The many episodes of day-to-day cruelty associated with war served as a backdrop of the king's individual acts of brutality. In the last Orihuela campaign of 1365, for example, Pedro ordered his soldiers to “wage the cruelest war they could, cutting off the heads of everyone you capture, so that there will be no man of Aragon taken who is not killed.”⁶⁹ As if to obey his own bloody command, Pedro had the crews of five captured Catalan galleys involved in harrying the Cartagena littoral during the same year executed to the last man—a clear affront to the international laws of war.⁷⁰

In logical terms, such rampant cruelty should have forcefully propelled Pedro to seek out an ultimate decision on the battlefield. When he did not do so, contemporaries, most especially his Aragonese adversary, attributed this strange turn of events to either divine or psychological causes. Pere, who from the beginning of the Castilian conflict claimed that he was fighting a just war, was certain that he would prevail over his enemy (“that wicked and false traitor”) who would be “put to shame and covered with confusion.”⁷¹ With this intellectual background in place, what was Pere to think when Pedro refused battle on several occasions except that his adversary feared that “God who is the judge of battles

⁶⁸Pere III, 2:493-95 (VI:1); Kagay, “Conflict,” 92.

⁶⁹*Documentos de Pedro I*, ed. Angel-Luis Molina Molina (Murcia, 1978), 162-63 (doc. 100); L.J. Andrew Villalon, “Cut Off their Heads, or I’ll Cut Off Yours”: Castilian Strategy and Tactics in the War of the Two Pedros and the Supporting Evidence from Murcia,” in *The Hundred Years War (Part II): Different Vistas*, ed. L.J. Andrew Villalon and Donald J. Kagay (Leiden, 2008), 165.

⁷⁰Ayala, 144 (15th year, chap ix). For treatment of prisoners, see M.H. Keen, *The Laws of War in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1965), 160-61.

⁷¹Pere III, 2:548-50 (VI:41); Donald J. Kagay, “The Theory and Practice of Just War in the Late-Medieval Crown of Aragon,” *Catholic Historical Review* 91 (2005): 602.

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would be against him for the great offense he had done...and was still doing against all reason and justice.”⁷² In truth, Pedro makes few explicit references to belief in cosmic influences on the result of battle. Like most medieval men, however, he believed in the power of saints to influence temporal events. This was clearly shown in 1364 after he escaped from a dangerous summer storm. To give thanks for escape from this peril, he appeared as a penitent at the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Murviedro “with a halter around his neck...[wearing only] a shirt and breeches.”⁷³

Even if Pedro’s apparent fear to submit his fate to the vicissitudes of the battlefield sprang from a dread of divine retribution, it may also have contained much more mundane elements. The most important of these was clearly the distrust of his own troops. Because many Castilian nobles who personally or through the innocent members of their families had experienced the king’s awful and seemingly mad vengeance, a great number had saved their lives by going into an exile that normally took them into Aragonese service. A good example of this constant ebb of manpower away from Pedro’s armed forces is associated with the principal captain of Castile (*adelantado mayor*), Diego Pérez Sarmiento who, for whatever reason, arrived too late at the disastrous battle of Araviana (1360) to take the field. Rather than face the “great fury” of his royal master who interpreted his action as treason, the great noble spurred his horse from the field and defected to Trastámara’s banner within

⁷²Pere III, 2:553 (VI:44).

⁷³Ibid., 2:554 (VI:45).

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a matter of days, never again to lay eyes on his former king.⁷⁴ The burgeoning number of defectors to his enemy's cause was bad enough, but those hidden traitors Pedro assumed to be serving in the Castilian army seemed to be the source of the king's greatest disquiet. Like American commanders afraid of being "fraggged" by their own troops in the midst of combat,⁷⁵ Pedro's suspicion of his soldiers reached such a level he would not trust them to engage in the confusing mêlée of battle for fear they would flee from the field or turn their weapons against him. This dread of fully unleashing his army is apparent at Orihuela in 1364 when victory over the Aragonese seemed to be at hand and, with it, the transformation of the Castilian king into an "emperor of Spain." Pedro, clearly thinking otherwise, looked at a loaf of bread in his hand and said, "with this...I could satisfy the loyal men there are in Castile."⁷⁶

No matter what motivations drove Pedro to avoid the wager of battle in the last years of the war, his refusal to answer challenges in the field had a severely detrimental effect on the confidence of his own troops as well as on his reputation as an accomplished warrior. While many medieval commanders in following the Vegetian advice that pitched battles should normally be shunned since they involved too many risks and their results were final, Pedro seemed set on avoiding the battlefield even when he held a clear advantage in troop

⁷⁴Ayala, 108 (10th year, chap. xxii). For Pérez Sarmiento's stint as *adelantado mayor de Castilla*, see Luis Vicente Diaz Martín, *Los oficiales de Pedro I de Castilla* (Valladolid, 1975), 21.

⁷⁵Thomas D. Boettcher, *Vietnam: The Valor and the Sorrow from the Home Front to the Front Lines in Words and Pictures* (Boston, 1985), 399-400; Steve Hesske, "They Dare not Speak its Name," <http://www.answers.com>. (accessed August 12, 2009).

⁷⁶Pere III, 2:565-67 (VI:52).

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strength and positioning. At Ibiza (1359), the first battle of Nájera (1360), Valencia (1363), the Valencian dockyard (*grau*) and Murviedro (1364) as well as the two campaigns of Orihuela (1364-1365), he seemed unwilling to fully unleash the troops under his command. With a dearth of unprejudiced evidence in this regard, it is truly impossible to determine whether the Castilian king, shaken by a base fear of either his enemies or his own troops, purposefully fled from situation that might have led to battle or he had begun to learn some of the defensive lessons his Aragonese adversaries had mastered years before.⁷⁷

The military portrait of Pere, like that of his opponent, changed drastically as the war progressed. From a rather timid defensive martial administrator through the later 1350s, the Aragonese king, at least through the image left in his chronicle, seemed during the 1360s to become an offensive warrior who was ever ready to embrace the dangers of the battlefield. Overshadowed and truly overawed by the glorious reputations of his ancestors, Jaume I and Pere II, the frail and crafty king of Aragon longed to win a momentous battle and, for this reason, war was never a stranger to his reign, breaking out in almost every decade of his life. None of these military episodes, however, lived up to the great battlefield exploits of his predecessors. When year after year of his conflict with Pedro passed without this direct confrontation ever coming to pass, Pere, who spent all his time administering war but never seeing it, grew increasingly anxious to prove himself. This disappointment with the course of military events erupted in the “parliament” of Monzón (1362-1363) when after months of

⁷⁷Zurita, *Anales*, 4:503 (IX:liv).

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negotiating a military subsidy he screamed at the assembly “all those who wish to remain safe [on the home front] should die.”⁷⁸

From 1362, the king’s desire to redeem his honor by personally taking up an active military command came ever closer to reality. When he did lead armies into harm’s way in the next three years, we can gauge some of the attitudes he brought to the front by the “speech” (*arenga*) he delivered to his men before leading them onto the field of battle outside Valencia in 1364. His first duty in such orations was to communicate the “firm confidence” he felt that his cause was just and God would allow him to act as His tool in the punishment of the king of Castile. Pere then had to convince his polyglot force that it was unified in its allegiance to him and to the glorious aim he had announced. He then gave the Castilians serving with him the right to cross over and join Pedro’s army if they so wished. With these emotional words, he unified his forces in a way worthy of his famous ancestor, Jaume I.⁷⁹

From most of 1363 at least, Pere was clearly “battle-willing” and in the next three years he seemed to move his troops toward open combat several times. This change from being a manager of a diffuse defense to a war leader who under many different conditions was ready to stand and deliver militarily had much less to do with a new tactical understanding of the conflict he was involved in and more with the realm of personal fulfillment. While Pere had shown himself to be an adaptable quartermaster who saw that

⁷⁸Kagay, “Parliament,” 130.

⁷⁹Pere III, 2:548-50 (VI:41).

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his troops were fed no matter what landscape his troops passed through,⁸⁰ the military accomplishment he wished to attain above all others was the command of soldiers in battle. Though he did not gain this wish in the Castilian war, it was not for want of trying since on several instances between 1363 and 1365 he clearly offered battle and had his desire to fight rebuffed by Pedro. Failing in this martial enterprise was not a complete loss, however, since by standing on the edge of battle in this way he had clearly managed to “satisfy... [his] royal honor.”⁸¹ This aim, though often expressed in Pere’s official vocabulary from the war’s very beginning, now seemed to mean more to him than ever before. Through his courage and military competence he wished to impress both posterity and the soldiers he served with. Describing in loving detail how during the second campaign of Orihuela (1365) he carefully coordinated troop movements through a range of bugle calls, he also proudly relived the series of grueling forced marches that commenced the expedition.⁸² Taking into account Pere’s well-known frailty—he had once openly admitted that he was not “a good foot soldier”⁸³—this obvious mastery of battlefield conditions, though not handing him defeat, had “destroyed... [the Castilian king’s right eye]” since, at least for his captains, Pere’s actions

⁸⁰Ibid., 2:562 (VI:50); Kagay, “Defense,” 30.

⁸¹Pere III, 2:559 (VI:48).

⁸²Ibid., 2:559-61, 563-64 (VI:48-49, 51). Pere described the camp organization in the following way: (1) with a first blast of the trumpets, the soldiers would feed and ready their mounts for the day’s march, (2) at the second, they themselves would eat breakfast, (3) at the third, the soldiers would gather their weapons and stand ready to advance, and (4) with the fourth, they would mount and follow the king.

⁸³Ibid., 1:263 (III:28). Pere made this admission during the Balearic campaign of 1343 against his cousin, Jaume III of Mallorca (1324-1349).

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had shown up Pedro as a coward.⁸⁴ In this regard, perhaps no praise was sweeter to the exhausted Aragonese king than that of Enrique de Trastámara, who claimed that by his dogged determination in repeatedly challenging Pedro across southern Valencia, Pere had shown himself to be “a king and lord to maintain and defend ...[his] kingdom... [who has] achieved the honor that is... [his] due.”⁸⁵ Though victory in battle was denied him, the Aragonese king returned from the Valencian expedition as a survivor of the war zone who had come very close in experiencing its greatest horror. At least in his mind, this seemed to be quite a triumph in itself.

VI.

In reality, the martial stance of the Aragonese king to that of Castile during the long war named after them by later historians represents both a personal and professional relationship. Both were drawn to the battlefield by motivations that modern historians would characterize as psychological—Pedro to avenge a wrong or set of wrongs that he and his people had long harbored against their eastern neighbor and Pere to finally live up to the reputation of his glorious reconquest ancestors. In assessing their willingness to engage in battle, their ties to the knowledge of professional soldiering each had gained as a war leader has to be taken into account. In most of the conflict, Pedro had shown himself to be a daring leader of men who often split his forces and struck where least expected. As the war years wore on, however, he seemed to honor caution over boldness and this surely explains

⁸⁴Ibid., 2:561 (VI:49).

⁸⁵Ibid.

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the ragged nature of his last campaigns in the war with Aragon and in the civil war (1366-1369) with Enrique de Trastámara. For Pere, on the other hand, the conflict with Castile was simultaneously a matter of regnal survival and military attainment. By supervising and financing an extremely complicated defense, he made his frontiers difficult zones to conquer and hold. In the last years of the struggle, however, he seemed to abandon caution at the very instant that his adversary was adopting it. The War of the Two Pedro, it seems, had as deep an effect on its commanders and their psyches as it did on the lands they ruled.