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A Tale of Two Kings: The Use of King David in the Chronicle of Pere III of Catalonia

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A Tale of Two Kings: The Use of King David in the Chronicle of Pere III of Catalonia

by

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Abstract

Pere III of Catalonia (1319-1387) began his reign in 1336. As count-king, he reigned over Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia. The Chronicle of Pere III of Catalonia covers the years 1319-1369, fifty years of a nearly seventy year life. Pere wrote this chronicle in collaboration with his chancery office. Bernat Descoll was the main contributor from the chancery, and he consulted with the king as he wrote it. The chronicle reflects spiritual justifications for actions that occurred during Pere's reign, such as his conflict with the *Unions* of Aragon and Valencia, as well as his conflict with Pedro I of Castile. In the prologue to the chronicle, Pere compares both himself and Catalonia to several events in the reign of King David of Israel. References to Biblical kings are not featured in the rest of the chronicle; however, there are many general spiritual references to God. It is my contention that Pere chose to emulate David because David was a highly respected Biblical king, as well as the fact that David's history as a warrior could be used to spiritually justify the military actions of Pere. I will seek to prove this by reviewing ancient and medieval interpretations of David's reign, and by analyzing both the representations of David in the prologue and Pere's religious references in the main text of the chronicle. This study shows that Pere used the idea of King David in an aberrant way to serve his own purposes. Prior to Pere's usage, David typically served as an example of a humble, righteous, servant king in political and theological works, not the righteous warrior king that Pere co-opts to justify his reign.

Introduction

Chronicles do not merely embody recorded facts; they can also reflect their authors' values and provide clues to their motivations. By researching an author's background and analyzing both the purported and actual events, one can postulate why an author made certain substantive and stylistic choices. The chronicle of Pere III gives just such an opportunity to discover why Pere selected biblical images, in particular King David, in the prologue to the chronicle that would recount the majority of his reign.¹ There was a purpose for that selection, and knowing that purpose helps us to understand the dynamics of his reign and possibly the dynamics of his intended audience.

The Reign of Pere III

Pere III of Catalonia (1319-1387) began his reign in 1336. As count-king, he reigned over Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia. His was not an easy, carefree royal life. The attainment and maintenance of his kingdom displayed deliberate courses of action by a determined man who did not just happen into his royal responsibility. Both Pere's childhood and reign were characterized by bouts of instability and rebellion, and he evidenced determination to continue in power.

Pere was the rightful heir to the throne of his father, Alfons III. His stepmother Leonor had distributed important strongholds of Alfons's kingdoms to her biological sons Jacme and Ferrando, and this caused infighting which continued even after Pere had acceded to the throne. Upon the death of his father, Pere challenged Leonor's gift of

¹ I have chosen to use names as they are listed in the Chronicle, even if there are other accepted name forms. This includes Pere instead of Pedro, Jacme instead of Jaume, and Ferrando instead of Ferran, etc.

Tortosa, Alicante, Játiva, and others to his step-brothers but was unable to secure enough allies to help him retain the lands.²

Pere's reign was also initially characterized by outside wars, which distracted him issues within his kingdom. However, this focus had changed by the end of his rule. The early years of his reign can be grouped around four major conflicts occurring nearly one right after the other: Majorca, the *Uniòns* of Aragon and Valencia, Sardinia, and Castile.³ Majorca was an economic rival, and Pere, with the support of the merchants in Barcelona, sought to eliminate the competition and Majorca's independence. By 1343, Pere had conquered Majorca. However, despite being heavily taxed by the previous administration of Jacme III, many Majorcans wished that Pere had never placed himself over them.⁴

Only three years lapsed between Majorca and his next conflict with the revived *Uniòns* of Aragon and Valencia. His conflict with the *Uniòns* was an outflow of internal strife between Pere and his half-brother Jacme.⁵ Pere had no sons and sought to make his daughter Constança his successor. The traditional procedure would have been to establish Jacme as the successor. If Jacme were unable to fulfill this role, Jacme's brother Ferrando, his ally against Pere, would have been next in line. Jacme protested Pere's inquiry into alternative succession by allying himself with nobles from Aragon who reinstated the *Uniòn*. A Valencian *Uniòn* soon followed suit. While Pere eventually

² J. N. Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms: 1250-1516*. Vol. I, 1410-1516 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 358.

³ J. N. Hillgarth, "Introduction" in *Pere III of Catalonia Chronicle*. Part I (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1980), 9-13.

⁴ Hillgarth, *Spanish Kingdoms I*, 363-5.

⁵ The *Uniòns* against Pere were formed in Aragon and Valencia.

surpassed his rivals, it was not without significant cost to his absolute authority. His tenuous influence over Aragon was now balanced with the rights of the nobles.⁶

The situation in Sardinia very much resembled the conflict in Majorca. The Sards wearied of their Catalan overlordship and lack of independence. In 1353 Pere deliberately provoked the Sards into rebellion, however, the Sards found allies in Genoa and Pisa against the Catalans. As the rebellion ebbed and flowed, Pere found himself with no allies. He conceded autonomy to the Sards; however, the Catalan officials prevented the Sards from practicing this autonomy. War broke out again in 1358.⁷

In 1348, despite the fact that his beloved third wife Elionor, who was a Sicilian herself, requested that he intervene in the revolt between Catalan and Latin factions in Sicily, he did not do so. His only intervention was to give his daughter, Constança, in marriage to Frederic IV of Sicily. He still gained little ground in Sicily, as Frederic submitted himself by treaty to Neapolitan authority in 1372. It was only the death of Frederic and the union of Frederic's daughter María to one of Pere's grandsons that enabled Sicily to be brought back into the Catalan fold.⁸

The Chronicle of Pere III

The Chronicle of Pere III of Catalonia covers the years 1319-1369, fifty years of a nearly seventy year life. It exists in two redactions, with the second a revision of the first.⁹ Pere wrote this chronicle in collaboration with his chancery office. Bernat Descoll was the main contributor from the chancery, and he consulted with the king as he wrote

⁶Ibid., 370-1.

⁷Ibid., 366-8.

⁸J. N. Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms: 1250-1516*. Vol. II, 1410-1516 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 220-1.

⁹Hillgarth, "Introduction", 53.

it.¹⁰ The collaboration between Pere and Descoll brings to mind the image of a ghostwriter pulling together the intended style and message of the named author.

Pere's chronicle is considered historically within a series of four chronicles regarding the count-kings of Aragon. His chronicle differs from the previous three chronicles in that providentialism is more pronounced, although the style itself is less fantastical, and it attempts to be more unbiased.¹¹ As Hillgarth has argued, however, Pere sometimes white-washed his own history either in an effort at propaganda or in a moment of self-delusion.¹²

What is especially interesting, however, about Pere III's chronicle are the allusions contained in his introduction. Pere aligns himself with King David and compares his reign with that of the Biblical king of Israel for several obvious reasons. David is a recognizable figure, especially within a predominantly Christian kingdom. The reference to King David would have generated specific ideas, rife with cultural baggage, in the minds of the chronicler's intended audience.

So the question is, what message was Pere III attempting to send to his audience, and was there a desire for Pere to validate his reign by appealing to the authority that a respected biblical figure may have had in the minds of his subjects? There are several perspectives with which to view this. Religion and government in medieval Europe worked hand in hand. There was no separation of church and state, and often the church played an active role in legitimizing state authority. If Pere's reign could be analogized to the reign of a righteous character within holy writ, it could have increased the legacy of his reign and kingly line.

¹⁰Ibid., 58-60.

¹¹Ibid., 84-9.

¹²Hillgarth, *Spanish Kingdoms I*, 368.

Further complicating matters was the status of the hierarchy of the Catholic church in Europe in the era when Pere reigned. Hillgarth describes the papacy as “simply another foreign power, which had to be conciliated whenever possible.” He also makes note of the struggle in which Pere found himself, at one time fearing excommunication and at another time rejecting the papacy’s claimed intermediary status between the Crown of Aragon and God.¹³ In comparing himself to a well-respected biblical figure, Pere encourages more authority in himself than that of the pope.

Further, David would have appealed to or at the very least would have been familiar to his readers. Unlike in most of the northern European countries, Jews, Muslims, and Christians resided in moderate harmony in the Iberian Peninsula. If Pere were trying to reach members of the three Abrahamic religions in his kingdom, David, as a subject of Hebrew scripture, would have been an accessible figure to all the “peoples of the book.” However, if that were a consideration, it could not have been the only one. There are many figures in the Hebrew scriptures from which he could have made his selection. David’s reign allowed Pere to identify with it, but to also hold it up as a model of regnal leadership. In the scriptures, David is exalted as a “man after God’s own heart,” and despite some grave shortcomings, he is one of the few kings to make it through his reign with God’s presence still with him. Further, Aragonese historians noted that Pere was constantly at war¹⁴, which would certainly align Pere with a man of war like David rather than his son Solomon who ruled in more peaceful times.

I will argue that Pere deliberately and calculatingly selected King David as his regal alter-ego for at least three of the reasons mentioned above. First, there were

¹³ Hillgarth, “Introduction,” 77.

¹⁴Ibid., 2.

similarities in the recorded reign of King David with Pere's self-recorded reign. Whether the similarities were embellished for the sake of comparison is yet to be seen. Second, David, despite his faults, has long been considered a good king upon whom the presence of God rested. A comparison to this type of man would have been beneficial to Pere's legacy. Third, since David was a well-respected Biblical figure, any similarities between him and Pere would provide a currency with Pere's intended audience.

In his introduction to Mary Hillgarth's translation of Pere's chronicle, J. N. Hillgarth expounds on the workings of Christianity in Pere's reign, but only briefly addresses the literary references to David in Pere's prologue. He does, however, provide a line of questioning to pursue. By Hillgarth's indication, Pere is replacing Christ, the spiritual successor of David, with himself.¹⁵ Based on Hillgarth's research, the reference to King David does appear to be in keeping with other elements of Pere's life and chronicling efforts.

The Scholarship on Medieval Chronicles

The foundation for much of the scholarship relevant to this study rests in the early to middle parts of the twentieth century when post-modernism and semiology flooded the scene. Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes influenced the way some of these scholars viewed the usage of exempla in particular instances of chronicles. Pere took David's image as a symbol of righteous kingship and used it as a piece of exemplum to justify his own reign. He constructed his arguments to draw a comparison between himself and David in order to effectively use the authority inherent in the David archetype. Since the primary focus of this study will be to analyze the ways in which Pere utilizes both

¹⁵ Hillgarth, *Chronicle*, 79.

Davidic and Biblical exempla, it is important to understand how these and other symbols were perceived.

Gerhart Ladner has attempted to bridge the gap between medieval and modern understanding of symbol usage. He notes that the medieval understanding was that symbol was closely and concretely related to its referent. In other words, there is no evidence that a theory of “reader response” held any widespread sway.¹⁶ Ladner summarizes that the modern era is a world of irreducible opposites, while the medieval world is unified and gradualistic, exemplarist and hierarchical.¹⁷

As Ladner and others have stated, one cannot view the use of symbolism, or allusions for that matter, without first examining the philosophical baggage that comes with it. Specifically, one must check any notion that wide-ranging interpretations of texts might be seen as equally legitimate. Of course, that does not mean that certain allusions would not have meant different things to different people, but the validity given to each interpretation would be unequal. To understand Pere’s use of this symbol of David there must be an idea of how many meanings the symbol could have.

Gabrielle Spiegel goes into more detail about the specific function of Biblical allegory in medieval chronicles, noting that moral edification was as important as and sometimes more important than a factual chronology.¹⁸ Further, she writes that when “chroniclers drew analogies between their rulers and David, Alexander, Constantine, or Charlemagne, they were not merely ascribing a particular list of attributes to their subject.

¹⁶Gerhart B. Ladner, “Medieval and Modern Understanding of Symbolism,” *Speculum*, Vol. 54, No. 2 (Apr. 1979): 227-8. To be fair, there are occasions of a type of reader response found in the writings of pre-moderns. Augustine held to a similar form that, although God was credited for the entirety of meaning in the text, allowed for readers to find meaning that Augustine had not intended in his writing. (See *Confessions*)

¹⁷Ibid., 230.

¹⁸Gabrielle M. Spiegel, “Political Utility in Medieval Historiography: A Sketch. *History and Theory*. Vol. 14, No. 3 (Oct., 1975): 319.

They were affirming a positive, virtually causal, relationship between what David or Constantine had done, and the deeds of the "new David."¹⁹ In other words, the idea of David or Alexander or Constantine was a sort of philosophical currency that could be used to buy favor or respect from the readers of the chronicle. Finally, Spiegel encourages a read of chronicles that includes more than just an eye for facts, but also flavor of medieval political ideals. The biblical imagery is a clue to how these societies functioned in the political realm.²⁰

Suzanne Cawsey has written several works addressing the use of themes to convey specific royal messages in the medieval crown of Aragon. In these works, she explains that Pere III would have been very familiar with past chronicles and biblical themes based on both his upbringing and his personal interests. She describes Pere participating in a medieval "inter-library loan" system, requesting chronicles from various libraries throughout Europe.²¹ In *Kingship and Propaganda*, Cawsey stresses the role that Christianity played in the relationship between an Iberian king and his subjects. The king was a feudal ruler and had a political contract with his subjects, but he was also a spiritual leader. Cawsey states that since kings made speeches in these roles, it is important to view what kings wrote or said with these roles in mind.²² She also notes that there was a history of religious interest, and that sermons were frequently used in speeches by members of the house of Aragon.²³ With a great tradition of biblical scholarship and a pattern of usage by other kings, it comes as no surprise that Pere would

¹⁹Ibid., 322.

²⁰Ibid., 325.

²¹Suzanne Cawsey, *Kingship and Propaganda: Royal Eloquence and the Crown of Aragon c.1200-1450* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 33.

²²Ibid., 1.

²³Ibid., 31.

have utilized similar themes in his own writings. Here is at least the how, if not the why, of Pere's allusions to King David in his chronicle.

Jaime Aurell provides a discursive take on the subject, and goes so far as to say that the counts of Barcelona "realized that writing historical texts was one of the most effective ways of legitimizing their aggressive policy of expansion." Hence, many Aragonese chronicles are now extant, including the *Quatre Grans Cròniques*.²⁴ For Aurell, the chronicles were not merely a record of history nor an attempt at a heroic legacy. Rather, they were part of a deployment of power in order to create and legitimize political authority. Further, Aurell asserts that the embodiment of these texts in the form of a chronicle increased their authority.²⁵ The form of the chronicle, much like the form of a monograph with copious citations, imbues a certain respect for its veracity.

Similar themes have also been studied within the chronicles of Alfonso X of Castile. During Alfonso's reign, the national history was written not simply for posterity, but also for the masses in their own vernacular tongue. Roberto Gonzáles-Casanovas, in *Imperial Histories*, expounds primarily on Alfonso X, but also on Jaume I of Aragon, Díaz del Castillo, and Las Casas. *Imperial Histories* also represents a discursive take on the subject of historical writing as an action.²⁶ Like Aurell, Gonzáles-Casanovas speaks of the usage of chronicles not as mere propaganda, but as deployments of power. While there are several works that have addressed the role and creation of medieval Iberian chronicles, Gonzáles-Casanovas's work seems to reflect more closely what will be

²⁴Jaime Aurell, "From Genealogies to Chronicles: The Power of the Form in Medieval Catalan Historiography," *Viator*. Vol. 36, 2005: 237. The *Quatre Grans Croniques* include the *Chronicle of Jaume I*, the *Chronicle of Bernat Desclot*, the *Chronicle of Ramon Muntaner*, and the *Chronicle of Pere the Ceremonious*. These four chronicles were written by the counts of Barcelona and kings of Aragon between 1244 and 1383.

²⁵Ibid., 264.

²⁶Roberto J. González-Casanova, *Imperial Histories from Alfonso X to Inca Garcilaso: Revisionist Myths of Reconquest and Conquest*, (Potomac, Maryland: Scripta Humanista, 1997).

discussed in this paper. Where he takes a more general view of imperial historiography using Alfonso X as his own exemplum, however, I shall take a more detailed and systematic view of how Pere's reign tied in with the "exemplarity" of his chronicle.

Finally, M. Cecilia Gaposchkin discusses the idea of sacral kingship in *The Making of St. Louis*.²⁷ While the main thrust of her book involves the canonization of Louis IX by the Catholic Church,²⁸ it also includes a review of biblical symbolism in relation to the writings about Louis. Gaposchkin notes the comparisons of Louis IX with both David and Solomon, whereas Pere focuses on David. Her analysis includes not only direct references to those kings, but also references to the ideals they represent. For example, David is characterized by his humility and servant hood. Gaposchkin finds examples of these qualities within the writings of and about Louis, and then explicitly ties them back to David.²⁹

The Methodology

To explore Pere's proclaimed likeness to David, I will review historical interpretations of King David and Pere's use of biblical allusions throughout the main text of the chronicle to place his usage of biblical exemplum in the prologue in a particular context. That context will provide the framework for determining what Pere hoped to accomplish by comparing his reign to that of King David. My intent is to use the chronicle to view what Pere purports to have happened during his reign, as well as the way that Pere structures his arguments and the occurrences. It is not within my current scope to include corollary accounts that would either refute or corroborate Pere's claims,

²⁷ Gaposchkin, M. Cecilia. *The Making of Saint Louis: Kingship, Sanctity, and Crusade in the Later Middle Ages*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008.

²⁸ Louis IX was canonized in 1297, 22 years before Pere was born. *Ibid.*, 49.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 100-124.

but I do acknowledge that the Chronicle of Pere III was written for Pere's purposes, and thus is subject to his own interpretations and selective inclusion of historical fact.

In chapter one I will address both ancient and medieval interpretations of King David. The summary will also include the ways in which other ancient and medieval writers utilized the ideals of David to further their own agendas. In chapter two I will analyze the prologue. I will focus on part four where Pere presents his Davidic analogies, but I will also include references to later parts of the Chronicle as well as to the sources of the Biblical exemplum Pere uses. Finally, in chapter three I will analyze spiritual and religious statements in the main text of the Chronicle to see how well they tie in to the outline of David that Pere meticulously lays out in part four of the prologue.

I have used the Mary Hillgarth English translation of *The Chronicle of Pere III*, and all quotations will be taken from this translation. All page numbers refer back to this English translation. The chapter divisions are original to the Chronicle. For all references, the chapter and section titles will be listed in the format of "chapter.section." For example, chapter 1, section 12 would be 1.12. This edition also includes a thorough introductory section by J. N. Hillgarth which contains a review of the chronicle itself as well as Pere's reign.

Chapter 1: Ancient and Medieval Interpretations of David

In *The Chronicle of Pere III*, King David is first introduced in part four of the prologue, and Pere identifies himself more with the person of David rather than the reign of David. As such, in this chapter I will address Kantorowicz's discussion of the "two bodies" of kings: the body natural and the body politic. In this case the reign of the David would be the body politic, and the person of David would be the body natural. However, Pere's knowledge of David's person or, body natural, is informed by previous authors' description of his legacy, or body politic. Because of this, I will also address the view of David in both Christian scriptures and political writings in order to describe what definitions of David's body politic existed before the writing of Pere's chronicle.

Kantorowicz is important to this discussion because of his descriptions of the evolution of ideas of medieval kingship and how they relate to a Christocentric idea of kingship. While this study will primarily be focused on David as David, not as precursor to Christ, Hillgarth notes a connection between Pere's purported equivalence to David and David's symbolic relation to Christ. Even though a Christocentric kingship is not the primary focus of this study, it is important to acknowledge that the idea of kings as analogous to Christ was present and prevalent. In order to present a firm foundation for this discussion, I will first summarize Kantorowicz's argument about the king's two bodies and then relate that idea to the idea of a Christ-like king.

The two bodies of the king are the body natural and the body politic. The body natural was simply the king's physical body and the body politic was his manifestation as king, an impersonal rendering of the person who reigned. In other words, the body politic represented the office of the king. God worked through the body politic, and in turn the body politic worked through the body natural. The body politic was immortal; when the

bodies politic and natural separated at death, the body politic lived on as an idea or a legacy.³⁰

Kantorowicz credits the Norman Anonymous, ca. 1100, a writer whose work in reference to King David will be discussed later in the chapter, as being “one of the staunchest defenders of the spiritual essence of a Christ-like kingship.”³¹ Though a specific clerical character was not attributed to kings, the king was still viewed by his subjects as being above the laity and possessing a special spiritual essence. He was not an “ordinary person,” but was gifted with a certain spiritual unction at his consecration. It is within this milieu that the Norman Anonymous wrote his treatise. Kantorowicz writes that although the idea of a *persona mixta* (the term the Norman Anonymous uses) was not the same as the body natural and body politic, the Norman Anonymous leads in the direction of uniting the two. He argues that the idea of the body politic, an immortal and impersonal entity, became entwined with the notion of the king’s spiritual nature or his extraordinariness.³²

Kantorowicz also outlines a few shifts from the Christocentric view of kingship. Following after this view were kingships centered on the law, polity, and men. The Christocentric view, however, is especially important when talking about King David. As will be discussed more fully, David is frequently referred to in the Christian scriptures as a forerunner to Jesus Christ, which is in accordance with the Christocentric view of kingship. Hillgarth even writes that Pere, rather than being specifically compared to

³⁰ Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 11-13.

³¹Ibid., 45.

³²Ibid., 44-5.

David, is actually stepping in as the spiritual successor to David. In other words, Pere is substituting for Christ.

The main comparison is to David whose “wars and tribulations” here “prefigure” not Christ (as in traditional exegesis) but Pere. God has delivered Pere as he delivered David: as God freed Lot from the five kings of Genesis, so Pere “another Lot,” has been freed from the kings of Castile, Portugal, Navarre, England and Granada.³³

Other than the connection to Christ, David is an obvious choice for Pere’s emulation in the prologue because he is universally recognized as a “good king.” However, there is also a progression of sorts in how David is recognized by others. He is never characterized as a “bad king,” but some of the accounts of his reign are more detailed than others. The extent of David’s one dimensional archetypal nature is dependent upon the context of the writings, whether written shortly after David’s reign, after the Hebrew diaspora, or during the medieval period. The representations evolve such that David is not presented as solely a historical figure, but also as figure to which later kings will be compared. David’s characteristics were compared with the characteristics of other kings, including Pere. It is for this reason that it is important to understand what the name “David” meant in the time of Pere in consideration of Christian scripture and for medieval philosophers.

In the Old Testament, David is held up as not only a great and powerful king but also as a good and righteous king. Just as Jeroboam³⁴ is the epitome of an evil ruler in the

³³Hillgarth, “Introduction,” p. 79.

³⁴ Jeroboam had caused all of Israel to sin by leading them into an alternate style of worship from what God had prescribed. After the nation was divided into the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, Jeroboam’s institution of an alternate worship site at Bethel allowed his subjects to participate in a form of worship without having to visit Jerusalem and interact with the kingdom of Judah. The actual practice of religion involved sacrificing to golden calves and nominating priests from within the general population, not from the Levites as was done before. See 1 Kings 12:25-33 and 13:33-34. Walter Dietrich, a professor of the Old Testament at the University of Bern, touches on this “cult” in his commentary on 1 and 2 Kings in the Oxford Bible Commentary.

kingdom of Israel, David is the epitome of a righteous ruler. While in the divided kingdom bad kings in Israel are compared to, but are rarely equated to, Jeroboam in his sins, kings in Judah are compared to David. Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah, the other “good kings” of Judah, did what was right in the sight of the Lord as their ancestor David had done.³⁵ Amaziah did what was right, but not quite as David had done.³⁶ Solomon, Abijam, and Ahaz did not do what was right as David had done.³⁷ Similarly within Pere’s chronicle, Pedro I of Castile stands in opposition to Pere’s “good king” status. Like these “bad kings,” Pere classifies Pedro as an unrighteous ruler in the sixth chapter of his chronicle.

For a medieval account of the biblical “good” king, one can look to Jacob of Lausanne, a Dominican from Paris. Jacob, who was a contemporary of Pere, wrote a sermon extolling the virtues of Louis IX of France. In particular, he noted the importance of being a good king and its religious implications:

Moreover, the head is God’s choice, and a bad ruler signifies God’s hostility toward the community. But a good ruler is the sign that God loves the community, and a good ruler is the minister and friend of God, for which the community must give thanks to God. Such was Louis, a “friend of God.”³⁸

It is apparent that rulers were chosen by God, and that a good ruler was the mark of God’s favor upon the people.

In all cases, whether the kings were good, bad, or mediocre, David is the standard bearer. He is God’s choice for the entirety of Israel, and, after the kingdom was divided, 1 Kings 12:19 (ESV) reports: “So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.” There are also many examples where God withholds his judgment for the sake

³⁵ 1 Kings 15:11; 2 Kings 18:3; 22:2.

³⁶ 2 Kings 14:3.

³⁷ 1 Kings 11:4, 6; 15:3; 2 Kings 16:2.

³⁸ Lausanne, Jacob, quoted in *The Making of Saint Louis*, 121.

of his “servant David.”³⁹ In other cases, God performs things specifically for the sake of David. Jeremiah 23:5 records that he will “raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.” David is also mentioned in the same breath as a righteous one who will be wise and just. Similarly, in Isaiah 11:1 David is “the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.”

Indeed, the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea throw around the name of David as an archetype for the ultimate in righteous kingship, as shorthand for a righteous Israel. For example, in Jeremiah 30:9 Israel “shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.” Ezekiel 37:24 reads, “My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd.” Verse 25 of the same chapter reports that “David my servant shall be their prince forever.” Finally, Hosea 3:5 reports that “the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days.” Less directly, there also have many references to the throne of David, such as Jeremiah’s statements about the one who would sit on his throne.⁴⁰ All of these post-exilic prophets wrote long after David had died, and long after there was a kingdom to speak of. So there is no mistaking these allusions as being to the physical person of David. In fact, these references seem to exemplify Kantorowicz’s idea of the body politic. Just as the body politic could live on after a king’s death in an idealized, impersonal form, David’s legacy had long outlasted his life. Even writers existing thousands of years later in different

³⁹ For example, see I Kings 11:13, 34, 36; 15:4; 2 Kings 8:19; 19:34.

⁴⁰ See Jeremiah 22:2, 4 and 29:36.

geographical regions, like Pere, would look to him as an example to follow or to mine for credit with the reader.

In the Bible, the majority of the historical information on David's reign is found in 1 and 2 Samuel. These books include both positive and negative aspects of his reign. A handful of positive aspects, such as David's being a servant and a man after God's own heart, have already been mentioned above. The negative incidents include David's adultery with Bathsheba and the subsequent lies and attempts to cover up the pregnancy. 2 Samuel 11 records David's failed attempts to have Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, come home from war to bed his wife. All of this culminates in David's complicity in the death of Uriah. David had ordered Uriah to the front battle lines, where his eventual death was an almost certain probability.

The books of the Chronicles in the Bible provide many examples of the ways in which appeals to David were used to motivate the Israelites. Both the books of Samuel and Chronicles follow a similar chronology and contain very similar information. However, the different details which are either rejected or emphasized in each of the books reveal their individual purposes. Where the books of 1 and 2 Samuel tend to recount occurrences without much commentary, the books of Chronicles emphasizes a more spiritual agenda. This agenda is directed toward unifying a reduced Israelite population who are forlornly returning to their native land by thematically focusing on the strength and righteousness of David.⁴¹

⁴¹ For a more detailed discussion, see H. P. Mathys, "1 and 2 Chronicles." trans. Benjamin Liebelt in *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, 267-8 and R. J. Coggins, *The First and Second Books of the Chronicles*, The Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 4-7.

A prime example of the differences is found in the books' treatment of David's anointing and early reign. 2 Samuel 5 and 1 Chronicles 11 record David's anointing, and some parts of the accounts are virtually identical. It is clear that the writer of 1 Chronicles used 2 Samuel as a reference when penning his account of the events. For example, 2 Samuel 5:1-5 reads,

Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Behold, we are your bone and flesh. In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the LORD said to you, 'You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel.'" So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.

In comparison, 1 Chronicles 11:1-3 reads,

Then all Israel gathered together to David at Hebron and said, "Behold, we are your bone and flesh. In times past, even when Saul was king, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the LORD your God said to you, 'You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over my people Israel.'" So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD. And they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD by Samuel.

Both accounts go on to address David's defeat of the Jebusites and building of Jerusalem. However, the 1 Chronicles 11 account does not include the details of the Jebusites mocking David by saying that the blind and lame of the city would keep him out, Hiram of Tyre's involvement in building David's house, and David's selection of additional concubines and wives from Jerusalem.⁴²

The order of the two accounts diverges after this, with 1 Chronicles going straight into a listing of David's mighty men and 2 Samuel detailing David's defeat of the

⁴² 1 Chronicles mentions Hiram and David's new wives and concubines in chapter 14.

Philistines.⁴³ There is a similar list of mighty men near the end of 2 Samuel in chapter 23. 2 Samuel treats the list of David's mighty men as almost an afterthought, a summary following the death of David.

Nowhere in Chronicles is there a mention of David's adultery with Bathsheba. This event is a defining moment for David, and a prominent example of his indiscretions. The only action included in 1 Chronicles that might reflect poorly on David is found in chapter 21. David disobeyed God and ignored the advice of Joab, the commander of his army, in counting the people of Israel.⁴⁴ For this deed, David was given the choice of three different penalties: three years of famine, three months of siege upon him by his enemies, or three days of pestilence. David, choosing to fall into the hand of the Lord rather than men, selected option number three. 2 Samuel does not mention this event until chapter 24, after recording David's last words and recounting the list of his mighty men.

1 and 2 Samuel records David as a historical figure. 1 Chronicles records David as both a historical figure and a symbol, similar to that of Kantorowicz's body politic, of all that should be right in Israel. The author of 1 Chronicles whittles down the details of David's reign in order to emphasize his purpose of presenting a history to rally around, and a people with which to identify. David serves as a unifying figure for exiles who have found their way home and must start over again. Additional details must have been deemed superfluous to that purpose. Both depictions of David in Samuel and Chronicles

⁴³ 1 Chronicles mentions the Philistines in chapter 14.

⁴⁴ Matthew Henry (1662-1714) argues that David's fault in numbering the nation was that the census indicated an overabundance of pride in the number of his people. Taking that analogy further, I would argue that it demonstrated a lack of faith in God's provision, and that he was trying to determine the loyalty of his fighting men. It should also be noted that according to Exodus 30:11-16, a tax of the people being numbered was required when there was a census. This tax was to go toward the tent of meeting. Neither 2 Samuel nor 1 Chronicles make note of a tax being collected. Regardless, Joab knew that the Lord would be displeased with David's action, and he informed David thus. Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible Volume II (Joshua to Esther)*. 1 Chronicles 21, accessed March 23, 2011, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/henry/mhc2.iCh.xxii.html>.

would have been available to Pere. While some of the examples he uses must have been taken from 1 and 2 Samuel, Pere treats David more like the writer of 1 Chronicles does. Pere's references to David are all positive and serve to point his subjects to a rich legacy with which they all could identify.

While the Old Testament references a messianic figure coming from the lineage of David, the New Testament ties that reference specifically to Jesus Christ, and places a great emphasis on David being both an ancestor of Christ and a type of Christ.⁴⁵ John 7:42 reports, "Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" Another example from Mark 10:47 reads, "And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' In Romans 1:3 Paul writes that Christ was "descended from David according to the flesh." In the opening to Matthew's genealogy of Christ, David is even listed before Abraham.⁴⁶

The book of Revelation provides even more prophetic allusions to Christ and the reign of David. In Revelation 5, we hear of the only one who is worthy to look upon the scroll found in the hand of one seated on the throne. Verse 5 identifies him with David, and verse 9 identifies him with Jesus Christ.

And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals...And they sang a new song, saying, 'Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.'"

⁴⁵ Richard Longenecker in *The Christology of Early Jewish Christians* provides a good summary of how Jesus Christ was viewed in relation to David in the early stages of Christianity.

⁴⁶ Matthew 1:1.

Revelation 22:16 is even more direct with the comparison. It reads, "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

As I wrote earlier, the scope of this study will not include the image of David as precursor to Christ and Pere as analogous to Christ. However, the comparisons of David to Christ would increase the prestige Pere gained by then comparing himself to David. David is like Kantorowicz's medieval king. He possesses a certain unction and is somewhere between clergy and laity. Pere's predominantly Christian audience would have been familiar with this idea of David, and they would have respected a Davidic and Christ-like equivalence.

Besides biblical references, there was an existing corpus of literature in the ancient and medieval periods that referenced biblical kings. David, among a few other kings, was often brought up as an example in writings about the role of a king in a Christian kingdom. In review of these writings, it is evident that Pere was certainly not the first to use King David's life to further his own arguments. When David's character is mentioned by ancient and medieval authors, it is usually in conjunction with a political or religious point that most of the writers are attempting to convey.

In most instances, the discussion of David's character focused on his humility and servant's heart. There was less of a focus on his ruling ability and more of a focus on his submission to God and priestly authority. As O'Donovan summarizes Gregory I, David's submission does not seem powerless and weak, but righteous. He is merely abiding by what his Lord ordains.⁴⁷

⁴⁷O'Donovan, Oliver and Joan Lockwood O'Donovan. *From Irenaeus to Grotius: A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought 100-1625*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1999, 173.

Gregory I the Great's, ca. 540-604, ideas about kingship were perpetuated by Isidore, ca. 560-636, in his *Sentences*.⁴⁸ Isidore writes that David evidenced humility, and was not prideful despite his achievements and kingly stature. According to Isidore, a good king ought to be humble and not subject to his own vanity.

He who uses royal power rightly should have a kind of distinction in which the eminence of his position is matched by his humility of mind. David's humility will serve him as an example: not puffed up because of his achievements but abasing himself humbly, he said: "My gait shall be lowly, and my appearance even lowlier before God who chose me."⁴⁹

Several hundred years later, Sedulius Scottus, fl. 840-860, echoes the same sentiment. The most righteous rulers consider themselves to be humble servants of God first, and kings second.

Accordingly, the most upright and glorious princes rejoice more that they are appointed to be ministers and servants of the Most High than lords or kings of men. For this reason blessed David, an illustrious king and prophet, often called himself the servant of the Lord.⁵⁰

Later, even Gregory VII, ca. 1030-1085, notes that David was at one time "good and humble" before he was made worse by his role as a king.⁵¹

While not denying David's humility, the Norman Anonymous, ca. 1100, approaches David's role from a different perspective. This perspective elevates him as a representative of a greater idea instead of focusing on his personal qualities.

Saul and David are said to have been chosen by God and anointed over God's possession, Israel; and they sat in the throne of the kingdom in Jerusalem. But the throne on which Christ will sit for eternity is higher than his, as both prophetic and angelic words declare. For Isaiah says [9:7]: "Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, above the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore." And the angel said to Mary [Luke 1:32]:

⁴⁸O'Donovan, 172.

⁴⁹ Isidore (560-636 AD), *Sentences*, Book 3, 49 *The Justice of Princes*. Quoted in O'Donovan, 207.

⁵⁰Sedulius Scottus (fl. 840-860 AD), *On Christian Rulers*. Quoted in O'Donovan, 222.

⁵¹Gregory VII (ca. 1030-1085 AD), Letter 8.21. Quoted in O'Donovan, 248.

“The Lord will give to him the throne of his father David...,” etc. Not, “he will give him the throne of his father Aaron,” nor “he will sit above the throne of Aaron and over his kingdom to establish it.” He says, the Lord will give him the throne of David and he will sit over the throne and kingdom of David. These words prove that there is one throne and one seat and one kingdom, which belongs to Christ and David. Christ and David are one in spirit, and have one power, one glory and dignity, are over all, greater than all, and holier than all. We conclude that the Lord gave him authority and rule even over the Lord’s own priests.⁵²

The element of his submissive humility is not dismissed; rather the God to whom he is submissive is emphasized. By his submission, however, David has even more power than other kings. His authority comes not from lineage, but from God.

It should be noted that the Norman Anonymous stands in stark contrast to the writings of Gregory VII. As a pope, it is no surprise that Gregory VII would emphasize the primacy of the papacy over mere earthly kings. However his statement in the earlier reference that David became worse after his stint as king seems excessive. The fact that Saul and David were even compared in this vein at all is strange, given that David was considered in Scripture and by other theologians as not only a good king, but *the* good king. Saul was never called a man after God’s own heart, nor was he known for his humility. Gregory VII conflates the two rulers in an attempt to invalidate the role of kingship entirely. For, while the office of the pope is holy, the office of the king is inherently corrupting. The pope holds the keys that were given to Peter for the church.

The Norman Anonymous uses Gregory’s key terminology, but does not define it in the same way. “There is only one key which is at the same time the key of the kingdom of heaven and the key of David, i.e., the king of heaven.”⁵³ David, the precursor to Christ, held the key. By virtue of the fact that David was not a priest, the writer evidences that

⁵² Norman Anonymous. Quoted in O’Donovan, 254-5.

⁵³ Ibid., 258.

the keys are actually held by the office of king. In these two representations from Gregory VII and the Norman Anonymous, it is apparent that one's view of the role and nature of kings in general could and does influence the view of a specific king. Even David, the man after God's own heart, is not immune to criticism by a pope because of the fact that he was placed in the role of king.

John of Salisbury (ca. 1115-1180), however, stands David in contrast to the Judean cohort of kings. In his discussion of tyrannies in *Policraticus*, he finds that the holiness of David, Hezekiah, and Josiah distinguishes them from the reigns of the other kings of Judah, of which there were twenty.⁵⁴

There is a famous history in the Books of Kings and Chronicles in which, on the authority of Jerome, it is taught that Israel had laboured under tyrants from the beginning and it is demonstrated that all the kings of Judah are to be considered damned except for David, Josiah and Hezekiah. Yet I would readily believe that Solomon and perhaps some others in Judah would have flourished once the Lord summoned them back. And I will be easily persuaded that tyrants instead of princes would have been deserved by a people of stiff neck and wild heart and a people who always resisted the Holy Spirit and who had provoked not only Moses, the servant of the law, but God Himself, the Lord of the law, to anger by their gentile abominations.⁵⁵

The focus here is less on the king himself than on his subjects. Judah did not have an inalienable right to a "good" king, and, as Salisbury goes on to note, her penitence was what freed her from the yokes of the tyrants. Even the tyrants, or "bad" kings, sometimes had a purpose. That predominant purpose was not solely their ambitions as kings, although their ambition may have been used as a tool. The purpose was to chastise a people that had gone astray.

⁵⁴ The kingdom was divided into Judah and Israel after the reign of Solomon. If Saul, David, and Solomon are included, the count would be twenty-three.

⁵⁵ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* 8.20 [Lawful Tyrannicide], Quoted in O'Donovan, 295.

Salisbury's position is more similar to that of the Norman Anonymous. Salisbury does not demonize kingship in itself, and he specifically cautions against insubordination in his writings about how one deals with a tyrant. As an example Salisbury makes mention of a sacred fealty, the violation of which led Zedekiah to be taken away in captivity. Further, calling upon one of three kings he earlier established as good, he writes the following of David's relationship with King Saul:

Not that I do not believe that tyrants are to be removed from the community, but they are to be removed without loss to religion and honour. For even David, the best of the kings about whom I have read and one who (except for his plot against Uriah the Hittite) advanced blamelessly in all his affairs, endured the most grievous of tyrants. Although he enjoyed frequent opportunities to destroy the tyrant, David preferred to spare him, trusting in the compassion of God who could free him without sin.⁵⁶

David is once again revered for his submission, but this time it serves to bolster Salisbury's case that the best way to remove a tyrant is to wait for God to do it himself.

There are also allusions to Biblical kings in Iberian chronicles preceding Pere. Sancho IV (1257-1295) of Castile frequently references Solomon as a wise ruler. In his book *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain*, modern scholar Peter Linehan makes the connection that both Sancho's and Solomon's fathers had died in the thirty-third year of their reign. Linehan also analogizes that if Sancho were Solomon, then Sancho's father Alfonso X was David.⁵⁷

The major references to David in general political thought end with Salisbury in the twelfth century and do not pick up again until the fifteenth century with Desiderius Erasmus. This of course does not mean that authors between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries failed to use David in their political arguments. Clearly, Pere did just that in the

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Peter Linehan. *History and the Historians of Medieval Spain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 486.

fourteenth century. It does indicate, however, there are not any major philosophical works extant that do so. I do not know the reason for this. Perhaps the regnal philosophy of David merely remained stable with no distinct shifts until the time of Erasmus. It is interesting that Erasmus's mention of David in *The Complaint of Peace* goes against previous arguments about David being a precursor to Christ. Erasmus writes that David was not worthy to prefigure Christ since he was a man of war. Solomon, however, was a man of peace and was the one actually chosen to prefigure Christ. Erasmus goes out of his way to state that a king involved in wars and bloodshed is not Christ-like, and these statements, though written after Pere's reign do contradict the image Pere presents of himself in relation to righteous kingship.⁵⁸ If Pere is not alone in his assumption of a warrior King David, then it is possible that Erasmus's writings are a reaction to the idea of a king who warred instead of seeking peace.

In conclusion, there are many examples of King David being used to illustrate the writer's purpose for both theological and political gains. Even as soon as a few hundred years after David's reign, the writer of I and II Chronicles capitalizes upon David as a powerful symbol of unification. There are many references to David in both the Old and New Testaments, even allusions from Jesus Christ himself. These references detail David's righteous heart, servant-hood, and the endurance of his throne. In the early to late Middle Ages, Gregory I, Isidore of Seville, Sedulius Scottus, Gregory VII, the Norman Anonymous, and John of Salisbury all utilized the idea of David in their arguments.

In Christendom, there is no higher king's reign to which one could hope to attain. Christ might be the highest option, but since Christ was not the king over any physical

⁵⁸Erasmus, Quoted in O'Donovan, 574.

kingdom, David is the most tenable choice. Pere was following in the footsteps of many before him by choosing David in his chronicle. It is no great surprise that Pere would reference David. However, the example of Pere differs from the previous ones mentioned in that Pere seems to identify himself so closely with the person of David, rather than viewing David's reign as a model to emulate.

In the next chapter, I will review the prologue to Pere's chronicle, as well as analyze his references to David. I have detailed why Pere would choose to use David as his political capital, and the subsequent step will be to see how he uses this capital.

Chapter 2: The Use of David in the Prologue to the Chronicle of Pere III

Before delving into the analysis of Pere's chronicle, it is important to see what the text itself purports to do. It is clear that the text is a tool not meant simply to exist, but to exhort and enact. Thus, the chronicle is written in a style that is self-aware. While it is in a narrative format, there are embedded statements that explicitly direct the reader to Pere's purpose.⁵⁹ In its initial chapters, the chronicle is littered with phrases such as "returning to our theme" and "thus ends the deeds of the first chapter." Each time a phrase like that is used, it draws the reader out of the envelopment of the narrative and back to the purpose of Pere.

It is apparent that Pere's aspiration to David in the chronicle was deliberate and calculated for several reasons. First, Pere writes that the chronicle's features, even if they seem odd, are intentional. In the midst of summarizing his father and grandfather's reign, Pere notes that the repetition of events previously thoroughly detailed are "done deliberately, to link events together."⁶⁰ He reiterates events and reinterprets them from different vantage points for different purposes. Second, Pere presents a schematic for reading the chronicle, indicating that there is a specific message that he wants understood.

In the prologue, Pere explicitly states the form and function of his chronicle by way of a three-part lens through which to read the entire work. The expressed purpose of writing the chronicle is to glorify his Creator. The propositions build upon each other, and taken directly from the chronicle are as follows:

⁵⁹ These elements are discussed in the following pages.

⁶⁰ Chronicle, Part I, 1.41, p. 171.

Of itself the divine excellence makes and maintains all creation. It is therefore fitting that [all things] should be attributed and given to the high power. The royal power wills that God should be praised for the good He grants of His clemency.⁶¹

The first purpose Pere acknowledges is that God makes and maintains creation. The second is that all things should be attributed to God. The third is that he himself wills that God be praised for what He has done. Pere continues to elaborate on these points like a mini-sermon, drawing from various scriptures to support each statement. Pere's third proposition is more personal, drawing from the scriptures and making an application to both the history of his kingdom and his own reign. It is this third proposition on which I will linger, seeking to determine why he used certain biblical examples and whether the comparisons match the real events of his reign. Pere's references to both God and other religious matters are a more quantifiable way to judge the effectiveness of this third proposition.

David is the initial vehicle which Pere uses to draw his readers' attention to God's work in his reign. Pere compares himself and his kingdom to David, and the main theme of these comparisons is conflict and deliverance. In the prologue, Pere references both types of occurrences, conflict and deliverance, in David's reign, and the first allusion to David addresses the constant conflict in David's household. David was noted to have "shed much blood" and "waged great wars," and because of this he was not permitted by God to build a temple as he had wanted.⁶² Pere contends that since he also warred with many states throughout his reign, he is an apt comparison to David. He also writes that just as David encountered familial strife with his son Absalom, Aragon had wars with its own people.

⁶¹ Chronicle, Part I, Prologue.1, p. 125-6. As a reminder, all page numbers refer back to this English translation, and the chapter and section titles will be listed in the format of "chapter.section." (i.e. 1.12)

⁶² 1 Chronicles 22:7-8. Pere quotes 2 Kings 12, but that reference does not pan out.

If We look at the great deeds that have occurred in the kingdom of Aragon in Our time [it seems to Us We see] another David, to whom it was said in 2 Kings, XVII: “the sword shall not depart from thy house.” So, in the time of Our rule, the knife of an enemy, whether of a stranger, a vassal, or of Our counselors, has almost never departed from Our House. And truly, Our wars and tribulations were prefigured in the wars and troubles of David. As he did not only war with the kings, his neighbours, but with his own people, who rose against him with Absalom his son, so We have not only had wars with the kings who were our neighbours and had lands contiguous to that of Aragon but also with Our own people who chose captains of Our blood, Our brothers.⁶³

In Absalom’s case, he was angry with his half-brother Amnon for raping his sister, Tamar. Since David did not take action against Amnon, eventually Absalom took it upon himself to kill Amnon for his crime. Absalom then fled the area for three years.⁶⁴ After that time, David sent for Absalom but would not allow Absalom into his presence. For two years he remained in Jerusalem without ever having seen his father, the king. Absalom finally got his father’s attention by setting fire to the field of Joab, David’s army chief.⁶⁵ Absalom went on to sow discord among David’s subjects and led an insurrection against the king. The insurrection was squelched when Absalom met his death by catching his beautiful hair in a tree and hanging.⁶⁶

As Hillgarth notes, Pere’s reference to Absalom seems to coincide with Pere’s experience with the *Unions* in Aragon and Valencia. Although Pere addresses the conflict with the *Unions* in the main text of the chronicle, not the prologue, his discussion of these events is an expansion of the analogies mentioned in the prologue. This discussion provides key insight into the allusions Pere makes in the prologue. As Pere tells it in the

⁶³ Chronicle, Part I, Prologue.4, p. 128-9. 2 Samuel is the modern appellation of 2 Kings, and the statement is found in chapter 12, verse 10.

⁶⁴ 2 Samuel 13.

⁶⁵ 2 Samuel 14:21-33.

⁶⁶ 2 Samuel 15-18.

fourth chapter, this revolt of the *Unions* was led by his half-brothers Jacme and Ferrando.⁶⁷ Much like David's situation with Absalom, Pere's altercation with his brother Jacme was due to familial strife. However, Pere's problems parallel rather than directly imitate David's. Where David neglected to take action when one of his sons committed the act of rape against David's daughter, Pere had actively sought to make his daughter Constança his successor rather than Jacme.⁶⁸ Pere explained to Jacme that since he did not yet have a male heir, he wanted to clarify legally what would become of his seignory upon his death:⁶⁹

Because of this [reply] the prince left Us, aggrieved. He went to his lodging and plotted, speaking secretly to some person in the city of Valencia, persuading them separately [to his view]. And these men roused the whole population to indignation against us.⁷⁰

Pere goes on to ask Jacme to come before him. Unlike Absalom, who was unable to plead his case before his father and was essentially ignored, Jacme was given a full audience.

We realised the many intrigues the prince was behind. We summoned him to come before Us and asked him why he did these things, saying that in raising the question of Our daughter's right to succession, We intended to act justly and had found that it was clear in the law.⁷¹

So Pere and Jacme did meet to discuss the rules of succession and the legality of Pere's contingency plan. Pere asked Jacme point blank whether he, as the "most notable person in the kingdom after" Pere would agree to uphold Constança as Pere's heir. Jacme did agree, but Pere still did not trust him. Pere was concerned that if Jacme remained his

⁶⁷Chronicle, Part I., note 4, p. 129.

⁶⁸Hillgarth, *Spanish Kingdoms I*, 370-1. Bisson notes that the vote on the legality of this female heir was not unanimous. Thomas Bisson. *The Medieval Crown of Aragon: A Short History*. Oxford: Clarendon, 2000, 107.

⁶⁹ Chronicle, Part II, 4.5, pp. 393-4.

⁷⁰Ibid., 4.5, p. 394.

⁷¹Ibid., 4.6, p. 394.

procurator general, his official deputy within the Crown of Aragon, he would use his power to continue to plot against Pere. Jacme was summoned once more and told by Pere not to go into any “important place,” including Saragossa. According to Pere, Jacme agreed, but went to Saragossa anyway to “continue his evil design.”⁷²

Absalom had employed a similar strategy against his father David, by going to the gates of the capitol city to intercept those who had come to plead cases before the king. Absalom would tell the people that they had a good case, but unfortunately, the king had not designated a person to hear their case. Absalom would then lament the fact that he was not a judge in the land, for if he were, every person would receive justice.⁷³ In this manner, Absalom “stole the hearts of the men of Israel.”⁷⁴ As noted above, however, Absalom was not successful, and neither was Jacme.

And, as the goodness of the Creator delivered David out of the hand of Saul, king of the Philistines, and out of the hand of Absalom and the people who had risen against him, so the mercy of the Lord has delivered Us and Our kingdoms out of the hand of all Our enemies.⁷⁵

While Absalom died in dramatic fashion in the midst of an attack, according to the chronicle Jacme died near his brother Pere in Barcelona of illness.⁷⁶ In Pere’s rendition of events Jacme had continued to stir rebellion by writing letters to the nobles and knights in Saragossa. Pere claims that Jacme did fear his order to not enter major cities, and used letter writing as a means to avoid the consequences of that. Pere also attributes Jacme’s attempts at peace with those in Saragossa to his “design,” for Jacme’s

⁷²Ibid., 4.6, pp. 394-5.

⁷³ 2 Samuel 15:1-6.

⁷⁴ 2 Samuel 15:6.

⁷⁵Chronicle, Part I, Prologue.4, 129. Hillgarth notes, “Either Pere’s knowledge of the Bible or the copyists of the *Chronicle* have gone astray here, in compressing two of David’s enemies, Saul and the Philistines, into one.

⁷⁶Ibid., Part II, 4.34, p. 420. Pere is rumored to have been involved in Jacme’s death, and an alternate explanation of events will be offered in the next few pages.

plan would fail if there was continued dissension among them.⁷⁷ In Pere's view, Jacme sowed discord, while Pere attempted to mend fences. Pere did agree to hold a *Cortes*, and later met Jacme and Ferrando, among others, at Saragossa. Pere begrudgingly agreed to many of their demands, though he found many of them to be "unnecessary." He recounts that he was required to surrender hostages, which resulted in Pere having no one to serve as majordomo or in the office of knight.⁷⁸ To regain some of his pride, Pere stated the following in front of the *Cortes* about Jacme.

How is this, Prince! Is it not enough for you to be head of the Union without stirring up Our people and rising up with it against Us? We tell you that you do this wickedly and falsely, and as the *great* traitor you are. So We intend to fight you in single combat, in armour or without armour, or in a tunic with daggers. We will make you say with your own lips that you have acted as you have in an unruly way. [In order to combat you] We will renounce the royal dignity We have and the primogeniture and will absolve you from the fealty you owe Us.⁷⁹

Having shown his might, Pere indicates that he intended to quash this rebellion. Pere notes that Jacme, however, pointed out to the crowd that if Pere spoke like this to his own brother, what would he say to them? When Pere went to leave, he found that he was surrounded by daggers from his entourage. Pere does not clearly state what was done with the daggers, but it appears that the daggers were meant to threaten them as they were led out.⁸⁰

So, Pere was led out with daggers, and the *Uniòns* were holding some of his men hostage. Pere notes that Mossén Bernat de Cabrera counseled him to sneak out, leaving the hostages. Pere reports, however, that he took the high road. It did not seem right to leave his men as casualties of this union war, so he conceded all to the *Uniòns*, and left

⁷⁷Ibid., 4.9, p. 397.

⁷⁸Ibid., 4.23-30, pp. 408-14.

⁷⁹Ibid., 4.31, p. 416.

⁸⁰Ibid., 4.31, pp. 416-7.

for Catalonia to gather troops for battle. Pere held a *Cortes* at Barcelona for the Catalans so that they would join him in his fight.⁸¹

Jacme arrived at Barcelona when Pere was holding the *Cortes*, but he was a changed man, not mentally, but physically. According to Pere, Jacme's health had taken a turn, and he was so sick that he could not see straight. Jacme died a few days after lodging in Barcelona. According to Hillgarth, Pere was suspected of Jacme's death, but the evidence points to a natural death by fever.⁸² Bisson also writes that Pere was rumored to have poisoned Jacme, but Bisson's description of events does not reflect so positively on Pere.⁸³ Bisson writes that Jacme surrendered to Pere in 1344 only to be held captive and reduced in status. After Jacme escaped from Pere he continued the resistance and "was killed in 1349 in a vain attempt to recover Majorca."⁸⁴

Ferrando continued the rebellion after Jacme's death.⁸⁵ According to Pere, he went beyond the actions of the *Cortes* to actual soldiers. With 400 footmen behind him, Ferrando approached Pere alone to do deference to him since there were many people surrounding Pere to protect him. Pere notes that Ferrando still grew in power and was made governor over Valencia, with Pere and Ferrando paying lip service to each other. Ferrando was eventually captured by Lop de Luna, who had received word that Ferrando was plotting to unite Aragon against Pere.⁸⁶

In setting up the conflicts with the *Unions* as David versus Absalom, Pere is able to identify and find solidarity with David. He is also able to set himself up as a better

⁸¹Ibid., 4.32-4. pp. 418-20.

⁸²Ibid., 4.34, p. 420. See note 44 in the Hillgarth translation of the chronicle.

⁸³ Bisson, 108.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 106.

⁸⁵ Bisson, 108.

⁸⁶Chronicle, Part II, 4.42-5, pp. 428-34.

David, a David who did not deny his opponent an opportunity to air his arguments and sequester him entirely. Pere only attempted to sequester Jacme after he realized that his role as .procurator was an avenue for him to continue his subterfuge. If Pere is a better David than David, it lends credence to Hillgarth's assertion that Pere was also invoking a spiritual kinship with David's spiritual successor, Christ. However, this is Pere's version of events, and he was free to interpret and present them as he saw fit. Pere's conflict with Jacme was just similar enough to the conflict between David and Absalom for him to model his description of Jacme's actions after it.

Finally, Pere's other allusions to David in the prologue concern deliverance from conflict. Pere notes that God delivered David from the both his outside enemies and his relatives, just as God delivered Pere from Castile. Pere compares Pedro I of Castile, his stepbrother and son of Leonor, to a bear and a lion, two animals which David defeated while still a shepherd boy.

And so We can say with David what is written in 1 Kings XVII, "the Lord delivered me from the mouth of the lion and the claw of the bear." For God delivered Us from the king of Castile, who has the evil character of a devouring lion, as his standard displays, and from the claw of a bear, an unclean beast signifying envious and malicious persons.⁸⁷

The original imagery that Pere uses here is rife with confidence. When David relates the story of the lion and the bear to King Saul, he is presupposing victory over Goliath and asking Saul to let him fight.

"Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God."³⁷ And David said, "The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!"⁸⁸

⁸⁷Ibid., Part I, Prologue. 4, p. 129.

⁸⁸ 1 Samuel 17:36-37.

Pere deals with the conflict of the king of Castile in the sixth chapter of the chronicle. Of the war, Pere writes,

[T]he king of Castile wickedly and maliciously insisted on starting [a war] against Us, [the] King En Pere and Our subjects. This war lasted nine years, beginning in the year of Our Lord *God* 1356, and ending in the year 1365, when the war came to an end through the great punishment God inflicted on [the king of Castile], as having made an unjust war, against all reason.⁸⁹

Pere from the beginning describes Castile as an evil kingdom, and states that one of their infamous kings even questioned the wisdom of God.⁹⁰ This particular altercation began with a seafaring dispute in which the two kings could not come to terms. A ship piloted by Pere's French allies had robbed certain Genoese who happened to be allied with the king of Castile. According to Pere, the attacking of the Genoese did not have his approval, although the king of Castile sent Pere a letter of grievance all the same. Pere's response to Pedro of Castile was not sufficiently deferential to the king, and Pere's subsequent response to the king of Castile took him up on his offer to detach from friendly relations. War was now on.⁹¹

Pere includes text from letters he claims were written between Pedro and him. Based on his treatment of this matter in the chronicle, Pere seemed to think that Pedro was deliberately withholding information from him that would help to resolve the conflict.⁹² Pedro sent his men to attack, but neglected to completely detail his grievances so that Pere could try to remedy them.⁹³ Cardinals from the Roman Catholic Church were

⁸⁹Ibid., Part II, 6.1, p. 492. Clara Estow also addresses this conflict from the perspective of Pedro I of Castile in *Pedro the Cruel of Castile, 1350-1369*.

⁹⁰Ibid., 6.2, p. 493.

⁹¹Ibid., 6.3, pp. 495-6.

⁹² Clara Estow, in *Pedro the Cruel of Castile*, notes that the Pedro's chronicler Pedro Lopez de Ayala wrote that Pedro did not sincerely desire peace with Pere either.

⁹³Ibid., 6.7, p. 509.

involved, and several truces were tentatively made. Pere claims that the truce was finally broken when Pedro, in a fit of anger, killed their mutual brother, Don Johan.⁹⁴

Pere writes that when he moved to Barcelona, Pedro decided to attack him with his fleet and a battle ensued. Majorca also remained in the crosshairs of Pedro, and Pere was concerned for its safety after Pedro took the island of Ibiza. Pere here notes that God was careful to deliver him from this situation without a battle. Pedro received word of the large fleet with which Pere was bearing down on him, and “like a frightened man, [he] raised the siege of the castle of Ibiza and fled with his fleet.”⁹⁵ More cardinal intervention followed at the behest of Pedro, and Pere “gave way to peace,” resulting in Pere not fighting when Pedro was in place to lay siege to Fariza.⁹⁶

Pere saw an opportunity to use Ferrando in this conflict and appointed him procurator general in an effort to bring Ferrando to his side against Castile. According to Bisson, Pere dressed up the appointment to procurator general as a customary action for the crown-prince of Aragon thereby reminding Ferrando of his status within the hierarchy.⁹⁷ However, Pere notes that he began to receive word that Ferrando was conspiring against him, and Pere arranged to have Ferrando taken prisoner. Ferrando refused to be taken, and Pere writes that he was “moved to rage” and that “if he would not be taken that he should die and, at once, they killed him.”⁹⁸ It seems that Mossèn Bernat de Cabrera was also found to be a traitor during this war, and that he passed along information to Castile. Pere later ordered his execution.⁹⁹

⁹⁴Ibid., 6.20, p. 520. Don Johan was Pere’s half-brother, the son of Pere’s father and stepmother.

⁹⁵Ibid., 6.23-5, pp. 523-5.

⁹⁶Ibid., 6.29, p. 530.

⁹⁷ Bisson, 112.

⁹⁸Ibid., 6.35, p. 539.

⁹⁹Ibid., 6.39, pp. 543-4. See also Bisson, 114.

Pere and Pedro continue to war for nine years, with Pedro reportedly advancing and retreating from the battles. Pere eventually recovers the lands that Pedro had taken, and uses this as another opportunity to mention the fact that God was on his side. Pedro had ordered his men to lay waste to the land, but according to Pere, his men were more loyal to Pere and surrendered to him. Pere writes,

But, as the wisdom of man cannot prevail against God, He did not give them the power to damage the places they abandoned, although in some places this was attempted. For Our people are so naturally [loyal] to Our royal seigniory that, seeing the destruction of the said king, they at once surrendered to Us and Our seigniory, becoming thus as heretofore Our natural vassals, which today they are and shall be, if it pleases God, for all time.¹⁰⁰

Since the wisdom of man cannot prevail against God, and since God has elected to spare Pere's lands from ruin, Pere uses this as further justification that he is chosen of God.

Pere closes section four of the prologue with Psalm 17¹⁰¹. He further identifies himself with David, using David's words to communicate how he felt about the Creator that sustained him.¹⁰² God's deliverance of Pere from his enemies would only cement the assertion that Pere was a legitimate successor of the Biblical David.

Pere does not claim that his life models that of David wholly and completely. In fact, one of the main, unavoidable differences between David and Pere was that Pere was part of a royal lineage, while David was not. David was only the second king of Israel. Though a dynastic line might have followed from the first king, Saul, the scriptures report that God was not pleased with the job Saul had done and sent Samuel the priest of Israel to anoint a new, unrelated king.¹⁰³ Where David was anointed king by the religious leader of that time, Pere refused to be crowned by the bishop of Saragossa for fear that it would

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 6.60, p. 576.

¹⁰¹ Psalm 17 is not an exact fit to the quote Pere uses, but that is the chapter and book he references.

¹⁰² See Chronicle Part I, Prologue.4, pp. 128-9.

¹⁰³1 Samuel 16.

“prejudice the Crown.”¹⁰⁴ Clearly, there was distinction in Pere’s mind between the theocracy that existed in Israel and the sovereign state that was Aragon.

As I discussed in Chapter 1, David was known in the Bible and in medieval thought primarily for his servant’s heart, humility, and dedication to God. Pere mentions none of that in section four of his Prologue. This section opens with Pere reiterating his third proposition, that Pere wills that God be praised for the good He does. After restating this, he writes,

The meaning of this truth is that We, the said King En Pere of Aragon, have been appointed to preside over and rule in this kingdom, through the divers gifts and many favours that We have received, through the supreme clemency, piety, and goodness of God. We wish to attribute all to God and praise Him, as nothing comes from Our part, but only from the divine bounty.¹⁰⁵

Section four is an expansion upon Pere’s desire that God be explicitly, and even officially, praised for the good that befalls Pere’s kingdom. In this section, God is not praised for granting David humility, but for rescuing him from his enemies. Each of the examples Pere uses regarding the status of David’s reign and his relationships with relatives and neighboring nations has a military element to them. David was a man of war who encountered strife with his own son and with other nations, and he fought off wild animals.

Since Pere begins indicates an affinity with the warrior version of King David in the prologue, the next step in the process will be to compare and contrast Pere’s reign, as represented by Pere in his chronicle, with that of David’s. However, comparing the reign of Pere with that of David is a bit like reading a horoscope and proclaiming its accuracy for that date. There will be some places where parallels can be drawn most assuredly and

¹⁰⁴ Chronicle, Part I, 2.10, p. 195.

¹⁰⁵ Chronicle, Part I, Prologue.4, p. 128.

others where the similarities could be stretched if the fancy strikes. Other than in the prologue, Pere does not draw attention to David in his chronicle, but he does construct his chronicle in such a way as to bring David to the mind of the reader. He has already implanted the idea of David, among others, into his readers' minds, and it seems that he mean for them to see David echoing throughout his recounts.

In the next chapter, I will review specific passages in which Pere makes in reference to God and spiritual matters, and I will examine their context. In the analysis, I hope to ascertain the purpose of their inclusion. Pere's prologue was constructed with a stated purpose, and the spiritual statements sprinkled throughout the chronicle contribute to an overarching theme that Pere intended.

Chapter 3: Biblical References in the Main Text of the Chronicle of Pere III

Pere's prologue has a clear agenda and utilizes Biblical imagery, especially that of King David, to convey the king's purpose. However, Pere's assessment of David in the prologue does not quite match up to the writings of the political philosophers before him. These philosophers set up David as a humble and righteous king with little to no mention of David's fighting prowess. Pere, on the other hand, focuses in on David's status as a man of war. Both interpretations were valid but do not represent the entire picture of David's life and character. They were one-dimensional caricatures that showcase the intent and perspective of the writers. It is my assertion that Pere utilizes his version of David as a warrior king in order to justify the actions of his own reign, whether to explain his victories or excuse his losses. Pere's David is a man who fought wars and wild beasts, and Pere's continued emulation of this is evident throughout the entire chronicle. Seen through this lens the chronicle of Pere III is less about royal policy and governance than it was about expansion of territory and military victory. Referencing God in military matters was intended to lend Pere a certain credibility in his military.

Pere asserts that he is akin to David as a righteous warrior king by developing the concepts established in the prologue throughout the remainder of the chronicle. Though the main body of the chronicle does not focus on David as the prologue does, the hand of the Almighty does figure in it prominently in various situations. Since Pere references God or other spiritual matters so often, I will seek to prove that Pere's explicit statements regarding God and spiritual matters are made in conjunction with military activities of some kind, and are thus in keeping with the formula he has set up in part four of the prologue. With so many religious references to God, I have opted to group Pere's

references to God and religion into four general categories: praise to God, God's will and Pere's agency in that will, judgment of God, and spiritual gifts from God. While there are a handful of exceptions, the majority of the religious references do relate back to Pere's military victories. One notable exception includes Pere's mention of God's grace when relating the story of how his father providentially received a castle just before he died.¹⁰⁶ However, there are few, if any, other statements that are in no way related to a military conflict.

Pere Giving Praise to God

The idea of giving praise, thanks, or reverence to God is apparent in the chronicle, and each time it occurs it references a military victory of some sort. Praising God for a victory is in no way out of the ordinary and would be expected from a Christian king. Statements officially praising God accomplish a few different general purposes. They firmly cement one as a godly king, as well as underlie the idea that God approves of one's exploits, for why would God allow something to happen that was out of His will. These purposes do apply to Pere, but there are additional purposes that directly relate to his account of his reign. First, explicit statements of praise build upon Pere's stated objective of duly praising God for all the good deeds He had done. Second, Pere creates a foundation that battles are decided by God, which would allow him to save face in the event of a loss. Since he connects the spiritual aspects of his chronicle with the military aspects, Pere also establishes how he wants to be perceived: as a mighty, righteous fighter.

On at least two occasions in the chronicle, Pere physically enters a cathedral to do reverence to his God after a military victory, and this is not unexpected. Each time, Pere

¹⁰⁶Chronicle, Part I, 1.55, p. 187.

is joined by a cohort of his personal entourage and sometimes the inhabitants of the city. Each of these occasions was significant enough to warrant a large scale worship service that would function as a public relations campaign for Pere. It is a public show that allows his subjects to participate in the victory with him, and reinforce the fact that God is on Pere's side in these battles. By siding with Pere, his subjects side with God.

The first example of Pere's use of the cathedral occurs in Chapter II after he has arrived at Lérida from Saragossa and is greeted and honored by the armed men of the city. Chapter II opens with the death of Pere's father, Alfons III, and continues on to describe the transfer of power to Pere, as well as Pere's uncertainty about how to proceed politically. Pere had been told by those in Barcelona that he must swear and confirm the *Usatges* and *Constitutions* in Barcelona, for it was tradition and would be an insult to them if he did not. Pere notes that he was undecided about how to proceed owing to his young age, and he is also told by the citizens of Lérida that it does not matter where he swears the *Usatges* and *Constitutions*. Pere decided not to prejudice Barcelona in this instance and to do this custom in Lérida instead. In this case, praise to God in a cathedral occurred after a political rather than military accomplishment.¹⁰⁷

We entered the city and dismounted before the Seu [Cathedral], where we did reverence to Our Lord God and Creator Jesus Christ and to Our Lady St. Mary.¹⁰⁸

The second reference is found in Chapter V, which details Pere's alliance with the doge of Venice against Genoa beginning in 1352. Pere could have chosen to side with either Venice or Genoa. According to his chronicle, Pere sided with Venice because the Genoese had violated the peace treaty with Catalonia-Aragon and had continued to do damage to them despite being at peace. Pere notes that in the year following the start of

¹⁰⁷ Chronicle, Part I, 2.1-23, pp. 189-202.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 2.23, p. 202.

the conflict, En Bernat de Cabrera, with his fleet and twenty Venetian galleys, had defeated Genoa in the seas of Alghero and captured thirty-three of their galleys.¹⁰⁹

Mossen Bernat had sent news of the victory along with banners from the Genoese fleet.

“Lord, look on your treasure that Our Lord God has given you.” When We had received these letters and read them and received the banner We praised and blessed Our Lord God for the grace and mercy He had done Us.¹¹⁰

As soon as he received this news, Pere left his palace with his nobles, knights, and household to spread the wonderful news of their victory, and found that the people of the city had come to join in the rejoicing.

[M]any people of the city who had come to Us to Our royal palace to know the good news God had sent Us. On foot, for reverence to God. We went to the cathedral of that city to render thanks to Our Lord God. As We came to the cathedral, the bishop and all the clergy sang the *Salve Regina* and said other prayers and benedictions, as it is customary to do in such cases in the church of God.¹¹¹

On each of these occasions, Pere has made a concerted effort to associate his victories with God in much the same way David did after the return of the ark of the covenant from the Philistines. However, David’s response does differ from Pere’s in that it was also related to a spiritual victory. When the ark of the covenant was brought into Jerusalem after having been possessed by the Philistines, David leapt and danced before God. After bringing the ark instead the tent he had pitched for it, David made offerings to God and “blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts.”¹¹² This example from David is actually more analogous to the first time Pere did reverence to God in a cathedral after swearing the *Usatges* and *Constitutions* at Lérida. Pere did this after accomplishing a political feat, and David’s recovery of the ark of the covenant can be

¹⁰⁹Chronicle, Part II, 5.1-4, pp. 454-7.

¹¹⁰Ibid., 5.23, pp. 472-3.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² 2 Samuel 6:16-18.

seen as both a spiritual and political victory. The ark was not recovered as part of a military campaign, but fell into their hands.¹¹³

Pere also connects his battles and praise to God with his own kingdom's achievements or goodness. Pere is not only right because God is on his side, but God is on Pere's side because Pere is right. In this, Pere has not only stated that God was previously for him, but that there is a reason for God to continue to be for him. Pere's victories will continue since he is proven to be deserving of God's favor.

For example, in the *Unións*-themed Chapter IV, Pere describes the defense mounted against his half-brother Ferrando in Epila in 1348. Pere writes that Ferrando "wished to subject to their will the nobles who were there, so that all Aragon should be united in their evil intention."¹¹⁴ Thus, En Lop de Luna, one of Pere's nobles, attacked them, and according to the chronicle, the carnage was so great that more than a thousand men died. Ferrando was taken captive, and the rest of the opposition either died or fled.¹¹⁵ Pere praised God for the victory they achieved; however, according to this statement it is as if they deserved the victory all along. The wicked kingdom of Aragon was at fault, and Catalonia had done nothing wrong.

Immediately and in haste the noble En Lop de Luna sent to Us, by a son of a knight, [news of the] Grace that God had given Us and him, in the victory he had won over those who had disturbed and upset the kingdom of Aragon, through their great wickedness, through their own fault, and through no fault of Ours. We therefore gave praise and gratitude to Our Lord God for the grace He had done Us.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ 1 Samuel 5-6. The Philistines, plagued by God while they were in possession of the ark, had set the ark on cart yoked to two cows, and the two cows proceeded without Philistine guidance to the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh.

¹¹⁴ Chronicle, Part II, 4.45, pp. 433-4.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 434.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 434-5.

Though only a circumstantial similarity, it is notable that David frequently praised God and extolled the virtues of a righteous God who had delivered David from very unrighteous enemies. For example, in I Samuel 25:39,

When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, “Blessed be the LORD who has avenged the insult I received at the hand of Nabal, and has kept back his servant from wrongdoing. The LORD has returned the evil of Nabal on his own head.”

More evidence is found in the psalms written by David. In Psalm 9, David gives thanks to the Lord because of his “wonderful deeds,” and the psalm is mostly about victories over the wicked.

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart;
I will recount all of your wonderful deeds.
I will be glad and exult in you;
I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

When my enemies turn back,
they stumble and perish before your presence.
For you have maintained my just cause;
you have sat on the throne, giving righteous judgment.

These first four verses establish the praise that David is giving and God’s activity in protecting David’s cause. It is similar to the report of the victory over the *Unions* at Tarazona for it represents David’s cause as just. He was in the right, just as Pere was in the right over Aragon. Aragon was at fault for its actions and deserved what it received. Psalm 9:15-16 reflects the same sentiment.

The nations have sunk in the pit that they made;
in the net that they hid, their own foot has been caught.
The LORD has made himself known; he has executed judgment;
the wicked are snared in the work of their own hands.

In Chapter VI Pere presents a similar judgment on the Pedro I of Castile. After concluding his version of the nine and a half year conflict with Castile that lasted from 1356-66, he indicates that Pedro was condemned of God by his own pride.

Although divers deeds of arms and deaths of persons and occupations of places occurred, at the end of the war the king of Castile, by the judgement of God, who crushes pride and exalts humility, was condemned to lose his realms twice.¹¹⁷

The harsh judgment God imposes on Pere's enemies contrasts with Pere's representation of himself. The idea that Pere is in the right or has the favor of God is a constant, as is the theme of defeat over Pere's enemies. God sees Pere's loyalty and rewards him accordingly. For example, Pere had heard that his sister was sick and wanted to see him. However, Pere knew that this ruse was a trap by the king of Majorca, but went anyway. After relating how they avoided the king of Majorca's planned treachery, Pere writes, "And Our Lord God, beholding Our loyalty and good intention, wished to save and protect us from all ill and peril."¹¹⁸

In 1364, towards the end of his war with Pedro, Pere notes that he has maintained hope in God, and he reports that as a result, Aragon's battles have been victorious. He reflects on the news brought to him by a friar that Valencia was besieged by Castile and running short of rations. Pere reportedly "both mentally and bodily, burst into tears, moved by this, as a king who dearly loves his subjects."¹¹⁹ Pere was in Sessa when he heard this news, and by the next month, he had reached Burriana. On leaving Burriana to go forward towards Valencia, Pere writes,

We put Our hope in Our Lord God Who helps His people, and, especially those who have a firm hope in Him, as is the case with the house of Aragon, whose royal standard has never been conquered or captured from the field of battle.¹²⁰

Pere goes on to describe his decision making process for the approach to Valencia, and notes that his men took Valencia just before the Castilians reached Valencia to defend it.

¹¹⁷ Chronicle, Part II, 6.65, p. 583.

¹¹⁸ Chronicle, Part I, 3.18, p. 249.

¹¹⁹ Chronicle, Part II, 6.40, p. 545.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 546.

Pere claimed victory, and in his chronicle he foreshadowed the description of his victory by writing that he put his hope in God and that Aragon had never been conquered in battle. All the while he states that it is because he has a firm hope in God and that he is one of God's people.¹²¹ By default, Pedro of Castile does not have this firm hope, for if he did, God would help him as well. Or perhaps Pere might say that if Pedro loved God, he would not oppose Pere so much.

It should be noted here that Pere was known by some as being hostile to his own family. The sixteenth-century historian Zurida wrote, "His nature was so perverse and inclined to evil that in nothing did he distinguish himself so much as persecuting his own blood."¹²² In her book on Pedro I of Castile, Estow notes that the "natural rivalry between Pere and his father's second family...was a factor contributing to the breakdown of Castilian-Aragonese relations."¹²³ Hillgarth also asserts that Pere tried to make up for his diminutive stature by putting on airs of majesty, including robes and ceremony.¹²⁴ In other words, Pere put on a bravado in order to make up for any of his shortcomings, as well as to combat hostility, both perceived and real, from his relatives. Whether he was on the "right" side or not, Pere posed as if he were both righteous and mighty.

God's Will and Pere's Role in That Will

Tying in with this idea of being on the right side of God, there are even more examples from the Chronicle that display the idea of Pere being an agent of God's will and fulfilling his duty toward God. Pere connects both his victories and sparse mentions of failures with God's will. With this in mind, any outcome in Pere's history can be

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Zurida, Quoted in *Spanish Kingdoms I*, 349.

¹²³ Clara Estow, *Pedro the Cruel of Castile, 1350-1369*. (New York: E. J. Brill, 1995), 182.

¹²⁴ *Spanish Kingdoms I*, 549.

represented as favorable. God's will is supreme, and though the victories serve to elevate Pere in the eyes of his subjects, the failures are excusable since God did not will a victory in that case. Pere's choice to make these connections supports an authority with which his subjects could not argue. If Pere has a general record of victory, a loss here or there is justified by the fact that it is a part of God's plan.

Concerning the conflict with the *Uniòns*, Pere justifies his neglect to hold a *Cortes* in Aragon at the start of his reign. Other affairs which were of paramount importance had cropped up, and he provides the example of King Benamari of Morocco, "who intended to conquer all Spain and the kingdom of Valencia."

For the honour of God and to safeguard Our lands from peril and to exalt Christianity, it was right for Us to assist the king of Castile by sea and land. With God's help and Our own, the king of Castile conquered and confounded the king of Benamari, as you well know...So it was proper for us to remain near the coast, so as to give a good lead if one was needed. By the mercy of God, such a lead has been provided until now, and, if it pleases God, it will continue to be so.¹²⁵

Pere has not only defended his decision not to hold a *Cortes* because he was defending the kingdom, but has also turned the tables to say that he was in fact exalting Christianity and doing God's will as well. With "God's help and Our own," he says, implying that if he was not there to help the king of Castile, both Spain and Christianity would be in peril from a Moorish king. Pere has gone beyond linking himself to David here and has linked himself to all of Christianity and by extension the man to whom David was forerunner, Christ.

Pere originally addresses this event in Chapter II. In 1339, Pere had received news that the king of Morocco intended to invade Spain, so he went to inspect the fortifications in Valencia. Pere also allied with Castile in staging a fleet of ships to oppose the king of

¹²⁵ Chronicle, Part II, 4.23, pp. 409-10.

Morocco. It was not until 1340 that the king of Morocco was defeated by the king of Castile's forces, for Benamari had infiltrated the fleet of ships. Pere had summoned a *Cortes* in Barcelona to send ten galleys to aid the king of Castile. In the midst of all this, Pere was preoccupied with having the king of Majorca due homage to him, so it also appears that Pere is trying to spin the neglect of other *Cortes* in his favor.¹²⁶ Homage from one king to another does not seem as pressing as the imminent arrival of a hostile, non-Christian king. However, Bisson notes that that Pere "had no direct part" in the Moroccan king's defeat, and by then Pere was concentrating on issues with Sardinia and Majorca.¹²⁷

In another instance of "failure" on Pere's part, Pere credits God with helping to check his anger against the king of Majorca and staying his hand from slaying him with a sword. However, this occurrence does not have the trappings of a miracle, and the way Pere relates it makes it seem like a providential coincidence. Lightning did not strike and time did not freeze. The heavily ornamented sword that Pere was carrying when he had an opportunity to kill the king of Majorca was simply "so hard to draw out from the scabbard" that despite trying three different times, he was unable to free it. Pere interprets this to mean that God did not want him to kill the king of Majorca. He writes, "Our Lord God, who ordains all things, and know what is best, did not choose that Our heart should complete its will."¹²⁸ While Pere was delayed in pulling out his weapon, his companions were able to talk him down from his anger and reason with him.¹²⁹ In retrospect, Pere sees that failing to kill the king was for the best and that God had the right and the power

¹²⁶ Chronicle, Part I, 2.32-8, pp. 215-26.

¹²⁷ Bisson, 105.

¹²⁸ Chronicle, Part I, 2.37, p. 223.

¹²⁹ Chronicle, Part I, 2.37, pp. 223-4.

to override his will. Whether or not this is truly the case, Pere has interpreted his inability to handle his own sword as God's will and absolved himself of any embarrassment that might entail.

In yet another example from Pere's war with Castile, Pere uses his reliance on the will of God as an answer when things did not go according to plan. Pedro had seized Ibiza and sacked the entire island. Pere perceived that Majorca was in imminent danger and decided to take action.

We agreed that We should go in person with Our Fleet – which included a great number of galleys and of ships, with at least fifty oared vessels, [and] many good warriors, both on land and sea, to the island of Ibiza to fight against that king. But it did not please God that this should come to pass, for two galleys, which were guarding the fleet of the king of Castile, encountered a fishing boat that was coming to Us in the city with some peacocks that the bishop of Majorca was sending Us.¹³⁰

Once again Pere's intentions were thwarted, and in this case his victory was delayed for another day. The two galleys reported back to the king of Castile that there was an incoming attack.¹³¹ Pere takes this opportunity to editorialize on the situation. Though he is unable to prove his superiority in combat, he attempts to prove it in courage.

And the king, like a frightened man, raised the siege of the castle of Ibiza and fled with his fleet and took his way back to his kingdom of Castile, abandoning the siege engines and artillery and other apparatus he had made for combat.¹³²

Pere notes that due to the will of God, he is restrained from attacking Castile yet another time. Pedro's chronicler, Ayala, reported this event differently. Pedro was not too frightened to face up to Pere, but made a military decision not to engage Pere on land.¹³³

¹³⁰ Chronicle, Part II, 6.25, p. 525.

¹³¹ Chronicle, Part II, 6.25, p. 526.

¹³² Chronicle, Part II, 6.25, p. 526.

¹³³ Estow, 198.

Further, Pedro was low on provisions and took the opportunity to restock in Alicante.¹³⁴
By the Castilian version of events, Pedro merely made a practical, strategic decision.

Once again, the will of God functions as an excuse for Pere's inability to combat the king of Castile. Hillgarth notes that in the war with Castile, Pere could not even claim victory on his own with Catalonia-Aragon forces. Pere had to hire French mercenaries to bolster his army, and thus his reference to Pedro I as a coward is disingenuous. Pedro had previously withdrawn from battle with Castile in Barcelona to Ibiza, after an unsuccessful attempt at capturing Barcelona. Pedro then followed Pere to Ibiza and overtook its fortress.¹³⁵

In 1364, in the midst of the war with Castile, Pere was on his way to relieve the town of Orihuela, because he expected it to be besieged by Castile. While on the way, Pere received word that the king of Castile was waiting to attack them on the plain of Matança. Matança was on the way to Orihuela, and Pere had concerns about the safety of that town in light of the King of Castile's plan to do battle. So, they made up their mind to move.¹³⁶

By the Grace of *Our* Lord God We began to move...And Our Lord God had put such a good heart in all Our people that all were very gay and content, and especially as they thought they were going to fight.¹³⁷

That fight, however, did not occur. Though Pere and his men were ready, God's final plan apparently did not include an altercation with Castile at that time.

We had [everything] in battle order *and arranged* in the said plain. For, as we passed down the slope, there had come to Us light horsemen of the count of Trastámara, who said they had reconnoitered the passes and seen the whole host of the king of Castile coming towards Us, which gave Us great pleasure. But it

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 197.

¹³⁶ Chronicle, Part II, 6.51-2, p. 563.

¹³⁷ Chronicle, Part II, 6.52, pp. 563-4.

did not please God that this should occur. We were halted in this plain, for We did not wish to (go) *enter* the place of Orihuela – this waiting for Our enemy was to Our honour, if he wished to come – when the counts of Trastámara and Denia came and said to Us, “Lord, you have completed what pertains to your honour and it is now the hour for you to go to Orihuela and camp in the gardens round the town, for it is better to set up camp in good time than later.”¹³⁸

Pere does not explain why it is usually within God’s will for him to be victorious in battle against this king who unjustly wars with him. If Pere was rewarded for his faithfulness with victory, Pedro should also have been able to attribute his victories to his faithfulness to God. Pere still considered Pedro to be wicked, but it was not an objective judgment. Pere’s failure to address these immediate issues leads me to believe that he is actually just trying to save face in the midst of failing to engage Castile in battle. Castile as a whole had long been vilified in his mind, and Pere could attribute no goodness to it.¹³⁹

God’s Judgment of Pere’s Enemies

Stylistically, a few of Pere’s statements about Castile are very reminiscent of judgments placed upon kings in the books of Samuel and Kings. Pere often sets himself up in opposition to Pedro I of Castile and rails against Pedro’s lack of integrity, accusing Pedro of wicked and malicious action against him.¹⁴⁰ In contextualizing his conflict with Pedro, Pere also relates the story of a Castilian king, purportedly Alfonso X, who had often said that if he had been around at the creation of the world with a free voice and the ear of God, many things that God made would not be made, and many things that were

¹³⁸ Chronicle, Part II, 6.52, p. 564.

¹³⁹ Hillgarth notes that Pere “grew up believing that his Castilian step-mother, Queen Leonor, had not only taken large parts of his domain for her children (as she had) but had tried to poison him.” *Spanish Kingdoms I*, 349.

¹⁴⁰ Chronicle, Part II, 6.1, p. 492.

not made would be made. Regarding this, Pere relates that this king heard a voice in the night saying,

As you have questioned the wisdom of God you will die in twenty days from now, and in the fourth generation your house will end. And words like these God sent the same night and hour to a saintly man of the Order of the Friars Preachers, who was in a monastery at Burgos.¹⁴¹

Following this quote, Pere goes on to recount the veracity of the prophecy and the evil in the Castilian descendents of Alfonso X.

Imitating the style or content of the Bible lends Pere's argument a sense of authority. If the Bible is respected, it is likely that a reader familiar with the Bible will respect or at least give pause to a text when encountering the form of a Biblical statement. Content or form such as this is a type of conversational currency with which readers can identify and concur. Pere uses this currency to not only relate how he feels about Castile, but to also inspire an immediate comparison between himself and the godly kings of the Old Testament.

Three elements of the reported prophecy of Alfonso X make reference to the Old Testament. The first is the prophecy and timeline of death, the second is the prophecy about the duration of the dynasty, and the third is the mention of the word going to a man in an order of preachers. Pere's statement that Alfonso X questioned the wisdom of God and received a prophecy that he would die within 20 days is similar to the prophecy that God gave to Hezekiah. However, Hezekiah, one of the good kings of Judah, was given 15 years to live after being told he would die from sickness.¹⁴² However, Hezekiah's judgment, unlike Alfonso's is a reprieve. 2 Kings 20:4-6 reads:

¹⁴¹ Chronicle, Part II, 6.2, p. 493. In note 3, Hillgarth connects this king with Alfonso X.

¹⁴² 2 Kings 20:1-6.

And before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the LORD came to him: "Turn back, and say to Hezekiah the leader of my people, Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will heal you. On the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD, and I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake."

Pere's reference to the end of Alfonso's dynasty after the fourth generation is reminiscent of King Jehu in 2 Kings 10:28-30. Jehu had started out as a good king, but became wayward throughout his reign. Verse 30 states:

And the LORD said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in carrying out what is right in my eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, your sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.

Unlike the symbolic reign of David, Jehu's reign would only last until the fourth generation, just as long as Pere has reported about Castile.

When I see that the king of Castile and I are before the judgement of God, I say of him that he is wicked and false and as a great traitor has made and is making war in my land. And I request of Our Lord God that on this day He will grant me justice on him, which I have firm confidence that He will do. 549

Pere only speaks of judgment when God is judging another nation, and not himself. When he writes of such judgment, he also attributes to the other nations a recognition that God's judgment is upon them and they act accordingly. This attribution of culpability on the part of other nations moves them from being merely "other" to being wicked, bad, or evil. By reducing his enemies in battle to pawns of God's judgment, Pere elevates himself as a wise and righteous leader who knows better than to incur the judgment of God upon himself and his subjects. According to Pere, his enemies knowingly and unwisely test God by acting unjustly. However, Pere's basis for why he happens to be in God's favor and why his enemies are unjust is not objective and seems

to derive solely from Pere's self-interest. In other words, Pere seems to be making these judgments himself with no confirmation that these assertions are derived from God.

Pere's primary adversary in the chronicle, Pedro IV of Castile, receives the brunt of his judgments against evil nations. In many instances, Pere describes Pedro as knowing he is in the wrong and is thus afraid to approach his more righteous nemesis, Pere. These statements occur throughout Chapter IV where Pere details his conflict with Castile.

And the king of Castile did not wish to wait [for Us] nor come to the battle, thinking that God would punish him, as he was waging an unjust war.¹⁴³

Castile had left...for he, fearful of the unjust war he was waging against Us, did not dare to enter into battle against Us, fearing the punishment of God, who is the judge and lord of battles.¹⁴⁴

He [Castile] did not wish or dare to do this, thinking that God, Who is the judge of battles, would be against him for the great offence that he had done to Us and that he was still doing, against all reason and justice.¹⁴⁵

Now, this is a seemingly odd thing to ascribe, especially repeatedly, to an enemy. By claiming that the king of Castile fears the judgment of God for the actions he had committed against Pere, Pere legitimizes his own position. In this version of events, there is no question as to whether Pere might be wrong, and it is clear that in the mind of everyone else, including his enemies, Pere is upholding the moral high ground. Not only that, but Pedro opposed Pere, just as he opposed his own conscience. Pere himself states that Pedro continues his actions "against all reason and justice."¹⁴⁶ The very fact that Pedro finds himself on the wrong side of God means, by default, that Pere has found God's favor.

¹⁴³ Chronicle, Part II, 6.12, p. 514.

¹⁴⁴ Chronicle, Part II, 6.26, p. 526.

¹⁴⁵ Chronicle, Part II, 6.44, p. 553.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

Pere presents is the idea God's justice is inherently right, and this idea peppers the writing in the chronicle. Everyone is rewarded according to his merits.

In this manner the Union was ended. It was condemned as something unjust and rejected, through the work of Our Lord God (Who did not consent), Who does not consent that evil should go unpunished... We (have) had had and have hope in God who has rewarded everyone according to his merits, according to the word of the Psalmist: "Vengeance is Mine and I will reward them in good time and their foot shall stumble."¹⁴⁷

This paragraph also contains a reference to the Psalmist,¹⁴⁸ someone who has not been mentioned since the prologue to the chronicle. "Vengeance is Mine and I will reward them in good time and their foot shall stumble." Though that particular phrase is actually found in Deuteronomy 32:35,¹⁴⁹ there are a few corollaries in the Psalms. Notably, Psalm 94 begins, "O LORD, God of vengeance, O God of vengeance, shine forth!" and ends with "He will bring back on them their iniquity and wipe them out for their wickedness; the LORD our God will wipe them out."

Psalm 94 is not attributed to any one person as many of the other psalms are. However, the Psalms in general are associated with David. In contrast with the Deuteronomic statement that the foot of the wicked would stumble, the Psalmist in verse 18 writes, "When I thought, 'My foot slips,' your steadfast love, O LORD, held me up." If Pere does indeed equate himself with David, then he is immune from this particular judgment. Instead of actively tripping him up, God would prevent his foot from slipping. Psalm 9:12, attributed to David, contains similar language, stating that God "avenges blood."

¹⁴⁷ Chronicle, Part II, 4.63, p. 448-9.

¹⁴⁸ "Psalmist" is a term used when the specific author of the psalm is not known.

¹⁴⁹ "Vengeance is mine, and recompense, for the time when their foot shall slip; for the day of their calamity is at hand, and their doom comes swiftly." J. Hillgarth notes J. Riera's proposition that Pere is mistakenly attributing Deuteronomy 32:35, and possibly Romans 12:19, to the Psalms. Chronicle, Part II, p. 449, note 87.

Even without the reference to the Psalmist, Pere's use of the statement still has symbolic meaning for the occurrences in his reign. Deuteronomy 32:28-33 is a scathing rebuke on a nation gone astray, and verses 28-29 in particular state,

For they are a nation void of counsel,
and there is no understanding in them.
If they were wise, they would understand this;
they would discern their latter end!

This could just as well be referencing a number of the foes Pere encounters, such as the *Unions* of whom he was writing in this specific instance or the king of Castile.

Spiritual Gifts to Pere

Pere speaks of two types of spiritual gifts in the chronicle: mercy and grace. The word mercy brings to mind a person who has committed wrong and is forgiven or pardon. It also brings to mind the idea of general compassion. In other words, someone is needed, either deservedly or undeservedly, and another person who has the power to help does. Pere is operating with the latter definition for his remarks always indicate that he the one wronged and has not brought judgment upon himself. The term grace, while similar to mercy, has a much more distinct spiritual element to it. Grace is also a type of unmerited favor, but it is usually of a divine nature coming specifically from God. In this analysis, I will begin with mercy.

Pere, due to both his righteous position with God and God's mercy, is purportedly able to avoid some unhappy occurrences. In a very real way, this presentation does resemble how David is presented in the Scriptures: as a man who is both righteous and who had been selected to receive God's good favor and mercy. David even expresses surprise when he learns of the great legacy God has prepared for him.¹⁵⁰ However, this

¹⁵⁰ I Chronicles 17:16-18.

also brings up the point that Pere does not present himself quite so humbly as David. Although, maybe such a thing is to be expected when a living king authorizes his own biography as a testimony to his legacy. To be like David would require a good bit of catch-up on Pere's part, and perhaps there is not much room for humility there.

Pere confirms God's mercy in many instances. He relates that his father, at the time the "lord prince" Alfons, while suffering illness during a siege, "endured all this with patience and benignity and with great confidence in the mercy of God, so as to accomplish what the lord king, his father, had entrusted to him."¹⁵¹ Regarding the plot of the king of Majorca against them he writes,

Our Lord God, Who never fails those who have faith and good hope in Him, did not wish that justice should be hindered nor wrongs go unpunished. By His great mercy and pity He perceived the intention of the king of Majorca against Us.¹⁵²

God's mercy came to Pere via a member of the conspiracy who informed Pere of the king of Majorca's treachery.

Two other instances include his half-brother Jacme's thwarted attempt to capture Puigcerdá, where Pere writes, "But, by the mercy of God he was opposed very rigorously; in the attack he lost three men of standing and some foot soldiers."¹⁵³ Pere also invokes God's mercy when relating how the king of Castile, fearful of combat with Pere, left for the castle of Murviedro. He writes of the inhabitants of Valencia, "all those within (went out to meet Us) *received Us* with great joy and great content for the mercy that God had given to Us and to them."¹⁵⁴ The mercy of God had saved both Pere and Valencia from an altercation with Castile. Despite the fact that he did not have to fight in

¹⁵¹ Chronicle, Part I, 1.25, p. 155.

¹⁵² Chronicle, Part I, 3.18, pp. 247-8.

¹⁵³ Chronicle, Part II, 4.13, p. 403.

¹⁵⁴ Chronicle, Part II, 6.43, pp. 551-2.

this instance, Pere can still claim legitimacy to a David-like warrior status. As Pere recounts it, the king of Castile was intimidated by Pere. Pere also has another chance to work in God's hand in the matter.

Shortly before this battle that never was, Pere records the stirring speech he gave to his people. The king of Castile had caught wind of Pere's arrival at the port of Murviedro, and sent a guard to block their passage. It seems Pere felt the need to give his people a pep talk, and he asked them to all come in close as he began. Pere opens his speech by saying,

Good people, at no time have We taken pleasure in saying ill or dishonour [of others] but at this time when I see that the king of Castile and I are before the judgement of God, I say of him that he is wicked and false and as a great traitor has made and is making war in my land.¹⁵⁵

Several components of this stand out. First, Pere says that he does not take pleasure in speaking ill of people, although he feels he needs to do so in this case. Second, Pere says that both he and the king of Castile are under the judgment of God. Pere does not single Castile out, but includes himself under this judgment. Third, Pere establishes that Castile is a wicked and false traitor. The first clause seems to be an attempt to justify Pere's assertion that the king of Castile is a wicked man. Pere indicates that he does not just go around calling everyone a wicked person, and also that he recognizes God's authority over him before launching into his diatribe against Castile.

Pere continues by beseeching God for his justice and reaching out to his people with just a touch of humility.

And I request of Our Lord God that on this day He will grant me justice on him, which I have firm confidence that He will do. And now I say to you who are gathered here with me, to you, Castilians, you know I have received you in my

¹⁵⁵ Chronicle, Part II, 6.41, p. 549.

kingdom and shared my goods with you, not as much perhaps as you deserved or as I wished, but as far as I was able.¹⁵⁶

Pere then contrasts his good wishes with people of Castile with the actions of their own king.

Of the king of Castile, who is over there, you know well that [there is] not one of you of whom he has not killed a father, son, brother, or relation, and dishonoured wives, daughters, or sisters, taking all your goods and theirs and treating all as traitors. Because of this I say to you that you should remember today the bad deeds that the said king has done to you and the good deeds that I have done. Therefore I want to say to you and to beg you, that if there are any who have a desire to go over there, that they go now, before the battle starts, for we give you leave to go and neither your horse nor your arms shall be touched. It is better to leave now than to be treacherous when We are joined [in battle].¹⁵⁷

Pere here lays a few serious claims against the king of Castile as he tries to rally the Castilians around himself. He has killed at least one relative of everyone in Pere's crowd, presumably raped daughters and mothers, stole from his people, and was apparently overzealous in his prosecution of supposed "traitors." For all these reasons, Pere asks them to stay on his side and fight against their king.

The second spiritual gift Pere mentions is grace. Grace is mentioned in over twice as many statements as mercy, although he seems at first glance to be using the grace in much the same way that he used the term mercy. The distinguishing feature is that the term mercy is used when Pere is in immediate danger, but grace is often, but not always, used when a "chance" outcome is favorable to Pere. The first incidence of the word grace is found early on and references Pere's birth.

And the said Mossèn N'Ot said: "Let us call this prince, Pere, so that Mossèn St. Pere may give him life and grace from God, and since he has the name of Pere he may have the same good fortune that had his great-grandfather the King En Pere."¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Chronicle, Part I, 1.40, p. 170.

This reference is short and generic, but the next is a bit more detailed.

Since what follows occurred through the special grace of Our Lord God, before the lord king, Our father, passed from this life, We wish that mention of it should be made in this book.¹⁵⁹

Pere goes on to say that his father was given a castle shortly before his death, and this gift was legally binding. Since his father had died, the castle was then bestowed to Pere. Pere ends Chapter I with this story, and again reiterates the role of God's grace in the acquirement of this castle. He writes of En Bernat de Materó, that "We had received the castle by the grace and gift of God through his efforts."¹⁶⁰

Neither of these statements about grace has been related to an act of war or a battle. The next mention of grace, however, does involve Pere's skirmishes with Majorca.

And We had a great fleet built in which to make the passage, and by the Grace of God, We embarked in Our fortunate fleet in the month of May of the Year of Our Lord *God* 1343. To guard Our lands and especially the frontier of Ampurdán and of Besalú and of Çamprodon, We left Our brother, the Prince En Jacme, as captain, and to accompany him Mossèn Lope de Luna, whom We later made count with 500 mounted men.¹⁶¹

The grace of God has not directly aided Pere in battle, but it has enabled him to depart for battle. Many other examples of grace intertwined with battle follow in the chronicle, including references to sieges of Alghero during Pere's conflict with Genoa in Chapter V. According to Pere, Alghero had rebelled against him for a long time, and Pere acquired Alghero after defeating the Genoese.

The noble En Bernat de Cabrera was in Alghero as Our commissioner, [enjoying] the Grace Our Lord God had given to Us and him in the victory over the Genoese and the acquisition of Alghero.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹Ibid., 1.55, p. 187.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., 188.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 3.21, p. 254.

¹⁶² Chronicle, Part II, 5.24, p. 473.

[B]y the grace of Our Lord God We set sail in Our royal galley and all the fleet followed *likewise* and We made Our way to Alghero... We landed there with all Our Barons and knights and other people, and disembarked all the horses and provisions and all the weapons We had had made to do battle and make a siege.¹⁶³

As soon as the people had come out, We, with Our victorious standard, giving thanks to Our Lord God for His grace in allowing Us to take the place, entered it.¹⁶⁴

By connecting the term “grace” with victorious battles, Pere spiritualizes his military campaigns. Victory no longer applies only to the physical realm of Catalonia-Aragon, but also to the spiritual well-being of his subjects. Therefore, the success of Pere is not only relevant to Iberia, but accomplishes some greater spiritual purpose of God’s.

Pere certainly continues the military-religious theme he established in part four of the prologue to his chronicle. He utilizes the typical Christian themes of praising God, following in God’s will, recognizing God’s judgment, and accepting mercy and grace to bolster the legitimacy of his military actions during his reign. In each of these areas, he presents himself as submissive to God, and as such, attempts to be impervious to criticism of his actions. In doing so, he also marginalizes his enemies based not only on the actions they commit, but on the inherent wickedness of those actions.

The chronicle does evidence that Pere praised God in keeping with his earlier assertion that God should be praised for all that He does. However, praising God also served the purpose of drawing the reader’s attention to Pere’s righteousness and solidifying the association with David that Pere introduced in his prologue to the chronicle. David praised God, David recognized that God’s judgment fell upon his enemies, and David recognized the role of God’s grace and mercy in his reign.

¹⁶³Ibid., 5.36, pp. 483-4.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., 5.3, p. 486.

Conclusion

Pere's use of David in the Prologue to his chronicle sets the reader up to view the remainder of the chronicle with the view that Pere is appointed by God. As other authors have done, Pere has taken the idea of David and run with it to exploit the power David's symbolism has. In Chapter 1, I summarized the ways in which King David was viewed by both Biblical authors and medieval authors. The primary characteristics noted of David were humility, servant hood, and righteousness. The focus was less on his ability to rule the secular kingdom and more on his ability to inspire his people to godliness.

Pere did not identify with David's humility and servant hood even though doing so would strengthen his connection to David. There are certainly allusions to Pere's submission to God's will, but the interactions resembling humility often seem contrived, as if Pere is playing a part, not internalizing his platitudes. Pere does not admit his own guilt or fault. To give him the benefit of the doubt, perhaps in the dealings about which he writes he truly was not at fault. However, to not include circumstances where he was greatly at fault makes any seeming claims to humility or submission to God appear less genuine. It is more difficult to feign humility when one is wrong than when one is not. To compare Pere's chronicle about himself to the Biblical representation of David would show that it is more like the representation of David in 1 Chronicles rather than 2 Samuel. 1 Chronicles does not address David's faults, and instead focuses on David's role as the ideal king and his role in building the temple. 2 Samuel does not have that same purpose and gives a more comprehensive view of David, warts and all. As illustrated by the fourth section of the Prologue, Pere is focusing on David's reputation as a mighty warrior who conquers his enemies with the help of God. The references to David in the Prologue

consist of David fighting against relatives, neighboring nations, and wild animals. Even the references to Abraham and Lot revolve around Pere's being delivered by God. These examples are perfect opportunities for Pere to demonstrably give God credit for his victories.

So, despite the lack of references to David, there are a great many references to God. As Hillgarth notes, "Pere was the theologian of his own acts...His own *Chronicle* provided proof of God's blessing on Pere's mission as heir of the kings of Aragon and counts of Barcelona."¹⁶⁵ The fact that Pere references God constantly does go to prove that he was serious when instructing his readers how to read the chronicle.

"Of itself the divine excellence makes and maintains all creation. It is therefore fitting that [all things] should be attributed and given to the high power. The royal power wills that God should be praised for the good He grants of His clemency."¹⁶⁶

Because God makes and maintains all, all things should be attributed to Him. Pere determines that, as a king, he should do so, and in fact he does. Reading the chronicle through the three part lens Pere provides does make this exceedingly clear. While I am certain that other motivations for writing the chronicle must have been present, Pere does carry out his inclination to praise God "for the good He grant of His clemency."

This echoes an observation that Gaposchkin makes about Louis IX of France. Gaposchkin submits that Psalms were reworked in order to allow Louis to "conform to biblical prescription," and that in writings about Louis, it was made clear that he did adhere to these prescriptions.¹⁶⁷ In one example, Louis is said to have "blessed the Lord in all his works." This was deliberately constructed to correspond to Psalm 102:22 which

¹⁶⁵ Hillgarth, *Spanish Kingdoms Vol. I*, 352.

¹⁶⁶Chronicle 126.

¹⁶⁷Gaposchkin, 104.

says to “bless the Lord in all his works.”¹⁶⁸ It is not merely stated by others of Pere that he blessed the Lord in all his works. In his chronicle, there is an example on virtually every page where he did just that.

As Spiegel noted, chroniclers compared their rulers to great kings in order to affirm a causal relationship between the great kings of the past and the good things that the current rulers did or intended to do. This association was not necessarily meant to be taken as a line by line comparison between the lives of the current rulers and the past archetypes. Rather, it was the association of a ruler with the ideal that elevated their moral, spiritual, and secular status. Identification as a good ruler provided more than just acclaim for the particular ruler in question. It also reflected well on the people the ruler governed, for a good ruler was the sign of God’s favor upon them. If the ruler is the friend of God, then the people are as well. Thus, the status of an entirety community or nation is elevated with that ruler.

If nothing else, mentioning King David in the Prologue introduces that notion into the reader’s mind. Perhaps the inclusion of comparisons to David was not meant to pique the curiosity of readers to see if this King Pere III could live up to the standards of David. Perhaps the Prologue was actually a statement of facts as seen by Pere. He already was comparable to David. Pere was an iteration of David to his people at his time. Instead of seeking to continue to justify that fact, the reader is supposed to read the remainder of the chronicle under this assumption. Pere’s entire reign is validated as holy and righteous because he has successfully invoked that greatest of Hebrew kings, David.

Pere capitalizes on David’s warrior reputation to justify his own predilection for conflict and conquest. As I stated earlier, Pere’s chronicle does not focus as much on his

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

policy making as it focuses on his conquest over his foes. This is similar to the Biblical and medieval representations of David in that David's policies as king were also not the center of discussion points around him. Where David was represented as a good, service-oriented, humble king with acknowledgement of his military prowess, Pere presents himself as strong, ready to engage foes, but with a smattering of humility.

There are many other aspects of Pere's reign that would add to the study but were not included. The incorporation of research into the imagery of Christ would certainly round out the Davidic imagery. It would also be a nice addendum to Hillgarth's assertion that Pere was actually using David as a vehicle to align himself in place of Christ as the next David. Further, this study has mainly addressed Pere's version of events as recorded in the chronicle. The next step would be to incorporate other accounts of the events detailed to determine how accurate Pere's account was and also to see if he modeled or reworked any of the events to better match the life of David.

Regardless, the allusions and selected events in the Chronicle of Pere III reveal something about the nature of kingship in fourteenth-century Catalonia-Aragon. That Biblical references would resonate with audiences in the Middle Ages is a given. Since Pere's choice to view David in more violent terms differs from the majority of other ancient and medieval scholars that came before him, his chronicle may be the first step in transition to a more Erasmian view of kingship whereby Solomon is appreciated as a king more than David. More simply, Pere took the respected King David, saw aspects of David's reign that were analogous to conflicts during his reign, and exploited that. Where Erasmus found David's history of war to be detestable and not Christ-like, Pere used it to align himself with God in the eyes of his subjects. Although Pere was not an exact analog

to David, he co-opted the portions of David's life that were applicable for his purposes. David was an accepted and respected model of kingship in medieval Christian Europe, and Pere craftily weaved in references throughout his chronicle that would exploit David's reputation in order to elevate his own. To a certain extent, Pere was successful, but a comparison of Pere's chronicle to other contemporary sources exposes the propaganda that exists among the detailed account of his reign.

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