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2003

### Catalonia

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#### Recommended Citation

Stephen P. Bensch. (2003). "Catalonia". *Encyclopedia Of Medieval Iberia*. 216-218.  
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brother, Enrique of Trastámara (Enrique II) and subsequently involving Lancastrian claims to the throne.

But Catalina of Lancaster also played an important political role in her own right. Enrique III had never enjoyed robust health, and when he died in 1406 the heir to the throne, Juan II, was not yet two years old. By the terms of Enrique III's will the regency of the kingdom was to be jointly exercised by his wife, Catalina, and his brother Fernando. These two, however, were never on good terms, and it was decided to divide the regency geographically, the southern half of the kingdom being entrusted to Fernando and the northern half to Catalina. For his part Fernando dedicated his energies to campaigns against the Moors, taking Antequera in 1410, and subsequently being elected to the throne of Aragón by the Compromise of Caspe of 1412.

In the exercise of her share of the regency Catalina was perceived by contemporaries as being of a suspicious nature and possessive yet at the same time easily influenced by favorites, particularly Leonor López de Córdoba, Isabel Torres, and, to a lesser extent, Fernán Alfonso de Robles. After Fernando's death in 1416, Catalina became sole regent of Castile for a brief time before her death in 1418.

ANGUS MACKAY

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### CATALONIA

Catalonia coalesced into a distinctive linguistic and cultural region in northeastern Iberia under the pressures of invasion and the violent confrontation between Islam and Christianity. Later its people constituted a cohesive, self-conscious political community centered on the counts of Barcelona. Dominated by inward-looking, protective mountain valleys in the north and an urbanized, Mediterranean coastline to the south, the eastern Pyrenean area lacked a clear geographical unity. Although the balance between mountains and coastal areas was far from stable, the exchange between the two and the interdependence it fostered produced a stable society with a well-defined sense of its own historical identity. Catalonia was in all essentials a creation of the Middle Ages.

#### Invasion and Continuity (415–801)

The first part of Hispania settled by the Romans, northeastern Iberia, was thoroughly transformed by Latin civilization. Roman institutional and cultural

foundations survived the installation of Germanic rulers, the Visigoths, and Islamic invaders. Both conquering peoples formed only a small minority among the local populations. First crossing the Pyrenees in 415, the Visigoths provided arms to maintain local Roman elites. Concentrated first in Aquitania and later in Castile, the Visigoths lightly governed the eastern Pyrenees and continued Roman administrative practices. King Alaric II issued a breviary of Roman law (506), later reworked into the *Liber iudiciorum*. It remained the basis of public order until the eleventh century.

Arriving in Spain in 711, Muslim raiders reached the Ebro by 714. Visigothic rule rapidly disintegrated. Tolerant masters, the Arab and Berber invaders allowed Christians to retain their churches and clergy in exchange for submission and tribute. Yet some Hispano-Gothic leaders resisted and sought refuge in the Pyrenees. The defensive militancy of the mountain valleys created a tough, cohesive Christian society capable of repelling Muslim advances from the plains. Linguistically the Islamic invasion accelerated the differentiation of Catalan from Aragónese and Castilian as the mountain population turned in upon itself.

#### The Spanish March (801–950)

The last of the early medieval conquerors, the Franks made the most lasting impression. Charlemagne ordered the campaigns culminating in the capture of Girona (785) and Barcelona (801), but Frankish armies failed to secure the Ebro as they had intended. The check proved decisive for it established a vibrant frontier society. In the Spanish March, the area subject to the Frankish protectorate extending just beyond Barcelona and including the eastern Pyrenees. Islamic influence disappeared; to the west, however, mass conversion produced a thriving Muslim culture centered on Tortosa and Lleida (Lérida). The Christian territory, later known as Old Catalonia bore the imprint of Carolingian order. Eventually divided into fourteen counties, the Spanish March adhered to Visigothic law administered in Carolingian courts. As the Frankish imperium weakened, local counts established hereditary rights to the territory they controlled. Descendants of Guifré the Hairy (r. 870–897) ruled several counties including Barcelona for more than five hundred years. Faced with a threatening frontier, the Pyrenean counties by the end of the early medieval conquests had emerged from the dislocation of the Roman world with a common language, institutions, and traditions. Political independence, dynastic consolidation, and territorial expansion still lay ahead.

#### Sovereignty and Social Change (950–1150)

Temporarily integrated into a non-Iberian realm by Frankish conquests, the Spanish March was an iso-

lated, conservative region clinging to traditional forms of public order. Local comital dynasties, however, gradually asserted their sovereignty. The sack of Barcelona by the Islamic caudillo al-Manṣūr in 985 made clear that local leaders would have to look after their own needs since the Frankish king failed to heed the appeal of Count Borrell II for aid. To secure the frontier, lay and clerical lords encouraged and protected settlements in deserted regions. Repopulation was above all the work of small, independent freeholders many of whom came from the densely populated mountains. A demographic upsurge began around 950, accompanied by an increase in agricultural production and the creation of local markets. With prosperity came a new aggressiveness and openness. In 950 Count Borrell sent the first embassy to the caliph in Córdoba. Raids were later launched against al-Andalus. The expedition to Córdoba in 1010, involving warlords from throughout Catalonia confirmed the military ascendancy of the Christian north. Through pillage and regular tribute paid by Muslim princes (*parias*), gold, silver, and silks further stimulated an already thriving agricultural economy.

Rapid militarization and a scramble to control new wealth undermined the traditional order based on comital authority, public courts, and Gothic law. Lords with their armed bands built private castles, imposed new obligations on the peasantry, and defied counts and judges. The “feudal crisis” reached its peak during baronial insurrections from 1041 to 1059. Ramón Berenguer I (1035–1076), count of Barcelona, proved the most successful in restoring order, but the basis of power had shifted. Oaths of fealty, contracts of service (*convenientiae*), and castle command buttressed the shaky framework of public authority. The success and prestige attached to the dynasty of Barcelona allowed it to secure several counties in addition to Barcelona, Girona, and Osona. Through marital alliance Count Ramón Berenguer III (1096–1131) acquired Besalú and Vallespir in 1111; in 1117 he annexed Cerdanya, Conflent, and Bergà at the death of Bernat III of Besalú. More land was taken from the Muslims. Upon the arrival of the Almoravids from North Africa in the late eleventh century, Islamic resistance stiffened and the flow of tribute was dammed. A restive baronage turned from raiding to settling the frontier. Tarragona, definitively occupied in 1118, was made an archbishopric. The conquest of Tortosa in 1148 and Lleida in 1149 rounded out the territorial extension known as New Catalonia. A prosperous agrarian society anchored by its many castles, Catalonia remained a land of regional contrast even as its southwestern frontier stabilized. The name Catalonia first appears in an early twelfth-century Pisan work and probably derives from

castellans (*castlàns*), the men who command local cells of power, the castles.

### Consolidation and Expansion (1150–1333)

A period of internal stabilization and external expansion succeeded the turbulent transformations of the eleventh and early twelfth centuries. With the western frontier of Catalonia secured, in 1150 Count Ramón Berenguer IV of Barcelona (1131–1162) married Petronilla, heiress to the kingdom of Aragón. The match negotiated in 1137, brought the comital dynasty a crown and even greater ambitions. Alfonso I (1162–1196) and Pere I (1196–1213) aggressively pursued family interests in southern France, but the Albigensian Crusaders thwarted Catalan designs at the Battle of Muret (1213) and left Pere dead on the battlefield. Later count-kings, as Ramón Berenguer IV’s descendants are called, consequently turned toward Iberian and Mediterranean expansion. The remarkable warrior-king Jaime I (1213–1276) conquered Mallorca (1229) and Valencia (1232–1245), his son Pedro II (1276–1285) subjugated Sicily (1282), and his grandson Jaime II (1291–1327) annexed Sardinia (1323). The brilliant phase of Catalan expansion depended on the rapid commercial and naval growth of the towns near the coast especially Barcelona, Tortosa, and Perpignan, and the restive energies of upland barons, knights, and soldiers. Each new conquest was treated as a separate state, but Catalonia remained the dominant member of the federative union known as the Crown of Aragón.

Internally the count-kings extended their control over independent counties and reestablished public order. Alfonso I obtained Roussillon (1172) and Lower Pallars (1192), and Jaime II completed the essential work of political unification with the annexation of Urgell (1314). Through the initiatives of Ramón Berenguer IV, legal experts produced the *Usatges de Barcelona*, a territorial code stressing regalian authority, and local officials called vicars and bailiffs moved toward routinized administration of the aggregate counties. These initiatives culminated in the creation of continuous royal registers by 1257 and a centralized fiscal overseer, the *mestre racional*, by 1283. Towns and villages obtained charters of liberty, fixing their obligations and internal organization. Economic prosperity, political consolidation, and military aggressiveness turned Catalonia into a Mediterranean power of the first rank.

### Crisis and Decline (1333–1479)

Under Pedro III the Ceremonious (1336–1387) Catalonia reached the height of its influence, but signs

of strain had already begun to appear. A severe famine struck in 1333, remembered as “the first bad year.” The Black Death followed in 1348, taking away 25 to 35 percent of the population. Although mercantile prosperity continued well into the fifteenth century, the economy had been shaken. The vast scale of dynastic ambitions began to erode the fisc. By 1400 many royal assets had been alienated, and the count-kings relied so heavily on the *cortes* (general assemblies) that they lost the financial and political initiative. To obtain a subsidy Pedro ceded judicial supremacy to a deputation of the cortes called the *generalitat*, which evolved into a coordinate administration with the count-king’s.

The difficulties of the fourteenth century led to decline by the end of the fifteenth. The lack of a direct male descendant provoked a constitutional crisis, resolved by the Compromise of Caspe (1412) in favor of a related Castilian family, the Trastámaras. The choice of a new dynasty proved a fateful acknowledgment of Castilian ascendancy. The new rulers tended to neglect Catalonia, which fell prey to bitter rivalries between aristocrats and lesser nobles, landlords and serfs, and urban factions. Increasing tensions led to a bitter civil war (1462–1472), accompanied by the revolt of unfree (*remença*) peasants. The war was an economic disaster and confirmed Catalan commercial decline. Before Juan II emerged the victor of the conflict, his son Fernando II had married Isabel of Castile in 1469. When Fernando succeeded his father in 1479, dynastic union brought about Castilian hegemony in Iberia and the eclipse of medieval Catalonia.

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**CATHAR HERESY** See ALBIGENSIAN CRUSADE; HERESY; WITCHCRAFT

**CATHEDRALS** See ARCHITECTURE, ECCLESIASTICAL

### CATHOLIC MONARCHS, ISABEL I OF CASTILE AND FERNANDO II OF ARAGÓN

Isabel I, Queen of Castile, known as Isabel la Católica, was born in the town of Madrigal de las Altas Torres,

22 April 1451. She died 26 November 1504, in the castle of La Mota at Medina del Campo (Valladolid). She was the daughter of Juan II, King of Castile, by his second wife, Isabel of Portugal. Only three when her father died, 1451, she was brought up piously by her mother at Arévalo. When she was thirteen, King Enrique IV, her older half-brother, took her and her younger brother, Alfonso, to court on the pretext of completing their education. Enrique’s actual motive was to prevent the two royal children from serving as rallying points for the discontented nobles.

When she was already a grown woman Isabel devoted herself to the study of Latin, and became an eager collector of books. She was actively involved in the education of her five children (Isabel, Juan, Juana, María, and Catalina). To educate Prince Juan, she created a school at court similar to the Palatine School of the Carloingians. Her daughters, too, attained high degrees of education. A rather austere individual, Isabel exercised great moral influence on the nobility, discouraging inordinate luxury and vain pastimes. At the same time, she fostered learning not only in the universities and among the nobles but also among women. Some of the latter distinguished themselves through their intellectual attainments—e.g., Beatriz Galindo, called la Latina, Lucía Medrano, and Francisca Nebrija, the Princess Juana and the Princess Catalina (who later became queen of England), Isabel de Vergara, and others who attained proficiency in Latin, mathematics, read philosophy, and became qualified to fill chairs in the universities at Alcalá and Salamanca.

By 1464, when the teenage Isabel had been moved to court by Enrique IV, the Castilian nobility had gained great power by taking advantage of the minorities of succession of the kings Enrique II and Juan II. By the time of the minority of Juan II, they had almost completely stripped the crown of its authority. They availed themselves of Enrique IV’s weak character and of the scandalous relations between Juana of Portugal, his second wife, and his favorite, Beltrán de la Cueva. Defeated at Olmedo and deprived of their leader the Infante Alfonso, who was probably poisoned on 5 July 1468, a group of nobles sought the crown for the Infanta Isabel, rejecting the king’s presumptive daughter, Juana of Castile, who was called “La Beltraneja” on the supposition that Beltrán was her real father. On this occasion Isabel gave one of the earliest indications of her strength of character and intelligence, refusing the usurped crown offered to her, and declaring that she would never accept the title of queen while her brother lived. The king, on his part, recognized Isabel as his immediate heir, thus excluding Juana. Historians have generally been willing to interpret this act of En-