Florins, Faith and *Falconetes* in the War for Granada, 1482-92

James D. Clark
History Honors Thesis
Spring 2011

Primary Thesis Advisor: Prof. Celine Dauverd, HIST
Honors Council Representative: Prof. Anne Lester, HIST
Interdepartmental Reader: Prof. Jim Walker, WRTG

Abstract

This paper focuses on the conquest of Granada from 1482 to 1492. This period marked the end of independent Muslim rule in Iberia and the final capture of land lost to the first Muslim invaders in the year 711. The conquest of Granada under Ferdinand and Isabella reflected the modernization of warfare that occurred across Europe beginning in the fourteenth century. In particular Ferdinand's army was larger and composed of far more infantry than previous crusading armies in Iberia, and it effectively deployed gunpowder siege artillery to assault the formerly impregnable defenses of Granada. Ferdinand emerged from the crusade with a modern and well-trained army that was under his authority, not the dispersed authority typical of feudal levies.

Since the conquest of Granada was fought as a crusade, the culmination of centuries of religious conflict, it is unsurprising that the Catholic Church played an active role in supporting Ferdinand and Isabella. The Church legitimized the conflict, and above all, it provided money. Ferdinand needed money above all else. Cannons and provisions for his many footsoldiers were not free. Papal subsidization for the crusade against Granada allowed Ferdinand to modernize his military and successfully wage a war of conquest. This paper will examine both the ways in which the Castilian military changed during the crusade, and the role that the Catholic Church played in making those changes possible.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....4

Chapter 1 10

Talas and Treaties.....11

Thunder of God - Artillery in the crusade 15

The plebs and the crusade - Infantry in Ferdinand's army.....25

Chapter 2 34

Holy justification 34

Holy subsidization 42

Final words 49

Works Cited.....51

Introduction

Ferdinand and Isabella were exceptional rulers who managed to consolidate a great deal of power during their reigns, however scholars agree that their rule did not by any means create a Spanish state.[1] Theirs was certainly a union of crowns, a political marriage between two distinct kingdoms. However it would be very difficult to confidently choose a single point to mark the beginning of a Spanish state. Criteria for statehood are debatable, and transitions are gradual. What is clear is that the conquest of Granada had profound implications for the organization of Spanish military forces, and allowed Ferdinand and Isabella to concentrate a great deal of power in their courts. Religious sentiment and the aid of the Church made the conquest of Granada possible, for it was waged as a crusade, a culmination of the centuries-old *Reconquista*. The religious capital gained by waging the crusade against Granada enabled Ferdinand and Isabella to finance a modern army of conquest, which consolidated royal authority and signaled the decline of Spanish feudal society as well as the emergence of a powerful monarchy of transcontinental prominence.

The surrender of the city of Granada to Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile on 2 January 1492, marked the end of over seven centuries of Muslim political rule in southern Iberia and the culmination of a *Reconquista* movement that was almost equal in duration. Ever since the Umayyad Muslims overthrew the Spanish Visigothic monarchy of Toledo in 711, Spanish Christian kings had desired to regain the territory lost to the Muslims. The imperative to drive the Muslims from the lost lands was seen as God's will, and sentiments of religious and territorial

[1] Pablo Fernández Albaladejo, "Cities and the State in Spain," in *Cities and the Rise of States in Europe, A.D. 1000 to 1800*, ed. Charles Tilly and Wim P. Blockmans (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 168.

conquest were intertwined by the middle of the eleventh century.[2] The crusades of 1482-92 were a conscious continuation of the previous crusading tradition in Iberia, however as the culmination of the *Reconquista*, the war against Granada had military and political implications for the Spanish kingdoms that past conflicts did not. The conquest of Granada was made possible by the subsidization of the crusade by the Catholic Church which allowed Spanish forces to adopt the newest military technology known to Europeans at the time. The crusade provided Ferdinand and Isabella the funds they needed to build a modern standing army, a common enemy to unify their subjects against, and eventually, the lands of Granada itself. After the conquest of Granada, Spain emerged on the international sphere by funding exploration of North America as well as challenging France militarily in the Italian Wars of the early sixteenth century.[3] None of these developments could have occurred without the benefit of church financing for the crusade against Granada.

The final crusade against Granada was the first military campaign in Spain to reflect the modernization of tactics and weaponry that occurred in Europe during the fourteenth through eighteenth centuries. The defining development of the military revolution was the effective deployment of gunpowder artillery in an offensive role. [4] The acquisition and employment of siege artillery allowed Ferdinand and Isabella to "conquer the heretofore formidable fortresses constructed during the early and mid medieval period."[5] According to military historian Weston F. Cook Jr., "gunpowder firepower and artillery siege operations won the Granadan war, and

[2] John Edwards, "*Reconquista* and Crusade in Fifteenth-Century Spain," in *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Norman Housley (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 165.
[3] Albert D. McJoynt, introduction to *The Art of War in Spain: The Conquest of Granada, 1481-1492*, by William H. Prescott (London: Greenhill Books, 1995), 15-16.
[4] Clifford J. Rogers, "The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years' War," *Journal of Military History* March (1993), 244.
[5] McJoynt, introduction, 27.

other factors in the Spanish victory were actually secondary and derivative."[6] Scholars agree that only the wealthiest governments could afford to acquire the gunpowder siege equipment necessary to wage an offensive siege campaign. While "acquisition costs and logistical support for a viable siege artillery train were beyond the means of the feudal lord, or even of a small country" like Castile or Aragon alone, papal aid for the crusade subsidized Spanish acquisition of a large artillery force that rivaled that of France or the Ottoman Empire.[7]

Papal funds also enabled Ferdinand and Isabella to raise large numbers of new troops - a standing force similar to that of Charles VII of France in the last phase of the Hundred Years' War.[8] The composition of Ferdinand's military during the crusade against Granada reflected a shift in European warfare away from the previous reliance on the shock capabilities of heavy cavalry towards a wider employment of cheaply raised projectile infantry in support of well-trained pike infantry.[9] This "increase in the size of the infantry, and the considerable numerical growth of the armies, entailed a large-scale plebification of warfare: once conceived of as a 'noble' activity, proper to noblemen, it now became the almost exclusive preserve of the commons."[10] These developments not only allowed Ferdinand to conquer Granada, but provided him with a modern military force that was capable of defending and expanding his imperial claims.

Of course it cost money to forge cannons and pay men-at-arms. Primary documents show that Pope Sixtus IV was "conscious that the resources of the king and queen are insufficient for operations against the kingdom of Granada and for such a great exaltation of the faith..." and

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[6] Weston F. Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain and the End of the Reconquista," *Journal of Military History* January (1993).
[7] McJoynt, introduction, 27.
[8] McJoynt, introduction, 38.
[9] Rogers, "Military Revolutions," 248-49.
[10] Luis Ribot García, "Types of Armies: Early Modern Spain," in *War and Competition Between States*, ed. Philippe Contamine (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 47.

gave accordingly, granting indulgences for both fighters and those who paid a set donation to the war effort.[11,12] He also diverted two-thirds of one tenth of the church's revenue in Spain to the campaign against Granada, while the remaining third of the tax went to pay for crusades against the Ottoman Turks.[13] Subsequent bulls continued the indulgences and increased subsidies to the Catholic monarchs by at least 100,000 Aragonese gold florins.[14] Spanish historian M.A. Ladero Quesada estimates papal aid to the monarchs at the "enormous sum of approximately 800 million *maravedíes*, three-quarters of which are accounted for in surviving documents. On this basis Ladero has no hesitation in affirming that 'With the money from the crusade [bull] and the tenth, the Crown financed the greater part of the war.'"[15] Clearly the involvement of the Church in the conquest of Granada was integral to its success.

Fortunately military histories of the conquest of Granada are plentiful. Modern military historians draw inferences from the primary documents and contemporaneous accounts that scholars have been aware of for centuries. William H. Prescott's *The History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, The Catholic*, first published in December 1837, deals mainly "with politics, war and diplomacy rather than with social or economic institutions," and remains canon with military historians due to its thorough yet skeptical use of primary sources.[16,17] Modern

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[11] Pope Sixtus IV, "Pope Sixtus IV grants the *cruzada* to Ferdinand and Isabella for the war against Granada, 10 August 1482," in *Documents on the Later Crusades, 1274-1580*, ed. Norman Housley (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 157.
[12] See also José Goñi Gaztambide, "The Holy See and Reconquest of Granada," in *Spain in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Roger Highfield (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1972), 357. The papal bull of 1482 granted indulgences for financial contributors to the crusade as well as military participants, a first for Spanish crusades.
[13] Pope Sixtus IV, "Pope Sixtus IV grants the *cruzada* to Ferdinand and Isabella for the war against Granada, 10 August 1482," 162.
[14] Hernando del Pulgar, "*Crónica de los reyes catolicos* chapter 176," in *Documents on the Later Crusades, 1274-1580*, ed. Norman Housley (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 164.
[15] Edwards, "*Reconquista* and Crusade in Fifteenth-Century Spain," 175.
[16] William H. Prescott, *The Art of War in Spain: The Conquest of Granada, 1481-1492*. ed. Albert D. McJoynt (London: Greenhill Books, 1995), 253. Note that *The Art of War in Spain* is based on seven chapters of Prescott's *Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella* with editorial revisions and extensive updated material focused on the military aspects of the campaign, all contributed by editor Albert D. McJoynt.
[17] Ibid., 255.

historians like Albert D. McJoynt, and Weston F. Cook Jr., are able to dissect Prescott's work and the sources it contains to examine specific components of the military struggle. For example, Cook examines in detail the role of artillery in the conquest of Granada. Military histories discuss the changes that occurred in the Castilian military during and after the crusade against Granada, and they contextualize these changes within the broader European military revolution.

The most significant primary source for any study of the final crusade against Granada or the lives of Ferdinand and Isabella is Hernando del Pulgar. Del Pulgar was the royal historiographer in Queen Isabella's court, and wrote about the conquest as a historian and as a witness, accompanying the monarchs to sieges in 1485, 1487, and 1489.[18] While his writing is admittedly celebratory of both his personal accomplishments as well as those of the monarchs he served, del Pulgar remains the most informed primary source on the subject. His combination of firsthand experience, access to the monarchs, and access to royal records and libraries positions him above all others to give a comprehensive account of the campaign, from the view of the Spaniards in any case. His *Crónica de los muy altos y esclarecidos reyes cathólicos don Fernando y doña Ysabel de gloriosa memoria* covers the reign of the Catholic monarchs until 1490, when it is likely that del Pulgar died.

Histories of the crusade against Granada between 1482 and 1492 tend to be either military studies or narrative accounts of the conquest. Historians acknowledge the support of the Church for the crusade against Granada. However papal subsidization of the *Reconquista* was so well-established by the time of Ferdinand and Isabella that many writers merely summarize the benefits granted to the monarchs by the Church. The role of the Church's support in effecting the changes in Ferdinand's military has been overlooked. This paper hopes to address the role that

[18] Joseph Abraham Levi, "Hernando del Pulgar (Fernando del Pulgar)," in *Dictionary of Literary Biography v.286: Castilian Writers, 1400-1500*, ed. Frank A. Domínguez and George D. Greenia (Farmington Hills: The Gale Group Inc.), 190.

religion and Church finances played in the military evolution that occurred in Spain at the end of the fifteenth century.

Chapter 1

The union between the crowns of Aragón and Castile was built on military dominance. The reign of the Catholic monarchs signaled a shift in the composition of the Spanish military, and Ferdinand and Isabella did not forget the value of a strong army for keeping rebellious nobles or dynastic rivals in check. Dynastic intrigue immediately forced the monarchs to defend their claim to the Castilian throne from Isabella's relative Joanna and her husband Afonso V, the king of Portugal.[19] Ferdinand assumed personal control of the military effort, and by 1479 he had "virtually won the crown for his wife."[20] As militaries across the European continent modernized, the army became "one of the fundamental pillars in the new political fabric, along with bureaucracy, diplomacy, new fiscal procedures, and a whole series of developments. At the root of this transformation lay the assumption, on the part of the king, of a monopoly in the affairs of war."[21] While political necessity occasioned Ferdinand's early command, his continued personal leadership during the crusade against Granada made him the most prominent military figurehead in Spain.[22] The authority that Ferdinand gained during the crusade, combined with the capital that Isabella was able to solicit from the Vatican in support of the war, allowed the monarchs to modernize their army to engage in wars of conquest. After Granada fell in 1492, Ferdinand, for instance, was able to use his military to defend his international territorial claims and even expand his empire into North Africa and North America.

[19] John Edwards, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2005), 13.
[20] Paul Stewart, "Military command and the development of the viceroyalty under Ferdinand and Isabella," *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 5 (1975): 226.
[21] Luis Ribot García, "Types of Armies: Early Modern Spain," in *War and Competition Between States*, ed. Philippe Contamine (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 37.
[22] Stewart, "Viceroyalty under Ferdinand and Isabella," 226.

***Talas* and Treaties**

When considered in its entirety, the *Reconquista* often seems like a divinely ordained exodus of the Muslim invaders from the Iberian peninsula. Certainly the papacy and the leaders of the many crusades viewed their efforts as such. The fragmented remains of the Visigothic kingdom must have been stunned by the ruthless military efficiency that the Umayyad Muslims displayed in their seven year conquest of Iberia, and focused their immediate efforts on self-preservation.[23] The efforts to recapture the lost territory rapidly took on the religious tenor that gives the *Reconquista* an exaggerated sense of mandate and unity. By the time Castilian and Leonese forces recaptured the symbolically important former Visigothic capital of Toledo in 1085, there existed a prevailing attitude among Asturian kings and their chroniclers that any conquest of Muslim territory was "for the recovery and extension of the Church of Christ, for the destruction of the pagans, the enemies of Christ, and the building up and benefit of the Christians..."[24] Similar rhetoric was found in papal bulls granting indulgences to knights fighting in Spain even before the capture of Toledo, and only increased after the First Crusade established what would become the centuries-long pattern of European crusading.[25] Despite the papal endorsement given to the *Reconquista* movement, however, instances of Christian kings fighting each other were as numerous as instances of Christian kings uniting against Muslim foes. And although the Iberian kings conquered for the glory of God, "what was lost in seven years, [nevertheless] took seven hundred to regain."[26]

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[23] Elena Lourie, "A Society Organised for War: Medieval Spain," in *Crusade and Colonisation*, Elena Lourie (Aldershot: Variorum, 1990), 54.
[24] Sancho I Ramírez of Aragon and Navarre, referring to his capture and settlement of Montemayor. See John Edwards, "*Reconquista* and Crusade in Fifteenth-Century Spain," in *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Norman Housley (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 165.
[25] Edwards, "*Reconquista* and Crusade," 166.
[26] J.H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716* (London, 1963), 14, cited in Lourie, *Crusade and Colonisation*, 54.

Christian expansion in the wake of Muslim conquest was intermittent. The small Christian kingdoms that remained in the north of Spain at first lacked the resources to seriously challenge the overwhelmingly superior Umayyad caliphate.[27] It was generally discord within the Muslim kingdoms that provided the opportunity for Christian expansion. The dissolution of the Cordoban Caliphate in the early eleventh century allowed Castilians to recapture Toledo and settle in the Tagus valley, however these successes prompted the invasion of the Almoravid and Almohad caliphates in close succession, which halted Christian advances for another century.[28] Significant advances were not made again until the middle of the thirteenth century, when the complementary but independent efforts of Ferdinand III of Castile and James I of Aragón resulted in the capture of Córdoba and Seville and the region of Valencia respectively.[29] By the middle of the fourteenth century, the kingdom of Granada was the only remaining Muslim state on the Iberian peninsula and the general demographic patterns that defined the remaining centuries of *al-Andalus* had been set. The Christian kingdoms had expanded from their refuge in the Cantabrian mountains to encompass almost "two-thirds of Spain, together with a still higher proportion of its population."[30] The middle of the fourteenth century marked the beginning of a lull in crusading activity in Iberia that would last until 1481. The grand strategy of the Christian kings became one "aimed at containment rather than elimination of a player - 'more parade than crusade.'"[31]

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[27] Lourie, *Crusade and Colonisation*, 54.
[28] Edwards, "*Reconquista* and Crusade," 164.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Weston F. Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain and the End of the Reconquista," *Journal of Military History* January (1993), 47-48. John Edwards is quick to note that despite the general perception of the century between the reign of Peter of Castile and Ferdinand and Isabella as fallow for crusading, this is not entirely the case. Certainly papal support for crusades in Iberia continued throughout the period, despite the Great Schism of the Western Church that produced multiple popes and cast papal authority into a state of confusion. For example, Ferdinand "de Antequerra" won his nickname after a five month siege of Antequerra that featured artillery and other

With most of the peninsula securely in Christian hands, the Iberian kings were free to vie for peninsular hegemony, and "largely ignored the emirate of Granada, except as a possible ally, instead devoting themselves to internecine conflict, within and between the Christian kingdoms."[32] While Christian kings preferred to wage dynastic wars rather than conquer Granada, nobles on both sides of the border kept the conflict alive through localized skirmishes. "Offensives became seasonal cavalry raids over porous frontier borders, the low-level enterprise of raid, ravage, and plunder known in Castilian and Arabic as *tala*."[33] This style of warfare was common in Europe before the military revolution. Feudal warfare was dominated by wealthy lords who had sufficient land and capital to outfit themselves as cavalry. Horses provided their rider with the requisite mobility to strike at undefended towns or burn crops in the hinterland of a city and escape any unwanted conflicts with a superior force. Campaigns were mounted during the Spring and Summer, and combatants returned home each year for the colder months. Chivalric warfare sometimes "seemed more like sport than serious business."[34] The scale and mortality of *tala* warfare remained comparatively low because one motivation behind any cavalry engagement was the prospect of ransoms. Royalty and nobility could bring in exorbitant ransom fees if captured, but any mounted soldier likely had access to enough capital to make capturing them far more desirable than killing them.[35] Cavalry raids were yearly occurrences on the Iberian peninsula during the decades leading up to the war for Granada, and these minor skirmishes did little to affect the general balance of peace between the Muslim and Christian royal courts. However, in 1481 all of that would change as the Muslim capture of Zahara and the

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siege engines. Despite this success however the crusade ended in a treaty with the Emir of Granada rather than the destruction of the Muslim realm. See Edwards, "*Reconquista* and Crusade," 167-68.

[32] Edwards, "*Reconquista* and Crusade," 167.

[33] Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 48.

[34] Clifford J. Rogers, "The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years' War," *Journal of Military History* March (1993), 255.

[35] Ibid., 256.

subsequent retaliation of the impetuous Marquis of Cádiz gave Ferdinand and Isabella the pretext they needed to launch an offensive crusade unrivaled by any on the peninsula in the preceding half-century.

The war for Granada showcased Spanish gunnery and placed the army under royal command, yet ironically the events that sparked the conflict were determined by the headstrongness of two lords and the feats of two teams of *escaladeros*, or wall-climbers. On the evening of December 26, 1481, a force of 300 cavalry and 4,000 infantry under the command of Ibrahim al-Hakim approached the fortified Christian town of Zahara, and after "scaling the walls under favour of a furious tempest, which prevented [their] approach from being readily heard...swept away the whole population of the place, men, women, and children, in slavery to Granada."[36] Two months later, the Marquis of Cádiz captured the fortress of Alhama in much the same manner as Zahara fell. It was his decision to occupy Alhama rather than retreat in the face of reinforcements from Granada that compelled Ferdinand to undertake a campaign of conquest beginning in 1482.[37]

[36]William H. Prescott, *The Art of War in Spain: The Conquest of Granada, 1481-1492*, ed. Albert D. McJoynt (London: Greenhill Books, 1995), 140.
[37] Ibid., 143. Prescott claims that the Marquis indignantly rejected the advice to withdraw from Alhama. Prescott implies that the Marquis was eager to go to war after Isabella had negotiated an end to his feud with another powerful Castilian family. The Marquis' soldiers on the other hand were enticed to stay by the amount of plunder they had gained from the settlement.

Thunder of God - Artillery in the crusade

To wage a crusade of true conquest, Ferdinand needed innovation. Castilian forces had not permanently captured a Granadan settlement in over a quarter-century by the time Pope Sixtus granted the *cruzada* to Ferdinand and Isabella in the summer of 1482. Warfare was predictable; each year raiding parties sallied forth from fortified frontier towns, and each year they returned to the safety of their fortresses for the winter. With a proper garrison, fortified settlements could usually be held until starved out or relieved by reinforcements. Ferdinand lacked the time to outwait every stronghold in Granada if he was to conquer within his lifetime a kingdom that had eluded Christian kings for centuries. At the outset, the advantage seemed to belong to Granada. Their "strength lay in interlocking fortifications planted in rugged terrain, hit-and-run guerilla cavalry tactics, and a people's militia infantry organized around a small corps of state-paid professionals fighting on interior lines."[38] In other words, it was much easier to contain Granada than to engage them offensively. What Ferdinand needed were guns, as many as possible.

A war of territorial conquest against Granada was a bold undertaking. Siege campaigns were expensive and laborious undertakings well into the fifteenth century. Fourteenth-century French writer Pierre Dubois described sieges as impractical: "A castle can hardly be taken within a year, and even if it does fall, it means more expenses for the king's purse and for his subjects than the conquest is worth. Because of these lengthy, dangerous and arduous sieges, and because battle and assaults can be avoided, leaders are apt to come to agreements which are unfavorable to the stronger party."[39] Granada was able to survive for centuries by maneuvering the power relations between Iberian kingdoms so that no realm had the resources or sufficient incentive to

[38] Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 58.
[39] Clifford J. Rogers, "The military revolutions of the Hundred Years' War," *Journal of Military History* April (1993), 273.

attempt a full-scale conquest of their southern neighbor.[40] What allowed Ferdinand to overcome Granada's defensive advantages was the aggressive acquisition and deployment of offensive gunpowder weaponry.

Prior to the last decades of the fourteenth century, gunpowder weapons were deployed most effectively in defensive roles. Gunpowder artillery simply lacked the firepower to seriously threaten well-engineered stone fortifications. "As late as c. 1420, a German author held that the defender of a well-equipped castle, provided with artillery and good gunners, 'whatever his enemy may attempt, will be able to hold off the enemy…until he is relieved or the enemy is given a good thrashing and departs the siege."[41] By the middle of the century however, advances in the design and construction of siege artillery had rendered cannons capable of breaching stone walls.[42] This achievement marked the point at which gunpowder weaponry "reversed the long-standing superiority of the defensive in siege warfare."[43] The first significant sustained use of gunpowder weapons in offensive sieges occurred during the latter half of the Hundred Years' War when Charles VII deployed artillery *en masse* to capture English strongholds. French artillery was present in Iberia during the early decades of the Hundred Years' War, however it played an inconclusive role.[44] Despite the limited effectiveness of French artillery in the Iberian theater, Ferdinand was influenced by Charles' wider success: "Because artillery so shaped its operations and conduct, the War for Granada bore far greater resemblance to the Valois eviction

[40] Cook notes that Amir Saad's defense of his kingdom against Castile was tacitly aided by Aragon, Navarre, and Italy. Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 49.
[41] Clifford J. Rogers, "Military revolutions," 261-62.
[42] Ibid., 265-66. Between 1420 and 1440, artillery grew in length and began to be loaded with more potent gunpowder. These combined developments allowed artillery to shoot further and do much more damage, increasing their value as siege weapons. English artillery was capable of breaching town walls by 1437, and by the 1440s Franco-Burgundian artillery could assail any fortress the English possessed. Sieges were shortened from months to weeks or even days as artillery bombardment wrought sufficient devastation within besieged towns to force them to come to terms quickly. Towns were now vulnerable to direct assault as well, as defensive towers could be demolished and gaps could be made in walls for infantry to assault through.
[43] Ibid., 244.
[44] Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 48.

of England from France or the Ottoman conquest of Byzantium and the Balkans than to earlier Reconquista campaigns."[45] To wage a war of conquest against Granada, Ferdinand and Isabella would need to make a considerable investment in gunpowder weaponry. Earlier Spanish monarchs either lacked the resources to acquire significant numbers of firearms or reigned before the technology had been proven in Europe. Even before the war for Granada began, Ferdinand and Isabella recognized the importance of artillery and took measures to improve their gunpowder weaponry. In just three years after securing power, the monarchs increased the number of artillerymen in the Castilian army from four to sixty-five.[46] Respect for the offensive capabilities of artillery and the ability to acquire and deploy artillery pieces were entirely different however.

Opening engagements in the war for Granada quickly proved the need for artillery. Zahara and Alhama had both been taken under cover of night and poor weather. The element of surprise and even a sleeping sentinel had allowed the capture of these settlements.[47] Once the capture of Alhama warranted intervention by the crowns of Granada as well as Aragón and Castile, surprise became difficult to achieve. Both Ferdinand and the Marquis of Cádiz knew full well that Alhama would suffer a Muslim counterattack due to its close proximity to the city of Granada. The marquis repaired the town's fortifications as best he could, and the king marshaled reinforcements. It was no surprise then when Abu l-Hasan Ali, the King of Granada, arrived before the gates of Alhama on the 5th of March, 1482 with the notoriously numerous host of his city - 3,000 cavalry and 50,000 infantry.[48] What the king had failed to bring in his haste however were any artillery pieces. Granadan forces used their numerical superiority to assault all quarters

[45] Ibid., 44.
[46] Albert D. McJoynt, introduction to *The Art of War in Spain: The Conquest of Granada, 1481-1492*, by William H. Prescott (London: Greenhill Books, 1995), 54.
[47] Prescott, *The Art of War in Spain*, 142.
[48] Ibid., 146.

of the town, however the Castilian defenders held, and after sustaining heavy losses, the Granadan king decided instead to blockade the defenders, who had left their baggage train behind in their eagerness to assault the town by surprise.[49] Without artillery, Abu l-Hasan had to content himself with the more traditional, and more importantly, more time-consuming besiegement method of starving out the defenders. Time was not on the king's side however as both Ferdinand and the Duke of Medina Sidonia were marching on his position with reinforcements for the besieged Spaniards. The Duke's army numbered five thousand cavalry and forty thousand infantry, and reflected his substantial wealth and power as the premier noble of southern Spain.[50] The Duke was poised to arrive first after ignoring orders to halt his army and wait for Ferdinand to assume command, and so Abu l-Hasan was forced to retreat on the 29th of March to avoid being caught between the garrison of Alhama and the incoming troops.[51] Thus from the outset the traditional methods of siege warfare proved inadequate to win or regain territory in the War for Granada.

Ferdinand eagerly took to the field at the head of his troops in June 1482, but found that the *repartimientos*, or provisions, and levies of troops asked of the cities and districts of Castile and Aragón were largely unfulfilled.[52] More importantly, Ferdinand had only a few pieces of artillery under his command. His target was the settlement of Loja, a naturally defensible stronghold reinforced by 3,000 troops following the loss of nearby Alhama.[53]As his forces deployed the artillery on a ridge overlooking the town, the Granadan garrison under Ali Atar sallied forth from Loja and drew the Spanish forces from the ridge. While the Spaniards were

[49] Ibid., 146-47.
[50] Ibid., 147-48. The Duke's annual rents totaled nearly sixty thousand ducats, and if the figures on the number of troops he brought to the relief of Alhama are accurate, he could indeed command an army "from his own resources...little inferior to what might be raised by a sovereign prince" as Prescott notes.
[51] Ibid., 148.
[52] Ibid., 150, 154.
[53] Ibid., 154.

preoccupied, Granadan *jinetes* carried off their artillery and harassed their troops until reinforcements could arrive. The debacle persuaded Ferdinand to retreat, and he undertook no further offensives that year. William H. Prescott notes that perhaps Ferdinand and Isabella underestimated the resolve of the Granadans, either due to eagerness for glory or the relative ease with which Alhama had fallen. It is impossible to know whether excessive zeal clouded Ferdinand's judgment, but perhaps inexperience with siege artillery led him to underestimate the importance of a well supplied and well defended artillery train in any army of conquest.

The following year was met by further defeat for Castile and Aragón. Military intelligence suggested that the region of Málaga lacked cavalry protection and was vulnerable to attack through a chain of mountains called the Ajarquía. The Grand Master of Castilian forces communicated the intelligence to noblemen on the border, who gathered their personal retinues to undertake the expedition.[54] The force that marched upon Málaga was undisciplined, and most of the front and center columns broke rank to plunder the countryside, with some of the most impetuous knights riding within sight of the city's walls unsupported.[55] A Granadan ambush spurred a nightlong Castilian retreat and left between 200 and 800 Christians dead, with many more taken captive.[56] Andres Bernáldez, the Curate of Los Palacios and one of the primary chroniclers of the War for Granada, attributed the loss to divine displeasure: "The number of the Moors was small, who inflicted this grievous defeat on the Christians. It was, indeed, clearly miraculous, and we may discern in it the special interposition of Providence, justly offended with the greater part of those that engaged in the expedition; who...with little regard to God's service, were influenced by covetousness and love of ungodly gain."[57] The Curate, like many chroniclers

[54] Ibid., 162.
[55] Ibid., 163.
[56] Ibid., 166-67.
[57] Ibid., 167.

of the age, emphasizes the religious dimensions of the war, however he is likely right that the noblemen's forces were lured by the spoils of war. The Marquis of Cádiz was one of the noblemen that ventured into the Ajarquía, and his retinue was accustomed to gaining from their struggles. The Curate claims that the unwillingness of the Marquis' men to part with the spoils of Alhama influenced his decision to occupy the town, rather than dismantle the citadel and retreat as was suggested by some of his advisors.[58] No sooner had the Duke of Medina Sidonia relieved the besieged garrison at Alhama than a quarrel broke out between members of the army concerning division of the spoils that the town had yielded. Only the tact of the Duke, who compelled his men to be contented with aiding a fellow countryman against the Muslim foe, prevented the quarrel from escalating.[59] Whether or not the defeat in the Ajarquía was divine punishment, it seems clear that it was greed and lack of discipline that enticed the troops of all but the Grand Master of Santiago to break battle readiness and pillage the hinterland of Málaga. Had the troops shown better professionalism and ridden together in formation, the Castilian forces would have had much improved chances for at least an organized retreat.

The failed campaigns of 1482 and 1483 held several lessons for Ferdinand and Isabella. First, they demonstrated the necessity of gunpowder artillery and sufficient ammunition in order to threaten a fortified position. Loja was an embarrassing reminder that enthusiasm alone was insufficient to defeat an enemy fighting to defend their home. Next, they suggested that royal consolidation of military authority was required to achieve territorial conquest. Nobles often acted independently and were motivated more by personal glory or profit potential than by religious ideals, fealty, or military discipline. In the Ajarquía, only the forces of the Master of Santiago marched in battle order. The Master of Santiago was an extremely prestigious member

[58] Ibid., 143.
[59] Ibid., 148.

of the Castilian court, and along with the leaders of the other Holy Military Orders provided some of the most disciplined and loyal troops that the Catholic monarchs had at their disposal.[60] The system of *talas* led by powerful border nobles would have to be replaced by a concerted artillery offensive consolidated under royal control if Ferdinand and Isabella desired to add the gem of Granada to their crowns.

The Catholic monarchs were not ones to repeat a mistake. Artillery acquisition and training began in earnest after the debacle at Loja. Ferdinand encouraged the growth of a nascent arms industry in Aragón by constructing a cannonball and powderworks in the Constantine Mountains, with arsenals in Seville, Córdoba, and Ecija.[61] In 1482, Ferdinand appointed Francisco Ramírez de Madrid as Master of Artillery. Seven years later, the Master of Artillery was made part of the *Casa Real*, and the personnel of the artillery department were made permanent, which placed the artillery firmly under the control of the king.[62] By 1485, the Catholic monarchs had increased the numbers of *lombaderos*, or master gunners, in the Castilian army from four to ninety-one.[63]

Ferdinand and Isabella's new focus on artillery paid dividends quickly. Just months after the rout in the Ajarquía, a sortie led by Ferdinand was able to destroy a fortified enemy encampment at Illora and proceed to capture the settlement of Tajara in a mere four days due to direct artillery assaults in both engagements. The summer campaign of 1483 marked a shift to a "mode of siege warfare where artillery did not so much support the assault as become the

[60] McJoynt, introduction, 51.
[61] Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 52.
[62] McJoynt, introduction, 30. The Master of Artillery was tasked not only with the upkeep of the crown's artillery pieces, but also with the construction and improvement of roads, which were vital to the transport of artillery. Hernando del Pulgar observed the construction of a road in preparation for the siege of Cambil that he claimed employed 6,000 workers.
[63] Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 50.

assault."[64] The Curate of Los Palacios recounted in his memoirs that "great towns - which once could have held out a year against all foes but hunger - now fell in a month."[65] Many towns like Tajara fell much quicker as Spanish guns tore down walls and made further defense untenable in a matter of days. The capture of Ronda in 1485 took fourteen days; Velez fell in eleven days two years later.[66] Spanish guns did more than tear down enemy fortifications. Gunpowder weapons possessed a certain demoralizing quality. At first gunpowder weapons caused more fear from their noise than their lethality, but once artillery could breach stone walls the fear of bombardment took on a new dimension. According to the chronicler Alonso de Palencia, when the walls of Alora fell in 1484, "there arose the most extraordinary clamor, howls and laments from the women, the weeping of children, raising the panic of defenders already overwhelmed with other fears."[67] Many towns simply chose to surrender as soon as Ferdinand's gunners began laying their sighting stakes rather than face bombardment.[68] With proper planning and enough artillery and ammunition, Ferdinand's forces need never suffer another embarrassment like Loja.

Yearly artillery forays against strategically important settlements allowed Ferdinand and Isabella to rapidly consolidate territory. They only needed capture the most influential stronghold in a region to secure the capitulation of the entire area in most cases. In 1487, Velez was chosen as a target due to its strategic significance on the route to Málaga. After a brief siege, the capture of Velez spurred the surrender of more than twenty outlying settlements between it and the city of Málaga.[69] The pattern of settlements in the hinterland surrendering after the capitulation of an urban center was not new to Iberian crusades or even to wars of territorial conquest in general.

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[64] Ibid., 61.
[65] Ibid., 43.
[66] For the capture of Ronda, see Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 63. For Velez, see Prescott, *The Art of War in Spain,* 197, 200.
[67] Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 62.
[68] Ibid., 64.
[69] Prescott, *The Art of War in Spain,* 200.

However artillery sieges were much more rapid than former sieges in Iberian crusades, and the surrender of swaths of land at a time following a successful siege allowed Ferdinand and Isabella to rapidly conquer the remaining Granadan territory.

All the same, superiority in firepower does not fully account for the Spanish success in capturing Granadan settlements. While Granada did not possess as many modern artillery pieces as Spain, what pieces they possessed could still effectively serve in defensive roles. Besieging forces still had to move within range of Granadan guns and even their dreaded poisoned crossbow bolts. Spanish commanders needed to develop strategies to effectively deploy both artillery and smaller gunpowder weaponry as the core of their forces. As Spanish strategy became more nuanced, gunpowder weaponry came to play a critical role in every juncture of territorial conquest. Handgunners and mobile field pieces escorted slow, lengthy siege artillery trains and defended the larger pieces once they were deployed and immobile. Siege artillery knocked gaps in enemy walls or simply lobbed projectiles inside the city to wreak devastation and coerce the defenders to surrender. Medium field artillery kept defenders from repairing damage to the walls or manning defensive artillery. Hernando del Pulgar described the chaos that the Spanish guns caused among the defenders of Ronda in 1485: "in one place the cannon knocked down the wall and in another wrecked the houses and, if they tried to repair the damage made by the *lombardas* they could not, for the unending hail of fire from smaller weapons killed anybody on the walls."[70] The system of mutually supporting fire between different classes of guns kept defenders from repairing breaches or sallying forth to meet the besieging force, and closely resembled the tactics used by the forces of Charles VII in France.[71] The primacy of

[70] Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 63.
[71] The Vabanesque system of siegecraft employed in France during the Hundred Years' War called for a sophisticated complementary deployment of guns. According to chronicler Guillaume Leseur, at the siege of Dax French forces first dug trenches and fortifications to protect gunnery crews from defensive fire. Once ready, "the

Spanish gunpowder weaponry carried every siege until the final siege of Granada itself in 1491, when Ferdinand and Isabella chose to outwait the enemy rather than bombard the city due to diplomatic considerations.[72] Despite the silence of Spanish guns in 1491, the War for Granada very much changed the composition of the Spanish military. By the time "the war ended, the Catholic Monarchs owned over 180 large and medium pieces, five state-run foundries (many on Granadan soil), and the largest standing army in the west."[73] The effective use of artillery and other gunpowder weaponry gave Ferdinand the advantage he needed to conquer territory from Granada, and it would also characterize the successes of his forces in Italy and North Africa in the years to come.

large artillery was fired assiduously day and night. Inside of a few days it had done great damage, so that the defenses of the towers…and a great part of the forward walls were thrown down to the ground; and our said artillery made large and wide breaches there, over which watch was held; and we fired the large culverines at these, so that, when the enemy wished to make shelters or otherwise repair them, our culverines often killed and wounded their men and knocked them down to the ground, them and their shelters." See Clifford J. Rogers, "Military revolutions," 266-67.

[72] Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 58.

[73] Ibid., 52.

The plebs and crusade - Infantry in Ferdinand's army

The armies that heeded the call to arms in each Iberian crusade were composed of eclectic forces. Italian knights, English lords, and Muslim auxiliaries all fought against Muslim kingdoms of al-Andalus.[74] Even Ferdinand's army was a mix of noble retinues, town levies, religious brotherhoods, and the *Santa Hermandad*. However Ferdinand's army was not only more technologically advanced than previous crusading armies in Iberia, it was far more massive. His forces peaked at more than 60,000 combatants during the 1485 campaigning season.[75] An army of such magnitude required more advanced organization than previous crusades had witnessed, and the increased prominence of infantry in the army ultimately reinforced the authority of the monarchs at the expense of noble autonomy.

Like the use of artillery in offensive siege campaigns, organization of armies around infantry also developed out of the Hundred Years' War. However it was not Charles VII, but his neighbors who needed to counter his many powerful knights, that developed modern infantry armies. The increased reliance on infantry in armies as well as their relatively nascent ability to decisively alter battles due to innovations in weaponry led to what some military scholars refer to as the infantry revolution. Clifford J. Rogers writes that

> The armies that dominated the battlefields of Europe from the mid-eleventh century through the early fourteenth were composed primarily of feudal warrior-aristocrats, who owed military service for lands held in fief. They served as heavily armored cavalry, shock combatants, relying on the muscle power of man and steed, applied directly to the point of a lance or the edge of a sword. They fought more often to capture than to kill. The armies which conquered Europe's first global empires, on the other hand, differed from this description on *every single count*. They were drawn from the common population (albeit often led by aristocrats); they served for pay; they fought primarily on foot, in close-order linear formations which relied more on missile fire than shock action; and they fought to kill.[76]

[74] Papal support for the crusading efforts in Iberia predated the First Crusade. The first bull issued in support of Spanish efforts was issued by Alexander II to Italian knights headed to Spain, most likely in 1063. See Edwards, "*Reconquista* and Crusade," 166. The Marquis of Cádiz brought Muslim vassals as part of his force that captured Alhama in 1481. See Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 59.
[75] McJoynt, introduction, 52.
[76] Clifford J. Rogers, "Military revolutions," 243.

The War for Granada catalyzed this change in the armies of Castile and Aragón. Nobles and their retinues still comprised a significant portion of Ferdinand's forces, however they were increasingly marginalized by circumstance and by design.

Following the civil war that secured Ferdinand and Isabella's claim to the throne in which many nobles supported Isabella's rival, the monarchs sought to strip the nobles of their military independence. This goal is exemplified by the annual decrees that forbade private manufacture or ownership of cannons. While these decrees were meant to reduce the military and political threat posed by semiautonomous nobles, they proved moot as the monarchs routinely asked to borrow cannons from their vassals.[77] However the marginalization of cavalry during the War for Granada did more to reduce noble military power and increase royal control over the army than any decree could have.

The siege campaigns that dominated the Spanish strategy for conquest did not require cavalry involvement on the scale that previous *talas* did. Vital artillery pieces were maintained by dismounted soldiers. Royal recruitment emphasized infantry; they were inexpensive to equip and required minimal training as opposed to a man-at-arms that required armor, a mount, and the leisure to train regularly.[78] A strictly feudal recruitment system, with its absolute emphasis on mounted nobles, was inadequate to field the requisite troops needed to conquer and hold tracts of land over a decade-long war. Clifford J. Rogers argues that "because of its broader recruitment pool and lower costs of equipment and training, a military system based on common infantry - and *only* such a system - could turn surplus agricultural population into large numbers of soldiers for export to the world at large. Thus, the Infantry Revolution was a necessary precondition for

[77] Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 53. Cook notes that towns in particular bristled at the demand to surrender their arsenals and depend on royal protection. He relates one particularly amusing example of this defiance: "'We grow our own oranges,' said a town councilman, making a wicked pun on local slang for cannonballs."
[78] Clifford J. Rogers, "Military revolutions," 252.

the European conquests of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries."[79] During the War for Granada, the Catholic monarchs increased the size of their military from 20,000 men to 60,000 fighting men; only infantry recruited from the lower classes could swell the size of their army so dramatically.[80]

Ferdinand and Isabella deliberately sought to increase their control of the military at the expense of noble autonomy. Even before the War for Granada, Isabella revived the institution of the *Santa Hermandad* as a means to reinforce her authority against hostile nobles in the wake of the civil war that secured her accession. The brotherhood was originally intended to offer urban areas a means to band together for mutual military protection, but Ferdinand and Isabella employed it as a sort of standing force throughout the duration of the war. The *Hermandad* was under Royal control from the instant it was reestablished. Ferdinand's brother was made its first captain-general in 1476.[81] A royal decree in 1485 organized the infantry wing of the *Hermandad* under Royal command and designated a modest uniform; the role of the *Santa Hermandad* changed from one of local protection to dynastic expansion.[82] Ferdinand and Isabella increasingly co-opted the institution for their own purposes. By 1488, towns no longer provided separate levies for the *Santa Hermandad* but instead pooled men who were placed into squadrons that were ultimately organized into twelve captaincies. The towns still salaried the common soldiers, but they were under the command of *capitanes* and *cuadrilleros* (squadron leaders) that were chosen and paid by the monarchs.[83] The *Hermandad* was an important part of the Spanish infantry that took on an increasingly prominent role under Ferdinand, and it was under royal

[79] Ibid.
[80] I.A.A. Thompson, "Money, Money, and Yet More Money," in *The Military Revolution Debate*, ed. Clifford J. Rogers. (Boulder: Westview Press, Inc., 1995), 274.
[81] McJoynt, introduction, 53.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid., 53-54.

authority. The institutionalization of the *Hermandad* further gentrified the Spanish military and reflected a deliberate effort to marginalize the power of the nobles in war.

The most significant tactical advantage that the reestablishment of the *Santa Hermandad* offered the Catholic monarchs was the ability to keep a military force in the field year-round. Feudal warfare consisted of annual campaigns during temperate weather with cessation of hostilities each winter. However a salaried body of infantry did not need to return to their seigniorial estates each year, and could operate throughout the year. An institution originally conceived for mutual defense and public order now served as Spain's first standing military force.[84] The *Hermandad* was integrated with Ferdinand's artillery strategy, and cannons defended vulnerable winter camps from Granadan guerilla raids.[85] Granadans were surprised and disappointed when Christian troops did not break the siege of their city during the winter of 1491 but instead built the fortified encampment of Santa Fe. Algerian chronicler Abu'l Abbas al-Maqqarī later wrote that " [The townsmen in 1491] thought and expected, with winter approaching, the Christians would raise the siege and retire to their country. Our hopes were dashed. They built a town in front of our city and pressed the siege closer than ever."[86]

Despite efforts to recruit troops to serve under royal command, Ferdinand still relied on noble retinues, mercenaries, Muslim subjects, and foreign adventurers to bolster the size of his army.[87] It is important to note that Royal consolidation of military authority was met with resistance by nobles who resented impingements on their social position and still wielded

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[84] García, "Types of Armies," 42.
[85] Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 50.
[86] Abu'l Abbas al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ at-Tīb* 4:524-25 quoted in Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 50. Cook merely notes that al-Maqqarī wrote his eight-volume history of Granada from Moroccan sources now lost. The text lacks the hyperbole common in many chronicles of the conquest of Granada written by both Muslim and Christian authors. While al-Maqqarī cannot divine the feelings of the Granadan populace with certainty, it seems reasonable to assume they would react with surprise to the atypical behavior of the Spanish forces. There was little if any precedent for uninterrupted campaigning in Iberian crusades. It was a novel tactic that would not gain widespread acceptance or even relevance for many years.
[87] Ibid.," 53.

considerable ability to make demands of the monarchs. Nobles were able to protect their vested interests and demand concessions from the monarchs by refusing to aid them unless their demands were met.[88] Major offensives required the cooperation of the nobility, and so the monarchs were forced to "bargain with *hidalgo* or *shaykh* nobles, towns, and other institutions eager to brake the absolutist pretensions of kings and amirs [sic]."[89] Ferdinand and Isabella were aware of their dependence on seigniorial troop quotas for their army, and pursued a policy of guarded non-antagonism toward their nobility following the War for Castilian succession. Rather than explicitly attacking the privileges of the nobility, the monarchs marginalized their role in war by adopting a strategy of conquest that did not favor the strengths of the nobility and by incorporating their forces under Royal control. Once Ferdinand established a command structure for his army, what he needed most were soldiers. In an effort to bring these disparate groups under Royal command, Ferdinand strove to organize them into standardized 800-man *capitanías*, an effort that was not always greeted with enthusiasm from the semiautonomous military groups that were incorporated into this scheme.[90] However the tactic did have marked advantages in deployment mobility and combat efficacy compared to attempting to foster cooperation between separate command structures.

As the war progressed as a series of artillery sieges, and not cavalry raids that yielded captives and prestige for mounted nobles, many nobles chose to meet their military duty by sending their required quota of troops under a son or deputy rather than commanding them personally. A few recognizable nobles like the Marquis of Cádiz were present in person at the final siege of Granada, but general war weariness among the nobility prompted many to merely

[88] Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain," 53.
[89] Ibid., 48.
[90] Ibid.

send their quota of troops when summoned.[91] Machiavelli perceived that the monarchs used the crusade to "engage the energies of the barons of Castile who, as they were giving their minds to the war, had no mind for causing trouble at home. In this way, without their realising what was happening, he increased his standing and his control over them."[92] Even noble retinues increasingly served under captains dependent on Ferdinand and Isabella for their positions, and so military leadership "passed from the nobles to the king through their acceptance of his leadership in the war, or that of his chosen captains-general."[93] Successful military expansion required better military organization than traditional feudal relationships offered.

Once Ferdinand had numerous troops and an effective command structure, he needed to equip them. Spanish infantry quickly became associated with the use of handguns in combat because they were purchasable *en masse*. The introduction of the arquebus by the middle of the fifteenth century made handguns viable infantry weapons, because they could now be fired by just one man.[94] The Spanish were early adopters of the *espingarda*, a particular version of the arquebus. Handguns in the late fifteenth century slightly underperformed crossbows in accuracy and reloading rate, however their "principle advantage was to equip a rapidly expanding infantry army."[95] Ferdinand swelled his forces by requiring quotas of armed *espingaderos* from the towns. While handguns certainly could not compare to the premier individual missile weapon of the day, the longbow, they could be mass-produced and unskilled urban levies could rapidly achieve proficiency in their use. Longbows on the other hand required master craftsmanship and a lifetime of training to gain proficiency. Longbowmen were supplanted by gunpowder infantry

[91] Prescott, *The Art of War in Spain*, 237.
[92] Jocelyn Hunt, *Spain 1474-1598* (London: Taylor and Francis Limited, 2000), 29.
[93] Paul Stewart, "Military command and the development of the viceroyalty under Ferdinand and Isabella," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 5 (1975): 226.
[94] McJoynt, introduction, 35.
[95] Ibid., 36.

on European battlefields because simply not enough could be fielded to fight continual wars of expansion.[96] In the face of tens of thousands of infantrymen, longbows did not become obsolete, they became irrelevant.

Just like innovations in gunpowder artillery changed the nature of siege warfare, the preponderance of infantry in early modern armies revolutionized field engagements. Use of the longbow, crossbow, handguns and pikes gave infantry the ability to defeat cavalry and win battles of their own accord. However the wide spread employment of these weapons by infantry forces of unprecedented size made battles far more lethal. Personal surrenders and ransoms became few as ranged weapons and long pikes prevented communication between aggressors on the battlefield; even if combatants did meet, common infantry were unlikely to command a high enough ransom to warrant their capture, and class tension often carried violence between infantry and cavalry to extreme proportions.[97] Spanish *hidalgos* greatly feared the lethality of poisoned Muslim crossbow bolts. The notion that a common infantryman could kill a mounted, armored noble with a lethal missile was very unsettling to the Spanish elite. Battlefields became even more perilous as infantry units fighting in formation were unable to accept personal surrenders without compromising their efficacy.[98] Infantry were only effective as part of a cohesive unit, so engagements devolved into kill or be killed until one army was annihilated or surrendered *en masse* under the authority of a commander. Gone were the days of chivalry in warfare; Ferdinand's army was massive and it was lethal.

The dramatic increase in infantry during the War for Granada left Ferdinand with an experienced body of infantry, many of whom subsequently served in the Italian Wars.[99] Many of

[96] Ibid., 37.
[97] Clifford J. Rogers, "Military revolutions," 256-57.
[98] Ibid., 257.
[99] McJoynt, introduction, 15.

the 5,000 infantry and 600 light cavalry that Ferdinand sent to Italy in the Summer of 1495 were veterans of the crusade against Granada.[100] Military historian Luis Ribot García posits the high percentage of infantry veterans in the Spanish expeditionary force as one possible reason for their triumph over the French in Italy. The French army was composed of two-thirds cavalry, while veteran infantry made up fully three-quarters of the Spanish force.[101] The Spanish infantry fought in combined pike and arquebus formations that negated the efficacy of French cavalry charges. The infantry that the Spanish expedition did encounter were primarily Swiss pikemen in the service of France, and their experience in close combat during city sieges gave them an advantage in defeating this formation. Spanish sword-and-buckler men displayed a marked proficiency in close quarters due to their experience as *escaladores* during the War for Granada, which required them to fight atop narrow city walls.[102] Spanish expertise with gunpowder weaponry also gave them an advantage in Italy. A climactic Spanish victory over Swiss pikemen under French employ in 1503 was due to the effective use of hand-guns and small cannon by the Spanish.[103] These weapons were acquired in increasing quantities during the crusade against Granada, and the campaign allowed Spanish commanders like Francisco Ramírez de Madrid the opportunity to develop the knowledge required to effectively deploy gunpowder forces - an asset arguably more advantageous than sheer firepower alone.[104] The Spanish army emerged from the War for Granada as not only the largest army in the West, but as the "army with a future...not because it possessed one of the famous infantry techniques of the era [English longbowmen or Swiss pikemen], but because it had the fundamental preparation to be an aggressive and flexible force. More than any other European infantry of the period, it was embracing the individual

[100] Ibid., 15.
[101] García, "Types of Armies," 45.
[102] McJoynt, introduction, 26.
[103] Ibid., 16.
[104] Ibid., 28.

missile weapon system of the future (albeit probably more for economic than tactical reasons)."[105] While Ferdinand's conquests in North Africa were construed as religious conquest in order to continue Church subsidization of his court, his intervention in Italy was decidedly secular. Ferdinand gained his premier military through service to God, however after the fall of Granada, his troops followed his mandate, not God's.

[105] Ibid., 26.

Chapter 2

"A man does not have himself killed for a half-pence a day or for a petty distinction. You must speak to the soul in order to electrify him."
- Napoleon Bonaparte

In fifteenth-century Spain, only a crusade could have mobilized tens of thousands of men into the field. Ferdinand and Isabella, like a great many of their subjects, were devout Catholics. The monarchs felt compelled by God Himself to retake the kingdom of Granada for Christendom, surely the zeal of the royalty and their subjects was one of their greatest assets during the war. The authority of God united diverse elements of Spanish society under a common purpose. Granada had been able to survive the challenges of its Christian neighbors for centuries, however Ferdinand finally had the manpower (and firepower) to match the ambition of Christendom. The walls of Granada could stem the tide no longer.

Ferdinand and Isabella very much understood their great need for money, soldiers and guns, but they publicly professed that they sought these things only to fulfill their duty to God:

> "We have not been moved nor are we moved to this war by any desire to enlarge our realms and seigniories, nor by greed to obtain greater revenues than those we possess, nor by any wish to pile up treasures; for should we wish to increase our sovereignty and enrich our revenues, we could do this with much less danger and travail and expenditure than we are putting forth in this. But our desire to serve God, and our zeal for His holy Catholic faith, make us put all other interests aside and forget the constant travails and dangers which continue to increase for this cause..."[106]

If the monarchs had motivations other than religious, they did not explicitly state them. One is left to wonder which neighboring kingdoms presented less dangerous or expensive targets to the monarchs however. The kingdom of Granada enjoyed a defensive advantage - its rough terrain made it difficult to conquer - Ferdinand and Isabella received international support for their crusade of conquest. Such an outpouring of support would not have occurred had the monarchs

[106] José Goñi Gaztambide, "The Holy See and the Reconquest of the Kingdom of Granada," in *Spain in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Roger Highfield (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1972), 361-62.

contented themselves with skirmishing against their traditional rivals the French and Portuguese or immediately pursued dynastic claims around the Mediterranean.[107] Ferdinand gained thousands of troops from all corners of Europe, including France, since the mission to recapture Granada transcended political boundaries.[108]

The monarchs strictly maintained their pious and zealous appearances throughout the war, from the solemn procession at the monastery of Santo Domingo el Real in 1482 that marked the beginning of the crusade until the final surrender of Granada in 1492.[109] Writing in 1601, just over a century after the fall of the city, chronicler Juan de Mariana presents the lasting popular image of the Catholic monarchs as devout: "The king, kneeling with great humility, gave thanks to God for the empire of those wicked people having been uprooted in Spain, and for the banner of the cross having been raised in that city, where for so long impiety had prevailed with such force and with such deep roots. He prayed to God that His mercy should allow this victory to endure forever..."[110] The maintenance of a pious appearance served the monarchs very well. By leading through example, Ferdinand and Isabella gained increased credibility as the leaders of a military crusade and increased leverage to demand favorable economic concessions from Rome. Holiness assured a place in heaven, however it had practical uses on Earth as well.

Leading a crusade was an absolutely effective way for Ferdinand to assume total control of his military. Ferdinand and Isabella were imbued with symbolic significance as the final monarchs to wage the *Reconquista.* God commanded that the Muslims be driven from Iberia; his authority was represented on Earth by the Pope, who granted it in kind to Ferdinand and Isabella

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[107] Ferdinand and Isabella maintained good relations with their rivals during the crusade. They maintained ties with Genoa while it remained imperative that Granada not trade with the Italian city, and then in 1493attacked it with the hopes of gaining Corsica. See John Edwards, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2005), 111.
[108] Gaztambide, "The Holy See and Reconquest of Granada," 359.
[109] Del Pulgar, "*Crónica de los reyes catolicos* chapter 141," 164.
[110] Juan de Mariana, "The Conquest of Granada (1601)," in *Early Modern Spain: A Documentary History*, ed. Jon Cowans (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 12.

through the *bulas de la cruzada*. The *Reconquista* was the defining element in the histories of the Christian kingdoms in Iberia, and notions of religious conquest, secular territorial conquest, divine mandate and royal representation became intricately intertwined over centuries of conflict. Perpetual conflict with Muslims shaped the identity of the early Asturian kingdoms so profoundly that residents referred to themselves simply as Christians; the term *español*, or Spaniard, only gradually caught on after the thirteenth century as other European Christians sought a label for their Iberian brethren.[111] Over the course of centuries of intermittent conflict between Muslims and Christians in Iberia, a certain sense of community formed between the Christian kingdoms despite their somewhat frequent dynastic disputes and armed conflict. "A distinction developed between frontiers between Christian kingdoms in Iberia on the one hand, and frontiers between Christendom and Islam on the other. Papal influence led to the definition of frontiers to be pushed as far as possible."[112] In this context, Muslims took on the dual identities of the invader and the opponent of Christianity, and the kings and queens who sought to drive them back across the straits of Gibraltar balanced the overlapping roles of statecraft and service to God.[113] Ferdinand and Isabella commanded deep loyalty as religious figureheads, and their passion won them kingdoms and permanent acclaim.

The conquest of Granada was unsurprisingly "preached and waged as a crusade, [and] the war's victories were construed as proof of divine approval of royal policy."[114] Success in crusading gave Ferdinand and Isabella authority beyond the level they could command based on the size of their realms. The popular conception of the monarchs as pious representatives of God

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[111] H.G. Koenigsberger, *Politicians and Virtuosi: Essays in Early Modern History* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1986), 122-23.
[112] Nora Berend, "Frontiers," in *Palgrave Advances in the Crusades*, ed. Helen J. Nicholson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 161.
[113] Ariel Guiance, "To die for country, land or faith in Castilian medieval thought," *Journal of Medieval History* 24 (1998), 314.
[114] Norman Housley, "Pro deo et patria mori: *Sanctified Patriotism in Europe, 1400-1600*," in *War and Competition Between States*, ed. Philippe Contamine (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 242.

was enthusiastically disseminated by their chroniclers. Upon the surrender of Granada in 1492, the Milanese humanist Pedro Mártir Anglería remarked that "this is the end of the calamities of Spain, this is the end of the happy fates of that barbaric people which, they say, some eight hundred years ago, at the command of Count Julian, came from Mauretania...At last, my Kings, accepted by God, are demolishing to the ground that cruel tyranny, broken by whole years of disasters."[115] Surely the magnitude of the conquest of Granada both depended on and indicated divine approval. The nobles that had challenged the succession of Ferdinand and Isabella willingly acquiesced to royal demands for troops in support of the crusade against Granada. It was one thing to unsuccessfully challenge the royalty; to defy God was far more dangerous and foolish.

The crusade against Granada gave Ferdinand and Isabella the authority to put an unprecedented number of troops in the field, but they needed money to do so. War had depleted the royal coffers since the beginning of their reign, when they were forced to fight a costly war to defend their thrones against a rival dynastic claim supported by the Portuguese.[116] The monarchs had only a few years between 1479 and 1482 to rectify the state of their treasury before war once again dominated the royal expenses. The crusade against Granada was the first modern campaign of conquest in Spain, and it required expenditure on a scale beyond that of previous *Reconquista* campaigns. According to military historian I.A.A. Thompson, "one of the principal consequences of the Military Revolution was a great increase in the cost of war, leading to the growth of state taxation, bureaucratic administration, and centralized government." [117] Ferdinand's army was larger than previous crusading armies in Iberia, it was equipped with far

[115] Edwards, "*Reconquista* and Crusade," 181.
[116] John Edwards, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2005), 20.
[117] I.A.A. Thompson, "Money, Money, and Yet More Money," in *The Military Revolution Debate*, ed. Clifford J. Rogers. (Boulder: Westview Press, Inc., 1995), 273.

more gunpowder weaponry than previous armies, and it sometimes campaigned year-round, which all increased the costs of campaigning. Artillery was especially expensive; it required high capital investment to acquire artillery pieces, and the effective integration of artillery into the military required rigorous training, more officers, and a complex system of administration and logistical support.[118] The increased assumption of the costs of war by the central government was typical of the Military Revolution. In neighboring France for example, by the middle of the fifteenth century, "the French government was spending more than twice as much on its artillery train as it spent on more traditional war materiel - arrows, lances, bows, etc."[119] International conquest required the well stocked coffers or ample lines of credit that only a large kingdom could hope to possess. According to Clifford J. Rogers, "the great cost of artillery, and the larger armies engendered by the growing importance of open battle, put a premium on the ability to produce and manage large amounts of cash."[120] The increasing power of artillery further marginalized the military power of feudal nobles and small kingdoms. "The central governments of large states could afford to acquire and maintain large siege trains: their subjects and smaller neighbors, in general, could not."[121] Power was consolidated in the hands of those who could afford to wield a powerful and modern military. The major artillery trains of the early modern period belonged to France, Spain, and the Ottoman Empire, not to smaller or semiautonomous

[118] Ibid.
[119] Clifford J. Rogers, "The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years' War," *Journal of Military History* March (1993), 272.
[120] Ibid., 274.
[121] Ibid.

units.[122] The acquisition and deployment of significant numbers of artillery was risky and expensive, but ultimately necessary to capture the extensively fortified Kingdom of Granada.[123]

One method the monarchs used extensively to raise money for the war effort was taxation. Taxes were unpopular, but effective. Tax revenues increased by thirty times under Ferdinand and Isabella, from 900,000 *reales* in 1474 to over 26 million *reales* in 1504. [124] Commerce was consistently taxed, in the form of import and export duties as well as the *alcabala*, a tax of one-tenth the proceeds on all commercial transactions.[125] Another method of domestic revenue was the sale of annuities, or *juros*. These loans provided easy revenue in the short term at the cost of future interest payments, however the sale of *juros* further consolidated royal control over the nobility as the wealthy families that bought the *juros* often came to depend on the interest payments they received from the king and queen.[126] Taxes and debt both raised considerable amounts of revenue for the monarchs, but these sources of income were either insufficient to fight the war against Granada or were not the only sources of income easily available to Ferdinand and Isabella. Papal subsidization of crusades in Iberia dated back centuries prior to the final conquest of Granada, and the monarchs turned to Rome for aid almost immediately.

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[122] There were some exceptions to the rule that only kings and empires could acquire cannons. The fact that Ferdinand and Isabella were known to borrow cannons from their vassals despite the official decrees that banned private ownership of artillery points to at least some non-royal acquisition of artillery. See Weston F. Cook, "The Cannon Conquest of Nasrid Spain and the End of the Reconquista," *Journal of Military History* January (1993), 53.
[123] Ibid., 58.
[124]According to John Edwards, "the monetary unit of account in late medieval Castile was the *maravedí,*" and the *real* was worth 34 *maravedís*. By these figures, Ferdinand and Isabella increased their tax revenue from 30.6 million *mrs* to 884 million *mrs* during their reign. See Edwards, *Ferdinand and Isabella,* 178. For the tax figures, see Jean Hippolyte Mariéjol, *The Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella,* trans. and ed. Benjamin Keel, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1961), 215. See also Jocelyn Hunt, *Spain 1474-1598* (London: Taylor and Francis Limited, 2000), 18.
[125] Mariéjol, *The Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella*, 212.
[126] Hunt, *Spain 1474-1598*, 22.

Papal support for the *Reconquista* was considerable. Even before Urban II preached the First Crusade in 1095, Popes granted indulgences to knights fighting in Spain.[127] The most relevant innovation in papal support occurred when Pope Calixtus III issued a bull in 1456 that granted "the crusading indulgence, in return for cash, to those already dead, as well as to the living who participated in or else supported a crusade."[128] The spiritual implications of the bull were controversial; opinion was divided regarding the authority of the Church over souls after they departed the flesh. However the material implications of the bull were made immediately clear - the sale of indulgences succeeded in raising 100 million *maravedíes* for Henry IV, Isabella's half-brother who ruled Castile at the time.[129] Ferdinand and Isabella were fully aware of the financial advantages to be gained through papal support of a crusade.

The Catholic Church possessed a sufficient income to subsidize a war, supported the *Reconquista* for religious reasons. Pope Sixtus IV wrote in the *bula de cruzada* of 1482 that the Catholic church sought timely ways of bringing about the "salvation of the souls of barbarian peoples, and for the humbling of any infidels, and their conversion to the faith."[130] Ferdinand and Isabella always portrayed their motivations as strictly religious. In 1485 they wrote that they hoped "only that the holy Catholic faith will be multiplied and that Christendom will be quit of so constant a danger as she has here at her very doors, if these infidels of the kingdom of Granada are not uprooted and cast out from Spain."[131] The Catholic monarchs took full advantage of the religious symbolism of their crusade as a defense of all Christendom. They used

[127] The remittance of sin granted to the Southern Italian knights bound for Spain in 1063 closely resembled the spiritual privileges that became typical of crusading bulls. Foreign combatants continued to flock to Spanish crusades until the final conquest of Granada. See John Edwards, "*Reconquista* and Crusade in Fifteenth-Century Spain," in *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Norman Housley (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 166.
[128] Ibid., 170.
[129] Ibid., 171-72.
[130] Pope Sixtus IV, "Pope Sixtus IV grants the *cruzada* to Ferdinand and Isabella for the war against Granada, 10 August 1482," in *Documents on the Later Crusades, 1274-1580*, ed. Norman Housley (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 156.
[131] Gaztambide, "The Holy See and Reconquest of Granada," 362.

the well-established precedent of papal aid for *Reconquista* campaigns to successfully lobby Pope Sixtus IV for aid in 1482, shortly after the conflict began. The resulting bull of crusade, issued on August 10, built on the material aid typified by crusading bulls after 1456, and benefited Ferdinand and Isabella so greatly that it was indispensable to their war effort.

"Endless money forms the sinews of war."
Cicero, *Phillipics*

The Papal Bull of 1482 was far more generous to the Spanish monarchs than previous arrangements had been.[132] The bull offers the traditional plenary indulgences, but greatly broadens the participants in the crusade, and in particular the revenue base of the crusade, by offering those indulgences not only to combatants but also to financial contributors who donated at least two silver *reales*.[133] Pope Sixtus IV acknowledged the aims and costs of the crusade in the text of the bull:

> "Our most dear son in Christ the illustrious king Ferdinand, and our most dear daughter Isabella, the queen of Castile and Leon, have begun, partly by our persuasion, to conquer the kingdom of Granada, which the perfidious Saracens occupy. They firmly hope and trust that, God helping, and all the Spanish kingdoms now being at peace, they may be able to achieve the longed-for victory and conquest of the kingdom of Granada which their predecessors sought with such zeal, with the conversion of at least some of the Saracens to the Catholic faith, and with the permanent release and liberation from [Saracen] aggression of the inhabitants of those Christian communities which border on the kingdom. We are conscious that the resources of the king and queen are insufficient for operations against the kingdom of Granada and for such a great exaltation of the faith..."[134]

The Pope echoes Ferdinand and Isabella's hopes that Granada might be conquered once and for all, but both parties realized that a mutual agreement was needed if this goal was to be achieved. The conquest of Granada would benefit both Spain and Rome, so Sixtus IV invested the Church accordingly and granted the Catholic monarchs a *décima* (tenth) of the revenue collected from all ecclesiastical benefices in their kingdoms, although they were initially required to return one-third of this sum to the Pope for use against the Ottomans.[135] The Church was in need of funds

[132] Ibid., 357.
[133] Ibid., 358.
[134] Pope Sixtus IV, "Pope Sixtus IV grants the *cruzada* to Ferdinand and Isabella for the war against Granada, 10 August 1482," in *Documents on the Later Crusades, 1274-1580*, ed. Norman Housley (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 156-57.
[135] Ibid., 162.

after the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, it had incurred many debts in the defense of Rhodes and the recapture of Otranto in 1480 and 1481 respectively.[136] This caveat became a point of tension between the papacy and the monarchs throughout the war, as the monarchs disliked any portion of the crusading revenues being diverted away from Spain. They accepted the condition at first under some duress, eager for papal aid.[137] However when the pope's envoy in Spain, Firmano di Perugia, tried to collect the money for the war effort against the Turks, "he encountered systematic opposition, and his attempt to collect the sum agreed upon met with total failure."[138] The Spanish monarchs believed that all of the revenue from the bull of crusade in 1482 should rightfully be applied to that crusade only, and they chose to ignore promises and orders to do otherwise. The monarchs made their position abundantly clear in a letter to the pope written in 1485 when the bull of crusade was up for renewal:

> "If our subjects were to learn that part of the money they are giving for the expulsion of the infidel is being put to other uses, they would refrain from taking the bull, and so the part for the pope's use would be insignificant, and the part left for us so much reduced that the emolument we would receive would be very small. If the needs of His Holiness are as great as he says, then he has all of Christendom to which to appeal by means of a crusade, a tithe, or what he will; for, excepting Hungary, no other country has any reason to excuse itself, as we would not excuse ourselves were we not forced to it by necessity."[139]

The king and queen employ an economic argument in their letter. All of the revenue from the bull of crusade must be spent in Spain, otherwise there will be no revenue at all for either the pope or the monarchs. Evidently the financial need of the monarchs was great. They claim that they were forced by necessity to excuse themselves from their agreement with the pope; any other country except Hungary, which was heavily invested in the conflict with the Turks, should be more able to provide money than Spain.

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[136] Pope Sixtus IV, "Pope Sixtus IV grants the *cruzada*," 162-63.
[137] Gaztambide, "The Holy See and Reconquest of Granada," 356.
[138] Ibid., 359-60.
[139] Ibid., 362.

The capture of Ronda in 1485 and the accompanying release of five hundred Christian captives gave Ferdinand and Isabella the political leverage they needed in Rome to force the new pope, Innocent VIII, to renounce his claim to a third of the *décima*.[140] Once the monarchs established a monopoly on the *décima*, they incorporated it as a regular source of income for their wars. Authorization for the tithe had to be periodically renewed by the pope, but the continued war against Granada and later campaigns against Muslims in North Africa justified the renewal of the tithe time after time.[141] In light of Ferdinand and Isabella's argument that misallocation of funds would end the purchase of indulgences, it seems ironic that the *décima* was often spent on projects other than crusade; part of Ferdinand's Italian expedition was financed through this line of revenue.[142] The Catholic monarchs understood the value of the tithe on ecclesiastical benefices, and they worked diligently to gain control of the entire tenth set aside in the bulls of crusade issued in support for their war against Granada.

The crusading bull of 1482 allowed virtually any devout Christian to involve themselves in the crusade as a donor. In order to raise both the men and money needed to conquer Granada, Sixtus IV felt it necessary to "require and warn all Christ's faithful, particularly those of Spanish birth, that they mightily and without ceasing assist, *with their goods* or in person according to their ability, the king and queen in defeating the Saracens, conquering the kingdom of Granada, and effecting the exaltation of the faith" (emphasis added).[143] Each donor could obtain the indulgences of the bull according to his or her own means: "if they are cardinals of the Roman Church, patriarchs, archbishops and bishops, [they must give] ten ducats; the said king and queen one hundred ducats; royal princes and children, together with their wives, ten ducats...those who

[140] Ibid., 363.
[141] Mariéjol, *The Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella*, 213-14.
[142] Ibid., 215.
[143] Sixtus IV, "Pope Sixtus IV grants the *cruzada* to Ferdinand and Isabella," 157.

are so impoverished that their goods amount to no more than sixty ducats, two silver *reales*, or as much as the said treasurers decide."[144] The very poorest in society could even band together into groups large enough to equip one substitute on their behalf, and gain the indulgences for themselves as well as the substitute.[145] While the sentiments of the bull of 1482 recall the peasant casting her two pence into the collection plate, the bull did not have its intended effect among the lower classes. As the provisions of the bull were renewed year after year, the initial benevolence of the laity came to be taken for granted, and the sale of indulgences were eventually included under the heading of regular revenues.[146] Crusading bulls were foisted on the Spanish public long after their capacity to give had been exhausted. The Cortes of 1512, a gathering of nobles and *alcaídes* (town officials) that met with the monarchs, complained bitterly about the priests who preached the bull of crusade:

> "[They] keep the people in the churches one, two, and three days from morning to evening to listen to their sermons, and thus prevent them from earning their daily bread; and when they find that they cannot persuade them to take up the said Bull by that means, they parade through the streets, asking everyone they meet if he knows his Pater Noster and Ave Maria; and if perchance they find one who does not, they force him to take up the said Bull as penance; and if anyone refuses, they drag him around in shackles to hear their preachments, and thus prevail on him at last by force and threats to take up the said Bull."[147]

Such practices may have raised funds for the ultimate glorification of God through the conquest of Granada, but they likely did not endear the clergy to the Spanish people. Sellers of inquisitions even targeted the deceased as possible sources of revenue, claiming the wills and testaments of those recently deceased who had failed to purchase the indulgence were invalid until the heir or executor of the estate paid the alleged debt.[148] Despite the complaints of the Cortes, abuses

[144] Ibid., 159.
[145] Ibid., 158.
[146] Mariéjol, *The Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella*, 215.
[147] Ibid., 213-214.
[148] Ibid., 214.

continued throughout the war as subsequent bulls after 1482 preserved the financial avenue for acquiring spiritual indulgences. While the monarchs did little to suppress the abusive sale of indulgences, they did at least lead by example by each purchasing an indulgence for one hundred florins a piece.[149] Hernando del Pulgar attributed the donations associated with indulgences as one of the sources of the "great sums of money, which were spent on wages and in the other things required for the war against the Moors."[150] Hyperbole aside, the renewal of indulgences well into the early sixteenth century - years after the fall of Granada - points to their value as a source of income for the monarchs during their wars of conquest.

A final source of revenue from the Church that Ferdinand and Isabella enjoyed as a matter of right even in times of peace was the *tercia real*, which amounted to a third of ecclesiastical tithes in Spain.[151] Despite the name of the tax, the royalty actually handed back one-third of what they took to fund the construction of parish churches, so their take was actually two-ninths of ecclesiastical tithes.[152] The *tercia real* was not novel to the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, however they certainly took full advantage of the precedent their forebears set with the Church by exercising their claim to this tax. Taxes on commerce remained the primary source of income for Spanish kings and queens, however at the 1480 Cortes of Toledo, both sales of the *Bulla de la Cruzada* and the *Tercias Reales* were listed among the primary sources of public revenue.[153] Ferdinand and Isabella continued to collect the *tercia real* as a matter of course, and one would expect that sales of the bull of crusade would have initially increased in 1482 after the capture of Alhama before degenerating into coerced transactions.

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[149] Gaztambide, "The Holy See and Reconquest of Granada," 359.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Mariéjol, *The Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella*, 215.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid., 210.

The relationship between the Church and the Catholic monarchs exemplifies the way that religious and political aspects of the war remained intertwined throughout the conflict. Money contributed by the church was meant to address a specific religious problem, the existence of an independent Muslim kingdom in Europe. However the revenue from the sale of the bull financed the crusade against Granada along with other secular conquests, and as the Catholic monarchs came to take the aid of the Church for granted, they began to enter the revenue from the sale of the bull directly into the regular royal treasury. [154] The bull of crusade issued in 1485 provided a direct subsidy of 100,000 Aragonese gold florins in addition to the customary indulgences and *décima*, and only the papal injunction that it be "entirely spent on the holy work of conquering the kingdom of Granada and defeating the infidels, and on no other uses," dictated how it was to be spent.[155] Once the funds were in the royal treasury however their expenditure was at the discretion of the monarchs, not the Church.

While the bulls were renewed long after the fall of Granada, and some of the revenue may have been spent on outwardly secular conflicts like the Italian Wars, it is safe to say that the Catholic monarchs did spend most of the funds generated by the *bulas de la cruzada* on the war effort against Granada. Treasury documents value the extension of the *bula de cruzada* at "over 361 million *maravedís* (nearly a million ducats)."[156] Records of the sale of the crusading bull are not complete, so the full extent of the financial impact of the bull may never be known. Ferdinand and Isabella certainly received hundreds of millions of *maravedís*. Spanish historian M.A. Ladero Quesada estimates that the sale of indulgences as well as the *décima* amassed a

[154] Ibid., 214.
[155] Del Pulgar, "*Crónica de los reyes catolicos* chapter 176," 164. For the papal injunction see Sixtus IV, "Pope Sixtus IV grants the *cruzada* to Ferdinand and Isabella," 163.
[156] John Edwards, "'España es Diferente'? Indulgences and the Spiritual Economy in Late Medieval Spain," in *Promissory Notes on the Treasury of Merits: Indulgences in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. R.N. Swanson (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 148.

staggering 800 million *maravedís* for the monarchs between 1482 and 1492.[157] He asserts that "with the money from the crusade [bull] and the tenth, the Crown financed the greater part of the war."[158] Eight hundred million *maravedís* was not an inconsequential amount - recall that Ferdinand and Isabella worked diligently to increase their tax revenue to 26 million *reales*, or approximately 884 million *maravedís*, per year by 1504. Royal revenues from all sources tripled under the Catholic monarchs, however religious subsidization remained invaluable to their war efforts, because unlike taxes and other domestic revenue, all of the proceeds could be spent on war rather than the repayment of *juros* or other routine obligations.[159]

Pope Sixtus IV was eager to help the monarchs in their holy task, and when they considered the scope of the task before them, they immediately knew where to seek aid. Ferdinand and Isabella drew on centuries of historical support for the *Reconquista* by the Church to gain the capital they needed to conquer Granada. Had Ferdinand not received the aid of the church, writes W.T. Walsh, "he would probably have followed the example of several of his ancestors; he would have waged a valiant medieval warfare against the Moors, defeated them, made the most favorable terms he could with them, then turned to gain an advantage over France; then perhaps, at a later, more favorable time, have stuck the Moors again and taken what profit he could."[160]

[157] John Edwards, "*Reconquista* and Crusade in Fifteenth-Century Spain," in *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Norman Housley (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 175.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Hunt, *Spain 1474-1598*, 19.
[160] Gaztambide, "The Holy See and Reconquest of Granada," 363.

Final words

Ferdinand and Isabella were heroes after the fall of Granada, both with their own subjects, and across Christendom. They would keep the lands of Granada, but the glory of the conquest was duly shared with God. It was His will that the monarchs followed when they rushed to defend Alhama in 1482, and they believed that their diligent service to God allowed them to conquer Granada when none of their predecessors had been able to. Ferdinand and Isabella's subjects followed their pious sovereigns into battle under the banner of crusade in unprecedented numbers. Success was perceived as proof of divine approval, and Ferdinand was able to maintain the impetus of his conquest into further international forays.

The final conquest of Granada may have reflected divine pleasure with the Catholic monarchs; it certainly reflected their aggressive adoption of the most modern military equipment and techniques available in Europe at the time. Ferdinand brought an army of conquest into the field the likes of which had never been seen in Iberia. It was massive, comprised primarily of infantry, and relied on gunpowder artillery to assault fortified defensive positions. Ferdinand's infantry became a regular standing force of sorts, and they became ruthlessly efficient with both artillery and smaller handguns. All of these developments reflected a broader shift in Europe away from feudal warfare towards modern wars of conquest between states and kingdoms. In Spain however, these changes were specifically prompted and allowed by the circumstances of the *Reconquista*.

No other entity in Europe enjoyed the level of Church support that Castile and Aragón did during the crusade against Granada. The Catholic Church subsidized the final campaign of the *Reconquista* by earmarking several sources of income for the struggle which raised hundreds of millions of maravedís for the monarchs over the course of the war and beyond. These funds

gave Ferdinand and Isabella purchasing power that they would not have otherwise possessed. They used the influx of cash to raise missile troops, forge artillery, and hire masters of artillery to deploy their guns with deadly efficacy. According to Machiavelli, the monarchs were "able to sustain [their] armies with money from the Church and the people and, by means of that long war, to lay a good foundation for his standing army, which has subsequently won him renown...Under the same cloak of religion he assaulted Africa; he started his campaign in Italy; he has recently attacked France."[161]

Castile and Aragón emerged from the *Reconquista* as premier international powers. Ferdinand's forces expanded across seas and oceans, and Europe's first transcontinental empire was born. The role of the Catholic Church in the Spanish empire is evident in the historical record. Modern Northern and Southern American demographics are still profoundly influenced by Spanish exploration, conquest, and conversion. What is easier to overlook however is the role that the Church played in allowing Castile and Aragón to defeat Granada and flourish in the years afterwards.

Ferdinand and Isabella took Granada for God. The money they received from the Catholic Church was given and spent with sincere conviction. The land won from the Muslims however remained in the hands of Ferdinand and Isabella. The many dozens of artillery pieces they acquired over a decade of conflict were not beaten into plowshares, but turned instead towards the shores of Africa, North America, and even Christian Italy. Men who answered the call of God during the crusade against Granada stayed on to fight for king and money under Ferdinand's banner in the early years of the sixteenth century. When Granada fell in 1492, the prayers of the Catholic monarchs were answered, the desires of God Almighty were appeased, and the nature of European warfare was forever changed.

[161] Hunt, *Spain 1474-1598*, 29.

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