El Poema de Mio Cid and the Old Testament

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EL POEMA DE MÍO CID AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

A THESIS

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts in the Graduate School of Loyola University

By

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1973
PREFACE

This thesis is an investigation into the relationship between El Poema de Mío Cid and the Old Testament; it attempts to point out similarities and parallelisms between the two. Specifically, four interrelated topics, the promise, the banishment, the conquest, and the concept of faith and destiny are explored. The long title of the medieval poem will be substituted, wherever possible, by the brief and practical term, El Poema.

The Julia Deal Lewis Library of Loyola University, the University Library of Northwestern University, and the Mellander and Wallgren libraries of North Park College, Chicago, were the main institutions from which material was drawn.

The author wishes to acknowledge the aid and advice of Dr. Carole Holdsworth whose constant direction and criticism were much appreciated. Further thanks are extended to Dr. Miguel A. Martínez and Mr. James Graham-Luján. Appreciation is also expressed to my wife Betty for her patience and understanding.
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Chapter I

The Promise

The word "exploration" is precisely the word that can best represent this thesis in its entirety, for it is symbolic of the mood and direction that it is to take from its beginning. The thrust or objective is certainly not an attempt to establish a link between *El Poema de Mío Cid* and the Old Testament but rather to point out similarities and parallelisms which seem to exist between these two masterpieces.

One aspect of no less importance in this research is the interesting dichotomy that the Old Testament and *El Poema* present. On the one hand, the literary nature of *El Poema* demands that the Old Testament be dealt with from a literary rather than a religious or spiritual point of view. On the other hand, the nature of the medieval period and the period of the Hebrew conquest of Canaan—both profoundly concerned with Man's relationship to God—also demands that adequate time and effort and concentration be given to the spiritual experiences, and particularly the religious attitudes of Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, King Alfonso, David, Saul, Joshua, and Solomon.

Although the meaning and the importance that the Old Testament may hold for modern man is not a subject of discussion here, it is interesting to note in brief that some scholars believe that few Christians have an adequate perspective of the Scriptures. John Bright, for example, in his work *The Kingdom of God* states that "we continue to affirm that the
scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, and vaguely believe it to be so. . . . In practice we relegate the Old Testament to a position of little importance and regard it . . . as a scripture of the second rank. Referring to the broader significance that the Bible has, however, Bright feels that "in one sense, the Bible exhibits more diversity than unity." To him, it is a "very variegated book; rather, it is not a book but a whole literature. . . . written over a period of well above a thousand years by men of the most diverse character and circumstance" (Bright, p. 9). For Bright the rendering of a solid unity to the Bible that ignores its diversity is to narrow its scope and set it in a rather limited space. His position, then, certainly opens the way to this exploration in which the Old Testament is treated more as a literary work than a source for inspiration or spiritual insight. It should not be surprising, however, that Bright would be quick to point out the spiritual value of the Bible; referring to both the Old and New Testaments he states that "both have to do with the Kingdom of God and the same God speaks in both" (Bright, p. 11).

According to Bright, the concept of the Kingdom of God is more prevalent in the New than in the Old Testament. Nevertheless, the concept is prevalent in the Old as well, perhaps emphasizing more the terrestrial than the spiritual manifestation of such a kingdom. Writing on the subject, Bright states that "while it underwent . . . a radical mutation on the lips of Jesus, it has a long history and is, in one form

or another, ubiquitous in both the Old and New. It involves the whole notion of the rule of God over his people, and particularly the vindication of that rule and people in glory at the end of history" (Bright, p. 18). In his work Bright makes it quite clear that it was precisely that kind of kingdom which the Hebrews awaited at the time of Jesus and fought for at the time of the conquest of Canaan. He points out that the Scriptures clearly indicate that since the time of David the Hebrews looked for a kingdom which was to be restored by a Redeemer . . . that the hope of Israel was the establishment of this kingdom and that this hope had its roots both in the faith and history of the people (Bright, p. 18).

The concept of the kingdom of God is, then, not entirely separated from the idea of a promised land which was to be Israel's inheritance through the promises made by God to Abraham, Jacob, and Isaac; and reiterated to Moses and David. According to the Scriptures, God called Moses to lead his people from Egypt toward the promised land (Gen. 50:22-25; Exodus 3:17, 12:25, 32:13; Numbers 10:29, 14:16-17; Deut. 6:3-23, 9:3-5, 9:28, 15:6, 19:8, 26:3-18, 29:13). Shortly after the death of Moses, Joshua led the Hebrew tribes into Canaan. By the year 1000 B.C. David's reign was established, and it is to him whom God promised the establishment of a lasting kingdom through a Redeemer—a Saviour—who was to come out of his lineage (Isaiah 9:6-7; II Samuel 7:4-29). This long development of the concept—almost cyclic in nature—is explained by Bright in the following manner: "... before Israel's hope of the Kingdom of God could assume a form, she had first to build a kingdom on
this earth" (Bright, p. 19). Canaan was the site upon which the Davidic kingdom was to be established, the land which Joshua gradually wrestled from the Canaanites.

John Pedersen, in his four-volume work Israel, writes about Canaan as a land which--like Spain--was settled for thousands of years--long before either the history of Israel or that of Christianity in Spain began. He maintains that the importance of Canaan, within the Biblical context, is not necessarily the almost continuous state of restlessness that has plagued its history; rather its importance is that "the whole of the central and southern sections are the real home of the history of Israel." The significance of this position seems to be that Joshua's conquest of Canaan was in actuality a return to the land that once had been occupied by Abraham (Genesis 17:8, 15:7, 12:5-9). His accomplishment was, then, more a re-conquest than a conquest of a foreign, hereto unknown, land. In this respect, similar conditions seem to have developed in Spain where the whole of the history of Christianity was closely related to the whole of the land--the Peninsula--which was to become the Christian kingdoms of Spain and Portugal. The significance of this seems to manifest itself in the long struggle for the expulsion of the Moor from the Peninsula. Both the Hebrew and Christian struggles are similar in that both had the same characteristic, the re-taking or re-conquest of land which had been theirs before. Interestingly enough both Hebrew and Christian alike

claimed--within their respective time zones--the divine intervention of a God who watched and guided them and who acted in their behalf through the events in history. With respect to Spain, in the Poema de Fernán González Fernán awakens after having had a vision in a dream just to hear a loud voice which said:

Cuando estaba, en el sueño que soñara, pensando,
oyó una gran voz que le estaba llamando:

—Levántate, y sigue tu vía, don Fernando;
Almanzor ya te espera con el su fuerte bando.

>No tardes, ve adelante; si no, perjuicio me haces;
porque tanto te tardas, en gran culpa me yaces;
no des a Almanzor tregua ni hagas con él paces;
debes todo tu pueblo dividir en tres aces.

>Tú entra con los menos, por el lado de oriente,
me verás en la lid entrar visiblemente;
manda entrar otra az por parte de occidente;
allí estará Santiago, el apóstol valiente.

>Debe entrar la tercera por parte de aquilón;
venceremos, no dudes, a este bravo león;
harás, si cumules esto, como hizo Sansón,
cuando con las sus manos lidió con el bestión.
No quiero más decirte; levanta y ve tu vía.
¡Quieres saber quién trae esta mensajería?
Millán soy yo por nombre, Jesucristo me envía; durará la batalla hasta el tercero día. ³

Fernán not only receives assurances of victory but also receives the blueprint which is to bring him victory in the battlefield. Here Fernán is approached in almost the same manner in which the Deity approached the ancient Hebrew sages. First the man's loyalty to his god must be established; secondly, an emissary is sent either in a dream, a vision, or an apparition. Thirdly, the emissary almost always identifies himself as being of divine origin—angel, archangel, apostle, or the deity himself—in the form of a "loud voice."

Knowledge of life conditions in Canaan at about the time of the Hebrew invasion has been constantly improved by periodic archaeological discoveries. Modern archaeological techniques combined with constant re-evaluation of both old and new sources have shed light upon everyday life and customs of ancient Canaan. Pedersen cites the Amarna Letters as one source of knowledge of life conditions in Canaan about 1400 B.C. According to him, from these letters and the Old Testament much of that world can be reconstructed. However, he thinks it is unfortunate that these letters, written largely by Canaanite petty kings to their

Egyptian overlords (Pedersen, p. 6), shed little light on the daily life in Canaan. In them, states Pedersen, "we are not told much of the inner life of the towns and the relation between king and people" (Pedersen, p. 6). They seem to deal mainly with the relation of king to king, and for sources pertaining to the daily life of Canaan it is life in Egypt and Babylonia at about the same period which throws some light on the customs and relations between king and people, for there are, he states, "some few suggestions to the effect that this relation was the same" (Pedersen, p. 6). Pedersen seems to find support for this contention in the fact that life does change little from century to century in that part of the world, and secondly that the Canaanites were but a small group of the large Semitic family of nations and tribes which occupied that land, from the Euphrates to the Nile.

Pedersen describes Canaan, then, as a land in which "the community is identical with the king, who acts by himself on behalf of the people; and the people have no independent will as against his. A separate will could only come through sedition" (Pedersen, p. 7). One characteristic of conditions in Canaan was the king-vassal relationship. According to Pedersen, the Amarna Letters reveal that Canaan was actually occupied by petty kings who paid tribute to other larger and more powerful kings such as the Assyrians, Egyptians, or Babylonians.

"These petty kings," states Pedersen, "living all over the country call each other brethren; at times they make covenants, at other times they fight each other, partly by means of intrigues and calumny. They
are the smaller luminaries that derive their light from the great sun, the King of Egypt. Just as they own their subjects, so in the same manner Pharaoh owns them and the whole country" (Pedersen, p. 7). The king-vassal relationship was reinforced by the paying of tribute money and the periodic sending of gifts either in kind or gold or precious stones. "The vassal kings," states Pedersen, "must pay tribute to their overlord to add to his wealth and indicate their dependency" (Pedersen, p. 8). The king-vassal relationship is characterized by a very servile attitude on the part of the vassal. Pedersen reports that they "search for the most servile expression, call themselves the stable boy of the King, a dog, his footstool, the dirt under his feet. They assure that they prostrate themselves before him 'seven times seven'"(Pedersen, p. 8). By all appearances, the vassal seems to accept an inferior position not always based upon respect and moral uprightness but rather based upon sheer power. The overlord is militarily stronger than the vassal.

In El Poema de Mio Cid the relationship between King Alfonso and El Cid has been investigated by Edmund de Chasca. De Chasca, in his article "The King-Vassal Relationship in El Poema de Mio Cid," describes similar conditions; that is, El Cid's relation to King Alfonso, as interpreted by de Chasca, strongly resembles the relationship between the petty kings of Canaan and the kings of Egypt and Babylonia. De Chasca considers that relationship--the king-vassal relationship--essential to the understanding of El Poema. He maintains that "the dramatic power of
the psychological tension of the Poema lies in that Alfonso's position is . . . morally inferior to that of his vassal . . . royal authority makes it possible for him arbitrarily to determine the fate of the Cid and of his people."⁴ De Chasca concludes by stressing that one most important aspect of El Poema lies in "the opposition of the arbitrary power of the monarch to the moral greatness of an individual, [that of El Cid]" (de Chasca, p. 192). According to him, here lies the effective interpretation of the relationship, characterized by the triumph of material success coupled with exemplary integrity.

To return to Canaan, Pedersen indicates that "the petty kings reside in their cities, each of them the lord of his own small territory, without any community beyond that which arose out of covenants with the nearest neighbours, occupied in fighting other petty princes and invading tribes" (Pedersen, p. 10). According to Pedersen, Canaanite life--already influenced by Babylonian and Egyptian culture--eventually influenced the invading Hebrews. "The Israelites," he states, "partly assimilating their spirit and customs, partly reacting against them . . . lived in the mountains, where they might continue their wonted manner of living with their flocks . . . Gradually . . . they were able to pass down into the valleys and conquer first one town, then another" (Pedersen, pp. 11-12). The result, then, was the acceptance and incorporation

of Canaanite social and religious customs into the mainstream of Hebrew life, precisely what their ancient sages warned against.

The Conquest of Canaan. The Hebrew conquest of Canaan is an extremely long and complex subject. Hence, both time and space set a strict limit to its discussion here. An interesting and significant fact on the subject is the difference of opinion which exists in regard to the length of time that it took the Hebrews to complete the conquest. One theory holds that the event was a swift, overpowering onslaught which took the Canaanites by surprise. A theory to the contrary is that the conquest was a gradual process which involved both periods of war and periods of relative peace. Compromise, assimilation, and coexistence were a necessary part of the whole process. Existing sources seem to indicate that the latter theory is the more plausible and therefore credible. Both the lack of sufficient accurate source material and archaeological discoveries fail to support the former. In the light of this it is important to establish, at this point, a support for the latter since either can affect significantly the direction of this work.

Henry Smith, in his work Old Testament History, begins his discussion of the conquest by differentiating between the unification of Israel and the conquest itself. "The unification of Israel," he states, "so far as it was accomplished at all--was accomplished under Solomon. The conquest (to retain the conventional term) had been going on for
four centuries or more." Referring to the Biblical account, Smith states that it is 'incredible' "that two battles should put Israel into complete possession of this rugged and defensible country" (Smith, p. 76). According to him, time and legend have synthesized a rather long process into a few glorious campaigns for the purpose of brevity and edification.

Smith's timetable presupposes the firm establishment of the Hebrews in the Trans-Jordan region. "What is quite certain," he states, "is that Israel was settled in the transjordanic territory before the invasion of Canaan proper" (Smith, p. 76). What follows after is a series of advances which took place over a long period of time. For instance, at the time of Saul Gilead was already under Israelite domination. "Once thoroughly established in Gilead," comments Smith, "Israel had a base of attack for the reduction of Canaan" (Smith, p. 76). Smith, like Pedersen, attributes a great deal of importance to the Amarna Letters. He considers them significant source material in clarifying the state of affairs in Canaan in the fourteenth century before Christ. Both scholars agree that the invasion which the letters mention may have been that of the Hebrews. "The Amarna letters," states Smith, "reveal a somewhat extended invasion going on. Whether it be the Hebrew immigration is not yet certainly made out. The Chabiri of the tablets cannot be affirmed to be the Hebrews. But Chabiri and Hebrews are a part of the same general stream of immigration. We see alliances already forming between the towns and the invaders. The Old Testament testifies

The process of amalgamation and assimilation may well have begun in the manner described by Smith:

The townspeople recognize that it is better to make peace with their tormentors. By the payment of blackmail they can make allies of their enemies, and perhaps even employ them against their neighbours with whom they are at feud... When an understanding is once reached, the parties are on amicable terms enough. The Bedawin agree to respect the rights of the townspeople, and honourably carry out the agreement. Alliances are made between individuals on both sides... Intermarriage follows, and final amalgamation of the two stocks. (Smith, p. 78)

It is interesting to note that, according to Smith, the Book of Joshua's account of the Hebrew conquest lacks credibility. "The account," states Smith, "fails us... when we seek for facts. And the reason why it fails us is found in the nature of the book. The aim of the author is not history, but edification" (Smith, p. 82). The account is worthy of mention, however, and Smith outlines it in the following manner:

In this narrative, Israel, after encamping some time in the Plains of Moab, crosses the Jordan and establishes itself at Gilgal. ... the approach of Egypt is rolled away by the circumcision of the people. ... Jericho falls by a miracle, and is made an example of utter 'devotion' ... A reverse at Ai is the means of discovering Achan's sacrilege. After his detection and
punishment the town falls. Then comes the treaty with the Gibeonites, secured by deceit on their part, and conceded by criminal carelessness on the part of Joshua. The treaty is resented by the Canaanites who attack the new allies of Israel. This gives Joshua new occasion for battle, and the natives are routed at Beth-horon—a battle marked by direct divine intervention in response to Joshua's prayer. The capture of the cities in the region is an easy matter. (Smith, p. 80)

Smith relates that the northern Hebrew thrust into Canaan was executed in much the same manner: "Jabin, king of Hazor, gathers an immense army at the Water of Meron. Joshua destroys the army, hamstrings the horses, and burns the chariots" (Smith, p. 80). Joshua then proceeds to take possession of the land, killing its inhabitants and retaining a large booty. "The whole land," states Smith, "is left entirely free for Israel to partition and occupy" (Smith, p. 80). In conclusion it can be said that, in spite of a lack of historical and factual credibility of the Book of Joshua, it remains—and Smith as well as others such as Albright will support it—a valuable source which describes quite accurately the dealings, and customs, of the Hebrews with the peoples of Canaan. Its literary value is also greatly appreciated, since the all-important human condition can be studied in the life of its hero Joshua.
The Christian Conquest of Moorish Spain. While the Tell el-Amarna tablets⁶ and the Book of Joshua⁷ reveal conditions in Canaan at the time of the Hebrew re-conquest of that land, Spanish medieval poems and ballads reveal conditions between Christians and Moors in Spain. El Poema de Fernán González, for example, throws some light upon conditions in medieval Spain. The following excerpt from the poem is in actuality an account of deceit and ill-formed alliances between Christian and Moor for the purpose of defeating another Christian:

⁶"The reader may perhaps object to the El Amarna letter being called to testify to the condition of Palestine, both in the Patriarchal period and at the time of the conquest. Strictly speaking, they testify to the state of things a little before the Israelite invasion. But they imply that a similar condition had existed during some centuries before the time of their composition" (Smith, p. 80).

⁷"The Book of Joshua falls naturally into two parts: first account of the battles with the Canaanites, then a sketch of the division of the country among the tribes. The latter (chapter 13-24) is simply a reflection of geographical divisions as they existed at a later time. This section, at any rate, can make no claim to be history, because it comes from a postexile author, whose distance from the events would prevent his having any accurate knowledge of what took place" (Smith, p. 80).
Mientras estabé el conde haciendo a Dios Placer
lidiando con los moros con todo su poder,
el rey de los navarros empezóse a mover,
pensó toda Castilla robar y bien correr.

Al rey navarro el conde envió demandar
llegó hasta el rey don Sancho aqueste mensajero.
'Me humillo—dijo—rey, luego de lo primero;
del conde de Castilla soy yo su mandadero,
te diré lo que él dice a ti, hasta lo postero.

'Para dañar Castilla y arruinar castellanos,
acordaste amistad con los pueblos paganos,
hiciste guerra mala a los pueblos cristianos
porque no quieren ellos ponerse en tus manos.

Tiene de ti, además, gran rencor y amargura,
pues hiciste otra cosa de mayor desmesura,
porque mientras corría él por Extremadura,
hiciste tal daño que fue desapostura.

(Poema de Fernán González, pp. 58-59)

The passage reveals the type of conflict characteristic of an unstable
land, such as Canaan and medieval Spain were at the time of Hebrew and
Christian struggles for re-possession of their land. Yet another pas-
sage revealing the dealings of Moor and Christian is found in El Poema
The trust and confidence that El Cid has in the Moor could not have been any greater. Not only does he trust Abengalbón with the safety of his daughters but also expects him to offer them safe conduct to Medina. Although it is very likely that Abengalbón is in El Cid's service, the Moor's loyalty and relation with El Cid transcends conventional bonds established by treaties peculiar of the times and strikingly similar to those revealed in either the Book of Joshua or the Tell el-Amarna letters. The reaction of the Moor to El Cid's request is characteristic of the Near Eastern culture people:

El moro, cuando lo supo, se alegró de corazón:

haciendo gran alborozo a recibirlos salió:

¡Oh Dios, de cuanto quisieron, qué bien de todo les dio!

---

Otro día de mañana con ellos ya cabalgó
con doscientos caballeros que a acompañarles mandó.
Fueron a pasar los montes, los que llaman de Luzón.
Por el valle de Arbujuelo llegaron hasta el Jalon.
Donde dicen Ansarera la noche allí se pasó.
A las hijas del buen Cid regalos el moro dio
y unos hermosos caballos para los dos de Carrión.
Con esto el moro allí quiso al Cid mostrarle su amor.

(Poema del Cid, pp. 116-117)

The Moor is jubilant; he makes feast preparations, provides them with an appropriate escort worthy of El Cid's rank, and offers an expected gift. It is interesting to note that in spite of the time factor that separates these events—those related in Fernán and El Poema—which is about one hundred years, the relations between Moor and Christian remained the same, depending much on the circumstances at the time. War and enmity were not continuous activities in the long, almost eight hundred year struggle.

It is Emilio González López in his work Historia de la civilización española who presents a brief and interesting account of the long struggle of the Christians of Northern Spain against Moslem Spain to the south. The re-conquest seems to have begun as soon as the defeat of Don Rodrigo was over. "Al hundirse la monarquía visigoda con la derrota de Don Rodrigo en la batalla de la Janda," states González López, "no cesó, por eso, la resistencia hispana contra los invasores árabes, sino
que esta tomó un carácter más desorganizado."⁹ According to González López, Christian resistance of the Moors simply took a different direction after 711; to the north resistance was fierce but loose, and to the south, in Murcia, count Teodomiro succeeded in gaining some degree of autonomy from the Moors. This was largely due to his unified and organized opposition.

It is interesting to note that the Christian re-conquest of Moslem Spain has some striking similarities with the Hebrew re-conquest of Canaan. Both were arduous struggles which took several centuries to bring to a close. Secondly, a significant degree of amalgamation and assimilation between these people and their enemies took place. Thirdly, although the distinctive characteristic of both Christian and Hebrew cultures remained unchanged, certain aspects were permanently altered, particularly in religion, literature, and government. In the case of Spain, for example, Américo Castro traces the religious mysticism of Santa Teresa and San Juan de la Cruz to the Moslem Ibn Abbad.¹⁰ In the case of Israel, to David and Solomon the establishment of the kingdom meant the affirmation of Canaanite custom. Prior to the Davidic kingdom the Hebrews were ruled by judges, a unique form of government peculiar of the peoples of Canaan. Fourthly, both peoples—and their enemies, one may add—fought what was essentially a holy war. The concept that


God was behind them guiding, intervening in the events of history was quite real.

It is not within the scope of this thesis to deal with the reconquest in Spain in its entirety. The subject is obviously long and complex. Nevertheless, a brief discussion, largely based on Emilio González López' *Historia de la civilización española* and Ámérico Castro's *Realidad histórica de España*, of the event is significant to the thesis. Referring to the first two hundred years of the struggle (711-914) González López states that "Entre la historia de dos siglos de la monarquía asturiana . . . se pueden distinguir tres etapas distintas: la primera de expansión de la reconquista, en la primera mitad del siglo VIII; la segunda de paralización de esa expansión en la segunda mitad del mismo; y la tercera de dominio del valle del Duero durante el siglo IX" (González López, p. 78). This statement reveals the slow forward movements of the struggle, zigzagging, as it were, between strong spurts of progress and, at times, serious setbacks. The next significant advance of the Christians was accomplished under Fernando I (1035-1065) prior to the union of Castille and León (1230) under Fernando III el Santo. It was the forging of the kingdoms of Castille, León, and the lands to the south largely occupied by the Moors. González López states:

Segura ya la frontera de su reino Fernando I concentró su atención en la oriental para poner coto a los ataques de su hermano Don García, Rey de Navarra. En Atapuerca (1054) . . . fueron derrotados los navarros, muriendo Don García en la batalla. . . .
Vencidos leoneses y navarros, Fernando I volvió sus armas contra los árabes, que estaban divididos en reinos de taifas. . . . Los castellanos tomaron las plazas de Vixeo y Lamego en la zona sur del Duero (1057) . . . En el centro de la Península el rey Don Fernando cruzó el Tajo y se apoderó de la parte norte del reino árabe de Toledo. Los reyes moros fronteros con su reino—Zaragoza, Toledo y Badajoz—y hasta algunos más lejanos, como el de Sevilla, le rindieron vasallaje pagándole tributo (1064) . . . Ni el reino de Valencia . . . se libró de su furia. Contra él emprendió Fernando I una expedición—preludio de la que años más tarde llevaría a cabo el Cid Campeador, que a buen seguro marchó en las banderas del primer rey de Castilla—y venció al rey moro de Valencia cerca de Paterna, en las mismas puertas de la capital valenciana. (González López, pp. 99-100)

According to González López, Fernando I succeeded in transforming Castille into the political and military center of Christian Spain. His authority and influence had been felt in almost all of the Peninsula. Moor and Christian alike seemed to have been under his vassalage or direct control (González López, p. 100). It is at this time when El Cid Campeador appeared on the scene. One interesting aspect of the legendary hero is that in actuality he was not legend but history, and it is precisely this fact which gives El Poema de Mío Cid a different perspective. Although some of the accounts in El Poema are legendary in nature and some historical facts are not quite accurate, the poem's central character—and many of its secondary characters—are found in
the history of medieval Spain. Like David and Saul, then, El Cid has a factual place in history; and González López briefly narrates the historicity of El Cid in the following excerpt:

Una de las grandes figuras de esta época de gran expansión cristiana es el Cid Campeador. Nacido en tierras de Burgos, en la frontera castellana con Navarra, educado en la corte del rey Fernando I con el príncipe Don Sancho, cuando éste llegó a ser rey fue su hombre de confianza desempeñando los cargos militares de mayor importancia. Al morir Don Sancho militó en el bando castellano que no veía con simpatía la subida al trono de Alfonso VI. Sin embargo, éste, para hacer las paces con Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, le casó con una parienta suya Jimena Díaz ... En la corte había un poderoso grupo hostil al Cid, capitaneado por García Ordóñez ... que, con sus intrigas no paró hasta que Alfonso VI desterró de sus reinos al Cid, que abandonó Castilla con trescientas lanzas ... se fué a Zaragoza, donde le recibió con afecto el rey árabe Almoctadín. Al morir éste, su hijo y sucesor Almutamín le empleó en sus guerras contra su hermano Almondir, a quien le habían correspondido los reinos de Lérida, Tortosa, y Denia, separados estos dos últimos por el de Valencia. Triunfaron el Cid y los zaragozanos contra el rey de Lérida apoyado por los catalanes ... Igualmente derrotó el Cid a los aragoneses que habían acudido en ayuda de Almondir, rey de Lérida ... Tras una breve reconciliación con Alfonso VI ... el Cid puso sus miradas en Valencia donde reinaba ahora Alkadír de Toledo ... Alcadír se hizo
The account bears, as will be demonstrated in coming chapters, striking similarities with the Biblical account of David and Saul. The deceit, the shifting of loyalties, the relatively unstable state of affairs, the intrigue among the royalty, and the continuous success of the hero in spite of adverse circumstances make for an interesting parallelism with conditions in Canaan at the time of the Hebrew conquest.

To return to the Christian re-conquest at the time of the union of Castille and León under Fernando III (1230), the Christians seem to have gained more vitality and impetus in the struggle. González López describes their new condition as an awakening of the conscience, a realization of their new identity, and their confidence in themselves. "Los pueblos de España," states González López, "concientes de su propia fuerza y de la debilidad política del mundo hispano-árabe, muy superior a la cristiana, la incorporan ahora como una de las fuentes más ricas del saber, a la suya propia" (González López, p. 132). According to González López, one significant advance at this time was the thrust into Andalucía. Under Fernando III and within the space of eleven years (1225-1236) Andujar, Ubeda, Trujillo, and others fell to the Christian king. By 1240 Extremadura and Córdoba were also under his power. Only
Granada was able to escape. However, the Moslem kingdom had to pay tribute and supply soldiers to the Castilian king (González López, p. 133). By 1492 the military aspect of the re-conquest was completed with the fall of Granada to the Christian monarchs Isabel of Castille and Fernando of Aragón. The Christian re-conquest, then, was just as long a struggle as that of the Hebrews; and in both cases it did not fail to leave its lasting impression upon their respective cultures.

As Canaanite culture influenced the Hebrews so did the Moslem eventually leave his lasting impression upon the Christian culture of the north of Spain. América Castro in his book La realidad histórica de España has made an intensive and provocative study of this rather long and complex subject. América Castro, writing about the confusions which have obscured the true reality of the peoples now called the Spanish, refers to the process of assimilation and amalgamation as the 'fenómeno humano' which not only left its lasting imprint but, more importantly, forced the Christian culture to relate to itself through the threatening presence of yet another culture seemingly more advanced and sophisticated. Similar conditions can be found in the life and history of the Hebrews, who were constantly aware of foreign influences in the form of a proselytizing of the religious life of the people. "Lo islámico instalado en el siglo VIII en la Hispania romano-visigoda," states Castro, "aparecería como un tema de vida para quienes no eran musulmanes y hubieron de ajustarse a aquellas nuevas circunstancias." Further on Castro writes that "El Islam obligó a contemplar y a usar en una nueva perspectiva el tradicional modo de existir y el quehacer social de los habitantes del
norte" (Castro, p. 176). With this, then, Castro opens the door to the discussion of the long and gradual interrelation which developed over the centuries between the two peoples.

According to Castro, the Christian people who lived throughout the Peninsula and who eventually called themselves the Spanish people were in actuality the result of the combination of two energetic efforts: the effort to remain humble and submissive in the face of a superior enemy; and the effort to overcome feelings of collective inferiority by maintaining a constant thrust against the Moor. To further support this Castro cites El Poema as a source of internal evidence. "Estos versos del Poema del Cid contienen unas palabras del héroe altamente significativas:

¡Oíd a mí, Albar Fáñez e todos los cavalleros!
En este castiello grand aver avemos preso;
los moros yazen muertos, de bivos pocos veo.
Los moros e las moras vender non los podremos,
que los descabezemos nada non ganarémos;
cojamoslos de dentro, ca el señorío tenemos;
posaremos en sus casas, e dellos nos serviremos. (616-622)

Ejercer el señorío y servirse de los moros, tal fué el programa consciente" (Castro, pp. 180-181). Precisely the same conscious attitude between the Hebrews and the Canaanites is reported by Smith: ". . . the two peoples dwelt side by side . . . When the Israelites became strong enough, they reversed the relations, reducing the Canaanites to clientage, to forced labour, or even to slavery. Extermination, which was
the ideal of later times, was not thought of while the problem was a practical one" (Smith, p. 84). Thus, in the excerpt from El Poema, cited by Américo Castro, the followers of El Cid rationalized the position of the captive Moors as one in which neither slavery nor death would be the solution. It was best, under the circumstances, to let them live in a state of servitude.

Referring to the long years of Moorish occupation of the Peninsula, Américo Castro states that those centuries of the Moslem history of Spain are generally seen from a discriminatory perspective. "Se miran por muchos," he states, "como un largo y enojoso intervalo, como una empresa bélica, pausada y penosísima, tras la cual España vuelve a la normalidad, aunque con algunas cicatrices y retrasos" (Castro, p. 181). This perspective seems, then, to ignore the long process of assimilation and amalgamation which took place between the two groups and is therefore an essentially anti-semitic view of the reality of the history of Spain. Further on Américo Castro states "los moros no se fueron enteramente de España en 1492; permanecieron los moriscos, oficialmente subditos del rey y cristianos, en realidad moros que conservaban su religión y sus costumbres, y cuya presencia ... no es desdénable, económica, literaria y religiosamente. Tan moros eran, el piadoso rey Felipe III decidió expulsarlos de sus reinos en 1609. ¿Se fueron por eso enteramente? Parece que no, pues aún se perciben sus vestigios en la huerta Murcia, en Valencia y en Aragón. De suerte que la presencia de moros y moriscos en España abarca, en realidad, más de nueve siglos" (Castro, p. 181). The Christian re-conquest of the Peninsula, then, was
not free from some degree of racial amalgamation, mutual assimilation of
customs, and the influences in the intellectual life of the peoples—
literature in particular. Total immersion by the Christians in the
Moslem culture was, of course, not possible; both were just as dia-
metrically opposed in their religious ideas as were the Hebrews and
the Canaanites. "Los cristianos adoptaron multitud de cosas," states
Américo Castro, " . . . pero no asimilaron sus actividades productoras,
justamente porque tuvieron que orientarse hacia otra disposición de
vida para oponerse y, finalmente, vencer a los moros" (Castro, p. 180).
The ultimate objective—the expulsion of the Moor from the Peninsula—
was then the constant barrier limiting the degree of amalgamation and
assimilation between the two peoples.

However, assimilation and amalgamation did occur at almost all
levels. Of particular interest here is the extent to which the litera-
ture of Christian Spain was influenced by Moslem ideas. Américo Castro
devotes a great deal of attention to it, and in his book La realidad
histórica de España he cites both the Disciplina clericalis and
El Criticón as works standing at both ends of a spectrum characterized
by strong Arab currents. Referring to San Juan de la Cruz, Castro
states that "San Juan . . . es inexplicable fuera de la tradición místi-
ca sadili conservada por los moriscos castellanos" (Castro, p. 182).

11"La Disciplina clericalis que en el siglo XII difundió 33 cuentos
de procedencia oriental por la España cristiana y por Europa, hasta
El Criticón, de Baltazar Gracián (siglo XVII), cuyo germen se halla en
un relato conservado entre los moriscos aragoneses" (Castro, p. 182).
Castro seems to indicate that the great Spanish mystic was influenced by a particular kind of mysticism called 'sadilí' which originated in Persia. Sadilí apparently took roots in al-Andalus influencing one Ibn Abbad born at Ronda, Spain at about 1371. According to Américo Castro the mysticism of San Juan de la Cruz and that of Abbad are similar in that both use the mystic symbolism.

Yet another aspect of Moorish and Christian relation was in the area of marriage. "En 980," states Castro, "viendo como Almanzor llegaba victorioso hasta muy adentro de Castilla, salió a su encuentro el rey de Navarra, Sancho Garcés, y le hizo ofrenda de su hija; Almanzor la aceptó gustoso, la tomó por mujer y ella islamizó, siendo entre las mujeres del ministro de las mejores en religión y en hermosura" (Castro, p. 187). Another example of this nature is that of Bermudo II of León, who in 993 sent his own daughter Teresa to a Moslem chieftain also. The Moslem accepted her as a slave but later freed her in order to marry her. Events of this kind seem to bear striking similarities to the customs and practices of the Canaanites and Hebrews. The Old Testament alone offers numerous examples of this kind of marriage. Solomon, for example, was criticized by the priesthood of the day for accepting foreign wives. Even though his motives were purely political--the consummation of a treaty or the demonstration of loyalty by a vassal king--the Book of Kings narrates Solomon's predicament in the following manner: "Solomon made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt; he took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had finished building his own house and the house of
the Lord and the wall around Jerusalem" (I Kings 3:1). "Now King Solomon loved many foreign women: the daughter of Pharaoh, and Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women" (I Kings 11:1). The custom, then, being largely or Semitic origin, comes as no real surprise when El Cid consents to the marriage of his two daughters at the urging of his king, Alfonso.

Throughout this chapter an attempt has been made to point out similarities and parallelisms between two cultures and their geographically isolated lands, the Peninsula from the rest of Europe and Canaan as merely the traffic road between two ancient cradles of civilization: the Fertile Crescent and the River Nile Basin. In both instances the concept of the "whole of the land being related to the whole of the history of the people" (see above, p. 4) seems to bear striking similarities. In both lands a long and arduous struggle was carried on by both Christians and Hebrews; and both peoples were ultimately influenced by the culture of their enemies. Assimilation and amalgamation did take place among the Christians to the north of the Peninsula and among the Hebrews of the highlands of Canaan. As has been seen, both fought a holy and religious war. The description of the lands stands out as a stage, however, in need of description before the main acts develop, before the main protagonist plays his part. In this case it is El Poema de Mío Cid's hero.

Chapter II

The Banishment

Banishment during the Middle Ages and Antiquity presented quite a different set of circumstances and conditions to man than it does today. Whether such misfortune caught him in the central highlands of medieval Spain or in the Middle Eastern desert of two thousand years earlier, the prospects for survival were quite dim; for banishment generally meant death at the hands of unfriendly forces or—as must have certainly been the case in the Wilderness of Zin and Canaan and its surroundings—being at the mercy of hostile nomadic tribes and nature's elements. Nature itself was not thought to be a friendly ally; rather it was considered to be either a mortal enemy or a harsh and unmerciful companion. Man in both Antiquity and throughout most of the Middle Ages seems to have accepted nature only insofar as being "God's handiwork" capable of stirring his heart and mind, causing awe and wonderment, and thus inspiring him and motivating him to write songs and poems about it. "When I look at thy heavens," wrote the ancient Hebrew poet, "the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast established; what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou dost care for him?" (Psalm 8:3-4). In reality, however, man seems to have had a fear

of nature which might have stemmed from having lacked a reasonable understanding of it and control over it. The psalmist here offers ample evidence that even before the birth of Christ man was overwhelmed by nature and believed it to be the work of an omnipotent God. Man often felt dwarfed—and perhaps inferior—by the immensity of the desert, the wild restlessness of the sea, and the majestic and imposing presence of the mountains. Indeed, man still seems to feel dwarfed by nature. In Antiquity, perhaps more than at any other time in history, nature was awesome and the town and the city surrounded by massive walls offered the needed protection and afforded the essential sense of security.

Johan Huizinga, writing about the sharp contrast that existed between town and country during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in France, states that "A medieval town did not lose itself in extensive suburbs of factories and villas; girded by its wall, it stood forth as a compact whole, bristling with innumerable turrets." This, of course, was a vivid manifestation of man's desire to seek together the common defense. Although Huizinga writes largely about medieval France, his observation is relevant to medieval Spain also, for it is Ávila, surrounded by its massive walls and eighty-eight turrets, which stands out as an example of how a "compact whole" must have looked in central Spain, seeking a common protection from both nature and the Moor. Not only Ávila but the whole of Castille, which bristled with castles and walled towns, were communities seeking protection from the threat of the Moor.

Huizinga depicts these communities as living under clearly marked concepts. Writing about the effect of nature on the life of a walled-in medieval city, Huizinga states that "The contrast between silence and sound, darkness and light, like that between summer and winter, was more strongly marked than it is in our lives" (p. 10). He describes the medieval town as a community in which folk marked time by the sound of bells; they warned the townspeople of danger and called upon them to rejoice or to mourn. With their call to vespers, the bells brought the day to an end. Huizinga describes the daily life of a rural community as possessed of a routine interrupted only by processions which were quite frequently a source of spiritual and emotional experience. The royal entries of princes and the executions also interrupted the daily routine, bringing to the community some excitement. "The entries of princes," remarks Huizinga, "were arranged with all the resources of art and luxury belonging to the age. . . . The cruel excitement and coarse compassion raised by an execution formed an important item in the spiritual food of the common people" (p. 11). When the times were trying and the security of the community threatened, long and winding processions were organized; these affairs sometimes lasted for weeks, until it was felt that some response from the deity had been secured. In many respects it would seem as if the pace of life in the medieval town was also marked by a sharp contrast between the harsh and cruel realities of life and the highly "coloured" and fantasy-ridden concept of the "fairy story" life led by the royalty and the gentry. "The court chroniclers," writes Huizinga, "were men of culture, and they observed the princes,
whose deeds they recorded, at close quarters" (Huizinga, pp. 15-17). He reports that often there is an element of fantasy in the recorded lives of these princes, quite reminiscent of the lives of caliphs in the Arabian Nights. He cites the example set by Charles VI who, traveling incognito, is knocked about by the crowd and petty constables as he watched the entrance of his betrothed. The life of comfort and wealth was in greater contrast with that of the unfortunate poor. Every rank and profession was set apart by its costume, relative wealth, and clearly defined position in the social strata. The poor and the destitute moved about in abject hopelessness; "Lepers sounded their rattles and went about in processions, beggars exhibited their deformity and their misery in churches" (p. 9). One interesting characteristic of medieval royalty was its dependence upon the occult and the more mystic aspects of the Christian faith. Huizinga reports that princes in fifteenth century France often sought advice on political matters from "ecstatic preachers and great visionaries." According to him, this custom tended to create a kind of religious tension on the political state of the kingdom which could, at any given time, manifest itself in decisions of a totally unexpected character (p. 17). The medieval literature of Spain offers examples of this in both the Poema de Fernán González and El Poema de Mío Cid; the authors of these poems wrote that their respective heroes had visions and dreams in which the outcomes of events were predicted favorably, and often consulted with and sought advice from the church.

Within this context then, it is not difficult to understand the immense significance that exile or banishment from a "compact whole" of
a medieval community had upon the individual. The loss of security manifested itself on El Cid when King Alfonso banished him from his dominions. The poet succeeds in depicting the tragic scene of the banishment of the hero in the following passage:

Con lágrimas en los ojos, muy fuertemente llorando,
la cabeza atrás volvía y quedábase mirándolos.
Y vio las puertas abiertas, y cerrojos quebrantados,
y vacías las alcándaras, sin las pieles, sin los mantos,
sin sus pájaros halcones, sin los azores mudados.3

In moving lines the poet succeeds not only in depicting the great sense of grief and loneliness of El Cid but also his awareness of having lost the security of the community. His perches, his mantles, and his moting hawks are symbols of the life of ease which must have been his in moments of relative peace. Echoes of similar tragedy can be found in the Book of I Samuel where the following tragic and moving scene takes place between David and Jonathan: "And as soon as the lad had gone, David rose... and they kissed one another, and wept with one another, until David recovered himself. Then Jonathan said to David, 'Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, "The Lord shall be between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants, for ever." And he rose and departed; and Jonathan went into the city" (I Samuel 20:41-42). Both David and Jonathan were aware of the special circumstances that exile created in their relationship.

Duff Cooper explains these circumstances and the possible consequences in the deadly struggle for power between Saul and David which the preceding Biblical passage reflects:

Jonathan . . . was admirably qualified to judge . . . and he knew that if conflict could not be avoided, it was David who must ultimately prevail. He knew that he had nothing to fear from David . . . but he knew also that fierce times lay ahead, and he thought of his children. It was the practice in those days for a king, who came of a new line, to extirpate without pity the whole family of his predecessor . . . So Jonathan asked David to swear to him that he would be kind to his children and his descendants . . .

David gave his word. He, who was in hiding from his foe and was about to become a hunted outlaw, undertook to protect the children of the all-powerful king's eldest son in the days to be. 4

In the midst of these circumstances then, the Biblical passage reveals the agony of the two young men as they faced the inevitable: exile and banishment for David. David, like El Cid, cries in his exiled condition. "I am weary with my moaning:" he states in a Psalm, "every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping. My eye wastes away because of grief, it grows weak because of all my foes" (Psalm 6:6-7).

El Cid laments his own misfortune thus:

Gracias a ti, Señor Padre, Dios que estás en lo más alto,
los que así mi vida han vuelto, fueron enemigos malos.

Pues perdí el favor del Rey, he de salir de Castilla.
No sé si he de volver más en los días de mi vida.

(El Poema, pp. 11, 19)

El Cid sought the immediate protection of his wife and daughters. By
interning them in the Monasterio de San Pedro de Cardeña he succeeded in
keeping them out of the reach of King Alfonso before he left the king's
dominions and began his exiled life.

El Cid and King Alfonso. If one were to select a human emotion
which may act as a catalyst, disrupting the friendship between King
Alfonso and El Cid, and initiating the complex relationship which devel-
ops thereafter, it would in all probability be calumny. El Poema almost
begins with a direct reference to it; as the minstrel prepares to sing
the poem he says:

Juntaos todos en torno, haced corro y escuchad.
Vais a oír aquí las nuevas de nuestro Cid de Vivar,

de cómo las malas lenguas llegaron a enemistar
a Alfonso, Rey de Castilla con el Cid, siempre leal.

(El Poema, p. 1)

Further on and not too far from the beginning of the poem the false
accusation appears:
Queremos, señor, deciros que el Cid la paz quebrantó que con los moros teníais, asegurada por vos.
y cuando lo hizo, sabía que con esta mala acción nos matarían a todos, a nosotros y aun a vos. (El Poema, p. 8)

This sort of accusation was very much in keeping with the political mores and practices of the Middle Ages and the tenth century before Christ. Indeed, it often functions as an effective tool in today's political arena. (With respect to the Middle Ages, Huizinga certainly emphasizes this particular aspect of life.) It is not surprising then that the writer of El Poema chose calumny as an effective tool with which to create an incident that disrupts, and at the same time initiates, a new relationship between the king and the vassal. A similar condition can be found in the Biblical account of King Saul and David. The author of the Book of Samuel writes about the Israelite women who at the zenith of David's popularity and in the midst of their frenzied dancing and singing cannot help but chant "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (I Samuel 18:7). Obviously the saying carried within the seed of envy which did not fail to implant itself in Saul's heart. The writer of the Book of Samuel effectively depicts Saul's reaction and emotional condition in the following verses: "And Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him; he said, 'They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands; and what more can he have but the kingdom?'" (I Samuel 18:8-9) Similarly, in El Poema, fear and distrust set in King Alfonso's mind for he remembered that:
su hermano don Sancho lo mataron a traición,
y don Rodrigo fue quien la palabra le tomó
que en su muerte no hubo parte; y de esto mucho se habló.

(El Poema, p. 8)

According to the writer of the poem, from this "crece el rencor del Rey,
que aleja a su servidor" (El Poema, p. 8).

Taking into consideration the special circumstances of their respective worlds, both Saul and Alfonso seem to have had justifiable reasons to fear and distrust the presence of popular heroes, for they represented a potential threat; they were capable of dividing the loyalties and good will of the people. Most significantly, they could wrestle from the king the right to reign, what in Biblical times was termed the wrestling away of the "blessing" or the "anointing". Perhaps a classical example of this wrestling away of the blessing would be the tragedy of King Saul, first king of Israel: Samuel blessed and anointed Saul as king of Israel, but Saul's failures and disobedience to the Divine Will resulted in his falling out of favor with God; the blessing is then bestowed upon David who reigns after Saul's tragic end.

At the heart of King Alfonso's fears and distrusts was the false accusation which according to Ramón Menéndez Pidal had an extraordinary power. "Los acusadores al oído del rey," writes Menéndez Pidal, "alcanzaban durante ciertos momentos de los siglos XI y XII un increíble preponderancia en la vida política; esos llamados "mestureros" o "mezcladores" . . .
Edmund de Chasca maintains that the relation between King Alfonso and El Cid constitutes the crux, the fundamental point which forges the poem together. In his book, *El arte juglaresco en el Cantar de Mío Cid*, he expounds this interesting theory. Citing line number 1892 as the great dividing line in *El Poema*—at which point a subtle but significant change in the relationship takes place, that in which "el Cid deja de ser peticionario y Alfonso se encuentra en una situación defensiva"—he goes on to state that "la actividad respectiva de Rodrigo y el rey se desenvuelve en dos planos: la de aquel, activa y volativa en el primer término de la escena: la de éste, pasiva, en el fondo. Sólo la acción que origina el Poema, el destierro del vasallo, es iniciada por el rey. Después del destierro es el Cid quien inicia las acciones y el rey el que reacciona. Y este sistema de acciones y reacciones progresa en tres etapas que corresponden a las tres gestas guerreras de los primeros dos cantares: la acción de Castejón, la de Alcocer, y la de Valencia" (de Chasca, p. 75).


In relation to this process of "acción-reacción" de Chasca cites for an appropriate example the gifts that El Cid sends the king. Upon defeating Fáriz y Galve at Alcocer, and setting aside some of the booty for King Alfonso, he calls on his trusted Minaya and exclaims:

A Castilla a vos quiero enviar con un mandado para contar la batalla que aquí hoy hemos ganado.

Al Rey don Alfonso quiero ... enviarle en don con vos treinta escogidos caballos.

Todos vayan con sus sillas; vayan muy bien enfrenados; que sendas espadas lleven de los arzones colgando.

(El Poema, pp. 39-40)

Further on, after the taking of Valencia, El Cid sends Minaya Alvar Fáñez once again to King Alfonso with a larger gift:

Si a vos os place, Minaya, y esto no os ha de pesar, os quiero enviar a Castilla donde está nuestra heredad.

Al Rey Alfonso, que él es de mi señor natural, de estas ganancias habidas en nuestros hechos de acá, quiero darle cien caballos. (El Poema, p. 59)

For the third time El Cid sends his trusted friends Minaya and Pedro Bermúdez to King Alfonso, not only to report on the defeat of Yúsuf but to deliver, once again, an even larger gift:

Mañana por la mañana vos tenéis que iros sin falta con caballos de la parte que yo gané en la jornada,
con sus sillas y sus frenos, y cada uno con su espada.
Por amor de mi mujer y por mis hijas amadas,
pues que el Rey me las mandó donde se encuentran honradas,
estos doscientos caballos sean ofrenda de gracias;
que no diga mal el Rey de quien en Valencia manda.

(El Poema, pp. 79-80)

The size of the gift increases with the importance of the event for which the gift was sent.

Solomon, David, and Saul not only gave gifts as lavish as El Cid's but also received them from their subjects; it was an accepted custom, carefully observed in the etiquette of the times. When a vassal sought a favor, requested protection, received a high or low dignitary, or even sought the forgiveness of the king, a gift would either follow, accompany, or precede such a request or desire. The Moors, members of the larger Semitic family that they were, seemed to have been aware of the binding power of the gift, of its ability to change the course of events; and El Cid's action seems to reflect the extent to which Christian kings in the Peninsula had accepted the customs and practices of the Moslem world during the Middle Ages.

Edmund de Chasca, in his article "The King-Vassal Relationship in El Poema de Mío Cid," studies the nature of the relationship between
king and subject even further. In his article he discusses several concepts which in his opinion affected significantly the role of El Cid. First of these is that the king can do no wrong; "Rodrigo himself does not hold Alfonso responsible for his personal disaster," states de Chasca. "And Jimenea . . . prefers to blame the "mestureros" rather than to place the fault squarely on the king." ⁷ According to de Chasca, it is indeed not "proper to blame the king even if he is not blameless" (p. 184). Second is the concept of the direct rule of a king by divine right. "Right or wrong," states de Chasca, "the king is always the master of his subjects' fate, never a sharer of honor on equal terms, rather the arbiter who confers it or takes it away" (p. 187). It is largely due to this idea that El Cid seems to have a need to be pardoned by the king; an absolution or a pardon would mean acceptance into the peripheral sphere of the king's subjects, a coming back into the favor of the king, which at the time of exile is denied to him. "As king," concludes de Chasca, "Alfonso dwells in a sphere which is inaccessible to the vassal" (p. 187). It comes as no surprise then to see El Cid sending gifts and dedicating his deeds to the king for he desires to dwell once again in the king's sphere.

A third concept is that which in Biblical terms is referred to as the suzeranty relationship; the suzeranty relationship seems to originate from a covenant of which the main characteristic is an unbalanced bond between king and vassal. Bernard W. Anderson in his book Understanding

the Old Testament defines it as "unilateral . . . made between a king and his vassal . . . the suzerain gives protection and security . . . the inferior party . . . is under obligation to obey the commands issued by the suzerain . . . [but] The most striking aspect of the suzeranty covenant is the great attention given to the king's deeds of benevolence on behalf of the vassal . . . It was a relationship between unequals." 8 Although Anderson is referring to the relationship between God and man, earthly kings, among them Christians and Hebrews, claimed to have received their authority from God and as such they were direct representatives of Him on earth. In the case of the Christians, it is quite likely that they conceived this idea from the Old Testament itself. "This complicated situation," writes de Chasca, "is brought out by the text of the Cantar. Alfonso's injustice imposes an awed respect, and especially when he demands the unwilling cooperation of the people in order to enforce his decree" ("King-Vassal," p. 187).

A fourth important concept is that of honor. According to de Chasca, the honor of El Cid never reaches "nor can it ever reach" the honor of the king. The fact that his daughters are ultimately given in marriage by Alfonso to the Infantes of Navarra and Aragón "para que ellas sean las reinas en Navarra y Aragón" (El Poema, p. 144) does not insure El Cid of an equal position with the king. "Because a king-emperor," concludes de Chasca, "like a star, dwells apart in awesome loneliness" ("King-Vassal," p. 187). From this point of view, then, it

is only the king who bestows honor; he alone restores it also or takes measures to cleanse it when it has been defaced. This he does in the case of El Cid, for the writer of El Poema relates that, upon hearing the sad news brought by Muñoz, the king made it known to all that:

¡Por todo mi reino vayan heraldos, y en alta voz que pregonen que en Toledo Corte haré! Lo digo yo: Que me tiene que ir allá todo conde o infanzón!
Allí mandaré que vayan los Infantes de Carrión y que den justo derecho a nuestro Cid Campeador. 
Rencor no le puede dentro, si impedirlo puedo yo. Decidle al Campeador, el que nació bienhadado

Porque quiero bien al Cid, estas Cortes yo las hago. Saludádmelos a todos, y que queden consolados; de lo que les ocurrió, quedarán aún más honrados.

(El Poema, p. 129)

Lastly is the concept of kingly justice; Alfonso as king is the supreme instrument of justice in the land, and he represents the just hand of God on earth imparting justice to his subjects in much the same way as King Solomon did in the Israelite kingdom. El Cid's predicament, his loss of honor brought about by the Infantes de Carrión, can only be solved by the king—in fact El Cid expects and demands just action from the king:

De lo mío se llevaron; todo era de valor. 

Esto me duele también con el otro deshonor.
En juntas o bien en Cortes que los citen quiero yo, según señala el derecho . . . (El Poema, p. 127)

El Cid is obviously reminding the king of his just right to receive justice at his hands. "Only through a trial at law," writes de Chasca, "which he himself and no one else can launch may the matter be adjudicated" ("King-Vassal," p. 188). It would seem as if for de Chasca, then, the underlying currents that control the progression of the "system of actions and reactions" already discussed elsewhere in the chapter are these concepts. The progression of this system leads to a "moral action" that takes place on two planes: "That of the Cid, active and volitional, in the foreground; that of the king, passive and responsive, in the background" (de Chasca, "King-Vassal," p. 190). Menéndez Pidal, writing on the same subject, the king-vassal relationship, states that "Los deberes propios del vasallo eran: servir al señor contra todos los hombres del mundo, ora en la guerra, ora acudiendo a la corte del señor siempre que éste le llamase, ora llevando los mensajes que le fuesen encomendados . . . si abandonaba el servicio de su señor sin despedirse, era traidor" (p. 199). The rights of the lord king were equally binding since his was the responsibility of "hacerles mercedes, procurarles matrimonios ventajosos, guardarles de daño, de fuerza, de afrenta, manteniéndolos en su derecho, pagarles soldada cuando los llevaba en hueste, y repartir entre ellos las cuatro quintas partes de la ganancia de guerra" (Menéndez Pidal, p. 199). However, Menéndez Pidal maintains that "la voz 'vasallo', en el caso presente del Cid, no tiene el sentido general de 'súbdito' que entonces también tenía la voz" (p. 199). The
relationship, as he describes it, was indeed quite binding and tends to support de Chasca's argument rather than to annul it. It is interesting to note, also, that Menéndez Pidal feels that it is the Christian church that introduced the concept of the divine right to rule (p. 100), although he does not seem to question or investigate just where the church got the concept.

David and Saul, First King of Israel. "Since the earliest times of which there is any record," states Duff Cooper in his book David, "the system of government adopted by the Israelites had been a theocracy, which means that in theory they were governed only by God. In practice it had meant that they were governed by whoever could successfully convince them that he was the authentic interpreter of God's will" (Cooper, p. 8). According to Cooper, success in communicating this to the majority by one individual made the rest of the task relatively easy. Saul, the son of Kish, seems to have been chosen king over Israel at the time when the Hebrews felt the need to identify themselves with the rest of the surrounding nations; "but we will have a king over us," cry the people to Samuel, "That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may govern us, and go out before us and fight our battles" (I Samuel 8:19-20). This desire to be as other nations could have been an indication that the old system of theocratic government was inadequate for a society which was increasingly abandoning their traditional nomadic life. Saul, then, represents not only a departure from the past, but the embodiment of a new kind of leadership which the judges no longer could
offer the people. In this respect Saul's reign opens a new chapter in the history of Israel. This abrupt and radical change is, according to John Bright, indicative of a "Crisis that brought Israel's amphictyonic organization to an end [and which] ... set in motion a chain of events that within less than a century transformed Israel totally and made her one of the ranking powers of the contemporary world." Yet Israel's monarchy, from its beginning, did not seem to have exhibited a total departure from the theocratic rule; for instead of adopting a pattern close to the feudal city-states characteristic of Philistia and Canaan, it chose to remain peculiarly Hebrew in its essence. Bright states that "While it may have borrowed features from the national kingdoms of Edom

9 "The reason why Saul has come to be regarded as the person who introduced the monarchy and thus marked an epoch in the history of Israel is that his chieftainship, greater than any other in early Israel, happened to prepare the way for the monarchy proper, which was founded by David. Saul's meeting with David determined his fate, and it also came to determine his place in the tradition" (John S. Pedersen, Israel: Its Life and Culture, 4 vols. [London: Oxford University Press, 1947], I, 46). It would seem as if Pedersen would deny the Biblical account in the tenth chapter of I Samuel. Rather he seems to be involved in an attempt to clarify just exactly what kind of king Saul was in relation to other Canaanite kings. However, Pedersen does raise the question as to who really was the first Israelite monarch.

and Moab, it remained a phenomenon characteristically Israelite" (Bright, p. 169). It would seem, then, as if the Hebrews, while renouncing the old theocratic system and in spite of occasional polytheistic adventures, remained uniquely monotheistic in their process of adopting the earthly monarchial system.

Perhaps the most apparent difference between Saul and Alfonso is the absence of a long monarchial tradition in the former and the presence of it in the latter. Writing on the nature of the early origin of the authority of the Hebrew king, Pedersen states that "His authority depended . . . on the recognition of his kinsmen . . . His power was greater than that of Gideon and Jephthah but how far it actually extended is unknown" (Pedersen, I, 44-46). It is surprising, too, that Saul was indeed more a Hebrew chieftain than a king. "There is nothing in Saul's position," he states, "which raises him above the nation and gives to him a special position in relation to the tribes. He is precisely a typical early Israelite chieftain of consideration" (Pedersen, I, 46).

Yet, in all consideration, the Old Testament does make it clear that Saul was anointed king. Pedersen does not seem to be in direct contradiction to the account as it is found in the tenth chapter of I Samuel. His statement is more an exerted effort to clarify and outline Saul's tradition as a king among other Canaanite kings rather than to contradict the Biblical account. In contrast, Menéndez Pidal, writing on medieval León and the power and influence of their kings, states that "La monarquía . . . había fijado su transmisión hereditaria, mantenía aún, en principio, el tipo de la monarquía visigoda. El monarca era
recuerdo del rey germánico, elegido por sus iguales, pero al cual la Iglesia con su consagración añadía un sello divino. La realidad así venía a ser, teóricamente, dignidad recibida de Dios ('non est potestas nisi a Deo') por medio de la elección ahora formularia, y de la aclamación del pueblo, esto es, de los magnates civiles y eclesiásticos" (Menéndez Pidal, p. 99). Aunque circunstancias y tradiciones entre los reyes cristianos y los hebreos fueron diferentes, el sello divino así como la voluntad del pueblo, esto es, de los magnates civiles y eclesiásticos, era esencial y esencialmente un requisito para asumir el trono.

Mientras que el Antiguo Testamento menciona que Dios, a través de Samuel, anotó a Saul como rey de Israel, Menéndez Pidal informa que "La voluntad de Dios era la fuente del poder: 'Ranimirus nutu divino princeps'" (p. 100).

Que Saul era o no un niño rebelde de Dios y David, la elección de Dios para sus propósitos, es un tema de importancia periférica aquí; el punto central aquí es que sus vidas eran trágicas y recordadas en la literatura también. El trágico es la vida de David. Parece permanecer, si no por otro motivo, más como un ejemplo religioso que literario. Sin embargo, ya sea como imagen religiosa o literaria, más laica, sería difícil imaginar a Saul sin David o viceversa. De manera similar, sería difícil imaginar El Cid sin Alfonso. Escribiendo sobre la relación entre Saul y David, John Bright escribe que "It was . . . the popularity of the young hero David"
that finally drove Saul beyond the bounds of rational behavior" (Bright, p. 171). Bright, whose research is largely based on the Old Testament, maintains that the inconsistencies in the Biblical accounts seem to obscure how David came to the attention of Saul. Quoting the Book of Samuel, Bright writes that David "was a lad of Bethlehem who is said to have been a skilled musician ... and who was among those likely young men whom Saul was accustomed to attach to his person" (p. 171). The Biblical account reports that David was the son of Jesse, selected by Saul, on the advice of his servants, to play for him and soothe his already tormented mind in moments of stress (I Samuel 16:16-18). David's rise from a simple shepherd boy with musical talent to popular hero seems to have been the result of the extraordinary feats he performed. His physical beauty also seems to have been an important aspect: "Now he was ruddy," states the writer of I Samuel, "and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. And the Lord said [to Samuel] 'Arise, anoint him; for this is he'" (I Samuel 16:12). With respect to his feats, Bright states that "when further exploits so increased his popularity that it eclipsed that of Saul himself, Saul could no longer endure. Feeling that the people regarded David as their charismatic hero, he feared that they would want to make him king as well ... Driven by insane jealousy he turned completely against David and repeatedly tried to kill him ... so that David had no recourse but to flee" (Bright, p. 172). It is precisely this type of circumstance which, in its essence, brings David and El Cid closer. For example, both David's and El Cid's escapes are dramatic events that totally change their perspective of themselves. Both seem
to ask divine assistance for the general direction their lives are to take in the exile. "Pray let my father and my mother stay with you," asks David of Mizpeh of Moab, "till I know what God will do for me" (I Samuel 22:3). El Cid, in his distress, makes a similar statement; addressing his wife, he states:

Rogad a nuestro Señor, rogad a Santa María,
que con mis manos alcance con que casar a mis hijas;
que ventura me proteja la vida por muchos días.

(El Poema, p. 21)

As David fled to the wilderness of Judah with his "father's house . . . And every one who was in distress, and . . . in debt . . . discontented" (I Samuel 22:1-2) becoming their leader and living a precarious life characterized by continually evading Saul's forces, committing himself and his forces to the service of the Philistines, and extracting protection from wealthy men such as Nabal (I Samuel 25:6-10), El Cid also leaves the dominions of Alfonso: "El Cid y su gente fiel cabalgan a toda prisa" (El Poema, p. 18).

Los unos dejan sus casas; otros, bienes y favor.
En este día tan sólo . . .
ciento quince caballeros juntanse, y con viva voz
todos piden y preguntan por el Cid Campeador. (El Poema, p. 21)

El Cid, followed by "trescientas lanzas, todas ellas con pendón" (El Poema, p. 26) deeply penetrates Moorish territory and begins a vigorous campaign against them, a campaign which not only was an attempt to make a living but also part of the whole Christian effort to expel
the Moor from the Peninsula, and which culminated, as far as El Poema is concerned, in the taking of Valencia. Just as David sent his family to Moab and placed them under the protection of Mizpeh away from the threat of Saul (I Samuel 22:4), El Cid committed his family to the care of the Abbot don Sancho at the monastery of San Pedro de Cardeña (El Poema, p. 19).

"Caught between the Philistines and Saul," writes Bright of David, "he was soon in a desperate predicament. So taking his men, now six hundred, he went over to Achish, king of Gath, and offered him his services" (Bright, p. 173). It may also be said of El Cid that he was caught, at least in the beginning of his exile, between the forces of Alfonso who were free to capture him after the ninth day of grace and the Moors who constantly eyed his every move. While the historic Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, like David, placed himself at the service of various Christian as well as Moorish lords becoming their vassal, David served Achish the Moabite. "The Philistine king," writes Bright, "received David cordially, accepted him as a vassal, and gave him the town of Ziklag (location uncertain but in the Negev of Judah) as a feudal holding. It is clear from both the Old Testament and El Poema that neither David nor El Cid made direct attempts to attack their kings. Yet neither seems to have had any scruples about taking sides with the enemy—the Moor in the case of El Cid and Alfonso and the Philistines in that of Saul and David. Attempting to clarify El Cid's position in this matter, Menéndez Pidal states that "El intervenir en las guerras intestines de los musulmanes y ganar riquezas en ellas era... un
desgaste y debilitación del enemigo y una extensión de la influencia cristiana" (Menéndez Pidal, p. 31). It would seem as if the comment also applies to David's condition for, according to Bright, David, while in the service of the Philistine king, "continued to play a devious game... convincing Achish by false reports that he was conducting raids into Judah, he actually devoted himself to harrying the Amelekites and tribes of the southern desert whose incursions had always plagued neighboring Israelite clans. By this means and by judicious distribution of booty among strategic clans and towns in the Negeb of Judah, he was able to convince his people that he was still their loyal protector"(p.173).

In both the Old Testament and El Poema the lion plays a rather curious if not significant part. Without emphasizing its possible symbolic implications in the Old Testament, some allusions are made to David's extraordinary strength and its relation to that of the lion. "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father," states David in the presence of Saul, "and when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, I went after him and smote him and delivered it out of his mouth; and if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him and killed him. Your servant has killed both lions and bears" (I Samuel 17:34-36). This example is not an isolated one, for further on in the Book of Samuel both Jonathan and David are described as "swifter than eagles [and] stronger than lions." The courage of man to confront the lion in single contest seems to have fascinated men of old; and the Old Testament sages who possessed this courage--either as proof of their physical strength or as a sign of God's direct intervention on
their behalf—were greatly revered. Perhaps the most interesting examples are those of Daniel in the lions' den and Samson. With respect to Daniel, it is King Darius who, after having sent him to the den of lions, came to it to mourn his trusted friend: "O Daniel, servant of the living God," exclaims Darius, "has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" (Daniel 6:20). To which Daniel replied, "O king, live for ever! My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me" (Daniel 6:21-22). In the case of Samson, it is his sheer physical strength which gave him a position of leadership among the Hebrews. "Then Samson went down," narrates the writer of the Book of Judges, "... to Timnah ... And behold, a young lion roared against him; and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion asunder as one tears a kid; and he had nothing in his hand" (Judges 14:5-6). Although it must be conceded that the circumstances surrounding these events differ from one another, they all seem to have one common denominator: the lion appears as a threat to man. Their physical or spiritual strength is expected to overcome the danger. There is a strange similarity between these widely separated Biblical events and the suspense-filled encounter between El Cid and the lion. Commenting on the cowardice of the Infantes of Carrión, the writer begins to narrate the event with utter simplicity:

Un día que el Cid dormía en su escaño, sin temor
un mal sobresalto entonces, sábed, les aconteció:
Escapóse de una jaula, saliendo fuera, un león.
Los que estaban en la Corte sintieron un gran temor;
recogieronse sus mantos los del buen Campeador,
y rodean el escaño en guarda de su señor.

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En esto que se despierta el que en buen hora nació; de sus mejores guerreros cercado el escaño vio:
--¿Qué pasa aquí, mis mesnadas? ¿Qué queréis? ¿Qué aconteció?
--Es que, mi señor honrado, un susto nos dio el león.

Con además mesurado, en pie el Cid se levantó.
El manto se pone al cuello y encaminóse al león.
La fiera, cuando vio al Cid, al punto se avergonzó; allí bajo la cabeza, y ante el su faz humilló.
Nuestro Cid Rodrigo Díaz por el cuello lo tomó, y lo lleva de la mano, y en la jaula lo metió.

(El Poema, pp. 103-4)

The short episode has a significance all of its own, separate from the Old Testament; yet, it would seem difficult to deny or ignore the similarity on at least two accounts. Like David, El Cid faces imminent danger from the lion. While David destroys the animal, El Cid reacts much in the same manner as Daniel did by leading the beast back to its cage. For all, David, Samson, Daniel, and El Cid, the event would seem to be a strange combination of raw human courage and a sense of divine security that will not allow any harm to come to them in the encounter.

"La personalidad del Cid," writes Cesareo Bandera in his article "Reflexiones sobre el carácter mítico del Poema de Mío Cid," "es una personalidad leonina, tal como la mente popular se imaginaba al león,
el ser que siempre ve, que siempre vigila, hasta el punto de mantener los ojos abiertos aún cuando duerme." In synthesis, Bandera's article alludes to the messianic myth in the person of El Cid. He is described as a terrestrial savior who in his conquest of Valencia succeeds in transmitting something of the glory of Jerusalem to the event. On the whole, however, the article is well within the limits of myth as it relates to El Poema. Indeed, Bandera doesn't seem to relate the event to similar Biblical accounts. It would seem, then, as if both David and El Cid remain, in their respective spheres, the lion-hearted figures whose courage and determination played a part in the overall--historical--objective of their respective peoples: the reconquest of the land.

11 Cesareo Bandera, "Reflexiones sobre el carácter mítico del Poema de Mío Cid," Modern Language Notes, 81 (1966), 204.
Chapter III

Conquest

The medieval Christian kingdoms of the Peninsula and the Hebrews of the conquest of Canaan seem to have regarded war as essential to their objectives; perhaps the almost incredible duration of these conflicts, which in the case of the Christian kings lasted (with relatively few periods of peace) for almost eight centuries, would be sufficient evidence of the tenacity with which these peoples sought to accomplish their objectives—mainly the re-conquest of the lands they believed to be theirs either by the right of previous occupation or an a priori act of the deity. From the standpoint of the medieval period, war seems to have been considered man's own proving ground, a field in which he attempted to assert his manhood over the opponent. Indeed, war was something more than this to medieval man, for Otis Green, in his work Spain and the Western Tradition, states that "The Spanish feudal noble ... lived for war, and it was with the greatest difficulty that his passion and lust for competitive armed strife became tempered in its violence, ennobled—in principle!—and raised to the rank of virtue."¹

It is perhaps difficult for contemporary man—with his preoccupation with peace in the face of a possible atomic holocaust—to see war elevated to the rank of virtue, even though he may still find war an

¹ Otis Green, Spain and the Western Tradition (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963); I, 10.
acceptable activity for the solution of his problems. However, within the context of the Middle Ages and the period of the Hebrew conquest of Canaan war was an acceptable activity for all but a few, a mode of life which afforded solutions to the problems of at least one segment of the populace, the feudal lord and the gentry that surrounded him. They, more than any one group of society, gave direction and guidance to the masses. Pedro Mexia writes that "the art and science of war... though it have its beginning and origin in sin, and though its means and often its ends be but cruelty and bloodshed and evil, is held in such high regard that men have preferred this art and honor, and the persons wise and skilled therein, to all other arts and abilities, and give it first place and the highest rank in their esteem." There is a close relationship between this statement (made some 400 years ago) and Green's opinion. "Fortunately for Christian society, which obviously could not exist without military defense," he writes, "it was possible to rationalize a way out of the categorical imperative: Thou shalt not kill" (Green, p. 16). The significance here seems to be the binding quality of the two statements apparent in the concept of sin, evil, and the rationalization of the ancient Hebrew command. It would seem as if for Hebrew and Christian alike the process of rationalizing war eventually led to the acceptance of the concept of holy war and the final theological justification of the act itself by a God who leads into battle because He is directly involved in the events of their history.

2 Green, p. 16, as quoted from Pedro Mexia, Silva de varia lección (Madrid: La Sociedad de Bibliófilos Españoles, 1933), I, 51.
Pedersen, writing on the subject, states that "All life in Israel depends on the interaction of the psychic forces of the people . . . This applies to daily life in the human community and to all its activities with the cattle and in the fields. But it applies even more to the great crucial situations when much is at stake. Then supreme effort is made . . . A renewal of strength beyond the normal is needed, and men who are to wield it create a renewed organism. In time of war, the Israelites form such a regenerated community with increased strength."

According to Pedersen, war was a natural condition for the Hebrews as well as for the peoples with whom they had to contend, and peace was a process which "had to be constantly recreated" out of each and every armed conflict (Pedersen, III, 1). It is not surprising, then, to see both struggles, the Christian re-conquest of the Peninsula and the Hebrew conquest of Canaan, as not only God-sanctioned struggles but also as God-led. Joshua, poised before the Jordan, is assured by God of his future success: "No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you" (Joshua 1:5). "About forty thousand ready armed for war passed over before the Lord for battle, to the plains of Jericho" (Joshua 4:13). Just before the fall of Jericho the divine


emissary appears to the warrior and states that "as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come" (Joshua 5:14). Further on God speaks to Joshua in the following manner: "I have given into your hand Jericho, with its king and mighty men of valor" (Joshua 6:2). Joshua, fully convinced of God's promises, leads his men to Jericho. "Then they utterly destroyed all in the city, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and asses, with the edge of the sword" (Joshua 6:21). In El Poema El Cid is also assured by an angel, in a dream, of his victory over his adversaries:

---Cabalgad, Cid, cabalgad, sois un buen campeador,
pues nunca en un tan buen punto logró cabalgar varón.
En tanto viváis, buen fin tendrá lo que emprendáis vos.

(El Poema, p. 25)

The fall of Jericho and the fall of Castejón are in contrast, particularly in the attitude and behavior of both Joshua and El Cid. While Joshua proceeded to raze the city to the ground and slay all its inhabitants, El Cid, acting under no divine command and influenced by a different set of circumstances, followed a more cautious plan:

Pero el castillo, en que estamos yo no lo quiero asolar.
A cien moros y a cien moras libertad les quiero dar.
Por cuanto de ellos tome, que de mí no digan mal.

(El Poema, p. 30)

Yet there is also here, between the two time-and-circumstance separated accounts, a binding quality found in the strong faith of the warriors. In the case of El Cid, examples of his constant dependence upon divine
aid in battle are evident at the conclusion of every armed encounter he
has either against the Moor or against his fellow Christians. "--Gracias
al Dios de los cielos, gracias a todos los santos," exclaims El Cid at
the aftermath of the battle for Alcocer (El Poema, p. 33).

It would seem as if El Cid's armed conflicts, when placed within
the more encompassing panorama of the struggle for complete control of
the Peninsula by the Christian kings, have a more significant meaning,
namely that of being part of a holy war. Writing on the relationship
between the Crusades and the wars of the re-conquest in the Peninsula,
Menéndez Pidal states that "El mismo año de la toma de Coimbra debemos
registrar otro suceso de menos trascendencia militar, pero más resonante
en la cristianidad. En 1063, el papa Alejandro II promovió una expedi-
ción a España; el papa concedía la remisión de los pecados a los comba-
tientes contra los moros de España, treinta años antes que se predicase
la primera cruzada a Palestina." Menéndez Pidal asserts that "la inva-
sión [moral] fue castigo divino a la iniquidad de los últimos godos;
Dios, que hiere y sana, es quien ayuda a los españoles a liberar la
santa Iglesia del poder islámico" (Menéndez Pidal, p. 634). Even more
significant is his analysis of the conditions in the eleventh century.
Writing on the Crusades, Menéndez Pidal states that "Después, en el
siglo XI, se reanudaban las expediciones ... no por el Imperio, sino
por el Papado en su aspiración a la supremacia política, o bien promo-
vidas por el llamamiento de España, que para resistir la guerra santa

5 Ramón Menéndez Pidal, La España del Cid (Madrid: Espasa Calpe,
1947), I, 147.
del Islam invocaba la nueva guerra santa de la Cristianidad" (Menéndez Pidal, p. 635). This seems to affirm that the wars of re-conquest were, at least in some aspects, part of a holy struggle against the Moor. Even if the whole conflict cannot be seen well within the bounds of holy war, the age or particular time in which it took place was indeed both a religious and violent age which afforded very little room for compromises but much for extremes. "So violent and motley was life," writes Huizinga, "that it bore the mixed smell of blood and of roses. The men of that time always oscillate between the fear of hell and the most naive joy, between cruelty and tenderness, between harsh asceticism and insane attachment to the delights of this world, between hatred and goodness, always running to extremes."

Within these extremes, both the Hebrews of Antiquity and the medieval Christians of the Peninsula searched for the perfect, often charismatic, leader who would lead them into battle and—as was the case with the Hebrews—would willingly become the vessel of God. This "anointed one" or man who "en buen hora nació" was, within the spectrum of human characteristics, found in the far extreme, for goodness, valor, righteousness and faithfulness were his most common personal characteristics. David, Joshua, Moses, and Solomon were but a small number among many who "found favor with God and man" and thus became instruments—vessels—of God, executing the divine will. To be sure, El Cid of El Poema was no "anointed one" in the Hebrew sense of the word, but in El Poema he was

the charismatic leader, the man "en tan buena hora nacido" (El Poema, p. 13) and who "en buen hora os ciñeron vuestra espada" (El Poema, p. 12). As such he shared something in common with Joshua and David, namely an innate perfection which set him aside from the rest and a charismatic power that men could see in him. With respect to the medieval warrior, it was this human perfection Green finds manifested in the knight. "As the father of the Infantes de Lara recognized the head of each of his seven sons, he pronounces over it a eulogy, and the seven eulogies together summarize the qualities of the perfect knight: loyalty, justice, truth, valor, fidelity, generosity, [and] . . . a fondness for good company" (Green, p. 6). Green maintains that these qualities are found in the person of El Cid, who in El Poema is portrayed as the exemplary knight not only fighting for existence but fighting for a just and righteous cause: the expulsion of the Moor from the Peninsula.

**El Cid's Victory over the Moors.** Within the historical perspective El Cid's contribution to the re-conquest of the Peninsula by the Christian kings of the north seems to be just as significant as King Alfonso's. Kenneth Meyer Setton, in his work A History of the Crusades, writes that "In 1095 the territory of the peninsula was fairly evenly divided between the Spanish Christians in the north and the African and Andalusian Moslems in the south. Military power was in precarious and sensitive balance... Alfonso was able to retain Toledo while Rodrigo Díaz of Vivar, called the Cid, established himself in Valencia and was able for a time to oppose the advance of the Moslems into northeastern
Spain.™ The holding on to Valencia by El Cid seems, then, to assure the veracity of his historic existence; in El Poema his exploits against the Moor receive greater magnification. There, like Joshua at the conquest of Canaan, El Cid is the perfect warrior, and he is called Campeador, a name closely associated with his feats on the battlefield. Indeed, from the beginning of El Poema—after the battle against Modafar—El Cid is known by that name:

_Y desde allí en adelante toda la gente de España conocerá a don Rodrigo con nombre ilustre y de fama:_

_Ruy Díaz él de Vivar, Cid Campeador se llama,_

_y entienden todos con esto que le gusta la batalla._

(El Poema, p. 6)

Even children know him by the name:

_Nueve años tiene la niña que delante se paraba:_

_—Campeador, que en buen hora os ciñeron vuestra espada!_  

_Esto el Rey nos lo prohibe, ayer de él llegó su carta con prevenciones muy grandes, y venía muy sellada._

_No podemos atrevernos a que entréis en la posada._ (El Poema, p. 12)


8 "The Cid Campeador (Arabaic El Seid, 'the Lord'), or 'My Cid', as the poet prefers to call him. (Campeador is of uncertain etymology, but is generally taken to mean 'challenger' or 'battler'.)" (Lesley Bird Simpson, _The Poem of the Cid_ [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970], p. v.)
When El Cid enters into battle, the name is part of his battle cry. For example, when he breaks the siege imposed on him by the Moor at Alcocer, the initial charge, led by him and his friend Pedro Bermúdez, is accompanied by the vigorous war cry: "—Al combate, caballeros, por amor del Creador! Yo soy Ruy Díaz el Cid de Vivar, Campeador!" (El Poema, p. 36).

As a popular hero of both legendary and historical stature, El Cid seems to occupy a unique position. Menéndez Pidal, attempting to define it, writes:

El Cid es un héroe épico de naturaleza singular. Muy poco o nada sabe la historia acerca de los protagonistas de la epopeya griega, germánica o francesa. Doctas excavaciones nos convencen de que la guerra troyana fue un suceso acaecido realmente sobre las ruinas que nuestros ojos pueden ver, y nos aseguran la veracidad de la poesía homérica mediante los objetos excavados que la confirman . . . pero de Aquiles nunca sabremos nada. Nada tampoco de Sigfrido; sólo cabe sospechar que fué personaje histórico . . . Las historias de Carlomagno nos aseguran que existió Roldán . . . pero fuera de su existencia, nada sabemos de él más que su desastros o fin. Estas heroicas vidas quedarán por siempre en la región pura de la poesía . . . Mas . . . el Cid es héroe de temple muy diverso: desde su mundo superior ideal desciende para entrar con paso firme en el campo de la historia . . . Es que el Cid no pertenece, como los otros héroes, a esas épocas primitivas en que la historia aún no se ha desenvuelto al par de la poesía. (Menéndez Pidal, pp. 593-94)
Further on Menéndez Pidal maintains that both history and poetry are amazingly close in *El Poema* in the person of El Cid. "No hay héroes épicos más iluminados por la historia que el Cid" (p. 594). The same can be said of Joshua who, to most theologians and Biblical historians, still remains the credible, real man chosen to lead the Hebrews into Canaan. It would seem as if in Joshua and El Cid poetry and historical fact have blended, held tightly knitted by the very authenticity of these heroes. El Cid is, then, the warrior whose name is feared by Christian and Moor alike, for whoever confronts him in battle learns the meaning of utter defeat. In *El Poema*, el Campeador never loses the battle; to his men he is almost invincible, "Nuestro Cid Rodrigo Díaz, que en buena hora ciñó espada" (*El Poema*, p. 13).

Two interesting aspects of El Cid's victory over the Moors are apparent in *El Poema*: first, the swiftness—almost lightning speed—with which El Cid moves south, towards Valencia; second, the utter defeat of the Moor on the battlefield coupled with a realism which seems to emphasize the extreme cruelties on the battlefield. Such cruel realism was effectively synthesized by Huizinga when he wrote "To the world when it was half a thousand years younger, the outlines of all things seemed more clearly marked than to us . . . all things in life were of a proud or cruel publicity. . . . all tended to produce that perpetual oscillation between . . . cruelty and pious tenderness which characterize life in the Middle Ages" (Huizinga, pp. 9-10). Edmund de Chasca, writing on the rapid enumeration of places and the effect it produces on the progression of time in *El Poema*, states that "Desde que el rey decreta el
destierro, autorizando únicamente un corto plazo para que el Cid salga de Castilla, hasta tres años más tarde en que el Campeador toma Valencia, éste no se detiene nunca, sino para tender celadas, para sitiar, o para dormir brevemente.”

Indeed, de Chasca's sensitive observations point out the swift movements of El Cid on the field, alluding in turn to a sense of urgency often accentuated by "el canto matutino de los gallos, y el sonido de cascos, rítmico y regular en las marchas; estruendoso en las batallas" (p. 85). (A similar sense of urgency seems apparent in the Old Testament account of Joshua's campaigns against the Canaanites where the whole conquest seems to have been a swift push of blitzkreig dimensions.) De Chasca writes that in El Poema "A veces, los lugares desfilan ante el lector con rapidez cinematográfica. El Cid y los suyos se tragan las distancias. Conforme a la velocidad de su movimiento cobra ímpetu, crece el número de los que le siguen" (p. 87). According to him, the swiftness is created by the admirable technique of the poet, who cleverly makes a rapid enumeration of places within a limited number of lines. De Chasca cites lines 1542-45 as an example. The lines, in Francisco López Estrada's version of El Poema, read thus:

Salen ellos de Medina, y allí cerca el Jalón pasan; por el Arbujuelo arriba prestamente que aguijaban pronto el campo de Taranz en seguida atravesaban hasta parar en Molina, la que Abengalbón mandaba.

(El Poema, p. 69)

Characteristic of El Poema is the cruel realism that permeates the actions of El Cid and his men in battle; nothing seems to make such a lasting impression as the extreme cruelty—and at times the extreme generosity—with which these warriors treat the enemy. As El Cid greets Minaya Alvar Fáñez from his deep incursion into Moorish-held territory, Minaya offers all the booty to El Cid and refuses to accept his share:

hasta no haberme sentido contento en mi buen caballo
peleando con los moros en combates por el campo,
la lanza bien empleada, y la espada meta mano,
y me baje codo abajo la sangre destelleando. (El Poema, p. 29)

The peculiarity of Minaya's vow to El Cid is not whether he will be able to keep it or whether the requirement of its fulfillment is the battlefield, but rather the significance is in that the vow must be fulfilled in the thick of battle. The bloodier the event and the greater the danger, the better the circumstances will be for the fulfillment of the vow. There seems to be a curious mixture of religious fervor, patriotism (the expulsion of the Moor from the Peninsula), and a sense of securing personal worth only in the bloodiest part of the battle. Another expression of this cruelty is seen at the battle for Alcocer. There it is El Cid and his forces who

... sin piedad los golpes daban;
en un poco de lugar a trescientos moros matan.
Dando grandes alaridos los que están en la emboscada
los van dejando delante, y hacia el castillo se marchan;
con las espadas desnudas al punto la puerta ganan.

(El Poema, p. 32)
"En cuatro versos," states de Chasca, "el juglar . . . menciona cinco lugares que los jinetes apenas ven, tanta es la prisa que llevan" (de Chasca, pp. 87-88). Another example is found between lines 542 and 556; in that passage the movement is even more rapid for in a few lines "los caballos del Cid recorren más de cien kilómetros desde Castejón a Alcocer" (de Chasca, p. 88). The Moor seems to be caught in this rapid pace; his existence as a complete person seems to lack credibility, for it is difficult to find a Moor whose personality and character stand out—-as those of Minaya Alvar Fáñez certainly do—in El Poema.

Abengálbón, the Moor of Molina and El Cid's reputed good friend, does not seem to progress beyond a mere caricature. In general, it would seem as if the Moor achieves some measure of reality in that he is the enemy and as such he is vaguely defined. Referring to the armed conflicts, de Chasca writes that "La acción de Castejón es sigilosa, el Cid y los suyos pasan toda la noche en celada antes de atacar. En Alcocer el Cid también ataca a los moros por sorpresa, pero el encuentro de los cristianos con el enemigo es más violento. El choque estruendoso a campo abierto se presenta 'agitado y fortísimo'" (de Chasca, p. 86). Essentially the same condition is noted at the battle by Pinar de Tevar, at the battle against the two Moorish kings, Fáriz and Galve, and at the battle for Valencia. "La batalla contra Yuçef," writes de Chasca, "se matiza de sentido novelesco por el anhelo del Cid de demostrar su fuerza ante su mujer y sus hijas . . . las cuales pueden ver a los contendientes desde el alcázar de Valencia" (p. 87).
Yet when the time to carry out the complete annihilation of the population came El Cid had a change of heart—or perhaps a change of strategy—for he called on his warriors in the following manner:

Oídme vos, Alvar Fáñez, y todos los caballeros.
Sabeis que en este castillo grandes presas hemos hecho.
Ya los moros quedan muertos; y vivos bien pocos veo.
Y los que quedan con vida, a quien vender no tenemos.
Si cortamos sus cabezas, nada en ello ganaremos.

(El Poema, p. 33)

Whether El Cid's decision is a matter of strategy or politics, there remains present in the action an element of mercy toward the enemy, which, considering the times, can be regarded as an action of extreme compassion in the midst of many acts of extreme cruelty. Yet another instance of cruel realism takes place at the battle of El Cid with the two Moorish kings. There the bloody conflict seems to take even larger proportions:

Todos atacan las filas donde Bermúdez entró.
Trescientas lanzas combaten, cada una con su pendón;
cada cual un moro mata de un solo golpe que dio;
cuando otra vez arremeten, otros tantos muertos son.
Tanta lanza allí veríais hundir, y bien pronto alzar;
tanta adarga en aquel caso romper y agujerear;
tanta loriga deshecha de parte a parte pasar,
y tanto blanco pendón rojo de sangre quedar;
y tantos caballos buenos sin sus dueños allí andar.
Los moros gritan: ¡Mahoma! ¡Santiago!, la cristiandad.
Por el campo derribados en un poco de lugar,
mil trescientos moros muertos más o menos allí están.

(El Poema, p. 36)

Through the use of words such as golpe, arremeten, agujerear, hundir, rojo, and sangre the poet effectively creates a cruel and vivid scene.
Yet, aside from the bloody characteristic of the passage, it is significant to note that the passage reveals the comparatively small number of Christian forces before the overwhelming size of the Moorish forces. This seems to find its counterpart in the Old Testament accounts of battles, where the Hebrew force, small in number and often lacking armaments, manages to overpower its enemy which is almost always the largest and best-prepared force. While the Christian medieval warrior calls upon Saint James for spiritual comfort and assistance, the Hebrew warrior feels secure in the knowledge that, in the ark of the covenant, God's presence in the battle is assured. This cruel realism is seen also in the actions of the individual in single combat. The poet writes with vivid force that

El buen Martín Antolínez un tajo dio al moro Galve,
y los rubíes del yelmo se los sacó del engarce.
Del golpe rejóle el yelmo y le llegó hasta la carne.
Sabed que el moro no osó allí otra vez esperarle.

(El Poema, p. 38)

This violent scene seems to reappear once more when El Cid gives chase to Búcar. Overtaking the Moor by the seashore, El Cid splits him from
the head to the waist. Episodes like this abound in the Old Testament also, perhaps David's encounter with Goliath being the best known example: after Goliath fell, temporarily stunned by the stone, "David ran and stood over the Philistine, and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath, and killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled" (I Samuel 17:51). These individual feats in battle seem to transcend time and circumstance for, in a sense, they are bound together by the cruel realism which they depict. Both El Cid's victory over the Moor and that of Joshua over the Canaanite seem to have this characteristic. Moreover, in both conflicts one finds an explicit or implied divine sanction.

**Joshua's Victory over the Canaanites.** According to B. W. Anderson, it is in the first part of the Book of Joshua where the most interesting account of the Hebrew conquest of Canaan is narrated. Anderson writes that "the reader is told how the whole land fell into the hands of Joshua as the result of three swift campaigns ... the first ... gave the Israelites a firm foothold in the other side of the Jordan ... [then] on to further conquests in the southern hill country ... [and] the coastal plain toward the city of Gaza ... Finally they carried out a successful campaign in the northern hill country ... in the area known as Galilee."\(^{10}\) Whether the conquest was indeed a swift campaign or a slow and gradual takeover is a secondary point since it has already

been discussed (see chapter I); what is significant here is the interesting similarities to El Cid's swift conquest of the southwestern regions of the Peninsula. Neither Joshua nor El Cid are truly fictional characters; they are indeed historical personalities that made significant contributions to their respective causes—Joshua's capture of cities such as Jericho and Ai, and El Cid's capture of Alcocer and Valencia. Joshua and El Cid were indeed charismatic leaders whose epic deeds eventually earned them a national position in their respective countries; Spain still honors El Cid as a national hero and Israel still sings the song of Joshua to their young sbras. They differ only in that Joshua was an "anointed" warrior. The Book of Joshua clearly states that "Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him; so the people of Israel obeyed him" (Deuteronomy 34:9). With both warriors there is a sense of divine assurance given not only to their overall concept of destiny but also to their particular exploits, for while the Lord assures Joshua that "No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life" (Joshua 1:5), Gabriel assures El Cid of his success against the Moors in a similar manner: "Cabalgad, Cid, cabalgad, sois un buen campeador... En tanto viváis, buen fin tendrá lo que emprendáis vos" (El Poema, p. 25). Moreover, though their circumstances and their environment differ, their actions in battle are similar in that they seem to convey a sense of cruel and cold realism of extremes which apparently is inseparable from their victories. At the destruction of Jericho only the harlot Rahab and those "who are with her in the house" (Joshua 6:17) are to live; the rest are
to be slain and the city razed to the ground in good Semitic tradition: "Then they utterly destroyed all in the city, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and asses, with the edge of the sword. . . . And they burned the city with fire, and all within it" (Joshua 6:21, 24). Yet the booty, silver and gold, was to be saved and deposited into "the treasury of the house of the Lord" (Joshua 6:24). It would seem that El Cid—if it were not for other reasons, and the fact that he had no divine orders to carry out—would also have destroyed the inhabitants at Castejón. As far as the booty is concerned, it is interesting to note that Minaya Alvar Fáñez' refusal to take part of the booty (giving it all to his lord El Cid) bears some relation to the king-vassal (or lord-vassal) relationship that Edmund de Chasca writes about. Joshua, as a vassal of the Lord, does not have the right to own the spoils, and in a broader perspective the Hebrews as the servants or vassals of God also have no right to the spoils, for the spoils belong to their king: "But all silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are sacred to the Lord" (Joshua 6:19). Yet another interesting similarity between the victories of Joshua and those of El Cid is to be found in their conquest of the cities of Ai and Alcocer. Indeed, both accounts seem so similar that it warrants their presentation as complete as time and space can afford.

In both conflicts the entire operation depends upon the success of the ambush which Joshua and El Cid set upon the enemy. In Joshua's case the conflict develops much along the following lines: After Jericho is taken, Joshua moves toward Ai, in the central lands of Canaan. There,
at the command of God, he makes preparations to take the city by ambush. Gathering a large, selective group from his main force, "he commanded them, 'Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind it; do not go very far from the city, but hold yourselves all in readiness'" (Joshua 8:4). Then he proceeded to explain his plan: "and I, and all the people who are with me, will approach the city. And when they come out against us, as before, we shall flee before them; and they will come out after us, till we have drawn them away from the city; for they will say, 'They are fleeing from us, as before.' So we will flee from them; then you shall rise up from the ambush, and seize the city" (Joshua 8:5-7). Now with respect to El Cid's victory at Alcocer, events develop along the following lines:

Cuando vio el Campeador que Alcocer no se le daba, ocurriósele un ardid, y sin tardar lo prepara:
plantada deja una tienda, y las otras levantaba.
Jalón abajo siguió con la enseña levantada;
vestidos con las lorigas y en el cinto las espadas,
acuerdo de hombre avisado, porque en la celada caigan.
Al verlo los de Alcocer ¡oh Dios, cómo se alababan!

Salieron los de Alcocer con prisas que ellos no usaban.
Nuestro Cid, al verlos fuera, hizo como si escapara.
Llevólos Jalón abajo; con su gente a vueltas anda.

El Cid, buen Campeador, vuelve para atrás la cara;
vio que entre ellos y el castillo un gran espacio quedaba.
Mandó volver la bandera y el espolón apretaba:

Entre ellos y el castillo entraron allí en batalla,
y los vasallos del Cid sin piedad los golpes daban;
en un poco de lugar a trescientos moros matan.
Dando grandes alaridos los que están en la emboscada
los van dejando delante, y hacia el castillo se marchan;
con las espadas desnudas al punto la puerta ganan.
Pronto llegaron los otros terminada la batalla.
Nuestro Cid ganó Alcocer; sabed que por esta mañana.

(El Poema, pp. 31-32)

Close analysis of the two accounts reveals that Joshua's plan of
attack is essentially the same as El Cid's. They seem to differ only in
the manner that their respective writers chose to narrate them. In the
Book of Joshua there is first a dialogue; Joshua speaks to his men
explaining the plan. It is through him that a glimpse of the whole cam-
paign is seen, but the detailed events of the battle are seen through
the eyes of the writer of the book. In El Poema, there is no dialogue;
in this particular passage El Cid does not instruct his men before the
fight nor does he explain the plan of attack. It is the writer of
El Poema who narrates both the plan of attack and the detailed events of
the battle for Alcocer. It is this technique which seems to obscure
their similarities.
However, as stated before, the accounts seem to have much in common. Both warriors divide their forces into two groups. One, the largest, comprises the main force while the other is a small but well-trained force of selected men. In both cases the plan is quite simple. While the main force is to stage a simulated retreat, the smaller force, strategically located, is to remain in hiding awaiting the signal to attack the main bastion. The maneuver, intended to deceive the enemy, is successfully executed by both warriors, for the Canaanites as well as the Moors are led to believe that Joshua's and El Cid's forces are indeed in full retreat. Victims of their greed, both Canaanite and Moor fall into the trap. Giving hot pursuit (in full force) they failed to leave their cities adequately guarded and thus exposed them to Joshua's and El Cid's second force which proceeded to take the castle. In both accounts the results are devastating to Moor and Canaanite, who, totally demoralized, are not only cut off from their cities but are also left to face an overwhelming main force in full charge. Unlike El Cid's attack on Alcocer, Joshua's assault on the city of Ai was, according to the Book of Joshua, quite thorough. The writer of the book states that "When Israel had finished slaughtering all the inhabitants of Ai in the open wilderness where they pursued them and all of them to the very last had fallen by the edge of the sword, all Israel returned to Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword" (Joshua 8:24). While Joshua acts with extreme cruelty, El Cid, at the taking of Alcocer, acts with almost extraordinary compassion. The Moors, for reasons previously discussed,
are spared from a kind of slaughter which seems to have been contemporary with both the Middle Ages and Antiquity.

The cruelty of the times is apparent at both Jericho and Ai; yet at Jericho it seems to lack some realism, perhaps because the writer does describe events in general rather than in detail. At the battle for Ai events seem to be described in more detail. "Joshua burned Ai, and made it for ever a heap of ruins, as it is to this day. And he hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening; and at the going down of the sun Joshua commanded, and they took his body down from the tree, and cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and raised over it a great heap of stones, which stands there to this day" (Joshua 8:28-29). In this passage the sense of cruel realism (characteristic of El Poema also) is seen in the manner in which the king of Ai is killed. Even though it is not reported that Joshua himself did the hanging, the account is reminiscent of the manner in which El Cid cuts Búcar in half. Both acts make a shocking impact on the reader with their vivid sense of cruel realism.

While El Cid's victories over the Moors remain peripheral in the overall struggle for the possession of the Peninsula, the significance of Joshua's victories over the Canaanites is precisely the opposite; they remain central events in the long conquest of Canaan. War to both warriors was, if not a holy event, at least a God-directed event in which victory had been assured a priori. With respect to the Hebrews, Roland de Vaux writes that "the Biblical tradition shows the people taking possession of the Promised Land by force of arms and with the help of God . . . it was Yahweh who fought for Israel, not Israel which
fought for its God. The holy war, in Israel, was not a war of religion."¹¹ There is, then, in Joshua a belief that his God leads him and thus not only controls his destiny but that of his people. It is safe to conjecture, too, that El Cid was guided by a sense of divine destiny, for in El Poema instances in which El Cid thanks his God for the victory in the field are not difficult to find.

Chapter IV

Faith and Destiny

There are a large number of passages in the Old Testament which deal with the subject of faith and destiny. Indeed, when one considers the Old Testament as a whole, the subject may very well constitute the most important legacy the book offers to man. It is within this perspective, it seems, that the Old Testament is both a most exciting and vibrant record of a people's faith in their God and a unique manifestation of the concept of divine guidance, a guided destiny that seems to set apart a people for a special purpose (Exodus, Chapter 20) and their leaders for special tasks (Exodus 3:10). Because of the abundance of passages concerning faith and destiny in the Old Testament it is possible to single out only a few here, those which seem to have an affinity with El Poema de Núñez de Cid.

Faith and destiny often constitute the essence of many a lesson or message which the various writers of the Old Testament wanted to convey to their contemporaries and, for that matter, to posterity. In the Book of Genesis, for example, it is recorded that the word of God came to Abraham in a vision—much in the same manner that Gabriel came to El Cid—and said: "I am your shield . . . Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them. . . . So shall your descendants be"; Abraham's reaction to the promise is capsuled in a
brief statement: "And he believed the Lord" (Genesis 15:1-6). His simple belief was counted unto him as righteousness before his God; most significant, however, it was counted as an act of supreme faith, for as the familiar account of Abraham and Sarah unfolds, the poignant fact that it was not possible for Sarah to bear a child because she was too advanced in years becomes clear. Only their belief in the promise gives them the hope that the humanly impossible may indeed become a possibility. When the child is born the word is fulfilled, and their perseverance and faith in God is confirmed. Their relationship with God is continually tested and renewed by acts of faith; indeed, theirs is a suzerainty relationship.

It is interesting to note that the words "faith" and "destiny" are often defined in the Old Testament by merely describing events or narrating whole accounts (Genesis 12:4, 22:1-12; Job 42:5; Psalms 34:7-22; Isaiah 30:15-17) which demand acts of faith on the part of the believer, or by describing personal trials which reveal strong and persevering faith in a belief that human destiny has a pre-ordained course, particularly if it is to carry out the wishes of the Deity. Perhaps the most concise definition of faith in the Scriptures is found in the New Testament; the Book of Hebrews defines it as "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). As for destiny, its definition seems to be implicit in the many accounts and examples of

the Hebrew's national and personal life. Indeed, the definition of the word is implied in Hebrews 11:1. Throughout the Scriptures faith and destiny are active rather than passive concepts. In the Old Testament their definitions seem to depend also upon the moment, the time when the act of faith, the vassal, and the Lord converge to form a complex whole.

Writing on faith and its relation to the Old Testament Hebrews, the yet unknown author of the Book of Hebrews writes that "By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain" (Hebrews 11:4). Referring to the flood he writes that "By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, took heed and constructed an ark for the saving of his household" (Hebrews 11:7). According to him, by faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau; and Jacob, in turn, on his death-bed blessed the sons of Joseph. By faith Moses' parents protected him from the king, and Moses through faith defied Pharaoh, kept the Passover, and crossed the Red Sea (Hebrews 11:20-29). The walls of Jericho gave in to Joshua because he had faith; and Abraham "By faith . . . obeyed . . . and he went out, not knowing where he was to go" (Hebrews 11:8). Indeed, the eleventh chapter of the Book of Hebrews chronologically reviews the lives of the patriarchs emphasizing their acts of faith and their sense of divine guidance. In comparison with the Old Testament, in El Poema there are manifestations of the Old Testament concept of faith and destiny in the person of El Cid; since both works reflect their respective times there is some common ground, some similarities and parallelisms which can be drawn. The Christian-Islam nature of the armed conflict in El Poema, for example, affords incidents of the dependence upon
a higher power and the need of divine guidance similar to those found in
the Old Testament.

Investigations of El Poema's relationship to religious themes,
particularly that of faith and destiny, are indeed few. This seeming
lack of attention on the part of scholars is rather surprising, since
religion was a very important aspect of the medieval period. One
explanation for this would be that scholars of Spanish literature
writing in Spanish or English have not seen the need to relate an essen-
tially religious work, the Old Testament, to a work of a more secular
nature. Recent investigations, however, do exist, but they seem to be
peripheral to the central theme of religion. Francisco López Estrada,
writing on the religious theme of El Poema, writes that "Junto a esta
concepción religiosa de la vida, asoman aquí y allá, sólo levemente,
algunas ideas que pertenecen a la herencia de los antiguos." According
to him, the idea that El Cid was born "en buena hora" has no religious
significance, for it is nothing but a "formula," a poetic expression
peculiar of the times and in use among medieval writers. López Estrada
attempts to show that the religious strain in El Poema is nothing more
than a characteristic of all the literature of the times. "El Poema,"
he writes, "pertenece al sentido universal del Medievo, en el que la
conciencia de la Divinidad se halla presente en cualquier consideración
humana y la condiciona" (El Poema, p. XVIII). God and the saints appear
in El Poema, then, as a last refuge to which El Cid goes when he seeks

2 Francisco López Estrada, ed., Poema del Cid, 7th ed., Odres Nuevos
(Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1971), p. XXV.
spiritual help and protection in his dangerous and hurried life. "El conjunto del Poema," he writes in his conclusion, "... manifiesta en diversos aspectos que el poeta cantaba con este fondo espiritual, sobre el que se alza la figura del Cid como héroe ejemplar no sólo por las armas, sino por este acatamiento a la religiosidad de su tiempo" (El Poema, p. XXI). Yet another recent study is Cesareo Bandera's "Reflexiones sobre el carácter mitico del Poema de Nío Cid." In it Bandera makes a reference to the messianic myth in the person of the hero El Cid. He is described as a terrestrial savior who in his conquest of Valencia succeeds in transmitting something of the glory of Jerusalem to the event. "A los ojos del poeta," he writes, "el héroe se presenta como un 'redentor terrestre enviado por Dios piadoso' en la 'culminación, en la plenitud de los tiempos'." On the whole, however, Bandera remains well within the limits of myth and does not explore the concept of faith and destiny. Two interesting characteristics of both studies is that the religious theme is always seen as originating from the poet and not from the hero of the poem, and that El Poema's religious theme is merely a reflection of the times.

El Cid's Concept of Faith and Destiny. Essential to the investigation of faith and destiny in El Poema and the Old Testament are two closely related points of view which seem to reveal a closer affinity between the two works; it would seem as if the similarities and

3 Cesareo Bandera, "Reflexiones sobre el carácter mitico del Poema de Nío Cid," Modern Language Notes, 81 (1966), 215.
parallelisms are more pronounced and vivid in this area than in any other thus far investigated. The first point is that El Cid's concept of faith and destiny is neither pagan nor fatalistic, but rather optimistic and Biblical in nature. Its origin seems to be in the Old Testament, mainly in the Book of Psalms and particularly in those Psalms attributed to David. El Cid's concept, however, differs from that of the Old Testament Hebrews in that it lacks the prophetic and supernatural characteristics so peculiar to the lives of the ancient Hebrew leaders. There is, in El Poema, an absence of a direct and divine intervention in the course of El Cid's life; yet there seems to be a sense or a feeling that God leads him into battle and that the outcome of small and seemingly isolated events are part of a larger God-led plan for his life. In El Poema, as is the case in the Old Testament, the concept of faith and destiny is an active rather than passive concept. That is to say that often the events themselves are examples of faith in action, eliminating the need to define the concept. The second point is that intrinsic in El Cid's concept is the reflection of medieval Christian beliefs which in some respects differ from Old Testament beliefs. Perhaps his worship of Mary, his devotion to saints and his loyalty to abbeys and monasteries, particularly that of San Pedro de Cardeña, are the best manifestations of this difference. Intrinsic also is what both Bandera and Francisco López Estrada have alluded to in their works—a profound concern with the relation between man and God, a concern which is characteristic of the medieval period and central to the Old Testament.
One similarity between El Poema and the Old Testament is the part which the archangel Gabriel plays in both works. In El Poema Gabriel appears to El Cid in a dream; the poet narrates the event in the following manner:

Allí el fue a descansar no bien la noche cayó.
Un sueño muy dulce tuvo, tan profundo se durmió.
El arcángel San Gabriel se le presenta en visión:
--Cabalgad, Cid, cabalgad, sois un buen campeador,
pues nunca en un tan buen punto logró cabalgar varón.
En tanto viváis, buen fin tendrá lo que emprendaís vos.

(El Poema, p. 25)

When El Cid awakens he quietly crosses himself for the dream seems to have given him the assurance that whatever he undertakes, God will be with him. In the Old Testament Gabriel is the high-ranking angel of the Lord who appears to man in critical moments. In the Book of Daniel, for example, Gabriel is sent to help the prophet Daniel interpret the difficult vision. Daniel, unlike El Cid, is awakened from a deep sleep; "As he was speaking to me," says Daniel, "I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and set me on my feet" (Daniel 8:18). Gabriel is often God's personal emissary often described in the Old Testament as the being who is constantly in the presence of God and who travels between heaven and earth. Even though the circumstances vary, it is difficult to ignore the apparent similarity between the two passages; in both instances Gabriel appears to El Cid and Daniel in an attempt to dissipate their fears of the unknown and to reassure them of
their success in the future. In the case of El Cid, it dissipated the basic insecurity which he felt upon his confrontation with exile.

Another interesting similarity between *El Poema* and the Old Testament is Daniel's encounter with the lions in the den and El Cid's encounter with the lion in Valencia. In *El Poema* El Cid politely shuns the protection his men have given him during his sleep:

Con ademán mesurado, en pie el Cid se levantó.

El manto se pone al cuello y encaminóse al león.

La fiera, cuando vio al Cid, al punto se avergonzó; allí bajó la cabeza, y ante él su faz humilló.

Nuestro Cid Rodrigo Díaz por el cuello lo tomó, y lo lleva de la mano, y en la jaula lo metió. (*El Poema*, p. 104)

In the above passage El Cid remains quiet and apparently in control of himself in the presence of imminent danger. All of his actions are reported in a manner that reveals El Cid's sense of assurance that nothing tragic will happen to him. It is also apparent that El Cid is not bent upon the destruction of the beast, since he does not carry a sword to meet the lion.

A similar incident is narrated in the sixth chapter of the Book of Daniel. There, it is reported that Daniel's favored position with King Darius was the object of envy in the court, and soon Daniel's religious principles were so challenged that not even Darius could save him. What follows is narrated in the following manner: "Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king said to Daniel, 'May your God, whom you serve continually deliver
you.' And a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den, and
the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords" (Daniel 6:16-17). Darius returned the following morning to check and to
mourn the death of Daniel, but to his surprise Daniel was alive. "My
God sent his angel," exclaimed Daniel from within the den, "and shut the
lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me, because I was found blameless
before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no wrong" (Daniel
6:22). While Daniel's faith in God was essential to his physical salva-
tion, there is a sense of security in him which seemed to originate in
his knowledge that God leads his life. This same sense of guided destiny
is seen at work in El Cid's encounter with the lion, even though both
men are widely separated by time and circumstance. Both men seem to have
been born "en buena hora" since both are under a supernatural protection,
and consequently nothing which will hamper their destiny can happen to
them. The encounter with the lions was not their last and final hour on
earth. Throughout El Poema El Cid shows a constant preoccupation with
his relation to God. When seen within this perspective, his attitude
towards war, triumph or defeat, life's fortunes and misfortunes, and his
sense of direction in life seem to take a different, perhaps more
profound, meaning.

Even though at the beginning of El Poema the poet prophesies a good
end for El Cid's life ("El valor siempre triunfa, y a un buen fin se
llegará." [El Poema, p. 2]) adversity in life is accepted after the
manner of Job. El Cid gives thanks to God for his misfortune: "Gracias
a ti, Señor Padre, Dios que estás en lo más alto, los que así mi vida
han vuelto, fueron enemigos malos" (El Poema, p. 11). Echoes of Job's lament can be found in this sad lament. When Job lost his four sons he exclaimed "the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21). Yet another similar incident in El Poema occurred when El Cid, commending his life to Mary and God, exclaimed:

--A Ti lo agradezco, Dios, que el cielo y la tierra guíen!
Que tus virtudes me valgan, gloriosa Santa María!
Pues perdí el favor del Rey, he de salir de Castilla.
No sé si he de volver más en los días de mi vida.

(El Poema, p. 19)

Here echoes of Job's resignation and acceptance of life's misfortune seem juxtaposed with his belief that God and Mary may afford him protection and guidance in the days ahead. Here also, his desire to be protected by God finds its echo in Joshua's. As Joshua looks ahead into the unknown land of Canaan, from Jordan's east side; and stands poised, ready to attack it, the assurance comes through a voice: "as I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you" (Joshua 1:5). In much the same manner it came to El Cid through Gabriel. Both Joshua and El Cid must face the unknown, but they have faith that in the end all will be well with them.

---Gracias a Dios sean dadas, que del mundo es el Señor!
Antes yo tenía poco, ahora muy rico soy.
Tengo riquezas y tierras, tengo mucho oro, y honor.
Y son mis yernos ahora los Infantes de Carrión.
En las batallas yo venzo como place al Creador.
Los moros y los cristianos tienen de mí gran temor.

En tierras donde hay mezquitas, en Marruecos, con pavor,
esperan que alguna noche quizás les ataque yo. (El Poema, p. 111)

In the eyes of El Cid, God made it possible for him to recover his
wealth, to return to the good graces of his king, and to be feared among
his enemies who are no match for him in battle. Job is also regarded in
a similar manner when his faith withstood the test of time; "the Lord
blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; and he had four-
teen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a
thousand she-asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. . . .
And in all the land there were no women so fair as Job's daughters; and
their father gave them inheritance among their brothers. And after this
Job lived a hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons,
four generations" (Job 42:12-16). A man in Job's position not only
was wealthy by the standards of his own time but by medieval standards
as well and also had reason to believe that he was all powerful and
influential in his land. Job, then, achieved comparatively as much
success through peaceful perseverance as El Cid achieved through force
of arms and under God's guidance. Both lives seem to be a testimony of
what God can do for his people in peace and in war.

Perhaps the most tragic moment in El Cid's exile is his departure
from Castille. When Alfonso exiles him, El Cid, like David, leaves with
a heavy heart, crying out in the following manner:

Con lágrimas en los ojos, muy fuertemente llorando,
la cabeza atrás volvía y quedábase mirándolos.
Y vio las puertas abiertas, y cerrojos quebrantados,
y vacías las alcándaras sin las pieles, sin los mantos,
sin sus pájaros halcones, sin los azores mudados.

Suspiró entonces el Cid; grandes eran sus cuidados.
Habló allí como solía, tan bien y tan mesurado:
--Gracias a ti, Señor Padre, Dios que estás en lo más alto,
los que así mi vida han vuelto, fueron enemigos malos.

(El Poema, p. 11)

It would seem as if the passage represents El Cid's moment of anguish. His faith in himself as well as in any higher power seems totally absent from the moment, for there is no turning to Castille and the future seems bleak; at this point he feels the heavy burdens of learning to exist in a hostile environment and regaining the confidence and trust of King Alfonso. Nowhere in the passage is there a cry for help from God. Like Job, El Cid expressed his gratitude to God even for his misfortunes. James Stamm writes that these opening lines capture the emotions of the falsely accused Campeador as he leaves his village to "undertake a totally unpredictable destiny." Stamm reports that in very few lines and with very few details, the poet is able to transmit the terrible sense of desolation and injustice that El Cid feels and to communicate El Cid's "firm faith in his destiny and the will of God. . . . [he] goes forth with his vassals, a small band facing the uncertainty of exile in a harsh and embattled land" (Stamm, p. 33). Indeed, the poetic passage

in art would be like a huge mural which with strong and vivid colors would clearly show the sense of desolation and firm belief in the face of El Cid, particularly in his eyes. It would be the kind of mural which would draw the attention of the spectator because of the massive, larger than life, figure of El Cid and his sad and penetrating eyes.

This kind of desolation and sense of destiny which Stamm writes about is reminiscent of Moses at Mount Pisgah. "And Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah . . . And the Lord showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan" (Deuteronomy 34:1). As Moses surveyed the land, he named his last plea: "Let me go over, I pray, and see the good land beyond the Jordan . . . and Lebanon" (Deuteronomy 3:25). However, in the will of God, it is not for him to enter it. "Speak no more to me of this matter," says the Lord, "Go up to the top of Pisgah, and lift up your eyes westward and northward and southward and eastward, and behold it with your eyes; for you shall not go over this Jordan (Deuteronomy 3:26-27). The Biblical passage may indeed be the subject for yet another large mural which would depict the massive, larger than life, figure of Moses pleading with his God "con lágrimas en los ojos."

David's Concept of Faith and Destiny. As David flees his son Absalom, his poetic nature explodes in songs and prayers. "O Lord," he exclaims in the third Psalm, "how many are my foes! Many are rising against me . . . I am not afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me round about" (Psalm 3:1-6). While El Cid's
lament is similar to that of Job, David's, in this instance, remains firm. Given his old age, he shows an amazing strength and lack of fear; there seems to be no terrible sense of desolation, only a firm belief in his God and himself. When Absalom rebels, David's first strategic move is to flee Jerusalem, leaving it undefended for Absalom to capture it. This seeming act of cowardice is explained to the contrary by Duff Cooper in his work David:

The explanation of David's conduct is not so far to seek as at first sight it might appear. In the first place he remembered the occasion . . . when he had thought to defend himself in . . . Keilah, and the words which Saul was reported to have used on that occasion. 'God has delivered him into my hand,' Saul had said, 'for he is shut in by entering into a town that hath gates and bars.' Saul had been right, and David knew it. If the revolt prospered in the north . . . while Absalom was marching on him from the south, he would be caught in Jerusalem as in a trap, and there would be no opportunity for him . . . to exercise their skill in battle.

Secondly, the population of Jerusalem . . . was rife with disaffection, and he could not tell how large a proportion would welcome the invader rather than endure the rigours of a siege.\(^5\)

The move was a clear act of strategy which reveals the military genius of David. Similarly, El Cid leaves the apparent safety and security of

the city for the open field where he can give battle to the Moor on his own terms. At the battle for Valencia El Cid:

con todas las guarniciones allí lo han enjaezado.

¿A banderas desplegadas salen de Valencia al campo!

... y en cabeza el Cid mandando.

A los cincuenta mil moros van a combatir ufanos. (El Poema, p. 76)

At Alcocer, after three weeks of siege, El Cid decides to attack the Moor in the open field also. Like David, El Cid seemed to have realized the trap that a castle could become; not being able to withstand long sieges, often being hot beds of discontent, and denying maneuverability, a king or a warrior could indeed assure his own defeat by remaining in it. It is interesting to note that both David and El Cid often commend themselves to God before a battle and do not fail to give thanks to God for their victory also. Most of David's Psalms\(^6\) are often reflections.

\(^6\) The use of the term Psalms of David must be seen in the following perspective: "One often speaks of the 'psalms of David', or 'the Davidic Psalter'. By this we do not mean that David was the poet who wrote all the psalms; even less that all the psalms ascribed to him in their titles actually originate from him. ... But it is quite true that David is none the less the initiator of psalmody as a literary form, and the organizer of Israel's liturgy. We must also consider him as the principal author of the Psalter in the sense of being the most notable and remarkable among the psalmists. ... We must never forget when studying and systematizing the psalms that we are dealing with poetry" (Pius Drijvers, The Psalms, Their Structure and Meaning, trans. from 5th rev. ed. of "Over de Psalmen" [1964; New York: Herder and Herder, 1965], pp. 19, 23).
of David's state of mind just before or after the battle. "And David inquired of the Lord, 'Shall I go up against the Philistines? Wilt thou give them into my hand?' And the Lord said to David, 'Go up; for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand'" (II Samuel 5:19). Doubtless David inquired through prayers, and the Book of Psalms offers an example of his petitions to God: "Arise, O Lord! Deliver me, O my God! For thou dost smite all my enemies on the cheek, thou dost break the teeth of the wicked" (Psalm 3:7). Here his plea reveals his sense of destiny and faith in God. His plea for help is also accompanied by a subtle reminder of what He has done for him in the past. In another Psalm David is more direct: "Lead me, O Lord... because of my enemies; make thy way straight before me" (Psalm 5:8). His is a direct request for guidance, for insight in defeating the enemy. As Cush the Benjamite—a follower of Saul—pursues him through the country, David in desperation turns to God in prayer for deliverance from him: "save me from all my pursuers... lest like a lion they rend me, dragging me away, with none to rescue" (Psalm 7:1-2). Throughout El Poema, particularly the first canto, El Cid's prayers and brief references to God reveal his dependence upon Him for guidance. The content of the prayers reveals his close relation with God and his sense of destiny. Like David, El Cid prays for success in battle and for the utter destruction of his enemies. However, neither David's nor El Cid's prayers are exactly alike; they are similar only in their mood, in some of the language which the heroes use, and in what they reveal, a faith in God, a
sense of divine guidance through life. At Santa María, for example, El Cid prays in the following manner:

--- ¡A Ti lo agradezco, Dios, que el cielo y la tierra guías! ¡Que tus virtudes me valgan, gloriosa Santa María! Pues perdí el favor del Rey, he de salir de Castilla. No sé si he de volver más en los días de mi vida. ¡Vuestras virtudes me valgan, Virgen santa, en mi salida, y me ayuden y socorran de noche como de día! Si Vos así lo hicierais, y la ventura me guías, mandaré yo a vuestro altar ofrendas buenas y ricas. Y yo prometo y declaro que allí se canten mil misas.

(El Poema, p. 19)

The first line of the prayer is addressed to God, the Old Testament God of Creation. The next eight lines address Mary, thus revealing its affinity with Christian thought. Yet, in spite of the fact that the prayer as a whole has a definite Christian character, its mood and form of expression bear a close similarity to the Old Testament Hebrew Psalms, particularly to David's. "I will extol thee, O Lord" (Psalm 30:1), prays David at the feast of dedication; "The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1), he prays when he surveys the heavens. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life" (Psalm 23:6), says David as he ponders his destiny. Similarly, El Cid exclaims "perdí el favor del Rey, he de salir de Castilla" and "los que así mi vida han vuelto, fueron enemigos malos" (El Poema, pp. 19, 11). David, in prayer, expressed grief in a
similar mood and form: "O Lord, how many are my foes!" (Psalm 3:1); "Malicious witnesses rise up; they ask me of things that I know not" (Psalm 35:11); "For wicked and deceitful mouths are opened against me, speaking against me with lying tongues" (Psalm 109:2). In mood and form, David's prayer at the cave bears a similarity with El Cid's prayer at St. Mary's: "I cry to thee, O Lord; I say, Thou art my refuge, my portion in the land of the living. Give heed to my cry; for I am brought very low! Deliver me from my persecutors: for they are too strong for me!" (Psalm 142:5-6). Had David prayed El Cid's prayer at the cave, perhaps he would have done it in the following manner:

-- A Ti lo agradezco, Dios, que el cielo y la tierra guías!
Que tus virtudes me valgan. Pues perdí el favor del Rey,
Saul, el mi buen Señor. He de salir de su Reino.
No sé si he de volver más en los días de mi vida.
Vuestras virtudes me valgan, Señor mío, en mi salida,
y me ayuden y socorran de noche como de día!

As can be seen, then, in mood and form David's and El Cid's prayers bear a close affinity, which is indeed reinforced by the content of the prayer itself, for theirs are prayers of anguish, of persecution, pleas for protection and guidance, and above all prayers of faith.

David's Psalms often begin with praise or with a strong appeal for help: "Answer me when I call, O God of my right!" (Psalm 4:1); "Give ear to my words, O Lord" (Psalm 5:1); "I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will tell of all thy wonderful deeds" (Psalm 9:1); "Vindicate me, O Lord" (Psalm 26:1). The mood and form of these psalms
find their echo in El Cid's brief thanks and praises to God. These often appear before or after significant events in his exilic life. "Gracias al Dios de los cielos, gracias a todos los santos," he exclaims after taking Alcocer (El Poema, p. 33). After the defeat of the Moslem kings Fáriz and Galve, El Cid gives thanks to God for the victory: "Demos las gracias a Dios, Aquel que está en lo más alto, /que quiso que esta batalla con victoria terminásemos" (El Poema, p. 38). Here his faith is so strong that he is convinced that the victory was the will of God. Before El Cid confronts the Valencian forces encamped at Murviedro, he offers the following prayer:

--Yo te doy a ti las gracias, Padre mío Espiritual.

Pues si en sus tierras estamos y hacémosle todo el mal,

A menos que haya batalla, esto no se ha de acabar.

(El Poema, pp. 53-54)

"Así a Dios le agradezco que el Rey me vuelva a su amor," says El Cid as he ponders the king's offer to have Doña Elvira and Doña Sol marry the Infantes de Carrión. Though he doubts the wisdom of the king's decision, he consents to the wedding. "En fin, este casamiento no me da satisfacción, /más pues el rey lo aconseja ... tratemos de tales bodas, y calle yo mi temor," says El Cid to Minaya Fáñez. However, in his leaving the decision to King Alfonso El Cid commends the whole matter to God: "el Dios de los cielos quiera que se acuerde lo mejor" (El Poema, p. 85). His feeling seems to be that the fortunes of his daughters are out of his own reach, that there is little he can do for them but to submit to
the king's wishes and to the will of God. At the public reconciliation of El Cid and King Alfonso by the Tajo River it is El Cid who publicly gives his thanks to God:

--Esto todo lo agradezco a Dios, Padre Creador:
el tener aquí la gracia de Alfonso, que es mi señor.
De día como de noche pido que me valga Dios. (El Poema, p. 89)

Yet another example of El Cid's faith in God and his sense of divine guidance is his comment at Valencia after the defeat of the Infantes de Carrión by Pedro Bermúdez, Martín Antolín, and Muño Gustioz:
"
"-¡Gracias al Rey de los cielos! La venganza se cumplió./Libres quedan ya mis hijas de la herencia de Carrión" (El Poema, p. 157).

It is interesting to note that the subject of false accusation, so central to the development of the actions in El Poema, appears often in the Book of Psalms. "Yea, I hear the whispering of many—terror on every side!—as they scheme together against me, as they plot to take my life" (Psalm 31:13). "Let the lying lips be dumb" (Psalm 31:18). "They make their tongue sharp as a serpent's, and under their lips is the poison of vipers" (Psalm 140:3). These and many other passages seem to have been written as a result of the conflict with Saul, the struggle with his sons for the kingdom—particularly Absalom, who eventually led an armed rebellion against him—and his own personal and spiritual struggles with the Lord. David and El Cid, as literary and historical figures, remain widely separated by time, circumstance, and environment; nevertheless, in spite of this wide gulf of time, their faith in God and their sense of guided destiny was essentially the same. Both, in this
respect, are bound together by one all-encompassing tie: man's relation to God. The times in which David and El Cid lived were times when religion and religious thought demanded a great deal of man's attention. Summerfield Baldwin calls the medieval period the age of faith. In his book *Organization of Medieval Christianity*, he writes that "The medieval period is chiefly characterized by the fact that thirty generations of human beings recognized, with a remarkable approach to unanimity, that the conduct of life according to the laws of God was the whole duty of man." 7 Baldwin comments that in contrast to this medieval position is the position of contemporary man, that it is the right of the individual to worship as seems good to him. "To the medieval man," writes Baldwin, "it was God's right to receive worship as seemed good to God. For man, worship was a duty, not a right" (Baldwin, p. 1). It is not surprising, then, that El Cid's concept of faith and destiny is Biblical in nature and similar to that of the Old Testament Hebrew sages.

Conclusions

This thesis is an investigation into the relationship between *El Poema de Mío Cid* and the Old Testament; it attempts to point out similarities and parallelisms between the two. Specifically, four inter-related topics, the promise, the banishment, the conquest, and the concept of faith and destiny, are explored. The investigation indicates that there are several areas in which both works are quite close.

The following are the most significant conclusions. (1) The king-vassal relationship, which according to Edmund de Chasca is essential to the understanding of El Cid and King Alfonso, is parallel to the king-vassal relationship—often referred to as the suzerainty covenant or relation—of the Old Testament. This parallelism helps to explain the striking similarities between El Cid's and David's behavior toward their respective kings, Alfonso and Saul. (2) When the story of David, as it appears in the Book of Samuel, was compared to the story of El Cid, a similarity of plot was apparent. The pattern of events and their sequence—rise to popularity, envy and false accusation, fear of the charismatic leader by the king, and eventual exile and persecution—were found to be common to both. (3) Joshua's campaign in Canaan seems parallel to that of El Cid in the southeastern corner of the Peninsula. This parallel may account for the sense of swiftness, almost lightning speed, common to both campaigns. It also seems to explain the sense of
divinely guided destiny apparent in the lives of both heroes. (4) The taking of Alcocer by El Cid and the taking of the city of Ai by Joshua are similar. Both leaders appear to have used the same military tactic in attacking the cities. (5) El Cid's concept of faith and destiny may very well be Biblical in nature, and the manifestation of this concept can be found in the Old Testament. This apparent affinity seems to explain the similarities between El Cid and David, Joshua, and Daniel. All have a similar sense of divine guidance, that God leads in the thick of battle and that He also leads in moments of great physical danger. All express a similar sense of constant dependence on God. (6) There is a striking similarity between El Cid's prayers and the Psalms of David. This similarity seems apparent in the mood, form, and thought of the prayers. A reconstruction of one of El Cid's prayers to resemble a Psalm seems to demonstrate the close affinity between the Psalms and the hero's prayers. (7) El Cid's encounter with the lion at Valencia is parallel to Daniel's encounter with the lions in the den. This may indicate that the writer of El Poema may have been familiar with the story of Daniel. (8) In the realm of the supernatural and miraculous, a very close relation exists between El Poema and the Old Testament. This seems to be clearly manifested in the appearance of, and function of, the Angel Gabriel in both works.

In conclusion, the investigation points out the similarities between two cultures and their geographically isolated lands. The Peninsula is severed from the rest of Europe by the Pyrenees, and Canaan was merely the traffic road between two ancient cradles of civilization,
the Fertile Crescent and the River Nile Basin. With both peoples, the Christian kings of the Peninsula and the Hebrews of the post-exile period, the whole of the land seems to have related to the history of the people. In both lands a long and arduous struggle took place. A long process of assimilation and amalgamation took place among both the Christians to the north of the Peninsula and the Hebrews of the highlands of Canaan. Both peoples fought a religious, if not holy, war and both had a similar sense of divine guidance. It is felt that these general similarities have led to the discovery of similarities and parallelisms which are more specific in nature.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Sydney N. Giovenco has been read and approved by the director of the thesis. Furthermore, the final copies have been examined by the director and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

May 21, 1973  Carole A. Holdworth
Date  Signature of Adviser