

Ferragut, defender of Nájera¹

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To the memory of M. C. Díaz y Díaz

Abstract: Ferragut, the giant Saracen defender of Nájera, was a leading character in one of the key chapters of the *Pseudo Turpin* for the consecration of Roland as a Christian warrior. Nevertheless, the Latin chronicle does not simply reproduce such a warrior's characteristic behaviour and morphology as expressed in other epic poems: it also provides him with various innovative features which certain vernacular texts qualify or modify in depth, even enriching them with episodes that are not to be found in the Latin source, and by creating additional characters.

Key words: Latin literature, Romanesque epic, the medieval period 400-1499; *Pseudo Turpin*; *Entrée d'Espagne*; *Prise de Pampelune*; *La Spagna*; *Fatti de Spagna*; Ferragut; Roland.

The *Liber Santi Iacobi* (LSJ), a compilation of Jacobean texts dating from the mid-twelfth century, consists of five books, each with different content². The fourth book, known as *Pseudo Turpin*, tells of a Carolingian expedition in different stages to free the Pilgrims' Road to Santiago and the whole of Spain from the Saracen yoke. The massacre at Roncesvalles, almost at the end of the story, shows great similarities with the episode concerning the battle that can be read today in the *Chanson de Roland*³, just

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2 The *Liber Sancti Iacobi* (LSJ) was published, among others, by Herbers and Santos Noia: K. Herbers-M. Santos Noia (eds.), *Liber Sancti Iacobi. Codex Calixtinus*, Santiago de Compostela, Xunta de Galicia, 1998; the *Pseudo Turpin* (PT) is transcribed on pages 192 to 229 of this edition, the one used in this study.

3 We make mention of the Oxford manuscript version published by I. Short in the complete edition of the manuscripts of the poem, co-ordinated by J. J. Duggan: DUGGAN, J. J. (coord.), *La Chanson de Roland. The Song of Roland. The French Corpus*, Turnhout, 2005, vol. I, part 1: I. Short (ed.), *The Oxford Version*, I, p. 11-338.

as other parts of the text are clearly influenced by other stories from French epic⁴. The structure of the various different campaigns and the ideal of pilgrimage, however, are entirely original, as are certain other relevant chapters, such as the war sustained against the Saracen Aigoland on French soil.

Many researchers argue that this text of an epic nature was conceived from the outset as an integral part of the *LSJ*, but it is quite possible that in fact it had an independent existence before being included in the Compostela text. In fact, according to some experts, not even the *PT* was written all at once: the heterogeneous nature of the different episodes, the waging of different campaigns, the existence of chapters that are unrelated to the whole and, above all, the obvious difference in content between the first five chapters on the one hand, and the rest of the story on the other, suggest the existence of two main authors and a certain number of interpolators, responsible, among other things, for the more elements most unlike the warrior spirit evident in the Latin story⁵.

This problem in the composition, which is far from being resolved, comes in addition to other features of the so-called cycle of the king, which the *Chanson de Roland* belongs to: the existence of two main characters, Charlemagne, the emperor, and his nephew Roland. It so happens that the behaviour of neither one of them is the same in all the texts; neither are their two personalities complementary, as Charlemagne is a righteous emperor in some parts of the poem but a ridiculous character in others⁶. As for Roland, epic tradition usually assigns him a stronger personality, but with a

4 For all these matters, cf. our book *Épica y Camino de Santiago. En torno al Pseudo Turpín*, Sada, Eds. do Castro, 2002.

5 The main researchers who defend the unity of the *LSJ* attribute its authorship to Aymeri Picaud, a character mentioned in several texts of the compilation, but never in the *PT*. Among them are BÉDIER, J. (*Les légendes épiques*, Paris, Champion, 1929³, t. III, p. 42-114), HORRENT, J. (*La Chanson de Roland dans les littératures espagnole et française au Moyen Age*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1951, p. 82-94), LOUIS, R. ("Aimeri Picaud, alias Olivier d'Asquins, compilateur du Livre Sancti Iacobi", *Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France* (1948-1949), p. 80-97), MOISAN, A. ("Aimeri Picaud de Parthénay et le Liber Sancti Iacobi", *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, t. 153 (1985), p. 5-52 and *Le livre de Saint-Jacques ou Codex Calixtinus de Compostelle*, Paris, Champion, 1992, p. 59-82), and CATALÁN, D. (*La épica española. Nueva documentación y nueva evaluación*, Madrid, Fundación Menéndez Pidal, 2001, p. 160-238 and 790-845). Those who defend the existence of various authors are less numerous and their positions are more varied: Gaston Paris (*De Pseudo Turpino*, Paris, 1865 and "[compte-rendu de] Dozy, R., *Recherches sur l'histoire et la littérature de l'Espagne pendant le Moyen Age*, Leyden, Brill, 1881", *Romania*, 11 (1882), p. 419-26) was the first to defend the existence of two authors, a hypothesis that was very recently taken up again by LÓPEZ ALSINA, F. "La prerrogativa de Santiago en España según el Pseudo-Turpín : ¿tradiciones compostelanas o tradiciones carolingias?", in HERBERS, K. (ed.), *El Pseudo-Turpín. Lazo entre el culto jacobeo y el culto de Carlomagno*, Santiago de Compostela, Xunta de Galicia, 2003, p. 113-129) and LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ-MORÁS, S. (*Épica y Camino de Santiago*, op. cit.). In this study, in which we partially follow André de Mandach (*Naissance et développement de la chanson de geste en Europe, I : la geste de Charlemagne et de Roland*, Genève, Droz, 1961), we propose the writing of *PT* in different phases and two main authors, just as Gaston Paris thought, but with decisive interpolations and radical changes in the configuration of the text. It is also possible to mention in this second group Pierre David ("Études sur le livre de Saint-Jacques attribué au Pape Calixte II, III. Le Pseudo-Turpin et le Guide du Pèlerin", *Bulletin des Études Portugaises*, t. 12 (1948), p. 70-223).

6 Cf. BENDER, K. H., "Les métamorphoses de la royauté de Charlemagne dans les premières épopées franco-italiennes", *Cultura Neolatina*, 21 (1961), p. 164-174, and BOUTET, D., *Charlemagne et Arthur ou le roi imaginaire*, Paris, Champion, 1992.

certain negative trait, because even though he was an undisputed hero, he is usually too headstrong in his actions and in some cases, even disobedient to his uncle's strict orders, as the episode of the capture of the town of Noble shows, which we will look at below. In any case, this dual leading role, essentially built from the main Roland text and fuelled by narrative rivalry that is occasionally crudely reproduced, is inherited to some extent by the *PT*. Nevertheless, the dual leading role is depicted in a far more attenuated way than is possible to imagine, and is only noticeable from Chapter XI onwards in the Latin text: from here to Chapter XIII the second capture of Pamplona and the death of Aigoland, the Saracen leader who led a devastating campaign against the Emperor and even came within French territory, is narrated. This last victory includes a theological discussion between the two military leaders which was resolved by arms⁷; but from here on, and before the glorious episode of Roncesvalles, in which the imperial peers die, and the burial of the martyrs who fell in combat, the Turpin text includes the following chapters:

XV: episode of the corpse looters, exterminated by Almanzor, the Saracen leader who survived the battle at the gates of Pamplona;

XVI: *De bello Furre*, concerning the conquest of the city of Monjardín and the death of its king Forré at the hands of the emperor Charlemagne⁸,

XVII: Roland's fight with Ferragut, the death of the latter and the surrender of the city of Nájera, ruled by the Saracens;

XVIII: *De bello larvarum* or the combat of masks: a pitched battle against the survivors of the Pamplona campaign: the aforementioned Almanzor of Cordova and Ibrahim of Seville, generals of Aigoland⁹,

XIX: The second privileges granted to the church of Santiago, which supplement those described in Chapter V, the work of the first author.

XX: A portrait of Charlemagne, partially based on Eginhard's *Vita Karoli*, with brief references to certain French texts from the cycle of the king¹⁰.

⁷ *PT*, XIII, p. 209-10.

⁸ Cf. below on the problems that arise from the presence of this episode at this point in the story.

⁹ Apparently this episode has a historical precedent which would have been a source of influence: the battle of Zalaca or Sagrajas (1086), fought by Alfonso VI against the Almoravids, as a result of which a severe defeat was inflicted on the Castilian monarch. Cf. MENÉNDEZ PIDAL, R., *La España del Cid*, Madrid, 1947 (4th ed. rev. and expanded), t. 1, p. 335, n. 2. Once Ibrahim of Sevilla has been killed, Almanzor ends up surrendering Cordova, which he kept in the emperor's fief. In the last documents of the *PT* the historical Almanzor's expedition is narrated – he devastated Santiago in 997 and under normal conditions should be understood as a different character to the above, as he belongs to a later time and comes into the story after the imperial campaigns. Nevertheless, we consider it almost inevitable for readers to confuse them as one and the same person. Cf. LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ-MORÁS, *Épica y Camino de Santiago*, *op. cit.*, p. 139, n. 301.

¹⁰ *Mainet* in particular, who tells of Charlemagne's youth in Toledo, and of which there are versions in various different languages (cf. especially HORRENT, J., *Les versions françaises et étrangères des enfances de Charlemagne*, Brussels, Palais des Académies, 1979) and the so-called *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*, a text which narrates a trip of Charlemagne and his peers to Constantinople and Jerusalem, of which two French versions exist that are completely contradictory in their ideology. Concerning this episode, cf. LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ-MORÁS, S., "Carlomagno y la tradición oral: de Notker Balbulus a los primeros textos épicos", in Kl. Herbers (ed.), *El Pseudo-Turpin. Lazo*

Following these chapters is the main battle:

XXI ff.: *De bello Runcievallis*¹¹. The battle of Roncesvalles and its consequences; the death of Charlemagne and Turpin's vision of Vienne; the miracle of Roland in Grenoble; the letter of Pope Callixtus II concerning the discovery of Turpin's body; Almanzor's raid of Santiago and San Román de Hornija, with disastrous consequences for his troops.

A quick look at these chapters reveals that from the fall of Pamplona the dynamics of the events change considerably: the battle of masks (XVIII) is directly related to that of the capital of Navarre, because it narrated the necessary annihilation of the survivors of Aigoland's army, in such a way that both chapters have to be taken, in terms of narrative, as two parts of the same episode. Chapter XIX, related to the privileges of Santiago, is directly related to Chapter V, as has been pointed out above, in such a way that a linear reading of the vicissitudes of the war shows the growing prominence of Roland from the first combat against Ferragut in Nájera onwards. Chapter XX, separate from the epic events in the *PT*, focuses on the figure of Charlemagne, but its content suggests that it is an interpolation¹². Under these conditions, the only really significant novelties before the battle of Roncesvalles are the chapters dedicated to Forré and Ferragut, because both lead to a structural modification in the story by separating the battle for Pamplona from its direct consequence: the destruction of the Saracen contingent that survives the taking of the city. The narrator himself highlights the sudden appearance of both episodes in the story as something unexpected within the logic of the campaign, when describing the two characters as enemies that had not heard of each other before:

*"Altero vero die nunciatum est Karolo quod apud montem Garzini princeps quidam Navarrorum nomine Furre volebat debellare contra illum"*¹³.

*"Statim nunciatum est Karolo quod apud Nageram gigas quidam nomine Ferracutus de genere Goliath advenerat de horis Syrie, quem cum XX milibus Turcorum Babilonis admirandus ad debellandum Karolum regem miserat"*¹⁴.

It thus seems clear that the two chapters have at least one bond that links them at a certain level. Although there are further links, there are, above all, significant differences: the taking of Monjardín and the death of King Forré are perpetrated by

ente el culto jacobeo y el culto de Carlomagno, op. cit., p. 45-82 (especialmente p. 67-75).

11 Concerning the essential features of this episode and the difficulties involved in its composition, cf. LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ-MORÁS, S., "De bello Runcievallis: la composition de la bataille de Roncevaux dans la chronique de Turpin", *Romania*, 126, 1-2, 2008, p. 65-102.

12 LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ-MORÁS, S., *Épica y Camino de Santiago, op. cit.*, p. 101-2.

13 *PT*, XVI, p. 210. Note that in this case it is not indicated that Forré is Saracen, but rather "*princeps Navarrorum*", although he dies "*cum tribus milibus Navarrorum scilicet et Sarracenorum*" (*PT*, XVI, p. 210). He would only be considered Saracen from the witness of the *Grandes Chroniques de France*. Cf. LAFONT, R., *La geste de Roland*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1991, t. II, p. 142, n. 2).

14 *PT*, XVII, p. 211

the emperor, according to the Turpin text, the French epic tradition presents the facts in a very different way: all existing references that link this king to a city associate him with a town called Nobles, identifiable with the current Dax in Gascony, and not with Monjardín. The original epic poem that contained the episode, the **Prise de Nobles*, is lost. Most epic poems that recount the conquest and provide scattered details also point out that the conqueror of the city was actually Roland, alone or with other warriors¹⁵, rather than his uncle. Under these conditions, everything seems to point towards the changes in the *PT*, where Nobles becomes Monjardín and Charlemagne replaces Roland as conqueror, due to some kind of anomaly. In a previous study¹⁶ we suggested that, at first, the Turpin text adopted the Nobles episode as recorded in the tradition, i.e. as a feat of Roland, only to undergo certain changes at a later date, due to different hands, responsible for the episode that we read today, in which the conquest is quickly brought to an end by the emperor.

In this way, tradition (and the information we provided in the above-mentioned study), enable us to suggest the reconstruction of a possible state of the writing of the *PT* in which Roland was made to intervene as conqueror of Nobles, before the final change in the text removes to the end as conqueror of Grenoble¹⁷. As things stand, the phase that has disappeared, with Roland as conqueror of the city, most likely coexisted with the episode of Ferragut, as the coincidences suggest that the two episodes were jointly integrated into the text: Roland is prominent in both warlike events, both interfere with the capture of Pamplona and its sequel, and both are episodes featuring insignificant kings of minor cities which Charlemagne had not been aware of before taking Pamplona. The structural similarities suggest that both episodes were included in the text as part of a process leading to the recovery of Roland as the main character prior to the massacre at Roncesvalles, at the price of splitting into two the Pamplona episode, in which Roland's uncle was at this stage doubtless the main character. But let us recall that the fundamental divergence between the two episodes was established by the influence of tradition: while the Nobles

15 With the exception of the Franco-Italian poem *La Mort Charlemagne*, in which the city is taken by Guillaume. Cf. M.-L. Meneghetti, "Ancora sulla Morte (o Testamento) di Carlo Magno" in HOLTUS, G. et alii (eds.), *Testi, cotesti e contesti del franco-italiano. Atti del 1º simposio franco-italiano (Bad Homburg, 13-16 April 1987)*, Tübingen, 1989, p. 245-84 (p. 258-84 is an appendix with the text of the poem. Cf. p. 270, vv. 606 ff. for the reference to the taking of Nobles by Guillaume).

16 LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ-MORÁS, S., "La Prise de Nobles dans le Pseudo-Turpin" in BIANCIOTTO, G. and GALDERISI, Cl. (eds.), *L'épopée romane. Actes du XV^e Congrès International Rencesvals, Poitiers, (21-27 August 2000)*, Poitiers, CESCO, 2002, t. I, p. 175-186.

17 We are referring to chapter XXIII of the chronicle, which narrates Roland's conquest of Grenoble. This military event, completely disconnected from the conquest of Spain, can only be understood as the result of continuous transformations in the taking of Nobles, which resisted destruction. In the context in which such modifications were implemented, the only thing that could avoid the elimination of the episode was moving it out of Spain; in this way, lacking all strategic value, the taking of Nobles, converted into Grenoble, is limited to the value of an *exemplum* of epic and mercy. To understand the complexity of all the changes we mention, cf. our above-mentioned work.

(or Monjardín) episode depends entirely on a prior text, the episode of Ferragut has no known epic antecedent, despite Bedier's hypothesis about an epic poem about this character, which is lost today¹⁸. Most likely Ferragut's roots lie rather in folklore¹⁹, even though his value as an epic motif and the particular way he was adapted to the Turpin text were primarily related to the usual formation process of the epic hero, which as a rule culminated in a confrontation with a significant Saracen warrior, usually of gigantic features²⁰.

But Ferragut's role went far beyond this question of initiation due to the geographical context which it was inserted into: more than in other similar cases of epic in the vernacular, the warrior is clearly identified with the city he is protecting, and is depicted as its only advocate²¹. He was theoretically the leader of an army sent by the emir of Babylon²², although his real strategy was to overcome Charlemagne's peers one by one in single combat. Conceived in this way, Ferragut becomes a peripheral character who gives form to Roland's personality, with whom, naturally, he ends up fighting. But this influence exacts a price on the narration, because even if the giant had some animal features, he evolved towards a more increasingly pronounced polite behaviour, which led to a *disputatio* about religious issues enriched by the author's own intervention. As a result, Roland abandons his proverbial immoderation at the same time as Ferragut abandons his own proverbial Saracen animalism. Naturally, the above-mentioned discussion about the basic tenets of Christianity, even though

18 Cf. BÉDIER, J., *Les légendes épiques*, op. cit., t. III, p. 98. The hypothesis about the existence of lost epic poems concerning episodes or characters of certain specific relevance was very common among critics in the early twentieth century. The existence of an old epic poem which includes this legend does not seem probable; it is much more coherent to talk about a motif which developed afterwards. Contrary to this case, it is possible to postulate the existence of a lost epic poem about the taking of Nobles, as is suggested by the repeated coincidence in the details provided by various works from different historical periods.

19 Just as with many other Saracen giants, evident Biblical references are employed, such as the mention of his belonging to Goliath's lineage (PT, XVII, p. 211). This topic is taken up in some epic poems influenced by the PT, e.g. the *Entrée d'Espagne* (EE: THOMAS, A., (ed.), *L'Entrée d'Espagne*, Paris, SATF, 1913; vv. 950-51): "*Trou bien retrait son jaianz ancessor/C'oncist David, le profete houtor*".

20 DUBOST, Fr., *Aspects fantastiques de la littérature narrative médiévale*, Paris, Champion, 1991, t. I, p. 595. In fact, David Aubert, who adapted the PT in his *Croniques et conquestes de Charlemaine* (1458) for the narration of the conquest of Spain, includes an interpolation after the taking of Monjardín, which clearly indicates its nature as a starting point: Charlemagne commands Guitelin to lead Roland along the pathways of Spain due to his lack of experience in the difficulties of warfare, but, above all, because of his ignorance of the land: "*Après celle conquête faite, le victorieux Charlemaine sejourna a Mont-Iardin et bailla a son bon ami Guitelin la charge de son nepueu Rolant pour le mener et conduire par les villes, chastiaux et citez d'Espagne, que il cognoissoit mieulx que nul autre*" (R. Guiette (ed.), AUBERT, D., *Croniques et conquestes de Charlemaine*, Brussels, Académie Royale de Belgique, 1940-51, Book II, p. 221).

21 There is also a clear identification of the city with its defender in the episode of Forré in the final version of chapter XVI, although in this case it is most probably due to the influence of the Nájera episode, which, as we have pointed out, never had radical changes forced on it by epic tradition.

22 The PT states that Zaragoza is governed by the brothers Marsile and Baligant, also sent to the capital of Aragón by the emir of Babylon: "*Et erant tunc temporis commorantes apud Caesaraugustam duo reges sarraceni, Marsirus scilicet et Beliguandus, frater eius, ab admirando Babilonis de Perside ad Yspaniam missi, qui Karoli imperii subiacebant, et libenter ei in omnibus serviebant, sed in caritate ficta*" (PT, XXI, p. 216). Neither should we forget that in the *Chanson de Roland* the emir of Babylon is Baligant, natural overlord of Marsile, the King of Zaragoza, although there is no blood relationship with his vassal.

it contains its own internal logic, is modelled on another similar discussion: the one held by Charlemagne and Aigoland in Chapter XII about the central aspects of the two religions, Christianity and Islam²³. This strengthens our hypothesis that the *PT* tends to progressively assign Charlemagne's values and behaviour from the capture of Pamplona onwards to his nephew. In spite of all, the hyperbolic aspects of the giant are clearly marked out from the beginning, as a basis for the later justification of his evolution: the Saracen has the strength of forty giants and both his height and strength are quite out of the ordinary²⁴. Ferragut, who never calls for Roland's presence, as he does in some of the vernacular versions, successively faces in single combat Ogier, Renaut de Montauban, Constantine, Hoel and a further twenty soldiers whose names are not revealed. The combat with Roland is given out just as any other, but is prolonged over two days. The first day was a battle on horseback, with swords and finally with bare fists and stones, before the granting of a truce and the postponement of the bout until the next day, when Ferragut comes with a sword and Roland with just a crooked stick²⁵.

However, Roland's continuous striking of the giant's body had no effect. Fatigue on both sides leads to a new truce and after Ferragut's dream, in which Roland behaves with great courtesy, the Saracen giant's behaviour became incomprehensible; at the behest of Roland, tired of fighting without success, he reveals that the only vulnerable point of his body is the navel:

*"Ferracutus namque, postquam satis dormivit, evigilavit se, et sedit iuxta eum Rotolandus, et cepit eum interrogare qualiter ita fortissimus et durissimus habebatur, quia aut gladium, aut lapidem, aut baculum non formidabat. Per nullum, inquit gigas, vulnerari possum, nisi per umbilicum"*²⁶.

Immediately after, the theological discussion opens up almost naturally. The essential points of the Christian religion are discussed in a conversation that is adorned with parables that have little to do with the epic spirit and show an evangelising nature in Roland, which is non-existent in the *Chanson de Roland* and present here for the first time. In a similar way to the case of Charlemagne and Aigoland, the discussion concerns the most complex dogmas of Christian tradition, which in this case are the

23 *PT* XII, p. 208. The discussion fails and the truth of the two religions is decided in combat between elite warriors from each side. When the Christians obtain the victory, Aigoland accepts baptism and orders the general conversion of all his subjects. However, the Saracen leader notices great incoherence in the practice of charity, as a group of poor people are treated roughly in Charlemagne's camp (*PT*, XIII, p. 209). This fact makes him regret his decision to be baptised and the fate of Pamplona was decided in the end on the battlefield.

24 It is precisely his status as a giant that brings Charlemagne to Nájera. Cf. *PT*, XVII, p. 211.

25 *PT*, XVII, p. 211. As shown in the case of Raynouart in the William episodes, the use of the mace, sticks and other rustic weapons considered unworthy of the Christian nobility is nevertheless appropriate for Saracen giants and characters close to social exclusion. Cf. the classic, but still valid work of FRAPPIER, J. *Les chansons de geste du cycle de Guillaume d'Orange*, Paris, Sedes, 1955, t. I, p. 219-33. In this case, however, it is necessary to reject the interpretation, because, as it is Roland who is armed with a rustic weapon, it is a clear depiction of the Biblical combat between David and Goliath.

26 *PT*, XVII, p. 211.

Trinity, the Immaculate Conception and the Resurrection of Christ, all aspects that are difficult to understand for a Saracen. The outcome of the discussion does not lead to any formal innovation: resort to the precedent of the discussion between the two sovereigns implies the adoption of an identical solution, i.e. the force of arms would settle the dialectical impasse the conversation had come to for once and for all.

The outcome of the combat is well-known: Ferragut dies after his abdomen is run through when the combat is taken up again, and his body is recovered by the city's inhabitants, so far virtually inactive, while the Carolingian army takes Nájera and frees the prisoners in fast-moving lines that leave no room for more detailed descriptions²⁷. Once Ferragut is dead, and Roland's *sapientia theologica* accomplished, the antithesis of his proverbial *fortitudo* in the vernacular epic, the author considered it unnecessary to go into any further detail about the military obstacle represented by the village of La Rioja.

This outcome enables the continuation of a collective military activity with no regularity or excessive consistency. The true value of the episode lies, however, in Roland's baptism of fire and in the discovery of his abilities as a theologian, which he keeps to varying degrees in other epic poems with no apparent links to the *PT*²⁸. All the above proves that Ferragut's character, even when fitted out with its own special traits when compared to the monstrosity of Saracen giants, has its reason for being as an element that enhances Roland's personality, thus culminating a narrative process in which Charlemagne is gradually replaced by his nephew. Furthermore, it also adds a significant novelty to the tradition, in that a Roland who discusses aspects of theology with the enemy is a diametrically opposite character to the one who, by his irrational excess, causes the destruction of twenty thousand men in the rearguard: the character known by tradition to the author in this episode was characterised in such a way, in a clear determination to give an unexpected twist to the ferocity of the fighting²⁹.

Ferragut and Forré therefore share a subordinate position in comparison to Roland, who matches them in practice, regardless of his greater or lesser degree of connection with epic tradition. The paradox is that while the *Prise de Nobles* is lost as an independent text and Forré and Nobles leave only indirect tracks in some epic texts, Ferragut, who did not exist before this story, acquired new life with the Turpin document. Although it is true that his relationship with Roland always determines

27 *PT* XVII, p. 213.

28 As in the case of Aquilon de Bavière. Cf. WUNDERLI, P., "Roland théologien dans Aquilon de Bavière" in LIMENTANI, A. ET ALII (eds.), *Essor et fortune de la Chanson de geste dans l'Europe et l'Orient latin : actes du IXe Congrès International de la Société Rencesvals pour l'Etude des Epopées Romanes* : Padua-Venice, 29 August - 4 September 1982, Modena, 1984, t. II, p. 759-81. Cf. also HOLTUS, G. and WUNDERLI, P., "Roland 'théologien'" in *idem*, *Les épopées romanes (Grundriss der romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters, tome 1 / 2, fasc. 10)*, Heidelberg, Universitätsverlag Winter, 2005, p. 106-113.

29 His lack of moderation also disappears, replaced by a greater concern for religion, in the battle of Roncesvalles at the end of the Latin chronicle.

his presence in the vernacular epic, his prominence in certain texts radically changes the details of the relationship between them, and some stories even use the defender of Nájera as a model for other giants at different levels. That said, it should be acknowledged that not all of these literary documents integrate the motif in the same way: excepting the more or less faithful translations or adaptations of the *PT*, in the vast majority of French epic texts references to Ferragut are essentially merely formulae: the giant is mentioned in these cases with no emphasis on the group of Saracen warriors fighting Christian troops in different contexts. His name became commonplace among the hoards of Arab fighters, although it does not enjoy pride of place in any particular epic cycle³⁰.

In addition to these specific uses, relatively in debt to the Turpin tradition, the text that makes the greatest use of Ferragut is undoubtedly the French-Italian epic poem³¹ *L'Entrée d'Espagne (EE)*, written c. 1328, which involves the giant in a considerable part of the story: around three thousand verses out of a total of approximately fifteen thousand, which can be read in the only surviving manuscript, in Venice, edited by Antoine Thomas in 1913³². Starting with this first epic testimony written in Venice, certain other texts from beyond the borders of France also follow the same trend, constituting Italian epic, influenced by the *EE* to a greater or lesser extent: *La Spagna (Sp)* and *Li Fatti di Spagna (FS)*³³, both from the fourteenth century; this study will be

30 A. Moisan (Repertoire des noms propres de personnes et de lieux cités dans les chansons de geste françaises et les œuvres étrangères dérivées, Genève, Droz, 1986, t. I, vol. 1, p. 403), records six different warriors all called Ferragut (with their variants Feragu, Fernagu, etc) in French epic poems, including the defender of Nájera. He is mentioned in such different epic texts as Baudoin de Sebourg, Chevalier au Cygne, Hugues Capet and Lion de Bourges, among others. As for the influence of *PT* in a more general way on French epic poetry, cf. by the same author, "L'exploitation de la chronique du Pseudo-Turpin", *Marche Romane*, 31 (1981), p. 11-41.

31 Franco-Italian literature was written in a mixed language in the north of Italy for various centuries in the Middle Ages. Work written at this time and place belongs to various different genres, although epic texts prevail, such as the one under study here. Many are translations of existing poems, while others are original compositions, although the topics are almost exclusively of French origin. HOLTUS, G. and WUNDERLI, P., *Les épopées romanes, op. cit.* (devoted specifically to the study of Franco-Italian texts, their context and language).

32 For details of the publication, cf. n. 19.

33 There are two versions of *Sp*: in prose and verse. There are in turn two variants of the latter, known as *Spagna maggiore* and *Spagna minore*, according to the number of *cantari* they contain (forty-four and thirty-four respectively); the difference depends on the length of Roland and Ferragut's combat and on the so-called *Rotta di Roncisvalle* (cf. among others, the recent article by STROLOGO, F., "Sulla storia redazionale della *Spagna in rima*: le morti di Alda la bella", *Medioevo Romanzo*, 31 (2007), p. 319-44, particularly p. 319-21). Our references are based on G. B. ROSIELLO's edition (ed.), *La Spagna in rima del manoscritto comense*, Alessandria, Ed. dell'Orso, 2001, which contains the short version of the combat, but includes the main details of the episode under analysis (cf. ROSIELLO, G. B., *La Spagna, ed. cit.*, p. 23). The quotation system for this work, whose *cantari* are composed of octaves (groups of eight verses), will be as follows: the corresponding *cantare* is expressed in Roman numerals, followed by the number of the octave in Arabic numerals, and when necessary, the verses. Another edition of *Sp*, older and based on a different version, was edited by CATALANO, M., *La Spagna. Poema cavalleresco del xiv secolo*, Milan, Carducci, 1939-40. An analysis of outstanding interest concerning the authorship, sources and date of *La Spagna in prosa*, together with a review of the different studies about this unpublished version, can be seen in STROLOGO, F., "Intorno alle fonte della *Spagna in prosa*: l'altro Turpino", *Rassegna europea di letteratura italiana*, 29-30 (2007), p. 69-91. We will give preference to *EE* over the two other texts and refer to the latter mainly regarding their differences compared to the main work. For the relation between *EE* and the Italian texts, in particular *Sp*, cf. apart from the above-mentioned works, DIONISOTTI, C., "Entrée d'Espagne, Spagna, Rotta di

limited to these texts. These new testimonies date from two hundred years after the *PT*, and their audience, essentially urban, had other literary preferences, and other social and cultural reference points, which explains most of the changes made with respect to Turpin's chronicle.

One of the main changes in the Padua text, or the Paduan, as the *EE* author is known³⁴, is the change in Ferragut's role, as he decides to associate him not only with Roland, but also with the success of the conquest of Spain itself, in order to make it a starting point, somewhat different from in the *PT*³⁵. For this reason, he even changes the geographical order – although he respects it in the rest of the text – and places Nájera before Pamplona to make the city in La Rioja and its governor the first hurdle to the conquest of the country. He also changes the kinship of the giant's relatives, turning him

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- Roncisvalle" in *Studi in onore di Angelo Monteverdi*, Modena, 1959, t. I, p. 207-41. We consulted *FS*, an Italian text in prose, in the only available edition: RUGGIERI, R. M. (ed.), *Li Fatti di Spagna. Testo settentrionale trecentesco già detto "Viaggio di Carlo Magno in Spagna"*, Modena, Società Tipografica Modenese, 1951, t. I (the second volume was never published). For the sources, cf. especially FLÖSS, L., "La fonti (sic) dei *Fatti de Spagna*", *Medioevo Romano*, 15 (1990), p. 115-37. Quotations from the *FS* will be given in Roman numerals for the corresponding chapters and in Arabic numerals for the pages. Concerning the public for the Franco-Italian texts, cf. KRAUSS, H., *Epica feudale e pubblico borghese. Per la storia poetica de Carlomagno in Italia*, Padua, Liviana Editrice, 1980.
- 34 "Mon non vos non dirai, mai sui Patavian,/De la citez qe fist Antenor le Troian,/En la joiose Marche del cortois Trivixan,/Pres la mer a .x. lieues, o il est plus proçan./En cronique letree, qe escrist de sa man/L'arcivesque Trepins, atrovai en Millan/L'estoire et la conquise dou regne Castellan/Qe fist le neveu Carles por coroner Audan,/La seror Oliver, q'el plevi soz Vian" (vv. 10974-82). Cf. FINOLI, A. M., "Note sulla personalità e la cultura dell'autore dell'*Entrée d'Espagne*", *Cultura Neolatina*, 21 (1961), p. 175-81. The author of the Padua text is rewriting the conquest of Spain and the Pilgrims' Road to Santiago based on Turpin, who appears to him in dreams and orders him to carry out this mission. After the taking of the city of Nobles, near Pamplona, which Roland conquers without imperial authorisation, however, there is a confrontation between uncle and nephew, leading to the latter's desertion and the start of his Asian adventure, heavily influenced by the legend of Alexander (cf. BRADLEY-CROMEY, N., "Roland as baron révolté: The problem of authority and autonomy in *L'Entrée d'Espagne*", *Olifant*, 5 (1978), p. 285-97; eadem, *Authority and autonomy in L'Entrée d'Espagne*, New York & London, Garland Publishing, 1993, p. 57-80). Once the Holy Places have been liberated, a moment that should be reconstructed with the help of *FS* as the only manuscript of *EE* has a laguna at this point, Roland comes back to the starting point, although the text in *EE* does not continue the story beyond the siege of Pamplona, which is still under siege at the end of the narration. A continuation of this work, traditionally known as the *Prise de Pampelune*, by Nicholas of Verona, takes up the story again but does not tell of the liberation of Santiago: the war inexplicably comes to an end in Astorga, which surrenders to Roland; the taking of the city ends the manuscript, but not abruptly, showing that the author deliberately brings the campaign to an end at this point. Concerning the Pilgrims' Road in the *Prise*, cf. SPECHT, R., "Nicolas de Vérone, la *Prise de Pampelune* et le chemin de Saint-Jacques", in ALVAR, C. and CIRLOT, V. (eds.), *Ville Congrès de la Société Rencesvals*, Pamplona, Institución Príncipe de Viana, 1981, p. 469-74; *idem*, *Recherches sur Nicolas de Vérone. Contribution à l'étude de la littérature franco-italienne du quatorzième siècle*, Berne, 1982, p. 47-110 (and p. 70-75 for the relation of *FS* and *Sp* with the latter text); BROOK, L. C., "La continuation de *L'Entrée d'Espagne (Prise de Pampelune)* et le chemin de Saint Jacques", in BIANCIOTTO, G. and GALDERISI, C. (eds.), *L'épopée romane. Actes du XV^e congrès International de la Société Rencesvals, op. cit.*, t. I, p. 137-143. There are two main textual editions of the *Prise de Pampelune*. The best-known was published in the nineteenth century: MUSSAFIA, A., (ed.), *La prise de Pampelune*, Wien, 1, 1864; although there is a much more recent edition, under a different and possibly more correct name (*Continuazione de l'Entrée d'Espagne*) in the complete edition of the Veronese writer's works: DI NINNI, Fr. (ed.), Niccolò da Verona, *Opere. Pharsale, Continuazione dell'Entrée d'Espagne, Passion*, Venice, 1992. Concerning the relation between *EE* and its continuation and the extremely complex problems of the manuscript tradition, cf. DI NINNI, Fr. (ed.), Niccolò da Verona, *Opere, ed. cit.*, p. 18-25.
- 35 Cf. a general analysis about Jacobean matters in *EE* in: MAROZZI, L., "La tradizione della liberazione del Cammino di Santiago nella *chanson de geste* franca-veneta dell'*Entrée d'Espagne*", in CARRO, J. (ed.), *Actas del Congreso de Estudios Jacobeos*, Santiago de Compostela, Xunta de Galicia, 1995, p. 511-25.

into the nephew of Marsile and son of Falsaron³⁶, in order to compare him more directly to Roland, who was also Charlemagne's nephew. This unexpected change in family ties turns Ferragut into an *alter ego* of Roland, at least as far as his relations with the sovereign he owes obedience to are concerned, and suggests from the beginning the need for a clash between two personalities who are parallel and at the same time opposites.

The conditions under which we are aware of the existence of this giant also change, intimately linked to the alteration of the geographical framework: Ferragut is not now discovered by surprise, as in the *PT*, after a major campaign and under the same conditions as Forré, defeated and killed before him: Ferragut himself, from his post in Nájera, disobeys the explicit orders of his uncle, who assigns him a purely defensive task in the town³⁷, and orders terrible devastating attacks on French territory, to win victuals and prisoners³⁸. On the other hand, we should bear in mind that the use of an armed contingent to carry out this campaign of attrition in the area round the French border implies that Ferragut stopped acting, in practice, as the only active defender of his city³⁹. These modifications to the original Turpin are not whimsical, because they redirect the role of the character: Ferragut's behaviour, although it fits in with the power scale of any army, actually depicts that of the giants in Arthurian *roman*, creators of territories *gastes* in their surroundings as a sign of presence and power⁴⁰.

The Padua text also elevates the importance of the city through the people inside it, both Christian and Saracen. Both the *Sp* and the *FS* use this with even greater inventiveness: contrary to the emptiness of the city in La Rioja in the Turpin text, various anonymous characters remain behind in the Nájera of *EE* to deal with the Christian

36 Falsaron is Marsile's brother in the *Chanson de Roland* (vv. 879, 1213). *EE* (v. 183), though, says that Marsile is also Baligant's brother, as in *PT* (XXI, p. 216). This is doubtless inherited from the chronicle, and relates all these characters in an unique family relationship.

37 "Li rois Marsille d'Aragonoise gient/En seul .VIII. jors a fait asenblement/De .x^m. homes, sin fist delivrement/A son neveu, Feragu d'Orient./ "Niés ", dist li rois, " menez cist garniment/A la citez q'eu vos don et present,/Ce est Laçarain, que fu de ton parent./Le rois de France i vient certainement ;/ Contenez vos illoc si sajement/E dou pasajes faites maintenant, /Qu'il non poissent passer legerement./Je manderai tot mon esforcamant,/Secorrai vos, s'il pleira Dex, breument./Et une riens vos comant et defent;/Ne lor donez estor ni torniamant,/Mais a fortece vos tenez seulement./ Il non venront, jel sai certainement,/D'illoc avant se la citex non prent." (Vv. 595-612).

38 Vv. 615-629. Ogier le danois, who anticipates the French contingent, informs the emperor of the situation. The emperor decides to start the march precisely because of the Saracens' campaign of devastation. The Dane is with Roland in Blaye, near the border, to inform him of the situation (vv. 746-47). Paradoxically, Blaye is, according to all Roland traditions, the burial place of Charlemagne's nephew. Cf. concerning this topic, JULLIAN, C. "La tombe de Roland à Blaye", *Romania*, t. 25 (1896), p. 161-173. In fact, the emperor gives orders to the vassal kings with the purpose of starting the crusade in *EE* (vv. 655-78) and *FS* (XVI, p. 16-17), imitating the steps that Charlemagne takes himself in in *PT* when attacking Pamplona to evict Aigoland (*Sp* has a very extensive list of nobles who meet the emperor in place of this: I, 11-29). In *FS* Ferragut recognises Ogier le Danois because he has previously fought with him (*FS*, XXI, p. 22) and *Sp* adds, furthermore, that the Dane had fought Marsile in Navarra (III, 16, 1-4).

39 Even before entering combat, Ferragut encourages his men and leaves Nájera with his barons, leaving the infantry inside the city, of whom "tant en i avoit, ni est que le nonbre en die" (v. 829).

40 When leaving Nájera, Ferragut warns his ambassadors in front of Charlemagne that "Vos alerois al roi/Oltre cist pont a l'ensaigne que voi" (vv. 921-22). The existence of this bridge, which is not mentioned in the *PT*, but is referred to in *FS*, is a crucial pass, similar to the one which the Arthurian knights had to cross, although here its purpose here seems rather to mark Nájera's natural boundaries.

prisoners, and reference is even made to a sister of Ferragut, who is barely mentioned in the Padua text; but a sister, possibly different from this one, plays something of a leading role within the city in the Italian texts⁴¹. Charlemagne's peers also play a significant role, which varies according to the different versions, and are captured in futile single combat with Ferragut, who always possesses an essential value in spite of the numerous changes.

These new narrative circumstances are not incompatible with the repetition of the Saracen's proverbial courtesy: the narrator himself highlights the chivalrous virtues of the giant while describing in detail the characteristics of his great size, but in terms that preclude any kind of fantastic reading of his form⁴². However, in the description of the origin of Ferragut's weapons, the Padua text mentions the existence of his only vulnerable point, anticipating the discovery of this fact in the course of the theological dispute:

*“Cist Ferragus, de qui nos ramenton,
Estot faez par itel devison
Qe de sa cars detrencer ne puet hon,
Fors endroit l'anbellil : tel fu sa nasion”⁴³.*

As a defender of the city, Ferragut proposes single combat via his ambassadors, but not in a general way, as in the *PT*, neither is it necessarily with Roland, but with Roland or Oliveros⁴⁴, whom he considers the greatest champions on the imperial side, and under the condition that the loser meets the winner's desire: either the surrender of the city, if the French win, or withdrawal to France in case of a Saracen victory. This embassy, absent from the *PT*, which depends on an anonymous source concerning the existence of Ferragut and his willingness to fight the emperor, has no direct background in the exquisite and most prudent embassy that the King of Zaragoza sends to Charlemagne via Blancandrin in the *Chanson de Roland*⁴⁵, as the emissaries sent by Ferragut behave with unusual insolence⁴⁶. The content makes us think rather

41 At one point in the confrontation, Ferragut promises Roland the hand of this mysterious sister, if he agrees to convert to Islam, but there is no further mention of her: “*Car crois Machon par ta arme salver;/Il ne te fait altre cose mester./Al roi Marsille te ferai pardonner/E ma seror, qe de bontez n'a per/e ne plus belle ne se poroit trover,/Cangeona te donrai a moiller;/Filie est de roi e de raïne mer;/Soz ciel n'a home ne s'an post contenter”* (vv. 3592-599). *FS* also mentions the promise of marriage (XXV, p. 33). However, in later chapters, Ferragut tells Roland about his sister, of evil features, who is waiting for him in Nájera (cf. *infra*). Given the difference between the two descriptions, it seems clear that they were two different sisters. *Sp* substitutes the monstrous creature for the giant's mother, described in an equally negative way, which suggests that the presence of an evil female was necessary at all times in the city. Sinagón, Ferragut's assistant and interpreter of dreams, the giant's *nudrigadore* and bearer of the news of the fall of Nájera to Marsile, is also of great importance in *FS*.

42 Vv. 830-55.

43 Vv. 868-71. *Sp* also reveals Ferragut's weak point while describing the preparation for the single combat (II, 38), just as in *FS* (XVIII, p. 19).

44 Vv. 1019-32.

45 This Saracen inexplicably disappears from the Oxford text after having fulfilled his purpose. Cf. DUFURNET, J., “La fin énigmatique de deux sarrasins dans la *Chanson de Roland*: Blancandrin et Margariz de Séville”, *Olifant*, 11 (1986), p. 171-87.

46 Vv. 959-86.

of a much more radical reworking of the timid embassy that Marsile himself submits to Charlemagne at the beginning of the *EE* to find out imperial intentions concerning Spain, and receives an ambiguous reply⁴⁷.

Once they are on the field before Nájera, the capture of prisoners in single combat in the *PT* is repeated, but in much greater detail, as the single combat of each of Charlemagne's peers is narrated. All of them are defeated and imprisoned, including Turpin himself⁴⁸. In the light of what happened to the twelve peers, Roland decides to engage in combat himself. This combat lasts for three days, one more than in the *PT*, an insignificant difference in practice. Just as in the Latin text, the theological discussion takes place on the last day, but the Padua text includes two aspects of particular interest on the second day: first there is a violent confrontation between Estout on the one side and the rest of the imprisoned peers on the other – these details are heavily nuanced and even lacking in hostility in the other texts⁴⁹. Secondly, it justifies the length of the story by including two sources different from Turpin, complementing *in extenso* what the archbishop had told in a very concise way:

*“Se dam Trepin fist brefsa lecion
E je di long, blasmer ne me doit hon ;
Ce que il trova, bien le vos canteron.
Bien dirai plus, a chi'n pois e chi non,
Car dous bons clerges, Çan Gras et Gauteron,
Çan de Navaire e Gauter d' Aragon,*

47 Vv. 431-537. The messengers come to the emperor with a text written by Marsile himself. This is rare in previous texts (cf. VALLECALLE, J. Cl., *Messages et ambassades dans l'épopée française médiévale*, Paris, Champion, 2006, p. 90 and 138-139) and illustrates the extreme precaution of the ambassadors. On the contrary, the attitude of Ferragut's envoys and the response and behaviour of the Franks is much more direct and lacking in formalities, to such an extent that Charlemagne “*juge nécessaire de retenir ses hommes pour les empêcher de maltraiter un envoyé trop arrogant.*” (VALLECALLE, J. Cl., *Messages et ambassades, op. cit.*, p. 167). Quite naturally, Ferragut's messengers transmitted his threatening message orally. Cf. also *FS*, XIX, p. 20-21. *Sp* does not include this sending of ambassadors: Ferragut goes directly to threaten Charlemagne and his men (II, 40-41).

48 I.e. Ogier, Otón, Berenger, Anseis, Engelier, Sanson, two of Naimes' sons, Turpin, Girart, Ogier, Oliveros and Estout. All the combats take place with no previous authorisation from Charlemagne. The list differs slightly in *FS* (XXI-XXII, p. 23-26): Uzere, Richardo, Anzelino, Anzellere, Avino, Avolio, Otone and Beluzere, Naimon's sons, Oliviere, Astolfo and Girardo de Rosilione. *Sp* III, 1-25 has Astolfo, Uzere, Olivere, Gualter de Monlione, Ottono, Belinzere, Sanson, Gayno, Angolere de Bordella and others, a total of thirty-seven men. As can be seen, both texts exclude Turpin, who stays by Charlemagne's side.

49 Cf. also the stormy relations between Ferragut and Estout in vv. 2949-65. In *FS* the giant even feeds him apart, on the floor, as if he were a minstrel, while he treats the rest of prisoners with the usual courtesy. Cf. *infra*, p.***. This behaviour by Estout enjoys a certain validity in the epic tradition. Cf. FERRERO, G., “Astolfo (storia di un personaggio)”, *Convivium* 24 (1961), p. 513-30 and, more recently, VALLECALLE, J. Cl., “L'écart et la norme: remarques sur le comique dans les chansons de geste franco-italiennes”, in GUIDOT, B. (ed.), *Burlesque et dérision dans les épopées de l'Occident médiéval. Actes du colloque international des Rencontres euriopéennes de Strasbourg et de la Société Internationale Rencesvals (Section française), Strasbourg, 16-18 septembre 1993*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1995, p. 225-36 (especially p. 226-8), and *idem*, “*Fortitudo et stultitia*. Remarques sur le personnage d'Estout dans les chansons de geste”, in FAUCON, J.-C. ET ALII (eds.), *Miscellanea Mediaevalia. Mélanges offerts à Philippe Ménard*, Paris, Champion, 1998, t. II, p. 1423-1434.

*Ces dos prodomes ceschuns saist pont a pon
 Si come Carles o la fiere façon
 Entra en Espaigne conquere le roion,
 La començaile trosque la finisun
 Dejusque ou point de l'uevre Guenelun*⁵⁰.

In a way, the length of the story is due to the theological discussion, much more extensive here than in the Turpin chronicle – the dialectical process is much more learned and rational too, especially in the responses of the Saracen⁵¹. Moreover, the discovery of his weak point is due to the need to refute Roland's accusation about a supposedly obscure origin of his invincibility⁵². Contrary to the giant's *fae* character in the *PT*, which the later texts take over with greater intensity, the explanation of Ferragut could not be more rational and scientific, but the anomaly is formally defined, however, in terms of *faerie*. Thus, his rare singularity is determined by the position of the planets at the time of his birth⁵³:

*“Sire Rollant, ce respont l'Arabi,
 Corociez estes, car bien vos ai ohi.
 Non sui Diable, home m'engenui.
 Volez oïr qi moi faa ensi?
 Soz un planez, Chavachabas, naqui :
 Si li noment li Saracins anti.
 Chavachabas es planet si basti,
 Ne feit son cors en .xx. ans n'en .xxvi.;
 Cil a vertu que celui o cili
 Che soz lui naist quant il ombre Çeli
 –Un autre estoile c'est, el cercle Jovi–,
 La car de cil qe naistra desoz li
 En totes part ert plus fort qu'esmeri,
 Fors en cel leu o il fust celui di*

50 Vv. 2775-85. Naturally, both sources are fictitious, although there were proposals for an actual identification of both characters, not very well received by critics. Cf. DE MANDACH, A., “L'Entrée d'Espagne: six auteurs en quête d'un personnage”, *Studi Medievali*, 30 (1989), p. 163-208. Nevertheless, it seems that the Padua text confers on them different narrative functions, indicating that a) only Turpin describes Ganelon's treachery (v. 2787 ff.), b) Gautier d'Aragon provides more information than the other two witnesses (v. 2793), and c) Roland's compliments are essentially due to Jean de Navarre (v. 2930 ff.). Most likely both sources are mentioned as it is impossible to have Turpin as an eyewitness of the events narrated, given that in the *EE* he is one of the prisoners of Nájera.

51 Cf. with regards to this point the work of BOSCOLO, Cl., “La disputa teologica dell'Entrée d'Espagne”, in ALVAR, C. and PAREDES, J. (eds.), *La chanson de geste. Actes du XVIe congrès International de la Société Rencesvals pour l'études des Épopées Romanes (Granada, 21-25 July 2003)*, Granada, Universidad, 2005, p. 124-134.

52 Vv. 3985-99.

53 LIMENTANI, A., “Astronomia, astrologia e arti magiche nell'Entrée d'Espagne”, in *idem*, *L'Entrée d'Espagne e i signori d'Italia* (ed. of M. Infurna and F. Zambon), Padua, Antenore, 1992, p. 293-311, in particular 299-301.

*Trenciez de fers: en cil leu ne l'afi.
Rollant l'entant, formaet s'en esjoï;
Mout noblemant a Diex en rant merci*⁵⁴.

And yet there are variants of great importance at this point in the other documents, because even though the Italian texts return to the magical origin of the giant's invulnerability, they create another negative feature for Roland, to whom they attribute a religious origin or one based on classical myths, according to the circumstances⁵⁵. Thus, *FS* alludes to a miraculous event that occurs during the battle of Aspremont: during the struggle, four saints come down from heaven to help him, and while three of them invest him as a knight, the fourth, Saint Vitalis, gives him the privilege of not spilling his blood on the battlefield⁵⁶. This Christian explanation was clearly created as a neutralising element for the giant's *faerie*. *SP* resorts to a minor rewriting of the Achilles myth instead of adapting an explanation of Christian inspiration, and creates a single weak point in the sole of the giant's foot, while at the same time pointing out that it is a privilege granted by fate:

*“Orlando disse: «Quando fui garçone
le fate me driçar sopra le due lastre,
fatarmi tuto come tu mi vedi
eccetto four che le piante di pedi»*⁵⁷.

This draws an insurmountable line at the origin and value of both warriors' exceptional conditions. Roland's personality is thereby specifically changed, conferring on him an almost mythical origin, but completely devoid of relevance in the result of the single combat⁵⁸.

54 Vv. 4000-16. Ferragut in *EE* is aware of this fatal mistake, because after the resumption of the battle, while Roland seeks to pierce his navel, “*molt se repant de quant qe dit i a*” (v. 4078). Cf. the comment of the Christian hero in *FS* after Ferragut's imprudent confession: “*Yo te farò pentire di queste parole*” (*FS*, XXV, p. 35).

55 The mutual revelation of vulnerability emerges in *Sp* due to Ferragut's fatigue, which suggests that both of them discover the only weak point they had, in order to put an end to an extremely strenuous combat (*Sp*, IV, 39).

56 “*Dixe el conde Roland: “Yo te voglio dire como sono affadato. Siando yo in Aspramonte in la battaglia de Tholomeo de Egipto e de la zente de Anglante, sollo apresso de una montagna, e combatendo con la spada in mane con ben .x^o. sarazini, quaxe che non me poteva defendere; de que Christo me volse adutare, e guardando vite desendere de la montagna quatro chavalieri armati, tuti bianchi, li qualli ereno quatro caporalli, e questi quatro chavalieri mi scampàno la morte e olcixeno tuti li pagani. Fata la grande bataglia, li me fezero chavalere: l'uno fo sancto Georgio, l'altro fo sancto Morixio, el terzo fo sancto Dyonisio, el quarto fo sancto Vitale. Sancto Georgio me dé una masellada, sancto Morixio me senza la spada, sancto Dyonixio me calzò li speroni, sancto Vitale me dede la benedictione, che non dovesi spandere del myo sangue in bataglia*” (*FS*, XXVI, p. 35-36).

57 IV, 40, 5-8. Resorting to classical antiquity is not uncommon in either *EE* or the derived texts; in fact, *FS*, for example, alludes to the Trojan origin of Roland's armour and sword, which belonged to Hector (*FS*, XXV, p. 31).

58 Some signs announcing the result of the outcome of the combat are also shown. In *FS* this happens in a dream of Ferragut's, described like most epic dreams in a symbolic way through depictions of animals. Sinagon, the giant's assistant and *nudrigadore*, interprets the dream correctly, although he fails to reveal its true meaning. To avoid disaster, the Saracen asks to replace Ferragut in the combat, but the giant rejects the offer and does not

In all the texts, Ferragut's death on the last day leads to the surrender of the city, but the conditions in which this end takes place differ once again in the various versions. In spite of their gaps and dependence on *EE*, both *Sp* and *FS* have the usual epic ending, absent in their source and in the *PT* itself: the possibility of Ferragut's being baptised after the single combat⁵⁹, the natural outcome of combat with a Saracen who has shown nobility and honour in the fight. Nevertheless, the sacrament is not administered without surprises: in both texts Ferragut's baptism *in articulo mortis*, and his soul rising up to heaven in view of all⁶⁰, transfer the motif of his fantastic animalism and monstrosity to a character who has been marginal in the Saracen universe up to this time: a woman of Ferragut's lineage (his mother in *Sp*, his sister in *FS*)⁶¹. This character that breaks into the story all of a sudden reproduces all the monstrous features that medieval tradition attributes to giant, and enlarges them, including extreme cruelty, close to cannibalism, which both Italian witnesses demonstrate⁶². In fact, it is Ferragut himself who warns the Christian hero about the presence of this woman in the city and her intentions⁶³; we have caught glimpses of her in the *SP* version over the days of the combat⁶⁴. Thus, actually, the taking of the city is not so much due to its inhabitants' spontaneous surrender, but above all rather to the death of the character who possesses the most perverse traits of otherness. This death takes place thanks to a trick related to disguise: in *Sp*, Roland dons the armour of his deceased enemy, and dresses Ferragut in his own clothes, thus managing to fool his mother, while the monstrous woman is busy devouring her own son's corpse with her nails in ignorance of what she is really doing. Roland takes advantage of the moment and cuts her head off in a terrible scene far removed from the extreme courtesy he had for Ferragut⁶⁵.

even ask why it is made (*FS*, XXV, p. 32). Concerning dreams in epic poems, cf. especially BRAET, H., *Le songe dans la chanson de geste au XIIe siècle*, Gant, Romanica gandensia, 1975.

59 We should not forget that in *EE* the Saracen is not baptised, "Le bran li mist [Rollant] deci qu'en le fié./Cil gete un cri, l'espirt en est alé;/Celui l'en porte qe bien l'a gaagné./Si com la tor, quan rompus est le pié./Chiet et decline, tot ensi fist l'Asclé." (v. 4129-33). Despite this omission, in *EE* Roland (v. 4147-53) and the other French people (v. 4184-88) regret not having been able to baptise the giant. It is very probable that the Italian texts include the episode because of this gap in the narrative in *EE*. Concerning the reason for the conversion of Saracens in epic poetry, cf. BANCOURT, P., *Les musulmans dans la chanson de geste du cycle du roi*, Aix-en-Provence, Université, 1982, t. II, p. 494-571.

60 Especially the emperor, who, ignorant of Ferragut's baptism *in extremis*, believes that the soul the angels are taking up is that of his nephew, defeated in single combat (*Sp*, V, 12). Roland explains the vision to Charlemagne after the taking of Nájera (*Sp*, V, 36-37).

61 We should not forget that the presence of Ferragut's sister in the *EE* is limited to the offer of her hand by the Saracen giant.

62 Concerning cannibalism in epic and Arthurian giants, cf. DUBOST, Fr., *Aspects fantastique*, op. cit., t. I, p. 621-22.

63 For example, in *FS*: "Anchora te avixo, quando tu saray in Lazara, che tu trovaray una mya sorella la quale è molte inimicha, e s'è quaxe meza indemogniata, e ha le umge aguze a modo de leone: se la te prendesse, la te fendereve per mezzo" (*FS*, XXV, p. 37; also in *Sp*, V, 10-11).

64 II, 36; III, 19, 6; III, 28, 1-7; IV, 18-19; IV, 26.

65 "Canifossa al so fiolo ne fo ita/e inzenogiosse con le mane per afferarlo,/con le hongie che l'aveva in le soe dita/e comenza tuto a desbardallo;/ Rolando trasse la spada furbita/e zà ne ge vene lo pensere fallato,/con Donindarna tal colpo ge calla/che al ge taiò la testa de la spalla". (V, 19). *FS* (XXVI, p. 37) has a slightly different outcome, because Roland does not take Ferragut's body to Nájera; consequently, the Saracen reaction towards the newcomer,

Parallel to the combats fought by the two champions in the open field, during the days of struggle there is great activity within the city, a fact that is completely ignored in the Latin chronicle. Despite the presence of relevant peers and Turpin himself, the weight of the dialectical confrontation with Ferragut lies on Estout, the essential spokesman with the giant⁶⁶. At this point the texts differ from each other and are sometimes inconsistent within themselves: in *EE*, several of the prisoners in Nájera, in particular Girart Roussillon and Ogier le Danois, argue with him because of his fears and jokes⁶⁷, which even poke fun at Ferragut himself, when the giant returns to his fortress leaving Charlemagne's nephew undefeated⁶⁸; in *FS* his alienation reaches the point where Ferragut does not feed him at the same table as everybody else, dispensing the disparaging treatment reserved for minstrels and buffoons⁶⁹. However, an isolated episode reverses this trend in a surprising way. Following the liberation of the Saracen feud, *FS* adds an appendix on the taking of an unidentified castle guarded by an unnamed giant under very similar conditions to those prevailing at the conquest of Nájera in the *PT*. This fortress is a necessary step for the way into Navarre, against the geographical logic of both the *PT* and *EE*. The event, presented and resolved in just a few lines, is played out entirely by Astolfo, who defeats the guardian with great ease:

“Alora l’oste grande, che era de clxxxm. christiani, preseno a chavalcare verso la Navarra, unde aveva fato fare Marsilio uno grande castello, che guardava uno pessimo gigante. A zercho lo castello se misse K. con sova zente, e ly stete per molti zorni. Ora, spesse fiade vegniva fora lo gigante del castello, e Molto forte delmazava la zente de l’imperadore; e portava in mano una grande maza de ferro, e andava questo gigante a pey. Alora Astolfo d’Ingaltera, uno de li xij piri de Franza, dixè al conde Rolando: “E’ve quero una gratia: che me lassati prendere bataglia con lo gigante da maytina, quando l’insirà fora.” Dixè Rolando: “Ve sia donato zìo che requiriti.” Quando vene a la maytina, lo gigante vene fora, como era sua usanza; alora Astolfo fo levato, e prende sova espada senza nessuna armatura, e andò contra lo gigante. E el gigante, quando el vite Astolfo desermato, comenzò a dire ridendo: “Que te plaxe, chavalere?” “Ben tel mostraray.” Alora lo gigante alzò la maza e andò sopra el chavalere per ferirlo, e trasse un grande colpo de la maza. Astolfo, quado vite desendere la maza, saltò da parte e non lo volse aspetare el colpo sì grande che ben l’avreve morto. E Astolfo strenze sova spada e trasse al gigante a mane volta,

whom she confuses with her brother, is to receive him with an embrace: “K. cavalca verso la citade, e Rolando in compagnia: quando fo sotto la volta de la porta, trovò la sorella de Feragù. Quando ela vite el conte Rolando, prixe andare contra luy e vosello abrazarre: alora Rolando la prixe per li capigli e taglioge la testa”.

66 As we already know, his absence from the Carolingian field could have promoted the Padua text's use of other fictitious sources.

67 *EE*, v. 2311-2435; reconciliation with Ogier in v. 3634 ff.; there is also a discussion with Oliveros and Girard in *FS*, XXII, p. 26 when Astolfo challenges Ferragut to execute all his prisoners, but with his joke he prevents the giant from sending them to Zaragoza with Marsile, where a worse destiny would have awaited them.

68 *EE*, v. 2958-65 (predicts Ferragut's death in v. 3350-63); *FS*, XXIII, p. 28; XXIV, p. 30. *Sp*, IV, 22.

69 *FS*, XXII, p. 26, XXIV, p. 30. Ferragut even calls him *buffone* in *Sp* (III, 10, 8, III, 11, 5), but here the character is not excessively reviled. However, later on, apparently driven by fear, Astolfo makes a comment that is laudatory about the giant and degrading to Roland when appearances make him think the latter has been killed in a duel (V, 18). He later explains his behaviour to the hero (V, 24, 6-8).

*e ferillo in la cossa, sì che el ge tagliò tuta quanta la cossa, e cadé in terra. Astolfo trasse un altro colpo de la spada e talioge la testa, sì che lo gigante morite. Alora Rolando corse molto presto con li altri chavaleri in lo castello, e K. imperadore feze fornire lo castello de zìò che aveva mestere, per que quello castello era lo passo de la Navarra per intrare in la Spagna, e per quello castello deveva fare condurre la victuallia de Franza fin a la Spagna*⁷⁰.

The main purpose of this combat is to bring out the textual rehabilitation of Astolfo, thereby correcting his being neglecting in the previous lines. Even under these conditions, Astolfo's intervention only becomes necessary in the combat, not in the formal conquest of the town or its conversion into a Christian fortress, because as is evident from the fragment, these functions revert to Roland and the emperor, in charge of its maintenance and administration.

Finally, the natural consequence of the narrative dissociation of Ferragut and his town, which we have alluded to on several occasions, is that Nájera suffers different fates in the different versions. *EE* opts for an outcome of unusual complexity in the process of surrender: after the fighting and the death of Ferragut, the military governor of the city, the inhabitants of Nájera split up into two groups: those who flee towards Aragón with Marsile⁷¹, and those who have not yet done so. The latter deal with their own prisoners: Natasar of Palus, a Saracen who has not been mentioned so far, offers, as an impromptu leader, conditions for peace, fulfilling Ferragut's orders⁷²: they include, as is only logical, the collective baptism of the population, but the strange thing is that this decision is negotiated with the captives, who, after praising Ferragut, advise a mass baptism and agree to intercede for them before Charlemagne⁷³. However, the conditions are not in the end discussed by people from Nájera (accompanied by Oliveros and Ogier) with the emperor: offended by the repeated disobedience of the barons who fought Ferragut without his permission, he delegates on Roland the negotiations with the ambassadors of the defeated city:

*“Je n’ ai qe fere de mesajers Païans;
Mais si en face son bon mes niés Rollans.”*⁷⁴

70 *FS*, XXVI, p. 38.

71 Vv. 4205-13. In *FS* it is Sinagon, after a single combat with Roland, who takes advantage of the moment to flee and inform Marsile about the fate of the city and its defender (*FS*, XXVI, p. 37).

72 V. 4220.

73 Vv. 4251-93. Note to what extent Nájera is devoid of defence, so much so that its inhabitants have to resort to their imprisoned enemies to negotiate in an extreme situation, very different to that of the embassy Ferragut sends to the Carolingian camp. Cf. VALLECALLE, J. Cl., *Messages et ambassades, op. cit.*, p. 439.

74 Vv. 4312-13. Quoted by VALLECALLE, *Messages et ambassades, op. cit.*, p. 446; *idem*: “Cette rebuffade s’explique par la colère qu’il nourrit contre les barons chrétiens qui intercèdent pour les vaincus : ils ne sont prisonniers que parce qu’ils lui ont désobéi en s’attaquant à Ferragu. Mais en même temps cette attitude le met à l’abri de tout contact avec les Sarrasins. Inaccessible, il ne s’abaissera pas à les écouter et à subir leur chantage et leurs pressions. C’est Roland qui traitera avec les vaincus. Mais sa prouesse [Roland’s], sa gloire, sa victoire sur le géant le mettent à l’abri de tout soupçon de faiblesse ou de complaisance envers les païens.”

Finally, the Carolingian banner waves over Nájera and the population are converted all together. As the culmination of this first stage of the campaign and as proof of its nature as just the beginning, Roland refuses the offer of the crown of Spain because the capture of Nájera is not the conquest of the whole country, but just the beginning⁷⁵, as the complicated sieges of Pamplona and Nobles make clear later on. In this way, Roland himself recognises the value of the fortress and his rival as a starting point.

Sp has a different outcome, perhaps inspired by the presence of the evil female character related to Ferragut in the city, which stops the author from considering Nájera as a simple military fortress. Despite its being a later text than *EE*, the outcome adopted is much more traditional; it ignores the ambassadors in order to bring about an end *manu militari*, while at the same time it restores Astolfo. After the death of Ferragut's mother a fight breaks out between Roland and the released prisoners⁷⁶, which makes any attempt at negotiation like in *EE* quite useless. Given the evident need for reinforcements, Roland proposes that it should be Astolfo who goes in search of Charlemagne; the mission is immediately fulfilled⁷⁷:

*“Astolfo se mosse senza far sozorno.
Corendo va che may no se atexe,
tanto che azonze a Charlo adorno
dixendo: Re, que fay? No far contexe,
Rolando sopra [que]’l ponte sonava ‘lo corno;
hode che Rolando à morto’lo saraxino
e si à ffranchato zaschaduno paladino,
venta ha la porta e messa in terra tuta”⁷⁸.*

The fighting becomes more widespread and Charlemagne is forced to burn the city down to force its surrender. Following the oldest criteria of epic poetry and by imperial decision, the French troops take over the fortress, baptise the Saracens who accept conversion and massacre all the others:

*“Charlo feze ordinare del fogo,
poi feze schere e andava per le strade
metando e affogando in honia logo
in unia parte tuta la citade;*

75 Vv. 4437-64.

76 V, 26-27.

77 None of this occurs in *FS*: Charlemagne rides towards the city after seeing Ferragut is dead; Roland kills the giant's sister, the Saracens surrender and accept baptism, and the episode closes with a comment by Astolfo, celebrated by everyone. Charlemagne occupies the whole town of Nájera (*FS*, XXV, p. 37-38).

78 V, 29, 2-8 y V, 30, 1.

*cossì l'aquistaveno a pocho a pocho
e li Saraxini se rendeveno con pietade;
qui[li] che voleveno batesmo eren campati,
e li altri che no, ereno tuti taliati*⁷⁹.

The recovery of certain traditional criteria for the taking of the city does not preclude further innovation, especially as the new spirit of chivalry requires that tribute be paid to the fallen enemy. The outcome of this matter once again divides the different texts: *FS* makes no further mention of Ferragut, who is forgotten to make way for Astolfo's action at the unnamed castle, while *EE*, the earliest text of the miniseries, buries the enemy with a disconcerting narrative sparsity:

*“Li empereor fesoit en un valon
Ensevelir Feregu li Sclavon,
dejoste lui sa spie e ses baston*⁸⁰.

Sp does not, however, attribute this role to the emperor, but to Roland himself, who pays the last military honours to his fallen enemy: not only does he bury him with the pomp of a great warrior (V, 44-45), but he also raises a mausoleum in his memory, visible to all those who walk the Pilgrims' Road to Santiago⁸¹:

*“Lassiamo stare questo baptizare⁸²,
retornaremo al nepote de [re] Charlone
che a [le] so prodeze nul[lo] pò contrastare;
[e] perchè de Feragù fosse mentione
al pè del ponte onde 'lo fe'[ze] amanchare
feze un molimento de marmoro bone
e intorno intorno letre intayate
le quale dixeveno cossì in vulgare:*

*Ottocento e ottanta anni era finito
quel Feragù, che [co]tanta forza haveva,
che per Rolando questo mondo have[va] transito»,*

79 V, 33.

80 Vv. 4419-4421.

81 “Le créateur, qu'il soit unique ou multiple, se dissimule derrière une parole plus puissante que la sienne, une parole qui non seulement impose sa vérité du seul fait qu'elle s'énonce, mais encore se donne pour un trésor de tradition, un concentré de la mémoire des siècles. L'ancrage dans un passé indéfini, immémorial, qui préfigure l'immortalité de l'âme sauvée et imite l'éternité divine, se cristallise autour des pèlerins qui véhiculent la légende.” (GALENT-FASSEUR, V., *L'épopée des pèlerins. Motifs eschatologiques et mutations de la chanson de geste*, Paris, PUF, 1997, p. 24).

82 The mass baptism of Saracens in Nájera.

*e anchora vedere se poteva
[quel]la sepultura onde [el] era sepellito
e questo molimento che per Feragù fato era.
Chi è stato a santo Iacobo el barono
esser pò de [co]tal cossa testimon[i]o*⁸³

Theoretically, Ferragut's role in the texts comes to a solemn end with his burial, although according to a hypothesis formulated in a recent but unpublished study, Marina Meléndez Cabo suggests that the single combat which pits Roland against Pelias, a character from the hero's Asian itinerary, is similar in structure to that of Roland and Ferragut before Nájera⁸⁴. Following this idea, a new reading of the Padua text could suggest that Ferragut's sacrifice in the defence of Spain left a very long shadow that was projected onto the character of other Saracen leaders, in both the imitation of his behaviour and the depiction of contrary values in their relations with Charlemagne's nephew⁸⁵. Hence the role of Isoré, son of Malgeris, King of Pamplona, can be understood better in subsequent episodes of *EE*, where he behaves much more courteously than even the defender of Nájera in his treatment of Roland. This working hypothesis, still largely unexplored, suggests that the renovation of Ferragut's personality in the Franco-Italian poem makes a revision of the Saracen world necessary in certain narrative contexts of the later stages of epic romance. Future research will help measure the extent of this possibility.

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83 *Sp*, V, 41-42.

84 MELÉNDEZ CABO, M., *El personaje de Roland in L'Entrée d'Espagne*, Santiago de Compostela, Universidade, 2008, p. 82 [Unpublished research work under guidance].

85 BROOK, L. C. "Roland devant le monde sarrasin dans l'Entrée d'Espagne", in VAN DIJK, H.& NOOMEN, W., *Aspects de l'épopée romane. Mentalité, idéologie, intertextualités*, Groningen, 1995, p. 215 : "La défaite de Ferragu et la perte de Nájera qui en résulte est un revers sérieux pour les Païens d'Espagne, mais accorde à Rollant une autorité et une réputation qui vont le précéder dans tout le monde musulman".