



Smithsonian Associates

The Princesses of Medieval Spain: A Partnership of Power

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Thursday, October 10, 2024 - 6:30 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. ET

1. The Asturian-Leonese Monarchy, 711–1037
 - The Visigothic legacy and the status of women
 - Matrilineal succession in Asturias
2. The Peak of Royal Women's Power, 1037–1165
 - Queen Sancha and her daughters
 - The last traditional infanta
3. Taking the Veil, 1165–1300
 - A drought of daughters
 - A flood of sons

Key Terms

Iberian Peninsula (Iberia)
Asturias
León
matrilineal kinship
patrilineal kinship
Castile
infanta
Infantazgo
Queen Sancha of León (r. 1037–1067)
San Isidoro de León
Urraca Fernández (c. 1037–1101)
Elvira Fernández (c. 1038–1099)
patronym
King Alfonso VI of León-Castile (r. 1065–1109)
Queen Urraca of León-Castile (r. 1109–1126)
King Alfonso VII of León-Castile (r. 1126–1157)
Sancha Raimúndez (c. 1095–1159)
Urraca Alfonso (c. 1132–1165?)
Elvira Alfonso (c. 1079–1151?)
Constanza Alfonso II (1199–1243)

Selected Bibliography

While there are many excellent studies on the topic of Leonese-Castilian infantas, not many of them are available in English. Bernard F. Reilly's books remain the best English-language overview of the reigns of many of the monarchs covered in this talk, with the addition of Therese Martin's important study of Queen Urraca. Lucy Pick's *Her Father's Daughter* is a groundbreaking reconsideration of early medieval infantas.

Therese Martin, *Queen as King: Politics and Architectural Propaganda in Twelfth-Century Spain*. The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World 30. Leiden: Brill, 2006

Lucy K. Pick, *Her Father's Daughter: Gender, Power, and Religion in the Early Spanish Kingdoms*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017

Bernard F. Reilly, *The Kingdom of León-Castilla under King Alfonso VI, 1065–1109*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988

Bernard F. Reilly, *The Kingdom of León-Castilla under King Alfonso VII, 1126–1157*. The Middle Ages Series. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998

Bernard F. Reilly and Simon R. Doubleday, *León and Galicia Under Queen Sancha and King Fernando I*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2024