

The Cid's Lineage in History and Fiction

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Abstract

The lineage of Rodrigo Díaz has recently been a subject of debate. This paper strives for a better understanding with several points in this regard: that he was not a member of the upper aristocracy by birth; that he is not portrayed as a lowly *infanzón* in the *Cantar de Mio Cid*, but rather as a powerful nobleman not belonging to the highest rank; that neither Rodrigo nor Jimena can be ascribed to the Flaínez family, meaning theirs was not an endogamic marriage; that she, being of royal blood, was buried at San Juan de la Peña rather than at Cardeña; that a confusion led to the poet naming one of the Cid's daughters Elvira, with further insights on the usage of Sol as a *cognomento* also being provided; and that the hypothesis of a granddaughter called Maria should most definitely be dismissed.

Resumen

El linaje de Rodrigo Díaz ha sido asunto de discusión en tiempos recientes. Este artículo intenta arrojar luz sobre el tema presentando varios argumentos: que no fue un miembro de la alta aristocracia por nacimiento; que no es presentado como *infanzón* en el *Cantar de Mio Cid*, sino como un poderoso noble no perteneciente a la capa superior; que ni él ni su esposa fueron de la familia Flaínez, de modo que su matrimonio no puede calificarse como endogámico; que Jimena Díaz, de sangre real, fue enterrada en San Juan de la Peña, no en San Pedro de Cardeña; que en el poema una de sus hijas fue llamada Elvira por confusión, a lo que se añaden algunas precisiones sobre el uso de Sol como *cognomento*; y que la hipótesis de una nieta barcelonesa llamada Maria debe ser descartada.

The special place taken by Rodrigo Díaz, better known as 'el Cid Campeador', in Hispanic history and culture has meant that his lineage has been a matter of attention in literature from the twelfth century to the present day. Moreover, modern scholars have to grapple with the issue that the masterwork of Hispanic medieval epic, the *Cantar de Mio Cid*, is informed by substantial historic knowledge, and offers a detailed portrayal of its hero, also regarding his social status. The matter of its truthfulness in this respect has also been the subject of considerable debate, and the question is far from being settled. In this paper, therefore, I will once again address these issues, focusing on the figures of Rodrigo Díaz, his wife and their children, as well as on their representation in the poem.

Rodrigo Díaz's ancestry

The approach to this subject with most impact in Spain in more recent times has been made by the hypotheses of Torres Sevilla, who in a series of publications proposed a new vision of Rodrigo Díaz's lineage (2000: 147-55; 2000-02; 2017). According to her, he belonged to the Flaínez family, one of the mightiest of the Leonese aristocracy. Moreover, she also links his wife Jimena to them, meaning she would therefore be a close blood relative of his, namely a *sobrina segunda* as detailed by Montaner (2011: 262, 699), a supporter of both views. They have become largely accepted in Spain, though one outspoken critic must be mentioned. Martínez Díez (2007) objected to the adscription of Rodrigo Díaz to the Flaínez family, and systematically refuted all links of this genealogic explanation. Outside of Spain, Martin has added some relevant counterarguments (2020: 17).

The basic source for the lineage of Rodrigo Díaz is his earliest biography, composed in the twelfth century and commonly known as *Historia Roderici*, which traces his paternal ancestry back seven generations counting him in the following passage:

Stirpis ergo eius origo hec esse uidetur: Flaynus autem Caluus multos genuit filios, de eorum numero fuit Fredinandus Flaynet et Bermudus Flaynet. <Fredinandus autem Flaynet genuit Flaynum Fredenandez>, Bermudus autem Flaynet genuit Rodericum Bermudez. Flaynus autem Fernandez genuit Nunnum Flaynet, Rodericus autem Vermudez genuit Fredinandum Roderici, Fredinandus autem Roderici genuit Petrum Fredinandez et unam filiam nomine Eylo. Nunus autem Flaynez accepit istam Eylo in uxorem et genuit ex ea Flaynum Nunez. Flaynus autem <Nunez> genuit Didacum Flaynez. Didacus autem Flaynez genuit Rodericum Didaci Campidoctum ex filia Roderici Albari. (Falque 1990: 47)

This then seems to be the origin of his stock. Laín Calvo fathered many sons, among them Fernán Laínez and Bermudo Laínez. <Fernán Laínez begat Laín Fernández;> Bermudo Laínez begat Rodrigo Bermúdez; Laín Fernández begat Nuño Laínez; Rodrigo Bermúdez begat Fernán Rodríguez; Fernán Rodríguez begat Pedro Fernández and a daughter named Eylo. Nuño Laínez took this Eylo for his wife, and from her he fathered Laín Núñez, who was the father of Diego Laínez. Diego Laínez fathered Rodrigo Díaz the Campeador from the daughter of Rodrigo Álvarez. (Barton and Fletcher 2000: 99)

The disclaimer *esse uidetur*, 'seems to be', should not be overlooked. Indeed, the figures in the upper branches cannot be traced in contemporary charters, and are most likely legendary. For our purpose at present, it is better to focus the discussion on the closer forebears (Flaín and Laín respectively are the Leonese and Castilian variants of the same name, from which patronymics in *-ez* are derived). Torres Sevilla argues that *Didacus Flaynez* must be identified with an alleged Diego Flaínez, a son of Count Flaín Muñoz of León, alluded in this passage as *Flaynus Nunez* according to her, meaning Rodrigo Díaz would belong to the highest aristocracy of the kingdom. I basically agree with Martínez Díez's arguments against such a hypothesis, so that here I will confine myself to elaborate briefly on two essential points which have not been adequately addressed by its proponents and make it untenable. Firstly, it is not documented that Flaín Muñoz had a son named Diego, which goes against all evidence available. We have two charters issued after the count's death, one in 1003, the other in 1009, detailing his children: Munio, Fernando, Pedro, Elvira and Marina, the latter not appearing in the latest, presumably having passed away in between (Herrero de la

Fuente 1988: doc. 381, and Fernández Flórez and Herrero de la Fuente 1999-2005: doc. 82, respectively). Secondly, the names Munio or Muño, on the one hand, and Nuño, on the other, were clearly different in the Middle Ages, even to the point that two brothers, one with each name, can be found in the same charter, with such distinction applied equally to their corresponding patronymics Muñoz and Núñez. This point is rightly stressed by Martínez Díez (2007: 44-48), and indeed had already been made most forcefully in a different context by Salazar Acha (1985: 11-12, n. 24).¹ As both scholars point out, there is no document produced by a medieval scribe in which the names Munio and Nuño, or their respective patronymics Muñoz and Núñez, are mixed up. The mistake only appears in early modern copyists and later historians. As a result, the *Flaynus Nunez* appearing in the *Historia Roderici*, a text preserved in two medieval witnesses, cannot be identified with the count of León documented as *Flaynus Munizii* and other similar variants in charters. The adscription of Rodrigo Díaz to the Flaínez family could only be taken into consideration if its proponents were able to furnish a concrete primitive example of such confusion, besides some sort of evidence that Count Flaín Muñoz had a son called Diego.

Moreover, it is unreasonable to disregard the area where the Castilian nobleman began his career when looking for documents concerning his ancestors. There is a charter of 1045 in which a *Flagino Nuniz* confirms a donation of properties in Albillos to the abbey of San Pedro de Cardeña (Martínez Díez 1998: doc. 247), and this Laín Nuñez can easily be identified with the paternal grandfather referred to in the *Historia Roderici*. The name reoccurs in several documents up to the year 1063, and it is likely that at least some of these mentions correspond to the same figure. In contrast, there is only one charter recording a Diego Laínez who can be identified as Rodrigo Díaz's father, namely a grant of the church of Santa María de Rucabia to the abbot of Cardeña in 1047, confirmed by a *Didaco Flaginiz* (Martínez Díez 1998: doc. 252).

It is evident that the paternal family of Rodrigo Díaz did not belong to the ruling elite of the kingdom as the Flaínez lineage did. However, his maternal ancestors were certainly prominent and influential. The *Historia Roderici* indicates that Diego Laínez, whom it depicts as a conquering hero in the war against the Pamplonese, married an unnamed daughter of Rodrigo Álvarez, who held the castle of Luna and four other important districts. He and his brother Nuño seem to have enjoyed a good relationship with King Fernando I of León dating back from the latter's period as count of Castile, already subscribing royal charters in 1038-39 (Blanco Lozano 1987: docs 8 and 11). They were magnates, well documented in contemporary sources, and all scholars accept them as such. The marriage of Rodrigo Díaz's parents was a typical instance of female hypogamy, whereby an aristocratic bride was matched with a nobleman of a lesser status but having shown outstanding military ability. Such a social pattern can even more easily be observed in the next generation.

¹ Nevertheless, I feel that some qualifications should be made to Salazar Acha's observations, namely that the etymology of the two names is a more complex question than suggested (see Becker 2009: 741-51 and 773-80), and that *Munio* or *Munno* was a paroxytone by the thirteenth century, as attested by the versification of Gonzalo de Berceo in his *Vida de Santa Oria* (l. 150c): 'rescibe a don Munno, el tu amo honrado' (Lappin 2000: 76).

The hero's social status in the *Cantar de Mio Cid*

Lacarra Lanz (2005) not only assumed Torres Sevilla's untenable genealogy, but even completed it with the maternal ancestors of Diego Flaínez, the imaginary son of the well-documented Count Flaín Muñoz, who had a wife of royal blood. In this new vision Rodrigo Díaz emerged as a *primo segundo* of King Fernando I of León, and therefore as a relative of this monarch's children, including King Alfonso VI, a main figure in the *Cantar de Mio Cid*. According to Lacarra Lanz, the poet describes the hero as a member of the highest ranks of the aristocracy, with only the Infantes of Carrión, his fictional antagonists, bearing a perception of his lesser status, expressing a tension between the military and administrative nobilities. Her views have had no following among literary critics. They have continued to maintain the received opinion that the Cid is portrayed in the poem as a lowly *infanzón*.

In my view, literary critics and historians have failed to grasp the subtleties of the art of the poet in this regard, as in so many other aspects of his epic. It is obvious at the beginning of the poem that the Cid had been a very powerful nobleman until his fall in royal anger. He was exceedingly wealthy, which allusions being made to luxury items such as falconry birds and precious garments (ll. 4-5). Moreover, he had sixty knights as his vassals (l. 16), himself not being at the service of a superior magnate. The *infanzones* were the lowest rank of the nobility during the period comprising Rodrigo Díaz's life to the composition of the poem. They constituted a relatively large social group: many were of rather modest means, but some were fairly well-off, belonging to the elite at local level. However, I am aware of no document in which one of them is described as having another nobleman at his service, which would probably be a contradiction. The Cid is not an *infanzón* in the poem, and no medieval audience would have considered him as such.

It is convenient to consider the usage of the term in the epic. Apart from an insulting allusion made about the Cid by one of the Infantes of Carrión (l. 3298, of which more later), it is only employed by King Alfonso in an inclusive pair with *conde*, i.e. *cuendes e ifançones*, meaning 'from the highest to the lowest rank of the nobility', that is to say, 'all the noblemen' (ll. 2072 and 2964, and in a negative construction in l. 3479).² The term used by the narrative voice and the hero is *fijos d'algo* (ll. 1035, 1832, 2252, 2264), which does not have any pejorative connotations, and covers the whole nobility under a sovereign. Indeed, the *Cantar de Mio Cid* was composed in the late twelfth century or very early thirteenth century (up to 1207), at a time when the word *infanzón* was being replaced by *fijodalgo* in Castile (Martínez Diez 2011: 50-52). The members of this social group seem to have perceived the use of the term as demeaning, as a number of their rights had been extended to some collectives outside the nobility, being put on a level to a certain extent. The word *fijas d'algo*, in the feminine, is the one used by the narrative voice and the vassals of the Cid to refer to his womenfolk (ll. 210, 1565, 2232).

The Infantes of Carrión, who take pride in belonging to a count lineage (ll. 2549, 2554, 3296, 3354), are unreliable characters, and their words cannot be taken at face value. When one of them, Fernando González, declares at the court of Toledo that

² I quote the text editing it myself from the facsimile published as *Poema de Mio Cid* (1988).

‘deviemos casar con fijas de reyes o de enperadores, / ca non perteneçién fijas de ifañones’ (ll. 3297-3298), it is clear that his claim is greatly exaggerated, and a medieval audience would have laughed at it. These impecunious *segundones* could never have achieved such high marriages, and Elvira and Sol, the Cid’s offspring, are most certainly not the daughters of an *infanzón*. Diego González, the other Infante, follows his brother with a speech along the same lines, but the poet, as usual, resorts to a third element to cap it all. The firstborn of the House of Carrión, an apparently drunk Asur González, alludes again insultingly to the Cid: ‘¡Fuesse a Río d’Ovirna los molinos picar / e prender maquilas, como lo suele far!’ (ll. 3379-3380). Such words border on sheer nonsense, being played for laughs to the audience. In the medieval period mills were often owned by noblemen, including those of the lowest rank, the *infanzones*. They were responsible for their maintenance, and charged for their services, but they did not perform such tasks themselves. Indeed, *molinos picar*, ‘dressing millstones’, was a difficult job, which could only be done by expert craftsmen, whilst in a mill complex there could even be a *maquintero*, i.e. an unskilled worker whose only duties were to receive the customers and *prender maquilas*, ‘collecting the toll’. It also must be taken into account that throughout this period there were not milling monopolies in Castile, in contrast to other parts of Europe, meaning the derived income for the owner could be rather modest (Rucquoi 1983: 115; Álvarez Llopis 1989a: 155-56, and 1989b: 670-72; González Tascón 1994: 20-22). Asur González’s comments regarding the Cid are outrageous: he is certainly higher born than the hero, but he exaggerates the latter’s lower status to an incredible degree.

The *Cantar de Mio Cid* does not provide any genealogical details about its protagonist, unless they were contained in the missing initial leaf of the only medieval manuscript. Nonetheless, his descent is a central concern in the poem. The hero is certainly not an *infanzón*, but his ancestry is implied to be inferior to the count lineage of the Infantes of Carrión. He does not belong to the upper aristocracy. The epic reflects a historical reality in which counts were at the very top of the ruling elite in León and Castile (Gambra 2011: 264-80). They had large patrimonies, and were charged with the management of major districts, usually as successors of their fathers or blood relatives. However, this happened within a kingdom which was expanding. The ambitious monarch had often to farm out substantial tasks such as lucrative operations in al-Andalus to lesser noblemen of great military ability having their own private armies with men tied to them by vassallatic bonds, with which they conducted royal missions (including the collection of *parias*), rendered combat services to taifa amirs immersed in internecine disputes, and carried out plundering expeditions into Andalusi territory (see Pastor Díaz de Garayo 2002: 326-38). They maintained and increased their forces with the profits of such activities, becoming extremely wealthy and powerful, handling the kind of money that a resentful upper aristocracy could not obtain from the exploitation of their patrimony. Such was the position of Rodrigo Díaz on the eve of being exiled, when he already had his own army according to the *Historia Roderici* (Falque 1990: 50-51), and also of the hero at the start of the *Cantar de Mio Cid*. Consequently, he should not be qualified as an *infanzón*, an inaccurate term only applied to him as an insult by his enemies in the poem.

Jimena Díaz's royal blood

One of the means favoured by the monarch to keep such aggressive Castilian noblemen under control, maintaining the social cohesion in his realms, was to marry them to a count's daughter, whilst at the same time avoiding to grant them that title. Such female hypogamy occurred in the case of King Alfonso VI's match between Rodrigo and Jimena. There are other comparable instances in this period. Most illustrative is the case of Álvar Fáñez, Rodrigo Díaz's *sobrinus*, 'nephew' or 'cousin's son', according to the *carta de arras* dated 1074, and the hero's *alter ego* in the *Cantar de Mio Cid*. The only document naming his wife is a donation of 1094 referring to 'Albaro Hanneç et uxore sua domna Iuliana' (Garrido Garrido 1983: doc. 52), which is in all likelihood the baptismal name of the daughter of Count Pedro Ansúrez of Carrión and Saldaña better known under the *cognomento* or second name of Mayor, 'the eldest', indicating her birth precedence.³ There was also a political dimension in the monarch's match of Rodrigo to Jimena. Such a marriage was a mixture of recognition and subordination for an ambitious Castilian nobleman who had reached great prominence under King Sancho II of Castile, and he was now being assimilated within the network of the Astur-Leonese aristocracy.

The *Historia Roderici* provides a short indication that Jimena Díaz was not only the daughter of a count, but a kinswoman of the monarch: 'Dominam Eximinam neptem suam, Didaci comitis Ouetensis filiam, ei in uxorem dedit' (Falque 1990: 49), i.e. 'The king gave him one of his relatives to wife, the lady Jimena, daughter of Count Diego of Oviedo' (Barton and Fletcher 2000: 101). There are two charters, dated 1046 and 1058, recording a Count Diego Fernández married to Elvira Ovéquiz (García Larragueta 1962: docs 51 and 60), but also a document dated 1083 naming Jimena Díaz's mother as Cristina. Because of this, some researchers have thought that Count Diego of Oviedo was married twice: first to Elvira Ovéquiz, then to Cristina (Salazar Acha 1985: 30 n. 37; Torres Sevilla 2000: 151). The document dated 1083 has been a subject of particular attention as a source of key information about the mother of Jimena Díaz, linking them to royal kinship. However, this is a highly problematic source. Firstly, there is evidence that it is in fact a forgery, but the information about the litigants can be proven to be true to some extent. Indeed, the text seems to be based partially on the record of an actual legal action, as pointed out in the most detailed study about it (Fernández Conde 1971: 288-90). Secondly, the charter itself has been lost in recent times. The only medieval witness is its copy in the *Liber Testamentorum Ovetensis*, omitting the name of Jimena Díaz's mother. Fortunately, there is an account of the charter by Miguel Vigil (1887: I, 81), in which it is described as a long, narrow piece of parchment, measuring about 68 cm high and 14 cm wide, written with thin strokes in beautiful Gothic script. Most importantly, the omission of the name in the *Liber Testamentorum Ovetensis* is supplied in the works of two eighteenth-century scholars who had access to this lost witness, namely in the edition of the Latin original text by Padre Manuel Risco (1793: 315-17) and in the Spanish rendering by Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, who explained 'también hay original de que se sacaron las faltas de los blancos que quedaron en la copia del

³ There is no contemporary charter recording that Álvar Fáñez was married to a woman named Mayor Pérez, but it can be inferred from several other pieces of evidence that he was her husband (gathered in Salazar Acha 1985: 53 and 1991: 39 n. 38).

libro como están señalados' (1947-52: IV, 67).⁴ The document, allegedly the record of a lawsuit involving Jimena Díaz's family led by her eldest brother (a namesake of her husband), reads:

Orta fuit intentjo inter Ouetensem episcopum dominum Arianum et comitem Rodericum Didaz et fratrem eius Fredenandum Didaz, pulsantes uocem suam et uocem sororis suę Xemenę Didaz quam uox eis ipsa comendauit, et omnis progeniei eorum. (Valdés Gallego 1999: 611)

Lebantose contienda entre el Obispo de Oviedo D.ⁿ Arias y el Conde Rodrigo Díaz y su hermano Fernando Díaz, tomando la voz suya y la voz de su hermana Ximena Díaz, cuya voz les encomendó a ellos ella misma, y todo su linaje de ellos. (Jovellanos 1947-52: IV, 67)

The bishop of Oviedo argued his ownership of the monastery of San Salvador de Tol, but

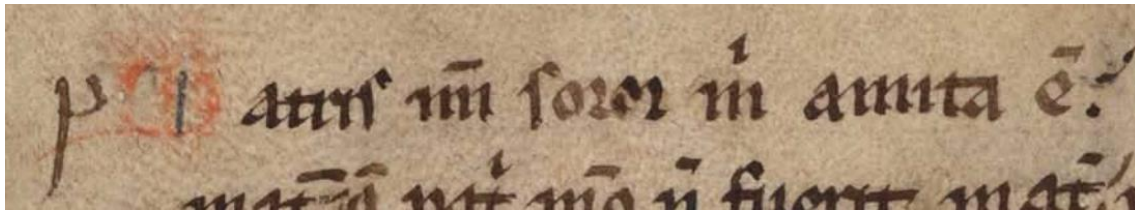
E contrario dicebant comes Rodericus Didaz et frater eius Fredenandus Didaz quod fuerat supra memoratum monasterium de Taule ex eorum progenie, et ipsi debebant illud habere post partem matris suę domine <Christine> et amite suę domine Urracce commitisse. (Valdés Gallego 1999: 612, with my addition)

Por el contrario decían el Conde Rodrigo Díaz y su hermano Fernando Díaz que había sido el sobredicho Monasterio de Taule del linaje de ellos, y que ellos lo debían de tener por parte de su madre D.^a Cristina y de su tía paterna la Condesa D.^a Urraca. (Jovellanos 1947-52: IV, 67)

The closing protocol is confirmed by 'Urracca comitissa filia Fredenandi Gundemariz' (Valdés Gallego 1999: 615), i.e. 'Urraca Condesa, hija de Fernando Gundemáriz' (Jovellanos 1947-52: IV, 67).

Menéndez Pidal (1969: II, 721-23) proposed a widely accepted genealogy for Jimena Díaz assuming that Urraca was her maternal aunt, meaning Fernando Gundemáriz was her maternal grandfather. Fernández Conde (1971: 289 n. 38) provided an apparent justification for such a view pointing out that the word *amita*, 'paternal aunt, father's sister', is defined as 'matris meae soror', 'the sister of my mother', in a witness of the *Corpus Pelagianum* (Biblioteca Nacional de España, MSS/ 1513, fol. 2r-v). Torres Sevilla (2000: 147-55) uses this observation to advance her hypothesis that Jimena's paternal grandfather was Fernando Flaínez, a member of the Flaínez family, which leads to a number of complications. The essential point, nonetheless, is that *amita* means 'paternal aunt', as Jovellanos had flawlessly rendered. The proposed instance signifying 'maternal aunt' cannot be accepted as such. It occurs in the explanation of a consanguinity tree in the Isidorian tradition, and it is an obvious mistake. Below is a reproduction of the line as it appears in the manuscript:

⁴ As in other cases, I introduce some minor adjustments. I respect Jovellanos's orthography, but regularize word division, punctuation and accentuation according to the current rules of the Spanish Royal Academy (RAE).



Corpus Pelagianum, MSS/ 1513, fol. 2v, detail
(Image from the collections of the Biblioteca Nacional de España)

As can be observed, the copyist initially left a space to be completed with a coloured capital letter, then an *M* in red ink was inserted by a mistake which can easily be explained (there are three correct instances of *Matris* with such capitals on the same page), but a medieval hand promptly emended it, erasing the *M* and adding a *P* on the left margin. The alleged example, therefore, is not an auctorial reading, not even a scribal error, but just a mistake in decorating. The passage, taken from St Isidore's *Etymologiae* (IX.vi.25), must be read as usual, i.e. 'Patris mei soror mihi amita est', 'The sister of my father is my paternal aunt (*amita*)' (Barney *et al.* 2006: 209).

There is no *bona fide* instance of *amita* meaning 'maternal aunt' in the whole corpus of Medieval Latin. Therefore, Menéndez Pidal's genealogy of Jimena Díaz, including Martínez Díez's revised version (1999: 76-82), as well as Torres Sevilla's adscription to the Flaínez family, must be rejected. The document dated 1083 means that her father was Count Diego Fernández of Oviedo, son of Count Fernando Gundemáriz.⁵ Moreover, there is a charter of 1043 which states that the latter's wife (and therefore maternal grandmother of Jimena Díaz) was Muniadomna Ordóñez ('ad suo genro Fredenando Gundemariz et ad sua mulier Mummadomna Ordoniz', Herculano 1869: doc. 340). This certainly means that Jimena Díaz's paternal ancestors belonged to the highest ranks of the aristocracy (García Álvarez 1960: 220, n. 80), but it does not appear possible to establish her kinship with King Alfonso VI indicated in the *Historia Roderici* through her father's line.

Salazar Acha (2021: 68) follows a different path of argument in his refutation of Menéndez Pidal's genealogy of Jimena Díaz. He observes that Jimena Alfonso, her maternal grandmother linking her to King Alfonso VI according to Menéndez Pidal, could not have been born before 1024, since her parents, King Alfonso V of León and Urraca Garcés, were married between 11 May 1023 and 13 November 1023 (Fernández del Pozo 1999: 220), and that it is highly unlikely that she was a grandmother in her twenties. Moreover, Salazar Acha (2021: 71-72) advances the only hypothesis to date compatible with the correct interpretation of *amita* in the document dated 1083: that the Cristina mentioned there corresponds to Cristina Alfonso, daughter of Count Alfonso Ordóñez, 'de genere regali' ['of royal lineage'] (García Leal 2000: 151), since he was a paternal grandson of King Ramiro III of León and a maternal grandson of King Vermudo II of León, the latter also being the father of King Alfonso V of León and the great-grandfather of King Alfonso VI. In this way, the kinship alluded to in the *Historia Roderici* can be explained. Nevertheless, the hypothesis seems impossible to

⁵ The argument advanced by Torres Sevilla (2000: 151) that this Count Diego Fernández de Oviedo cannot be the son of Count Fernando Gundemáriz should be discarded, since she identifies the latter with a Count Fernando Gomáriz who clearly is a different, much later nobleman.

demonstrate conclusively. There is no evidence that Cristina Alfonso had any children, nor that she was even married. Salazar Acha thinks that one Cristina Díaz whose last will of 1097 is preserved in the *Liber Testamentorum Ovetensis* (Valdés Gallego 1999: 648-49) was her daughter, and therefore Jimena's sister, but there is no proof of this, and it does not seem plausible to me.⁶ Even more problematic are the abovementioned two charters of 1046 and 1058, which both imply that Count Diego Fernández and his wife Elvira Ovéquiz were dead by that point. If they are accepted as genuine, this creates chronological problems in the possibility of him having fathered Jimena Díaz with Cristina Alfonso that are as insurmountable as the ones faced by Menéndez Pidal's genealogy. Indeed, it cannot even be discarded that the copy of the document dated 1083 in the *Liber Testamentorum Ovetensis* omitted the name Cristina precisely because the scribe became aware that it was a mistake in the forged charter, which had been fabricated in the same church. However, it is far more difficult to trace a royal ancestry for Elvira Ovéquiz than for Cristina Alfonso, not to say impossible. I do not believe that the author of the *Historia Roderici* was necessarily mistaken in his attribution of such an origin to Jimena Díaz. It could be more tenuous than usually assumed, probably deriving from a bastard line, and made untraceable given the intense activity of manipulation performed in the bishopric of Oviedo in the first half of the twelfth century.

There is a further indication of Jimena Díaz's royal blood in a source that has been disregarded: the epitaph of her sepulchre at the Aragonese monastery of San Juan de la Peña. It has been neglected because of the competing claim of San Pedro de Cardeña as her burial site. At first sight Cardeña seems a more natural place for her interment, since she had reburied there the remains of her husband after the evacuation from Valencia in 1102. However, there is overwhelming evidence that Jimena's tomb at this Castilian monastery was actually a fabrication. Its monks failed to provide a credible date for her death in the *Breviario antiguo de Cardeña* of 1327 (Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, Cod. 79, fol. clxx), which states: 'Et finó doña Xemena en Era de mill et CXLII años', i.e. in 1104, whilst there is an authentic charter of 1113 signed by her which records the sale of her property in Valdecañas to two canons of Burgos (Garrido Garrido 1983: doc. 94). The abbot of Cardeña, Pedro, acted as a witness, but monks who came later were obviously unaware of the transfer. It seems possible *prima facie* that the year 1104 derives by haplography from the year 1106 appearing in the *Anales Toledanos Terceros*, i.e. Era MCXLII(II), as suggested by Montaner (2011: 700). However, the insertion of x before L by a copyist assumed by him following Menéndez Pidal so as to add a decade and propose a plausible year cannot be explained away so easily as a scribal error. Moreover, it is unconceivable that the monks were unable to

⁶ As indicated by Fernández Conde (1971: 329), there is a marginal note in an early modern copy reading: 'Christina Didaz, Didaci filia, neptis Christinae uxoris Ordonii Ceci, qui fundavit anno 1024 monasterium Sancti Salvatoris de Cornelianana et filia fuit Regis Veremundi et ex Velasquita Regina' (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, MSS/ 6957, fol. 149r), which I think should be interpreted as 'Cristina Díaz, daughter of Diego, granddaughter of the Infanta Cristina —the wife of Ordoño Ramírez "the Blind"—, who founded the monastery of San Salvador in Cornellana and was the daughter of King Vermudo II of León and Queen Velasquita'. I am inclined to believe that the author of the note is Alonso Marañón de Espinosa, also known as Alfonso de Marañón y Espinosa, who made the *traslado* in 1612 as stated at the beginning of the copy (fol. 80r). This does not mean that he could not be right. Cristina Díaz might be a daughter of Sancha Alfonso, i.e. a niece rather than a daughter of Cristina Alfonso, the latter two being granddaughters of Cristina Vermúdez.

provide an accurate date for her death if her original tomb was within the premises of their own abbey. It should be added that the authenticity of the remains of Jimena Díaz exhibited at San Pedro de Cardena is more than dubious. At the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Benedictine historian Fray Prudencio de Sandoval visited the abbey and remarked: ‘y en Cardena se muestra no solamente la sepultura, mas los huesos desta señora, aunque son tan grandes que espantan, y parecen más de hombre que de muger’ (1601: 41r; 1615: 62r). Two centuries later, in 1808, the Napoleonic army occupied the abbey. It seems that Marshal Soult ordered a forensic examination of Rodrigo Díaz and his wife, which determined that he was a very tall fellow, and that her remains actually corresponded to a young man, presumably a novice, according to Michael (2015: 62).⁷ This cannot be dismissed by attribution to scribal errors of medieval copyists as usual, though it could be argued that there must have been a mix up affecting the corpse of Jimena in a transfer made during construction works. Nonetheless, the more simple explanation is preferable: her tomb at Cardena was a late fabrication, filled from its very creation with a skeleton that the monks had at hand, without paying attention to the detail that it belonged to a male.

Jimena Díaz’s royal descent secured her a sepulchre at San Juan de la Peña in its pantheon of the early rulers of Aragon and Pamplona. However, it was destroyed in a great fire on 24 February 1675. Fortunately, its epitaph had already been copied by a number of Benedictine scholars. Among the most important witnesses are Fray Prudencio de Sandoval (1601: 47v-48r) and Fray Juan Briz Martínez (1620: 206-07), since they had direct knowledge of the monastery and provided relevant comments about the location. A later transcription made by Fray Ramón de Huesca (1802: 404-05) is also of great interest. He wrote after the sepulchre had already been destroyed, yet had access to a manuscript copy of the epitaph in the archive of the monastery, even if he apparently follows Padre Juan Francisco Masdeu (1783-1805: IX, 394-95) in the disposition of the text.

Sandoval, who had already visited the supposed tomb of Jimena Díaz at Cardena, makes an accurate description of the location. In the pantheon at San Juan de la Peña he found a board recording prominent burials, including a rather careless entry on her: ‘Hic requiescit Eximina Gomez, mulier Ruderici Cid, vulgo Rui Diaz’ (‘Here rests Jimena Gómez, wife of Rodrigo the Cid, commonly known as Ruy Díaz’). This is obviously a late text, which reflects the tradition of the *Mocedades de Rodrigo*, widespread in the fourteenth century. Sandoval, however, found Jimena’s old sepulchre at the entrance of the church far more impressive, with an inscription on the slab covering her tomb. Here is the text of the epitaph, rather than an attempt at reconstruction, edited with line division, solution of abbreviations and some orthographic regularization:

⁷ I have reviewed all testimonies I am aware of about the presence of the French troops in Burgos during the Peninsular War, but I have been unable to find the primary source alluded by Michael. At any rate, Sandoval’s testimony cannot be rejected lightly, since he had observed a considerable number of relics of male and female saints and historical figures.

In hac tumba requiescit Dopna Eximina,
 cuius fama prēnitescit Hispaniē limina.
 Regis Sancii fuit nata, Feliciaque me fecit,
 Roderico copulata, gentes quem vocant Cid.
 Hęc in Era millesima fuit hic tumulata
 centum et sexagesima, fuerat sed balsamata.
 Marcii nonis sepulta, maneat cum gaudio,
 bona quia fecit multa prēsenti cēnobio.

The text above must be interpreted as follows: ‘In this tomb rests Doña Jimena, / whose fame shines to the borders of Iberia. / She was descended from King Sancho, and Felicia made me (= this sepulchre). / Married to Rodrigo, to whom the people call Cid. / She was interred here in Era one thousand / one hundred sixty (= A.D. 1122), but she had been embalmed. / Buried on the nones of March (= on 7 March), may she rest in glory, / since she did many good things for the present monastery’ (my translation).

There are many minor, mostly graphic variants among the copies of the Benedictines (also for the text of the board), but the only substantive one is the alternation between ‘fuerat sed’ (‘but she had been’) in Sandoval, and ‘fuit atracta et’ (‘she was brought and’) in Briz. The latter reading occurs first in Fray Antonio de Yepes (1610: 15r), and probably came about as a way to conciliate the competing claims of the two monasteries for her tomb, i.e. leaving open the possibility that she was originally buried at Cardena, and then her body was transferred to San Juan de la Peña. However, this is unlikely, and Huesca reads as Sandoval.

Difficulties of interpretation are raised by the third line of this epitaph, but its content can be deemed accurate. The first hemistich poses the question of the identification of the alluded monarch, who is King Sancho Garcés I of Pamplona. Given the marriage strategies of the ruling houses of the Christian states of northern Iberia during this period, almost any hypothesis which would make Rodrigo Díaz’s wife a blood relation of King Alfonso VI results in her being a descendant of that sovereign, the founder of the so-called Jimena royal dynasty of Pamplona, for example through his daughter Sancha Sánchez of Pamplona and then her daughter Urraca Fernández of Castile, the mother of King Vermudo II of León, if Salazar Acha’s genealogy of Jimena Díaz is assumed as correct. The second hemistich poses the question of the identification of Felicia, who is Felicia de Roucy, the consort Queen of Aragon and Pamplona as second wife to King Sancho I Ramírez. She was a well-known patron of religious art. Two sumptuous devotional panels, one of them bearing her name, and both obviously produced contemporarily by the same workshop, are today preserved at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City (Abenza 2018; Perratore 2021: 32-35). Her death was recorded in the ‘Necrologium’ of the monastery of San Victorián in Sobrarbe as ‘V. Non. Maii obiit Felicia Regina, anno MCXXIII’, i.e. on 3 May 1123. This indication is accepted by Vajay (1966: 278), though not by Spanish historians. Lapeña (2021: 179-80) dismisses such notice, without actually giving any argument for it, preferring to date her demise shortly after the death of her husband, King Sancho Ramírez I of Aragon and Pamplona, in 1094. However, the information of the ‘Necrologium’ can be considered trustworthy. There is a donation made by her son King Alfonso I of Aragon on 18 March 1106 ‘pro anima patris mei Sancii regis, et pro anima matris mee regina Felicia, et pro anima fratris mei Petro Sancio rege, atque pro

anima mea uel omnium parentum meorum' (Lema Pueyo 1990: doc. 11), 'for the soul of my father, King Sancho, and for the soul of my mother, Queen Felicia, and for the soul of my brother, King Pedro Sánchez, as well as for my own soul, and also of all my relatives' (my translation). Nevertheless, the formula, including the reigning monarch himself, is so overarching that it cannot be assumed from it that his mother Felicia was already dead by then. Indeed, there is no charter issued by King Alfonso I's chancery from which it can be inferred that she passed away before the year registered in the monastery of San Victorián, since the records mentioning her use ambiguous expressions or cannot be dated with enough accuracy. Therefore, there is no documentary evidence against the date provided by its 'Necrologium', which should consequently be accepted.

It was logical for Jimena Díaz to spend her last days near her eldest daughter Cristina, married to Ramiro Sánchez, lord of Monzón, all her other children having already died by the time she sold her property in Valdecañas in 1113. Felicia de Roucy seems to have been some years younger than her, and the two women could even have known each other. San Juan de la Peña was an obvious choice for Jimena's burial if she lived her final years in the area. It was also natural to emphasize her descent from King Sancho Garcés I of Pamplona in such a place.

Some medievalists have dismissed her epitaph at San Juan de la Peña as a fabrication. Yet their arguments are weak, often influenced by the sometimes inaccurate second-hand account about her sepulchre provided by Fray Ramón de Huesca. Smith (1980: 51-52) rejected it as a forgery, believing 1122 to be too late a year for her decease. However, this date is perfectly acceptable for Jimena's passing, and her epitaph is also noteworthy for providing the earliest documentation of the byname *Cid* referred to Rodrigo Díaz. We do not know exactly when she was born, but a death at the age of 77 years (with a lifespan from 1045 to 1122) was quite possible for an affluent aristocratic woman who had survived childbirth (Eleanor of Aquitaine, for example, passed away approximately at 82). Smith also questions the representation of the diphthongs in the text, but orthography would be significant only if the original or a more faithful reproduction would have been preserved, which is not the case here. In particular, he quotes *praesenti coenobio* as example, which he takes from *præfēti cænobio* in Sandoval (1615: 62r). That reading, however, had been edited in this Benedictine's previous works as *p̄sēti cænobio* (1601: 47v), and such diphthongs do not appear at all in the text published by Fray Ramón de Huesca (1802: 404), who offers PRESENTI CENOBIO. It is obvious that such an argument must be dismissed given the circumstances. Finally, Smith indicates that it is a fabrication dating from the fourteenth century at the earliest linking it to what had been indicated on the board, but this was a very different, much later item, as Sandoval had unequivocally noted.

Two other recent advocates of the hypothesis of a forgery are Durán Gudiol (1967: 24) and Montaner (1998: 106-08). Durán Gudiol thought that the inscription was a sixteenth-century falsification by Fray Juan de Baranguá, but this Benedictine memorialist was not a forger and never wrote any compositions to be set in stone, as pointed out by Montaner. The latter dismisses the sepulchre as a late medieval fabrication, but his argument is ultimately derived from Fray Ramón de Huesca's late faulty conflation of the information surrounding the board and the tombstone. Montaner

wrongly states that the epitaph was on a door of the church, and misinterprets its text analyzing *Regis Sancii fuit nata* as referring to *Felicia* rather than to *Eximina*. In summary, there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the sepulchre of Jimena Díaz at San Juan de la Peña. At any rate, it has a much stronger claim than the tomb located at Cardeña, a monastery which failed to provide a plausible date for her death and exhibited the skeleton of a male as her remains.

It is likely that the author of the *Cantar de Mio Cid* was aware of the assertions about the royal blood of Jimena Díaz. However, his plot would have been rendered meaningless by any reference to her regal lineage or even to the counts in her family (the title was borne at least by her great-grandfather Gundemaro Pinióliz, her grandfather Fernando Gundemáriz, her father Diego Fernández and her brothers Rodrigo and Fernando Díaz). The key episode of the affront at Corpes would make no sense if the audience were aware that the hero's daughters had such a high kinship through their mother, so the poet only alluded to her aristocratic origin in rather vague terms. He could afford to do so because he composed his epic when the Cid and his deeds already overshadowed all other historical figures connected to his legend.

The descendants of Rodrigo Díaz

The *Linage of Rodric Díaz*, composed at the end of the twelfth century, records that his marriage to Jimena produced three children who survived infancy: a boy called Diego, and two girls named Cristina and María (Ubieto Arteta 1989: 45). It also reports that the son fell at the battle of Consuegra, fought on 15 August 1097. There is no reason to doubt this information. His untimely death means that he left hardly any traces. He does not appear in the *Cantar de Mio Cid*, the plot of which has no place for him, and it is possible that its author was not even aware of his existence.

Rodrigo Díaz, however, matched his two daughters in matrimonial alliances so significant that they left a mark in the poem. Cristina Rodríguez was married to Ramiro Sánchez, a descendant of King García Sánchez III of Pamplona, killed at the battle of Atapuerca in 1054. Her husband, therefore, was an Infante of the Pamplonese royal house, and is documented as lord of Monzón from 1104. The couple had at least two children: a son called García Ramírez, later known as 'the Restorer', who was proclaimed King of a Pamplona independent from Aragon in 1134, and a daughter named Elvira Ramírez, who married Count Rodrigo Gómez of Bureba. These two grandchildren of Rodrigo Díaz are well documented (see Domínguez Fernández and Larrambebere Zabala 1994, and Sagredo Fernández 1976, respectively).

María Rodríguez was married to Count Ramon Berenguer III of Barcelona, but the matter of her offspring poses more difficulties. She is still documented in a donation made with her husband on 4 August 1104 to the church of Sant Adrià de Besòs, a charter transcribed by Pierre de Marca (1688: doc. 335). However, she passed away shortly afterwards, since this count of Barcelona appears already married to his second wife, Almodis, in early November 1105 (Baiges *et al.* 2010: doc. 360). He had only one daughter from María Rodríguez, who probably died in childbirth in late 1104 or early 1105, and gave her hand in marriage on 1 October 1107, with the relevant document

omitting the girl's name: 'ego Raimundus, Dei gratia Barchinonensis comes et marchio, dono atque trado tibi Bernarde, Bisullunensis comes, filiam meam prolem Marię Ruderici in coniugium' (Baiges *et al.* 2010: doc. 370), 'I, Ramon, count and marquis of Barcelona by God's grace, give and hand over my daughter, born from María Rodríguez, in marriage to you, Bernat, count of Besalú' (my translation). Ten years later Count Ramon Berenguer III of Barcelona married his daughter called Ximena to Count Roger III of Foix. Everything suggests that she was the same child that had been born to him by María Rodríguez, that she had been christened after her maternal grandmother Jimena Díaz, and that she was pledged again after having reached the canonical age for marriage. Her first match to Count Bernat II of Besalú had been a complex political operation, generating a substantial amount of ceremonies and charters. It had been accompanied with an agreement according to which all the dominions of the bridegroom were to pass to his father-in-law should the marriage not produce an heir. The chances of this were certainly slim: Count Bernat II of Besalú was an ailing elderly man in his seventies, apparently without issue from three previous marriages, and the bride must have been some two years old. The match was a transfer *de facto* of his territories to the count of Barcelona, more than forty years younger than his son-in-law. Indeed, Bernat II died without consummating the marriage, and Ramon Berenguer III is already documented as the ruler of the county of Besalú in 1111. The historiography on Rodrigo Díaz continues to repeat routinely that he had a hypothetical granddaughter called Maria who married a similarly hypothetical Count Bernat III of Besalú. However, there is no documentary evidence in medieval sources for such two figures, first occurring in the historiography produced in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and accepted later through their incorporation in the monumental work of Montsalvatge i Fossas about the county of Besalú. Their non-existence has respectively been proven by Vajay (1968: 54-56) and Feliu (1998), with a relevant contribution to the latter by Salrach (2014).

The strategical marriages secured by Rodrigo Díaz for his two daughters forged important alliances with Christian states in north-eastern Iberia, and each of his three documented grandchildren, i.e. King García Ramírez 'the Restorer' of Pamplona, Countess Elvira Ramírez of Bureba, and Countess Ximena of Foix, produced further issue. This left a mark on the *Cantar de Mio Cid*. In particular, the fact that García Ramírez became King of the Pamplonese involved that the descendants of the conqueror of Valencia had entered the royal houses of Navarre, Castile and León by the time Per Abbat copied the epic in 1207, justifying the anonymous author's claim at the end of the poem: 'Oy los reyes d'Espanna sos parientes son' (l. 3724).

The names attributed in the *Cantar de Mio Cid* to the hero's daughters, Elvira and Sol, do not correspond to those documented in historical sources, Cristina and María, respectively. In all likelihood, the poet had no accurate information in this respect. As for Cristina, the likeliest explanation appears to me that he knew of the existence of a descendant of Rodrigo Díaz called Elvira, i.e. the abovementioned Elvira Ramírez, and hence used her name believing that she had been his daughter rather than his granddaughter. As for the other, Menéndez Pidal (1953: II, 856-57) provided the best hypothesis to date, arguing that Sol could be a *cognomento* of María. He furnished a few examples, to which 'Maria, cognomento Sol Martiniz' in a charter of 1098 could be added (Quintana Priego 1971: doc. 102). It should be stressed that Sol also is well

documented with other names: ‘Justa, connomento Sole’ in a text dating back to 992-999 (Flórez 1770: I, 133, n. 1); ‘Fronille Annalaz, cognomento Sol’ in 1095 (Quintana Priego 1971: doc. 79); ‘Fronildi, cognamento Sol Monniz’ in 1102 (Fernández Conde *et al.* 1978: doc. 6); ‘Gunterodo cognomento Sol Osoriz’ in 1104 (Valdés Gallego 1999: 639); ‘Sancia Petri, cognomento Sol’ in 1191 (García Leal 2000: 80). Furthermore, it can be added that sometimes scribes wrote it initially, e.g. ‘Sol Petriz, cognomento Goto’ in 1082 (Floriano Llorente 1968: doc. 87), and that the two names, María and Sol, appear also to have been used to refer to two different sisters, e.g. ‘Rodericus Moniz de Miraio cum filiis suis Fernando, Garsea, Maria, Sol’, in a charter of 1107 (García Leal 2000: 106). Menéndez Pidal’s observation that the frequent occurrence of this name preceded by the first person possessive indicates that it was originally applied as a term of endearment, i.e. ‘my sunshine’, is equally plausible, and further examples could be provided in which the construction appears lexicalized, e.g. ‘yo Johán Martines de Villareyo e yo sua muller Mia Sol’, ‘yo Mia Sol e mio marido Domingo Março de don Salvador’ and ‘la tierra que yo Mia Sol heredey’ in a charter of 1303 (Cavero Domínguez *et al.* 2001: doc. 12). It is also possible that the *cognomento* Sol, which in contrast to Mayor was exclusively applied to women, was used for those with a light complexion, meaning ‘the fair’ as a connotation, in line with medieval canons of female beauty. It can be taken into account that the abovementioned noblewoman named Justa living in the 990s was a royal concubine, who declaring herself a *peccatrix* made a donation of some properties received from King Vermudo II of León to the monastery of San Acisclo, and that the hero refers to his daughters in the *Cantar de Mio Cid* (l. 2333) as ‘tan blancas commo el sol’ (a formula, on the other hand, also applied to hauberks in l. 3074, and to garments in ll. 3087 and 3493); cf. the name *Solabella*, presumably ‘beautiful as the sun’ (Becker 2009: 983-84).

Conclusion

In the preceding lines I have attempted to address the issue of the lineage of Rodrigo Díaz and his family based on my own reading of the preserved documents and incorporating some significant points made by previous scholars which I feel have been neglected. It is clear that there has been a bias in the recent historiography on Rodrigo Díaz in order to portray him as a well-established figure of the ruling elite by reason of his birth. This trend has coincided with what could be termed the demise of the *Cid repúblico*, to use the expression coined by Joaquín Costa, i.e. the use of the hero’s figure by progressives. Intellectuals like himself and Antonio Machado focused on episodes of the Cidian legend such as the oath at Santa Gadea and the outrage at Corpes, which today are universally qualified as fictional, responding to a hunger of audiences for accountability of the rulers and for justice to repair the abuses of the establishment. Rather predictably, if Catherine Morland’s famous remark in *Northanger Abbey* is recalled to mind, such exalted lineage has resulted in a duller character than the one created by the author of the *Cantar de Mio Cid*. However, it should be food for thought that, for all his poetic elaborations, he seems to have been truer to the social status of the figure who inspired his creation than some tendencies in recent historiography.

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