[251] Between her accession in the summer of 1109 and her death in the spring of 1126 Urraca governed and administered the realm of León-Castilla on the whole successfully, as we have seen. But the same paucity of materials that often makes difficult the determination of the political history of the reign also hinders clear discernment of the ordinary operation of its administration. These materials are basically the same hundred-odd charters of the queen, the three contemporary chronicles with their varying purposes, and a variety of private documents. Barring some major discovery of a currently unknown cache of royal documents, only the publication of the mass of private documents in individual archives and their correlation and comparison can be expected to add significantly to these resources.

This process, though under way in some centers of local history such as León and Toledo, promises to be so extended that it is worth undertaking here the first survey of Urraca's royal administration. At the same time, it should be understood that the instrumentalities and processes of administration to be treated here evade specific identification and analysis because of the character of the realm itself. In a society based largely on agriculture with a limited exchange of goods and services beyond the immediate locale of their production, small need arises for a machinery that extends beyond personal and occasional decisions, which refer to unwritten custom and precedent for legitimacy. The sense of office is weak and only loosely formalized, even at the highest levels, below the crown itself. The function of government [252] was limited largely to conflict resolution rather than to the active direction of society. The waging of war, control of the church, and, perhaps, the administration of justice were the only activities that systematically engaged the crown on a so-called national level. Its usual preoccupation was rather with the affairs of the royal house and dynasty, which sometimes merged with the former activities and were not strictly distinguished from them.

With these limitations in mind, we begin with a consideration of the institutions of the central government. What has been said in Chapter Seven furnishes a point of departure. The queen herself was, of course, the font and origin of all legitimate secular authority, but she functioned in, and in a sense with, a curia of about thirty persons who constituted her companions, advisers, and who confirmed her diplomas. Five or six of these, her notaries and the majordomo, might fairly be described as officials, another five or so were bishops, and the remainder were nobles and barons of the kingdom. Together with the queen and such members of the dynasty as were present, this group may fairly be called the ordinary governing body of the realm. (1)

On the evidence of the diplomas, no member of the curia except the queen herself was a member by right whose presence was essential to its proper function. Although it cannot be explicitly demonstrated, it seems likely that this body could also function in the absence of Urraca herself. During the years after 1116 the queen was almost annually in Galicia for a period of one or two months, ordinarily accompanied only by a notary or two of those who usually figure in her charters. It is difficult to imagine that, during her absence from the central portion of the kingdom, the usual members of the curia simply returned to their homes as private individuals with no provision made for
the continuing administration of government.

Although it cannot be established in the documents, it is almost irresistible to assume that the curia continued to function in some fashion on such occasions under a vicar or regent of some sort. This was not, of course, a formalized office, but I suspect that it was filled by the primate of the realm, the archbishop of Toledo. He would have been automatically the leader of the bishops present, he had wide experience of Urraca's government, as indicated by his confirmation of thirty-two of the queen's charters, and he had the prestige of long association with the government of her father, Alfonso VI. All these qualifications would have fitted him to become the temporary head of such a collegial body.

In the simultaneous absence of the queen and the primate it is possible to imagine that such a role was filled by the bishop of the royal city of León or even by the bishop of Palencia, both of whom appear in an equal number of Urraca's diplomas. A lay president of the curia seems to be ruled out by the circumstances. The queen's only legitimate son, Alfonso Raimúndez, was first too young and then too dangerous a rival for such a post. Count Pedro González of Lara, her consort and most frequent member of the court, confirming fifty-two charters of the queen, was too objectionable to most of its other members but his own subordination to another lay noble would have been troublesome also.

Of the range and function of the curia, we can be absolutely certain only that it confirmed royal charters. Only when it swelled into a larger body, a "general" curia or council, is there a basis for wider generalization about its activities. There is evidence that it did so metamorphose with reasonable regularity, and contemporaries realized and expressed their sense of the resultant institution as somehow different in kind and competence from the ordinary curia.

The author of the "Historia Compostelana" described the meeting of the prelates and barons held at Palencia in October 1113 as "generaliter concilium.‖ However, he also characterized the same meeting as simply a council, as a "general collegio," a "generalem synodurn," and as a "synodale collegium." On the other hand, he styled the meeting held by Alfonso VII at Zamora just after Urraca's death simply a curia. This ambiguity in terminology assuredly reflects the only tentative institutionalization of the age. For our purposes, I propose to call a more widely convoked meeting such as this a general curia.

From the literary records, which are only occasionally interested in the royal government, we can identify at most only eleven such assemblages. Recourse to the documents of the period may isolate more of them. If, for example, the presence of an unusual number of bishops at court is a hallmark of such meetings, then the confirmation of a royal charter by more than five bishops could signal such a reunion. If we accept five as the usual complement of bishops in the curia, some sixteen other, similar meetings can be identified: eight times Urraca's charters are confirmed by as many as six bishops and another eight times by seven to eleven bishops. On such grounds, considering the paucity of surviving documents and the known fact that not every bishop present at court necessarily confirmed each charter, it does not seem adventurous to conclude that a general curia ordinarily met twice a year, at least after the very troubled years from 1109 to 1112.

What differentiates these bodies from an ordinary curia seems largely to have been the sense of the importance of the occasion and the wider range, but not kind, of membership. The probabilities are strong that the range of matters with which they dealt reflects fairly well the competence of the smaller, more obscure body also. Before investigating their operation, however, one general problem remains to be considered.

The literary sources, usually ecclesiastical in origin, that allow us to investigate their activities often present these gatherings as purely ecclesiastical councils. They are sometimes presided over by the Spanish primate, either as primate or as papal legate, and even by a papal legate sent from Rome. In
such cases the question arises whether a royal or an ecclesiastical institution is being described. Perhaps the best response is to say that it is each, both, and neither. Our definitions and distinctions are not necessarily those of the twelfth century in León-Castilla, and few persons in that age would have excluded the dignities of king and barons from the church or the dignities of bishops and abbots from the realm. What we might regard as imprecision, then, would allow the same assembly to be described variously, depending essentially on the interest or purpose of the author. The very gradual movement toward a distinction of royal and ecclesiastical institutions may be perceived in later years, but it was never completely realized as long as monarchy remained the dominant western institution.

During the reign of Urraca the general curia dealt with the most central affairs of the dynasty and of the kingdom. On the testimony of the queen as we have it, the general curia of León in August of 1109 successfully supported the arrangement of her dead father for the marriage to Alfonso of Aragón against the preferences of Urraca herself. Not quite a year later another meeting at Sahagún, probably in July, discussed the condemnation of their marriage by Paschal II and effected their first separation. Such a body seems also to have debated Alfonso of Aragón's offer of reconciliation at Burgos in July or August of 1113. Finally, if I am correct in my earlier argument, what turned out to be a "rump" general curia at Sahagún in August of 1121 aspired to the deposition of Urraca herself and her replacement by her son.

At a more modest level, these bodies participated in what may most properly be called the diplomatic sphere. Thus, the general curia at Sahagún in August of 1116 dealt with a general reconciliation of Urraca and her son. A similar meeting at Burgos in February 1117 most likely worked out the terms of an understanding between Urraca and Alfonso of Aragón that had equal importance for royal policy. It seems unrealistic as well to deny something of a special legislative function to the general curia. The one held at Palencia in October of 1113 appears clearly to have addressed itself to a remedy for the widespread troubles in the realm resulting, in part, from the running dispute between Urraca and El Batallador. And if the decrees subsequently issued by Bishop Gelmírez for his own honor reflect the decisions of Palencia, they may certainly be styled civil legislation. The enactments at León in October 1114 are more narrowly ecclesiastical in nature but some of them dealt with civil matters, as we would be inclined to describe them.

The distinction between political decisions and judicial ones is a thin one at best, and the problem of determination is aggravated when the same body is engaged in both types of activity and when the information is tantalizingly laconic. Nevertheless it seems to me that the sources allow the attribution of a judicial function to the general curia during Urraca's reign, and certainly that has been the judgment of other historians dealing with similar bodies elsewhere in the medieval west.

"Las crónicas anónimas de Sahagún" as we have it is, unfortunately, only a translation, but the language clearly assigns a judicial function to the meeting at Sahagún in the summer of 1112. Urraca and Alfonso of Aragón were being measured in terms of their respective adherence to a previous agreement, and the whole tenor of the relation is that of a judicial proceeding or inquest. The account of the "Historia Compostelana" is not as explicit but supports the same interpretation in the language of the time. The curia at León in October 1114 similarly decided the drawn-out dispute between the abbot of Sahagún and the burghers of that village. The same dispute, erupting subsequently, was argued and decided at the curia in Burgos in February of 1117.

Finally, that such assemblages decided ecclesiastical matters is patent. The curia at Palencia in October 1113 arranged the election of a new bishop, the queen's chaplain, to the see of Lugo and moved
the see of Mondoñedo to Vallabriense. That at León in 1114 legislated extensively for the church. That at Segovia in June 1118 accepted the candidate for the see of Braga.

What applies to the procedures of such general curias may be applied, by extension, to the workings of the ordinary curia. Although it is certain that they needed her approval to meet, the presence of the queen does not seem absolutely essential. She apparently was not at Burgos in 1117. At this same curia the primate of Toledo and the papal legate, Cardinal Boso, are spoken of as presiding.\(^{20}\) In Valladolid in 1124 apparently the legate, Cardinal Deusdedit, presided.\(^ {21}\)

In its actual workings, the curia cannot be said to have had regular officers or specialized permanent structures distinct from the offices of the crown itself. Nevertheless, it is clear that it did not function always and simply as a committee of the whole. According to "Las crónicas anónimas," at Sahagún in 1112 the parties to the dispute were given, or allowed to name, persons responsible for arguing their cases.\(^ {22}\) Again at Sahagún in 1116, a delegation was chosen whose function seems to have been to work out the details of the accord between Urraca and Alfonso Raimúndez and to conclude the pact.\(^ {23}\) At Burgos in 1117 it is clear that Count Bertran was the spokesman for the burghers of Sahagún and was one of the three persons named to implement the decision of that curia.\(^{24}\) Without exaggeration, then, it seems possible to say that, although it had no permanent, formal structure, the curia did employ formal spokesmen for the argument of complicated judicial matters and practiced the delegation of its authority to oversee the execution of its decisions. In none of these operations, however, should the actions of the curia be dissociated from those of the crown.

The crown and the curia were supported in their governing of the realm by no executive or administrative institutions comparable to the modern department of government. During the reign of Urraca her chancery comes the closest to approximating such a body, but it would probably be premature to characterize even the chancery in that fashion. As we have seen in an earlier chapter, it was composed of a group of four to five persons whose association with the queen was regular and of comparatively long duration, and of a variety of others whose appearance was occasional and whose connection with the court was otherwise tenuous or nonexistent. Although the title "chancellor" was sporadically employed the usual one was "notary," and there is no conclusive evidence of that hierarchy of officials and subordinates that characterizes the modern department. Nor does the diplomatic form of the charters that they prepared attain to a standardization, although as individuals a fair degree of regularity is noticeable. One speaks, then, of a chancery in the sense of a number of persons at court who have a specialized duty, of preparing the written instruments of government, that is clearly defined and recognized by title. At this stage, however, they seem to exhibit no formal organization in relation to one another comparable to what is evident in the chancery of her son and successor, Alfonso VII.

Other persons at court held official titles, but it is difficult to perceive them as true officials or officers. The most prominent among these is the majordomo. On the analogy with this office elsewhere in the Latin West and with the later development in León-Castilla itself, this was the office responsible for the overall management of the royal fisc. But at the court of Urraca the office was held by great nobles of the realm, as we have seen in Chapter Seven. It seems that this office was already well on the way to becoming an honorific title, a development that led eventually to the position's being divided into a "major" and a "minor" majordomo.\(^ {25}\) Although these officers probably maintained some general control over the activities of those who managed the fisc lands, the documents do not give evidence of that fact, nor is it likely that such control amounted to more than perfunctory approval of measures and decisions devised elsewhere.

Again there is no evidence of a departmental organization, but given that the widely scattered fisc lands were the major economic resource of the crown, someone at court must have paid some attention to the organization and collection of its proceeds even if their management was somewhat decentralized.
Probably such a function was performed by one or more of the royal clerks who appear occasionally in Urraca’s charters, but the sources do not explicitly indicate such activity, and it has not reached such a degree of formality as to have crystallized in a title or office.

As to the fisc lands themselves, no register has survived that would make a general description of them possible. To estimate their extent we must rely once again on the charters, which ordinarily inform us of their existence only at the moment when they are being alienated. Still, these documents tell something of their extent and location during Urraca's reign. They indicate, at least, that the fisc lands were dispersed throughout the entire realm. If only the extant charters are considered and the notices of lost documents disregarded, of the places that can be fairly confidently located geographically the largest number of grants, some twenty-six, are made from the fisc in the province of León. To these might be added for practical purposes another four grants made from the fisc of the rough and mountainous Astorga-Bierzo region.

The next largest numbers of grants are twenty from the province of Castilla, twenty from Galicia, and sixteen from the Campo Gótico, stretching westward from around Palencia. These areas were the political centers of the realm. Its birthplace, the province of Asturias, furnished some nine grants and its future, the new kingdom of Toledo, eight. To the east, in the contested border province of Rioja, four grants were made of fisc lands and to the west in Zamora, often similarly troubled, five grants.

To proceed beyond this rough survey is impractical. The number of documents is too small to permit more detailed analysis. For now it is possible only to point out that what information we have supports what we might have guessed. If the proportion of lands granted was in proportion to the actual size of the fisc, then roughly eighty percent of the productive fisc land lay in the political centers of León, Castilla, the Campo Gótico, and Galicia.

I have qualified these fisc lands as "productive" because certainly the largest fisc holdings must have lain in the trans-Duero and Toledan regions. Under the law of the period the lands reconquered from the Muslim passed to the crown, and vast tracts in these two regions must have been legally part of the fisc because of their relatively recent reconquest. That fact would not have been reflected in the grants because both the crown and the potential grantees were hard pressed to find the resources with which to repopulate and defend them, which processes alone would have made them productive and desirable.

Similarly, the raw figures probably give a depressed figure for the contested areas of Rioja, Castilla, and Zamora. On the other hand, the eight percent reflected for Asturias more likely illustrates the extent to which the growth of ecclesiastical and noble estates had encroached on crown holdings in that oldest of provinces.

Only for the province of Galicia, given the state of knowledge of the private documents of the period, is there another major resource for estimating their characteristics. The "Historia Compostelana" is, among other things, a register of land acquisitions by the church of Santiago. The charters alone indicate that the lands of the fisc appear to be scattered widely and fairly evenly over the province. If we add to these known possessions the ones that are recorded in the "Historia Compostelana" as royal possessions, another grouping of fisc lands becomes apparent between the rivers Tambre and Ulla and just to the south of Compostela. Had a comparable register survived for the other three bishoprics of Galicia, or indeed for those of the entire kingdom, it is to be expected that they would reveal comparable richness in terms of their area of interest and acquisition.

The evidence is clear that this fisc land was formally subdivided and allocated to the support of different areas of the royal court and government. Thus, Urraca speaks, in her original charter of April 28, 1112, of the alienation of lands "sive hereditates de regalengo, sive de infantatico, sive de comitatu." It is apparent, then, that the fisc was subdivided to serve the needs of the monarch, of the
other living members of the royal house, and of the chief local agents of the government, the counts. At the same time it is obvious that the monarch held paramount control of all and was able to alienate any portion of it, although it would have been more difficult to do so when the *infantes* were of age.

When they had reached their majority, as we have seen, Alfonso Raimúndez was especially associated with the control of the fisc around Sahagún and his sister, Sancha, with that about the castle of Grajal. Doubtless the lands of the *infantaticum* were managed by the majordomos of these children and so reduced or delayed the need for a special department to do so at Urraca's court. The fourteen genuine charters of Alfonso Raimúndez and the four of Doña Sancha issued during their mother's lifetime also demonstrate that their prerogatives to the management of their lands included the right to alienate without formal consent by the ruler.

[263] So long as lands remained in the fisc they supported the government by means of the ordinary proprietary dues and rents. Alienated, they rewarded or purchased the loyalty of magnates, bishops, abbots, and, occasionally, humble folk. A comparison of the known charters of alienations from the fisc for the last seventeen years of the reign of Alfonso VI (1092-1109), the reign of Urraca (1109-1126), and the first seventeen years of the reign of Alfonso VII (1126-1143) provides a rough idea of the rate at which such grants were growing. For Alfonso VI there are 49, for Urraca 102, and for Alfonso VII 208. This progression, however, does not necessarily imply the increasing depletion of the fisc. More likely the figures reflect the geographic growth of the realm itself, the ability of the crown to direct its repopulation, and the ever-increasing general awareness of everyone concerned of the necessity of protecting the legal basis of their claims to land as the power of the crown to monitor their claims steadily increased. The proliferation of cathedral and monastic *tumbos* and *becerros* in the first half of the twelfth century as a way to preserve individual charters is a reflection of that growing awareness. If these three circumstances are accepted as operative, the figures do not support the idea that a great raid on the lands of the fisc occurred, much less proceeded from any weakness in her government.

When necessary, however, the fisc might produce a onetime cash revenue for the crown through the sale of some designated portion. From Urraca's charters and the "Historia Compostelana" we can identify nineteen separate instances of this practice. That is, something like a fifth of all alienations were sales. With one exception these transactions occurred fairly regularly throughout the reign and should be presumed an ordinary practice rather than an emergency measure. The exception is four charters of sales in the spring of 1112, connected certainly with the great effort to recover from the twin disasters of Candespina and Viadangos and to hold the realm of León against Alfonso of Aragón.

In one of these, dated May 31, 1112, Urraca granted certain [264] possessions and exemptions to the monks of Samos in return for thirty-six marks of silver and "duos kavallos optimos."[27] These must have been warhorses for the coming campaign. A little earlier, on May 18, Urraca had made a donation to the church of Lugo for one hundred marks of silver "de sacratis ornamentis altaris eiusdem Virginis ut reddam donativa militibus meis."[28] Even before, on March 29, 1112, a donation to the archdeacon of the church of Oviedo, Pedro Annayez, was made at the price of "una copa argentea et duerata centum quinquaginta solidos ponderata purissimo argento."[29] All these, however, pale into near insignificance with the donation made to the church of Oviedo itself on March 27, 1112, which brought some 9,280 "auri purissimi metkalia," 10,400 "solidos de purissimo argento magno pondere maurisco," and "trecéntos solidos plata laborata." This sale alone would have largely defrayed the costs of a summer's campaign if we may credit it.[30]

Still another function of the fisc lands was to support the maintenance and provisioning of the royal palaces and castles even when the crown and court were not in residence. It may be that this was part of the task of lands assigned specifically to the *comitatum* within which they lay, but we cannot be sure. As to palaces, or royal residences, the notices we have suggest their concentration largely in the heart
of the Leonese fisc lands. There was one at Ceia ten kilometers north of Sahagún and assuredly another adjoining the castle of Grajal, five kilometers to the south of Sahagún, where Count Raymond had died in 1107. In her frequent residence at Sahagún itself Urraca probably stayed in the former castle of her mother, Queen Constance, which Alfonso VI had presented to that monastery after his wife's death. Her expenses may well have been borne by the monastery as part of their duty of hospitality, which would have given them good reason to rue such a gift.

Close by, in the city of León itself there would have been royal apartments in the famous "towers," or royal citadel. In fact, many major castles of the crown probably had royal residences adjoining them. But we may be sure that there was a royal palace in Burgos to replace the old one of his parents given by Alfonso VI to the bishop in 1081. One further palace, in Nájera, may also be identified, although here, as in Burgos, the circumstances of the reign seldom permitted Urraca to avail herself of it.

Royal castles are somewhat easier to identify because of their relatively greater prominence in the narratives of the time. Private castles, though, were quite widespread and often it is difficult to be positive whether a rebellious noble was defending a castle of his own or whether he was in fact capitalizing on his position as royal castellan. Whose, for example, was the castle of Mancilla on the Río Esla just twenty miles southeast of León in which Count Pedro González of Lara was held prisoner briefly in the spring of 1119? The "Historia Compostelana" does not say.

Royal castles may be identified, however, in some of the major cities of the realm. There were the towers of León, the old castle in Astorga, and the citadel at Burgos, although the garrisoning and upkeep of the last would have fallen not to the fisc but to Alfonso of Aragón because he usually controlled it. We may safely assume that the Alcazar in Toledo was both royal fortress and residence. Other captured Muslim fortresses in the kingdom of Toledo, such as those at Oreja and Medinaceli, may have been ceded to those nobles like Alvar Fáñez who were on the spot and prepared to defend them. We simply do not know.

On the other hand, there seems not to have been a royal fortress in Compostela, and perhaps that condition was usual where the city's bishop held the "honor" of the city and its territory as at Compostela and Lugo. Although a great deal of documentary and archaeological work remains to be done, the same condition seems to have obtained in other episcopal cities peripheral to the heart of the realm: at Zamora, Tuy, and Orense in the west, at Oviedo in the north, and at Osma and perhaps even Palencia in the east. There is no hard evidence for royal castellans in any of these places in Urraca's day. Presumably both their defense and the maintenance of the royal authority and prerogative within them devolved upon the bishop as a royal officer.

In the countryside circumstances were quite different. In the kingdom of León itself, a concentration of royal castles is apparent. Grajal, southeast of Sahagún, was matched with the castle at Ceia, to the north of the latter on the Río Cea. Another twenty kilometers to the north on the same river there was yet another at Almanza. Forty kilometers southwest of Sahagún and thirty-five kilometers south of the city of León was the royal castle at Coyanza, today Valencia de Don Juan. Almost equidistant between Coyanza and Sahagún there was probably another royal castle at Castrotierra de la Valduerna and yet another fifteen kilometers southwest of Sahagún, on the Cea at Melgar de Arriba. The inference is inevitable that these castles defended the frontier with Castilla when necessary and administered the surrounding fisc lands when it was not.

Although most of the fortresses of Castilla, from Saldaña to Carrión to Castrojeriz, were in the hands of Alfonso of Aragón for the greater part of Urraca's reign, that warrior was kept from permanent occupation of the Campo Gótico to the south. Something approximating a line of castles controlled by Urraca can be traced stretching from west to southeast above Palencia, beginning at Monzón de
Campos eleven kilometers north of that city. Ten kilometers southeast of Palencia on the Río Arlanzón was the castle at Magaz. Fifty kilometers southeast of Magaz lay the great fortress of Peñafiel on the Duero. Another fifty-five kilometers upstream, the castle at Peñaranda de Duero may have been a royal possession. Just twenty kilometers north of Peñaranda was Huerta del Rey, a castle given to the monks of Silos in 1137 by Alfonso VII. Thirty-five kilometers east of Peñaranda lay the outpost of Urraca's realm at Osma.

To the north and west of the city of León was the royal castle of Luna, high up on the Río Orbigo as it descends from the Cordillera Cantabrica, where Alfonso VI had kept his brother, García, imprisoned until he died. We hear also of royal castles in Bierzo at Ulver and Cabreya, and at Santa María de Autares near Villafranca del Bierzo.

For western and central Galicia the "Historia Compostelana" offers about the only overall view currently available. Of the castles mentioned, six seem to have been in royal hands. Of these, three lay along the valley of the Miño between Túy and Orense: the castle of Suberoso near Puenteáreas, castle Minei near Castro del Miño, and castle Orzilione fifteen kilometers northwest of Orense. Farther north, castle Luparie sat near the Ria de Arosa quite near the modern Villagarcía de Arosa. Castle Cira overlooked the Río Ulla, which flows into the Ria de Arosa well upstream, about twenty kilometers southeast of Compostela. Finally, castle San Georgii was located about ten kilometers north of the Río Tambre and just south of the monastery of Santa Comba. The position of all these castles suggests that they were originally constructed to protect the river valleys and their fisc lands from incursions from the Atlantic by Viking or Muslim pirates.

Whether or not the pattern of Galicia was replicated elsewhere, the cumulative evidence suggests that royal castles generally served the twin needs of defending and administering the fisc. It is also clear that they are numerous enough to constitute a major burden on those lands for their provisioning and garrisoning.

In addition to her proprietary income from the fisc Urraca enjoyed an income of indeterminate amount from a variety of public imposts. Given that there is no sign of a treasurer or other specialized revenue officer at her court, such income may have been minor in comparison with that of the fisc. These imposts come to light largely in charters of exemption from them, which apparently were worth seeking. Still, one wonders if these are exemptions from a continuing threat of collection or from an actual collection.

In all likelihood the easiest levy to collect was the fossataria, from which the men of León were exempted in 1110. This was the payment due in lieu of, or for failure to perform, military service. Occasional by nature, it would have created no permanent machinery of collection, and its obvious relationship to periods of special financial need by the crown would have tended to make it the most useful sort of income.

In 1112 the subjects of the Galician monastery of Samos were exempted from both the fossataria and the fiscalia. The latter suggests some sort of general regular tax, but this is the only time it appears in documents of the period and the notice is laconic. There may be a hint about its nature in a document of 1110, when some villages belonging to the Castilian monastery of San Millán de Cogolla were exempted from the forum and facendera they owed to the royal palace in Nájera. The first was a tax or a rental due from those who worked land that had originally been a public impost, but in the period the term is applied also to the rent due any proprietor. The second is also ambiguous in the usage of the period. It refers to services in labor due on roads or bridges but also to labor services on private lands. The usage of the terms here, however, suggests that a public charge could be collected even from
private lands to support local components of the fisc. Perhaps these are elements of the fiscalia, but unfortunately the notice is again a unique one.

All the evidence suggests that, after the fossataria, the most important source of royal revenue was from the portaticum. This tax on goods or travelers journeying over long distances was applied, above all, to that great artery of commerce and pilgrims, the Camino de Santiago. There was a collection station at Logroño, where the pilgrim road first entered the realm. There were others where the road passed through Burgos and Castrojeriz in Castilla. Those who continued on the road would have encountered yet two more tax stations at León and Astorga. At least one more lay along the road at Villafranca in the Bierzo.

As the old Roman road from Sevilla to Zaragoza came increasingly into the firm control of Urraca there are indications that the portaticum was organized also along that stretch within the realm of Toledo. In 1123 a tenth of that tax was granted to the archbishop of Toledo. In 1124 the bishop of Sigüenza was similarly granted tenths of the tax at Atienza and Medinaceli. There may also have been some such system on the Roman road leading north from Mérida. In 1124 the bishop of Zamora was granted a tenth of the portaticum there.

The royal right of market still possessed some vigor. The cathedral of Burgos was given a tenth "de cunctio redditibus mercati" in 1120, and the cathedral of Sigüenza a tenth "de totis alquavalas" in 1124. Such revenues, as well as those from fines imposed by royal justice, were more likely to be utilized locally by the agents of the crown, for a systematized, centralized exploitation of them would surely have necessitated a fiscal officer visible at court. In all likelihood these revenues as well as those from the portaticum passed automatically to local agents of the crown, who had purchased their office precisely that they might enjoy them.

One final important source of revenue requiring mention is the coining of money. From the reign of Urraca a variety of coins survive. All are small silver coins, as are those of her father, Alfonso VI. They sometimes bear her likeness, full face or profile, sometimes merely a cross and her name. The reverse usually names the place in which they were struck. Under Urraca there were mints at León, Toledo, Palencia, Segovia, Zamora, Sahagún, Santiago de Compostela, and Lugo. These mints were intended to make a profit from the difference between what they paid for their materials and the value of the coins that they issued. Thus, in 1123 the church of Toledo was assigned a tenth of the proceeds of the mint there. A few months later, in early 1124, the church of Zamora was granted a tenth of the profits from the mint in that city.

There has been controversy as to whether these mints were operated directly by royal officials or whether the concession was leased to various individuals and agencies. Given the scanty evidence a definitive answer is impossible, but I incline to suspect that the latter was the case, for there is no evidence of a treasurer in the court of Urraca. Direct royal control of the mints would presumably have led to the emergence of one.

The very best testimony that survives is in a diploma of Alfonso VI granting the royal mint of Santiago de Compostela to Bishop Gelmírez in May 1107. The "Historia Compostelana" dramatically, though not entirely accurately, describes Alfonso’s decision to make that donation in order to provide for the costs of construction of that shrine and its perpetual maintenance. It is clear from this charter that the design of the coins themselves was ordinarily stipulated by the crown, for the bishop is explicitly authorized to issue those of another design. The crown evidences much concern with both counterfeiting and profit. There is also mention of a provost of the royal mints.
No corroborative testimony for the existence of such a centralized control is to be found for the reign of Alfonso himself or those of his daughter or grandson. At least for the reign of Urraca it seems more likely that "prepositus" was a term used in its generic sense for whoever was designated actually to oversee the operations of a single mint. Urraca's grant of a mint in October 1116 to the abbot of Sahagún is innocent of any reference to such an official. The abbot was simply given the perpetual right to mint coins and to prosecute counterfeiters. No design nor standards are specified, nor is there any mention of royal officials.

This mint seems to have been the only one established by Urraca, and it is likely that she did so to maintain the loyalty of the abbot there at a critical moment in her struggle with Aragón. Probably due to the same circumstances was her grant of half the proceeds of the mint at Palencia to the bishop of that city not long before, mentioned in a bull of Paschal II of March 25, 1116. This mint evidently antedated her reign, as did all the rest with the possible exceptions of those at Zamora and Segovia.

Neither her grant of coinage to an ecclesiastic nor her alienation of a portion of their proceeds represents a departure from royal practice. As we have seen, Alfonso VI granted an established mint at Compostela to its bishop and had also alienated a third of the profits of the mint at Lugo to its bishop. The magnitude of the revenues from the mints is unknown, but in all likelihood it was substantial.

The most apparent and most regular activity in which all revenues were expended was war. Of her seventeen-year reign there are only four years in which we have no evidence of a campaign. The gathering of the royal host in the spring of the year would, then, have been an almost annual event, as would have been the collection of the fossataria from those who declined to come. In all likelihood the proceeds of this levy were brought to the gathering by those bishops, counts, and merinos who did respond to the summons to the campaign.

All the evidence points to the queen herself as the formal commander of the army. In the marked absence of an alférez during her reign, although the office was traditional in that of her father and would reappear in that of her son, we must suppose that on most of these occasions the practical direction of military operations fell to Count Pedro González of Lara. Doubtless he was assisted by some sort of high council of the great magnates. In a regional campaign, such as took place in the trans-Duero in the spring of 1116, the leadership might be entrusted to another figure, in this case Count Pedro Froilaz of Galicia under the titular direction of Alfonso Raimúndez.

Participation in these campaigns remained a public duty and not one incumbent merely on those who held lands of the crown. Thus, for example, in a fuero for the men of León and Carrión granted in September of 1109, Urraca exempted widows from the payment of the fossataria, slaves who did not bear arms from either the fossata or the fossatana, and any caballero who had married within the year. The army was thus a mixed force of cavalry and infantry, as is often noted, and slaves appear as well, probably as baggage handlers, porters, and servants generally.

This duty was probably due once annually, as Alfonso Raimúndez specifically stated in his fuero to the men of Toledo in November of 1118. It is also safe to assume that it was possible to satisfy one's obligation in terms similar to those of the fuero of Sepúlveda, which excused from personal service anyone who furnished a caballero with a helmet and breastplate or any four peones who supplied an ass for baggage. This fuero was originally granted by Alfonso VI in 1076. The only surviving information about the actual size of the armies so raised comes from the "Historia Compostelana," which says that at the battle of Viadangos in 1111 the Galician force numbered only two hundred seventy-six, while the Aragonese numbered seven hundred and seventy cavalry and two thousand infantry. The latter numbers sound about right for a major campaign.
The summoning of the host was accomplished by royal letters sent to the bishops and counts of the realm. Two examples of these letters survive, incorporated in the text of the "Historia Compostelana." The first directs Bishop Gelmírez to lay siege to certain castles in Galicia held by rebels and, once they have been reduced, to retain control of them himself or to entrust them to loyal nobles. The second is a summons to the Burgos campaign of 1113 and directs Bishop Gelmírez to organize the nobles and knights of Galicia and to accompany them himself. Both specify the purpose of the mobilization, which perhaps was a necessity of custom, but are otherwise quite general.

It is not clear what length of service was expected from those called to arms. In the Burgos campaign of 1113 the Galician contingent left Compostela on May 30 but did not actually arrive at Burgos until late June. By July 8 the Aragonese garrison of the citadel there had surrendered, and the Galicians decided to go home. The queen desired instead that they go to the relief of the castle of Berlanga to the south, and eventually she prevailed, although not without difficulty. All this suggests that the length of service was that necessary to accomplish the purpose of the expedition as stated in the letter of summons, and that it could not be extended to effect other purposes simply by royal fiat.

Part of the price paid by Urraca to secure an extension of service on this occasion was the exemption of the bishop of Compostela from personally accompanying his forces on such expeditions in the future. The exemption implies that the obligation of the fossata applied to the great ecclesiastics of the realm as well as to lay subjects. The presence of four other bishops, including the primate of Toledo, in the host on this occasion reinforces that conclusion.

In summary, central government in León-Castilla during the reign of Urraca is essentially personal government. The queen in her curia is the heart of the realm. That curia regularly is expanded, for the more important considerations, into a larger body, or curia generalis, and can function in her absence but has developed no formalized permanent offices or officers. An embryo chancery exists, but it has not yet been organized into a hierarchy of offices. A court majordomo is a regular, household officer but he has no perceptible staff and the management of the fisc appears to be mostly a local matter.

The dynastic lands are assigned particular functions, especially for the support of junior members of the dynasty, the counts, and the maintenance of royal residences and castles, thus facilitating their local administration. Similarly, the sources of other revenue are managed and collected outside the court. Tolls on the major roads are surprisingly developed, as are the mints. Both are subject to some royal control but there is no evidence of the crown's continuous and direct intervention in their operation.

Although the army itself is supported by a strong tradition of general and public service, it possesses no regular structure or head apart from the queen herself. It is, however, called up regularly, perhaps annually, and its convening is accompanied by the collection of the most important general tax of the realm, the fossataria.

Such a personal government was embodied for most of its subjects primarily in its local administrators. Contact with the latter was maintained through their occasional attendance at court or at gatherings of the host but, above all, by the progress of the court itself about the countryside. Except for wintertime, when the queen and court were usually at Sahagún or León, the court traveled continuously and widely to maintain that contact. Regions such as Toledo and Asturias excepted, most major divisions of the realm could expect to see their sovereign at least once a year. To determine just how effective was the direction and influence of the peripatetic central government, we need to consider the local organs of government.
Notes for Chapter Nine

1. Standard authorities such as Luis García de Valdeavellano, *Historia de las instituciones españolas* (Madrid, 1968), pp. 452-453, include the abbots of the realm, but the actual documents seldom disclose their presence.


4. Ibid., pp. 172-173 and 182-183.

5. Ibid., pp. 434-439.

6. It should be remembered that prior to 1120 there were but thirteen bishops in the territories ruled by Urraca. Of these, Burgos was sometimes vacant and more often than not in the hands of Aragón. Túy lay on a most troubled frontier. For practical purposes, six would have constituted a numerical majority of her episcopate, at least prior to 1120. I do not include in any of these the so-called Council of Oviedo of 1115, which is a patent fabrication. See Francisco Javier Fernández Conde, *El libro de testamentos de la catedral de Oviedo* (Rome, 1971), pp. 39-41.

7. The question is discussed by Odilo Engels, "Papsttum, Reconquista, und spanisches Landeskonzil im Hochmittelalter," *Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum* 1 (1969):266-275, who demonstrates some tentative beginnings in such a distinction between the reigns of Alfonso VI and Alfonso VII. More briefly, see Marongiu, *Medieval Parliaments*, p. 31.


10. Ibid., p. 164.


13. See ch. 4.


15. Ibid., pp. 191-192.

16. "...E alli ayuntados e de un acuerdo el rri e la rrreira, de cada parte fueron dados arbitrios los quales savia e amigablemente juzgarse entre si e demostrasen manifestamente al rrei e a la rrreira en que manera el uno con el otro bibiese en buena paz e concordia....Por ninguna manera de fabla nin de eloquençia podieron ynclinar o atraer el coraçön del rrei aquesto para que quiesese guardar los estatutos e obedescer a los jueces"; Puyol y Alonso, "Las crónicas anónimas," *BRAH* 76 (1920):349.


19. Ibid., 77 (1921):159-161.
20. Ibid.
22. See note 16.
25. García de Valdeavellano, *Instituciones españolas*, p. 592. Only in the diploma of August 6, 1120 does Jimeno López confirm as "palacio ipsius regine maiordomus maximus" and that is not an original; AHN, Sección de Clero, carp. 1.240, no. 5.
26. AC Túy, 4/1.
27. AHN, Clero, carp. 1.240, no. 5.
28. AC Lugo, estante 21, legajo 2, no. 10; and AHN, Sección de Códices, 1.043B, fol. 17; published in García Conde y Vázquez Saco, "Diploma de la reina Doña Urraca," *BCM Lugo* 1 (1943):326-330; and in Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz, "Notas para el estudio del 'petitum,'" *Viejos y nuevos estudios sobre las instituciones medievales españolas*, 2d. ed. (Madrid, 1976), 2:935, n. 10, who dates it to December 18, 1112 from the copy in the AHN.
30. Ibid., pp. 345-347, but Fernández Conde, *El libro de testamentos*, pp. 354-361, believes that this donation has been fabricated from a genuine but more restricted one of the same date so that it is possible that only 300 solidos were involved. Sánchez-Albornoz, "Notas," p. 935, accepts the entire amount.
34. Flórez, ES, 20:270.
37. AHN, Clero, carp. 893, no. 9. This document of Sahagún says that it was held by Fernando Téllez, but I believe he did so as castellan for Urraca, whose documents he frequently confirms.
38. AHN, Clero, carp. 961, no. 7; published in Luisa García Calles, *Doña Sancha* (León, 1972), pp. 130-131.
41. AHN, Clero, carp. 375, no. 4; published in Marius Férotin, ed., Recueil des chartes de l'Abbaye de Silos (Paris, 1897), pp. 70-72.


44. Flórez, HC, ES, 20:216.

45. Ibid., p. 99.

46. Ibid., pp. 123-329.

47. Ibid., pp. 109, 127, 131, 215, 382, and 389. See also Urraca's charter of December 1, 1118; AHN, Códices, 258B, fols. 14 and 34v-35r: "in terra saliensi in comitatum castelli luparie."


49. Ibid., p. 200. A seventh royal castle of "leyro" (Oleiros?) in the northern territory of Nendos had been granted to Count Pedro Froilaz in May 1112; López Ferreiro, Historia, 3:81-83 app.


51. AHN, Clero, carp. 1.240, no. 5.

52. Serrano, Cartulario de San Millán, pp. 298-299.

53. García de Valécavellano, Instituciones españolas, pp. 251-252. There was perhaps a castellaria, or public duty of repair of castle and city walls, but this is not mentioned here. See Antonio Palomeque Torres, "Contribución al estudio del ejército en los estados de la reconquista," AHDE 15 (1944):228-229.


55. Luciano Serrano, ed., Colección diplomática de San Salvador de El Moral (Madrid, 1906), p. 24. They appear in the fueros of Palenzuela granted by Alfonso VI and confirmed by Urraca. I presume that these stations existed in the time of the latter although the revenue from them would have been lost to Alfonso of Aragón.

56. AC León, no. 9.277.

57. Luis Vázquez de Parga, José María Lacarra, and Juan Una Ríu, Las peregrinaciones a Santiago de Compostela, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1948-49), 2:303.

58. AHN, Códices, 987B, fol. 11.


60. AC Zamora, Tumbo negro, fols. 20r-21r. Although less visible in the documents, toll stations existed also on much humbler arteries. A document of Corias, dated to 1131, mentions a dispute arising over such a station whose existence went back to the time of Alfonso VI; Antonio C. Floriano Cumbreño, ed., El libro registro de Corias, 2 vols. (Oviedo, 1950), 1:57.

62. See note 59.

63. Descriptions and reproductions of some of them may be seen in Aloïss Heiss, *Descripción general de las monedas hispano-cristianas desde la invasión de los Árabes*, 3 vols. (1865-69; reprint, Saragossa, 1962), 1:5-6 and plate 1. This work was first published in 1865 and a modern revision incorporating subsequent discoveries is badly needed. Antonio Vives, *La moneda castellana* (Madrid, 1901), is but a suggestive essay and Felipe Maten y Llopis, *La moneda española* (Barcelona, 1946), is hardly more than a commentary on Heiss. During the period 1109-1112 Alfonso el Batallador and Urraca issued a joint coinage. See Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz, "La primitiva organización monetaria de León y Castilla," Viejos y nuevos estudios sobre las instituciones medievales españolas, 2d ed. (Madrid, 1976), pp. 912-913, n. 65. This study first appeared in AHDE 5 (1928):301-345. See also Octavio Gil Farrés, "Monedas cristianas de vellón de Alfonso VI y Doña Urraca en el Museo Arqueológico Nacional," RABM 56 (1950):637-646. The latest survey is Octavio Gil Farrés, *Historia de la moneda española*, 2d ed. (Madrid, 1976), pp. 312-317. He believes there may also have been a mint at Oviedo and establishes that Alfonso of Aragón issued coinage minted in Toledo and in Segovia.

64. AHN, Códices, 987B, fol. 11.

65. AC Zamora, Tumbo negro, fols. 20v-21r.


68. AC Compostela, Tumbo A, fol. 27v, Tumbo C, fol. 219r; published in López Ferreiro, *Historia*, 3:70-72 app.: "prepositus omnium mearum monetarum...."


70. AHN, Sección de Microfilmas, Palencia, armario 3, legajo 10, rollo 1.727, fols. 37v-38r: "...et monetae partem mediam que ibidem sit quam ab Urraca regina tua strenuita adquisivit."


75. Ibid., p. 128: "...In eadem Civitate pedites et mancipia reficerent, ea quae in itinere debilitata fuerant et viatica necessaria praepararent."

76. Muñoz y Romero, *Colección de fueros*, p. 364. Caution is necessary in all these generalizations, for it is difficult to date precisely any particular provision of this fuero or that of Sepúlveda; both were subject to later reformulation. This characteristic of the fueros will be discussed in a later chapter on the towns. Derek Lomax, *The Reconquest of Spain* (London, 1978), has a useful general sketch in "Conditions of Warfare," pp. 94-111. In two critical studies, "The Origins and Development of Municipal Military Service in the Leonese and Castilian Reconquest, 800-1250," *Traditio* 26 (1970):91-111, and "Townsmen and Soldiers: The Interaction of Urban and Military Organization in the Militias of Medieval Castile," *Speculum* 46 (1971):641-655, James F. Powers goes as far as is currently possible in analyzing the terminology of the fuero material and the conclusions that may be
drawn from it. He also reviews the earlier literature on the subject. Further progress will depend on the sifting of the charters.

77. Muñoz y Romero, *Colección de fueros*, pp. 281-286. Moreover, this service might be limited to the immediate area of a town, as seems indicated by the difficulties of getting the men of Compostela to serve in the Portuguese campaign of 1120; Flórez, HC, *ES*, 20:325. The reference apparently is to the fuero of Compostela granted by Count Raymond in December of 1105, which limited their obligation to an expedition of one day only; López Ferreiro, *Historia*, 3:61-63 app.

79. Ibid., pp. 132-133.
80. Ibid., pp. 152-153.
81. Ibid., p. 168: "Jam Galliciani diem repatriandi statuunt...."
82. Ibid., p. 169.
83. Ibid., p. 163.