

PROJECT WHITE PAPER · REVISED

An Operating Manual for a Closing World

*The Libro del Conoscimiento as archive, armorial, circuit,
contingency file — and as a book that hides a second book*

28 August 2026 · revised after remainder review

Companion: Master Volume (63 pp.) · [itinerary_map.html](#)

Abstract

The anonymous Castilian Book of the Knowledge has been labeled a Franciscan itinerary, a Mandeville-style fiction, a sapiential encyclopedia, and a world roll of arms. Those names describe surfaces. The object is a portable file for a Eurasian system that was closing while the author lived: Ilkhanid Persia after Abu Sa'id (1335), the Latin road to Khanbaliq going dark, the Horde's tamga still readable, the Atlantic islands not yet a conquest chronicle. Geography is the drawer. The painted device is the file. The Seville circuit is the witness. This revision adds what the first white paper under-read: the plague is absent; Malsa and Magot share one sensory formula; Jews as well as Latin and Armenian Christians are in the gazetteer; the speaker subtracts himself; Part V is still Markham, not a new Castilian text. The second book — doors, assets, recipes, gates — is hidden inside the first so it will copy after the courts and the signs have been replaced.

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1. The object, the witnesses, the motive problem

Full title, from the Castilian rubric: a book of the knowledge of all the kingdoms, lands, and lordships that are in the world, and of the signals and arms that each land has, and of the kings and lords who provision them. Four manuscripts: S (Madrid BNE 1997), most complete, base of Jimenez 1877 and Markham 1912; N (BNE 9055); R (Salamanca BUS 1890); Z (Munich BSB Cod.hisp. 150), Zurita's copy, facsimile Lacarra 1999. Z, N, and R share one lost exemplar. S descends from another. Painters worked from written blazons. The same sentence produces different pictures.

Jimenez sold an authentic Franciscan journey of about 1350. Later criticism settled on imaginary travel with an armorial payload, perhaps painted in the 1370s-1380s. Lacarra: sapiential encyclopedia that happens to walk. Marino: a herald could have used travel as pretext. All describe contents. None say why a Castilian would weld itinerary, hydrography, heraldry, day-counts, two roads to Cathay, a named gate, and a closed circuit into one object.

Working premise: the voice is first-hand enough to treat as itinerary of body and report. The structures below do not depend on that. They are on the page. The premise only changes their weight. The premise is not yet measured. No one has counted I departed / I stayed / I saw / they say. Until that census exists, hybrid is a shape, not a number.

2. What was disappearing on his clock

He dates one day: 11 September 1304, stacked on seven eras (Hebrew 5065, Flood 4407, Nebuchadnezzar 2502, Alexander 1617, Caesar / Spanish Era 1343, Christ 1304, Arabs 706). One- and two-year misses are transmission drift in an Alfonsine clerk. If the birth holds, he is of travel age in the last years of the open corridor, and of writing age after it fails.

Abu Sa'id dies in November 1335. The narrative treats that death as a climax: vow to convert, Armenian cross in the van, Hajji-poisoning, another report that a favourite wife poisoned him in the bath. After 1335 that court does not exist. Montecorvino's see at Khanbaliq dies with him around 1328-1330; by the 1350s Latin priests in China are gone; 1368 shuts the Yuan window. The book still lists Solin, Magi monuments, Cathay merchants at Cato, and sixty-five days up the Magot. If the painted book is late, that eastern matter is salvage.

Ozbeg reigns 1313-1341. The red mark on white at Norgancio and Sara is a Golden Horde tamga, drawn in Z and R in a form that also sits on Dulcert 1339. Nearer erasures: Acre 1291, Avignon holding the papacy, Templars gone in his childhood, Granada unfinished, France changing from seme of lilies to three lilies in 1376. That last rewrite is inside

the tradition: Z paints seme; S paints three.

3. Form as argument

The title demotes lived experience. The first person is not the subject. It is the authentication protocol. A copied atlas can be called a copy. A body that leaves Seville and returns to Seville is harder to dismiss. Testimony is what you write when you expect the next generation to be told a different story.

The computus is the same skill as the flags: convert without losing the object. Magot, not Cathay, is the hinge — a stay at a gate of enclosed Tartary, Alexander-wall geography, Goths who came out when they deliberated on the siege of Alexandre. Prester John is re-sited under Abdeselib on the Nile, first European parking of that king in Africa, on the same page as the 1291 Vivaldi wreck. Hope is moved because the old site has gone dark.

4. The seven-leg file

The six-chapter modernizations rendered the European-Levant-Persian spine and omitted half the book. The pre-translation circuit is seven legs that close on themselves.

Leg	Arc	Files
I	Castile to Lviv via France, Flanders, Rhine, Baltic, Bohemia	Highest civic and dynastic density
II	Sweden / Norway / Britain / Ireland / isles / second Spain	Ocean loop. Polar day. Finisterre return
III	Narbonne to Rhodes via Avignon, Italy, Venice, Hungary	Papal and civic Mid-Sea
IV	Anatolia, Cilicia, Cyprus, Jerusalem, Egypt, Maghreb	Levant plus first Africa
V	Boujdour, 25 islands, Guinea, Dongola, Malsa, Aden, India, Java, Cathay, Magot	Omitted half. African Prester John
VI	Bocarin, Cato, Urgench, Caspian, Tabriz, Shiraz, salt ark	Eastern hinge. Tamga. Abu Sa'id
VII	Kur, Cyprus, Constantinople, Derbent, Volga, Flanders, Seville	Return braid. Z silent. S/R close

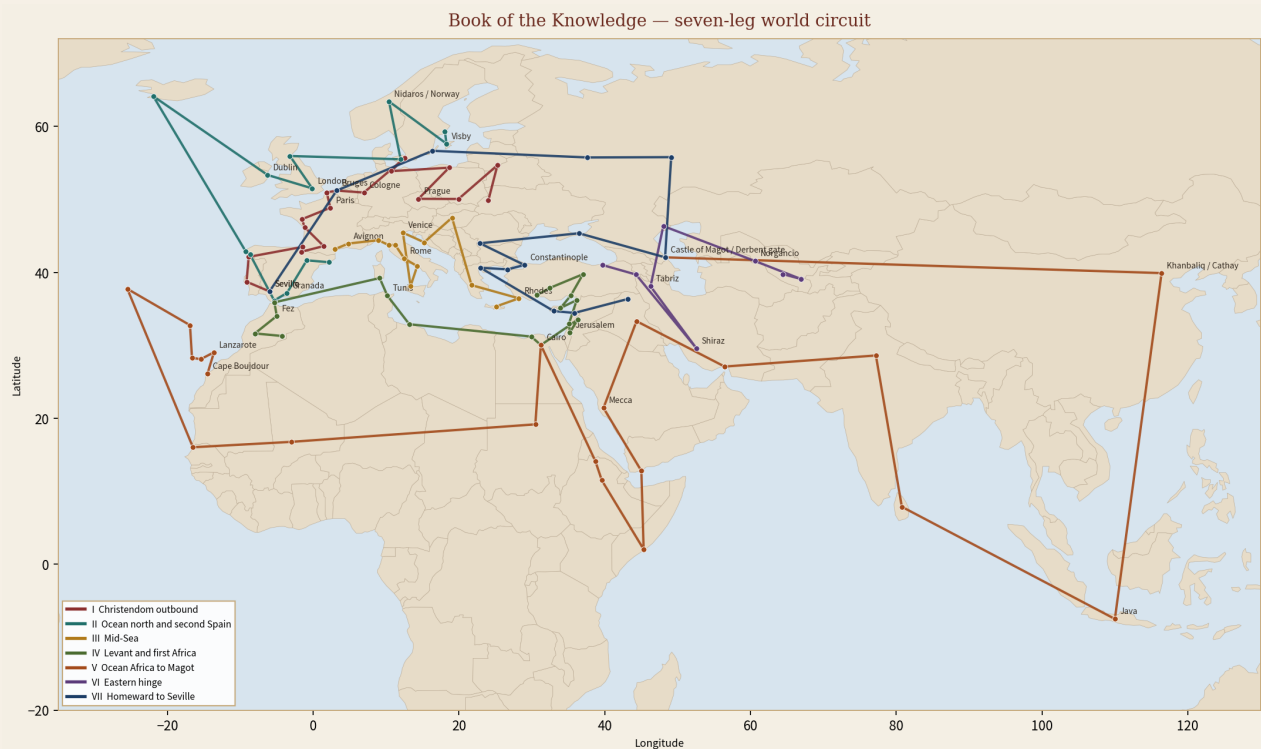


Figure 1. Seven-leg circuit. Leg V pulls the file to Java and Khanbaliq before the hook west to Magot. The line is the book's claim, not a measured track.

5. Modules and the two roads

Working figures: 4 days Loire to Paris; 8 miles Calais to England; 60 miles Denmark to Norway; 6 days on the Draa; 25 Magot to Bocarin; 35 merchants to Cato; 30 Urgench to the Caspian shore; 40 Java and Red Sea inland; 50 Indian gulf; 60 Dongola to Cairo; 65 Guinea river and Magot river; 125 for the Caspian spur and again for Persia's length; Persia 100 wide; enclosed Tartary 100 by 70.

125 used twice is a classification: mountain system and empire are the same kind of object, a barrier that takes a season and a third to cross. At 25-30 km a day, 125 days is 3,000-3,700 km, the right order for a Caspian-to-Hormuz idea of Persia, not a paced road. Symbolic figures sit beside those: 360 towns in the Armenian ring (completeness); 154 regions of Magdasor as a quarter of the earth's face (rank, not census); 90 parishes on Gotland; 1.5 million cavalry.

Road 1, north. Constantinople, Azov, Avegazia, King David, Greater Armenia, Iron Gate, Caspian, Janula, Trastago, Urgench, mountains, Cato, Bocarin, Cathay. **Road 2, south.** Cyprus, Armenia, Sivas, Euphrates at Argot, Mesopotamia, Kur, Tabriz, Samarqand, Scim of the field-living, Cathay. After 1335 the north-Persian road dies. Writing both is contingency. Iron Gate may also be two gates wearing one name: Derbent on the Caspian and Alexander's wall at Magot. If so, Road 1 is more recipe than track.

6. Armorial filing and the Z / S rewrite

File	S	Z / N / R	Meaning
France	Three lilies (post-1376)	Z fol. 3r: field seme	Dates the painted book
Navarre	Chain-net of Las Navas	Lilies over chains	Old badge vs new court
Lemberg	Green, red cross	Cross from a crescent	Poland / Lviv confused
Prester John	Cross and crooks	Each MS invents a staff picture	Office agreed, drawing not
Ozbeq / Sara	White, red sign	Tamga matching Dulcert	Paint, words, history lock
Bocarin / Cato	Shared starred yellow	Stars sometimes dropped in paint	Prefer the words
End	Flanders to Seville	Z incomplete	Follow S/R for the proof

Shared devices are a graph. Field-living Java and field-living Scim are one ethnographic class on the Khan's roads. Double Magi (Cologne and Solin) keep the world rhymed. Double Persia, outbound and inbound in a different order, is the hardest thing to fake in a compiled atlas. The last Baltic-Flanders-Seville stretch sheds painted arms: home does not get a device. The close is a signature.

7. The second book: what is hidden, and why

Most of what is still buried is not a cipher. It is a second book written in the same sentences as the first. The first book is kingdoms and painted signs. The second is which doors still open, who already stands inside them, and what to do when the signs get repainted.

7.1 Two holy-operational camps

At Malsa, under Prester John, he says he saw and heard marvellous things every day. At the castle of Magot he says the same sentence again. Those are the only two stays justified that way. South hinge and east hinge. The book does not have one climax in Cathay. It has two camps where the file stops and listens.

7.2 An inter-confessional gazetteer, not only a Latin asset roll

Armenian guards at the Persian court, a Coman ship on the Caspian, Cathay merchants who call themselves Christian at Cato, Nubian Christians at Dongola, Abdeselib, Genoese on the Nile and in the Black Sea grammar — that is a roll of people who can already talk across the line. It is not the whole roll. At Cape Boujdour he finds Moors and Jews. Paradise is named in three tongues: Greek Ortodoxis, Jewish Ganheden, Latin Paraiso Terrenal. Chaldea's sea is the Black Sea to him and the Persian Sea to the Jews. At Sant Estropoli the Coman Christians are of Jewish descent — a Khazar-shaped memory on the Caspian road. The second book files who calls which sea what, before that becomes unsayable.

7.3 Hydrography as skeleton

Two four-river machines: Taurus (Tigris, Cur, three-armed Euphrates, Surmena) and Paradise under Prester John. Then a quieter pair: eastern Nile from Dongola and Rio del Oro as western Nile. Jordan is the river that dies, swallowed by two lakes. When theology and seamanship split, this is how the sacred map stays inside a rutter.

7.4 Naming as possession

Twenty-five Atlantic islands, Lanzarote named from the dead Genoese, Canaries / Madeiras / Azores grouped together. In this century a name on a page is the start of a claim. A conquest chronicle that names islands is an act of war. A travel book that names them is information. Castile gets a world-file in its own language without announcing a fight with the Majorcan-Catalan atlas houses.

7.5 Why hide it

A Castilian world-rutter titled as a rutter picks a fight. A list of Christians and Jews at Tabriz, Urgench, and Boujdour titled as a list does not copy for a hundred years. Gog and Magog titled as prophecy makes a prophet. All three copy if they look like a man walking from Seville to Seville, naming flags. The first book is the one that gets painted. The second is the one captains extracted in 1402, and the one the three lilies of S are already overwriting.

8. Silences that are evidence

The plague is not in the book. If the painted object is 1370s-1380s, he writes after the Black Death and never mentions it. A chronicle of his age would. A file of kingdoms would not. The persona still lives in a pre-1348 world. Either the journey-memory is that old, or the mask is.

Almost no food, prices, lodgings, weather (except the frozen Baltic), language-learning, liturgy, or inner life. He sees the Pope at Avignon and does not hear a mass on the page. Women appear as poison in one report of Abu Sa'id and as someone else's genealogy. England has a place of general studies called Gunsa — Oxford or Cambridge heard wrong — and the speaker does not stay to study. The self is hidden harder than Gog and Magog. A man building a world-file subtracts himself so the file outlives him. The missing plague and the missing I felt are the same decision.

9. Afterlife: 1402

Bethencourt and Gadifer sail from La Rochelle for the Canaries. Their chaplains, wanting the mainland beyond Bojador, the River of Gold, and Prester John, fall back on the book of a Spanish friar. Within two generations the text is a kit. That is the control experiment. The sapiential reader was also right: it is an encyclopedia. Both audiences were supposed to hold the same object. He never writes a purpose-prologue. A stated purpose can be banned or dated. An unstated purpose has to be inferred from use.

10. What the edition has not yet done

Part V of the master volume is a cleaned Markham 1912 English text, not a new translation from Castilian S and not a collation of Z. Footnote ghosts remain. The six chapter files of 2026 were often cleaner than the OCR strip. No facing-page S. No verb census. No toponym-by-toponym map onto Dulcert or the Catalan Atlas. Piri Reis (1513), raised in the early analysis, was not followed. Hereford Mappa Mundi was used once to normalize marvels and then dropped; a tight shared/unshared list is still owed. Lacarra's 1385 date hangs on a Lanzarote notice that has not been isolated sentence-for-sentence in S versus Z. Iron Gate is still one pin on the map.

The next empirical pass is not another theory. It is a three-column sheet: Castilian S / modern English / verb-type, with the Malsa and Magot sentences side by side, and the Lanzarote notice transcribed from both families.

11. Implications

If the itinerary is first-hand in the European and Persian bands and reported beyond, then a Christian-and-Jewish corridor still ran to Urgench in the 1330s; Armenian clergy translated Ilkhanid high politics; the Caspian was a Christian-navigated sea; Noah's ark was already a white salt lithology with a ban on ascent; West Africa had a named island-set precise enough to steal. The quiet argument is that Christendom already has marks inside the Mongol-Islamic belt and along the Atlantic face of Africa. That is an intelligence object and a Castilian claim-file against a Catalan atlas monopoly.

The sentence he never writes, and which the book executes: file every sovereignty under its sign, because the sign will be repainted; file every road as a recipe, because the courts that kept the roads open are dying; file the people already east and south of the expected line, because those networks will be forgotten; file Magot and Malsa as camps, not wonders; close the circuit at Seville so the file has a home port and a witness.

Sources

Jimenez de la Espada 1877. Markham, Hakluyt Society 2nd ser. 29, 1912. Marino 1999. Lacarra, Lacarra Ducay, Montaner, facsimile of Z, 1999. Ashley and Clemmensen, *The Coat of Arms* 4th ser. 4 no. 238 (2021). Jackson, *The Mongols and the West*. Bontier and Le Verrier, *Le Canarien* (1402; Hakluyt English 1872). Project volumes, 28 August 2026: Master Volume; Findings; Map and Timeline; Armorial and Z Collation; Complete Modern English Rendering.

End of the revised white paper.