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“Alfonso X Writes to His Son: Reflections on the *Crónica de Alfonso X*”

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Preface

Dr. Paula K. Rodgers has kindly consented to an electronic republication of an article she published on the basis of her dissertation “Prolegomena to a Critical Edition of the *Crónica de Alfonso X*”, as a companion piece to the dissertation itself, which can be accessed at <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/3rk2d1ft>. The article presents a remarkable achievement in textual reconstruction based on a large number of textual witnesses, all of which were described and placed in a stemma in her dissertation.

I am grateful to Professor Roberto González-Casnovas, Spanish, European and Latin American Studies, School of Cultures, Languages and Linguistics, University of Auckland, New Zealand (r.gonzalez@auckland.ac.nz), for permission to reproduce the article from the journal he edited, *Exemplaria Hispanica*.

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Alfonso X Writes to His Son: Reflections on the *Crónica de Alfonso X*

(together with a commentary on
and critical text of
the unique Alfonsine letter
that it preserves)

Paula K. Rodgers
University of California at Davis

The fourteenth-century *Crónica de Alfonso X* is the only nearly-contemporary extended account of the reign of Spain's most celebrated medieval king, Alfonso the Learned, who ruled Castile and Leon from 1252 to 1284. Among his achievements in law, letters and science, Alfonso initiated the two monumental historical projects known as the *Estoria de España* and the *General estoria*. Alfonso's plan and personal direction inform both, and together they mark the beginnings of modern Spanish history in the vernacular. Posterity's almost antonomastic association of Alfonso with early Spanish historiography is hardly exaggerated. It is therefore supremely ironic that the chronicle devoted to the events of the reign of the great historian himself has been described as seriously flawed by chronological error, misinformation and a general insufficiency of detail.

Coming to terms with the errors first pointed out by the Marqués de Mondéjar in 1777, modern historians tend to concur in negative evaluations (Mondéjar 569 ff, Ballesteros 418, Hillgarth 425). Even Evelyn Procter, whose 1931 assessment remains to this day the most fertile, summed up that the *Crónica* is late, unreliable, and in general, an unsatisfactory source (Procter 1931: 39, 53). Consequently, the Chronicle rests in the key moment between the justly famous Alfonsine *estorias* and the well-known chronicles of Pero López de Ayala almost totally

neglected by all save a few political historians, who, while they continue to mine its contents, correcting it against the documentary evidence, rail against its real and perceived shortcomings.

Procter was the first to note that the seventy-seven chapters of the *Crónica* fall into three natural groupings. The first, chapters 1 to 19, is devoted to the early years of the reign to 1271, and establishes the annalistic structure typical of the *Crónica*. The imposition of the year-by-year organization is probably responsible for many of the numerous chronological errors in these early chapters. However, factual error is also common, and the entire section is characterized by what can only be described as maddeningly spotty coverage and a somniferous style. The overall negative evaluations of the *Crónica* are without doubt based on reactions to this first group of chapters.

The third section, comprising chapters 59 to 77, narrates the events from 1274 to 1284 and is a great deal more detailed and accurate, almost certainly because the events clustered around the problem of succession were dramatic in themselves, occurred closer in time to the writing of the *Crónica* and created problems for the ruling dynasty which were to continue into the era of the fourteenth-century chronicler, Fernán Sánchez de Valladolid. Procter observed some bias in favor of Alfonso's second son Sancho after his revolt against his father, and believed that bias compromised the fullness of the account. In any event, Fernán Sánchez lived the aftermath of the final tragic years of Alfonso's reign; he witnessed the struggles of Sancho's royal descendents to defend themselves against the ever-difficult nobility and pretenders with strong claims to the throne, and his engaging, if not snappy, style reflects that involvement.

Procter pointed out that the second or middle section of the Chronicle, chapters 20 through 58, is superior in accuracy of detail and breadth of coverage to the other two. It describes just four years (1271-74) and fills almost half of the *Crónica*, which covers a reign of thirty-two years. The middle section deals with one crucial affair, the revolt of the nobles, who, led by the King's brother Don Felipe and the *ricohombre* Don Nuño de Lara, had gone into exile to Granada in protest against Alfonso's alleged violations of their traditional rights and privileges. The section is different from the other two in more than proportion. It includes, with little narrative interruption, a collection of letters which appear to be copies of originals sent and received by the royal household. If the letters are not inventions of the chronicler, they are in themselves sufficient to guarantee the historical value of the *Crónica*. Their compilation is an example of documentary history at its best.

The internal evidence suggests that all the letters are authentic. At no other point in the *Crónica* does the author break off the narrative to include an extensive body of documentary evidence. On the other hand, he does refer in all three sections and with some frequency to a written source or sources (Rosell XV 11, XXI 17, XLIV 33, XLIX 37, LV 44, LVIII 47, LXVII 53, LXVIII 53, LXIX 54). It is clear that there was some earlier account of the reign, which may have included, or been accompanied by, the collection of letters. Procter believed that the entire middle section is an earlier and document-based record of the revolt, composed during or shortly after the events, and later incorporated *in toto* by the fourteenth-century chronicler into his own work.

In form and intention the several letters of the collection which are from the King are significantly different from the public documents issued by the royal chancery known as *cartas plomadas* and *cartas abiertas*. They lack the usual introductory formula of notification, *sepan quantos esta carta vieren*; the salutation, the internal formulae of dating and the subscription of the redactor. Rather, all begin with the simple identification of the addressee, followed immediately by a summary of the items the King proceeds to discuss. The majority of these letters are addressed to the rebels and refer to the King in the third person; they were relayed by the royal messengers, Gonzalo Ruiz de Atienza and Sancho Pérez (Rosell XXVII 24, XXXVII 29, XXXVIII 30, XLIX 36, LI 38). While the procedure suggests that the King wished to distance himself in his displeasure from the rebels, and the letters all carry political import, their contents are predominantly personal in nature.

It is unlikely that the letters from the King were issued by the chancery, nor would they have been copied into the chancery registers, none of which survive. They were probably dictated by Alfonso to his chamber notary and preserved as records of his chamber secretariat. There have been some efforts to identify such a secretariat, dependent specially upon the monarch's personal needs and designed to handle matters requiring particular discretion, as the antecedent of the fourteenth-century chancery *de la poridad* (Procter 1968: 117, Sánchez Belda 217). The fact that Fernán Sánchez de Valladolid was *canciller de la poridad* under the Learned King's great-grandson Alfonso XI, suggests that such records would have been available to him. In any case, the letters point to a subgenre of royal correspondence that has not been studied.

Among the letters from the King, there is only one that Alfonso directed to a member of his party. It is addressed to his son and heir, Fernando de La Cerda, who at the time was in Córdoba with the King's

commission to defend the frontier and act as intermediary to the rebels. The letter is not dated, but would have been written in late May or early June of 1273 (Ballesteros 648). The case for authenticity of the letter is strengthened by the fact that a collation of the versions provided by seven MSS representative of the main families of the thirty-five witnesses of the *Crónica* revealed virtually no significant variation, with the notable exception of vacillation on verb tense and mood. This is not the case in other sections of the *Crónica* collated. Copyists were evidently reluctant to tamper with the King's word. It is probable that a chronicler nurtured in the same tradition would have been more hesitant to invent it. Most telling, the investigators who have mentioned Alfonso's letter to his son, the Marqués de Mondéjar (306 ff), Antonio Ballesteros Beretta (650 ff), Francisco Rico (107 ff) and Manuel González Jiménez (xcii) never pause to consider the possibility that the letter might be an invention of the chronicler. Francisco Rico's faith in the authenticity of the letter is eloquently implicit in his use of its style and content as the basis for the identification of passages in the *General estoria* which Alfonso personally wrote.

Alfonso's letter to his son is explicitly secret: the last lines warn Fernando that only the King's illegitimate son, Alfonso Fernández, and his trusted advisors, Jofre de Loaysa and Diego de Corral, are to be privy to its contents (Appendix 1: 308). We are thus prepared for revelations at odds with the King's public posture as the patient, even-tempered monarch who repeatedly initiated negotiations in face of the rebels' continued refusals, in which they invariably upped the ante in their demands (Ballesteros 574 ff). The King's irritation is transparent from the outset in his despective reference to the rebels as "*esos que son en Granada*" (3). After a summation of the contents of Fernando's last communication from the frontier, Alfonso reveals that his annoyance extends to Fernando's handling of affairs: he states that when he received the Prince's letter, he was in Avila, ill with a cold and fever, which upset him, as it kept him from dealing with the pressing business at hand, but he was more upset on reading Fernando's account of the news from Córdoba (18-24). The King points out to his son that the advice which had informed the Prince's actions was clearly not trustworthy as it was given by the Masters of the military orders of Uclés and Calatrava, the first of whom was cautiously but nevertheless certainly supporting the rebels, the second of whom was intimately linked by family ties with one of the leaders of the revolt, Lope Díaz de Haro (25-46). Alfonso does not expressly indict Fernando for having followed their advice, but the negative criticism is implicit as Alfonso proceeds im-

mediately to analyze the situation and its roots, all of which should have been intuitively obvious to the trainee for the throne.

Under the guise of a lesson in history and government for the Prince, the analysis affords Alfonso the opportunity to vent his frustration in face of the threat to the monarchy inherent in the attitude of the nobles. He repeatedly returns to the leitmotif of their self-interest and ingratitude. In a studied parallelistic style, the King summarily dispatches the nobles' assertions that they had moved against him for the *fuero* that he had taken from them, for the *tuertos* that he had committed against them and, in general, for the *pro de la tierra* (50-60). The rhetorical parallelisms quickly move Alfonso's defense forward, without addressing the issues, to his main point: that the reason for the revolt rests squarely in the nobles' desire to limit the monarch's power and enrich themselves at the expense of the crown, just as the forefathers of these same nobles had harried the ancestors of Alfonso (61-65).

Alfonso prepares for his next shot with another series of perfectly balanced and rapid parallel statements on the historical generosity of his royal ancestors requited invariably by rebellion and ingratitude on the part of the ancestors of the nobles (65-74). Here, he is calling to mind the subversive activities of the fathers of the two greatest magnates, who together with Don Felipe, Alfonso's brother, led the revolt, Nuño de Lara and Lope Díaz de Haro. The careers of the older Lara and Haro ended in disgrace and exile, brought on by overweening ambition and greed (Ballesteros 21 ff, 520 ff). The series is designed to throw into high relief the sarcastic conclusion that such is the *fuero* and *pro de la tierra* that the nobles have always sought (74-75).

At this point, Alfonso slips in a reference to the great preoccupation which shaped his public policy of benevolent conciliation toward the rebellious nobles: the King was anxious to leave the Peninsula to pursue his claim as emperor-elect to the Holy Roman Empire, frankly admitted as his most important concern (76-79). He could hardly pursue that claim until the revolt was settled and the southern frontier was relatively secure. The reference is revealing as it has little to do with the development of the argument to this point, or with Fernando's business on the frontier. The overriding concern intrudes because Alfonso was pressed for time. As the days passed, his chances of securing the title diminished.

Furthermore, the issue of the Empire was inextricably involved with the question of the monetary services due the nobles. An extraordinary sum would be necessary to finance the retinues of the magnates who were to accompany the King abroad. The King, always financially

strapped, hoped to cover those costs in part with the tribute due him from Granada, which had not been paid for the last two years. He is non-plussed that the nobles should request that the crown pay the tab as compensation for the income on their lands in Castile and Leon which, by customary law, they had not received since abandoning the realm (79-82). The reference to the *ida del imperio*, then, recalls the King's frame of reference for his course of action during the revolt. The impatience he shows here with what he considered the nobles' inherited tendency to self-interested and obstructionist behavior contrasts violently with the series of royal concessions in which the revolt finally ended (Ballesteros 660 ff).

Alfonso then addresses the nobles' threat that they will support Yusef, Emir of Morocco, in a massive invasion. In an attempt to reassure Fernando, who was at the first line of defense on the frontier in Córdoba, the King minimizes the threat, as well as the nobles, in his use of the curiously familiar term *chufar* (90, 125). He then reminds Fernando of the fate of earlier invasions in an historical digression on his great-grandfather, Alfonso VIII, the disastrous battle of Alarcos of 1195, and the dramatic recovery of the monarchy that followed. Alfonso VIII eventually triumphed over an invader more powerful than Yusef, who was supported by traitorous nobles more numerous, of better lineage, and, more intelligent, than those presently in Granada (97-102). Our Alfonso cannot resist the temptation to point out that Alarcos was lost due to the cowardice of Diego López de Haro, the great-grandfather of one of the leaders of the current revolt; he relishes the opportunity to recall sarcastically that the traitor is known as "*el Bueno*" (109-114).

In the following lines, Alfonso turns to the substance of the threat from Granada and Morocco. It is not clear if Alfonso sincerely believed the threat to be minimal or if his attitude arises from a desire to reassure Fernando. The fact that such an invasion actually took place in 1275, when Alfonso was in Beaucaire, where he was forced to relinquish his bid for the Empire (Ballesteros 745 ff), may be taken to support the latter interpretation. In any case, in the letter the important enemy in Alfonso's mind is not the infidel (118-37).

He reacts strongly, however, on the key question of his alliance with the *arrayazes* of Malaga and Guadix, rebellious vassals of Granada, and Alfonso's ace-in-the-hole as he sought to keep the Emir of Granada constantly off balance. By the treaty of Alcalá de Benzaide of 1265, Alfonso had agreed to withdraw his support of the *arrayazes* (Ballesteros 385). His failure to do so was the key issue of contention with the Emir of Granada. The Emir surely found profound satisfaction in his tit

for tat support of the rebels against Alfonso. It was the news of Fernando's decision to follow the advice of the *Maestres* of Uclés and Calatrava and officially agree to the treaty, while secretly continuing to aid and abet the *arrayazes*, all summarized in the first lines of the letter (5-10), which so aggravated Alfonso's cold.

We gain an insight on intrigue and on Alfonso's mental processes in his interpretation of his brother Don Felipe's communication that in Granada it was broadcast that no harm should be done to the *arrayazes*. For Alfonso, it is a cunning maneuver designed to lead him to question his allies' loyalty (138-42). Given that Don Felipe had not been especially helpful in his earlier communications, Alfonso's interpretation was most likely accurate. His response is fierce: to abandon the *arrayazes* would bring dishonor and shame; it must not even occur to Fernando to mention the possibility; whosoever advises such a policy, advises it as a traitor (142-48). The King's anger leads him to a statement of his position vis à vis the rebels that is utterly at odds with his subsequent conciliatory behavior and the ultimate resolution of the conflict. He states succinctly that from this moment on, unless the nobles obey him in his every command, without the promise of recompense, they are not to be heard (151-55). Alfonso here is all sick and no carrot.

Alfonso assures Fernando that the crown will prevail, as the law, justice, truth and God are on its side. His parallel statement on the king as the instrument to enforce and defend the law in face of the nobles who do all possible to destroy it evokes a complex of associations on Alfonso's troubles in imposing a uniform municipal law code in face of the nobles' insistence on their customary privileges (157-60). Alfonso's confidence in the justice of his course prepares for his remarks on the only real danger to the royal position: the harm that the royals may do to themselves (166-68), an allusion to Fernando's mistake with the *arrayazes*, and in fact, the chief admonition of the letter. Alfonso softens his remarks adding that God will guard the king as He guarded his ancestors (170-71), and he proceeds to bolster the Prince's confidence in yet another string of parallel constructions contrasting the wealth of Castile and Leon with the meager resources of Granada (171-78).

In lines 179-86 the King returns to the theme of the reputed intelligence of the rebels. He deals concisely with Don Nuño de Lara, the cleverest of the lot, who followed in the footsteps of his ancestors, and in his ingratitude to God and the King, had lost everything in this "*locura*" (179-86). Alfonso does not mention that it was his personal protection of Don Nuño that had rescued and augmented the latter's honor, inherited titles and possessions following the senior Lara's dis-

grace (Ballesteros 602). Does Alfonso here refuse to stoop to the question of personal ingratitude, or is he aware that his affection was inappropriate in its excess, dangerous in a king? Continuing the theme of divine support, Alfonso refers to his brother Don Felipe, who had shown his intelligence by abandoning the archbishopric of Seville (186-90). Alfonso implies that the Prince had rejected God, and was paying. The statement is surprising as the public Alfonso had reacted tolerantly and generously. He had provided Felipe with alternate sources of income and a royal bride (Ballesteros 197, 597 ff).

From line 193 Alfonso points out that the rebels claim to count among their number many *ricoshombres*, the highest nobility, related to kings, when in fact there are only Don Felipe, Don Nuño and his sons, Don Lope Díaz de Haro and Don Estéban Fernández (194-97). The King feels no need to comment on the nobles' presumption in counting Lope de Mendoza and Fernán Ruiz as *ricoshombres*. It is an error to conclude that Alfonso here indulges in nobiliary sniping. Rather, he makes the point because the *ricoshombres* controlled vast resources of men and wealth and were therefore a more serious threat than nobles of lesser category. Alfonso implies that the rebels need to bolster their ranks in swaggering posturing. The comment provides him with the opportunity to describe in contrast the caliber of the nobles who remain loyal, which, in turn, leads logically to remarks on the growing numbers of defectors from the rebels' cause. Alfonso concludes that the defections will continue, highlighting in his balanced style, by now recognized as typical, an insightful summary of the past and the future of his economic-based dealings with the nobility. He states that more will defect, "*conosciendo el bien que les fize y lo otro cobdiçando el bien que les quiero fazer*" (206-7).

In the remainder of the letter Alfonso offers practical advice to his son as guardian of the frontier. The recurring theme of poor or false counsel appears in lines 211, 215, 229, 233, 239, 278. In the same context, Alfonso warns Fernando that he must maintain close contact with the loyal nobles on the frontier in his service; he must promise them that the King will reward them for their service, and that he has the resources to keep his promise. Alfonso, cynically or realistically, does not trust them (267-75). Inseparable from all discussion of the nobles, loyal and otherwise, the theme of financing the Prince's endeavors is also constant; it appears in lines 233, 263, and from lines 278 to the conclusion of the business of the letter in line 302. In this context, there is the admonition that the Prince must not continue to hand out money, privileges and *otras cosas* to Uclés and Calatrava (288-96). The

King shrewdly sees that the Masters play off father against son in the matter of concessions, and he insists on absolute control of the purse strings. Reflecting on past experience and future possibilities, Alfonso shows his frustration in the hyperbolic statement "*desta guisa non ha aver en el mundo que conpliese, nin yo lo podria conplir*" (295-96).

The King's advice is an admixture of criticism of what Fernando has done to this point and indications of what he should do in the future. Instead of the futile attack on Algiers, he should have attacked Granada directly (240-45). He should have seen that the galleys in the Straits of Gibraltar were equipped to prevent an invasion from Morocco (246-49). He should have divided his men among the two *arrayazes* in such a way that when the Emir of Granada attacked one, the other would attack from behind (250-53). And, instead of spreading his forces among the frontier castles, he should unite them for an organized foray into enemy territory (212-228). Reminiscent of the manuals for the education of Princes, and strikingly similar to the conclusion of one of Don Juan Manuel's *exempla*, Alfonso includes the general maxim: "*si agora en vuestro comienço en estas cosas errades despues cuando las quisieredes emendar non podredes*" (237-39).

In this section, there appears to be a clarification of the Prince's activities from his headquarters in Córdoba which the political historians have missed. In lines 240-45 Alfonso writes that Fernando should have invaded Granada's lands when instead he launched an assault against Algiers. The contrary-to-fact dimension of the statement is fairly clear in the introductory *en lugar de*. The form *fuera*, derived from the Latin pluperfect indicative, must carry here its non-fact, subjunctive function in hypothetical clauses, as the side-by-side usage of the newer synthetic subjunctive form, *ovierades perdida*, provides the past-perfect time reference. Furthermore, in lines 219 to 224, Alfonso urges Fernando to invade the *vega de Granada*, now, in the early summer, *mientras es el pan verde*. If this reading of the passage is correct, Fernando had not yet waged the campaign against Granada, and his failure to do so was one of the reasons for his father's irritation.

Antonio Ballesteros Beretta cites a document from Cáceres, dated February 12 of 1275, in which Alfonso rewarded the men of the city who accompanied Fernando in the invasion of the *vega*. We know, therefore, that such an invasion took place. Ballesteros, who comments on our letter at some length in another context (650 ff), disregards the evidence it provides on this point to assume that the invasion of the *vega* was part of the offensive against Algiers, which took place late in 1272 (594). Apparently following Ballesteros' lead, González Jiménez

concludes the same (xcii). In the larger scheme of things, the point is small, but it does suggest that the letter, in fact the letters as a group, may afford the opportunity for future discoveries of significance.

The final lines reassure Fernando that his father is on his way to join him. The reassurance is reiterated in the King's confident affirmation that if the Prince reflects and acts on the advice contained in the letter, the boasting from Granada will turn into something entirely different, presumably better. Nevertheless, the concluding note of confidence is somewhat qualified by the final admonition to secrecy.

In sum, the letter portrays a man whose roles as king and as father are virtually inseparable. This is due in part to the political purpose of the letter, but also to the fact that this father was first and foremost the father of a future king. As such, Alfonso's confidence and reassurances to Fernando are never based in praise of the Prince's personal attributes, but rather in the conviction of the righteousness of the monarchy. His criticism, while never harsh, is direct, and his instructions are explicit. The stakes were high; the future of the dynasty warranted a rational, non-nonsense approach.

In spite of the resulting somewhat impersonal tone, the letter fleshes out the shadowy image of the Alfonso behind the monarch behind the cultural endeavors and the documentary history. He reveals a capacity for righteous indignation, frustration and anger, rarely expressed beyond the confines of this letter, but always latent in the caution and perspicacity his advisors exercised when dealing with him (e.g. Rosell XIX 14). We see as well his overriding concern for the Imperial title and a rather cavalier attitude toward the nagging economic problems. He shows a particular fondness for the disciplines of history and law, the bulwarks of his policy. And, he reveals himself to be no mean military strategist. The integrity of his personality is never compromised by purely personal carping. The curious reference to his cold and fever at the beginning of the letter (19-24) is remarkably out of step in his self-portrayal. It may be a variation of the *captatio benevolentiae* employed rhetorically to cast his reaction to the news from Córdoba in the most negative terms possible. If so, it is further evidence of the careful stylist whose tendency towards parallel structures suggests an ordered and ordering intelligence. The intelligence is no surprise, but the emotional energy, the strength and the attention to detail here depicted all negate the still popular image of Alfonso as a weak king whose political failures were due to his absent-minded pursuit of intellectual interests.

The foregoing remarks barely suggest the resources of information that remain to be worked in the *Crónica*. We err in dismissing a source

because sections of it are flawed by factual error. It is worth reaffirming that the broader insights provided by texts considered primarily political history are valuable complements to the data. On the other hand, Peter Linehan recently showed that the Marqués of Mondéjar shaped the political history he wrote according to a political agenda of his own, and that Ballesteros is, on occasion, warmed-up Mondéjar. The *Crónica*, at least, preserves only the errors of fact and biased perspectives of the fourteenth-century chronicler. It remains a primary source.

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APPENDIX

Alfonso X's Letter to Fernando de la Cerda

Crónica de Alfonso X (LII)

Critical Text as Transcribed by
Paula K. Rodgers

The critical text is based on a collation of MSS. 829, 10195 (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid); M563 (Biblioteca Menéndez Pelayo, Santander); M.II.2, N.III.12, Y.II.15, Z.III.7 (Biblioteca del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial).

It is transcribed according to David Mackenzie, *A Manual of Manuscript Transcription for the Dictionary of the Old Spanish Language* (Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1986). The punctuation has been inserted by me.

[*Editor's note:* The text has been divided into five-line segments to aid in reading and making references.]

1 Don Fernando,
 2 vi la carta que me enbiastes, & otrosi las que vos enbio
 3 el maestre de Calatrava, que le enbiaron esos que son
 4 en Granada. & entendi otrosi que despues que Gonçalo Ruiz
 5 veno de alla, que vos aconsejaron que enbiasedes al maestre
 6 de Calatrava a Granada que otorgase al rey de Granada
 7 el pleito de Alcalá de Bençaide & que le diese mi carta
 8 que lo jurava a buena fe que lo toviese, & que desanparasedes
 9 a los arrayazes en consejo & despues que lo non fiziesedes
 10 en poridat. & esto, que vos lo aconsejaron los maestros de Ucles
 11 & de Calatrava. & sobre esto que ovistes vuestro acuerdo
 12 de enbiar alla al maestre de Calatrava, & el que fue a Porcuna,
 13 & enbio dezir [a] aquellos que son en Granada
 14 que le enbiasen cavalleros que le guiasen. & ellos
 15 que le enbiaron su respuesta que si esto sobre dicho
 16 non leuase firmado, & pleito de sus dineros que los oviesen
 17 en Granada, que en otra guisa non avia por que ir alla.
 18 & don Fernando, quando estas cartas me llegaron,
 19 era en Avila, que venia y por hablar con los conçejos
 20 de tierra de Leon & de las Estremaduras, que fize y ayuntar,
 21 & ove y enfermedad de romadizo & de calentura poca,
 22 & peso me mucho por que en tal tiempo me acaesçiera;
 23 mas mucho resçebi mayor pesar quando entendi
 24 lo que las cartas dezian. & a lo que dezides
 25 que vos aconsejaron los maestros, bien vos deveades guardar
 26 de la maestria del maestre de Ucles en lo crear de
 27 tal consejo commo este, ca este es uno de los omnes
 28 del mundo que mas consejo a estos rricos omnes
 29 que fiziesen lo que fazen. & mande le yo
 30 que fuese derecha mente al reyno de Murçia,
 31 a do serviria a mi & a vos, & non lo quiso fazer,
 32 & fuese para vos por aconsejar a los rricos omnes
 33 esto que fazen, & a vos que fiziesedes aquello
 34 que vos dava el por consejo. & demas enbio dezir

35 al rey de Aragon que se non dexase de venir
 36 a las vistas conmigo, ca pazes eran, & que el iria a el
 37 & le diria todo el fecho commo era. & del maestre de Calatrava
 38 vos digo que commo quier que lo yo amo & lo tengo
 39 por omne bueno, se que cosa quita es de Lope Diaz
 40 por todo su linaje & aquellos que el mas amava suyos son.
 41 Pero maravillo me mucho dar vos el tal consejo,
 42 aviendo le yo dicho que si el fuese a Granada que de llano
 43 les dixiese que nunca avrian mi merçet si non se partiesen
 44 de demandar estas cosas tan sin rrazon, & demas aviendo el oido
 45 a Juan Nunnez & a Estevan Fernandez lo que vos dixieron
 46 en Jaen, & aconsejar vos el esto al.
 47 & don Fernando, quiero vos agora hablar deste fecho
 48 commo es aqui llegado & que ha menester de fazer y,
 49 por que sepades mejor y obrar & mostrar a los omnes
 50 la cosa commo es. & estos rricos omnes non se movieron
 51 contra mi
 52 por rrazon de fuero nin por tuerto que les yo toviese,
 53 ca fuero nunca gelo yo tolli, mas aun que gelo oviese tollido,
 54 pues que gelo otorgaua, mas pagados devieran ser
 55 & quedar devieran con tanto. Otrosi tuerto nunca gelo fize,
 56 mas aun que gelo oviese fecho el mayor del mundo,
 57 pues que gelo queria emendar a su bien vista dellos,
 58 non avien por que mas demandar. Otrosi por pro de la tierra
 59 non lo fazen, ca esto non lo querria ninguno tanto commo yo,
 60 cuya es la heredat, & muy poca por han ellos ende
 61 si non el bien que les nos fazemos. Mas la rrazon
 62 por que lo fizieron fue esta: por querer sienpre tener
 63 los rreyes apremiados & levar dellos lo suyo,
 64 pensando les buscar carreras por do los deseredasen
 65 & los desonrrasen, commo las buscaron aquellos onde
 66 ellos vienen. Ca asi commo los rreyes criaron a ellos,
 67 pugnaron ellos de los descriar & de toller
 68 los regnos a algunos dellos seyendo ninnos.

- 68 & asi commo los rreyes los heredaron, pugnaron ellos
 69 de los deseredar, lo uno conçejera mente con sus enemigos,
 70 lo al a furto en la tierra levando lo suyo poco a poco
- 71 & negando gelo. & asi commo los rreyes los apoderaron
 72 & los onrraron, ellos pugnaron en los desapoderar
 73 & en los desonrrar en tantas maneras que serian muchas
 74 de contar & muy vergonnosas. Esto es el fuero & el pro
 75 de la tierra que ellos sienpre quisieron.
- 76 Agora lo podedes entender en esto, ca todas las cosas
 77 por que yo me movia a fazer lo que ellos querian,
 78 tiran las ende, sennalada mente la ida del inperio,
 79 que es lo mas. & el aver que avian a fazer al rrey de Granada
 80 que me diese, con que fuesen ellos comigo,
- 81 dizen que gelo de yo a ellos en cuenta de los dineros
 82 que les mengua fasta aqui. & sin todo esto,
 83 que les tome las tierras que de ante tenian
 84 & que les de mas de aquellas & que les de heredades,
 85 que demandan sin derecho, por que sean mas poderosos
- 86 de lo que ante eran & que nos fagan sienpre deservicio.
 87 & demas quieren que non podamos fazer ninguna cosa
 88 de abenencia con los moros menos dellos, asi que todavia
 89 tengan el un pie firme alla & el otro aca, lo que non sera,
 90 si Dios quisiere. Ca de aquello que ellos chufan
- 91 de pleito de Abenyuçaf, que pasara aca con grant poder,
 92 don Ferrnando, mucho avia mayor poder el Miramamolin,
 93 que tenia la tierra que agora tiene Abenyuçaf,
 94 & lo que tiene el rrey de Tunez & los otros rreyes
 95 que son en medio, & demas era sennor de toda el Andaluzia
- 96 & nunca pasava aquende menos de çient mill cavalleros,
 97 & demas sienpre eran con el rricos omnes desta tierra,
 98 don Ferrant Ruiz de Castro algunas vegadas & don Pero Ferr-
 nandez
- 99 & don Diego & fijos de rreyes, & el infante don Pedro
 100 de Portugal, & aun el rrey de Navarra mesmo, & cada uno

- 101 destos rricos omnes eran de mejor ventura & de mejor seso
 102 que non son estos de agora. & el rrey don Alfonso de Castilla
 103 non avia si non fasta Toledo, & destorvava le
 104 el rrey de Leon su yerno & aun el rrey de Portugal
 105 & el rrey de Navarra quanto podian, & algunas vegadas
- 106 el rrey de Aragon, pero con todo esto defendiose muy bien
 107 del Miramamolin, que nunca de lo suyo le pudo tomar
 108 ninguna cosa si non la villa de Alarcos
 109 quando fue vençida la batalla mas por culpa de los del rrey
 110 que non por bondat de los moros, ca don Diego,
- 111 su visabuelo deste don Lope Diaz, que llaman el Bueno,
 112 fuxo con la senna a la villa de Alarcos seyendo aun el rrey
 113 en la batalla, & despues dio la villa a los moros
 114 con su mano, sin mandado de su sennor. Pero despues
 115 el rrey don Alfonso, con aquello poco que avia,
- 116 sopo se vengar muy bien del Miramamolin
 117 & vençio lo en canpo & tollio le grant partida
 118 de lo que avia. & demas don Ferrnando,
 119 devedes parar mientes en commo Abenyuçaf
 120 ha muchas guerras, lo uno con Marruecos que tienen
- 121 que non es su sennor, lo al de Gomaraçan,
 122 que le faze guerra en la tierra, lo otro
 123 que el es muy mal quisto, ca todo quanto gano
 124 fue por traicion & por enganno, por que tengo
 125 que non puede pasar asi commo chufan esos que estan
- 126 en Granada. & pongamos que quisiese pasar:
 127 çonde podria el aver navios para pasar tantos cavalleros
 128 commo dizen que traera, & vianda que les abonde
 129 a esos & a los otros que aca son? & yo non lo puedo creer
 130 que pueda ser nin tan aina commo ellos dizen
- 131 que lo faran, mas costunbre es de los moros
 132 de fazer cartas maestras & falsas & enbiar se las
 133 unos a otros por cuidar ende sacar su pro.
 134 & este almir de Granada faria [a] Abenyuçaf

- 135 enbiar estas cartas, bien asi commo lo fazia su padre,
 136 que me enbiase a mi dezir que me abeniese con el,
 137 si non, que faria maravillas contra mi. & en lo que
 138 me enbiava dezir don Felipe, que pregonaron en Granada
 139 que non fiziesen mal a los arrayazes,
 140 bien lo podedes entender que arteria fue buscada
 141 que veniese de alla por que los oviese yo de aborreçer
 142 & de caber el pleito & desanparar los, & non catavan y
 143 la desonrra & la verguenna que nos vernie
 144 en fazer nos tal fecho commo este nin dezir lo,
 145 por que, don Ferrnando, tal cosa commo esta
 146 non la fagades, nin solo non vos venga a coraçon
 147 de lo dezir, & quien quier que vos conseja esto,
 148 conseja vos muy mal commo traidor. & pues que ellos
 149 asi lo fazen, que quando les otorgamos
 150 lo que ellos quieren, luego demandan al,
 151 de aqui adelante, a menos de se meter a fazer
 152 todas las cosas que yo mandare, sin tierra & sin al
 153 & a mi mercet & a mi mesura, commo yo quisiere,
 154 maguer vos enbien mover pleitesia, nunca otra cosa
 155 sea cabida nin escuchada. Ca don Ferrnando,
 156 fio por Dios que mucho aina avremos grant derecho dellos,
 157 que non querriemos nos mayor, ca tenemos nos
 158 con la ley & estamos en acresçentar la
 159 & en defender la. & ellos pugnan quanto pueden
 160 de la abaxar. & demas tenemos nos derecho & verdat,
 161 lo que ellos non tienen, ca andan con tuerto conosçida mente
 162 & con falsedat, & avemos lo sobre lo nuestro,
 163 que se nos quieren tomar a danno & a desonrra de nos,
 164 & que nos mismos gelo demos, lo que non deve ser fecho
 165 si todo el mundo se ayuntase & sopiesemos mill vezes morir.
 166 & don Ferrnando, quando omne resçibe mal a fuerça,
 167 esto non ay maravilla, mas quando se lo faze el
 168 con su mano, este es el mayor quebranto que ser puede,

- 169 & nos punnemos de nos guardar quanto pudieremos,
 170 ca fio por Dios que el nos guardara, que guardo sienpre
 171 a los otros onde nos venimos. & si nos fazen entender
 172 que por mengua de aver nos vençeran, a esto vos rruego
 173 & vos digo que paredes mientes que aver es el de Granada
 174 para ellos & que aver es el de Castilla & de Leon para nos,
 175 & donde han ellos aver & vianda & donde la avemos nos,
 176 & donde avran ellos cavallos & donde los avremos nos,
 177 & que poder es el de Granada para ellos & que poder es
 178 el de Castilla & de Leon para nos. & si vos fazen entender
 179 que ellos son sesudos, parat mientes a don Nunno,
 180 que es tenido por el mas sesudo dellos, que non sopo
 181 gradesçer a Dios el bien que le fiziera nin a mi servir
 182 en qual estado & onrra que lo puse & sopo lo perder
 183 por esta locura en que entro. & aqui podedes ver
 184 el su seso qual es. & demas viene de linaje
 185 que sienpre perdieron quanto avian & por esta rrazon
 186 murieron mal andantes. & de don Felipe mi hermano
 187 non he por que vos fable de su seso, ca bien sabedes vos
 188 lo que fizo a Dios & lo que dexo que tenia de santa iglesia
 189 & lo que fizo a nos en que mostro muy conplida mente su seso
 190 & paresçe segunt que oy esta. & de Lope Diaz
 191 & de Estevan Ferrnandez vos digo que creo que non son ellos
 192 tan sesudos nin nos tan sin ventura que nos vençan
 193 de saber. & si ellos fazen cuenta que son
 194 muchos rricos omnes, bien sabedes vos que non son ellos
 195 mas de don Felipe & don Nunno & sus fijos & Lope Diaz
 196 & Estevan Ferrnandez, & cuentan y por rricos omnes
 197 a Lope de Mendoça & Ferrant Ruiz, & dar vos he yo
 198 aca ochenta que son todos fijos de rricos omnes
 199 & de omnes buenos, & demas don Ferrant Ruiz de Castro
 200 & Rodrigo Rodriguez de Saldanna, que vinieron de alla.
 201 & si fablan de la otra cavalleria, mejor es la nuestra
 202 & muy mas, ca aquellos suyos de los nuestros son,

- 203 & los mejores son conusco, & demas vinieronse
 204 una grant partida dellos a nos, & verrnan de cada dia,
 205 lo uno por que conosçen que fazen tuerto de estar alla
- 206 conosçiando el bien que les fize & lo otro
 207 cobdiçiando el bien que les quiero fazer,
 208 lo al por que estando alla son mal andantes & ser lo han
 209 mas de cada dia. Mas don Fernando, sabedes lo que me pesa,
 210 que tenedes vos tres para uno dellos & mejores que ellos,
- 211 & sin todos los de la frontera, & esos que vos aconsejan
 212 fazen vos los poner en los castillos & tenedes los derramados
 213 & non fazen ningunt bien. & vos non podedes fazer
 214 nada de lo que avedes a fazer con esas conpannas
 215 que alla tenedes. Otrosi dizen que los moros
- 216 han peones & gente: esta es muy poca
 217 la que han & muy mala, & avedes vos mucha & buena
 218 en la frontera, que non ha en ninguna tierra mas.
 219 & tengo que si vos juntasedes los que estan puestos
 220 por fronteros en los castillos con esos que tenedes
- 221 y conbusco & con las gentes de pie que podriedes aver
 222 de la frontera, & fuesedes agora a la vega de Granada
 223 mientras es el pan verde, que aun que otro mal
 224 non les fiziesedes si non en pisando lo, gelo tirariades.
 225 & si ellos aquel poco de pan perdiesen, con el otro danno
- 226 que rescebirian en las huertas & en las vinnas
 227 & con el danno que les han fecho los que estan
 228 en Granada, tengo que muy poco duraria la guerra.
 229 Mas non me semeja que ay ninguno que vos esto diga,
 230 mas dizen vos que son ellos muchos & muy buenos
- 231 & que pasaran moros de allen mar, & que los vuestros
 232 han servido su tiempo & se vernan luego. & de otra parte
 233 vos dizen que vos non avedes aver que les dar
 234 & yo que non he con que vos acorra. & deziendo vos
 235 las cosas falsa mente desta guisa, meten vos miedo
- 236 por cuidar vos traer a fazer lo peor, por que ha menester

- 237 que paredes y mientes, que si agora en vuestro comienço
 238 en estas cosas errades, despues quando las quisieredes emendar
 239 non podredes. & escarmentado devierades ser del consejo
 240 que vos dieron oganno, que en lugar que fuerades
- 241 al rey de Granada & fueran conusco los arrayazes
 242 & ovierades perdida la cabeça o fincarades ende
 243 onrrado para sienpre, fizieron vos ir a Algezira
 244 faziendo vos creyente que el fijo de Abenyuçaf era y,
 245 & en aquel camino non ovistes pro nin onrra.
- 246 Tengo otrosi que en la cosa que primero devierades
 247 parar mientes eran las galeas commo fuesen aguisadas,
 248 ca si ellas agora estudiesen en el estrecho,
 249 non podria pasar Abenyuçaf nin otro aun que quisiesen.
 250 Otrosi tengo que des que salistes de la vega
- 251 devierades partir los omnes, los unos con el un arrayaz
 252 & los otros con el otro, & quando el rey de Granada
 253 fuese al uno, entrar le ye el otro la tierra.
 254 Otrosi irian alla los que estoviesen conusco,
 255 & con esto & con los otros omnes de la frontera,
- 256 tal guerra les podriedes fazer que avrian a fazer
 257 lo que nos quisiesemos, ca el rey de Granada
 258 non osa partir de si esos cristianos, & si lo provase
 259 luego cuidaria ser muerto. & lo que vos dizen
 260 que los arrayazes non querrian consigo
- 261 los rricos omnes & cavalleros que les vos enbiedes
 262 salvo si levasen de comer, verdat vos dizen,
 263 & vos buscad les alguna cosa que les dedes
 264 mas de lo que les dades aca por que estudiesen
 265 si quier un mes, & de la una parte ayudariades bien
- 266 a los arrayazes & de otra fariades esta guerra
 267 que es dicha. & para esto deveades hablar
 268 con los rricos omnes & dezir les que agora
 269 era sazon de vos adebdar a vos para sienpre,
 270 & demas que les faria yo mucho bien & que tenia en que

271 en estas tierras mesmas destos otros que se fueron,
 272 & prometiendo les & deziendo les esto sofrir vos yan
 273 & servir vos yan mejor, ca dexar los en los castillos
 274 & non les dezir nada, enojan se ende & rrecuden
 275 a fazer lo peor. & eso mesmo pudierades fazer

276 a los conçejos que dexastes venir con que los tovierades
 277 fasta que estos otros llegasen que van agora conmigo.
 278 & don Fernando, de lo que vos meten miedo de aver,
 279 vos quiero dezir tanto que bien sabedes vos
 280 quantas cosas vos di en ayuda para esto,

281 de que vos non tome un dinero, & demas mando a
 282 todos los otros conçejos que salgan en hueste
 283 tan bien de las villas pequennas commo de las grandes
 284 de que avie muy grant algo con que vos acorra,
 285 & sin todo esto los cogedores & los merinos

286 que fio que me ayudaran agora muy bien
 287 & de otras partes muchas que vos non puedo
 288 enbiar dezir por carta. Mas por todo, non ha pro
 289 si lo vos dieredes asi commo lo dades, & dando yo aca
 290 a las ordenes de Ucles & de Calatrava lo que les di,

291 dades les vos alla dineros & otros fueros & otras cosas
 292 en que fazedes vuestro danno & rrecibo yo desonrra,
 293 ca tienen que quanto les do yo non es nada
 294 si les vos non dieredes lo que non podeades
 295 nin deveades dar, & desta guisa non ha aver en el mundo

296 que compliese, nin yo lo podria conplir.
 297 & demas tenedes y a don Çuleman de que podeades aver
 298 muy grant aver lo uno por que es mi serviçio & lo al
 299 que lo avedes menester a esta sazon & lo al
 300 que vos fara a vos muy grant serviçio. & desto

301 vos podeades acorrer fasta que lo de aca vos llegue,
 302 ca yo luego me vo para alla quanto puedo
 303 & non tardo por al si non por el rrey de Aragon,
 304 que non se aun por çierto quando ira. & rruogo vos

305 que paredes mientes en estas cosas que dizen

306 en estas cartas & que vos metades bien de rrezio a ellas
 307 & luego veredes que se tornaran las nuevas & las chufas
 308 de aquellos de otra guisa, & quando leyeredes esta carta
 309 sea y Alfonso Fernandez mio fijo, si fuere convusco,
 310 & don Jufre & Diego de Corral & non otro.