The Paso de la Fuerte Ventura (Paso of the Daunting Adventure), Valladolid, 1428

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Source 2

The *Paso de la Fuerte Ventura* (*Paso* of the Daunting Adventure), Valladolid, 1428

This source consists of a translation of a narrative account of this event.

Author: Pedro Carrillo de Huete

Language: Medieval Castilian

Manuscript source: Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, 9945

Edition used: Juan de Mata Carriazo y Arroquia, ed., *Crónica del halconero de Juan II, Pedro Carrillo de Huete (hasta ahora inédita)*, Colección de crónicas españolas, 8 (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1946), pp. 20–2 (= PCH)

Select bibliography:

Barber, Richard, and Juliet Barker, *Tournaments: Jousts, Chivalry and Pageants in the Middle Ages* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989), p. 98

Fernández de Córdova Miralles, Álvaro, 'L'impact de la Bourgogne sur la cour castillane des Trastamare', in *La cour de Bourgogne et l'Europe: le rayonnement et les limites d'un modèle culturel; actes du colloque international tenu à Paris les 9, 10 et 11 octobre 2007*, ed. by Werner Paravicini, Torsten Hiltmann and Frank Viltart (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2013), pp. 593–630 (pp. 607–8)

Nadot, Sébastien, *Le Spectacle des joutes: Sport et courtoisie à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2012), pp. 19, 134, 195–6, 284

Riquer, Martín de, *Vida caballeresca en la España del siglo XV* (Madrid: Gráficas Marina, 1965), p. 67

Ruiz, Teofilo F., *A King Travels: Festive Traditions in Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. 231–3, 335–8

Introduction

The *Paso de la Fuerte Ventura* is one of the first *pas d'armes* that we know of and was celebrated on the Plaza Mayor of Valladolid on Tuesday 18 May 1428 under the aegis of the court of King Juan II of Castile (1405–54). The *entrepreneur** or organiser of the *Paso* was the Infante Enrique of Aragon (1400–45), third son of King Fernando I of Aragon (1380–1416), who had acted as regent of Castile in the years 1406–15.[1] Enrique became one of the most prominent noblemen of Castile when he inherited the Castilian possessions of his father in

[1] DBE, lemma 'Enrique de Aragon'.

1416.[2] Valladolid was an important centre for the kings of Castile: King Juan II was born (and would later be temporarily buried) there and he usually resided in the palace of San Pablo, constructed in the grounds of the convent of the same name. Hence it became not only a major administrative centre, where the *cortes* (the assembly of the representatives of the three Estates of the realm) were often convened, but also a place where many courtly celebrations were held.[3] This *paso* was even embedded in a series of chivalric events during the months of May and June of 1428,[4] which were organised by the main political protagonists of the Castilian court, each of whom did so in turn.[5] The second event was the actual *Paso de la Fuerte Ventura* of Enrique of Aragon. Most authors relate this as a one-day event, although one royal chronicler, Álvar García de Santa María, who gave a brief account of it (see below) mentions that the feast lasted for six days.[6]

The organiser of the *paso*, Enrique of Aragon, competed with a team consisting of five defenders. Their challenge was taken up by the kings of Castile and Navarre, accompanied by teams consisting of twenty-four and twelve knights, respectively, as well as by other knights who competed individually rather than as part of a team. The event seems to have been rather 'closed' in nature, although one chronicler mentions the presence of some 'caballeros extrangeros' (foreign knights) but without providing any further information about them.[7] In any case, there is no evidence that chapters of arms (if there were any) or invitations were sent across the Iberian Peninsula and beyond. The bouts consisted of both individual and collective jousts, but this is not spelled out in detail in the account that preserves it. The fighting was so intense that the *entrepreneur* had an unfortunate fall from which he almost died and one of his team members was seriously injured by his opponent and did subsequently die from the wound that he had received. The atmosphere of political rivalry pervading the Castilian court in this period may have played a role in this, but casualties seem to be the rule rather than the exception in Castilian chivalric events, such as the *Paso Honroso* (Órbigo Bridge, near León, 1434), where one competitor suffered a particularly gruesome death from a lance tip that penetrated his skull.[8] Another distinctive element of the Castilian *paso* was the structure of the so-called 'passage' itself, which was either an arch, as at this event and the *Paso de El Pardo* (1459),[9] or a bridge, as at the *Paso Honroso* and the *Paso de Jaén* (1461).[10] Little information is available about the exact theatrical scenario governing the *Paso de la Fuerte Ventura*, at least when compared to the more elaborate descriptions of the Angevin and Burgundian *pas*, such as the *Pas de la Bergère* (Tarascon, 1449) and the *Pas*

[2] Sébastien Nadot, *Le Spectacle des joutes: Sport et courtoisie à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2012), p. 284; Teofilo F. Ruiz, *A King Travels: Festive Traditions in Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. 231–2.

[3] Francisco de Paula Cañas Gálves, *El itinerario de la corte de Juan II de Castilla (1418–1454)* (Madrid: Silex Ediciones, 2007), p. 149.

[4] For more details on the five chivalric events of May and June and on the political strife in the 1420s between the two competing noble factions of Castile, see Essay 1.

[5] See PCH, pp. 19–27; LB, pp. 59–66; and the summary in Ruiz, *A King Travels*, pp. 335–8.

[6] AGSM, p. 16.

[7] FPG, p. 250.

[8] Noel Fallows, *Jousting in Medieval and Renaissance Iberia* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010), pp. 482–3; on the level of violence at this event, see also Essay 6.

[9] See Source 8.

[10] See Source 10.

du Perron Fée (Bruges, 1463), respectively.[11] Nevertheless, the *entremets**, the inscriptions of the texts that were painted on the ephemeral architecture and the dialogue between the herald and the challengers all point to an event involving a scenario of some kind and a fixed set of rules, which unfortunately have not come down to us.[12]

The *Paso de la Fuerte Ventura* is described in four different chronicles, which were all written under the patronage of the Castilian kings, another characteristic feature of most *pasos* celebrated in this kingdom.[13] The first and most extensive report was written by King Juan's falconer, Pedro Carrillo de Huete (*c.*1380–*c.*1448), who was knighted in 1407 and held office at the Castilian court until 1455. Carillo was an eyewitness of the event since he acted as one of the judges at the *paso*. Interestingly, he refers to himself in the text in the third-person voice in this judging role, which may be a kind of humility device whereby the author avoids drawing attention to himself.[14] The narrative forms part of his chronicle on the Castilian court under Juan II between 1420 and 1450. The transmission of the text, however, is somewhat complicated. The original manuscript is lost and the version that is preserved — a sixteenth-century copy of a fifteenth-century copy — is incomplete.[15] However, despite its convoluted provenance, this version serves as the basis of the translation given here, as it is the most elaborate description of this *paso* and was itself based on the original account of Carrillo. Lope de Barrientos, Juan's confessor, made another copy of the lost original chronicle of Carrillo de Huete, now known as the 'Refundición', which was also lost but has come down to us in a sixteenth-century copy.[16] This second version very much resembles the first report of the *paso* in style, length and content, but has some small additions and variations, which will be indicated in the footnotes to the translation. Fernán Pérez de Guzmán (*c.*1378–1460), of a noble family from Toledo, wrote a third, shorter account in his chronicle of Juan II which tends to be biased towards Álvaro de Luna, the king's favourite.[17] The fourth and shortest report was composed by Álvar García de Santa María (*c.*1380–1460), from Burgos, who occupied a local administrative office for several decades. He was officially installed as royal chronicler in 1406, a post which he held until 1434.[18]

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[11] See Sources 6 and 11a.

[12] Álvaro Fernández de Córdova Miralles, 'L'impact de la Bourgogne sur la cour castillane des Trastamare', in *La cour de Bourgogne et l'Europe: le rayonnement et les limites d'un modèle culturel; actes du colloque international tenu à Paris les 9, 10 et 11 octobre 2007*, ed. by Werner Paravicini, Torsten Hiltmann and Frank Viltart (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2013), pp. 593–630 (p. 608).

[13] Whilst this is the case of the *Paso de Valladolid* (1440) (see Source 3) and that of El Pardo, the narrative account of the *Paso de Jaén* is preserved in a chivalric biography, rather than a royal chronicle.

[14] See also Source 14, where Antoine de Lalaing uses the third-person voice to recount the *Pas* of Brussels which he himself organised.

[15] DBE, lemma 'Pero Carrillo de Huete'; PCH, pp. ix–xv. PCH is an edition of Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, 9945.

[16] LB, pp. ix–xix. LB is an edition of El Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo, X-II-13.

[17] See FPG, p. 250; and DBE, lemma 'Fernán Pérez de Guzmán'. Luna, constable of Castile, the most senior army and household officer of the king, organised the first chivalric event of the series held in Valladolid on 2 May. DBE, lemma 'Álvaro de Luna'.

[18] See AGSM, p. 16; and DBE, lemma 'Álvar García de Santa María'. AGSM is an edition based on the following manuscript: El Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo, X-II-2.

In the translation that follows, page numbers in parentheses have been inserted for ease of reference to Carriazo y Arroquia's edition.

TRANSLATION

(20) **About the festivity that the Infante Don Enrique organised in Valladolid**

On Tuesday, the eighteenth day of May in the year of Our Lord 1428, the Infante Don Enrique[19] organised a very notable[20] festivity in the following manner: on the square of the said town[21] at the corner of the street[22] that connects the Puerta del Campo with the square, he constructed a fortress of wood and cloth.[23] It was built in the following way: a very high tower was crowned with four turrets; there was a belfry on top of the tower and a bell placed inside it. A column, fashioned in the same way as the tower so as to look like [it was made of] stone, was placed on top of the belfry. On the column stood a gilded griffin which held a very large white and red standard in its front paws. On each of the four turrets of the tower was a smaller standard of the same kind as the large one.

The tower was surrounded by a very high fence with four turrets and an outer fence which was a little lower than it and had a further twelve turrets. On each of these turrets stood a well-dressed lady.[24] The ground floor of the (21) fortress contained dressing rooms for the infante, as well as stables and mangers for the horses.

A tilt* made of canes[25] was placed between the fortress and a gated arch[26] with two more towers through which all the knight-adventurers had to pass. On this arch was the following inscription: 'This is the Arch of the Dangerous Passage of the Daunting Adventure'. On top of each of the two towers stood a man with a horn. The fortress and the towers were made to look as if they were made of bricks. On a scaffold [built into]

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[19] [el ynfante don Enrrique]. Enrique of Aragon (1400–45), infante of Aragon, marqués of Villena and count of Alburquerque, was the brother of King Alfonso V of Aragon and brother-in-law of King Juan II of Castile (see below, n. 37); he was also Grandmaster of the Order of Santiago (1409–45). DBE, lemma 'Enrique de Aragon'.

[20] Note that the chronicler already describes the *paso* in a way that distinguishes it from the other chivalric events that both preceded and followed it in the series. See above, p. 58, and Essay 1.

[21] That is, the Plaza Mayor of Valladolid.

[22] That is, the Calle de Santiago.

[23] García de Santa María describes this structure as a wooden 'Alcázar', the Arabic word used for a fortified palace where the king resides. AGSM, p. 16.

[24] It is not clear whether there were ladies standing only on the twelve turrets of the outer fence or on all sixteen turrets.

[25] The usual word for tilt in Castilian is *tela*, which literally means cloth and may refer to the material that the earliest tilts were made of, these in fact being a Castilian invention. See Richard Barber and Juliet Barker, *Tournaments: Jousts, Chivalry and Pageants in the Middle Ages* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989), pp. 98, 196; Tobias Capwell, *Arms and Armour of the Medieval Joust* (Leeds: Royal Armouries Museum, 2018), p. 81.

[26] LB, p. 60, has the lesson 'varco' instead of 'arco', meaning boat. See also Martín de Riquer, *Vida caballeresca en la España del siglo XV* (Madrid: Gráficas Marina, 1965), p. 67.

the fence next to the tower was a very large gilded wheel; this was called 'The Wheel of Fortune'.[27] At the foot of the wheel was a very elaborate seat.

When all of this had been made to his specifications, the said lord infante defended [the passage] in royal harness* with five[28] other knights who were accompanying him; these were: Juan Manrique,[29] son of García Fernández Manrique,[30] *Frey* Gutierre de Cárdenas,[31] Lope de Rojas,[32] Álvaro de Sandoval,[33] and Diego de Tejeda.[34] Before he armed himself, the infante went to the foot of the fortress with many noblemen from his household and danced there awhile right in front of the building. Afterwards they freed from the fortress many hens, goats and rams that were living there before the infante then mounted his horse and rode off to his lodgings.

He staged an *entremés** in the following manner: eight very finely dressed damsels came riding on gentle coursers*, all with their trappers*. They were followed by a goddess on a cart who was accompanied by twelve damsels, all of whom were singing, as well as many minstrels.[35] They accommodated the goddess in the seat that stood at the foot of the wheel, with the other damsels [clustered] around her. On the towers of the gate stood many noblemen wearing coat armours* laden with *argentaría** in the livery that the lord infante had given them.

The infante and his knights then armed themselves in his fortress. (22) As various knights came up to the Arch of the Daunting Adventure, those who were standing

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[27] LB, p. 60, has the lesson 'rueda de la ventura' instead of 'rueda de la aventura', in line with the name of the arch.

[28] Pérez de Guzmán mentions six knights. FPG, p. 250.

[29] [Jhoan Manrrique]. Juan Fernández Manrique (d. 1498), son of García (see below, n. 30), was count of Castañeda after the death of his father (1436) and chancellor of Castile (from 1437). Luis de Salazar y Castro, *Historia genealogica de la casa de Lara* (Madrid: Llanos y Guzman, 1696), pp. 506–24.

[30] [Garçia Fernández Manrrique]. García Fernández Manrique (d. 1436); from 1414, he was in the service of Enrique of Aragon as *mayordomo* (the equivalent of a French *maître d'hôtel*) and, thanks to the intervention of the latter, King Juan II gave him the lordship of Castañeda in Asturias with the title of count. In the 1420s, he chose the side of King Juan II against the Aragonese faction and even fought against his former master Enrique in 1429. DBE, lemma 'García Fernández Manrique'.

[31] The word *frey* used here is an indication that he was a member of a military order, probably that of Santiago. Gutierre died in 1450 at the siege of the castle of Torija. He was the son of García López de Cárdenas, *comendador mayor* of the Order of Santiago, and brother to Alonso, who later became Grand-master of the same Order. Not to be confused with his namesake, Gutierre de Cárdenas (1440–1503), who played a major political role in Castile in the last decades of the fifteenth century. DBE, lemma 'García López de Cárdenas'.

[32] This lesson has been taken from LB, p. 60. PCH, p. 21, has the lesson 'Lope de Foyos'. It is not clear who this person is.

[33] [Albaro de Sandobal]. It is not clear who this person is. Pérez de Guzmán (FPG, p. 250) notes that he is the nephew of the count of Castro (abbreviated from Castrojeriz, near Burgos), a title held from 1426 onwards by Diego Gómez de Sandoval y Rojas, a firm supporter of the Infante Enrique (which caused him to lose his titles and lordships in Castile after 1429); from 1411, he was also governor of Castile. DBE, lemma 'Diego Sandoval y Rojas'.

[34] [Diego de Texeda]. Diego de Tejeda was considered by Juan II to be a supporter of Enrique of Aragon and hence, from January 1430, was seen as a traitor. PCH, p. 49.

[35] LB, p. 60, adds that 'the cart was pulled by two horses and twenty foot soldiers dressed in white and red livery'.

on the towers blew their horns and a lady rang the fortress bell.[36] At this, a lady on a hackney* came out of the fortress accompanied by a herald and said: 'Knights, what fate has brought you to this dangerous passage which is called that of the Daunting Adventure? You would do better to turn round because you cannot pass through without jousting!' Their reply then came that they were prepared to do just this. The lord king of Castile[37] stepped forward with twenty-four knights, all dressed in gowns of dagged* green cloth whilst the lord king's gown was laden with gilded *argentaría*, trimmed with precious ermine filled with down, and [decorated with] diadems [in the shape] of butterflies.[38] The lord king broke two heavy lances and he jousted in such a knightly fashion that no one could equal him. After that, the king of Navarre[39] ran courses with [a company consisting of] twelve knights, all with crests of windmills. The lord king of Navarre broke one lance.

Gonzalo de Quadros[40] fought a bout with the lord infante as a defender and broke one heavy lance. As a consequence, the infante fell against the tilt with such force that they thought he had died. Then followed another combat between a squire of the lord infante, who was one of his fellow defenders, and Ruy Díaz de Mendoza,[41] *mayordomo* of the lord king of Castile. This squire received such a severe wound to his body that he died within two hours; his name was Álvaro de Sandoval.[42]

After night had fallen, the kings, the queen and the infantes all went to dinner with the infante at the house of Don Alfonso Enríquez,[43] admiral of Castile, where they all

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[36] According to Pérez de Guzmán, the challengers rang the bell to indicate the number of courses that they wanted to run. FPG, p. 250.

[37] Juan II (1405–54), king of Castile and Leon (r. 1406–54), son of Enrique III and Catherine of Lancaster, was married to 1. María of Aragon (1403–45), sister of King Alfonso V, King Juan II the Great of Aragon and Enrique of Aragon, and 2. Isabel of Portugal (1428–96, not to be confused with her namesake, the wife of the Burgundian duke, Philip the Good). DBE, lemma 'Juan II de Castilla'.

[38] LB, p. 61, adds here that as 'the king entered the lists in this manner, the queen, the infantas and the other ladies [were] seated in the stands watching the joust'.

[39] Juan II the Great of Aragon (1398–1479), king of Navarre (r. 1425–79) as well as king of Aragon and Sicily (r. 1458–79), son of Fernando I and Leonor of Alburquerque, brother of Alfonso V and Enrique of Aragon, was married to 1. Blanca I of Navarre, queen of Navarre (r. 1425–41), and 2. Juana Enríquez.

[40] [Gonzalo de Cuadros]. Gonzalo de Quadros (d. 1461), son of Diego, was a knight and poet from the town of Seville, where he occupied different functions in the town administration. He was one of the Castilian noblemen who were partisans of the Infante Enrique until 1430, when he changed sides and supported Álvaro de Luna. In another contemporary chronicle he is described as one of the most outstanding jousters of the king's household. Antonio Chas Aguión, 'Gonzalo de Quadros. Hidalgo, justador y poeta de cancionero', *Revista de poética medieval*, 28 (2014), 35–55 (pp. 41, 49–52); Fallows, *Jousting*, p. 93.

[41] [Ruy Díaz de Mendoça]. Ruy Díaz de Mendoza (d. 1477). In 1426, he succeeded his father, Juan Hurtado de Mendoza, as *mayordomo* of King Juan II of Castile. In the 1430s and 1440s, he fought in several military campaigns for the king under the leadership of Álvaro de Luna. DBE, lemma 'Ruy Díaz de Mendoza de Arrellano'. In 1440, he would himself organise a *paso* in Valladolid: see Source 3.

[42] Sandoval is earlier referred to as a knight, which is also the lesson of LB, p. 61.

[43] [don Alfonso Enrriques]. Alonso or Alfonso Enríquez (1354–1429), illegitimate son of Fadrique Alfonso and hence a grandson of King Alfonso XI of Castile, was admiral of Castile from 1405 and was succeeded in this office after his death in 1429 by his son Fadrique. Esteban Ortega Gato, 'Los Enríquez, almirantes de Castilla', *Publicaciones de la Institución Tello Téllez de Meneses*, 70 (1999), 23–65.

spent the night.[44] The judges at this joust were Diego de Ribera, governor of Andalucía,[45] Rodrigo de Perea, governor of Cazorla,[46] Pedro Carrillo de Huete, the king's head falconer,[47] and Juan Carrillo de Toledo.[48]

[44] Pérez de Gúzman mentions that, on this occasion, Enrique donated many gifts not only to the knights and nobles from his own household but also to minstrels, trumpeters and foreign knights. FPG, p. 250. García de Santa María specifically says that the gifts for his men concerned forty or fifty 'crochas' all covered in *argentaría*: this is probably a mistranscription by the editor of the word *clochas* (French: *cloches*; English: cloaks), i.e. garments sometimes used for riding that could be ankle-length, were likely to be of a circular cut, and could require a great deal of fabric, thus providing ample scope for displaying a lot of silver jewellery, as seems to be the case here. AGSM, p. 16. See also Francisco Bautista, 'La segunda parte de la *Crónica de Juan II*: borradores y texto definitivo', *Cahiers d'études hispaniques médiévales*, 37.1 (2014), 105–38; Victor Gay, *Glossaire archéologique du Moyen Âge et de la Renaissance*, 2 vols (Paris: Librairie de la Société Bibliographique, 1887), vol. 1, pp. 396–7 (entry on *cloches*). Thanks are due to Margaret Scott for her help in identifying this garment.

[45] Diego Gómez de Ribera (d. 1434, at the siege of Álora), son of Per Afán de Ribera, succeeded his father as *adelantado* (governor) of Andalucía in 1416. Ribera was a brother-in-law by marriage of Álvaro de Luna, who acted as a protector of his son's interests after his death. DBE, lemma 'Diego (Gómez) de Ribera'.

[46] Rodrigo Pera (d. 1438, at the battle of Baza) was governor of Cazorla until his death. PCH, p. 200.

[47] See above, p. 59.

[48] [Jhoan Carrillo de Toledo]. LB, p. 62, refers to him as mayor of Toledo. Juan Carrillo de Toledo did indeed fulfil this role until 1438, when he was appointed by King Juan II as governor of Cazorla. He was a *protégé* of Álvaro de Luna, on whose side he fought in various battles for more than twenty years. DBE, lemma 'Juan Carillo de Toledo'.

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