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The "destroyer of the realm": Castilian chronicles and the de-legitimation of Juan Pacheco (d. 1474)

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During the fifteenth century, Castilian nobles were subject to criticism in chronicles and other literary texts. Titled nobles, especially those who were closest to the royal court, were particularly hard-hit by these discourses. Some of these aristocrats stand out for the intensity of the diatribes suffered, especially Juan Pacheco, Marquis of Villena, whose political influence would, to a large extent, shape political relations in Castile in the second half of the fifteenth century. The time is ripe for a reassessment of the public image of this figure from a new perspective on medieval political discourses and criticism. The aim of this study, therefore, is to analyse the de-legitimising strategies deployed around his figure, in relation to both his political role in the kingdom at large and his local influence in various cities and regions.

Keywords: Crown of Castile, fifteenth century, nobility, chronicles, discourse

Introduction¹

During the fifteenth century, Castilian nobles were subject to criticism—sometimes very harsh—in chronicles and other literary texts. This was especially so for titled nobles who were closest to the royal court. Such discourses were a powerful weapon to de-legitimise political actors and also to achieve the opposite effect.² In recent years, scholarship has paid increasing attention to these propaganda and legitimation practices and to their discursive strategies.³ Some of these aristocrats stand out for the intensity and the

¹ This article was written within the framework of the research project *Ciudad y nobleza en el tránsito a la Modernidad: autoritarismo regio, pactismo y conflictividad política. Castilla, de Isabel I a las Comunidades* (ref. HAR2017-83542-P, 2018-2021, funded by MCIN/AEI/10.13039/501100011033/FEDER *Una manera de hacer Europa*). I would like to thank the reviewers and the journal editor for all useful and helpful comments on this manuscript. I am grateful to David Govantes for the initial translation of the text; later revisions and changes are my own.

² As argued by Albaladejo, "Los discursos del conflicto," 46, conflict has a direct reflection on discourses.

³ Several authors have pointed out the importance of discourse in legitimation and de-legitimation processes during the Middle Ages. The bibliography is extensive, so I shall only mention a few works which deal with late medieval Castile, arranged by publication date: Nieto Soria, "La parole;" Carrasco Manchado, *Isabel I y la sombra*; Perea Rodríguez, "El entorno cortesano;" Jara Fuente, "'Por el conocimiento';" Monsalvo Antón, "Ideario sociopolítico y valores estamentales;" Oliva Herrer, "'La prisión del rey';" López Gómez, "Entre la concordia;" Corral Sánchez, *Discursos contra los nobles*. For an interesting theoretical perspective see Dumolyn, "Political

frequency of the criticism suffered. One particularly significant example is Juan Pacheco (1419–1474), Marquis of Villena from 1445, whose political trajectory greatly contributed to the shaping of political relations in Castile in the second half of the fifteenth century.

Despite his complex life and trajectory —or perhaps because of them— the figure of Juan Pacheco has been the subject of few focused studies beyond the monographs of Nancy Marino and Alfonso Franco Silva. Marino focuses especially on Juan Pacheco's political manoeuvres, while Franco Silva examines him within the social and economic framework of the Crown.⁴ The time is now ripe for a reassessment of the public image of Juan Pacheco from a new perspective on medieval political discourses and criticism.⁵ How was the Marquis of Villena's political and economic influence perceived by political commentators in the second half of the fifteenth century? What discursive tools did they use to support this perception? The primary aim of this study is to answer questions

Communication.” A stimulating approach to discourse can be found in Van Dijk, *Discourse and Power*, which has helped to form a theoretical basis for my studies.

Van Dijk argues that the negative characteristics of the "enemies" are made explicit to create discourses of political opposition and social alterities.

⁴ Marino, *Don Juan Pacheco*. In order to address this relative paucity of monographic works, Franco Silva, *Juan Pacheco*, esp. chpts. 3 and 6, studied Juan Pacheco's figure from several perspectives, comparing the chronicles' accounts with archival records, especially from the archive of the Dukes of Frías within the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid.

⁵ Carceller Cerviño, "Álvaro de Luna," for a comparison of Pacheco's public projection with those of Álvaro de Luna and Beltrán de la Cueva.

including these, taking into consideration the circumstances that surrounded the writing of each of the works examined and their authors' perspective. I shall analyse the image of Juan Pacheco in Castilian royal chronicles, in relation to both his political role in the kingdom at large and his local influence in various cities and regions, together with the discursive strategies deployed by these chronicles.⁶ The Castilian nobility showed its social and political pre-eminence through different aspects that have sometimes been interpreted as part of a propaganda discourse to maintain its legitimacy. This propaganda referred to both public and private life, including political leadership and government or respect for the chivalric ideals and moral virtues, among others. This legitimacy was a necessary ideological support to maintain their power and status, as well as other elements such as legal privilege.⁷

In this regard, it is worth noting that Castilian fifteenth-century historiography is amongst the richest and most varied in the Middle Ages (for the main chronicles analysed in the present study, see table 1).⁸ This is the result of changes in the relationship between power and written history, as well as of a new notion of historical memory and its influence on the present. In addition to other factors, this led to chronistic texts, which played a significant role in the political conflicts of the period, conveying increasingly in-depth

⁶ Although reference will be made to other contemporary and later sources, I focus on the *Crónica del Halconero* by Pero Carrillo de Huete; *Refundición de la Crónica de Juan II*; *Crónica anónima castellana o de Enrique IV*; *Crónica de Enrique IV* by Diego Enríquez del Castillo; and *Memorial de Diversas Hazañas* by Diego de Valera.

⁷ Quintanilla Raso, "La nobleza," 76–78.

⁸ As pointed out by Tate, *Ensayos sobre la historiografía*, 281.

political analyses. It must be emphasised that royal chronicles, whose authority based on the use of chancellery and other government documentary sources, stressed their value as a legitimising mechanism.⁹ This made royal chronicles a very attractive tool for political actors, as well as a powerful instrument of propaganda and counterpropaganda.¹⁰

REIGN	TITLE	AUTHOR
Juan II (1406–1454)	<i>Refundición de la Crónica de Juan II</i> *Source: Ms. X-ii-13 (El Escorial)?	Lorenzo Galíndez de Carvajal (compiler) *Source: attributed to Pérez de Guzmán
	<i>Crónica del Halconero</i>	Pero Carrillo de Huete *Final ten years: Lope de Barrientos?
Enrique IV (1454–1474)	<i>Crónica Anónima de Enrique IV</i>	–
	<i>Crónica de Enrique IV</i>	Diego Enríquez del Castillo
	<i>Memorial de diversas hazañas</i>	Diego de Valera
	<i>Coplas de Mingo Revulgo</i>	Íñigo de Mendoza
	<i>Coplas de Vita Christi</i>	
	<i>Crónica incompleta de los Reyes Católicos</i> *It covers from 1469 to 1476.	Juan de Flores?
Isabel I (1474–1504)	<i>Crónica de los Reyes Católicos</i>	Hernando de Pulgar
Throughout the fifteenth century	<i>Letras</i>	
	<i>Claros varones de Castilla</i>	

⁹ Bautista Pérez, "Historiografía y poder," 98, 109. In this article, Bautista traces the creation of the position of royal chronicler and the circumstances that surrounded historiographical production in the fifteenth century.

¹⁰ For the notion of propaganda in late medieval Castile see Carrasco Manchado, "Aproximación al problema," 229–69.

Table 1. List of the main sources considered in this article, providing the chronology (reign covered), title, and author.

Pacheco as an agent of government: the "bad councillor"

Juan Pacheco entered the service of Enrique IV (1454–1474) while he was still prince, between 1440 and 1441. Although he was to play a much more prominent role during the rule of Enrique IV, some texts produced during the reign of Juan II (1406–1454) already began conveying a negative image of him. We must remember that this was a period of intense civil strife in the Crown of Castile, owing to the conflict between the noble faction supported by the princes of Aragon and that led by the *condestable* Álvaro de Luna (d. 1453), Juan II's right-hand man. The accounts written in these years accuse Pacheco of bringing the prince closer to the *infantes* of Aragon and their faction, as a way to undermine the king's authority for his own personal gain. In fact, Pacheco is explicitly mentioned among the reasons presented to justify the writing of the *Refundición de la Crónica de Juan II*, according to Fernando Gómez Redondo, "to expose the culprits of destroying the realm." This work, revised and published by Lorenzo Galíndez de Carvajal (1472–1527) is the only known version of the *Crónica de Juan II* that covers the whole reign, which makes it particularly interesting. The authorship and origin of the text used by the compiler are problematic, although it is plausible that the original work was written by Fernán Pérez de Guzmán (d. 1460), as Galíndez claims in his prologue.¹¹ Pérez de

¹¹ Gómez Redondo, *Historia de la prosa medieval*, III: 2322, 2240–43, suggested that Ms. X–ii–13 (El Escorial) could be attributed to Pérez de Guzmán and the original source for the *Refundición*. He argues for a "twofold historiographical work" by Pérez de Guzmán, which includes the chronicle and the related *Generaciones y semblanzas*. In any case, although the *Refundición* was published substantially after

Guzmán opposed Álvaro de Luna's faction, and their tense relationship led to his retirement from court. The chronicle also stressed that Pacheco's actions were the result of his ambition and greed, discussed below. As a result, we can appreciate the connection the chronicler establishes between Luna and Pacheco in the following quotation, as well as his criticisms of Pacheco.

Prince Enrique's household includes a young man, Juan Pacheco, son of Alonso Téllez Girón, lord of Belmonte, whom the *condestable* Don Álvaro de Luna had appointed, and the Prince loved him so much that he did nothing but what [Pacheco] wished: he wanted to create difficulties for the king for his own profit, and so he managed to tear the Prince away from the King's will, and made him follow that of the King of Navarre.¹²

Pero Carrillo de Huate's (c. 1380–c. 1448) *Crónica del Halconero*, in its account of events in the 1440s, also claimed that Pacheco sought to become richer by encouraging the prince to disobey, and ultimately abandon, his father.¹³ Although this chronicle does not cover the final years of Juan II's reign, the *Crónica del Halconero* conveys detailed and greatly valuable accounts, including a personal diary. The chronicler emphasised the

the events, it seems clear that the text edited by Galíndez is contemporary to them.

Hereafter I shall refer to this work as *Refundición de la Crónica de Juan II*.

¹² *Refundición de la Crónica de Juan II*, 1440, chpt. 22, 1441, chpt. 5. In later chapters, the chronicler repeats the same argument.

¹³ Carrillo de Huate, *Crónica del Halconero*, chpts. 283, 252. The chronicler also mentions the machinations of Juan de Navarra and Admiral Fadrique Enríquez to influence young Prince Enrique. For these events see Carceller Cerviño, "Álvaro de Luna," 97–99.

authority of his work by transcribing official documents in it, while arguing that the nobility was under the king's thumb. Gómez Redondo suggests that there was a period between 1439 and 1441 in which the monarch was shown in a somewhat negative light, as a result of the political strife that was tearing the kingdom apart.¹⁴

Similarly, after the Battle of Olmedo in 1445 the chronicle repeats that the disagreements between king and prince sprang "from the influence of Juan Pacheco," who worked for his own profit, trying to harm the monarch —"create difficulties"—circulating scandals in Castile and bringing the prince to the side of the princes of Aragon. Pacheco's private actions were not free from scrutiny either: both the *Crónica del Halconero* and the *Refundición de la Crónica de Juan II* denounced Pacheco's manoeuvres to gain the *maestrazgo* of Calatrava for his brother, Pedro Girón (d. 1466), "against all justice."¹⁵

Although the final part of the *Crónica del Halconero* presents a positive portrait of young Prince Enrique, the chronicler kept his reservations about his right-hand man. The chronicle argues that the ills of the kingdom were not to be blamed on the king, but on the instigators of "conflict and strife."¹⁶ It is worth recalling that, in 1441, Carrillo de Huete, the falconer, lost the favour of the court by the influence of Prince Juan (1398–1479; king Juan II of Aragon from 1458), and some argue that the final ten years of the chronicle were authored by Lope de Barrientos (1382–1469), Bishop of Cuenca. According to this theory, the bishop used the chronicle to present his own version of

¹⁴ Gómez Redondo, *Historia de la prosa medieval*, III:2274–87.

¹⁵ Carrillo de Huete, *Crónica del Halconero*, chpts. 9, 269; *Refundición de la Crónica de Juan II*, 1445, chpts. 19, 352.

¹⁶ Carrillo de Huete, *Crónica del Halconero*, chpt. 354.

events, underlining the loyalist stance of Cuenca and Toledo. Barrientos was also the prince's tutor, which explains why Enrique is shown under a more benevolent light and why emphasis is laid on the negative influence posed by Pacheco.¹⁷

After the death of Juan II, Pacheco, despite his enormous influence at court, was not the only one to have the new king's ear.¹⁸ In fact, he was soon displaced from his position as head royal advisor by Beltrán de la Cueva (d. 1492), appointed Count of Ledesma in 1462. However, the actions of the Marquis of Villena were compared in the *Refundición de la Crónica de Juan II* to Álvaro de Luna's, whose authority during the reign of Juan II was absolute.

In the sections that deal with the early years of Enrique IV's reign, the chronicles insist on presenting Juan Pacheco as the "bad advisor" that his early career foretold. Diego Enríquez del Castillo (c. 1431–c. 1503) claims that the monarch was suspicious of him as early as 1460–1462, but that he kept ignoring the Bishop of Seville's warning about an alleged plot between Pacheco and his uncle, Alfonso Carrillo (1412–1482), Archbishop of Toledo. Enríquez viewed these political actors from an openly moralistic perspective, emphasising their intrinsic wickedness with metaphors and warning the

¹⁷ Therefore, the *Refundición del Halconero* by Lope de Barrientos, published by Juan de Mata Carriazo, would be a misnomer. According to Gómez Redondo, *Historia de la prosa medieval*, III: 2322, the text published by Mata Carriazo corresponds to ms. X–ii–13 (see note 11), attributed to Pérez de Guzmán and "recast" by Galíndez de Carvajal.

¹⁸ Foronda, "La 'privanza' dans la Castille," 153–98, describes Enrique IV's reign as a constant tussle in which none of the pretenders to the role of royal right-hand man ever replicated Álvaro de Luna's success.

Crown against councillors that, in league with the king's enemies, pursued nothing but their own gain.¹⁹ These bad councillors revealed themselves openly later, when they brought to court the king's stepsiblings, Isabel (1451–1504; queen Isabel I of Castile from 1474) and Alfonso (1453–1468), "with sinister motivations that had nothing to do with the king's interests."²⁰

Enríquez del Castillo's chronicle has been regarded as a point of inflexion in the implementation of humanistic ideals, in which the ideological message of the work is conveyed by means of a narrative that is reminiscent of a sermon.²¹ In fact, the arguments put forward by the chronicle manifest a considerable understanding of theoretical doctrinal constructions, leading to an abundance of subjective digressions and a discourse that is never limited to the simple account of events.²² We must also consider that the chronicler was close to the king. It seems that, between 1481 and 1502, with Isabel—to whom Enríquez had sworn loyalty—already as uncontested queen, the text was revised, probably to cleanse and polish the damaged reputation of Enrique IV.²³

Criticism against Pacheco, however, was not limited to the period in which he was closest to the king, but became especially acrimonious when he led the

¹⁹ "It is not possible for selfish people to make good councillors," Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 33.

²⁰ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpts. 37, 68.

²¹ Fernández Gallardo, "El discurso directo," 135. Tate, "La historiografía del reinado," 19, also heard "a preaching tone" in Enríquez del Castillo's chronicle.

²² Bermejo Cabrero, "Las ideas políticas," 61–78.

²³ Fernández Gallardo, "El discurso directo," 16–17. For the king's role in the chronicle see Nieto Soria, "La oratoria como *speculum regum*."

aristocratic faction that opposed him. As such, references to the king's suspicions concerning Pacheco and others, notably Carrillo, became increasingly frequent. Occasionally, the focus was laid on Enrique IV's emotions, when he was said to be "saddened and angry by [the Marquis of Villena's] past lies."²⁴

Rebellious, unruly, and traitorous

The political schism that marked Enrique IV's reign began with the formation of a royal party and a faction that supported the political aspirations of his stepsiblings, first Alfonso and then Isabel. Naturally, this confrontation was reflected in the historical writings. For instance, the events that unfolded after 1464, when the king's enemies ramped up their offensive, led to the image of Pacheco in the chronicles deteriorating more than ever before.

In Enríquez del Castillo's chronicle, criticism of the rebel nobles peaked with a digression in which the chronicler, following his account of the Farce of Ávila, accused these nobles of going against God's will, as well as of committing an infamous mistake with the excuse of criticising the king's, "tearing the veil of shame off disloyalty."²⁵ They were defined as "ungrateful creatures" and "perverse servants," which emphasised their links with the Crown and the royal origin of their privileges. The chronicler's diatribe even includes appeals to a vague notion of patriotism, when he states that the nobles "being foreigners" were not concerned about the kingdom's welfare. With this, he was

²⁴ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 57.

²⁵ The Farce of Avila was a "ritual ceremony" where a group of Castilian noblemen deposed Enrique IV in effigy (June 1465). This event was notably studied by Angus MacKay, see MacKay, "Ritual and propaganda."

probably referring to the roots of the "Portuguese party," formed around Carrillo, Pacheco and Girón.²⁶

Increasingly, Pacheco is portrayed in the chronicle as the leader of the aristocratic party that opposed Enrique IV's authority. The faction is defined as "his [i.e., Pacheco's] deals with the realm's great men" to "destroy and dethrone the king."²⁷ Although the chronicle generally grounds these criticisms on Pacheco's relationship with the king, at times the chronicler adopts a more collective approach. In this same passage Pacheco is called "destroyer of the realm" and, in the *Crónica anónima castellana*, "the bane of these kingdoms"²⁸.

Yet the Marquis of Villena's was not the only name to stand out. Enríquez del Castillo often mentions Carrillo, Archbishop of Toledo, and accuses him of misgovernment and injustice in collusion with Pacheco: "His only purpose was to destroy, rather than repair, and offend, rather than serve." Archbishop Carrillo was one

²⁶ "If you were naturals of this kingdom, you would feel pain when you hurt it,"

Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 74. See Olivera Serrano, *Beatriz de Portugal*, 204–06; Romero Portilla, "Protagonismo del partido portugués."

²⁷ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 53. Enríquez coupled this statement with a proverb: "the ancients said that those that err never forgive, but suspecting the guilt of their faults, they multiply their wickedness." This was also used in part in Alonso de Palencia, *Gesta Hispaniensia*, Década 1, libro 6, chpt. 8, 246: "sed ut sunt feruentiores in persequendo mali quam in reparando probi."

²⁸ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 166; *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, chpt. 62.

of the main butts of criticism in the period's sources, although Pacheco always was the main target of the chroniclers' opprobrium.²⁹ Later in the chronicle it is said that the archbishop "always went out of his way to cause harm. Carrillo was also criticised in the literary and chronicle works by Íñigo de Mendoza (c. 1424–c. 1507) and Hernando de Pulgar (d. 1492). The latter was especially harsh in his *Letra* III of 1475: "your house was the den of malcontent and furious knights, a maker of plots against the Royal Sceptre, the matron of unruly men and scandals against the realm; [...], enemies of the peace of the people."³⁰

The marquis pursuing his interests with plots "in rebellion and disobedience" is a constant in Enríquez del Castillo's work, which also refers repeatedly to this movement as "treason" against the king: "The kingdom's knights indulged in traitorous plots, and in greedy disarray; he opened the gate to treason, tearing the veil of shame from the traitors."³¹

"Tyranny" was another recurrent theme. The concept was used to define the attitude of the knights involved in the revolt against the Crown, who are often called "tyrant knights." However, Pacheco's personal tyranny is made to stand out time and time again: "His tyrannical condition and disloyalty were already self-evident."³² It seems that,

²⁹ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpts. 57, 86; Mendoza, "Coplas de Vita Christi," vv. 213–215. For Carrillo's image in the chronicles see Parrilla García, "La 'Exclamación de España'," 75–77.

³⁰ Pulgar, *Letras*, 15–18.

³¹ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 126.

³² "My servants and other knights, disloyal as they were, tried to offend me [...], moving away from my service to achieve their disordered tyranny;" "Once the

although criticism was levelled against all rebel nobles, very often this ended focusing on the figure of the Marquis of Villena. Similarly, although the author of the *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV* accused nobles in various regions of tyranny and of wreaking havoc locally, he also remarked the “tyrannical condition” and “government” of the Marquis of Villena, which affected the whole Crown.³³

It is interesting to note that Diego de Valera’s (1412–c. 1488) *Memorial de Diversas Hazañas* attributes most acts of tyranny to the king and some nobles operating in a strictly local level.³⁴ As a result of his animosity towards Enrique IV and his intent to legitimise Isabel I, Valera sought to depict an unjust government that would be replaced by the Catholic Monarchs' justice and order. By contrast, Enríquez del Castillo presented Enrique IV as a victim of the nobility’s plots and, particularly, of the Marquis of Villena’s machinations. This was linked to the king’s known, and criticised, tendency to push away those who were loyal to him, propping up instead those "who had made him such disservice and betrayed him."³⁵ In this same vein, Valera also claimed that the king "elevated the Marquis of Villena to the detriment of all others."³⁶

wickedness of the tyrannical knights that had risen against him was visible," Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpts. 75, 77, also in chpts. 87, 92, 149. The quotation about Pacheco appears in chpt. 84.

³³ *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, 2:85, 90.

³⁴ In fact, the rebellion of nobles led by Pacheco is described as a reaction to the king’s tyranny in Valera, *Memorial de diversas hazañas*, chpt. 25.

³⁵ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpts. 57, 62, 63, the quotations appear in chpts. 126, 132.

³⁶ Valera, *Memorial de diversas hazañas*, chpt. 96.

In Enríquez del Castillo's chronicle, Pacheco's attitude to government was mostly seen through a moral lens. As a result, wrong actions were regarded as a reflection of his wrong nature. His wicked intentions — "damaging," "ill-purposed," "bad wishes," "so grave was his cruelty;" his will to destroy — "he worked tirelessly for the dishonour and the perdition of the king," "he sought the king's ruin and the destruction of his magnificent kingdom;" his dishonest attitude — "little truth and big lies," "invidious deals;" his selfishness — "unruly greed;" and his ingratitude make for a larger-than-life negative portrait.³⁷ Similarly, the author of the *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV* referred to the Marquis of Villena as a concocter of dishonest deals.³⁸

Many of these moral opinions were put directly in the mouths of some of the characters that populated the chronicles, including Enrique IV himself. The king is made to describe Pacheco as "my own ungrateful creature," in direct relation to Pacheco's above noted links with the royal service and his subsequent ingratitude and disobedience. The chronicler also makes Enrique IV describe an attempt by Pacheco and his supporters to arrest him — to remove the Count of Ledesma from the royal court and the king's side — as a "perversely daring action." The failed attempt led to Ledesma's appointment as *maestre* of Santiago, which, according to the chronicler, made matters even worse. These concepts are voiced through the king on several more occasions to criticise the marquis's role in the aristocratic plot against the king. The king was not the only figure made to criticise Pacheco in these chronicles, as other nobles and ecclesiastical lords also appear blaming him for "pursuing his interest" and his "tyrannical wishes,"

³⁷ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpts. 60, 84, 59, 81, 62, 84, 61, 53, 80

(following the order in which they are quoted in the text).

³⁸ *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, 2:56, 65.

triggering the civil war in Castile and all its negative consequences “against Spain’s laws.”³⁹ By emphasising the displeasure of the kingdom's elites, the chroniclers attempted to put across a general aversion towards Pacheco, which reinforced their descriptions.

It must be pointed out now that Valera's and Enríquez del Castillo's chronicles present notable similarities. In his *Memorial*, Valera tried to demonstrate that Enrique IV's reign had been void of both political authority and military deeds that met his chivalric ideal. As pointed out by Gómez Redondo, the chronicler always tried to offset a positive event with an unfavourable one.⁴⁰ Similarly, the *Crónica anónima castellana* betrays a clear sympathy for Isabel and Fernando, while attacking Enrique IV relentlessly. This political stance, similar to Valera's and also to Alonso de Palencia's, is explained by the use of sections from the *Décadas* and the *Memorial de diversas hazañas*.⁴¹

Enríquez del Castillo, for his part, systematically confronted bad and good servants based on the actions of the Marquis of Villena. Besides defending the king's position, Enríquez emphasised thus the behaviour expected of aristocrats, probably with a didactic and moralising purpose. As such, he highlighted Pacheco's disloyalty, disservice and disobedience, his attempts to plot with other nobles and to set them up

³⁹ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpts. 60, 61, 10, 88. As we shall see, this chorus of critics even includes Pacheco's wife; *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, vol. 1, chpt. 85; Valera, *Memorial de diversas hazañas*, chpts. 31, 97.

⁴⁰ In the second half of the chronicle the limelight falls on Fernando, by then the husband of Isabel, whose values stand out against those prevailing in the Castilian court.

Gómez Redondo, *Historia de la prosa medieval*, IV:3525–34.

⁴¹ *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, XVI–XVII, XCVIII–CLXXVII.

against the king, while intending that the monarch's suspicions fall on those who served him well. The monarch is made to use these very words in his criticisms of Pacheco, as the following illustrates:

Oh, shameless knight, ungrateful and disloyal servant! In order to ascend you attacked the greatness of him who made you, wasted his honour, denied his fame, insulted his kingdoms, his people and his nation; to display the sword of nobility on your chest you made so many innocents go through the knife and die for your cause; in your search for mastery you unmade him who made you, caused endless robberies, made so many widows, took so many children from their parents and so many parents from their children; in order to become *maestre*, you tainted your name and left your children a shameful surname. Tell me, now, tyrannical knight, was it all worth it, for such a brief time, since word of your infamy will run among the people for as long as the world lasts, for as long as women give birth?⁴²

In the same vein, a few chapters later, the chronicler presents Pacheco's lack of regret and guilt for his actions:

Once in the height of infamy, he remembered him who made him out of nothing, and dishonoured him who brought him to such heights, with no shame of himself, no regret in his conscience, oblivious to his faults against him to whom he should be most grateful, whom he should serve, not destroy, avoiding his bones, there where they lie, to take pride on once being the loyal

⁴² Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpts. 59, 70; the quotation appears in chpt. 94.

servant of his king and lord, who got nothing from him but persecution and shame.⁴³

It must be emphasised that these criticisms are not limited to the period in which Pacheco was the leader of the rebel faction, but continue appearing after he returned to Enrique IV's side and while he defended the cause of his daughter, Juana of Trastámara. According to Enríquez del Castillo, Pacheco's only purpose during this period was to be made *maestre* of Santiago. In fact, the chapter in which his appointment is recounted implicitly de-legitimises this act, as it is pointed out that the decision was not taken with the agreement of the king, the nobility and the pope.⁴⁴ The *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV* also claimed that the *maestrazgo* was being granted "against all law, tyrannically."⁴⁵

It is now necessary to point out that in the *Memorial de diversas hazañas* the attacks on Pacheco are neither nearly as frequent nor as harsh. This is probably due to the Marquis of Villena's friendship with Valera. This good relationship crystallised in two treatises written for Pacheco's instruction. However, it seems that Valera's efforts

⁴³ A few lines above, the narrator admits his lack of impartiality: "speaking the truth without passion, because we should all befriend truth, not lies, I cannot but think this of this knight," in Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 126. This was followed by a statement attributed to Pacheco's wife, María Portocarrero.

⁴⁴ "Without the consent of the king or the prince, his brother, from whom [the appointment] had been taken away, the prelates and other great men of the kingdom, and without consulting the pope," Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpts. 86, 94.

⁴⁵ *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, vol. 2, chpt. 62.

to lead him down a straight path and to the company of good men were being wasted, causing the author's disappointment.⁴⁶ It is thus likely that Valera's criticism of Pacheco fed on his frustration and displeasure. For instance, the chronicle emphasises Pacheco's hypocrisy by claiming that, while supporting Prince Alfonso's faction, he kept upholding Enrique's power and preventing his ultimate downfall, and this, ultimately, caused devastation in the kingdom and among the nobility:

It would be a hard thing to do to describe everything that went on between these great [lords] in order, of which very few acted for the benefit of the res publica of these kingdoms, or to serve the king, but rather [did so] to increase their estates; among them was the Marquis Don Juan Pacheco, who seemed to follow King Don Alonso but still upheld King Don Enrique, preventing his ultimate downfall, not going full tilt for his party or against King Don Enrique; and in the struggle between these two kings these kingdoms were ruined, and no less their great [lords].⁴⁷

A reflection of these descriptions of Juan Pacheco may be found in the period's literature, specifically the *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo*, which, in the context of the Farce of Ávila, stand as a direct indictment against the violent conduct of the nobility. In one of the stanzas, Íñigo de Mendoza mentions a "butchering wolf" who, despite his cruelty and vileness, appeared as harmless through deception and lies: "A butchering wolf comes / In the midst of the flocks; / And showing their footprints / He claims to be a sheep."⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Villa Prieto, "El epistolario de Diego de Valera," 170.

⁴⁷ Valera, *Memorial de diversas hazañas*, chpt. 31.

⁴⁸ Mendoza, "Coplas de Mingo Revulgo," §9.

Although Julio Rodríguez Puértolas argued that these verses referred to Beltrán de la Cueva, Kenneth Scholberg's interpretation, that the "wolf" was Juan Pacheco, seems closer to the mark because it mirrors the other opinions about this nobleman found in the period's literature.⁴⁹

Pacheco as an agent of regional instability

Beyond his actions at the top levels of government, Pacheco is represented in the chronicles as an agent of local instability. First, concerning the royal granting of seigniorial rights over different areas, the chronicles reproduce the reluctance of the local population. According to the *Refundición de la Crónica de Juan II*, soon after the Battle of Olmedo Juan II thought of giving a number of estates in Badajoz to Juan Pacheco and some in Cáceres to Prince Enrique. However, the local residents protested energetically, "claiming that this was done against their will, and that they did not consent to it."⁵⁰ In addition, the local nobility joined the fray, supporting the local resident's protests: Mencía, wife of Alonso de Aguilar and Lady of Villanueva de Barcarrota, was not willing to cede the rights that she held over her lands near Badajoz.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Scholberg, *Sátira e invectiva*, 252; Corral Sánchez, "Perros contra lobos."

⁵⁰ *Refundición de la Crónica de Juan II*, year 1445, chap. 20.

⁵¹ Marín, "Las Ordenanzas Municipales," 352–56. Montaña Conchiña, "Señorialización y usurpaciones terminiegas," 345–48, has identified a double process in Badajoz: one of "major seigniorialisation," with purchases and grants such as the ones awarded to Pacheco, and a "minor" one, characterised by the illegal encroachment of rights by the local oligarchies.

Like in the previous example, the chroniclers working during the reign of Enrique IV gave voice to the residents affected by the processes of “seigniorialisation” and to the nobles whose influence in the area was thus undermined. According to Enríquez del Castillo, when the king granted Sepúlveda to Pacheco the residents expressed their protest, arguing that taking this estate out of the king’s domain did a disservice to the kingdom, and in reprisal they joined Princess Isabel’s side.⁵² Similarly, the *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV* pointed out the frontal opposition posed by these residents, who expressed their concern not only for “a hard state of servitude” but also for the “universal damage” that granting the estate to the Marquis of Villena, by then *maestre* of Santiago, would cause to the whole province.⁵³ The arguments put forward to resist these developments have been regarded as contradictory, as they combined a conservative approach, which defended tradition, and an innovative one, which based its arguments on freedom and natural law.⁵⁴ In this regard, Luke Sunderland made interesting observations about the notion of “resistance” to both grants and the illegal encroachment of fortresses, villages and estates, and its relation with the emergence of the modern State:

Both vendetta and revolt can aim for justice and for the common good, whereas resistance makes sense within a context of competing claims for sovereignty that must be grasped outside the teleology of the nation–state,

⁵² Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 156.

⁵³ *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, vol. 2, chpt. 50.

⁵⁴ Nicolas, Valdeón, and Vilfan, “Monarchic State and Resistance,” 103–07. For arguments against “seigniorialisation” in *pechero* discourses see Monsalvo Antón, “Percepciones de los pecheros,” 65–70.

without automatically siding with the crown as if its demands were somehow morally superior.⁵⁵

It has also been pointed out that all social groups that suffered from the nobility's pressure reacted to the upper nobility's attempts to keep their socio-political status after the late medieval economic recession. It affected not only peasants but also the urban dwellers of towns that fell under seigniorial control⁵⁶.

In a different passage, Enríquez del Castillo recalls that Pacheco convinced the king to give him the only fortress in Carmona that was not yet under his control. In this instance, the irreconcilable Marquis of Cádiz (Rodrigo Ponce de León, 1444–1492) and Duke of Medina Sidonia (Enrique Pérez de Guzmán, d. 1492) —who "in this occasion acted as one"—, other noblemen, and the city's *regidores* and knights implored “insistently” for the city not to be taken outside the royal domain because that would do a disservice to the Crown.⁵⁷

This sort of criticism was not only directed at the granting of estates by the king, but also at the violent encroachments perpetrated by the nobility. As noted, those acting in this way were referred to as “tyrants.” The author of the *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV* added this charge to that of “wickedness,” the moral overtone again, to describe Juan Pacheco's occupation of fortresses.⁵⁸

These encroachments were a reflection of aristocratic competition at the local level and of the struggle for power at the royal court. In this way, the *Crónica anónima de*

⁵⁵ Sunderland, *Rebel Barons*, 260.

⁵⁶ Valdeón, *Los conflictos sociales*, 212.

⁵⁷ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 134.

⁵⁸ *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, vol. 2, chpt. 70.

Enrique IV mentions Pacheco's interference in Seville, especially concerning the confrontation between the Marquis of Cádiz and the Duke of Medina Sidonia: "both of whom he pretended to befriend in order to make trouble for them." The narrator emphasises Pacheco's negative influence, claiming that, with the king's support, he kept a retinue of "bad and scandalous men," who "offended and damaged the inhabitants of the city." This mirrors the broader situation in Castile, the Marquis of Villena being presented as a deceptive supporter of two factions at war. Again, the chronicler gave voice to the citizens, implicitly in this instance, when he described the hatred that they felt for Pacheco and for the Marquis of Cádiz —referred to as "tyrant" by Valera. According to the chronicler, several reasons justified this animosity. First, Pacheco had let "violence," murders and "some detestable crimes" happen; and, second, he had sowed division in the city by forcing the marriage of his "true wife" to his cousin, against the wishes of her family.⁵⁹

This same chronicle also claims that Pacheco was "illegitimately" in possession of several towns in the region of the Alcarria, such as Alcocer, Valdolivas and Salmerón, and that he intended to extend his possessions over the regions that separated Madrid and Seville:

Which he left the marquis with some hope of getting more; his sights were set not only on the noble town of Madrid, in the province of Toledo, after getting Escalona, which had belonged to *condestable* don Alvaro de Luna, but he also aimed to have the city of Segovia. He also thought of occupying the city of Alcaraz, which in fact belonged to Princess Doña Isabel, and Baeza he was already in possession of, and also wished to take Úbeda, but most of

⁵⁹ *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, vol. 2, chpts. 33, 41.

all the city of Sevilla and he endeavoured to take the city of Avila, that obeyed the Princess⁶⁰.

Pacheco's unquenchable thirst for controlling the areas in the proximity of his estates "by means of tyranny" was not overlooked by Enríquez del Castillo, who stated that "the hungry greed of the *maestre* was so insatiable that he never had enough." Owing to the state of insecurity that followed in Pacheco's wake, the chronicler insisted on the need to confirm the *Hermandades* as a bulwark against the marquis's greed:

In the meantime it happened that the *maestre* don Juan Pacheco, in his exquisite greed, took over the city of Alcaraz, because it was close to his marquisate [...] These tyrannies and similar ones promoted by the *maestre* went unpunished to the detriment of God and the king, so that in many cities and villages grave offences were committed, and deaths, robberies, insults and violence, and people were not safe in their own houses, so the villages [...] agreed on ways to protect their lives and properties, and each city and village chose two good men to go around with armed folk to punish miscreants, and this not only pleased the king, but he commanded these *Ermandades* to be confirmed and to look after the safety of roads.⁶¹

⁶⁰ *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, vol. 2, chpt. 24.

⁶¹ The *Hermandades*, or "brotherhoods," were armed associations of town dwellers, peasants, lower nobility, and lower clergy. The purpose of these local militias was to preserve public order, peace, and justice, especially in the countryside, where they combated noble abuses, sackings and other crimes. See Sánchez Benito, "Observaciones sobre la Hermandad castellana."

Naturally, Enríquez del Castillo placed Pacheco in the party that opposed these *hermandades*, claiming that he and his followers "put as many obstacles as they could, arguing that villagers and commoners would turn into lords, and would want to rule over *hidalgos* (lower nobility)." ⁶² The *Crónica anónima castellana*, on the other hand, seems to have shared Pacheco's opinion on this count, criticising the "commoners that wished to lord over the nobility with the *Hermandad*." Valera's position was half-way: he thought that the creation of the *hermandad* was a positive step, but after a time, in view of the excesses committed by it, supported the measures implemented to repress it. ⁶³

Throughout this section, as well as the previous two, the public, political role of Pacheco was questioned from various perspectives. The attacks censored his capacity for government and leadership, as support for the monarchs and as lord of territorial states. Considering the different dimensions of noble propaganda discussed above, it seems clear that these criticisms greatly impaired its effectiveness. Consequently, this type of reproach damaged both the legitimacy and the reputation of the censored nobleman and his family, as the chronicles even indicate. Moreover, by emphasising not only his "spoiled" lineage, but also several negative aspects of his personality and various moral defects, the de-legitimation also affected his private life.

⁶² Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpts. 150, 156.

⁶³ *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, vol. 1, chpt. 70; Valera, *Memorial de diversas hazañas*, chpt. 33. Barros, *Mentalidad justiciera de los irmandiños*, 222, has analysed similar opinions within the *hermandad* in Galicia. For the excesses committed by the *hermandades* see Palencia, *Gesta Hispaniense*, Década 1, libro 9, chpt. 3.

Discursive strategies and everlasting infamy

The criticism levelled against Pacheco largely relied on the use of terms that not only censored his actions but, especially, his nature. We have already seen numerous examples that span a wide array of topics, from moral issues to political concepts, often related to the loyalty owed to the king (“treason,” “disobedience,” “disloyalty”). It is important to recall that the corporate relationship of the king with his kingdom was based on principles of loyalty, obedience and service. Therefore, the terminology chosen is a direct reference to the king and his feudal relationship with Pacheco. The use of these terms demonstrates how alive this chivalry-inspired social ideal was in the Late Middle Ages.⁶⁴

Although very often these terms concealed the chroniclers’ personal interests, the use of general political concepts to characterise specific political conflicts betrays the intermingling of political expediency and intellectual production.⁶⁵ These terms point to a series of conceptual categories and the shared norms and values that constitute the socio-political culture of late medieval Castile. In any case, it must be taken into account that the interpretation of these concepts was fluid and open to alternative views.⁶⁶ In this particular instance, the concepts were defined against Pacheco’s actions, which were regarded as detrimental to the Crown’s interests and a contravention of the king’s orders.

Let us focus now on the notion of “tyranny.” The use of this expression appears to be a commonplace to describe any grievous behaviour, rather than a concept based on legal theory. However, some texts also mention Pacheco’s “tyrannical condition” to

⁶⁴ Carrasco Manchado, “Léxico político,” 123; Quintanilla Raso, *La nobleza señorial*, 53;

Pascua Echegaray, *Nobleza y caballería*, 288.

⁶⁵ Nieto Soria, “La parole,” 708–10.

⁶⁶ Oliva Herrer, “La prisión del rey,” 375–76.

undermine his reputation. This seems to be a key difference in the criticisms levelled at other nobles, which are limited to the casuistry of their behaviour.⁶⁷ It is, in any case, interesting to note that these concepts are the counterpoint to the ideas used in the sources to support the legitimacy of a given political agent.⁶⁸ They are, therefore, highly illustrative of the dynamics of political communication, and their use is recurrent in the analysis of other conflicts: for instance, Valera criticises the king in the same terms for his “ill intentions.”⁶⁹

Together with the descriptions of his actions, discussed above, the use of these concepts contributed to de-legitimising the image of Pacheco's leadership and government. They emphasised his negative relationship with the monarch, to whom he did not demonstrate the expected service and loyalty.

In addition to these arguments, the chroniclers also resorted to other, less direct strategies to put their positions across. First, parallels and *exempla* which compare Pacheco's behaviour with that of other political actors, especially the *condestable* Álvaro de Luna. Their actions are put in parallel, for instance, when, according to the *Refundición de la Crónica de Juan II*, they arrested some high aristocrats "so that they could rule over the king and prince as they pleased." Also the *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV* recalled the *condestable* when talking about Pacheco's wish to acquire the *maestrazgo* of Santiago. Both are accused of having received this appointment “forcefully,” being “the

⁶⁷ Corral Sánchez, *Discursos contra los nobles*, 234–47.

⁶⁸ Black, *Political Thought in Europe*; Ullmann and Walter, *Medieval Political Thought*; Monsalvo Antón, "Ideario sociopolítico y valores," 325–62.

⁶⁹ Diego de Valera, *Memorial de diversas hazañas*, chpt. 53.

greatest intruders in the post that one could imagine.”⁷⁰ Classical and religious history also offered parallels; Enríquez del Castillo compared Pacheco’s cruelty to that of the “Greeks against the Trojans,” and his “impious” insult to “that of the mothers besieged in Jerusalem, who, full of impiety, ate their own children.”⁷¹

Chroniclers also used the New Testament to attack Pacheco. Diego de Valera resorted to the authority of the Bible to recount the death of Pacheco before his plans came to fruition, namely the marriage between the king of Portugal and Juana, the king’s daughter: “Confirming the sentence of Saint Job, who said: ‘God dispels the thoughts of the wicked, so their hands cannot see their wishes to the end’.” The same reference is used in the *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, which, as noted, took some fragments from Valera’s work.⁷² As we can see, from the perspective of medieval rhetoric, history and religion provided examples and sources used by the chroniclers to back up their arguments. In this sense, it has been pointed out that past events or characters were not as interesting to the authors of the chronicles as the image they intended to present. In fact, it seems that the past was assigned two functions in the historical account: to provide legitimation and to offer an example; that is, to show present power as an inheritance from the past. Scholars have also studied the recourse to biblical formulas that connect the chronicles with the

⁷⁰ *Refundición de la Crónica de Juan II*, year 1448, chpt. 2; *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, vol. 2, chpt. 90.

⁷¹ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 81. The last quote is a reference to the Book of Lamentations (Old Testament), where women have boiled their own children because of God's punishment.

⁷² Job 5: 12; Valera, *Memorial de diversas hazañas*, chpt. 95; *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, vol. 2, chpt. 89.

human "history of salvation," stressing its importance in legitimising the chronicles themselves.⁷³ Thus, these arguments significantly strengthened the attempts to de-legitimise Pacheco, since they were not commonly used to describe most censored noblemen.

The invectives against Pacheco also made frequent use of other literary resources, such as metaphors and commonplaces. Referring to a vague time in the past, Enríquez del Castillo defined Pacheco as an "infected tree," arguing that "those with their self-interest at heart cannot be healthy councillors, and loyalty never springs from wickedness in the same way that an infected tree never gives good fruit or a diseased heart a good deed."⁷⁴ Beyond his behaviour, the very nature of the marquis was thus being attacked. Concerning literary commonplaces, like the use of the *ubi sunt* and of the notion of death as a social equaliser (of which more later), such rhetorical techniques were anything but new. Numerous studies on medieval sermons and preaching techniques have highlighted the frequent use of *exempla*, *similitudines* and *auctoritates*, among others, as a resource to catch the listeners' attention.⁷⁵ Their use also makes clearer the didactic aim of this type of discursive attacks: these chroniclers especially wanted to prevent the nobles from repeating the mistakes of the past.

The foremost scholars on Castilian historiography, such as Brian Tate, have pointed out a tendency towards the gradual individualisation of the "voice of the historian" in the Late Middle Ages. The narrator's position becomes more explicit in the narrative, although

⁷³ Monsalvo Antón, "*En tiempo de los reyes*," 12; Martin, "Pasados para el presente," 18; Las Heras, "Temas y figuras bíblicas," 131–40.

⁷⁴ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 33.

⁷⁵ Mews and Welch, *Poverty and Devotion*.

the emphasis of this varies greatly from author to author. Among our authors, the most outstanding example of this is Enríquez del Castillo, who included numerous, highly subjective allocutions and digressions —almost sermons— in which he decried the suffering of the Crown, for which he naturally blamed the nobility. The tone of these digressions led Tate to compare Enríquez del Castillo with a preacher.⁷⁶ However, all of these criticisms and discursive strategies were not only the expression of the chroniclers' opinions —the vehicle of the historian's voice— but also of other characters, either in the form of oral allocutions, recorded by the chronicler, or by writing documents —especially letters— reproduced in the chronicle to increase its authenticity.⁷⁷ We have already seen examples of the use of various political actors, named or otherwise, for this purpose. Enríquez del Castillo mentions the complaints of some “major lords, men of the Church and men of conscience” against Pacheco but without more details; it seems clear that his intention was to express the revulsion that some important political actors felt for Pacheco.⁷⁸ However, it is not rare for named figures to also feature in this capacity, openly attacking the Marquis of Villena, especially King Enrique IV and Pacheco's wife, María Portocarrero.

It is significant that, in his wish to undermine Pacheco's reputation, Enríquez del Castillo even turned his own wife's deathbed words against him. The marchioness emphasised his disloyalty and “dishonourable infamy,” asking that he return to the king's obedience and using words that point directly to the commonplace of death as the great equaliser (*omnia mors aequat*):

⁷⁶ Tate, "La historiografía del reinado," 19.

⁷⁷ See Bautista Pérez, "Historiografía y poder," 109.

⁷⁸ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 88.

You are mortal and you must die, and you will be summoned to the Divine court, where you will be accused of ingratitude for great disloyalty, for you have failed, destroyed and insulted him whom you should not only honour and defend, but die for. And if you do not want to repent from your infamy, do it for your soul, so that it does not go with Judas and be lost without appeal.⁷⁹

As could be expected in a deathbed scene, fame and memory played a central role in the invective dedicated by the chronicler to Pacheco after his death:

Tell me now, enemy of your soul, wastrel of your fame, persecutor of your king, you who destroyed that kingdom where you were born and raised, you made such use of your power [...]. What will your memory be like? What fame will you leave your children? What will your reputation be among the people of the world, but that you lost your life taking what was not yours? Suffice it to say that you leave your bad family name and the infamy of your toil.

This fragment recalls another commonplace, the *ubi sunt*. ("where are... [they]") Enríquez del Castillo had already written in a previous chapter that "neither in life did he do good deeds nor in death did he leave good memories," and now the idea is repeated that the Marquis of Villena's legacy will forever be tainted by his actions in life. The author further accuses Pacheco, in both his own voice and that of Pacheco's wife, of besmirching his lineage — "You attached your name to an ugly fame, and left your children a shameful

⁷⁹ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpt. 155. For this commonplace, see the analysis of the "totentanz," in Vives-Ferrándiz Sánchez, *Vanitas: Retórica visual*, 215.

surname”— and therefore also his fame, repeating "neither in life did he do good deeds nor in death did he leave good memories."⁸⁰

On the other hand, the *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV* makes explicit reference to people's happiness at the death of the *maestre*. The chronicler also sowed doubts about whether Pacheco had died "catholically," that is, with his sins pardoned.⁸¹ This directly links with his lack of regret, as mentioned by Enríquez del Castillo, which added this to the offences listed in the brief *Arte del bien morir*, printed in Zaragoza between 1479 and 1484: "Item, let it be known if he was excommunicated; Item, if he did his penitence; Item, if he harboured rancour against anyone; Item, if he truly repents from his sins; Item, if he left any sin untold."⁸²

The critical nature of these final considerations is especially significant if we compare them with one of the few positive characterisations of Pacheco, in Pulgar's *Claros varones de Castilla*. Although he is blamed for leading the knights "that sowed division in the kingdom," the final moments of Pacheco's life are dominated by regret and the recognition of his human faults, but also by what del Pulgar regarded as Pacheco's highest virtue, prudence:

As this knight saw that the King Don Enrique's side was not a safe place for him, with others nearby and posing a threat to his life, he left his service and was the main knight responsible for sowing discord between King Don Enrique and King Don Alfonso, his brother. [...] As no one can correct themselves without repentance, this knight, knowing that he had turned away from the right path, not only turned back, but worked hard to allay the altered will of the knights and bishops who wanted to

⁸⁰ Enríquez del Castillo, *Crónica de Enrique IV*, chpts. 94, 126, 155, 166.

⁸¹ *Crónica anónima de Enrique IV*, vol. 2, chpt. 90.

⁸² *Arte de bien morir*, 126.

continue this division, and returned to the favour of the King, who forgave him. [...]
From then on he ruled absolute, showing more liberality than he had ever done. It is not my intention to deny that this knight, as a human being, had faults, as all men have; yet it is conceivable that if his human nature could not resist those faults, his prudence might be able to conceal them.⁸³

In his *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*, this Castilian humanist also insisted on Pacheco's act of repentance, when he came back under the authority of Enrique IV.⁸⁴ In this regard, the humanist undertone of Pulgar's work should not be overlooked. As Bianchini notes, his "bourgeois humanism" was reflected in the civic nature of his political views, in which the defence of individual freedom is linked to the support for royal power, particularly while Isabel was queen.⁸⁵

In fact, in the works written during the reign of Isabel, the infamous memory of the Marquis of Villena kept falling upon his descendants. In his narration of the Castilian War of Succession (1474–1479) between Isabel and Juana of Trastámara, Pulgar criticised those who supported the Portuguese king in their local areas of influence. In the region of Extremadura, María Pacheco, Countess of Medellín and daughter of the late

⁸³ Pulgar, *Claros varones de Castilla*, chpts. 59, 60. Pulgar was raised at court, and later was Enrique IV's secretary, with judicial and diplomatic responsibilities, so he was well acquainted with government procedures. Despite this loyalty to the king, when Isabel came to the throne he began writing apologetic texts for the new monarchs, who appointed him royal chronicler in the place of Alonso de Palencia around 1480. For the political views of these chroniclers see Tate, "Poles Apart."

⁸⁴ Pulgar, *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*, chpt. 2.

⁸⁵ Bianchini, "Fernando del Pulgar," 27.

Juan Pacheco, and Alonso de Monroy, *clavero* (key-bearer) of the Order of Alcántara, surrounded themselves with "many men of ill will, greedy for war," who had "rebelled" against the monarchs, taking the side of the Portuguese. The countess was blamed for being the main agent behind the war, and Pulgar defined her as a "woman full of daring," who had "usurped the town of Mérida, which belonged to the *maestrazgo* of Santiago, and she held by force the town of Medellín with all its properties to the detriment of its legitimate master."⁸⁶

Pacheco's memory was also present in the *Crónica incompleta de los Reyes Católicos*, attributed to Juan de Flores. In a speech addressed to the king, it is said that Beatriz de Bobadilla had criticised the behaviour of the Marquis of Villena, accusing him of perverting the country by rising up against the king, taking his rents and "tyrannically" occupying cities and towns to bring about their destruction. For all of this, she concluded, he deserved to be executed "as his wickedness and malice, mistress of Lucifer, deserve." This mention of Satan expressed in no uncertain terms the need to dole out punishment to match his "ingratitude and wickedness."⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Pulgar, *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*, chpt. 102.

⁸⁷ The chronicler, however, blamed "wars, ills and robberies in the kingdom" exclusively on Enrique IV, see *Crónica incompleta de los Reyes*, chpts. 5, 8, 10. The identity of Juan de Flores, the first official chronicler appointed by Isabel and Fernando, has caused some difficulties; he was probably a university graduate linked with the House of Alba and the University of Salamanca. He also seems to have been militarily very active, taking part in the campaigns against Portugal and Granada. Parrilla García, "Encina y la ficción," 130; Gwara, "Identity of Juan de Flores."

The image portrayed in chronicles —especially official ones, which were regarded as more reliable— was often also reproduced in literary works and, notably with regard to the abuses of power, frequently reflected the same sort of demands put forth in the meetings of the *Cortes*. The convergence of these tendencies, along with popular expressions conveyed by some of the chroniclers, suggest that these issues were present beyond the royal court's circles. As others have pointed out, these discourses even reached middling rural communities through informal communication networks.⁸⁸ The dissemination of the idea of infamy and dishonour was a harsh punishment for a social group obsessed with fame. As pointed out by María Concepción Quintanilla Raso, "any attack on their honour affected the aristocracy at its very core."⁸⁹

Discourse and de-legitimation: final considerations

The narration of the tense confrontations witnessed by late-fifteenth Castile left many discursive attacks against the nobility, underscoring the importance of *a posteriori* words in the presentation of political conflicts. Sometimes, these invectives focused very particularly on given individuals, as was the case of Juan Pacheco.

Criticism against the Marquis of Villena largely revolved around his public activity as a major political agent, both at the head of government and on regional and local levels. During the years in which he was close to Enrique IV, Pacheco is represented as a "bad councillor" of whom many other nobles were suspicious as the king's right-hand man, a position not unlike that of Álvaro de Luna in the previous reign. However, the substance of the criticism changed significantly when Pacheco came to lead the

⁸⁸ Oliva Herrero, "La prisión del rey," 384.

⁸⁹ Quintanilla Raso, "Nobilitas virtutis causa," 155.

aristocratic league against the king. Thereafter, the criticism became significantly harsher, and he is presented as the main, sometimes almost the sole, culprit of the rebellion against Enrique IV. He is also portrayed as an agent of instability at the regional level, trying to occupy places against their inhabitant's wills and to interfere in the competition between local nobles. This criticism also affected his private and personal affairs. Pacheco was not only scorned for his role in government, but he was also accused of having tainted his lineage. In this regard, it is worth emphasising that his critics not only attacked the marquis's behaviour, but his very nature and his innate personal features, so the invectives launched against him were not necessarily associated with any of his actions.

In order to put all this criticism across, the chroniclers used a wide array of discursive strategies, including conceptual arguments —such as juridical terms, sometimes turned into mere commonplaces— metaphors and historical parallels. Similarly, the narrators often brought in other characters to underscore their ideas. The result of this was the construction of a negative image of the marquis which, according to some sources, doomed him to infamy for posterity.

This criticism features in literary works and royal chronicles spanning three reigns, which is in itself an indication of the significance of this phenomenon. However, their purposes were different. At first, during Juan II's reign, some of the attacks were didactic, though other attempts were made to discredit the king's support of Álvaro de Luna. In fact, it is important to underscore the educational and moralistic aims — evidenced in different *exempla* and historical arguments— as well as the political delegitimising objectives. Thus, in the chronicles favourable to Isabel I, it is possible to understand this representation also as an attempt to damage the reputation of Enrique IV: under his rule, "tyrants" like Pacheco played a major role in the "anarchy" that had spread across Castile. Despite this, it was a nobleman, Pacheco, who was criticised and held

responsible for the problems in the kingdom, rather than the monarch directly. This avoided questioning the institution of the monarchy, in line with Isabel and her chroniclers' interests.

Of all the texts under analysis, Enríquez del Castillo's is the harshest. The chronicler used a wide variety of resources and dedicated many pages to denouncing Pacheco's actions and presenting a very negative view of his life. In general, all the nobles that confronted Enrique IV were treated acrimoniously by Enríquez del Castillo, which, it has been argued, was the chronicler's way to take the focus off the king's mistakes. This chronicler was close to Enrique IV and a defender of his legitimacy in the narrative of the civil conflict. However, other authors who were not so close to the king also attacked Pacheco, and even chronicles with whom he was friendly did not spare him.

It is interesting to recall that Pacheco had died by the time the chronicles of Enrique IV's reign were finished, unlike other important figures, such as Alfonso Carrillo, his uncle and archbishop of Toledo. The disproportionate invectives against Pacheco suggest that his absence gave the chroniclers' some freedom to turn him into a sort of scapegoat. Making him the main, if not the sole, culprit of the strife in the period had the effect of improving the reputation of other political actors who remained in a prominent political positions after the king's death. Nevertheless, it is not my intention to deny Pacheco's responsibility for his actions, nor should it be presumed that the chronicles were fictional narratives. Rather, these are historical accounts of events from the points of view of different authors, and the study of such different perspectives contributes to a better understanding of medieval political cultures.

To sum up, the variety of strategies and representations used to censure Pacheco shows the strength of criticism, its different objectives, and its aim to reach a wide audience. Contravening the ideals of nobility, they became a de-legitimation instrument

against Pacheco's own memory and lineage, especially when the last chronicles were written. In particular, they help us to understand how Pacheco's negative representations were built, creating a political alterity, an example that noblemen had to avoid. In addition, the idea that rulers should carefully select their noble advisors or remove them from certain governmental duties was apparently defended by most of these authors. Hence, it might represent an ideological support for the late medieval authoritarian monarchy.

In conclusion, an analysis of the discursive criticisms deployed in these chronicles against members of the nobility—the strategies used and the resulting representations—shows that the authors reflected the aristocratic competition of the period on the field of royal historiography, contributing to long-term goals, such as the de-legitimation of political adversaries. For future studies, a comparison with other contemporary sources, including private chronicles and those written in Latin, such as Alonso de Palencia's, would be of great interest from the point of view of analysing political communication.

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