

***Fortitudo et sapientia and Military Leadership in the
Historia de los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz***

Grant Gearhart
(Georgia Southern University)

1. Introduction

Rodrigo Ponce de León (c.1443-1492), also known by his title the Marqués de Cádiz, was a knight and military leader active along the Andalusian frontier during the second half of the fifteenth century. There are different accounts that tell of Ponce de León's actions and achievements, including Alonso de Palencia's *Guerra de Granada* and Diego de Valera's *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*. The *Historia de los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* (c. 1492; henceforth *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz*), though, is a unique chivalric biography similar to contemporary works such as the biography of Pero Niño *El Victorial* (1448) by Gutierre Díaz de Games, and the anonymous *Hechos del condestable Don Miguel Lucas de Iranzo* (c. 1473). Chivalric biographies such as these documented the life of a noble—a captain for example—with the goal of preserving the memory of their subjects' bellicose deeds. This was done through precise narration that recorded specific actions with realism while avoiding the embellishments often seen in later epic cycles or *libros de caballería* (Beltrán, 485).¹

Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz deals exclusively with Ponce de León and his military career, but does not recount other parts of his life such as his childhood or romantic relationships (Vallejo Naranjo, 345). Recognized mainly for its value as an historiographical document, the work has received sparse attention from literary scholars and has yet to find its place amongst other canonical examples of chivalric writing. Nevertheless, the work simultaneously recalls “una imagen preestablecida de héroe en la más clásica tradición literaria castellana, que concuerda con los presupuestos políticos-religiosos del momento,” and it characterizes Ponce de León as the “perfecto caballero, tanto por su vocación militar como por sus virtudes morales” (Carriazo Rubio, 37). *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* celebrates an emerging image of the military hero who operated on an increasingly impersonal yet sophisticated battlefield, and this essay analyzes certain narrative qualities that make the work exceptional in its portrayal of an historical knight. Specifically, it examines the biographer's application of the literary convention *fortitudo et sapientia* as markers for exemplary military leadership.

The chivalric biographies from fifteenth-century Spain were born out of a literary environment influenced by humanism and the resurgence of many classical military texts, the production of novel chivalric doctrines by writers such as Alfonso de Cartagena and Diego de Valera, and the appearance of uniquely gifted warrior-poets such as the Marqués de Santillana and the Manriques.² María Elvira Roca Barea comments on the connections between chivalry and humanism, stating “En el siglo XV la caballería está redefiniendo sus funciones sociales y, para ello, vuelve sus ojos a unos orígenes que estaban, por deseo propio, en la Antigüedad, pero ahora

¹ Beltrán lists six components of a chivalric biography: 1) a narrative of the life of a noble, such as a captain; 2) written by someone close enough to have witnessed first-hand many of the deeds; 3) recounts the deeds with precise detail similar to a historiographical work; 4) possibly spliced with episodes that seem fictitious; 5) written at the behest of the subject or their family members; and 6) written with the goal of preserving the memory of the knight's deeds and feats of arms (485).

² For thorough studies on the various chivalric doctrines being composed and studied in Iberia during the fifteenth century, see Huesch, Roca Barea, and Rodríguez Velasco.

lo que destaca es el vínculo entre cultura y caballería” (43). The chivalric debate about who and what knights were, how they were made, and what they were supposed to do flourished and fed into a literary ecosystem from which these biographers developed their craft. Learned authors such as Díaz de Games and the author of *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* were eye-witnesses to their subjects’ deeds, but they were also products of their literary atmosphere. As a result, they were able to properly contextualize those deeds with not only the current military conditions, but also with the dominating literary motifs at the time. Chivalric biographies “were intended as mirrors of attitudes and behaviors for their own day” (Lawrance, 63), and Ponce de León’s biographer aims to portray him as an ideal knight and model of proper chivalric behavior, one who follows God and is absolutely devoted to opposing Islam in service to his king (Carriazo Rubio, 34-37; Ladero Quesada, 224).

Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz describes how Ponce de León faced unique challenges such as planning and executing raids on Muslim strongholds along the Andalusian frontier, as well as maintaining order and morale amongst the troops under his command. Ponce de León, according to the text, excels as both a commander and a fighter, and also as someone who possesses the unique combination of wisdom and prowess. In the Classical sense, these qualities together symbolized the Homeric heroic ideal: “Homer holds that strength and intelligence in equipoise represent the optimum in warrior virtue” (Curtius, 171). Sometimes referred to as *fortitudo et sapientia*, this literary topos has been defined as “the ideal conjunction of intellectual and physical prowess in the perfect warrior-knight (Lawrance, 64). In literary examples, *fortitudo* is often obvious; *sapientia*, on the other hand, has nuance and requires scrupulous observation. Jeremy Lawrance argues that *sapientia* in fifteenth-century Iberia is akin to facility with words, rhetoric, and literature (64). In the case of earlier literary examples of heroes that demonstrate both *fortitudo* and *sapientia* such as El Cid, often their *sapientia* is characterized by high levels of cunning and prudence.³ In *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz*, Ponce de León demonstrates *fortitudo* through his physical prowess, and also *sapientia* through both his cunning and his ability—according to his biographer—to deliver inspiring speeches. As such, the author takes into account how knights were expected to be astute, well-educated thinkers and orators, and skilled practitioners in the art of war. In this way, the author parallels chivalric theorists who argued the value of prudence alongside prowess.

2. The Fifteenth-Century Chivalric Context at the Andalusian Border

Knights were not all the same nor from the same social classes, per se. The highest-ranking knights were the royals (e.g. the ‘alta nobleza’ or ‘nobleza de linaje’), followed by noble knights—which would be knights with certain titles and a clear political approximation with the royal family—and then finally knights who were not noble (“la caballería no noble”) but that were highly functional soldiers who played significant roles in frontier campaigns (Heusch, 13-14). The Marqués de Cádiz emerges from the second category. He is not a royal but still from a distinguished bloodline, one his biographer no doubt seeks to elevate through his writing. *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* illustrates how Ponce de León interacts with the third category of knights, those who do not hold vast titles of nobility but who proved themselves indispensable in difficult battles, sieges, and raids. Ponce de León commands these men on several missions that

³ In the case of the *Poema de mio Cid*, Norman Schafler argues that it is the Cid’s guile in examples such as with Raquel and Vidas and his battle tactics that reveal his *sapientia*. Also, R.E. Kaske observes a similar type of *sapientia* in *Beowulf* which he describes as a “general, eclectic concept” that includes cleverness, skill in words and works, and knowledge of the past (425).

prove dangerous and, as a result, exciting for the reader. Ponce de León's leadership and his skill in battle distinguish him amongst other knights in the eyes of those directly above him socially and militarily, including the Catholic Monarchs Fernando and Isabel. He appears to be more of an early rendition of professional military leadership *par excellence* than a "caballero andante" in the mold of a character such as Amadís de Gaula, and he models behavior that would become the standard for future Castilian military leaders. For example, some decades after Ponce de León was active militarily, Fray Prudencio de Sandoval comments in his chronicle of Carlos V that "La mayor prudencia que un capitán, experto en el arte y ejercicio de la milicia puede tener, es conservar su ejército y gastar y consumir al contrario con trazas y buenos ardidés" (III, 274b).

Ponce de León's lineage extended back centuries to the "nobleza vieja" from León before his ancestors migrated and settled throughout Andalucía (Carriazo Rubio, 16). According to his chronicler, Rodrigo was the son of Juan Ponce de León and was born "en día muy sennalado y bienaventurado, y de grand gozo y alegría, que fue día de la Conçepçión de nuestra Sennora la Virgen María, en el anno de mill CCCCLIII annos" (Carriazo Rubio, 158).⁴ At just under twenty years of age, Rodrigo was heralded for his part in the battle of Madroño and then the conquest of Gibraltar in 1462 during the reign of Enrique IV. A little more than a decade later he became a key asset for the Catholic Monarchs and their enterprise to defeat the last Muslim strongholds in Granada. Various chronicles label him as a new Cid and the second coming of the Conde Fernán González, especially in *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz*:⁵

Y así podemos bien dezir por el marqués de Cádiz, el segundo y buen conde Fernand Gonçález, y segundo y santísimo cauallero Çid Ruy Díaz, pues que averiguadamente y fablando toda la verdad, tan nobles y tan esforçadas cosas dél podemos contar, de sus grandes victorias y vencimientos que en los moros fizo, fauoreçiendo y ensalçando la santa fe cathólica. (Carriazo Rubio, 145)

He died in Seville in 1492 around the age of fifty after having lived his life along the borderlands of Andalusia.

The 650-kilometer frontier region of Andalucía remained by and large peaceful for two centuries, with Christians and Muslims living through truces and mutually beneficial economic trade (Devaney, 3, 15-16; Ladero Quesada, 329). As a literary setting, this frontier is especially known for having inspired the "romancero fronterizo," but this stretch of land also plays host to the majority of the action in *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz*. Historically, the frontier was the backdrop for constant military and political activity, where both the Muslims and Christians maneuvered to maintain and secure territory; and, although they coexisted through peace agreements and cultural exchanges, these did not prevent skirmishes or tensions from escalating into full-scale war.⁶ Additionally, the heroic ideals reminiscent of a noble crusade against Islam endured in the minds of knights and noblemen throughout Iberia, but in particular the inhabitants near the frontier. Of significant historical importance was the legacy of the thirteenth-century

⁴ Carriazo Rubio doubts the veracity of this date, in part by pointing to the chronicler's evident devotion to the Virgin Mary and perhaps wanting to tie his subject to her. Additionally, he cites other historical documents that do not corroborate this claim (18).

⁵ See Mackay (1991).

⁶ The Granadan frontier was a complicated place that has fascinated historians for decades. How the people coexisted yet remained enemies requires a longer explanation, and there are many studies on this region and topic during the fifteenth century. See, for example, Castillo, Devaney, Ladero Quesada (2001 & 2002), and Mackay (1992).

warrior-king Fernando III. The author of the *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* extols King Fernando in the opening of his chronicle:

¡O, qué descanso será de contar de tan santísimas y esclarecidos reyes de gloriosas memorias y muy nobles y virtuosos caualleros, que tanto resplandecen antel acatamiento de Dios, defendiendo y ensalzando la santa fe cathólica contra los moros e ynfieles, enemigos de la fe de Iesu Christo! Asy commo el muy magnífico rey don Fernando, que ganó a Seuilla día de Sant Clemeynte, e la bíspera antes de su fiesta, en la noche, le apareció nuestra Sennora la Virgen María e le puso las llaues de la çibdad en su mano e lo metió dentro. Y este santísimo rey, enbeuido ante su ymagen con muy deuota oraçión, al tienpo de su partida oluidósele su espada. E otro día por la mannana, el rey moro ge la envió, pidiendo por merçed a Su Alteza les quisiese releuar las vidas, porque Su Sennoría tenía fecho voto de los meter todos a espada. (142)

The memory of past deeds by Castilian knights is further embedded in the Marqués de Cádiz's chronicle when its author states

Pues agora vengamos a los nobles y virtuosos caualleros, así commo el buen conde Fernand Gonçález, que fue tan christianísimo y tan esforçado cauallero, que después de la destruyçión de Espanna fizo cosas marauillosas, que serían luengas de contar, contra los moros ynfieles; faziendo en ellos grande destruyçión. E tres vezes vençió al rey Almançor en batallas canpales, e le mató infinitos moros. Pues qué diremos del santísimo cauallero Çid Ruy Díaz, que dexando otros muchos vençimientos que en los moros fizo en su vida, e touo quinze reyes moros por vasallos, después de su falleçimiento vençió treynta e dos reyes en una batalla en que avía sesenta mil de cauallo e dozientos mill moros de pie, con mill e seysçientos de cauallo e çinco mill peones. (143)

The message to his readers about Ponce de León is clear: there are legendary heroes from Spain that epitomize certain ideals now found in the examples of contemporary knights such as Ponce de León. The passages above share a particular theme articulated by Alfonso de Cartagena, that the highest calling for a Castilian knight is to be a champion of the Catholic faith by fighting the Muslims: “Non consiste el loor de los caualleros en tener muchas armas nin en mudar el tajo dellas e poner su trabajo en fallar nueua forma de armaduras e poner nombres nuevos que si nuestros anteçesores se leuantasen non los entenderian, mas en exalçar con ellas la sancta fe e ensanchar los terminos del rreyno” (Fallows, 255).

The author characterizes El Cid, Fernán González, and King Fernando III first and foremost as slayers of the followers of Islam, considered to be the eternal enemy that has plagued the Iberian Peninsula for centuries. The Castilian nobility consistently pursued territorial expansion and the establishment of a dominant military presence in the historically Muslim part of the Peninsula. Controlling territory along the frontier meant 1) taking and holding “ciudades-base,” which included first and second-line fortified villages of varying sizes and defensive capabilities; 2) disrupting communications by capturing watchtowers (“atalayas”); and 3) destroying the infrastructure and sustainability of enemy economies through raids (Ladero Quesada, 229-31). Large incursions into Muslim-controlled territories typically produced minimal long-term gains due to the fact that the Castilian forces regularly withdrew to safer zones (Ladero Quesada, 331). The goals of warfare along the frontier were not to destroy the enemy through direct, high-intensity

encounters, but instead to steadily weaken them and force negotiations for accords (Castillo Cáceres, 58-59).

There were certain realities present at the time along the Granadan frontier that further dissuaded perpetual combat. The frontier was home to diverse groups who maintained mutually beneficial contacts across religious, linguistic, and cultural lines. Despite their differences, those living along this borderland acknowledged and respected certain aspects of each other's way of life (Devaney, 13). However, these differences—especially for the Christians—did produce degrees of anxiety; and, for men like Ponce de León, there was always the pull to be part of a long-standing holy war against Islam in order to ensure Christian hegemony (Devaney, 13). Therefore, when the bellicose Muslim ruler Muley Aben Hassan chose to preemptively attack Zahara in 1481, he unwittingly reignited the abating enthusiasm for open war along the frontier and sparked the Catholic Kings to action. These monarchs would rely heavily on the leadership and prowess of Ponce de León to conduct their war on the Andalusian Muslims (Reston, 85-86).

3. Leadership and *Fortitudo et Sapientia*

It is necessary to begin with a working definition of “leadership,” specifically “military leadership,” as the term may be open to interpretation. Historically, military leadership required both *fortitudo* and *sapientia* in the form of thinking paired with action. Although *fortitudo* and *sapientia* are the qualities that best exemplify the ideal warrior as far back as the Homeric epics (and were standard *topoi* in medieval epics), a notable change in their treatment occurs at the beginning of the Renaissance. *Fortitudo* is a defining trait because it represents prowess and honor (Lida de Malkiel, 283), reflects “battle-lore” (Curtius, 172), and involves proficiency with weapons, virility, and boldness of speech. These are always the basic skills that yield immediate, tangible benefits to the battlefield, and therefore they are understood to be the foundation ideal chivalry.

Sapientia is grounded in soldierly virtues such as cunning and prudence (Lawrence, 64), traits that were praised by chivalric theoreticians such as Alonso de Cartagena, who states in the *Tratado de la Guerra* that “Saber conviene que en la pelea más aprovecha uso que fuerza” and “Si el saber de las armas cesase, no habría diferencia del caballero al labrador” (452). Cartagena follows the example of Flavius Vegetius Renatus, a Roman military theoretician whose *Epitoma rei militaris* was widely translated and circulated throughout Iberia and other areas of Europe during the late Middle Ages (Rodríguez Velasco, 81).⁷ Alfonso de San Cristóbal's late-fourteenth or early fifteenth-century Castilian translation of Vegetius's work notes that prudence is more important than simply being good at wielding arms: “Ca por çierto, así como el cavallero usado e enseñado sabidor cobdiçia de pelear, así el que non sabe lo reçela. E finalmente, es de saber que en la pelea más aprovecha el uso que la fuerça, ca si çesare el arte e sabiduría de las armas non ha entonçe diferençia entre el villano e el cavallero” (346). San Cristóbal's glosses of this section also emphasize the importance of wisdom and reason: “E concluye dos cosas. La una es que el que es bien usado a las cosas de la guerra e las bien sabe cobdiçia la pelea; el otro, que non es usado, reçela de pelear. La otra conclusión es que en la pelea más aprovecha el uso que la fuerça, e do desfallesçe el arte de las armas non ha diferençia del cavallero al villano” (347). Ideal knights such as Ponce de León, therefore, needed to be brave but wise, strong but also intelligent because they were charged with leading more complex missions.

Vegetius attributes Roman success on the battlefield to men—captains especially—who are both wise and bold:

⁷ For an in-depth discussion of Vegetius's place in fifteenth-century Castilian chivalric doctrine, see Velasco 81-85.

Mas contra estas cosas todas mucho aprovechó a los romanos escoger entre todos los de su gente tirón—que quiere dezir omne mançebo, cavallero ardit e acuçioso, sabidor e artero en el arte de las batallas—e que sepa enseñar la arte e el uso de las armas e esforçar e fortaleçer de cada día la hueste por arte e por uso e conosçer primeramente en su pensamiento el canpo e todas las otras cosas que en la haz pueden acaesçer así contra ella como por ella. Ca la sabiduría e la çiencia de la arte de las batallas faze a los que la saben ser muy osados e sin temor, ca non ha ome que tema de fazer lo que bien sabe e bien aprendió, ca fázelo sin miedo. Onde es de saber que en las batallas los pocos sabidores de la arte e usados son prestos e aparejados para vençer, la muchedunbre de la gente ruda e que non sabe arte de pelear está espuesta e aparejada para la muerte. (160-61)

Vegetius proclaims that it is the men leading the army who are essential to success rather than brute force or greater numbers. San Cristóbal's gloss of this chapter amplifies the point:

En este capítulo pone Vegecio tres cosas...Conviene a saber: por uso de las armas, e sabiduría de asentar e levantar el real e la hueste, otrosí por la arte e saber de la pelea...La segunda cosa...es cosa nesçesaria de escoger capitán, mançebo ardid e artero e sabidor...La terçera cosa que pone es que la çiencia de las batallas que cría osadía en los que la saben, e que más valen pocos e sabidores que non muchos e rudos para pelear. (161-62)

San Cristóbal speaks of practice, knowledge, and experience, qualities the author of *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* seeks to emphasize about Ponce de León. This last quality is what distinguishes some military leaders from others.

Military leadership is distinct from other types of leadership because a hierarchy already exists within the group based on rank and/or title. For example, in a feudalistic society, the “leader” by default is the highest-ranking nobleman, and those of lower rank will look up for the decision making. The question therefore becomes not “who is the leader” but instead “how does he lead”? Leadership at the highest level initiates movements, changes, attitudes, and perspectives on a broad scale. For instance, certain Castilian kings from late fourteenth and into the fifteenth century established models for military leadership geared towards a “restauratio Hispaniae.” Alfonso XI (1312-1350) was an archetype for the warrior-king in the late Middle Ages who was motivated by concepts of heroism and fame present in historical and literary figures (Muñoz Gómez, 235-239). Some decades later, Fernando “el de Antequera” reignited the crusading spirit espoused by Alfonso XI and was likewise motivated to seek fame as a loyal soldier for Catholic Iberia (Muñoz Gómez, 242). Through their example, these two royals shaped the military posture towards Muslim Andalucía.

The type of leadership we observe in *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz*, which is less about broad political policies or ideologies, reveals what commanders do before, during, and after specific military actions. Alfonso XI, for example, was known not only as a great leader on a broad scale, but also as being present during battles, organizing marches, encampments, and strategies (Muñoz Gómez, 236). Ponce de León also demonstrates flexible skills in leadership depending on the sociopolitical and battlefield contexts, but *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* devotes greater attention to leadership during battles. Ponce de León is what modern military practitioners would

term as someone who “leads from the front” by standing alongside his troops and organizing and motivating them during even the most precarious moments of the fighting.⁸

4. Leadership and *Fortitudo et Sapientia* in *Los Hechos del Marqués de Cádiz*

As the concept of what a knight was evolved into being more of an infantry commander in need of different skills, biographers such as the author of *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* applied their humanistic perspective to how their subjects demonstrated prowess and wisdom. Wisdom could be displayed through direct speeches that contained precise rhetorical tools. These types of discourse were largely absent from fictional narratives. *Amadís de Gaula* briefly comments on military leadership when King Perión—an older and more established knight—prepares and organizes his troops to face King Lisuarte:

Pues sabido eso, luego otro día de mañana [Perión] se levantó, y mandó llamar todos los capitanes y cavalleros de gran linaje, y díxogelo, y cómo su parescer era que el real se levantasse, y, la gente junta en aquellos prados, se fiziesse repartimiento de las hazes porque todos supiessem a qué capitán y seña avian de acudir, y que hecho esto moviessem contra sus enemigos con gran esfuerço y mucha esperança de los vencer con la justa demanda que levavan. Todos lo tuvieron por bien, y con mucha afición le rogaron que assí por su dignidad real y gran esfuerço y discreción tomasse a su cargo de los regir y governor en aquella jornada, y, que todos le serían obedientes. Él lo otorgó, que bien conosció que le pedían guisado, y no se podía con razón escusar dello. Pues mandándolo poner en obra, el real fue levantado, y la gente toda armada y a cavallo puesta en aquella gran vega. (1442)

According to this description, Perión orders his men to form ranks under their banners and move against the enemy in their just cause. However, it is his status and rank that procures immediate obedience and collective cooperation amongst the cadre, and reveals nothing about how he addresses his men, who appear to simply accept his leadership as proper. This scene focuses more on the aesthetics of effective leadership rather than on the marshaling of forces itself or on the rhetoric of the speeches that Perión delivers. This exceptionality is also evident when it describes the king's physical appearance, while he takes his place in the ranks of soldiers: “El buen Rey se puso en medio de todos en un cavallo muy fermoso y grande, y armado de muy ricas armas, y tres escudos que las armas levavan, y diez pajes en diez cavallos, todos de una devisa...” (1442). His age, too, is a factor in constructing his leadership abilities, as the text depicts him in a later stage in life:

Y como él era ya de tanta edad que lo más de la cabeça y la barva toviesse blanco y el rostro incendiado con el calor de las armas y de la orgulleza del corazón, y como todos sabían su gran esfuerço, paresçia tan bien, y tanto esfuerço dio a la gente que lo estava mirando, que les fazía perder todo pavor, que bien cuidavan que después de Dios aquel caudillo sería causa de les dar la gloria de la batalla. (1442)

Such scenes favor brief narrative descriptions over examples of rhetorically complex speeches. Bold knights like Perión, *Amadís*'s model knight from the beginning, seamlessly command their troops while evidencing no special oratorical skills.

⁸ “Lead from the Front” is a modern military concept. Captain Ron Roberts lists this as one of twelve principles of modern military leadership. Others include “Moral Courage,” “Physical Courage,” “Be Aggressive and Bold,” “Take Care of Your Soldiers,” “Be a Student of the Past,” and “Be Strong of Character.”

Real knights such as Ponce de León, on the other hand, faced challenges like maintaining order amongst the troops under their command, a task that increasingly came to be considered just as honorable for a nobleman as direct participation in war (Keen, 240). This acceptance implied a realignment of the heroic concepts that had been ingrained in Castilian society through epic and romance. As Keen explains, “the forces that in the medieval past had given [chivalry] life and impetus were still at work, but the outward aspects in which they found expression were changing” (239). In practice, this change meant an emphasis in learning certain skills such as proper and effective oratory, as well as other intangibles required by an expanded leadership role.

Exemplary leadership is a manifestation of the proper combination of *fortitudo* and *sapientia*, which required not only courage and prowess but the intelligence to apply those features in the proper military context. Along the Andalusian frontier, this military context was unique and involved a static yet stout Muslim fortification system meant to deter and resist Castilian incursions along the Granadan frontier. Due to the short distance between each fort (at most twelve kilometers), the landscape was covered with castles, walled cities, and watchtowers that represented a connected series of sanctuaries and observation posts.⁹ This defensive approach became necessary because the Castilians had achieved offensive superiority by adopting and pairing Muslim guerrilla tactics with better artillery. Ground fighting largely consisted of sporadic skirmishes, and raids were low-risk, effective ways of harming the enemy. As Castilian forces advanced on Granada, their movement was limited to a number of passes through the rugged mountains, and both sides employed a sophisticated early warning system in the form of watchtowers, beacons, and roving patrols that intended to alert inhabitants to secure their livestock and food stores when needed (Nicolle, 62). As a result of their abundance of fortifications, they were likewise symbolic refuges for both sides, and therefore they assume a central yet complex role in texts like *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz*.¹⁰

For men like Ponce de León, who viewed the Granadan fortresses and the lands they protected first and foremost as opportunities for territorial, material, and ultimately political gain, tactics evolved against these locations. Taking and then holding territory became a primary goal, evident in *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* where the Castilians steadily gain land along the Andalusian frontier. In fact, of the fifty-two chapters in Carriazo Rubio’s edition of the text, thirty are about achieving territorial control through an assault or siege. Yet, conquering a fortress was a costly and complicated endeavor because their walls offered soldiers maximum cover and concealment. Since the overall goal was to breach these walls, two options existed at the time: scaling over the wall, or bombardment with artillery to knock the wall down (Harari, 10-12). Once inside, the fighting often became fierce due to limited space and close proximity with the enemy. This is evident when Ponce de León assaults Alhama.

The author of *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* discusses the assault of Alhama by contextualizing Ponce de León’s actions to be deserving of the highest recognition:

Grandes honrras mereçen los nobles caualleros que en lo bueno nunca desfallecen. Y ved qué cosa marauillosa deste tan noble cauallero marqués de Cádiz, que continuamente jamás

⁹ The key cities—Ronda, Málaga, Almería, Guadix, and Loxa—enjoyed the presence of both a citadel and powerful city walls (Purton, 347).

¹⁰ Irene de Jong observes that “space” has three functions in a narrative: thematic, as a mirror (to contrast themes of the narrative), and symbolic. A space is symbolic when it becomes “semantically charged and acquires an additional significance on top of its purely scene-setting function” (15). Fortifications symbolize safety for one side but also opportunities to conquer them for the other. On the one hand their walls provide the illusion of security, but on the other for a trained military force those same walls represent the chance to demonstrate prowess.

dexaua de pensar cómo podría fazer todo mal a los moros yn fieles. E continuando su lypio deseo, siempre mouido al seruiçio de Dios y de la Corona real, estando en la su villa de Marchena, vnos adalides suyos vinieron a él e le dixerón que avían tentado la çibdad de Alhama, commo por él les avía sido mandado. La qual, avnque era muy fuerte e asentada sobre vna mota de penna muy alta cerca de vn río, e non tenía más de vna salida para la fortaleza, muy agra e alta, pero con todo eso, les pareçía que, segund el mal recabdo que en ella tenían, se podría bien escalar. (199)

The author predicts how difficult attacking this city will be due to its defensive structure, high topography, and location near a river. Despite these challenges, it is possible to scale Alhama's walls, where after great honors await Ponce de León and his men.

By appraising the effort needed to successfully assault Alhama, the author indirectly draws a parallel between this action and Ponce de León's prowess as a soldier. True in both chivalric chronicles and romances, a knight gains more honor when he defeats a superior rather than a weaker opponent. Amadís, for example, is celebrated for defeating the Endriago because the latter is an invincible monster, and so Amadís thrashing the monster heightens the knight's perceived prowess. Yet, Ponce de León is a real knight tasked with real missions by his superiors, and these must be characterized as daunting because, for a knight, accomplishing a more strenuous task yields greater honor. Taking a fortified village or city, therefore, is tantamount to defeating a monster, and makes him appear more valorous.

Even though soldier-centered assaults demanded the fighters to engage their targets at close distance, these are not individual feats-of-arms. Instead, due to their complexity, these assaults rely on the careful execution of a choreographed plan that requires steady nerves, i.e. both *fortitudo* and *sapientia*. First, the assault force must arrive at its target, not an easy task when traversing a jagged landscape under the cover of darkness. Ponce de León sometimes moves with thousands of men on foot, maintaining a low profile while approaching a fortress, before positioning his men to climb the outer wall unseen. This is a feat requiring tremendous physical prowess and psychological discipline. Once having arrived at the site of the assault, an ambush of equal or greater difficulty usually followed that involved secretly scaling the inner walls and catching the inhabitants off guard, which is the plan for Alhama:

E fue tanto secreto y tan bien ordenada su partida del marqués con todas sus gentes que, lleuando su vía por medio del reyno de Granada, nunca fueron sentidos, porque plazía a nuestra Sennora la Virgen María, commo por ella le fuese así otorgado, lleuando consigo muchos mantenimientos y petrechos e artillerías, e sus batallas tan bien hordenadas que, avnque el rey moro saliera, le diera la batalla, segund la gente lleuaua tan escogida y con tan buena gana. E continuando su camino, llegaron fasta cerca de la çibdad de Alhama vna hora antes del día. (200-201)

While deceiving the enemy in such a way could appear to run contrary to the examples of “honorable” battle found throughout chivalric romances, the Castilian philosopher Don Juan Manuel argues the merits of guerilla warfare—which were adaptations of Muslim tactics—in his *Libro de los estados*:

La guerra de los moros non es como la de los cristianos; también en la guerra guerreada como cuando cercan o combaten o son cercados o combatidos, como en las cabalgadas et

correduras, como en el andar por el camino et el posar de la hueste, como en las lides, en todo es muy departida la una manera de la otra...Et cuando en cabalgada andan caminan cuanto pueden de noche et de día fasta que son lo más dentro que pueden entrar de la tierra que quieren correr. Et la entrada entran muy encobiertamente et muy apriesa; et de que comienzan a correr, corren et roban tanta tierra et sábenlo tan bien facer que es grant maravilla, que más tierra correrán et más daño farán et mayor cabalgada ayuntarán doscientos homes de caballos moros que seiscientos de cristianos...Cuando han de combatir alugunt logar, comiéndanlo muy fuerte et muy espantosamente; et cuando son combatidos, comiéndanse a defender muy bien et a grant maravilla...que yo diría que en el mundo non ha tan buenos homes de armas ni tan sabidores de guerra ni tan aparejados para tantas conquistas.¹¹

This trickery became a fundamental part of medieval warfare. Honoré Bouvet's *Árbol de batallas* absolves Christians from the problem of whether or not deceiving one's enemy shows valor by offering the biblical example of Joshua ambushing his enemies:

Según la Escritura e según Dios yo puedo vencer mi enemigo por engaño o por barato sin hazer pecado, después que la guerra es juzgada e ordenada e notificada entr'él e mí, después que yo lo é desafiado. E Nuestro Señor nos da d'ello enxemplo, cuando él mismo enseñó a Josué cómo hiziese una celada por detrás de sus enemigos, por la cual ellos serían desbaratados. (109)¹²

Surprise and deception were used regularly in medieval warfare, but these tactics were not acceptable in every situation and depended largely on the applicable legal and moral precepts (Whetham, 248-49).¹³ Deceiving one's opponent while jousting would have been seen as cheating and a dishonorable act, but in open combat against a foreign enemy (especially one of a faith like Islam that appeared to threaten the hegemony of the Church and Christianity) a feint or ruse could mean the difference between victory and defeat.

The operation to take Alhama turns bad when he and his force lose the element of surprise. Once the Castilians are discovered, the Muslims mount a counterattack, and Ponce de León is forced to confront his suddenly disheartened men. The Muslim counteroffensive has squeezed Ponce de León and his men into narrow city streets, impeding their ability to fight: "Y commo [el Marqués] entró con toda su gente, los moros desmayaron e se retruxeron por algunas calles más estrechas, donde mejor se podían defender" (201). The author describes a psychological hurdle for the Castilians, who now run a greater risk of being killed in face-to-face combat.¹⁴ The claustrophobic space magnifies the fear of being in a *mêlée*, and is confirmed by the toll: "pelearon con [los moros] tan reziamente fasta que todos seys allí murieron por no ser socorridos commo era razón" (201). Bearing witness to some of the best knights killed leads to a breakdown of the collective will, and even the most astute knights suggest aborting the mission: E los capitanes que

¹¹Chapters LXXV and LXXVI.

¹² The Castilian edition used here is attributed to Diego de Valera. See Velasco 116-119.

¹³ Studies such as Whetham's and Rose Mary Sheldon's *Ambush*—particularly the chapter on the Night Attack (chp. 6)—affirm that soldiers were not confined to a prescribed type of fighting, and were flexible in their strategies given the circumstances facing them.

¹⁴ Dave Grossman terms this the "intimate brutality" of killing at edged-weapons range, and recognizes that "it is psychologically easier to kill with an edged weapon that permits a long stand-off range, and increasingly more difficult as the stand-off range decreases" (120).

yuan con el marqués, caualleros muy principales, commo esto viesen, paresçioles ser cosa muy graue e ynposible de se tomar aquella çibdad; e dixeron al marqués que les pareçia, segund los moros se defendían, que se deúan boluer para sus casas y no dar lugar que más gente allí pereçiese (201). The soldier's logic appears sound: they are behind enemy lines fighting skilled warriors, and they would be better off cutting their losses and retreating. The author harnesses this display of faltering courage as a way for Ponce de León to assert his bravery and prudence, and thereby demonstrate excellent leadership.

The author explains how Ponce de León uses a three-prong approach inside the walls of Alhama to rally the men. First, he harangues the troops, of which the text provides a brief description followed by the men's reaction:

A los quales el marqués respondió que se marauilla mucho dellos, segund quien eran, tomar tan mal consejo, donde tan grand mengua e injuria podían resçibir; y pues que allí estauan con tanta y tan noble gente, que cada vno deuía esforçar los suyos e trabajar por tomar aquella çibdad, commo esperaua en Dios que la tomarían; e que quando la fortuna les fuse tan contraria que oviesen ally de morir, muy más honrrada les sería la muerte que la vida con denuesto entre los otros caualleros. E commo los caualleros oyeron al marqués tan graçiosas y esforçadas razones, respondieron que, pues a él aquello le pareçia, que todos querían seguir su mandado e morir debaxo de su vanderá juntamente con él. (202)

Second, he motivates the men by promising them any spoils they claim: “que cada vno ouiese para sí lo que pudiese tomar” (202). Finally, he galvanizes the desired fighting spirit from his men by circulating through their ranks: “y el marqués, andando por todas las estanças esforçándolos mucho, que los christianos cobraron tan grand coraçón y apretaron tanto en el conbate, que retraxeron a los moros...” (202). This third step marks a clear shift in the knight's military role from the principal fighter to the leader whose primary responsibility is maintaining unit cohesion. Establishing and maintaining unit cohesion have been staple military principles for over two millennia, and the leader—whose decisions largely determine if the ranks achieve victory or die—is tasked with generating confidence during the fray (Manning, 456, 464).¹⁵

Rather than rely on old models that exclusively laud martial prowess, *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* celebrates Ponce de León's ability to achieve a particular military objective. He arouses his men's fighting spirit when they want to retreat by incentivizing them with the promise of booty, and keeps them organized by moving through their ranks. Diego de Valera also chronicles this specific battlefield emergency in the *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos*: “los cavalleros respondieron que pues esto a él plazía que eran contentos de lo así hazer, e que les paresçia debían mandar enviar a llamar toda la gente, mandándoles que por toda parte los moros fuesen apretados” (138-139). Valera's version does not laud Ponce de León's leadership ability in the same way as *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* because his biography is ostensibly intent on celebrating the excellence of his captaincy (Carriazo Rubio, 202, fn. 240).

Inspiring men to fight was a common problem dealt with in works about combat, and Ponce de León exhibits understanding of warfare early on in the text by quelling such fears from his fellow nobleman Luis de Pernía. De Pernía suffers a crisis of courage on the way to battle and tells Ponce de León that he does not want to fight: “catad, sennor, que estos moros es muy gruesa gente y nosotros somos pocos, y es tan grande la ventaja que nos tienen, y no querria resçibiésemos

¹⁵For studies on military cohesion, see Hanson, Henderson, Manning, and Richardson.

alguna mengua y nos perdiésemos, pues estamos a tiempo de nos poder yr a nuestro saluo” (163). Leaders had manuals such as Vegetius’s *Epitoma rei militaris* and Sexto Julio Frontino’s *Strategematon* that offered advice on how to motivate troops. Vegetius contends that a commander must display confidence and daring in order to inspire his followers:

Onde a los mesmos que desesperan viene osadía con el esfuerço del cabdillo, e si pareçe que él non teme alguna cosa entonce creçe coraçón a los suyos (416); Pero virtud e coraçón creçe a la hueste si el cabdillo los esfuerça e amonesta que fagan su debdo, mayormente si de la pelea que se ha de fazer oyen alguna razón con que han esperança de venir a vitoria (436-37); E debes a los tuyos acresçentar la fiuza con esperança e confiança, e con esto amenguas a los adversaries la fiuza (464); Es a saber que si alguna parte de la hueste quedare e alguna parte fuyere non devemos por eso desperar que en tal nesçesidad la firmeza e constançia del cabdillo pueda a sí mesmo apropiar e alcançar la vitoria (501).

According to Vegetius, the leader must portray courage and confidence if he expects the same from his troops. The confidence of their leader is a litmus test for them, and thus a brave and strong commander can help engineer a victory by setting a good example.

In *Los Hechos del Marqués de Cádiz*, we observe this confidence at work in Ponce de León’s response to De Pernía’s fear, as he exhorts his companion to be confident in God and the outcome:

¡O, buen cauallero Luys de Pernía! ¡Pluguiera agora a Dios mi Sennor y tales palabras de vos nunca oyera! ¡Vn cauallero tan esforçado commo vos, y en tan grandes fechos commo vos avéys visto, y siempre ouistes victoria, y dezisme agora tales palabras y a tal tiempo! Yos tengo por padre, y delante destos caualleros y gentes que aquí están, parientes míos, criados y vasallos, yo vos perdono qualquier cosa de mí aconteçiere. Y vamos, y demos en ellos, ca yo tengo tan grand confiança en Dios nuestro Sennor y en la Virgen María, su bendita madre, que oy seremos vençedores, y mi voluntad determinada es dar la batalla avnque con menos gente me fallase. Y, puesto que yo muera, mi muerte avré por bienaventurada, porque soy bien cierto biuiré para sienpre. (163)

The speech echoes the virtues praised by Vegetius and reveals a command of rhetoric, atypical for such a young man. The “exclamatio” salutes Pernía and appeals to his worth as a knight, and then reminds him of his great successes in the past (“exemplum”).¹⁶ Next, he absolves Pernía of any responsibility for what happens to his person, before moving quickly to address the task at hand. Finally, he states that Pernía can earn an eternal life of glory if he dies.

The inspiration for the last two comments is found in the *Strategematon*’s “First Book” (chapter XI), which deals with the example of Julio Póstumo who “levantó los ánimos de los suyos diziendo que Cástor e Pólux les ayudavan, e así restituyó la batalla” (77); and Judas, who “sacó de noche las armas que estavan hincadas en los templos por ornamentos e amonestó a sus cavalleros que los dioses havían de seguir su camino e que peleando ellos se fallarían en la batalla” (78). These examples are meant to persuade soldiers into believing victory is achievable, and in the mouth of Ponce de León, they spotlight his capacity to harangue others effectively. As Fallows notes, this ability is an essential skill in battle: “en el calor de batalla, las arengas exhortatorias

¹⁶Murphy, 366-372. Murphy references Quintilian, 9.3.97.

carecían de sentido a menos que se reforzasen con la experiencia y, sobre todo, con una estratagema prudente que se basara en la lectura y el estudio atinado de manuals teóricos” (2006, 38). Ponce de León's speech changes the course of the battle, as De Pernía abandons his fears and predicts future successes: “Sennor don Rodrigo Ponçe de León, yo soy muy alegre de todo lo que tan bien avéys razonado, mostrando tan esforçado coraçón y dando tan noble cuenta del linaje donde venís” (164).

Ponce de León's chronicle praises an evolved form of knighthood that is the harbinger of the professional officer, a model that requires knights to be leaders of men and able to put the needs of soldiers above their own. As Manning explains, “It is not enough that a leader merely be technically proficient. If he is to inspire confidence his subordinates must see not only that he will not waste their lives through incompetence, but also that he will not waste them through indifference” (464).

Ponce de León's rhetorical skills are also made evident at King Fernando's court, when he debates strategy with other nobles at his first war council. On the surface, the meeting appears to be a failure since his advice is rejected in favor of another nobleman's. At a gathering in Penna de los Enamorados (situated between Antequera y Archidona), Fernando asks Ponce de León his thoughts on the planned assault against Loxa (Loja), to which the latter responds:

Sennor, pues que Vuestra Alteza sigue esta obra tan santa y tan buena contra los moros, paréçeme que Vuestra Alteza deue buscar el camino más corto para los destruir. El qual es que Vuestra Sennoría quiera poner el sitio sobre Álora, que es muy más ligera cosa de ganar que Loxa, e los moros están muy quebrados, e non tienen lugar de venir a la socorrer. E Loxa es cosa muy más fuerte, y es çierto que está muy basteçida, asy de gente, la mejor del reyno de Granada, commo de mantenimientos e artillerías para se defender; y está tan vezina de Granada que non se puede tanto çercar, quanto non ayan lugar de ser socorridos de gente cada día por la sierra syn ge lo poder register. E vuestras gentes podrían resçeibir grand danno, porque en Loxa ay oy mucha gente. Y es menester de se poner dos reales, los quales estarán a grand peligro segund el sitio donde se han de poner. E tomándose Álora, perderse yan los valles de Cártama e de Santa María e todos los otros lugares çercanos, en lo qual resçeibirían los moros muy gran pérdida, y vuestra enpresa grand fauor. Por ende, Vuestra Alteza faga lo que más le lazerá, que este es mi pareçer. (209-210)

He argues that Fernando and his army should first take Álora instead of Loja for very specific reasons. First, Álora is not heavily defended, and reinforcements are unavailable to rescue it. Loja, on the contrary, is heavily defended and populated, and close enough to Granada that the best Moorish soldiers can quickly come to its aid. In order to take Loja, Ponce de León concludes, Fernando will need two battalions that would, in the end, be in danger of being surrounded because of the area's geography.

His advice, however, is countered by Gutierre de Cárdenas, the “comendador mayor” of León:

Sennor, poner el sitio sobre Loxa es muy más conuenible a vuestro seuiçio, porque tomada aquella çibdad, estará mejor aconpanada Alhama e avrá mejor lugar para que la recua entre más segura quando quiera que menester sea. E yo creo byen que Vuestra Alteza muy ligeramente la tomará, quanto más que Vuestra Alteza lo tiene ya asy hordenado, e non se deue este consejo mudar. (210)

The speech displays Ponce de León's knowledge of war and logic when discussing strategy, something the books of chivalry allude to but fail to fully show. Even some of the chronicles, for good reason, lack details about what is said and by whom during pre-war councils. Valera's *Crónica de los reyes católicos*, for example, relates how the council arrives at its conclusion, yet does not report any exchanges between Ponce de León and Cárdenas:

E a la fin se determinó que se pusiese cerco sobre la cibdad de Loja, por que aquella se tomando sería grand ayuda para meter la recua a la cibdad de Alhama. E como quiera que todos fueron en este acuerdo, el marqués de Cádiz, como toviese mayor esperiençia de la guerra de los moros que otro alguno de los cavalleros que allí estavan, fué de contraria opinión, dando para ello evidente razones. Pero como ya en la voluntad del rey e reyna estava determinado de poner el cerco sobre Loja, óvose de poner en obra, de que grandes inconvenientes siguieron. (147)

Valera acknowledges Ponce de León's expertise in fighting the Muslims and speaks about his making a compelling argument to the Catholic Kings, but *Los Hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* uses the council scene to spotlight Ponce de León's exemplary skills at deliberation.

During a later council, Ponce de León again responds to a question from Fernando regarding which city to attack next, Róna or Málaga. According to the text, certain unnamed nobles express doubts and appear timid in the King's presence: "e algunos dellos respondieron que todo era mucho bien para el Andaluzía, pero que les pareçia ser cosa muy graue e de grand fecho" (237). Their diffidence sets the stage for Ponce de León's speech:

El qual respondió que todo lo que los caualleros dezían era muy bueno, pero pues que él era obligado a decir la verdad a su rey y señor natural, que su voto era que ante todas cosas Su Alteza ganase a Álora, porque era llave y puerto así de Málaga como de Ronda. E ovo sobre ello algunas alteraciones; tanto, que dixo el marqués que si no se tomava primero Álora, que ninguna de las dichas çibdades non podría estar el real seguro sobrella syn estar a peligro, porque era espada de dos manos, que podría por allí resçibir el real grand danno. (237)

Again, Ponce de León discusses the advantages of taking Álora, which include its strategic proximity to a more valuable target, Málaga; and also how controlling it prevents potential security issues from developing. By arguing the importance of taking Álora to the security of forces besieging Ronda and Malaga, Ponce de León demonstrates that he has a greater understanding of strategy than the others.

A third example shows how the author presents an apparent adaptation of a war council described by Valera's chronicle. Again, Ponce de León identifies a weakness in the battle plans that other nobles espouse:

Sennor, muchas razones ay para aver de tomar por buen consejo el cerco de Málaga; en especial que, ganándose aquella çibdad, se aseguraría toda la tierra de la Barbía que Vuestra Alteza tiene ganada. E así ganará el Axarquía fasta Bélez-Málaga, e sennoreará Vuestra Alteza grand parte de la mar. Pero para aver de sityar a Málaga, hánsele de poner tres reales. El vno, el más principal, en lo alto, cerca de Gibralfaro, que tome fasta la mar. E el otro

real ha de estar en lo baxo, en el onsario. E el otro real, en las huertas, que tome fasta dar en la mar. E para estos reales ha menester mayor cantidad de gente que Vuestra Alteza aquí tiene. Y por tanto, señor, mi parecer es que Vuestra Alteza deue asentar sobre Loxa, e fío en Nuestro Sennor que en breue tiempo la ganará. E de ally, pasará el río de Genil e asentará sobre Yllora; e commo quier que es villa y castillo muy fuerte, tiene muy buena dispusiçion para ser combatida de las lonbardas, e non se le puede detener quatro o cinco días. E de allí puede Vuestra Alteza yr asentar sobre Moclín, e la puede tomar en otros tantos días. Porque estos lugares, commo quier que están enrriscados en pennas altas, son a mi parecer muy flacos para el artillería que Vuestra Alteza aquí tiene, así por ser lugares pequennos de poca gente commo porque no tienen barreras nin baluartes que tengan traueses nin fosados; y por estas cabsas non son defendederos. Y estas fortalezas tomadas, queriendo Dios nuestro Sennor, la çibdad de Granada se porná en mucha necesidad. E la villa de Montefrío e otro lugar que se llama Colomera luego se darán a Vuestra Alteza, porque quedan atajados de Granada. (248)

The author constructs the deliberative speech around four of the five parts Aristotle identifies as the “dispositio”: “exordium,” “narratio,” “confirmatio,” and “peroratorio.”¹⁷ It begins with an “exordium,” which renders the audience attentive and well-disposed by acknowledging the “buen consejo” of the other noblemen,¹⁸ and follows this by explaining (“narratio”) that taking Málaga will secure already conquered lands and create opportunities for future conquests, including controlling much of the coast. This objective, he concedes, will not be easy and will require that he isolate the city by capturing three towns and the land between “la Axarquía” and “Bélez-Málaga.” Only then should the king begin the siege of Málaga. A first front will take care of the area between Gibralfaro and the sea, a second will separate the city from its food supply, and a third will take the low land. This, unfortunately, requires more manpower than Fernando has at his disposal. The speech follows Aristotle’s dictum from *Rhetoric* that one must “know the extent of the military strength of his country, both actual and potential, and also the nature of that actual and potential strength” (18) in order to be effective.

Ponce de León’s military intelligence further echoes what Aristotle emphasizes in *Rhetoric*: “With regard to National Defense: [the speaker] ought to know all about the methods of defense in actual use, such as the strength and character of the defensive force and the positions of the forts” (19). In the “confirmatio,” Ponce de León presents his plan to attack the three easier targets of Loxa, Genil, and Yllora, because they are susceptible to Fernando’s artillery, and none would last more than a few days. From there, Moclín would fall next and just as easily for it lacks proper fortifications. This advice further demonstrates how Ponce de León manifested the tenants of a good military leader by considering his army’s strengths and also his enemy’s weaknesses in order to make victory appear easier.¹⁹ Finally, Ponce de León ends his argument with a “peroratio” that addresses how to capture Granada, King Fernando’s primary objective. As Curtius explains,

¹⁷The question as to why the author constructs a rhetorically-sound speech but leaves out one of the key parts—“refutatio”—is intriguing. Clearly he understands Aristotelian rhetorical structure, so this omission appears to be deliberate. One possible explanation is that the author does not wish to offend or shame one of the “otros grandes” noblemen who were present during the council, since the point of a “refutatio” is to refute other arguments. Carriazo Rubio points out that Valera’s version of the events only refers to “otros grandes” and does not mention Ponce de León by name (248, fn. 410).

¹⁸See Murphy, 205 on Alberic of Monte Cassino’s *Dictaminum Radium*, which cites the Ciceronian objectives of the *exordium*.

¹⁹ See Vegetius Book III.

the conclusion must appeal to something close to the listener's mind or heart but be plausible in order to convince them (70). In the case of Fernando, capturing Granada and marking the beginning of the end of the Muslim presence on the Peninsula would do just that.

5. Conclusion

Through actions, advice, and deliberative speeches, Ponce de León's biographer describes his subject in a manner consistent with other chivalric biographical writings of the time. Chivalric biographies from fifteenth-century Spain, like other genres, were influenced by the rise of humanism on the Iberian Peninsula. Chivalric theorists debated the precepts of what it meant to be a knight, often reviewing translations and versions of classical military texts that were once again trendsetting. These texts celebrated the long-lived heroic concept of *fortitudo et sapientia*. In *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz*, through carefully crafted displays of leadership, the author characterizes Ponce de León as an ideal knight who demonstrates both *fortitudo* and *sapientia* and the best attributes of heroic chivalry. He further develops Ponce de León's chivalric profile to match the realities desired in knights by several Iberian chivalric theoreticians. The author precisely details Ponce de León's speeches, including elements not found in other works commenting on the same events. Whether or not Ponce de León was truly as erudite as his biographer would imagine him to be, it is clear that the author of *Los hechos del Marqués de Cádiz* aims to portray him as courageous and intelligent, and as a knight who demonstrates much of his intellect as a skilled orator who is also brave and wise in combat.

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