



# The Arrival of the Control of Violence in Sport to the Kingdom of Castile in the 15th Century, as it Appears in the Chronicle of Lucas de Iranzo, Governor of Jaen

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## Abstract

*Between 1460 and 1473, when the Muslim kingdom of Granada was the only one that remained to conquer to the Christians of the Iberian Peninsula to complete the Reconquest of their land, Lucas de Iranzo, an ennobled villain, governed Jaen –a city and region bordering Granada– in an absolute manner. A chronicle of the time, *Relación de los fechos del muy magnífico e más virtuoso señor el señor don Miguel Lucas muy digno condestable de Castilla*, dedicated to the exaltation of the excellence of that character, Lucas de Iranzo, contains very valuable information on sports in Castile in the fifteenth century. In fact, it is the chronicle that most extensively deals with the sports recreations of all the history of the Castilian chronicles: game of reeds, dance, bullfighting, run the ring, chasing bears, skirmish on horseback, hunting, egg fights, pumpkin fights, jousts, tournaments, are widely described. In this article we make a historical analysis of the sports content of the chronicle. We will be guided in particular by Norbert Elias' theory on violence and sports violence in history. We note in the course of the chronicle - which is written at the end of each year - a rapid disappearance of the most violent sports, which were typical of medieval warrior societies, especially jousting and tournaments. The disappearance of violent sport was replaced by an abundance of spectacular, festive and always peaceful sporting events. Such spectacles always had a single individual protagonist, the excellence of the governor Lucas de Iranzo, and two great collective protagonists in which the chronicle never individualizes, the people and the knights.*

*The Governor's excellence, his political absolutism and the advent of non-violent sport came together. The governor was able to anticipate the advent of the modern Renaissance by means of an attractive theatricalization of these sporting exhibitions. If Norbert Elias states that the (internal) control of violence in western societies appears for the first time in history with the advent of the modern age, and this would be reflected in a less violent sport, we observe that this change, this advent, is taking place in Castile at that time. In fact, this change is coming ahead of the time when it would be due to, precisely with the sporting narratives of the chronicle of Lucas de Iranzo written between 1458 and 1471. Lucas de Iranzo's chronicle is the first historiographical manifestation of the historical change to non-violence in sport in the kingdom of Castile*

**Keywords:** Medieval Sport, Sport Violence, Chronicles, Castile, Jaen, Norbert Elias

## 1. Introduction

Alborg, in his *Historia de la Literatura Española* (1997), notes that the history of the fifteenth century is abundant in names, what he interprets as an evidence of the importance that the individual was acquiring in the heat of the new humanistic currents. Kings are no longer the sole concern of historians, as until now, but now they also care for men of modest origins, provided they had acquired notoriety by their deeds (p.474). Among the twelve works of history from the Spanish fifteenth century noted by Alborg –mostly chronicles–, those who offer more information on knightly sport are the following four:

- 1) El paso honroso de Suero de Quiñones,
- 2) El Victorial (that tells the deeds of Pero Niño);
- 3) Crónica del Halconero de Juan II;
- 4) *Relación de los fechos del muy magnífico e más virtuoso señor el señor don Miguel Lucas muy digno*

condestable de Castilla (hereafter Lucas de Iranzo's Chronicle [LIC]).

Only one of those chronicles is about a king, one about a nobleman, and the other two deal with men of humble origins who eventually were ennobled, Pero Niño and Lucas de Iranzo. All the four give abundant information on knightly sport and only one –the LIC– tells us both about knightly sport and popular sport, what has been considered as remarkable, as we will see below (Ramírez & Fernández, 2010).

The aim of our work is to show the relegation of violent sports (jousts, tournaments, passage of arms) by Lucas de Iranzo, as portrayed in LIC, and to give an explanation to such relegation.

Thus, first we will briefly discuss the Castilian sport of the fifteenth century, Lucas de Iranzo, and the LIC. Second, we will see the full list of sports that are mentioned in the LIC, which we could term as 'the sports of Lucas de Iranzo', a list that shows a relegation of violent sports and a preference for peaceful sports. Those peaceful events share some common features, such as their festive and theatrical character, the elimination of competitive and individualistic aspects, and their especial empathy towards the people. Those are thus the basic characteristics of the sport of Lucas de Iranzo. Finally, we give an explanation, based on Vicente's study about body education for nobles in medieval Castile (Vicente, 2003) and on Norbert Elias's (1986c) well-known essays on sport and violence. Our explanation tries to connect excellence, absolutism, and the rejection of violence.

### ***1.1 Status Quaestionis in Research on Sport in Medieval Castile***

A brief review of the research on sport in late medieval Castile, both from the perspective of socio-political medieval history, as well as from the perspective of the history of sport, shows –as we will see– that the sport recorded in late medieval sources is in general a violent sport, and almost exclusively a festive one (unlike modern and contemporary sport). Only in the chronicles of the late medieval period, and especially in those of the fifteenth century, that sport is referred to in detail, being the LIC the most prominent on this aspect, standing out from the rest of chronicles.

A review of the sources also shows us that it is rigorous to speak of sport in Medieval Castile, since the word was already used there at that time, especially in the fifteenth century. Among the experts in Medieval History who have studied the question, we have to mention Miguel Angel Ladero, María M. Mantel, or Víctor Gibello, among others. Among the experts in history of Sport who have studied the question, we can mention Miguel Vicente, Javier Olivera, José Antonio Funes, Ramírez Macías, and Fernández Truan, plus María Luisa Rodrigo (2007) (who has focused on the kingdom of Aragon).

The relationship between sport and feasts, and the role played by sport in the feasts of medieval culture – especially in Spain– has been deeply studied by Ladero (2004). According to him, unlike feast, sport (or game) does not have a concrete meaning but it is identified with joy, and for that reason sport reinforces feasts, being an essential element in most of them (p.27). Thus, sport is present, in an important way, in religious feasts (that generally coincide with Calendar feasts and equinoxes), in political feasts (celebrations of the king and nobility, their weddings, christenings, ambassadors' receptions), 'alegrías' (celebrations of military victories), and in local festivities (celebrations of patron saints, guilds, religious confraternities).

It could be said, without fear of being wrong, that in the Middle Ages there was almost no feast without sport or –what is still more typical of the Medieval period– sport without a festivity. This is, in the Middle Ages sport takes place almost exclusively in a festive context.

María M. Mantel (2017) has studied the main sources that inform us about that festive sport, the chronicles, also analysing their characteristics and their evolution in Castile. Marcela points out that feasts and sports were a subject that before the fourteenth century was dealt with laconic comments, whereas in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries those same subjects were addressed with extensive and detailed descriptions. The best example of this is the LIC (written between 1455-1471), that is considered to be the summit of that trend. That phenomenon coincides with the irruption in the European courts of the time of the humanism of the Quattrocento and the transformation of the knight warrior into a courtier.

The essentially violent nature of Medieval sport (knightly sport: tournaments, jousts, and pas d'armes) has been studied by Víctor Gibello (1999). He agrees with the famous sentence "Medieval Spain was a society organised for war", the reasons for that being (according to him):

- a) that the Middle Ages were a historical period characterised by the supremacy of cavalry in war (since the time when the gothic cavalry defeated emperor Valens in the battle of Adrianople, in AD 378), Yet, that supremacy started to be challenged and displaced with the appearance of the first fire weapons, what in Castile began to happen already by the fourteenth century (as documented by the chronicle of Alfonso XI, that says that the warriors were very afraid of fire weapons).
- b) that the noble society of the Middle Ages sought glory and fame through the demonstration of their bravery, preferably in violent knightly sports, and through the exhibition of their wealth and power in feasts of unprecedented luxury, "without the slightest scruple to spend what the peasant accumulated so industriously" And though the fifteenth century is a century of deep transformations for the noble-knight class and its sport (because

“the old re-enactments of battles in the open field yielded to regulated and controlled duels, to prevent any danger”), some amount of risk continued to exist, because participants were very competitive, eager to get the prizes, fame, prestige, or the attention of the females, and because of the enmity that existed among many of them, since they were rivals at the court.

Gibello stresses that this process of progressive risk control -control of violence- is parallel to the growing demilitarization of the nobility, which inevitably tends to be courtly and urban, but which clings to the chivalrous ideal of life, established among other aspects in the playful vision of life, surrounding the party, in its final with deeply baroque elements looking for a more spectacular presentation, with all kinds of fictitious structures and constructions;. These structures and fictitious constructions will certainly abound in the parties and sports of Lucas de Iranzo.

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The ideal of princely and noble excellence in Late Medieval Castile, an excellence that was supposed to be partly innate and partly acquired, and that justified rule, domination and government, has been studied by Vicente (2003), as it appears in the *Código de las Partidas* of Alfonso X. That ideal of excellence was based on the contraposition of the distinction of the noble versus the vulgarity of the villain. That distinction has a very important body, visual and scenographic components, as it could not be otherwise in an illiterate society. Body and gestural excellence was intended to be the external manifestation of internal virtues, the latter being what justified superiority and rule.

According to Vicente, *Las Partidas* de Alfonso X is a work that, due to their later importance and the universality of its values, is a cultural landmark, that puts together the different European branches of chivalric treatises and that influenced the ideal of excellence of the main European courts. In the case of the LIC, it is –or pretends to be– a portrait of noble excellence, but with the drastic novelty of showing affective empathy towards the villains.

The use of the word sport to designate the physical exercises and games of the late medieval period has been studied by Olivera and Torreadella (2015), who has researched about the historical evolution of the word in Western Europe. He finds the presence of the word ‘deporte’ and its derivatives in the medieval Castilian language, concretely in the *Cantar de Mio Cid* (around 1140), that say ‘luego toman armas y tórnense a deportar’, and in *Las Partidas* of Alfonso X (thirteenth century) the term ‘deporte’ is related to hunting. Around 1440 the Castilian word ‘deporte’ means pleasure and entertainment. Thus, the authors mention and seem to accept Trapero’s conclusion that sport is not a phenomenon exclusive to our time. Norbert Elias (1986b) says the same, though distinguishing between a general meaning of the word –applicable to the Middle Ages– and a specific meaning –non applicable to the Middle Ages– (pp.128-130). These authors specify that in the medieval period the word –‘deporte’ meant more fun/pleasure than physical exercise-, unlike what happens today but that that fun of Medieval sport will gradually incorporate more and more physical activity (p.66).

The research by Funes (2016) about the Medieval sources dealing with sport in Jaen and the nearby areas shows that the history of late Medieval sport is centred on chivalric sports, hunting, and bull fighting (pp.179-194) the main sources being the LIC, *El libro de la montería* (Alfonso XI, mid fourteenth century) (p. 211), *Libro del ajedrez* (Alfonso X, thirteenth century), and *Gala de caballeros, blasón de paladines* (by Ibn Hudayl, a moor from the kingdom of Granada, fourteenth century, a book about war, tournament, arms and horses) (p. 120).

A fairly exhaustive study of the sport of Lucas de Iranzo, together with that by Ladero (already mentioned), is the one by Ramírez and Fernández (2010). Iranzo is here compared to a Roman patrician, at the same time warrior and patron, who adopted the way of life of a knight, devoted to war, but also to amusements, both aristocratic as well as popular, the latter being the more familiar to him, due to his humble origin. As Ladero (pp. 152-153), Ramírez and Fernández also think that Iranzo’s excessive promotion of sport and public spectacles had as an aim to prepare the people for war and to control them. They consider that his tournaments, games of reeds, and other sport events were too much loaded with aesthetic elements, in an attempt to maintain the chivalric ideal, already decaying by that time. The fact that in the LIC there are only two references to tournaments, one to jousting, and another about pas d’armes, shows that those activities were not very popular, together with the fact that they were full of theatricality and that they already lacked any military function as training for war. Those authors think that the LIC is an exceptionally worthy source, different from the rest of chronicles of the time because of the great attention it pays to feasts and celebrations and by the detailed descriptions of the ludic physical activities both of the nobility as well as of the villains. They suggest that thanks to Iranzo’s humble origin, and –therefore– to his interest for the common people, we have had the possibility to know those ludic activities –among them some children games in the fields–, about which there was very little information, or none at all.

### 1.2 Lucas de Iranzo and His Chronicle

Lucas de Iranzo did not come from a noble family, but was brought up and educated in the court with the future Henry IV (Villa, 2011, p. 97) When Henry ascended the throne he gave Iranzo the highest privileges and titles, which roused the resentment of some of the nobles of the court (Gutiérrez, 2013). Since the lord condestable was grown up and lived with the king and the latter loved him and held him in higher esteem than any other of the servants and favourites he had, the marquis of Villena, Juan Pacheco, and the Master of Calatrava, Pedro Girón, resented it and became jealous and envious, and always treated him in the worst possible way. By 1459 Iranzo had already been appointed *canciller mayor* (high chancellor) and *alcayde* of Jaen and of Alcalá la Real, but then the king decided to increase still more his noble status by making him a baron, count, and condestable, 'so that he could serve him better'. The incident in which the men of Iranzo killed some men of the valid of the king, Beltrán de la Cueva, in the court shows the tension that existed between Iranzo and other nobles close to the king.

Due to those tensions, Iranzo wanted to get away from the court. On the contrary, the king wanted him to stay beside him in the court. Finally, the king had to cede and allowed Iranzo to choose any city of the kingdom of Castile. Iranzo 'with the great desire he had to be on the frontier, to make war against the Moors, chose to settle definitively in the city of Jaen'.

Thus, after a previous stay of ten or eleven months in Bailen, Iranzo arrived at Jaen on 17 December 1460, where he would live until he was murdered in 1473.

Some chroniclers of that time wrote that he was a mediocre military leader (Blanco, 1962, p. 345). Giménez thinks that he was a person who did not stand out for his attitudes or military deeds, but was outstanding for his humanity, the breaking of social barriers between the people and the nobility, and for his enormous love of feasts and sport games, where all social classes took part together (Giménez, p. 86).

Yet the negative military image of Iranzo does not seem to be sufficiently justified, because the Moors of Granada feared him and because, since he arrived at Jaen, they ceased to make incursions in that city (incursions that before had been frequent and devastating) (Mata, Ed. 2009, pp. 112-115).

Mata Carriazo portrays Iranzo as a lover of music and theatre (he was the pioneer of the latter in Castile), a faithful Christian, unflinchingly loyal to Henry IV, a good defender of the frontier, fond of showing his high dignity in any public event and festive recreations, and brave in his military actions (Mata, Ed. 2009, pp. LXIII-LIV). For her part, for Osorio (2006), Iranzo is one of the clearest representatives of the frontier cavalry and, also, a courteous and deferential man, who gave splendid feasts to his friends and comrades in arms (p. 243).

Blanco underlines Iranzo's 'popular conscience' (he was a lover of the people), a popular conscience that becomes stronger and more evident in the ludic atmosphere of the several recreations recorded by the chronicle: 'the whole people of Jaen, nobles and plebeians mingle in banquets and country feasts' (Blanco, p. 101). And in that ludic and festive atmosphere, Iranzo deploys an enormous talent and vitality, 'showing an aspect of his personality that distinguishes himself and makes him greater'. But 'this love of mingling with his vassals breaking social barriers brought him, at the same time, the love of his subjects and the enmity of the nobles' (Blanco, p. 89). Moreover, Iranzo was a good administrator who was concerned about the wellbeing of the city of Jaen, a concern that materialized in measures of all kinds.

The anonymous author wrote the chronicle after the end of each year, recording the main events that had occurred that year (he did so from 1459 to 1471). The events of 1472 were never recorded, and Iranzo was killed in April 1473, while he was praying in the Church of Santa Maria. The author was someone close to Iranzo (Giménez, 1984, p. 91), and who witnessed the events he recorded (Osorio, p. 241).

The chronicle sought to prove that Iranzo deserved the honours granted to him by the king, and the no lesser honour of marrying an aristocratic lady whose family was extraordinarily prominent, Teresa de Torres (García, 2009, pp. LXII-LXIII). But the chronicle has turned out to be something more important, a detailed annals of the events that occurred in Jaen in those years of the fifteenth century, recording the life, customs, and struggles of those men of the frontier, and especially their feasts and recreations (García, p. LXVII). This author notes that Iranzo, as the good politician he was, knew that to celebrate entertainments and sport recreations with their subjects (plebeians included) was very profitable in political terms. But that political profitability, García continues, is not enough to explain the huge amount of time, money, and enthusiasm devoted to his recreations by Iranzo. According to García, Iranzo felt a real love for those recreations, a deeply-rooted love (p. LXVIII).

In comparison to other Castilian chronicles of the late Middle Ages, this chronicle devotes a lot of space to social customs (Mantel, 2017, p. LXIV) and, within them, to feasts and sports. Mata Carriazo assures that when the chronicle describes the retirement of Iranzo in Jaen, expelled from the court by his powerful rivals, the chronicle becomes 'one of the most faithful and meticulous mirrors of the Spanish society of the third quarter of the fifteenth century. A representative example of Spanish realism ... a window opened onto the life of a noble and onto a frontier city of Andalucía' (p. XVII). Even though the chronicler, seems to be more concerned about aesthetics and the desire to flatter than about speaking about the crude reality, paying so much attention to the ludic element that it is difficult to imagine the hard conditions of life, sometimes dramatic, of those inhabitants of Jaen (García, pp. LXI-LXIII).

## 2. Festive sports in the Lucas de Iranzo Chronicle

If we list, in a positivist exercise, the sports recreations reported in the chronicle, we will be overwhelmed by the number of sports stories. These sport recreations ordered from the most frequently cited to the least frequently cited, would be the following: game of reeds (Mata, Ed. 2009, pp. 47, 49, 53, 58, 65, 73, 98-100, 110, 116-117, 118, 132, 135, 160, 172, 175, 176, 180, 258, 259, 262, 377); dance, (pp. 53, 54, 57, 73, 165, 162, 163, 259, 262, 377); bullfighting (pp. 35, 47, 49, 52, 54, 57, 58, 177, 260); run the ring (pp. 40, 57, 70, 71, 101-102, 11, 161, 163); chasing animals, normally bears (pp. 65, 75, 132, 169, 262), but on one occasion he let loose a lioness (p. 135) and a wolf (p. 378); skirmish on horseback -a cavalry military game- (pp. 65, 132, 171-172, 259); hunting (pp. 25, 36, 132); egg fights (pp. 63-64, 123, 166); pumpkin fights (pp. 112, 164); jousts (pp. 54-55, 73); tournaments (p. 56); pass d'armes (pp. 58-59); horse races (p. 119) and, last, crossbow shooting (one sole mention, having a military aim more than a festive one) (p. 117).

### 2.1 Favorite Sports in the Chronicle

We note that the recreations preferred by Iranzo were the most adaptable as shows in the parties (shows and participation for all the people), he also preferred those non-violent recreations. These recreations had to be filled with theatre and humour. This is why the game of reeds, dances, bullfighting, run the ring, chasing bears, skirmish on horseback, egg fights, and pumpkin fights, were the preferred.

Now let's take a look at a few - and cut-up - sport stories of those that appear in the chronicle, where their spectacular, festive, enthusiastic, peaceful, anonymous -except for the constable- humorous and theatrical character can be directly observed. Another characteristic of Iranzo's festive events is that they are multiple and scheduled one after the other without a break.

*Game of reeds* (Mata, Ed. 2009, pp. 47, 49, 53, 58, 65, 73, 98-100, 110, 116-117, 118, 132, 135, 160, 172, 175, 176, 180, 258, 259, 262, 377):

This game is the one that appears more often in the chronicle, and it is also the most frequently practised by the cavalry. The riders used to wear Moorish clothes and rode 'a la gineta' (a Berber riding style consisting in using short stirrups), because the game was identified as coming from Spanish Muslims. Iranzo had no doubts about the efficacy of the game as military training for the cavalry. (pp. 116-117).

Sometimes, several games of reeds were held consecutively one after the other, in different places of the city, with the participants never seeming to get tired. In many and continuous games of reeds and bullfighting they spent the time, for as long as there was daylight and once everyone of them had received enough food and the night had fallen, in momos and inventions and adventures they took part (p. 58).

*Dance* (pp. 53, 54, 57, 73, 165, 162, 163-164, 259, 262, 377)

Iranzo and his wife and his brothers used to open the dances, sometimes even singing. Iranzo and his wife normally dance in the palace, but occasionally they also dance in the street at the gate of the palace, becoming then the spectacle not only of nobles but also of the people.

The said lord Condestable, with the said ladies, came down the said tower, the trumpets and shawms blasting before him, and he went out to the street, to the platform that was set up. And later came some professional dancers that had been hired for that night. And after the dancers had danced, the lord Condestable with the lady countess danced. And in the same way his siblings, and all the other kind men and ladies (pp. 163-164).

Iranzo almost never addressed an oral speech to the authorities, nobles, or the people, but his skills as non-verbal communicator become evident in the dances and theatrical recreations where he takes part.

Ramirez and Fernandez (2010) believe they can distinguish between two types of dances in the chronicle: 'dances', proper of the knights, and 'bailes', proper of the people (p. 14). Births, baptisms and weddings were special occasions that were celebrated with 'danzas y bailes'.

*Bullfighting* (Mata Ed. 2009, pp.35, 47, 49, 52, 54, 57, 58, 177, 260)

The chronicle never describes this entertainment as practised on horseback, but always on foot. The knights who attend only take part as spectators, watching from the balconies. Iranzo always presides and never sets his foot in the arena.

It is clearly a spectacle offered by the people to the nobles, whereas it is vice versa in the case of the game of reeds and other cavalry games.

And after they had played (the game of reeds) for a long time, with an infinite amount of people from the city and from all the shires watching the game and giving many shouts and cries, the said lord, and all the other knights and squires and ladies and maidens and other peoples, went up to the balconies of the bishop's palace, and to other balconies, terraces, windows, roofs and towers, and he ordered men to fight six bulls that had been set aside for that feast. The said bulls were so brave that no one had ever seen better bulls. So brave, that with their horns they butted and hit fifteen or twenty people. But God Our Lord wished that no one was in danger or died. And besides this, since there were many people in the stands of the fountain, when the bull came round there, the people, trying to flee, fell in great numbers into the said fountain, and the bull after them, so it was the greatest pleasure in the world to watch it (pp. 259, 260).

#### *Run the ring*

This game is always staged in the same place and at the same hour; when night has fallen, before dinner, to the light of torches and at the gate of Iranzo's palace -a beautiful setting for such a night spectacle-.

In this case it is a spectacle performed by the nobles for the people, who are the spectators. Iranzo and his knights are the participants. When they fail to thread the ring with their spears, they always break them by hitting the stone wall of the palace. After the game, Iranzo offers a banquet that is followed by dances.

Very frequently, the game run the ring was also theatrical, with masks, fictitious characters, and a narrated story. This is perfectly exemplified by the theatrical performance of the game that was held on the festivities of the Christmas of 1464, with Iranzo himself as the main actor. The ring was hang in front of the tower of his palace, with many ladies and maidens in the neighbouring windows and terraces watching the spectacle.

#### *Chasing Bears* (pp. 64-65, 132, 167-169, 262)

As we have already mentioned, in some festivities it became customary to let loose one or two bears in the mounts near Jaen, and then the nobles and the people started to chase them with hounds. Sometimes the bears entered the city (p. 169).

To this entertainment of chasing bears the chronicle pays much more attention than to hunting, probably because it was an activity more exciting for the people, who could take part in it easily (hunting was primarily just for the nobles, with some plebeians fulfilling subordinated roles).

#### *Skirmish on horseback* (pp. 65, 132, 171-172, 259)

Skirmish on horseback was another war game, consisting of chasing other riders and fighting (in a fictional way) with them, similarly to a real battle. The races and performance of the horses were more important than the blows, that tended to be avoided. The chronicle says 'they put their hands to the swords' but it seems to be mere rhetoric, since it does not mention sword blows as in tournaments.

Skirmish on horseback was the second most preferred cavalry game by Iranzo, after the game of reeds. Both games were often staged one after the other. Skirmish on horseback used to begin by the river, outside the city, but the participants played from there to the streets and squares of the city, thus offering a good spectacle to the inhabitants. Iranzo was a habitual participant.

And when the night fell, the comendador of Montizón ... on one side, with up to two hundred Christian knights, and on the other side, the officer Fernando de Villafranke, with another two hundred Moorish knights, with false beards, and blackened, with many trumpets and drums and buisines, and with many torches and lamps ... formed in front of the palace of the said lord condestable; he was, with many other knights, in the tower, watching. And there they skirmished for a while, and they played many war games.

And this completed, they dismounted in the palace, where there were so many people and dances and games and momos and actors, and in so many ways, all together, and all behaved as if mad with pleasure, and all those pleasures and joys and dances and games lasted and were continued by the free will of the people for eight consecutive days, or more... (p. 259).

Aubrun (1942, p. 43) has seen in the feasts and recreations of Iranzo the origins of modern theatre in Castile. In the 'regocijos' that Iranzo offers to his troops and people, Auburn sees the spectacular character of theatre in the music, staging, costumes, fictional characters, and the organization of the whole spectacle around a fictional plot. Iranzo liked that his feasts included, frequently, re-enactments of fights between Moors and Christians. For example, in the game of reeds, one of the sides disguised themselves as Moors, painting their faces black (with charcoal) and wearing fake beards. In one occasion, the game was performed as part of a fictional theatrical play; the king of Morocco asked Iranzo that their men played the game to see which religion was more powerful and the true one. And so they did, with the predictable result of the Christian victory, which shows that the result was fixed (Mata, Ed. 2009, p. 100). Brisset (2001) suggests that those theatrical games of reeds and war games held by Iranzo are

connected to the re-enactments that appeared later in the feasts of Moors and Christians (that we can still see today).

These theatrical performances of Iranzo are so important that Auburn even says that gradually they started to separate more and more from sport, announcing theatre (though they were still sport) (Aubrun, p. 48).

#### *Egg fights* (pp. 63-64, 166)

At Easter, nobles and plebeians went to the gate of Iranzo's palace to receive the hornazo and, there, they engaged in a battle of eggs, in the middle of a well-prepared scene.

The high and the low took part in this entertainment, the first being in the tower of Iranzo's palace (with Iranzo himself throwing eggs) whereas some of the people came on a wooden castle with wheels that came up the street until it reached the tower. The rest of the people watched from the street. This is the description for the year 1464.

The Monday that of Easter is the second, he ordered them to invite all the lords of the Church, and all the officers, knights and squires and citizens, and almost the whole people of the city so that, after eating in the afternoon, they came to his palace to receive the hornazo. And when they came, he placed himself with the officers and some knights in a tower of his palace, and all the rest in the windows and balconies and in the street. And then, as ordered, many people came down the street that comes from La Magdalena with a great wooden castle that was brought on four wheels and, on the castle, some men with big oblong shields, and many other men around them. And when they arrived in front of the palace, an egg battle started between those on the castle and those on the said tower and balconies and streets, that was a delight to watch. In the battle, I truly think that they used around nine or ten thousand eggs. And after they spent a long while in this, they held a banquet of boiled eggs and fresh cheese (pp. 63-64).

Iranzo's great communicative skills allowed him to become the main character of those performances, attracting all the attention. He also managed to attract the attention by using magnificent horses and by wearing rich and varied robes and jewels, as was the case during the several days that his wedding lasted ('the lord and the lady every day appeared dressed in a new way and not as the preceding day'<sup>1</sup>).

He also presided over all the sport recreations he organised (when he was not a participant himself), as in the case of bullfights, or tournaments,

#### *Pumpkin fights* (p. 112)

On Shrove Tuesday 1464, as it was customary on that date, after dining, Iranzo went up to the tower and watched the game *run the ring* (performed at the gate of the palace). After that game, it was the turn for dances. First the momos (specialized dancers) (pp. 163, 259, 262) danced and next Iranzo with his wife and his siblings. After that, it was time for the pumpkin battle (p. 164).

## **2.2 Relegated Sports in the Chronicle**

We think that the reasons why these medieval festive activities were relegated by Lucas de Iranzo were: because they encouraged violence, because of the lack of massive spectacularity, because of the promotion of individualities, because of the inadequacy for nobles and commoners to enjoy the festivities together and, finally, because they did not make Iranzo's excellence shine as the organizer of the festivities and the highest and only governor of his people.

#### **Tournaments (p.56)**

The chronicle only refers to one tournament, the one held during Iranzo's wedding (1461), staged on one day (and that was not organized by Iranzo himself). The first phase of the tournament consists of both mounted groups charging each other with lances. This occurs in the plaza del Arrabal, with Iranzo and the bride presiding from a balcony. In the centre of the square there is a high platform for the judges of the tournament.

The second phase occurs in the same place; once the participants had broken their lances they began a sword fight on their horses. The swords have no point and the edges are blunted. It is forbidden to strike with the point and to attack from behind.

The third phase is an axe combat on foot, that is held after dinner in the courtyard of Iranzo's palace, and that is stopped by the intercession of the bride, fearful of further injuries.

#### **Jousts (pp.54-55, 73)**

The sole joust recorded in the chronicle is staged on 15 January 1462, at the wedding of a lady who is a relative of Iranzo's wife, and it is laconically described (p. 73).

Yet, it is true that –apart from the feasts–, about the year 1462 the chronicle says that in jousts and games of reeds some time was spent every day by those of his house, since they had no other war affairs to attend, because the truces with the Moors still lasted (p. 73).

***Pas d'armes (pp. 58-59)***

The celebrations of Iranzo's wedding ended some days after the tournament, when some 'adventurer knights' from outside Jaen performed a pas d'armes in the plaza del Arrabal.

It is interesting to note that Iranzo had taken part in a tournament held in Seville in 1455 (five years before moving to Jaen), during the wedding of Henry IV and Joan of Portugal. The tournament, as recorded by the chronicler Diego Enríquez del Castillo –counselor and chaplain of Henry IV–, pitted Iranzo in the field against the marquess of Villena, both being rivals in real life. (Barrantes, 1988, p. 371) But during the eleven years that Iranzo lived in Jaen, the chronicle does not mention him taking part as a participant in any single tournament, joust, or pas d'armes, despite the fact that they were typical pastimes of the Castilian nobility of the time (Rühl, 2001) (although tournaments had already been criticized by that time for being the occasion of intrigues and vengeance (Osorio, p. 243).

The first years of the chronicle bear witness to the danger of tournaments, jousts, and pas d'armes (e.g. we have already seen that during Iranzo's wedding, his wife begs him to end the tournament, to prevent further injuries (pp. 55-56).

Thus, after the year 1462, jousts, tournaments, and pas d'arms disappear from the chronicle and are not even staged at the weddings of two of Iranzo's knights in 1463.

***Hunting (pp. 25, 36, 132)***

It is recorded in the Chronicle that, in 1459 (when the king went to León) Iranzo ordered to capture some hares, to tie bells to them, and to set them free again, so that the king and the queen had a funny time chasing them (p. 25). During his stay in Bailen, Iranzo proved he also liked to be the hunter, since the chronicle says he spent the time 'going through the mountains and killing many boars and bears and other beasts, and playing games of reeds, and dancing, and feasting, and having many other pleasures' (Relación, p. 36).

But after settling in Jaen, hunting became relegated by him, probably because it was not proper (as a massive spectacle in the city) for the enjoyment of the people, which was his priority.

The only formal occasion when he goes hunting again is when the king visits him in Jaen in 1464. Henry IV was an inveterate hunter, so that Iranzo organizes for him his favourite past time (p. 196).

Although it is true that hunting was relegated by Iranzo as a festive recreation, he continued practising it in Jaen (as he has already practised it in Bailén) as a private activity, in his normal life (out of festive contexts), as attested by a fragment from 1464 (p. 132).

***Horse races***

Horse racing was a popular entertainment of the time, in Castile as well as in the Muslim kingdom of Granada. Yet, in the chronicle there is only one short reference to a special place to horse racing (p. 119), and there is not a single description of horse races.

***Crossbow shooting***

In the same way that Iranzo sought to improve the skills of his cavalry by making them practice the game of reeds, horse skirmishes, and to run the ring, he also tried to improve the marksmanship of his body of crossbowmen by encouraging them to compete in crossbow contests every Sunday and festive days. Yet, the chronicle only spends a few words describing these activities.

**3. From Lucas de Iranzo's Excellence to Political Absolutism and Non-Violent Sport*****3.1 About Excellence in Lucas de Iranzo***

The excellence displayed by Iranzo, and the feasts offered by him, were propaganda that helped to his absolutist rule of the city. According to Elias, the control of internal violence in a society goes hand in hand with political absolutism in that society.

Let's see Ladero's (2004) explanation about how Iranzo managed to implement his absolutist rule, especially assisted by a programme of feasts and propaganda that enhanced his image of excellence.

Feasts also played an extremely important role in that political programme of confiscation of all areas of power. They are the feasts of the condestable, because he organizes and presides them, and he appears in them as the protagonist, giving roles and honours. That is another way of overcoming wills and quelling resistances, through propaganda. Miguel Lucas de Iranzo gave the feasts of Jaen an splendour that they had never had before, emphasizing his role as host, captain of the city and generous patron. He introduced new elements in his celebrations, for example ... those elements that had a chivalrous and warrior character, typical of a border city that was in constant risk of war attack, but he also introduces other innovations concerning momos, characters and theatrical inventions. Perhaps that monopoly of the festivities would

end up being the most unbearable thing for the local knightly nobility, because it was imposed by an upstart who was thus being more pretentious than what he should be, trying to hide his humble origins with that kind of festive megalomania... The detailed accounts of the Chronicle... reflect habitual situations and customary festive elements that the condestable merely enhanced or used for the benefit of his own image (pp. 152-153).

Political absolutism, in the case of Iranzo, is closely linked to the image of excellence of himself that he is able to transmit to his governed (knights and above all the people).

The traditional model of noble excellence, as it appears in *Las Partidas* and as it is recorded by Miguel Vicente (2003), includes the following characteristics: a docile and disciplined body, the minimization of the gesture and the display of self-control (p.10) –which is presented as the paradigm of the rationalization of the palatial and civilized conduct– (p.11). Although they seem to be only appearance, they are the result of the inner cultivation of virtues, they are “the physical extension of an interiority that comes from the virtue”. To be attractive, to have composure, to have a distinguished appearance, is what differentiates the noble from the villain and what characterises the behaviour of the court.

The dress of the noble is also essential, and the rule is no longer moderation, but quite the opposite, ostentation and even excess: “clothes make it possible to know if men are noble or villains”, “silk cloths with gold and precious stones” (p. 11), “so that men may know them after seeing them ... and therefore [they use] bits and saddles made of gold and silver and precious stones”.

Moreover, they add the practices of hunting, of riding well and elegantly, and of using all kind of arms. Hunting was thought to provide the following benefits: rest and distraction, improvement of health and understanding, and lengthening life (p. 13).

Lucas de Iranzo is depicted in the LIC possessing more features of courtesan and political excellence (distinguished appearance, self-control, inner virtues, handsomeness, ostentation of wealth in his outfit and steeds, excellent riding skills, owner of magnificent horses) than of warrior excellence (as depicted, for example, in *Las Partidas* of Alfonso X), because the LIC does not exacerbate his expertise with arms, and because historians in general agree that he was not a great general.

Iranzo perfectly illustrates the evolution that was occurring in the fifteenth century from the old warrior noble to the new political, courtesan and urban noble. Those new nobles spend much of their time in splendid feasts characterized by their baroque character, excessive protocol, luxuries, incipient theatre, dances and, in the case of Iranzo, dramatized sport.

But there is something especially shocking about his personality and his behaviour that does not fit that imaginary of medieval nobility based on the noble-villain contrast. That shocking feature is the breaking of social barriers by Lucas de Iranzo in the playful environment of the fiestas and their sports, something unique among the governors of the fifteenth century: identifying with the people and yearning to entertain them by organizing and participating in their sports.

The LIC offers, therefore, a model of excellence partly coinciding with the traditional model of Alfonso X in terms of noble virtues, distinguished appearance and ostentation of wealth; but it is a model of excellence more inclined towards the ludic, the political and the courtly, rather than towards arms and war, and, above all, it is a model of excellence that breaks with the medieval tradition in what refers to the identification of Iranzo with the people, which is expressed predominantly in the playful environment and the feasts (breaking social barriers in a sincere way, he really meant that).

### **3.2 About Norbert Elias and His Theory of Non-violent Sport**

Iranzo's relegation of knightly violent sports during his rule of the city of Jaen (since the early years of that rule, in 1463), in favour of non-violent alternatives, could be explained by Elias's theory about the degree of violence existing in each society and each historical moment. It is true that that theory, since it is “unusually comprehensive (Linklater & Mennell, 2010, p. 386) offers a higher risk of being imprecise for explaining a given situation, and Elias himself warns that his theory must be corrected and developed with the new studies, as recorded by these authors:

If I have succeeded in providing a tolerably secure foundation for further reflection and research in this direction, this study has achieved everything it set out to achieve. It will need the thought of many people and the cooperation of different branches of scholarship (p. 387).

For Elias (1986b), sport violence faithfully reflects social violence in general, and it is adapted to the conditions of life and to the degree of security and protection the individual may expect from the state (pp. 132-140).

Elias compares the great amount of violence of medieval knightly sport with that of ancient Greek sport, and explains both by the fact that violence was something inherent in those societies. The individuals of those times needed violence to survive in their daily lives; violence was a normal element in their lives:

Fighting, in games as in war, was centred on the ostentatious display of the warrior virtues which gained for a man the highest praise and honour among other members of his own group – for his kin-group or his city – among other group... Victory or defeat was in the hands of the gods. What was inglorious and shameful was to surrender victory without a sufficient show of bravery and endurance (Elias, p.138).

In those times (both in ancient Greece as well as in medieval Europe) the state does not have enough political or economic power to control the violence of the people. But when the state gets enough power to do that –what happens in Europe by the beginning of the modern age–, that control of violence is demanded by the people and achieved by the state, which benefits the security and the economy of the individuals and the state. An example taken from sport can illustrate this change: in the sixteenth century a new modality of game of reeds appears, the so-called game of the carousel (brought from Italy), that consisted in the riders throwing each other balls of mud instead of reeds, what eliminated the risk that still might exist with the medieval game of reeds (Tomassini, <http://worksofchivalry.com>).

In the theory of Elias (1986c), a still greater control of sport violence would come in a third and definite stage in the history of sport and social history, concretely in the Enlightened England of the eighteenth century, with the birth of modern sports.

The author says that the evolution of the control of violence is not free of regressions, and that each society of each time and place may have special characteristics.

In the West the transformation of the warriors proceeded very gradually from the eleventh or twelve centuries until slowly reached its conclusion in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (...) Then, from the profusion of castles and estates in every region, arose individual houses whose rulers had attained, in many battles and through the growth of their landed possessions and military power, a position of predominance (...), compelled even the warriors who found themselves thus in closer interdependence to observe some degree of consideration and foresight, a more strict control of conduct and –above all towards the mistress of the house on whom they depended –a greater restraint of their affects, a transformation of their drive economy. The courteous code of conduct gives us an idea of the regulation of manners (...) that becomes necessary and normal at these major and minor territorial courts (Elias, 1986a, p. 389).

Thus, the success of Iranzo to relegate and abolish violent sports in the city of Jaen –something that seems to have been an exception in the Castile of his time– could have its cause in the absolute effective power of Lucas de Iranzo in his city (and in the parallel courteous code of conduct they adopted), which was manifestly in contrast to the political divisions and struggles between nobles and the king in the time of Henry IV

The relevant court societies intensified a trend that had already been evident in the earlier feudal courts where a significant number of nobles were brought together under the watchful eye of the ‘territorial lord’, and required to moderate conduct, speech and gestures given the range of ‘unwarlike administrative and clerical work that (had) to be done to promote effective government’ (Linklater & Mennell, p. 395).

#### **4. Conclusion: Lucas de Iranzo Chronicle, first historiographical manifestation of non-violence in sport in Castile**

During Iranzo’s rule of the city of Jaen (from 1460 to 1473) its inhabitants enjoyed a time of splendour in what refers to feasts and sport, as they had never seen before, a time during which violent knightly sports were relegated, despite the fact that they were typical entertainments of the Castile of the time.

In the vision of N. Elias, the control of the internal violence of a society is something desirable and tends to impose itself automatically if there is sufficient power of the state over the citizens. This internal pacification of society has its expression in a certain pacification of sport. Here in the small kingdom of Jaen, belonging to Castile, these conditions were present during the mandate of Lucas de Iranzo.

Iranzo is presented in his Chronicle as an extraordinary figure, who meets the requirements of noble excellence of Castile (a model where the body, the visual and the appearance are very important), but who also offers a new image of aristocratic ruler due to his closeness to the people, where he really came from. He diplomatically combined the traditional noble attitude of opposing ‘nobles versus villains’ with an extraordinary empathy and approach to them.

Lucas de Iranzo displaced from power and excellence everyone who held them before. Jealous of his own excellence, he seems to have excluded all those who tried to gain prominence through the demonstration of their

bravery, as it was proper of medieval society, mainly at violent games and by offering extraordinary luxury feasts. Precisely, the demonstration of his excellence at feasts full of sports seems to have been important for the consecution of political absolutism (among other financial and coercive means).

Thus, festive and spectacular sporting activities were the preferred and imposed by Iranzo, with a massive participation and presence of both knights and people, impregnated with pacifism, theatricality and humor. This abundant and exclusively peaceful sport dominated this society for more than a decade, until Iranzo was assassinated.

The Governor's excellence, his political absolutism and the advent of non-violent sport came together and were recorded in Iranzo's chronicle, four-three decades before the beginning of the sixteenth century. The chronicle of Lucas de Iranzo appears as the first historiographical manifestation of the arrival of non-violent sport in the kingdom of Castile. Reflecting, thus, the historical change from violence to non-violence in sport, advocated by Norbert Elias' theory for the beginning of the modern age.

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