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## Ramon Muntaner, *Crònica* (Valencia, ca. 1325-1328)

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### Introduction

Ramon Muntaner (1265-1336) was a citizen of the Crown of Aragon who wrote his *Crònica* at the beginning of the fourteenth century. In the first half of this century the Iberian Peninsula was divided into different political units: the Christian Kingdoms of Portugal, Castile, Navarra, and the Crown of Aragon, as well as the Muslim Kingdom of Granada. At that time, the Crown of Aragon consisted of a federal structure that comprised the Kingdom of Aragon, the Principality of Catalonia, and the Kingdom of Valencia, which shared the same king. The king of the Crown of Aragon belonged to the Catalan-Aragonese Dynasty, which had three branches: the first corresponded to the king of the Crown of Aragon; the second was represented by the king of Majorca, whereas the third branch corresponded to the king of Sicily. It could be argued that the Catalan-Aragonese Dynasty was mainly Mediterranean and it is in this Mediterranean context in which Muntaner's *Crònica* can be fully understood, especially the fragment that will be analyzed below. The Catalan-Aragonese presence in the Eastern Mediterranean started at the very beginning of the fourteenth century to help the Byzantine Empire against the Turkish incursions. However, in the second decade of the century the territories that were occupied during the Catalan-Aragonese expansion fell under the control of the king of Sicily.

### The Four Great Catalan Chronicles

The *Crònica* (*Chronicle*) was written by Ramon Muntaner in Valencia between 1325 and 1328. This is one of the so-called four Great Catalan Chronicles of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The first of these chronicles is *El Llibre dels fets del rei En Jaume* (*The Book of Deeds of King James*), which was written between 1244 and 1274. This chronicle can be considered an autobiography in which King James I the Conqueror (r. 1213-1276) dictated his life and military conquests. The second chronicle is the *Llibre del Rei En Pere de Aragó e dels seus antecessors passats* (*Book of King Peter of Aragon and His Ancestors*), written between 1283 and 1288 by a member of the Royal Chancery: Bernat Desclot. While the book starts from the first conquest of Majorca in the twelfth century, the chronicle focuses mainly on King Peter the Great's life (r. 1276-1285), with the conquest of Sicily (1282) and his victory against the French (1285). Ramon Muntaner's *Crònica* (*Chronicle*), describes the reigns of the Catalan-Aragonese monarchs in the thirteenth century and focuses on the adventures and conquests carried out by the Catalan-Aragonese mercenaries, also known as the Catalan Company, in the Byzantine Empire at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Finally, the fourth Catalan chronicle is the *Llibre* (*Book*) by Peter the Ceremonious (r. 1336-1387), written between 1375 and 1386. The *Llibre* is quite different from the other three chronicles as it is a political treatise of a medieval king who behaved almost as a Renaissance prince, since he intended to expand and centralize the Royal power and reunite the three dynasties under one king.

All four of these chronicles have two points in common: first, they are all written in Catalan. While the historiographical works in the Crown of Aragon in the twelfth century had been written in Latin in a monastic environment, the four Catalan chronicles are written in a courtly milieu and in Catalan, which, as a result, becomes the most prestigious language of the Catalan-Aragonese Monarchy. Second, in the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries we witness the writing of historiographical works in Catalan that had a profound impact on the greatest works of fifteenth-century Catalan literature such as *Tirant lo Blanc* (1490) by Joanot Martorell and Martí Joan de Galba and the anonymous *Curial e Güelfa* (ca. 1448). For example, Bernat Desclot's *Llibre del Rei En Pere* was a source of *Curial e Güelfa*, and Muntaner's second part of his *Crònica* had a very clear influence on *Tirant lo Blanc*. As a matter of fact, the character of *Tirant* was based on the leader of the *almogàvers* and former Knight Templar Roger de Flor (1267-1305). This is why the reading of these works,



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especially Muntaner's *Crònica*, might remind us that the difference between history and literature is not as obvious as one may think.

## Ramon Muntaner's *Chronicle*

Ramon Muntaner had two main objectives when he wrote his *Crònica*. He wanted to exalt the House of Barcelona-Aragon, which at his time was divided into three different dynasties, as I explained above. These three dynasties were reigning in the Iberian Peninsula, Sicily, and Majorca. When Ramon Muntaner starts writing his *Crònica* in 1325 there were three different kings who belonged to the House of Barcelona-Aragon: first, James II (r. 1291-1327), King of the Crown of Aragon, who reigned over the Iberian territories of the Principality of Catalonia, the Kingdom of Aragon, and the Kingdom of Valencia. Second, James III (r. 1324-1344) who was king of Majorca, and, finally, King Frederick III of Sicily (r. 1296-1337). Muntaner emphasizes the common origin and interests of these three dynasties in the first part of his *Crònica* by telling the story of the Catalan-Aragonese kings who reigned during the thirteenth century. In the second part he indicates that the three dynasties are united in a common project: the conquest of Sardinia.

However, the second part of Muntaner's *Crònica* focuses mainly on the military campaigns of the Catalan Company in the Byzantine Empire, which was the second objective of his work. As Muntaner was part of some of these military campaigns, the narration may be considered an autobiography of someone who witnessed the events that he described and might have exaggerated or embellished his account. In the Treaty of Caltabellotta (1302) by which King Frederick III of Sicily accepted to transfer the throne of Sicily to the Angevins after his death, the war in Sicily came to an end. The Catalan-Aragonese mercenaries known as *almogàvers*, who had also fought in the Iberian Peninsula defending the interests of the Catalan-Aragonese kings during the thirteenth century, agreed to help the Byzantine Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (Andronicus II Palaelogus) (1282-1328) against the Ottoman Turks. These *almogàvers* headed towards the Eastern Mediterranean under the command of Roger de Flor (1267-1305), a former Italian-German Knight Templar. Roger de Flor's army became known as the Catalan Company. Muntaner narrates how Roger de Flor married Emperor Andronikos's niece. Later, in 1304, he was appointed Caesar, which is the name used by Muntaner when he refers to Roger de Flor in the text below. According to Muntaner, as Roger de Flor's power and influence were increasing, the Genoese and Emperor Andronikos's son Prince Miqueli plotted to assassinate him, and in 1305 Prince Miqueli had him murdered in Adrianople. After this tragic event, the Catalan Company carried out what has been called the Catalan Vengeance in which the *almogàvers* looted the area between Macedonia and Thrace. King Frederick III of Sicily got involved in 1311 when he sent his son as deputy governor of the territories occupied by the Catalan Company, giving rise to the Duchy of Athens. Soon after, in 1319, the Duchy of Neopatria fell under Sicilian control. Nonetheless, during the reign of Peter the Ceremonious the two duchies became part of the Crown of Aragon after the *Chapters of Athens* (1380).

The text below comprises chapters CCXV, CCXVI, and CCXVII. The passage represents an explanation of the causes that lead to the so-called "Catalan Vengeance." Muntaner describes how Roger de Flor was deceived and betrayed by Prince Miqueli and how Emperor Andronikos was a clear accomplice with an utter lack of integrity, honesty and gratitude towards the commander of the *almogàvers* who had saved the Byzantine Empire from the Ottoman threat. The degree of deception of which both Prince Miqueli and Emperor Andronikos are capable is particularly striking. Muntaner provides vivid images of the cruelty shown by Byzantines, Alans, originally from Central Asia, and Turcopoles, with mixed Greek and Turkish ancestry, as well as the determination of the *almogàvers*, who were able to resist and who showed a great level of bravery and resilience.



## Capítol CCXV

*Com lo Cèsar vench a la ciutat de Andrinòpol per pendre comiat de Xor Miqueli, lo qual féu occiure lo Cèsar a Girçon, cap dels Alans, d tota sa gent, que non escaparen mas tres; e com tramès a Galípol gents qui correguesen lu terra, e destroyssen la Companya del Cèsar.*

Ara vos tornaré a parlar del Cèsar, que s'aparellà ab CCC hòmens a cavall e ab mil d'a peu per anar a Andrinòpol per veure Xor Miqueli, fill major de l'Emperador, malgrat de tots sos amichs e sos vassals. E açò feya ell per gran lleyaltat que havia en son cor, e de fina amor e de dreta rahó que havia al Emperador e a son fill: e cuydava's, que axí com ell era ple de tota lleyaltat, que l'Emperador e sos fills fossen aytals; perquè era tot contrari, e provar s'[h]a avant, com oyrets.

Com lo Cèsar partí de la host, ell llexà per cap e per major lo Magaduch En Berenguer d'Entença, e En Berenguer de Rochafort per seneschal de la host. E així per ses jornades vench a la ciutat de Andrinòpol, e lo fill de l'Emperador, Xor Miqueli, eixí-li a carrera, el reebé ab gran honor: e açò féu lo malvat, per ço que vaés, ab quina companya venia. E com fo entrat a Andrinòpol, lo fill de l'Emperador estech ab ell ab gran goig e ab gran alegre que'l Cèsar féu d'el[ll], e Xor Miqueli feya semblantment a ell. E com hach ensemps ab ell estat VI jorns, el VI jorn Xor Miqueli hach feyt venir a Andrinòpol Girçon, cal dels Alans, e Milich, cap dels Turcoples, axí que foren entre tots IX milia hòmens de cavall.

Chapter CCXV<sup>1</sup>

*How the Caesar came to the city of Adrianople to say goodbye to Prince Miqueli, who asked Girçon, chief of the Alans, to kill the Caesar and all his people, so that only three of them could escape; and how he sent soldiers to Gallipoli to devastate the lands and to destroy the Caesar's Company.*

Now I will tell you again about the Caesar,<sup>2</sup> who gathered three hundred cavalymen and one thousand foot soldiers and headed towards Adrianople to meet Prince Miqueli despite the warnings of all his friends and vassals. And he did this because of the great loyalty that he had in his heart, as well as his true love and great respect towards the emperor and his son; and he thought that both the emperor and his sons were as loyal as he was; however, they had opposite values as you will hear and will be proven.

And when the Caesar left the army, he appointed the Great Duke En Berenguer d'Entença<sup>3</sup> as chief and maximum authority. He also appointed En Bernat de Rochafort<sup>4</sup> as seneschal of the army. And then he marched for six days until he arrived in the city of Adrianople. And the emperor's son, Prince Miqueli, welcomed him and received him with great honor. And this wicked man did this so that he might learn who accompanied the Caesar. And after entering Adrianople, the emperor's son stayed with him. The Caesar showed great joy and happiness towards his host and the prince returned the affection. And after being together for six days, on the seventh day, Prince Miqueli called for Girçon, chief of the Alans,<sup>5</sup> and Melech, chief of the Turcoples,<sup>6</sup> in such a way that altogether there were about nine thousand horsemen.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Muntaner, Ramon. Ca. 1328/1844. *De Chronik des Edlen En Ramon Muntaner*. Edició de Karl Friedrich. Stuttgart: Wilhelm Lanz. [https://ca.wikisource.org/wiki/Chronik\\_des\\_edlen\\_en\\_Ramon\\_Muntaner](https://ca.wikisource.org/wiki/Chronik_des_edlen_en_Ramon_Muntaner)

<sup>2</sup> *Cèsar* refers to Roger de Flor (see the introduction).

<sup>3</sup> Berenguer d'Entença i de Montcada (?-1306) was an Aragonese noble who lead the Catalan Company once Roger de Flor was assassinated on April 30, 1305.

<sup>4</sup> Also known as Bernat de Rochafort (1271-1309), a Valencian knight who was the leader of the Catalan Company between 1307 and 1309.

<sup>5</sup> The Alans were a people from nowadays Iran, who are already mentioned in Roman sources. They settled in the Iberian Peninsula in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A. D. before being defeated by the Visigoths.

<sup>6</sup> Turcopole: a person who has a Turkish father and a Greek mother.



E aquell dia ell convidà lo Cèsar. E com hagren menjat, aquell Girçon, cap dels Alans, entrà en lo palau hon estava Xor Miqueli e sa muller e lo Cèsar, e van trer les espases, e pecejaren los Cèsar e tots aquells qui ab ell eren; e puix per la ciutat mataren tots quants ab lo Cèsar eren venguts, que non escaparen mas tres, que se'n muntaren en un campanar. E d'aquells tres la hu era En Ramon Alquer, fill d'En Gilabert Alquer, cavaller de Catalunya, nadiu de Castelló d'Ampúries; e l'altre un fill de cavaller de Catalunya, per nom G. de Tous; e l'altre Berenguer de Roudor qui era de Llobregat. E aquests foren al campanar combatuts, e defensaren-se'n tant, que'l fill de l'Emperador dix que pecat seria si murien. E axí assegurà-los, e aquests tant solament ne escaparen.

Encara fou major malvestat lo dit Xor Miqueli, que ordonat hach que'ls Turcoples ab partida dels Alans hach tramesos a Galípol; e hach ordonat que aquell dia que'l Cèsar muria que ells correguessen a Galípol e per tots los casals. E nos havíem mesos los cavalls en erba, e estava la gent per los casals. Què us diré? Que axí'ns trobaren descuydats, que'ns tolgren tots los cavalls que teníem per los casals, e més de mil persones que'ns mataren: axí que no'ns romangueren mas CCVI cavalls, e nos no romangren mas tre millia CCCVII persones d'armes, entre de cavall e d'a peu, e de mar e de terra. E tantost van-nos posar setge davant, e vench-nos tanta de gent sobre nós, que foren bé XXX milia hòmens d'a peu. Si que'l Magaduch, ço és, En Berenguer d'Entença, ordonà que faessem vayll, e que metessem dins vayll tot lo raval<sup>7</sup> de Galípol, e axí ho faem. Què us dire? Bé XV jorns esteguem axí, que tots dies haguem torneig ab ells dos vegades lo dia, e cascú jorn era nostre desastre que perdiem ab ells.

Què us diré? Qu' estant axí assatiats com érem, En Berenguer d'Entença féu aparellar cinch gales e dos lenys,<sup>8</sup> e a malgrat de tots quants eren, ell

And on the same day he invited the Caesar and, after lunch, Girçon, the chief of the Alans, entered the palace where Prince Miqueli stayed with his wife and the Caesar. The Alans drew their swords and tore apart the Caesar and all who were with him. Immediately after, they killed everyone who had come to the city with the Caesar, of whom only three were able to escape by climbing a bell tower. One of the three was En Ramon Alquer, Gilabert Alquer's son, a Catalan knight from Castelló d'Empúries. And the other one's name was G. de Tous, a Catalan knight's son. And the other was Berenguer of Roudor, who was from Llobregat. And the three kept fighting in the bell tower and defended themselves in such manner that the emperor's son said that it would be a great sin if they died. This is why he spared them and only these three could escape.

The aforementioned Prince Miqueli carried out an even worse act of villainy: he ordered the Turcoples with some Alans to go to Gallipoli the same day that the Caesar had died, and asked them to devastate Gallipoli with all its country houses. And we had left our horses grazing while people were at their country houses. What can I tell you? They took us by surprise and killed all the horses that we had in the country houses. Moreover, they killed more than one thousand people, to such an extent that we had no more left than two hundred and six horses, and three thousand three hundred soldiers including cavalrymen and sea and land infantry. And as soon as we managed to confront them, a great amount of people attacked us, including a group of more than fourteen thousand horsemen made up of Turcoples, Alans, and Greeks, plus about thirty thousand foot soldiers. And the Great Duke [i.e., En Berenguer d'Entença] ordered us to dig a trench and to welcome all the inhabitants of the suburbs of Gallipoli. And we obeyed. What can I tell you? We were in that situation for fifteen days and every day there were two battles against them and it was a complete disaster since we were always defeated.

What can I tell you? In the middle of such siege, En Berenguer d'Entença ordered us to prepare five galleys and two wooden boats and, despite the large number

<sup>7</sup> The population of the suburbs of Gallipoli.

<sup>8</sup> *Leny* (*lley*, ing. 'wood'): This is a synecdoche by which the boat is named after the material with which it has been built.



dix que volia anar a fer una ferida perquè pogués donar refresch a la companya, e de viandes e de diners. E tuyt digueren-li que no feya a ffer, mas que valia més que'ns combatessem tuyt ensemps ab aquells que'ns tenien assatiats. E ell axí com a bon cavaller e savi que era, veyà lo peril de la batalla, e per res no s'hi acordava, mas pensà que anàs a fer una ferida envers Constantinoble, e, com la ferida hauria feyta, que tornàs tantost a Galípol. Si que a la fi a ffer s'[h]ach ço que'll volch, e ab ell reculliren-se'n tanta de gent que'n Galípol no romàs mas En Berenguer de Rochafort, qui era seneschal de la host, e yo R. Muntaner, qui era capità de Galípol. E no romangueren ab nos mas V cavallers: ço és a saber, En G. Sischar, cavaller de Cathalunya, e En Ferran Gorri, un cavaller d'Aragó, e En Ioan Peris de Caldes de Cathalunya, e Rexamèn d'Albero. E reconeguèrem quants érem com En Berenguer d'Entença fo partit de Galípol e trobam que érem entre de cavall e d'a peu mil CCCCLXII hòmens d'armes, dels quals eren de cavall CCVI, que no havien pus cavalls, e mil CCLVI hòmens d'a peu. E axí romanguem en tal dolor, que tots dies teníem del matí al vespre lo torneig dels de fora ab nós.

Ara vos lejaré a parlar de nós de Galípol, que bé m'hi sabré tornar, e parlar-vos he d'En Berenguer d'Entença que se n'anà e pres la ciutat de Recrea qui és a XXIV milles prop de Constantinoble e lla ell guanyà tant que fo sens fi. E aquella ciutat és aquella on Herodes estava, qui féu matar partida del innocents. E comptar-vos he un miracle qui és visible. Que en aquell lloch de Recrea ha un golf que va entro a la illa de Màrmora, qui és una illa hon se talla tot lo marbre de Romania. E dins aquell golf ha dues bones ciutats, la una ha nom lo Panidó e l'altra lo Rediscó. E devets saber que en aquesta ciutat del

of enemies, he stated that he wanted to launch an attack to provide refreshment, food, and money for the Company. And everybody asked him not to think about it since it was worthwhile fighting together against those who were besieging us. And he, who was a wise and good Knight, knew how dangerous the battle was but he did not change his mind. He was determined to attack Constantinople, and once the attack was over, he would come back to Gallipoli at once. This is how he ended up doing what he desired. And the number of people willing to join him was so large that only En Bernat de Rocafort, the seneschal of the army, and I, R. Muntaner, the captain of Gallipoli, stayed. And only five knights stayed with us, namely: En Guillemí de Siscar, a Catalan knight; and En Ferran Gorí, an Aragonese knight; and En Joan Peris de Caldes de Catalunya, and Rexamèn d'Albero. And when En Berenguer d'Entença departed from Gallipoli we checked how many of us had stayed and we realized that with the cavalrymen and the foot soldiers the number was not greater than one thousand four hundred and sixty-two soldiers, including two hundred and six horsemen (as we did not have more horses) and one thousand two hundred and fifty foot soldiers. And this is why we were distressed, since every day, from the morning until the evening, we were attacked by the outsiders.

Now, I will stop talking about us in Gallipoli, although I will return later on, and I will tell you about En Berenguer d'Entença, who left and conquered the city of Recrea,<sup>9</sup> which is twenty-four miles away from the city of Constantinople, and there he obtained such a large loot that it could not be counted. And that was the city where Herod was, who had the group of innocents killed.<sup>10</sup> Yet I should tell you about a miracle that can be seen because in this place of Recrea there is a gulf that extends to the island of Marmara, which is an island where all the marble of Romania<sup>11</sup> is extracted. And in this gulf there are two beautiful cities: the first one is called Panido and the other

<sup>9</sup> This city is the ancient Heraclea in the European part of the Sea of Marmara (Soldevila, Ferran, ed. 2011. *Les Quatre Grans Cròniques III. Crònica de Ramon Muntaner*. De Ramon Muntaner. Revisió filològica de Jordi Bruguera. Revisió històrica de M. Teresa Ferrer i Mallol. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, p. 354), which corresponds to the Turkish city of Ereğli.

<sup>10</sup> According to the Gospel of Matthew, Herod the Great, after learning from the Three Kings that the King of the Jews had been born, had all the children around the city of Bethlehem under the age of two killed (Matthew 2: 16).

<sup>11</sup> The term *Romania* refers to the Byzantine Empire.





Rediscó fo feyta a nós la major malvestat que hanch fos feyta a negunes gents. E per ço que sapiats la malvestat quina fo, jo la us diré.

### Capítol CCXVI

*Com la Companya del Cèsar delliberà desafiar lo Emperador e reptar-lo de fe e d'açò que feyt havia; e com l'Emperador de Constantinoble féu matar a'n Ferran d'Aunes, almirall, ab tots los cathalans e aragonesos qui eren a Constantinoble*

Veritat és que, com lo Cèsar fo mort, ens hagren correguts ens tenien assatiats a Galípol, nós hagrem d'acord que, abans que faessem mal a l'Emperador, que'l desafíassem e reptàssem de fe e d'açò que feyt havia a nós; e que aquest reptament e puix lo desafiament se faes en Constantinoble en presència del Comú de Venècia, e tot ab cartes públiques. E ordonà En Sischar cavaller e Pero Llopis adalil,<sup>12</sup> e dos almogàvers<sup>13</sup> e dos còmits<sup>14</sup>, que ab una barca de XX remes hi anassen per cap d'En Berenguer d'Entença e de tota la Companya. E axí fo feyt, e anaren-se'n a Constantinoble. E davant los davant dits de les Comunes desafiaren l'Emperador e puix los reptaren de fe e's proferiren que, deu per deu e C per C, que eren aparellats de provar que malament e falsa havia feyt lo Cèsar e les altres gents qui ab ell eren anats. E havien correguda la Companya sens desafiar. E axí que valia menys sa fe, e que d'aquí avant que's deseixien d'ell. E d'açò llevaren cartes públiques partides per A, B, C, que se'n portaren, e atre tal lexaren en faeltat als davant dits de les Comunes. E l'emperador escusà's que ell no·u havia fet.

Rodosto. And you should know that in this city of Rodosto we suffered the worst act of villainy that has ever been suffered by any other people. And so that you may know about this act of villainy I will tell you the story.

### Chapter CCXVI

*How the Caesar's Company agreed to defy the emperor and accused him of acting in bad faith for everything that he had done; and how the emperor of Constantinople sentenced Admiral Ferran Dunes to death with all the Catalan and Aragonese population who were in Constantinople.*

The truth is that when the Caesar died, and they had attacked us and had us under siege in Gallipoli, we decided that before hurting the emperor we would defy and challenge him for everything that he had done to us; and that the rest, as well as the subsequent defiance should take place in Constantinople in front of the Commune of Venice<sup>15</sup> and that everything should appear in public letters. And it was ordained that the knight Sischar and the leader Pero Llopis, and two *almogàvers*, and two boatswains set sail on a twenty-oar boat on behalf of Berenguer d'Entença and the whole Company. And so they did, and they headed for Constantinople. And before the aforementioned members of the Communes<sup>16</sup> they defied the emperor, and they accused him of acting in bad faith, and they offered to demonstrate in a combat of either ten against ten or one hundred against one hundred that he had ordered to kill the Caesar and everybody who was with him in a deceitful and despicable manner. Moreover, they would also demonstrate that the Company had been attacked without a previous defiance and, consequently, as his word did not have any value, henceforth they would break any kind of relationship with him. And all of this was written in

<sup>12</sup> Person who guides the army and knows the area very well

<sup>13</sup> See the explanation in the introduction.

<sup>14</sup> *Còmit*: officer in charge of the rowers of a boat.

<sup>15</sup> Venice was granted special trading privileges with the Byzantine Empire in 1082 when the Venetians helped Constantinople against the Normans. While Genoa and Pisa soon became important trading rivals, Venice maintained a special position as a link between the Western and the Eastern Mediterranean. This privileged position may explain why the duel was signed in the presence of the "Comú de Venècia".

<sup>16</sup> *Comuna* (Commune) refers to certain areas in Tuscany and Lombardy that were very urbanized between the twelfth and the fourteenth centuries.



Veus com se'n podia escusar! E aquell dia mateix féu matar tots quants catalans e aragonesos havia en Constantinoble ab En Ferran d'Aunés almirall.

public letters divided in A, B, C,<sup>17</sup> as evidence, which they took with them. Other letters were left as a sign of fidelity to the aforementioned members of the Communes. And the emperor used the pretext that he had not done it. There you could see his capacity to make excuses! And that very same day he made sure that all the Catalans and Aragonese who were in Constantinople with Admiral Ferran d'Aunés were killed.

### Capítol CCXVII

*Com los missatgers tramesos a l'Emperador per desafiar-lo foren presos e esquarterats a la ciutat del Redischo; e lo miracle del golf de Màrmora bon fon degollada gran res dels innocents per Herodes.*

E com açò fo feyt, partiren-se'n de l'Emperador e demanren que'ls donàs un porter qui'ls tengués guiats entro fossen a Galípol. E axí lliurà'ls lo porter. E com foren a la ciutat del Redischo lo porter los féu tots pendre XXVII persones qui eren de catalans e aragonesos. E tots esquarteraren-los en la carnisseria, e a quarters ells los penjaren. E podets entendre qual crueltat fo aquesta que féu fer l'Emperador a aquests qui eren missatgers. E vaja-us lo cor que avant oyrets, que d'açò fo feyta tan gran venjança per la Companya ab la ajuda de Déus que jamés tant gran venjança fo feyta.

Si que en aquell golf és aytal miracle que tostemp hi trobarets unes planures de sanch, que són tamayes com un cobertor. E han'i de majors e de menors. E aquell golf va tostemp ple d'aytals places de sanch viva. E puix que siats fora d'aquell golf no'n trobarets gens. E de la sanch aquella cullen los mariners, que se'n porten de la un cap del món entro el altre per relíquies. E açò esdevé per la sanch dels innocents qui en aquell loch fo escampada. E axí d'aquell temps ençà hi és e hi serà tostemp. E açò vera veritat, que yo de la mia mà n'i he cullida.

### Chapter CCXVII

*How the messengers sent to the emperor to defy him were imprisoned and quartered in the city of Rodosto; and the miracle of the Gulf of Marmara where Herod cut the throat of many innocent children.*

And when this had been done, they left the emperor after asking him to provide a messenger to guide them to Gallipoli: and this is how they were assigned a messenger. And when they arrived in the city of Rodosto, the messenger had the twenty-seven Catalans and Aragonese arrested: and they were all quartered in a real carnage in which they hanged their bodies mutilated in four parts. And this is how you will be able to understand the degree of cruelty that the emperor showed towards these messengers. But rest assured, as you will hear later on, that the Company, with God's help, took revenge on all these deeds to such an extent that there was never such a great vengeance.

And such an astonishing miracle takes place in that gulf that you will always find some bloody plains, which are as large as a deck: and some are larger than the rest, which are smaller. And that gulf is always full of these stains of an intense red color, and after you have left that gulf, you will not find any. And sailors collect this blood and take them around the world from one extreme to the other as relics. And this happens because of the blood of the innocents that was shed. And this is the way it has been from that moment on and this is the way it will always be. This is a great truth, as I myself have collected it with my hand.

<sup>17</sup> The division of these public letters may correspond to the Aristotelian triad of speaker, subject, and audience or could be an adaptation of the division between exordium, narration, argumentation and conclusion based on Isidore of Seville (560-636) that we find in the *ars dictaminis* of the period.



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