

A PALEOGRAPHIC GUIDE TO SPANISH ABBREVIATIONS

1500 - 1700

UNA GUÍA PALEOGRÁFICA DE ABREVIATURAS ESPAÑOLAS

BY A. ROBERTA CARLIN

FOREWORD BY MEREDITH D. DODGE

A Paleographic Guide to Spanish Abbreviations 1500-1700
Una Guía Paleográfica de Abreviaturas Españolas 1500-1700

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DEDICATION

To my husband, Jim.

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FOREWORD

After they had restrained their tears somewhat, those chiefs replied that they held him as their lord and had sworn to do all he commanded, and that for this reason and on account of what he had said they were very pleased to obey, and from then on they submitted themselves as Your Highness's vassals. Then all together and each one by himself they promised to obey and comply with all that was demanded of them in the name of Your Majesty, as true and loyal vassals must do, and to provide all the tributes and services which formerly they paid to Montezuma and whatever else might be required of them in Your Highness's name. All of this was said before a notary public, who set it down in a formal document, which I asked for, attested by the presence of many Spaniards who served as witnesses.

Hernán Cortés receiving the vassalage of Montezuma in the name of Charles V, 1519¹

Every student of Latin American history has at least a passing familiarity with Cortés as the conqueror of Mexico. Unknown to many, though, is that he began his career in the Indies rather humbly, serving as a municipal notary in Hispaniola, in 1504.² Historians seeking to reconstruct the history of Latin America through its documentary sources might be hard pressed to decide for which role he should be best remembered.

The importance of the conquest as historical fact is beyond dispute, though whether it was an event to be praised or vilified remains a matter of opinion. What continues to be of interest to historians is not so much the event itself, but what came in its wake. Everyday life and the stories of those who lived it, history writ small as it were, are the real grit of the historian's mill, and this is where the lowly scribe and his archive of documents assume their true significance. If the recoverable past can be found anywhere, it is in the cumulative record of individual actions noted in the scribe's hand.

Language aside, what is most daunting for the beginning historian and paleographer is the document itself. Every researcher who has entered an archive with the highest hopes has felt them evaporate when faced with a document that will not yield to the most determined efforts to unlock it. Whether in relatively clear *chancillería real* or recalcitrant *procesal encadenada*, a document that cannot be read is scarcely worth the paper it is written on.

Of everything at hand to frustrate the aspiring paleographer--lack of punctuation, syntactical complexity, and orthographic chaos--the most maddening is the widespread use of abbreviations. The logic of abbreviations is straightforward. Since words used most frequently are those most often abbreviated, the superfluous elements, such as vowels, are the first to be suppressed. Although the necessary components of a word, such as the initial and terminal letters are usually present, because

the beginning of a word has a higher recognition value, the end can be dispensed with, since it is easily inferred from context.³

However useful theory may be, however, it is no substitute for experience. That is why the present volume, *A Paleographic Guide to Spanish Abbreviations, 1500-1700*, is so timely. As a *vade mecum*, it is a gift to the researcher of what is most needed at the critical moment: a way into the documentary record. While it is true that real paleographic ability only develops over time and with exposure to many kinds of documents, Carlin has provided a powerful tool for correctly identifying hundreds of abbreviations, thus saving hours of effort that would have been expended on reinventing the linguistic wheel.

The *Guide*, based on years of extensive, comparative work in the documents and in archives, represents the most readily accessible handbook available in English for those researching the Hispanic legacy in the Americas.⁴ The abbreviations have been compiled from a wide variety of sources and reflect the myriad variations likely to be encountered. For ease of use, they appear alphabetically in modern Spanish, accompanied by their abbreviated forms and scribal renderings. The comprehensive index further facilitates consultation.

If documents never lie, and historians sometimes do, it may be said in their defense that it is rarely a sin of commission. Paleographic ignorance and sheer lack of experience can waylay any historian, the integrity of intentions notwithstanding. Carlin's *Guide* thus comes as a welcome and necessary aid to those who have undertaken the most formidable of human tasks: to disseminate the truth preserved in the written record.

Meredith D. Dodge

Notes

Anthony Padgen, trans, and ed., *Hernán Cortés: Letters from Mexico*, with an introduction by J.H. Elliott (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988),99.

Padgen, *Hernán Cortés*, xlix.

For a discussion of the historical, linguistic, and psychological aspects of abbreviation, see Archivo General de la Nación. *Introducción a la paleografía*, Serie de Información de Archivos 12 (Mexico City: Archivo General de la Nación. 1990), 43-59.

Although several paleographic manuals exist for speakers of Spanish, they are not widely available in the United States, largely because of very limited press runs and concomitant high prices. Aside from the *Introducción a la paleografía*, mentioned above, is Agustín Millares Carlo's *Album de paleografía hispanoamericana de los siglos xvi y xvii*, 2

vols. (Barcelona: El Albir, 1975), the standard against which any paleographic guide, English or Spanish, must be judged. In *La escritura y lo escrito: Paleografía y diplomática de España y América en los siglos xvi y xvii* (Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica; Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana, 1986), Vicenta Cortés Alonso provides both an analysis of documentary types and an invaluable discussion of diplomatics.

PREFACE

How does one learn to read and transcribe the original handwritten documents of the Spanish colonial period? I used to ask myself this question and now answer it for others. The answer is simple but it is not easy; Read thousands of pages of manuscript. Study the various handwriting styles of the time. Make friends with Spanish dictionaries, Latin dictionaries and Native American dictionaries. Study Spanish colonial history. Acquire a working knowledge of the developmental history of the Spanish language. Learn from Spanish and Latin paleographic texts to understand both traditional and innovative uses of abbreviations. Finally, approach each manuscript page as if it were a letter from your mother, a lover or spouse, a son or daughter, a page on which you are desperate to understand everything that has been written.

This book was not available when I needed it most but it can now help others transcribe Spanish colonial abbreviations. To all of the possessors of unread Spanish colonial documents, be they national archives, universities, old Spanish families or Pueblo tribal councils and to all those determined to read them, be they historians, genealogists or curious intellectuals this book is fondly presented.

Roberta Carlin

INTRODUCTION

As every Spanish paleographer and Spanish linguist knows, documents from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries present a series of special problems. The Spanish writers of this time not constrained by modern rules of grammar or orthography wrote with great syntactic and orthographic latitude. As a result, spelling was inconsistent and variable to the point of individuality. Punctuation did not exist in any useful form. Several very different handwriting styles added to the confusion. At this same time when Latin terms were being retained and used both correctly and incorrectly, exploration in the New World was introducing a multitude of new words from the indigenous tongues and from Africa. In addition, the scribes made extensive use of original, creative and curious abbreviations.

This book deals with the perplexing problem of these abbreviations. All of the abbreviations appearing here were scanned from photocopies of extant Spanish documents written between the years 1500 and 1700. There are over one thousand abbreviations from a wide variety of sources exemplifying the most common as well as some rarely seen.

Each abbreviation presented appears within the context of a four line entry:

- Line one: a complete word and or phrase presented in current Spanish spelling.
- Line two: the abbreviation in the original handwriting of the scribe.
- Line three: a printed display of the letters represented in the abbreviation.
- Line four: a paleographic transcription of the scribal abbreviation using angle brackets < > to enclose those characters supplied by the transcriber.

There are three appendices:

- Appendix A: presents ambiguous written forms of individual letters of the alphabet found in the manuscripts of the time.
- Appendix B: references by page number the line one Spanish words or phrases with current Spanish spelling.
- Appendix C: references by page number the line three printed display of the letters represented in the abbreviations.

This book will guide its users in deciphering and translating the abundance of abbreviations found in Spanish colonial texts. It also provides a word list of Spanish terms then in common use, the orthographic inconsistencies of the time and examples of handwriting styles of the period.

ALPHABETICAL WORD AND ABBREVIATION LIST

A

α ᾱ α̇ α̈ α̉ α̊ α̋ α̌ α̍ α̎ α̏ α̐ α̑ α̒ ἀ ἁ α̕ α̖ α̗ α̘ α̙ α̚ α̛ α̜ α̝ α̞ α̟ α̠ α̡ α̢ α̣ α̤ α̥ α̦ α̧ α̨ α̩ α̪ α̫ α̬ α̭ α̮ α̯ α̰ α̱ α̲ α̳ α̴ α̵ α̶ α̷ α̸ α̹ α̺ α̻ α̼ α̽ α̾ α̿ ὰ ά α̂ α̃ ᾱ α̅ ᾰ α̇ α̈ α̉ α̊ α̋ α̌ α̍ α̎ α̏ α̐ α̑ α̒ ἀ ἁ α̕ α̖ α̗ α̘ α̙ α̚ α̛ α̜ α̝ α̞ α̟ α̠ α̡ α̢ α̣ α̤ α̥ α̦ α̧ α̨ α̩ α̪ α̫ α̬ α̭ α̮ α̯ α̰ α̱ α̲ α̳ α̴ α̵ α̶ α̷ α̸ α̹ α̺ α̻ α̼ α̽ α̾ α̿

A Quien

aq̄

aqⁿ

a q<uie>n

A Quienes

aq̄es

aq^{es}

aq<uien>es

A Quienes

aq̄^{nes}

aq^{nes}

a q<uie>nes

A Su Santidad

asusm^{ad}

a su san^{ad}

a su san<tid>ad

A Vuestra Señoría

aVS

aVS

a V<uestra> S<eñoría>

Abadesa
abadsa
abadsa
abad<e>sa

Abogado
abogdo
Abbogdo
Abbog<a>do

Absolución
absolucio
absolucio
absolucio<n>

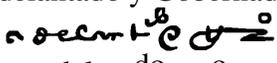
Abuelo
agu^o
agu^o
agu<el>o

Abundantemente
abundantem^{te}
abundantem^{te}
abundantem<en>te

Acaecimiento
acaecim^o
acaecimy^o
acaecimy<ent>o

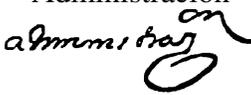
Acordado
acor^{do}
acor^{do}
acor<da>do

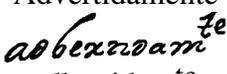
Acusación
ausaçⁿ
ausaçⁿ
a<c>usaç<ió>n

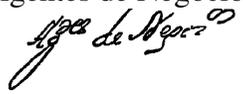
Adelantado y Gobernador

adelant^{do} e g^{or}
adelant<a>do e g<obernad>or

Administración

adynist^{on}
ad<m>ynist<raci>on

Administración

administraz^{on}
administraz<i>on

Advertidamente

adbertidam^{te}
adbertidam<en>te

Agentes de Negocios

Ag^{tes} de Negoz^{os}
Ag<en>tes de Negoz<i>os

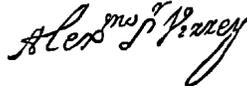
Agosto

ag
ag<osto>

Agosto

Ag^o
Ag<ost>o

Al Excelentísimo Señor Virrey



Alex^{mo} Sr Virrey

Al ex<celentísi>mo S<eño>r Virrey

Al Señor



als^{or}

al s<eño>r

Al Señor



Als^r

Al s<eño>r

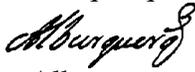
Al Señor Marqués Hermano de Vuestra Señoría



al SS^{or} marq^z herm^o de VSS^a

al SS<eño>r marq<ué>z herm<an>o de V<uestra> SS<eñorí>a

Albuquerque



Alburquerq

Alburquerq<ue>

Alcalde



alcd

alc<al>d<e>

Alcalde



alcde

alc<al>de

Alcalde



Ald

Al<cal>d<e>

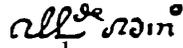
Alcalde Ordinario



alde ordy^o

al<cal>de ordy<nari>o

Alcalde Ordinario



all^{de} ordin^o

al<ca>lde ordin<ari>o

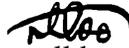
Alcalde Ordinario de Primer Voto



alde ord^o de prim^o boto

al<cal>de ord<inari>o de prim<er>o boto

Alcaldes



allds

al<ca>ld<e>s

Alguna



alg^a

alg<un>a

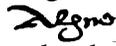
Alguna



alg^{na}

alg<u>na

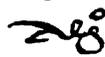
Alguno



algnd

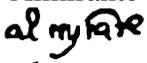
alg<u>nd

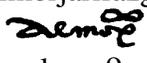
Alguno

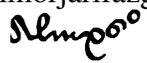


alg^o

alg<un>o

Almirante

almyrate
almyra<n>te

Almorjarifazgo

almox^o
almox<arifazg>o

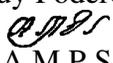
Almorjarifazgo

almoxa^o
almoxa<rifazg>o

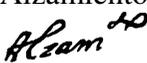
Alonso

al^o
al<ons>o

Alonso

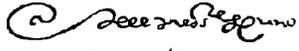
a^o
a<lons>o

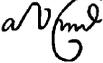
Alteza Muy Poderoso Señor

A M P S
A<lteza > M<uy> P<oderoso> S<eñor>

Alzamiento

Alzam^{to}
Alzam<ien>to

Ante

ate
a<n>te

Ante el Presente Escribano

ate el pres^{te} scrino
a<n>te el press<en>te <e>scri<ba>no

Ante Usted

AVmd
A<nte> V<uestra> m<erce>d

Año

a^o
a<ñ>o
Año Pasado

año p^{do}
año p<asa>do

Año Próximo

ano prox^{mo}
ano prox<i>mo

Años

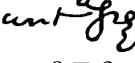
a^{os}
a<ñ>os

Años

a^{os}
a<ñ>os

Años

a^s
a<ño>s

Antonia Fernández

ant^a Fr^{ez}
ant<oni>a F<e>r<nánd>ez

Antonio

Antt^o
Antt<oni>o

Antonio

Ant^o
Ant<oni>o

Antonio

ant^o
ant<oni>o

Antonio Arquiepiscopeal Granadino

archieps granats
A<ntonius> archiep<iscopu>s granat<ensi>z

Apercibimiento

apercebimt^o
apercebim<ien>to

Apelación

apelaçio
apelaçio<n>

Aplicación

aplicaz^{on}
aplicaz<i>on

Apostólica

ap^{ca}
ap<ostóli>ca

Apostólica

app^{ca}
app<ostóli>ca

Apostólico

App^{co}
App<ostóli>co

Apostólico

app^{co}
app<ostóli>co

Aprobación

app^{on}
app<robaci>on

Aprovechar

ap^{ov}char
ap<r>ov<e>char

Aquel

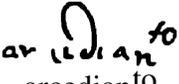
aq^l
aq<ue>l

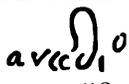
Aquella

aqlla
aq<ue>lla

Aquí

aq
aq<uí>

Arcedianato

arcedian^{to}
arcedian<a>to

Arcediano

arcedi^o
arcedi<an>o

Arcipreste

arcepreste
arcepre<re>ste

Arquieiscopal

archieps
archiep<iscopu>s

Arrendamiento
arrendamj^{to}
arrendamj^{to}
arrendamj<en>to

Arrepentimiento
aRepentimj^o
aRepentimj^o
aRepentimj<ent>o

Asesores
aSores
aSores
a<se>Sores

Asunto
ass^{to}
ass^{to}
ass<un>to

Atención
atenz^{on}
atenz^{on}
atenz<i>on

Audiencia
abdi^a
abdi^a
abdi<en>cia

Audiencia
abdç^a
abdç^a
abd<ien>ç<i>a

Audiencia
aud^a
aud^a
aud<ienci>a

Audiencia Real
audi^a rreal
audi^a rreal
audi<enci>a rreal

Aumentos
augm^{tos}
augm^{tos}
augm<en>tos

Ausente
aus^{te}
aus^{te}
auss<en>te

Averiguación
averig^{on}
averig^{on}
averig<uaci>on

B

ᵇ ᵈ ᵇ ᵇ ᵇ ᵇ ᵇ ᵇ ᵇ ᵇ

Bartolomé

Bme

ᵇme

B<artolo>me

Bartolomé González

ᵇme gñz

ᵇme gñz

b<a>r<tolo>ne g<o>n<zále>z

Bastante

bas̄te

bas̄te

bas<tan>te

Bastante

bas̄te

bas̄te

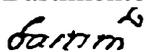
bas<tan>te

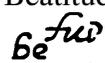
Bastantemente

bastante m̄te

bastan^{te}tem̄te

bastan^{te}tem<en>te

Bastimento

bastim^{to}
bastim<en>to

Beatitud

betud
be<ati>tud

Bendición

Vendizⁿ
Vendiz<ió>n

Bernardino

Br^{no}
B<e>r<nardi>no

Bernardino

Br^{no}
B<e>r<nardi>no

Bernardo

Bdo
B<ernar>do

Besa La Mano

BLM
B<esa> L<a> M<ano>

Besa La Mano de Vuestra Majestad

Blm^o de Vm
B<esa> l<a> m<an>o de V<uestra> m<ajestad>

Besa La Mano de Vuestra Señoría

Bl M^o V^{ta}

BLM^o de VS^a

B<esa> L<a> M<an>o de V<uestra> S<eñorí>a

Besa Los Pies

Blp

Blp

B<esa> l<os> p<ies>

Bienes

b^es

b^es

b<ien>es

Buen

bue

bue

bue<n>

Buena

bn^a

bn^a

b<ue>na

Buenos

b^os

b^os

b<uen>os

Bustamante

Bustante

Bustan^{te}

Busta<ma>nte