

Spanish Paleography Digital Teaching and Learning Tool Tutorial

The Spanish Paleography Digital Teaching and Learning Tool offers you two ways of viewing samples of early-modern Spanish manuscripts for you to learn deciphering the different handwriting styles or scripts used in those documents: 1) Individual manuscripts shown isolated; 2) Manuscripts shown side-by-side with a typed transcription. Because of the way this first version of the Tool is constructed, you always need to open the isolated version of a manuscript first and then, from it, open its double version of manuscript + transcription. A supplementary element of the Tool incorporated to help you in the deciphering exercise is the sample alphabet linked to each manuscript. The following is a step-by-step description, based on screen-shots, of how to access the manuscripts and how to use the features of the Tool to decipher them.

I. VIEWING AN ISOLATED IMAGE OF A MANUSCRIPT

The screenshot shows the website's interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the following items: 'HOME', 'SELECT A DOCUMENT' (with a 'CHOOSE' dropdown menu), and 'HOW TO USE THIS PALEOGRAPHY TOOL'. Below the navigation bar is a large image of a handwritten manuscript. A red callout box points to a small down-pointing arrow on the right side of the 'CHOOSE' dropdown menu. Below the image, there are three columns of text: 'ABOUT THE PALEOGRAPHY TOOL', 'HOW TO USE THE TOOL', and 'SPANISH PALEOGRAPHY'. The Windows taskbar is visible at the bottom of the browser window.

1 Click on the down-pointing arrow of the “Choose” drop-down menu.

1. On the Home Page of the Spanish Paleography Digital Teaching and Learning Tool, go to the “SELECT A DOCUMENT” menu on the navy blue upper menu bar and left-click on the arrow located at the right end of the “CHOOSE” textbox.

2. A drop-down menu will appear showing a vertical listing of the titles of manuscripts contained in the Spanish Paleography Tool. You may scroll up or down the menu to find a document by dragging up or down the scroll button on the right side of the box or by left-clicking on the up or down arrows at the right-side of the box. All the titles of documents in the box begin by the name of the Spanish handwriting style they belong to: Cortesana, encadenada, procesal, redonda, etc. The titles also include the year or approximate year of the document. They are listed in alphabetical order following the first word in the title (the word that designates the writing style they belong to). As per this sequence, documents in **CORTESANA** handwriting come first, followed by those in **ENCADENADA** handwriting, and so on. Once you are familiar with the sample of manuscripts contained in the Tool, you can also type-in the name of the handwriting style (or any other term contained in the manuscript's title) inside the "Choose" textbox to more quickly bring up the manuscript you want.

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SPANISH PALEOGRAPHY
DIGITAL TEACHING & LEARNING TOOL

HOME SELECT A DOCUMENT HUMANÍSTICA CURSIV HOW TO USE THIS PALEOGRAPHY TOOL

Reconstructed interior of an office at the Governors' Palace, home in colonial times to the powerful tribunal of the Real Audiencia.
Photo Credit: CUNY Dominican Studies Institute

3 Left-click on the title of the manuscript you want to open and view.

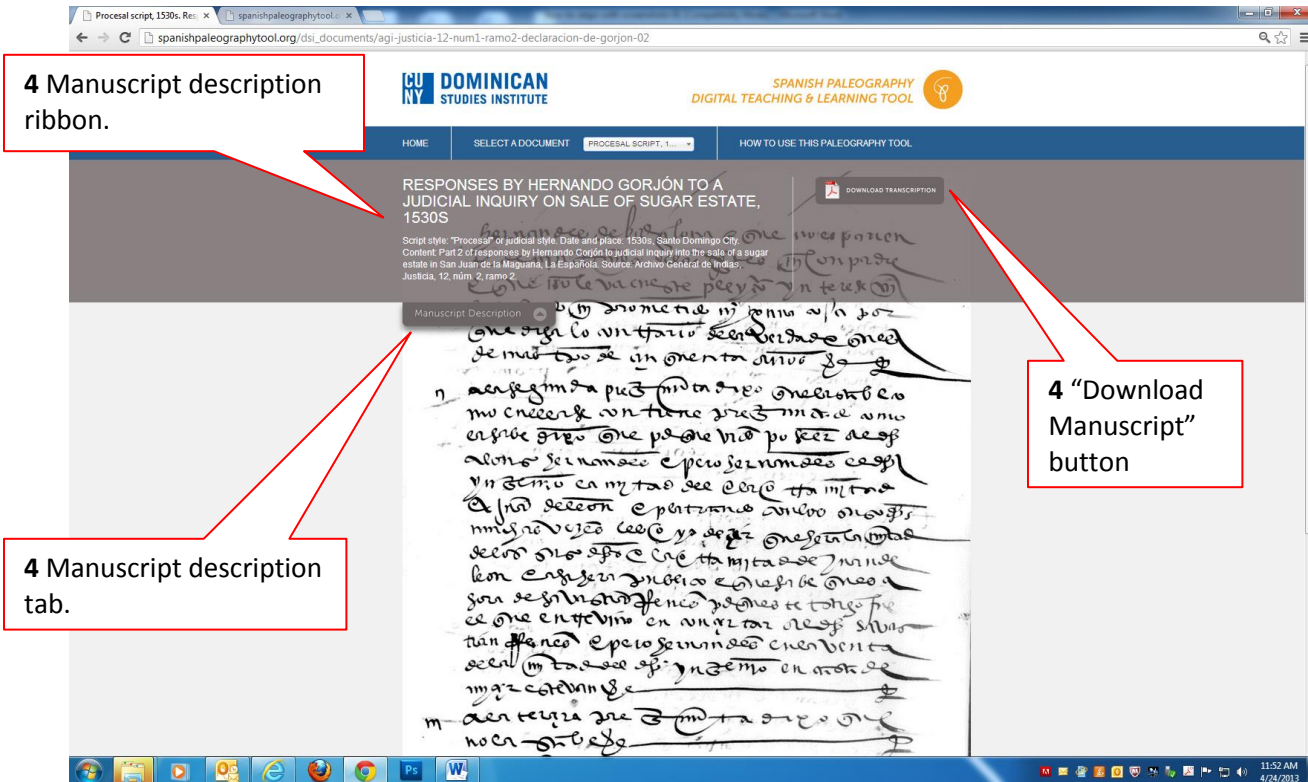
ABOUT THE PALEOGRAHY TOOL
The purpose
The Spanish Paleography Digital Teaching and Learning Tool is an online interactive resource to assist users in the learning of the deciphering and reading of manuscripts written in Spanish during the early modern period, roughly from the late 15th to the 18th century.
[READ MORE »](#)

HOW TO USE THE TOOL
Script and transcriptions
This Tool presents digitized manuscripts, typed transcriptions and sample alphabets to help the user decipher and read the early-modern Spanish handwriting styles. In this section you will learn how to operate and use the Tool to your fullest advantage.
[LEARN MORE »](#)

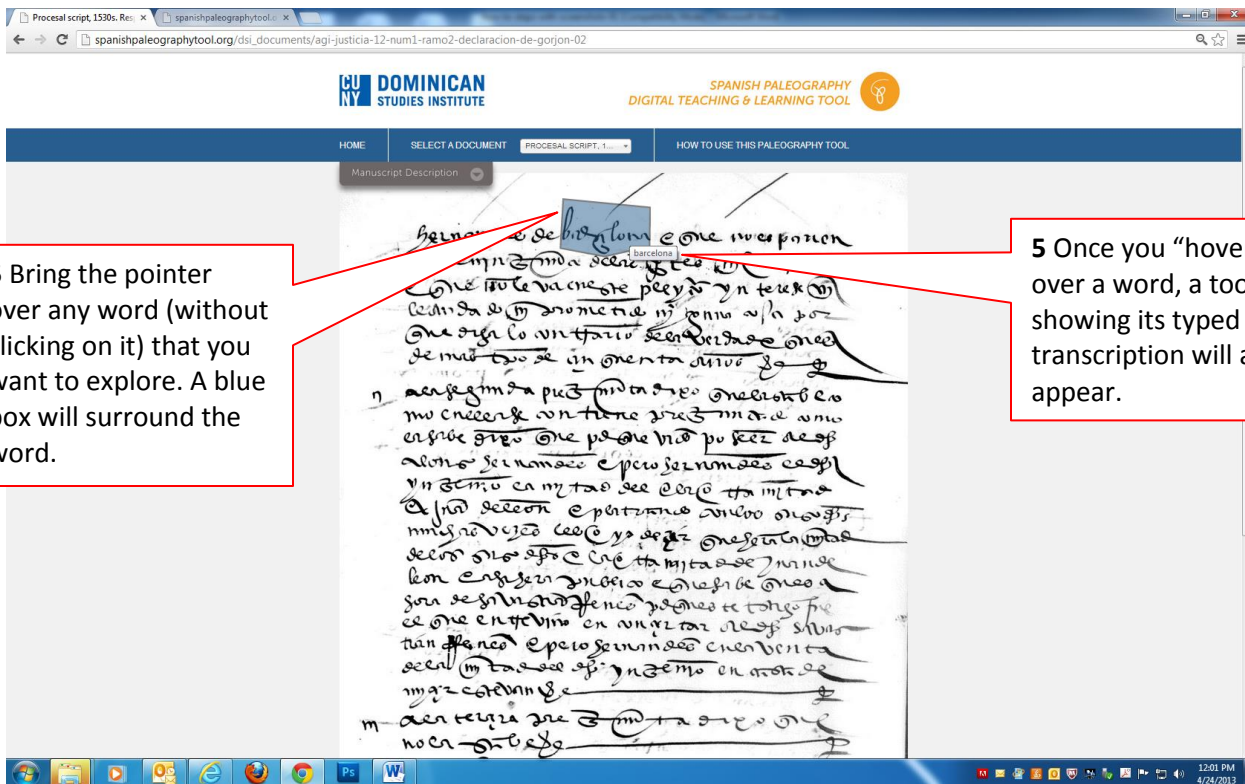
SPANISH PALEOGRAPHY
More Tools for Learning
Besides this online learning Tool, there are printed manuals and monographs, as well as online resources, that you can consult to enrich your learning and knowledge of Spanish paleography. Here you will find a list of them and links to access those online.
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3. Inside the “SELECT DOCUMENT” drop-down box, place the cursor on top of the title of the manuscript you want to open or view. A blue highlighting will cover the manuscript’s title. Left-click on the title of the manuscript you want to open or view.



4.A new page will open on the screen showing the selected manuscript with its “Manuscript Description” grey silk-strip at the top. This “Manuscript Description” gives a summarized description of the manuscript as to, its theme or content, the type of archival document it is part of, the author(s), individuals involved in the events mentioned, date and place, etc. To the right of the strip you will see the “DOWNLOAD TRANSCRIPTION” button-link. (We will describe the function of this button later in these “How to” instructions.) On the left bottom edge of the “Manuscript Description” strip is the “Manuscript Description” tab showing an upward arrow. Right-click on this toggle tab to have the strip retract upwards and allow full view of the upper part of the manuscript. (The tab will remain visible at the upper left edge of the page.) To view the “Description” strip again, just right-click on the tab again at any time.



5 Bring the pointer (without clicking on it) that you want to explore. A blue box will surround the word.

5 Once you "hover" over a word, a tool-tip showing its typed transcription will also appear.

5. With the manuscript in full-view onscreen, use the mouse to move the screen's cursor –without any clicking– until it is on what you may identify as a word of the manuscript that you want to explore. Once the cursor is on top of the word, a box or parallelogram will appear drawn around the word with its interior tinted in light blue color covering the entire word (or most of it). A tool-tip or small rectangular tag will also appear next to the selected word showing the typed transcription of the hand-written word. You can now visually compare the handwritten word in the manuscript and the tool-tip transcription to begin identifying and memorizing the tracing or script of each letter in the word. After doing this process with a number of words in the manuscript, you will begin recognizing letters in other words further ahead in the manuscript or among the words you already left behind. You can almost immediately begin testing your learning by traveling visually to an unchecked word, trying to recognize-guess its letters and spelling, and then testing your guess by bringing the cursor over the word and contrasting your guess against the word's transcription tool-tip.

The screenshot shows the Spanish Paleography Tool interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'SELECT A DOCUMENT', 'PROCESSAL SCRIPT, 1', and 'HOW TO USE THIS PALEOGRAPHY TOOL'. Below this is a 'Manuscript Description' section. The main area displays a manuscript page with handwritten text. A callout box on the left points to the first word of the first line, stating: '6 To access a sample alphabet, click on the first word of a manuscript'. Another callout box on the left points to the 'ALPHABET' link in the 'More Information On Selected Manuscript Segment' daughter page, stating: '6 A "More information" daughter page will open showing word-links to several informational items. Click on the "ALPHABET" link. A new window showing the alphabet will open.' A third callout box on the right points to the 'X' at the top right of the daughter page, stating: '6 To close the "More information" daughter page, right-click on the X at the right end of the page's header.'

6. Besides familiarizing yourself with the script of a selected word of a manuscript by contrasting it against its tool-tip typed transcription, you can also look into more detail at individual letters of the word by opening a sample-alphabet of the particular Spanish handwriting style in which the document onscreen was written. You may access the alphabet by **right-clicking on the first word of the first line of text of each manuscript in the Tool**. This will open a “More information” daughter page. (A daughter page is a box with horizontal sections that contain descriptions of aspects of the manuscript or word-links to other digital elements that provide such information.)

The “More information” daughter page offers several word-links, including an “ALPHABET” word-link. Right-clicking on “ALPHABET” will open a separate page showing a sample alphabet. This sample alphabet, made up with letters extracted from the manuscript itself, shows a vertical display of the letters of the alphabet that appear in the manuscript and their script variances, if any), organized alphabetically from A to Z in two vertical parallel columns, so that --in case of doubt-- you may more easily identify the handwritten letters by comparing them to their typed, contemporary version that appears on the left at the beginning of each horizontal line of letters.

Each **word** in the isolated version of every manuscript of the Spanish Paleography tool has a “More information” daughter page that provides other information about a word or about the manuscript in general, like a transcription of the word, a glossary-entry describing the meaning of the word, the word’s English translation or equivalent, if any, and some historical context information that helps better understand the word and/or the manuscript. In the case of those consist of word-links, left-clicking on them will take you to an additional element of information. **But only the daughter page of the first word of each manuscript offers access to the manuscript’s sample alphabet.**

7 Right-clicking on any word in the isolated version of a manuscript opens a "More information" daughter page with descriptions or word-links to items like "GLOSSARY," "HISTORICAL CONTEXT" etc.

7 Clicking on the word-links like "GLOSSARY" or "HISTORICAL CONTEXT" in the "More information" daughter pages" opens other elements providing more information on these items or topics.

7. Each **word** in the isolated version of every manuscript of the Spanish Paleography Tool, including the first word, has a "More information" daughter page that provides other information about a word or about the manuscript in general, like a transcription of the word, a glossary-entry describing the meaning of the word, the word's English translation or equivalent, if any, and some historical context information that helps better understand the word and/or the manuscript. In the case of those consist of word-links, left-clicking on them will take you to an additional element of information. **But only the daughter page of the first word of each manuscript offers access to the manuscript's sample alphabet.**

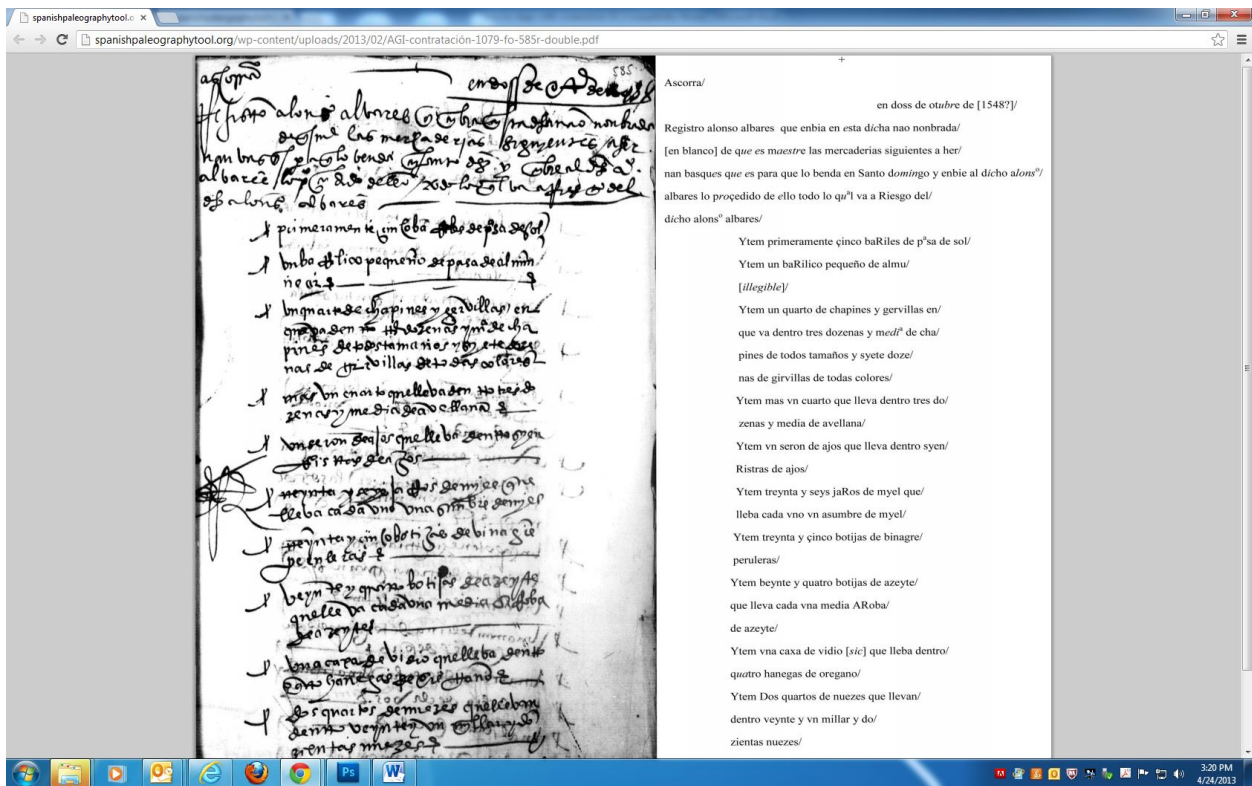
II. VIEWING A MANUSCRIPT SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH ITS FULL TRANSCRIPTION

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Spanish Paleography Tool. The page title is "CARGO MANIFEST OF SHIP TRAVELING FROM SPAIN TO LA ESPAÑOLA, 1548." The interface includes a navigation bar with "HOME", "SELECT A DOCUMENT", "PROCESAL SCRIPT", and "HOW TO USE THIS PALEOGRAPHY TOOL". Below the navigation bar, there is a "DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION" strip with a "DOWNLOAD TRANSCRIPTION" button. A red box highlights this button, and a context menu is open over it, showing options like "Open link in new window".

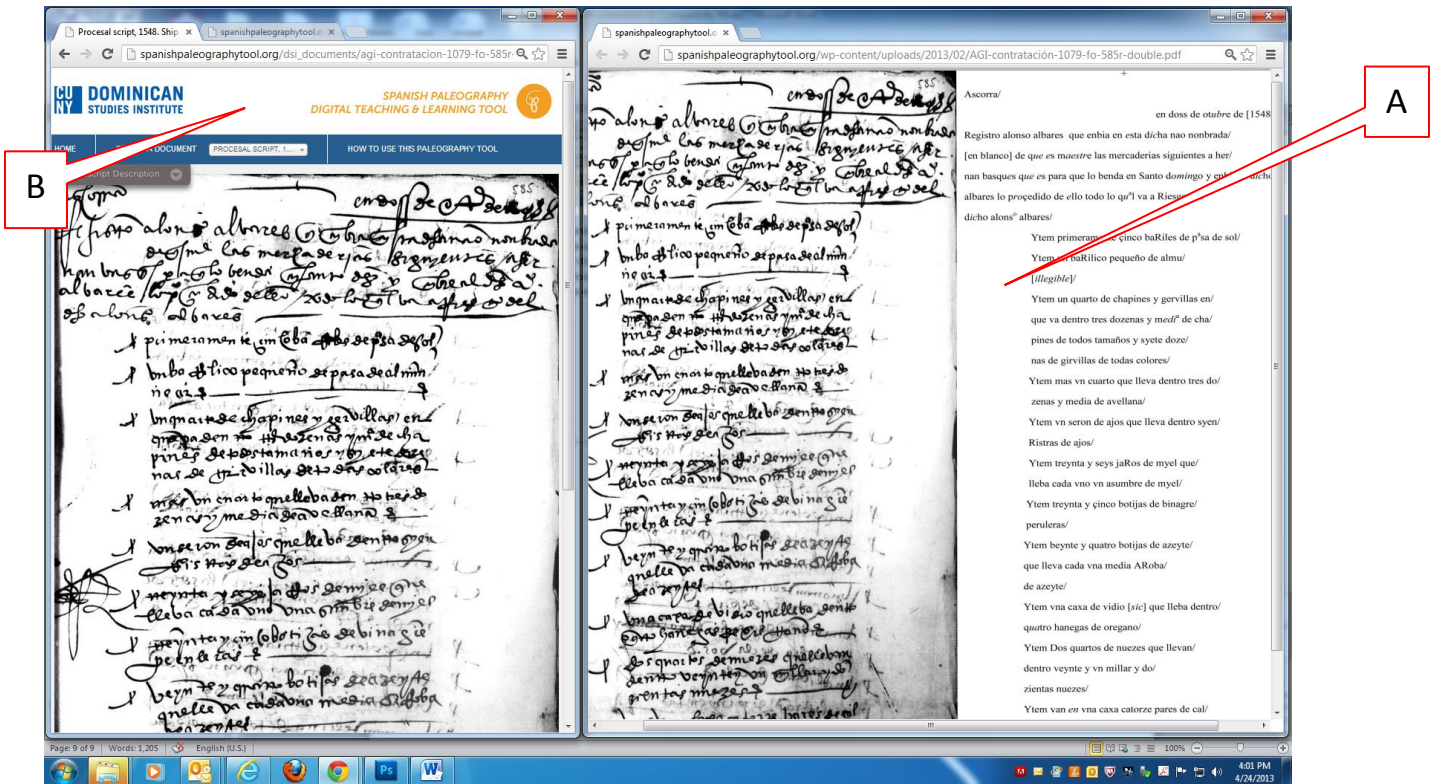
8a Right-click the “DOWNLOAD MANUSCRIPT” button/link in the “DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION” strip. A drop-down menu will open showing options of action vis a vis the link.

8b On the drop-down menu, **left-click** on “Open link in new window.” This will open the double version of the manuscript on a separate window.

8. The Spanish Paleography Teaching and Learning Tool also allows you to look at each manuscript side-by-side with a full, line-by-line typed transcription of the entire manuscript as one single PDF document. To access this double version of a manuscript, open a manuscript as in Step 4 of these instructions, go to (or display) the “Document Description” strip at the top of the manuscript, and **right-click** on the “DOWNLOAD TRANSCRIPTION” button/link at the right end of the strip. A menu box will open with options as to how to open the new window. If you choose/click on “Open link in new window,” this will open a manuscript + transcription image as a separate window.

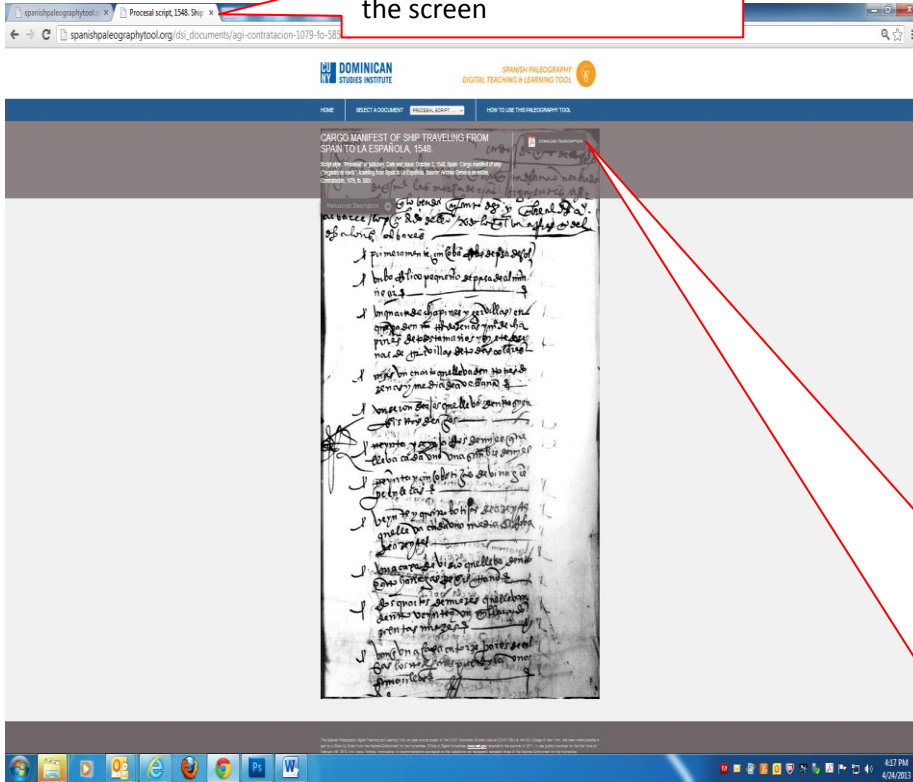


9. The separate-window format will allow you to drag, relocate and resize the double image momentarily on the screen in whichever position or way is more useful to your viewing.



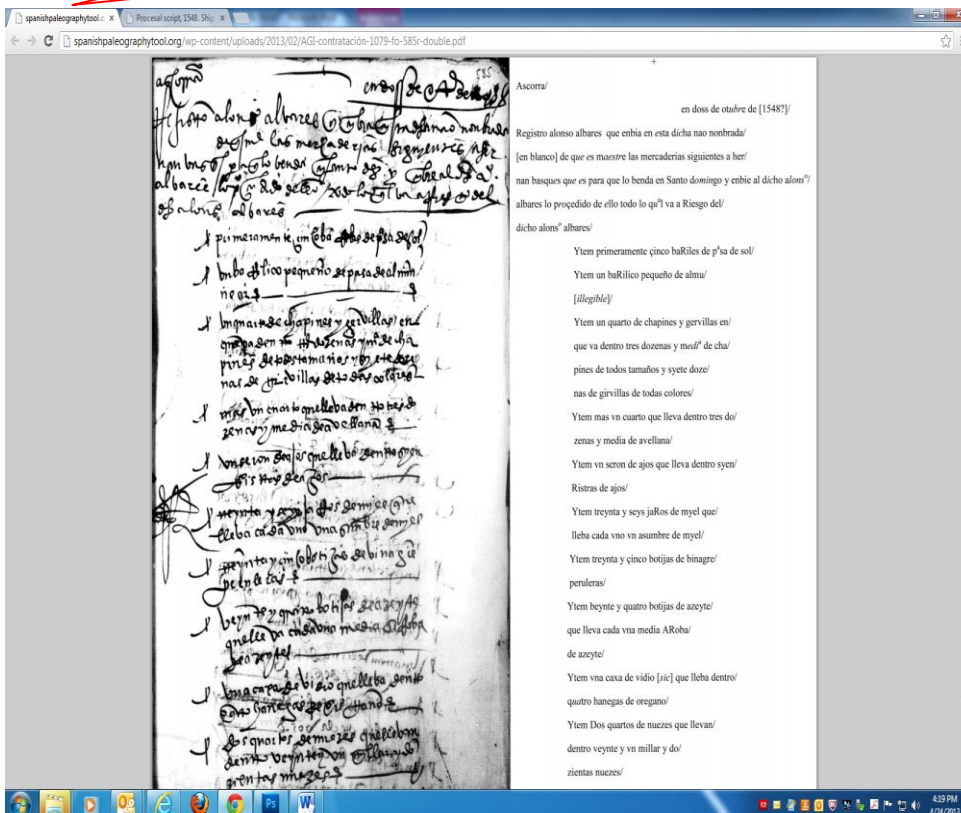
10. You could, for instance, resize the manuscript + transcription window (A) and then the other window containing the isolated version of the manuscript (B) and drag them together side-by-side so that they could be both visible next to each other onscreen. This will allow you to travel between both versions of the manuscript, checking the transcriptions of each word of the manuscript both with the tool-tips of the isolated version as well as the full and visually steady transcriptions of the double-document.

Isolated version of manuscript remains as separate tag on the screen



11 If you left-click on the "DOWNLOAD TRANSCRIPTION" button of a manuscript while in its isolated version, the Tool will automatically open the double version of the manuscript as a new tab within the Tool's window's structure, and rather than watching both versions simultaneously onscreen you will just be able to switch or toggle from one to another, each appearing full blown by itself on the screen. The advantage of this option is that it provides you a default view of each image of the document at a larger size.

Double version of manuscript appearing as a separate tag on screen while isolated version stays hidden behind it.



12.ZOOMING. Zooming is a very useful mechanism in the deciphering of the handwriting in digital versions of manuscripts. This Spanish Paleography Tool does not have yet a “magnifying glass” application, yet in the meantime we can hold on to the browser-based zooming functions (Ctrl and plus sign (+) to zoom in; Ctrl and minus sign (–) to zoom out) to enlarge and reduce, respectively, the image of a digitized manuscript to better decipher any part of the script.