

Jesuit Notions of Nobility: Chivalric Culture in the Early Modern World

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This article traces the unique way early modern Jesuits defined “nobility,” and argues that these ideas were rooted in chivalric culture. While recent scholarship, arguing against Reformation and Enlightenment critiques, has said that the Jesuits were not “militant, soldier-like zealots,” this article contends that now, in the absence of confessional or Enlightenment polemic, the Society of Jesus should still be understood as part of the history of chivalry in the *longue durée*. These Jesuits were representatives of a learned and elite class. Among them were celebrated multiple saints, including their founder St. Ignacio de Loyola and St. Francisco de Borja, the former Duke of Gandía and courtier of Emperor Charles V (1500-1558). Early modern Jesuit sources celebrating these saints, including poems, employed the same notions of nobility as did letters of recommendation Jesuits wrote for applicants to Spanish military orders. These ideas were present within the order for a significant period, from the late sixteenth to late seventeenth centuries. Like the Cistercians or Templars in the Middle Ages, the early modern Jesuits took part in both noble and chivalric culture and had their own viewpoints concerning the ideas that they derived from them.

What it meant to be “noble” in early modern Europe was often deeply contested. Members of the Society of Jesus, however, maintained a surprisingly interesting and consistent definition. Articulated clearly by the Jesuit jurist Francisco Suárez (1548-1617) in the early seventeenth century, there were two types of nobility—civil and theological, of blood and of religious sincerity. Nobility was also closely tied to chivalric culture, as many nobles gained their titles through military service. For example, the founder of the Society of Jesus, St. Ignacio de Loyola (1491-1556), was a minor nobleman from the Basque country who had served at the Battle of Pamplona before his conversion to the religious life. He descended from nobles and became representative of early modern chivalric culture, writing *Spiritual Exercises* for a knight who wished to serve under Christ’s battle flag.

This multifaceted conception of nobility as intertwined with chivalry and tied to blood, service, and piety can be found repeatedly in Jesuit sources from the era, including numerous rare books and archival documents from Spain and Italy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These include biographies of Jesuit saints written by Jesuits, books produced to celebrate canonizations of Jesuit saints, and the poems and descriptions of parade floats contained within them, theological treatises and opinions Jesuits (including Suárez) wrote on behalf of a Morisco nobleman’s application to a military order, and letters Jesuits wrote to ask their Superior General if they could serve in the Indies. Together, these sources confirm the relevance of martial themes and language to early modern Jesuits.

Recent scholarship tends to overlook this. For example, John M. McManamon, SJ, has argued that “Ignacio made clear his distaste for misguided military heroics and aristocratic crusading fervor” (McManamon, SJ, xiii). Similarly, Carlos Eire argues that the Jesuits have been unfairly portrayed as “militant, soldier-like zealots” and that Ignacio’s “Meditation on the Two Standards” is not about armies gathered for an apocalyptic battle. Rather, “about individuals realizing that they can be a ‘servant and friend’ of Christ, being ‘sent on an expedition’ to ‘aid all persons’ in the pursuit of a life of virtue” (Eire, 447). These scholars are responding to a long-standing Protestant and Enlightenment critique of the Jesuits, grounded in understandings of their

active roles in worldwide Catholic imperial expansion and in the Counter Reformation in Protestant lands.¹ While these recent scholars correctly note that Jesuits emphasized spiritual battles over physical ones, it is nevertheless possible to see the Jesuits as representatives of early modern chivalric culture without engaging in any Reformation or Enlightenment-era polemic. These anti-Jesuit polemics were created by both Protestants who saw Jesuits as the demons serving a devil-pope, and by Catholics viewing them as loyal only to Spain, the papacy, or to themselves. According to Eric Nelson, “The Jesuit legend was a post-Reformation creation; nevertheless it reflected many of the features seen in similar but much older myths surrounding fifth-column threats to the social order such as witches, demons, Jews, and gypsies” (Nelson, 95). This article aims for an understanding of early modern Jesuit ideas of nobility which avoids these previous biases.

The Jesuits developed an understanding of nobility that was rooted in their origins, and they engaged with definitions of nobility within a secular context. It was more complicated than simply replacing natural with spiritual nobility upon a conversion to the religious life—natural nobility was still necessary to their conception of nobility. As Camilla Russell has argued, “the opportunity outlined in the *Exercises* to discover and develop one’s individual talents in the service of God and neighbor likely appealed to the upper and middle social strata that were drawn in large numbers to become Jesuits” (Russell, 122). In early modern Europe, Jesuits tapped into the spiritual components of chivalric culture, and were representatives of it.

Previously, in the Middle Ages, chivalric culture had contained a very significant spiritual aspect. This article argues that just as St. Bernard of Clairvaux, who founded the Cistercians (an order quite attractive to young noblemen) and supported both the Templars and the third Crusade, was a part of the history of chivalry, so too the Society of Jesus, headquartered in Rome, and founded by a former Spanish soldier and minor nobleman with a taste for chivalric romances, was part of early modern chivalric culture. We know from numerous historians of medieval chivalry (Painter, Keen, Kaeuper) that it is necessary to study the works of clerics, of knights themselves, as well as literary sources such as romances, to thoroughly investigate the history of chivalry. One Iberian cleric, Ramon Llull, wrote a handbook of knighthood between 1274 and 1276, at the end of the Crusades. He wrote “it is fitting that those who are in the Order of Chivalry be made lords of the people” (Llull, *Order*, 41), and that “it is the office of the knight to support and defend his temporal lord” (Llull, *Order*, 46). There are elements of European social hierarchy here which in the sixteenth century, Ignazio de Loyola was also familiar with. Llull viewed nobility as hereditary but grounded in deeds, and in a “nobility of courage” (Llull, *Order*, 56). “Nobility is nothing less than a continuance of ancient honor” (Llull, *Order*, 58), and while men of “base lineage” should not be knights, he did acknowledge a loophole:

As regards bodily nature, nature is as honored as much in trees and beasts as in men; but through the nobility of the rational soul which only forms part of the body of man, nature thus has greater virtue in the human body than in the animal’s body. Therefore, the Order of Chivalry permits that through many noble habits and deeds and through the nobility of some prince, any man of new, honorable lineage may attain chivalry (Llull, *Order*, 58).

It is possible to ennoble oneself, this idealistic thirteenth century guide of knighthood proclaims. In more practical ways, historians have shown that the ever-moving “Reconquista” frontier created

¹ See Friedrich’s chapter, “A World Without the Society,” for a description of these critiques and the need for a re-evaluation of the Jesuit order.

new noble houses for Castile in the Late Middle Ages.² Service on the battlefield could lead to ennoblement. Samuel Claussen has insisted we avoid a “Victorian misreading” of these sources (Claussen, 12) and that “the political identity of the Trastámara nobility was fundamentally violent.” (Claussen, 67) Lull’s works were known to a lot of sixteenth-century writers, like Ignacio,³ and so keeping this medieval background, and the fact that Spain had military orders such as Alcántara, Santiago, and Calatrava, independent of crown control until the late fifteenth century, in mind, we can now approach the relationship of the early modern Jesuits to the concept of nobility.

While the Jesuits were not physical warriors, they were still part of this spiritual lineage. According to a modern historian of the Jesuits, the order had a chivalric impact on the Portuguese monarch: “when King Sebastião...fell in battle against the Muslims at Alcácer Quibir, Morocco, in 1578, the Jesuits were blamed for the youthful ambition of the idealistic ruler they had largely educated” (Friedrich, 25). To prove and demonstrate this strong connection between the Jesuits and early modern chivalric culture and reveal their special standpoint on the nature of “nobility,” we will turn to Loyola himself, his *Exercises*, and the Jesuit biographies that celebrated his life, as well as the life of St. Francisco de Borja (1510-1572) exemplar of both types of nobility, of blood and of religious sincerity, who gave up a dukedom to become a Jesuit. Returning the Jesuits to the history of chivalry reveals an otherwise hidden point, that the way religious orders interacted with political power in an age of conquest was actually a continuity from medieval to early modern Europe.

The Burial and Canonization of a Saintly Knight

In 1617, the bones of Francisco de Borja (1510-1572), superior-general of the Society of Jesus, were transferred from Rome’s Chiesa del Gesù to his homeland of Spain as part of the canonization process, completed in 1670. Borja (Francesco Borgia) came from an illustrious family: his great-grandfather on his father’s side was Pope Alexander VI (Rodrigo Borgia, 1431–1503); his grandfather on his mother’s side was Alonso de Aragon, Archbishop of Zaragoza, illegitimate son of Ferdinand of Aragon (1452–1516). Thus, Borja was a cousin to Emperor Charles V. He was a typical nobleman of his time, but unique for the confidence entrusted in him by his prince. He served as viceroy to Cataluña from 1539 to 1543. In his early life, according to one of his Jesuit biographers, Borja had two favorite human entertainments—composing music, and hunting with birds—falconry. Falconry, this biographer notes, was a beloved past time of Roman emperors (ARSI ROMA, VITAE 80, Libro 1, Cap.11, 31r-31v).

The Jesuit’s canonization had been initiated by Borja’s grandson, Don Francisco de Sandoval y Rojas, Duke of Lerma (1553–1625) and favorite (*valido*) of King Philip III of Spain (1578–1621) (De Dalmases, SJ, 225). To launch the cult of his ancestor, the duke celebrated grand *fiestas* at Lerma which, as befitted his penchant for extravagance, included Eucharistic processions, a mass for the saint to be, as well as gifts of “a dazzling array of ornaments and sacred vessels,” in the words of Lerma’s modern biographer, Patrick Williams (230-231). Several months later, after Borja’s bones (minus an arm, left in Rome), arrived in Spain, Lerma had them interred in the house of the Jesuits in Madrid; he left the city not much later and to become a cardinal (Williams, 230-231).

² See Crawford and Claussen.

³ Júlia Butinyà and especially Benítez Riera have added significantly to the debate on the relationship between Lull’s ideas and Ignatius.

Before joining the Society of Jesus and becoming the superior general of the order, Francisco de Borja had been an accomplished nobleman (Duke of Gandía and a member of the military order of Santiago), courtier, and devoted servant of the crown: while viceroy of Cataluña, Borja built up new fortifications to defend Barcelona from attack, helped to build galleys for use in the Mediterranean, and firmly represented the king's authority in the face of noble recalcitrance (De Dalmasas, SJ, 30-33, 39-40). While serving as viceroy, in 1541, Borja had the opportunity to serve as the judge for a joust. Before the joust, however, he had told the Catalan nobles they were not to make egregious shows of their position and wealth. They violated this by setting up a dais for the Duke and Duchess of Cardona to be seated above the rest. Borja's response was to cancel the joust. He allowed it to be rescheduled for another day when he would not be present. He also clashed with this same nobleman regarding the order of seating at a dinner, when Cardona did not abide by the rules Borja had set. (De Dalmasas, SJ, 39-40). These incidents show the significance of Borja's noble identity as well as the firm role he took as representative of the crown's authority. Borja provides a case study for the way Jesuits understood "nobility" in the early modern period.

Furthermore, Borja was a confidant and beloved courtier of his cousin, Emperor Charles V. It was at Borja's instigation that Charles took up mathematics, and after the death of Empress Isabel de Portugal, Borja accompanied her body to her burial in Granada (De Dalmasas, SJ, 15-17). Borja's son, a companion of prince Philip II, was charged with keeping the prince away from his young wife to avoid death by sexual exertion (Parker, 403, 405). Both Borjas were quite involved at court. After the death of his own wife, however, Francisco de Borja gave up a life of noble service to the crown to become a Jesuit. He visited Charles V at Yuste at the end of the emperor's life (Parker, 417), and founded numerous Jesuit houses in Spain, France, and Germany, which were part of the international expansion of the order.⁴

After joining the Society of Jesus, Borja spent some time visiting with St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), and the mystic writes about this encounter in her spiritual biography. She describes their meeting in this way:

During this time Father Francis, who was once Duke of Gandía, came here. He had given everything up some years before and entered the Company of Jesus. My confessor and the gentleman I have spoken of arranged for him to visit me, so that I might talk to him and give him an account of my experiences; for they knew that he was very advanced in prayer and that he received great favors and graces from God, as rewards, even in this life, for all that he had given up for Him...I was greatly comforted by this, and so was that gentleman, who was delighted that Father Francis had found my experiences to be the work of God...(Teresa of Avila, 171).

She emphasizes here the importance of the worldly honors that Borja gave up—but that his heavenly king now provided him with spiritual *mercedes* instead. To early modern Spaniards, earthly kingship and heavenly kingship were mirrors of one another, and the same language was used to describe both—except the title they used for God was more than Majesty—it was Divine Majesty.

Celebrating Francisco de Borja

⁴ As it is well known, nobles helped run the Spanish Empire as viceroys. In his case, Yuen Gen Liang describes the imperial service of the Fernández de Córdoba family.

Ambrosio de Fomperosa y Quintana states in his account of the 1670 celebrations for Francisco de Borja's canonization that it was clear the saint fought "under the battle flag of the unbeaten monarch Charles V, and afterwards governed Spanish armies, to give an illustrious example of a Captain, in the region of Cataluña," referring to Borja's time serving as viceroy, clearly referring to the Ignatian battle flag of Christ from the *Exercises (Días sagrados y geniales...*, 48v). Two years after these events, Quintana published an entire book on the topic of these canonization celebrations for Borja (*Días sagrados y geniales...*).

Floats and ephemeral arches had been built for the celebration depicting, in particular, virtues and vices, and then a royal tomb, where the body of the Empress Isabel can be seen, and on the left of that, St. Francisco de Borja wearing the arms and rings of his nobility, above the wheel of fortune. On the right, the Jesuit was depicted in a glorious throne, with "the arms of his sanctity, that manifested in the lights of the Holy Spirit" (*Días sagrados y geniales...*, 91v). Thus, the canonization artworks displayed his two types of armor, knightly and spiritual. The empress's body was included in the image because of the famous moment when having helped bring her body to be interred in Granada and viewing the body a final time to be identified, Borja said that this was the last time he would serve a sovereign who could die. Most biographers of the saint point out that even if this exact quote was not uttered by Borja, the disturbing experience of seeing the empress's decomposing corpse deeply affected him.

Poetry for Francisco de Borja

Ambrosio de Fomperosa y Quintana published numerous poems which discuss Francisco de Borja's life and the nature of his nobility, in addition to describing the floats and emblems created for Borja's canonization. One poem celebrated Borja's prowess in not allowing Cupid's arrows to penetrate his chest, drawing from both the monastic imagery of spiritual warfare as well as ideals of chivalric chasteness (*Días sagrados y geniales...*). Analyzing a second poem, below, we can note the appearance of Suárez's "two types of nobility," of blood and of spirit. In the poem, Borja's natural nobility is mentioned, but he is praised even more for his humility, and for taking up eternal, immortal honor in the religious life. The poem seems to see earthly honor and natural nobility as good, yet as ultimately inferior to holiness and sanctity, and sets up a dichotomy between what Borja "inherited" versus what he "merited." "Pues el puso lo heredado, Y Borja lo merecido/ His lineage put on him that which he inherited, and Borja put on that which he merited" (*Días sagrados y geniales...*, 150v, 151r). The relationship of Borja's earthly nobility to his spiritual nobility was a central theme in the celebration of Borja's canonization and had been expressed in the visual arts—arches and sculptures created for the fiesta—as well as in the poetry published after the fact. Through these visual and written sources, we can see an idea of Jesuit nobility emerge:

El esplendor que difiere
 A Borja su Augusta casa
 Es relampago que passa
 Es accidente, que muere:
 Mas el que de Borja adquiere
 Por su humildad sin igual,
 Es eterno, es sustancial,
 Con que exceder se percibe,
 Quien caduco honor recibe,

Y vuelve honor inmortal.

[The splendor that differentiates
Borja from his august house
Is a flash of lightening, that passes
Is an accident, that dies:
But the splendor that the house acquires from Borja
By his humility without equal
Is eternal, is substantial,
With which to surpass what is perceived,
Who defunct honor receives
And immortal honor returns.]

Vese en un noble nacer,
Y en un generoso obrar
Lo casual de heredar,
Lo libre de merecer:
Grande a Borja vino a hazer
Su linaje es clarecido,
Pero es lustre mas surtido
El que su humildad le ha dado,
Pues el puso lo heredado,
Y Borja lo merecedo.

[One sees in a noble born
And in one generous worked
That which is chance to inherit,
That which is free to merit,
Greatness that Borja comes to have
His lineage is clear,
But it is luster more full
In that which his humility has given him,
His lineage put on him that which he inherited,
And Borja put on that which he merited.]

The poet emphasizes the immortality of Borja's spiritual nobility, that it has built upon his earthly nobility. The poet celebrates the Jesuit's earthly lineage while also pointing out the mortality and fleeting nature thereof. As a nobleman, he is required to pursue virtue, and he does:

La sangre ilustre, es pension
Que pone en honroso empeño,
La virtud es desempeño,
De essa misma obligación:
Que hoy Borja en su casa imprime,
Pues de quanto tan sublime
Sangre le obliga, y le empeña,

Su humildad le desempeña,
Y su virtud le redime.

[The illustrious blood is an inheritance
Which is placed in honorable debt,
Virtue is payment,
Of this same obligation:
That today Borja fixes to his house,
For from something so sublime
Blood obliges him, and makes him indebted,
His humility releases him from debt,
And his virtue redeems him.]

Solo es grande la nobleza,
Quando a ella se sobrepone
La virtud, porque assi pone
A su dueño en mas alteza:
Y assi en Borja la grandeza
Tuvo logro superior,
Pues pisado su esplendor
De la virtud, que le esmalta,
Quedo su casa aun mas alta,
Por ser su Dueño mayor. (*Días sagrados y geniales...*,150v, 151r).

[Nobility is only great
When to it is added virtue
Because in this way it raises its own master to greater heights
And in this way, in Borja, the greatness
Had the greater success,
Perhaps tread his splendor
Of the virtue, that he adorns,
Brought his house even higher,
By its master being greater.]⁵

The poem argues that Borja replaced earthly glory with heavenly, and heavenly was the greater. Nobility had two types, one from lineage, the other from deeds, but the type that stemmed from action was clearly required: “Each person is the son of their deeds/Cada uno es hijo de sus obras.” This aphorism appears in *Don Quixote* (1605) several times, in the mouth of both Sancho Panza and Don Quixote himself (Coll y Vehí, 79).⁶ It is a common saying in early modern Spain, as it was also included by Pedro de Ribadeneira in his (1595) mirror for princes (*De Ribadeneira, Tratado de la Religion...*, 305). By being “son” of one’s “deeds” a person gets honor through lineage, but it is a lineage of action, not chance. The aphorism aligns with Jesuit Francisco Suárez’s earlier idea that there were two types of nobility but argues for the greater nobility being from one’s behavior. Both this common aphorism as well as the above poem written for St. Francisco

⁵ With thanks to Matthew P. Michel for checking my translation of this poem.

⁶ With thanks to Matthew P. Michel for the reference.

de Borja point to the idea that nobility through virtue is greater than nobility through blood, though both are considered legitimate sources of nobility. It is possible to see a sort of Renaissance Platonism displayed here, or at least, a longer-term discussion of the roots of nobility (Kristeller, 60).⁷ A larger theological theme of separating body and spirit helps to buttress this discussion.

Francisco Suárez's "Two Types of Nobility"

Jesuits not only took part in celebrating their own, but aided the aspirations of others, in some cases, to earthly honors. When Morisco nobleman Don Pedro III de Granada Venegas (d. 1643), who descended from Yusuf IV, Sultan of Nasrid Granada (r.1431–1432), applied to enter the military order of Alcántara in the early years of the seventeenth century, he was faced with the order's statutes of purity of the blood which prohibited the descendants of Jews and Muslims from entering. He would need the help of Francisco Suárez, among others, in his quest to enter it. Don Pedro's family was one of the most famous Morisco families in Spain, so he could not hide his Muslim lineage. Thus, he sought to make it appear as illustrious as possible. He sought out fifty theologians to write him letters of recommendation. Ultimately, his royal blood trumped his Moorish blood, and he was awarded the habit of Alcántara in 1607-1608, avoiding the Morisco expulsions of 1609-14 (AHN, OM Alcántara, Exp. 655). Jesuits who wrote him letters of recommendation included Francisco Suárez (1548–1617) and Pedro de Ribadeneira (1527–1611). In 1603, in his letter of support for Don Pedro, Suárez wrote that there were two types of nobility, civil and theological, of blood and of religious sincerity, and that Don Pedro had both. As custom was the best interpreter of laws, the *limpieza de sangre* statutes should not be applied to Don Pedro whose ancestor Cidi Yahya Al Nayar (1435? –1506) had converted willingly to Christianity (De Aldama, 271-85).

In the first decade of the seventeenth century, Borja's fellow Jesuits, including the eminent theologian and jurist Francisco Suárez (1548–1617), had helped to craft this understanding of "two types of nobility" when they supported an elite descendant of converts from Islam to Christianity's claims to nobility against the statutes of *limpieza de sangre*. Because this Morisco succeeded, the arguments used on his behalf help to reveal the meaning of nobility in early modern Spain.⁸

Borja, in his 1670 canonization celebrations, was depicted with both the "arms of his nobility" and the "arms of his sanctity." It is clear that in the celebrations for the canonization of Borja in 1670, Suárez's same definitions of nobility from the letter for the Morisco knight Don Pedro in 1603 were employed. Borja had both kinds of nobility, of blood and of the spirit, following Suárez's definitions. By arguing noble examples of sanctity from the Society of Jesus had both of these qualities, the Jesuits were able to carve out an elite identity that was both lay and clerical, in the world, but not of it. These early modern definitions were built on medieval and ancient precedents, including debates over "nobility of the soul" (Fallows, 305).

Suárez's definition of nobility as by blood and by spiritual conversion supported the idea that a member of the Society of Jesus could have been a knight of Santiago, a courtier, a duke, and a saint, at the same time—making him a man to be admired, a member of the elite—by both earthly and heavenly standards (Bilinkoff). The military order of Alcántara, which was also a religious

⁷ Kristeller said of Erasmus, that he displayed a "somewhat diluted form of Platonism when he opposed the higher folly of the inner spiritual life to the lower folly of ordinary existence..."

⁸ As Cortijo has explained, in the works of Ramon Llull, "The military nature of the knight has to show itself so much in the interior as in the exterior, in the spiritual sphere as in the temporal. In this the knight is not distinguished from the priest whom is also referred to as the soldier of Christ," 37.

order, had been founded as a squadron of fighting monks during the Reconquista. Jesuit notions of nobility harken back to a long history of European chivalric and noble culture, and hagiography. Both the Society of Jesus and the military orders that Don Pedro wished to join were taking part in early modern chivalry—extending the history of chivalric culture well past the early seventeenth century, a time often seen as a key turning point towards noble decline.

Many among the Spanish clergy agreed with Jesuit ideas about nobility. Pedro González de Castillo, Doctor of theology, who in 1617 would become the Bishop of Calahorra y La Calzada, near Logroño, in the North of Spain, had been serving as an (Augustinian) canon at the Cathedral in Cuenca at the beginning of the seventeenth century. He wrote from Valladolid on November 11, 1602, that with Ribadeneira and Suárez he supported the Morisco Don Pedro III de Granada Venegas's application to join Alcántara. Castillo wrote this evocative phrase:

...La gracia no destruye la naturaleza, sino antes la perfecciona: y la Religion Christiana no disminuye la nobleza, sino antes la acrecienta y mejora, y sube de quilates. Y sobre la nobleza parece la Religion tan bien, como el esmalte sobre el oro (*El Caso y Pareceres...*,9v).

[...Grace does not destroy nature, but rather it perfects it: and the Christian religion does not diminish nobility, but instead, it increases it, improves it, and increases its carats. And over nobility it appears so well, like enamel over gold.]

Don Pedro's family descended from the Muslim Sultans of Granada. Thus, he had natural nobility, and according to Castillo, the grace of Christian conversion only made it better—adorning it “like enamel over gold.” The (1670) poem about Borja which we have just discussed, had a similar image, “su esplendor De la virtud, que le esmalta, Quedo su casa aun mas alta, Por ser su Dueño mayor/ Of the virtue, that he adorns, Brought his house even higher, By its master being greater” (*Días sagrados y geniales...*,150v,151r). Again, one sees a virtue—a spiritual good—adorning someone who had natural nobility, or noble birth, to start with. John O'Malley writes, “intimately related to the Thomistic assumption that ‘grace perfects nature’ was an understanding of the relationship between grace and ‘free will’ that allowed for human activity under the influence of grace” (O'Malley, 249). St. Thomas Aquinas was known for the maxim that “grace perfects nature but does not destroy it” (McKosker, 211).

One hundred and eighty-five years before Borja's canonization, in 1485, a nobleman whom some call Austria's founder, Leopold of Austria (1073–1136) was canonized by Pope Innocent VIII in Rome. In 1509, his bones were taken from his tomb in Klosterneuburg convent, washed, replaced in a silver reliquary, and reburied. Marching in the translation procession was the emperor Maximilian I, who “was ceremonially garbed not as emperor but as archduke of Austria.” (Finucane, 114, 72-73). Leopold had been the father of eighteen children, had avoided political conflict during the Investiture crisis, and had refused to take the imperial crown due to “old age.” When his candidacy for sainthood was being proposed in 1465, the Bishop of Passau called him a “himelritter,” or heavenly knight. Both Emperor Frederick III (1415–1493) and Maximilian I (1459–1519) emphasized their descent from Leopold, the “godly margrave,” in an intricate family tree at his tomb which was explained by hanging parchments (Finucane, 72, 78). Despite his identity as a layman, Leopold was thought to merit sainthood due to his holy life and the miracles that occurred at his tomb.

In the seventeenth century, the construction of Borja's nobility and sanctity would show a continuity with Leopold's and have a similar understanding of nobility, that it encompassed both

secular honors and the rewards of a religious life. This duality of earthly and heavenly has also been observed by medievalists in the sacral kingship of St. Louis of France, and others (See Kantorowicz, Gaposchkin). By refusing the imperial title, Leopold, the twelfth-century “heavenly knight” prefigured Borja’s leaving “the world.” Borja had avoided being named *mayordomo* to prince Philip II, as well as receiving a cardinal’s hat. Even though Leopold never became a monk or priest, both he and Borja had turned down earthly honors. Both Leopold’s and Borja’s canonization causes were heralded by Habsburg monarchs, who were their relatives.⁹ In his canonization celebrations, Borja had been depicted with both knightly armor as well as spiritual armor. Like St. Ignacio de Loyola, he had lived the life of a Spanish nobleman before he embraced the religious life, but unlike Loyola, had held high earthly titles like duke and viceroy.

Politeness Concerning What the Elites have Inherited

The conception of nobility as civil and theological, by blood and by spiritual conversion that Suárez put forward in his letter of recommendation for Don Pedro, was more than just mere words to buttress the power of Spain’s military, political, or land-holding elite. Rather, it actually represented a far more profound belief that the Jesuits held regarding the nature of salvation itself. Numerous scholars point to a famous passage at the end of Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises* (1535) as evidence of his views towards Lutheran and Calvinist theology and his Counter Reformation efforts. Alternatively, it has been seen by others as an attempt at pastoral care during a divisive age (Eire, 447). However, when analyzed in the context of Jesuit understandings of nobility, a different meaning emerges, which de-emphasizes inherited favor over the active pursuit of charity:

14. Although it may be true that no one can be saved unless it be predestined and unless he have faith and grace, still we must be very careful of our manner of discussing and speaking of these matters. 15. We should not make predestination an habitual subject of conversation. If it is sometimes mentioned we must speak in such a way that no person will fall into error, as happens on occasion when one will say, ‘it has already been determined whether I will be saved or lost, and in spite of all the good or evil that I do, this will not be changed.’ As a result, they become apathetic and neglect the works that are conducive to their salvation and to the spiritual growth of their souls. 16. In like manner, we must be careful lest by speaking too much and with too great emphasis on faith, without any distinction or explanation, we give occasion to the people to become indolent and lazy in the performance of good works, whether it be before or after their faith is founded in charity. 17. Also in our discourse we ought not to emphasize the doctrine that would destroy free will. We may therefore speak of faith and grace to the extent that God enables us to do so, for the greater praise of His Divine Majesty. But, in these dangerous times of ours, it must not be done in such a way that good works or free will suffer any detriment or be considered worthless (*The Spiritual Exercises*, 141).

It is a key distinction that members of the Society of Jesus emphasized a type of nobility that can be earned through service. This reflected the Spanish context of the “Reconquista”—many fifteenth-century Castilian families gained their coats of arms through military service against Muslims on the frontier. To the Jesuits, free will and good works created active ways to cultivate spiritual nobility. There is a sort of egalitarian politeness to Loyola’s advice at the end of the

⁹ For more on the way genealogies and family trees helped to shape claims to political power in early modern Europe, see Eichberger and Beaven, Bizzocchi.

Exercises—that Jesuits should focus on discussing the things that everyone can strive to do, rather than just on what the elites have inherited—this is certainly an understandable mentality for an order that would build universities and instruct students. And yet, at the same time, what sixteenth-century person had the time and freedom to spend a month going through the *Spiritual Exercises* to discern if they would marry, or become a Jesuit? A member of the economic elite—someone with choices. Baldassare Castiglione (1478-1529) was thirteen years older than Loyola but lived during the same anxious age. Citing Eduardo Sacocone, literary critic Harry Berger, Jr. describes a discussion among the speakers in Castiglione’s *The Courtier* this way: “It relegates the ascriptive ideal of natural perfection to the background as a reality possessed by a lucky few and leaves it standing as a real ideal to be imitated by the less fortunate majority...” (Berger, 17). In early modern Europe, imitation was open to all, even if noble inheritance was not.

Faith and grace are gifts—like St. Francisco de Borja’s natural, inherited nobility, they are gifts from on high. Predestination is like being born the eldest son—it happens without human effort. Oddly enough, Martin Luther, the Protestant Reformer, used a similar image of the nobleman in describing Christians as the heirs of Christ:

The mass or sacrament is Christ’s testament which he bequeathed to be distributed after his death, among those who believed in Him. For his words run: This cup is the New Testament in my blood. I say this truth stands firm, and is the unchanging foundation on which to build everything else we have to say. For you will see how we shall undermine all the sacrilege which men have imported to this sweetest of sacraments. Christ, who is the Truth, truly said: “This is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for you.” I do not stress this without reason; the matter is not a small one, and is to be received in the depths of our heart. Let us inquire, therefore, what a testament is, and, at the same time, it will also become clear to us what is the mass, what is its use, its fruit, and its abuse. Without question, a testament is a promise made by a man in view of his death. In it, he bequeaths his heritage, and appoints heirs. A testament, therefore (a) anticipates the death of the testator (b) embodies the promise of the heritage; and (c) appoints the heirs. That is how Paul discusses a testament at length in Romans 4, Galatians 3 and 4, and Hebrews 9. The words of Christ show the same quite plainly. Christ testifies of His own death when He says: “This is my blood which is given. This is my blood which is shed.” He names and designates the bequest when He says, “In remission of sins.” Similarly, he appoints the heirs when He says, “For you and for many” I.e. Those who accept, and believe in, the promise of the testator. Faith here makes men heirs, as we shall see. You will see, therefore, that what we call the mass is a promise made by God for the remission of sins; a promise which was confirmed by the death of the Son of God (Luther, 272-273).

For Luther, salvation passes from God to his children like inheritance from a nobleman to his son, adopted through faith. When someone dies, they write a will and testament, and appoint heirs. And the Christians are heirs of Christ, celebrating his death at communion. It is extraordinary that two Christian viewpoints so fundamentally at odds (those of Luther and those of Loyola), could use the image of the nobleman in a similar way to explain what they are saying. Yet Luther de-emphasized any good works Christ’s heirs could do for him.

Kings were at the top of the noble hierarchy, and were the center of the royal court, and were the embodiment of political power. Loyola asks his young novice undergoing the *Spiritual Exercises* to imagine a human king: “The call of the earthly king helps us to contemplate the life

of the Eternal King” (*The Spiritual Exercises*, 67). The human king, in the meditation, speaks of his will to “conquer all infidel lands,” and that any who wish to serve him must be willing to undergo numerous toils and trials. The novice must “consider what the answer of good subjects ought to be to such a generous and noble king, and consequently, if anyone would refuse the request of such a king, how he would deserve to be despised by everyone, and considered an unworthy knight” (*The Spiritual Exercises*, 67). Loyola was engaging here with a deep well of European chivalric culture—he was meditating on a central chivalric value, loyalty to one’s lord, and applying it to the heart, spiritually. He used imagery from real royal courts to aid in his follower’s understanding of their relation to God.

Salvation—for the Jesuits, was an honor one could earn (Matava). As Loyola concludes his advice at the end of the *Exercises*, “good works or free will” should not “suffer any detriment or be considered worthless” in the preaching of the Jesuits (*The Spiritual Exercises*, 141). Fascinatingly, sometime later, in the *de auxiliis* controversy of the early seventeenth century, after the Protestants were condemned at the Council of Trent, Jesuits, led by Luis de Molina, would take the side of free will in salvation in a debate with the Dominicans, who instead emphasized God’s sovereign choice. The Jesuits in this debate argued for the importance of human freedom because “moral responsibility could not be maintained without it” (Matava, 426).

Pedro de Ribadeneira’s *Lives*

Pedro de Ribadeneira (1527–1611) is a key player in these theological debates as he wrote saints’ lives for both St. Ignacio de Loyola as well as St. Francisco de Borja, and in his letter in support of Don Pedro III de Granada Venegas’s suit to enter Alcántara, Ribadeneira wrote that he agreed completely with the earlier opinion of his fellow Jesuit Francisco Suárez, signing his agreement on the last day of March, in “the college of the Company of Jesus of Madrid,” 1607 (*El Caso y Pareceres...*, 62v). These Jesuits worked together and supported one another in a theological network of ideas, even if they saw each other rarely. Ribadeneira, in particular, had an important role in crafting the way his fellow Jesuits were understood and viewed by others, as he wrote numerous histories and treatises in addition to the biographies of his Jesuit peers and predecessors. In his prolific writings—histories, biographies, and devotional works—he helped to craft the image and meaning of Jesuit nobility and sanctity in early modern Europe. He was also one of the early Jesuits, and thus his writings were based on eye-witness observation, and on numerous documents to which he had special access.

In Pedro de Ribadeneira’s biography of St. Francisco de Borja, we can see a clear expression of Francisco Suárez’s “two types of nobility.” In her analysis of this source, historian Jodi Bilinkoff has argued that “Ribadeneira’s construction of Borja as a Christian and a gentleman sent a powerful message: upper class men could maintain their honor while serving God in the Society of Jesus” (Bilinkoff, 455). Rather than being a time of noble decline, “the domestication of the nobility” and “the inflation of honors,” the early seventeenth century, and early modern period in general, had a noble class which was robust, with great political and cultural power, and that had deep ties within the leadership ranks of religious communities. Recent scholarship has started to add nuance to these decline narratives.¹⁰

Pedro de Ribadeniera knew both Borja and Loyola personally. In his biography of Loyola, Ribadeniera referred numerous times to the saint’s former military occupation and used military imagery to describe aspects of his new life. The original was written in Latin in the 1560s, and a

¹⁰ The older view of noble decline has been expressed by Elias and Stone, newer scholarship re-evaluating the declining of the nobility by Duindam, Sandberg, and Liang.

Spanish version was published in 1583. Ribadeneira, holding Loyola up as an exemplar, explains: “we ought to place Ignacio before us as a leader given to us by God, and as a captain leading the charge” (De Ribadeniera, *The Life of Ignatius*, trans. Pavour...5). Ribadeneira then describes the saint’s noble birth, his military service at Pamplona, and how God saved him during his convalescence. On his way to Monserrat, Loyola traveled with a Moor who did not believe Mary was always a virgin, and so he verbally defended her. Then, upon arrival at Monserrat, he put down his arms “with which he served the world” at the Virgin’s altar (De Ribadeniera, *Vida del P. Ignacio...*, 10r, 11v).

Loyola had considered doing more than verbally defending the Virgin Mary, however. After their conversation ended, and the Moor went on ahead, he

[left] Ignacio alone, puzzling for a long while in hesitation over whether Christian devotion demanded that he pursue the Moor and stab him with his dagger because he had spoken in his presence dishonorably about the most Blessed and Immaculate Virgin. As a military man who was at one time taken in by deceptive imitation of real honor, he considered it a personal disgrace if an enemy of the Christian faith said anything within his hearing that detracted from the inviolate purity of the holy Virgin. This kind of apparently devout thinking deeply and for a good while tormented the soldier of Christ (De Ribadeniera, *The Life of Ignatius...*,20).

Loyola decided that if his donkey followed the Moor, he would do the violence to the Moor that he was considering. Instead, the donkey continued on his own way. “This way we can all know from what beginnings and through what stages God was leading his soldier on to the end” (De Ribadeniera, *The Life of Ignatius...*,20). While Ribadeneira makes a distinction between “real honor” and its “deceptive imitation,” dividing religious chivalry from secular, from this same source, what can be observed by the historian in the *longue durée* is that chivalry had a hybrid nature as both a religious and secular concept in the Middle Ages, and continued to be so in the early modern period.

According to Ribadeneira, when the saint held his vigil at the Virgin’s altar, he was intentionally imitating secular knights:

In 1522, on the eve of that day on which the Word of God, taking on flesh started the process of the salvation of humanity [feast of the incarnation] he went as secretly as possible, covered by the darkness of night, to a certain beggar dressed in rags and gave him his own clothes as a gift, put on the clothing that he had hoped for, and stood at the sacred altar of the Holy Mother. In secular books, he had read about an old rite of initiation for soldiers. Now he wanted to create for himself a spiritual version of that rite. So, girded with his new weapons against the devil, he spent that whole night, sometimes standing and sometimes kneeling, without any sleep, in front of the image of the Most Holy Mother of God, trusting himself to her, weeping over his misdeeds, and imagining the good deeds that he would do. And so that no one would recognize him, early in the morning, before dawn, he hurried off...(De Ribadeniera, *The Life of Ignatius...*,21).

Loyola spent a month in Jerusalem in 1523, after his time in Monserrat and Manresa. In *Tirant lo Blanc* (1490), one of the most popular chivalric romances of his day, at the very start of the story, the Count William of Warwick (later known as the Hermit and the Hermit King) declared his

intention to “make a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, which every Christian should visit to atone for his sins. This virtuous count wished to do penance for the many deaths he had caused in wars and tournaments.” (*Tirant lo Blanc*, 4). Long after his pilgrimage, the Hermit later explained to the young Tirant that “knights were created to uphold and defend Christianity” (*Tirant lo Blanc*, 43).

The moment of putting down his arms at the Virgin’s altar, “with which he had served the world,” (De Ribadeniera, *Vida del P. Ignacio*) was depicted in a 1622 set of prints about Loyola’s life by the Dutch artist Peter Paul Rubens. This gesture is reminiscent of the knights of the Round Table giving up their arms to become hermits after the final battle in *The Death of King Arthur* (221-225). The chivalric ideal was not the only ideal used in (Rubens)—an early picture of Loyola fighting at Pamplona shows him in the garb of a Roman soldier, and in the pictures where he suffers a shipwreck, and is arrested and brought to see “Pilate,” and “Caesar,” Rubens references the scriptural life of Christ and the Apostle Paul’s journeys to honor Loyola. In the early stages of Loyola’s pilgrimage, he tried to seek God anonymously and in rags, in imitation of the saints, but inevitably, his biographer Ribadeneira writes, “people started talking around the idea of his nobility” (De Ribadeniera, *The Life of Ignatius...*,24). He experienced many trials and temptations. “When he entered this training camp, our soldier had already slogged through a four-month struggle, completely unaware of the deviousness and the machinations of the devil, with whom he had started a fight” (De Ribadeniera, *The Life of Ignatius...*,24). In his interior mind, Loyola began to be “aware of occasional deep changes and something like strong movements of spirits running in opposite directions” (De Ribadeniera, *The Life of Ignatius...*,25). It shook him, and so “noticing this difference and variation, amazed and struck by the strangeness of the experience, he said, ‘What is going on here? What road have I taken? What kind of military service have I got myself into?’” (De Ribadeniera, *The Life of Ignatius...*,25). Ribadeneira employs the language of war continually in his biography of the soldier-saint.

Pedro de Ribadeneira also wrote a mirror for princes, entitled *Tratado de la Religion y Virtues que debe tener el Principe Cristiano, para governor y conserver sus Estados, contra Nicolas Machiavello* (1595). In it he drew from ancient and medieval history, scripture, Spanish law, and classical sources, to tease out whether nobility was based only in blood or lineage, or in the deeds and character of the individual:

I do not want by this to say that there is no difference between a knight and a citizen, between a noble and one who is not, between the rich and the poor, between the big and the small, that if it has to have, since God wants that there are diverse levels in the Republic, and also in heaven, and not all the saints in glory are equal, nor do all the stars have the same clarity. And in this way the Prince has to honor the knights and virtuous lords and himself serve them and give them privilege [merced], and prefer them to those who are not, and demonstrate with works that he understands and measures their persons, and by what their fathers and grandfathers merit. (De Ribadeneira, *Tratado de la Religion...*, 301-302).

Ribadeneira then quoted the *Siete Partidas* of Castilian King Alfonso X (1252–1284), saying there are three reasons for knights to be honored, “first for the nobility of their lineage, second for their goodness, and third for the advantage that comes from them.” Clearly, even in King Alfonso’s thirteenth-century laws, the idea was for the king to act in his own self-interest and use nobles to his political and military advantage. “The knight that comes from illustrious blood...and imitator

of those who founded his house, merits to be more honored than he who is not, by his virtue, and by that of his grandfathers...” (De Ribadeneira, *Tratado de la Religion...*, 304). However, if like a *picaro*, he is always bragging about his house, he should be punished for this. Ribadeneira then showed his classical *bona fides* by citing Ovid, Plutarch, and Juvenal, and his understanding of the nature of nobility was that it came from both lineage and character, both blood and service.

Priests Errant: The Desire to be Sent

An archival source unique to the Society of Jesus are the *Indipetae*, the letters within which a Jesuit writes to their superior general directly to ask if they might be sent on an evangelical mission to the Indies. The earliest *Indipetae* held in the archive of the Jesuit curia in Rome are from 1583. However, the letter Borja sent was in 1559. A biographer of his, Dionisio Vazquez, records Borja’s letter to Diego Lainez, who was his superior General in 1559 (ARSI ROMA, VITAE 80, Libro 4, Cap.1, 270r-270v). Vazquez says that these *Indipetae* offered “a nuestro señor sus vidas, yendo a las Indias a morir en su servicio, o emplearse en leer las classes de principios de la Grammatica a los niños/to our lord their lives, going to the Indies to die in his service, or to be used by teaching classes of grammatical principles to children,” and records Borja’s letter to his superior general as the following:

V.P. Manda a los Hermanos de la Compañia que le declaren sus desseos de yr a Indias, y de leer las infimas classes de la grammatica a los niños. Yo padre, aunque no tengo salud, para la larga jornada de Indias, ni talento suficiente para enseñar a nadie. Todavía digo que Dios nuestro señor me haze Gracia de darme muy particular, y entrañable desseo de morir derramando la sangre por la verdad Catholica, y en servicio de la sancta Iglesia. Los medios para conseguir esto mi desseo yo no los se, y los que se me ofrecen los tengo por sospechosos por salir de mi cabeza. Yo soy tan miserable que tras este desseo del martyrio, me hallo con tan flaca virtud, que aun no puedo sufrir un mosquito, sino es con gran favor de nuestro señor. Pido por charidad a V. P. que le offrezca este desseo por mi, y le suplique le dee efficacia y effecto, si dello es servido, o que a lo menos haga que a mi me sea otra Muerte, o otro martyrio verme morir, sin morir derramando la sangre por el, herre aqui padre herre aqui, plague al señor de dar el perficere, como ha dado el volle, de Valladolid, 29 de Julio 1559 (ARSI ROMA, VITAE 80, Libro 4, Cap.1, 270r-270v).

[Your paternity orders the brothers of the company declare their desires to go to the Indies, and to teach grammar to children. I, father, though I do not have the health for the long journey to the Indies, nor the talent for teaching anyone, I still say that God has given me the grace of a particular and strange desire to die pouring out my blood for Catholic truth, and in service of the holy church, the wherewithal to bring my desire to pass I do not have, and those offered I suspect, as they exit my head. I am so miserable that through this desire for martyrdom, I find myself with such weak virtue, that I cannot even handle a mosquito, without the great favor of our lord. I ask for charity from your paternity and I offer up my desire, and beseech you for the ability and effect, if served, that at least I have another death, or another martyrdom to die, if I don’t die pouring out my blood. Shoe me (like a horse) father, shoe me here, if it please the lord to give me “the completion,” as he has given “the desire,” from Valladolid, 29 de Julio 1559.]

The last line is particularly fascinating. He asks that the lord shoe him—like a horse, the word he uses is related to the word for iron and horseshoe, and asks that it please the lord to give him the “completion” as he has given the “the desire.” He uses Latin words for these infinitives at the end, *perficere* and *volle*. This facility with Latin Borja reveals to his superior general after a letter in which he says he does not have the ability to teach anyone grammar! According to his biographer Vazquez, Borja was a man of great humility, and it is in a section of the biography about his humility where this letter is found. In it we can see not just Borja’s desire to die, but “spill his blood” on behalf of Catholic truth, and if he cannot find it in the Indies (due to his lack of health), he wants to find “another martyrdom.” The language of service in this letter could be taken from a secular letter to a king, or even a chivalric romance. The ideal of self-sacrifice was very present within it. *Indipetae* are an under-utilized source for understanding Jesuit noble culture and social history, although they have been the subject of a few recent studies.¹¹ Many of the themes prevalent in these sources are the ardent and sustained desire the applicant has to serve in the Indies, Japan, and elsewhere, their willingness to die, to be sent wherever the order wishes, and the skills and good health they bring to the enterprise (as the journey was long and arduous).

According to St. Francisco Xavier (1506-1552), who had been in Asia six years at the time he wrote this, “those of our Society whom you send here for the conversion of infidels should be so reliable that any of them could be sent either alone or with a companion to any region where there is hope of the greater service of God our Lord” (Russell, 54). Thus, in my view these Jesuits had to be prepared to serve as “priests errant,” with little support, and a great deal of independence. Don Quixote lamented, with similar idealism:

...it grieves me to the depths of my soul that I ever took up the profession of knight-errantry in such a detestable age as this one in which we are living, because even though there is no danger that can strike fear into me I am concerned when I think that gunpowder and lead might deprive me of the opportunity to make myself famous all over the face of the earth by the might of my arm and the blade of my sword (Cervantes, 358).

The early seventeenth century, when Cervantes was writing, did have different technologies available to soldiers than in the Middle Ages (Rogers), yet what Don Quixote is saying here relates to what medievalists call the ideal of knightly spiritual and political independence (Kauemper, Claussen). Ramon Llull, thirteenth-century Iberian writer and preacher, had also dedicated himself to missions of conversion.¹² Like Cervantes’s Don Quixote, members of the Society of Jesus were concerned with having a “good death” (Russell, 170-172). Francis Xavier himself died in China and the letters he and others sent back to Europe inspired numerous young men to seek to serve in Jesuit missions. This was a continuity from medieval Europe, religious orders such as the Cistercians, Franciscans, and Dominicans, as well as military orders such as the Spanish orders of Santiago and Alcántara, and international orders like the Teutonic Knights and Hospitallers, were part of European crusading and expansionism. In the early modern world, Jesuits were major players in the expansion and spread of Catholicism and European empires to Asia and the Americas.

¹¹ These *indipetae* are housed at ARSI in Rome, and the Institute for Advanced Jesuit Studies at Boston College has created an online database of them from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries; Camilla Russell analyzed Italian *indipetae* in her study of Italian Jesuits.

¹² See Llull, *Vita coetanea*, Cortijo ed.

Conclusion

When asked a social question—what nobility is—Jesuits, in a variety of biographical and theological sources, answered in a practical manner, that there was a civil nobility, recognized by kings and based in ancestry, and a spiritual nobility, which one could earn with good works. These views aligned with the theological stances taken by the Jesuits in their controversies with the Dominicans over free will and predestination, *de auxiliis*. Social and religious history reflected each other within these debates—debates that took place in a particular social context of *Ancien Régime* Europe, where kings, nobles, and the church were at the top of the social hierarchy.

The Jesuits were unique in that those Jesuit priests with “the fullest possible integration into the Society” took a final fourth vow of obedience to the pope, (Russell, 21) such that they were willing to be sent anywhere in the world in service to the Catholic Church, even if it meant death or martyrdom. The *Indipetae* introduced here are a source that reveal these ardent desires among many Jesuits, over time—including moments in early seventeenth century Japan in which Christianity became illegal and Jesuits were killed. Is there any greater chivalric ideal, than complete loyalty to one’s lord, and the willingness to die in his service? Given these findings, and the benefit of the *longue durée*, we have a broader, non-confessional and non-Enlightenment context within which to assess early modern noble and chivalric culture and the Jesuits’ contributions to it. Loyola’s and Borja’s Spanish noble backgrounds have long been well-known, but these biographical, poetic, and archival sources, analyzed together, suggest that the Jesuits, as priests errant, were both taking part in the ideals and practices of early modern chivalry, as well as helping to craft an understanding of the nature of nobility which was consistent with stances they took on significant theological questions.¹³

¹³ With thanks to Matthew P. Michel, Giuliana Perrone, Trevor Jackson, Geoffrey Koziol, and Walter P. Simons for their thoughts on previous versions of this article, and to staff at the Institute for Advanced Jesuit Studies and John J. Burns Library at Boston College, and to archivists at the Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, for their assistance and hospitality.

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