The Social and Cultural Worlds of Elite Valencian Youth, 1300–1500

by

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Abstract

This study examines the socio-cultural position of adolescents and youths – those between the approximate ages of fifteen and twenty-five years old – within aristocratic and patrician society in late medieval Valencia. It investigates how young people were defined and described by adult society, as well as how young people understood their own relationship with sources of adult authority – sometimes acquiescing to it and sometimes actively resisting it – and concludes that, far from being an insignificant or abbreviated period of transition from childhood to adulthood, adolescence was a vital and protracted period of preparation that was believed to require special vigilance and attention from adult society to ensure that adolescents and young adults became “successful” members of society.

The study begins, in Part I, by investigating how adolescence was understood and defined by the Valencian legal code, the Furs, which collectively codified adolescence as a period of “quasi-adulthood.” Then, the second part examines how adolescence and youth were constructed in works of prescriptive literature composed by ecclesiastical and secular authors in late-medieval Valencia, with particular attention given to the writings of the Franciscan writer Francesc Eiximenis, as well as Ramon Llull’s Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, and Joanot Martorell’s chivalric epic, Tirant lo Blanc. These sources highlight the importance of paternal or
adult supervision of a child’s education, while also giving insight into societal constructions of aristocratic masculinity and femininity, aristocratic honor, masculine aggression, and socially acceptable forms of sexual expression between young men and women. Finally, Part III of this study explores how the values expounded by the sources used in Parts I and II were expressed by young people within society. Using legal records (court cases and judicial records) and documentary materials, this section analyzes how young members of aristocratic households, particularly squires and the younger members of aristocratic families, were socialized into the culture of violence, honor, and “proper” sexual comportment by adult society and, consequently, reproduced these values in their own lives.
Acknowledgments

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Introduction

The overarching question that has hung over the study of childhood and adolescence in the distant past is undoubtedly that which was first posed by the French scholar Philippe Ariès more than fifty years ago in his groundbreaking study *L’enfant et la vie familiale sous l’Ancien Régime.* In this work, Ariès posited that premodern societies understood childhood and adolescence in terms that were fundamentally different from those of “modern,” Western society. Most significantly, he concluded that childhood and adolescence were so severely attenuated as to be largely non-existent and childhood itself was “a period of transition which passed quickly and which was just as quickly forgotten.”

Despite some rumblings of dissent, Ariès’s central assertions went largely unchallenged for much of the next two decades. Beginning in the last years of the 1970s, though, Ariès came under increasing attack by a new wave of historians who claimed that, even if premodern societies did not understand childhood and adolescence in exactly the same terms as modern societies, this did not mean that there was “no awareness” of later childhood or adolescence at all. Rather, Ariès’s claims were exaggerated, at the very least, and, in several crucial respects, premodern childhood and adolescence shared many elements that mirrored modern understandings.

Among the first sorties launched against Ariès were those of social historians following in

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2 Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood,* p. 34.
the footsteps of Natalie Zemon Davis’s groundbreaking research on French youth abbeys and the role of adolescents in popular rites and festivals like Carnival and charivari. Then, in the mid-1980s, the study of childhood and adolescence took another step forward, with specialized studies beginning to appear that increasingly viewed childhood, and adolescence even more, as vitally important periods of transformation and initiation in nearly all premodern, European societies. Thereafter, although some have continued to make claims along the lines of Ariès, the overall framework for viewing earlier understandings of childhood and adolescence (which, when being discussed together in this study, will be described as “minority”) shifted much more fully to one that saw premodern and modern understandings of childhood and adolescence as far more similar to each other than they were different. Moreover, as the sheer volume of

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Also worth noting, is the scholarship of Georges Duby, especially his article “Youth in Aristocratic Society,” in which he first laid out a vision of parent/child relations that incorporated many “modern” notions of youthful rebelliousness that had been asserted, most famously, by the psychologist Erik Erikson. Georges Duby, “Youth in Aristocratic Society,” in The Chivalrous Society (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 112–22. On the other hand, in an article of similar vintage, Anne Yarbrough argued against an Ericksonian interpretation of the urban adolescence experienced by apprentices in Bristol, in the sixteenth century, even if the two still seem to agree that adolescence did exist as a distinct life-stage in the premodern era. For her interpretation, see Anne Yarbrough, “Apprentices as Adolescents in Sixteenth-Century Bristol,” Journal of Social History 13 (1979): pp. 67–81.

5 While not using exactly the same language as Ariès, some version of his ideas can be seen in the scholarship of Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, Norbert Schindler and, more prominently, in that of James Schultz. See, for example, David Herlihy and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, Tuscan and Their Families: A Study of the Florentine Catasto of 1427 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), p. 245; Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, “The ‘Cruel Mother’: Maternity, Widowhood, and Dowry in Florence in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries,” in Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), pp. 117–31; Norbert Schindler, “Guardians of Disorder: Rituals of Youthful Culture at the Dawn of the Modern Age,” in A History of
scholarship on premodern childhood and adolescence has continued to increase over the past several decades, this viewpoint has been even further confirmed, creating a rich base of secondary literature from which one can draw.6


6 The scholarship has become too vast to cite in anything but a cursory manner. However, some of the works that have been most influential, both in general and to this study, in particular, can be offered. Among the most prominent scholars on childhood and adolescence over the past three decades has been Barbara Hanawalt, and her influence is often seen far beyond the realm of English historiography. Particularly noteworthy works include Barbara Hanawalt, The Ties That Bound: Peasant Families in Medieval England (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Ibid., “Historical Descriptions and Prescriptions for Adolescence,” Journal of Family History 17 (1992): pp. 341–351; Ibid., Growing Up in Medieval London: The Experience of Childhood in History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Ibid., “‘The Childe of Bristowe’ and the Making of Middle-Class Adolescence,” in Bodies and Disciplines, ed. Barbara Hanawalt and David Wallace (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 155–78. The last of these is not only a full-throated takedown of Ariès, but also of Schultz, that asserts that premodern society did, in fact, have a conception of adolescence as a distinct life-stage. Additionally, this article has a good summary of the historiography up to that point. Somewhat more recently, in 2002, Hanawalt also summarized the state of the debate over historical childhood. For this, see Ibid., “Medievalists and the Study of Childhood,” Speculum 77, no. 2 (2002): pp. 440–60.


Yet, as rich as the scholarship on young people has become, within the context of Spanish historiography the field has remained much less developed: to this point, there has been no monograph-length study focused specifically on how Spanish society conceived of adolescence and the transition from dependent minority to adulthood. Instead, most of those studies that have been conducted have either been of a shorter length, with the majority of scholarship conducted thus far having been published as articles in various scholarly journals, or else they have focused on these issues only tangentially.7 As such, while the scholarship that has been conducted thus far is undoubtedly valuable and has provided a base on which this study can build, there still remains a significant gap to be filled.

Before proceeding to outline how this study fills some of these gaps, two matters need to be addressed. First, since this study deals primarily with a region of Europe outside of the traditional English/French/Italian axis of studies on childhood and adolescence – as well as outside of the common tendency of Iberian scholars to focus on Castile or Catalonia – a brief

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overview of both the Kingdom and city of Valencia seems to be in order, to give a fuller picture
of the significance of both in the later Middles Ages. Second, because the terminology applied
to pre-adults often lacks precision and is inconsistent in its usage, in both its premodern and in its
modern idioms, it has been a consistently thorny issue for scholars of childhood and adolescence.
Therefore, a brief explanation of the terms common in late medieval Valencia for young people
and how they correspond with modern English usage will be included.

A brief history of the Valencian kingdom

The history of Valencia extends far earlier than the foundation of the medieval, Christian
kingdom founded in the first half of the thirteenth century. Initially founded by the Roman
consul Junius Brutus in 138 BCE as a colony intended to house retired legionaries, the city was
situated slightly inland from the Mediterranean coast, along the Turia River and in the midst of a
fertile coastal plain that benefits from rains that fall as the wet Mediterranean air hits the various
mountain ranges that ring the kingdom and serve as its physical boundaries.\footnote{The plain around Valencia, called “la horta” or “la huerta” continues to be a major center of agricultural production to the present day. For the history of Roman Valencia, see Miquel Taradell, “La civilització llatina,” in Història del País Valencià, ed. Ernest Belenguer Cebrià (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1988), pp. 125–96.}

In no small part because of the fertility of its soil, its advantageous proximity to the sea, and
its access to settlements further inland, Valencia rose to a position of relative prominence in the
centuries following its foundation – albeit interspersed with periods of regression or stagnation
that arose at various points. By the eleventh century, the city was sufficiently important that it
had become the capital of one of the many \textit{taifa} kingdoms that had arisen out of the ashes of the
Umayyad Caliphate, and became a tempting prize for the expansionist dreams of successive
generations of increasingly expansionist Christian leaders. Not least of these was Rodrigo Diaz
de Vivar, more commonly known as “El Cid,” who captured and held the city of Valencia for
five years, until his death, in the last decade of the eleventh century.\footnote{While Taradell's section on Visigothic Valencia is quite brief, due in large part to the paucity of evidence from the period, his discussion of the Islamic period of Valencian history is quite extensive, and also quite useful. See \textit{Ibid.,} “Època musulmana,” in Història del País Valencià, ed. Ernest Belenguer Cebrià (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1988), pp. 229–384.} Subsequently, the city and surrounding territory was recaptured by Almoravid armies and remained under Islamic rule for
another century.

After the second Christian “capture” of the city of Valencia itself, in 1238, which occurred
after the city capitulated following a lengthy siege, both the city and its surrounding territories continued to be, for the most part, prosperous. In subsequent decades and centuries, they became only more important as loci of trade and commerce, with the city of Valencia serving as the kingdom’s primary hub of trade. On the other hand, though, many of the lords who had participated in the capture of the city and its outlying territories were granted lands and titles. Therefore, Valencia was, in many respects, a hybrid society that blended together elements of the earlier, feudal tradition of landed aristocracy with a much more “Mediterranean” culture of increasingly urbanized and bourgeois artisans and merchants, who lived in the kingdom’s cities and towns. Agricultural work in rural areas was carried out by Christian farmers, but was even more frequently carried out on aristocratic estates by members of the kingdom’s remaining Islamic population.

Thereafter, following the many travails of the fourteenth century, including periodic famines, economic instability, and mass mortality from both disease (the Black Death) and violence (the rebellion of the “Union” in 1347–48; war with Castile from 1362 to 1366; the pogroms of 1391), Valencia emerged in the fifteenth century to experience what is often considered to be its “golden age.” Even earlier, in the later decades of the fourteenth century, Valencia had already become an important conduit for goods and products to pass between the Iberian interior and markets in other parts of the Mediterranean, especially Italy and North Africa. What is more, Valencia also became a production center in its own right, especially as an increasingly strong competitor in cloth production (especially silk) as well as in other emerging industries like paper production. In effect, during these decades, Valencia – and the Crown of Aragon in general – increasingly challenged the dominance of other Mediterranean powers like Pisa and Genoa and

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11 These issues are addressed at greater length in Chapter 4 of this study.

12 Because this study focuses almost exclusively on Valencia’s Christian population, the broad historiography of Jews, Christians, and Muslims in medieval Valencia will be largely set to the side. With this said, the various studies of Mark Meyerson prove an excellent starting point for inquiry. For the “troubles” of the fourteenth century, see Agustín Rubio Vela, “Els temps dificils (1347–75),” in Història del País Valencià, ed. Ernest Belenguer Cebríà (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1988), pp. 207–234; Furió, Història del País Valencià, ch. 2.

further pressed claims to direct authority over strategic territories that included Sardinia, Sicily, and other Mediterranean outposts. Yet, although Valencia was frequently at odds – or at war – with its Italian counterparts, trade remained generally strong, and Valencia was home to large populations of merchants from both Italy and across the Mediterranean.

It is within this context, then, that this study is situated, within a society that simultaneously bore the marks of the feudal past – in the continued existence of titled aristocracies on rural estates in the Valencian countryside and in the kingdom’s cities – coupled with an increasingly mercantile economy rooted in overseas trade that blossomed in the city of Valencia and the larger towns surrounding it. Yet, even more important, these two worlds were not distinct from each other. Instead, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters, the worlds of the old aristocracy and the urban elite were often blended: many aristocratic families chose not to live on their rural estates, but instead took up residence in the capital city of Valencia. Similarly, as certain lineages of businessmen and merchants began to amass fortunes from the booming trade of the city, they began to abandon their professional activities and became, in effect, a patrician class that quickly began to intermarry with the families of the titled aristocracy.

As such, Valencia was a place where old and new social forms blended together and created a society of exceptional social fluidity, in which ideas and social attitudes were equally fluid in their capacity to spread from one socioeconomic group to another, while also creating ideal conditions for what may have once been more specifically “aristocratic” notions of adolescent upbringing and comportment to become much more generally held social beliefs – and vice versa, of course. Thus, the medieval kingdom of Valencia is a particularly compelling location

15 Evidence for the presence of foreign merchants in Valencia can be seen in the records of the Consell, one of the city’s ruling bodies. For example, in 1402, the ruling council of the Jurats attempted, albeit apparently without success, to prohibit all Italian merchants from being able to conduct business in the kingdom. See Archivo Histórico Municipal de Valencia, Manuals de Consells A-22 (1400–06), ff. 172v-73r (Apr. 22, 1402). Similarly, in 1410, the Consell declared that it intended to request that the king grant it the power to expel all Italian merchants from the city. Unfortunately, since King Martí I had died, without heir, five months earlier, there was no ruler to whom the request could be made. Ibid., Manuals de Consells A-24 (1408-12), f. 275r (undated, 1410). For secondary studies on foreign merchants in Valencia, see Henri Lapeyre, “Els mercaders estrangers al Regne de València en els segles XV i XVI,” in València, un mercat medieval, ed. Antoni Furió (València: Diputació de València, 1985), pp. 25–46; Cruselles Gomez, Los mercaderes de Valencia. Also useful are several other essays from Furió’s edited collection that discuss the presence of merchants from Barbary, Langeudoc, Lombardy, and Flanders.
for the study of late medieval conceptions of adolescence and the transition of young people to adulthood.

Terminology

The problem that terminology poses for any historian of childhood, adolescence, or youth appears in even the very earliest studies. For example, in 1949, Alex Denomy asked what was meant by the word “joven” in medieval French romance and troubadour poetry; Erich Köhler asked much the same question seventeen years later. Similarly, an analysis of the terminology applied to the stages of the life cycle formed an important part of Ariès’s evidence for the “absence of adolescence” in the collective mind of medieval society. Even for more recent scholars, issues of vocabulary have continued to be confounding and have engendered debate; for instance, a heated debate between Barbara Hanawalt and James Schultz occurred in the late 1980s and 1990s over the basic definition of “adolescence” and whether the term could be applied to premodern societies.

Leaving aside this larger debate, which Hanawalt won handily in any case, within the context of this study, two categories of terms need to be discussed and defined. The first is that which incorporates the nomenclature of childhood, adolescence, and youth used by Valencians themselves in the later Middle Ages. Second is the category that includes the various English terms that will be used throughout this study to refer to the various age categories that delineate the period of life between birth and the entrance into adulthood.

For the most part, the terms used by medieval Valencians to refer to children as well as to young people more generally are often derived from Latin precursors. Therefore, they often are broadly recognizable from their cognates in other Romance languages or English. Among these are terms like “infant” (also spelled as enfant, fem. infanta) and “pubil” (also pobil, fem. pubila), which were both used to refer to the youngest categories of children, and which ranged from birth all the way up to include children of eleven or twelve, and even up to fifteen years old in

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17 See footnote 1 for a citation of these articles.
18 Ariés, Centuries of Childhood, pp. 15–29.
19 For works pertinent to the debate between these scholars, see footnotes 5 and 6. Other recent scholarship on the terms used by medieval societies for the young include that of Isabelle Cochelin, cited above in footnote 6, and of Ilaria Taddei. For the latter, see Ilaria Taddei, “Puerizia, Adolescenza and Giovinezza: Images and Conceptions of Youth in Florentine Society during the Renaissance,” in The Premodern Teenager: Youth in Society, 1150–1650, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler (Toronto: Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, 2002), pp. 15–26.
some circumstances. Further, these terms were used more-or-less interchangeably, with the only major distinction being that the latter term was used more frequently in the Valencian law code and in legal proceedings. For those who would be described today as “adolescents,” medieval Valencians used the term “adult” (fem. *adulta*), which itself was derived from the Latin word, *adolescens*, to refer to individuals between the ages of fifteen and twenty. Lastly, while the term “jove” is much less specific in its meaning, it shares its ambiguity with the similarly vague Latin term, *juvenis*, as a term used to describe a “youth” in his or her mid- to later adolescence, or first years of majority – that is to say, from approximately the late teens to their early twenties – though the term also appears to have been used for individuals who were even older, on occasion, especially if they were still unmarried.

Two other terms are worth explaining because they formed the basis of two important categories used in many of the legal documents analyzed for this study and divided the population of young people in medieval Valencia into those who were still legally dependent on an adult versus those who were legally independent. According to Valencian law, all those under twenty years old were “menors” (equivalent to the English word, “minors”), which meant that they were unable to hold property independently, represent themselves in legal matters, or enter into legally binding contracts. Those over the age of twenty, though, were termed “majors,” which meant that they had arrived at an age at which they could, potentially, exit from the legal authority of a father or other legal guardian. Thus, although not everyone over the age of twenty was legally independent, all of those described as *majors* in extant documents can be identified as at least twenty years old. Moreover, these terms also derived from Latin antecedents that had substantially similar meanings, and which formed the basis of earlier, Roman notions of legal majority and minority.

Other terms used by medieval Valencians to refer to various stages of childhood and adolescence, however, are harder to define. One example that can be given is the term “mosso”

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20 The use of the term “pubil” in Valencian law, to refer to children up to fifteen, will be discussed at much greater length in Chapter 1.
21 Alcover’s *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear* merely defines a “jove” as an individual “of little age” (*de poca edat*), though an alternate definition also notes that the term was used for journeymen artisans, better suggesting the use of the term for individuals closer to the threshold of adulthood. Antonio Maria Alcover Sureda, "jove," in *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear: Inventari lexicogràfic i etimològic de la llengua catalana*, 2nd ed., ed. Francesc de B. Moll. (Palma de Mallorca: Editorial Moll, 1968. The classic example of a man remaining a “youth” until well into middle age is that of William Marshall, who only left his youth behind when he married in his forties. For a pleasant, readable discussion of his long “youth,” see Georges Duby, *William Marshal: The Flower of Chivalry*, 1st American ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986). 22 Again, both these terms and the laws that pertain to them will be discussed more in Chapter 1.
(also *moço* or *mozo*, fem. *mossa*), which can refer to a young person in his or her early to mid-teens, but also to those slightly younger or older. Further, the term was also commonly used to denote a servant, who, admittedly, was likely young himself. Nonetheless, the term was used in enough distinct circumstances that its ambiguity can cause problems for a modern reader. Similarly, the term “*macip*” (also *mancip*) was also used for servants, as well as for an apprentice and even for a “boy or youth in general.” Thus, as in the case of a *mosso* or *mossa*, when one comes across an individual described as a *macip*, it is likely that he (or she) was still in his (or her) minority, but the certainty is rather less than ironclad; likewise for the term “*escuder*” (also *scuder*, meaning “squire”), which will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 4 of this study, but which may not always have referred to adolescent knights-in-training.

Lastly, two other terms were used with some frequency and, because they do not have obvious English cognates, can be especially problematic for modern readers to interpret. The first of these is the term “*fadri*” (also, *fadrin*, fem. *fadrina*), which, in most respects, appears to be roughly equivalent to the Italian term “*fanciullo*,” and similarly refers to one in the earlier stages of adolescence. However, like the Italian term, the use of the term *fadri* sometimes extended to those even younger, perhaps as young as nine or ten. Similarly, on the other end of the age spectrum, while those under fifteen years of age were most commonly described by this term, there is, again, some degree of ambiguity and examples surely could be found of individuals older than fifteen who are referred to as “*fadrins*.23

The second term to be discussed is the even more ambiguous use of “*donzell*” and “*donzella*” by medieval Valencians. In part, the trouble with these terms lies in the fact that the feminine form of the term roughly approximates the English terms “damsel” or “maiden” and, as such, largely was used to refer to younger women who were still unmarried and, at least ostensibly, remained virginal. Further, by the same token, the term also could refer to the unmarried ladies who attended on an aristocratic lady as maids; here, too, the implication was that such maids, since they were unmarried, would almost certainly have been younger women.24

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23 Alcover Sureda, "*fadri*,” in *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear*. For the Italian equivalent, see Niccoli, *Il seme della violenza*, pp. 17–19; Taddei, “*Puerizia, Adolescenza* and *Giovinezza*,” pp. 15–16. Taddei’s article illustrates some of the difficulties with the Italian equivalent, *fanciullo*, which variously referred to children from birth to nearly twenty years old. This term does not have a direct English equivalent, but the closest may be the term “*tween*,” which is used to refer to children between the rough ages of nine and thirteen or fourteen.

24 Alcover Sureda, "*donzella*,” in *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear*. The average age of marriage for most women was around eighteen, though some in the aristocracy married younger. For men, the average age was around twenty. Furió *et al*., “L’entrada en la vida dels joves,” p. 104.
The term “donzell,” on the other hand, is notably harder to get a hold on. Defined by the Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear as “a young noble still not armed as a knight” (“jove noble encara no armat cavaller”), or as a “page ... who was in the service of a prince or feudal lord,” (“patge ... que estava al servei d'un príncep o senyor feudal”) or even a “fadrí” or “young, unmarried man” (“home jove i no mullerat”). The sheer variety of definitions given suggests the ambiguity of the term.

Even more problematic, though, is the fact that other documents suggest that the same title was also used by individuals of knightly rank who had not yet been dubbed knights, but who were also no longer young, strictly speaking. For example, in one case, from 1418, a man named Jaume Scriva appeared before the Valencian civil court to emancipate his fourteen-year-old son. In the record, Scriva is described as a donzell; basic biology would therefore indicate that this donzell was at least in his late twenties, and was likely significantly older. Similarly, when the patrician Pere Catala was named as a guardian for a minor – this being an office that only those over the age of twenty could occupy – he too is described in the document as a donzell. Therefore, while it is possible that he was still a youth in his early twenties, he almost certainly was not a page, squire, or fadrí; moreover, he surely was no longer an adolescent.

Turning now to the similarly ambiguous vocabulary used in the English language to refer to young people, at the very least these terms should be defined with regard to how they will be used in this study. First among these terms is “adolescence” (or “adolescent”), which is used in this study to refer to children between the onset of puberty and full physical maturity. As such, it also roughly delineates those between the ages of twelve or thirteen and those around twenty years old and corresponds, more or less to the Valencian term “adult.”

Similarly, the term “youth,” as it is used here, refers to those over the age of twenty who were still relatively unestablished as independent adults, whether because they were still legally dependent on a parent, or were in the service of a lord or master as a squire, an apprentice, or in some other capacity. While legally defined as adults, the continued dependence on family or other institutions often meant that such individuals were not viewed by society as “entirely adult,” at least until the instability of the early twenties settled into a more stable career and

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26 Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.920 (1418), mn. 8, f. 49r (Dec. 23, 24). This case is discussed further in Chapter 1.
27 Ibid., Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.914 (1406), mn. 1, f. 1 (Jan. 15).
family life that, traditionally, were to follow.

Lastly, this study uses two terms more or less interchangeably when referring to younger children and adolescents as collective groups. The first of these terms is “minors”; the second is the generic term “young people.” In both cases, these terms should be understood to refer to anyone still in a state of legal minority and who was, therefore, below the age of twenty. These terms coincide with the Valencian usage of the term “menor,” which had much the same meaning. Additionally, since the upper end of legal minority had some degree of ambiguity that occasionally led to individuals over the age of twenty still being considered “menors,” for reasons mentioned just above, among others, the use of both these terms should be understood in a more inclusive than exclusive sense.

**Thesis outline**

This study is not intended to be a comprehensive study of adolescence as experienced by all segments of Spanish society. Rather, it focuses primarily on the experience of adolescence and the transition to adulthood of those from the relatively elevated, urban elite that included wealthy merchants, non-noble patricians, and members of the titled aristocracy. Moreover, this study has largely restricted itself to documents and texts that originated from within the late medieval city and kingdom of Valencia, for reasons that have already been outlined above in the section on Valencia’s history and historical development.

The reasons for these choices are three-fold. First, the scholarship on the history of childhood and adolescence in the Crown of Aragon, as a whole, let alone the Kingdom of Valencia, is relatively sparse, making it fertile ground for investigation. Second, the parameters of adolescence were not always understood in exactly the same way, even between the various Iberian kingdoms, meaning that a study devoted specifically to the experience of adolescence in the Crown of Aragon can provide interesting contrasts to those studies that have primarily focused on the Castilian experience. In addition, the most significant scholarly work on the topic in the Valencian context focuses primarily on the experience of adolescence among poorer, rural populations of farmers and laborers. Last, the focus of this study on the upper classes of

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28 Such a work is still needed, but is far beyond the constraints of time and space that have been imposed on this work.
29 Furió et al., “L’entrada en la vida dels joves.”
Valencian society permits the use of both archival sources as well as works of literature that were written by and for the social, political, and economic elite, which was made up of a mixture of titled aristocrats, non-noble patricians who nonetheless lived off of rents and the proceeds of accumulated property, and wealthy members of the bourgeoisie. From such sources, one can gain significant insight into how adolescence was perceived within the elite classes of society and into the values elite society believed should be imparted to adolescents during the lengthy period of indoctrination into adulthood that they believed adolescence to represent.

In carrying out these objectives, this study will be divided into three distinct parts and a total of five chapters. The first part, which contains Chapter 1, is entitled “The Legal Youth,” and it traces the origin and evolution of the legal definition of adolescence in the primary law code that governed the kingdom of Valencia, known as the Furs. In particular, Chapter 1 examines the legal definitions of adolescence in the Furs, as well as how the code functioned to construct adolescence as a distinct life-stage that gave significant agency to adolescents, but also rigorously sought to provide a safety net of legal protection that would prevent them from falling into ruin.

Additionally, this chapter examines how the rights and restrictions enumerated within the Furs were implemented in various cases brought before both the civil and criminal courts of the city and before the royal court of the Governor. Here, much of the focus is given to orphaned minors, in large part because the rights of orphans were particularly well enumerated in the Furs. Further, as wards of the court, orphaned adults or their appointed guardians also appear frequently in court records, especially since they needed court approval for most economic and legal actions involving inherited properties or other assets. These records show that, despite the imposition of court oversight, orphaned adults still were often able to live relatively independent lives, in which they exercised significant control over the income they received from both their own labor and from inherited, patrimonial assets. Therefore, by examining how both the courts and the Furs treated this class of adolescents, it is possible to gain some insight into how Valencian society as a whole perceived adolescence as a period of gradual transition and indoctrination into adulthood, which granted significant agency to adolescents in many respects, but which also ensured a certain level of oversight to protect the minors from significant catastrophe.

Lastly, the first chapter looks at two additional, related issues. First, it will examine the use of emancipation within Valencian society and, in particular, why it was much less frequently utilized in Valencia than appears to have been the case in other legal jurisdictions within Europe.
Florence, in particular. Second, attention is given to how the *Furs* changed over time and how later revisions of the code demonstrate larger changes in societal perceptions of adolescence over the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; in most cases, the laws issued by later rulers substantially restricted the independent agency of *adults* to act without adult oversight. The result was that, by the end of the sixteenth century, adolescents were notably more marginalized from adult society than they had been in earlier centuries and appear to have been considered closer to children than to adults.

Part II, which is titled “The Literary Youth,” is comprised of Chapters 2 and 3. In these chapters, the focus will shift from the legal definition of adolescence and youth to the idealized literary representations of these life-stages as found in prescriptive and popular literature. Chapter 2 deals with the idealized vision of adolescent behavior and proper upbringing of young men and women found in the prescriptive writings of Francesc Eiximenis and Ramon Llull, both of whom can be seen as ecclesiastical authors; Eiximenis was a friar of the Franciscan order, and Llull, although never having entered fully into a clerical or regular position, nonetheless lived his life, post-“conversion,” much in the manner of a friar, dedicating himself to proselytization and evangelization. The chapter examines the advice Eiximenis gave to members of the Valencian elite in several of his works, including his encyclopedic compilation, *Lo Crestià*, and *Lo llibre de les dones*, the latter of which treats topics of female education and the proper comportment of women in society. For the most part, Eiximenis’s writings serve as useful compilations of the “consensus opinion” of ecclesiastical thinking of his time. Furthermore, because his works enjoyed a broad readership among the upper classes of late medieval Valencia, his advice on the proper mechanisms for the upbringing and moral formation of young people is especially relevant for a study dealing with these issues in late medieval Valencia.

The second part of the chapter focuses on the provisions for the education and moral formation of ideal knights that are included in Ramon Llull’s *Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria*. Like Eiximenis’s writings, the popularity of Llull’s work in the years and decades following its composition meant that his descriptions of both the qualities necessary for a good knight and his prescriptions for the proper belief and the comportment of knights and squires were useful in formulating a broader model of idealized knighthood that would have been familiar to many members of the aristocracy and patrician classes, as well as to those who aspired to join them. If nothing else, Llull’s work provided an influential model for society of how a knight *should* act; whether or not he actually did so, however, is another matter entirely.
On the other side of the equation, the third chapter turns from the specifically ecclesiastical models asserted by Eiximenis and Llull to the models of the “ideal knight” and “ideal lady” articulated by Joanot Martorell in his chivalric romance *Tirant lo Blanc*. Beginning with a discussion of how accurately Martorell’s writings reflect the more general attitudes of the knightly aristocracy, of which he was a member, the chapter then gives attention to the rather more worldly vision of knights, ladies, and their interactions than was presented by Eiximenis and Llull.

First, the chapter examines the emphasis that Martorell places, throughout the work, on violence, as well as the equivalence that he frequently makes between violence, honor, prowess, and knightly identity. In short, Martorell asserts that his main hero, the eponymous Tirant lo Blanc, was not an ideal knight because of his courtliness or intelligence (though he possesses these qualities as well), but because of his raw physicality and capacity both to inflict and to absorb physical harm. Violence and bloodshed, not courtliness, were what made Tirant a great knight. Elaborating on this notion, the chapter also examines the body of *cartas de batalla* written by Martorell to various opponents with whom he had quarrels and whom he challenged to mortal combat. In many respects, these *cartas* embody the very same ethos of honor and violence that Martorell constructed within his fictional world, again demonstrating that the ideals expressed in his fictional world were not entirely fictional.

The focus of the chapter then turns to Martorell’s handling of courtly matters, including his portrayals of courtship and sexuality between his male and female characters, as well as a seemingly paradoxical portrayal of female sexual desire that emerges forcefully from the work. Notably, Martorell’s view of feminine sexual desire is surprisingly liberal, and almost diametrically opposed to the near universal abnegation advocated by Eiximenis. Instead, Martorell repeatedly emphasizes the social and moral appropriateness of female sexual desire.

Yet, at the same time, Martorell also complicates this rather rosy picture of female sexual agency at various points in the narrative, and most notably in his descriptions of sexual encounters between his male and female characters, where he regularly employs a vocabulary suffused in imagery of sexual coercion and rape in his descriptions of sexual intercourse between what were, up to that point and by all previous accounts, equally consenting partners. Consequently, the chapter attempts to grapple with – and contextualize – this seeming dichotomy. Utilizing the scholarship of Kim Phillips, Louise Sylvester, Corinne Sanders, and Kathryn Gravdal, the chapter tries to explain how Martorell’s use of the vocabulary of rape and sexual coercion can be seen as part of a broader literary pattern in medieval romance, where the
use of such imagery was not uncommon. Therefore, while jarring, Martorell’s enthusiastic employment of such motifs in his descriptions of sexual encounters is not unique, but instead reflects what appear to have been broader societal attitudes about sex and sexuality in the medieval world.

The chapter concludes by discussing Martorell’s advocacy of clandestine marriage, which is rather odd in light of the fact that his own sister was dishonored by a man whom she (and Martorell himself) claimed had agreed to marry her clandestinely and who subsequently refused to recognize the arrangement. Nonetheless, in *Tirant lo Blanc* the practice is used on several prominent occasions, suggesting that, despite official disapproval by both secular and religious authority at the time of the work’s composition, the practice of secret marriage between two individuals, often undertaken as a prelude to sex, continued to have social currency in fifteenth-century Valencia.

The final part of the study, which is titled “Youth in Society” and which incorporates Chapters 4 and 5, returns to sources of a more documentary and archival nature, and examines how the ideals espoused by the authors in Part II were expressed in the lives and actions of young people living in the city and kingdom of Valencia. Therefore, Chapter 4 examines the role of squires – as a class of individuals who were frequently still adolescents or in the first years of majority – in the households of the Valencian elite and, in particular, their involvement in the factional and private wars between various aristocratic lineages that were known collectively as *bandositats*. The chapter attempts to show how the correlation between violence, honor, and prowess, seen in *Tirant lo Blanc*, was manifested in the actions of young aristocrats and other members of their household – including squires – described in complaints and accusations made before the criminal courts. In addition, the chapter also will examine incidents of violence committed by squires or young members of the elite that occurred outside of the more “regimented” context of the *bandositats*. Through this examination, the chapter will illustrate how the culture of aggressive knightly masculinity, glorified by Martorell, spilled beyond the bounds of interfamilial and factional violence and became a generalized mode of behavior for young members of elite households in both their personal interactions with each other and with members of other social classes.

The final chapter of this study, Chapter 5, picks up the second theme addressed in Part II of this study, by giving attention to the ways elite Valencian minors and youths, both male and female, constructed and expressed their sexual identities. Since sexual maturity is one of the most significant points of demarcation between childhood and adolescence, though certainly not
the only one, it is important to pay attention to how young people themselves internalized the often conflicting messages they received from adult society with regard to their ability to express themselves sexually. On the one hand, young people were urged by moralistic writers to refrain from sex or any outward display of sexuality to the greatest extent possible; on the other hand, prominent segments of secular, literary, and popular culture advocated an understanding of adolescent sexuality that was entirely opposite of that advanced by moralistic and didactic authors.

The first part of the chapter looks at the role of the bordell – the public brothel that was created by royal decree and administered by the city – in the social and sexual lives of elite Valencian males and the young members of their households. First, the chapter will provide evidence that individuals from elite classes and younger age cohorts made use of the bordell regularly. Second, the chapter will examine the role of the bordell as a locus for adolescent male identity formation, where social hierarchies and personal identities were constructed (and challenged. Additionally, the chapter will examine the role of the bordell as an especially important platform for performative acts of adolescent male violence, as elite adolescents, youths, and their squires all jockeyed with each for social position in the “hierarchy of honor” that defined much of elite society.

Following the examination of the bordell, the second half of the chapter looks at instances of premarital and extramarital sex in the city’s criminal court records that occurred outside of the context of the legalized prostitution in the city’s public brothel. These cases are noteworthy because they offer insight not only into how male partners perceived themselves as sexual actors but also the sexual attitudes and sexual perceptions of young women. Therefore, these cases offer glimpses into the minds of young medieval women and enable one to consider whether Martorell’s permissive acceptance of female sexuality in any way reflected the social reality lived by the young women in late medieval Valencia.

From the cases that were consulted for this study, it appears that, on the whole, men and women of the elite classes were relatively free to pursue sexual relationships, as long as such pursuits were discreet. At the same time, allegations of illicit, extramarital sexual expression remained a powerful tool to attack and shame in the public forum, meaning that extra care must be exercised in interpreting the evidence for illicit adolescent sexuality, since much of it takes the form of defamatory accusations made as part of larger legal disputes. Nonetheless, even with this said, what Chapter 5 shows is that, for the most part, the lived experience of Valencian adolescents and youth was, in most respects, more like the vision of the lusty, aggressive lover in
Martorell’s work than the chaste, hesitant, restrained ideal of a lover that Eiximenis would have favored.
Part I
The Legal Youth

The idea that one can explore the contours of premodern minority (i.e., the periods generally categorized as childhood, adolescence, and youth) through an examination of legal statutes and court rulings is certainly not an innovation of this study alone. Past decades have seen many historians make use of similar sources in their research, with examples ranging from Barbara Hanawalt's writings on peasant and working-class youth in late medieval England to David Nicholas's writings on the adolescent offspring of the comparatively wealthier merchant class of the Low Countries, to Stanley Chojnacki's scholarship on the young members of the patrician elite in late medieval Venice, among many others. In each of these instances, the scholar has successfully used legal statutes to highlight how adolescence and the transition to adulthood were experienced by young people in disparate, premodern societies. In short, because legal codes generally serve to define and clarify social practice, they also often provide an excellent window onto how societies were ordered, and what values those societies sought to promote.

This is surely the case when legal codes delineate the status of young people (legal minors) with respect to adult society. In law codes from across Western Europe, adolescent minors frequently are defined in such a way that they appear to be individuals stuck between worlds, who are neither fully child nor adult, but an often awkward mixture of both. Hence, medieval legal codes frequently incorporate provisions that were intended to protect adolescents from their “childish” lack of worldly experience – and from the deliberate and malicious efforts of adults to mislead or defraud what was considered a particularly “vulnerable” class of individuals. At the same time, many of the codes also granted a certain amount of agency or personal freedom to adolescent minors to participate in the adult world and public life in meaningful ways and to exert some amount of control over their lives and property, even if such agency was often attenuated somewhat by the oversight of adults.

Similarly, the relevant legal codes in Valencia and the other Iberian kingdoms also give significant attention to young people, carefully delineating the rights and obligations that would accrue to them over the extended period of transition from childhood to adulthood. To a large

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extent, the particular attention given to the legal rights of minors can be traced to the fact that the rulers of both the Aragonese and Castilian Crowns undertook concerted efforts during the thirteenth century to revise, update, and systematize their legal codes as part of the resurgence of interest in Roman law that had spread over much of Europe in the preceding hundred years.² Further, since the Christian kingdoms were still actively expanding and were establishing new legal jurisdictions during this period, in territories conquered as part of the ongoing *reconquista*, Spanish monarchs were able to construct legal codes, in essence, from scratch. This was certainly the case in Valencia, which was “reconquered” in the mid-thirteenth century and where the primary legal code, the *Furs*, was heavily influenced by the resurgence of interest in Roman legal custom.

Yet, as noted in the Introduction to this study, despite the wealth of sources, relatively little has been written about adolescence and youth as experienced in the Iberian context; within Valencian historiography only one article has given any extended attention to how the *Furs* defined adolescence and the rights and protections that adolescents should receive.³ Therefore, to fill in some of these gaps, the first chapter will examine the provisions of the *Furs* relating to adolescence, giving particular attention to the rights and privileges accorded to Valencian minors and the differences between Valencian practice and that of other jurisdictions in the Iberian and broader Mediterranean worlds.

It will also examine the provisions of the *Furs* that pertain to the proper oversight and care of

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² Examples of other codes that were created during this same period are the *Fueros* of Aragon and Alfonso X’s *Siete Partidas*. Both were created, at least in part, as responses to the problems found in earlier codes that often followed the more *ad hoc* format common to the Germanic legal tradition. For useful editions or translations of the Aragonese *Fueros* and *Siete Partidas*, see *Los fueros de Aragón: Según el ms. del Archivo Municipal de Miravete de la Sierra (Teruel)*, ed. Antonio Gargallo Moya (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1992); Alfonso X, *Las siete partidas*, ed. S.P. Scott and Robert Ignatius Burns, 5 vols. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001). A good general description of the importance of Roman law and the influence of its resurgence on Spanish jurisprudence is included in Donald Kagay’s introduction to Pere Albert, *The Customs of Catalonia between Lords and Vassals*, ed. Donald J. Kagay (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2002), pp. ix–xlix, esp. pp. xvii–xxiv.

³ Furió *et al.*, “L’entrada en la vida dels joves.” To date, this has been single best source on the passage through adolescence, experienced by Valencian laborers and agricultural workers. Yet, as is the case in the other Iberian studies, while the Furió *et al.* study is very useful in enumerating and analyzing those provisions of the Valencian *Furs* that pertain to adolescents in a general sense, it cannot be seen as definitive, largely because of its circumscribed scope that concentrates on the rural social milieu and leaves aside the experience of urban adolescents as well as those of higher social and economic status.

An additional article worth mentioning, because of its focus on Valencia itself, is Rubio Vela, “Infancia y marginación.” This article examines government institutions for the care of orphans, particularly the *Almoína de los Orfens*, founded in the fourteenth century in an attempt to delineate the mechanisms through which civic institutions attempted to provide for young people who were otherwise outside of familial custody. For the purposes of this study, however, the work is less valuable because it focuses more on the structural and institutional aspects of care for orphans rather than on how orphans experienced adolescence, or even their own status as orphans.
orphaned minors and others who were no longer under the legal authority of a parent; because orphanhood was believed to create additional hazards for adolescent minors, the *Furs* that deal with their care are particularly detailed. In addition, because orphans were “wards of the state,” they appear with more frequency in extant court records than do other members of their age cohort. Therefore, although they represent a comparatively small portion of the adolescent population, their experience is, altogether, far better documented than that of their contemporaries.

The result of this push for specificity in defining adolescents and their legal rights is that, in the eyes of the law and the courts, medieval adolescents were understood as just that: *adolescents*, who were no longer infants (*pobils* or *pubils*), but were certainly not yet adults. Instead, as discussed already in the Introduction, the Valencian legal code constructed adolescence as something akin to a proving ground, in which adolescents could slowly grow more comfortable with the duties and obligations of adulthood within a legal environment that continued to offer significant protections. Furthermore, adolescence was seen as a vitally important period of socialization for young people into the sociocultural and socioeconomic norms of the society in which they lived. By gradually orienting them to the expectations and responsibilities of adult life, the *Furs* attempted to mold adolescents into competent and effective adults.

In the next several pages, the particular methods used by the *Furs* to effect this gradual transformation will be explored, providing additional insight into how adolescents in late medieval Valencia transformed themselves, over the long periods of adolescence and legal minority, from children into adults.
Chapter 1: Minors in the Furs

When contemplating how medieval Valencian society delineated adolescence (as well as minority), the most important element to remember is that the definition of adolescence was not directly linked to any particular physical or sexual transformation of the body. Instead, as also is the case for modern adolescents, while sexual maturity and puberty generally occurred in the early or mid-teenage years, the legal passage to adulthood and concurrent exit from adult guardianship occurred only much later, when the adolescent has reached a specific, often legally mandated age.¹ In the Furs, this age of transition from legal minority to majority occurred at the age of twenty, with the relevant statute making the point very clearly: “One may be deemed a minor up until twenty years old, and this may be understood and stated for all minors, whether they have a wife or not.”² Thus, minority was a legal state discharged only by the attainment of twenty years of age.

Similarly, the age of entrance into adolescence was also fixed by age instead of by physical transformations within the body. Thus, in the Furs, one finds that the entrance into adolescence, being the point at which a pubil became an adult, occurred at age fifteen. Before this point, a young person was still considered to be, for the most part, a child with few legal responsibilities and even fewer independent rights.³

The disconnection of legal minority from physical development that is seen in the Furs is not unique by any stretch of the imagination. It mirrors understandings of cultural passage from childhood to adulthood that were already mapped out a century ago by Arnold van Gennep in his classic study on rites of passage as societal demarcators of transition in various human societies from one social status to another. Notably, he asserted that, in many societies, the onset of physical puberty rarely served as the primary demarcation between childhood and adulthood.⁴

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¹ Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos makes much the same observation, albeit for early modern adolescence. See Ben-Amos, Adolescence and Youth, p. 237.
³ The importance of fifteen as a point of transition is touched on repeatedly in a section of the Furs dealing with the assignment of guardians to orphaned children. See Ibid., b. 5, rb. 6, chs. 9–13, pp. 76–79. The difficulties of determining when young people “came of age,” whether at age fifteen or twenty, is examined by García Herrero, Las mujeres en Zaragoza, pp. 29–32. She argues that while full majority came at twenty, custom still viewed majority as arriving earlier, around fourteen or fifteen, though she does not give specific evidence for this conclusion.
Instead, entrance into adult society often was marked by a ritual transformation that occurs during the performance of a particular ceremony or rite of passage and that cuts the ritual object’s bonds to childhood and forges new bonds with adult society. Thus, although it is not accompanied by a specific, legally mandated process, the seemingly arbitrary insistence that adulthood arrived only after one's twentieth birthday that is found in the Furs bears all the hallmarks of a Van Gennepian rite of passage, in which “social puberty” trumped “physical puberty.” In much the same manner, it also served to extend adolescence artificially, beyond the simple attainment of sexual maturity.⁵

To establish the root of the disconnection of physical maturity from the passage between childhood, adolescence, and adulthood, however, one must look much further back into history, to precedents from the Roman legal tradition. Doing this, one finds that the passage from childhood to adulthood initially was symbolized by the ceremonial abandonment of “childish” clothing and the donning of the “toga of manhood” (the toga virilis). This ceremony was directly linked to the onset of sexual maturity and, therefore, was used as a means to publicly announce the adolescent’s ability to legally contract marriage. Therefore, for much of the Roman period preceding the collapse of the empire in the West, the passage from childhood into adolescence was directly connected to the onset of puberty: in fact, for much of the Roman period, physical examinations of young boys and girls were mandatory elements of the ritual passage from childhood to adolescence, to verify the onset of puberty.⁶

By the sixth century reign of Justinian (527–65), however, the practice of physically examining children, especially girls, to determine sexual maturity had increasingly come to be seen as both overly intrusive and morally dubious. Consequently, the legal practices included in Justinian’s landmark compilation of Roman law, known collectively as the Corpus iuris civilis, defined the transition to adolescence not by the onset of puberty, but by the child’s attainment of a certain, specified age. For boys, the transition was “considered to commence at once on the completion of the fourteenth year,” with the assumption clearly being that by age fourteen, sexual maturity would have arrived for the vast majority of young men.⁷ Therefore, while

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⁵ In certain situations, such as in certain legal proceedings or in the emancipation of a child by his or her parents, discussed at greater length later in this chapter, there was a more official ceremony recognizing the adult status of a former adolescent. These occasions appear to have been rather uncommon, however, and there is little evidence that they were considered mandatory or routine.


⁷ Justinian, The Institutes of Justinian, ed. J.T. Abdy and Bryan Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University
representing a significant change in practice, Justinian’s revised provision continued to adhere to the spirit of the original ritual practice, while also bringing it in line with the changes in moral belief that made physical examination of children increasingly unacceptable. Similarly, for girls, the age of adolescence came even earlier, at age twelve. Here too the underlying assumption appears to have been that most girls would have reached sexual maturity by this point and, therefore, physical examinations would no longer be necessary.

The statutes dealing with the passage from childhood to adolescence in the Furs largely follow a model similar to that just delineated, albeit with the transition occurring at fifteen years of age rather than fourteen. Nonetheless, in the basic understanding of what differentiated a child from an adolescent – including the ability to contract legal marriage, have children, and give testimony in court (at least for adolescent males) – the Furs fundamentally follows the lead of its classical models. In this, one clearly sees the weight that was given to Roman legal precedents by the framers of the Furs, as well as the lingering influence of Roman legal practices that were passed down through the various codes enacted by the regions’ Visigothic rulers and their successors in the period following the collapse of the Western empire.

On the other end of the adolescent age spectrum, however, a more significant distinction exists between the Furs and its Roman antecedents: namely, that the passage from legal minority to legal majority – being also that from a menor to a major – occurred significantly earlier in the former than in the latter. In short, the passage to legal majority in Valencian law occurred five years earlier than was mandated by Justinian's code, at age twenty instead of twenty-five. Moreover, there is no indication given within the Furs for why it departed so significantly from

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Press, 1876), bk. 1, tit. 22, quoted in Laes, Children in the Roman Empire, p. 62. [et ideo sancta constitutione promulgata pubertatem in masculis post quartum decimum annum completum illico initium accipere disposituimus.]

The particular reasons for the separation of physical maturity and legal majority remain hazy, but may even have begun to develop as far back as the second century BCE, following the Second Punic War. This interpretation is suggested by Jean Néraud. His suggestion is that because of a significant rise in the number of orphans in the Roman Empire, whose fathers had been killed during the eleven-year struggle with the Carthaginians, the Roman Senate decided that the risks of financial ruin through fraud or prodigality for such a large population of orphaned children were simply unacceptable. Consequently, legislation was passed in 191 BCE establishing the much higher age of majority to protect the welfare of those orphaned by the war and giving them the additional adult supervision that they would have received from their fathers, had they not fallen in the course of the war. That such a practice, initially instituted as a reaction to a particular socio-cultural crisis, remained in place without significant modification for the next eight hundred years, eventually being reproduced in Justinian’s code, is rather remarkable, though perhaps no more so than that legal codes of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that were still drawing heavily on the sixth-century code of Justinian. For Néraud's interpretation, see Jean Pierre Néraud, Être enfant à Rome (Paris: Société d’Édition “Les Belles Lettres,” 1984), pp. 25–26.

For discussions of the influence of Roman law on the Furs, see both the Introduction to this study and later in this section, where the influence of Roman legal understandings of adolescence that appear in Visigothic law codes will be more thoroughly discussed.
the legal foundation that was so influential in shaping the Furs as a whole.\textsuperscript{10}

The most likely cause of this disparity is that the codes of the Crown of Aragon, instituted by Jaume I and which include the Furs, continued to give weight to legal precedents established by Visigothic codes, in addition to the strain of Roman civil jurisprudence derived from Justinian’s \textit{Corpus Iuris Civilis} that was spreading rapidly from centers of learning, like Bologna, into various European courts in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. These codes, although issued by barbarian, Visigothic kings, nonetheless were also rooted in Roman precedent, albeit from a strain of juridical tradition different from those utilized by Justinian. Instead, the Visigothic codes relied heavily on statutes promulgated by Rome’s Christian emperors in the period between the fourth and sixth centuries, with the fifth century \textit{Codex Theodosianus} (the “Theodosian Code”) being particularly important. In large part, this is due to the fact that its precepts were adopted, nearly in their entirety, by the Visigothic king, Alaric, in a law code he had compiled for his Roman subjects in the first part of the sixth century.\textsuperscript{11}

The \textit{Codex Theodosianus}, issued by the Emperor Theodosius in 429, was intended as a compilation of all the laws enacted by the Roman Empire's Christian rulers, since the early fourth century. However, while it became important for many jurisdictions in the Western empire, especially following the collapse of imperial authority in the West, the Theodosian code was given rather less predominance in the East, with Justinian's \textit{Corpus iuris civilis} ignoring many of its provisions in its attempt to recreate the more “pure” and “undiluted” legal tradition that was perceived as having existed in Rome’s earlier, pre-Christian past.\textsuperscript{12} Therefore, because

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\item \textsuperscript{10} While other codes elsewhere adhere more strictly to the age of majority given by Justinian’s code, the other major legal codes of the Crown of Aragon also place the age of majority at age twenty, showing that this was a consistent regional practice. For more on this, see Fueros de Aragón, p. 132. [Quando padre o madre quieren eredar algún fillo o filla… aquel fillo primero no puede ni deve vender ni allenan aquel heredamiento dentro edat de XX annos e, passados los XX annos, bien la puede vender e allenan toda o una partida e fer todas sus voluntades.] The format of the Usatges, as a collection of law closer to the haphazard organization of Germanic codes than the order of the Romans means that the age of majority is mentioned only in passing as part of a law dealing with an issue only tangentially related to issues of majority. For this, see The Usatges of Barcelona: The Fundamental Law of Catalonia, ed. Donald J. Kagay (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), ch. 92, p. 87. [Let guardians and bailiffs be legally answerable for their wards if these are willing. But if they are not, this must wait until \textit{the ward shall come of age; that is, twenty years old so they may engage in litigation with plaintiffs.}\textsuperscript{11}] Emphasis mine.
\item \textsuperscript{11} This code, known both as \textit{The Breviary of Alaric} and as the \textit{Lex Romana Visigothorum}, is almost certainly the main vector through which the precepts of the Theodosian code were incorporated into Visigothic law more generally. See Peter Stein, \textit{Roman Law in European History} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 31.
\item \textsuperscript{12} For a brief discussion of the origins of Justinian’s \textit{Codex}, see \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 29–41. As Stein notes, while Justinian’s Code was based on the “Theodosian Code,” where conflicts arose between legal precedents, they were resolved by new constitutions. In these, Justinian and his compilers frequently favored older precedents over newer “innovations.” \textit{Ibid.}, p. 33. For the actual provisions of the code, see \textit{The Theodosian Code and Novels, and the Sirmondian Constitutions}, ed. Clyde Pharr (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969).
\end{itemize}
the Visigothic codes relied on legal understandings that were frequently minimized or rejected by Justinian's code, they are the most likely source for the earlier age of legal majority found in the *Furs*. In fact, when examining the sections of the Theodosian Code that delineate the age of majority and the transition to legal adulthood, one immediately notices that the age of majority is the same as in the *Furs*: twenty years old.\(^\text{13}\)

Although both codes share the same age of transition to legal majority, the legal understandings that underlay the two codes on this matter are not totally equivalent. Specifically, while the *Codex Theodosianus* identifies twenty years old as the age when legal majority *should* occur, it does not allow, as does the initial redaction of the *Furs*, that simple attainment of that age established majority *ipso facto*. Instead, in something more closely akin to a Van Gennepian, ritualized process, the Theodosian Code decreed that, after reaching the prescribed age of majority, minors should petition their local ruler for a decree of *venia aetatis*, which then immediately ended minority and granted all benefits of majority to the receiver.\(^\text{14}\) Thus, instead of linking majority directly to one's attainment of a certain age, the Theodosian Code stated that majority only came into force when it was recognized by civic authority, in the form of the decree of *venia aetatis*.\(^\text{15}\) Therefore, while the age at which majority can commence is the same in both codes, the fundamental understanding of how majority comes into legal force is recognizably different, forcing one to look elsewhere for a more direct antecedent for the *Furs*. Nonetheless, the *Codex Theodosianus* remains important because it is the earliest code in which one finds twenty years of age, rather than twenty-five, given as the age of majority.

Looking beyond the *Codex Theodosianus*, the seventh-century *Liber iudiciorum* of the Visigothic King Recceswinth is another major source to be considered. In the sections dealing with adolescence, legal minority, and the transition to adulthood, one finds that his code did

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\(^\text{13}\) For further discussion of *venia aetatis* in the “Breviary of Alaric,” see Merchán Alvarez, *La tutela de los menores*, pp. 224–26. Although the reasons for viewing twenty years old as the transition point to majority are unclear, it is notable that this age has a biblical precedent and was commonly seen as the age of majority in the Hebrew and Old Testament traditions. This could, quite possibly, have served as a possible source for the early codes of the Visigoths. For more on the age of majority in the Old testament and Jewish traditions, see Joseph Fleishman, “The Age of Legal Majority in Biblical Law,” *Journal of Ancient and Near Eastern Society* 21 (1992): pp. 35–48.

\(^\text{14}\) In many respects, this practice is similar to that discussed in footnote 8, above, albeit with the civil courts of the city standing in for the lord.

\(^\text{15}\) Merchán Alvarez suggests that the rise of the *venia aetatis* was linked to more general confusion over the passage to majority and the role of guardians in relation to their wards in the later empire, which the new policy probably did nothing to alleviate. Merchán Alvarez, *La tutela de los menores*, p. 224.
away with the ceremony of *venia aetatis* entirely.\(^{16}\) Instead, his code reinstated a legal framework more closely aligned to that advanced within Justinian's *Codex*, in which the transition to majority was effected by a simple attainment of the prescribed age.\(^ {17}\) Yet, importantly, Recceswinth's code differs from that of Justinian in its assertion that majority commenced at age twenty, rather than the age of twenty-five specified by Justinian. Therefore, the *Liber iudicorum* perpetuated the clear break from earlier tradition already seen in the earlier *Codex Theodosianus* and “Breviary of Alaric.”

Furthermore, while no statute directly addresses the passage from legal minority to majority, the topic is addressed tangentially in several places. For example, one of the clearest statements of the *Liber iudicorum*’s understanding of the transition to majority is found in a statute that primarily deals with what happens to children should their mother remarry after the death of the children’s father. Here, the statute states that, in such cases, the mother loses her rights of guardianship over her children, but that any children who “have achieved their majority, that is if they have arrived at the age of twenty years” could be impelled to serve as guardian for their younger siblings.\(^ {18}\) Importantly, the statute makes no mention any procedure or writ, such as *venia aetatis*, as being necessary to permit children over twenty to serve as a guardian. Instead, it seems that the simple attainment of twenty years old was sufficient to effect the transition to majority and to permit the woman's child to act as a guardian for his siblings.

Therefore, the *Liber iudicorum* can be seen, perhaps, as something of a hybrid document, which draws on both traditions of Roman law – the Theodosian and the Justiniac – but that combines them in a new and unique manner. Moreover, since it was an important source for the legal codes promulgated by Jaume I in the early to mid-thirteenth century, it was also quite likely an inspiration for the otherwise unusual identification of twenty as the age of majority found in the Valencian *Furs*.\(^ {19}\)

As much as the attainment of twenty years of age was, undoubtedly, a signal moment for the transition from legal minority to legal majority, another element of the Roman legal tradition frequently prolonged the legal dependence of Roman sons (as well as daughters) to their fathers,

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\(^{16}\) This source for the Valencian *Furs* is also identified by Colon and Garcia, the editors of the edition used in this study. For their discussion of the *Liber iudiciorum*, see *Furs*, v. 1, p. 45.

\(^{17}\) For example, see *Leges visigothorum*, ed. Karl Zeuner and Albert Werminghoff (Leipzig: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1902), bk. 4, tit. 3, p. 190–93.

\(^{18}\) *Ibid.*, bk. 4, tit. 3, ch. 3, p. 191. [*Quod si mater alium maritum acceperit, et aliquis de filiis iam ad perfectum, id est usque ad XX annorum perveniat etatem, ipse iuniores fratres sua tuizione defendat.*]

\(^{19}\) cf. footnote 10.
even after the child had reached the age of legal majority. This practice is *patria potestas*, which was the traditional notion of Roman jurisprudence and family law that put the father, the *pater*, in a position of more-or-less supreme power over the household and which held that all children would remain under the legal authority, the *patria potestas*, of a father for as long as the latter lived, regardless of the child's age or physical maturity; further, this right was absolute and could be nullified only by the father’s express emancipation of his children from his authority. Consequently, *patria potestas* frequently served to delay the accession of young men to adulthood far beyond the age of physiological maturity. In fact, since it was possible for a child to marry at age fifteen, unless the young groom was formally emancipated by his father, he (and, by extension, his wife) would have remained legally dependent on his father and under the father’s *potestas*: a situation that would have meant that the young man would have had almost no legal authority over his own family or financial situation.\(^{20}\) What is more, the young man would not have possessed *patria potestas* over his own children either. Instead, his father would have been given legal control over his grandchildren. Thus, in some situations, one could be a father, yet enjoy none of the privileges that *patria potestas* was supposed to grant.

No doubt because of the various problems that would have arisen from such extended periods of legal dependence, by the thirteenth century several medieval law codes, including the Valencian *Furs*, had come to recognize the cessation of *patria potestas* when a male child married.\(^{21}\) Thus, in a passage enumerating the various means for male children to exit from *patria potestas*, one provision of the *Furs* states, “Sons who are in the power of their father are

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21 This trend was not universal. For instance, one example of a community that maintained the classical Roman practice that extended *patria potestas* into marriage was Florence, Italy. Thomas Kuehn has devoted several studies to this topic, concluding that Florentine law clearly recognized the continuation of a father’s (or other patriarch’s) legal control over both male and female children, even after they had been married and left the paternal household. As in classical Roman practice, in Florence, *patria potestas* could only be terminated by an explicit, public act of emancipation or the physical death of the father. For this, see Kuehn, *Emancipation*.


The Valencian *Furs*, on the other hand, stand in agreement with their Castilian counterparts. In her monograph on Castilian guardianship practices, Grace Coolidge mentions in passing that marriage terminated minority and *patria potestas* in the *Siete Partidas*. Coolidge, *Guardianship, Gender, and the Nobility*, p. 22.

Further, in his exhaustive study of guardianship practices in the Crown of Castile, Merchán Álvarez also notes that marriage of a minor may have resulted in the termination of guardianship, and a corresponding attainment of majority, based on provisions taken from a fourteenth-century Castilian formulay. Merchán Álvarez, *La tutela de los menores*, p. 226.
removed and delivered from this power [their *patris potestas*] if the father emancipates them … if the father dies, or if the son takes a wife.”\textsuperscript{22} Further, this was the case from very earliest redaction of the *Furs*, promulgated in the mid-thirteenth century.

The situation for girls, on the other hand, is somewhat less clear, with the evidence provided by the *Furs* indicating that young brides were given the capacity to be emancipated by marriage only at a much later date, in a revision to Jaume I’s original statute issued by Martí I in 1403.\textsuperscript{23} Before this point, girls appear to have remained under their father’s *potestas* even after marriage, unless the father surrendered the *potestas* into the hands of another through emancipation. Unfortunately, emancipation documents are rare in Valencia for both sexes and none of the few that can be found in the registers of the civil and royal courts deal with the emancipation of a daughter. Likely, this matter will require additional research within the disparate, largely unedited, and unindexed registers of the kingdom's independent notaries. For now, however, the question must remain open.

What can be said with more certainty, however, is that for the period most closely examined by this study – between approximately 1400 and 1425 – girls did possess the privilege of being emancipated by their marriage, much as had been the case for grooms for almost a century and a half. Therefore, after 1403, both young men and women entered into marriage having exited the paternal authority of *patris potestas*. This did not in itself effect the transition of a child to full legal majority and adulthood, however. As noted in the definition of legal minority provided by the *Furs*, and quoted above, as long as either or both spouses remained under twenty years old, they remained minors according to the *Furs*. Thus, while marriage effected the exit from *patris potestas*, married *adults* under twenty years old remained subject to adult authority; the difference was that, after marriage, the authority was no longer automatically that of the child’s father, exercised through *patris potestas*. Instead, minors who married were given legal guardians charged with overseeing their affairs and protecting their assets (including the dowry, other properties, or other incomes given to the couple) until the minors reached the age of majority mandated by the *Furs*.\textsuperscript{24}

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\textsuperscript{22} *Furs*, bk. 6, rb. 3, ch. 5, p. 134. [*Los fills qui són en poder del pare són exits e deliurats de son poder si aquel pare los emancipará, ço és si és absorvà o'ls deliurarà de son poder o si aquel pare morrà o'l fill pendrà muller.*]

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., bk. 6, rb. 3, ch. 6. p. 135. [*Ordenam que'ls cases de deliurament de pàtria potestat en lo fur final antich, posat sots la present rúbrica, sien enteses e hajen loch axi en filles com en fills, ço és axi en filla qui pren marit com en fill qui pren muller, e axi dels altres cases.*]

\textsuperscript{24} In this respect, the Valencian *Furs* may be seen to contrast with practices in other areas of Europe such as
In fact, the *Furs* specifically prohibited minors from attaining legal majority through any means other than by reaching the age of twenty, stating,

> If any minor less than twenty years old requests a “pardon of age” that is to say that he may be held as older than twenty years by means of a rescript or concession of the king, we wish that such a rescript or concession shall not be valid; until he is twenty years old he shall remain a minor in all ways.25

Thus, this provision underscores, once more, the inability of marriage to deliver minors from legal dependency, even as it also delivered them from the *potestas* of their father. Further, the fur clearly states that no writ, rescript, or other privilege granted by a secular lord would have any validity in prematurely establishing legal majority, making clear that, at least by the time of the Furs, the earlier practice embodied by the writ of *venia aetatis* had fallen entirely out of favor.

Turning away from the actual provisions of the *Furs* and towards an examination of how the statutes were implemented by Valencian courts, several cases from the registers of the Valencian civil court, the *Justicia Civil*, that touch on these matters can be cited. Frequently, these cases were proceedings undertaken to appoint legal guardians for children who were about to exit from their father’s *potestas* because of marriage. Moreover, these cases consistently demonstrate that while *patria potestas* might have ended at marriage, legal minority did not.

Illustrating this, one example taken from a court proceeding in 1419 tells of the father of a Valencian adolescent who requested that a legal guardian (a curator) be appointed for his daughter, whom the document identifies as Elionor Torrella. The guardian, he said, was needed to administer her dowry after her marriage to a young man named Anthoni Ximenez d’Espanya.26 Further, the document records that her father claimed that a guardian was necessary because Elionor was “older than fifteen years old and less than twenty.” In short, Elionor was an adolescent, or, in the terminology of the *Furs*, an *adult* and, therefore, while her impending nuptials removed her from the authority of her father, the continuation of her status as an *adult* minor meant that she was legally prohibited from having any control over either her dowry or other assets.27 Moreover, since minors were not permitted to alienate any inherited

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25 *Furs*, bk. 2, rb. 13, ch. 8, p. 219. [Si aici menor de XX ans demanarà perdó de edat, ço és a saber que sie pres per major de XX ans per rescrit o per atorgament del senyor rey, volem que aquel rescrit e aquel atorgament no haje valor, enans sie pres tota via per menor tro haje XX ans.]

26 The legal distinctions between types of guardians and the levels of guardianship are described more fully in the subsequent section on orphans and guardianship.

27 Archivo del Reino de Valencia, *Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles* 1.917 (1419), mn. 8, f. 36r (Dec. 16). In
property without the express consent of both a guardian and the civil court, and since the marriage effectively removed her father’s capacity to act as her legal custodian, a guardian was necessary to effect the transfer and transformation of various inherited properties into a usable dowry. Consequently, even though married – and, ostensibly, released from the legal authority of her father – Elionor’s emancipation remained less than complete. Notably, in her case, the guardian named by the court was also her fiancé, which suggests that he was over twenty years old; had this not been the case, another guardian would have been assigned and her husband would also have been given a guardian to oversee his estate. Further, such an arrangement was perfectly legitimate; the record of Elionor’s father's petition on her behalf includes several pages of witness statements testifying that Anthoni, the fiancé, had reached his majority and was therefore legally capable of serving as her guardian. Having her fiancé serve as guardian may well have permitted the new couple greater access to the dowry money than would have been possible had the curatorship been granted to an unrelated party.

In another example from the following year, the emancipation and marriage of a younger adolescent, Francesc Gilabert de Centelles, the scion of one of Valencia’s most prominent aristocratic clans and a man of some importance later in his life, is documented. The record of his emancipation reflects the continuation of his attenuated status as a minor, analogous to that seen in Elionor Torrella's case. While Francesc Centelles’s emancipation freed him from the direct legal authority of his parents, he was still given a guardian to oversee his welfare and

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28 The nuances of Valencian law pertaining to guardianship will be discussed more fully in the subsequent section, “Orphaned ‘Adults’ in the Legal Record.” In most cases, women did not directly control their own dowries while their husbands were alive, but provisions within the Furs did permit direct control of dowries by adult women who were widowed or were able to prove in court that their dowry was being mishandled by their husbands. Book 5 of the Furs de Valencia is largely given to the topic of dowries and how they are to be handled (especially rubrics 1–5). The particular fur outlining a woman’s right to reclaim her dowry in special circumstances can be found in bk. 5, rb. 5, ch. 16. Further, several monographs delve further into the rights of wives. For example, for women and dowry in Valencia itself, see Dana Wessell Lightfoot, Women, Dowries and Agency: Marriage in Fifteenth-Century Valencia (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013). For women in medieval Catalonia, see To Figueras, Familia i hereu, esp. pp. 318–40. For wives in late medieval Venice, see Chojnacki, Women and Men, esp. chs. 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8.

29 Although no additional cases of this sort are contained in the records of the Justicia Civil, it is possible that an arrangement such as this would have been fairly common, given that it results in a situation that most closely approximates the societal standard that while a dowry was managed by the husband, it was not a gift. He was expected to protect and manage the dowry in such a manner that the principal did not decline.

30 Archivo del Reino de Valencia (ARV), Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.921 (1420), mn. 3, f. 1r (Mar. 21). Notably, the guardianship was not given to the Francesc's father, but to a relative, also a noble from a prominent family, named Manuel de Montagut. Unfortunately, rationales for the choice of curator were not generally requested by the court and therefore are almost never specified within the documents. As a result, the motives behind the choice of guardian are indeterminate in almost all cases.
affairs. Moreover, while his marriage made him “independent” in a legal sense, it is clear that his independence remained limited to a great extent.

For those who remained under their father’s potestas – that is, those who did not marry, who were not emancipated, or whose fathers remained alive – their transition to full legal independence was even more attenuated and protracted. Several statutes from the original redaction of the Furs had the collective effect of pushing the age of legal majority even further beyond the age of twenty. For example, in one statute, the Furs decreed that any property that a minor under patria potestas came to possess, whether through inheritance, gift, or purchase, could not be held by the minor himself or herself, but instead was held by the father either until his death or until his child left his potestas.

This, in itself, is not extraordinary, especially since minors generally did not control their own property. What is remarkable, however, is that, in an unusual intervention that only occurred in a handful of instances, Jaume I included an addendum to the original law that overturned the intent of the original provision, almost entirely. Instead of the original language, which mandated that a father must restore the property when the son left his potestas, Jaume’s revision decreed that a father could hold any property or gifts received by his son, as well as the usufruct from it, until his child reached twenty-two years old – two years beyond the previously stated age of majority. Moreover, Jaume’s modification also provided that, despite the fact that the goods were not his in the first place, “the father shall not be held to restore the usufruct [of the goods or property] to the son,” even after the child had reached the age of twenty-two. Therefore, in effect, this provision created a situation in which ownership could be held by a son, but the benefit of the property continued to be enjoyed by the father, creating even further hurdles to the ability of young adults to manage property that was, fundamentally, theirs until

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31 Another case detailing a similar situation can be found in ARV, Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.920 (1418), nn. 8, ff. 49r-50r (Dec. 23, 24).
32 Furs, bk. 6, rb. 2, ch. 3, pp. 131–32. [Si alcunes coses mobles o no mobles o semovens venran per testament o per altra cosa al fill o a la filla o al nét o a la néta e d’aqui enant a alsques que sien en poder del pare, aqueses coses lo pare procur e guarant que no sien afollades ni mirvades e que sien estojades e guardades a ells e que les pusquen recobrar après la mort del pare ... Mas si el pare lo fill o la filla, o l’nét o la néta,... emanciparà, o lo fill o la filla o l’nét o la néta ... seran allogats en matrimon, de mantinent lo pare sia tengut de restituir a ells entegrament les coses damunt dites ... Enaxi que, d’aquel temps a enant, lo pare, en les dites coses o els fruys d’aqueses, neguna cosa no prene ne hafe.] 33 Similarly, if a father sold “possessions” to his child, the father would retain control and use until the child reached age twenty-two.
34 Ibid., p. 131. [E quan lo fill haurà complida edat de XXII ans, recobre e haja aqueses possessions de pare. Mas lo pare no sia tengut de restituí al fill l’usufruit.] In a footnote associated with this passage, Colón and Garcia note that, as in the original fair, usufruct would be restored if the child was emancipated or married.
well after their twenty-second birthday.\textsuperscript{35}

The fact that Jaume's revision, in effect, transferred the economic benefit of a child's property, represented by the father’s continued right to \textit{usufruct} of the property even after his child had reached the specified age of twenty-two, not only underlines one of the many ways in which dependence of sons and daughters on their parents could be extended beyond the point of emancipation or marriage, but also the even greater lack of independent agency experienced by those who remained under \textit{patria potestas} and who, as a result, exercised almost no economic autonomy in regard to their own goods and property. Consequently, for those who had a living father, were not married, and were not emancipated, it appears that these individuals experienced a much lengthier period of “minority” than even the twenty or twenty-two years mandated by the \textit{Furs}. In effect, even though they had reached legal adulthood, these youths remained stuck in a state of social childhood, much like earlier generations of aristocratic youths described by Georges Duby, in which they could only await, impatiently, their parents' deaths, when they could finally accede to the land and property that would, ultimately, signify their adult status and their exit from dependent minority to full adulthood.\textsuperscript{36}

Thus, while the statutes of the \textit{Furs} are generally clear in their definition of legal minority and majority, as well as of the requirements that governed the transition between these states, some ambiguities remained. Because exiting legal minority required both the exit from parental dependency (triggered most often by marriage, but also by emancipation) coupled with a transition to legal majority dependent entirely on one's attainment the specified age of twenty, it is perhaps understandable that clear distinctions of where adolescence ended and adulthood

\textsuperscript{35} In a note glossing this particular \textit{fur}, the editors of the modern edition of the \textit{Furs}, Germà Colón and Arcadi Garcia, note that while age twenty-two has no exact precedents in the \textit{Furs} or in earlier codes, it may not have been intended at all as a marker with any ritual significance pertaining to the accession of adulthood. \textit{Ibid.}, p. 132, n21. Instead, they suggest that the two additional years added on were intended to make the \textit{fur} align with another that only permitted children to take legal action against their fathers “within two years after twenty years old, concerning that which they have been damaged during their minority.” \textit{Ibid.}, bk. 2, rb. 13, ch. 7, p. 218. Thus, since the \textit{fur} that Jaume “improved” was dealing with goods or lands received during the child’s minority, the two years after age twenty may have served as a transitional period for the father to hand over the goods, rather than as a firm extension of the effective age of majority. Unfortunately, whether Colón and Garcia’s assessment is truly accurate cannot be determined with any real certainty, but the fact remains that these statutes stand alone as the only provisions of the \textit{Furs} that mention the arrival of an individual at the age of twenty-two as having any special, legal significance at all. Ultimately, whether these provisions represented an acknowledgment of the difficulty of disentangling a father and child’s property rights or were, instead, a simple power grab by fathers to maintain control over goods and property that legitimately belonged to their children may have depended on the perspectives of those involved, whether that of the parent or the child. From the language of the \textit{fur} itself, the possibility of abuse, if not its actual occurrence, looms large.

\textsuperscript{36} Duby, “Youth in Aristocratic Society.”
began were difficult to demarcate, with different circumstances leading one twenty-year-old Valencian who was married and whose father had died to be considered an adult, while another, of the same age but who remained unmarried and still resided in his father's home, to be considered legally a minor, dependent on his father and lacking the ability to act independently in legal or economic matters.

**Protections Accorded to Minors in the *Furs***

Having demonstrated that legal minority was generally attached to age-based criteria, even if those criteria sometimes retained elements of ambiguity, this section examines how the *Furs* used the large gap between the onset of physiological and social adulthood, represented by adolescence, as a means to slowly transition minors from childhood into adulthood. Furthermore, this section will explore how the *Furs* reflected broader hopes and fears of late medieval Valencian society, as it aided its younger members in their transition to adulthood. It is clear that Valencian society was profoundly concerned about its adolescent members and, in particular, their capacity to act independently of adult supervision.

Rooted in the widespread societal perception of the young as inherently guileless, pure of spirit, and therefore easily deceived, the *Furs* placed several layers of legal restrictions and protections on minors, all of which were intended to protect the young so that they could learn the ways of the world while minimizing the risk of catastrophic economic damage to either the adolescent or their inherited patrimony.37

In some instances, these provisions took the form of outright prohibitions. Most significantly, there was a prohibition against any minor legally obligating himself or herself on behalf of another. According to the relevant *fur*, while it was recognized that minors were permitted to give testimony in court proceedings beginning at age fourteen, which can be considered as one form of oath-taking, *adults* still were not permitted to pledge themselves as guarantors for oaths taken by others before the court.38 The reason for this distinction, given by

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37 These beliefs have been documented on various occasions. In his voluminous *Etymologiae*, Isidore of Seville describes childhood (*pueritia*) as “pure” (bk. XI, ch. 20). The relevant passages are included as an appendix in Burrow, *Ages of Man*, pp. 200–01. Similarly, Richard Trexler dwells on perceptions of “purity” among children in Renaissance Florence. See Trexler, *Public Life*, pp. 368–87.

38 *Furs*, bk. 4, rb. 9, ch. 6, p. 48. [*Menor de XIII ans no pusque fer testimoni en feit civil ni en criminal.*]
the *fur*, is that a minor “cannot cause damage to himself.”\(^{39}\) In essence, because the guarantor of an oath put his own economic well-being on the line in support of the purported good faith of another, minors, because of their lack of sufficient maturity and exposure to the adult world, were deemed to be ill-prepared to make such judgments effectively. Therefore, they were prohibited from acting as guarantors under any circumstances.\(^{40}\) Thus, in this provision, one sees a careful balancing act between the desire of the *Furs* to permit adolescents to begin to take part in adult society, as by permitting them to give legal testimony, and the desire to limit their capacity to enter into contracts (such as acting as a guarantor) that could be economically damaging.

Similarly, another provision extends much the same protection to minors who entered into other types of contract, and again balances the two aforementioned competing desires. For example, minors were explicitly prohibited by the *Furs* from entering into any contract that would sell any movable or immovable object in their possession.\(^{41}\) For those still under their father's *potestas*, this prohibition makes a good deal of sense, since the possessions of the child were, in almost all cases, considered to be the legal possessions of the father; even goods or property given directly to a dependent minor came under the oversight and usufruct of the father. For those outside of *patria potestas*, however, such a provision makes sense only if the ban were enacted because Valencian society inherently viewed adolescent minors with a certain amount of suspicion and, therefore, sought to limit the ability of minors as a collective group to act independently with regard to contracts involving the sale of any property or movable goods that could be considered, in any way, part of the minor's familial patrimony. Therefore, the prohibition was intended as a means of ensuring that minors did not "cause damage to themselves" by dissipating the patrimony that was intended to support them and eventually be passed on to subsequent generations.

In other respects, however, the ordinances of the *Furs* attempted to balance the desire to protect adolescent minors with other provisions that were slightly more permissive in their view

\(^{39}\) *Menor de XX anys no deu ésser reebut per fer mança, car no pot fer son dan*. An additional law dealing with the same issue can be found in bk. 2, rb. 13, ch. 3, as well as in bk. 5, rb. 6, ch. 34, p. 90.

\(^{40}\) Likewise, in a subsequent section, minors, or at least those still under their father’s *potestas*, are also prohibited from giving surety for another in a contractual matter. For this provision, see *Ibid.*, bk. 2, rb. 13, ch. 3 p. 216. [*Fill familiar, ço és que és en poder de son pare, si és menor de XX ans e per algú farà fer mança, no sie a alcuna cosa obligat per rahó d’aquella fer mança.*]

\(^{41}\) *Si menor de XX ans, jasia ço que haje tudor o no tudor, vendrà alcuna cosa movent o seent, aytal venda per dret no valla.*
of the capacity of minors to enter into a contractual obligation. One statute, for example, reaffirmed that, while minors could not sell property or goods, they could enter into other forms of contract, as long as the minor was not harmed by the transaction. As the *fur* itself puts the matter,

Those things that are enacted by minors less than twenty years old should in no way be revoked or undone; but they should be undone and revoked later if it becomes apparent that the minor was misled through the falsity of his adversary, or the minor, negligently, because of the weakness of his mind, has done himself damage or worsened his possessions in any contract.\(^{42}\)

Therefore, the *Furs* granted minors both the right to enter into contracts, but also the capacity to withdraw from them with no penalty, should a contract turn to their economic disadvantage, with full restitution of all money and possessions. In short, the *Furs* created a means for minors to begin to take part in economic dealings with the adult world, but in such a manner that risk was significantly minimized. Moreover, another *fur* makes much the same point:

If a minor of less than twenty years old is taken advantage of in any contract because of his feeble age, and can prove it so, he may request the benefit of restitution, that is that the deception and damage done to him should be undone … thus cutting off and undoing the contract in which he was deceived because of his feebleness of age.\(^{43}\)

Thus, the function of the *fur* was to introduce minors into adult society gradually, by allowing them to take a significant step into the adult world of courts, contracts, and commerce while still being prevented from the same level of risk to which adults themselves were subjected.

While this desire to protect minors from their own inexperience is laudable, it also was the source of fairly significant problems. For example, one statute attempted to clarify what should be done in cases where a minor defaulted on a loan made by another minor – a particularly thorny problem since the loan would have been, in effect, a form of contract and, therefore, both parties were legally entitled to protection under the *Furs*. However, since this was impossible in this case, with one of the two minors suffering economic harm, the framers of the *Furs* attempted to balance the prerogatives of both parties, by deciding that the minor who defaulted on the loan was not liable to repay it, as long as he or she had not experienced a net increase in wealth

\(^{42}\) *Ibid.*, p. 221. [Aqueles coses que seran feytes ab los menors de XX ans, jens tota hora no deuen ésser revocades ne desfeytes; mas ladonchs deuen ésser desfeytes e revocades can serà manifest e cert que serà enganat lo menor de XX ans per engan de son adversari, o el menor negligentment, per leugeria de son sen, en algun contrat haurà feit son dan o pivoament de ses coses.]

\(^{43}\) *Ibid.*, bk. 2, rb. 13, ch. 16, pp. 222–23. [Si menor de XX ans serà enganat en algun contrat per féblea de edat, e açò porà provar pusque demanar benefici de restitutió, ço és que li sie desfeyt l’engan e el dan que haurà pres… e axi trencar e desfer lo contrat en lo qual per féblea de edat serà enganat.] Furthermore, minors were not required to take vows on the sacrament or Bible when entering into contracts. Any contract in which such a vow was required was automatically deemed null and void.
because of the loan. In essence, if the borrower could demonstrate that the borrowed money had been dissipated (i.e., lost or spent) without his or her having received any lasting benefit from it, the debt did not have to be repaid. If, however, the loan could be shown to have increased the borrower’s net wealth, he or she was obligated to repay the debt by whatever means possible.\footnote{Ibid., bk. 2, rb. 13, ch. 14, p. 221. [Si menor de XX ans creurà o prestarà diners a menor de XX ans, aquel qui pres lo préstet no és tengut de retre aquell aver, si doncs no era trobat quen fos pus rich. Enaixi és vist que és pus rich: si aquell aver o diners que menlava són en son poder, o si comprà alcuna cosa d’aquell aver o d’aquels diners, la qual cosa sie encara en son poder].}

Therefore, underlying the solution proposed by the Furs is a basic assumption that a minor who borrowed money was, most likely, in a weaker financial position than one who had money to lend. Moreover, through this approach, the fur attempted to maintain the safety net of the Furs’s provisions by protecting the minor with the most to lose, while also permitting minors to continue to enter into such agreements. As in the statutes cited above, a loan between minors would be nullified or terminated only if the borrowing party defaulted. Thus, this provision mirrors the tenor of other furs discussed throughout this section, again casting minors as active participants in the “adult” economy of the kingdom.

On the whole, then, the Furs sought to balance two competing desires: on the one hand, the Furs embodied broader societal fears about the inexperience and credulity of the young and, therefore, went to great lengths to protect minors from financial harm that their own, intrinsic weaknesses as young people could have created; on the other hand, the Furs also embodied the competing ideal that sought to encourage young people to integrate themselves into the adult world and, consequently, indulged such participation, giving adolescents opportunity to grow, mature, and explore the world they would one day join. In this respect, the construction of adolescence in the medieval Furs reflects modern understandings of the adolescent years as a period of experimentation, identity formation, and transition from the dependence of childhood to the independence of adulthood.

**Premature Adults at Court: Emancipati, Orphans, and Their Guardians**

This section will give attention to the provisions of the Furs that address the oversight of those minors who, through various means, had exited from patria potestas. Even more than the statutes pertaining to minors more generally, statutes pertaining to orphans or emancipated minors tend to highlight the broader understanding of adolescence that the Furs as a whole
projects. In no small part, this is due to the fact that statutes detailing the rights of orphans form a body of legislation that is even more extensive and detailed than that which pertains to minors. Moreover, orphans appear with far greater regularity in extant court records and, therefore, represent an outsized share of the adolescents that appear in the records that have been preserved and which were used in this study.

Additionally, although orphans were certainly a minority of the population, their numbers were likely not as small as one might initially suspect. Even though reliable data on such subjects is extremely scarce, several studies conducted in other areas of Europe estimate that between 30 percent and 40 percent of the premodern population lost at least one parent at some point during childhood and adolescence, with the father being the most likely to have passed away. Consequently, rather than being an entirely insignificant percentage of society as a whole, and a social group rarely encountered in everyday life, minors who had lost at least one parent would have been common enough that most extended families or networks of acquaintances would have had at least one orphan among their members. Thus, the provisions of the Furs that address the rights and protections of orphans provide a valuable glimpse into how Valencian society viewed the place of the adolescent within society as a whole. Additionally,

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45 In her study of childhood, adolescence, and the transition to adulthood, Growing Up in Medieval London, Barbara Hanawalt begins her chapter on orphans and wardship by stating that “reading through approximately 2000 wardship cases in London’s Letter Books is enough to make a historian skeptical about Philippe Ariès’s claim that children were not valued” (p. 82). This was certainly the case in Valencia as well, as will be discussed further in this chapter.

Other notable works examining the situation of children orphaned by parental death include the work of David Nicholas, who treats this subject as part of his larger history of the family in late medieval Ghent; see Nicholas, Domestic Life of a Medieval City, esp. ch. 7. Parental death as a moment of familial disaster has been described nowhere as forcefully as in Christiane Klapisch-Zuber’s classic essay, “The Cruel Mother,” cited above. Yet her view of the relatively weak position of widowed mothers with regard to maintaining custody and control over their children has been challenged in the subsequent decades, especially by Stanley Chojnacki in several essays compiled in his monograph Women and Men in Renaissance Venice. Also, in her study of inheritance patterns and female guardianship in Castile, Grace Coolidge largely supports Chojnacki’s position, asserting a much greater involvement of mothers in the lives of their children after the death of the child’s father. In addition, Emma Montanos's much older, but still useful, study from the early 1980s also gives attention to the situation of wards in Castilian law. For efforts to deal with the problem of orphaned children in later centuries and further afield, see, among many others, Boswell, Kindness of Strangers; Terpstra, Abandoned Children; Elaine Clark, “City Orphans and Custody Laws in Medieval England,” The American Journal of Legal History 32, no. 2 (1990): pp. 168–87.

46 In his monograph on early modern England, Peter Laslett estimated that 35 percent of children had lost a parent in the late seventeenth century. Peter Laslett, The World We Have Lost: Further Explored, 3rd ed. (New York: Scribner, 1984), p. 100. Drawing on records from sixteenth-century Castile, David Vassburg calculated an even higher rate of 38.5 percent, with 23 percent having lost their father and 12 percent their mother. See David Vassburg, “Orphans and Adoptions in Early Modern Castilian Villages,” The History of the Family 3 (1998), p. 441 n4. The implication would seem to be that the remainder (65 percent) had lost both parents, meaning that roughly one in seven children would have lost both parents by the end of their minority. However, since Vassburg does not state these statistics himself, they must be treated as tentative. Unfortunately, as is so often the case, the lack of surviving records that so often plague study of the medieval era has largely prevented researchers from conducting similar studies for centuries before the fifteenth.
the rights and privileges accorded to orphans by the *Furs* may have served as a standard against which other adolescents measured themselves, giving those still under *patria potestas* a clear glimpse of privileges they likely believed they should also be able to exercise, but which their father's continued existence preempted.

Following this discussion of the provisions of the *Furs*, attention will then pass to how these provisions were implemented, as seen in various cases drawn from the registers of the *Justice Civil*, the primary civil court of the city of Valencia. Often, these cases include details that even permit one to glimpse how the adolescents appearing before the court perceived their own rights, their own agency, and their relationship with the adult world, and are, therefore, an especially valuable source for this study. What these cases also demonstrate is that, for the most part, Valencian courts took the desires of orphaned adolescent minors seriously and were very hesitant to impinge on the capacity of such individuals to live independently, if this is what the orphaned adolescent desired to do. Furthermore, when conflict arose between orphaned adolescents and those assigned to act as their guardians, the courts showed a surprising willingness to favor the prerogatives of the adolescent over those of the guardian, suggesting even further that the courts – and, by extension, Valencian society as a whole – viewed adolescence as a crucial period of transition and incorporation into the adult world.

Lastly, the section turns specifically to the small set of emancipations that are recorded within the registers of the civil and royal courts in an effort to tease out additional insights into what role emancipation played in Valencian society, particularly in light of the work of Thomas Kuehn, whose studies on emancipation in late medieval Florence remain the most extensive writings on the subject within the field of medieval adolescence. Therefore, by comparing the use of emancipation in Valencia to that reported by Kuehn for Florence, one can begin to gain a better understanding of why, at times, Valencian parents might choose to emancipate their dependent children, even while the parents themselves remained alive.

**Orphans and guardianship**

The basic approach of the *Furs* on issues pertaining to orphaned minors bears the imprint of Roman precedent, much as it did for the legal treatment of minors more generally. This is seen nowhere more obviously than in the basic understanding of the *Furs* that, like its classical antecedents, ultimate accountability for the welfare of orphaned children was placed in the hands of courts rather than solely in the hands of an orphan’s relatives, which does not mean that the
role of family was unimportant. Relatives quite commonly served both as legal guardians and as caregivers for orphaned minors, but the involvement of courts, nonetheless, was understood to be necessary to ensure that orphaned children received proper care until they had achieved legal majority. Therefore, even if it frequently meant little more than confirming the guardianship of a surviving parent or another individual named in a deceased parent's will, the courts still intervened in such cases and approved the arrangements that had been made.

On these occasions, the Justicia Civil held primary responsibility for assigning guardians to orphaned or emancipated children within the city. In addition, the court also adjudicated cases that pertained to the property and inheritance of orphaned minors. However, its jurisdiction extended, for the most part, only to those who lived within the walls of the capital city. Consequently, most of those who appeared before it were drawn from the ranks of the urban patriciate, mercantile, and artisan classes. Orphaned members of the aristocracy, on the other hand, especially if they did not claim the capital city as their primary place of residence, tended instead to use the court of the Governor (the Gobernació), which held primary jurisdiction over the aristocracy and other individuals who were held to be exempt from the authority of municipal courts. As a result, cases involving the young, orphaned, or emancipated aristocrats also appear within the registers of the Gobernació with some frequency, making it a valuable supplementary source to the records of the Justicia Civil.

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47 In the Institutes, guardians could be named by parents in their wills and testaments but were ultimately appointed by officials of the state, such as the Praefectus Urbi or Praetor. Institutes, bk. 1, tit. 20, ch. 4, p. 58 & bk. 1, tit. 23, ch. 1, p. 63.
48 Although dealing with a somewhat different context, Stanley Chojnacki stresses the fact that both patrilineal and matrilineal relatives were involved in the upbringing of minors and their entrance into adult society, in his case by examining which family member served as sponsor for a young patrician as they entered political life. Much the same was the case for Valencian minors and orphans, as both patrilineal and patrilineal relatives can be found as sponsors and guardians for orphaned children. See Stanley Chojnacki, "Kinship Ties and Young Patricians," in Women and Men in Renaissance Venice (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), pp. 206–26.
49 In most instances, continued habitation with the surviving parent was the assumed norm. The only exception to this rule occurred in cases of a remarriage by either the father or mother. In these instances, a child could remove himself or herself from parental authority should either the relatives of the deceased parent, or the child themselves so wish. Furs, bk. 5, rb. 2, ch. 10, p. 25. [Can lo pare será mort, los fils romanen en poder de la mare, e can la mare serà morta, los fils romanen en poder del pare. Si, emperò, lo pare pendrà muller o la mare pendrà marit, los fils no sien en poder d’aquels si aquels fils o pruixmes d’aquels fils o volran.] The intervention of the state into the lives of orphans can also be seen in other contexts, where Roman precedent was not quite so dominant. For example, in England, orphaned wards from aristocratic households fell under the direct authority of the king, who could decide whether to keep the ward in his own household, or sell the "care" of the ward to one of his vassals, who received the usufruct of the ward's patrimony until he reached majority. For a brief discussion of this, See Orme, From Childhood to Chivalry, pp. 50–51.
50 The Governor's court also, at times, functioned as something akin to an appellate court, before which subjects could make complaints against judgments rendered by lower, civic courts.
The sections of the *Furs* pertaining to the oversight of orphaned children and the rights and legal capacities they enjoyed are strongly influenced by earlier Roman practices. Therefore, in much the same manner as Justinian's *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, the Valencian *Furs* established what amounted to a graduated system of guardianship. Children under fifteen years old (pubils or pobils) were subjected to a more active and authoritative form of guardianship under a tutor (tudor), who was directly responsible for ensuring the day-to-day sustenance of the child, including his or her proper housing, nourishment, and education. The Valencian *Furs* also adopted the provisions of Justinian’s *Institutes* in establishing that the involvement of a tutor was necessary for any transaction that created “bilateral obligations” between a pupilus and another individual, as is reflected in the *Furs* by the similar provision that a pubil “can not obligate his belongings either generally or in particular without the authority of his tutor.”\(^{51}\) In effect, the tutor functioned in much the same manner as a father in his exercise of patria potestas over the child and, in almost every respect, pubils remained dependent on adult authority.

Minors between the ages of fifteen and twenty (adults), on the other hand, were placed under the supervision of another type of guardian, known as a curator (curador), and both the *Institutes* and the *Furs* outline a very different relationship between curators and their wards than that between a tutor and his charge. Most notably, curators were not automatically imposed on adults upon the death of their father in either the *Institutes* or in the *Furs*. Also, even on occasions where the civil court did assign a curator for an orphaned child, the appointments were made only to fulfill specific legal tasks and were of limited duration, such as representing the orphaned minor in court in a specific complaint or drawing up a contract and bringing it into legal force.

Moreover, unlike a tutor, a curator was not generally responsible for the overall management of an orphaned adolescent's entire estate, which remained in the hands of the minor himself, but oversaw only a portion of a specific asset or bequest that had been given to the orphaned adult. It was not uncommon, therefore, for adults, especially from the upper classes, to have more than one curator. Consequently, curators were not expected to act as a surrogate parent and did not wield patria potestas or any other equivalent form of authority over a ward. In fact, Justinian's *Institutes* even went so far as to state explicitly that an adolescent “cannot be compelled to have a curator, except for the purpose of conducting a [legal] suit.”\(^{52}\) Moreover, curators could not be

\(^{51}\) *Institutes*, bk. 1, tit. 21, p. 26. [*ex quibus mutuae obligationes nascuntur.*] *Furs*, bk. 2, rb. 13, pp. 228–31; *Ibid.*, bk. 5, rb. 6, pp. 72–95. The quotation used here is from bk. 5, rb. 6, ch. 34, p. 90. [*Lo pubil no pot obligar generalment ne specialment les suas coses sens aucturit del tudor.*]

\(^{52}\) *Institutes*, bk. 1, tit. 23, p. 28. (*Item invitales adulescentes curatores non accipiant praeter quam in litum*).
assigned in wills or through any other means that might result in a permanent supervisory position.

Like the Institutes, the Furs established that as long as an adult continued to live off of the proceeds of the property and investments included in his or her inherited patrimony – and made no attempt to diminish the principal of the patrimony itself or to alienate inherited property – no guardian needed to be appointed by the court, and curadors were assigned only in exceptional cases, where the child was determined to be either insane or otherwise incompetent to manage his or her own affairs, or “[managing his or her] affairs poorly,” as the relevant fur describes it.\footnote{Furs, bk. 5, rb. 6, ch. 14, p. 79. [Als adults, ço és a aquells qui seran mayors de XV ans tro a XX, si mal aministren lurs feits, sia donat curador.]} For the majority of adults, though, curadors were assigned, in the original redaction of the Furs, only for specific purposes and only for a limited duration. Here, the impulse was, on the whole, to allow orphaned adults to live as independently as possible.

Over time, however, Valencian curatorship came to differ from its Roman precursor in one significant respect: namely, in 1363, Pere III modified the Furs and permitted parents to name a curator for their children in their wills. Additionally, he provided for curators assigned in this manner to occupy their position on a more or less permanent basis until the child reached the age of majority. Moreover, these assignations did not require “any confirmation by a judge or other person,” permitting them to come into legal force merely by their inclusion in a parent's will.\footnote{Confirmation of curatorships established in wills still appears to have been sought from the various Valencian courts in some instances, but it was in no way mandatory.}

Yet, while Pere III’s revised statute gave parents significant new privileges, it did not fundamentally change the legal capabilities of curadors themselves; they still remained relatively limited in their authority, especially when compared to that granted to tudors. Even after Pere's revision, orphaned adults retained the ability to manage their own incomes and still only needed to make use of their assigned curadors for legal matters such as those specified above. Only in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries did this begin to change, with revisions enacted by later rulers altering more fundamentally the basic character of Valencian guardianship and restricting the ability of orphaned adults to live independently. For the period most fully examined by this study, however, the office of the curador remained attenuated.

Given the continued impotence of curadors, one wonders how frequently parents actually named a curador in their testaments. A definitive answer, unfortunately, cannot be given at
present and requires a much more intensive study of wills and other notarial instruments, but data collected from a limited survey of notarial registers from the first decades of the fifteenth century provides some tentative answers. Specifically, the registers of two Valencian notaries who were active in the first half of the fifteenth century, Jaume Mestre and Julian Andrés, form the basis of the conclusions that follow.

Among the testaments found in their registers, around thirty name a testator that is identifiable through various means as a member of the middle or higher socioeconomic classes. Of these, thirteen of the wills name a child or children as heirs, and, of the thirteen, all name an individual who the testator desired to serve either as a tudor or as a curador, suggesting that the naming of a guardian in a testament was a relatively common practice, although it certainly is possible that the unanimity seen in testaments could also have been the result of the particular advice or predilections of both notaries. Perhaps these notaries were particularly diligent about asking the testators to provide for a guardian. Nonetheless, the fact that none of the testaments omit naming a guardian for heirs who were still minors is notable, even if a wider base of testamentary evidence is needed for a more absolute conclusion.

Where the testaments show less unanimity, though, is in the person named to serve as guardian within each testament. In the majority of cases, the guardianship was kept within the extended family, with fathers, mothers, brothers-in-law, spouses, or adult children all being represented and named as guardians. Additionally, because the testaments were written after King Martí I permitted mothers and grandmothers to serve as guardians in 1403, women are also named by husbands and sons to serve as guardians for children or grandchildren: in fact, in the eight wills drawn up by male testators who had children, five of them, approximately 63 percent, left the guardianship to either their wives or to their mothers. In comparison, only three wills specify a male guardian. On the other hand, only one of the five female testators with children (20 percent) named their husband as guardian; the others (80 percent) elected another to serve, including the testator’s own mother, father, or another relation from the maternal line.

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55 The cases discussed here are all drawn from four notarial registers spanning the years 1397 to 1425. The registers are as follows: Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Protocols i Testaments, Jaime Mestre 2.644 (1395–99); Ibid., Protocols i Testaments, Julian Andres 1.256 (1409–10); Ibid., Protocols i Testaments, Julian Andres 1.268 (1422–29).

56 In one interesting case, the testator appointed his brother-in-law as guardian, but notes that if the brother-in-law dies, then his spouse should be given the guardianship. In this way, he splits the difference to some extent. ARV, Protocols i Testaments, Julian Andres 1.256 (1409-10), ff. 87r-89r (Oct. 31, 1410).

57 An example of this can be seen in a case from 1411 in which a father appeared before the Justicia Civil to request a curador for the goods left to his children by his deceased wife, who had died intestate. The court
preference for a guardian from the mother’s own family likely reflects a recognition that the assets being distributed, frequently drawn from the mother’s dowry, had their origins in the assets of the maternal line. Therefore, it was deemed fitting that a member of the maternal line should oversee them. Further, for both male and female testators, only in a small handful of cases does the guardian named have no recognizable blood tie to either the testator or his or her family, which suggests that the guardianship of orphaned minors was, most frequently, a family affair.

Looking beyond the registers of these two Valencian notaries, the records of petitions made before the courts of the Justicia Civil and Gobernació are much larger, often extending to dozens of cases and hundreds of folios per year. To some extent, these cases challenge the conclusion that the naming of testamentary guardians was common because, repeatedly, one finds petitions being made either by minors themselves or by members of their families for a guardian, either a tudor or curador, to be named for an orphaned minor left without one by his or her deceased parent. At the very least, additional research into this question will be necessary to determine whether the registers cited above are representative of general practice, or whether they are more of an anomaly. For now, the question must remain open.

What can be stated with more certainty, however, is that for the entire period that forms the focus of this study, from the late fourteenth century to mid-fifteenth century, orphaned adolescents (adults) were permitted by the Furs to live their lives and conduct their personal affairs with relatively little mandated oversight from a guardian or court-appointed, adult authority. Protections still existed to be sure, but for the most part Valencian society seems to have taken the view that orphaned adults should be left, largely, to their own devices, at least by the courts or other legal institutions. Supporting this conclusion are several examples drawn from the records of the city’s civil courts, which will be discussed in the following section.

appointed an individual described as a "parent e conjuncta persona," suggesting that he was a maternal relation of the man's spouse. See Ibid., Justicia Civil, Cures 4.659 (1411), nn. 1, ff. unmarked (Jan. 20). The reasons for this preference are unclear but may have something to do with the claim that maternal relations still exercised over maternal assets, such as the dowry, that would commonly be passed on to a deceased woman's children. Although neither Dana Wessell Lightfoot nor Stanley Chojnacki speak to this matter specifically in their respective studies, both scholars do speak generally about the efforts medieval women made to disburse their personal and dotal assets as they saw fit and the relative independence that they enjoyed in doing so. Moreover, Chojnacki, in particular emphasizes the important role that maternal relations often played as executors for these bequests. For these, see Chojnacki, Women and Men, esp. chs. 4, 6, and 10; Wessell Lightfoot, Women, Dowries and Agency, ch. 6 and passim.
Orphaned “adults” in the legal record

Only a portion of what was once a much larger body of records has survived within the records of the Justicia Civil’s Curateles i Tuteles registers, this being the collection of registers specifically pertaining to the appointment and service of tutors and curators. Although fewer documents have survived than one might hope, those that do exist provide sufficient quantitative and qualitative evidence to use them as the basis of a broader exploration of the attitudes and patterns of behavior relating to youth and adolescence within Valencian society because they allow us to examine how orphaned adults were treated by the court and how their relationships to both their curators and adult society as a whole were understood.

Among the elements brought into relief by the various petitions and other cases contained within the registers is that orphaned adults, and especially adolescent males, frequently asserted their independent agency to manage their inheritance and other property aggressively. Even in cases where orphaned adults had been assigned a curador by one or both parents in a testament, they repeatedly appeared before the court to assert the right to independent agency that they believed was granted to them by the Furs, and which they believed was being infringed upon by intrusive meddling of their assigned curador or other member of adult society. In other cases, one can find examples of some adult males accepting the limited oversight of a curador with apparent equanimity, but such acquiescence was not at all universal. Instead, the guardianship documents of the Justicia Civil indicate that medieval adolescents were no more obedient to adult authority than has been ascribed to their modern-day counterparts by modern social psychologists like Erik Erikson.

Evidence of orphaned adult males acting in the manner just described can be found in several petitions made before the Justicia Civil, where a curador was requested by an adult but was appointed only on a provisional ad hoc basis to carry out specific legal tasks, much in the model of earlier Roman practice, and with the curatorship dissolved once the specified action had been completed. Further, in most of these cases, no mention is made of a previous curador, indicating that a not insignificant percentage of orphaned adults lived largely outside the constraints of

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58 For the period covering the late fourteenth to early fifteenth centuries, relatively complete registers are available only for the years 1358, 1402, 1406, 1410, and 1418–20.
59 ARV, Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles, 1.910, 1.913–1.914, 1.916–1.917, 1.920–1.921; Curas, 4259.
60 Erik Erikson is certainly among those who have most fully explored adolescent rebellion and the search for independent identity, stating at one point, “Should a young person feel that the environment tries to deprive him too radically of all the forms of expression which permit him to develop and integrate the next step [of identity formation], he may resist with the wild strength encountered in animals who are suddenly forced to defend their lives.” Erikson, Identity, Youth, and Crisis, 1st ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1968), p. 130.
formal guardianship.

In one particularly illustrative example of this, from 1418, an adult named Ramonet Jofre, the scion of a prominent noble family, petitioned the Justicia Civil for a curator to carry out a legal action related to an annuity (censal) he had inherited from his deceased mother.\(^{61}\) According to the record created by the court, Jofre was supposed to receive periodic dividends from the annuity from the holder of the principal amount, a man named Joan Lop.\(^{62}\) In his appeal to the court, Jofre asserted that Lop now refused to pay the annual dividend of seventy-five sous (solidi) that was owed, and, on top of that, when Jofre demanded the return of the principal that underlay the annuity, amounting to twenty-six lliures (libras), six sous, Lop stated that he could not conduct such a transaction with Jofre because he “had not completed XX years of age,” and was a minor (de menor edad).\(^{63}\) Notably, Jofre’s mother had not named a curator for him in her will and Jofre seems never to have requested one, as was his right.\(^{64}\) Instead, it appears that Jofre had, up to this point, been content to live off the proceeds of his patrimonial investments, while keeping the principal intact. Therefore, he only needed a curador now that a portion of those proceeds were being withheld, a fact that seems to have displeased Jofre greatly: the record of the proceeding notes that Jofre made clear to the court that he did “not want to have any curator to administer his goods since he, by the grace of God, deem[ed] himself satisfactory.”\(^{65}\)

However much Jofre believed himself to be qualified to manage his own finances, for Joan Lop the lack of an adult guardian to oversee and authorize transactions on behalf of the young adult appears to have been a serious problem, even if his specific concerns are never elaborated at any length in the extant record.\(^{66}\) All that is known is that Lop was said to have refused to deal with Jofre directly, and, consequently, Jofre grudgingly requested a curador be assigned to him,

\(^{61}\) ARV, Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.920 (1418), mn. 5, f. 27r (Aug. 11).

\(^{62}\) Unfortunately, the record makes no additional mention of who Joan Lop was or what his relationship may have been with Ramonet’s mother Elionor. At the very least, there appears to have been no familial connection between the two.

\(^{63}\) ARV, Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.920 (1418), mn. 5, f. 27r (Aug. 11). [no ha complida de XX anys.]

\(^{64}\) This fact, in itself, provides an interesting counterpoint to the notarial evidence presented above and lends some measure of weight to the view that the notarial registers examined may not be entirely representative of general practice.

\(^{65}\) ARV, Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.920 (1418), mn. 5, f. 27r (Aug. 11). [nech altre ell haja ne haver vulla curador alcun administrar sos bens com ell per gracia de deu si ting per bastant.]

\(^{66}\) It should be noted, though, that Lop’s refusal to deal with Jofre may have been nothing more than a convenient excuse for him not to make the payments he was obligated to make, whether because he was unwilling or unable to do so.
albeit making it very clear that the curator’s office would expire after the transaction was completed. After this, he would then return to administering his incomes and other affairs without the supervision of a curador. In fact, in what almost serves as an exclamation point to the entire affair, after all arrangements had been made, Jofre again repeated that he wanted no curador; clearly, for this young man, even the onerousness of a temporary adult overseer was almost too much to bear.

Looking beyond Ramonet Jofre’s case, it is clear that his reticence in accepting the oversight of a curador was not unique to him, but fits into a pattern of behavior seen in other records as well. One such case is that of Berenguer d’Oluga, an adult who appeared before the Justicia Civil in 1358 and who requested that a curador be assigned him to assist in the signing of a purchase contract. Like Jofre, Oluga clearly specified that the curador being assigned was not permanent, but only would exercise his office for the purpose of concluding the contract. After that, the appointment would end and Oluga, like Jofre, would go back to managing his own affairs. Notably, the record of the proceeding identifies Oluga as a notary, even mentioning that he had drawn up the legal petition himself. Clearly, he does not seem to have lacked any confidence in his own abilities, and perhaps it was for this reason that he felt himself perfectly competent to manage his other legal and economic affairs and only made his request because of the legal mandates that the Furs imposed on him.

Similarly, in another case, an adult named Francesc Corbara, described as “between fifteen and twenty years of age,” came before the court of the Justicia Civil to request that part of his patrimony be transferred from the hands of his current curador, his paternal grandfather, into the

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67 ARV, Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.920 (1418), mn. 5, f. 27r (Aug. 11). [In reliquis vobis negotiis suis, protesta que no vol haver curador a c.]
68 The curator that Jofre ultimately did receive from the court was none other than his older brother, “the honorable Sir Jaume Jofre, knight.” This in itself is not particularly remarkable given that curatorships were quite commonly assigned to close family relations. The Furs even contain specific provisions encouraging such assignments. In this instance, however, especially given the tenor of the document as a whole, one could almost imagine that his brother was one of the few people that Ramonet trusted with any sort of legal authority over him, however temporary. Even given this, the document notes that Jofre wanted the court to ensure that the curatorship his brother exercised was limited to the terms previously laid out, nothing more.
69 Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.910 (1358), mn. 3, f. 15r (May 12). As noted above, contracts entered into by adults were generally considered to be valid, although with caveats. Therefore, it is likely that the curador was deemed necessary to give an extra veneer of permissibility to the arrangement. Notably, another adult, this time named Joan d’Oluga appeared before the court the following month also requesting that a curador be named for the signing of a contract. However, while the last names of both petitioners are the same, there is no other indication that the two were otherwise related. See Ibid., mn. 4, ff. 18r&v (Aug. 11).
70 The record indicates that Oluga nominated his paternal uncle to act as his curador for the contract.
hands of another *curador* who would more willingly carry out the younger Corbara's will. In the petition, Corbara is also described as practicing the trade of a merchant (*mercader*), suggesting that he, like Berenguer d'Oluga, was already established in a highly regarded trade, in spite of the fact that he remained a legal minor.\(^7\) Nonetheless, in spite of his apparent maturity, he was still a minor and had been appointed a *curador* some earlier time. Thus, when a dispute arose between the young Corbara and his *curador*, his paternal grandfather, named Garcia Corbara, the younger Corbara had no choice but to appeal to the Justicia Civil for assistance in carrying out his will in the face of his guardian's opposition.

The nub of their dispute was rooted in Garcia Corbara’s unwillingness to turn over twenty-five Aragonese florins from the inheritance he was administering for his grandson to use to purchase a vineyard. In essence, he refused to release the funds without a direct command from the Justicia Civil, likely in recognition of the fact that a *curador* was not permitted to diminish his ward's patrimony in any way, which is exactly what the younger Corbara hoped to do.

While this may seem like a reasonable position for Garcia Corbara to take, especially since he was adhering to the letter of the law, his grandson appears to have viewed his reticence in another light, as an obstacle preventing his exercise of his own agency to carry out his purchase of a potentially profitable, income-generating property. Therefore, in his petition, Francesc not only requested that the Justicia Civil compel his grandfather to hand over the money, but also that another, separate *curador* should be named to oversee and deal with issues connected to the purchased property, effectively severing the vineyard from the patrimony overseen by Garcia Corbara and transfer it out of his authority. What is more, the court ultimately agreed to Francesc Corbara's request and granted his petition, naming Jaume Ros as Francesc Corbara’s new *curador* to oversee the purchase and maintenance of the vineyard. Notably, this was the very man that Francesc himself had suggested as a candidate for the position, and this basic fact suggests that, even as late as the second decade of the fifteenth century, the court of the Justicia Civil remained willing to accede to the attempts of *adults* to exert independent authority in managing their economic affairs, even if such petitions effectively reduced the power of a

\(^7\) ARV, *Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles* 1.917 (1419), mn. 1, ff. 37r–38r (Jan. 14). It is possible that Corbara could have been a *factor* or other form of apprentice to an older, more established merchant, but no mention of such an affiliation is made in this document. To be sure, though, it would have been far more common that a “merchant” of his age would have still been in the employ of another rather than working on an entirely independent basis.
curadors in favor of the increased authority of the adult petitioner. In Corbara’s case, this is demonstrated by the Justicia Civil's ultimate acceptance of Francesc Corbara’s plan, which served to permit him to reorder his assets and estate as he saw fit, even though, technically, he was prohibited from doing so by the Furs.

Unfortunately, there is little to indicate if the dispute between Francesc Corbara and his grandfather affected their relationship in any significant way, an especially important fact given that the elder Corbara remained the primary curador of his grandson’s inherited patrimony. Thus, while the records of Corbara’s case give no indication if Francesc Corbara continued to attempt to further displace his grandfather's guardianship through additional petitions to the Justicia Civil, the most likely scenario is that Garcia Corbara remained in his position as Francesc’s guardian until he reached majority at age twenty.

Thus, in many respects, Francesc Corbara’s case gives a glimpse into some of the possible complications that arose when the economic prerogatives of orphaned adults came into conflict with the perceived responsibilities of his or her curador. Corbara's experience also suggests at least one reason for the reticence of other young men like Berenguer d’Oluga and Ramonet Jofre to resist the imposition of any form of curatorship at all upon them, since Corbara's dispute with his grandfather ultimately appears to have served little purpose, other than to make the entire transaction more difficult, time-consuming, and, likely, expensive.

For orphaned girls, both married and unmarried, on the other hand, the picture offered by the Curateles i Tuteles registers is rather more ambiguous. In many cases, the records appear to show a greater willingness by adolescent girls to entrust their inheritance, as well as their own person, to the care of a curador. The reason for this is not entirely clear, but it is likely the result of various factors – not least of these was that young women, and especially those in the upper socioeconomic ranks, were often considerably more restricted by social convention from

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72 No indication is given as to the relationship between Ros and either Francesc or Garcia Corbara.
73 As much is also suggested in the Justicia Civil’s final decree, which describes Garcia Corbara as the “tutor and curator” of his grandson and Jaume Ros merely as the “curator of Francesc Corbara for the present actions.” Moreover, further evidence suggesting this can be found in another case, in which a young girl requests an additional curator to manage the portion of her inheritance that was to become her dowry. Her husband-to-be is proposed, thereby handing control of the dowry over to him and leaving the rest of her estate in the hands of her original curator, most likely her father, though he is never explicitly mentioned as such. This case can be found in Ibid., mn. 8, ff. 36r–38r (Dec. 16).
74 Examples in which adolescent girls appear before the court to request a curador can be found throughout the Curateles i Tuteles registers. Examples include ARV, Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.910 (1358), mn. 1, f. 36r (Mar. 7); Ibid., mn. 2, f. 25r (Apr. 10); Ibid., 1.917 (1419), mn. 2, f. 3r (Jan. 31); Ibid., 1.920 (1418), mn. 5, ff. 36r–38v (Aug. 20).
actively participating in the public sphere and were encouraged to adopt more passive public personas than their male counterparts.\textsuperscript{75} Thus, it may be the case that young women more readily accepted adult oversight in the form of a curator as a result, at least in part, of the different, gendered patterns of behavior that society sought to instill in young men and women. Therefore, it is little surprise, perhaps, that these broader societal attitudes were reflected in the behavior of orphaned \textit{adultas} who appeared before the \textit{Justicia Civil}'s court to request that a guardian be appointed for them.\textsuperscript{76}

With this said, however, exceptions to this general rule also exist within the documentary record, in which adolescent girls actively resisted the authority of those assigned by the court to oversee their estates and welfare and brought complaints to the \textit{Justicia Civil} against guardians who they deemed to be illegitimate or overly oppressive. One such case is that of Francesca Aragonés, a girl who, in 1410, had recently turned fifteen years old and, having passed from the status of \textit{pubila} to that of \textit{adulta}, appeared before the court to claim the additional rights over her inheritance granted by her new status as an \textit{adulta}. Notably, up to that point, the inheritance had been held by her paternal grandfather, Martí Aragonés, but nowhere in the petition is he said to be her \textit{tudor}, despite the fact that he seems to have been largely performing this function for her.\textsuperscript{77}

Whatever Martí Aragonés’ status may have been, Francesca makes it perfectly clear in her petition to the court that she no longer desired him to retain control of the inheritance she had received from her deceased father, Martí Aragonés’ son. Thus, she requested that another individual be named as her \textit{curador} to initiate legal proceedings on her behalf against her grandfather and to force him to hand over the inheritance. This is especially interesting because it placed the decision of who should ultimately assume her guardianship directly into Francesca’s

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{75} The impetus for female passivity can certainly be seen in literary texts from the period and these ideas will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 2, during an examination of the approaches to male and female education advanced by Francesc Eiximenis, a leading didactic writer in late medieval Valencia. Additionally, scholarship dealing with the same issues in other areas of Europe includes Shahar, \textit{Childhood}, pp. 174–75; Fiona Stoertz Harris, “Sex and the Medieval Adolescent,” in \textit{The Premodern Teenager: Youth in Society, 1150–1650}, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler (Toronto: Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, 2002), esp. pp. 234–35. For societal efforts to inculcate passivity in young women, see Phillips, \textit{Medieval Maidens}.

\textsuperscript{76} Adolescent males, one might argue, were more actively encouraged to engage in conflict to demonstrate their "prowess" and social prestige. Therefore, they may also have been more willing to challenge those holding authority over them. This idea is explored more fully in the later chapters of this study, especially in Chapters 3 and 4.

\textsuperscript{77} \textit{ARV, Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles}, 1.920 (1418), nn. 5, f. 35r. [\textit{Vulla demanar sos bens qui son en poder d’en Martí Aragonés, major de dies, vehi de la dita ciutat de Segorb, avi paternal seu.}]
own hands: at the end of the petition, as shown by the fact that the candidate that Aragones put forth to begin legal proceedings against her grandfather was approved by the court. The fact that the man appointed was a maternal uncle only makes the case more interesting, as it adds an element of interfamilial competition to the case as well.

Therefore, although it was noted above that medieval cultural expectations often expected young women to be meek or docile, Aragones certainly does not give this impression, appearing instead very much to have taken matters into her own hands and to have exerted a form of personal agency that would have confounded the expectations of many medieval didacts or moralists. At the same time, it must also be recognized that, unlike Berenguer d'Oluga or Ramonet Jofre’s forceful rejections of any adult oversight over their affairs, Francesca’s opposition to her grandfather’s guardianship was rather more moderate. More akin to Francesc Corbara’s petition for a new curador, Francesca’s petition ultimately appears to reflect a desire to push back against the perceived impingement by her paternal grandfather on the rights and privileges granted to her as an orphan and adulta, rather than a full-throated rejection of guardianship as a whole.

Even in spite of the differences in the vehemence of their rejections of adult interference or "obstruction" in matters pertaining to their inherited assets and economic affairs, all of the adults discussed here demonstrate a similar belief that they were entitled to some measure of control over their inherited assets and the incomes that derived from them. Additionally, in all of the cases, the young petitioners, both male and female, were not afraid to protect those rights enthusiastically when the necessity arose, even if it meant attacking members of their own family in court and, in effect, undermining the authority of previous guardians.

One additional element of Francesca’s petition that was already mentioned in passing is worth considering at greater length: the role that Francesca’s maternal family played in advancing her claim against her paternal grandfather. Here one sees that while the Furs tended to follow Roman precedent in favoring patrilineal relatives over those of the maternal line when assigning a guardian, this principle was not universally applied by the Valencian courts.

78 In this, it is possible to see a bit of the same sort of phenomena advanced by Stanley Chojnacki for Renaissance Venice, cited above, in which he admirably demonstrated that the upbringing of an adolescent was often a matter of concern for both branches of a child’s family and not just a matter to be dealt with by paternal relations. See Chojnacki, Women and Men, chs. 7, 10, and passim.

79 The fur outlining the process for appointing tutors simply states that they should be from either the father or mother’s side. Furs, bk. 5, rb. 6, ch. 9, p. 76. The fur dealing with the appointment of curators, however, clearly favors the paternal line. Ibid., bk. 5, rb. 6, ch. 10, p. 77. [La cort do a aquestis aytals curador covinent qui sia de
Unfortunately, the relative brevity of Francesca Aragonés's petition makes the topic rather hard to explore at any great length, based solely on her situation; other records from the Governor’s court, however, offer the opportunity to explore the issue more fully. One case that is particularly useful is that of an orphaned *adulta* named Lucia Castellar. In the record of her petition to the Governor’s court, one finds not only a record of the conflict between her paternal and maternal relations over Castellar’s fate and well-being, but also a record of how Lucia herself attempted to use the court as a means to advocate on her own behalf and for her own welfare.

In the case, which was brought to the court in 1414, a notary and advocate for Castellar (who is also called Yolant, rather than Lucia, in the record by her paternal relations) came before the court to request that her current *curador* be relieved of his office and replaced by another. As described by the notary, Castellar's parents had both passed away and Lucia initially lived with her *tudor* before then going to live with her maternal aunt. After her aunt’s death, however, Lucia was forced to move to Valencia and into the household of a man named Pere Vinyech, whose wife claimed to be a cousin of Lucia’s father. According to the notary’s accusation, Vinyech used his wife's connection to the girl to have himself appointed as her *curador*, putting him in charge of her inheritance and other funds.

Even more problematic for Castellar and her maternal relations than the shady manner in which Vinyech had come to control Lucia’s inheritance was the fact that he was a good friend (*en gran amistat et familiaritat*) with Lucia’s former *tudor*, Berthomeu Castellar, who, given his surname, was likely a paternal relation. According to the accusation made by Lucia’s representative, Castellar had done so poorly in his office as Lucia's guardian that she had initiated legal action against him and, ultimately, had received a judgment of approximately 5,300 *sous*. Furthermore, it was alleged that, following Vinyech's assumption of Lucia's guardianship, he and Castellar arranged a deal in which the latter would recover some of the

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80 Archivo del Reino de Valencia, *Gobernació, Litium* 2.209 (1414), mm. 21, ff. 29r-31v (Sept. 11). It appears that her maternal relatives called her by the name Lucia, but her paternal relatives called her Yolant, though the precise reasons why this might have been the case are unclear. Her status as a *donzella*, a member of the knightly class made her eligible to receive the judgment of the Governor’s court.

81 This is also why the petition eventually came before the Governor’s court. In this instance, it was acting as something equivalent to an appellate court.

82 The relationship between Lucia and Berthomeu Castellar is never explicitly clarified, but the fact that both share the same name, along with the fact that Vinyech was aligned with Lucia’s paternal relations through his wife, would suggest that Lucia and Berthomeu were likely related fairly closely through her father.
money that he had already paid, and for the remaining penalty against him to be forgiven. Because of this, the petition claims that Lucia fled Pere Vinyech’s house and sought the assistance of her sister and other maternal relatives to have Vinyech’s guardianship revoked.

The argument that Lucia and her maternal relatives made for Vinyech’s removal as curador was twofold. First, Lucia and her advocates argued that Pere Vinyech’s friendship with Berthomeu Castellar created too strong a conflict of interest with his responsibilities as curador to defend his ward’s interests and insure the integrity of the inherited estate. Second, they claimed that it was inappropriate for Lucia to live in the household of Pere Vinyech, her nominal curator, as it brought "suspicion" down on all involved. This may have been merely a convenient legal stratagem, but it also indicates that Lucia's living arrangement, living as she did in the household of her guardian, could also have been viewed as unusual or less than wholesome. There is certainly a suggestion of possible sexual impropriety on the part of Vinyech implicit throughout the petition. Therefore, they argued that because of both these issues, he should be replaced by another who would better attempt to collect on the judgment against Berthomeu Castellar and better look after her personal and economic interests.

But underlying the two rationales that Lucia and her supporters provided, there also appears to have been a third reason behind the request for Vinyech's removal: namely, a fundamental dispute between the maternal and paternal families over which side of the family should have control over Lucia and her inheritance. As noted in the description above, for much of her orphaned life Lucia had been bounced back and forth between her maternal and paternal relations. Initially under the care of her paternal relation, Berthomeu Castellar, after receiving her judgment against him and having passed into adolescence, she then lived with her maternal aunt. Then, after her aunt died, Pere Vinyech made his claim and received custody and the curatorship of the girl. Therefore, one way to look at the petition against Vinyech is as a potential play by Lucia’s maternal relations to bring the girl back under their control. This idea is supported by the fact that Lucia’s maternal relations took an active part in the case against Vinyech and, ultimately, when the court sided with Lucia and stripped Vinyech of all rights as her curador, her sister’s husband, Ramon Eximenez, an ally of the maternal relations, was confirmed as her new guardian – being also the candidate that Lucia Castellar herself had proposed as a suitable candidate. Moreover, the petition notes that Lucia then went to live with
her sister and her new curador.\textsuperscript{83} Therefore, the end result of the case can be interpreted both as a victory for the maternal line over the paternal as well as additional evidence of the willingness of Valencian courts to permit orphaned adolescents to have a strong voice in who would act as their guardian.\textsuperscript{84}

In conclusion, the willingness seen throughout the cases discussed in this section of both the Justicia Civil and the Gobernació to permit the traditional hierarchy of patrilineal dominance to be overturned, at least in part, is remarkable: not only were the courts willing to strip paternal relations of guardianship rights in favor of maternal relatives, but they also were frequently willing to accede to the petitions of adults who challenged the authority of their guardians or who sought alternative arrangements. Furthermore, all of the cases discussed here suggest that although the individuals behind the various petitions were minors, the courts nonetheless gave significant weight to their petitions and stated desires, and did not shy from assisting the adult or adulta in transforming their desires into reality. Ultimately, this reinforces the view that the courts expected orphaned adults to enjoy a good deal of personal agency and capacity to have a say in their own lives and welfare, as well as the view that the courts were often more concerned with the welfare of individual minors than they were about maintaining strict hierarchies of patrilineal authority. More frequently than one might expect, Valencian courts sided with young challengers to the authority of adults rather than reinforcing the hegemony of adults over the young.

\textit{Emancipation: Causes and Complications}

Legal minors also passed out from under patria potestas through the legal emancipation of a child by a father. Unlike several other jurisdictions in Europe, such as late medieval Florence, where emancipation was a fairly common practice, in Valencia emancipation appears to have been relatively uncommon, with only a handful of cases surviving in the records of the Justicia Civil and Gobernació. Consequently, when compared to the frequency with which emancipation was performed in Florence, where more than one hundred emancipation cases occurred annually,

\textsuperscript{83} Such cases, in which guardianship was reassigned to someone with a more "proximate" relationship to the orphaned adult or adulta, can also be found elsewhere in the records of the civil courts. For example, see ARV, Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.910 (1358), mn. 6, ff. 41r&v (Oct. 28).

\textsuperscript{84} In this, the case of Francesca Aragonés correlates well with Chojnacki's research and, at least to some extent, suggests that Klapisch-Zuber's conclusions regarding familial attitudes towards orphaned children in Florence do not reflect views held in Mediterranean Europe more generally.
the obvious question emerges of why such a discrepancy exists between two societies whose legal codes were both firmly rooted in Roman legal practice.\textsuperscript{85} The intent of this section is to offer an answer to this question and thereby provide additional insight into the nature of Valencian emancipation, as well as how its use related to broader understandings of the transition from adolescence to adulthood in late medieval Valencian society.

To begin, however, a brief overview of how emancipation was carried out in late medieval Valencia and what processes it entailed should be offered. Descriptions of the process are recorded in many of the extant emancipation records, such as the record of Jaume Scriva’s emancipation on December 23, 1418. In this record from the register of the Justicia Civil, it is reported that, on that day, Joan Scriva, a donzell and therefore an aristocrat, appeared before the court to emancipate his son, Jaume Scriva.\textsuperscript{86} The document reports that, after learning of Scriva’s intention to emancipate his son, the Justicia Civil asked him why he had decided to do so – to which Scriva replied that his decision was predicated by his son’s imminent marriage. Then, taking his son’s hands within his own, Joan Scriva again reaffirmed that the emancipation was being granted willingly. Lastly, Jaume Scriva, “accepting the said emancipation and kissing [his father’s] hands, gave thanks to his father as was appropriate.” Thus, with this simple act and through the son’s simple acknowledgment of his father’s offered liberation from parental authority, Jaume was no longer held to be legally dependent on his father, no longer subject to his will, and no longer sheltered by his father’s legal protection; in the eyes of the law, he was now an orphan.\textsuperscript{87}

While the emancipation ceremony contains echoes of other ceremomial passages from one socio-legal state to another, with the image of the child placing his hands between his father’s and kissing them bearing a strong correlation to rituals of homage or investiture, in this case the “ritual passage” cannot be seen as a complete transformation from child to adult. After all, the child still remained, fundamentally, a minor in the eyes of the law; like marriage or parental death, emancipation did not effect a child's full entrance into adulthood.\textsuperscript{88} In fact, in the case of

\textsuperscript{85} Kuehn, Emancipation, p. 79, tb. 1. Kuehn’s study remains the most significant work on medieval emancipation practices. In Valencia, the emancipation decrees are mixed in with other cases pertaining to the maintenance and protection of minors in the Curateles i Tuteles registers. Unfortunately, because the quantity of these registers is rather limited, a statistical analysis comparable to that offered by Kuehn is not possible.

\textsuperscript{86} As noted in the Introduction, “donzell” refers to individuals who are eligible for knighthood by birth, but who have not yet been knighted.

\textsuperscript{87} ARV, Justicia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.920 (1418), mn. 8, f. 49r (Dec. 23, 24). [acceptant la dita emancipació, besant les mans, al dit pare seu fent gracies a ell segons se pertanye.]

\textsuperscript{88} See Nelly R. Porro Girardi, La investidura de armas en Castilla: Del Rey Sabio a los Católicos (Valladolid:
Jaume Scriva, he was not even an adult, but still a pubil of fourteen years old when the emancipation took place, meaning that he was not even entitled to the more limited oversight of a curador. Instead, immediately following his emancipation, he was placed under the supervision of a tudor – none other than his father, Joan Scriva. Thus, Jaume Scriva's emancipation, ultimately, does not appear to have actually removed him from the supervision of his father in anything but the strictest legal sense, leaving one to wonder why the emancipation was performed in the first place, especially since Jaume’s impending marriage would have effected his emancipation him from his father on its own.

Research conducted by Thomas Kuehn, even though focused on the very different milieu of late medieval Florence, nonetheless offers a likely answer for this question. He notes that a major reason for emancipation of children in Florentine society was that it established strict and clear legal divisions between fathers, their children, and the property that each possessed. In Florence, Kuehn argues, such legal separation was necessitated by the draconian provisions of the legal code that made unemancipated male children liable for debts incurred by their fathers. This, he says, created situations in which unemancipated sons could be jailed for unpaid debts that their parents (or even grandparents) had incurred. By contrast, the liability of emancipated sons extended only to those goods or properties they had received either at the time of the default or afterwards; all property given to them by their parents before the default was immune from seizure. Thus, Kuehn argues, there was a clear incentive to emancipate one's children both to safeguard them from legal penalty and to protect familial assets from seizure as creditors attempted to collect on the money owed.

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89 ARV, Justícia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.920 (1418), mn. 8, f. 49r (Dec. 23, 24). [com lo dit en Jacme Scriva menor de XV anys emperò major de XIV]

90 In another case from the Gobernació, the father of a married adulta appears before the court, acting on her behalf as her curador. Thus, as was likely the case for Jaume Scriva, here too one sees the continued involvement of the still-living father in the affairs of an emancipated, married child. See Ibid., Gobernació, Litium 2.195 (1407), mn. 9, ff. 23r–26r (Jul. 28).

91 This practice was not observed in Valencia, where the Furs are explicit in disassociating the debts of fathers from their sons, even going so far as to indemnify wives from the debts of their husbands as well. For examples, see Furs, bk. 2, rb. 4, ch. 8, p. 163; Ibid., bk. 4, rb. 5&6, pp. 32–38. The primary fur dealing with this issue, though, is found in Ibid., bk. 6, rb. 8 ch. 3, p. 234. [Aquel qui será demanat denant la cort per lo deute del pare seu o per los deutes de qualque altre qui l'haurà feit hereu, no sia tengut de respondre a aquels qui d'ell se clamaran, si ell és apparellat de renuntiar per tots temps senz frau e sens malea a tota aquela heretat e és apparellat de lexar de tot en tot los bëns que ell ha slavus en present de la davant dita heretat. D'aqueses cases, emperò, que ell haurà despeses en sustentatió de son cors, com no haguéss otros cases de quès puguéss sostentar ne viure, no'n sia tengut en neguna guisa.]

92 Kuehn, Emancipation, pp. 42–46. Notably, women were exempted from these provisions.
Returning to Valencia and the emancipation of Jaume Scriva, there is no evidence of financial difficulty at any point in the extant record, but it is still quite likely that the emancipation was carried out for reasons similar to those outlined by Kuehn – namely, Joan Scriva desired to create to create a legal distinction between himself and his son, which would permit the former to endow the latter with goods and properties before his marriage. In fact, this is noted in the emancipation record itself, when Joan explained that his donations to Jaume were mandated by the marriage contract that had been negotiated with the bride’s family. In this light, then, it is likely that Jaume’s emancipation and the installment of his father as his tutor may not only have served to facilitate the transfer of money or property from Jaume's paternal and/or maternal relations, but that it also helped to guarantee the smooth transfer of the dowry that Jaume's bride brought to the marriage; had he been released from patria potestas by the wedding ceremony itself, it is probable that no guardian would already have been in place, making the transfer of assets more complex, at the very least. Therefore, by establishing Joan as Jaume’s tudor before the ceremony, the financial underpinning of the marital relationship was established even before the ceremony had taken place, with little to no additional court involvement necessary after the marriage. The fact that Scriva’s young bride-to-be brought a sizable dowry of 70,000 sous to the marriage could only have increased the desire of the groom and his father to ensure that the transfer of funds into their hands went as smoothly as possible.

Clearly, practical considerations loomed large in Jaume Scriva’s emancipation. These were not the only reasons for parents to emancipate their children, however; in other emancipations, economic or purely practical considerations were much less prominent. Instead, in many other cases, social or ritual reasons also appear to have spurred fathers to emancipate their (male) children. In these cases, the emancipations served as recognitions of a child's attainment of adulthood. Moreover, they were much more common than emancipations of the type seen in the

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93 As noted earlier in this chapter, dependent minors were not permitted to own or control property themselves. Instead, the property was held by their parent or guardian. For the relevant fur, see Furs, bk. 8, rb. 8, ch. 16, p. 201. [Lo pare si dóna alcuna cosa al fill qui era en son poder purament e leiurament que fos del fill, aytal donatió no haja valor.] Only gifts of money for business ventures, armor and harness for a knight, or books for a schoolboy were permitted.

94 ARV, Justícia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.920 (1418), mn. 8, f. 49r (Dec. 23, 24). [Ell [Joan] vulla ... fer a aquell [Jaume] donació de certa quantitat o part de bens per capitols concordats entre les parts e fermats en poder del honrat en Ramon Lopez, notarius.]

95 For another case that deals with the same issues, with a pubil emancipated before an impending marriage, see ARV, Justícia Civil, Curateles i Tuteles 1.921 (1420), mn. 3, f. 1r (Mar. 21). The first case, in particular, which deals with individuals from the patriciate, specifically mentions that the father is emancipating his son to facilitate an endowment of goods and property by the boy's mother before his marriage.
case of Jaume Scriva. In fact, of the emancipation records that were consulted for this study, only two of thirteen involve minors under fifteen years old and only in those two cases does the emancipation mention imminent marriage. The majority of the emancipations, however, tend to share a motivation at least partly rooted in what appears to have been a common sociocultural understanding that emerging from *patria potestas* was a vital element of a young person’s transition to adulthood.96 Of the thirteen emancipations recorded in the registers of the *Justicia Civil*, eleven (or 85 percent of the total) were granted to young men described as twenty years old or older, meaning that they were all at or past the most commonly recognized age of legal majority; none of the emancipations occur for individuals between the ages of fifteen and twenty.97 Moreover, in most of these cases, the emancipations were carried out either around age twenty or age twenty-five, further indicating that the traditional significance of these ages as markers of legal majority and as particularly significant points of transition were well known by society at large.98

In many of the cases, it is noteworthy that parents cited the rights and privileges their emancipated child would enjoy as an adult as a primary reason for their decision to emancipate. Similarly, they frequently mention their child's continued inability to act with unfettered independence, despite being over the legally mandated age of majority. In some cases, this notion is taken even one step further with some parents using language that suggests that they viewed the attainment of twenty years of age as a point at which majority and independent agency were to be expected by young men.99 Thus, for young men such as these, who were

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96 Even in the case of Jaume Scriva, when asked by the *Justicia Civil* why he believed he should be emancipated, he stated that, by his right, “he [Jaume] ought to be a *pater familias*.” The implication is that since Jaume was about to become a “head of household,” he should also be able to lay claim to the same paternal rights that his father had enjoyed, even if those rights remained attenuated by his father’s continued guardianship. Also noteworthy is that no emancipations of young women are to be found among the extant documents, likely suggesting that female emancipation was even more rare than that of male adolescents. This fact may also reflect the subtle differences in how young men and women experienced adolescence as a whole, with less emphasis once again placed on the independence of females.

97 In one additional case no direct indication of age is given, but the lack of any corollary documents discussing the naming of a tutor or curator suggests that this individual was most likely over twenty years old as well.

98 The age of twenty was a particularly common age for emancipation with seven of the eleven documents giving that as the emancipated youth's age. Undoubtedly this fact is related to twenty also being the age of legal majority in the *Furs*, meaning that parents saw it as a fitting time to make their (male) child into a full-fledged adult. These cases can be found in the following registers: ARV, *Justicia Civil, Curatelas i Tutelas* 1.913 (1402), nn. 1, ff. 24r&v (Jan. 24); *Ibid.*, nn. 5, unmarked folio (Aug. 28); Archivo del Reino de Valencia, *Justicia Civil, Curatelas i Tutelas* 1.916 (1410), nn. 2, f. 18r (Mar. 10); *Ibid.*, nn. 2, f. 41r (Apr. 1); *Ibid.*, nn. 3, f. 45r (Jun. 12); ARV, *Justicia Civil, Curatelas i Tutelas* 1.917 (1419), nn. 1, ff. 14r&v (Jan. 9).

99 In the emancipation of one Joan Canyelles at age twenty, his father states that he is conducting the emancipation because “it was pleasing to him [the father] that he [the son, Joan] be made a man in his own right and
unmarried and whose fathers were still living, emancipation was carried out as a means for the father to recognize the son’s adulthood and legal majority, in a situation where the son’s passage could not be effected otherwise.

Of the four other emancipations of this type, all of them are clustered around age twenty-five, with one youth emancipated at twenty-four, two at twenty-five, and one at age twenty-six; but in none of the records is any specific reason given why the emancipation was delayed by the parents so long after their child had reached the age of legal majority. The most likely explanation is that these emancipations are simply reflective of a societal awareness of the alternate, Roman legal tradition that recognized legal majority at a later age, and which was the age used in other jurisdictions as close as the Crown Castile, just across the border from Valencia. Thus, ideas about this later age as another "proper" age of majority appear to have had resonance among certain individuals or communities, even if it was not officially recognized as such in the Valencian legal framework of the Furs.

In conclusion, then, the overall impression given by this brief study of Valencian emancipation practices is that while emancipations did occur in late medieval Valencia, and occurred for various reasons, they remained, on the whole, relatively uncommon and were reserved largely for instances outside the norm. On the one hand, more in line with Kuehn’s research, emancipation sometimes took place before a child had reached the age of legal majority, in situations where a parent desired to create a strict legal boundary that permitted the child to possess goods, money, or property that would be seen as separate from the parental estate. On the other hand, and more commonly, emancipations were carried out as a means of parental recognition of an unmarried child’s arrival at the age of majority and, thereby, symbolized the passage of that child into adulthood. Yet, on the whole, all indications suggest that emancipation was not a common practice in Valencia; in all likelihood, this is indicative of a society that viewed it as largely unnecessary, since the combination of emancipation through marriage, which commonly occurred around age twenty, and emancipation that resulted from

that he may be able to contract and administer his person and his goods as one of those who are created according to their right and the law...” Ibid. [li plau d’aci avant sia fet hom de son dret e que puxa contractar e administrar sa persona e sos bens axi com aquells qui son fet segons dret e fur...]

100 These cases can be found in the following registers: ARV, Justicia Civil, Curatelas i Tutelas 1.913 (1402), mn. 4, f. 4r (May 18); Ibid., mn. 5, f. 56r (Aug. 17); Ibid., 1.917 (1419), mn. 4, f. 39r (Jul. 3); Ibid., mn. 7, f. 34r (Oct. 21).

101 This would certainly have been the case in the early decades of the sixteenth century, when additional provisions were added to the Furs that delayed certain rights and legal capacities until age twenty-five, as is discussed later in this chapter.
parental death before a child had reached the age of majority both served as mechanisms through which the majority of young Valencians were "liberated" from *patria potestas*.  

### Revising the Code: Later Revisions to the *Furs*  

At this point, a picture of how Valencian law defined adolescence and the role of adolescents in society has begun to emerge; this image is defined, on the whole by a relative liberality with regard to the right of adolescents to participate in aspects of adult society and to exert some forms of independent agency, even if it was still attenuated by adult oversight and authority to some extent. Beginning in the early fifteenth century, however, and even more in the sixteenth century, one sees a marked shift away from this air of permissiveness towards adolescent minors, with the most extensive periods of revision occurring during the post-interregnum reign of Alfons V (1416–58; titled "the Magnanimous" and Alfons III when acting as king of Valencia) and Charles I (1516–56, the first king of unified Spain and Holy Roman Emperor as Charles V).  

By the end of the reigns of these two monarchs, the ability of adolescents to act independently within the public sphere or with any significant personal agency had been almost completely stripped away. In short, the rights and privileges of Valencian adolescents were increasingly restricted and rigorously policed.

Among the first revisions of the code that significantly restricted the ability of minors to engage in economic activity were those enacted by Alfons V in 1428. The impetus for them seems to have been an attempt to correct what had come to be a source of potential fraud, in which minors requested that contracts or other obligations they had entered into fraudulently, by claiming to have reached the age of majority when they had not, should nonetheless be nullified. In essence, because the *fur* originally allowed minors to enter into contracts, while simultaneously permitting their release from their contractual bond if they suffered financial

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102 For the age of marriage, see footnote 24 of the Introduction. For the frequency of parental death, see the section on orphaned adults above, in this chapter.

103 While most names in this study have been left in their original Valencian/Catalan form, in the case of Charles, the Catalan form of his name, Carles, is not one by which most people would recognize him. Therefore, it has instead been rendered in its Franco-English form for greater ease of identification.

104 Although there is no proof of a direct connection, it is also notable that the revisions picked up notably following the house of Trastamara's accession to the Aragonese throne. Very possibly this reflects something of a cultural clash as the new Trastamara king, who was of Castilian background, encountered the contradictory traditions found in Arago-Valencian law and, therefore, sought to harmonize them. Furthermore, while the reign of Charles I lies beyond the stated scope of this study, his revisions are discussed here because they represent the culmination of the increasingly restrictive trend of his fifteenth-century predecessors.
damage, when a minor lied about his or her age when entering into a contract, the original fur still permitted the minor to be released from the agreement and to recover his lost assets. For the counter-party, this situation meant that not only had they entered into a potentially risky contractual relationship unwittingly, not knowing that the other party was still a minor, but they had no legal recourse in the original fur to prevent their having to make restitution to the dishonest minor.

Responding to this potential problem, Alfons V initiated a series of reforms that both introduced new and harsher penalties for those found to have perpetrated such fraud and instituted new prohibitions against minors entering into contracts of any sort without the oversight of a court-appointed or testamentary guardian.105 Thus, in both respects, the revised furs stood as substantial modifications to those enacted by Jaume I almost two centuries earlier.

Alfons's revised statutes also decreed that any young person who desired to enter into a contract independently and who believed that he had reached the age of majority first needed to appear before a judge and offer the testimony of two relatives (parents) and two other oath takers (jurats) to verify his newly attained majority.106 The youth could then legitimately enter into contracts by his (or her) own authority. If, however, a minor managed, somehow, to receive recognition as a major from the court illegitimately, the new statute denied the minor any ability to request that the contract be invalidated later. Instead, he would continue to be “held to be a major in that contract,” would remain bound to its terms, and would have to accept any damages

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105 Furs, bk. 2, rb. 13, ch. 21, pp. 226-27. [volents sobre les cases en aquell contengudes pus strematn provehir, provehim e manam a qualsevulla menor de vint anys, que en tal contract no faça ne interpose jurament algú de servar e complir lo dit contracte e contra no venir, ne en altra manera aquell roborar o confermar en temps que aquell farà ni abans ni despuyys durant la menor edat; e si ò farà, o fer atempiave en qualsevol manera, anul-lam lo dit contracte e lo dit jurament e interposició de aquell ... romangua lo dit menor en alguna cosa ni en alguna manera judicialment ni fora de juhi constret ni convengut, ans lo contrahent ab lo dit menor, exigent tal jurament, sia encorregut en pena de CC morabatinis.]

106 Ibid., bk. 2, rb. 13, ch. 22, p. 227. [Si algú afirmarà o dirà ésser major de XX anys per alcun contracte affer, e lo justicia- per lo aspecte de aquell e per informació, ab consell de son assessor, si n’haurà, e de IIII prohòmens, ço és de dos jurats e de dos parents de aquell qui dirà e afirmarà veritat e aquell ayal jurarà en poder del dit justicia ésser major de XX anys, lo dit justicia en la fi del dit contracte jurat interposa sa autoritat e decret, e de aquí avant en tal contracte hon haurà jurat no-s puixa ajudar de restitució ne de altre benefici e rahó de menor edat, ans sia haüt per major en aquell contracte; ne puixa ésser aposat que lo dit justicia hagués mal deliberat de interposar-hí sa autoritat e decret per rahó alguna.]

Conversely, in one case brought before the Governor’s court, a man who ten years earlier, in 1407, had received a written declaration of his status as a major was forced to return to the court in 1416 to obtain a new declaration, after having lost the original documents. The reason for his reappearance seems to have been his desire to reaffirm the majority status he had been enjoying for the past decade and to reaffirm the legitimacy of his economic actions during that period. For this case, see Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Gobernació, Litium 2.217 (1416), mn. 36, ff. 10r&v (Nov. 6). The original request for recognition of majority is in ARV, Gobernació, Litium 2.195 (1407), mn. 5, f. 23r (Apr. 28).
incurred as a result of the contract.

Additionally, in a second, more wide-ranging reform, Alfons overturned the original approach that the Furs had followed with regard to the ability of adults to enter into contracts without the oversight or involvement of a guardian and, instead of the original code's stance that contracts entered into by minors on their own authority should be presumed legitimate, the revised statute mandated that the involvement of a parent (normally the father) or of a legal guardian was absolutely necessary to give any contract involving a minor legal force. Although no explanation is ever given, the motivation for this shift in approach appears to have been a belief that the involvement of a parent or guardian would ensure that the terms of the contract were observed by the minor, as well as giving him an advocate already familiar with the particulars of the agreement should litigation become necessary at some point in the future. Consequently, Alfons's revised statute decreed that if any minor entered into a contract without the consent and oversight of a parent or legal guardian, the contract was to be considered null and void. In short, adolescents were increasingly subject to the authority of adult society and, most notably, those no longer under patria potestas lost a significant portion of their independent agency.

Although the fundamental problem that this revised statute tried to address was that of minors entering into contracts, it was flawed in one major respect: it did not penalize minors for attempting to enter into such contracts. Instead, the adult who contracted with the minor incurred a monetary fine of two hundred morabatins.\footnote{Precise values of medieval currencies are notoriously difficult to ascertain. The morabatin (or maravedi in Castilllian) is among the most variable. By the mid-fifteenth century, the fine issued here of two hundred morabatins would have likely been viewed as stiff, but not exorbitant.} The rationale for this seemingly perverse enforcement mechanism is never given, but it may be that Alfons continued to view adolescents through a prism which saw them as, fundamentally, guileless. Thus, while minors might do foolish things as a result of their innocence and inexperience, adults who knowingly entered into contracts with minors deserved their fate, especially given that Alfons was proclamation of the same time the need for all contracts with minors to be overseen by a parent or guardian. Therefore, by directing the fine at the adult contracting party rather the minor, the revised statute attempted to dissuade adults from entering into contracts with minors by holding them responsible for all penalties. However, the lack of significant penalty for the contracting minor would become increasingly problematic, so much that during the reign of Charles I further
legislation was deemed necessary to deal with problems that do not appear to have been resolved in any significant way.

Before passing on to the content of Charles's revised statutes, however, something first should be said about their form, which is notably different from that of the majority of other statutes included in the Furs. Most significantly, the revised statutes enacted by Charles often take the form of letters written by Charles’s regents to the emperor. As a result, they frequently include lengthy justifications of the proposed revisions to the code and explanations of language of the revised statute itself.

Therefore, one learns that the first of Charles’s reforms, proposed and implemented in 1537, was initially proposed to the emperor by “Ferdinand, duke, Lieutenant General for Charles, emperor,” to remedy “the great damage and disorder which are occurring in this city and kingdom [of Valencia] as a result of contracts of sale and resale.” The root cause of this disorder, Ferdinand asserts, was the fact that minors continued to enter into contracts illegitimately or fraudulently.

Interestingly, the solution proposed by Ferdinand largely mirrors the one proposed by Alfons in the previous century, but with some notable divergences. The new statute proclaims,

Sons that are not married may not make a contract, except with the consent and confirmation of their fathers, if they have one, and if they do not have one, with the consent and confirmation of the two relatives most closely related to them; this shall continue until they have reached the age of twenty-five years old.

The actions proposed by the revised law are not substantially different from what Alfons V had already put into place, but the few key differences between the two statutes are worth highlighting. First, the revised law shifts the age of majority – if majority is understood as the ability to act independently and without parental supervision – from twenty to twenty-five, with no explanation given within the statute for what appears to have been a significant change in legal practice. Second, the means of enforcing the ban became even more extreme, even if it still

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108 Furs, bk. 2, rb. 13, ch. 23, p. 228. [Ferdinandus, dux, locumtenens generalis Caroli imperatoris, regis Hispaniae ... Los tres braços de la present cort, ço és ecclesiastic, militar e real, a causa dels grans dans e desòrdens que s'han en esta ciutat e regne per los contractes de vendes e revendes, supliquen a vostra excel·lència sia mercé de aquella perpetuament provehir e ordenar que los fills que no seran casats no puixen contractar, sinó ab consentiment e ferma de lurs pares, si n tendran, e, si no tendran pare, ab consentiment e ferma de dos parents pus propinchs; e açò fins tinguin edad complida de vint-e-cinch anys. E si lo contrari serà fet, los dits actes e contractes sien nul·les. Açò emperò, entès e declarat que per pagar deutes deguts fins al dia de huy, puxen obligar sos béns e contractar, pux, emperò conste dels dits deutes ab actes públichs o testimonis; e que lo notari o corredor que entrevendrà en semblants actes sia bandejat perpetuament de present regne, e lo corredor, ultra la dita pena, sia encorregut en pena de cent açots sens alguna remissió.] The entire text of the fur is reproduced here as a reference for all subsequent quotations.
did not target the minors specifically.

The most likely explanation for the change in age from twenty to twenty-five is that it was part an effort to harmonize more closely the legal practices of the various kingdoms that had been joined together by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella in the previous century. Since twenty-five was the age most commonly held to be the point at which majority commenced in most regions of the Crown of Castile, it may well be the case that the revised fur represented an attempt to bring the legal norms of the two Crowns closer in line with each other, even though both kingdoms continued to maintain separate legal codes for several more centuries. In fact, this process already was underway during the late fifteenth century, as seen in revisions to the laws governing elections that were enacted by King Ferdinand II in 1487. In this case, despite the fact that the age of twenty was still recognized as the age of majority in the legal codes governing the majority of his subjects, he nonetheless decreed that, in elections, no one under the age of twenty-five, or anyone who had not yet married, could be elected to senior positions in the city's government. Moreover, in justifying his stance, Ferdinand cites the "various abuses and insolences [that had] occurred" when individuals had previously been elected "who were too young."

Therefore, the effort to prohibit young people from entering into elected office was, it appears, a conscious attempt to shift the legal terms of the previously recognized definition of adulthood by shifting the age of political eligibility from twenty to twenty-five and by introducing marriage as a precondition for political eligibility. Thus, although Charles's seemingly casual shift of the age of majority, as reflected in the ability to enter into contracts independently, from twenty to twenty-five is noteworthy, it is perhaps not quite as significant a shift as it appears at first glance.

Turning now to the second area of difference between Alfons’s and Charles’s statutes, it is notable because it shifts the penalty for entering into a contract with a minor from the adult

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109 Ibid., bk. 1, rb. 3, ch. 1, pp. 188-9. [Més avint, com sobre les nominacions e elections de juraderia e de altres officis de la dita ciutat, en dies passats hi sien estats feis alguns absusos e insolències, per pròpies passions, elegint-hi persones maça jòvens, no havents pràctica ne experiència dels afferes, provehins més a les persones que als officis, en dan notori de la dita ciutat… Nós, volents a açò obviar, provehim, volem e ordenam perpetualment que de ací avint no sien admeses ne eletes persones que no hajen de XXV anys complits ensus, e hajen haidà o hauran muller dins lur casa e habitàció, per solemnizació de matrimoni en fas de sancta mare Sglésia.]

110 Hanawalt notes a similar shift in the age of majority from twenty to twenty-five in fifteenth-century England. See Hanawalt, Growing Up in Medieval London, p. 203. It is also quite possible that the reform was part of an attempt to prevent powerful lineages from engaging in flagrant examples of nepotism and “stacking” political offices with members of their own family. These activities are discussed at length in Rafael Narbona Vizcaíno, Valencia, municipio medieval: Poder político y luchas ciudadanas (1239–1418) (Valencia: Ajuntament de Valencia, 1995), esp. chs. 3 and 4.
entering into the contract to the notary or broker (*lo notori o corredor*) who assisted in drawing up and recording the agreement. Moreover, the penalties extended beyond the simple payment of a fine to include perpetual banishment from the kingdom and corporal punishment of one hundred lashes, with the penalty being even more severe if the notary held an official position within the city. Thus, by shifting the focus from the contracting parties to the notary ostensibly in charge of drawing up the contract and, therefore, ensuring proper compliance with the law, Charles's revised provision attempted to stamp out any possibility that a minor could convince a notary to "look the other way" and permit a contract to be created without the consent of a parent or guardian.¹¹¹

In 1537, Charles also enacted another revised provision that attempted to address an issue that Alfons V also had attempted to correct: minors entering into legal contracts fraudulently by declaring themselves to be older than twenty when, in fact, they were not. Also recorded in the form of a letter from the Valencian regent to the emperor, the vivid language used to describe the continuing problem is worth quoting in full:

"Lord, it has often occurred that certain minors have declared themselves 'adults' (majors) and many people, trusting in the said declaration, have contracted with them. [However,] after having contracted, they [the minors], claiming that they have been harmed by the proving of the said age, demand restitution 'in integrum', and they want to infringe on the contracts. Through these deeds, great damage often results for the same minors who have proven the said age [claiming they had reached the age of majority] but cannot prove the contrary, even if they truly are minors. But, even more, those who have contracted with them [also] are harmed in many instances through deceit and fraud which would have been discovered had the statements been diligently examined, which is not done, because the receipt of the said testimonies is commonly handled only by the court’s scribe."¹¹²

To remedy this situation, the revised statute decreed that, in the future, not only did minors need to produce witnesses to verify their claim of majority – this also being the solution to the problem proposed by Alfons's reform – but the statements of the witnesses would also be personally verified by the court’s assessor, which would further prevent the ability of minors and their accomplices of engaging in such fraud. Thus, implicit in Charles's revised statute is the

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¹¹¹ The markedly harsher law instituted here may also suggest that notaries and other officials may have previously been all too willing to draw up illegitimate contracts, though this hypothesis must remain speculative until additional research can be carried out.

¹¹² *Furs*, bk. 2, rb. 13, ch. 19, p. 225. [Item, senyor, com sovint s’esdevinga que alguns menors se fan declarar majors e molts gents confiants de la dita declaració contracten ab aquells, los quals après de haver contractat, pretenen ésser lesos en la probació de dita edat, demanen restauració “in integrum”, e volen infringir los contractes per aquells fets, per hon se seguex gran dan molts voltes als mateixos menors qui han provat la dita edat per no provar lo contrari, jatsia ab tota veritat sien menors, emperò per la major part reben dan los qui ab aquells han contractat, e açò se seguex moltes voltes per dol e frau lo qual se descobriria si los testimonis fossen diligentment examinats, lo que no fa, perquè comunament la recepció dels dits testimonis se comet al scrivvé de la cort.] The translation of this passage was lightly edited to improve comprehensibility.
belief that false claims of majority still occurred with sufficient frequency to merit an additional level of official scrutiny to prevent fraud of this sort. Moreover, the fact that minors continued to fraudulently claim legal majority, even a century after Alfons V’s attempt to stamp it out, suggests that there remained some level of continued resistance on the part of adolescent minors to any effort to restrict the independent agency they believed they possessed, even in the face of increasingly restrictive legislation and higher penalties.

These were not the last of Charles’s reforms, however; nor were they even the most extreme. In fact, only five years after these revisions were enacted, Charles issued another reform of an earlier practice in 1542 that curbed the privileges and liberties granted to adults even more fundamentally. In this case, the revised statute specifically targeted the capacity of orphaned adults even to manage the rents and other incomes that they earned from their inherited assets without the oversight of a curador. As noted in the previous section of this chapter, the original redaction of the Furs permitted orphaned adults to live in this manner as long as they did not attempt to sell or otherwise alienate any portion of their inherited assets, and this was the prized right that had permitted orphaned adults such as Ramonet Jofre to live without any oversight by a curador at all.

Charles's revised statute, however, essentially overturned the entire premise of curatorship as a form of attenuated guardianship that had formed the basis of the earlier understanding, instead decreeing that adults should remain under a form of patria potestas even after the death of their father and all the way until they had reached the age of majority. Notably, the revised statute justifies this fundamental shift away from traditional practice by asserting that adolescents were simply too irresponsible to manage their own affairs properly, a statement that would seem to signal another shift in the societal perception of adolescents. The revised statute claims that, in spite of the protections already afforded them by the Furs, orphaned adults still had too much ability to squander their inheritances wastefully and thus create their own economic ruin. Therefore, they should be entirely denied the ability to act on their own authority with regard to financial matters. Here too, the fur is worth quoting in full to give a sense of its pungent prose, urgency, and sense of impending doom that is conveyed by the language used:

Lord because of the fur for adults situated in the rubric “De tudoria” of Jaume I and because of the understanding which has been made of the said fur, it has been practiced in the city and kingdom of Valencia that at all times and whenever a minor reaches the age of fifteen years old and has a decree made by the Civil Justice or the Lieutenant of the general Governor of the city and kingdom of Valencia, the capability is given to the said minors that, without the authority of their curators, they are able to receive the pensions and rents from their annuities and goods and to dispose of them as they will. And since the said minors of fifteen years do not possess sufficient understanding and experience to know how to manage and administer their goods, experience has shown that they damage and waste the said rents and pensions,
through which they consume their patrimonies. Because of this for the benefit of the said minors, the said military and royal estates request that, improving the said fur, it may be pleasing to Your Majesty to provide that, while the said minors are of an age that they are required to have a curator, they shall not be able to receive nor administer the pensions or rents of their goods without the authority of their curators, and the same shall be provided in the other royal cities and towns of the said kingdom.113

Thus, it is clear that, at least in the opinion of Charles and his representative who proposed the revised statute, the authority that the Furs granted to curators was entirely insufficient to prevent orphaned adults from bringing down financial ruin upon themselves. Even more importantly, however, the statute signals the very different way that sixteenth-century society appears to have perceived adolescents. Rather than individuals who were on the verge of adulthood, and who should therefore be encouraged to participate in the adult world, they were considered, fundamentally, still to be children. This does not mean that Ariès was entirely correct in his view of medieval children as simply “little adults,” but it does perhaps support a more Foucauldian assertion that the relative permissiveness shown towards adolescents in the Middle Ages was increasingly scaled back by the more regulated and invigilated cultural milieu of early modern Europe. In this context, the increasingly restrictive laws described throughout this section can be seen as part of a broader societal shift that increasingly mistrusted the capacity of adolescents "to do what was right for themselves" and therefore imposed adult supervision to ensure their proper economic (and moral) behavior.114 Yet, as has been also seen throughout this chapter, restrictive efforts such as those imposed by Alfons and Charles were not often accepted without resistance from some parties, and the "problem" of adults acting independently of adult authority remained a constant arena of contest throughout the later Middle Ages and into the early modern period.

113 Ibid., bk. 5, rb. 6, ch. 15, p. 80. [Item senyor, com segons lo fur als adults situat en rúbrica “De tudoria” del rey En Jaume primer e la intel·ligència que s’és donada al dit fur, se ha practicat en la dita ciutat e regne de València que tota hora e quant algun menor ateny edat de quinze anys ab hun decret que s’ha per lo justícia en lo civil o per portantveus de general governador de la dita ciutat e regne de València se dóna facultat als dits menors que, sens autoritat de sos curadors, puguen rebre les pensions e rendes dels seus censals e béns e dispondre de aquells com volran. E com los dits menors que tenen edat de quinze anys no tinguin tal capacitat de enteniment e experiéncia per a saber regir y administrar sos béns, e la experiéncia haja mostrat que aquells malmeten e gasten les dites rendes e pensions, per hon consumixeixen sos patrimonis. Per ço, per lo benefici dels dits menors, supliquen los dits braços militar e real que, mentre los dits menors seran en edat que hajen de tenir curadors, no puguen rebre ni administrar les pensions e rendes de sos béns sens auctoritat de sos curadors, e lo mateix sia proveït en altres ciutats e viles reals del dit regne.]

Conclusion: Adolescents as Adults

To conclude, given the evidence presented in this chapter, Philippe Ariès’s blanket claim that premodern societies “had no idea of what we call adolescence” certainly can be refuted; the evidence presented here clearly shows that late medieval Valencian society did have a concept of adolescence as both a distinct and important moment in the human lifecycle.115 Furthermore, just as the modern definition of a “teenager” distinguishes adolescence from childhood and adulthood, while still maintaining a distinction as "not-quite adult," so too did the Valencian Furs assign the name “adult” to the same class of people; in both instances, the term referred to one who had reached sexual maturity, and was therefore “adult” in that sense, but who remained legally and socially dependent on adults for support and guidance. Moreover, the collected statutes of the Valencian Furs walked a fine line between the seemingly contradictory impulse to protect adolescents from exploitation and their own lack of worldly experience, while also permitting them to interact with adult society in meaningful ways, thereby helping them learn how to function within adult society. Therefore, one finds the Furs, in one law, decreeing that contracts or other agreements enacted by minors “should be in no way revoked” but, elsewhere, in another fur declaring that a contract or legal agreement could be nullified if it "damaged" the adolescent who had entered into it.116 In both, the overall inclination of the code was towards leniency for adolescents and indulgence of their efforts to exert their independent will and agency.

Similarly, this indulgence is also seen in the official responses to the petitions made before the Justicia Civil and the Gobernació, where the Valencian courts put into practice the relatively lenient provisions of the Furs and, on several occasions, intervened to protect the personal agency and privileges granted to orphaned adults by the Furs. In addition, through their actions and decisions, the courts can be seen to have given weight to the appeals of adolescent minors who appeared before them, recognizing that they should have a say in matters pertaining to their inheritance, economic well-being, and life. Thus, at least before the series of reforms of the mid-fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, curadors were routinely restrained from impinging on the ability of orphaned adults to enter into contracts, purchases, or other obligations.

115 Ariès, Centuries of Childhood, pp. 29, 34.
116 Furs, bk. 2, rb. 13, ch. 13, p. 221. [Aqueles coses que seran feytes ab los menors de XX ans, jens tota hora no deuen ésser revocades ne desfeytes; mas ladorchs deuen ésser desfeytes e revocades can serà manifest e cert que serà enganat lo menor de XX ans per engan de son adversari, o el menor negligentment, per leugeria de son sen, en algun contrat haurà feit son dan o piyoramant de ses coses.]
Returning, then, to the larger issue of how adolescence was understood by late medieval Valencian society, this chapter shows that it was not viewed as a brief, or even nonexistent, phase of life to be rushed through as quickly as possible, but instead as a period of tremendous ritual and practical significance in which an adolescent was suspended between childhood and adulthood, with a foot in each. It was a period of experimentation and exploration (though never without sufficient safety measures at the ready). It was also an important period of socialization, in which adolescents were introduced gradually into the practices, customs, and potential hazards of the adult world. Additionally, it simultaneously had a precise, fixed end date signified by the arrival of legal majority at age twenty, as well as a much more variable, nebulous end denoted by the exit from patria potestas that was effected either by marriage, the death of one or both parents, or legal emancipation by a living parent. Ultimately, however, the way in which Valencian society constructed adolescence in its legal code ensured the continuation of an attenuated pre-adulthood that was not dissimilar to how adolescence is understood even in the modern day: far from being ignored by the law, adolescence was instead viewed as a vital step on the path to adulthood.
Part II
The Literary Youth

In addition to the picture of adolescence and youth given by legal sources, literary representations of youth and adolescence found in fictional, prescriptive, didactic, and encyclopedic works also are valuable sources that provide insight into the efforts of adult society to “create” adolescence and instill “proper” ideals and morals into its children. As the case with the historiography of childhood and adolescence more generally, however, so too is scholarship on Iberian works of literature dealing with these issues rather sparse when compared to that from other areas of Europe. Thus, while some studies have incorporated literary sources, with the scholarship of Susana Belmartino being among the most extensive and notable, it is still the case that relatively little has been written about the many important works of Catalan literature from the later Middle Ages that are equally important for what they can tell about late medieval understandings of adolescence and the transition to adulthood. For example, the prescriptive and didactic works of Francesc Eiximenis, who was considered among the foremost Franciscan scholars of his day, include extensive advice on the proper education of sons and daughters, with his works Lo Crestià and the Libre de les dones, which was written specifically as a didactic tool for young women and their parents, being particularly useful. Yet with this said, Eiximenis’s

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2 Belmartino draws on chivalric and courtly texts from the tenth to thirteenth centuries as important sources for their views of how youth was understood by the society of medieval Spain. In her article, she draws particularly heavily on the noted epic, the Cantar de mio Cid. See Belmartino, “Estructura de la familia y ‘edades sociales,’” p. 257n8, p. 279, and passim. Following Belmartino, Pastor also noted the importance of literary sources for the study of childhood. For this, see Pastor, “Papel y imagen de la juventus,” p. 88n1. Similarly, Iberian authors have received a measure of attention from historians of childhood and adolescence, with Isidoro de Sevilla and Ramon Llull being the most commonly cited. Additionally, Isidoro de Sevilla is often mentioned by authors who examine literature concerning the "Ages of Man." A good summary of many of these works can be found in Cochelin, “Pre-Thirteenth Century Definitions of the Life Cycle.” Llull is mentioned in many texts that examine aspects of chivalry or the training of knights. These works are discussed at greater length later in this chapter.

3 The edition of Eiximenis's Dotzê that is used here is Dotzê llibre del Crestià, ed. Curt J. Wittlin, 4 vols. (Girona: Diputació de Girona, 1986). Many of the English quotations are from Ibid., Francesc Eiximenis: An Anthology, ed. Robert D. Hughes, Xavier Renedo, and David Guixeras (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2008). The edition of Lo libre de les dones is Ibid., Lo libre de les dones, ed. Frank Naccarato, Joan Coromines, Curt J. Wittlin, and
writings on the education of young men and women have not yet been employed by scholars to any great extent.

Further, although certainly better known, and a common reference for most works that examine medieval constructions of knighthood and chivalry, Ramon Llull’s *Llibre de l’ordre de cavalleria* (*Book of the Order of Chivalry*) also is a valuable source for exploring the moral qualities that Llull – and, by extension, aristocratic society as a whole – considered important for a "good" knight. Further, Llull gives attention to how these moral attributes could be nurtured in young people, and especially those serving as squires.

Llull’s work is also useful because it serves as a bridge between more specifically ecclesiastical and lay/aristocratic constructions of "proper" adult behavior, especially as they relate to the expression of violence and aggressive masculinity. Although written subsequent to his "conversion" from the life of a knight and member of the royal court to that of a hermetic mystic and missionary, the *Llibre de l’ordre de cavalleria* achieved great success: translated into several different languages, the work became a touchstone for countless later authors. Its popularity, especially among the secular elite, was due in no small part to the fact that it did not seek to entirely subsume the institution of knighthood under the authority of the Church.\(^4\) Instead, Llull sought to reform the institution of knighthood, making it more “holy” and respectful towards Church authority, but not necessarily subordinate to it.

The influence of Llull’s work can be seen in the writings of many secular authors, including the Valencian author Joanot Martorell, a Valencian knight and landholder, who used the work extensively in his chivalric epic *Tirant lo Blanc*.\(^5\) This work, which also claims to have been written to reform the institution of chivalric knighthood, draws heavily on Llull’s *Llibre de l’ordre de cavalleria*, especially in its early sections, which appropriate many of Llull’s ideas and literary motifs almost verbatim.

Yet Martorell’s vision of aristocratic knighthood and the proper comportment of knights (and ladies) is not entirely beholden to that of Llull either. Instead, Martorell offers a vision that,

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The influence of Llull on Martorell will be discussed further at various points, but for a good summary, see Miquel Aguilar i Montero, “El *Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria* en el context sociocultural medieval,” *Tirant* 13 (2010), pp. 11-13. This source also references Llull’s influence of knightly self perception within the Crown of Aragon more broadly.
while influenced by Llull, also reflects aspects of how late medieval Valencian society expected aristocratic men and women to behave, many of which contradicted the models of ideal behavior advanced by Llull and Eiximenis.

Before turning to the understanding of aristocratic adolescence and youth in Martorell's chivalric writings, however, attention will first be given to the idealized models of adolescent male and female comportment found in the prescriptive writings of Eiximenis and Lull, whose views can then serve as a baseline against which the ideals advanced by Joanot Martorell in *Tirant lo Blanc* can be measured and compared.
Chapter 2: Images of Youth and Adolescence in the Writings of Eiximenis and Llull

In many respects, Eiximenis's *magnum opus*, *Lo Crestià*, shares the grand ambition of other, more famous, encyclopedic works, such as Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae* or Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*. Unlike these examples, however, while Eiximenis’s scholarly output was extensive, he ultimately fell short of his stated goal of composing an encyclopedic commentary on all matters pertaining to proper Christian life, completing only four volumes of the twelve he proposed before his death.\(^1\) Nonetheless, Eiximenis’s writings remain useful because, since his work was intended as a practical reference tool, it represents a clear, well-organized statement of the dominant strains of scholastic and ecclesiastic thought of his day, with most of his writings adhering firmly to what could be best described as the “consensus opinion” of the ecclesiastical authors he cites. Further, because he tends to adhere to the "party line" on most matters, when Eiximenis turns his attention to matters pertaining to the education, proper upbringing, and correct social and moral comportment of adolescents, his views on these matters can also be seen as representative of a broader scholastic and ecclesiastic consensus.

Born into a reasonably prosperous merchant family from Girona, in Catalonia, sometime in the early fourteenth century (around 1330?), Eiximenis appears to have been intended for a religious vocation from a young age.\(^2\) Thus, following studies in his homeland, he left as a young man to pursue study at Oxford and also, perhaps, at Paris, before ultimately earning his doctorate in theology from the University of Toulouse in 1374.

Returning to Catalonia after receiving his degree, he quickly began work on the encyclopedic *Lo Crestià* (*The Christian*). Perhaps unsurprisingly – given the sheer ambition Eiximenis’s undertaking – he quickly came to the attention of the ruling elite of Aragon and rose to a position of prestige in the Aragonese court, with the Aragonese monarchs serving as important benefactors. Around 1383 or 1384, however, Eiximenis was convinced by some members of the ruling class of Valencia to leave Catalonia and, instead, take up residence in their city. Hoping to gain the prestige that such a prominent figure would bring to their community, the elite of the city were able to keep Eiximenis there for most of the rest of his life, until he was named Bishop

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1. This is still an impressive tally, especially when his other writings are also taken into account, but it may account, at least to some extent, for Eiximenis's relative obscurity outside of the Catalan-speaking world.
of Elne in 1408 and died shortly thereafter.³

During his lengthy residence in Valencia, Eiximenis enjoyed significant influence among the ruling elite of the city and kingdom, as demonstrated by the fact that copies of all his writings, and especially the completed volumes of Lo Crestià, were kept in the meeting chamber of the city’s larger governing council, the Consell, where they were used as reference texts by the city’s leaders. What is more, extant records show that the volumes were lent out to prominent members of the Valencian citizenry who then used them to make additional copies for their own personal collections and use.⁴ Therefore, although many of his writings, and especially Lo Crestià, were often encyclopedic in scope, they cannot be viewed merely as dry, academic exercises, written and then largely ignored, but as real, practical resources that were intended to be used by members of his society and perhaps even other European societies. Further indicative of this is the fact that Lo Crestià was composed entirely in the Catalan/Valencian vernacular, rather than in Latin, which can only be seen as an attempt by Eiximenis to facilitate the diffusion of the work to as broad an audience as possible.⁵

Ramon Llull’s Llibre de l’ordre de cavallèria (henceforth referred to as the Llibre) demonstrates a similar ambition for universal applicability, while also reflecting the particular concerns of Llull’s own life and experience. Therefore, while ostensibly written as a tool to reform the institution of knighthood and to extricate it from a "worldly, profane state," mired in the pursuit of violence, power, and sinful distractions of the body and mind, Llull's motivation for writing the Llibre was also undoubtedly rooted in his understanding of his own transformation from a debauched courtier in the retinue of Jaume II of Mallorca (1276–1311) to

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³ Ibid., p. 20. Eiximenis was appointed by the Avignon pope, Benedict XIII. He also had received the largely ceremonial title of Patriarch of Jerusalem. He died shortly after his arrival in his new diocese.
⁴ The importance of these volumes is shown by a request made by the Consell to the wife of the "Count of Cocentayna," in which they firmly asked that the copies of Lo Crestià that the count had borrowed should be returned, so that the consellers could once more make use of them. This document is reproduced in Epistolari de la València medieval, ed. Agustín Rubio Vela, 2 vols. (Valencia: Institut de Filologia Valenciana, 1985), v.2, pp. 107–8. In addition, in a note included in the the introduction to the edition of the Dotzé used here, the editors state that Alfonso, the duke of Gandia, paid between 80–100 florins for an illuminated copy of the work for his personal use. See Eiximenis, Dotzé, v. 1, p. x, n. 1. Works of Eiximenis can also be found in other private libraries of Valencian testators and even in the libraries of Spanish royalty, including Isabel la Católica and Felip II, which again show his prominence and the diffusion of his writings. See García Herrero, Las mujeres en Zaragoza, 136–37; Cruselles Gomez, Escuela y sociedad, pp. 148–49.
⁵ The term “Catalan/Valencian” will be used throughout this study to refer to the primary literary and spoken language used by those living within the medieval Kingdom of Valencia. The intent of this is to recognize that although the two are closely related, to the extent that “Valencian” can be considered a dialect of Catalan, nonetheless there has been a push in recent years to establish “Valencian” as a distinct linguistic entity. Therefore, by including both terms, recognition is given to both factions in what is ultimately as much a political debate as it is one of linguistics.
a more spiritually pure status that followed his “conversion” to a religious life.

Claiming that he had passed much of his time as a young man writing love poetry and flirting with young ladies at court, Llull stated in the autobiography he composed after his religious awakening that his turn toward religion was directly related to the sinfulness of his previous life at court. In fact, he claims that his first call to religion came at the very moment that he was most mired in sin, while composing a love poem to a young lady with whom he hoped to have an affair (he was already married at this point). According to his account, it was at this moment that he began to be plagued by visions urging him to change the course of his life. Consequently, his works can be seen as attempts on his part to steer subsequent generations away from the mistakes that he believed he had made as a youth. Certainly this is the case of the *Llibre*.

In the centuries following its initial composition, somewhere between 1274 and 1276, the *Llibre* received an enthusiastic reception and spread across Europe, becoming one of the most well known texts on knighthood and its practice through a series of translations. Further, it achieved no small measure of influence on subsequent writers, making it an important touchstone for later medieval understandings of what knighthood and aristocratic comportment were “supposed to be.” Therefore, like Eiximenis’s *Crestià*, the *Llibre* offers another lens through which one is able to explore the cultural and pedagogical milieu of the late medieval Valencian elite, while also serving, in many respects, as a bridge between clerical and lay/aristocratic ideals of how the members of elite, aristocratic society should behave. In short, Llull’s text provided a template for aristocratic behavior that continued to resonate within Valencian society long after Llull’s death. Consequently, it provided a valuable model for what Valencian society believed a knight “should be,” even if knights, in reality, did not often live up to Llull’s ideal.

In sum, the works of both Eiximenis and Llull reflect the particular circumstances of each author, but both also aspire to a more universal relevance, in which both authors viewed their works as mechanisms that could be used to fundamentally reform their respective societies

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To some extent, Llull’s account of his “debauched” youth is reminiscent of Augustine’s account of his own, pre-conversion life in the *Confessions*. Because of this, Llull’s account of his own conversion should probably be read with a grain of salt. Nonetheless, it is still useful in that it outlines what he believed to be a stark contrast between his earlier, amoral, secular life at court and that which he undertook after his conversion.
through the advice and prescriptions contained in their works. Moreover, both authors clearly conceived of their projects as tools to be used by parents and other educators of young people. After all, Eiximenis and Llull both recognized that while adults might try to reform themselves, it was through the proper education of the young that societal reform truly could be effected. Therefore, both gave a good deal of attention in their works to ensuring that young people would internalize the moral, cultural, and social ideals that they believed to be vital to the moral health of society at large.

Rearing Perfection I: Education and the Training of Youth in Francesc Eiximenis's Lo Crestià

As noted previously, Francesc Eiximenis’s worldview was particularly attuned to the urban, mercantile environment in which he lived much of his life. In fact, the influence of urban society is an absolutely vital component of his broader views of how a "good" society should function; throughout his writings, Eiximenis exalts the new, urban society that had arisen in the later Middle Ages, while regarding the associated institutions of rural life with more than a little suspicion and distaste. So too was this the case when it came the education and proper upbringing of children, such as when Eiximenis cited an unknown "philosopher" named Prometheus in the twelfth book of the Crestià (referred to, hereafter, as the Dotzè), who advised that all young people, even young peasants, should be sent to cities to be educated. By doing this, Eiximenis claimed, fathers “would fulfill the obligations they had to their sons much better,” by permitting their children to be exposed to the civilizing atmosphere of the city. Thus, cities are fundamental to Eiximenis’s conception of "good society" because they function as central loci for education – and education, for Eiximenis, was absolutely fundamental to society's improvement and advancement. Further,

[In cities,] man is better acquainted with every good thing that he might wish to know, for in such places there are more learned men, more books, more sermons, more lectures, and more examples that are worthy from many fine people, than there are in smaller towns, as a result of which instruction men control their appetites much more effectively than they do in an unsophisticated, small town.

Thus, the true value of a city lay in its capacity to bring young people into contact with a greater

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7 Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 51. All translations of Eiximenis's writings are taken those of Hughes, unless otherwise indicated.

8 Ibid., pp. 50–51; Eiximenis, Dotzè, v. I, 1, ch. 22, p. 44. [viure en notable comunitat qui és ben regida, axi com deu ésser comunitat de ciutat, val més a reffrenar les males cobejances que no viure en comunitat menor, e pus simple e de menor regiment ... Car en les ciutats l’om és mils informat a tota res de bé que vulla saber, car aquí ha més hòmens scients, e més libres, e més sermons, e més liçons, e més bons exòmplis de moltes bones persones que no ha en los lochs manors.]
number of edifying influences that would, in turn, give them abundant opportunity to learn the values, skills, and appropriate behavior that, Eiximenis believed, would ultimately create a "better" society.

Underlying Eiximenis's view on the importance of education is the assumption that he makes, but which he never states openly, that proper behavior and good morals are not intrinsic to the individual: instead, they need to be instilled in the individual from outside. After all, it is not the city but the wealth of educators in it that makes it such a beneficial place. Therefore, Eiximenis repeatedly stresses the need for young people to be instructed and overseen by adults so that they fully apprehend the customs, practices, and habits he believed were necessary for them to lead a "proper" and moral life. Just as an individual entering into a city did not become civilized without instruction, so too was a child of the city not civilized at birth. Consequently, Eiximenis deemed the participation of adults, and especially parents, to be absolutely essential for the education of children, as a means for guiding young people away from vice and towards virtue.

Outlining his prescriptions for the education of children and the role of parents in overseeing it, Eiximenis was adamant that ultimate responsibility fell to parents and was an intrinsic part of parenthood, saying that it fell to them “because nature has charged [them] with the care of their children.” In particular, Eiximenis stressed the importance of fathers in the education of children, since he believed that mothers were more prone to spoiling their children, due to the greater capacity for love instilled in them by God, and were, therefore, less suited to ensuring rigorous adherence to an educational program. This attitude is illustrated at one point in the Dotzé when he states that “an ill-mannered child is usually known as a widow’s nursling.”

Elsewhere in his writings, Eiximenis explains even further the dangers that can result from one or both parents showing too much affection to their children, stating in the Terç del Crestià that it can even lead them to hold their parents in contempt. Consequently,

The desire to forestall this contempt [of children for their parents] should spur natural fathers, above all, and then mothers, to avoid showing too much flattery or familiarity towards their children, for if they act in this way, their children do not fear them and become even worse. However, whatever the mother does, the father must strictly observe this rule, for he should always show only a small degree of familiarity to his son and should speak to him only a little, and his words should be severe, though restrained, and not excessive.

10 Eiximenis, Libre de les dones, v. 1, ch. 6, pp. 13–15; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 69.
11 Eiximenis, Libre de les dones, v. 1, ch. 100, pp. 151–54; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 76.
12 Francesc Eiximenis, Terç del Crestià, ed. Martí de Barcelona, 3 vols. (Barcelona: Barcino, 1929–32), v. 2,
In short, the assumption made by Eiximenis is that mothers, by their very nature, were ill-suited to educate their children, since they were unable to show sufficient detachment to ensure that their children did not become spoiled or ill-behaved. Therefore, it was imperative for fathers to take an active and energetic interest in the education of their children.

For similar reasons, Eiximenis also advises (male) teachers to show a similarly reserved and cold demeanor to those in their care:

However much they [the students] learn, he [the teacher] must reprimand them for learning little and for having scant sense and a meagre knowledge of God . . . The said teacher must never allow his pupils to know that he is satisfied with their progress for, if he permits this, they will swell with pride at this news and will show contempt for their teacher’s command and for his very person.

Thus, it is incumbent upon anyone involved in the education of the young, in Eiximenis’s view, to ensure that modesty and humility are enforced with rigor. Not doing so leads only to haughtiness, ill manners, and, ultimately, attempts by the child to usurp the authority of the parent and thereby upset the entire order on which parental and filial relations was supposed to be based.

For many, the advice to treat children coldly and with relative harshness may seem rather cruel; one could only imagine that Lloyd deMaume, for example, would see it as further proof of

pp. 56–77; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 70.
13 Notably, it was this very fear that is given by parents in other areas of Europe as the rationale for sending their children to be raised in the households of others; they feared they would not be able to maintain the detachment that Eiximenis calls for. More generally, this practice has been most discussed by historians of England, not least because of the harsh critique given of the English practice by an Italian traveler in the sixteenth century, which modern historians still feel compelled to rebut. See, for example, Hanawalt, Growing Up in Medieval London, pp. 146–49; Ben-Amos, Adolescence and Youth, pp. 54–68.
14 As much as Eiximenis claims that his mistrust of mothers as the primary educators of their children is rooted in the love they have for their children, an element of basic misogyny must be acknowledged, such as when he concludes, at one point, that mothers were much more likely to pass their own vices on to their children than were fathers. Examples of Eiximenis’s views of women can be found scattered throughout his works, with several examples included in Hughes’s translation. Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, pp. 93–102.
15 Ibid., p. 71; Eiximenis, Terç del Crestià, v. 2, pp. 56–57.

Further illustrating his concerns about the repercussions of fathers contentedly leaving the education of their children in the hands of others, Eiximenis tells in the Dotzé of a king who, belatedly learned that his son behaved in a haughty and undignified manner, unbefitting for a noble child. Thus, he confronted him, threatening his son with disinheriting unless the boy changed his ways. Terrified of his father’s wrath, the boy then explained that he had learned his ill-behavior from his mother, who he said “detests things most readily and takes great pleasure in my own [the son’s] turns of abhorrence.” Thus, realizing that his son’s mal-education was his own fault, having ignored his responsibility and having left his son's education in the hands of his wife, the king thereafter took much greater care to ensure that he was the primary model for this son's behavior. His wife, on the other hand, was cut off from contact with her child because of bad habits and seemingly irresistible desire to pass her bad customs on to her son. Consequently, because of the father’s attentions, the son returned to the path of good morals and proper comportment. For this exemplum, see Eiximenis, Dotzé, v. II, 1, ch. 528, pp. 140-43; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 77.
the inherent viciousness of medieval parents. Yet Eiximenis himself seems to have viewed his approach as necessary, not least because his understanding of the basic nature of young people, rooted as it was in the writings of earlier authorities like Aristotle and Isidore of Seville, viewed the adolescent personality as inherently unstable and prone to sins of pride, anger, and lust, all of which were the result of the dominance of the sanguinary humor during the adolescent life-phase. Thus, while the sanguinary humor also contributed admirable traits, like vigor, intensity, high spirits, and a passionate, trusting nature, the same preponderance of blood also made adolescents susceptible to negative character attributes like self-aggrandizement and overweening pride, as well as aggressiveness, intemperance, and distractibility.

Eiximenis’s incorporation of these ideas is clearly seen in one chapter of the *Dotzè* where he describes the “commendable habits” of adolescents and makes use of much the same vocabulary as that of his Greek and Roman sources. Therefore, when commenting on the generosity of adolescents, for example, Eiximenis speaks glowingly of their willingness to give away their possessions to others freely. Similarly, he praises adolescents for their optimism, their confidence, and their lack of fear in pursuing whatever they may desire; he also lauds their lively minds and strong wills; he praises their trusting nature and lack of guile or deceptiveness. Above all, though, he praises adolescents for their capacity to feel shame easily, which he sees as a positive attribute, since their desire for praise and approval leads them to try much harder to reform themselves when chastised for the wrongs they committed.

Where things become slightly more confused, however, is when Eiximenis turns to the “six or seven … shortcomings” of the adolescent personality. Frequently, these characteristics are

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16 DeMause, perhaps more than any other scholar, characterizes medieval parenting in negative terms, as brutal, uncaring, and destructive. See, for example, deMause, “Evolution of Childhood.”

17 In many respects, their view is similar to the modern explanation of many parents of teenagers, whose outbursts and emotional swings are ascribed to “hormones” and the onset of puberty. For discussions of these earlier writings, especially as they relate to the idea of the “Ages of Man,” see, among others, Burrow, *Ages of Man*; Dove, *Perfect Age of Man’s Life*; Cochelin, “Pre-Thirteenth Century Definitions of the Life Cycle.”

18 Eiximenis, *Dotzè*, v. II, 2, ch. 814, pp. 317–18; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, pp. 128–29. [los joves han sis costum es loables. Car primerament son liberals, e açò fa car els sens lur astuïcia e traball an ço que an. Segonament an gran esperança de opetir ço que desigen, e fa-o car són tots ardens e calts e no-ls és vigaresque res los puxa contrastar; fa-o encara car jamés no-s són vists en grans contrasts e no saben quin affany és opetir ço que hom no ha. Deliten-se encara solament en ço que veen e esperen e no en res passat, car han poc vist ne fet e temps passat, e per tal an gran sperança en l’edevenidor. Tercament, són animosos e de gran cor, car fa-o la calor gran qui és en ells, qui-lls inclina a volar sobre tots altres e a opetir glòria e honor. Quartament, no pensen tant de mal en res com hy à, car pensen-se – com no sàpien molt ne agen molt vist – que tot sia pla e dret en los altres. Quintament, són misericordiosos, car no saben ponderar lo mal fet per negun e avorrenx tota pena e amen delits, e per tal quant veen que los altres són en perill de soferir o soferen penes de fet, tantost se mouen a misericòrdia... Sisenament, són vergonyosos, car com desigen per lur calor que sien honrats e preats, per tal si caen en desonor an-ne gran desplaer, e aquell desplaer se liga ab vergonya.]
little more than negative interpretations of the same qualities he just finished describing as
virtues. For example, while their “fiery nature” makes them lively and generous, Eiximenis then
states that it also makes them "slavishly follow their passions and inclinations,” while also
rendering them “lecherous and quickly moved to anger.” Similarly, because “their humours are
in furious motion,” he notes that they have great energy and confidence; yet this same quality
also makes them mutable and fickle and causes them to hop from one passion to the next. Even
the adolescents’ tendency to feel shame, which he had previously described as their greatest
positive trait, is interpreted negatively, since he states that it also leads them to defame others
unjustly in hopes of impressing those around them, and especially "the woman or women that
they love," since youths “greatly covet being held in esteem.” Therefore, in essence, an
adolescent’s greatest attribute (being their ability to change when corrected) is also described as
his greatest flaw, since the fear of being shamed leads him to try to puff himself up to look better
for his peers.\footnote{Eiximenis speaks primarily of adolescent males in this passage, though the same could, perhaps, also be
said of adolescent females.} Concluding, he states that young people “are not careful about anything they do.”
Rather,

   everything they do, they carry out with great ardour, so that what they love, they love with great ardour, and
   what they detest, they detest with a vengeance. Similarly, if they praise or censure anything, or honour or
dishonour it, they do it all to great excess. And this is on account of their great natural fieriness and ardour
   and the little control they have over their scant good sense and their paltry powers of reason.\footnote{Eiximenis, Dotzè, v. II, 2, ch. 814, pp. 318–20; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, pp. 129–31. Because of the
length of this passage, the following reproduction of the original, Catalan/Valencian passage has been abridged at
various points, noted by ellipses.}

   [Han, emperò, lo jòvens, segons aquells matexs, VI o VII altres defallimens vituperables.

   E lo primer si és que segueixen fort lurs passions e inclinacions, e açò per tal quant són molt calts e ab pocca raò,
   e per tal la calor los empeny a seguir los passions e la pocca raò no ls reté E per tal són fort luxuriosos e mogut
tost a vra.

   Lo segun és que són fort mutables;... car com sien ardents lurs humòs són en gran moviment, e com la ànima
   seguescha les passions de cors segueix-se que axi matex tantost se mogue lur volentat e apetit; per tal diu aquí
   Aristòtîl que los jòvens agudament cobeegen, mas tantost són sadolls e girats en altre proposit.

   Lo terc, que massa tot creixen, a açò car, com no sien molt experts en diverses malícies dels hòmens, pensen-se
   que tothom los diga veritat.

   Lo quart que tant són moguts a desonor als altres; raò és car, com dit és, ells per la calor natural volen
   sobrepajar als altres, e com negun no onra molt als jòvens per lurs defallimens e per lur juventut, per tal tantost
   se tenen per menspreats e tantost vituperen als altres ... lo major greuge que jove pot reebe ès que ell sia
desonor e vituperat davant dona e dones que am.

   Lo quint, són fort cóbeus de ésser preats, e per lur calor e arder parlen e dien cases excessives e àrdues; e com
   no-s coneguen, car no an gran saber, per tal cuyden saber moltes cases que no saben; e per raò d’açò afermen
   tot ço qui ls ve a la pensa, e cuyant dir ver confermen-ho ab tanta pertinàcia que per força an a dir moltes
   falsèies. E, pus que dites les agen, an vergonya que sien tenguts per monçeguens; per tal confermen- les ab
   aytanta pertinàcia com poden ...

   Lo sisèn, que són fort monçegués, segons que prova lo quint punt tantost recitat; e asigna-y altra raò lo dit
Therefore, at the very core of Eiximenis’s characterization of young people there exists a fundamental contradiction that is similar to that seen in the writings of other classical and medieval authors who portray adolescents and youths as simultaneously representing strength, vitality, beauty, and joyfulness, while also describing them as disruptive, corruptive forces within society who are ruled by vanity, anger, impulsiveness, and a lack of wisdom.21

However, while the image of adolescence that Eiximenis presents is not entirely consistent, his advocacy of the role of parents as guides through the veritable minefield of adolescence is unambiguous. By tempering the boisterous "heat" of youth through careful oversight and rigorous moral instruction, parents (and especially fathers) could channel the inherent passion and enthusiasm of their adolescent children into the most positive expressions possible, so that adolescent *joie de vivre* would lead, ultimately, to a successful entrance into adulthood – and successful adulthood thereafter.

**What Books a Nobleman and Citizen Should Read**

Given Eiximenis's belief in education as the root of moral behavior, it should be little surprise that he believed books to be a key component of a child's moral formation. Consequently, he advised that children of the elite classes should be literate and should be encouraged to read widely, even laying out a general program of literary works that he believed “every worthy and respected citizen” and “every prominent figure, such as a knight, a nobleman, a duke, or a sovereign” should read during their adolescence.

Notably, he begins by asserting that all members of the ruling elite (both merchants and aristocrats) should not only be literate in the local vernacular, in which Eiximenis himself composed his work, but should also master Latin grammar, which he believed would permit them to read great and edifying works of the classical past and also enable them to converse with

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21 This basic dichotomy in the perception of adolescents has been well-documented over the years. For a relatively recent collection of essays that speaks to the matter from a variety of perspectives, see Eisenbichler, *Premodern Teenager*. 
people from other lands without needing an interpreter, reinforcing the “real-world” utility of the language as a tool for diplomatic and mercantile pursuits.\textsuperscript{22}

Eiximenis then builds on this basic prescription by mentioning books on a variety of topics, which he divides into categories according to the qualities he believed they would help to develop. First are those that he describes as “concerning morals” and “matters of conscience.” For the most part, the works in this group are of an obviously religious nature and include several books of the Bible, such as the two books of Kings, the book of Genesis, the Pentateuch, and the the books of Laws and Judges. In addition, he also recommends a work he calls the “Book of Vices and Virtues.” It is not entirely clear which work this title refers to, but it may be a reference to the fourteenth-century English translation of the French work \textit{La somme le roi}, which Eiximenis may have encountered while studying at Oxford.\textsuperscript{23} Whatever work he is referring to, all of his suggestions are rooted in an unequivocally Christian and ecclesiastical notion of morality; there are no works of pre-Christian or classical authors included among those that “concern morals” and there is little evidence of much, if any, influence of the new wave of humanistic pedagogy that emphasized pagan authors as a source for moral behavior. Instead, Eiximenis clearly remains rooted in the older, scholastic tradition of the medieval university.\textsuperscript{24}

The second category of literary works that Eiximenis recommends is of a rather more practical nature, dealing with works that provide a basic background in rhetoric, with the implication being that the child being exposed to his curriculum would already have undertaken the study of grammar and, therefore, would already be literate. Explaining the particular importance of rhetoric for members of the elite classes, he states, “They [meaning the educated member of the ruling elite] must be able to give guidance and know how to speak eloquently upon any subject which might be required of them.” Again, what is reinforced here is the sheer practicality of the skill that he is advocating. Further, he then recommends that young men

\textsuperscript{22} Eiximenis, \textit{Francesc Eiximenis}, p. 110; \textit{Ibid.}, Dotzè, v. I, 1, ch. 192, p. 411–12. In a later chapter (ch. 501) Eiximenis again discusses the books that a prince should read. Here, however, he places the emphasis much more strongly on the books of the Bible, which he believes are particularly necessary for a prince to know. For this, see \textit{Ibid.}, v. II, 1, ch. 501, pp. 81–82.


\textsuperscript{24} Eiximenis has sometimes been described as a “proto-humanist,” particularly with regard for his exaltation of urban life, as in Manuel de Montoliu, \textit{Eiximenis, Turmeda i l’inici de l’humanisme a Catalunya: Bernat Metge} (Barcelona: Editorial Alpha, 1960); Soledad Vila, \textit{La ciudad de Eiximenis: Un proyecto teórico de urbanismo en el siglo XIV} (Valencia: Diputación Provincial de Valencia, 1984). In his educational prescriptions, however, this influence is less pronounced.
should thoroughly acquaint themselves with the writings of Cicero and Aristotle, thereby linking his prescriptive advice even more firmly to the traditional curriculum of the trivium, in which both authors were valued as sources of practical, if not moral, guidance.²⁵

Continuing in a similarly practical vein, Eiximenis then turns to ‘useful’ works of literature that are related to matters of governance, rule, and military strategy, all of which would have been directly applicable to the lives of the aristocratic as well as the non-noble ruling elites of the city and kingdom of Valencia. As Eiximenis himself explains, books on these topics are important because the children of the elite could expect to serve in positions of influence and power in the future. Therefore, they “must have experience as councillors, and must have special books on these subjects, detailing … [the practices of] the best and most sensible rulers.”²⁶ Thus, he advises that young members of the elite should read the histories of Rome and its emperors that were composed by Valerius Maximus and Livy, which he believed contained valuable models of statecraft and statesmanship that would give their readers additional understanding about how to lead others effectively and how to advise those they served better and more competently. Additionally, because members of the aristocratic elite were, at their root, soldiers, he also advised that the sons of the aristocracy (as well as the non-noble elite) should read the works of Vegetius, whose On Military Matters (De re militari) was held to be a standard text for training young men to fight and lead armies.²⁷

The final group of books that Eiximenis suggests are of a decidedly more educational and pedagogical bent, although they also remain fundamentally practical in nature. Many of these works are among the most well-known medieval texts on these matter, including Boethius’s Consolation of Philosophy (De philosophiæ consolatione) and On Scholastic Discipline (De scholastica disciplina), as well as works by Hugh of St. Victor and John of Wales.²⁸

²⁵ For more on Cicero’s influence on medieval education, see James Jerome Murphy, Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from Saint Augustine to the Renaissance (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).
²⁶ Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 108; ibid., Dotzè, v. I, 1, ch. 14, p. 29. [Los majors deuen saber leys, furs consells e custumes de la terra e haver práctica de consellar, e haver d’açò libres especials, axi com són los regiments dels passats, la experiència dels presents, la fama d’aquells qui són luny, la práctica d’aquells qui són prop, millors e pus sensats.]
²⁷ The author, Publius Flavius Vegetius Renatus, lived in the fourth century. His most well-known work is that on military matters, which was widely read across Europe in the Middle Ages, existing both in Latin manuscripts and in translated versions in various vernacular languages. A recent translation of the work is Flavius Vegetius Renatus, Vegetius, Epitome of Military Science, trans. N.P. Milner (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1993).
²⁸ Hugh of St. Victor is the author of the well-known educational treatise, the Didascalion. John of Wales was an English Franciscan who taught at Oxford and Paris, and who was the author of several philosophical treatises
While Eiximenis does not specifically explain why he believes these works to be valuable for young members of the elite classes, it is likely that he viewed them as providing an important foundation for the continuing pursuit of knowledge and wisdom that he believed to be incumbent on all young sons of the elite. These works also could have served as additional pedagogical tools for young readers who, when they had children of their own, could employ the advice of such authors in their children’s education, thus fulfilling the important duty of a father to oversee his child’s education.

Elsewhere in the Dotzè Eiximenis expands even further on the program just outlined. For example, in a section that outlines the books that all “princes” should have read, Eiximenis cites the authority of “the great philosophers” to suggest that, in addition to the subjects already mentioned above, young aristocrats should also pursue the study the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy/astrology), as well as studies in “the principles of natural philosophy, metaphysics, medicine and theology.” This was not an onerous expectation, though, he says, because “they could learn [these subjects] in a short space of time.” What is more, the benefits of these subjects would greatly assist the young aristocrat in his future role as a leader of men and of society.

In short, Eiximenis advocates in this chapter for what amounted to a full university education for “princes.” Yet, given that the readership of Lo Crestià was not restricted to monarchs or even only the aristocracy, one must almost certainly view his recommendations here as being equally applicable to children from other groups within the Valencian elite, such as the sons of the non-

translated into Catalan in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. *Gran Enciclopèdia Catalana*, s.v. “Joan de Gal·les,” accessed December 9, 2013, http://www.encyclopedia.cat/enciclopedies/gran-enciclopédia-catalana/EC-GEC-0034655.xml?s.start=10&s.q=gal·les#.UqYiC5HRswp. It is likely that Eiximenis encountered the works of both during his study at Oxford and Paris. Further, in a testament by a member of the Valencian bourgeoisie, included in José Maria Cruselles’s study on Valencian schools, Boethius’s *Consolation of Philosophy* and works by Eiximenis are included, though whether Boethius’s work was acquired because of Eiximenis’s recommendation is, of course, impossible to discern. Cruselles Gomez, *Escuela y sociedad*, p. 149. Notably, Giles of Rome’s thirteenth-century text *De regmine principium* is not mentioned by Eiximenis, though the reasons for this omission are unknown. The omissions is striking, however, and may be reflective of Eiximenis’s training in northern rather than southern Europe.

29 Eiximenis particularly emphasizes the study of music and astronomy. Musical study, he says, serves as a means to “offer the heart permissible pleasures” at the end of a day of work – giving some recognition that even princes needed some time to relax and enjoy themselves. At the same time, though, Eiximenis also warns sovereigns against developing an interest in “the art of composing songs or writing verse”: these pursuits are mere distractions that “serve no purpose at all.” Second, the fields of astronomy and astrology are useful because they permit sovereigns to “take care of their health and do their job better for, although all good derives from God, He has, nevertheless, entrusted many things [to the governance of lower things], such as the heavens and the stars and the planets.” For medieval understandings of astrology, see Michael A. Ryan, *A Kingdom of Stargazers: Astrology and Authority in the Late Medieval Crown of Aragon* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011).
noble urban patriciate (the *ciutadans honrats*). Moreover, although Eiximenis specifies only that the “principles” of each field are necessary, his prescriptions still represent a far more intensive educational regimen than was common during this period.\(^{30}\) Therefore, in this determination that advanced university subjects would benefit broad swaths of the lay elite, and not merely those destined for a career in the Church, one can see, again, Eiximenis’s marriage of his scholastic and university background with the fluid, urban society in which he lived, where, although his vision is certainly idealized, education would no longer be reserved for a small minority but would be viewed as a requisite for any member of the Valencian elite, whether aristocratic, patrician, or burgher.\(^{31}\)

Therefore, in his literary recommendations, one sees that Eiximenis possessed a broad vision of education for the scions of the Valencian elite. Furthermore, in his vision for their education, books played as important a role in the attainment of wisdom and expertise as did the mastery of more practical skills, such as riding, swordplay, or other skills that might be necessary for the practice of mercantile or bureaucratic occupations. In short, while Eiximenis probably cannot be called a “humanist,” especially given his adherence to what was largely a stereotypically “scholastic” curriculum, one can still say that his belief that young people from a broad spectrum of society should receive a broad and diverse education certainly qualifies Eiximenis to be described as “humanistic.” In this respect, at least, he shares a similar outlook to many of his more famous, Italian counterparts.\(^{32}\)

*Parents and the Moral Formation of Elite Adolescents in Eiximenis’s Writings*

Eiximenis also wrote extensively about the qualities that noblemen and non-noble patricians (those collectively described as *generosos*) should possess and what their role should be in society.\(^{33}\) Through these writings, he outlines a vision of aristocratic comportment and behavior

\(^{30}\) J.M. Cruselles argues that such a program as Eiximenis calls for, while not unheard of in the Valencia of his day, was not normal. More common was basic training in reading, writing, and basic math. See Cruselles Gomez, *Escuela y sociedad*, pp. 193–96.

\(^{31}\) The demand for educational opportunities for the sons of the urban bourgeoisie and patriciate was so great that the city attempted to establish a secular school on several occasions in the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, albeit in the face of ecclesiastical opposition; the bishop and those in charge of traditional schools overseen by the episcopal office were resistant to the introduction of any school not under their oversight or jurisdiction. In this respect, at least, Eiximenis may have been in disagreement with other members of the Valencian ecclesiastical hierarchy. Again, see *Ibid.*, esp. pp. 155–62.

\(^{32}\) See footnote 24; Craig Kallendorf, Humanist Educational Treatises (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

\(^{33}\) The term "generos" literally refers to "one who is generous." Consequently, it often was used as a general
that is fairly critical of the aristocracy of his day, characterizing his own era as one of decline for the elite classes, in which the ideals espoused by earlier generations of aristocrats were increasingly disregarded.

In particular, Eiximenis highlights what he saw as a fundamental flaw in the character of many members of the elite classes for whom, he believed, honor had become too disassociated from personal conduct. Consequently, “through the wickedness of men, now the world is reversed such that no nobleman considers as dishonor the evil he does, but he considers as a dishonor the evil which another has done to him.” In essence, Eiximenis is asserting here that, in his own day, honor was no longer linked to proper “moral” behavior but instead only concerned itself with damage committed by others, through slight or insult, and not with the damage done by one’s own poor behavior. Consequently, Eiximenis urged the elite to reform itself, return to earlier ideals of previous generations – although he does not specify how far back one must go, which suggests that he is referring to an idealized past rather than any specific period. Nonetheless, Eiximenis states, should such an attempt be made, "proper" morals would be restored and the sins of fathers would not be perpetuated into future generations.

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Eiximenis, Dotzé, v. II, 2, ch. 822, p. 339. [Mas ara és lo món reversegat que negun generós no s té a desonor mal que faça, mas té s desonor mal qui fet li si a per algun.]

In contrast, he states that, in earlier times,

You would never find a nobleman [who was] a thief, nor a false swearer, nor a liar, nor an adulterer or fornicator, nor a glutton nor an unjust [man], nor a wrathful [man] or an evil [one], since the [the ancients] said that their glory was that no vice was to be found in them, nor any thing for which they should merit dishonor.

For this passage, see Ibid. [jamés no trobarás hom generós ladre ne falsari ne monçoneguer ne tiran, ne adulter ne fornecedor, ne golafre ne injust, ne furís ne malvat, car deyen que lur glòria era que en ells no fos trobat negun vici ne cosa per què meresquessen desonor.]

Llull does much the same thing in the Llibre when he discusses the noble origins of knighthood and laments its decline in more recent times. This will be discussed further later in this chapter in the section devoted to Llull and this work.

This externalization of honor and the sensitivity to external attack is readily apparent in the actions of the youthful members of aristocratic Valencian households, discussed in the next section of this work. It is also representative of the fragile, constantly contested construction of masculine identity elaborated by many scholars over the past several decades, including Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Honour and Social Status,” in Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society, ed. Jean G. Péristiany (Chicago: Midway Reprint, 1974), pp. 19–78; Claude Chauchadis, Honneur, morale et société dans l’Espagne de Philippe II (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1984); Mark Breitenberg, Anxious Masculinity in Early Modern England (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Karras, From Boys to Men. Pitt-Rivers, in particular, notes that the externalization of honor and shame into the public sphere can even be seen in the grammar of the Spanish language, where the phrase used to express feelings of shame or dishonor, darle vergüenza (donar-se vergonya in Catalan/Valencian) – literally, “It gives me shame” – is
Although Eiximenis criticizes the elite classes roundly for their sensitivity to matters of honor, this same quality remains fundamental to his ideas about the proper functioning of society and place of the lay elite within it. Thus, Eiximenis advises *generosos* to be extremely concerned about their honor and reputation, and even goes so far as to state that they should also take account of the honor (and honorableness) of those in their care or service, be they a child of the lord himself, a member of the lord’s household staff, or his military retinue.  

Illustrating this vision of aristocratic honor, Eiximenis then provides an example that, once again, warns fathers of the problems that could arise from the neglect of their child’s educational and moral development; notably, though, the example also speaks of the dangers that could also arise from the overly harsh punishment of a child’s misdeeds. As Eiximenis relates in his tale, a king named Samuel of Licaónia was such a model of honorable comportment, and his concern for his own honor and reputation was so great that he even viewed an insult to one of his prisoners as an attack on himself. Because of this, Eiximenis states, “no man in the world dared to speak ill of his [the king’s] enemies” in his presence.

Although his attention to his own honor was exceptional, Eiximenis notes that Samuel had neglected the moral education of his own son. Consequently, because of his ignorance and mal-education, Samuel’s son summarily executed a knight who had surrendered to him and whom he had taken prisoner, breaking a primary tenet of knightly comportment. Samuel viewed this as a black mark not only on the honor of his son, but also on his own honor. Summoning his son into his presence, the king therefore berated and disowned him, and decreed that his son should henceforth bear the name “Royal Scoundrel” and lead an ignoble life.  

Particularly compelling in this example is Eiximenis’s discussion of what occurred afterwards. Thus, while he states that King Samuel was rightly outraged by his son’s actions, by punishing his son so severely he brought even greater dishonor to himself. Therefore, despite the severity of the crime his son had committed, the fault for the son’s behavior ultimately resided with the father who not only had neglected to teach his son to act properly, but then condemned

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expressed as something that is “not inherent in the person but is imposed from outside.” See Pitt-Rivers, “Honour and Social Status,” p. 43.


his son to a life of depravity for his ignorance. By condemning his child, King Samuel had, in essence, left his son no option but to become the scoundrel his father had condemned him to be. Furthermore, King Samuel’s fault was only exacerbated by the fact that the moral indoctrination of his son, after his banishment, was left to the criminal companions with whom he surrounded himself, and whom Eiximenis says he actively questioned about ways to become “an even greater scoundrel.”

Ultimately, only the influence of a saintly bishop put the young man back on the right track. Taken prisoner and tortured by the king’s son and his criminal associates, the bishop nonetheless convinced the young man to return to the path of morality, even going so far as to advocate on behalf of the son before his father. Admonishing King Samuel for his actions, the bishop told King Samuel, “Correction must be moderate in order that the son should not give way to despair. You … have caused your son to lose hope.” 39 Finally realizing his own fault, the king recognized his son once more and rescinded his earlier judgment, instead requiring that his son make financial restitution to the murdered prisoner's family, so that, thereafter, “they might be seated at his table at all times.” 40 Therefore, in the end, both the son’s and the father’s honor were restored, and Eiximenis illustrates in a dramatic fashion the peril of fatherly neglect of the moral development of his child.

Elsewhere in the Dotzè, Eiximenis builds on the idea that parents must closely supervise their adolescent children. In particular, he notes that parents should pay particular attention to the company their children keep since, as was the case for King Samuel’s son after his disinheritance, poor role models were often instrumental to the decline of children into bad morals. Quoting Saint Cyprian, Eiximenis describes the dangers presented to young people by poor companions and bad influences:

The first [danger] is that such company always begets wickedness which, when repeated in front of another, exerts a heavy allure and attraction upon the mind of the person who witnesses it;... the third is that bad company results in profane language which corrupts good morals ...; the fourth is that on the whole everyone wishes to please the other and, as a consequence, if a person sees that by acting wickedly he can please that other, he will immediately do as that person wishes. 41

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39 Eiximenis, Dotzè, v. II, 1, ch. 630, p. 392; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 87. [Senyor, jatsia que, segons que dix Salamò, bon pare dega tenir al fill a prop la verga de càstich deu esser ab mesura, per guisa que lo fill no vinga a desesperació.]

40 Eiximenis, Dotzè, v. II, 1, ch. 630, p. 392; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 87. [leja cosa m·és estada que a mon presoner no sia feta cortesia en ço del meu, ne li ensenyada aquella amistat qui·s pertany de fet a hom generós e real axí com és mon fill... yo li perdò; mas vull que satisfaça als fills del mort axí que torstems siquen en sa taula, e·ls faça de present alcun assenyalat do en recompensació del dampnaige a ells dat per la mort del pare.]

41 Eiximenis, Dotzè, v. II, 2, ch. 808, p. 303; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, pp. 71–72. [mala companyia
Eiximenis then develops this theme even further with a story of a teacher who had corrupted his pupil, the son of the Duke of Garb, with his foul mouth and ill manners. In brief, Eiximenis recounts that the duke's son had adopted several of his tutor's bad customs, including spending too much time in the kitchens, which gave him “a very marked sweet tooth,” and a propensity to impolitely “smack his lips whilst eating” – both of which Eiximenis states elsewhere are traits unbefitting a gentleman or aristocrat. Moreover, the tutor also encouraged the duke’s son to adopt a rude demeanor with those around him, which the latter found very amusing: when the duke's son saw someone eating he would shout out, “Oh, I hope it makes you sick”; when someone sneezed he would cry, “Curse you!” instead of "Bless you!"; and when someone slipped, he would say, “Have a good trip!” Worst of all, though, the boy’s ill manners and bad behavior soon spread to other children of the castle, who had, in turn, adopted the poor manners of the duke's son, their de facto leader. Thus, again, the young are portrayed as blank slates, or perhaps even more appropriately as sponges who absorb the manners and mannerisms of those around them, whether they be good or ill.

In addition to his concerns about punishment that was too harsh, and his worries about the influence of poorly mannered companions or other role models, Eiximenis also feared that fathers could corrupt their children, albeit inadvertently, by making them economically independent at too young an age, in particular, by granting a child his or her inheritance before the parent's own death. Situations where this could have occurred have already been discussed in the previous chapter, such as when fathers emancipated their sons in order to give them gifts of land or money before the child's marriage. Of even greater concern for Eiximenis, however, were occasions where a parent might turn over the titles or an entire estate to his or her child while still living. This, Eiximenis feared, put parents in a situation where they would lose their most powerful leverage over their child's behavior and would become dependent on the child.

corromp als altres per les següents vies: la primera si és car de la mala companyia ix tostempes mal qui, continuat davant altre, inclina e tira molt lo cor d’aquell qui’l veu;... la terça, car de mala companyia ixen males paraules quicorrompen bones costume... la quarta, car cascù vol comunament complaure a l’altra e, per consegüent, si veu que mal faent li puxa complaure tantost li farà a volentat.)

Hughes notes that the primary actors in this exemplum cannot be identified definitively, which gives the narrative a rather apocryphal feel. Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 72. Nonetheless it is still useful in that it demonstrates that even those occupying traditionally “respectable” positions, such as that of a teacher, could still be corruptive influences.

Ibid.; Eiximenis, Dotzè, v. II, 2, ch. 808, p. 303. Because of the brief nature of the quotations used here, the original text has been omitted.

In the end, Eiximenis reports that the boy's father became aware of the poor influence of the teacher and had him banished, never to return to Africa. Further, all of the ill-mannered boys were sent to live on the island of Malta “for as long as it took to cure them of their vices.”
rather than the other way around. This, Eiximenis believed, was an inversion of the "natural" order that, all too often, resulted in the child then neglecting his or her parent and leaving him or her in penniless destitution.45

Eiximenis further underlines this idea that a parent cannot entirely trust his or her child (at least when it comes to inheritances) in another chapter of the Dotzè, when he castigates first-born sons who actively wish for their father’s death so that they might finally inherit.46 What is more, his fear was not entirely unfounded, as seen in the case of Alfons (el Jove), the son of the Duke of Gandia, who, allegedly, was a constant source of trouble for his parents, even going so far as to attack his father’s palace at the head of an armed retinue of supporters.47 Underlying the young Alfons’s actions, it appears, was a basic frustration that, although Alfons was over twenty years old and had even been granted a title and estate by his father, he still remained largely dependent on his father, who continued to hold the primary familial title and the majority of the family’s economic resources. Thus, demonstrating elements of both of Eiximenis’s fears, Alfons was empowered by the land and title he had received from his father, but still desired the full authority his father possessed and therefore rebelled against the control that he still believed his father held over him. Eventually, his conflicts with his parents became so severe that his mother disinherited him as a means of punishing him for his ill behavior, giving the properties that she controlled to another man.48

In many respects, the fears that Eiximenis describes, as well as the realization of those fears by Alfonso of Gandia are strikingly reminiscent of the relationships between aristocratic youths and their parents in the scholarship of Georges Duby, in which the impatience of the young to achieve independence sometimes led them to act out with violence against their parents, thereby leading to a general state of hostility and mistrust between many fathers and those children who were impatiently awaiting their inheritance. And even if this situation was not necessarily the

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45 In support of this fear, Eiximenis cites the case of Ferdinand of Malta, whose father had given him much of his inheritance while still alive. After having received it, Eiximenis reports that Ferdinand then “forced him [his father] to wear shabby clothing and to live in extremely miserable conditions”; since the inheritance was given, the father had no lever through which to enforce his will over his son and, instead, was entirely at his mercy. Ultimately, only the intervention of Ferdinand’s own son served to correct the behavior of the recreant father.

While this suggests that Ferdinand was likely not a young man the example still applies equally well to the parents of minors, who would have exited patria potestas if they had been emancipated and given their inheritance, making them, effectively, independent of their parents. For more on this topic, see Chapter 1 of this study.

46 Ibid., v. II, 1, ch. 477, pp. 23–24. A similar sentiment can also be found in vol. II, 2, ch. 827, p. 349.

47 This case is discussed at greater length in the Conclusion of this study.

48 The conflict over the mother’s bequest of her properties to one other than her son is the dispute at the core of the case, which is discussed at greater length in the Conclusion to this study.
case for the majority of parents and children, the fact that accusations of this sort were made against Alfonso of Gandia strongly suggests that Eiximenis's fears may have been rooted in firsthand observations.  

In bringing this section to a close, it can be noted that Eiximenis is not entirely gloomy in his view of relations between parents and their children. It is more that throughout his writings Eiximenis returns repeatedly to the need for parents to retain control over their children and to remain active participants in their children’s development. This view can even be seen in Eiximenis’s suggestion regarding how a parent might circumvent the entire issue of filial impatience to inherit: rather than adhering to a strict system of patrimonial transmission, primogeniture, or fixed portions that would be given to all heirs, Eiximenis suggests that, instead, parents should give their titles and estates to whichever child they believe to be “most worthy.” This, he claims, would both give incentive to children to remain obedient to the will of their parents, who would retain control over the prized inheritance as long as possible, while also motivating the children to make sure that they internalize and express the “good” ideals that their parents should desire them to possess. Thus, linking the idea to earlier practice, Eiximenis advises parents

to select the best [individuals] for their service and for that of the land, the ancient princes, formerly, did not merely observe [the practice] in their officials, both in and out of the house, but they observed it in their sons; for if they had many sons, even if the kingdom fell to the first-born by custom, they would still give it to that one whom they viewed as wisest and best for the common good.

Yet, as cogently as Eiximenis argues his case, the evidence provided by even a short examination of archival sources indicates that this advice was largely ignored.

In a broader sense, though, even in his advice regarding inheritance, Eiximenis is consistent in his view that children needed to be constantly invigilated by their parents (especially by their fathers) and that the parent bore the ultimate responsibility for the moral education of his (or her)

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49 See Duby, “Youth in Aristocratic Society.” He too stresses the tension that often arose between living parents and their children, who were forced to remain in a state of dependent minority until they came into their inheritance at their father’s death.

50 Eiximenis, Dotzé, v. II, 1, ch. 474, p. 16. [Posa aquell gloríós Policarpus que la dita manera de elegir los millós per a sson servay e de la terra, no solament ho servaven antigament los antiches prínceps en lurs officials, doméstichs e fora casa, ans ho servaven en los fills; car sy aguessen molts fills, no contrastant que per costuma lo regne fos degut al primogènit, emperò ells o daven a aquell qui veyen que era pus cdavi e millor per la cosa pública.]

51 For inheritance practices in medieval Spain, as well as Valencia, see, for example, Montanos Ferrin, La família, esp. ch. 3; Pallarés-Emelindo Portela, “Los mozos nobles”; Rafael Narbona Vizcaíno, “Marrades, un partit patrici,” in L’univers dels prohoms: Perfils socials a la València baix-medieval, ed. Ferran García-Oliver Rafael Narbona Vizcaíno et al. (València: E. Climent, 1995), esp. pp. 33–36.
children. In short, because adolescence was a crucial period of transition and moral formation for all children, which had ramifications for the rest of their lives, the education of adolescents could not be ignored or entirely outsourced to others. Rather, it was precisely because it was so important that parents needed to be intimately involved in both the practical and moral education of their children.

In School and at Court: Education and Career Preparation for Adolescents in Eiximenis’s Writings

Another area that Eiximenis highlights as particularly important for parents (and especially fathers) is the provision of a suitable profession for their child that would not only ensure a stable livelihood suitable to the family’s station but that would give opportunities for social advancement. So important is this responsibility, in Eiximenis’s estimation, that parental neglect in providing a suitable profession was considered to be a legitimate cause for grievance against a parent. Thus, he tells fathers,

Every man must pass on to his son the very best profession he can, according to what the philosopher Zeno said. For this reason he said that a son may always express a grievance against his father in the following matters, that is to say, first, if he is not his legitimate son or if he does not acknowledge him as such. Second, if he gives him a horrible name. Third, if he has brought him up badly. Fourth, if he has forgotten to give him the paternal, necessary and natural privileges that are due to him. Fifth, if he has taught him an unprofitable way of life, for everyone can teach his son some worthy profession which is good in itself or is in accordance with the ways and customs of his country.52

Notably, the primary characteristic that Eiximenis offers as the basis for the "suitability" of a profession is that it should be “more lucrative than others.”53 Consequently, since the fundamental measure of a profession’s worth is its income potential, many of his suggestions would be recognizable to parents today, and include professions such as that of jurist, medical

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52 Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 69; Ibid., v. I, 1, ch. 148, p. 322. [Cascun hom deu dar a son fill la millor art que puxa, segons que deya Zenò philosoff. Per tal deya que lo fill se pot tostems clamar de son pare en les cases següents, ço és, primerament si no l’engenra legitíim o si l’è sens legitimació; segonament, si li posa vil nom; terçament, si l’ha mal nodrit; quartament, si l’ha oblidat en deguts, e paternals, e necessaris e naturals beniflicis; quintament, si li ha ensenyada dolenta art de viure, car cascù pot ensenyar a son fill alguna bona art qui sia bona en si o segons la manera e costuma de la terra.]

53 This prescription would seem to be rather surprising given that, as a Franciscan friar at least ostensibly devoted to the ideal of poverty, one would expect him to place less emphasis on income potential as the primary basis for selecting a profession for one's child. Nonetheless, this is exactly what Eiximenis does. The ambivalent view of Christianity towards money can be seen clearly in Thomas Aquinas’s Summa theologica. In particular, see his sections on cheating, buying and selling, and usury. See Thomas Aquinas, Summa theologica, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: Viewforth Press, 2012), secunda secundae partis, questions 77 & 78. Also for a modern interpretation of these matters, see Lester K. Little, Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), esp. pt. 4. In his book, he makes the argument that mendicant poverty was instrumental in the formulation of a “bourgeois Christianity” suitable for the emerging mercantile economy of medieval European cities.
doctor, money changer, minter, merchant, or lawyer. Moreover, Eiximenis gives even further praise to these professions and to those who practice them elsewhere in *Lo Crestià* as well, characterizing them as the moral bedrock of Valencian society, and individuals without whom the society would collapse. Thus, while his apparent weighting of professions by the amount of money they would generate might appear to be contradictory to the ideals of Eiximenis’s own religious order – he was a Franciscan, after all – his advice nonetheless reflects an admirably pragmatic sensitivity to the realities of the world in which he lived, where, then as now, money was a key element to a child’s future economic success and socio-political prominence as he entered into independent adulthood.

For those parents whose ambitions for their children were more "aristocratic" in nature, Eiximenis allowed that the more traditional practice of placing one's child into service in the household of an aristocrat or other, prominent individual was also a viable path to social success and economic security. In pursuing this route, Eiximenis assures parents that they would not only ensure their child's education in the military and social skills necessary for aristocratic or courtly service, but would also be giving their child a valuable opportunity to forge connections with powerful members of the elite, connections that could prove quite valuable as the child entered adulthood. But equally as important, service to the nobility also carried the possibility of ennoblement for the child himself or, at the very least, of an advantageous marriage that would similarly permit social advancement for the child and for the family as a whole. This was not idle speculation either: several examples of families or individuals who had risen to noble status through their service to other nobles were readily available in late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Valencia. In fact, one need look no further than the families of two of the best known Valencian authors: the Martorell and the March. These two families both rose to prominence and, eventually, aristocratic status as a direct result of their service to the dukes of Gandia, including Alfons, discussed above. For example, Ausiàs March's father, Pere, was a prominent administrator in the duke's retinue and served in several administrative and advisory capacities, for which he was granted the title of knight, which Ausiàs March later inherited.

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54 Eiximenis's enthusiasm for the urban bourgeoisie has already been noted earlier in this chapter, and has also been well documented by other historians. For example, see Agustín Rubio Vela, “Ideología burguesa i progrés material a la Valencia del Trescents,” *L’Espill* 9 (1981): pp. 11–38; Cruselles Gomez, *Los mercaderes de Valencia.*

55 If the child was fortunate enough to serve in a royal household, even loftier, more prestigious positions became available, including that of “Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Treasurer, Keeper of the Privy Purse, Chamberlain, Steward, Keeper of the King’s or Lord’s Wardrobe, Lord Justice, Protonotary, or Secretary.” Eiximenis, *Francisc Eiximenis,* p. 69; *Ibid.,” v. I, I, ch. 148, p. 322.

56 For Pere March's service and ennoblement, see Jesús Villalmanzo Cameno, *Ausias March: Colección*
Likewise, Joanot Martorell’s title was earned by a relatively recent ancestor who had been similarly knighted for his loyal service.  

Elaborating further on the suitability of aristocratic service for young members of the elite, Eiximenis emphasizes in another chapter of the Dotzé that noble lords were obligated both by tradition and by honor to ensure the education of those young people in their service. Citing a proclamation issued by the ancient Roman king, Pirrus, Eiximenis laid out the skills that lords were expected to impart to those in their service:

[how] to serve a lord, to wait at table, to serve in a household and to tend horses, ... to knead dough, to cook, to play musical instruments, to practice swordsmanship, to jump, to dance, to sing, to speak courteously and to conduct himself according to his station.

In short, those in the service of nobles or lords could reasonably expect to be trained in all the skills and customs of the aristocracy, as also seen in sentiments expressed by Henry, the English duke of Lancaster, who agreed with Eiximenis’s basic outlook and stated that it was his responsibility to ensure that all young people in his service were “doctred, learned and brought up in his noble court in the school of arms and for to see noblesse, courtesy and worship.”

Turning to focus even further on Eiximenis’s view of knighthood itself, what is immediately striking is that, rather than being framed as a sacred calling or as any sort of divinely ordained social position, it is instead described by Eiximenis as a profession like any other, which, if practiced correctly, permitted its practitioners to earn a reasonable livelihood. Once again, Eiximenis’s first consideration in advising parents is for the income that knighthood, purely as an occupation, could generate. Furthermore, explaining this position, he tells his readers,

All the worldly arts, whatever they may be, are given over to making money in order to earn one’s livelihood; so too is the art of chivalry, in the case of the one who exercises it, likewise given over to this, even if the


57 For Martorell’s family history, see the introduction to Riquer’s edition of Tirant lo Blanc (Joanot Martorell and Martí Joan de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc i altres escrits de Joanot Martorell, ed Martín de Riquer. (Barcelona: Ariel, 1979). Additionally, a similar phenomenon is seen in one of the court cases discussed in the Conclusion to this study. In the case, the complainant accuses his legal adversary of having been born the illegitimate child of a promiscuous laboring class mother. Through the vagaries of fate and several fortunate connections, however, the boy eventually was able to gain training as a notary and became a scribe in the household of the Duke of Gandia. Over time, his influence in the household rose to such an extent that the boy, now a man, was knighted. Therefore, at the time of the case, which was brought by the old Duke of Gandia’s son, the illegitimate child of a vagabond carried the honorific “mossen” before his name and had joined the aristocracy. For more on the dispute as a whole, see the Conclusion of this study. For this case, in particular, see Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Gobernación, Litium 2,207 (1414), mn. 8, ff. 37r–v (Apr. 17). The case continues in mn. 7 and the specific allegations discussed here are found on ff. 32v–33r.

58 Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, pp. 142–43.

59 Quoted in Orme, From Childhood to Chivalry, p. 55.
community ordains that it be for the protection of the commonwealth.\textsuperscript{60}

Therefore, instead of castigating knights for profiting from their office, Eiximenis takes the view that knighthood, “if carried out with prudence and audacity, is most respectable and merits great rewards in money and in other good things, especially civic and political honours.”\textsuperscript{61}

Consequently, it also ranks among the professions that Eiximenis believes to be appropriate for children of the socio-cultural elite.

Although Eiximenis is supportive of knighthood in general, he expresses fairly strong reservations about it at other points in the Dotzè, suggesting that while knighthood was an honorable profession, it was not always practiced honorably. This, he argues, was utterly disastrous, because the desire for wealth by the knight who practiced his office poorly – and therefore could not earn a sufficient income through legitimate means – caused him to abandon his role as protector of his society and, instead, prey on those around him.

This idea has already been suggested above, when Eiximenis criticized knighthood for having declined from its earlier, idealized state, but it can also be found elsewhere in his writings, such as in an anecdote about a Persian duke named Tampnis, who bemoaned the destruction that knights had caused to his lands, which he linked directly to a decline of the authority and respectability of the aristocracy as a whole. Speaking to his son, the king says,

\begin{quote}
See, my son, what the foolishness of noblemen has done, that has forsaken the study of wisdom, which was their chief glory, and has chosen the least part: namely, devotion to violence and to the particular profession of soldiery. Therefore, God punishes them most hideously for this sin, for today the sons of peasants throughout the world have taken command of the study of wisdom that the nobles have forsaken and they stand in judgement over these nobles and have taken their chief honours.\textsuperscript{62}
\end{quote}

In short, in this anecdote, Eiximenis recognizes what was, for the most part, the reality of his own day as well, in which wealthy non-nobles – and especially the urban bourgeoisie – were increasingly rising into social and political prominence, while the aristocrats quarreled among themselves, squandered their resources, and increasingly fell into destitution. Continuing his

\textsuperscript{60} Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 70; Ibid., Dotzè, v. I, 1, ch. 148, p. 322. [Tota art, axí mateix, del món que y suma, tota és ordenada a guanyar diners per sustentar la vida corporal, car art de cavalleria axí mateix a açò és ordenada per l’om qui la té, iaisa que la comunitat la ordon per salvació de la cosa publica. Aquesta art exeguida prouentment e ab ardiment és fort honorable e mereix grans guardons en peccinies e en altres béns, especialment en honors civils e politiques.]


\textsuperscript{62} Eiximenis, Dotzè, v. II, 2, ch. 889, p. 498; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 113. [mas vet, fill,que ha feta la folla dels hòmens generosos que ha levat l’estudi de la savia, qui era la lur glòria principal, e ha elegida la pus minva part, ço és, entenedor en força e en art d’ames especial; e per tal los pone Deus per aquest peccat fort lejament, car huy per tot lo món los fills dels pagesos an amprat l’estudi de savia que los generosos han levat, e jugen los generosos e’ls han toltes le honors principals, pus que los generosos an a venir a lur juy.]
narrative, the king, and Eiximenis, expand on this point, saying,

Further, they [the bourgeoisie] have taken all their [the aristocracy’s] privileges, for the noble go to perform feats of arms and these people sleep in their homes in the cities and large towns. And what’s more, they have taken their profits, for a learned man is immediately wealthy and a nobleman almost never or rarely; and, moreover the learned man can pick up as much money as he likes from attending a meeting or from giving counsel, while a knight may remain on the field of battle against the enemy night and day, all for a florin, and risks losing his life and his possessions.63

In essence, Eiximenis is advocating that the practice of soldiery was not, in fact, the “best” practice of a knight’s office. Instead, service as an advisor for a king or higher lord offered much better opportunities for social and economic success, not to mention a greater life expectancy as well.64

Thus, while Eiximenis did not intend to usurp knights, or even loftier aristocrats, from their position among the societal and political elite, he stressed that they were not granted their position simply so that they could pursue a vagabond's life of knight errantry and soldiery, but rather to better organize and regulate society as a whole.65 Therefore, once again, in asserting the primacy of the knight’s role as an advisor and administrator, rather than a soldier, Eiximenis also reinforces his basic assertion that education and the development of wisdom were fundamental criteria for future economic security and social success of young people. Moreover, this was the case as much for sons of knights and lords as for sons of notaries, lawyers, or even

63 Eiximenis, Dotzé, v. II, 2, ch. 889, p. 498; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 113. [E après los tolen lurs ayres, car los generosos van als fets de les armes, e aquests reposen en les ciutats e grans viles en lurs cases. E après los han tolt lurs profits, car un savi és tantost ric hom e lo generós quaxi no jamès o fort tart; no-res-menys, que lo savi, per anar a una col·lació o per dar un consell, poñà diners aytaus com ne vulla, e un cavaller per un flori estàr al camp de batalla nit e jorn contra los enemichs a perll de perdre si mateix e les seus cases...]

64 Similarly, in another of his works, the Book of Angels (Llibre dels àngels), Eiximenis also broaches this subject and suggests an additional cause of the corruption of the aristocracy: their very residence within the city walls, which is interesting in light of his views of the city as a "civilizing place." Here, citing “the great sovereign and jurist,” Lycurgus, the leader of Classical Sparta, he suggests that knights should be required to live in their rural castles rather than in the cities. In the rural castles, he says, “They might devote themselves more readily to the study of noble books and to a virtuous life.” Moreover, their remove from city dwellers would cause them to be “held in higher esteem and met with greater eagerness when they are among [the city dwellers].” Clearly, the implication is that close proximity to members of the aristocracy only served to degrade the general public’s view of them. However, Eiximenis also believed that knights needed to be protected from cities, which were full of temptation and, ultimately, a corrupting influence. Thus, knights should remain on their rural estates, “That they might hear less about the delights of the city and might be strong, wise people, full of every virtue instead of being self indulgent.” See Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, pp. 112–13.

65 These ideas are expressed at several places throughout his work. See, for example, Ibid., Dotzé, vol. I, 1, chs. 172–78, 198–200, and passim. Moreover, while not stated as explicitly as in the writings of Llull, a somewhat similar view lingers behind the viewpoint of the French knight, Geoffroi de Charny, who in his book on the proper practice of knighthood considers deeds of arms undertaken within one’s own home territory to be the most honorable and much more so than deeds performed in foreign lands or for pay. In short, knighthood practiced for the defense of one’s homeland was particularly honorable; knighthood practiced for profit or spoils was much less so. Thus, a knight’s role was to be active within his own society, not merely to practice military violence. See Geoffroi de Charny, A Knight’s Own Book of Chivalry: Geoffroi De Charny, ed. Richard W. Kaeuper and Elspeth Kennedy (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), p. 49.
Conclusion

In conclusion, while *Lo Crestià* is not a work that was intended solely as a didactic text on the education and moral formation of young men (and women), these matters were, nonetheless, clearly important to Eiximenis and, therefore, receive much attention throughout the work. Further, since adults – be they fathers, guardians, or masters of other sorts – were vitally important to ensuring that young people learned proper morals and adhered to the path of “proper living,” the need for adults to supervise the education of the young is repeatedly emphasized, as are the dangers that accompanied the lack of adult and parental supervision of a child’s education. In short, the education of the young was a profoundly serious endeavor and one that, Eiximenis believed, a parent or other guardian simply could not permit himself to overlook.

For Eiximenis, adolescence and early youth were both conceived of as periods of precarious transition in the human life cycle that, while not as precisely defined as in the *Furs*, still are understood by him as slow, gradual transitions in which a young person continued to require ample supervision to ensure that the he or she did not come to a bad end. Moreover, proper morals and behavior are not understood by Eiximenis to be instinctual or intrinsic to individuals, but are characteristics that need to be instilled in the young over the extended period of adolescence. Thus, ultimately, this suggests that, at least in Eiximenis's mind, adolescence not only existed as a distinct life-phase, but was a vitally important point of transformation along the path from childhood to adulthood.

Rearing Perfection II: The Education of Girls and Young Women in Eiximenis's Writings

In addition to advising parents on how best to bring up their male children, Eiximenis also

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Eiximenis, *Dotzè*, v. II, 2, ch. 862, p. 432. [diu que és legut a tot cavaller per guanyar sa vida o per apendre d’armes a servir qualsevol senyor guerrejant que no guerreg ab manifesta injustícia, axi com fan tirans o heretges contra los fels, mas diu que basta-li actoritat del príncep sots qui exeguex sa cavalleria e que no li sia clara sa injusticia, car si és amagada ell no és tengut de fer inquisició si és bona o no.]

Notably, Eiximenis includes his source author's qualification that it may even be permissible for a knight to serve an unjust lord, since the injustice of the lord “may not be clear to him, … if it is hidden he is not bound to make an investigation into whether [the lord] is good or not.”
wrote extensively on the education and moral development that the other half of the adolescent population, young women, should receive; in fact, he devoted an entire work to the topic, the *Libre de les dones*. This work became quite popular in the years following its composition, and its influence can be seen in other prescriptive works written around the same time, like the brief “Letter of Chastisement and Good Advice” written by Duke Alfons I of Gandia to his daughter, Joana, sometime around 1399. Eiximenis also included additional prescriptions for the education of young women in various books of *Lo Crestià*, but these are not nearly as extensive as those found in the *Libre de les dones*.

In his ideas about the education of young women, Eiximenis generally adheres to the "consensus opinion" provided by earlier authorities, as was the case in his prescriptions for young men. Consequently, Eiximenis’s advice is largely unsurprising to anyone with even a passing familiarity with medieval expectations about “proper” feminine comportment – even if some exceptions also exist that will be highlighted as well. Thus, describing the temporal parameters of female adolescence, he turns to the great Roman orator Cicero for his definition, who says,

> Girls and maidens are of different ages, for she is usually called a girl who is between ten and twelve years old, and from twelve until the age when a woman has a husband she is called a maiden. And he says that the age for a maiden to marry begins at eighteen and lasts until she is twenty-five, and from then on her time for marrying has passed.

As was the case in the legal definition of adolescence described by classical Roman jurisprudence, discussed in Chapter 1, the definition of female adolescence that Eiximenis quotes from Cicero maintains the close link between the onset of female adolescence and the onset of puberty. Notably, however, by also citing Cicero’s rule of thumb that adolescent women should marry sometime between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, Eiximenis also appears to be signaling that, just like young men, young women could expect to undergo a protracted period of

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67 Alfons’s “letter” to his daughter is essentially a list of dictates for her to follow once she leaves her parental home. The overall tone is one very much akin to that taken by Eiximenis and the “letter” concerns itself, primarily, with advising how young women can avoid sin and their own moral failings. Also, the dating of the “letter” is rather ambiguous, but it was likely composed in the 1390s. All of these matters are discussed at some length in the recently published critical edition of the work. See Duque de Gandia Alfons, *Lletra a sa filla Joana, de càstig e de bons nodrimentos*, ed. Rosanna Cantavella (Gandia, Spain: CEIC Alfons el Vell, 2012). For the influence of Eiximenis on Alfons’s text, see pp. 42–44.

68 As above, the versions used are Eiximenis, *Libre de les dones*; *Ibid.*, *Dotzè*.

69 Eiximenis, *Libre de les dones*, v. 1, ch. 16, p. 31; Eiximenis, *Francesc Eiximenis*, pp. 116–17. [Ara vegam quins nodrimens pertanyen a infantes e a donzelles. E açí notaràs primerament que, segons que posa Tulli, De officiis, infantes e donzelles no són d’uns anys, car infanta és appellada comunament de .X. fins en .XII. anys, e de dotze fins que la dona ha marit, s’apella donzella. E diu que edat de maridar donzella comença a .XVIII. anys e dura fins en .XXV., e d’aquí avant passa-li lo temps de maridar.]
adolescence between the age at which they became sexually mature and that in which they married and thereafter entered into adulthood. Where there is a difference, however, is in Eiximenis’s conception of the education that boys and girls should receive during the period of their adolescence, with that of girls being far more concerned with their indoctrination into strict societal norms of moral behavior.

Throughout his writings on young women, Eiximenis consistently emphasizes that the “moral stakes” for young women were much higher than they were for young men. In short, while young men could be given some leeway if they should fall into ill behavior, no such leniency could be shown to adolescent girls. Moreover, Roberta Krueger has noted in her research on the portrayal of women in medieval literature that other didactic authors from roughly the same era similarly called for young women to be treated more harshly than young men. She concludes that, in general, “boys are to be educated, that is, led through to assume their role in government; girls are to be guarded and not indulged.” She continues, “Women's education is not a practical, but a moral education, which protects girls' sexual purity.”70 Thus, the education of girls is more strict precisely because it was intended to indoctrinate young women into a value system and moral order from which there could be no deviation, rather than, primarily, to prepare them for “public life,” either professional or political.

This viewpoint comes through clearly in Eiximenis’s writings: when giving advice on the best means to discipline boys, Eiximenis advises parents to be careful and to show moderation in their punishments; yet, when advising parents how best to correct the wrongdoing of girls, he advocates that they use severe corporal punishment to force the compliance of young women to their parents’ mandates. Girls, he states, should be beaten, even to the point that parents “awaken in her [their daughter] a great fear of being harmed at all times.”71 There is simply no passage equivalent to this that pertains to the punishment of adolescent boys. Instead, while Eiximenis generally calls for parents to temper the harshness of their discipline of male children,


71 Notably, Eiximenis does warn against hitting the child on the head, instead instructing the lashes to be “behind and on the back.” See Eiximenis, Libre de les dones, v. 1, ch. 16, p. 32; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 118. [la deven adodtorinar de honrar pare e mare e de besar-li les mans ... Deven-li encara, ensenyar de tembre a ells , e sovèn li deven fer gran pahor de ésser ferida, e a vegades, si'u mereys, que la firen, no per lo cap, mas per la esquena e detràs, ab la verga.]
he simultaneously advocates for their daughters to live in constant terror of them and of the possible bodily harm that they might receive should they disobey their parents’ wishes.

Elsewhere, when he describes how parents should train their daughters to eat and drink properly in front of guests or strangers, Eiximenis similarly emphasizes that girls should, once again, be more forcefully punished for any breaches of etiquette or comportment they commit than boys or young men would be. Further, he states that girls should be “encouraged” to feel shame for their failing and fear that they might have brought dishonor onto themselves and their parents. As Eiximenis puts it, “Shame is the principal shield with which a girl guards herself from evil.” Therefore, at its root, Eiximenis’s approach to the education of young females reinforces basic societal beliefs about male activity and female passivity. By cautioning against shaming boys too extensively – lest parents lead them to passive despondency or, at the other extreme, complete rebellion – while simultaneously advocating for the opposite approach towards girls, Eiximenis implements a striking, and troubling, double standard to ensure female docility and compliance to the norms and expectations imposed on them by their parents and by society at large.

Building even further on this idea, Eiximenis concludes his chapter on the punishment of girls by saying that, for the most part, girls should be taught to remain silent and to speak only when spoken to. Further, they should not look anyone directly in the face, even when speaking to them; should they accidentally do so, they “should immediately lower [their] gaze to the floor.” Again, in these examples, one sees clearly the emphasis placed by Eiximenis on female passivity, which further reinforces Krueger’s basic assertions regarding the education of female adolescents as a moral and behavioral indoctrination into rigid societal expectations of feminine propriety.

Given Eiximenis’s view that adolescent girls should adopt what amounts to a siege mentality against the “corruptive” society that surrounded them, it is hardly surprising that his calls for girls to protect themselves from impurity (especially that of sex) could reach rather extreme levels. Consistently, throughout his writings, he states that the only remedy for the assertive sexuality of young men, which he seems to take as a given, was for women to turn inwards, both

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72 Ibid., v. 1, ch. 18, p. 36. [qui infanta nodreys sobre totes coses la costum q’a haver verguonya, car verguonya és l’escut principal ab què la infanta s’à a gardar de mal.] Cf. with the examples quoted above, in which fathers punish their boys for improper behavior, including poor table manners.

73 Ibid.
literally and figuratively. Moreover, following his advice above, such behavior should be beaten into them, if they should refuse to comply willingly. Illustrating this mentality, Eiximenis advises that young women should never “make eyes at any man, nor remain at the window, nor speak from the window to anyone in the street below, particularly young men.” Doing this, he says, is a recipe for disaster, since “neither a woman who desires to lure men nor bad apples on the branch shall long endure”: both will fall into ruin quickly.74

Moreover, the entire mentality of Eiximenis with regard to young women and their relationship with the world around them is neatly encapsulated in his description of the root origins of the term “damsel.” Citing John of Salisbury's etymological definition of the Latin word “domicella” as being derived from the root words “domini cella,” meaning “the habitation and house of God,” Eiximenis then elaborates on this definition as a justification for the sequestration of females. As he puts it, since girls are commonly cloistered inside the family home with little opportunity to venture outside, “there is no reason to let [her mind] be distracted by things from the outside world; thus … it follows that God abides in her as in a cell and in his house.”75 In short, while girls are “protected” from the corrupting world outside their home, it is possible that they might remain “pure” themselves, preserving their virginity and thereby remaining a “house for God.” For much the same reason, Eiximenis urges that girls should enter into convents, where they would more easily be able to maintain the sexual continence he believes to be so important for them.76

The underlying sense of fear, verging on panic, that characterizes Eiximenis's advice regarding sexual expression by young women is a constant element of his writings, even if it is shared with nearly all other prescriptive authors writing on the topic of women and female

74 Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 118; Ibid., Libre de les dones, v. 1, ch. 16, p. 32. [Nuyll temps fer huyllades a hom de mòn, ne estar a la finestra, ne d’aquí parlar ab negù baix, majorment ab jóvens. Car dona finestrera, ne préssech ab costera, no porá molt durar, segons que diu l’eximpi comí.]
75 Eiximenis, Libre de les dones, v. 1, ch. 19, p. 36; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, p. 120. [Deya Policraticus que donzella en latí vol dir aytant con Domini cella, ço és habitation e casa de Déu... con la donzella estigiu comunament tanchada, no ha rahó de haver lo cor escampat a les cases de fiora. Donchs, si és adoctrinada de amar Déu e puritat e honestat de sa persona, e a entendre en bonea, segueix-se que Déus en ella habita, axi con en cel·la e en casa sua.]

Certainly this notion of female celibacy is not unique to Eiximenis. Rather, one can see direct links back to the writings of earlier Church fathers, and St. Jerome in particular, reflected in Eiximenis’s words.
76 Eiximenis, Libre de les dones, v. 1, ch. 19, p. 36–37; Eiximenis, Francesc Eiximenis, pp. 120–21. [Les donzelles són en dues diferències. La primera diferència és d’aquelles qui deven servir Déu en orde; e aquestes, per tal que aprenen letra, millor deven en poquea tantost entrar en orde. La segona diferència és d’aquelles qui entenen a pendre marit; e a aquestes conseylla sent Jerònim que, jatsia hagen el cor de fer ço que-les conseylarà lo pare e la mare, emperò, quant en elles, que més amarien servar virginitat a Déu, e ab alcun desplaer e força vènem a pendre marit.]
education. Moreover, this outlook is demonstrated nowhere better than in the advice Eiximenis gives to young women regarding the attitudes they should have towards sex, even after marriage. Essentially, he advises women that they should remain averse to expressions of their own sexual desire, such that even those about to marry should “prefer ... to keep intact their virginity for God, and come to marriage with some displeasure and reluctance.” This, he says, would not only permit young women to live “more chastely and more honestly,” but also “if [she were to die] before [she] were married, before [dying, she] might revoke her proposal in order to preserve her virginity for all time for God.”

Thus, by waiting until after marriage before consenting to sex, and certainly not consenting after merely being betrothed, a young bride-to-be would maintain the virginal state that Church fathers like St. Jerome considered to be the most holy and conducive to salvation for the longest possible duration. Moreover, the strong implication is that, even after marriage, sex should continue to be viewed with a certain amount of distaste, and reluctance to engage in sexual intercourse, even between husband and wife, was to be encouraged, whatever the apostle Paul may have said on the matter.

Equally important to Eiximenis’s ideal of female chastity and modesty is the outward appearance that women project through their dress, comportment, and personal adornment. In particular, Eiximenis heaps scorn on the accoutrements and mores of the fashionable, courtly society of his day, and, in both the Libre de les dones and the Dotzé, he repeatedly warns young women against the harm that comes to those who concern themselves too much with such "vanities." For example, at one point in the Libre de les dones, he describes the moral decline of young women in his own day, who damn themselves through their attempts to “improve” their appearance:

In the present day some young women ... think all day about the adornment and decoration of the face or of the body, which is a great offense to God, since they try to improve the face that the wisdom of God has given them and they would rather wear the face that they themselves have made than the one that God made for them.

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77 Ibid., v. 1, ch. 19, p. 37. [Primerament qu’en viven pus castes e pus honestament. Segonament que si moren ans que sien maridades, abans [de morir] poden girar hur propósit a voler servir virginitat tostemps s Déu.]

78 Jerome’s well-known declarations on the relative worth of marriage and virginity are included in his “Letter 22, To Eustochium.” See St. Jerome, The Letters of St. Jerome, ed. Charles Christopher Mierow and Thomas Comerford Lawler (London: Longmans, 1963). For a modern study on these matters, see, for example, Dyan Elliott, Spiritual Marriage: Sexual Abstinence in Medieval Wedlock (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), esp. chs. 4 & 5. To some extent, though, Eiximenis appears to have been fighting what Elliott would view as a losing battle, since, as she states, the later Middle Ages became increasingly focused on the sexual obligations that married partners owed to each other and which each was obligated to fulfill (the “conjugal debt”). In a broader sense, though, Eiximenis’s view is representative of views that remained well-established even in the fifteenth century.

79 Paul’s views on marital responsibilities between spouses can be found in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 7.

80 Eiximenis, Libre de les dones, v. 1, ch. 21, p. 39. [Mas en lo temps present alcunes donelles no han gran
Continuing on to describe the adornment and dress he finds so offensive, Eiximenis begins his rant by describing the fashionable headwear of his age, which he calls “curious ornaments that pass all proportion and proper measure.” Similarly, the clothes worn by young women are described as similarly outlandish in their richness and frivolity. As he puts it,

To increase their beauty they [women] wear clothing of the most precious material they can find, such that they are better adorned than the altars at which mass is said, that is with cloths of gold, of fur, of scarlet, from Douai [referring to the city in modern-day France], of purple, from Tauris [a city in Persia], of damask, or other precious garments.

Further, the cut of the dresses that young women wore also was a source of concern for Eiximenis, leading him to include a description so vivid in its disapproval that it almost hints at some level of fascination (albeit outwardly repressed) beneath the vitriol:

The cut of these garments is the most insane that one can find: since it will be wide at the breast, because they [the women] are then able to show a great portion of their body, and the waist [is] tightened such that it is a marvel that the tightness does not break them in two or cause them to burst; and afterwards [the dresses are] creased all over, with feet [clad] with slippers that do nothing but to impede their walking, and adorned with ermines … And there are others with long trains, the cloth dragging on the ground being of sufficient length that a poor person could clothe themselves [with it].

Continuing, Eiximenis then criticizes "worldly" women who wear makeup, especially mascara, saying that it gives their eyes “another shape, larger and longer than the eyes that God has given them,” and long, painted fingernails, which, he says, make a woman's hands look like they have “claws of a lion or of some beast.” In both instances, Eiximenis characterizes the

cura d'aquest affaytament del cor, mas tot jorn pensen en l'afaytament e pintura de la cara o del cors, la cal cosa és gran ofensa de Déu. Car elles entenen a millorar la cara que la saviesa de Déu ha feta, e més amen portear la cara que elles se fan que no aquella que Déu los fà.]

Even more troubling to Eiximenis, however, was that young women not only “require such adornments, to their great shame,” but that they were even encouraged in this vice by their mothers – this perhaps being one more reason that Eiximenis warns against mothers taking too active a role in the education of their female children, as well as male. After all, like the ill-mannered boy who corrupts those in his company, so too does a vain, adorned young woman cause those around her to fall into luxuria.

Ibid., v. 1, ch. 24, p. 42. [Les veuràs portar e-l cap ornaments curiosos e passans tota regla e tota mesura… Segonament, porten los vels estrets ab agulles d’argent precioses, ab los caps daurats, e ab perles, e ab pedres, qui ja agrega lo dit ornament.]

81 Ibid. [Terçament, a créixer lur bellea porten vestadures de la pus preciosa matíèria que poden, entant que n’hi ha mills hornades que ls altars en què’s diu missa, ço és, de draps d’aur, e de vellut, e de escarlatam e de duay, e de porpra, e del tauris, e de domasquinse d’altres precioses vestidures.]

82 This phrase is ambiguous, but likely refers to the cut of the dress across the breast and sitting just off the shoulders, making a “wide” opening that would show off more flesh, at least in Eiximenis’s opinion.

83 Ibid., v. 1, ch. 24, p. 42–43. [E lo tayll d’aquestes vestidures serà lo pus orat qui s passa trobar: car serà als pits ample, perquè puxen gran part de lur cors ensenyar, e-l mig estret tant que es maravella cant la estretura no les trenca o les fa esclaffar; e après ruades a totes parts, e als peus ab patins que no-los serveys sinò a empatxar lur anar, e ab erminis ornades… E à-n’i d’altres ab coes longues roceguant per terra lo drap de qué un mesqui de pobre seria vestit.]

84 Ibid., v. 1, ch. 24, p. 43. [La cara pintada, los huyls alcofoylats e pintats ab altra figura pus gran e pus longua que no han los huyls que Déu los ha dats… e-s nodrexen alguna ungla longua qu par ungla de leò o de qualque bèstia.] See also Eiximenis, Dotzé, v. II, 2, ch. 852, pp. 409–11.
women who make use of such adornments as quasi-monstrous, further adding to his critique that feminine adornment degrades the image in which God made them, and should therefore be wholly avoided.

Underlying all of Eiximenis’s criticism of female garb is the fear that such attention to personal appearance could only lead to sin. For much the same reason, Eiximenis also criticized the manner in which courtly young women spoke, describing it as affected. He used much the same language to describe how the young women of his time too often held their head and moved their lips as if “they had learned those things at home, in front of the mirror, before which they stand for the space of an hour, looking at themselves.”86 Once again, Eiximenis’s fundamental problem was that these affectations were the little more than manifestations of a woman’s overweening devotion to luxury and vanity. Therefore, any parent who was trying to indoctrinate his (or her) daughter into “proper” morals would attempt to repress any attempt on the part of the girl to artificially improve her appearance through clothes, cosmetics, or mannered coquetry at all costs.87

Notably, Eiximenis’s views on these matters appear to have been based not only on his own purely theoretical moralizing but, instead, were rooted in his very real distaste for the courtly culture of the elite classes of his own day. Moreover, he was not at all shy about identifying what he perceived to be the source for the moral decline of elite ladies: the increasingly pervasive

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86 Ibid., Libre de les dones, v. 1, ch. 24, p. 43. [parlen ab especials maneres, com pus primament poden e ab especials condeschs en menar lo cap e los labis. Les quals cases aprenen en casa davant lo miral, davant lo qual estaran per espay de una hora o leugua, guardant con los està.]

87 In addition to the usual ecclesiastic suspects, two other writers are worth mentioning, not least because of their Valencian origins. The first is the Valencian author (and medical doctor) Jaume Roig. His most famous work, L’Espill, also known as Lo libre de les dones, speaks at length about the moral character of young women and has similarly been accused of misogynistic overtones. Unfortunately, there is not enough space in this study to adequately incorporate Roig’s ideas on these subjects beyond saying that they share the same tenor as Eiximenis’s. For more, see particularly the Introduction and Book One of Jaume Roig, L’espill, o, Llibre de les dones, 1st ed., ed. Maria Aurèlia Capmany (Valencia: E. Climent, 1992). For an English translation, see Ibid., The Mirror of Jaume Roig: An Edition and an English Translation of Ms. Vat. Lat. 4806, ed. Maria Celeste Delgado-Libreiro (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2010). The second is the famous Valencian preacher cum saint, Vicent Ferrer. On several occasions in his sermons, which were transcribed and published afterwards, he preaches on similar themes. For a summary and discussion about Ferrer's preaching on morals and femininity, see Rafael Narbona Vizcaíno, Pueblo, poder y sexo: València medieval (1306–1420) (València: Diputació de València, 1992), ch. 2, esp. pp. 98–103.

The preeminent scholar on the issue of Eiximenis's attitudes towards women is David Viera, who has written extensively these issues. While recognizing that Eiximenis's writings contain many misogynistic elements, neither Viera nor his collaborator, Jordi Piqué Angordans, view Eiximenis as inherently misogynistic, for many of the reasons noted in this study. For this, see David Viera and Jordi Piqué Angordans, La dona en Francesc Eiximenis, Biblioteca de cultura catalana, vol. 66 (Barcelona: Curial, 1987); Ibid., “Women in the Crestíà of Francesc Eiximenis Revisited,” Medieval Encounters 12, no. 1 (2006): pp. 97–117.
influence of French courtly culture that arose in the Crown of Aragon during the reign of Joan I.

As David Viera has noted in several articles, following Joan's marriage to the Violant de Bar, the niece of the French king, the Aragonese court experienced a dramatic turn towards fashions and customs that were directly influenced those worn and practiced by Violant and the stylish retinue that she had brought with her from France. Viera notes that the more risqué fashions and flirtatious manners that Violant and her retinue introduced to Joan’s court quickly spread throughout the Crown of Aragon and engendered no small measure of mistrust and apprehension among the more conservative members of the lay and ecclesiastical elite, including Eiximenis. Thus, his attack on “extravagant” feminine garb and manners is very much intended as an attack on the courtly culture that existed in his day.

Eiximenis’s distaste for French courtly culture is made plain in a later chapter of the *Libre de les dones* where he explicitly links the moral degradation of society to the increased influence of French fashions and manners:

> While King Robert, in our days the king of Sicily and of Naples, was alive, certain French nobles came to Naples with their wives and entire families. And as certain high-born Neapolitans learned to dress in the manner of those Frenchmen, namely to wear scanty, tight-fitting, and less than chaste clothing, so the ladies of the court and of the said city wished to resemble those French ladies who had come there by wearing skimpy and tight-fitting apparel like them, and to dance all the time, and to drink in the streets, and to go riding just like a man, and endlessly to kiss and embrace men in public, and to sing twittering songs in French as the noble ladies do in France, and to speak of love affairs and falling in love and to swap jokes with young people as was their way.

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88 See again David Viera, “Francesc Eiximenis, Courtly Love, and the *De Amore* (I-II),” *Romance Quarterly* 34 (1986): pp. 311–16; *Ibid.*, “Francesc Eiximenis’s dissension with the Royal House of Aragon,” *Journal of Medieval History* 22 (1996): pp. 249–61. Similarly, Garcia Herrero claims that, by the thirteenth century, a new ideal of femininity had emerged in which a lady was, first and foremost, a lover. As she puts it, “La dama, capaz de apreciar y aprovechar su propia juventud, es, ante todo, amorsa, y se encuentra ornada de múltiples virtudes que hacen de ella un ser delicioso y apetecible para el enamorado.” Garcia Herrero, *Las mujeres en Zaragoza*, p. 134. Later in her study, she even mentions Eiximenis’s critique of female dress, but also notes that, in spite of Eiximenis’s protests, a proper understanding of beauty and personal adornment was an essential skill for any young noblewoman. What is more, several books were written during this period that discussed how to make cosmetics and how best to apply them. *Ibid.*, pp. 169–74.

Also noteworthy is the observation of Justina Ruiz de Conde that Andreas Capellanus’s treatise on courtly manner and extramarital love, the *De Amore*, was translated into Catalan for Carroça de Vilaragut, the favorite maid of Violant de Bar and a purported mistress of her husband, Joan I. This fact, she argues, further underlines the popularity of French courtly culture in the Aragonese court, even if its influence likely became prominent much earlier. Justina Ruiz de Conde, *El amor y el matrimonio secreto en los libros de caballerías*. (Madrid: M. Aguilar, 1948), p. 102.

89 Eiximenis, *Francesc Eiximenis*, p. 127. This passage is also translated and quoted in Viera, “Francesc Eiximenis’s dissension,” p. 253. For the original text, see Eiximenis, *Libre de les dones*, v. 1, ch. 56, p. 90. [Vivent lo rey Robert, en nostre temps rey de Cicilia e de Nàpols, aucuns generosos de França vinguere ab lurs muylers e ab totes ses cases en Nàpols. E con alsuns hòmens de paratge napoletons apresseen de anar a la manera d’auquells Francesos, ço és, curts e strets e fort dissoluament, lavors les dones de cort e de la dita ciuat volgueren ressemblar a aquelles dones Franceses qui y eren vengudes en anar cortes estretes així con elles, e ballar tot jorn, e beure per les carreres, e anant cavalcant així com a hom, e a besar e abraçar los hòmens davant tothom tot jorn, e de cantar
Continuing on, Eiximenis then states that the king’s mother, the "Queen of Sicily and Naples," whom he describes in glowing terms as “saintly,” viewed the rise of French courtly fashion with no small measure of disdain and, in the end, commanded her ladies to reject the new practices and mores that the French had introduced. Instead, she told them, they should endeavor “to keep their bosom covered, to go to church with a book in their hand, to read from this without pause and without looking up, and to honour their husband and raise their children well.”

In short, through the persona of the matronly queen, Eiximenis himself was calling for a return to the more staid moral code that he advocates throughout the *Libre de les dones* and to which French courtly culture posed a significant threat, at least in Eiximenis’s estimation.

Digging even deeper into the matter, it becomes apparent that Eiximenis’s primary fear was that French courtly culture was particularly corrupting to to adolescents. In fact, in the *Dotzè*, Eiximenis makes this connection explicit and links the rise of French courtly culture directly to the moral decline of young noblewomen (*donzelles de paratge*) throughout the Crown of Aragon, who he claimed had become so influenced by the loose morals of courtly love that they “kiss and embrace men and vice-versa, and they say that it is not a sin, since it is based on familial ties, or on a good custom, or on good love.” Elaborating even further, he notes that these ostensibly "chaste" kisses and touches are, in fact, nothing of the sort. Instead they all too frequently become “other touches on those they call relatives, which are even dirtier and done with even poorer manners than the kiss and hug.” Thus, rather than being modest, playful tokens of familial affection, these "innocent" signs of affection of young elite ladies are actually expressions of underlying lust and sinfulness, which were as perilous to the souls of those participating as sex itself, since "not only consent in a carnal act but also deliberate consent to

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*francès gargolegend axí con fan les dones generoses en França, e de parlar de amors, e de anemoramens, e de motegar-se ab jóvens a la lur manera.*

90 *Ibid., Francesc Eiximenis, p. 127; Ibid., Libre de les dones, v. 1, ch. 56, pp. 90–91. [E en aquells temps era aquí una santa regina appellada Costançã,... Deya la sant regina que de França devien appendre les altres dones qui no són franceses aquestes cases: ço és, portar lo pits cubert e anar a la esgleya ab libre en la mà, e en aquell ligir continuament sens levar los huyls en alt, e de honrar marit, e de bè nodrir infans; les altres cases qui bones no són, sien de qui-s vayllen.]

91 Eiximenis, *Dotzè*, v. II, 2, ch. 853, p. 412. *Encara dutpen alsuncs sobre una gran abusió que acostumen les donz elles de paratge, majorment en les cort dels senyors, encara, que fan semblant les dones maridades generoses, e és que sens vergonya besen e abracen los hòmens e elles a elles, e dien que no és peccat, car fer-se pot per parentesh o per bona costuma o per bona amor.*

92 *Ibid. [aytals hoberes sovinjeades entre parents altres sinó entre aquells qui dits són, no son indici de amor parental mas de amor leja e carnal. E açò apar majorment en aquells qui axí n’usen al temps de present, que ultra lo dit besar e abraçar fan altres tocaments a aquelles que apellen parents, qui són pus sutes i fets ab pus leges maneres que no lo besar e l’abraçar segons que ells senten dins lur cor quant fan aytals coses, e u enseynen les maneres que y tenen parllant e tocant a elles.]*
the pleasures, without consenting to the actual act, is also a mortal sin.”

Thus, the influence of courtly love and the relaxed attitudes towards courtship and romance that accompanied it directly induced women to engage in behavior that imperiled their souls.

At the same time, however, Eiximenis’s view on these matters was not universally held within Valencian society, as will be seen in the next chapter, and his viewpoint must be seen only as one of many. For instance, his view certainly stands in stark contrast to that of the knight and author Joanot Martorell, whose chivalric epic *Tirant lo Blanc* offers a view of aristocratic sexuality that is much much more in line with that of the courtly ladies Eiximenis despises than with that espoused by Eiximenis himself. In fact, one must suspect that, had he been alive to read it, Eiximenis would have hated Martorell’s work and likely would have viewed it as nothing more than further proof of the moral corruption brought on by the creeping plague of French courtly manners. Further, Eiximenis’s dislike of French courtly culture can also be seen as rather ironic because, although literary works were a primary vector through which “courtly” ideals were spread, through written works (romance) or oral performance (troubadour poetry), Eiximenis favored female literacy and even urged husbands and fathers to permit their wives or daughters to learn to read and write. Thus, from at least one point of view, Eiximenis could be seen to be enabling the spread of the very culture he so despised.

Even more interesting is that, in his estimation of the value of female literacy, Eiximenis was at odds with several of his more well-known contemporaries, as well as earlier authorities, including Phillipe de Novare and Giles of Rome, both of whom viewed female literacy with a certain measure of suspicion and hostility. Nonetheless, Eiximenis, like Vincent of Beauvais, believed that literacy and the ability to write were absolutely essential skills for young women for both spiritual as well as practical reasons. Therefore, in the Terç del Crestià, one finds him advising all husbands to permit their wives to learn to read, and he gives three reasons for his position.

The first rationale he gives is that if a woman is illiterate, “if she desires to be wicked, she will not be able to restrain herself if she cannot read or write.” In essence, he is saying that while

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93 *Ibid.*, v. II, 2, ch. 853, p. 413. [*en aquesta manera besar e abraçar o per altra via tocar a fembra per delitar–se carnalment en ella és peccat mortal, com, segons los sants doctors, no solament consentir en obra carnal, ans encara consentir del-liberadament en los delits sens consentir en obra, sie peccat mortal.*]

94 Krueger, *Women Readers and the Ideology of Gender*, pp. 220–21. García Herrero, in her work, largely assumes that literacy, if not always the ability to write, was more or less normative for daughters of the aristocratic and patrician elite by the fifteenth century, and not unheard of for those in the bourgeois classes. Only among the lower classes was illiteracy more prevalent. García Herrero, *Las mujeres en Zaragoza*, pp. 139, 148.
a literate woman could turn to the didactic writings of Christian moralists in times of moral weakness, an illiterate woman would not have access to these moral supports and, therefore, would more readily fall into sin and sexual incontinence.95

Extending this idea even further in his second justification for female literacy, he then states that a literate woman was “of much greater worth [to her family] than if she is not [literate],” particularly since if she could read, she could “serve God by reciting the hours of the Passion and of the Virgin Mary.” Therefore, Eiximenis seems to suggest that a literate woman was better able to serve her family and her husband by praying for the salvation of both her own soul and of those of her family. Further, although he never says as much explicitly, Eiximenis also seems to be suggesting that, since they were of a more complex devotional nature than the simple prayers of the illiterate masses, her prayers would also be more pleasing to God and, therefore, would be more effective.

Third, and perhaps most interesting in its nod to the more practical and worldly benefits of female literacy, a literate woman “can better and more knowingly serve her husband and assist his family, as well as remain more easily at home reading various books which deal with the salvation of her soul.”96 Notably, this rationale suggests a much more practical advantage of female literacy, by hinting, if only implicitly, that literate women would be better able to manage her husband’s household, including accounts and other affairs pertaining to the family’s home and holdings. What is more, such a purely practical, economic benefit of female literacy could only have added to the appeal of female literacy for husbands, at least as much as the spiritual benefits that Eiximenis claimed as well.

Nowhere does he ever suggest that female literacy may lead women into immorality. Instead, he describes it in entirely positive terms and, therefore, when viewed in its entirety, Eiximenis’s advocacy of female literacy was that literacy was not only a tonic for the literate woman’s soul, but also was a benefit to the entire household, both spiritually and economically.

Unfortunately, other than this advice to teach girls to read and write, Eiximenis does not provide much else in the way of a formalized curricula for female education. Rather, as already

95 Unfortunately, Eiximenis does not explain exactly how literacy would help a woman restrain herself in the face of temptation: one is left to take him merely at his word that it would help.
96 Eiximenis, Fransc Eiximenis, pp. 124–25. Unfortunately, this chapter does not appear to have been included in any published edition of the Terç, meaning that I have to rely entirely on Hughes's translation of the relevant passage.
discussed at length above, Eiximenis’s primary concern regarding the education of young women was their moral training, with particular concern given to issues pertaining to feminine modesty and chastity. Further, this approach represents a substantial departure from the approach that he advocated for the education of boys and young men. Focused far more on the personal discipline and moral rigor that he believed necessary for girls to possess in order to overcome their, seemingly, more sinful nature, Eiximenis’s prescriptions fully embody the idea put forth by Roberta Krueger that medieval pedagogical texts on female education, fundamentally, were more concerned with issues of female sexual morality than on imparting a set body of knowledge or skills, such as seen in the programmatic recommendations of recommended literature that Eiximenis gives to boys. Even his recommendation that girls be taught to read and write was intended, at least in part, to provide tools for young women to more effectively repel the external moral temptations of the world.

Eiximenis's prescriptions for the proper upbringing of young women also reflect an underlying foundational belief that instruction of girls during childhood and adolescence was of the utmost importance, as these periods in the life cycle both represent the point at which future habits and beliefs become firmly entrenched in the psyche. It is precisely for this reason that Eiximenis insists so firmly that the moral lessons he sought to impart to girls should be driven home with such force, even to the point that he advocated corporal punishment as an appropriate measure in the face of filial resistance. Moreover, it was for much the same reason that Eiximenis was so profoundly suspicious of the growing influence and popularity of French courtly culture, and the genres of courtly and chivalric literature that promoted it; these "corruptive influences" were nothing more than additional temptation that pulled the young into sin, wickedness, and luxuria.97 One had only to look about the fashionable courts of Valencia to see the propensity of the young to adopt “corrupt” accoutrements and behaviors demonstrated in the clothing that women wore, the makeup and jewelry they used, and the demeanor they projected, to see the picture in Eiximenis's mind of an amoral society in decline, adrift on a sea of worldly licentiousness and courtly sensuality.

Consequently, while Eiximenis did not necessarily view young women as inherently evil or

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97 In fact, Eiximenis's fear of the influence of French courtly culture was so great that, according to David Viera, Eiximenis obliquely refers to Andreas Capellanus (the author of the late medieval manual to extramarital courtly romance, the De Amore) as “an evil man” (un malvat hom) who had corrupted the Catalan court and their moral behavior. The chapter of the Terç that he cites is ch. 995. Again, however, the later chapters of the third book remain unavailable in any published edition.
corrupt, he did believe that they needed, even more than young men, constant, intense supervision, and sequestration from a dangerous, corruptive outside world. In short, Eiximenis advocated for parents to instruct their daughters in such a way that they would live a "cloistered life" in which they would be protected from the worldly temptations by which, he believed, they were all too easily seduced. To what extent his view was actually internalized by parents of young aristocratic women and applied to their lives, however, is a much more complicated matter that will be addressed at greater length in subsequent chapters that will argue that, despite Eiximenis’s moralizing, the lives of young, aristocratic women were not as “cloistered” as Eiximenis believed they should be.

Rearing Perfection III: Ramon Llull and the Training of Ideal Young Knights in the Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, Ramon Llull's Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria is another useful source for exploring the idealized image of aristocratic knighthood to which the elite classes of medieval Valencia would have aspired. In part this is because this work, which was likely written sometime around 1274–75, does not explicitly reject “worldly” professions like knighthood in favor of those in service of the Church, as seen in Llull’s Blanquerna or the Doctrina Pueril. Instead, the Llibre merely seeks to temper and reform the vocation of knights, bringing it more in line with the moral teachings of the Church, but still recognizing it, fundamentally, as distinct from the Church itself and as an independent, secular institution.

Consequently, Llull’s Llibre can be understood as part of a broader corpus of didactic literature written about the practice of knighthood, often composed by older, experienced knights for their younger contemporaries, which sought to correct perceived flaws in knightly practice but which never intended to usurp or overthrow the institution entirely. In fact, this quality of Llull’s Llibre has been noted by several scholars who have commented on the careful way in

98 Neither of these works will be considered in this study since both focus far more on the moral development that precedes an ascetic, religious life either within the hierarchy of the Catholic Church or as a hermit.

99 Examples of such works include that of Geoffroi de Charny, one of the most well-known French knights of the fourteenth century, who died defending the French king’s standard at Poitiers, and a treatise on knighthood credited to the Aragonese king Pere III (the Ceremonious) and known as the Obra de mossén sent Jordi e de Cavalleria or Tractat de Cavalleria, among many others. For a discussion of Geoffroi de Charny’s work, see Richard W. Kaeuper, Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 284–88; Charny, Knight’s Own Book of Chivalry. For Pere III’s Tractat and a discussion of its relationship to Alfonso X’s Siete Partidas, which it quotes extensively, see Tractats de cavalleria, ed. Pere Bohigas (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 1947), pp. 28–30, 97–154.
which Llull avoided placing the institution of knighthood under direct ecclesiastical oversight or control, but instead chose to characterize the relationship as one of complementary equals. Thus, in contrast to some of the ecclesiastical theorists of "spiritual knighthood," which included luminaries like St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Llull conceived of the institution of knighthood as existing in balance with religious authority, which sanctified the knight's secular authority, while the knight ensured the safety and security of the Church.

Likely because of the stance that it took in creating a righteous, societally privileged but still fundamentally secular vision of knighthood, Llull’s work was quite popular in the decades and centuries following its composition, and its influence can be seen in many subsequent works of other authors who utilize its ideas and motifs. Not least of these is Joanot Martorell's *Tirant lo Blanc*, the subject of the next chapter of this study, which reproduces significant portions of Llull’s introductory section and narrative structure and utilizes them, almost verbatim, in the first section of the narrative that describes the entrance of the eponymous hero, Tirant lo Blanc, into the order of knighthood. As such, because of its widespread popularity, Llull’s treatise on knighthood can be seen as reflective of a commonly held ideal of “what knighthood should look like” that, even if not reflected exactly in the real world, would have been a familiar model for knightly behavior for both the elite classes of Valencian society and those of Western Europe more generally.

In addition to what it can tell about the ideals that were applied to knighthood and that underlay the practice of the knightly vocation, Llull's *Llibre* is also useful as a source for better understanding how these ideals were applied to young people of the elite classes. In particular, because the *Llibre* includes a clearly stated regimen of education and training for young people who aspired to become knights, in addition to providing a clear model of idealized behavior for young people to follow, the work serves as a guide to the qualities that young, aspiring squires should develop and nurture within themselves, so that they could bring honor to themselves and

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101 Again, see Clairvaux, *In Praise of the New Knighthood*. In this respect, the *Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria* also stands in marked contrast to the *Doctrina Pueril*. On the other hand, it does correspond to other strains of ecclesiastical thought on the relationship between religious and secular power, such as seen in the writings of John of Paris (*De potestate regia et papali*), among others.

102 Among the translations, William Caxton's 1484 translation into English is particularly notable in that it introduced the author to an entirely new audience in late medieval Britain.

103 A similar point is made by Maurice Keen, in his discussion of Llull’s treatise. See Keen, *Chivalry*, p. 11.
to the institution of knighthood as a whole.

The didactic tone of the work is set out early on, in an expository prologue that Noel Fallows has described as a *captatio benevolentiae*, intended as something akin to “literary sugar” that will make the subsequent, didactic lessons of the text, the “medicine,” more palatable. Thus, Llull tells his reader of a famous knight who, worn down by old age and a lengthy career of renown and glory, had decided to abandon his secular position as a soldier and lord and, instead, pursue the life of a hermit. Eventually, the knight-turned-hermit meets a young squire who is on his way to a royal festival where he hopes to be knighted. The young square had strayed from the road and stumbled upon the knight-hermit, who was meditating by a pond. Out of the conversation that these two have, Llull begins to transition his text from one that is purely narrative to one that is almost entirely didactic. After the two began to converse, Llull says, it quickly became apparent to the knight-hermit that his companion, the squire, knew almost nothing of the moral principles that the hermit believed to underpin the “proper practice” of knighthood. Aghast, the knight-hermit then reproached the young man for his ignorance, telling him, “How can you not know, son, … what the Order of Chivalry is? And how can you seek knighthood if you do not know what the Order of Chivalry is?” Admiringly, the squire admitted the deficiency of his knowledge and begged the hermit’s assistance in rectifying it, at which point the knight-hermit shared with the squire the book that he had been reading when the two had met, which he claimed detailed all of the elements of knighthood and its proper practice, and which Llull also suggested was the same text that his reader held in his hand.

Therefore, even in what amounts to a purely secondary narrative intended to draw in the reader, Llull expertly primes his reader for the more serious matters to follow by placing the reader in much the same position as the young squire, anxious to learn the secrets of the “Order of Chivalry.” Further, the introduction also makes patently clear that Llull intended his work to

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105 The description of the old knight mirrors Llull’s own experience, to some extent, in that the hermitic knight is described as having forsaken his land, passing it on to his heirs and thereafter pursuing a life where he could shun the world, “so that the frailty of his body, which had been brought about by old age, would not dishonor him.” See Ibid., p. 35. All English passages are taken from Fallow’s translation. The Catalan passages are all drawn from Marina Gustà’s edition of the text: Ramon Llull, *Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria*, 4th ed., ed. Marina Gustà (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1987), p. 35. [e fugí al món, per ço que lo despoledament de son cors, en lo qual era esdevengut per vellesa, no el deshonrás.]

106 Ibid., *Book of the Order of Chivalry*, p. 37.; Ibid., *Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria*, p. 38. [–Com, fill!– ço dix lo cavaller–, ¿e no saps tu qual és la regla e l’orde de cavalleria? Car negun cavaller no pot mantenir l’orde que no sap, ni pot amar son orde ni ço que pertany a son orde...]
serve as an entirely practical manual for its readership; in fact, even within the narrative itself, the squire is encouraged by the knight-hermit to share the book with “all those who wish to be new knights,” so that they too might benefit from its wisdom. The work most certainly was not intended to be a purely theoretical or academic pursuit, as Llull makes clear later in the text, when he states,

Thus, since lawyers and doctors and clerics all have knowledge and books, and they listen to lectures and learn their office through the teaching of letters, so honored and high is the Order of Knighthood that it is not sufficient that a squire should be shown the Order of Knighthood merely by thinking about horses, not by merely serving a lord, nor by accompanying him in deeds of arms, nor other things similar to this; but it is fitting that a man in the order of Knighthood should have a school and that he should be taught written knowledge from books …; and the young sons of of knights, in the beginning, should learn the science that pertains to knighthood and, afterwards, they should be squires and travel through the lands with knights.

Thus, at the risk of dwelling too much on the meta-textuality of Llull’s manual appearing within the narrative introduction of his own manual, it is clear that the work was fully intended to be used as a practical manual for the education of knights and squires in the real world.

**Llull’s Prescriptions for Knighthood**

Turning now to the particular prescriptions made by Llull in his treatise, he begins by highlighting the "glorious" origins of knighthood and by sanctifying the position of the knight within the social order of his day. Describing their deserved place at the apex of society, he says,

So lofty and noble is the Order of Chivalry that it was not sufficient for the Order to be made of the noblest people, nor that the noblest beast and the most honourable arms be bestowed upon it; in addition, it was fitting that those who are in the Order of Chivalry be made lords of the people. And since seigneurie has so much nobility, and servitude so much subjection, if you, who are taking the Order of Chivalry, are base or malfeasant… because of the baseness in which you find yourself you should be a subordinate of another person, and because of the nobility of the knights who are good you are unworthy of being called a knight.

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107 Llull, Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, p. 39; Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, p. 38. [portats-vos-en aquest llibre a la cort on anats, e mostrats-lo a tots aquells qui volen ésser cavallers novells.]

Elsewhere in his writings, Llull similarly emphasizes the need for such a work. For example, in *The Tree of Science*, a knight curses his father for not teaching him properly and bemoans that no one has written a book to teach knights how to behave, saying, “If a book of knighthood were written, many knights would be humble who are prideful, just who are unjust, chaste who are lustful, hardy who are cowardly, rich who are poor, honored who are dishonored.” Llull, *Obres essencials* (Barcelona: Editorial Selecta, 1957–60), p. 903. [Dix lo cavaller que ell no sabia l’orde de cavaleria, e blasmava son pare qui escrit no l’havia; car si era fet un llibre de cavaleria, molt cavallers serien humils qui son ergulloses, e justs qui son injurioses, e castis qui son luxurioses, e ardits qui son volpells, e rics qui son pobres, e honrats qui son deshonrats.] This quotation can also be found in Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence*, p. 277 n15.


109 Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, pp. 41–42; Ibid., Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, pp. 42–43. [Tant és alt e noble l’orde de cavalleria, que no bastà a l’orde que hom lo faés de pus nobles persones, ni que hom li donàs les pus nobles bésties ni les pus honrades armes; ans covenc que hom faés senyors de les gens aquells hòmens qui séon en l’orde de cavalleria. E car senyoria ha tanta de nobilitat, e servitud ha tant de sotsmetiment, si tu qui prens...
In essence, Llull makes the rather circular argument that the societal privilege of knights was directly related to their superior moral character, which was itself made manifest by their social preeminence. Where Llull is unequivocal, however, is in his appraisal that those who were not knights were, ipso facto, less “noble” or “good” than those who were and, therefore, were “rightly” subjected to the authority of knights, again implying a syllogistic arrangement in which social position and moral worth were mutually reinforced and validated by each other. Furthermore, Llull accepts the ideal of aristocratic moral superiority as wholly normative, telling his (aristocratic) reader,

It behoves the people to plough, dig, and pull up the weeds so that the land yields fruits on which the knight and his beasts shall live, and it behoves the knight to be mounted on horseback and to govern and derive prosperity from those things for which his men endure hardship and privations. Therefore, while Llull's work sought to reform the office of knighthood, it in no way sought to overturn the social order of the late medieval aristocracy or the stratified social hierarchy upon which the aristocracy supported itself.

Following this description of the “noble” origins of knighthood and position of knights within society, Llull describes the attributes that he considers to be most important for knights to possess, in a chapter that equates each trait with a different piece of a knight's arms or armor. Among those traits that Llull highlights, “courage” (coratge), manifested in various forms, stands out as the absolutely fundamental component of his conception of knightly identity; even

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l’orde de cavalleria est vil ne malvat, pensar pots qual injúria fas a tos sotsmeses e a tos companyons qui són bons; car per la viltat en què est, deuries ésser sotsmès, e per la nobilitat dels cavallers qui són bons, est indignie que sies apellat cavaller.]  

110 Llull, Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, p. 43; Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, p. 42. [Elecció ni cavall ni armes ni senyoria encara no abasta a l’alta honor qui pertany a cavaller, ans cové qu hom li dò escuder e troter qui el servesquen e qui pensen de les bésties. E cové que les gens aren e caven e traguem mal, per ço que la terra lleu los fruits on viva cavaller e ses bèstiesm e que cavaller cavale e senyoeig e haja benanança d’aquelles cases on los homens han maltret e namlanança.]  

111 Llull is not the only writer to use knightly apparel and harness as metaphors for the virtues that knights should possess; his is a particularly early example, however. Other examples from within the Valencian/Catalan linguistic world, albeit from subsequent centuries, include Joanot Martorell’s use of the list in Tirant lo Blanch, discussed below, as well as the knight-poet Pere March’s verse version, entitled “L’Arnés del Cavaller,” which can be found in Pere March, Obra completa, 1st ed., ed. Lluís Cabré (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 1993), pp. 200–60. Likely the use of the motif by the other authors further reflects the influence that Llull had on subsequent generations of aristocrats.

The full list of equipment, tack and the qualities they represent are as follows: the sword is equated with justice and the crusading spirit; the lance with the truth; the helmet with shame; the hauberk with noble courage; the chausses with protection of roads; spurs with zeal; the collar with obedience; the mace with strength of courage; the dagger with trust in God; the shield with the knight's duty to protect his lord; the saddle with the security of courage and the burden of Chivalry; the horse with nobility of courage; the bit with proper speech; the shaffron (protection for the horse’s head) with prudence and reason in the use of force; the bardings with prudent management of wealth; the purpoint (the cloth covering worn over the armor) with the idea of the knight as first defender; the blazon on the shield with the praiseworthiness of knightly valor; and the standard with the knight’s duty to his king.
more than religious devotion, loyalty, or obedience, *coratge* is the quality that differentiates knights from other members of society. Therefore, unsurprisingly, it is also quality he believes to be most necessary for all knights to possess.\(^\text{112}\)

Describing the different forms of *coratge* that knights should strive to possess, Llull begins by equating the knight's hauberk with “noble courage” (*noble coratge*), that protects the knight like the walls of a castle, such that "neither treachery, pride, disloyalty nor any other vice can enter."\(^\text{113}\) Thus, in this respect, *coratge* represents honesty and forthrightness of the knight. Elsewhere, though, such as in his description of the knight’s mace, *coratge* has other, more militant meanings. Describing the knight’s mace, he says that it represents the knight’s “strength of courage” (*força de coratge*), meaning the brute strength of the knight that conquers all who oppose him.\(^\text{114}\) Here, then, “strength of courage” is much more closely equivalent to the term “prowess” that Richard Kaeuper uses in his research. For Kaeuper, while prowess could embody more lofty, chivalric ideals, such as embodied by “noble courage,” its much more basic and significant meaning was rooted, fundamentally, in a knight’s capacity to demonstrate his ability to dominate enemies through superior skill of arms, while withstanding any and all physical assaults initiated against him by others.\(^\text{115}\)

In much the same vein, Llull equates other components of the knight’s equipment with other forms of *coratge*. For example, the saddle on which a knight rides represents “security of courage” (*seguretat de coratge*), which a knight relies upon when facing possible death in battle.

\(^\text{112}\) Llull's assertion of *coratge* as the basis of knighthood correlates nicely with Richard Kaeuper’s assertion that knights of the Middle Ages were frequently consumed by an “utterly tireless, almost obsessionally emphasis” on “knighthly prowess.” In both cases, while the term being used is different, the values that both Llull and Kaeuper claim are embodied by the terms they use, whether “*coratge*” or “prowess,” are largely the same: knightly valor, strength (both moral and physical), and wisdom. See Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence*, p. 135. Additionally, although Llull’s writings are never specifically mentioned, Craig Taylor’s study of the use of “courage” within the context of late medieval French conceptions of chivalry is also useful. For this, see Craig Taylor, *Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood in France during the Hundred Years War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), ch. 4, esp. pp. 172–76.

\(^\text{113}\) Llull, *Book of the Order of Chivalry*, p. 66; Ibid., *Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria*, p. 70. [Auszberg significa castell e mur contra vicis e falliments; car enaixi con castell e mur és enclòs environ per ço que hom no hi pusca entrar, enaixi ausberg és per totes parts enserrats e tancats, per ço que dò significança a lo noble coratge de cavaller, con no pusca entrar en ell traició ni ergull ni deslleialtat, ni null altre vic.]

\(^\text{114}\) Llull, *Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria*, p. 71; Llull, *Book of the Order of Chivalry*, p. 67–68. [Maça és donada a cavaller a significar força de coratge; car anaixi con la maça és contra totes armes, e dòna e fer de totes partes, enaixi força de coratge defèn cavaller de tots vicis, e fortifica les virtuts e les bones costumes per les quals cavaller manté la honor de cavalleria.]

\(^\text{115}\) In fact, in Antoni Alcover’s authoritative *Diccionari català-valencià-balear*, Llull’s usage of “coratge” in this text is specifically cited as an example of a usage understood as “force of spirit” (*força d’ànima*), “valiance” (*valor*), or “strength” (*valentia*). See Alcover Sureda, “*coratge*,” in *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear*. 
As he tells his reader,

The saddle upon which the knight rides signifies security of courage and the burden of Chivalry, for just as the knight is secure on his horse because of the saddle, so security of courage makes him stand facing forward in battle, and because of security much cowardly boasting and many vain semblances are scorned, and many men are restrained who dare not move forward in the place where noble courage makes the knight’s body secure.\footnote{Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, p. 68; Ibid., Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, p. 71. [La sella en què cavalca lo cavaller significa seguretat de coratge e càrrec de cavalleria; car enaix seguretat de coratge fa estar de cara lo cavaller en la batalla, per la qual seguretat esdevé ventura amiga de cavalleria. e per seguretat són menyspreads molts volells gabaments e moltes vanes semblances, e són reforços molts hòmens qui no gosen passar a avant en lo lloc on coratge noble fa estar segur lo cors del cavaller. E tant és gran lo càrrec de cavalleria, que per lleugeres coses no es deuen moure los cavallers.]} Thus, “security of courage” assists knights not only in facing down danger, but also by restraining knights from reacting to other, non-physical attacks. In essence, Llull is suggesting that if a knight is secure in his self-perception, he will be better equipped to ignore perceived, external slights to his honor, mirroring Eiximenis’s later prescriptions regarding honor and the excessive sensitivity of knights to external slights, discussed above. Further, such advice would have been particularly apt for Llull's younger readers, who, as Eiximenis described them, were even more sensitive to perceived slights to their status or honor than were knights as a whole.

More than any piece of equipment or raiment, however, the "nobility of courage" (nobilitat de coratge) embodied by the knight's horse stands as the highest representation of knightly identity and represents, in Llull’s estimation, the most fundamental characteristic that differentiated knights from the rest of society. Thus, describing the importance of the horse, Llull states,

The horse is given to the knight to signify nobility of courage, and so that he may be mounted higher up than everyone else, be seen from afar, have more things beneath him, and be prepared before anyone else for everything that befits the honour of Chivalry.\footnote{Llull, Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, pp. 71–72; Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, p. 68. [Cavall és donat a cavaller per significança de nobilitat de coratge, e per ço que sia pus alt encavalcat que altre home, e que sia vist de lluny e que més coses tenga dejús si, e que enans sia a tot çoque és cové a la honor de cavalleria que altre home.]}

Therefore, further reinforcing the social preeminence of knights that he asserts throughout the work, the coratge that knights possess, in and of itself, justifies the position of knights at the pinnacle of medieval society; the horse is fundamentally linked to a knight's martial responsibilities, and also to his lofty social position, with both fundamentally linked to his ability to demonstrate “prowess” by overcoming opponents, whether on the battlefield, tourney ground, or in personal duels to defend one’s honor from significant external assault. As Llull makes clear elsewhere, since knights used violence to protect those they served, this duty justified the
Although the notion of coratge is central to his construction of knightly identity, Llull does not view knights as purely independent actors beholden to no one. Rather, he recognizes that knights existed within a social framework in which they were also subject to the commands of others. For this reason, Llull also emphasizes the need for knights to show obedience to those they serve and symbolizes knightly obedience to greater lords in the knight's gorget and standard, both of which he links to a knight’s coratge.

In both instances, Llull emphasizes that the actions of knights, both noble and ignoble, impacted not only the honor of the knight himself but also that of his lord. Therefore, describing the significance of the standard as a symbol of knightly obedience, Llull states,

The standard is given to the king, the prince and the knights’ lord to signify that the knights shall uphold their lord’s honour and estate, for in the honour of the kingdom and the principality and in the honour of their lord they are honoured by the people; and in the dishonour of the land in which they reside and the lord whom they serve the knights are censured more than anyone else. For just as through honour they must be more praised because honour resides more in them than in anyone else, so in dishonour they must be more censured than everyone else because through their frailty or treachery kings, princes and high barons are more forcibly deposed, and more kingdoms and earldoms and other lands are lost than through the frailty and treachery of anyone who is not a knight.

As noted earlier in this chapter, the notion expressed here by Llull, that honor could be lost not only through one’s own actions, but also those of one's underlings, renders the entire structure of knightly honor inherently unstable. In fact, in many respects this situation recalls Mark Breitenberg’s explanation of early modern constructions of masculine identity as fundamentally “anxious,” arguing that since all members of a man's household could negatively

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118 Such can be seen in Llull's discussion of the knight's shield, which symbolizes his obligation to protect his lord.

119 Llull, Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, p. 70; Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, p. 67. [Gorgera és donada a cavaller a significanç a d’obediència, car cavaller qui no és obedient a son senyor ni a l’orde de cavalleria deshonra son senyor e ix-se de l’orde de cavalleria. On, enaixí con la gorgera environa la coll del cavaller per ço que sia defes de naferes e de colps, enaixí obediència fa estar lo cavaller dins l’orde de cavalleria, per ço que traició ni ergull ni injúria ni altre vici no corrompen lo sagrament que el cavaller ha fet a son senyor e a cavalleria.]

120 Llull, Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, p. 73; Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, p. 70. [Senyera és donada a rei e a príncep e a senyor de cavallers a significanç a que los cavallers deven mantenir la honor de senyor e de sopn heretatge; car en la honor del regne o del principat, e en la honor de llur senyor, són honrats e lloats per les gent; e en la deshonor de la terra on són, e del senyor de qui són, los cavallers són pus blasmat que altres hàmens. Car enaixí con per la honor deven ésser pus lloats, per ço car la honor més està en ells que en altres hàmens, enaixí en la deshonor deven ésser més blasmat que altres hàmens, per ço car per la llur flaqua o traició són pus forment desheretat reis e prínceps e altes barons, e són perduts més regnes e comitats e altres terres que per la flaqua e traició de nulls altres hàmens que no sien cavallers.]

This idea is not unique to Llull and is a common thread in chivalric literature, prescriptive writings, and medieval law. To give but one literary example, see Sarah Kay, Raoul de Cambrai (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). The plot of this chanson is entirely suffused with concerns about the damage that kings (and knights) could do through their bad decisions.
affect a man’s honor through their behavior, and since the actions of other humans are only imperfectly controllable, therefore, masculinity in the Early Modern period (as well as before) was subject to profound instability within broader “economy of honor” that served to establish a man’s social standing and public reputation. Moreover, it is perhaps for this reason that Llull asserts the tantamount importance of properly training those destined to become knights as well as giving significant attention to the methods through which young people were to be trained and, eventually, incorporated into the “orde de cavalleria.”

Squires and the Making of “Good” Knights

The introductory encounter between the squire and the knight-hermit is only one of many instances in which Llull emphasizes the importance of proper education as a means of indoctrinating young people into his idealized vision of knighthood. For example, in one chapter that is devoted entirely to the qualities that a squire should possess, Llull states that a squire should aspire to be “valorous, loyal, and trustworthy,” above all else. Notably, all three of these qualities are also at the center of his conception of knightly coratge. Describing this in a passage that compares cowardly squires to knights who own no horse – both of which he considers to be useless – he concludes by saying,

Just as a knight who has no horse is not suited to the office of Chivalry, so a squire who lacks nobility of courage is not suited to the Order of Chivalry, for nobility of courage was the beginning of Chivalry, and debasement of courage is the destruction of the Order of Chivalry. In which case, if a squire of base courage wishes to be a knight, then he wishes to destroy the very Order that he seeks, and if he is against the Order why is he seeking it? And why would a knight unmake his Order by making a squire of base courage a knight?

Again, it is important to note that Llull uses the term “nobility of courage” in this passage to signify a range of qualities he believed to be necessary for knighthood. At the same time, because “coratge,” at its core, is an expression of militaristic ideals such as valor and prowess,

121 Breitenberg, Anxious Masculinity, pp. 1–31. According to Breitenberg, this was responsible, in large part, for early modern society’s outsized concern with the sexual continence of female members of the household, who the male may have felt he could control even more imperfectly.
122 Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, p. 55; Ibid., Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, p. 58. [per açó nos en passam con pus abreujadament podem, e majorment con a requesta d’un cortes escuder, lleial, vertader, qui llong temps ha seguida la regla de cavaller, hajam fet aquest llibre abreujadament.] I am not entirely sure that I agree with Fallows’s translation of the word “cortes” as “valorous” but I will defer to his interpretation for the time being.
123 Llull, Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, pp. 59-60; Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, p. 56. [Enaixí con cavaller sens cavall no es cové ab l’ofici de cavalleria, enaixí escuder sens noblesa de coratge no es cové ab l’orde de cavalleria; car nobilitat de coratge fo començament de cavalleria e viltat de coratge és destruïment de l’orde de cavaller. On, si escuder ab vil coratge vol ésser cavaller, doncs vol destruir l’orde que demana; e si és contra orde, per què demana orde?, ni cavaller qui fa escuder ab vil coratge, per què desfà son orde?]
consequently, Llull also advises that the qualities of “valour and nobility” should be pursued and
nurtured in aspiring knights “more vigorously than anything else.”

Thus, in essence, by emphasizing the need for a squire to possess coratge, Llull recognizes that knights are, above all
else, soldiers, warriors, and leaders. Therefore, squires too must be trained to be effective
warriors who are strong and bold in the face of danger since these are the among the most
visible, powerful expressions of knightly coratge. Other qualities, such as obedience and
courtesy, while also important, nonetheless appear to have been placed on a secondary level of
importance.

In addition to discussing the internal qualities that squires should possess before becoming
knights, Llull also describes spends a good deal of time describing the ceremonial process
through which a squire should be dubbed a knight, devoting two chapters to the topic.

Although he lays out the ceremony in great detail, he is less clear about other matters, however,
such as when a squire should be knighted or how long the period of his squirehood should last.
When discussing these topics, Llull merely states that dubbing should take place when the squire is “of a suitable age.”

Nonetheless, even given the vagueness that shrouds his opinion, one can deduce that Llull
conceived of squires, on the whole, as younger men still in the midst of an adolescent period of
transition between childhood and adulthood, with the dubbing ceremony representing the point
of passage from child to adult status. Elaborating on this, to some extent, he tells his reader,

If the squire who wishes to become a knight is too young, he cannot have learned the manners that pertain to the
squire before he becomes a knight, nor will he be able to remember as well the promises he makes to the honour
of chivalry if he is made a new knight in infancy. And if the squire is old and frail of body and wishes to be a
knight, having reached old age he wrongs Chivalry, which is upheld by strong combatants and debased by the
weak, the helpless, the vanquished and those who flee.

Thus, in this passage, one finds Llull warning against children being dubbed as knights while
still in their infantesa – the first stage of life that ended at age fifteen. Before this point, he
reasons, children simply are not sufficiently developed mentally, morally, or physically for the

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124 Llull, Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, p. 62; Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, p. 59. [per açò tu, cavaller qui examines escuder, est obligat pus fortament a encercar valor e nobilitat en escuder que neguna altre cosa.]

125 Ibid., chs. 3 & 4.

126 Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, p. 57; Ibid., Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, p. 60. [Edat covinent se cové a novell cavaller; car si és trop jove l’escuder qui es vol fer cavaller, no pot haver apreses los nodriments qui pertanyen a escuder ans que sia cavaller, e no porà tan bé remembrar ço que promet a la honor de cavalleria, si és en infantesa fet novell cavaller. E si l’escuder és vell e ha debilitat de son cors e vol ésser cavaller, enans que fos vell féu injúria a cavalleria, qui és mantenguda per los forts combatadors e és avilada per flacs, despoderats, e vençuts fugíders.]
demands of knighthood. Similarly, if squires are dubbed at too old an age, their bodies (and minds) will likewise be unable to support the demands that knighthood would place on them, and the office of knighthood as a whole would be diminished. Thus, although Llull remains vague, it nonetheless appears that he conceived of late adolescence, around fifteen or twenty, as the most appropriate age for adulthood to commence, as signified by the squire becoming a knight.

Similarly, in another passage, Llull urges fathers not to neglect the education of their sons and advises that such education should occur before the child exited his father’s paternal authority. Neglecting this responsibility, Llull states, would leave the child morally stunted and no better than a beast. Therefore, if one reads between the lines of Llull’s words, it seems clear that Llull conceived of the period of knightly training as, essentially, equivalent to the period of service as a squire. Further, this period of training was to occur before adulthood, while the child was still under the care and oversight of the parent. Therefore, given that Llull also believed that dubbing should occur sometime in late adolescence, roughly around the age that the Furs legislated the passage of orphaned minors to legal majority, it is reasonable to conclude that he conceived of squirehood as also occurring during the adolescent phase of the life cycle, in which it served as a period of education and transition between childhood (infantesa) and the full adulthood represented by the dubbing ceremony.

Conclusion

When one considers the intent of Llull’s composition of the Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, one must think of it, first and foremost, as a pedagogical tool that attempted to chart a “middle road” for those who aspired to become knights. On the one hand, his prescriptions for the education of squires emphasize the need for considerable moral rigor on the part of the aspirant, to ensure that he will work for the benefit of both his lord and of society as a whole; in this respect, Llull clearly intended his work to serve as a tool for the reform of an institution that he believed had strayed too far from its original purpose. At the same time, the Llibre also wholeheartedly validates the position of knights and the aristocracy in society as well as the

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127 Llull, Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, pp. 82–83; Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, p. 79. [Per la costuma e lo bon nodriment que cavaller fa a son cavall, no és tan mantenguda la honor de cavalleria con és en la costuma e en lo bon nodriment que cavaller fa en si mateix o en son fill; car cavalleria no está en cavall ni en armes, ans está en cavaller. On per açò cavaller qui acostuma ben son cavall e acostuma si mateix e son fill a malvais nodriments, faria de si mateix e de son fill, si fer-ho podia, bèstia, e faria de son cavall cavaller.]
established order in which they live off the labor of others.\textsuperscript{128}

Ultimately, though, Llull affirms the social primacy of the aristocracy by glorifying the aristocratic, knightly ideals of forcefulness, strength, and martial prowess – all of which are encapsulated in his use of the term “coratge” – as being the most intrinsic and fundamental elements necessary for those who were to become, in his conception, the born leaders of their society. In short, the view that he presents is that because knights are strong, both in personal morality (honor) and military might (prowess), their claim to social and political superiority was intrinsically legitimate. It is a view that is profoundly conservative in its validation of the existing social order, and which, as a result, can only be seen as fundamentally reinforcing the position of the nobility within society. Thus, when one turns to Llull's prescriptions for those who hoped to become knights – that is to say, squires – it is little surprise that he emphasizes coratge, being the term that encapsulates the courage, mental fortitude, and social superiority of the knight, as the fundamental quality necessary for squires to nurture in themselves if they are to become “good” knights and, by extension, good rulers of their society.

Conclusion: Llull and Eiximenis

As is evident from the preceding pages, the viewpoints of both Ramon Llull and Francesc Eiximenis on how best to educate adolescents and how to incorporate them successfully into adult society are broadly consonant with each other, in that both authors stress the importance of education (especially in the forms of written works), moral formation, and active parental oversight to ensure that children do not stray from the path of virtue into vice. Further, both authors also view adolescence as a particularly crucial period in the life cycle, in which moral education and indoctrination should occur.

However, there are also some differences that one can point to between the two authors. For example, while Llull focuses far more specifically on the training and moral formation of the aristocratic elite, Eiximenis, who was writing more than one hundred years after Llull, focuses more broadly on the range of noble and non-noble classes that collectively formed the later

\textsuperscript{128} This can be seen when Llull discusses the need for knights and members of the aristocracy to be wealthy. Knighthood, he says, should always be equated with splendor. Consequently, “it behoves the knight to speak with fine words, wear fine clothes and have a fine harness and a grand household, for all these things are necessary in order to honour chivalry.” The inability to project sufficient grandiosity, on the other hand, disqualified even the most noble, valorous, morally virtuous, but economically impoverished squire from knighthood. See, for example, Llull, \textit{Book of the Order of Chivalry}, pp. 60, 78.
medieval Valencian elite of his day. Nonetheless, both viewed the elite classes of their time as in need of reform and, as a result, both authors placed great emphasis on the importance of educating young members of the aristocracy and social elite during the period of their adolescence, thereby ensuring that they would bring honor to themselves, their parents, the lords they serve, and to their social class as a whole. Mal-education among the elite, on the other hand, in the opinion of both Llull and Eiximenis, only could bring about destruction and ruin, since the elite, because of their power and lofty position, were far more able to corrupt and poison society as a whole, should they be improperly trained or indulged in their bad customs. Consequently, both Llull and Eiximenis saw their works, both the Crestià and the Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, as practical manuals that would effect the reforms they believed necessary to return aristocratic knighthood to its “proper” position at the apex of society and to maintain the elite in a state of idealized moral comportment.

At the same time, however, because both Eiximenis and Llull represent what could be considered to be a more moralizing, ecclesiastical viewpoint in that both were, at the time they were writing, devoted to religious lifestyles of one sort or another, it is also the case that their prescriptions, while both popular and undoubtedly influential, may not fully represent the views of the lay elite itself in certain respects. Therefore, in the next chapter of this study, an additional perspective will be added to those of Llull and Eiximenis that incorporates elements of the ideals of both but also differs from both in that it also represents (and celebrates) a much more worldly, courtly viewpoint that both Llull and Eiximenis largely rejected. This source is, of course, the Valencian chivalric epic Tirant lo Blanc, written in the middle decades of the fifteenth century by the Valencian knight Joanot Martorell.

In many respects, Martorell challenges and critiques the idealized picture of knighthood and aristocratic comportment advanced by both Eiximenis and Llull, especially in matters of sexual morality. Yet, at the same time, because Tirant lo Blanc, like the works of Eiximenis and Llull, also purports itself to be a practical manual and model for proper behavior and comportment to be used by individuals in the real world, it also represents a fascinating, surprising, and sometimes confounding source for studying the values that young members of the upper classes were taught as they passed from childhood into adulthood. Furthermore, since the values expressed by Martorell frequently appear to be at odds with those expressed by Eiximenis and Llull, a comparison of his vision of aristocratic and knightly comportment with that of Llull and Eiximenis invariably leads one to ask interesting questions about how fully Martorell’s perspective accorded with the social and moral expectations of the late medieval Valencian elite,
of which he was a part. In short, how much did the much more worldly values, beliefs, and cultural practices that Martorell describes in *Tirant lo Blanc* actually reflect beliefs common to fifteenth-century Valencian aristocracy? The next chapter tackles these questions and explores Martorell’s often surprising views on aristocratic male and female comportment, as well as that of adolescents, to gain a better sense of the values that the late medieval Valencian elite espoused for both itself and for its children.
Chapter 3: The Chivalric Youth, or "Tirant the Pedagogue"

The importance of Joanot Martorell's late medieval chivalric epic, *Tirant lo Blanc*, to modern Catalan literature cannot be overstated. Frequently cited as perhaps the "greatest work of Catalan literature," it has received accolades from critics across the centuries, including luminaries like Martí de Riquer (perhaps the foremost scholar of Catalan literature to date) and Miguel de Cervantes (the author of *Don Quixote* who, in its pages, called *Tirant lo Blanc* "The best book of its kind in the world").¹

Largely written in the early to mid-fifteenth century, though not published until 1490 – well after Martorell’s death, as well as that of his successor, Martí Joan de Galba – the book recounts the heroic deeds of its titular character, Tirant the White (*Tirant lo Blanc*), during his string of military and amorous conquests across the European continent. Beginning his knightly career in England with “glorious” victories in tournaments and private duels, Tirant subsequently made his way south and east to the Mediterranean, where he aided various Christian rulers in resisting the aggression of Islamic forces from North Africa and the Near East.² Eventually, his campaign led him into the service of the Byzantine emperor, for whom he eventually captured much of North Africa.

In addition to his military exploits, his amorous exploits are equally notable. Throughout his various campaigns, Tirant repeatedly demonstrated his greatness as both a knight and as a leader of others through his ability to secure advantageous romantic matches for both his friends and companions as well as for himself, in his own courtship of the Byzantine princess Carmesina, the daughter of the emperor. Therefore, because he “conquers” both on the battlefield and in the bedroom, Tirant is held up by Martorell as a complete and ideal model for aristocratic male


² The book was not finished at Martorell’s death, but was completed and published by another, Martí Joan de Galba. Although it is unknown how much of the work de Galba actually composed himself, the consensus seems to be that his influence is most apparent in the later sections of the work, especially in the section describing Tirant’s sojourn in North Africa. To what extent de Galba may have been following plot threads loosely blocked out by Martorell is unclear. For a more in-depth look at the scholarly debate over the work’s authorship, see Kathleen McNerney, *Tirant lo Blanc Revisited: A Critical Study* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Out-of-Print Books on Demand, 1988), pp. 10–11. For Martorell’s claim to knighthood in the prologue of Tirant, see Joanot Martorell and Martí Joan de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanç*, ed. Albert Hauf, 2 vols. (Valencia: Conselleria de Cultura, 1990), p. 1. This edition of the text will be used for all quotations in the original Valencian/Catalan that follow.
comportment, which young Valencian aristocrats could try to emulate.

Furthermore, because Martorell’s narrative specifically traces Tirant's path from inexperienced adolescence into adulthood, Tirant is first introduced to the reader as an ignorant squire who, in an episode lifted directly from Llull, is instructed by a reclusive hermit and, soon afterwards, begins to live out the model of ideal knighthood advanced by Martorell, by conquering all he faced, male and female, through a combination of prowess, coratge, and brute force.

Therefore, in approaching the various insights that can be gained from Martorell's work, this chapter is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on how Martorell, as both a knight and member of the Valencian aristocracy, understood and reproduced notions of knightly honor, fame, and coratge in his portrayal of Tirant lo Blanc’s capacity to dominate his foes physically, intellectually, and emotionally. In the second part of the chapter, attention shifts to how the same qualities were translated to the arena of the court and to the knight's role as a romantic lover, where the rhetoric of war, domination, and prowess define Martorell's conception of a knight's relations with members of the opposite sex. Moreover, this section will also explore the ways in which women of the elite classes can be seen to maneuver within the often circumscribed social roles they inhabited in medieval society. In short, this chapter asserts that young aristocratic women may have had more opportunity to express their romantic and sexual desires than one might expect if only the writings of ecclesiastical moralists like Francesc Eiximenis are considered; in fact, in his writings, Martorell generally grants his female characters a good deal more personal and sexual agency than one finds in Eiximenis’s writings, even giving them a surprising capacity for sexual assertiveness at times and characterizing it in broadly positive terms. What is more, as has been noted by José Cruselles, Tirant lo Blanc was a popular work among the circles of young, female aristocrats in the years following its publication, which also suggests its importance.\(^3\)

Thus, Tirant lo Blanc is a useful source for understanding the social and cultural attitudes that were current among the Catalan/Valencian-speaking aristocracy of the later medieval period.\(^4\) Moreover, this viewpoint has been adopted by several modern literary scholars, with one, José Ruiz Doménec, claiming that the view advanced by Martorell's represents “the

\(^3\) Cruselles Gomez, Escuela y sociedad, p. 146.

\(^4\) For the use of the term “Catalan/Valencian” in this study, see Chapter 2, note 5.
authentic Lebenswelt of the European aristocracy from the middle of the twelfth century onwards” and that Tirant lo Blanc can be read as a reflection, albeit idealized, of social and cultural mores common within the fifteenth-century Valencian elite classes. Similarly, Rafael Beltrán also has concluded in his writings on Tirant lo Blanc that it was clearly intended to serve as a didactic model and source of inspiration for its audience, transmitting the ideals of Valencian aristocratic society as a whole as well as those valued by Martorell himself.

The link between the aristocratic, knightly identity advanced by Martorell in his fiction and that held by the elite classes of the kingdom can also be seen in the various exchanges of “letters of challenge” (cartas de batalla) that Martorell conducted with other members of the Valencian elite during his lifetime. In these letters, Martorell exchanged insults and challenged other members of the Valencian aristocratic and patrician elite to engage in armed combat with him, as a means of redressing perceived insults to his own honor and/or that of his family. As such, the letters that make up the correspondence, which frequently includes both Martorell’s challenges and the replies of his adversaries, illuminate how closely the values in his fiction corresponded with those he lived in his own life as he, like Tirant, asserted his claim to knightly prowess and martial dominance.

Romance and Chivalric Literature as Didactic Tools

Before proceeding directly to the issues discussed above, a bit more should be said about the use of courtly and chivalric narratives as didactic tools for the education of young aristocrats and for societal reform, as well as the evidence that suggests that Martorell intended for Tirant lo Blanc to function as such.

Almost fifty years ago, Georges Duby wrote several articles and essays that argued that chivalric and courtly literature had other functions beyond that of entertainment for a predominantly female audience, which had been the most prevalent opinion among previous

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6 Rafael Beltrán, “Tirant lo Blanc i la biografia cavalleresca,” Symposium Tirant lo Blanc (1993): pp. 101–32. In a different context, though making much the same point, the literary scholar Louise Sylvester also states that romance can serve as a source for broader societal attitudes’ though, citing Anna Livia, she also notes that one should not treat fictional speech as “expressive of the speech of real people.” See Sylvester, Medieval Romance, esp. pp. 10–11, 17.
scholars of chivalric romance. Instead, he asserted, these works were intended much more as instruments to instruct young, aristocratic men in the proper social etiquette and behavior expected of a knight and member of the court. Subsequently, this position has been bolstered by other scholars who have also found explicitly prescriptive and didactic motivations pervading the genres of chivalric literature and medieval romance, while also ascribing a widespread audience of both male and female consumers to these works.

Also supporting Duby’s opinion and that of his followers are the words of Joanot Martorell himself who, in the first chapter of Tirant lo Blanc, states explicitly that his work is intended as a guide to proper knightly comportment and a tool for the reform of knighthood as a whole. It may be the case that Martorell was not entirely serious in this assertion, but his sincerity is bolstered by the simple fact that the text abounds with examples that demonstrate a clear prescriptive and didactic intent. For example, on two occasions one finds Martorell appropriating didactic motifs from other authors, incorporating them with very little revision into his own work and thereby wholly preserving the didactic message of the original texts.

In the first instance to be discussed, one finds Martorell loosely incorporating the plot of Guillem de Torroella’s fantastical parable La Faula into a chapter of his own work, while maintaining the strongly didactic tone of the original poem. In the second, even more significant

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7 The notion that courtly literature was primarily "feminine" and reflected the interests and desires of women, while also creating a social reality that placed them in a position of "superiority" over men was first asserted by Gaston Paris in the late nineteenth century. For a good summary of his views and how the view of female influence in romance changed over time, see Krueger, Women Readers and the Ideology of Gender, pp. 1, 11–14.


9 Kaeuper, Chivalry and Violence, ch. 2 & pp. 30–6. Kaeuper even goes so far as to say that, for many medieval authors, “romance and other categories become indistinguishable in the minds of those who wrote and those who read,” suggesting the extent to which chivalric and courtly ideals suffused the mindset and worldview of aristocratic authors (p. 31). In addition, Nicholas Orme came to a similar conclusion in his study of medieval, English aristocratic childhood: see Orme, From Childhood to Chivalry, esp. pp. 81–6. For a similar argument, see Maurice Keen, Nobles, Knights, and Men at Arms in the Middle Ages (Rio Grande, OH: The Hambledon Press, 1996), pp. 26–42.

Elsbeth Kennedy takes this idea one step further, by offering specific examples of how motifs found in various Arthurian romances were appropriated by didactic authors writing for the aristocracy, making the connection between courtly literature and didactic literature even more explicit. For example, she notes that the didactic message of Llul's Llibre de l'orde de cavalleria is firmly couched within narrative forms that draw heavily on Arthurian tropes, such as the hermit's role as a wizened, "Merlin" figure for the young squire. Therefore, the converse proposition, that narrative or poetic courtly literature could possess didactic intent seems hardly unreasonable to consider. For this, see ElsBeth Kennedy, “The Knight as Reader of Arthurian Romance,” in Culture and the King: The Social Implications of the Arthurian Legend, ed. James Carley and Martin Schichterman (Albany; State University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 70–90.
episode, he incorporates the basic narrative outline used by Llull in the *Llibre de l'orde de cavalleria*, as already mentioned above. Other examples also exist, including a moralizing sermon based on one of Petrarch's published letters, but these two stand as the most elaborate and, therefore, will receive the most attention.  

Central to Martorell’s appropriation of Torroella’s main plot is a mystical, quasi-magical appearance of both Morgan le Fay and King Arthur during a lavish feast held by the Byzantine emperor, which permits Martorell to place his prescriptive advice into the mouth of none less than King Arthur himself. Loosely approximating Torroella's plot, in which his narrator similarly meets Morgan le Fay and Arthur, who bemoans the decline of knighthood and chivalry, Martorell’s scene begins with the arrival of Arthur's sister, Morgan le Fay, at the feast held by the emperor, accompanied by a retinue of attractive ladies-in-waiting. Le Fay then tells the assembled court of her brother's despondency at the depths to which knighthood has fallen, before ushering in Arthur himself to answer questions posed by the emperor and others about how knighthood should be practiced and what behaviors aristocratic knights and ladies should display while at court.

At the same time, because Arthur’s prescriptions are given as responses to specific questions, they are frequently more disjointed and vague than one might like; more often than not his responses are given as simple lists that contain very little in the way of either explanation or interpretation. For instance, when asked to name “a damsel’s passions,” Arthur responded with a simple list, stating that they include “love, hatred, desire, loathing, hope, despair, shame, fear of discovery, audacity, anger, delight, and sadness.” Moreover, he only elaborates on this response slightly, by then noting that chastity “is the greatest gift” possessed by young women,

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10 Martorell incorporates material from a wide variety of sources, many of which have been identified by Martí de Riquer in his various writings. The connection between the Petrarchan letter, however, is certain since a Catalan translation of it is included in a notebook associated with Martorell, preserved in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid, which also contains a draft of Guillem de Varoic and copies of various cartels sent by Martorell. For this passage, see Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, ch. 143 and and additional information found therein, in footnote 43.

11 There is an indication within the text that the entire episode was nothing more than a dramatic staging. Nonetheless, the sheer scope of the dramatic enactment lends a clear element of magic to the affair. The episode is found in chs. 190–202.

12 This telling of the tale differs in specifics from Torroella’s, which revolves around the transportation of the narrator to a mystical island on the back of a whale, where he meets Arthur and his sister, but the larger motifs are the same. Torroella certainly intended his work to serve as a call for the reform of knighthood and says as much in the text itself. A good edition of the text is Guillem de Torroella, *La Faula*, Sara Vicent Santamaria, ed. (Valencia: Tirant lo Blanch, 2011).

implying that it is a remedy for the “damsel’s passions,” but never saying as much straight out.

Similarly, when asked to name “Nature’s gifts,” Arthur again neglects to elaborate in his response, merely stating that the gifts include high birth, “a strong and handsome body, ... great might, ... a clear and loud voice,” and “youth and gaiety”; yet how these qualities should be understood by the reader or what they are intended to mean is not explained. Instead, one must again read into Arthur/Martorell’s words to tease out meaning, which seems to highlight youth as the pinnacle of the life cycle, by focusing on its strength, gaiety, and beauty and by emphasizing these qualities as most suited to the martial and amorous exploits of its young, chivalric heroes and courtly heroines. Therefore, although Arthur's responses are frequently all too brief, what little that is given tends to reinforce preexisting, gendered paradigms of adolescent behavior.

In much the same manner, when Arthur responds to questions more specifically related to knighthood and the moral qualities necessary for its practice, the responses are similarly brief. For instance, when asked to describe “what nobility was,” Arthur responds to the question in this way:

Nobility has four aspects: first, a knight must win glory; second, he must be truthful; third he must be stalwart; and fourth, he must be learned, for God abhors ignorance. Nobility means honouring one’s vassals and acknowledging one’s debt to God.

Thus, whereas Eiximenis stressed the importance of learning as a means to ensure proper comportment among knights, one finds in this passage that Arthur/Martorell emphasizes rather different qualities, instead emphasizing that knightly nobility is not demonstrated by sage counsel, as Eiximenis claimed, but by winning glory and showing strength in the face of physical threats. Thus, while learning is mentioned, its significance clearly is secondary to the knight's capacity to exert sheer strength at arms. Instead, one sees the much greater influence of Ramon Llull's notion of coratge, meaning “prowess,” looming large behind Arthur’s words.

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14 Ibid., p. 334; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 1, p. 453. [Lo primer és gran linatge, lo segon és granea e bellea de cors, lo tercer és gran força, lo quart és gran laugeta, lo cinqué és clara e bona vista, lo seté és clara e bona veu, lo huyté és jovent e alegria.]

15 Again see Duby et al. for the equivalence between youth and courtly literature. In addition, although quite old, A.J. Denomy’s article on the use of the term “joven” by troubadours is still applicable and useful. See Denomy, “Jovens.” Further, from the perspective of writings on youth as the “perfect age,” see Dove, Perfect Age of Man’s Life.

16 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, p. 337; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 1, p. 457. [En noblea són quatre coses specials e singulars. Primerament, que lo cavaller sia clar en sos fets; la segona, que sia verdader; la tercera, que sia fort de cor; la quarta, que haja conexença, car fort és odiosa desconexença a Déu. Per noble és tengut aquell qui ha conexença a sos vassals e servidors.]

17 For Eiximenis’s opinion on this matter, see the section of the previous chapter titled “In School and at Court.”
This focus on the physical requirements necessary for the practice of knighthood is also underlined by Arthur/Martorell when he is asked to name the qualities that a man-of-arms (home d'armes) should possess. Rather than any notion that a knight should be, first and foremost, a councilor or advisor, as Eiximenis seemed to suggest in Lo Crestià, Arthur tells his audience,

The first and principal thing a knight requires is to support the weight of his armour; the second is to practice arms constantly; the third is to withstand hunger; the fourth is to be able to sleep badly and live uncomfortably; the fifth is to fearlessly risk his life for justice and the common good, thus saving his soul as though he had been pious and chaste all his life; the sixth is not to fear the sight of blood; the seventh is to skillfully defend himself and to injure his enemies; and the eighth is to be ashamed of craven flight.  

This passage is interesting in several respects: first, it underlines even further the importance of brute strength and physical acumen as fundamental elements of the identity of knights and soldiers, as well as highlighting the need for knights to be able to withstand physical deprivations and hardships. What is more, throughout Tirant lo Blanc, the eponymous hero is repeatedly shown to possess these very qualities, killing his opponents in spectacular fashion while also, frequently, receiving grievous injuries of his own.

Even more interesting, however, are the second trio of qualities, and the fifth in particular, which Arthur/Martorell mentions. Here, Arthur/Martorell seems to acknowledge a fundamental immorality that underlay the knightly practice of violence as a means of displaying prowess and attaining honor, by recognizing that a knight’s devotion to violence and bloodshed, in effect damned his soul. However, rather than rejecting the entire knightly enterprise in pursuit of spiritual purity, as Llull could be argued to have done, Arthur/Martorell instead doubles down on the idea of knightly devotion to violence, by asserting that a knight could atone for his violent actions by throwing himself into his violent acts wholly and heedlessly. In short, by sacrificing his body, “for justice and the common good,” Arthur/Martorell suggests that knights could counterbalance the inherent sinfulness that lay at their root of the knightly vocation, at least in part. Nonetheless, violence lay at the core of knighthood and, for this reason, Arthur/Martorell

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18 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, pp. 336–37; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 1, pp. 455–56. ![La primera e principal cosa que lo cavaller ha mester, si vol ’sser home d’armes, que puga comportar lo pes de l’armés. La segona és que faça gran treball ab les mans exercint les armes. La tercera és que sapien sostenir fretura de viandes. La quarta és mal jaure e mal star. La V és que per justícia e per lo bé comí no dute la mort, car així bé salvarà la sia ñíma com si tota sa vida fos stat verge y en regió. La sisena, no tema scampament de sanch. L VII és que hagen abtea de defensdre si mateix e de offendre sos enemicus. La VIII és que hagen v[e]rgonya de fugir vilment.] For Eiximenis’s negative appraisal of knights as professional soldiers, see Chapter 2 of this study, in the section titled “In School and at Court.”

19 Many of these examples are found in the second section of the book, during Tirant’s residence in England. During the several duels recounted, Tirant’s battles include one against a giant mastiff, which he fights bare-handed and which wounds him grievously, and one in which, when his opponent refuses to surrender, Tirant stabs him in the eye with his dagger. These incidents are more fully discussed in the following section of this chapter.
quickly returns the focus of his prescriptions to these matters, advising that a man at arms “not to fear the sight of blood,” “to injure his enemies,” and “to fear craven flight.”

Notably, Eiximenis’s advice that a knight’s primary function should be to council those they serve does not feature anywhere in Arthur/Martorell’s discourse, beyond general observations that wisdom and education are important. Instead, Martorell’s conception of knighthood is unequivocally linked to its military function.

Turning now to Martorell’s use of Ramon Llull's introduction to the Llibre de l’orde de Cavalleria, this episode immediately follows an account of military exploits of another knight, named Guillem de Varoic (William of Warwick), who stands in in the role of Llull’s hermit in Martorell's version. Like Martorell’s hermit, Martorell describes Guillem as a knight of great renown, who had forsaken his secular life for that of hermitic contemplation and atonement for his violent life. Thus, when a young squire, Tirant in this case, found himself before the hermit, he also had the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of knightly practice, just as Llull's squire was instructed by the unnamed hermit in his version of the story.20

Notably, the particular lessons given to Tirant by the hermit also draw extensively from Llull's treatise, and include, almost verbatim, those sections of Llull’s work that pertain to the origins of the knightly order and the symbolism inherent in each piece of a knight’s armor and armament. In the first case, he repeats Llull’s explanation of the origin of knighthood as the result of an ancient selection in which only one out of a thousand was chosen, thereby explaining the etymology of the Latin word for a knight, milites. In the second case, he uses his descriptions of the knight’s apparel and weaponry to map out the basic chivalric values important to knighthood (including charity, loyalty, justice, strength, etc.).

In fact, in only one place, when discussing how a knight may be expelled from the order of knighthood, does Martorell go at all beyond what Llull himself had stated. Even in this case, Martorell’s additions to what Llull had said largely serve to drive home the Lullian notion that honor was absolutely fundamental to the practice of knighthood. Thus, Martorell claims that if a knight committed sufficient crimes that he were deprived from knightly status, his loss should be understood as also signifying a complete loss of honor and as a punishment equivalent to a death sentence. In his description of this ceremony of "undubbing" (used for lack of a better term), he portrays it, in many respects, as a ritual counterpoint to the girding ceremony that transformed a

20 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, p. 39; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 1, p. 50.
squire into a knight. Whereas in the girding ceremony a knight was ritually exalted and elevated above the rest of society, the "undubbing" ceremony ritually debased the knight in the manner of a convict suffering execution, with all participants dressed as if in mourning or attending an execution. The dishonored knight was placed on a scaffold in front of the crowd and, surrounded by praying priests, stripped of his armor and weapons, piece-by-piece, until naked. Then, having been humiliated, shamed, debased, and ritually separated from his former community, the knight was driven out of the kingdom into banishment, thereby suffering the social equivalent of a death sentence.\footnote{1}{Llull mentions the possibility of expulsion for bad knights, but only in passing. It appears in Chapter 4 of the Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, during his discussion of the examination process squires must undergo before becoming knights. See Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 47; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, pp. 60–61.}

Curiously, despite the many obvious similarities between Martorell’s introductory episode and that of Llull’s Llibre, at no point does Martorell ever specifically credit Llull as his source, even giving the “book” read by the hermit and containing the instruction for Tirant a different name, "The Tree of Battles," also the title of a fourteenth-century treatise of knighthood by an Occitan knight named Honoré Bonet.\footnote{2}{Riquer, Tirant lo blanch, novela de historia, pp. 70–71. For more on Bonet’s work, see Honoré Bonet, The Tree of Battles (Liverpool: University Press, 1949).} The reasons for this omission are unclear, but Riquer has argued, relatively convincingly, that Martorell’s hesitancy to openly credit Llull may have been intentional, stemming from Llull’s posthumous condemnation by the Inquisition, in 1376, for certain of his views. Thus, although the censure was revoked in 1416, Riquer notes that Llull continued to be held in suspicion for much of the fifteenth century and, therefore, Martorell’s attribution of Llull's views to another source may have been a means of self-protection, sheltering him from affiliation with Llull's checkered past.\footnote{3}{Miguel Batillori and Eulàlia Duran, Ramon Llull i el lul·isme, 1. ed. (València: E. Climent, 1993), pp. 339–41.}

Whatever the reason may have been for this obfuscation, the similarities between Llull's work and that of Martorell are so obvious that the conclusion that the former was Martorell's primary source is accepted nearly universally by scholars. Moreover, his use of Llull’s text is clearly intended to serve a similarly didactic purpose to that envisioned by Llull himself. In fact, as will be discussed in the next section, Tirant immediately applied the lessons that he learned from Guillem de Varoic in his first tournament, and, following the tournament’s completion, he even returned to the hermit to report on the victories and glories he had earned. Clearly, Martorell intended for his reader to internalize the values of Llull’s text, just as Tirant had done,
and it is through this prism that the work as a whole also should be viewed. Although entertaining, amusing, and sometimes confounding, *Tirant lo Blanc* also has a serious didactic core, which called for knights to return to earlier values and practices and, through this, return knighthood to purer and less corrupt state.

Where he differed from his ecclesiastical counterparts, however, was in his understanding of which values of knighthood were to be celebrated, and which were to be repressed. In the next sections, these matters will be examined more fully, first by investigating how Martorell understood violence to interact with knightly conceptions of prowess and honor, and then by examining how Martorell understood sexual morality in his work, particularly as it related to a similar understanding of honor and dishonor. In both cases, his understanding of these matters was markedly different than that of Eiximenis and Llull.

**Tirant the Bloody: Images of Violence and Knightly “Prowess” in *Tirant lo Blanc***

As mentioned above, Martorell's emphasis on honor as the core of knightly identity is substantially similar to that of his contemporaries. Therefore, it is likely the case that the “deviations” from the prescriptive advice of ecclesiastical authors regarding honor, prowess, and knightly violence that one see in Martorell’s writing reflect a broader tendency of the military aristocracy to incorporate ecclesiastic ideas about knightly identity only inasmuch as they are compatible with its preconceived understanding of its own identity. As Richard Kaeuper notes,

> They [knights] largely appropriated religion; they absorbed such ideas as were broadly compatible with the virtual worship of prowess and with the high sense of their own divinely approved status and mission; they likewise downplayed or simply ignored most strictures that were not compatible with their sense of honour and entitlement.25

Ultimately, Kaeuper argues, the blending of prowess, achieved through the performance of knightly violence, with a selective appropriation of Christian teaching combined to make "chivalry" the powerful conceptual framework for aristocratic and knightly identity formation that it became.26 In *Tirant lo Blanc* these elements are given even more nuance by the work’s overarching ethos of religious contest and crusade between Christianity and Islam.

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24 Again, see Kaeuper, Chivalry and Violence, p. 47.
25 Ibid.
Consequently, although religious figures (priests, friars, monks, or other officials, especially from the upper echelons of the Church hierarchy) do not frequently appear in *Tirant lo Blanc*, there is, nonetheless, a Christian ethos of solidarity in confronting a threatening, Islamic “other” that is present throughout the work.\(^{27}\) Yet, at the same time, the work also reflects an almost willful ignorance of ecclesiastical efforts to bring knighthood more firmly under the influence of Christian moral teaching. Instead, Tirant's status as an "ideal knight" derives almost exclusively from his exceptional physical abilities and martial ferocity, utilized in a crusading context, but nonetheless largely devoid of any particular adherence to ecclesiastical authority; for instance, the number of priests, monks, or other representatives of Church authority that appear in the text can be counted on one hand, nor do religious rites feature particularly prominently in the narrative.

Illustrating Martorell’s expression of Christian belief in its most militant, knightly form, the introductory chapters that precede Tirant's education by the knight-hermit, Guillem de Varoic, recount a remarkable – and completely ahistorical – invasion of England by a force of North African Muslims, led by the one who Martorell simply names as the “King of Canary.”\(^{28}\) Initially, Martorell refrains from using especially defamatory language for the Islamic foe, describing the king merely as “a hardy youth whose virile and restless soul was stirred by dreams of conquest,” which suggests that, the king was driven to war not by his religious beliefs but by an understandable – even if unjustified – motive. The king went to war merely because he was young and, as discussed in Chapter 2, young men were given over to such behavior more or less by their very nature.\(^{29}\)

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27 The literature devoted to studying the intersection of religion, knightly identity, and the notion of crusade is quite extensive. In addition to the writings of Kaeuper and Keen, the writings of Joseph O'Callaghan and Jonathan Riley-Smith are also quite valuable, in that both look at similar issues through the specific prism of crusade. See, for example, Jonathan Riley-Smith, The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986); Joseph F. O’Callaghan, Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003). Other works that are useful with respect to these matters include Maria Rubiera i Mata's monograph on the portrayal of Islam in Tirant lo Blanc and Robert Burns's more general discussion of how the ideology of crusade permeated Valencian culture throughout the medieval period. For these works, see Burns, Muslims, Christians, and Jews, esp. ch. 10; Maria Jesús Rubiera i Mata, Tirant contra el Islam (Altea, Alicante, Spain: Ediciones Aitana, 1993).

28 In earlier French and English versions from the fourteenth century, William of Warwick (Guy de Warvich) fought an invading army from the north, to all appearances made up of Scandinavian Vikings. Martorell's original text refers to the invading soldiers as Moors (*moros*), but in his English translation, Rosenthal changed the appellative term to "Saracens," which has been adopted here. See Rosenthal’s introduction for more on the earlier tradition of the story, as well as Martorell’s recreation of it.

29 For more on ideas about “youthful nature” and the influence of the humors, see “Rearing Perfection I” in Chapter 2.
The narrative discourse, however, quickly takes on a tone that utilizes the vocabulary of difference and sectarian conflict after the English king and his armies suffered a string of embarrassing defeats at the hands of their Islamic foes. As a result, the English king offered his title and throne to the knight-hermit Guillem, who commenced to rule in the English king’s place if only until he had driven the invading army from England. Further, it is at this point, with Guillem's arrival on the field, that the contest between the opposing forces transforms from a secular war between two monarchs into something much more explicitly religious, and crusading, in nature, with the conflation of Christian piety and violent militarism that Kaeuper describes reaching its fullest expression. As Martorell describes the situation, because of his "holiness" and because of the divine favor he enjoyed, Guillem was able to place explosives in the midst of the Saracen camp, decimating the opposing army. Further, divine favor, coupled with an almost bestial ferocity, are given as the primary reasons why, when challenged to single combat by the King of Canary, Guillem emerged victorious.

Describing their confrontation in the most emphatic (and gruesome) terms possible, Martorell states that Guillem’s victory was achieved when, following a sequence of charges, he finally managed to cut off his opponent's arm, disarming him. Then Guillem stabbed the king in the side, and, finally, beheaded him. He then returned to his own camp with his opponent's head skewered on his lance, a grisly trophy that betrayed a singular disrespect for his royal adversary. In short, if there is saintliness to be found in the hermit-knight Guillem de Varoic, it is a saintliness of the most militaristic sort and one thoroughly infused by the ideology of crusade and religious militancy.

Similarly, in another episode that is even more evocative of a “crusader ethos” of religious hostility and confrontation, immediately following his defeat of the Saracen king, Guillem is described as leading his army in a rout of that of the leaderless Saracens, in which Martorell

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30 Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, p. 8; Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanch*, v. 1, p. 11. [Seguí’s après, que lo gran rey de Canària, jove fortíssim, ab la viril iniqueta joventut de nobles speranças guarnida, sempre spírant a honorossa victòria.]

31 This passage echoes a later passage in the book in which a captured Turkish soldier, who is nonetheless revered by Tirant for his wisdom, claims that the Byzantine emperor’s weakness stems from the fact that he inherited his crown and did not need to win it. The implication clearly seems to be that the right to rule is best established by military “prowess.” For this, see Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, pp. 243–48; Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanch*, v. 1, pp. 311–20.

describes the Christian attackers as chasing down their fleeing opponents and “beheading as many infidels as they could catch.” One particular Saracen prisoner, who Martorell describes as “so huge he might have been a giant,” however, was not immediately executed. Instead, he was brought before Guillem, where he suffered an even more gruesome and humiliating fate as the sacrificial victim in a disturbing ritual process that served as a perverse rite of passage for Guillem’s recently knighted son, in which the boy would prove his own masculinity and martial prowess by "dominating" (that is to say, murdering) the imprisoned Saracen giant. Describing the scene, Martorell states,

His Majesty [Guillem, who remained king for a brief period after the Saracen amy's defeat] decided the boy should slay that Saracen. The lad drew his sword and stabbed him again and again till he was dead. Then the king seized the boy’s hair and flung him on the infidel. He kept him there until the boy’s face was covered with gore and made him stick his hands inside the wounds, thus [initiating] his son [with] infidel blood. The child grew up to be a valiant knight and most fearless in battle.  

The brutality of Martorell's imagery is extraordinary, especially since it is coupled with that of Christian baptism or anointing, albeit profoundly perverted from a ritual of cleansing to one of intentional corruption that would ease Guillem’s transition into a knightly life of violence through his “initiation” and immersion in the deceased prisoner’s “infidel blood.” Moreover, the description also is remarkable because the execution is carried out in a manner that can only be seen as lacking in honor, with the giant executed while still bound prostrate, rather than falling in open or single combat. In short, the Muslim giant is treated more like a beast for slaughter than a man, underlining the sheer dehumanization of the Muslim “other.”

Adding to the significance of the ritualized killing of the Muslim giant is the fact that Martorell describes it as as wholly transformative, leading Guillem’s son into a new status of adult masculinity. The passage quoted above gives no indication at all that Guillem’s actions were anything less than glorious or justified.  

Thus, in this episode, one sees how the vocabulary of crusade and militant religiosity were joined to already present ideals that glorified knightly violence and the conquest of one's foes, such that bathing one's son in the blood of an

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33 Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, pp. 29–30. I have substituted the word “initiating” for Rosenthal’s word “baptizing” to eliminate the religious overtones of the latter. The word used by Martorell, “enconar” lacks this religious context, being instead related to the process of encouraging a baby to suckle.

34 The ritual Martorell describes mirrors in several respects those described by the likes of Arnold Van Gennep, Victor Turner, and Clifford Geertz. Through this prism, the son's murder of the Saracen prisoner can be seen both as signifying his commencement of his life as a warrior and knight, but also as engendering *comunitas* – Victor Turner’s idea that shared participation in a ritual established a kinship between the individuals undergoing the ritual transformation and those performing it. Thus, the son’s murder of the Saracen prisoner can be seen as also serving to forge deeper bonds between himself, his father, and the other knights present. For Turner's work on this, see Victor W. Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co., 1969), pp. 96–97.
executed Muslim prisoner could serve to "make a man out of a boy."

This episode is also significant because it demonstrates an ethos of aristocratic masculinity and violence that stands in stark contrast to that put forth by both ecclesiastical authors discussed in the last chapter. Recall, for example, the scenario discussed by Eiximenis in which a king became furious with his son – going so far as to disinherit him – for rashly executing a prisoner. There, although the king was later chastised for the severity of his punishment, the underlying belief that the son had done wrong was never questioned; thus, the call for martial restraint and courtesy advanced by Eiximenis stands in complete contrast to Martorell's seemingly unambiguous endorsement of a prisoner’s execution as part of brutal blood rite.

The efficacy of the Saracen giant’s ritual execution is cemented in Martorell’s later descriptions of the martial ferocity that Guillem’s son demonstrated after his "baptism in blood." For example, in one episode that occurs at the same tournament where Tirant was made a knight and competed for the first time, Guillem’s son, who had been named "Constable of England" even though he was still "no more than fourteen or fifteen," also entered his name into the lists. Notably, he did this, Martorell states, because of his “martial spirit,” in spite of the express prohibition of the English king who acted as the boy’s guardian and who feared that the young man's tender age and lack of experience would endanger him. Thus, when the king discovered his deception and summoned him into his presence, the boy declared that not participating would have been "womanly," unbefitting a knight, and contradictory to the basic understanding of knighthood and aristocratic masculinity that his father had taught him during the ritual execution. Moreover, he reproached the king for his outrage, declaring,

Does your Majesty not recall my father and lord, Guillem, Count of Varoich, who, while holding the royal scepter, was the victor in so many battles, and with his virtuous arm and the edge of his sword he was the conqueror and destroyer of Saracens? Did he not take me by the hair and make me kill a Saracen, even though I was still of a young age? And did he not, with me sullied by blood, desire me to be a conqueror and to teach me through a fitting lesson?

Clearly, the boy's execution of the Saracen giant was precisely what had "made [him] a conqueror," that is to say, worthy of challenging others and competing in the tournament.

In this episode, one also sees, yet again, the assertion that Martorell makes throughout Tirant lo Blanc that conquest, violence, and the shedding of blood were the primary mechanisms

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35 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 68; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 1, p. 82. [¿E no sap la magestat vostra de aquell pare e senyor meu Guillem, comte de Varoych, com tenint lo cepitre real fon vencedor e destruidor dels moros, e pres a mi per los cabells e féu-me matar un moro, si bé era de poca edat, e tot sullat de sanch volgué fer-me vencedor e leixar-me alló per doctrína de bé a fer?] The translation of this passage is mine as the Rosenthal translation departs from the text to a greater extent than normal.
through which knights established and maintained their individual reputations. Thus, in the episode just described, Martorell portrays Guillem as entirely justified in his disobedience of the English king’s command, since he had been denied what he perceived to be akin to a “natural right” to challenge others and to advance his claim to social preeminence through acts of martial violence. Guillem’s son even concludes his angry diatribe against the king by accusing him of having brought dishonor onto both of them:

Having heard his lord’s rebukes, the constable angrily replied: “Your highness, in that case I shall be deemed the most craven knight alive, since you refuse to let me fight lest I be slain in battle. To be a knight I must act like one, the same as everyone else. If Your Majesty does not wish me to brave the perils of combat, order me to dress as a woman and serve the queen, as Achilles did among King Priam’s daughters.”

Therefore, in his conception of knightly honor, the dishonor that Guillem’s son would incur by not fulfilling "a knight's duties" far outweighed the repercussions of disobeying one's lord. Even this in itself is significant, in that it undercuts, at least to some extent, the Lullian notion of obedience of knights to their lords, which Llull discusses in the context of the knight’s standard and gorget. For Martorell, though, obedience to one’s lord clearly takes second rank to a knight’s right to assert his claim to glory and status through violence.

For the height of prowess, however, one must look beyond Guillem’s son to the young Tirant who was entirely without equal in his ability to dominate others through violence and brutality. Although his knightly career commenced rather ingloriously, with Tirant being unhorsed by his first opponent, he quickly recovered. Remounting his horse, he then struck his opponent such a blow that he “flew off his horse and fell to the ground dead.” This achievement then set the tone for all of his later encounters, in which he killed challenger after challenger, further strengthening the connection that Martorell makes between one’s capacity to commit acts of lethal violence and the successful practice of knighthood. Eventually, Tirant was named the overall victor of the tournament, having participated in various duels and contests, which occurred one after the other, and having received grievous injuries in several before killing his opponents.

The strategy that Tirant pursued in establishing his reputation for prowess was simple: he

\(^{36}\) Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, p. 68; Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanch*, pp. 81–82. [E com lo conestable véu la gran reprènció que lo rey li havia feta, dix ab gran ira un tal parlar: “Donchs, senyor, ¿será veritat que yo haja rebut l’orde de cavalleria e que haja ésser tengut per lo més abatut cavaller de tots, que per temor de la mort vosstra magestat nom leixe fer armes? Puix só cavaller, tinch a fer obres de cavaller axi com fan tots los altres bons cavallers. E si vosstra altesa no vol que veja que veja los perills de les armes, mane’m que stiguat vestit com a dona entre les donzelles de la senyora reyna axi com féu aquell invencible cavaller Achi’il·les entre les filles del rey Priam de Troia.”]

issued a general challenge to anyone who would fight him; he did battle and killed his challenger (he always ended up killing them); he recovered from the injuries he had received; he issued another general challenge. Among those who accepted his challenge was a knight that Martorell only describes as "Highmount." Their duel serves as a vivid example of Martorell’s attempt to fully connect knightly honor to the physical domination of others. Describing their contest, Martorell skims over most of the battle; instead, he focuses on the battle’s final moments when, having crushed Highmount’s helmet with his axe and having knocked him to the ground, Tirant offered to spare the other knight's life in exchange for his opponent's acknowledgment of his own defeat and subjugation.

However, instead of allowing his hero to bask in the courtesy and mercy he was showing towards his vanquished opponent, Martorell minimizes and trivializes Tirant’s merciful overtures as Highmount scornfully repudiates Tirant and tells him,

> It grieves me more to hear your vainglorious boasts than to perish, since I prefer death to begging your arrogant hand for mercy … God forbid that I should perform an act so shameful to me and mine [as surrender], and to noble William of Warwick who received me into this bitter order. Do as you like; I would sooner die than live in shame.\(^{38}\)

Because his opponent continued to challenge to his dominance, Tirant forsook all pretense of mercy and, instead “plunged his dagger into the champion’s [meaning Highmount] eye, slamming his other hand down on it so hard that it transfixed his skull.”\(^{39}\) In effect, Martorell turns ecclesiastical calls for mercy for defeated opponents, seen in the writings of Eiximénis as well as in earlier clerical attempts to moderate aristocratic violence, such as the “Peace of God” movement (Pax Dei), on their head.\(^{40}\) Instead, Tirant was, in effect, forced to kill Highmount because of the latter’s refusal to acknowledge the dominance of the former, putting Tirant in a position where any show of mercy would be seen as a sign of weakness. Martorell even seems to acknowledge Tirant’s impossible position when, just before stabbing Highmount, he tells his

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\(^{38}\) Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, pp. 76-7; Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanch*, v. 1, pp. 89–90. [Mès dolor tinh – dix lo cavaller – de les tues cruels paraules, abundoses d’estrema vanaglòria, que de perdre la vida, e més stime la mort que no demanar perdò a la tua superbiosa mà … No plàcia a Déu ni me’n done lo poder que yo þames faç a acte de tanta vergonya per a mi e als meus, ni en aquell egregi senyor meu lo comte Guillem de Varoych, del qual rebi aquest amargós orde de cavalleria! Per què fes de mi tot lo que bët vingua, que més stime bé morir que mal vivre.]


\(^{40}\) Notably, in one section of *Lo Crestià*, Eiximénis counseled that knights should not be ashamed when they lose a duel. Martorell seems to utterly reject this notion. For Eiximénis's view on this matter, see Eiximénis, *Dotzè*, vol. I, 1, ch. 290. For additional discussion of the “Peace of God,” see Georges Duby, “Laity and the Peace of God,” in *The Chivalrous Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 123–33; Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence*, pp. 73–81.
vanquished foe, “Any knight who seeks renown must expect a place in Hell.” What is unclear is whether Tirant was speaking of his adversary, for his stubborn refusal to submit, or of himself, for committing what was, in effect, murder in the name of prowess. The fact that Tirant had to kill Highmount, however, was unquestionable.

Taking this notion even further, Martorell in no way criticizes Highmount for his actions, despite the fact that they led directly to his own death. Rather, Martorell eulogizes him, declaring, “What an ardent knight was he, preferring death to disgrace!” For the young readers or listeners who were the intended audience of the work, the implication could not have been more clear: dishonor was a fate worse than death and honor was only achieved by forcing others to recognize their own submission to oneself, whatever the consequences may be to the state of one’s soul. Religious morality, while important, was secondary to the violent dictates of the economy of honor and the display of status through prowess.

A similar tone is taken in another episode that speaks to the dishonor of surrender. After Tirant captured a leader of the Turkish forces, called the "Grand Karaman," he brought his prisoner before the Byzantine emperor to beg for mercy. Unlike the episode involving Highmount, however, in this case Martorell portrays the Grand Karaman’s refusal to subjugate himself to his adversary in purely negative terms, with Tirant unabashedly assaulting the Grand Karaman's knighthood (and manhood), telling him, “It is you who chose life over death with honor, kneeling before me, crossing your arms, and uttering those words abhorred by worthy knights: ‘I am your prisoner and you my master.’” In short, because the Grand Karaman chose capture and defeat instead of accepting an honorable death by defying Tirant on the battlefield, he was no longer entitled to make any claim to either honor or manhood.

Again, for the young, aristocratic consumer of Martorell's tale, the message that he was conveying would have been abundantly clear: surrender (and the loss of honor and prowess that accompany it) was worse than death. Honor, on the other hand, was more important than life.

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42 Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, p. 77; Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, v. 1, p. 90. [*Quin ànimo de cavaller fon aquest, que més stinà morir que no viure envergonyit, per no ésser blasmat dels bons cavallers.*]
43 Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, p. 307; Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, v. 1, p. 409. [*Ab altres rahons mal dites no cur respondre, sinó que us recort, cascuna volta que naturalea vos temptarà en tenir costum de dona, per ésser yo aquell que, pus prest la vida que la mort honesta elegint, ficàs los genolls en la alta popa de la nau, davant mi, ab los braços en creu retent l’esperit de la honor, diguiust aquell spaniós mot per aquells qui virtut conexen, com és dir: ’Yo só ton presoner e tu est mon senyor.’*]
and, given the choice between the two, one should chose honor over life.

Similar motifs are made clear in the seven other duels that Tirant fought while in England, in addition to his duel against Highmount; honor (or perceived damage to one's honor) lays at the root of all of them. In addition to those that resulted from Tirant’s open challenges to all comers, he also fought a duel over the affections of a young lady, and several others were the result of vendettas engendered by the deaths of previous challengers whom Tirant had faced, with each subsequent challenger attempting to avenge the honor of his predecessor in an escalating spiral of violence and death that continued until no challengers remained alive to challenge Tirant further.

In the duel that followed his execution of the knight Highmount, the root cause was a perceived slight that Tirant had caused to another knight named Lord Barrentowns. According to Martorell’s account, the young woman whom Lord Barrentowns was courting – who was a relative of the queen and, therefore, of relatively high status – had given a brooch to Tirant, at his request, in exchange for his service and devotion. This was galling enough for Barrentowns, whose affections were now being challenged by the upstart Tirant, but even more so was that the young woman, whose name was Agnes, permitted Tirant to remove the brooch from between her breasts, “with [his] own hands.” Consequently, Martorell, states, Tirant “was forced to touch her breasts as he removed it.” This was an even greater assault on the masculine and knightly identity of Lord Barrentowns, who saw Tirant’s actions as a something equivalent to an invasion of “his territory,” with Agnes’s body becoming a battlefield for the two men: the fact that he did so at her request was of no importance at all. Therefore, in order to restore the honor that he believed Tirant had stolen from him, he demanded in a formal letter of defiance (carta de batalla) that the two men should duel to the death.

Particularly notable in Martorell's description of the duel between Tirant and Lord

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46 Notably, dueling as a means to establish or regain honor was not merely confined to the pages of chivalric fiction, as can be seen in the fact that members of the Valencian aristocracy actually had participated in formalized duels. The Valencian nobleman and knight Felip Boïl i Soler, for example, fought a duel before the King of England during Martorell's lifetime. So too were several treatises written at around this time that were dedicated, specifically, to discussions of the theory and practice of dueling. José Hinojosa Montalvo, “Boïl i Soler, Felip,” in *Diccionario de historia medieval del Reino de Valencia*, 4 vols. (Valencia: Generalitat Valenciana, Conselleria de Cultura, Educació i Ciencia, Direcció General del Llibre, Arxius i Biblioteques, 2002), v. 1, p. 367. Martorell himself even exchanged letters of defiance with Felip Boïl, though no duel between the two seems ever to have been carried out.
Barrentowns, though, is its lack of many of the usual trappings of such confrontations, including swords and armor. Instead, the duel was more akin to a back-alley knife fight, with both opponents clad in garb suggestive of knightly raiment but entirely lacking in defensive properties, including “French linen shirts, paper bucklers, garlands of flowers, and nothing else.” The weapons used were daggers, which, even if not the weapon most closely linked with chivalric combat, nonetheless were sufficient for both men to do significant damage to each other. Clearly relishing his description of bloody confrontation, which he renders in gory detail, Martorell tells that both men “fought so fiercely that it was gruesome to behold, for they were at such close quarters that every thrust drew blood.” Even when both men tired and “reached the point where they would have preferred peace to war,” still neither of the combatants, described by Martorell as “doughty and spirited youths,” would yield to the other. Thus, the duel continued until both young men had nearly died from loss of blood, at which point Tirant finally was able to stab Lord Barrentowns in the heart. At the very same moment, however, Barrentowns stabbed Tirant in the head, with both men collapsing, the first mortally wounded and the second grievously so.47

Following this, Martorell recounts, partisans of both combatants “seized their weapons and hastened to where the knights lay.” Having not been informed that the duel was taking place, when Lord Barrentowns’s followers arrived and learned of his fate they immediately attempted to take vengeance against Tirant and to kill him where he lay. Only the timely intervention of Tirant’s own supporters saved his life as they stood over his body with weapons drawn. Thus, while Tirant had won his duel fairly, his victory almost immediately became fuel for additional conflict. In the end, only a royal edict ended the conflict between Tirant, Lord Barrentowns, and their followers by proclaiming that while “the glory of the said battle belongs to Tirant lo Blanc,” Lord Barrentowns “died a worthy knight” and could, therefore, “be entombed with those knights who have died bearing arms without reproach.”48 Thus, by acknowledging Barrentown's doughtiness and unwillingness to surrender at any cost, his honor was restored to a sufficient extent that further violence between the parties could be forestalled. In subsequent duels, however, this was not the case and Tirant can be found, mowing through successive challengers, including four kings who challenged Tirant in succession; as each challenger died, he was replaced by another who attempted to redeem the honor of his predecessor. Unfortunately, none

47 The quotations cited in this paragraph can be found in Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, pp. 77–78; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 1, pp. 89–92.
48 Both quotations Ibid.
were successful in doing so.

Also noteworthy in many of these later duels are the cartas de batalla that are exchanged between Tirant and his adversaries. In many respects, the cartas that Martorell “transcribes” in the pages of Tirant lo Blanc bear strong similarities to those that he himself composed over the course of his life. In both, the exchange of cartas de batalla was, along with the duel itself, an integral part of the basic mechanism through which honor was challenged and defended. It was also, therefore, an integral part of the economy of honor and retribution within which both Martorell and his fictional protagonists lived.

Of the numerous cartas de batalla that Martorell wrote in his life, the most notable, and lengthy, are those he exchanged relatively early in his adult life with his cousin, Joan de Montpalau.\(^49\) Around twenty-four years old at the time, Martorell had only recently taken control of his father's estates and become master of the household and guardian of his younger sister, Damiata. Unfortunately, problems arose when it was discovered that Montpalau had seduced her while visiting the family. In her defense, Damiata claimed that she and Montpalau had exchanged marriage vows clandestinely and that it was only for this reason that she had consented to have sex with him. Montpalau, on the other hand, consistently denied that he had promised marriage, though he never denied that the two had had intercourse. Therefore, because Montpalau would not admit to his accused misdeeds, Martorell composed his cartas to force Montpalau either to admit his guilt or to submit to the “justice” of a duel.

The cartas themselves are bravura performances of bluster and insult that demonstrate a disregard for danger or personal injury markedly similar to that seen in his descriptions of Tirant’s duels. As such, when proposing the parameters for his potential duel, he informed his opponent,

I, of my own free will, desiring to stand in the judgment of God, who in all things shows his great power, offer to battle with you to the ultimate death, my body against yours, on foot or on horse, in that manner devised by you, as long as we are equally armed, either with both defensive and offensive arms, or without any defensive armament.\(^50\)

\(^49\) This incident is discussed at length by Martí de Riquer in several of his works. The most extended and informative treatments can be found in Joanot Martorell, El combate imaginario: Las cartas de batalla de Joaot Martorell [por] Martín de Riquer [y] Mario Vargas Llosa, 1st ed., ed. Martín de Riquer and Mario Vargas Llosa (Barcelona: Barral, 1972); and Joanot Martorell and Martí Joan de Galba, Tirante el Blanco: Versión castellana impresa en Valladolid en 1511, ed. Martín de Riquer, 5 vols. (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1974), esp. pp. xi–xxi.

\(^50\) Martorell, in Riquer and Vargas Llosa, eds., El combate imaginario, p. 40. [Yo, a tota ma requesta, volent star a juhi de Déu, qu’en tals cases mostra lo seu gran poder, vos offer combatre a tota ultrança, mon cors contra la vostre, a peu o a cavall, en aquella manera que per vós serà devisat, puix siam igualment armats, aixi de les armes defensives com ofensives, o desarmats de armes defensives.] Translation mine.
Just as Tirant agreed to duel in nothing more than a shirt, paper shield, and flowers, so too did Martorell offer to forsake any advantage or safeguard in his attempt to regain his damaged honor.

In a subsequent letter, Martorell expanded his rhetoric even further and incredulously questioned how Montpalau dared to deny the charges against him, before accusing him of rank cowardice and effeminacy. Thus, he tells Montpalau,

I desire to come to battle very quickly, and you, through the delay of letters, wish that there would never be an end, in which letters and discourteous words I do not want be equated with you, because it [writing letters] is not an act that pertains to knights or gentlemen, but to women and lawyers, who place all of their defense in the pen and in the mouth. But I trust in God that I will measure myself against you with deeds on the day of our battle to my great honor and to your great shame, as a deceiver and seducer, falsely under the guise of friendship and kinship, of the honor of my sister.  

In short, Martorell asserts that, like Tirant, the violence he hoped to commit upon the body of his rival was the highest and most authoritative statement of his social and personal superiority, with his honor resting, ultimately, on his capacity to inflict physical harm on his opponent. Furthermore, it was only through his own display of personal superiority over Montpalau that his sister’s honor and that of his family could also be restored. As suggested in the previous chapter, the slight that Montpalau had committed against his sister’s honor also had become a slight on Martorell’s own honor, status, and reputation. Consequently, it was only through a display of superiority over Montpalau by Martorell himself that, at least to an extent, the honor of the family and its members could be restored.

The *cartas de batalla* that Martorell includes in *Tirant lo Blanc* are similar in tone, if less restrained in their use of hyperbole. For instance, following Tirant’s duels with the four kings Tirant received a final *carta de batalla* from a knight named Kyrieleison of Muntalba, who was a vassal of one of the slain monarchs and who sought to avenge his lord’s death. Therefore, addressing Tirant in a tone that Martorell surely would have relished using in his own letters, he tells Tirant,

To you, Tirant lo Blanc, crueler than a ravening lion, spiller of the royal blood of those worthy Kings of Friesland and Poland, user of false and assembled arms no honorable knight would bear: since you are a recreant knight, or more exactly, a treacherous one, a deceiver in arms and everything concerning honor, I knowing your wickedness, though I shall be reproached by my peers for entering the lists with a vile and disorderly person who behaves like a freed serf, challenge you to single combat according to the usage and

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51 *Ibid.*, p. 65. [yo u volria venir molt prestament a la batalla, e vós, ab dilacions de letres, volrieu que jamés hagués fi, de les quals letres e paraules descorteses yo no m vull acabalar ab vós, perquè no és acte que [a] cavallers ne gentils homens pertanga, sinó a dones e a juristes, los quals en la ploma hi en la lengua tenen tota lur deffensió. Mas en Déu confi que yo m‘acabalaré de vós en les obres lo jorn de nostra batalla ab molta honor mia e ab gran vergonya vostra, així com a decebedor hi enganador, falsament sots simulació de amistat e parentiu, de la honor de ma germana.] Translation mine.
Clearly, the language used here is even more insulting than that used in Martorell’s letters to Montpalau, likely reflective of the freer reign that Martorell felt he possessed in the fictional world that Tirant inhabited. Yet, even though the language that he employs is more colorful, it is notable that the cartas exchanged between the characters in *Tirant lo Blanc* substantially mimic the standard form of Martorell's own *cartas de batalla*. Both meticulously outline the pertinent details of how, when, and where the duels should take place, which suggests that Martorell understood that such challenges required a certain, recognizable form. In fact, in his study of the cartas, Martí de Riquer noted many correspondences between the letters used in *Tirant* and other cartas that had been written and published by other notable Valencian knights. Therefore, in *Tirant*, one could argue that Martorell intended for his fictional cartas to be exaggerated but still fundamentally recognizable examples of the literary form. It may even be the case that he intended for them to serve as exempla that could be studied and reproduced by his elite audience, especially since Martorell himself had not shied away from “borrowing” from his peers.

Lastly, any discussion of Tirant's duels and the equivalence that Martorell draws between physical brutality, knightly prowess, and personal honor cannot ignore what is assuredly the strangest, least "heroic" duel that Tirant fought. Between his duels with Lord Barrentowns and those with the four kings, Tirant fought a mastiff owned by the Prince of Wales, thereby blurring even further the lines between Tirant as a paragon of knightly ideals and the underlying assertion that his status as a paragon was rooted, fundamentally, in even an animalistic capacity to commit acts of violence against those who challenged him.

The circumstances that led to the duel are simple: one of the mastiffs owned by the Prince of Wales for hunting had escaped from his kennel and began to chase Tirant, who happened to be passing by. Once he realized that he could not escape, rather than simply killing the dog with his sword, Tirant instead strips away nearly any semblance of "courtliness" that he might have achieved up to this point and places himself on terms nearly equal to those of the beast he was

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52 Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, p. 107; Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanch*, v. 1, pp. 131–32. [A vos, *Tirant lo Blanc*, més cruel que lo leó famejant, falsificador y scampador de la sanch real de aquells beneventurats cavallers mon senyor lo rey de Frisa e lo rey de Apo-lònia, ab armes falses e disimuladas entre cavallers de honor no acostumades portar. É per quant vos sou desegual cavaller e, per més propi parlar, traidor, falsificat en armes y en tot lo que de honor és, e yo avent noticia de la vostra gran maldat –per bé que só cert que'n serè blasmat per molts bons cavallers que a tan vil e desordenada persona e traidora yo haja admesa per companyia de entrar dins liça en camp clos a tota ultrança com si fos de persona en libertat posada–, a tota ma requesta vos combatre a hús e costum de França.] 53 For more on this, see the introduction to Martorell in Riquer and Vargas Llosa, eds., *El combate imaginario*. 
facing. Thus, after agreeing to the “duel,” Tirant cast his sword aside, saying that he would only rely on “the same arms that you [the mastiff] plan to use against me” and would use only his hands and teeth, just as would the dog. Then, describing the duel itself, which lasted over an hour, Martorell tells that Tirant, whose “arms and legs were covered in bites,” finally “[seized] the dog’s neck [and] squeezed with all his might and bit its jowl so hard that it fell down dead.”

In essence, Tirant had “gone for the jugular,” using his mouth to crush his victim’s throat with a bite.

Yet, in what is perhaps the most surprising element of the duel and of Tirant’s descent into beastliness, Martorell never characterizes the conflict as anything less than an unequivocally admirable display of manliness and prowess on Tirant’s part: he even asserts that the duel should be viewed as an honorable example of chivalric honor and knightly prowess. Underlining this point emphatically, even if in a manner that appears otherwise ridiculous, Martorell reports that the King of England issued a decree that proclaimed Tirant’s victory over the mastiff to be fully equivalent to a victory over another man, elevating the dog, in effect, to quasi-knightly status.

In attempting to come to grips with this strange encounter, some literary scholars have been so baffled by it that they have dismissed it as nothing more than a purely comic reductio ad absurdum of chivalric practice. This interpretation is unconvincing, however, because it requires one to entirely write off the episode as an aberration when, in fact, Tirant's duel against the mastiff is not an aberration within the text itself, but rather part of a series of contests that all flow naturally from one into the next and that build upon that which came before it. In fact, within the narrative itself, all of Tirant’s duels form part of a narration given by Tirant’s friend and companion, Diafebus, to the knight-hermit Guillem de Varoic, which was intended to prove to the latter that his student had fully learned the lessons that the former had imparted. Thus, because the duel against the mastiff is intended as part of a program specifically intended to highlight Tirant's greatness as a knight, it simply cannot be written off as a mere joke. This does not mean that Martorell seriously believed that knights should follow Tirant’s example and rip

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54 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 89; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 1, p. 107. [“Abraçaren-se ab gran furor lo hu a l’altra e a morsos mortals se daven ... Lo pobre de Tirant tenia moltes nafres en les cames y en los braços. A la fi, Tirant abl les mand los pres per lo coll e strengué’l tan fort com pogué, e ab les dents mordè’l en la galta tan ferament que mort lo fëu caure en terra.”]

55 Interestingly, this episode is largely ignored by Tirant scholarship, and is generally only mentioned in passing, such as occurs in Aylward’s case. For examples, see E.T. Aylward, Martoreller’s Tirant lo Blanc: A Program for Military and Social Reform in Fifteenth-Century Christendom (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), pp. 46–47, 144–45; McNerney, Tirant lo Blanc Revisited, p. 4; Riquer, Tirant lo Blanch, novela de historia, p. 97.
out their opponent’s throats with their teeth, or even that they should fight dogs; it nevertheless does serve as an excellent demonstration of the physical stamina and mental ferocity that Martorell thought were requisite for a “good knight.” Therefore, the didactic lesson imparted by Tirant's duel against a mastiff still fundamentally aligns with the overarching themes of honor and violence that are repeated throughout Martorell's account of Tirant's other duels, in that it shows Tirant, victorious, in even the most seemingly ridiculous circumstances.

In conclusion, the early sections of *Tirant lo Blanc* provide clear and dramatic illustrations of the qualities that Martorell— who it must be remembered was himself, first and foremost, a knight—believed to be important for an individual’s success in that vocation. Given this, it is clear that, while Martorell likely agreed with the views of Llull and Eiximenis regarding the importance of a knight’s role as protector of both the general populace and of the Church, his visceral, brutal vision of knightly masculinity, defined more by physical dominance and the ability to inflict violence upon others than any notion of knightly restraint imposed by ecclesiastical authority, was central to his notion of knighthood as a whole.56

Further, while other scholars have seen Tirant's duels as little more than attempts to avoid being perceived as cowardly or weak or as evidence that Martorell sought to hold up Tirant as an object of ridicule, when one considers the tenor of Martorell's writing in his own *cartas de batalla*, it seems much more likely that he truly believed Tirant to represent an idealized form of knightly masculinity.57 As Martorell himself states in the first pages of the work, *Tirant lo Blanc* was intended to help restore knighthood to a state of “honor and sovereignty,” in which the institution would again be admired and respected by society in general. Moreover, while there certainly are elements of satire and hyperbole in the text, it would be a mistake to read them as fundamentally undermining or negating Martorell’s clearly stated, didactic intention for the text.58 Yes, the insults in Tirant’s *cartas* are more certainly more harsh than those found in Martorell’s own *cartas*. Yes, Tirant’s duels are all unmitigated victories from single combat,

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56. See especially Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, ch. 33, pp. 43–44.  
57. The first example of this sentiment is found in Aylward’s monograph, in which his argument is predicated on an evolution from an earlier form of chivalry, presented early in the book, to a more advanced, “modern” form at the end. The second is contained in Charles Merrill’s article, “Reading *Tirant lo Blanc* as Medieval Romance,” in *Tirant lo Blanc: Text and Context*, ed. Josep M. Sola-Solé (New York: P. Lang, 1993), pp. 165–80. Here, to fit his argument that *Tirant* qualifies as a medieval romance, because of Tirant’s relative lack of spiritual devotion, as compared to one such as Galahad, he must be characterized as an “imperfect” knight, more in the vein of Lancelot. This, in his opinion, also explains Tirant’s tragic end.  
while Martorell’s own proposed duel with Joan de Montpalau never actually occurred. Yes, Tirant lo Blanc, as both a character and as a literary work, is an outsized version of reality. Yet, underneath this, what one sees is nonetheless a model of masculinity and knightly behavior that Martorell himself clearly wished to emulate to the greatest extent possible. In short, Tirant was his ideal knight, and, therefore, one must take his model of aggressive, savage, violence as the fundamental mechanism for attaining social prominence and honor at least somewhat seriously. Moreover, in the years following the publication of Tirant lo Blanc, the influence of Tirant as a model for knightly behavior only became more marked, as the popularity of the work itself also grew, which made Tirant an important counterbalance to the more restrained conceptions of knightly behavior and the practice of violence that Eiximenis and Llull advocated.

**Tirant the Lusty: Gender and Sexuality in *Tirant lo Blanc***

More than any other topic, Martorell's portrayal of sexual mores, sexuality, and gender in *Tirant lo Blanc* has attracted the attention of literary scholars, especially because it is, generally, unabashedly frank in its recognition of sexual desire between characters. In fact, largely because of these scenes, several early twentieth-century scholars condemned the work as little more than pornographic, immoral smut. Even fifty years later, the work continued to shock, with one scholar rhetorically asking, “How could anyone in the Counter-Reformation take this lascivious hero for the paragon of virtue that the author obviously intended?”

The obvious response to this question is that Martorell considered Tirant to be a “paragon of virtue” not despite his lascivious nature, but precisely because of it and, beginning in the mid- to late 1960s, other scholars began to make precisely this argument. Among the most useful and eloquent of those taking this alternate viewpoint is Frank Pierce who, in his 1962 article entitled “The Role of Sex in *Tirant lo Blanc,*” asserted that Martorell's portrayal of sex and sexuality was not merely intended as burlesque titillation, but rather should be read as a reflection of the social norms of his times and "that may well have been giving a picture of life as he knew it at the court of Valencia." Thus, Pierce suggests that Martorell’s descriptions of his

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60 Riley also calls the sexual content of *Tirant lo Blanc* “egregiously indecent” and the overall tone of the work “a confusion of literary attitudes.” For this and more, see E.C. Riley, *Cervantes’s Theory of the Novel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), pp. 23–25.
characters’ romantic interaction in *Tirant lo Blanc* may simply be reflections, if exaggerated to some extent, of the romantic and sexual mores of the fifteenth-century Valencian elite. Moreover, within this framework, Tirant can still be viewed as a “paragon” because his behavior represents an ideal to which Martorell believed his readers should aspire and try to emulate, even if the ideal that he represents is not one that ecclesiastical writers like Eiximenis and Llull would have shared.

In the years and decades that have followed the publication of Pierce’s article, other scholars, including Dámaso Alonso and Antony van Beysterveldt, have advanced fundamentally similar interpretations. In Alonso’s case, he states that since Martorell tends to describe his characters in realistic terms throughout the work, even to the point that he showed them in what could be considered “unheroic” situations, it is unlikely the he would have done anything different when dealing with matters of sex and sexuality. For him, the entire work is defined, above all else, by its verisimilitude to the actual world in which Martorell lived.\(^6^2\) Similarly, in his article “El amor caballeresco del Amadís y el Tirante,” Van Beysterveldt concluded that the complexity of *Tirant lo Blanc*’s characters reflects Martorell’s “more firm point of connection to the reality of the epoch” than that seen in other, contemporary works of literature. Thus, the unabashedly erotic interactions between Martorell’s male and female characters are, in all likelihood, more indicative of actual social norms of his age than those found in the repressive (and repressed) prescriptions of ecclesiastical and moralistic writers. To restate, this does not mean that there was no room for exaggeration or hyperbole in Martorell’s descriptions of his characters’ behavior, or that *Tirant* represents a direct reflection of social reality; there definitely is a certain level of libidinal fantasizing present throughout. At the same time, however, Martorell’s portrayal of sex and sexuality in *Tirant* presents a model for social behavior and attitudes that would have been recognizable to members of the fifteenth-century Valencian aristocracy and seen as emblematic of how romantic and sexual relations between men and women *should be*.

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\(^{63}\) In this respect, Martorell mirrors the prescriptive writings of Eiximenis and Llull. Where they differ, though, is that the actual attitudes of young people were more closely aligned with those of Martorell than with
Thus, with this in mind, this section examines Martorell's understanding of the proper romantic and sexual comportment of young knights and ladies in Tirant lo Blanc.

The majority of the material dealing with issues of sex, romance, and courtship occur in the latter half of the story, when Tirant courted the Byzantine princess Carmesina. Even before this point, though, Martorell includes several episodes that set the tone for what follows. For example, in addition to the encounter between Tirant and Agnes, the young woman beloved by Lord Barrentowns, during the same tournament Martorell also describes a banquet held by the newly married King and Queen of England, in which a temporary “palace” had been constructed and in which various statues decorated the rooms occupied by the guests. Describing the statues in terms ripe with carnivalesque imagery and licentiousness, Martorell highlights the libidinous nature of his narrative at quite an early stage. For example,

In the King’s apartment, there was a silver statue of a lady with a few wrinkles on her belly and breasts that sagged a little. As she squeezed them, water spurted from her nipples into a crystal basin, having been brought from the river in silver pipes. In the Queen’s apartment, there was a gold and enamel statue of a lady with her hands on her pubis, from which an exquisite white wine flowed into a glass basin.

In this case, while Martorell also describes several sculptures of male figures in a similarly lighthearted manner, none possess anything approaching the explicitly sexualized characteristics of these female figures. In fact, the male figures are much more defined by their grotesqueness or asexuality than any overtly attractive physical characteristics: the figures described include a dwarf, a cleric, and a stooped, old man. By contrast, the donzella emitting "exquisite white wine" from her pubis cannot be seen as anything other than intentionally titillating.

At the same time, Martorell gives no indication that such sexualized imagery should be viewed at all in a negative manner. Rather, the tone used by Martorell throughout the passage indicates, instead, that he hoped to evoke the entirely opposite reaction – to elicit wonder and awe at the sophistication and opulence that the statues represented. Thus, from the very beginning of the work, Martorell delineates a decidedly different attitude towards sex and sexuality than that seen in the writings of Eiximenis, whose disapproval of such imagery would

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64 Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984). At the very least, the episode discussed here aligns more closely to the worldview of a Boccaccio or Chaucer rather than that of de Troyes or Mallory.


[“E trobaren que en lo aleujament del rey stava una dona tota d’argent quasi ab lo ventre un poch ruat e les manelles que un poch li penjaven, e ab les mans les stava sprement e per los mugurons exia un gran raig d’aygua molt clara qui venia del riut per canons d’argent, e l’aygua que cañia de les manelles dava en un bell safareig de cristall. En l’altra estància hon la reina stava havia una donzella tota d’or smaltada e tenia les mans baixes endret de la natura, e de allí exia vin blanc molt fi e especial, e aquell vi dava en un safareig de vidre crestall.”]
have been certain, given the attitudes he outlines in his own writings.

Throughout the rest of the work, the picture of female and male sexuality that Martorell offers follows along these lines. While sensitive to societal norms and the constraints that class, economics, and public propriety put on the ability of individuals to act freely, nonetheless, Martorell’s overall attitude toward sex and sexuality is remarkably liberal, and he permits expressions of overt sexuality and sexual desire by both his male and female characters. For example, Tirant tells his beloved, the Byzantine princess Carmesina, that "true beauty and chastity have little in common." In essence, Martorell affirms, both in this passage and elsewhere in the work, that chastity, since it makes women no more beautiful to those courting them, is of little value; sex should not be feared by young ladies but embraced and enjoyed.

Perhaps more than any other character, Plaerdemavida, whose name is translated as Pleasure-of-my-Life and who is described as one of Carmesina’s maids and closest friends, most fully expresses Martorell's understanding of how male and female sexual morality should be understood. Throughout Tirant’s courtship of Carmesina, Plaerdemavida provides a nearly constant stream of racy and sexually assertive dialogue. She also serves as something akin to a sexual instructor for both Carmesina and Tirant, encouraging both lovers in their amorous endeavors, inciting both to ignore the dictates of religious propriety and to submit to their sexual desire for each other even before the two were publicly married.

The presence of a figure who acts in the role of a “procuress” is certainly not unheard of in other works of medieval literature. In fact, just such a figure is featured prominently in La Celestina, another, roughly contemporary, work of Spanish literature. Yet, unlike the eponymous procuress in that work, in Tirant lo Blanc, Plaerdemavida is never reproached or punished for her licentiousness or for her role in trying to facilitate the sexual coupling of Tirant and Carmesina. She is accused of being an “immoral” and “loose” woman by Carmesina's decidedly prudish governess, La Viuda Reposada (the Easygoing Widow), but Martorell does not permit these labels to have any lasting influence. Rather, La Viuda Reposada is the figure who ultimately inhabits the role of the villain as she tries to poison the love between Tirant and Carmesina, and, ultimately, she comes to a bad end. Plaerdemavida, on the other hand, is “a

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66 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 166; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 1, p. 203.
complete woman without fears,” in the words of J.E. Ruiz-Domènec, whose saucy nature is indulged by the other characters in the story and whose sexual assertiveness is ultimately rewarded when Tirant arranges a marriage for her to a loving, royal husband and she becomes a queen. Thus, rather than being portrayed as some sort of tawdry sexual deviant, Plaerdemavida is characterized by Martorell as a young woman fully aware of and comfortable with her own sexuality, and who is lauded for those very qualities.

One of the most vivid examples of the role that Plaerdemavida plays in Martorell’s narrative as an instigator and facilitator of sexual encounters for other characters can be found in an episode in which she recounts to Carmesina and Stephania, another of the princess’s maids, the events that had transpired in a particularly erotic dream that she had recently experienced. Beginning her account, Plaerdemavida reports to the ladies (who Martorell states elsewhere were both approximately fifteen years old) that, in her dream, she found herself “[laying] in a sumptuous room with four other damsels,” at which point, she saw Stephania furtively going to the door that led out of the room and admitting Tirant and his fiend, Diafebus, who was the object of Stephania’s affections in both the dream and in the “real life” of Martorell’s narrative world. At this point, Plaerdemavida states, the Princess Carmesina also appeared in the room from an adjacent bedchamber and, immediately, she was approached by Tirant, who picked her up and began to kiss her passionately, until she begged him to put her down. During this romantic interlude, Plaerdemavida tells Carmesina, “I dreamt that he kissed you again and again, unbuttoning your blouse and caressing your breasts. Once he had kissed them, he put his hand under your skirt.” Certainly this is as frank a description as one could find anywhere of sexual foreplay, let alone in a work of chivalric or courtly literature!

Such contact is not reserved only to Plaerdemavida’s imagination, however; elsewhere in the text, Martorell tells of an audacious attempt by Tirant to “probe” and fondle Carmesina’s genitals while the two were seated together at a table and in the company of others. Maneuvering his leg underneath her dress, Martorell states that Tirant stretched his foot upwards “between her thighs” where he touched her genitals with his stocking. What is more, this effort is held up as a crowning achievement by Tirant himself (and Martorell, by extension), who subsequently had the stocking embroidered with expensive jewels to demonstrate its preciousness before wearing

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69 This episode is found in ch. 163. See Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, pp. 295–300.
it on his armor as a token in a tournament.\textsuperscript{70} In short, sexually charged episodes like this are seen throughout the pages of Martorell's text, and, as is the case in Plaerdemavida's description of her dream, they are portrayed by Martorell as entirely normative behavior within the milieu of Tirant and Carmesina’s social circle.

Returning briefly to Plaerdemavida's account of her dream, the description of Stephania’s sexual encounter that she relates to the young woman even more dramatically highlights the sexual agency that Martorell grants to both his male and female characters in the text. Following her description of Tirant and Carmesina's amorous activities, which for reasons that will be discussed further below do not result in sexual consummation, Plaerdemavida then describes the dream tryst between Stephania and her lover, Diafebus, Tirant’s close friend and companion. First, in the dream, one finds Stephania demonstrating a remarkable degree of independent agency in initiating the physical and sexual encounter that occurs. This is demonstrated not least by the fact that, in Plaerdemavida’s account, Stephania was the individual who admitted Tirant and Diafebus into the room she shared with Carmesina, implying that the encounter was premeditated and that she was at the center of the plot. Similarly, in everything that occurred afterwards, Stephania is portrayed as an active and willing participant, up to the moment of intercourse.

Moreover, just as was the case in Plaerdemavida’s description of Tirant and Carmesina’s romantic encounter, so too does one find Stephania taking an active role in instigating sexualized physical encounters with Diafebus elsewhere in the text. For example, in one episode later in the text, Martorell tells of Carmesina refusing to give permission for Stephania to kiss Diafebus in her presence, much to the chagrin of the two lovers. Shortly thereafter, though, Carmesina relents in her objection, acceding to the pleas of the two lovers. Seizing her opportunity, Stephania then turns to Diafebus and tells him, “Since you have striven, pleaded, and finally kissed me at my lady’s command, I now ask you to take possession of me, but only from the waist up.” Diafebus, for his part, shows a similar lack of inhibition, despite Carmesina's presence, and Martorell then describes the scene by saying,

\textit{Diafebus [sic], who was no sluggard, quickly began to caress her [Stephania’s] breasts, fondling the nipples and everything else he could lay his hands on.}\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{70} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 327 and in footnote 60, found on that page; Martorell and de Galba, \textit{Tirant lo Blanç}, p. 440. Notably, Rosenthal states that a similar episode can be found in a 13th century troubadour poem, further suggesting that such behavior was not necessarily unheard of or considered out-of-bounds for young suitors.

Thus, within the boundaries of social propriety that continued to bind both lovers – and which is evidenced in Stephanie’s grudging acceptance of the fact that she could not simply elope with Diafebus, despite her desire to do so – Stephanie and Diafebus both still had ample opportunity to engage in acts of physical and sexual pleasure with each other far past those with which Eiximenis would have recognized as appropriate.\textsuperscript{72} What is more, underlying this entire encounter is the notion that such behavior was perfectly licit, despite having occurred before marriage; at no point in the scene is there any explicit or even implied disapproval of Diafebus and Stephanie's actions. On the contrary, the erotic encounter described above is the very event that precipitated their subsequent marriage. During his “explorations” of her upper torso, Diafebus found a note that Stephanie had hidden in her bosom, in which she proposed their union and in which she promised him both her title and control over her patrimonial holdings (she was also an orphan and ward of the emperor).\textsuperscript{73} This in itself is interesting because it demonstrates both that the marriage was contracted for love (although Stephanie's title and lands were certainly an added bonus) as well as that it was the woman, Stephanie, who clearly occupies the active role in pushing the romance to its next stage. She, not he, proposes the marriage, just as she, not he, gives permission for their relationship to progress beyond chaste kisses given "in honor of the Holy Trinity," to what was, essentially, sexual foreplay.

Before turning to other matters, however, one additional element found in Martorell’s description of Diafebus and Stephanie's sexual encounter in Plaerdemavida’s dream should be mentioned because it undercuts, at least in part, the more equitable view of sexual agency between men and women that was just described. Specifically, on each occasion when Martorell describes a scene in which his characters actually have sex with each other, as opposed to foreplay or other sexualized behavior, there is a consistent, troubling, overtone of sexual violence that suffuses each description. Furthermore, in these instances, his female characters, who so often display such remarkable self-possession with regard to their own body and sexual desire at all times leading up to the moment of coitus, are portrayed almost exclusively as suddenly

\textsuperscript{72} Acabant la princessa les darreres paraules, Diafebus donà dels genolls en la dura terra e besà-li la mà. E acostà’s a Stephanie e besà-la tres voltes en la boca honer de la sancta Trinitat. Parlà Stephanie e díx:

\begin{quote}
-Pix ab tan gran sforç e requesta vostra, e per manament de ma senyora, yo us he besat, vull que a voluntat mia prengau possi possí de mi, però de la cinta amunt.
\end{quote}

E Diafebus no fon gens pereós. Posà-li de continent les mans als pistocant-li les manelles e tot lo que poguè.]\textsuperscript{72} Recall his condemnation of young women who were too free with their kisses and embraces, which he believed would lead to their damnation. These views were discussed in Chapter 2, in “Rearing Perfection II.”

unwilling, passive victims of their partners’ sexual aggression during intercourse. Time and again, his female characters cry out, protest, or scream for their partner to desist, but in nearly every instance, their pleas simply are ignored.

This scenario is clearly evident in Plaerdemavida’s dream encounter between Stephania and Diafebus, which is rendered by Martorell strikingly aggressive terms that emphasize the physical pain experienced by Stephania, as well as an underlying expectation that she should simply “submit” to Diafebus’s will and to his “affections”:

Afterward, I dreamt that Stephanie was on that bed, where I could see her white legs as she shouted: “Oh my lord, do not hurt me! Show a little pity and spare your beloved’s life!” Tirant said: “Sister Stephanie, why do you endanger your honor with such cries? Have you forgotten that walls have ears?” She took a sheet, stuck it in her mouth, and bit it to keep from screaming, but a little later she exclaimed: “Alas, what shall I do? My pain forces me to speak, for it seems you seek to slay me.” Then the constable [Diaphebus] closed her mouth [for her].

What one sees here, then, is a queasy middle ground between consent, force, pleasure, and pain, in which Stephania stifles her own screams with a bed sheet, but also has her mouth "shut for her" by Diaphebus when she is still unable to stifle her cries. Thus, at the same time that Stephania actively consents to her lover's will, there remains an overarching atmosphere of coercion and menace in the scene, as demonstrated by the implied threat of dishonor that underlies the words of Tirant, who, it should be recalled, was also in the room with Carmesina. Moreover, for the audience of the story, this scene projects an unmistakable assumption that force, or at least coercion, was not only appropriate but expected in sexual encounters such as these, just as Martorell's opinion appears to be that such violence should be tolerated by young women. Demonstrating this, Stephania states, after the encounter had ended,

How ardently have you fought to rob me of my virginity … I have only one consolation: that I have done nothing against my husband’s [Diafebus’s] honor, but rather at his command and against my own will. No

74 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, pp. 296–97; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 1, p. 393. [Aprés viu somniant que Stephanie stava sobre aquell lit ab les cames que al parer meu li veia blanquejar, e deya sovint: “Ay, senyor, què mal me féu! Doleu-vos un poc de mi e no m vullau del tot matar.” E Tirant que li deya: “Germàna Stephanie, ¿per què voleu incriminar-la vostra honor ab tants grans crits? No sabeu que moltes volte les pares tenen oreilles?” É ella prenia lo lançol e posava l-se a la boca e ab les dents strenyia l fort per no cridar. E no s pogué star, apres hun poc spay, que no donàs hun crit: “Trista, què faré? Dolor me força de cridar, e segons veg, deliberat teniu de matar-me.” Lavors lo conestable li tancà la boca.]

75 Corrine Saunders (rightly) has attacked what she calls the "myth" of female fantasizing about rape, and the notion that a woman would enjoy such an experience. With this said, though, Martorell seems to be arguing for this very notion throughout the text, as will be discussed further below. See Corinne J. Saunders, Rape and Ravishment in the Literature of Medieval England (Rochester, NY: D.S. Brewer, 2001), p. 8. Adding further complexity to the issue, Louise Sylvester cites a survey published by two sociologists in her monograph, which states that female protest against male sexual aggression can sometimes be *intended* to provoke a more aggressive response from the male partner, leading one to wonder if this is what Martorell is describing in the scene between Stephania and Diafebus. Are Stephania’s protests intended to be seen as a goad to Diafebus? For her mention of this study and its implications, see Sylvester, Medieval Romance, pp. 47–48.
As she states, the sexual encounter occurred “against her will,” and only “for [her] husband’s pleasure.” These most assuredly do not sound like the words of the same assertive, sexually confident young woman seen in previous examples. Moreover, even further adding to the strangeness of the matter is the fact that Plaeremavida, for her part, is described by Martorell as saddened not that Stephania had, in essence, been raped, but rather that the same had not happened to her in the dream sequence:

When I heard that sweet complaint [of Stephania] I cursed my bad luck not to be the third. Though my idea of love may be vulgar, my heart always knew this was its final goal, and my passion for noble Hippolytus redoubled. The more I thought about it, the sadder I became until finally I washed my neck, breasts, and belly to calm myself. 

Here, then, Martorell’s conflicted attitude towards sex is brought even further into relief, with Stephania’s protests contrasted with Plaeremavida’s overt fantasizing.

Strikingly, however, the troubling disjuncture between the capacity of Martorell’s female characters to express sexual desire and to possess control and agency over their bodies at other points in the text, except at the moment of intercourse, has received relatively little attention from literary scholars. Kathleen McNerney, one of the few who has addressed the topic, has suggested that this “oversight” may be a direct result of the fact that the disjunction is so very dramatic and confusing, though even she offers little additional perspective.

Fortunately, however, this topic has received more attention from scholars who study other strands of medieval literature, with Kathryn Gravdal, Louise Sylvester, Corinne Saunders, and Roberta Krueger all contributing valuable scholarship that can shed additional light on Martorell’s otherwise baffling use of motifs suggestive of rape and coercion in his descriptions

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76 Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, p. 297; Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, v. 1, p. 394. [*Gran ardiment has fet, que ab pensa deliberada hages volguda robar la despulla de la mia virginitat... No tinch conorit sinó que he complida sa mal grant meu. En les mies bodes no y són venguts los cortesans, ni capellà no s’és vestit a dir la missa. No y és venguta ma mare ni mes parents. No han agut treball de despillerme les robes e vestir-me la camisa nubcial. No ha’m pujada al lit per força, car yo m’i só sabuda pujar. No han agut treball los ministres de sonar ni de cantar, ni los cortesans cavallers de dançar, que bodes sordes séon stades. Emperò tot lo que he fet resta en grat de mon marit.*]

77 Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, p. 297; Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, v. 1, pp. 393–94. [*E la mia ànima, com sentia aquell saborós plant, complanía’n de ma desaventura com yo no era la tercera ab lo meu Ypòlit. Encara que yo sia grossera en amar, conegué lo meu sperit que lo terme de amor aquí devia finir. La mia ànima hagué alguns sentiments de amor que ignorava, e doblà’m la passió del meu Ypòlit, com no prenia part dels besars així com Tirant de la princesa e lo conestable d’Estephania. E com més hi pensava, més dolors sentia, e paregué’n que prengué hun poch d’aigua e que’m laví lo cor, los pits e lo ventre per remeyar la dolor mia.*]

78 McNerney, *Tirant lo Blanc Revisited*, p. 83.
of what were, up to that point, consensual sexual relationships.\textsuperscript{79}

Among these authors, the scholarship of Louise Sylvester is particularly useful because it emphasizes much more forcefully the ambiguity that often exists in literary portrayals of rape or "rape-like" sexual encounters, much like those found in \textit{Tirant lo Blanc}. Specifically, she claims that, because medieval romance lacked "a language that [could] encompass both adolescent female desire and femininity as coexistent," in medieval literary descriptions of sexual encounters "[adolescent girls] could only be taken by surprise by a sexual initiative."\textsuperscript{80} In short, rape, ravishment, and other forms of real or implied sexual violence are found in medieval romance and chivalric literature with such frequency precisely because female sexual desire was perceived as an especially tricky matter, in which the reality of female sexual desire could never fully be reconciled with the societal expectation (often religiously based) that women were not supposed to display desire of any sort. Consequently, even in episodes where both parties appear to consent to sex, even if only implicitly, there still existed a tendency by writers to speak of the encounter in terms of coercion, force, and sexual violence, thereby satisfying both the expectation that women did not desire and the reality that they, in fact, did so.\textsuperscript{81}

Therefore, in Martorell's account of Stephania and Diafebus's sexual encounter, even though Stephania acknowledges that she had consented to have sex with Diafebus, the overall tone is defined more by regret and loss than either joy or satisfaction, Stephania ultimately claiming, as noted above, that her actions were more "for [her] husband's pleasure" than her own. In the end, one is left to wonder how much Stephania's lament should be read as heartfelt statement of her

\textsuperscript{79} Most prominently, Saunders disagrees with Gravdal's alleged tendency to impose modern understandings of sex and sexual propriety onto the past. Instead, she argues that the medieval conception of "rape" can not be understood without a concurrent understanding of "ravishment" – the seizure or kidnapping of a young woman – which she views as much more common and to which the girl may even have consented. Rape, in Saunders's opinion was viewed almost exclusively negatively and, as a result, "occurs only rarely" in medieval romance. For this, see Saunders, \textit{Rape and Ravishment}, ch. 1, esp. p. 20, p. 330. Krueger also discusses these issues, and also critiques Gravdal in \textit{Women Readers and the Ideology of Gender}, pp. 34–35. Nonetheless, Gravdal's work remains the touchstone for all of the others. For her thought on the matter, see Kathryn Gravdal, \textit{Ravishing Maidens: Writing Rape in Medieval French Literature and Law} (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991).

\textsuperscript{80} Sylvester, \textit{Medieval Romance}, p. 55.

\textsuperscript{81} Sylvester also ties into this understanding how rape narratives can be viewed as a means to "eroticize power differences" in medieval narratives and that both males and females are, to some extent complicit in this process. See \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 61–65, esp. 63–64. In this, she also stands in contrast to Gravdal (and even Duby) who tends instead to view this eroticization of power as something purely for the benefit of males and which came about at their instigation. See Gravdal, \textit{Ravishing Maidens}, p. 18; Georges Duby, \textit{Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 58. Also useful is Renato Barahona's study of early modern court cases in which he reports many of the same attitudes towards coercion and force in sexual relations as seen in Martorell's narrative. For this, see Renato Barahona, \textit{Sex Crimes, Honour, and the Law in Early Modern Spain: Vizcaya, 1528–1735} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), esp. pp. 60–69.
feels and how much it is, instead, a quasi-playful "complaint" that follows a more-or-less predetermined script of expected behavior. Moreover, for the young consumers of the text, such an episode must have been similarly confusing, in that it suggests that male sexual advances are desired by women, even if they are explicitly rejected by them, and the implicit message is that a young man should continue to force himself on a potential sexual partner, even in spite of any protestation she might make, since she was, in essence, “required” to protest and resist his sexual advances whether or not she actually desired and consented to what was about to occur.

Another episode, found relatively early in the narrative while Tirant was residing at the court of the King of Sicily, contains similarly strong overtones of sexual coercion and rape between purported "lovers." Accompanied on his travels during this phase of the story by a boorish younger son of the King of France named Phelip, who had little expectation of receiving either title or inheritance from his father, Tirant, as a demonstration of his nobility and largesse, acts on the young man’s behalf and begins to arrange for him to marry the King of Sicily's daughter, who was the sole heir of her father's wealth and title. However, since Phelip was unusually ill-mannered and coarse, as well as unloved by his father, he brought little with him as a potential suitor and, consequently, it takes all of Tirant's charm, skill, and no small amount of trickery to convince the young woman to consent to the match. Eventually, however, she does, transforming Phelip, in an instant, from a pauper, albeit with a noble lineage, into a king-to-be.82

But despite the fact that Phelip had already secured the princess’s consent to marry him, even if the formal betrothal ceremony had not been performed, Martorell describes a troubling episode that occurred immediately before the couple’s betrothal, in which Phelip tried to force the princess into having sex with him in what was, in effect, an attempted rape. Making the situation even more problematic, Tirant, the story’s hero, actively aided Phelip in his attempt and goaded him along during the entire encounter. This fact alone forces one to consider the possibility that Martorell viewed the actions of both young men, Phelip and Tirant, as appropriate and that, therefore, the text itself is again advancing a view of knightly comportment in which such acts are seen as licit, at least within certain boundaries.

Describing the incident, Martorell states that Tirant came upon Phelip while the latter stood

82 Martorell’s description of Phelip's courtship of the Sicilian princess is often comic, including a humorous episode in which the princess, spying on Phelip in his bed chamber, misinterprets his sleeping on the fancier of the two beds in the room as a sign of his good breeding and nobility. In fact, Phelip had lost a needle in the less-fancy bed while popping a pimple and darning a hole in his stockings. Therefore, he slept in the fancier bed not because of his good breeding, but because he feared being pricked. See Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 171.
outside the doorway of the princess's room, waiting to escort her to the mass at which the two were to be betrothed. However Tirant had other ideas for Phelip and, entering the room with Phelip, he told the princess that he and Phelip wanted to speak to her in private and requested that she dismiss her ladies-in-waiting. Then, when she had complied with his request, Tirant took it upon himself to exert Phelip's "rights" for him, telling the princess, “My lady, … here you see Phelip [Phelip], who longs to serve you more than any other princess on earth, wherefore I beg you on my knees to kiss him in sign of troth.”

The princess, however, demurred, saying that she would only kiss Phelip when given permission to do so by her father, suggesting that she was much more strongly influenced by the more traditional conceptions of female sexual agency espoused by ecclesiastical authors. Then, in response to her refusal,

Tirant motioned to Philip [Phelip], who quickly took the princess in his arms and carried her to the bed, kissing her five or six times. The princess cried: “Tirant, I had more faith in your gentility! I thought you were my brother, yet you place me at the mercy of one who may be friend or foe!”

Notably, as Stephania also had done, the princess immediately redoubled her protest. The difference was that, at no point does it seem that the princess ever gave even implicit consent.

Thus, Tirant first tried to calm the princess, telling her,

“Such cruel words, my lady! How can Philip [Phelip] be a foe, when he loves you more than life and only longs to hold you in that royal bed he slept in, either naked or in your nightshirt? I assure you it would be the greatest blessing he could ever enjoy, and my lady,” said Tirant, “you who are so high in dignity and rank: let poor Philip, who pines for you, have a bit of the glory he so desires…. Philip and I are only here to serve you. Surely Your Highness will show a little forbearance.”

When this strategy did not work, though, Martorell then writes that Tirant "[seized] her hands while Phelip tried to resolve things after his own fashion, whereupon the princess screamed and

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83 Ibid., p. 172; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 1, p. 212. [-Senyora – dix Tirant –, veus ací Phelip, lo qual té més desig e voluntat de servir la senyoria vostra que a totes les princesses del món, per què supplich a la mercé vostra, agenollat axi com stich, de voler-lo besar en senyal de fe.]

84 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, pp. 172–73; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, p. 212. [E Tirant signà a Phelip e a aquell prestament la pres en los braços, e portà-la en un lit de repòs que y havia e besà-la çinch o VI voltes. Díx la infanta:

–Tirant no confiava yo tan poch de vós. Què m’haveu fet fer? Que us tenià en compte de un germà e hauve-me posada en mans de aquell qui no sé s’im serà amich o enemich.

–Cruels paraules, senyora, veig que m’dio. ¿Com pot Phelip ésser enemich de la exel·lència vostra, qui us ama més que a la sua vida he us desixa tenir en aquell lit de parament hon ha dormit esta nit, si’s vol tota nua o en camisà? É creheu que seria el major bé que ell portà haver en aquest món. E puix, senyora –dix Tirant–, pujant vós en aquell superior grau de dignitat que la altesa vostra mereix, al desaventurat de Phelip, qui mor per la vostra amor, deixau-li sentir part de aquella glòria que tant ha desijada.

–Déu me’n defensa –dix la infanta– he m guardar de tal error. Com me tendría per vil de consentir una tan gran novitat.

–Senyora –dix Tirant–, Phelip ni yo no som ací sinó per servir-vos. Vostra benigna mercé prenguà una poqua de paciència.]
her maids rushed in and forced them to make peace.”

Therefore, but for the timely intervention of the princess's maids, this episode is, in effect, a description of a rape, with Tirant, the moral center and hero of the story, serving as the primary instigator and motivator for Phelip's actions. Moreover, there is no sense of the same sort of complicity that Stephania ascribes to herself in her dream tryst with Diaphebus; the princess’s reaction to Phelip and Tirant’s amorous advances is unequivocally and consistently negative throughout the episode and, therefore, leaves no room for doubt that she was refusing to consent to the tryst. Again, one must ask how and why Martorell felt comfortable to contradict so blatantly the mandates of prescriptive writers, like Llull and Eiximenis, who emphatically emphasized the need for sexual restraint on the part of knights and ladies.

In attempting to tackle this question, two considerations should be made. First, it should be noted that all of the episodes involving sexual consummation in Martorell’s text occur between men and women who are, at least to some extent, promised to each other. This certainly does not justify the actions of the male characters’ sexual aggression, but it does nuance the encounters to some extent. The sexual aggression of Martorell’s male characters is not indiscriminate, but rather is channelled towards the sexual conquest of each character’s “beloved.”

Building on this, one is again reminded of Louise Sylvester's assertion that, according to societally dominant expectations of female behavior, women had little alternative other than to say “No” in response to the sexual advances of their male partner. In short, while Martorell could allow for female sexual agency up to the point of consummation, at that point, he had to revert to the traditional narrative of women as sexual victims, whose resistance was overcome by their male lover. Further supporting this interpretation, anthropologist Don Kulick has noted that such instances are often used in literature as mechanisms through which male identity is formed and performed, and where the ability for a male to transform a "no" into a "yes" becomes a moment in which masculinity is proven and the masculine identity of a young man is established:

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85 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 173; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, v. 1, p. 212. [El Tirant li pres les mans; Phelip volgué usar de sos remeys; la infanta cridà e vengueren les donzelles, e pacificaren-los e donaren-los per bons e per leals.]

86 For example, Llull emphasizes that a knight should not commit adultery, nor have a child with a woman of lower social status than himself (e.g., a slave, servant, or peasant). More to the point though, he emphasizes that only sexual relations enacted "through the sanctity of matrimony ... befits the honour of Chivalry; and the opposite constitutes the destruction of Chivalry." For this, see Llull, Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria, p. 86; Llull, Book of the Order of Chivalry, p. 81.
“No” in both its present and absent manifestations facilitates the production of heterosexual subjectivities and heterosexual sexuality. Its utterance invokes a domain in which one interactant can performatively produce himself as a man by responding to it by prolonging the encounter and ideally finally transforming it into a “yes,” and the other interactant can performatively produce herself as female by facilitating –willingly or not – that extension and prolongation of the sexual scene.87

Therefore, in this light, the princess's refusal to consent to Phelip's advances became, in essence, an opportunity for both young men, Phelip and Tirant, to “prove themselves” by coercing her “forbearance” (paciencia, as Tirant put it) or forcing her submission, if need be. Additionally, because the masculine identity of knights is intrinsically expressed through their ability to physically dominate others, the needs of masculine and knightly identity to be constantly seen as “conquering” would almost entirely preclude the possibility of Martorell's female characters saying anything but "No," since saying "Yes" would remove the possibility for Martorell’s knightly “heroes” to prove themselves in their "conquest" of their resistant sexual partner.

Elsewhere in the text, one even finds instances in which Martorell suggests that his female characters both desired and expected their lovers and sexual partners to use aggression or force when attempting to coerce consent from them. In one notable instance, after Tirant had agreed to Carmesina’s request that they should refrain from sex until he had achieved a sufficiently lofty social status that would permit their marriage, Plaerdemavida berated him for his actions, telling him,

Are you unaware that every lady, great or humble, always longs to find love and gives the prize to whoever can find the most honorable – that is the most discreet – path to her by night or day through windows, doors, or rooftops? Do you think I would be angry if Hippolytus acted thus? I would love him forty times more and hope he would seize my hair if I resisted, dragging me across the room till I shut up and obeyed him. May he act like a man and not like you, who fears to displease the princess, for elsewhere you should certainly love, honor, and protect her, but when the two of you are alone, you need not fret about formalities. Have you forgotten that psalm about “the hand of the diligent”? The gloss is that if you want a lady or damsel, you should feel no shame or fear lest she think the worse of you.88

88 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 373; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 2, p. 513. [— Axi castiga hom los qui seón poch enamorats! ¿Com podeu vós pensar que dona ni donzella li pugua desplauar, vull's sia de gran o de poca condició, que no sia tostemp desijosa que sia amada? É aquell qui més vies honestes, ço és, secretes, de nit o de dia, per finestra, porta o terrat, hi porà entrar, aquell, elles lo tenen per millor. Força que m desplauaria a mi que Ypòlit fes semblant! Que, de una amor que ara li porte, lavors li’n portaria quarranta. E si star no volia segura, no m desplauaria que'm prengués per los cabells e, per força o per grat, rocegant-me per la cambra, me fas callar e fer tot lo que ell volgués. E molt lo’n stimaria més, que yo conegués que és home, e que no fes així com vós dieu que no la volrieu per res descomplauar. E en altres coses la deveu vós honrar, amar e servir, mas, que siaub ab ella en una cambra a soles, no li guardeu cortesia en semblant acte. No sabeu vós com diu lo psalmista manus autem? És la glossa: si adquier voleu dona o donzella, no vullau vergonya ni temor haver e si u feu, no us tendran per millor.]
It certainly may be the case in this passage that Martorell is exaggerating Plaerdemavida’s words and beliefs for dramatic and humorous effect. However, even if this is the case, the underlying notion that sex is to be "taken" from women by men, and that women expect (and desire) for this to happen, is no less potent, even if it is intended to be understood facetiously. Further, the power of the underlying notion is only increased by the fact that it is never directly challenged by Tirant or anyone else, and is repeated, almost as a refrain throughout the latter chapters of the text. For example, on another occasion when Tirant failed to force himself sexually onto Carmesina, Plaerdemavida again belittles Tirant, but this time even attacks his very manhood and tells him that any self-respecting woman would mock his timidity:

> Were I a man, I would challenge you to a duel, for you were in bed with the fairest and loftiest damsel on earth, yet you cravenly yielded to her tears and supplication. If she lay down a virgin, she got up one too, much to your shame and eternal discredit. No gentlewoman who knows your history will ever befriend you, but rather they will all hold you vile and common. 89

Moreover, the sexual aggression of his male characters never results in any type of censure or penalty. Even in the episode involving Phelip and the Sicilian princess, there appears to have been no significant repercussion for his attempted rape of her. Instead, Martorell states that, afterwards,

> When the princess had her skirt laced up, she donned her finest robes and they escorted her to Mass. She and Philip [Phelip] were betrothed before the service began, and the following Sunday they were married with great solemnity. There was a week of continual feasting, with jousts, tournaments, dancing, and mummers... The princess was so well courted that she felt very pleased with Tirant, and much more so with Philip, whose good works she never forgot. 90

In essence, therefore, Tirant and Phelip's actions were not only tolerated by the Sicilian princess, but were even celebrated, with no apparent dissatisfaction on her part that the man who had just tried to force her into sex, entirely against her will, was now going to be her husband. Instead, her subsequent behavior suggests that both her resistance to Phelip's advances as well as his sexual aggressivity itself were simply a part of courtship and the sexual gamesmanship that

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89 Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, p. 426; Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanch*, v. 2, p. 598. [*E si yo fos cavaller vos ho combatria, car haveu tenguda en lo lit abraçaça donzella, la més bella, la més agravida e de major dignitat que sia en tot lo món, que per prechs ni per làgrimes no la devieu dexar. E si verge s’igita, verge la’n viu exir, e gran vergonya e confusió vostra. E de tota ma vida me dolrà lo gran defalt que haveu fet, que no sé dona ni donzella en lo món que tal cars sabés de vós que us stimás res ni volgués vostra amistat, ans vos tendran totes per hom de mal recapte.*]

90 Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, p. 173; Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanch*, v. 1, p. 213. [Com la infanta fon liguada vesti’s molt pomposament, e Phelip e Tirant la acompanyaren a la missa ensembs ab la reyna. E aquí ans de la missa los esposaren, e lo diumenge após foren fetes les bodes ab molta solemnitat e foren fetes grans festes qui duraren VIII dies, de juntes, torneigs e danses e momos, de nit e de dia.

*Per tal forma fon festejada la infanta que ella restà molt contenta de Tirant e molt més de Phelip, que li féu tal obra que jamés la oblida.*]
naturally occurred between the “attacking” male and “defending” female. Therefore, although no less troubling for modern readers, it may well be the case that, for Martorell, his descriptions of male sexual aggression by a knight against his “beloved” should be viewed, primarily, as yet another mechanism through which he could express his status and physical virility, by imposing his own sexual desire onto his lover. Whether her resistance was real or feigned is almost irrelevant. What was important was the knight’s display of prowess in his domination of her, just as he dominated other men to prove his prowess on the battlefield and in the dueling ring.

Tirant's courtship of the Byzantine princess Carmesina is a particularly rich source for further analyzing Martorell's understanding of the intersection between male sexual aggression, female resistance, and the economy of knightly honor. Repeatedly, throughout their extended romance, Tirant is portrayed by Martorell as trying to coerce Carmesina into consenting to his sexual advances; in each instance, however, she successfully rebuffs his advances – in spite of her own desire – and convinces Tirant to refrain from using force to gain his will. Therefore, even though Tirant is described at one point as having gone so far as having “brought out his artillery” and of having "tried to storm the castle,” their relationship remained un consummated for much of the tale, until shortly before Tirant departed from his princess's side for the last time.91

At first glance, this sequence of events would seem to contradict the notion that male sexual aggression is aggravated by feminine resistance, but, notably, on each occasion where Tirant submits to Carmesina’s pleas, his acquiescence is roundly criticized (most frequently by Plaerdemavida), and his sexual timidity in the face of Carmesina’s resistance is portrayed as profoundly dishonorable. Thus, following his attempt to “storm” Carmesina's "castle,” which he failed to do, Plaerdemavida scolded Tirant harshly for allowing Carmesina to forestall him:

Alas, my lord! Why wait to be in bed? Do it on her robes, that they may bear witness. We shall close our eyes and say we saw nothing, whereas if you wait for her to undress you will be waiting all night! Afterward, Our Lord will punish you as a recalcitrant lover, taking away this morsel and never granting you another, for any real man would swallow it whole even if it choked him.92

91 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 423; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 2, p. 594. [Com la príncessa se véu en tan stràt pas, qu' Tirant despullat se era més al seu costat e perballava ab la artèlìa per entrar lo castell, y ella, vèuent que per força d'armes no podia defendre, pensà s'ab les armes de les dones si'l poti fer salvi.] The military euphemisms in this passage are certainly rich in multiple significances and are characteristic of Martorell’s style. Rosenthal, citing Riquer, states that the use of military metaphor strongly suggests that Martorell was the author of these chapters, rather than the lawyer, de Galba. Of course, subsequently, Riquer eventually claimed that the entire work is that of Martorell, diminishing the importance of de Galba dramatically.

92 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 423; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 2, p. 594. [— Ay, senyor! Per a què voleu sperar lo lit? Sinó damunt les sues robes, perqué facen més verdader testimoni, e nosaltres tancarem los ulls e direm que no havem vist res, car si a sa altesa sperau que.s sia despullada, de ací al
In short, Plaerdemavida accuses Tirant of not acting as a “real man,” who would focus on "getting the job done" to the exclusion of all other considerations. Therefore, as long as Carmesina remained a virgin – that is to say, "unconquered" – Tirant’s honor, prowess, and masculinity would remain suspect.

Furthermore, even when Tirant tries to explain his reticence to Plaerdemavida, telling her that "my fear derives from shame caused by the great love I bear my lady [Carmesina]," and his fear that she would no longer love him if he forces her to have sex with him, Plaerdemavida almost immediately cuts him off and asserts, once again, the necessity of aggressive male sexuality, even linking his reputation as a lover explicitly to his reputation as a warrior. Thus, she tells him,

Tirant, Tirant, never will you be feared in battle if you refuse to use a little force with reluctant damsels! Since your wishes are honourable and your beloved is worthy, go to her bed when she is naked or in her nightshirt and attack bravely, for you can invite a friend to dinner even if you lack clean tablecloths. Should you refuse, I shall quit your bailiwick, as I have known many knights whose hands were quick and courageous enough to win honour, glory, and fame from their ladies. Oh God, what a wonderful thing it is to hold a soft, naked, fourteen-year-old damsel in one’s arms, and still better if she is of royal blood! Oh God, how glorious to be an emperor’s son-in-law, and how splendid to have a rich and generous mistress untainted by infamy.

Again, while Plaerdemavida’s words may be exaggerated beyond what Martorell himself might say, the underlying idea that sex is to be “taken” by men, regardless of the woman’s actual consent, is profoundly important, not least because, with all his hemming and hawing, Tirant

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matí n’ha. Après, nostre Senyor poria-us demanar les penes de cavaller repropi d’amor, si en semblant cars fallieu o inconvenient negú se seguïa. No u volrieu, per tot lo món! E per vós ésser tan civil enamorat, nostre Senyor no us volria més dar tal boci, ni tendria més que dar per a vós, car no sè home en lo món qui no l se enviàs encara que fos cert que se’n deguès ofegar.

Donzella, la mia temor és de vergonya per lo strembé que vull a ma senyora. Més stimaria tornar-me’n que anar més avant, com pens que la magestat suano té sentiment negú de açò. E no és menys, com veurà així gran vovitat, tota no s’altere en si. E yo desige ans la mort que la vida que fer offensa a sa majestat. Adquerir-la volria ab amor, més que no ab dolor. E com veig que ab tan gran desorde que la granea de ma benevolença, que ab il·licites pràctiques la haja de conquistar, lo meu voler ab a lo vostre no és conforme. Per Déu e per mercè vos prech, virtuosa donzella, a vós plàcia quens en tornem, car yo delibre ans de perdre la cosa que he més amada e lo que tant he desijat, que si fàbia cosa que en res la agreuïàs. Encara, me par molt gran càrrech, que ans de haver errat sia aci vengut, que per tal dafalt deuria yo ésser fet homeyer de la mia persona. E no penseu, donzella, que yo per sola temor ho deixe, mas per la strema amor que a sa alteza porte. E com ella serà serta que tan prop li sia stat e que per amor só stat de no enajar-la, en major compte m’o pendrà de infinda amor.

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Tirant, Tirant, jaumes en batalla sereu ardit ni temut si en amar dona o donzella una poqueta de força no y mescleu, majorment com no u volen fer. Puix teniu sperança bona e gentil e amau donzella valent, anau a la sua cambra e gitau-vous en lo lit, com ella hi sia nua o en camisa, e feriu valentment, que entre amichs no y cal tovalla. E si així no u feu, no vull ésser de vostra batlia, car yo sé que moltz cavallers, per tenir les mans prestes e valents, han hagut de ses enamorades honor, glòria e fama.

O, Déu, quina cosa és tenir la donzella tendra en sos brusos, tota mua, de edat de XIII anys! O, Déu, quina glòria és star en lo seu lit e besar-la sovint! O, Déu, quina cosa és com és de sanch real! O, Déu, quina cosa és tenir pare emperador! O, Déu, quina cosa és tenir la enamorada rica e liberal, quitia de tota infamia!
ultimately did force Carmesina to have sex with him, thereby proving his masculinity and “prowess” in the end.

Furthermore, Tirant is not the sole recipient of criticism for leaving his relationship with Carmesina unconsummated. Carmesina also receives substantial criticism from other characters for her resistance to Tirant’s advances. In her case, her behavior is described as not only old-fashioned but as fundamentally contradicting her proper role as an aristocratic lady. It is even described, on several occasions, as almost immoral, inverting standard, ecclesiastical views of sexual morality entirely.

One example of the criticism leveled at Carmesina can be found in an episode where Tirant's squire Ypòlit took her to task for her continued adherence to what he believed were antiquated notions of sexual morality and propriety. As Martorell describes the situation, Ypòlit had been sent by Tirant to deliver a love letter to Carmesina, in which he had poured his heart out to her and had begged for her to consent to sex with him. In response, however, Carmesina merely pulled three hairs from her head and said that they should suffice to satisfy Tirant’s desire. At this, Ypòlit became enraged and launched into a rather shocking tirade, which, in its blunt appraisal of sexual desire, better summarizes Martorell’s understanding of sexual morality and norms than almost any other passage in the entire work:

Really, my lady! Does Your Highness think that these are the old days, when people followed the laws of grace and a damsel who loved some suitor in extreme degree would give him a well-perfumed bouquet of flowers or a hair or two from her head, whereupon he considered himself exceedingly fortunate? No, my lady, no. That time is past. I know quite well what my lord Tirant desires: to see you in bed, either naked or in your nightdress, and if the bed is not perfumed, he will be just as pleased. Offer me no hairs, as I am unaccustomed to bearing such gifts."

Clearly, for Martorell, if an era of "courtliness" had ever truly existed, it had passed: sex was what Tirant wanted and there was no shame (or point) in pretending otherwise. Moreover, for Martorell’s audience, whether male or female, such a frank assertion of the appropriateness of physical lust, by allegedly “ideal” knights and squires no less, could only have served as further encouragement for them to adopt a similar attitude, especially since the words are spoken by Ypòlit who Van Beysterveldt describes as representing “all courtly lovers, whether ladies or

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95 Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, p. 393; Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanch*, p. 545. [E com, senyora! Pensà vosstra altesa que siams en lo temps antich, que usaven les gentz de ley de gràcia? Car la donzella, com tenia algun enamorat e lo amava en streem grau, dava-li un ramelet de flors ben perfumat, o un cabell o dos del seu cap, e aquell se tenia per molt benaventurat. No senyora, no, que aquex temps ja és passat. Lo que mon senyor Tirant desija bé u sé yo: que us pogués tenir en hun lit nu o en camissa; posat cars que lo lit fos perfumat, no s’i daria res. Mas si la magestat vosstra me dóna tres cabells en present a Tirant, no acostume yo tal cosa portar: trameteu-los-i per altri o digue’m vosstra excelència sots quina sperança són exits del vostre cap.]
In essence, Ypòlit is presented by Martorell as a teenager whose words justify the sexual desire of other teenagers and the implication is that even if young men and women must be cognizant of social propriety and decorum, if the opportunity arises to engage in sexual intercourse in such a manner that will avoid obvious dishonor or public shame, such opportunities must be seized by young men and, at the very least, tolerated by young women. For many young men in late medieval Valencian society, this meant that their sexual aggressivity was directed primarily at women from lower social classes, since honor would not come into play to nearly the same extent. However, this does not mean that occasions along the lines of those described here did not arise between men and women of the elite: one need only consider the case of Martorell’s sister, Damiata, to see this. Her sexual relationship with Montpalau was also alleged to have developed out of a promise to marry, which provided sufficient social cover for their sexual relationship to commence.

As sharp as Ypòlit’s words are in the example above, they pale in comparison to the tenor of criticism that Carmesina received from her own maids, Stephania and Plaerdemavida, who judge her behavior to be entirely unbefitting of a true lady. This attitude can be seen when, having been chastised by her villainous, nursemaid, the Easygoing Widow (la Viuda Reposada) for allegedly inciting Tirant’s ardor and for “glor[y]ing in what [she] should abhor” (i.e., premarital sex with Tirant), Carmesina redoubled her commitment to resisting Tirant’s advances and her own desire. Yet, when Stephania, her maid, learned of her reaffirmed resolve, she pleaded with Carmesina to reconsider, telling her that the Easygoing Widow’s opinion was unbefitting a young noblewoman and, moreover, was hopelessly outdated. Instead, she says, a “modern lady” should not fear to act in a sexually provocative manner, before concluding by saying, “No one … could persuade me to stop dancing and courting as befits noble ladies. It is customary for courtly damsels to be loved and wooed.” Furthermore, she reinforces this opinion later in the same chapter by telling Carmesina that, of three types of love that exist, immodest, "sinful" love – being that which she describes as “when a damsel loves some gentleman or knight for her pleasure”– is the type to be preferred (and pursued) most. Thus, Stephania’s view largely

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96 Antony van Beysterveldt, “El amor caballeresco del Amadis y el Tirante,” Hispanic Review 49 (1981), p. 416. He also cites this same passage as a primary example of Martorell’s blending of “courtly, anti-courtly, and realistic” literary elements.

97 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 208; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, v. 1, pp. 256–57. [...] Qui m’faria a mi star –dix Stephania–, per temor de pare, de no dançar e festejar segons a nosaltres, donzelles cortesanes, és dat, com sia cosa acostumada? Com les donzelles estan en cort, se tenen a molta glòria que sien amades e festejades, com tinguam tres maneres de amor; ço és, virtuosa, profita, viciosa... La terça és viciosa, com la donzella ama lo gentilom o cavaller per son delit, lo qual serà fart de rahò ab les paraules molt affables que
acords with that asserted by Ypòlit above and one can see her living out these values of the “modern” courtly lady in her own romantic entanglements with Diafebus, in which she takes a consistently assertive role.

In much the same manner, Plaerdemavida also challenges Carmesina's unwillingness to give in to her sexual desire for Tirant. In her case, though, she takes the issue even one step further, by couching her remonstrations against Carmesina’s reticence in terms of religious obligation, warning Carmesina that divine condemnation and punishment would result if she continued to ignore “obligations” she had, as a woman, to her lover, Tirant. Thus, she tells Carmesina,

If God permitted me to make you see and feel those amorous delights prized by many, you would be blessed and praised eternally like all other true lovers, yet Your Highness is like one who smells food but never eats it.  

Continuing, Plaerdemavida then embarks on another dreamlike reverie, imagining that Carmesina will be forced to justify her sexual reticence with Tirant to God himself. Therefore, setting a scene in which Carmesina has appeared before God and Saint Peter, and is asked by them if she had followed God’s command to “be fruitful, multiply, and replenish the earth,” Plaerdemavida tells Carmesina that she would be unable to answer and would be condemned, with Saint Peter saying, “Lord, this woman does not deserve to dwell in glory, for she disobeyed Your most holy commandment.” Consequently, for the crime of maintaining her chastity, Plaerdemavida concludes that Carmesina would be thrown into hell – along with the prudish Viuda Reposada. Plaerdemavida herself, on the other hand, because of her better “obedience” to God’s requirements – that is, her willingness to engage in sexual activity – would receive a divine blessing and “shall be seated in the highest circle” of heaven. Therefore, the message advanced by Martorell through Plaerdemavida is patently clear: while both male and female sexual propriety must be given lip service, they should in no way impede lovers from acting on their desires, and the fact that Plaerdemavida’s illustration is clearly farcical does not diminish the power of the underlying message that men are justified in demanding sex and women are, in essence, required to consent to it.

\[vida vos donen per un any, emperò, si de allí avant passen e poden apleguar al lit encortinat e los lançols bé perfumats, e tota una nit de hivern poden star, tal amor com aquesta me par molt millor que neguna de les altres.\]  
\[Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 395; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 2, pp. 547–48. [E vostra altesa serà causa de fer-me viure dolorosa, car com veig que sou donzella per Déu ab tantes virtuts creada, tinch per impossible fallir vos lo major do de gràcia que natura pot donar, ço és, amor qui us fall, que no amau així com deuríeu a qui n’és merexedor, qui ha tan lealment servida la magestat vostra... Si aquesta pena creya fos semblant a moltes altres que ja sentides he e que la selcitud vostra pogués sentir aquella glòria que altres donzelles han sentit, si Déu per sola mercé me atorgà’s vos fes conèixer e veure aquella glòria dels enamorats en aquesta [vida] e lo delit que ab si porta.]\]
Although protracted throughout much of the text, and interrupted by Tirant’s lengthy stay in North Africa, after being shipwrecked there, Tirant and Carmesina’s relationship is eventually consummated near the end of the text, with Plaerdemavida playing a central role in the affair. Following a convoluted sequence of events, Plaerdemavida had been made the queen of a North African territory that Tirant had conquered and which he gave to her and to her husband, one of Tirant’s companions on the campaign. Consequently, when Tirant and his army returned to Constantinople, to give military relief to the city, Plaerdemavida traveled with him. Upon their arrival, she extended an invitation for her former mistress, Carmesina, to visit her in the army’s camp a short distance from the city.

When the princess arrived, Plaerdemavida suggested that the two should sleep in the same quarters, so that they could better reminisce and socialize with each other, which Carmesina agreed to do. Then, following her retreat to Plaerdemavida's quarters, the latter immediately went to Tirant, whose presence in the camp was unknown to Carmesina, and told him, “Glorious captain, take off everything but your shirt, and hurry to the side of one who loves you more than life. Dig in your spurs and show her no mercy, for if you spurn my advice you will never enjoy her favors.” Acting immediately on Plaerdemavida's advice, Tirant went to Carmesina and got into the bed where she lay, asleep. Soon, however, Carmesina awoke and, realizing her situation, resisted Tirant in much the same manner that she had on previous occasions, asking him again to “abjure bellicose violence” and pleading that “a delicate damsel cannot resist a knight.”99

Remarkably, her protests against Tirant come despite the fact that, at this point in the narrative, Tirant and Carmesina had already exchanged clandestine marriage vows before Tirant’s departure on the voyage that left him shipwrecked. The two had not consummated the vows at that time, however, as Carmesina still had not wished to make their marriage public, and feared that she might become pregnant if the two did have sex, bringing shame upon herself. Therefore, it is for much the same reasons that Carmesina tries to forestall Tirant when she awakes and finds him in her bed. On this occasion, however, her pleas are no longer effective

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99 Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 574; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 2, p. 843. [—Cavaller gloriós, despullau-vos en camisa e descalç anau-vos aposar al costat de aquella qui us ama més que a la sua vida. É feriu fort dels sperons, car axi-s pertany de cavaller, tota pietat apart posada. É en açò no-m façau rahons, que no les vos adletria, ni poseu dilació, car yo us jur, a fe de reyna, que, si no feu lo que us he dit, que jamés a tota vostra vida tal gràcia aconsiguereu.]

Note here the continued use of military metaphor to describe the impending physical encounter, just as above.
and Tirant does not relent in his assault on her; consequently, the encounter quickly takes on a decidedly darker tone.

Martorell never states specifically why Tirant suddenly became “immune” to Carmesina’s pleas that he desist, but as she realized that Tirant would not relent, Carmesina can be seen to become increasingly frantic in her pleas, saying,

Do not treat me thus, as love’s battles should be won through clever flattery and sweet deception ... Oh my lord, how can you delight in forcing me? Oh, how can you hurt the one you love? By your virtue and nobility please stop before you hurt me! Love’s weapons should not cut; love’s lance should not wound! Alas, cruel false knight, be careful or I shall scream! Lord Tirant, show your compassion and pity a helpless damsel! You cannot be Tirant! Woe is me! Is this what I longed for? Oh, my life’s hope, you have slain your princess[100]

Again, however, her words do not dissuade Tirant, who finally fulfills Martorell’s expectation of male sexual comportment by winning what he describes as a "delightful battle."

Therefore, in what is (with apologies for the unfortunate pun) the story's climactic moment, Martorell informs his readers,

And do not think that because of the pitiable words of the princess that Tirant ceased from doing his work, and in a brief time Tirant had won the delightful battle and the princess laid down her arms and abandoned them, appearing as if dead. Tirant quickly leapt out of bed, thinking that he had killed her, and cried out for the queen [Plaerdemavida] that she should come his aid[101]

At this point, then, the "battle" between the two lovers was finally over – and a final nail was put in the coffin of the restrained, repressed attitude towards sex previously held by Carmesina, which itself echoed the moralizing prescriptions of Eiximenis and other ecclesiastical authors.

Making the point even more clearly, when Carmesina regained consciousness and began to reprimand Tirant, telling him, “You have not behaved like a knight or revered me as a princess,” Plaerdemavida, who had arrived in the intervening period, again reproached her, and, on this occasion, Carmesina finally heeded her words. Although still “mourning her lost virginity,” she and Tirant reconciled with each other and spent “the rest of the night in those pleasant games

[100] Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 575; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 2, p. 845. [— Mon senyor Tirant, no cambieu en treballosa pena la sperança de tanta glòria com és atényer la vostra desijada vista. Reposau-vos, senyor, e no villau usar de vostra bel·licosa força, que les forces de una delicada donzella no són per a resistir a tal cavaller. No m tracteu, per vostra gentilea, de tal manera. Los combats de amor no s volen molt strènua. No ab força, mas ab ginyosos afalachs e dolços engans se atenyen... Ay senyor! Y com vos pot delitar cosa forçada? Ay! E amor vos pot consentir que façau mal a la cosa amada? Senyor, deteniu-vos, per vostra virtut e acostumada nobleza. ¡Guardau, mesquina, que no deuen tallar les armes de amor, no han de rompre, no deu nafrar la enamorada lance! Haja pietat, haja compassió de aquesta sola donzella! Ay cruel, fals cavaller! Cridaré! Guardau, quer vull cridar! Senyor Tirant, ¿no haureu mercé de mi? No sou Tirant. Trista de mi! ¿Acò és lo que yo tant desijava? ¡O sperança de la mia vida, vet la tua princesa morta!]

[101] Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanc, p. 575; Martorell and de Galba, Tirant lo Blanch, v. 2, p. 845. [E no us penseu que per les piadoses paraules de la princesa Tirant stigués de fer son lavor, car en poca hora Tirant hagué vençuda la batalia delitosa e la princesa reté les armes e abandonà's, mostrant-se smortida. Tirant se levà cuytadament del lit pensant que la hagués morta e anà cridar la reyna que li vengués ajudar.] Translation mine.
lovers are wont to play.”

Thus, the impression given by Martorell in this episode is clearly that both characters, Tirant and Carmesina, had finally lived up to the roles they were expected to play: Tirant was finally the conquering hero in all respects and Carmesina finally was the compliant, consenting lover. One can only imagine that this message would not have been lost on Martorell’s audience either. Moreover, one must wonder how much it might have influenced a portion of its young male audience to similarly ignore the refusals of young women with whom they wished to initiate sexual encounters, especially since here, as in the case of Phelip and the Sicilian princess, there are no negative repercussions to Tirant’s having forced Carmesina to have sex with him. In fact, in the days following her consummation with Tirant, Carmesina’s resistance and inhibitions vanished entirely and she consented enthusiastically to a number of additional sexual encounters with Tirant. All sign of her previous reticence vanishes. She does not even appear to have blamed Tirant for what he did, which thereby undermines even more fully her previous refusals and protestations and, it would seem, also justifies the quasi-rape that had initiated her sexual relationship with Tirant.

Therefore, for both Martorell’s male and female audiences, even if the objects of the sexual attentions of elite males were not often woman of the same social elite, since families were certainly cognizant of the perils of female sexuality out of wedlock, the basic framework of sexual power and gender dynamics described by Martorell throughout Tirant lo Blanc certainly still applies. In fact, it is precisely because of the dynamic of male sexual aggression and the assumption of female submission to a man’s advances that elite families tended to be so protective of their female members. Yet, if given the opportunity to do so without significantly risking their honor or reputation, the implication advanced by Martorell is that young men should “press their claim” to the greatest extent possible since only by doing this could they demonstrate their prowess and since the desire of their partners would be hidden behind a mask of refusal and would only be revealed after their “conquest.”

Before bringing this chapter to a close, however, Martorell’s rather odd use of clandestine

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102 Ibid.
103 Also notable throughout these passages is Martorell’s reliance on the language of military confrontation, seen both in the passages already quoted as well as in his description of Plaerdemavida’s arrangement of their romantic encounters as her “positioning them in the lists and arranging the jousts,” or as their romantic encounter as a battle that “would never end.” Here too, the motif of sex as contest and yet one more arena for a young man to “conquer” or dominate his “opponent” is reinforced, and, once more, the basic, fundamental role of contest and the ability to demonstrate one’s prowess is highlighted.
marriage to legitimize the sexual consummation of Tirant and Carmesina's relationship is worth examining at greater length, particularly because it aligns to some extent with the attempted rape of the Sicilian princess by Phelip, which occurred after she had consented to the marriage, but before the public betrothal (or marriage ceremony) had taken place. Remarkably, in the case of Tirant and Carmesina, no public wedding takes place between the two at any point; both Tirant and Carmesina die before it could occur. Thus, the sexual and romantic relationship between the two is predicated by Martorell only on their exchange of secret marital vows (known commonly as “words of the present tense”) that, while still seen as creating a valid and binding marital contract, increasingly had fallen into disfavor amongst both secular and ecclesiastical authorities. In canon law, clandestine marriages had already been proscribed by several Church councils. Already in 1215 one finds the canons of Lateran IV forbidding the practice “absolutely.”

Yet, even with these obstacles, clandestine marriages appear to have occurred with some frequency throughout the later Middle Ages, with William Entwistle making a very simple but compelling observation that Martorell’s use of the practice was likely indicative of the pre-Tridentine mindset that was prevalent in late medieval society: “We can thus understand the conduct [i.e., clandestine marriage] … as the expression of this older preference for the secret promise and consummation.” On the other hand, taking a different tack but arriving at much the same conclusion, Edward Aylward sees Martorell's acceptance of clandestine marriage as a means to “modernize” chivalric literature to more adequately reflect social reality, in effect suggesting that such arrangements were relatively common, and were used as a way to legitimize premarital sex. In either case, the fundamental point is that Martorell’s acceptance of

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104 The relevant passages can be found in canon 51, although matters concerning marriage also feature in the preceding and the subsequent passages as well.

105 Furs, vol. 5, bk. 6, rb. 9, 2–7, pp. 238–42. The first statute was instituted by Jaume I in the initial redaction of the Furs. In it, he stated that parents could disinherit their daughter who married without their consent. Later, however, the provisions regarding clandestine marriage were made much stronger and the punishments more harsh.


107 As already suggested above, Aylward views Martorell’s take on clandestine marriage as part of an attempt “to streamline and modernize” the practice, which makes sense in the context of his broader argument that Tirant lo Blanch, as a whole, was intended as part of a broader reform agenda. For this, see Aylward, Martorell’s Tirant lo Blanch, pp. 88–89. In this respect, as in several others, he largely channels Justina Ruiz de Conde's earlier thesis that Martorell's use of clandestine marriage was intended as a means to emphasize that romantic love could occur within the bonds of matrimony. For this, see Ruiz de Conde, El amor y el matrimonio secreto, pp. 101–70, esp. pp.
clandestine marriage likely reflects a broader current of societal thought and not merely the views of one man.

Nonetheless, even if his opinion was not out of place in his socio-cultural milieu, his apparent endorsement of the practice seems odd when one considers that it was precisely a clandestine arrangement that brought his sister into disrepute and his family into dishonor. In fact, the surviving evidence indicates that his sister, Damiata, never was able to recover from the disgrace that the incident brought upon her, and was unable to marry thereafter.  

Therefore, given this history, one might expect that Martorell would not view the practice favorably, yet even in his various letters to Montpalau, the fact that the two lovers agreed to a clandestine relationship, or that they then had sex as a result, is never criticized: instead, his condemnation of Montpalau was focused entirely on the latter’s reneging on the vows he (allegedly) had entered into. It was the fact that he would not recognize the marriage, not the manner of the marriage itself, that enraged Martorell. Therefore, rather than questioning the practice in its entirety, Martorell, instead, was only concerned with the misuse of the practice, again suggesting a deep-seated acceptance of these practices as socially licit – as long as a public wedding occurred at some later point.

In the end, the best conclusion that can be drawn regarding this matter, as well as about Martorell’s construction of masculine and feminine morality and power dynamics in general, is that he does not appear to have desired to overturn existing societal values to any great extent.

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108 It is worth noting that, although she never married, Damiata ultimately received a sizable cash settlement of four thousand florins from Joan de Montpalau. Paid directly to her (and not to her brother, Joanot), it was likely intended as a means of compensation and financial support since her marital prospects had become substantially diminished by the public nature of the quarrel. For this, see Martorell and Galba, Tirante el Blanco: Versión castellana impresa en Valladolid en 1511, p. XXI.

109 This is also the pattern noted by Guido Ruggiero as having been commonly practiced in late medieval Venice. See Guido Ruggiero, The Boundaries of Eros: Sex Crime and Sexuality in Renaissance Venice (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), esp. ch. 2. Another historian who makes much the same case is Renato Barahona. See Barahona, Sex Crimes, Honour, and the Law, ch. 1, esp. pp 14–40.

Another way of looking at the affair between the Martorell’s and Montpalau is that, in making his challenge, Martorell ultimately hoped that Montpalau would marry his sister, Damiata, thereby transforming his challenge into a tool to secure his desired outcome: a marriage. Gene Brucker’s account of the clandestine affair between two Florentines, in which the male partner allegedly married the female clandestinely, the two had sex, and then the male partner denied the marriage had taken place, is also relevant here. To save her reputation, the female partner made a formal complaint to the court, desiring that the marriage be formally recognized as valid. See Gene A. Brucker, Giovanni and Lusanna: Love and Marriage in Renaissance Florence (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986). For the use of rape allegations for a similar, strategic purpose, see J.B. Post, “Ravishment of Women and the Statutes of Westminster,” in Legal Records and the Historian: Papers Presented to the Cambridge Legal History Conference, 7–10 July, 1975, and in Lincoln’s Inn Old Hall on 3 July, 1974, ed. J.H. Baker (London: Royal Historical Society, 1978): pp. 150–64.
Instead, loosely following Aylward's thesis, his "reform" of knighthood sought to strip away more mannered, courtly accretions that he believed impeded men and women from approaching the ideals of what perceived to be a more “true” masculinity and femininity. Therefore, in his conception, the primary reason for Carmesina’s constant worry about the propriety of her relationship with Tirant and her continued commitment to more staid, repressed forms of courtly love was an understandable but misguided effort to remain committed to social ideals that Martorell believed were no longer valid or useful, and which, therefore, should be cast aside in favor of more direct, honest, physical relationships that, nonetheless, would result in marriage.

In essence, throughout *Tirant lo Blanc*, Martorell appears to reiterate to his audience, male and female, that sexual desire was not something about which one should feel shame. Rather, sexual pleasure was something that both men and women could, and should, pursue – albeit while recognizing the limits imposed on them by notions of social propriety. Nonetheless, among the young aristocrats that he describes, sex and sexual flirtation were integral components of their lives, and they all tried to get away with as much as they could, constantly skirting up to the very limits of social propriety and, sometimes, even passing beyond. For Martorell’s male characters, this meant demonstrating their "potency" and capacity to achieve their sexual desires through physical strength and single-minded persistence, “conquering” in the bedroom as they did in battle. For his female characters, their role was to acknowledge, and appreciate, their lover’s prowess and potency, even as they maneuvered skillfully within the boundaries of social propriety to pursue (and fulfill) their own romantic and sexual desires. They do not, however, ever appear to have given much attention or credence to the dictates of feminine sexual propriety put forth by moralists and ecclesiastical didacts such as Eiximenis. In fact, Martorell generally seems to have had little patience for those of Eiximenis’s ilk, appropriating only those elements that suited his secular, aristocratic viewpoint and ignoring or discarding the rest: in this respect, Martorell himself was a model knight.

**Conclusion: Tirant “lo Joven” and the Education of the Adolescent Elite**

As has been emphasized throughout this chapter, while Martorell appropriated many elements of earlier clerical and didactic writings on the proper practice of knighthood and proper comportment of the elite classes, the image of the “ideal knight” or “ideal lady” that he offers in *Tirant lo Blanc* differs from that offered by the authors from whom he appropriates material in several notable respects. Thus, while his work is also a call for the reform of knightly practice,
Martorell seems not as interested in returning knighthood to a more “pure” or “moral” state, as Llull advocates, nor in viewing knighthood as but one of many profitable career paths, as Eiximenis asserts. Rather, at its core, Martorell’s reform seems to be intended as a means through which knights, as part of the military aristocracy, reasserted their dominance over the rest of society and their position at its apex. Thus, Martorell focuses, more than all else, on the need for knights to act as warriors whose personal honor and social status derived directly from their capacity to conquer and subjugate those who oppose them, whether they be opposing knights in a duel, tournament, or battle, or a lover to be “conquered” in bedroom. In short, Martorell would undoubtedly have agreed with Kaeuper’s observation that, among medieval knights, “a real man of prowess [bore] the marks of other men’s weapons on his body for life.”

For Martorell, Tirant truly was the ideal, if not always the reality, of knightly practice as he left what amounted to rivers of blood, both his own and that of his opponents, in his wake as he crossed Europe from west to east and conquered all who opposed him. In the end, he even died unconquered, brought low by illness but never beaten by any man (or woman).

Similarly, when examining the “ideal lady” that Martorell offers in his work and that he represents through the three young ladies, Carmesina, Stephania, and Plaerdemavida, none of the three women fully represents his vision individually. However, when considered as a group, his portrayal of these three female characters easily permits one to conclude that Martorell’s vision of aristocratic female comportment is fundamentally dissimilar to that advocated by Eiximenis. While sensitive to societal expectations and the need for public discretion in matters pertaining to romance and sex, Stephania, Plaerdemavida, and Carmesina display not only a surprising degree of comfort in expressing their sexual desires, but also a notable capacity to pursue those desires. Both Stephania and Carmesina were able to choose their own romantic partners, for example, and, Stephania was even the facilitator of her own marriage. Carmesina, while never married formally to Tirant, nonetheless also was able to choose her lover and actively worked to create a situation in which they, too, could be publicly wed. Carmesina was certainly aware of the social constraints that had been placed upon her, but those constraints in no way prevented her from working to achieve her desire. Thus, while the motif of masculine sexual aggression is

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110 Kaeuper, Chivalry and Violence, p. 151.
111 Plaerdemavida’s case is a bit more complex since she did not ultimately marry her “beloved” Ypòlit – who ended up in an adulterous relationship with Carmesina’s mother, the empress, and married her after the emperor’s death, becoming emperor himself. As noted above, she ultimately was given in marriage by Tirant to a king in North Africa. Notably, though, the marriage was offered to her by Tirant as a reward for her service to him and therefore, although she protests against it to some extent, she ultimately entered into it freely. Additionally,
undeniably present in the text and deserves to be recognized for the violence that it is, the female characters in Martorell's narrative can not be portrayed only as victims of male sexual aggression or as entirely passive, as Duby and some others have represented them in other examples of medieval romance and courtly literature.\textsuperscript{112} Rather, they were active participants in the romantic world they inhabited, actively encouraging and inciting both themselves and their male counterparts in the pursuit of amorous encounters and romantic couplings.

Things get notably more complicated, however, when Martorell describes moments of sexual consummation. At these moments, the agency of Martorell’s female characters vanishes, and the sexual power dynamic between his male and female characters, which was relatively equitable before, suddenly reverts to a much more traditional, patriarchal form that is rooted in more static gender tropes of male sexual aggression and female sexual resistance. As discussed above, the reasons for this dichotomy are numerous, but they are likely the result of the very societal expectations of female sexual comportment put forth by clerical writers and analyzed at length by Gravdal, Krueger, Saunders, and Sylvester, among others. Moreover, while one must be wary of overstating the quotidian veracity of what is clearly and intentionally a stylized and idealized work of fiction, the weight of critical opinion nonetheless tends to view Martorell’s work as encompassing a literary vision of the world that is not too far from the reality of Martorell’s own day, in which male sexual aggressivity was considered an acceptable and even normative behavior, even if it was generally restrained by social norms and practices and channelled onto the bodies of women of lower social standing. Further, even if young aristocratic males could not act on their sexual impulses towards young women of equal class indiscriminately, the underlying assertion made by Martorell in his narrative – that his young knights were justified in forcing themselves sexually onto their aristocratic partners if given the opportunity to do so in a more-or-less socially tolerable context – remains a powerful statement of the ideal model of behavior that he believed his readers should try to emulate. In this respect, the words of Plaerdemavida, quoted above, again come to mind:

Oh God, what a wonderful thing it is to hold a soft, naked, fourteen-year-old damsel in one’s arms, and still better if she is of royal blood!

Martorell is not saying that every young knight should brazenly attack noble women to force

\textsuperscript{112} Duby, “On Courtly Love.”

Martorell makes it clear that she loved her husband and was very well treated by him. Therefore, even if the match was “arranged” in this case, Plaerdemavida nonetheless benefitted from it. This episode can be found in chs. 381–83. For Ypòlit’s affair with the Empress, see chs. 255–64.
them to have sex, but it does suggest a belief that, if one could do so in a discreet enough manner, one should seize the opportunity and, certainly, one should not let the young woman’s protests stand in the way. For most of the characters in the narrative, this meant that their sexual relationships occurred after some form of marital commitment had been offered, even if often clandestinely, but there is nothing in Martorell’s narrative to suggest that it could only occur within the context of marriage, as seen in Tirant’s repeated, if unsuccessful, attempts to seduce Carmesina throughout the text.¹¹³

The focus of this study now shifts from the idealized portrayals of aristocratic male and female identity presented by clerical and secular sources in this and the previous chapter to the way these ideals manifested themselves within within late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Valencian society. Therefore, by using legal and administrative records from that time, the mechanisms through which the young were acculturated into values and ideological systems similar to those expressed in these chapters, and particularly those espoused by Martorell and embodied by his characters in Tirant lo Blanc, can be further investigated. Consequently, the next chapters will turn to an examination of the “reckless” behavior of young people, and especially young men, and the legal, social, and cultural underpinnings that informed and shaped their behavior.

¹¹³ Again, Ypòlit’s adulterous relationship with the empress is relevant here, but has been relegated to a footnote for reasons of space. Notably, his sexual relationship with the empress commences before the death of her husband, the emperor, thereby suggesting the possibility of such relationships if proper discretion were observed.
Part III – Youth in Society:
The “Culture” of Youth in Love and War

In the preceding chapters, two related (if competing) models of masculine and feminine behavior were outlined: the first being that proposed by the ecclesiastical authors, Francesc Eiximenis and Ramon Llull, and the second being that asserted in Joanot Martorell’s chivalric epic *Tirant lo Blanc*. As was demonstrated, Llull’s conception of aristocratic knighthood and knightly masculine identity was influential for both Eiximenis and Martorell; both emphasized Lullian notions of honor, loyalty, generosity, valor, and courtesy as qualities central to their constructions of knightly and aristocratic identity. Moreover, both authors adhered to Lull’s belief that education was absolutely fundamental to ensuring the proper moral formation of young knights, as well as their future success.

Yet the visions of Eiximenis, Llull, and Martorell also stand in stark contrast to each other at points. In particular, while all three authors share a basic, Galenic understanding of adolescence and early youth as defined by the passions brought on by the overarching influence of the sanguinary humor, the views of Martorell depart markedly from those of the others. In particular, the differences that were seen center around whether the passions of youth – which Galen and his followers linked to bodily pleasure, aggressivity, and unbridled sexuality – should be celebrated or repressed.1 In short, while Eiximenis largely advocated for a restrictive attitude that restrained and mitigated the “excesses” of the adolescent spirit, Martorell tends to glorify the very same qualities in his characters – namely, their vivacity, garrulousness, libidinousness, and desire to demonstrate their potency and capacity to dominate others, whether physically, sexually, or even intellectually.2

In Part III of this study, the competing visions of adolescence, youth, masculinity, and femininity discussed in the previous section will be linked more firmly to the activities of real people in late medieval Valencian society in order to examine if and how the educational and moral prescriptions of Eiximenis, Llull, and Martorell can be seen in the activities of young people that were recorded in extant archival and notarial documents. In particular, civil and criminal court proceedings provide some of the most extensive accounts of adolescent activity

2 See Karras, *From Boys to Men*. 
and behavior. These documents also identify and address the motivation young people’s activities, and as such they are particularly valuable when trying to determine social or cultural attitudes that may have influenced individual or collective behavior.

Other administrative sources will be used in Chapters 4 and 5. Particularly useful are the registers of letters exchanged between civic and royal officials and records that document the deliberations and discussions of the Valencian Jurats and advisory council (the Consell). Frequently, these sources describe the activities of young people in the city, albeit often only when their behavior contravened social norms or resulted in particularly heinous crimes. Despite this tendency to only mention young people in extraordinary circumstances, these sources remain exceptionally useful because they further flesh out the picture of how young men (and sometimes, though rarely, women) behaved.

Based on the information provided by these source materials, Part III argues that within the milieu of late medieval Valencia, adolescent identity and that of young people as a whole among the elite classes was far closer to the image offered by Martorell in his fictional narrative of Tirant lo Blanc than to that found in the prescriptive admonitions of Eiximenis and Llull, whose images of youth and adolescent comportment appear to have been viewed more as abstract ideals than actual models for behavior that were to be employed in the real world. Therefore, while the writings of both Eiximenis and Llull were well known and widely read, it was the culture of aggressive, knightly masculinity illustrated by Martorell, as well as the more relaxed, libidinous sexual morality that he advances, that appears to reflect much more closely the attitudes of the Valencian elite as they are described in extant archival sources. Thus, one finds cases throughout the legal and archival records of late medieval Valencia in which adolescent males were permitted, or even encouraged, to embody ideals of honor and masculine display in very much the same manner proposed by Martorell, with personal prowess and the ability to dominate others forming the basis of social, political, economic, and personal preeminence.

In support of these observations, Chapter 4 examines the role of aristocratic, adolescent males in episodes of factional violence between aristocratic and patrician families, known collectively as bandositats, which were a recurrent problem for the Kingdom of Valencia throughout the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Through their participation in the assorted skirmishes, brawls, and occasional assassinations that constituted most bandositat

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3 This is perhaps unsurprising given that Eiximenis was attempting to reform the ills of society in his writings. See Chapter 2 of this study for more on these issues.
violence, young participants, who are most commonly described as squires, received hands-on, real-world training in the militant ideals of the knightly masculinity through which the aristocracy continued to define itself. Further, these ideals were not solely confined to the aristocracy, but were shared both by members of the patrician elite and even the artisan and laboring classes.4

Additionally, as was the case for Martorell’s young protagonists, late medieval Valencian adolescents also enjoyed a perhaps unexpected level of freedom to pursue their romantic and sexual desires – both through licit means (i.e., the use of the regulated public brothel) as well as illicit (i.e., concubinage, adultery, or sexual violence). While some effort was made by adult society to channel adolescent sexual expression (and especially that of young males) into socially tolerable forms, these attempts were of only limited success, as evidenced by the incidents of illicit sex and sexual violence throughout the records of Valencian courts for the entirety of the period studied. What is more, while the available evidence is somewhat murkier and less abundant, it also appears that young Valencian women may have been able to exercise a greater agency and level of control over their romantic and sexual life than may be expected if only prescriptive sources were consulted. In short, the evidence provided by the records of Valencian courts suggests that Martorell's seemingly liberal attitude towards female sexual expression and agency was not particularly unique, but was instead relatively widespread amongst the elite classes of Valencian society, even if young women still were more beholden than their male counterparts to conduct their affairs with a certain amount of discretion to avoid public censure or dishonor.

Chapter 5 addresses matters pertaining to sex and sexual agency among late medieval Valencian adolescents (both male and female). As is so often the case, because cases involving young men are more common in archival sources, they will receive more attention than those involving young women, not least because Valencia, like many Mediterranean cities, permitted the existence of a public brothel that catered primarily to the city’s unmarried, male population; no similar institution existed for young women. Therefore, because the Valencian brothel (referred to hereafter by its Catalan/Valencian equivalent, the bordell) operated as a socially licit

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4 Whether the ethos of violent masculinity described here arose within the aristocracy and spread out from there to other classes or whether it is merely an aspect of masculinity that was present in male society regardless of social or class origins will not be addressed directly. Suffice it to say that the ethos of aggressive masculinity described here that was espoused by the aristocratic elite is documented most clearly by the sources that form the evidentiary basis for this study. For the assessment of others on thee matters, see, for example, Kaeuper, Chivalry and Violence, esp. chs. 7–9, pp. 121–208; Karras, From Boys to Men, pp. 20–66.
venue for young men to engage in sex, it also serves as a particularly useful prism through which
to analyze their sexual socialization. Furthermore, given its public nature and the fact that it was
subject to civic oversight, a wealth of documents was created by various governmental
authorities that discuss both the workings of the brothel itself as well as the activities of its
various inhabitants and visitors.

The bordell also was an important locus for the socialization of young men and the formation
of their identities, since it served as a primary venue for other questionable social activities, such
as drinking, gambling, and carousing. In addition to the various boarding houses (hostals) in
which prostitutes lived and plied their trade – since they were forbidden by statute from
soliciting customers in the streets – the bordell also was home to taverns and gambling dens,
where food and drink were served and where sex, at least briefly, receded into the background.
Therefore, the bordell was also a primary locus for physical and sexual competition among
adolescent and young adult males, where reputations were made or broken, honor was won or
lost – all of which occurred in an atmosphere already charged with alcohol and excited
hormones. Given this, it is little wonder that violence was common in the bordell, or that the
young men who formed its primary clientele were among its most frequent perpetrators.5

Following the discussion of the bordell, chapter 5 will then examine the evidence suggestive
of the agency that young Valencian women may have possessed in conducting their sexual lives.
However, since young women are most frequently encountered in court documents as victims of
sexual crime, any attempt to use criminal cases to determine female sexual attitudes must
necessarily be read against the text of the accusations being made to get at the more complex
attitudes and relationships that sometimes lie underneath. Reading several of the cases found in
the registers of the Justicia Criminal, one gains the sense that, for all that young women were
restricted in their contact with the outside world and by social ideas of "proper female
comportment," more opportunities existed in aristocratic households for young women to engage
in sexual behavior, as noted above, as long as their activities remained both private and discrete.

5 Narbona only mentions youths in passing in his chapter of Pueblo, Poder, y Sexo devoted to the bordell.
Nonetheless, he does note that it was "a place of recreation in which they could carry out their reckless partying."
("Los jóvenes también encontraron en el burdel el lugar de esparcimiento para correr sus alocadas juergas.")
Chapter 4: Sons, Squires, and Bandos

The violent bandositat feuds that occurred between aristocratic families and their associates amongst the urban patrician, bourgeois, and artisan classes were a plague for the city and kingdom of Valencia for much of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The records of the Valencian Consell and Jurats ably demonstrate their disruptive nature and contain frequent discussion of the violent confrontations that occurred between rival aristocratic factions and their clients. Despite the best efforts of the city’s ruling institutions, bandositat violence was never entirely stamped out.

Violence and factional conflict between rival aristocratic households was certainly not unique to Valencia; similar confrontations and “private wars” can be found throughout both of the Spanish Crowns of Aragon and Castile and across Europe more generally.¹ Thus, ideals similar to those expressed by participants in the Valencian bandositats can be found in many southern European cultures, so much so that anthropologists have even described them as "honor cultures."²

However, what makes the private wars of the Valencian aristocracy particularly noteworthy was the way in which bandos – the general term for bandositat gangs – expanded beyond the ranks of the aristocracy itself and incorporated segments of other urban classes such as the patriciate and bourgeoisie. In recent years, studies have been published that highlight how the incorporation of non-noble groups into bandos created avenues for the values and practices of what had earlier been a largely rural aristocracy to take root within in the urban context of the


² See Pitt-Rivers, “Honour and Social Status.”
burgeoning late medieval city.\textsuperscript{3} Therefore, while the factional violence categorized as “bandositat violence” was frequently predicated on personal conflicts between rival aristocratic families, these private quarrels all too frequently ballooned outwards with great rapidity to encompass much wider swaths of Valencian society.

Furthermore, although such conflicts were never viewed favorably by the governing institutions of Valencia, in most cases these conflicts or private wars were entirely legal. In the first redaction of the \textit{Furs}, Jaume I provided that private wars between knights, aristocrats, or members of the patriciate were to be permitted as long as: 1) they were announced publicly; 2) the announcement was witnessed by three others; 3) those with whom the instigator of the war wished to fight were explicitly named as enemies; and 4) one's attacks were limited only to those named as enemies (property or other members of household, technically, were out of bounds).\textsuperscript{4} Beyond these stipulations, however, members of the elite were within their rights to attack, injure, or kill those with whom they were “at war.”

Over time, these private wars came to incorporate far greater collections of participants than


Note also that, although Carbon’s full name is given in citations, he generally only uses his paternal surname. Consequently, the text of this study will refer to him simply as Rafael Narbona. Throughout, this study will defer to the convention used by the individual him or herself.

\textsuperscript{4} The relevant furs are discussed in the following two articles. Both cite a sixteenth-century edition of the \textit{Furs} for the laws, however, and, unfortunately, the apparatus is not the same as that used by the modern edition, making a citation of the relevant fur difficult at the present time. With this caveat, however, both articles quote or paraphrase the relevant furs at some length. See Remedios Ferrero Micó, “‘Pau e treua’ en Valencia,” in \textit{Estudios dedicados a Juan Peset Aleixandre} (Valencia: Universidad de Valencia, 1982), p. 1; Emilia Salvador Esteban, “Bandos y fórmulas de solaridad. La instrumentalización de las rivalidades de los poderosos por la Corona,” in \textit{El món urbà a la Corona d’Aragó del 1137 als decrets de Nova Planta: XVII Congrés d’Història de la Corona d’Aragó}, ed. Salvador Claramunt Rodríguez (Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2003), pp. 21–22.
were initially delineated by Jaume I. As noted by Emilia Salvador Esteban, bandositat factions frequently pulled in friends, clients, and other dependents or allies of both aristocratic principals. As a result, the private feuds of aristocrats or other members of the elite frequently metastasized to create broad-scale conflicts that were fought in the very streets the streets of the capital city and other towns.\(^5\) Moreover, even when Martí I revised Jaume’s legal toleration of private wars in 1403, in an attempt to curb bandositat violence and minimize their destructiveness, he did not outlaw private wars entirely but instead merely forbade the supporters of the primary disputants from attacking each other. Martí I also clarified even further that attacks could only be directed at members of the household leading each of the opposing bandositat factions, which he hoped would prevent smaller vendettas from arising between two subordinate, client families serving in the retinues of the principal combatants. Unfortunately, this provision appears to have been largely ignored: instead, the conflict and rancor of bandositat violence appears to have only increased further.\(^6\)

In addition to personal causes for bandositat violence that were rooted in disputes between individuals, political motivations also appear to have been behind outbreaks of bandositat violence. In these instances, the clashes were part of broader efforts by the factions to dominate the city's various governing institutions. Making this case, Rafael Narbona has argued that this political dimension of bandositat violence was also one of the main factors that led to the incorporation of non-noble socioeconomic groups into bandos.\(^7\)

Ultimately, though, the primary reason for the prevalence of bandositat violence in Valencia is linked to the fact that, unlike many other Mediterranean cities, such as Florence, where the aristocracy was expelled from the city and supplanted by the rising bourgeois and patrician elite, in Valencia the aristocracy continued to live within the city and to occupy prominent roles in both royal and civic government. Most notably, members of the aristocracy filled the office of the Governador, the highest representative of the King and Crown in the realm, as well as the office of his lieutenant and other members of his retinue.\(^8\) Similarly, in city government, the

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\(^{5}\) Ibid., p. 22.

\(^{6}\) Ibid.

\(^{7}\) Narbona makes this point in several of his works, but does do in a particularly concise manner in Narbona Vizcaíno, *Valencia, municipio medieval*, pp. 164–70. For a more extensive treatment, see Ibid., “Violencias feudales en la ciudad de Valencia,” *Revista d’Història Medieval* 1 (1990), esp. pp. 66–70. López Rodríguez makes a similar argument in his study of later outbreaks of factional violence committed by aristocrats. López Rodríguez, *Noblez y poder político*, esp. chs. 7 and 8.

\(^{8}\) Examples include Ramon Boil – himself murdered in 1407 by members of the bando opposed to that of his family – Ramon Guillem de Moncada, and Vidal de Blanes, both of whom were also from prominent aristocratic families and were titled lords in their own right bearing the honorific title of Mossen.
patriciate and aristocracy were guaranteed seats on both the Consell, the larger of the city’s administrative councils, as well as on the executive committee of the Jurats. In the Consell, which was comprised of approximately one hundred consellers, the nobility held six seats reserved for “cavallers y generoses.” The real prize, though, were two of the six seats on the governing board of the Jurats, which were reserved for the aristocracy from the late thirteenth century onwards. Thus, despite their relatively weak representation on the Consell, the aristocracy (or at least those factions within it that controlled the relevant offices) were able to continue to influence policy and the governance of the city through their representation among the Jurats. Similarly, the offices of the two Justicias, the primary civil and criminal enforcement officials in the city, were shared between members of the aristocracy and the non-noble elite (commonly referred to as ciutadans honrats) in alternating years, giving additional authority to members of the aristocracy to participate in the day-to-day administration of the city, as well as continued access to the mechanisms of control over the instruments of civic authority.

Among the explanations that have been offered to account for the increase in bandositat violence in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is that, in spite of their access to political offices and power, certain segments of the aristocracy had begun to experience increased economic instability. Therefore, according to this viewpoint, the bandositats were an effort to reclaim political relevance and societal dominance in a world that, at least in some respects, had begun to leave them behind.  

Related to this view, but approaching it from a slightly different tack, is the viewpoint offered by Narbona and several other Valencian historians, who view bandositat violence as a means through which otherwise marginalized segments of the aristocracy (i.e., aristocratic factions who had been shut out of political office by their rivals) could effect political change. In essence, through murder and the use of physical force, by intimidating residents and dominating areas of the city, the leaders of bandositat factions could exert influence over both the Consell and Jurats

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9 The history of how the Consell and Jurats were elected is actually rather convoluted, with repeated changes and revisions made between the mid-13th and 15th centuries. These changes are outlined (with helpful charts) by Narbona Vizcaíno, Valencia, municipio medieval, ch. 1, esp. pp. 39-52.

10 A second view links the bandositats to factional conflicts within the royal court, such as those between Pere IV (the Ceremonious) and his son, Joan I (the Hunter) in the 1370s or between the various claimants to the Aragonese throne after Martí I’s death, without heir, in 1410. In this respect, the factions of the bandositats are more or less similar to the Guelfs and Ghibelines of Italian factional politics, which were rooted in aristocratic disputes between those allied with the Holy Roman Emperor and those opposing his authority, often allied with the papacy. Lansing discusses the rise of the Guelfs and Ghibelines, along with their affiliation with the aristocracy in the thirteenth century; see The Florentine Magnates, pp. 176–84. Both views of the motivation for the Valencian bandositats are summarized in Rubio Vela, “La guerra interna dels bàndols.”
in subsequent elections. The problem became so pronounced that, by 1401, the Consell complained in a letter to Martí I that it was nearly impossible to find candidates for public office who were not involved in one or another of the bandositats factions, telling him, “We doubt to find XII men of the aristocracy, from whom two (are selected), and XII burghers, from whom IIII (are selected),” who are “suitable and sufficient” for service as a jurat, which is to say not connected to either of the main bandositats factions. Consequently, the Consell was forced to relax earlier restrictions that prevented participants in bandositat violence from serving in public offices.

At times, the links between aristocratic bandositat factions and the members of the civic government were viewed as so explicit as to be almost scandalous, especially since there was supposed to be at least a pretense of distance between the bandositats leaders and those of the city. One example of this occurred in 1401, when a young man named Jaume Ros was implicated in the death of Jaume de Soler, the main leader of one of the two most important bandositats factions. At the point that Jaume Ros was accused, his father, also named Jaume Ros, was a jurat for the city, which raised immediate suspicion in the minds of others that the son's participation in the bandositats was directly linked to his father’s position on the executive council. What is more, in the months before his death, Jaume de Soler had formally declared the younger Jaume Ros to be a mortal enemy due to his affiliation with the opposing Centelles bando, raising suspicion that the entire Ros family were supporters of the Centelles faction and

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11 Narbona Vizcaíno, _Valencia, municipio medieval_, pp. 167–70. Supporting this contention, Narbona has observed that bandositats violence generally surged just before municipal elections. For example, he cites the election of 1374 when the bandos of certain “great and powerful people” (grans e poderoses persones) clashed with each other following the election of a bandositat member as Justicia Criminal. Similarly, two years later, violence again broke out following the election of the Justicias, this time between a gang controlled by the bishop of Valencia, Jaume d’Aragó, a relative of Pere IV, and one headed by the Vilaragut family, one of the most powerful aristocratic lineages in the kingdom and a regular participant in other episodes of bandositats violence. In this case, the violence was linked to the influence one faction had gained over the other as a result of the election. Hinojosa Montalvo has made a similar observation with regards to the connection between outbreaks of bandositats violence and elections in Orihuela. See Hinojosa Montalvo, “Bandos y bandositats en la gubernación de Orihuela,” pp. 714–15, 728–32.


An extended letter from the Consell to the King details the widespread participation in bandos that was endemic throughout Valencian society. See Archivo Histórico Municipal de Valencia, _Lletres Missives_ G3-6 (1398–1400), ff. 178r–182r (July 18, 1399).

13 Archivo Histórico Municipal de Valencia (AHM), _Manuals de Consells_ A-22 (1400–06), f. 91v (May 21, 1401).
that the son’s actions were carried out with the father’s knowledge.¹⁴

However, while much has been written about the \textit{bandositats} and the nature of \textit{bandositat} violence in general, the role of adolescents and young people, who were among the most active participants in \textit{bandositat} conflicts, has often been ignored, or at least taken entirely for granted. Often serving as foot soldiers on the frontlines of the assorted skirmishes, assaults, and even assassinations, the ranks of the adolescents and youths who fought for the various aristocratic factions were composed both of members of the feuding families themselves – sons or grandsons of the head-of-household, for example – as well as young members of the household staff. In particular, squires (\textit{scuders} or \textit{escuders} in Catalan/Valencian) who served as personal attendants to the head of household and his family are mentioned with notable regularity, perhaps more than any other group, as participants in \textit{bandositat} violence. As a result, they also were the target of the harshest penalties meted out by the \textit{Jurats} and the officials of the criminal justice system.¹⁵

The participation of young people and squires in \textit{bandositat} violence is especially significant because it appears to have been a primary mechanism through which the values of the Valencian aristocracy were disseminated from older to younger generations. For the young, their participation in \textit{bandositat} violence provided an important means through which they could participate in the aristocratic economy of honor and violence, which "made men" of them much in the same manner as the "baptism" of Guillem de Varoic's son in the blood his first victim symbolized his coming of age and accession to full manhood in \textit{Tirant lo Blanc}. For the young members of the aristocratic \textit{bandos}, the violence of the \textit{bandositats} provided a fertile ground for their own displays of prowess and physical dominance. In short, the participation of young

¹⁴ \textit{Ibid.}, ff. 80v–81r (Apr. 13, 1401). In other cases, the connection is somewhat more oblique, though still betraying the link between the \textit{bandos} and those exercising political power. For instance, in March 1407, the Valencian Governor, Ramon Boil, was murdered by a gang of attackers while traveling. His family, the Boil, was among the most active supporters of the Vilaragut/Soler \textit{bando}, and the involvement of the Centelles or their allies was widely conjectured, though never definitively proven, in the weeks following the murder. The understanding at the time was that the murder served to remove a powerful ally of the Vilaragut/Soler \textit{bando} from the scene, permitting the Centelles faction to gain the upper hand.

Ultimately, even though harsh new penalties for participation in the bandos were proclaimed in 1405 and were directed at both aristocrats as well as their non-noble allies, \textit{bandositat} violence only began to abate after the death of Martí I in 1410 and the turmoil of the interregnum had passed. For the later legislation, see Archivo Histórico Municipal de Valencia, \textit{Lletres Missives} G3-8 (1403-05), ff. 104r-105r (Jan. 13–14, 1405); \textit{Ibid.}, f. 107r (Jan. 28, 1405). Even after this point, however, outbreaks of \textit{bandositat} violence were not fully extirpated, with periodic outbreaks continuing throughout the fifteenth century and beyond. See, for example, López Rodriguez, \textit{Nobleza y poder político}.

¹⁵ The terms “squire” and “\textit{scuder}” are used interchangeably in this chapter and should be understood as synonymous.
people from both within and from outside the aristocracy in the *bandositats* can be seen as part of their broader indoctrination into the socio-cultural values of the militant Valencian aristocracy and a knightly ethos that based personal prestige on the ability to do violence unto others.\(^\text{16}\)

Given this, it is also no surprise that squires and other members of aristocratic households appear regularly as the perpetrators of violent crime in other contexts, or that there was often an assumption that the violence they committed was an appropriate means of protecting their honor or displaying their social dominance over others. As will be developed below, the ideals of knightly violence expressed in *bandositat* violence were just as frequently expressed by squires in their own personal conflicts with each other that sometimes amounted to their own “private wars.”

Lastly, although similar values were undoubtedly present in other socioeconomic groups as well and were not completely exclusive to the aristocracy, the inclusion of younger scions of the city’s non-noble, patrician, and mercantile elite, such as Jaume Ros, mentioned above, is significant in that it incorporated these young men into what remained, at that time, a system of values most fully elaborated and expressed by the aristocracy. Therefore, through their participation, non-noble members of the elite gained exposure to the knightly culture of honor, violence, and retribution in a very direct manner. It can only be assumed that their participation also would have resulted, frequently, in these young members of the non-noble elite more fully adopting and expressing these values as their own. Additionally, as will be discussed, the same process would have occurred for squires, whose ranks also included members of the non-noble elite as well as young members of the aristocracy.

**Squires in Fifteenth-Century Valencia**

Despite their frequent appearance in many accounts of *bandositat* violence, the participation of squires in these incidents has never received significant attention from historians who study the *bandositat* phenomenon. In fact, even basic questions about exactly who the squires mentioned in the documents were remain largely unexplored. For example, Narbona – certainly the most prolific writer on the Valencian *bandositats* – only mentions squires in passing in his early articles on the subject, devoting only one paragraph to them and equating them, largely, with household servants, even as he also recognizes them as "one of the most active, violent

\(^{16}\) See Part II of this study for a more extended discussion of the ethos of knightly masculinity, especially as demonstrated in chivalric fiction.
agents of the bandositats.”

Part of the reason for this relative lack of scholarship given to squires may be a result of the fact that, in its late medieval Valencian context, the definition of a "squire" had evolved over the course of the fourteenth century, becoming, in some cases at least, more ambiguous than it had been previously. On the one hand, in the idealized picture of the medieval squire found in countless medieval stories and treatises on chivalry, including Ramon Llull's thirteenth-century *Llibre de l'orde de cavalleria*, a squire was generally understood to be a youth of aristocratic background who, upon reaching adolescence around age fourteen, entered into the service of a knight to receive training in exchange for service. Thus, service as a squire was, in most respects, akin to an apprenticeship, with squires likely having the expectation that they would, at some point, be dubbed knights as well.

In two recent studies that analyze the composition and inner workings of Spanish aristocratic households (both Castilian and Aragonese) in the fourteenth century, this basic understanding of squires is largely reinforced. In both, the authors conclude that squires, most commonly, were drawn from the ranks of the petty aristocracy who were client families of the lord in whose house the squire served. Furthermore, the families of squires were often linked to a lord through geographical or familial connections, meaning that service as a squire was also a means through which lineages became even further intertwined with each other through affective relationships. Additionally, much in the manner outlined by Llull and Eiximenis, squires could expect to be educated, receive room and board, and earn a salary in exchange for their service as a lord's personal attendant and as a member of his military retinue. Also, after their period of service had ended, squires frequently received the lord’s assistance in establishing themselves as independent knights.

However, while the path from squirehood to knighthood just presented continued to occur for some individuals, it does not appear to have been a universal norm in late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Valencia. Notably, in early fifteenth-century documents, one finds that squires often came from outside the borders of the kingdom, traveling to Valencia from other Aragonese territories, from Castile, or even from other areas of Europe. Others appear to have come from non-noble families – from the ranks of the non-noble patrician class or even from lower classes.

17 Narbona Vizcaíno, “Violencias feudales,” p. 68. ("El escudero se transforma en uno de los agentes violentos más activos de las bandositats.")
18 Jorge Sáiz, “Una clientela militar entre la Corona de Aragón y Castilla a fines del siglo XIV: caballeros de casa y vasallos de Alfonso d’Aragó, conde de Denia y marqués de Villena,” *En la España Medieval* 29 (2006): pp. 97–134; Ortega Cervigón, “‘Por servicios muchos e buenos que me ha hecho.’”
Furthermore, it seems that at least some of these squires had little expectation of ever being dubbed knights. Instead many appear to have remained squires well past the legal age of majority and into their “adulthood.” In short, by the fifteenth century, it appears that the institution of “squirehood” as a temporary period of apprenticeship for young aristocrats to gain the skills necessary for knighthood had broadened significantly, making the simple assumption that squires were *de facto* adolescents rather more problematic.

Turning now to a closer examination of those defined as *escuders* in the archival record of late medieval Valencia and who fit into this broader conceptions of squirehood, the registers of the *Gobernació* that record negotiated and contracted truces between individuals are quite useful, despite the fact that only a small portion of what was surely a much larger corpus has survived to the present day. Often these records include specific details regarding the socio-cultural status of the contracting parties that illuminate the backgrounds of the squires and other individuals contracting them, as well as the networks of personal relationships that squires possessed.

Among the truces recorded in the registers, several deal with squires who bear the surname of prominent aristocratic families, indicating that, at least sometimes, squires were drawn from the ranks of the aristocracy. Three squires, in particular, can be identified as coming from prominent families. In the first document, one finds that Lluís Pardo, the son of the knight, Pere Pardo, and Martí Çabata, who is described in a related document as a *donzell* – one eligible for knighthood but not yet dubbed – both agreed to make peace with the knight Anthoni de Vilaragut. Notably, the document describes both Pardo and Çabata as squires (*escuders*), though it does not indicate which lord or lords the young men served. Therefore, since both men are

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19 One wonders if the phenomenon of Valencian squires who do not seem to have conformed to the standard definition may reflect some of the same social phenomena that caused the terms of apprenticeship contracts to be extended and entry into professional organizations to be restricted in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. For example, see Hanawalt, *Growing Up in Medieval London*, pp. 203–4. Unfortunately, at present this must remain speculative.

20 An additional problem is that the term "escuder" can also refer to one who makes shields (escuts), adding even another layer of complexity to the matter.

21 Very few registers of the *Paus y Treves* series have survived, such that only one volume falls within the period of this study, spanning the years 1420–1434.

22 The relevant documents can be found at the following folio marks: Archivo del Reino de Valencia, *Gobernació, Paus i Treves* 3.311 (1420–34), mn. 2, ff. 9r–13r (Dec. 28, 1422); *Ibid.*, mn. 2, f. 14r (Jan. 12, 1423). Of the three families, the Soler are the most noteworthy due to their prominent involvement in an outbreak of *bandositats* in the last years of the fourteenth century, though the other families – the Pardo in particular – were also involved. Additionally, another truce in the register involves a peace concluded between Mossen Pere Ferrer and a squire of the Centelles household, although the circumstances predicating their truce are left unstated. Archivo del Reino de Valencia, *Justícia Criminal, Cedules* 16 (1402), mn. 9, f. 22v (Aug. 31).

23 Although the lord(s) that both young men served is (are) not identified, the families of all the parties involved were prominent in the *bandositats*. The Vilaraguts took over the leadership role of the *bando* opposed to
from demonstrably aristocratic lineage, it is likely that their service as squires followed what could be dubbed the more “classic” model, which was intended as a period of training before undertaking the office of knighthood at some point in the future.24

Similarly, in another truce, a squire named Pere Soler, who bears the same surname as the leading lineage of the Soler/Vilaragut bando, is described not only as a squire, but the lord he served is also stated, Berenguer Boïl, whose family was allied with Soler and Vilaraguts against the Centelles bando.25 Thus, with this additional information, Soler can also be placed squarely within the more traditional definition of the “squire,” as a member of an aristocratic family in the service of another, older lord. Moreover, given the factional alliance between the Soler and Boïl families, it is probable that Pere Soler’s service to Berenguer Boïl was intended to deepen the connection between the two families through the affective bonds of the pseudo-paternal, master/apprentice relationship of a squire and his lord.26

Further, it is for very similar reasons that parents who were not members of the aristocracy sought to place their male children into service as squires within noble households, as well as into those of particularly notable members of the patriciate (ciutadans honrats). By doing so, these parents also could expect that their children would gain skills and training necessary for life in aristocratic (or royal) service, perhaps as an administrator or bureaucrat, as well as connections and patronage from one or more powerful benefactors. For some, there may even have been the opportunity to progress into the ranks of the lower aristocracy by becoming a knight, as occurred in both the cases of the Martorell and the March families.27

In other cases, however, found in other registers of the criminal courts, the squires mentioned do not appear to have come from such lofty backgrounds. Moreover, several of the squires also appear to have departed from the standard definition of a “squire” in other ways as

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24 Eventually, in 1430, Lluís Pardo became the alcaide (castellan) of the castle of Segorbe for the Count of Luna.

25 For the involvement of the Soler in bandoms, see the previous note and below. The Boïl were prominent factional allies of the Soler, further supporting the hypothesis that Pere Soler was a member of the aristocratic Soler clan. Berenguer Boïl had been a prominent knight in the service of the Avignon pope, Benedict XIII. See Hinojosa Montalvo, “Boïl i Dies, Berenguer,” in Diccionario de historia medieval, v. 1, entry searched, p. 365.

26 Recall that Eiximenis spoke of the master/servant relationship in these terms, as one with paternal or maternal overtones. Cf. also with the description of aristocratic service offered by Orme and Hanawalt, in Orme, From Childhood to Chivalry; Hanawalt, Growing Up in Medieval London, esp. pp. 129–198.

27 Sáiz, “Una clientela militar,” p. 100. For the ennoblement of the March and Martorell families, see Chapter 2, notes 56 and 57.
well. For example, in one case brought before the court of the Governor, a squire named Andreu d’Amiga was said to be in the service of the knight Bernat Sanç. In 1433, he appeared before the Governor’s court on charges that he had assisted Sanç in murdering another man. Yet in addition to being an escuder, Amiga is also described in the document as a hostaler in the bordell – the city’s red-light district and seat of public prostitution. Therefore, Amiga was also the proprietor of a roaming house in which prostitutes plied their trade, making him part of the city's legal, but certainly not socially celebrated, sex trade. At the very least, this state of affairs suggests that fifteenth-century squirehood had diverged fairly significantly from the idealized vision of the squire advanced by Llull and others. Moreover, given his “side-career,” one must doubt, at least to some extent, whether Amiga had any real expectation that he might, one day be made a knight himself.

Another accusation from the Crimenum registers similarly suggests that the line between the squire as “apprentice knight” and “elite servant” was becoming increasingly blurry. The accusation, which was brought before the court by the prioress of the convent of Mary Magdalene in 1458, alleged that a squire of Lluis Boil had recently attacked one of the convent's younger nuns, waiting for her to appear in the convent’s semi-public receiving room and then attacking her with a sword. Named in the complaint as Berenguer Oco, the squire’s surname is not immediately recognizable as that of a preeminent clan. The family name of his master, however, was quite prestigious, making it likely that Oco himself was from a relatively “good”

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28 Archivo del Reino de Valencia (ARV), Gobernació, Crimen 4.279 (1433), mm. 4(?), ff. 1r–10v (Feb. 14, 1433). The Sanç (Sanz) family are not well attested in Hinojosa's Diccionario de Historia Medieval, but two entries name men of this lineage as knights, although neither of them were the Bernat Sanz found here. Those named appear to have been close to the royal household, serving as castellans and in other capacities in Sicily and Naples. Hinojosa Montalvo, Diccionario de historia medieval, v. 4, p. 108.

29 Other cases involving escuders as proprietors of bordello establishments also exist. For example, see Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Justicia Criminal, Cedules 15 (1401), mm. 2, 29r (Feb. 4); Ibid., mm. 10, f. 2v (Nov. 12). In these cases, however, it is also possible that the individuals named were shield makers, not squires. This possibility is made more likely by the fact that no lord is mentioned in either case who the “squires” would have served.

30 The prioress did not appear before the court herself, but another nun spoke on her behalf and produced the complaint that she had written. The convent was located within the city of Valencia itself and, interestingly, the convent is described in the accusation itself as a home for illegitimate daughters of the city's elite families, describing them as “noble women and illegitimate gentlewomen, as well as daughters of patricians and honored citizens.” Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Gobernació, Crimen 4.260 (1458), mm. 2, f. 34r (Oct. 25, 1458). [En lo qual [monestir] hi ha monges axi nobles dones com gentils dones de natura com encara filles de ciutadans e honrats homens.] The convent itself was affiliated with the Dominican monastery of Santo Domingo, although the prioress of the convent was sufficiently powerful in the socio-political life of the city that she possessed authority to openly challenge the will of the city’s Dominican Provincial on occasion. See Lori Woods, “Penitents, Godly Charity and Public Sin: The Transformation of Civic Religion in Valencia, Spain, 1300–1450” (PhD, University of Toronto, 2007), p. 217.
family, possibly from outside the kingdom. Thus, at least at first glance, Oco seems to fit the traditional definition of a squire quite well.

In her denunciation of him, however, the prioress of the convent described both Oco individually, and squires in general, in terms that bear little resemblance to the standard definition. Describing Oco as “a vile man of mean condition,” she also described him as one “accustomed to be with others as a servant” and as “a squire, taking his salary like other squires are accustomed to take money.” Thus, although these statements were clearly made to defame Oco’s character, they also represent, collectively, a markedly frank assessment of the office of squirehood, in which it possessed little or none of the grandeur that Llull had ascribed to it as an “apprenticeship for knighthood” and, instead, had become little better than a salaried servant. Certainly, the prioress believed this to be the case, but the way that her statements are framed makes it also seem like her opinion was quite common.

In attempting to explain how squires had come to be transformed from essentially apprentices to servants, it may be the case that the prioress’s evaluation reflects the emergence in the later Middle Ages of a new type of squire that has been noted both in Valencia and elsewhere by historians: the “escuder de casa.” Described by Jorge Sáiz in his article on the composition of aristocratic households, the title “escuder de casa” was given to squires who no longer actively served their lord as servants, but who nonetheless continued to receive a salary in exchange for remaining part the lord’s retinue. For the lord, Sáiz says, the arrangement served as a mechanism through which social status and wealth could be demonstrated, since the size of one’s retinue demonstrated one’s power. For the squire, however, the arrangement appears to have largely turned him into a permanent retainer of the lord, and, it seems, also served to block him from further advancement into the ranks of the aristocracy. Therefore, since escuders de casa existed somewhere outside the traditional system of knightly apprenticeship, with no indication that they ever expected to accede to knighthood, it may well be the case that the

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31 The accused is alternately named as Berenguer Ocho, Oco, d’Oco, or Doquo when referred to by different scribes.
32 ARV, Gobernació, Criminum 4.260 (1458), nn. 2, f. 34r. [Lo dit delat e denunciat es scuder e home vil e de poca condició e ha acostumat star e sta ab altres per servidor axi com a scuder prenenent sa soldada com altres scuders han acostumat pendre soldada.] No entry is listed for Lluís Boïl in Hinojosa’s Diccionario, but the entries for Pere Boïl i Romani, the Baron of Manises, and Ramon Boïl i Vilanova, Lord of Boïl and Borriol, both note younger sons named Lluís. It is likely that the Lluís mentioned here is the son of one of these two lords. Both Lluís Boïls are known to have been knights and one was part of the Order of Calatrava. See Hinojosa Montalvo, Diccionario de historia medieval, v.1, pp. 366–67.
34 Ortega Cervigón, “Por servicios muchos e buenos que me ha fecho,” p. 721.
equivalence between a squire and a salaried servant, made by the prioress, simply reflects this phenomenon, with Oco "taking his salary" in exchange for his continued presence in Lluis Boïl's retinue.

In addition to shedding light on the increasingly ambiguous social position of squires in late medieval Valencian society, Oco's case also serves as a demonstration of the potential value that service to a respected lord could provide for a squire. In fact, in the case described above, it appears likely that Oco's noble master, Lluis Boîl, may have helped him extricate himself from what eventually became a sticky legal predicament. Following the initial accusation made before the Governor's court, Oco went into hiding for several months. During this time, Boîl was well aware that his squire was being hunted. As part of the search, representatives of the court repeatedly went to Boïl's residence, where Oco was "accustomed to live." However, when asked where his squire could be found, Boîl maintained complete ignorance.\footnote{This appears to have been a common occurrence for the agents of the Governor's court when sent to apprehend those accused of crimes; often cases are preceded by separate processes that outline the efforts to find and apprehend the accused, so that they can be forced to appear before the court. In one case, the effort dragged on for months and involved repeated attempts by court officials to compel a noble father to reveal the whereabouts of his son, which he consistently refused to do, pleading ignorance on each occasion. This was in spite of the fact that his son was known, generally, to have lived with him, previously, and was almost certainly either still a minor or under his father's potestas, leading one to suspect that the father was not being entirely honest. Cf. Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Gobernació, Criminum 4.258 (1450–53), mn. 3, ff. 44r–46r (July 28, 1452). The case is continued on mn. 4, ff. 20v, 35v.} Eventually, since he never appeared before the court or made any attempt to lodge a defense, Oco was sentenced to death \textit{in absentia} by the Governor and the conviction was proclaimed publicly.

This was not the end of the matter, though. Several months later, in the final paragraphs of the record, it is noted that representatives of the bishop and the king appeared before the court and informed it that Oco had received a clerical tonsure in the intervening period. As a result, since he was no longer subject to civil jurisdiction (especially since the victim of the attack was also under ecclesiastical jurisdiction) and since the representatives also noted that Oco had been absolved by the bishop's court, the Governor's court had little choice but to vacate its sentence and to drop the matter entirely.\footnote{As noted above, this action by the bishop likely brought little satisfaction to the prioress who made the accusation, especially given the tension between the convent and the bishop, noted by Lori Woods. See note 30.}

In the turn of events that came in the case, there is never any direct proof that Lluis Boïl had acted on behalf of his squire to effect his acquittal, but the way in which the the matter was resolved for Oco, with representatives of the bishop and king conveniently appearing on his behalf to exonerate him from a death sentence, certainly raises the specter that powerful allies of
the accused squire had intervened on his behalf.\textsuperscript{37} After all, he was a young man who the prioress had only recently described as a man of "vile and mean condition," who did not bear the surname of a prominent Valencian lineage, noble or otherwise, but who did serve in the household of a man of some importance in the city and kingdom.\textsuperscript{38} Moreover, Oco’s tonsuring as a clerk (clerus) did not necessarily mean that he would have left Boil’s service. Later in this chapter, other examples will be offered that show the somewhat surprising presence of tonsured squires serving in many elite households, in which their receipt of the tonsure appears to have been similarly intended as a means to evade judicial punishment for violent acts that they had committed.\textsuperscript{39}

Before passing on to other matters, one additional case is worth highlighting, especially since it brings into focus many of the ambiguities of the fifteenth-century squire already discussed.\textsuperscript{40} Brought before the Governor’s court in 1416, the case centers around a squire named Luca di Tono, a young Sicilian man from the town of Catania who was living in the Valencian town of Morvedre (modern-day Sagunt) and serving in the house of a ciutadan honrat and town jurat named Bernat Palomar. The accusation brought against him, by a man named Miguel Berenguer, alleged that di Tono had committed a series of crimes during the course of a protracted dispute between the two, including theft, attempted murder, and breaking a legally contracted truce between the two.\textsuperscript{41} Unfortunately, no indication is given of di Tono’s socioeconomic status or that of his family in Italy, which makes it impossible, at present, to know if he came from an aristocratic background. However, the fact that his master was not

\textsuperscript{37} That members of the aristocracy acted in this manner is suggested by López Rodríguez, Nobleza y poder político, pp. 187–88.

\textsuperscript{38} ARV, Gobernació, Crimini 4.260 (1458), mn. 8, f. 33v (Oct. 25, 1458). [Lo dit Berenguer, delat, ab la dita provisió es stat remes com a clerus simple coronat a la cort ecclesiastica.] Berenguer’s tonsuring and absolution is noted in the final paragraph of the document. No definite identification could be made regarding Oco’s familial origins, but there is a town with that name in Navarra. During this period, Navarra had been drawn into the orbit of the Aragonese crown through the marriage of Joan II of the Trastamara family to Blanca, the heiress of the Navarese throne, making it possible that this brought additional visitors from that realm to the affiliated kingdoms of the Crown of Aragon.

\textsuperscript{39} Also notable is the fact that Ausias March, the noted Valencian knight and poet, had three squires in his service at the end of his life. When drawing up his last testament, one of squires served as a witness. Notably, though, in the document, the young man is not identified as a squire, but as an "estudiant," suggesting that he was serving in something akin to a secretarial capacity for March. Given this, it is quite possible that he could have been tonsured during the period of his studies, as were many university students of the era.

\textsuperscript{40} The commencement of the case can be found in Ibid., Gobernació, Litium 2.216 (1416), mn. 30, ff. 40r & v (Oct. 7), continuing in a subsequent volume at mn. 45, ff. 1r–18v.

\textsuperscript{41} At this point, Sicily was under the authority of the King of Aragon (since 1381), making the presence of a Sicilian in Valencia rather less remarkable, especially since considerable attention was given to the Crown's Italian holdings during this period, ensuring regular contact and communication between the island and Iberian mainland.
himself a nobleman, albeit still an important figure in his community, suggests that di Tono was most likely from a non-aristocratic background as well, or perhaps from the very lowest ranks of the petty nobility.  

Nonetheless, despite the fact that he was not in the service of a knight or other member of the aristocracy, Luca di Tono is consistently described in the record as a squire (scudcr) in Palomar's service. In fact, was not even part of Palomar’s retinue, but that of his wife. Thus, although described as a squire, di Tono’s position in the Palomar household throws the entire Lullian construction of squirehood into question: not only was he not, from all appearances, training to become a knight, but he did not even serve a member of the traditional aristocracy!

Given these problems, it is a fortuitous coincidence that Luca di Tono’s advocate, speaking on his behalf before the Governor’s court, offered a particularly useful explanation of his client’s status that directly addresses the "in-between" position of the escudcr in the households of the Valencian elite. Speaking on his client's behalf, di Tono's advocate stated that, as a squire, di Tono "was habituated to serve gentle and honored men loyally and skillfully." This remark, although quite brief, is telling because it suggest that, by the early fifteenth century, squires had become, in at least some cases, not so much “knights in training” but trained and skilled servants for the elite of Valencian society, performing much the same duties that squires had traditionally performed, but without the implicit expectation that their service would result in knighthood.

At the same time, though, there is clearly also the implication in the advocate’s words that the service rendered by squires was of an altogether different register than that provided by other less-skilled household servants, being those described by the terms “servent” or, more commonly, “mancip.” As, di Tono himself explained in his own testimony, he believed that his duty as a squire incorporated at least some element of the office’s more militant or pugilistic origins, such as the obligation that he believed was incumbent upon him to provide security for his master and mistress should they come under threat. It is an obligation elaborated by di Tono

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42 Placing a noble into service to a non-noble would too dramatically have upset perceptions of the proper social order and, without doubt, would have been seen as dishonorable in a society so sensitive to questions of honor and social status.  
43 *Ibid.* , Gobernació, Litium 2.218 (1416), nn. 45, f. 10r. [*ha acostumat servir leyalment e be de son art a gentils e honrrats homens.*]  
44 This description of a squire’s duties brings immediately to mind the footmen, butlers, and valets who served in the royal and aristocratic manors of later Victorian or Edwardian England. Therefore, in this regard, at least, the judgment made by the prioress of the convent of Santa Maria Magdalena against Berenguer Oco rings rather more true.
at a point in his interrogation when he was to explain the circumstances that had led him to entering into a contracted truce with his accuser, Miguel Berenguer. Explaining the matter, di Tono stated that the truce came about following a melee (bregas) that had occurred in one of the main squares of the town. Apparently, while accompanying Palomar's wife through the city, he and his companions witnessed a fight break out in one of the town's plazas. Shortly thereafter, because of his role as a sitting jurat, Bernat Palomar arrived to put a stop to the altercation; instead, however, Palomar was sucked into the melee. Consequently, di Tono left his mistress’s side and threw himself into the fray as well, taking it upon himself go to his master’s side. In the subsequent chaos, di Tono and Berenguer apparently got into a sufficiently serious scuffle that a legally contracted truce was deemed necessary to prevent retaliation by either one against the other. Paraphrasing di Tono’s testimony, the court record tells of the event as follows:

The said Luca, who at that time was a squire with the said Bernat Palomar, . . . entered into the said brawl in order to be close to the said Palomar, his master, and to preserve him from harm just as any good servant.46 Thus, in di Tono's statement there is at least some overtone of the knightly militarism central to its earlier, literary epitome.47 Moreover, the impression ultimately given is that di Tono was more than a mere servant, but not, by any stretch, a “knight-in-training.”

Beyond the insight that Luca di Tono’s case gives regarding the status of squires in the households of the Valencian elite, the case also serves as a valuable source of information on other topics, such as the wide range of social networks in which he participated, ranging from slaves to the sons of local aristocrats both within and outside Morvedre. In di Tono’s particular case, on the one end of the spectrum, he was said to have associated with a young, slave girl, named Margalida, with whom he was alleged to have had a sexual relationship, and, on the other end of the spectrum, a youth, referred to only as Miguel, who was a squire for Jofre de Thous, yet another member of a prominent, baronial family. In the latter case, di Tono claimed to have traveled with the squire in order to attend the young man’s wedding to a local widow.48

45 The fight was started by the son of a local knight, according to di Tono’s statement, which is interesting in itself as yet another example of how aristocratic conceptions of honor through violence and physical domination may have, once more, come into play.

46 Ibid., nn. 45, f. 9v. [Lo dit Luca, qui iladochs stava per scuder ab lo dit Bernat Palomar... mets se en la dita bregua per star prop lo dit en Palomar, amo seu, e preseruau aquell de perill axi com tot bon servidor.] Later, he further emphasizes that his role in the altercation was mandated by his role as a squire to the Palomar family, stating, “in the said fight the said Luca was not personally involved, except to split it up and to serve his master.”

47 Ibid. [en la dita bregua lo dit Luca no fos entreveugut personalment sino per partir aquella e per servir son amo.]

48 While di Tono was accused of having married Margalida, the fact that the accusation was made by her
Di Tono’s network of social connections with squires and other youths within the town of Morvedre was also quite extensive and included some who served members of the aristocracy (and may even have been of aristocratic lineage themselves) and many of whom can be inferred to be young men.\textsuperscript{49} According to his testimony, he was part of a fairly large group of young men who gathered together regularly to drink, gamble, and socialize, and which included other squires and servants, as well as the children of the town’s various patrician and aristocratic lineages. In fact, in his relationships with these other young men, it may even be possible to see something akin to a youth culture based on the professional and socio-cultural commonalities between the young men of the town.\textsuperscript{50} In this respect, the shared experience of squires may have permitted the creation of social networks that permitted the growth of a shared social outlook, much as some historians of late medieval and early modern England have argued was the case among apprentices, where one can find evidence of what one termed an “apprentice culture” that was forged from a shared experience of servitude.\textsuperscript{51}

In sum, the picture presented within the pages of Luca di Tono's case is that of a young man who moved easily throughout the various levels of society, with access to the higher echelons of society as well as the lower. Further, as a squire in the household of Bernat Palomar, a non-noble but still influential ciutadà honrat, di Tono perceived his position as one that still harkened back to the original roots of service to a knight and combined elements of domestic service with those of military function, making him, at least in his own mind, a “real squire.”

By way of conclusion, one additional example can be offered that pulls together the various strands discussed so far in this section. In this case, the squire being discussed in the court record is especially remarkable because he can be positively identified as an adolescent, and his lineage is also identifiable as that of a powerful but largely non-noble family. Even further, the owner, Miguel Berenguer, leading one to view the accusation with some skepticism. In his testimony, di Tono admitted to the sexual relationship, but claimed it was consensual; he denied that a marriage had taken place. See \textit{Ibid.}, nn. 45, f. 3v. Yet, with this said, relationships between young Christian men and household slaves were certainly not unheard of, nor were they always coercive in nature. See Debra Blumenthal, \textit{Enemies and Familiars: Slavery and Mastery in Fifteenth-Century Valencia} (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), 194–238.

\textsuperscript{49} ARV, \textit{Gobernació, Lítium} 2.218 (1416), nn. 45, f. 3v. For instance, when asked to explain his relationship with Margalida, di Tono explains that she had agreed to have sex with both di Tono and a friend named Jacmet Maço(?); the use of the diminutive in his friend's name is suggestive of a younger age. Also, di Tono names his gambling partners, in part to corroborate an alibi he was giving. One of them was identified as the son of a local aristocrat, although he is not identified by name.

\textsuperscript{50} This notion is not going to be pushed too far, especially given the general scarcity of solid evidence. Nonetheless, a case such as this does lead one to speculate whether the youth culture of squires and others of similar status may have been more established than is sometimes argued for young people in service elsewhere in Europe.

\textsuperscript{51} Griffiths, \textit{Youth and Authority}, pp. 161–69.
squire can also be directly linked to the militaristic ethos of the Valencian *bandositats*, in which he was alleged to have participated.

The inclusion of all this information is largely a lucky coincidence, however, because the young squire, whose name was Francesc Miró, was not the primary target of the accusation in which he appears.\(^{52}\) Rather, in 1422, he was called before the court to give testimony on behalf of Joan Castellar, a knight whom Miró appears to have known well but whom he did not serve directly. Rather, Miró served in the household of another lord, Joan de Pròxita.\(^{53}\) Yet, because of his willingness to speak on behalf of Castellar, Miró also came under scrutiny of Castellar’s accusers and, consequently, a supplementary letter was included in the case record that indicted the character of Miró and other men who had given testimony on Castellar’s behalf. It is in this supplementary letter that the majority of information about Miró is to be found.

Among the details provided, the letter states that Francesc Miró was Joan de Proxita’s squire and that he was still firmly in the period of late adolescence, at least seventeen years old ("mes de XVII anys"), at the time of his appearance before the court.\(^{54}\) Additionally, the letter links Miró directly to the *bandositat* violence that still periodically plagued the city, accusing him of having participated in a fight (*brega*) between the accused knight, Joan de Castellar, and Jaume Ros, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, whom the letter makes sure to note was implicated later in the death of Jaume Soler, the leader of the Soler/Vilaragut faction.\(^{55}\)

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52 The section discussing Francesc Miró is part of a much longer case, found in Archivo del Reino de Valencia, *Gobernació, Litiium* 2.229 (1422), nn. 26, 19v. The case begins in register 2.228, mn. 14, f. 16.

53 The Miró lineage had aristocratic origins, but several of the branches appear fallen out of the aristocracy in subsequent centuries. Nonetheless, even those branches that did not possess knighthood or title often remained important. Several members of the family served as prominent officials throughout the kingdom, with one serving as *Justicia Civil* in Valencia, another as *baile* (bailiff) in Castelló (Castellón de la Plana), and several others named as *alcaldes* (councillors) of various castles throughout the kingdom. Further, while the particular “Francesc Miró” mentioned in this case is not mentioned by Hinojosa Montalvo in his *Diccionario*, at least two other Francesc Mirós are mentioned, who lived in the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Thus, it is probable that Miró was either the child of a patrician *ciutadans*, or petty aristocrat. See Hinojosa Montalvo, *Diccionario de historia medieval*, v. 3, pp. 120–21.

54 Although the Catalan reads “more than seventeen years old,” if there had been any uncertainty about the fact, the standard practice would have been to say “more or less” (*mes o menys*). The way the phrase is used here suggests strongly that Francesc was in his seventeenth year.

55 Francesc Miró's father is not mentioned specifically, but it is quite likely that he is a member of the Miró family, who were notable members of the city’s patrician class with several members having served as *Justicios* and in other leadership positions both within the city itself and in other, surrounding communities. Several members of the family were named Francesc, as Hinojosa notes in his *Diccionario*, including one who served as Justicia Civil in 1406, right around the time that the squire, Francesc would have been born. Members of the family were generally counted among the patrician class of the city, though some members were able to enter into the lower aristocracy. Thus, it is likely that Francesc Miró was a member of this powerful, largely patrician family of *ciutadans honrats* and that he was placed in service to a noble household as a potential means through which he too might enter into
Although the squire for another man, Miró was accused of having been a member of Joan de Castellar’s gang during the brega with Ros. Thus, although the reasons for Miró’s participation are not specifically addressed, it is likely that his participation reflects a similarly broad social circle as seen in the case of Luca di Tono. Moreover, much in the same manner of di Tono, or Andreu d’Amiga, here too one clearly sees a squire who was not neglectful of the more militant aspects of his position and who did not shy away from participating as a “soldier” in the “wars” fought by the Valencian elite, in which he had ample opportunity to develop strong relationships with members of the aristocracy.

Thus, Miró's case, once again shows that violence and militancy were fundamental elements of a squire's identity and role within an aristocratic household; the fact that Miró was still an adolescent only makes his case that much more significant, since it goes some way towards confirming the assumption that squires, by and large, were young – either still minors or in the first stages of youth. Unfortunately for some of those who lived out the violent ethos of aristocratic masculinity, their attempts to follow this path led only to their untimely death, as they became victims by association in the violent confrontations that typified the Valencian aristocracy's relations with each other and with society at large.

**Squires as Participants in Bandositat Violence**

This section examines the roles that squires played in bandositat violence, as well as how their participation in these encounters both reproduced and perpetuated the ideals of aristocratic masculinity that defined aristocratic culture and knighthood to a great extent. Moreover, while it certainly can be argued that the linkage of honor with violence and physical prowess was present in other classes of society, the unique position of the aristocracy as possessors of significant social privilege and public authority meant that squires, as members of aristocratic or patrician households, were often indemnified to a greater extent from the consequences of their violent actions than were members of other social groups. Consequently, their activities often appear more brazen since, for reasons that will be discussed below, civic authority was largely impotent in its attempts to punish their transgressions.

Examples detailing the extensive involvement of squires in bandositat violence are found throughout the records preserved in Valencian archives. Of particular value, though, are the
letters written by the Valencian *Jurats* and *Consell* to the king and members of the royal court, or to ecclesiastical authorities like the bishop of Valencia that describe what was a particularly volatile period of conflict between *bandositat* factions. Such correspondence was quite common to the entire period studied here, but the letters written during the summer and fall of 1399 are particularly relevant because, even more than elsewhere, they feature squires both as major instigators of *bandositat* violence and as the primary combatants.\(^\text{56}\)

The primary impetus for the resurgence of *bandositat* violence during this period was, without a doubt, the tit-for-tat deaths of two important members of the Centelles and the Soler families a year earlier, in 1398. The first death was that of Luis de Soler, and the second was that of Pere Centelles, both of whom were killed during a street skirmish between the two rival clans. As a result, vendettas were eventually sworn separately by the brothers of both deceased men, which transformed the conflict from a purely private matter into a fully formed, socio-politically driven, private war, with both families pulling allied noble, patrician, and other elite lineages into their respective factional camps.

It is within this broader context of conflict between the Soler and Centelles families, then, that one finds the description of an incident between the members of two households who were aligned with the primary disputants and were acting, in essence, as proxies for them.\(^\text{57}\)

Describing the circumstances of the incident in a letter to the king, the *Jurats* reported that a young clerk named Pere d’Ares, described in the letter as a "youth" (*jove*), was attacked by a member of the Claramunt family, who were allies of the Centelles, and several squires while passing by the Claramunt family residence on his way to a relative's home nearby.\(^\text{58}\) Apparently the attack was largely opportunistic, but the letter also notes that it may not have been entirely unexpected, since d’Ares was known to be “a friend of or in alliance with the Valldaures”

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56 Other examples citing the participation of squires in *bandositat* violence also exist. For example, in a letter from the *Jurats* to the bishop of Valencia, written in August 1409, they complain that squires featured prominently in private wars between the nobility. In particular, they describe two lords as “participants in *bandositats*, who, through their squires, have weakened and imprisoned this city in many cruel ways.” Archivo Histórico Municipal de Valencia, *Lletres Missives* G3-9 (1409–10), ff. 79v–80r (Aug. 24, 1409). [*eren familiars de les bandositats qui per llurs scuders han carafaxada e presa aquesta ciutat per molts maneres cruels.*]

57 The conflict between the Centelles and Soler/Vilaragut *bando* resembles the general pattern of feud described by Paul Hyam for medieval England, not least in its use of “tit-for-tat” violence in response to an earlier that had been suffered, creating an escalating spiral of violence from which it was hard to escape. See Hyams, *Rancor and Reconciliation*, esp. pp. 6–20. Also useful is the checklist that he offers for defining feud, found on p. 6; the Centelles/Soler/Vilaragut conflict easily meets all of the criteria proposed there.

(d’amistat o de valença dels Valldaures) and that family supported the Soler faction in their war with the Centelles.\(^5\) Therefore, even though d’Ares was a cleric, his affiliation with the Valldaures made him a legitimate target. Therefore, as the document states, taking advantage of d’Ares’s chance passage, “Bernat Servent, a first cousin of the said Claramunts, along with some squires armed with long spears attacked the said Pere d’Ares.” Realizing his peril, d’Ares fled into the home of a nearby notary, but was pursued by his attackers and was severely wounded there by a sword stroke to the head. Following this, his attackers departed, leaving d’Ares for dead.

When the sons of the Valldaura family heard of the attack on d’Ares, they immediately went to collect him and brought him to the family’s residence – this in spite of the sons already being under house arrest for previous turmoil they had caused.\(^6\) When they returned home, their arrest was further strengthened by the Justicia Criminal in an attempt to prevent a reprisal by them against the Claramunt family. Unfortunately, the attempt to prevent further violence was unsuccessful, and, three weeks later, a second letter documents additional skirmishes between the Valldaures and members of the Centelles bando, with young people, once more, featuring among the primary protagonists (and victims) of the continued attacks.

In the days preceding the skirmish, Gilabert Centelles, the leader of the Centelles faction, was seen re-entering the city in secret. This was significant because both he and other members of the two bandos had been expelled from the city in an attempt to head off further incidents of violence. Nonetheless, shortly after Gilabert Centelles’s return, none other than Pere d’Ares (who appears to have recovered from his previous ordeal earlier in the month) and several other members of the Valldaura household began to foment additional trouble by hurling abuse at three members of the Centelles household who were riding past the Valldaures residence, armed with spears.\(^6\) In response, the three horsemen charged at d’Ares and his companions and chased them back to the Valldaura residence, where Nicholau de Valldaura, the patriarch of the family, defended the escape of his retainers by raining down rocks on the Centelles horsemen from an upper-story window. Assisting Valldaura, according to the account, was another squire who

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\(^5\) In his article “Violencias feudales,” Narbona lists the Valldaura as part of the Centelles bando. While this may have been the case at some point, it certainly was not subsequent to this incident. As noted in the letter to the king, written on July 21, 1399, “ia enans los Claramunts fossen de la valença de moss. Gilabert [Centelles]… per ço los Valldaures se son acostats al bando dels Solers.” Narbona Vizcaino, “Violencias feudales,” p. 68.

\(^6\) The reasons for their initial arrest are not given, but the Consell states that their subsequent arrest was "strong ... under [pain of] great penalties and warnings." See Carreres Zacarés, Notes, pt. 2, p. 77.

\(^6\) Notably, the document states that d’Ares himself initiated the verbal assault on the Centelles partisans.
helped to drive off the attackers and, it appears, was learning the tactics of *bandositat* violence on the job, so to speak.

Eventually, the attackers retreated, but even this was not the end of the skirmish. Soon after, Centelles partisans again appeared in front of the Valldaura household and conflict reignited. According to the account given by the *Jurats*, the climax of the skirmish came when a partisan of the Centelles *bando*, named Alfons Roïç and a neighbor of the Valldaures, was seriously injured by a crossbow bolt fired by the Valldaures.\(^{62}\) Shortly thereafter, the skirmish again died down and the *Justicia Criminal* and *Gobernador* placed both Nicholau de Valldaura and the squire who had assisted him under arrest, but let Alfonso Roïç remain free at home because of his injury.

Yet, even at this point, the conflict still was not at an end. The following day, armed men issued forth from the Roïç household and mortally wounded a young footman (*macip de peu*) of the Valldaures, who the document does not name, but only states was eighteen years old. Almost certainly, the attack was carried out as revenge for Roïç's injury the previous day. In the account given by the *Jurats*, this final attack was deemed to be particularly egregious since the young *macip* was unarmed at the time of the attack and was doing nothing more than standing in the doorway of the Valldaures residence when it occurred. Describing the injuries suffered by the young man, the *Jurats* concluded their account by stating, “it is the opinion of doctors that the said blows, especially the three on the head that pierced the skull, are mortal and that he cannot escape death by means of medicine.”\(^{63}\) Immediately following this statement, in an addendum, the *Jurats* then indicate that the *macip* eventually succumbed to his wounds and had died.

Following this incident – on the same day, in fact – the *Jurats* and *Consell* finally took decisive action and appointed a special guard of approximately six hundred men from among the citizenry of the city. This, as well as the fact that most of the Valldaura family were under arrest, finally was sufficient to prevent further confrontations between the Valldaures and either the

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\(^{62}\) Hinojosa includes an entry for a man named Alfons Rois de Corella in his *Diccionari*, who he says lived in Valencia in the fifteenth century, though no birth or death dates are provided. Nonetheless, it is quite likely that this is the same man involved in the death of the Valldaures footman. Unfortunately, Hinojosa has little additional information to offer, noting only that Rois was a knight and that he served as *Justicia Civil* in 1425. See Hinojosa Montalvo, *Diccionario de historia medieval*, v. 3, p. 612. In the document, Roïç and his squire are said to have come out of the household of Nicholau Valldaures's stepson (*fillastre*), named Andreu Civera, who apparently lived in the same square as the Valldaures, as did Roïç's stepfather (see below).

\(^{63}\) See Carreres Zacarès, *Notes*, pt. 2, p. 83. [*Es opinió de metges que'ls dits colps, specialment tres del cap que li travesen lo test, sien mortals e que no pot escapar mort per benefici de medecina.*] Additional grammatical notations added for better comprehensibility.
Roïç, Claramunt, or Centelles, restoring peace to the city for several months, until the peace was again broken by a melee between squires of the Soler and Suau families in January, 1400.

In analyzing the string of violent clashes between the Valldaures and their opponents, the frequency with which adolescents or youths can be identified as primary participants in the violence is striking. Even beyond the one individual who is specifically identified as a minor – the eighteen-year old Valldaura footman (macip de peu) killed by the Roïç – the confrontations abound with squires, clerics, and sons. As noted above, Pere d'Ares is described as a "youth" (jove) in the document, suggesting that he was anywhere from his mid-teens to late twenties, and his status as a cleric (clergus) only further supports the probability that he was young, with the Jurats expressing uncertainty about whether d'Ares had received major orders or simply had been tonsured. Similarly, Nicholau de Valldaures's sons likely were also either adolescents or in their early youth, as indicated by the fact that they continued to reside in the household of their father. This suggests that they still were legal minors or still remained under their father's patria potestas and continued to be economically dependent on him. Thus, although no indication of their ages is given in any of the documents, it is likely that the Valldaura sons were young enough to still be unmarried and, therefore, were likely under the age of twenty-five or so.

Those attacking the Valldaures also appear to have been young, for the most part. For example, Alfons Roïç also appears to have been in his teens or twenties when he received his wound from the Valldaura crossbow bolt. Not only was he, like the Valldaures son, still living in the home of his parents (being that of his mother and stepfather), but an entry in Hinojosa Montalvo's Diccionari de Història Medieval de Reino de Valencia indicates that Alfons Rois (sic) was a knight active in the fifteenth century and who served as Justicia Civil in 1425. Therefore, if Hinojosa’s “Alfons Rois” is the same as the “Alfons Roïç” named in the Jurats’ account, as seems quite possible, it would indicate that when he was wounded by the crossbow

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64 The text describes him as a "priest or clerk" (prevere o clergus), which does make it rather more likely that he was in his twenties, especially if he had been ordained. This remains unclear, though. Also, in a later entry in the Manuals de Consells registers, in 1409, ten years after this incident, one finds a man named Pere d’Aries listed as a jurat of the city. AHM, Manuals de Consells A-24 (1408–12), f. 148v (Sept. 3, 1409). There is no way to definitively prove that these are the same man, but this creates an interesting possibility. If Pere d’Ares is the Pere d’Aries listed there, it would suggest that he may have been tonsured but was never ordained.

65 See Chapter 1 for more on the Valencian interpretation and implementation of patria potestas.

66 These conclusions are, admittedly, speculative. However, given the evidence that exists, they also seem to be reasonable conclusions based on general patterns and cultural norms.

67 While it is possible that Hinojosa’s entry refers to a different individual by the same name, both the timeframe in which both were active and the fact that Hinojosa’s Alfons Rois was a member of the lower aristocracy, which ties in nicely with Alfons Roïç’s participation in the Centelles bando, makes the connection quite tempting.
bolt in 1399, he would almost certainly have been a man still very much in his youth, and quite probably between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. By the same token, internal evidence suggests that both Bernat Servent, the cousin who led the attack against d’Ares that initiated the series of attacks, and the squires who assisted him were also young, though, again, no direct mention of their age is ever made.

The assumption about the relative youth of most of those involved in the violence between the Valldaura family and the partisans of the Centelles bando is supported further by a letter that the Jurats and Consell sent to the king later the very same month as the events described above. In it, they give various explanations for the continued violence of the bandositats, in addition to accounting for why their efforts to curtail the violence had been largely unsuccessful. One of the primary reasons given in the letter was that the leaders of both bandositat factions frequently employed individuals in their bandos who could not easily be apprehended by civic authorities. In particular, clerics and legal minors, and especially squires, were mentioned as especially problematic. Clerics, being the group which included Pere d’Ares, above, were employed in bandositat violence because they were not subject to lay courts. As a result, the officials of the municipal and royal courts were rendered largely impotent to deal with them. In fact, in the case of Pere d’Ares, at no point is there any indication that he was arrested or otherwise detained, despite the fact that he was named as the primary instigator and participant in several of the incidents of violence.

Taking their denouncement of bandositat violence committed by clerics even further, the Jurats and Consell also alleged that some individuals were even taking the tonsure despite having no intention of actually joining the Church, noting that even members of the elite aristocracy ([homens] de paratge) as well as married men – not normally a group known to wear a tonsure – increasingly were found to have shaved their head in an attempt to protect themselves from secular punishment for their participation in bandositat violence. The result, according to the Consell, was that the tonsure, “which should be a sign of simple honesty,” had instead become a “symbol of deception.”

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68 In a previous outbreak of bandositat violence, one faction had been led by the bishop of Valencia, Jaume de Aragon, who was also a member of the royal family. These bandos are discussed at length by Carreres Zacares, in his Notes, and by Narbona, in “Violencias feudales.” See also the document cited at the beginning of this section, in which the Jurats begged the bishop of Valencia to force tonsured squires to stand trial. The document is found in AHM, Lletres Missives G3-9 (1409–10), ff. 79v–80r (Aug. 24, 1409).

69 AHM, Lletres Missives G3-6 (1398–1400), ff. 178r–81r, esp. f. 181r (Jul. 18, 1399). Reproduced in Carreres Zacarés, Notes, pt. 2, pp. 80–81. [Primera, car son molts de cascuns bandos, axi coniugats com no coniugats, axi de paratge com dal tres [sic.], portants e allegants corona..., la qual axi com era e esser deuria senyal
been mentioned in regard to Berenguer Oco, who clearly used the tonsure as a means to avoid the death sentence imposed on him by the Governor’s court for his attack on a nun.

The second group identified in the letter is even more relevant to the current study: these were individuals whom the Jurats described as holding no property or substantial assets of their own, including “squires, disreputable men, and the sons of honored men who are in the power of their fathers and under patria potestas and do not yet have any goods [of their own].”70 In short, the letter states that since minors generally did not control property or money, they were rendered largely immune to Valencian justice, which relied heavily on monetary fines and the confiscation of goods as its primary punitive tools.71 What is more, the letter suggests that the young and the impoverished were utilized in factional confrontations by leaders of aristocratic bandos precisely because they were comparatively difficult for authorities to prosecute successfully. Thus, while the ages of those participating in the various clashes between the Valldaura bando and the Claramunt are nearly always left unstated, there is a very good chance that many, if not most of them, were still adolescents or, at least, legal minors.

The use of intermediaries in bandositat violence has also been observed elsewhere in the secondary literature. For example, in her study on the use of slaves in the late medieval kingdom, Debra Blumenthal has noted that, on occasion, slaves were called upon to deliver the killing blow against individuals attacked by their master.72 The reason for this, she argues, was twofold: first, the victim would be dishonored by dying at the hand of one of such low social status; second, and more importantly, if the slave delivered the killing blow, blame for the actual murder shifted to the slave and the slave’s master could only be prosecuted if he (or she) had specifically ordered the attack or could have prevented it; in either case, there was significant

70 Ibid. [Ia de si no havien ne han bens alcuns, així com escuders e homens de forcha e encara fills de homens honrats qui son en poder de lurs pares e sots patria potestat e no han encara alcuns bens.]

71 The term “homens de forcha” is rather ambiguous, but may refer to a colloquial phrase included in the Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear, which equates “homens de forca” with those deserving to be hanged (from a scaffold: i.e., forca). Thus, it gives a meaning of something akin to “disreputable men,” that is used here. However, it is also possible that there is a scribal error in the text, with the word actually intended as “força,” giving more of a sense of “men at arms.”

room for plausible deniability by the slave’s owner and, therefore, protection from legal retribution. In much the same manner, lords who used squires, minors, or clerics, were similarly buffered from the repercussions of the violent actions carried out in their names and, frequently, on their orders.

The benefit of using intermediaries can clearly be seen in the Valldaures’ conflict: none of the actual perpetrators of the various attacks appear to have been punished at all. While Nicholau de Valldaura, three other knights and seven ciutadans honrats were expelled from the city in November, 1399 – this being the standard practice for men unwilling to lay aside their grievances – they do not appear to have incurred any other penalty for the violence they had provoked. In fact, even their expulsion proved to be unsuccessful in stemming the larger tide of bandositat violence, which rekindled again in January 1400 and, again, featured young people at the center of the incident.

Beginning as a street brawl between two groups of squires from the opposing bandos of Jaume de Soler and Pere Suau, a partisan (valedor) of the Centelles bando, this second outbreak of bandositat violence quickly escalated into an all-out melee that went far beyond a simple skirmish between two groups of hot-headed teenagers. Yet, regardless of the factors that predicated it, when word of the brawl came to both Jaume de Soler and Pere Suau, both men rushed to the scene with additional forces and joined in the melee, with the fight lasting for several hours and squires from both groups receiving wounds, albeit none that were mortal. Therefore, the central role of young people – in this case, squires – as initiators of bandositat violence again manifested itself. Further, the altercation between the squires was sufficient to reignite tensions between the heads of the bandositat factions as well; in the days following the brawl, the Consell reported that Gilabert de Centelles, the leader of the Centelles bando, was seen prowling the streets in an effort to draw out the Soler bando. Unfortunately for Centelles, the city reacted quickly and expelled additional members of the Soler bando, leaving Centelles with no one to fight, at least for a time.

In April 1401, however, Gilabert de Centelles came much closer to achieving his wish of

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73 Further, slaves sometimes acted as bodyguards for their owners, within the city, with the noble owner going unarmed. Again, see Blumenthal, “Defending their Masters’ Honour: Slaves as Violent Offenders in Fifteenth-Century Valencia,” pp. 39, 41–42.
74 The role of expulsion as a means to quell bandositat violence is discussed in Ferrero Micó, “Pau e Treua.”
open battle between his *bando* and that of the Soler/Vilaragut faction. Following yet another confrontation between the two rival *bandos*, several additional members of the Soler *bando* were expelled by the *Jurats*. In this case, however, the expelled individuals, who were all part of the Vilaragut lineage, refused to leave the city. Instead, they made their way to the home of Jaume de Soler, armed and accompanied by men-at-arms and provocative trumpet fanfares. In response, Gilabert de Centelles gathered together his own forces, which the report says included knights, nobles (*homens de paratge*), members of the non-noble patriciate (*ciutadans honrats*), and squires (*esculers*) of his household, and rode out to meet the Vilaraguts in the main square of the city that faced the cathedral.  

In the end, only the last-minute intervention of the *Jurats* and the city’s bishop prevented the two sides from coming to blows, with him managing to convince both groups to return to their homes. Subsequently, even more members of the Soler *bando* were expelled from the city, including Jaume de Soler himself, which again gave Gilabert de Centelles no one to fight.

While no major altercation resulted from this incident, it nonetheless illustrates again the full and prominent participation of adolescents and young men in *bandositat* violence, as well as how their participation served to introduce them into the values and belief system of the Valencian aristocracy. Thus, in both the examples just given, the participation of squires had a two-fold purpose. First, squires formed a ready pool of muscle that, because of their young age, were also more likely to escape punishment for their participation in *bandositat* violence. Second, their very participation in *bandositat* violence gave young people the same sort of opportunities for demonstrating “prowess” as were glorified by Martorell in his descriptions of Tirant lo Blanc in the dueling ring. Through their violent actions, squires and other youths could make their own reputations and establish themselves in the pecking order of “honor.”

These themes are illustrated even more clearly in another case that occurred only a month after the averted battle between the Soler and Centelles *bandos*. In particular, the incident highlights how the use of squires as proxies for *bandositat* attacks also served to indoctrinate

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78 Cf. the discussion of the legality of private wars at the beginning of this chapter.
them into the bloody life of the urban aristocracy, in which one’s status was too often linked to one’s capacity for violent action. In this instance, the *Jurats* reported that four squires of the Soler *bando*, who were under the direction of an unnamed knight, attacked and killed a notary named Martí de Roda as he read a book in the doorway to his home. A relative of Gilabert de Centelles through marriage, this connection made Roda a "legitimate" target for attack because it rendered him a *valedor* of the clan.79 Therefore, in this incident, one sees what could almost be described as a “lesson” in aristocratic violence, with a knight “teaching” his young charges, the four squires, and guiding them through the execution of a factional rival.

Discussing the incident in a letter to Boniface Ferrer, Saint Vicent Ferrer's brother, the *Jurats* noted that the participation of squires in murders of this sort was increasingly common, telling him that such incidents increasingly were carried out “by squires and persons of perverse life who care less about killing a man than being well thought of.”80 Although somewhat ambiguous, this statement seems to suggest exactly the point made above – that acts of violence, “killing a man” in this case, were directly linked to the attainment of status and an increase in one’s reputation. In effect, the *Jurats* seem to be suggesting that, in the minds of the perpetrators, the “honor” earned (or restored) by the death of a *valedor* of the opposing faction far outweighed any qualms the perpetrators might have felt about murdering a man who was, by all appearances, only connected to the *bandos* by the loosest threads.

Furthermore, this case is also noteworthy because, just as occurred in the case of Berenguer Oco, following their murder of Roda, all of the squires went into hiding. One, however, named Tomas Rosell, was eventually arrested and, during his hearing, he revealed that he was wearing a “*corona*”– a tonsure. This caused the hearing to be suspended and the bishop to request that Rosell be remitted into his custody. In their letter, the *Jurats* comment on this, saying, “all of them [the squires] wear a shaved crown [tonsure], not only the squires but also young servants [*rapaços*] wear them in public, such that because of the crowns of those men, the Justice [the *Justicia Criminal*] can prosecute few of those taken.” Continuing on, the letter also states that Rosell had not mentioned his tonsure in his preliminary hearings or when he had given his initial statement, in which he confessed to having killed Martí de Roda. Nonetheless, when he appeared before the court, tonsured, the proceedings were thrown into a tumult and

80 Ibid., f. 302v (Aug. 9, 1402). [per scuders e persones de perversa vida que donen menys en matar un bon home que esser en bon comüt. E tots porten les corones rases e no solament los scuders mas ara los rapaços pochs a poblich les porten, en tant que per causa de les corones de aquells pochs que son presses, [el] Justicia no s’en pot aconseguir.]
representatives of the bishop appeared and requested his transfer to ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

Unfortunately, no mention is made of the fate of the other three squires. Presumably, they were never found. For Rosell, however, it is clear from the Jurats’ letter that they and the secular courts believed his tonsure to be illegitimate and, consequently, executed Rosell in spite of the bishop’s jurisdictional claims. With this said, however, the fact that the Jurats also felt compelled to write to Boniface Ferrer, who was an important member of the Church in his own right, to explain the situation strongly suggests that the Jurats feared the possibility of ecclesiastical reprisal for the execution. Thus, whether legitimate or not, Rosell’s tonsure still had power, even if it was not sufficient to save his life. Moreover, even given this, his case also highlights how surrogates – and squires in particular – were used by older members of the bandos to insulate themselves from punishment. This is especially apparent in the fact that the knight who oversaw the murder of Martí de Roda is never even mentioned by name, as well as in the fact that only Rosell, who made the mistake of returning to the city, appears to have been punished for the incident. All of his accomplices, who likely had little in the way of property or investments tying them to the city, simply vanished.

Yet while the Consell and Jurats appear to have largely failed in their attempts to restrain outbreaks of bandositat violence in the city, it certainly was not because they did not try to stem the tide of violence; however, they also complained frequently that their efforts were being thwarted by the lackadaisical efforts of royal officials or those of aristocratic background to enforce the provisions enacted by the Jurats and Consell, often because these men were themselves involved in one or another of the bandositat factions. For example, in one missive, written in February 1401, the Consell castigated both royal and civic officials for their lack of interest in restraining bandositat violence, before proposing several additional measures.81 Among them, the most extreme provision is aimed directly at squires. As the relevant passage states, “If any squires of those persons associated with bandos are found, they shall be disarmed and put in prison and punished according to the said royal ordinance.”82 Notably, the provision distinguishes between squires and other servants (domestichs) who were treated much more generously. If found bearing weapons, these individuals (i.e., other servants) would only have

81 This is the basic thrust of Salvador Esteban’s article, in which she argues that the crown permitted the bandosits to continue because it kept the aristocracy weak and allowed royal power to continuously increase. See Salvador Esteban, “Bandos y fórmulas de solaridad,” p. 30. In addition, one wonders if part of these offices were also those controlled, at least intermittently, by members of the aristocracy.
82 AHM, Manuals de Consells A-22 (1400–06), ff. 65r&v (Feb. 25, 1401). [Si als uns escuders d’aquells persones de bando seran atrobats, sien desarmats e meses en la preso e punits segons la dita ordinació reyal.]
their weapons confiscated “without hope of recovering [them]” (sens sperança de cobrar); no mention is made about them being imprisoned or otherwise punished. Thus, in the estimation of the Consell, there was a distinct, qualitative difference between the threat posed by armed squires compared to that posed by other members of elite households, particularly with relation to their participation in bandositat violence.

In essence, despite the fact that squires may increasingly have been more akin to professional servants rather than apprentice knights, the education and training they received in many of the aristocratic households of the Valencian elite nonetheless continued to prepare them for a “knightly” life of violence. Thoroughly immersed in the culture of factional violence, personal vendetta, and private war that suffused the elite classes of the city and kingdom, squires became the “shock troops” for the private armies of many aristocratic lords, both because they appear to have been particularly prone to violence and because their status as individuals with little personal wealth, and often as minors, made them especially difficult for the Valencian courts to deal with. Therefore, bandositat violence was something akin to a perfect storm for the indoctrination of young squires into the violent economy of personal and familial honor by which the aristocracy continued to define itself, in which “honor” was indelibly linked to one’s capacity to dominate and “conquer” others.

To conclude this section, one additional letter can be cited that demonstrates how readily squires adopted the particularly dangerous blend of bravado and reckless violence seen in Martorell’s construction of aristocratic knighthood. Dated April 24, 1401 and sent to the city’s representatives at the royal court – known as missatgers – the letter describes what had been a recent altercation in the city, in which “X o XII escuders, desonastament armats” were confronted by the Justicia Criminal, Francesc Aguilar, and two constables (saitgs) who accompanied him, in an attempt to enforce the ban that had been placed on squires carrying arms, which had been issued only two months earlier.

In the beginning, everything went according to the Justicia’s plan. When he and his men arrived at the location where the squires were massing, the letter reports that most of them fled immediately: three squires from the household of Ramon de Vilaragut, however, did not flee. Instead, these three individuals reportedly fortified themselves in a nearby barber’s shop where they absolutely refused to surrender to the Justicia and his men. They stated that they would only surrender their weapons into the hands of their lord, Ramon de Vilaragut, and asked that the
*Justicia* accompany them back to Vilaragut’s home, where they would then surrender. In all likelihood, this was an attempt on their part to lay claim to shield themselves behind their lord's authority who, when made aware of the situation, would have attempted to use his position and influence on their behalf.

Unfortunately for the squires, the *Justicia* refused this arrangement and insisted that they surrender the weapons before being accompanied to Ramon de Vilaragut's home. He and the constables then attempted to approach the squires, to disarm them, and the squires attacked. One squire was able to injure one of the constables with a blow from a shield, and another squire dealt a dagger-wound to the hand of the other constable. The third squire, who attempted to flee, was pursued by the *Justicia Criminal*, who also was injured when he fell off his mule during the pursuit. In the end, all three squires appear to have escaped, and their willingness to directly attack the primary law enforcement official of the city appears to have gone entirely unpunished. Moreover, to add to the *Justicia*’s humiliation, things soon went even worse for him: shortly afterwards, he was charged in the Governor's court and was thrown into prison pending trial.

Notably, though the accuser in the case is not named, it is quite likely that the case was brought either by Ramon de Vilaragut or by the family of the third squire, since the allegation against the *Justicia* was that he had wounded a squire with his short sword while pursuing him, which lines up well with the facts of the case.

However, even if the squire mentioned here is not one of the three mentioned in the case above, this incident nonetheless demonstrates the problem posed by squires, as well as yet another mechanism through which squires were protected from facing punishment for the lawbreaking. The case amply captures the tension that existed between aristocratic families who participated in *bandositat* violence and civic authorities who were trying to restrain them. Further, even if the squires who had massed in the initial episode acted entirely on their own initiative, and not on that of their lord, their blatant disregard of the recent provision barring them from bearing arms is notable, as is the ineffectualness of the *Justicia Criminal*. Thus, squires continued to feature prominently as foot soldiers in the *bandos* of aristocratic families throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, perpetuating the cycle of private war, vendetta, and violent aggression in the city that continued, at the very least, until the practice of private war was

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83 There seems to be an error in the original letter (f. 110r), in which the scribe accidentally wrote "saigs" instead of "escuders." As the text reads, without editing, the *Justicia* told his constables that they should lay down their arms, and they said "No." As written this makes little sense. Instead, the *Justicia* would have said this to the squires, not to his own men. Therefore, the text is being used with this emendation.
outlawed by Felip III in 1603, or even beyond.\textsuperscript{84}

\textit{The Cent de Cavall}

In addition to serving as a squire in an elite household, other mechanisms also existed through which the adolescent sons of wealthy, non-noble Valencian lineages became suffused into the cultural identity of the militant aristocracy and were equipped with the skills necessary to “fit in” among this most elite segment of Valencian society. This institution was the \textit{Cent de Cavall}: a cohort of cavalrymen formed by royal decree in 1391 as an elite unit of the city’s civic militia as an additional defense against both internal and external threats.\textsuperscript{85} This unit is particularly noteworthy because, while it was intended to be a heavily armed cavalry unit, much like a cohort of knights, it was primarily made up of individuals who were not aristocrats or knights themselves. In fact, titled knights were only a small minority of the force.

According to the unit’s mandate, it was to be every bit as heavily armored as any cohort of aristocratic knights and each member was expected to provide funds for his own horse, tack, arms, and armor. Moreover, the statute founding the unit also specified that the arms and armor to be used were also the same, heavy and expensive pieces used by aristocratic cavalry units. Consequently, participation in the \textit{Cent de Cavall} represented a considerable expense to its members, but the result was what could only have been a formidable military presence.\textsuperscript{86}

Despite financial requirements that seem, at first glance, to be quite prohibitive and which might lead one to expect that the members were exclusively from the wealthiest and highest echelons of society, the decree instead specifies that the majority of the unit’s members were to be drawn from decidedly more humble socioeconomic circumstances. To this effect, the founding document states,

\begin{quote}
Item, that in the aforesaid Cent de Cavayll [sic] there should be from each [social] condition, or hand [class] of the city, that is X aristocrats, XXX citizens from the upper class, XXX from the middle, and XXX from the lower, all skilled and sufficient [for the position], elected by the aforementioned Electors or the greater part of them.\textsuperscript{87}
\end{quote}

As can be seen, while members of both the aristocracy and patriciate are included among the

\textsuperscript{84} Salvador Esteban, “Bandos y fórmulas de solaridad,” p. 22. Salvador notes that the legality of private wars was confirmed not once, but twice in the sixteenth century, in 1510 and in 1534.


\textsuperscript{86} Only thirty of the troops one hundred members were permitted to wear light or leather armor. The rest were required to wear heavy, metal armors.

\textsuperscript{87} AHM, \textit{Manuals de Consells} A-19 (1388–92), ff. 218r–219v. [Item que en los dits Cent de cavayll haia de cascuna condició o ma de la Ciutat, ço es X homens de paratge, XXX Ciutadans de ma major, XXX de mijana, e XXX de menor, tots aptes e sufficientes elegidors per los dits Elets o per la maior part d’aquells.]
ranks of the *Cent de Cavall*, they formed only a minority of the total force – 40 percent. Members of the middle and lower “hands” (*manos*), which can be understood as merchants or artisans of significant, though not excessive, wealth, formed the majority – 60 percent. Moreover, actual knights or members of the aristocracy were only 10 percent of the force, meaning that the troop was largely made up of individuals of non-noble lineage who were nonetheless appropriating many of the symbols of aristocratic knighthood for themselves. Thus, the existence and social makeup of the *Cent de Cavall* reflect what was a substantially more fluid boundary between the aristocracy and the wealthy urban bourgeoisie/patriciate (the *ciutadans honrats*) in late medieval Spain than one might expect. The very fact that members of the aristocracy were blended into a much larger cohort of others from lower socioeconomic ranks only underlines the intentional incorporation of different classes under what was, ostensibly, a purely aristocratic, knightly institution as part of a civic unit of heavy cavalry. Therefore, participation in the *Cent de Cavall* also, by design, would have created additional opportunities for its members from across the class spectrum to come into contact with knightly, aristocratic constructions of masculine identity and social comportment and to incorporate them into their own identity and public projection of self.

Even more important than the exposure to knightly training and skills that the *Cent de Cavall* offered to its adult members was the fact that an individual who was selected to serve in the *Cent de Cavall* was permitted to substitute a son to serve in his place. Moreover, this privilege was specifically intended to provide non-noble sons the opportunity to learn skills associated with knightly service and to initiate them into the knightly profession:

> Item, that each of the aforesaid *Cent de Cavall* must fulfill his service himself and not through a substitute, except in case of personal necessity made known to the said Justice and Jurats, or to the greater part of them. But in order to guide and prepare their sons in skills of arms and riding, it is permitted to each of the aforesaid *Cent de Cavall* to fulfill their service through an apt and sufficient[ly skilled] son, with the knowledge of the said Justice and Jurats.  

Thus, on the one hand, while the *Cent de Cavall* was certainly intended as an additional tool for civic protection, it also served, from its very foundation, as a means to introduce largely non-noble sons into the skills directly associated with the practice of knighthood, including riding and

88 The fluid boundary between the aristocracy and the non-noble patriciate is particularly well illustrated by several essays in the collection entitled *L'univers dels prohoms*. In particular, see Narbona Vizcaíno, “Marrades, un partit patrici.” His essay outlines the evolution of the Marrades lineage as it moved from the ranks of the non-noble patriciate into the aristocracy.

89 AHM, *Manuals de Consells* A-19 (1388–92), ff. 218r–219v. [Item que cascu dels dits C de cavall haia a fer lo servy personalment e no per substitut sino en cas de necessitat de sa persona, a coneguda dels dits Justicie e Jurats o de la major part d'ells. Empero per endreçar e enaptir los fills lurs al exercici de les armes e de cavalcar, sia legut a cascu dels dits C de cavayll fer lo dit servy per propri fill apte e sufficient a coneguda dels dits Justicie e Jurats.]
skill-at-arms. Because of this, the Cent de Cavall also represented an important means through which families could pursue upward social mobility across generations.

In short, although service in the Cent de Cavall could be seen as a “watered down” version of knighthood, in that it did not grant any actual title or aristocratic privilege, such a view seriously underestimates the importance of the institution. By permitting sons to serve in place of their fathers, the Cent de Cavall served as means through which members of “lower” classes were given access to a version of knighthood that permitted them to, in effect, become knights in all but title. As such, it was yet another mechanism through which the military training and belligerence of the aristocracy were made accessible to other segments of society. Moreover, the mixture of boys and men from across the class spectrum also served as yet another avenue through which what may once have been considered to be purely aristocratic values increasingly were shared across society.  

**Beyond the Bandositats: A Culture of Violence**

In many instances, the same ideals and beliefs expressed by adolescent squires and aristocratic youth within the context of the bandositats can also be seen in the behavior and activities of these individuals in other contexts. Therefore, this section will examine the values, attitudes, and behavior of squires and young members of the elite that were expressed in their interactions with members of the general populace, and especially with individuals of lower social standing. In these interactions, one finds a markedly similar adherence to notions of honor and dishonor and a similar devotion to expressing personal honor through violence, physical confrontation, and the humiliation of one’s opponent, despite the fact that those of lower socioeconomic status would have been seen as possessing little “honor” when compared to a member of the aristocracy. Nonetheless, for the young members of the elite, it remained necessary to demonstrate their prowess through the physical domination of their opponents.

To begin, however, two examples will be given in which squires or young members of the

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90 Perhaps in this respect the ordinances also betray a lingering desire to maintain the easier social mobility that had been possible in earlier generations, encapsulated by the distinctly Spanish phenomenon of previous centuries, the caballero vilano. The phenomenon of the non-noble knight has been extensively studied over the decades and is examined at some length by both James Powers, as part of an extended study of Iberian militias and Carmela Pescador, in an extended article spread over several volumes of the journal, Cuadernos de historia de España. See Carmela Pescador, “La caballería popular en León y Castilla,” Cuadernos de Historia de España 33–34, 35–36, 39–40 (1961, 1962, 1964): pp. 101–238, 56; James Powers, A Society Organized for War: the Iberian municipal militias in the central Middle Ages (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). Also valuable is Elena Lourie’s classic article, “A Society Organized for War.” For this, see Elena Lourie, “A Society Organized for War: medieval Spain,” Past and Present (1966): pp. 54–76.
aristocracy came into conflict in private disputes not directly linked to the factional conflicts of the bandositats. In both these examples, one clearly sees the expression of attitudes, values, and practices similar to those already described above within the context of the aristocratic bandos.

The first example, found among the brief notices of the Justicia Criminal’s Cedules registers, occurred on December 22, 1407, and details the discovery of Pere Jaume, a squire of Pere de Vilaragut, dead from knife wounds to his face and neck, in the house of a baker. 91 Unfortunately, the brief description found in the register gives little additional detail about the incident. Importantly, though, it does name the suspected culprit(s). When asked by the authorities who had committed the murder, they learned that, "according to rumor and that which is said by many individuals or people, squires of the Vallterres had committed the said murder." 92

Of course, any conclusions drawn from such hearsay evidence must be treated with caution, but several elements of the attack on Pere Jaume are worth noting. First, there is the strong correlation between the tactics used in the attack on Jacme and those used in attacks carried out under the aegis of bandositat violence. Just as was the case in the attack on Pere d'Ares, the murder of the macip de peu of the Vallterra family, and the assassination of Martí de Roda, here too one finds an individual who appears to have been surprised and ambushed by a group of opponents. 93 Further, like Pere d’Ares, Pere Jaume also sought protection in the home of a nearby citizen, but was pursued and attacked nonetheless.

However, unlike the cases mentioned above, the murder of Pere Jaume does not appear to have been linked to any broader factional confrontation, but rather was the result of a private dispute. First, while both the Vallterres and the Vilaragut families were involved in bandos – with the Vilaraguts being especially prominent – the Vallterres family’s participation in them was largely restricted to their home town of Segorbe (Sogorb), rather than the capital city of

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91 Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Justicia Criminal, Cedules 18 (1407), nn. 12, f. 43r (Dec. 22). The last name of the squire has, uncharacteristically, been left in the original spelling given by the text, since it is functioning as a surname. In modern Catalan/Valencian, the name would likely be corrected to Pere Jaume. The substitution of a “c” for the “u” is common in documents of this period.

92 Ibid. [Segons fama e los ere stat dit per molis persones o gentes que scuders dels Vallterres havien feta la dita mort.]

93 Such ambushes are also seen in numerous other assassinations and other murders carried out by aristocratic bandos, such as the assassination of the Valencian Governador, Ramon Boïl, in 1407, by a group of Centelles supporters. The incident is documented in Archivo Histórico Municipal de Valencia, Manuals de Consells A-23 (1406–08), ff. 160v–61r (Mar. 22, 1407). Surprisingly, this document is omitted from Carreres Zacares’s otherwise comprehensive compilation. He does note, though, that the assassination was carried out because Boïl had secretly been protecting the Soler, with whom his family was allied. Carreres Zacarés, Notes, pt. 1, p. 135.
Further, by the time of Pere Jaume’s death in 1407, the feud in which the Valterres had participated, being that between the family and Joan Ferrández de los Arcos, had already been brought to an end – by means of a contracted truce – two years before Pere Jaume’s death. Likewise, Jaume was murdered during a period of relative calm within the city, and, furthermore, there is no indication that the Vallterres were in any way affiliated with the Centelles bando or had any significant familial dispute with the Vilaraguts. Therefore, while Pere Jaume was part of the Vilaragut household, it is likely that his death was caused by factors other than his affiliation with the Vilaraguts, even if the attack on him clearly reproduces the forms of violent attack, reprisal, and collective participation that typify bandositat violence.

The second example likewise demonstrates how the methods and form of bandositat violence were mirrored in private disputes between members of the elite. In addition, it also shows how the belligerent ideals about personal and familial honor and the importance of vengeance for perceived injuries and slights seen in the bandositats were also passed from one generation to the next, as sons came to learn these values from their fathers.

Notably, the case to be discussed involves no less than one of the most accomplished poets of the Catalan world, Mossen Ausiàs March. According to a criminal complaint made against him before the Governor’s court, March had become embroiled, in the last years of his life, in a dispute with a much younger man, named Francesc de Vilanova. Additionally, March’s illegitimate son, Pere March, was also said to be intimately involved in the dispute and was accused of having attacked Vilanova at his father’s request, making him, in effect, the violent hand who carried out his father’s will.

According to a second complaint, brought specifically against Pere March for his role in the

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94 The family features only minimally in Carreres Zacarès’s comprehensive study on the Valencian bandositats and the scope and breadth of his research makes it unlikely that other documents exist that would show wider participation by the Valterres in Valencian bandositats. With this said, though, Carreres Zacarès does limit himself, on the whole, to sources housed in archives within the city of Valencia much more than those from smaller, outlying repositories. For the section on the Valterres participation in bandositat violence, see Ibid., pt. 1, pp. 12–14.

95 Joan Ferrández de los Arcos is also largely absent from Carreres Zacarès's monograph, other than this one appearance, suggesting that he was not a major player in either of the major bandositat factions either.

96 Again, one might recall the advice given by Eiximenis that nobles should ignore external slights to their honor, mentioned in Chapter 2. Obviously, his call had fallen on deaf ears.

97 The account of the first attack has been edited and reproduced in Villalmanzo Cameno, Ausias March, pp. 373–91, doc. 358. Villalmanzo also discusses the dispute in his introductory study (pp. 138–43). The original is found in ARV, Gobernació, Crimínum 4.260 (1458), mn. 1, f. 9r (Jan. 7), with continuations following in manos 6 (ff. 8r–13v) and 7 (ff. 6 r&v).
attack on Francesc de Vilanova, it was claimed that Ausiàs March had begun to develop a hatred towards both Vilanova and also towards a Moorish slave owned by the count of Oliva, whom Vilanova also served. Because of this hatred (the source of which is never made clear), when Pere March, accompanied by a group of Moorish slaves, encountered Vilanova and the count of Oliva's slave walking together, March seized the opportunity and attacked the pair, wounding Vilanova in the thigh with a barbed crossbow bolt, "from which wound he ran a great risk of dying." Thus, while initiated by the elder March, the dispute with Vilanova was quickly adopted by the younger March, such that he was the individual who actually carried out the violent actions that would restore the honor and reputation of the March family that Vilanova appears to have called into question.

As is so often the case, though, this was not the end of the conflict. Not long after, following his recovery from the wound he had received, Vilanova took his revenge. According to a carta de batalla addressed to Francesc de Vilanova written the following year, apparently, by Ausiàs March in his son’s name, the former, along with a band of twenty-four supporters (valedors) had ambushed Pere March unexpectedly, while he was traveling through town, accompanied only by four Moorish slaves. Thus, again, the son became, in effect, a surrogate for his father, and the violence that was committed against him was understood by all parties to be also an attack on his father. Thus, both as the perpetrator and the victim of violence in this affair, Pere March was fully incorporated into his father’s dispute, such that his own honor (as well as that of his father and family) hinged on his ability to physically dominate Vilanova. In fact, it was for this very reason that the carta de batalla was composed, so that Pere March could begin to regain the honor that had been further diminished by Vilanova’s successful assault on him.

Following the issuance of the carta de batalla by Ausiàs and Pere March, however, there do not appear to have been additional outbreaks of violence between the two parties, although it is likely that this was due as much to Francesc de Vilanova being arrested by the Governador and thrown into prison until the elder March died of natural causes, soon after, in early November

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98 Villalmanzo Cameno, Ausias March, p. 375. [Francesch de Vilanova fon nafrat en la cuixa d'una treta ab erba, de la cual nafra aquell corregué gran risch de morir sino que de morir sino que nostre senyor Déu plagué que fon tost acorregut ab medecines cordiales e altres remeys.]
99 The account of Vilanova’s attack on Pere March has also been edited and reproduced in Ibid., pp. 372–73, doc. 357. The original document is housed in the Biblioteca Nacional de España, Manuscritos, no 7.811, f. 163. Vilanova’s illegitimacy is asserted by Villalmanzo in his initial study (p. 140).
100 Part of March’s hesitance to engage with Vilanova directly may result from the latter’s illegitimate status, which may have prevented March, as a "true nobleman," from challenging him directly. His son, on the other hand, since he was also illegitimate, would have had no similar restriction. But since March was relatively advanced in years at this point, his age may have been another reason for his use of his reliance on his son.
1458. Although one cannot know for sure, it may be the case that, for Pere March, the dispute died with his father. Or, perhaps, Pere simply bided his time until the chance to strike would again present itself. Whichever possibility may have been the case, Pere March and Francesc de Vilanova largely disappear from the historical record.

Notably, throughout all of the extant documentation of the case between Ausiàs March, Pere March, and Francesc de Vilanova, Pere March’s age is never specified with any precision. Nonetheless, it is quite likely that he was still a minor at the time of the dispute. This point is suggested by the fact that, at the time of March’s death, Pere March still lived in his mother’s home. Consequently, one not only sees here an example of a child drawn into a father’s quarrel. In fact, if the proposed duel signified by the carta de batalla had actually come to pass, it would have been Pere March, and not Ausiàs himself, in the dueling ring, making him entirely responsible for both the recovery of his own honor and that of his family.

Also noteworthy in this case is that the attacks carried out by both March and Vilanova largely followed the form of those seen in the bandositats, with individuals or small groups attacked by much larger forces in what were, essentially, ambushes. Further, while these attacks were not necessarily “honorable” in themselves, they do seem to have been effective. Second, especially in Pere March’s attack on Vilanova, it may well be the case that his use of Moorish slaves as accomplices may have been an intentional attempt to humiliate and shame Vilanova as much as an attempt to injure him physically. As previously mentioned, Muslim slaves were occasionally commanded to participate in acts of violence by members of the aristocracy or patrician elite as a means to dishonor the victim of the attack. So it may also have been in the case of Pere March's attack on Vilanova, where he was accompanied by just such individuals, whose presence may also have been a similarly conscious attempt to bring additional dishonor upon Vilanova.

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101 Amadeu Pagès, Ausiàs March i els seus predecessors, Col·lecció politècnica, vol. 41 (Valencia: Institució Alfons el Magnànim: Institució Valenciana d’Estudis i Investigació, 1990), p. 114. Pagès notes that, at the time of his father's death, Pere March almost certainly still lived with his mother. Only his older half-brother, Joan, also illegitimate, appears to have lived with Ausiàs March in Valencia. This assertion is supported by Leonor Vilanova's petition, in which she states that only Ausiàs March, and none of the other individuals accused, lived in the city of Valencia. For this, see Villalmanzo Cameno, Ausiàs March, pp. 142–43.

102 In many respects, these cases recall the early, though still foundational anthropological research of scholars like Péristiany, Pitt-Rivers, and Geertz, all of whom focused extensively on systems of honor and shame within various societies. Péristiany and Pitt-Rivers wrote on these matters most extensively in Jean G. Péristiany, Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society (Chicago: Midway Reprint, 1974). Geertz wrote about this in his monograph The Interpretation of Cultures (New York: Basic Books, 1973), ch. 15.

103 See note 72 of this chapter.

104 Admittedly, this is conjectural. There are certainly other, less calculatedly vindictive explanations that
Elsewhere in the archival records of Valencia’s courts, additional cases demonstrate similar attempts by young men to shame and dishonor others through the violent attacks that they commit. For example, in one case, a group of “six or seven persons,” led by a young squire from the retinue of Anfos [Alfonso] de Proxida, whose name is only given as “Cabrit,” was reported to have attacked the house of Domingo Mari, who was a hostaler in the district of the bordell.105

As is common, no explicit motive is given in the record for why the attack occurred, but all signs point to it being a private dispute between the squire, Cabrit, and the hostaler, Mari. According to the complaint, the squire and a group of accomplices (valedors) arrived at Mari’s house while he and his family were eating dinner. Upon entering, after having gained access to the house by claiming to be friends of the family, Cabrit and his men drew their weapons and began to attack those present, with Cabrit, in particular, said to have hit Mari’s wife with “five or six good blows of his buckler,” before slashing her hands and face with a dagger.106

Notably, Mari himself emerged from the assault unscathed; only his home and family appear to have suffered harm. This suggests that, as much as or even more than Mari himself, these were the real targets for Cabrit’s assault. This is a particularly relevant detail because, unlike most instances of bandositat violence, in which women, young children, and property were exempted from attack, here no such allowance was made.107 In fact, by attacking the house at a mealtime, the odds were much greater that the whole family would be present. Thus, it is quite likely that Cabrit and his accomplices intentionally attacked Mari and his family to bring shame to him, by demonstrating his inability to protect his family from harm. In fact, Mari largely acknowledges this himself when he alleged that his infant daughter was even targeted by the attackers. Thus, the fact that the attack occurred within Mari’s house only further increases the likelihood that the attack was intended as an “invasion” that would bring dishonor to Mari by showing his impotence.

could also explain the presence of the Moorish accomplices, especially since the other target of Ausiàs March’s wrath was a Muslim slave.

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105 ARV, Justicia Criminal, Cedules 18 (1407), mn. 11, ff. 40r&v (Nov. 19). The name given to the squire is likely not his given name. Meaning “little goat,” the term “cabrit” is defined by Alcover as also used to describe someone who is “indocile,” or “of little moral firmness ... especially, a client of a prostitute.” Given the context of the case, with the victim being a hostaler in the bordell, this moniker (or nom de guerre, perhaps) seems particularly appropriate. See Alcover Sureda, “cabrit,” in Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear.

106 ARV, Justicia Criminal, Cedules 18 (1407), mn. 11, ff. 40r&v (Nov. 19). [...lo dit Cabrit pres a la dita muller de dit clamant e dona-li V o VI colps bons de broguer...]

107 Salvador Esteban, “Bandos y fórmulas de solaridad,” p. 22. The problem of attacks by members of aristocratic households against civilians is also discussed by Craig Taylor, who notes aristocratic violence was a persistent problem within medieval society and a frequent topic of didactic and moralistic writings. See Taylor, Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood, pp. 220–27.
If one were to ask why the “rules of engagement” that generally governed incidents of *bandositat* violence were not observed by the squire, Cabrit, and his accomplices, the most obvious explanation is that such restrictions only applied to conflict between members of the same social class, where norms governing “courtly” and “chivalric” behavior, rooted in the chivalric ethos of proper knightly behavior examined earlier in this study, were seen to apply. As Richard Kaeuper has noted, chivalric ideals were, quite simply, inapplicable to the interactions of knights or other members of the elite with members of lesser social rank, leading him to conclude that “as a code, chivalry had next to nothing to do with ordinary people at all.” Consequently, as much as squires were sometimes viewed as social inferiors by some segments of society, such as the prioress of the convent of Mary Magdalene, the affiliation of squires with members of the aristocracy and the urban elite nonetheless granted squires a relatively high social status. Thus, in this light, the attack by Cabrit on the home and family of Domingo Mari can also be seen as demonstration by Cabrit and his *valedors* of both socio-cultural as well as physical dominance over Domingo Mari, which reinforced Cabrit’s physical and social superiority over the *hostaler*.

In much the same manner, another case from the *Cedules* registers also shows how shaming was used by young members of the elite to demonstrate dominance over those of lower social standing. Brought before the court by a sailor named Girat de Termens, the case deals with Termen’s request for Ramonet de Thous (almost certainly a member of a prominent baronial family) and several other members of his retinue to be arrested for having attacked and, subsequently, publicly humiliated Termens during a confrontation in a public street. Describing what had occurred, Termens stated that, while returning to the city from the port district, known as the *Grau*, he had encountered Ramonet de Thous in the company of a paternal

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108 Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence*, pp. 176–85. The quotation appears on p. 185. Further, he stresses the attempts of knights to exert social dominance through chivalric practice, as well as violence, throughout the work.

109 A similar motivation can be seen in another case, brought before the Governor’s court, in which a widow pleaded for protection against a group of squires who had forcibly entered her home on several occasions, during which they robbed her and threatened to murder her if she turned them in. The attacks were, according to the woman’s complaint, the result of an argument that she had had with one of the squires, who was an acquaintance of hers. Here, the fact that the crime was repeated, which the victim even states made her incredibly fearful, suggests that the violence was intended as a means to terrorize and exert power and control on the part of the squires. The victim of the attack, named Sperança, brought two separate claims against her attackers. The first begins in ARV, *Gobernació, Crimenin* 4.258 (1450–53), nn. 2, ff. 40r–42r (Jan. 26). The second complaint begins on f. 42v. Notably, there is also another dimension to this case, which will be discussed further in the next chapter, but, for now, suffice it to say that there is a strong likelihood that Sperança had been having an affair with one of her attackers, and that the attack and robbery was a result of the ill will between the two when the relationship fell apart. For more on this case, see “Pre/Extra-Marital Sex outside the *Bordell*,” in Chapter 5.

110 ARV, *Justicia Criminal, Cedules* 15 (1401), nn. 2, f. 42r (Feb 11).
cousin (*cosí germa*), two squires, and three other men, all of whom were armed. Apparently, a dispute then erupted between Termens and Thous, with the latter and his men blocking the road and attacking the former, wounding him in several places. Then, in an action that nearly defines the phrase "adding insult to injury," Ramonet’s cousin coerced Termens into participating in his own public humiliation, compelling him to appear in the "Plaça de Miquell Novals" where he was forced to "to beg pardon [of Ramonet] and to kiss [his] feet." Further, after performing this act of self-abasement, Termens was then told that he should flee the city and, should he attempt to enter again, “more than twenty members of the Marrades *bando* stood ready to to kill him.” Thus, because he feared for his life – and likely because he could not or would not leave the city – Termens turned to the authorities for help in restraining the young Ramonet.

In his study on societal and class based relations relations of power, James Scott makes several observations that are relevant to Termens’s case. In particular, he asserts that societal discourse between "leaders of society" and the "ruled" – what he terms the "public transcript" – is, by nature, "a highly partisan and partial narrative ... designed to be impressive, to affirm and naturalize the power of dominant elites, and to conceal or euphemize the dirty linen of their

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111 Ibid. [*El dit clamant per pahor, que no'lt matassen, hac a prometre que ell hi hieir(?) a la plaça d'en Miquell de Novals a demanar perdo e a besarli los peus al dit Tonet. E que lo dit Olziva e lo dit Tonet haurien dit a ell dit clamant que no entras dins la ciutat car mes de XX del bando de'n Marrades stant allí ajustats per matarlo.*] The mention of the Marrades *bando* makes sense because, according to the genealogical chart of the Marrades family put together by Rafael Narbona, Ramon de Tous was the grandson of Pere Marrades, one of the major figures in the family and its increasing fortunes over the later fourteenth century. See Narbona Vizcaíno, *Valencia, municipio medieval*, p. 102. The mention of the Marrades *bando* also may suggest that Termens was a member of a rival *bando*. However, there is relatively little to indicate that Girat de Termens had become embroiled in *bandosíats* violence brevity at the time, beyond the mention of the Marrades *bando* and the fact that the Thous were allies of the the Vilaragut and Soler families. Most notably, there is no mention anywhere in the document that links the incident directly to the *bandosíats*, unlike many other instances in which the connection is plainly stated.

112 While there is no direct mention of the age of any of those involved in this altercation, the consistent use of the diminutive when naming Ramonet de Tous strongly suggests that he was still in his minority. Even more than the use of "Ramonet," the further diminution granted by the use of the appellative “Tonet” strongly suggests that he was likely still in his youth. The fact that he was accompanied by his girlfriend (*amiga*) at the time of the confrontation only increases the likelihood that he was still young, unmarried, and therefore at somewhat less risk of dishonor for keeping such company while riding through the streets of the city. Her presence will be discussed further below.

Another indication of his youth is found in a later incident, in which Ramon de Tous and Joan Pardo de la Casta, along with their squires, were accused of having raped the daughter of a *prohom*, which is discussed in AHM, *Manuals de Consells* A-24 (1408–12), f. 350r (Apr. 28, 1411). It is also quoted in Narbona Vizcaíno, *Pueblo, poder y sexo*, pp. 128–29. In Hinojosa Montalvo's entry for the second of the two men, he notes that he was given an estate by his father in 1409. This would indicate that he had been emancipated at some point previously. As noted in Part I of this study, emancipations most commonly occurred around age twenty or so, which then serves to give a tentative baseline age for Joan Pardo of somewhere in his early to mid twenties. By extension, this would also suggest a relatively similar age for Ramon de Tous. If the same individual as seen in the above case, this would place Ramonet de Tous somewhere in his early to mid teens. For his entry on Joan Pardo de la Casta, see Hinojosa Montalvo, *Diccionario de historia medieval*, v. 3, p. 334.
rule." Therefore, using this idea, one can posit that the violence and humiliation inflicted by Thou may have resulted from the "public transcript" of aristocratic precedence and domination coming under challenge by Termens’s words or actions to such an extent that "proper order" needed to be restored. This meant, of course, that Girat de Termens needed to be humiliated, publicly, so that the discourse of aristocratic dominance would then be re-established by Termens’s public acknowledgment of Ramonet de Thou’s superiority.

What emerges from this encounter, then, is a situation in which a member of the aristocracy, Ramonet de Thou, undertook not only to physically attack one who had crossed him, but who then took matters one step further by adding public humiliation into the mix, thereby ensuring that the subordination of his foe and his own “prowess” as a dominator of others would be publicly recognized.

Digging further, another possible – more personal – motive might be found for Thou’s attack on Termens. Among those who Termens requested be placed under arrest in his complaint are two women whose names are given as Siges and Sanchalia. Notably, Termens describes Sanchalia as the “amiga del dit Tonet.” This is particularly significant because the term “amiga” was commonly used to denote women who were being kept as mistresses or concubines. In his complaint, Termens requested that both women should be arrested as well, claiming that they both were “initiators and abettors in the said matters” (tractadores e consentidores en las dites cases), which strongly suggests that at least one of the women was involved in circumstances leading up to the altercation – acting as an “instigator.” In fact, it may even be the case that Ramonet de Thou’s actions were a reaction to a wrong committed by Termens against one or both of the women. Within the milieu of knightly conceptions of honor, a perceived insult to the women, affiliated as they were with Ramonet himself, may have been construed as constituting a slight on Thou’s honor as well, therefore “forcing” Thou to exact retribution and to humiliate Termens as a means of recovering from the slight that Termens had committed. Ultimately,

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114 Given that only Termens's account of the incident has survived, it is perhaps unsurprising that he glosses over actions he took that may have incited and enraged the young nobleman to such an extent. A similar approach could also be applied to the case of Ausiàs and Pere March, discussed above.
115 For example, see ARV, Justicia Criminal, Cedules 15 (1401), nn. 1, ff. 33r–34r (Jan. 15). In this document, the Justicia Criminal attempts to forbid the keeping of mistresses. Perhaps it is because of this that Girat to mention the women as companions of Ramonet de Thou.
116 This line of thinking is supported by at least one other case, in which a squire of Jaume de Soler and his mistress attacked another woman, with the strong implication being that the attack came at the behest of the concubine who herself participated in beating the other woman. See Ibid., Justicia Criminal, Cedules 17 (1403),
though, whatever the reason for Ramonet de Thou's attack on Girat de Termens, his actions nonetheless show a very real awareness among young males like him of the power that public shaming held as a means to exert power, authority, and dominance, just as was seen in the attack on the home of Domingo Mari.

Conclusion: Knights in Training, or merely Thugs on the Prowl?

The common thread that links all of the cases discussed in this chapter is the consistent utilization of violence as a means to assert social, political, or personal dominance between individuals or groups. Assuredly, this was not a phenomena restricted only to the aristocracy, but when one considers the ethos of knightly masculinity described in Chapter 3 by Joanot Martorell in Tirant lo Blanc, the examples included here clearly show how influential that particular ideology was. Squires and aristocratic sons overtly displayed this mentality as they prowled the streets of the capital city in search of opportunities to prove their “prowess” over others, even if those they encountered often were not knights, but sailors, hostalers, or other squires.117

As was noted in the first sections of this chapter, service in an elite or aristocratic household was a particularly effective conduit through which aristocratic ideals could be passed from one generation to the next, as well as from one socioeconomic milieu to another. Thus, squires, who generally served in close proximity to their aristocratic masters and who were not always of aristocratic lineage themselves were even more likely than the population at large to be exposed to values similar to those found in Martorell’s work, which they then reproduced in their own lives and interactions with others in society. In short, by learning, adopting, and reproducing the ideals, customs, and practices of the aristocratic elite, they could further their own social position and, perhaps, with a healthy dose of luck, even advance into the ranks of the aristocracy themselves.118

As noted in the later sections of this chapter, however, service as a squire in late medieval Valencia (or behaving as an aristocrat) meant more than acquiring proper manners or a

\[\text{mn. 5, f. 7r (Apr. 2).}\]

117 On some occasions, though, squires can be found in direct conflict with knights, such as seen in the truce between Pere Pardo, Martí Çabata, and Anthoni de Vilaragut, discussed near at the beginning of this chapter. However, these conflicts do not appear to have been resolved in courts, for the most part, rendering them more or less invisible, unless a formal truce was contracted, such as was the case here.

118 See Chapter 2 for Eiximenis’s recommendation of service in an aristocratic household as a suitable profession for the sons of the urban elite.
somewhat elevated sense of one's position within society. Much more importantly, squires needed to know how to fight; being among the most common participants in acts of bandositat violence, squires clearly had internalized the aristocratic concept of the "private war," which they then reproduced in their own interactions with each other, as well as with other individuals of equal or lower social standing. Thus, immersed in an aristocratic culture still propelled by the militaristic ideals of "chivalric" knighthood, in which vendettas, duels, and assassinations (or at least the threat of these things) were still relatively common, squires were unleashed onto the streets of Valencia, often armed, and with a desire to prove themselves to their masters, to each other, and to the world.
Chapter 5: Sex and the Medieval Adolescent; Or, the Marriage Bed and the Bordello

In the previous chapter, various paths were explored through which young aristocrats were incorporated into the culture of violence, honor, and reprisal that lay at the core of Valencian constructions of aristocratic masculinity in the later Middle Ages. Yet, as was also the case for Tirant lo Blanch, military skill and social dominance were only part of the equation that produced “proper” aristocrats: a “proper” knight (or a “proper” lady, for that matter) was also expected to be equally successful in courtship and love, thereby further securing his reputation through his romantic “conquests” and through the match that would, ideally, augment the reputation of his family and subsequent generations. Just as Tirant lo Blanc's military prowess established him as the greatest knight in the literary world he inhabited, so too did his successful courtship of Carmesina, the Byzantine princess. His eventual sexual “conquest” of Carmesina was an equally important demonstration of Tirant’s prowess in the eyes of his creator, Martorell, and, likely, his audience.

In this chapter, attention will turn to the conclusions that can be drawn about the formation of elite Valencian adolescents as sexual beings, based on existing archival material. In particular, this chapter will examine how broader aristocratic ideas about courtship, seduction, and sex expressed by both male and female characters in *Tirant lo Blanch* correlate with the reality of adolescent sexual interactions seen in the archival documents examined for this study. As such, this chapter is divided into two sections. The first explores the role of the Valencian brothel district, known as the bordell, as a primary locale for both the sexual and homosocial socialization of Valencia's elite male youth. Therefore, this section will investigate the presence of young people, especially squires, as sexual customers of the bordell and will explore their interactions with the district’s various residents, including prostitutes, hostalers, and others. Lying just outside the city walls, and eventually covering an area of several city blocks, the Valencian bordell was officially tolerated as an unsavory, but ultimately necessary, component of the urban landscape that, at least to some extent, mitigated sexual improprieties committed by young males.¹ Thus, in its role as a legal venue for sexual commerce that specifically catered to

the city’s population of unmarried males, the bordell is a prime venue for exploring how young people, and males in particular, expressed their sexual identities in premodern Valencia, and for examining the behaviors, values, and ideas about masculine (and feminine) sexual identity within the context of the socializing milieu of the bordell.

Second, since the bordell also served as a primary venue for young males to socialize with each other in the various taverns, gambling houses, and hostals of the bordell, it also is a site in which one can also successfully examine the interactions between the young male customers of the district. In fact, it may even be a place where one might be able to glimpse fleeting examples of “youth culture.” In addition to prostitution, the bordell was also a primary location in which men (and especially young men) gathered to talk, eat, drink, gamble, and, frequently, fight. Consequently, attention will also be given to the role of the bordell as yet another stage for interpersonal conflict, contest, and the performance of aristocratic “prowess” by young people, and squires in particular.²

The second part of this chapter will investigate how adolescent sexual identities were expressed in milieus outside of the bordell. This is a particularly valuable undertaking because such encounters even more closely reflect the reality of adolescent sexual behavior that frequently thumbed its nose at the staid pronouncements of ecclesiastical authors and, instead, more closely mirrored the moral and sexual worldview of Tirant lo Blanc’s characters. For example, cases can be found in which young men were accused of "kidnapping" the young women they desired to marry. On closer examination, however, it is not always clear in some of these cases that the young “kidnapped” woman had not, instead, willingly participated in her own “capture.” Conversely, in other cases such as that of Joanot Martorell's sister, Damiata, the opposite problem could arise, with courtship leading to sex before a public marriage had taken place and, afterwards, the young woman's family scrambling to save both her reputation and its own by attempting to force marriage on at least one unwilling party. So, too, in other cases, one finds clandestine relationships outside of the bordell between young men and married women, who were themselves often still young, suggesting another, albeit substantially more socially

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Moreover, several of the hostals in the bordell rented rooms to squires and others, as is discussed further later in this chapter.
precarious avenue for adolescent sexual expression

In addition to what these cases can tell about adolescent male performances of sexuality, the cases involving sexual encounters that took place outside of the bordell are compelling because they also offer a comparatively rare glimpse of how young women from “respectable” backgrounds both experienced and expressed their own sexuality. Ultimately, what emerges is a vision of adolescent female sexuality that, like its masculine counterpart, is not far from that demonstrated by the fictional Carmesina and her maids in Tirant lo Blanc. In both, one finds that while young women (and men) were constrained by societal reticence about premarital or extramarital sex, especially for young women, nonetheless many youth still found opportunities to engage in such acts, albeit, for the most part discreetly and in a clandestine manner, highlighting a degree of agency in the sexual lives of individuals who, at first glance at least, often appear to have been severely curtailed in their sexual opportunities.

The Valencian Bordell: A Crucible of “Youth Culture”?

The title of this section may appear provocative to some, especially in light of statements by several prominent scholars who have questioned whether “youth culture” actually existed in the medieval world and who claim that adolescents in the Middle Ages had neither the time nor freedom to develop a youth culture. At least in part, though, this conclusion may stem from the geographical and socioeconomic foci on members of the artisan and peasant classes in the northern region of Europe. In Valencia, however, the existence of the bordell district as a locale that catered particularly to the social vices of young, unmarried men offered a much greater opportunity for social mixing among its young patrons and a much more distinct youth culture that existed alongside, but still distinct from, adult society.

The Valencian bordell was rather unusual because, unlike the bordellos in many other European cities, and even others in the kingdom of Valencia, it was not one building, but an entire district located just outside the main walls of the city. Known also by its previous name

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3 Hanawalt, Growing Up in Medieval London, pp. 127–28. It should be noted, however, that Hanawalt remains a staunch supporter of the notion that adolescence was a valid and recognized life-stage in the Middle Ages.

of the “pobla vella,” the bordell was established by royal decree of Jaume II in 1325 and was among the earliest examples of organized, regulated prostitution in Spain. Initially run by the brothel owners, led by an official known as the “Rei Arlot,” the abuses that this system engendered soon led the government of the city to assume more control over the bordell, and the office of the Rei Arlot was abolished in 1337.\(^5\) Subsequently, the city increasingly exercised authority over all matters relating to the district, and even assumed ownership of the rooming houses (hostals) in the bordell, which it leased to individual hostalers who, in turn, handled the day-to-day operations of the establishments and rented out rooms to prostitutes, as well as others, at rates fixed by the city.

Similarly, the city also increasingly saw itself as responsible for the welfare of the prostitutes living in the bordell. Therefore, it also provided for relatively stiff legal and physical protections for them against blatant exploitation or injury, in exchange for the additional revenue that the bordell brought to the city through licensing fees, taxes, and fines. It even provided doctors and other services to help protect the health and welfare of the women and, by extension, their customers.\(^6\) Thus, by the late fourteenth or early fifteenth centuries, the bordell was a well-established institution of Valencian life, eventually growing to such an extent that city leaders decided to surround it with its own set of walls in 1444. In addition to defending the burgeoning population of the district, these walls were intended to ensure that the prostitutes of the bordell did not practice their trade in the city proper; prostitution was entirely forbidden, and harshly punished, outside of the bordell. The walls also were intended to better regulate the access of individuals and goods (i.e., weapons) into the district, in an attempt to reduce incidents of violence and crime that were endemic there.\(^7\)

The sheer vibrancy of the Valencian bordell in this period is dramatically illustrated by a

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\(^5\) Prostitution was already regulated as early as 1311, but royal recognition of the district only came in 1325. Notably, this is the same year that Florence established its public brothel. The district was fully incorporated into the city, juridically, in 1355, including regulation and law enforcement. For more on the Valencian bordell’s foundation, see Manuel Carboneres, Picaronas y alcahuetes; ò, La mancebía de Valencia: apuntes para la historia de la prostitución desde principios del siglo XIV hasta poco antes de la abolición de los fueros, con profusión de notas y copias de varios documentos oficiales (Valencia: Imp. de el Mercantil, 1876), esp. pp. 125–203; Eukene Lacarra Lanz, “Changing Boundaries of Licit and Illicit Unions: Concubinage and Prostitution,” in Marriage and Sexuality in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia, ed. Eukene Lacarra Lanz (New York: Routledge, 2002), esp. pp. 173–78.

\(^6\) See footnote 9 below.

\(^7\) Notably, while the actual construction of the walls did not occur until more than one hundred years after the bordell’s foundation, the advantages of walls around the bordell were already identified in the later fourteenth century. The primary hurdle to their actual completion appearing to have been the sheer expense of the undertaking. See Carboneres, Picaronas y alcahuetes, pp. 63–8.
description found in the memoir of a Flemish visitor to the city named Antoine de Lalaing.

Writing in 1502, he states,

After dinner, the two knights were led by other knights of the city to the location of the “public women,” which is as large as a small village, and is enclosed by walls and only one gate ... At the gate the man in charge of it takes all of the walking canes (bastones) from those who wish to enter within ...

In this place there are three or four streets lined with little houses, in each of which there are girls, richly dressed in velvets and silk, and there are somewhere between two hundred and three hundred of them. Their little homes (casitas) are adorned and decorated with good cloth. The ordained rate is four diners ...

There are also taverns and public houses with food there. Because of the heat, one cannot comfortably go there to see [the women] in the daytime and they [the women] turn the night into day: they seat themselves in the entryways, with a tasteful lamp placed above them in order to be seen more easily.\(^8\)

From Lalaing's description, it is clear that he did not perceive the bordell as a neighborhood beset by poverty, squalor, or degradation, as one may assume to have been the case. Rather, the luxuria, in its most literal sense, on display there was precisely what made the greatest impression on the foreign knight. In fact, his account suggests that the bordell was even something of a tourist destination, with Lalaing and his companion brought there by locals so that they could “see the sights.” In short, the bordell was even a source of public pride for at least a certain portion of the city’s residents.\(^9\)

\(^8\) The date of the account is, admittedly, beyond that of this study. Nonetheless, it is not so far beyond that it may not still be seen as emblematic of what the district may have been like in the previous century. Quoted in Perez Garcia, *La comparsa de los malhechores*, pp. 169–70. The passage was initially included in Vicente Graullera’s article on the bordell and its residents. Graullera Sanz, “Hostaleros del burdel,” pp. 95–96. The translation of the passage is mine and it has been somewhat abridged for brevity. [Después de cenar, fueron los dos caballeros conducidos por algunos caballeros de la ciudad a ver el lugar de las mujeres públicas, el cual es grande como un pueblo pequeño, y cerrado todo alrededor con muros y una sola puerta ... En este sitio hay tres o cuatro calles llenas de pequeñas casas en cada una de las cuales hay muchachas muy ricamente vestidas de terciopelo y de seda, y habrá de doscientas a trescientas mujeres. Tienen sus casitas adornadas y provistas de buena ropa. La tasa ordenada son cuatro dineros de su moneda ...

Allí hay tabernas y casas de comidas. Por el calor no se puede allí ver bien de día, y hacen de la noche día: porque están sentadas en sus entradas, con una hermosa lámpara colgada encima de ellas, para verlas con más facilidad.]

\(^9\) Lalaing’s description also notes several regulatory practices in the bordell that particularly impressed him, and which give additional insight into the bordell’s function as a tool for public order and “good government.” Among the practices that particularly impressed Lalaing was the well-regulated check-in procedure at the lone gate into the district. Here, he says, all those wishing to enter were required to surrender their weapons, in an attempt to prevent bloodshed within. Customers were also given the opportunity to leave behind their excess money with the doorman for safekeeping, thereby ensuring that one did not lose everything in the gambling halls or as the victim of a back-alley mugging; when one left, the money would be returned.

Also impressive for Lalaing was the fact that the city had appointed doctors specifically to minister to the needs of the district’s prostitutes. Lastly, Lalaing specifically mentions that the prices charged by the prostitutes was not only much higher than what he considered normal, but there was also substantial regulation that governed both the price, type, and duration of the “services” that a customer could receive from the prostitutes of the bordell. Thus, despite the fact that the fundamental activity of the prostitutes of the bordell was not viewed in the highest regard, Lalaing’s description shows that the bordell was not ignored by the ruling elite of the city. Rather, the activities that took place there were managed and controlled to the greatest extent possible, with an eye towards causing the least damage to the moral rectitude of the city as a whole.
Turning now to the function of the bordell as a center for social activity and sexual experimentation by young men (and especially those from aristocratic and patrician households), several Spanish scholars have noted that individuals from these segments of society feature prominently in documents pertaining to it. In most cases, these historians also rely heavily on the earlier generation of scholarship by American and French historians, including Jacques Rossiaud and Richard Trexler, both of whom also assert the primacy of young people as customers of the bordell. In particular, Rossiaud unequivocally concludes that premarital fornication by young men was not only common, but was societally conditioned:

The texts are numerous, clear, and without ambiguity: fornication was customary for young people; it is likely that this [state of affairs] was not merely imposed by “nature,” but by adults and elders: the married and the notable. In short, Rossiaud’s conclusions are much the same as those made here – that brothels were central proving grounds for the assertion of adolescent masculinity. In fact, Rossiaud suggests that patronage of brothels was considered so normative that a lack of desire to use them by more reticent young men, for instance, could even be seen as “abnormal” or as a sign of underlying social deviance.

Similarly, in his article on the bordell in Castellón (Castelló in Valencian/Catalan), Pau Viciano also recognizes it as a central location for the initiation of adolescent boys into the age of sexual maturity. In one particularly illustrative example, he cites the case of a young man who, as part of his testimony in response to a rape accusation, was asked to describe his first sexual experience. In response, he stated, he and a friend (companyó) had gone to bordell in Castellón, to the flat of a prostitute who he described as “a very public woman” (una dona grossa pública), where both young men paid her for sex. The implication given by the record

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11 The most commonly cited works are Rossiaud, “Prostitution, jeunesse et société”; Trexler, “La prostitution florentine”; Rossiaud, Medieval Prostitution. The work of Leah Otis, also on prostitution in southern France, is not cited as frequently, perhaps because it was not translated into Spanish until long after Narbona, Viciano, and Peris had published their articles and monographs. Nonetheless, Otis's research accords with the conclusions of the Spanish historians. See Otis-Cour, Prostitution in Medieval Society. Additionally, for an interesting study of the tavern as a locus for ludic activity – both social and sexual – see Andrew Cowell, At Play in the Tavern: Signs, Coins, and Bodies in the Middle Ages (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).
13 This thread is notably elaborated by Trexler and his followers, especially Michael Rocke, who saw the brothel in Florence as, primarily, a mechanism to combat homosexual and homosocial behaviors endemic in that city. See Trexler, “La prostitution florentine,” pp. 995–96; Rocke, Forbidden Friendships.
14 Viciano gives little additional information about the case, since he is most interested in the testimony about the young man’s experience in the bordell.
15 Viciano, “El bordell dels prohoms,” p. 333. Most other works on prostitution and the bordell give little or no attention to the clientele of the prostitutes, focusing instead (and legitimately it should be said) on the structure
is that this moment was particularly important in that it signified the young man’s sexual coming of age and initiated him into a new pattern of behavior, in which fornication would feature prominently and which, it seems, may have prefigured his later assault.

Unfortunately, no similarly telling case from the Valencian court records consulted for this study could be found. Nonetheless, much the same conclusion can still be inferred, if nothing else from the sheer volume of records that mention young men (either adolescents or youths) as frequenters of the bordell district. Based on this simple fact, one can conclude that medieval Valencians were also well aware of the affinity that existed between young men and the milieu of promiscuity and excess that the bordell exemplified. The minutes of the Consell are particularly illuminating in this regard. For example, in June 1391, members of the city's aristocratic and patrician classes appeared before the Jurats to plead on behalf of a group of noble and patrician youths (jovens, axi de paratge com ciutadans) who had been arrested by the city guard for “going through the city at night, crying out crazy words.”

Explaining why the youths should receive special clemency, the nobles reminded the Jurats that such behavior was to be expected, since it was "a common path of youths ... to sin and carouse." What is more, the Consell agreed and instructed the Justicia Criminal to release the boys with little more than a "firm and harsh talking-to." Ultimately, the youths' worst offense seems to have been that their nighttime carousing took place in the city proper, rather than in the more “appropriate” venue for such activities: the bordell.

Squires and Young People as Patrons of the Bordell

As already noted, the Cedules registers of the Justicia Criminal's court attest to the presence of squires as customers of the bordell, and, in several instances, squires are linked directly to prostitutes living there. These cases are worth exploring because they serve as representations, broadly speaking, of the sexual experiences of many adolescent males. In particular, several entries suggest that the relationships between squires and prostitutes in the bordell were often

and mechanics of the bordell and the lives of the prostitutes and hostalers who formed it.


17 Ibid., f. 236v. [Comun via es de jovens, per solaç o per la savia del joventud, pegueiar (pecar?) i arlateiar.]

18 Ibid.[facen venir davant si los dits preses, els facen o donen aquella correctió verbal comunicatió fort e aspera que a lur savien sera mils vist. E aço fet que’s dellauren de la presó.]
more complex and durable than simple, anonymous, and transitory economic transactions for sex.

For example, in a complaint made before the Justicia Criminal in March 1403, a prostitute named Sperança claimed that she had been attacked by a squire named Ferrando, who served in the household of the nobleman mossen Gilabert Jaume(?). In her complaint, she stated that she had received a blow to the head from Ferrando, who attacked her with a staff. No additional detail is given of the incident, but, significantly, when asked if she wanted to press charges against him, she declined and instead requested that another prostitute, named Johaneta de Barcelona, be arrested. Continuing on, she then explained that Johaneta was the person truly at fault for the attack, having incited Ferrando to act on her behalf. Unfortunately, Sperança does not explicitly state that Johaneta was Ferrando’s amiga – the common term for a mistress or concubine – but there is a strong implication of this throughout the account: the following day, Sperança returned to court and withdrew her accusation against Johaneta, leading one to suspect that she may have been “encouraged” to do this by the still-free Ferrando. Further, after Johaneta was released, no additional action was taken against either individual.

Luckily, in another complaint the connection between violence committed by a squire and the incitement of an amiga is made explicit. Only three days after Sperança appeared before the Justicia Criminal, Vicenta, the “wife of Thomas Fabra,” made an accusation against Bernat Serra, a squire from the household of Jaume de Soler, and against Francesca, “his concubine,” claiming she had been attacked by both Serra and Francesca and, as a result, had received several injuries to her head and body. No motive is given for the attack, but the record does report that on the following day, Francesca was arrested and her possessions seized by the court.

Interestingly, there is no mention that her lover, the squire Bernat Serra, was similarly apprehended, which creates an interesting parallel with Sperança’s complaint. Perhaps, in both complaints, the prostitutes were targeted, rather than the squires, for the same reasons that made squires so difficult to prosecute for acts of bandositat violence they committed: they simply did

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19 ARV, Justicia Criminal, Cedules 17 (1403), mm. 5, ff. 3r&v (Mar. 30). The word following the name “Gilabert” is both difficult to read and highly abridged. It appears to be “Jacme,” the name of one of the noble families of the city. However, read another way, it may refer to Gilabert de Centelles, who is commonly referred to in documents by only his title and first name. It may be the case that the the word read as “Jacme” is actually “Item.” In either case, Ferrando was a squire in the household of a nobleman and knight.

20 In another example, a squire named Joan [E]steve posted bond for a fembra del bordell named Jacmeta de Vilareal. Here the relation between the two is left unstated, but it is again likely that Joan [E]steve was either her lover or her procurer. Either possibility would explain Joan’s use of his own money to pay the two hundred-morabatin fine imposed on Jacmeta.
not have sufficient property or possessions. Francesca, on the other hand, did own property, and the complaint made by Vicenta even includes an inventory of the possessions found in her home, following her arrest. Whatever the reason for the arrest of the amigas while their lovers, who had actually committed the violent attacks, remained free, both cases cited here show the intimate connections that sometimes arose between squires and female inhabitants of the bordell and how these affective relationships sometimes led to additional violence as the “honor” of the amiga became entwined with that of her lover.

Long-term, concubinage relationships between young men and women living in the bordell were considered a significant enough problem by the ruling elite of the city that attempts were increasingly made in the the period studied here to prohibit them, with the basic reason given being that concubinage discouraged young men from marrying. Similarly, Eukene Lacarra Lanz has noted that while concubinage was permitted in many Spanish legal codes as long as both partners were unmarried, toleration for it waned during much the same period as it did in Valencia, as society became more concerned about defining and reinforcing the boundaries between “moral” and “immoral” sexual behavior. In short, because concubinage blurred the lines between the “moral” sexuality of marriage and the “immoral,” but tolerated the sexuality of prostitution, it increasingly was seen as needing to be repressed.

Consequently, beginning in 1372 and on fairly regular intervals thereafter, one finds pronouncements from both the Jurats as well as the Justicia Criminal that began to equate concubinage directly with prostitution and, therefore, required all amigas of unmarried (or married) men to reside only within the bordell. Later decrees from the early fifteenth century went even further and prohibited concubinage altogether, which included keeping amigas in the bordell. Thus, by 1407, one begins to find denunciations that deal with precisely this provision, in which squires were accused of continuing to maintain relationships with particular amigas. For instance, in one case, a hostaler named Sanxo Çabater accused a squire named Joan de Casania(?) of keeping one of the prostitutes living in his hostal as an amiga, "against the ordinances of the city." For this, he requested that the squire be held and punished according to

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21 Carmen Peris Rodriguez has noted that a similar fear was behind many of the other regulations on the prostitutes of the bordell, including their very sequestration within the bordell itself: fembres publics were forbidden from going into the city without special permission from the Consell, for fear that they may provide too great a temptation for the married men residing there. Peris Rodriguez, “La prostitución valenciana,” p. 184.
22 Lacarra Lanz, “Changing Boundaries of Licit and Illicit Unions,” passim.
24 Unfortunately, the squire’s name is abbreviated and was written in a rather difficult hand, making his
The societal shift in opinion vis à vis concubines and prostitutes, both in Valencia and elsewhere, was driven, at least in part, by the popular preaching of individuals such as St. Vincent Ferrer, who was the most charismatic and popular Dominican preacher in eastern Spain during his lifetime and was, therefore, a dominant moral and political arbiter in Valencia and elsewhere in the Mediterranean world. Speaking explicitly about concubinage on at least one occasion and about how it continued to be perceived as acceptable, Ferrer first gave what he believed to be the popular opinion of the day, which supported the practice. Assuming the voice of one who still kept a concubine, he said, "I believe that it is not a sin for a man who doesn't have a wife, or for a man who has a wife and cannot have children, to have a concubine in his house." In short, because there was no marriage in the first case, and because children were impossible in the second, concubinage became a path through which a man could pursue “normal” masculine behavior, even when constrained by circumstance. Therefore, it amounted to little more than a “minor sin.” This was not an opinion that Ferrer shared, however, and he quickly followed this statement with his own judgment that even simple fornication was a mortal sin and that any sex between unmarried partners, “even if it is pleasing [to both],” was injurious to God. Therefore, in his view, concubinage was rightly repressed by society, even if his dream of eliminating extramarital sex altogether remained unfulfilled.

What the provisions enacted by the civic government concerning the keeping of amigas and concubines did accomplish, however, was to enact heavy penalties intended to prevent prostitutes and their clients from entering into relationships that were anything more than transitory. This purpose can be seen in a decree issued by the Justicia Criminal in 1401 that again prohibited men from keeping concubines (amigas) but also included a provision directed at prostitutes themselves, forbidding them to have "any special or defined lover [amich special ne cert] in any manner, whether openly or hidden." In short, the governing institutions of the city

surname hard to decipher.

25 ARV, Justicia Criminal, Cedules 18 (1407), mn. 3, f. 17r (Mar. 31). No indication is given of what occurred after the initial accusation was made.

26 At one point, in 1407, Ferrer was even asked by the city government to intervene in the bandositat conflicts between the Vilaragut and Centelles, so great was his perceived power and influence.


28 ARV, Justicia Criminal, Cedules 15 (1401), mn. 1, f. 34r (Jan. 15). [Semblament, alguna fembra stadant de la dita pobla, ni altra fembra publicha, ço es liurant son cors a molts publicament en la dita ciutat e terme no gos o
tried as much as possible to prevent relationships between prostitutes and their lovers from resembling monogamous or marital relationships in any way.

Notably, however, while this policy continued to give young men a sexual outlet in the form of casual sexual encounters with public prostitutes in the bordell, no such outlet was ever instituted for sexual expression by young women. And while this fact may not be surprising, given the dominant attitudes towards female sexuality already expressed in this study such as those of Francesc Eiximenis, the double standard is still worth illuminating. For women, all premarital sex was illicit, at least according to the common, orthodox opinion. Therefore, as Carmen Peris Rodriguez has noted, any single, married, or widowed woman who was suspected of engaging in “illicit [sexual] relations or of exercising prostitution” ran a very real risk of being labelled a “fembra errada” (“erring woman”) or “fembra que feia mal ses faenes” (“a woman who does her work badly”) and of being forcibly expelled from her home and neighborhoods and compelled to take up residence in the bordell as a “fembra publich” (a “public woman”).

Yet, in spite of the prohibitions placed on concubinage and other forms of illicit extramarital sex, such activities between young people did not disappear; young men continued to keep concubines and young women continued to engage in premarital or extramarital sex, as will be discussed further below. In one notable example, a young man named Pere Gill was reported to the Justicia Criminal by his own father, Sanso [Sancho] Gill, for continuing to keep an amiga, a prostitute named Violant de Murcia, whom the elder Gill demanded should be arrested. Notably, the request was made within a few months of the 1401 prohibition on concubinage relationships, and, while not stated explicitly, it seems likely that Sanso Gill took the dramatic step of denouncing his own son in an attempt to break off a relationship that his child was either unwilling or unable to terminate himself. What is clear, though, is that Sanso Gill saw his son’s relationship with the prostitute, Violant, as a source of potential dishonor for his whole family.

presumescha tenir o haver algun amich special ne cert per alguna manera, manifestment o amagada.] The prohibition against men keeping concubines is on the same folio.

Lacarra Lanz notes that ecclesiastical penances for illicit female sexual expression regularly were more severe and punitive than those assigned to men committing the same offense. Lacarra Lanz, “Changing Boundaries of Licit and Illicit Unions,” pp. 166–70.


ARV, Justicia Criminal, Cedules 16 (1402), mn. 9, f. 32v (Sept. 9). Another case in which a son of the elite (a notary) appears to have been in an extended, concubinage relationship can be found in the same volume at mn. 11, f. 2r and is also briefly discussed by Narbona. Narbona Vizcaino, Pueblo, poder y sexo, p. 188.
and, therefore, took action.\textsuperscript{32}

As shown here, the bordell played an important role in the sexual lives of Valencian male youth as a central locus for socialization of the young into the mores of “proper” masculine behavior. In sum, by reserving a section of the city for the legal indulgence of personal vices, including fornication, gambling, and carousing, the city also created an ideal venue in which these characteristics, which were already seen as particularly prevalent in young people, would continue to be reproduced in subsequent generations of young men. However, for the very same reasons that the bordell was so influential in the sexual lives of young men, by offering the opportunity for socially tolerated fornication within a geographically defined area, relatively few documents describe the sexual interactions of the young patrons of the bordell, and especially those of the elite classes, with the prostitutes residing there.\textsuperscript{33}

Instead, it is in documents that relate to the practice of concubinage that one must look to find more frequent mention of young men as patrons of the bordell. As noted above, since these relationships had increasingly come to be seen as problematic by society as a whole, the keeping of concubines also increasingly became a matter that the criminal courts were called on to deal with. Therefore, additional records were created that demonstrate that young members of the elite were still keeping concubines (amigas) in the bordell, and it is in these charges that one sees most clearly the presence of squires and other members of elite households as patrons of the bordell.

In the next section, the role of the bordell as a locus of social contest and violence between young, unmarried members of the elite will be examined to further demonstrate how the bordell served as an important crucible for their socialization, as a stage for them to perform their masculinity, and as an arena for them to contest their rank in the social hierarchy of honor.

\textsuperscript{32} Another case of a very similar nature features individuals who, potentially, had even loftier social status. According to another Cedules entry, a dyer named Pere Manresa gave surety for the behavior of his apprentice (mancip), named Pere de Vilaragut, who was accused of having a concubine “in contravention of the ordinances of the city.” See ARV, Justicia Criminal, Cedules 15 (1401), nn. 5, f. 7r (May 9).

\textsuperscript{33} Graullera Sanz has also noticed the lack of records dealing with the clientele of the bordell. From scattered documents that show that the prices paid to prostitutes by clients was rather low, he suggests that the use of the prostitutes likely was widespread across economic strata. Perhaps this was part of the reason why those who could afford it kept amigas? Perhaps a certain amount of prestige accompanied the ability to keep a woman exclusively, thereby ensuring that she would not be “shared” with individuals of lower social standing. Notably, Walter Prevenier, in his essay on violence against women in fifteenth-century France, makes this very argument and states that concubines were most frequently associated with the upper classes. For this, see Walter Prevenier, “Violence against Women in Fifteenth-Century France and the Burgundian State,” in Medieval Crime and Social Control, ed. Barbara Hanawalt and David Wallace (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 188. For Graullera’s comments, see Graullera Sanz, “Delinquencia y vida cotidiana,” pp. 74–75.
Further, while these activities were certainly not the exclusive province of the young, the status of the bordell as a “place apart” from the “normal” life of the city, and as a place where “passions” of various types were catered to, undoubtedly exercised a powerfully attractive pull for young men who were seen as dominated by their passions from their very nature.

The Bordell as a Locus of Violence and Criminality

In addition to its role as the primary location for legally tolerated fornication, the bordell district also was commonly equated with violence and various forms of criminality. Peris Rodriguez has stated that the heightened criminality found in the bordell is rooted, fundamentally, in the fact that the criminal element of the city, including serious criminals, petty thieves, and other ruffians, was more firmly entrenched there.\(^{34}\) Drawing much the same conclusion, Narbona has noted that the danger of the bordell stemmed from the marked blending of different social and economic groups within its tight quarters, coupled with a particularly large population of transient and foreign individuals (particularly sailors), who further contributed to its distinctly violent atmosphere.\(^{35}\)

Undoubtedly, these factors were both important, but equally important was the concentration of young, unmarried men in the bordell.\(^{36}\) The fact that at least a portion of these young men were squires or members of elite families who were accustomed to carrying weapons and were thoroughly trained in their use would only have further increased the potential for violent conflict to erupt.\(^{37}\) Consequently, it is little surprise that arguments and fights were extremely common. In fact, the level of violence in the bordell district eventually became so extensive that in March 1401, the Jurats took the extraordinary step of prohibiting the city guard from patrolling the

\(^{34}\) Peris Rodriguez, “La prostitución valenciana,” p. 181.


\(^{36}\) Narbona does mention the role of youths as protagonists of violence in the bordell, but only very briefly before moving on to other topics. See Narbona Vizcaíno, Pueblo, poder y sexo, p. 183.

\(^{37}\) Peris Rodriguez, “La prostitución valenciana,” p. 181; Viciano, “El bordell dels prohoms,” pp. 339–40. The use of weapons was certainly not restricted to the social elite, as is made abundantly clear from the records of the Justicia Criminal. Weapons were also common in many middle- and lower-class households, as indicated by Perez Garcia. In his study of confiscated weapons, individuals in the “service” industry (a group that would have included squires) ran second only to textile workers in the number of weapons confiscated. Metalworkers (including sword and shield smiths) followed in third position. Perez Garcia, La comparsa de los malhechores, p. 294.
streets of the bordell. Justifying their decision, the Jurats complained that the time, energy, and manpower spent by the guard on policing the bordell had become so great that, for "a great or better part of the night, the rest of the city was deprived of or without guards, resulting in great damage and peril." Thus, the security of the bordell was handed over entirely to the Justicia Criminal and his lieutenants, who were expected to police the bordell themselves. Unfortunately, even if this approach worked initially, by the 1440s complaints began to mount regarding the ineffectiveness of the Justicia Criminal to keep the peace in the bordell, which resulted in further reforms. Moreover, it was within this disorderly environment of the bordell that young people carried out violent attacks and reprisals against both district's inhabitants (the prostitutes and hostalers) as well as against one another.

One example of a violent attack by a squire and a group of his young valedors has already been provided in the previous chapter, in the description of the squire Cabrit’s attack on the home of the hostaler Domingo Mari. Other records in both the registers of the Justicia Criminal and of the Governador indicate that such invasions were not uncommon. For example, in another complaint, a prostitute named Isabell Montoliva(?) reported that, on the previous Thursday, while "sleeping with a youth who was [of the household of] Mossen Joan Gasco" – either a squire or other servant – a group of young men arrived outside her door, including a squire. After arriving, Isabell claimed, the group began to shout and try to force its way inside her quarters, threatening to murder her and the young man in her company. Eventually, the mob was successful and, while entering, Isabell saw that the members of the group were armed "with crossbows and other arms." At some point in the ensuing chaos, it appears that Isabell’s young companion, the squire, was able to slip off and flee, although he does not appear to have been the primary target of the attack in any case. After threatening her, the leader of the group, whom she identified as “Valldragna Trompeta,” proceeded to steal various items from the house, including a

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39 Carboneres, Picarones y alcahuetes, pp. 68–80. It was during this period that the Jurats decided to encircle the bordell with its own walls in an attempt to better regulate access to the district and restrict the carrying of weapons by those entering. Cf. note 7 of this chapter.
40 This episode can be found in the section of chapter four entitled “Beyond the Bandositas.” Similarly, Narbona highlights another instance in which squires invaded the home of a hostaler as a prime example of youth violence in the bordell district. See Narbona Vizcaíno, Pueblo, poder y sexo, p. 183.
41 ARV, Justicia Criminal, Cedules 18 (1407), mm. 11, ff. 23r–24r (Nov. 7). Among the other individuals identified were a criert?), a lancer, and a barber. Notably, Narbona cites another, similar case in which three young men forced a prostitute to stay with them in a room in a hostal until she was eventually able to escape. She eventually brought charges against the wife of the hostaler, who she said knew of the situation and did nothing to assist or rescue her. Narbona Vizcaíno, Pueblo, poder y sexo, p. 182.
pointed hood of red hue, two shirts, and a bag of gold, which suggests that robbery may also have been part of the motivation for the “invasion” of Isabell’s home.

Robbery was not the only motivation for the young men, however. In her accusation, Isabell maintained that, after robbing her, Valldraga demanded a further ransom of ten gold florins from her, threatening that, otherwise, she would be kidnapped. Unable to pay, Isabell cried out, but was quickly subdued and taken by force to a fabric mill in the outlying settlement of Paterna, where she was held in the home of one of the accomplices and was sexually assaulted by at least one of the group members. Afterwards, she was then brought to Gandia, where she was able to escape, return to Valencia, and, eventually, file her criminal complaint.

Unfortunately, even though Isabell’s account of the attack on her is notably longer than most in the Cedules register, extending to three folio pages, many elements of the incident are glossed over, or described only in the most general terms. Not least among these is the actual motive for the attack. Again, since the Cedules record only initial accusations, the account given is entirely that of the victim, who is also the one making the accusation before the court. Therefore, it is nearly impossible to say with certainty whether Isabell was truly the target of Valldraga and his associates or, perhaps, she was merely a “consolation prize,” claimed when the main target of the attack, the young squire in her bed, managed to slip away. While it seems that she was the target of the attack, this cannot be stated unequivocally. Furthermore, if she was the target of the attack, one still must wonder how much of what actually happened was planned and how much was due to spontaneous circumstance. Here, too, since neither testimony from Valldraga nor from any member of his gang is included alongside Isabell’s accusation, these questions remain largely unanswerable.

At the same time, Isabell’s case vividly demonstrates that the bordell was frequently an unstable, often chaotic environment where violence could erupt at any moment and in which not even the homes of its inhabitants were considered to be off limits from attack by armed gangs. Further, one again sees in her case the presence of squires, both as potential victims and as perpetrators of violent assaults. On the one hand, there is the squire who was sleeping with Isabell when the Valldraga’s gang arrived. For him, one wonders if his flight in the face of attack, while undoubtedly prudent, would have resulted in a loss of honor on some level. For the other squire, who was part of Valldraga’s gang but not, apparently, a leader, his presence demonstrates the fluidity of the social bonds that appear to have typified the social networks of many Valencian squires, which could also be seen in the case of Luca di Tono in Chapter 4. Moreover, his presence also goes some length to demonstrate that the equation of squires with
criminality, also discussed in the previous chapter, had at least some basis in actual fact.\textsuperscript{42}

Another case from the more extensively documented \textit{Denunciaciones} series of the \textit{Justicia Criminal}'s court offers additional insight into the composition of another gang of young people in the \textit{bordell}. Notably, the gang in the second case also included squires.\textsuperscript{43} The root of the complaint was a series of thefts that had occurred in the city in the year 1400, which appear to have been carried out by something akin to an organized larceny ring. Unfortunately, since the initial folios of the record that lay out the specific allegations suffered extensive damage and are no longer legible, the affidavits and records of the interrogations of the accused are the only sources that can be used to reconstruct the overall tenor of the crimes that the group were believed to have committed.

The surviving record of affidavits of those accused includes a similarly wide range of individuals as that which attacked the prostitute Isabell above, including a fishmonger, several sailors, a barber, and, most notably, two squires. Moreover, the group was also geographically diverse and included individuals originally from Castile, Catalonia, Mallorca, and perhaps as far as Rhodes; in fact, only two or three claimed to be locals of Valencia or its environs. Despite their seemingly disparate backgrounds, the \textit{Justicia Criminal} suspected that all these individuals had banded together as a gang of thieves who were also linked together by their collective tendency to gamble (this being one of the questions asked in every interrogation) and consort in the \textit{bordell}.

For the purposes of this study, attention will primarily be given to the testimony of two squires who were among those questioned, since they are among the most likely to have been in their later adolescence or early youth when questioned by the \textit{Justicia Criminal} and his officials. Of the two, the first that will be discussed is Joan de Rodes.\textsuperscript{44} When questioned about his

\textsuperscript{42} See Chapter 4, “Squires in Fifteenth-Century Valencia.”

\textsuperscript{43} Because these cases document what were essentially the next judicial steps to follow the initial complaints made in the Cedules registers, they often include lengthier descriptions of the what occurred, as well as affidavits taken from both the accused and other witnesses. Consequently, these cases provide a rich source of qualitative data that shed further light onto the shady underbelly of youth, violence, and criminality that underpinned life in the \textit{bordell}.

\textsuperscript{44} The case containing the depositions and interrogations can be found in Archivo del Reino de Valencia, \textit{Justicia Criminal, Denunciaciones} 50 (1400), nn. 4, ff. 1r–10r. The beginning of the case is in the first mano of the same volume, but is sealed and inaccessible because of its poor state of conservation. The surname “Rodes” could refer to the island of Rhodes, or, perhaps, to a village just beyond the Pyrenees mountains, in what is now France, called Rodés. Similarly, since he testified that he had been in Castile before coming to Valencia, it may be the case that this was also his homeland. In any case, it is likely that Joan de Rodes was an immigrant to the Kingdom of Valencia.
origins, as were all of the others as well, Rodes stated that he had been in Valencia only for a little over a month. Before that, he said that he had been in Castile, though he never specified whom he served there or why he had left. When asked how he had supported himself since his arrival in Valencia, he replied that because he had not yet found a position in an elite household, he supported himself primarily by gambling, as well as by drawing on a purse of thirty-one florins that he had brought with him from Castile.

Given even this brief description, one sees that, in many respects, Joan de Rodes fits well into the popular perception of the young, wild, and socially disruptive escuder. Like Luca di Tono, the squire introduced in the first section of the previous chapter, who originally hailed from Sicily and who lived a rather peripatetic life, serving first in the home of one elite family and then that of another, Joan de Rodes’s testimony indicates a similarly unstable existence. Thus, when asked where he lived and with whom he associated, he replied that he had a room in an hostal in the port district (the Grau), which he shared with a roommate (companyo), who was also implicated in the robberies, and that he had few other connections in the city. Therefore, from all appearances, at the time that he was questioned, Joan de Rodes still possessed few social connections and few clear paths through which he could establish himself in the city. The one exception, it seems, was the community of young people that he had come into contact with in the bordell. It is unclear whether he was introduced to the district and its inhabitants by his roommate or discovered it himself, but it appears that it was there that Rodes began to develop the social network that would soon get him into trouble, as he gambled and socialized in its taverns and hostals.\textsuperscript{45} Thus, here too, one again finds evidence of social networks among young people that could be perceived as possessing characteristics of a defined and separate “youth culture,” centered on the tavern and brothel and consisting of young, unmarried, and often foreign men who banded together to form loose social networks in the absence of traditional bonds of family and patronage. Further, it may well be the case that, because young members of the Valencian population itself also utilized the bordell and its services, the district also provided a prime locale for one to begin to form links within the Valencian community itself, as one came into contact with locals in the taverns and at the gambling tables.

The testimony given by the other squire, whose name is given as Pere de Rosanes, is equally

\textsuperscript{45} When asked, at one point, if he knew a particular hostaler in the bordell who was suspected of special involvement in the robberies, Rodes responded that he was acquainted with the man, suggesting that although he lived on the opposite side of the city, in the Grau, he was a likely patron of the man's establishment in the bordell, in which he likely attempted to earn his wages gambling, and perhaps engaged in other activities there as well.
revelatory. Like Joan de Rodes, Rosanes was also a relatively recent transplant to the city, having arrived around six months previously from Tarragona, his hometown in Catalonia. Following his arrival in Valencia, Rosanes stated that he, like Luca di Tono, initially had served in the household of a *ciutadán* *honrat*, but for unknown reasons had left that house. One month later, he entered into the service of Joan Bonastre, a knight and also a resident within the city. Rosanes told his interrogators that, in exchange for his service, he had been given room and board by both of his masters, as well as a wage.

In the period between his postings, however, Rosanes made what may have been a fateful decision to take up residence in the *bordell*, where he lived in the quarters of his *amiga* and where he appears to have met some of those being questioned, likely at the gambling table. When asked if he gambled, he told his interrogators that, since he no longer had a regular source of income and no employment, he was gambling more frequently than he had in the past. Thus, although gambling was prohibited by civic ordinance, enforcement appears to have been lax, and most of those questioned alongside Rosanes also admitted to having gambled with more or less regularity. Moreover, even before taking up residence there, one can also see that the *bordell* was already an important focal point for his life and was a place where he likely spent a good amount of his idle time.

Therefore, the testimony of both Joan de Rodes and Pere de Rosanes demonstrates the ambiguous position of squires within Valencian society: on the one hand, they were at the center of elite Valencian society as members of elite households with no small measure of contact with powerful and influential patrons; and, on the other hand, they inhabited the margins of society, in which they lived what often appears to have been an unstable life in which employment was not guaranteed and assistance from traditional mechanisms of social support was not always possible. In Rosane’s case, not even the fact that he may have come from an aristocratic, Catalan lineage appears to have helped him cement himself more firmly among the Valencian elite, though it may be the reason why he was able to enter into the service of two different

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46 Hinojosa Montalvo notes that the Rosanes family were "a Catalan lineage that established itself in the Kingdom of Valencia from the end of the thirteenth century." It is quite possible that Pere de Rosanes was a member of one of the original, Catalan branches of this family. See Hinojosa Montalvo, “Rosanes,” in *Diccionario de historia medieval*, v. 3, entry searched, p. 630.

47 In the testimony of Gabriel Cifre, sailor, he claimed Pere de Rosanes as his sole friend (*companyó*) and states that he is Rosanes's roommate in the *hostal* where they were both staying at the time. (ARV, *Justicia Criminal, Denunciacions* 50 (1400), nn. 4, f. 2r.) Likewise, in his own testimony, Rosanes names Cifre as his companion.
members of it.

It is also because of their status both within and outside of the social elite that squires may have been able to develop a particularly broad social network of contacts and acquaintances that, it could be argued, reflects something akin to a “youth subculture.” The social network of both squires mentioned here appears to have extended far beyond the ranks of only the elite and included individuals from a much wider socioeconomic spectrum. Thus, as was also suggested in the case of Luca di Tono, so too does the experience of Joan de Rodes and Pere de Rosanes suggest that squires often lived lives that were “in between” the various socioeconomic strata of Valencian society, in which they acted, in many respects, as a bridge that spanned them – and, one suspects, also bound them together.

Turning briefly to the role that Pere de Rosanes was accused of having played in the larceny ring, it appears that he was acting as fence for the stolen goods. According to the interrogation record, when he was arrested, he was in possession of a sword and certain other goods, which he tried to sell to a city official near the central market. For his part, Rosanes claimed to have received it from a sailor who "he would recognize if he saw again, but whose name he did not know" and only sold it because the sailor had asked him to do so. This claim that he would pawn a sword given to him by a seemingly random sailor makes little sense, though, and it appears that his interrogator did not find it convincing either. Immediately afterwards, Rosanes was asked if he had known that the sword he was selling had been stolen, at which point Rosanes appears to have realized his legal peril, revealed that he wore a tonsure, and therefore was exempted from further questioning.

Although Rosanes’s interrogation came to an abrupt end after the revelation of his tonsure, the testimony he did give is suggestive of the fact that his status as a squire – and especially as one who wore a tonsure – may have made him a particularly valuable member of the larceny ring. It is never stated, but it may well be the case that his status as a squire, being a position of rather greater social status than a mere fisherman or barber, may have made Rosanes an ideal frontman and fence for the goods stolen by others. Not only would he likely have had contacts

48 Cf. Eiximenis’s discussion of the greatest faults of adolescents, discussed in Chapter Two. Further, while she does not equate them with young people, specifically, Barbara Hanawalt asserts in her article on English taverns that they were particularly “disorderly” and “dangerous” spaces in the social topography the medieval city. Much the same seems to have been the case in Valencia. For Hanawalt’s discussion of English taverns, see Hanawalt, “The Host, the Law, and the Ambiguous Space of Medieval London Taverns.”

49 ARV, Justicia Criminal, Denunciaciones 50 (1400), mn. 4, f. 10r.
who had sufficient money to purchase the goods, but he had additional protections against prosecution, including the tonsure. Furthermore, his testimony also demonstrates the important role of the bordell as a locus of criminality, which both squires, Rodes and Rosanes, accessed when they fell on tough economic times. In short, when both young men encountered a period of economic uncertainty, in spite of their lack of traditional social supports, they were both able to draw on what appears to have been a broader social network that, even if fundamentally rooted in a criminal enterprise, nonetheless could provide some measure of stability. For those like Rodes and Rosanes, who lacked the more stable social network of patronage that they would have received while in service in an aristocratic house, this alternate social network provided some measure of stability and social support in otherwise rootless circumstances.

To bring this section to a close, one additional case will be offered that dramatically illustrates the intersection between crime and honor, in which a crime committed by one squire against another became an occasion when, but for a fluke of chance, additional violence could easily have occurred. The incident is found among the Cedules registers, but, in this case, the complaint was made by one of the Justicia’s own lieutenants. Reporting what had transpired, he stated that, while on patrol in the bordell that morning around dawn, he came upon a “young squire” (hun jove scuder) carrying a curved blade (un falch, likely a falchion), whom the lieutenant identified only as Jaumet and a member of the household of Lluis d’Abella.50 Apparently, the youth, perhaps aware that squires were forbidden from carrying weapons, accosted the guard, telling him that a cloak and dagger (una gramalla e un man dret) had been stolen from him and that the young man who had stolen them was nearby, enjoying himself in a nearby hostal. Agreeing to accompany the young man and to investigate further, the lieutenant then accompanied the young squire to confront the purported thief in the room he was sharing with a prostitute.

The alleged thief is described by the lieutenant as another squire, described in the document as a "youth" (jove), whose name is given as Ramon de Vilarnau, raising the possibility that he was a member of the prominent, aristocratic family of the same name.51 Nonetheless, because Vilarnau still had the cloak he was alleged to have stolen in his possession, the lieutenant had little choice but to apprehend him. Subsequently, when questioned further, Vilarnau admitted to

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50 ARV, Justicia Criminal, Cedules 17 (1403), nn. 2, 6r&v (Jan. 10). Note the use of the diminutive in his name, also suggestive of his relative youth. No surname is given for him in the document.
the lieutenant that he had stolen the cloak, though he denied stealing any dagger, and stated that he had done so several weeks previously, while Jaumet, his accuser, was himself occupied in one of the bordell’s hostals and had left the cloak behind in the room he had rented. Furthermore, he confessed that he had committed the theft because he knew that the cloak was valuable and, also, because "the Devil had made him take it." Therefore, rather than being part of any broader factional quarrel, Vilarnau’s crime appears to have been largely opportunistic in nature.

Whatever the reason for his theft, Vilarnau’s actions and his explanation for them are emblematic of a broader pattern of behavior seen throughout the cases discussed in this chapter and those that preceded it, in which a certain level of violence and criminality appears to have been endemic among those who served as squires. The criminality is obvious enough, but the violence that seems to have been barely averted is also worth highlighting. Thus, while the document never entirely explains why Jaumet had a sword in his hand when he ran into the Justicia’s lieutenant, it seems entirely possible that he had been on his way to confront Ramon de Vilarnau on his own. However, when he came face to face with the lieutenant, carrying a sword that he was not supposed to have in his possession, he quickly changed tactics and decided instead to enlist the lieutenant’s aid.\(^{52}\) One is left to wonder, though, if Jaumet would have preferred not to have encountered the lieutenant and to have dealt with the matter on his own, with his sword doing the talking. Thus, although violence was averted by Jaumet’s chance encounter with the lieutenant, the barely averted confrontation between the two squires nonetheless suggests how youthful impulsivity quickly turned into a situation where honor appears to have been damaged and where, consequently, violence, in an attempt to recover his goods and to repair his honor, was the next step. Furthermore, while young people were assuredly not the only individuals committing crimes or engaging in violent actions within the boundaries of the bordell, they were nonetheless among both the most active perpetrators and the most common victims of such attacks. Thus, the bordell itself served as a primary staging ground for the performance of adolescent masculinity, as well as for the contests of sexual and interpersonal power staged between them in the districts taverns and hostals.

**Premarital and Extramarital Sex outside the Bordell**

As important as the bordell was in the lives of adolescent and young males, sexual

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\(^{52}\) The prohibitions against arms in the bordell and against squires carrying them at all are discussed in the first section of this chapter and in the previous chapter, as well.
encounters continued to occur outside of its confines – and continued to be perceived by some as a threat to the moral health of the body politic.53 This topic has already been touched on, albeit briefly, in earlier chapters, such as when the amiga of Ramonet de Thous was accused of provoking his assault of Girat de Termens.54 Similarly, in the accusation made against Luca di Tono, he was accused of having fornicated with his accuser’s slave after promising to marry her.55 Even in the dispute between Joanot Martorell and his cousin, Joan de Montpalau, extramarital sex lay at the root of the conflict, with Montpalau accused of having agreed to marry Martorell’s sister clandestinely in order to trick her into having sex with him. In each of these cases, the sexual lives of squires or members of elite households that occurred outside of the confines of the bordell can be glimpsed. Moreover, it is only in cases such as these that the sexual lives of young women can also be considered, even if it must be kept firmly in mind that the nature of the evidence – namely, court cases – means that the young women that appear are nearly universally portrayed as victims of male sexual aggression. Frequently, this is exactly what they were, but in some cases, with close examination, other possible characterizations also appear that highlight instances in which young women were able to express some measure of sexual agency.

The cases mentioned above are also useful because they are suggestive of three related, but distinct, categories of illicit sex that one finds in the cases contained in the registers of the Justicia Criminal and Gobernació. The first category involves cases dealing with individuals who engaged in more protracted adulterous relationships or who continued to keep illicit concubines outside of the bordell, in spite of the city ordinances that forbade doing so. The second category of cases are those that involve allegations either of simple fornication or of rape. While decidedly different, these cases are nonetheless linked by the simple fact that they involve

53 Although Rafael Narbona primarily focuses on sex within the context of the bordell in his monograph Pueblo, Poder y Sexo, he also discuss sex and sex crime in the city generally, albeit rather briefly. For this, see Narbona Vizcaíno, Pueblo, poder y sexo, esp. pp. 98–109, 125–44. Other useful examples dealing with illicit sexuality outside of the context of public brothels, both within Valencia and elsewhere in Europe, include Rossiaud, “Prostitution, jeunesse et société,” pp. 293–94; Peris Rodriguez, “La prostitución valenciana,” esp. pp. 180–81; and Lacarra Lanz, “Changing Boundaries of Licit and Illicit Unions.” Also dealing with illicit sexuality, albeit largely to highlight what may have been a particularly Florentine subculture of premarital sodomy, are the works of Trexler and Rocke. For example, see Trexler, “La prostitución florentine”; and Rocke, Forbidden Friendships. The groundbreaking study of Rafael Carrasco suggests a similar homosexual or sodomitical subculture in Valencia. Unfortunately, however, his study only commences in the mid-sixteenth century; there is no case record to confirm the existence of such a phenomenon in the previous centuries that are the focus of this study. See Rafael Carrasco, Inquisición y represión sexual en Valencia: Historia de los sodomitas, 1565–1785 (Barcelona: Laertes, 1985).

54 For a discussion of this case, see “Beyond the Bandosits” in Chapter 4 of this study.

55 This case can be found in “Squires in Fifteenth-Century Valencia” in Chapter 4 of this study.
sexual relationships that were, for the most part, impermanent. Last are those cases that pertain to allegations of illicit or clandestine marriage. These cases are particularly interesting because, in several of the cases that survive, the courts took into consideration not only the desires of relatives or guardians, but frequently gave a good deal of weight to the wishes of the young women themselves who were at the center of the disputes. In fact, in several of the cases, the courts deferred to the wishes of the young, clandestinely married girls, even in cases where her wishes directly contradicted those of her legal guardian or other relatives.

Concubinage relationships between young members of the elite classes (or squires in elite households) and women living in the bordell have already been discussed in the previous section. Outside the bordell, however, such relationships certainly continued to occur, as seen in the cases mentioned above. Even more interesting, however, is that several of the relationships also seem to defy the standard notion of the male partner “keeping” a woman. Rather, in some cases, it almost appears that it is the male who is being “kept” by his older, widowed lover. Similarly, in other cases, one also finds instances in which a younger male entered into an adulterous relationship with a married woman, which also served to blur the boundaries of power and dominance between the lovers, which remained much clearer in more traditional concubinage relationships.

A description of an alleged romantic affair between a young man named Joan Ferrandez, who claimed to be a student (escolar), and a local widow, named in the document as Constantina, the widow of the local knight, mossen Ramón Gostanti, illustrates an instance in which a young man appears to have been “kept” by his older lover. Because the account of Ferrandez’s relationship is part of a broader attempt by opposing litigants to blacken his reputation and, therefore, impeach his testimony, it must certainly be taken with a grain of salt. As such, the account also describes Ferrandez as a “vile man and one of little Christian faith,” and as not actually a student, but as little more than a wastrel and leech on others. Nonetheless, in its description of the basic framework of the relationship between the two, the account given appears to be credible. In short, the account describes Ferrandez as essentially living with Constantina in her home and as being financially supported by her. This, they say, was because although Ferrandez was in “holy orders” (sanxs ordens), likely indicating minor orders, he held no benefice as a student and, therefore, had no means to support himself. Thus, Ferrandez

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56 ARV, Gobernació, Litium 2.229 (1422), mn. 26, f. 19r.
eventually came to live with the widow in her home, where it is implied that he agreed to exchange sex for financial support, which he had continued to do for some time. In short, the relationship that is described between Joan Ferrandez and Constantina is very similar to a traditional concubinage arrangement, except for the fact that the genders are reversed. Consequently, it could be argued that this arrangement put Ferrandez in an entirely dependent and “submissive” role in the relationship.

In all likelihood, the relationship between Ferrandez and Constantina roughly fit into the shape just described. Those impeaching his character did not stop at this point, however. Rather, at the same time that they accused him of leeching off Constantina in exchange for sex, they also attempted to portray Ferrandez as a domineering sexual predator who had victimized Constantina repeatedly and who somehow was able to invert the power dynamic between the two such that she, not he, was in control of their affair. Most notably, the denunciation accuses Ferrandez of having acted as a pimp for Constantina and of having forced her to have sex with other men, including pimps and other individuals of an unsavory sort. This, his denouncers say, then became another revenue stream for Ferrandez. Therefore, at the same time that Ferrandez was said to be more or less dependent on his lover, he also, supposedly, was forcing her to prostitute herself for his benefit, again inverting the power dynamic between the two into a shape more in line with standard, if chauvinist, ideals of male dominance and female submission.

If nothing else, the two conflicting narratives of Joan Ferrandez and Constantina’s relationship create a tension that is difficult to unravel. Was Joan Ferrandez a sneaky leech who was looking for little more than financial support from a lonely widow, or was he a malevolent, almost sadistic, force over Constantina, who forced her to debase herself in a manner that almost anyone would deem to be appalling? From the sheer face of things, the first characterization would appear to be the most likely, but, nonetheless, the fact that the second characterization of

\[57\] This description of their relationship could also be described in another way, however, in which their affair fits into the literary conventions of courtly romance outlined in Capellanus's *Art of Courtly Love (De Amore)*, and which can also be seen in *Tirant lo Blanc* in the quasi-adulterous romance between Tirant's squire, Ipólit, and the Byzantine empress, the mother of Tirant's beloved, Carmesina. In the former, Capellanus argues that true love most often occurs between a younger man and an older woman. In the latter case, the romance between Ipólit and the Byzantine empress fits just this model, with the affair beginning while the Byzantine emperor is still alive but culminates with Ipólit marrying the empress and taking the imperial throne after the death of the emperor, his daughter, and Tirant. In this respect, perhaps Ipólit realized the dream of economically disadvantaged elite youths everywhere, just like Joan Ferrandez. For these chapters, see Martorell and de Galba, *Tirant lo Blanc*, chs. 255–64.

\[58\] Peris asserts that this was a fairly common occurrence, in which lovers often turned into pimps for their concubines. Therefore, this may have been another instance in which Ferrandez’s accusers fell back on a common trope in making their accusation, which they assumed would be seen as, at the very least, possible. See Peris Rodriguez, “La prostitución valenciana,” pp. 193–96.
Ferrandez was also included might once again suggest the power of the overriding narrative of male sexual aggression, in which Ferrandez’s status as, in effect, a “kept man” did not compute on some level for those denouncing him. Therefore, one is left with a description of Ferrandez in which he is both dominant and dependent at the same time. The basic facts, however – being that Joan Ferrandez was a student in a sexual relationship with an aristocratic widow and who lived in her house – are nonetheless credible and highlight one avenue in which sexual relationships could take place for young men outside of the regulated context of the bordell, in spite of the efforts of civic and ecclesiastical officials to direct their sexual energies away from the bodies of “respectable” women and onto those of the prostitutes in the bordell.

Similarly, another case, this time from the criminal records of the Governor’s court, is also noteworthy in that it gives a glimpse into what appears to have been an adulterous relationship between a squire and a married neighbor of relatively prominent status. The squire in the case was named Perito Voltayna, and the record notes that he was a member of the household of the master of the militant Order of Montesa. The young woman with whom he may have had the affair is identified as Sperança (Esperansa) de Monpalau, the wife of an unknown man named Alfonso de Pedrosa who appears to have been some sort of merchant. The case itself was brought by Monpalau against Voltayna and several other squires, whom she accused of forcing their way into her house, threatening her with injury or death, and robbing her on several occasions of goods and treasure worth more than one hundred florins. Moreover, the thefts were sufficiently large that she had been driven to financial ruin by them, thereby forcing her to appear before the court as a "poor and miserable person" (pobre i miserable persona) who was unable to pay the court fees necessary to prosecute her attackers, and therefore necessitating that she place herself at the mercy of the Governador.

In her complaint, Sperança laid much of the blame for the attacks on her on Voltayna, who she said had been the mastermind of the attacks and was the ringleader of the gang that had attacked her. Following his alleged attack, however, Voltayna had fled the city and, therefore, gave no response to any of Sperança’s accusations. Another squire, however, named Jaume

59 The first case begins in ARV, Gobernació, Crimínum 4.258 (1450–53), nn. 2, 40r (Jan. 26, 1452). The second case immediately follows at f. 42r. Pedrosa’s status as a merchant is not stated explicitly, but part of the case revolves around the fact that he was absent from city business for an extended period of time, during which the affair had occurred.

60 Her status as a “pobre i miserable persona” permitted her to bring her case before the Governor’s court, which permitted those who were impoverished to bring claims before it that they otherwise would not have had enough money to present.
Vidal, who was accused by Sperança in a second complaint of having participated in the attacks, was not so lucky. Having made the mistake of remaining in his master’s house, he was apprehended and questioned extensively by the Governador and his lieutenants; it is from his testimony that a more complex, interesting case emerges, in which Perito Voltayna and Sperança’s relationship was much more complex than simply that of criminal perpetrator and innocent victim.61

In his testimony, Vidal paints a very different picture of Sperança and Voltayna’s relationship.62 Thus, while Sperança had admitted in her accusation that she and Perito Voltayna had been friends before the attack and were sufficiently familiar that he had come into her house “on several occasions, to visit and see [her],” this, she claims, was the extent of their relationship. Further, when explaining why the attacks and robberies had taken place, she said that they were the result of an argument between the two. Vidal’s account of events, on the other hand, also noted that he and Perito Voltayna had been friendly with Sperança de Monpalau, especially since his master’s home was located right across the street from Sperança’s home, and, therefore, their acquaintance was predicated by sheer proximity.63 More significantly, however, Vidal also alleged that, after her husband’s departure from the city, Sperança had quickly entered into a sexual relationship with Voltayna that had continued for several days, before Voltayna decided to end it. Even before this, though, Vidal noted, Voltayna had already caught Sperança’s eye and she began to lust after him. Therefore, Vidal claimed, she, not he, had initiated the affair.64 Shortly afterward, however, Voltayna grew bored with Sperança and broke off the relationship, at which point Sperança threatened to bring charges against the squires (both Voltayna and his alleged accomplice, Vidal) unless he resumed their sexual relationship. Briefly, her ploy succeeded, with Voltayna returning to her for one more tryst.

61 In one of the documents, Jaume Vidal is said to be a native of Catalonia, making him yet another peripatetic squire, serving in a home far from that of his family. Further, her complaint claims that he was expelled from the region for breaking a truce, at which point he came to Valencia, upholding, once again, the violent mien of the squire.
62 Vidal’s testimony begins in mn. 3, 23r and continues for the next several folios.
63 Vidal gives this very reason on f. 23v, saying that their acquaintance was founded “per la proximitat de les dites cases.”
64 He says that she had “bon grat del dit Perito.” Ibid. In an article on the representation of adulterous women in Spanish law and literature, Louise Mirrer notes that while unfaithful wives were a popular topic, as were graphic descriptions of the punishment they could expect to receive for their crimes, “Spain must also be considered as a society whose subjects were inclined to see themselves, irrespective of officialdom, as autonomous and free.” “The ‘Unfaithful Wife’ in Medieval Spanish Literature,” in Medieval Crime and Social Control, ed. Barbara Hanawalt and David Wallace (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 153. Perhaps this explains, at least in part, the relative equanimity with which Vidal’s accusations were received by the court.
After this, though, Voltayna broke off the relationship definitively and, because of this, Sperançã brought the charges to which Vidal was responding. Explaining the robbery of her goods, Vidal stated that nothing at all had been stolen, but that Sperançã had given the money and goods to Voltayna as gifts. It may be just as likely, however, that Voltayna actually did raid Sperançã’s home after breaking off his relationship with her, perhaps in an attempt to punish her for the threats she had used to try to compel him to continue the relationship.

Thus, in the relationship between Sperançã and Perito Voltayna, one again sees a situation in which a young man could enter into a sexual relationship with a (potentially) older woman, though it is likely that Sperançã was not terribly old herself. This is not to say that Voltayna’s experience was especially common; likely it was not, but it does illustrate well the fact that adulterous relationships between young men and married women were not only confined to the pages of romance or the writings of Capellanus. Instead, as was also the case for Joan Ferrandez, opportunities appear to have existed for such encounters to occur, and, if anything, what is striking is the relatively casual way in which Jaume Vidal, the second squire, described the evolution of the affair as a natural outgrowth of the close, interpersonal contact and friendly socialization that had occurred between Sperançã and Voltayna. Thus, although their sexual relationship was fairly brief, one must wonder if it could have continued for quite some time further, if Voltayna had not so quickly tired of Sperançã. Clearly, Sperançã herself believed this to be the case. Unfortunately, her threats seem to have provoked a response from Voltayna that she had not anticipated.

Turning now to examples from the second category of cases: those dealing with allegations of fornication and/or rape. Cases dealing with these matters appear fairly frequently in cases brought before the Valencian courts, underlining once more that although the civic leaders tried heartily to restrain premarital sex to the area of the bordell, their efforts were often in vain. However, with this said, as was the case for Joan Ferrandez, so too does one find that accusations of fornication or rape appear most frequently not as charges lodged for that reason itself but as part of broader attempts to tarnish the reputation of the alleged perpetrator of the act. As such, the accusation of fornication or rape was intended to establish the “dishonorable” character of the accused. This was very much the case in a case brought against the prominent nobleman, Phelip Boï, by his legitimate and illegitimate children. At the time of the complaint against him, Phelip

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65 ARV, Gobernació, Criminum 4.258 (1450–53), mn. 3, f. 24r.
Boïl was already over sixty years old, but had recently married for the third time; what is more, his bride was a twenty-year-old conversa named Castellana Castellar. Whether the issue at the root of the Boïl childrens’ disapproval was Castellana’s religious status, or whether it was worry that the match might produce additional rivals for their inheritance, is never specified, but their dislike for Castellana and her family is made abundantly clear in their accusation against her, in which they attempted to overturn the marriage, or at least minimize the influence of Castellana and her family by bringing charges against her, her brother, Joan Castellar, and their father. First, they alleged that Joan Castellar, who held no title of his own, had begun to ride throughout the city on horseback with a group of squires, like a knight, putting on aristocratic airs to which he was not entitled. Moreover, Joan also appears to have fully adopted the ethos of knightly violence discussed in the previous chapter and was accused of having attacked one of his brother-in-laws, Phelip's illegitimate son, Pere, in order to prevent the latter from disrupting the marriage between his sister and Pere’s father. Second, and more importantly, the Boïl children also alleged that Castellana was known to have fornicated with members of both the Centelles and Carbonell families, both of whom were factional enemies of the Boïl. Implicit in this accusation is the belief that this behavior, in itself, was sufficient cause either to invalidate the marriage or to call Phelip’s judgment into sufficient question that he should no longer be permitted to manage his own affairs, which would then be handed over to a curador, likely one of his sons.

Unfortunately, the portion of the case in which Castellana answered the charges against her has not survived. From the testimony that does exist, however, the allegations made against her appear to have been seen as plausible, if only because they are quite specific and, therefore, would have been relatively easy to verify. Even if they could not have been proven one way or the other, the very fact that such allegations were made suggests that they were considered plausible and potentially damaging to Castellana’s reputation. Thus, one sees again that accusations of fornication were powerful weapons to use against one’s opponents in the public forum, which can only be seen as a reflection of the strength of the societal disapprobation against any form of sexual expression outside of marriage pushed by Christian moralists.

On the other hand, though, one wonders if an even greater concern for Boïl’s children was

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66 Ibid., Gobernació, Litium 4.578 (1422), mn. 3(?) ff. 29r–33r (specific date unknown). Some manos are missing from this volume, including those that record the beginning of the complaint. Only a portion of the witness testimony survives. Unfortunately, the Castellar are not attested in Hinojosa’s Diccionario de historia.
not so much that Castellana had had sex before marrying their father as it was that her other sexual encounters were with members of opposing lineages. At the very least, this may have raised larger concerns about the loyalty of her family to the Boils, especially given the history of bad blood between them and the Centelles. Thus, when viewed in this light, the allegations of fornication made by Phelip Boil’s children can be seen as less concerned with the fact that she had sex before marriage and more concerned that it was with the wrong people. In fact, in the record itself, it is noted that Castellana and Phelip Boil themselves had had sexual relations with each other before their marriage. Perhaps her previous sexual encounters also were predicated by a similar expectation that they would result in marriage, even if these hopes did not come to pass for her; eventually, she was able to marry a lord, even if he was far older than her. Nonetheless, in this regard Castellana’s various relationships embodied the values expressed by Joanot Martorell as well as those expressed by Guido Ruggiero’s pithy adage about medieval sexual practice as consisting of “fornication, then marriage.”

Even with this said, though, the fact also remains that while her accusers may not have truly believed that Castellana’s behavior was remarkable, as a woman, she was still more vulnerable to such accusations and was more likely to be held in reproach for her sexual behavior than were any of her male partners.

Because premarital fornication by young men was more or less expected, allegations of fornication were made against young men generally appear in court records only when they seriously transgressed other taboos or beliefs about social propriety. The most common cause of these exacerbating factors was, without doubt, the young man having forced a young woman, and especially one of comparable or higher social status, to have sex with him. Moreover, as Narbona has noted in his work on the Valencian bordell, young people were the most common perpetrators of such attacks, as well as the most frequent victims of them.

Among the examples that Narbona cites when addressing the occurrence of rape in the city of Valencia, one in particular involves a member of the Valencian elite: Nicholau Valldaura, who was a member of the same patrician lineage involved in bandositat violence in the previous chapter. According to Narbona’s synopsis of the accusation, in 1401, Valldaura was accused by a married woman named Francesca of having attempted to rape her while she was passing him

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67 This notion is at the root of Ruggiero’s understanding of the premodern sexual economy for the most part and is even the title of one of his chapters. See Ruggiero, Boundaries of Eros, ch. 2 and passim.
68 Narbona Vizcaíno, Pueblo, poder y sexo, p. 130.
on the street, by forcing her into a nearby house and assaulting her. Unfortunately, Narbona does not give additional information about the case or about the outcome of the accusation. He does, however, offer other examples that largely reinforce the idea that rape as largely an opportunistic crime, such as was the case when an apprentice (moço) attacked a thirteen-year-old servant girl who had come to his master’s shop; only the apprentice was in the shop at the time, and the girl alleged that he had lured her inside with him and then assaulted and raped her. Thus, in both of these attacks, Narbona highlights their unplanned, opportunistic nature. In addition, however, there is also an element of brazenness in both attacks, and especially in that of Nicholau Valldaura, which can almost be seen as echoing the calls of Plaerdemavida for “proper” men to actively pursue sex, even in the face of a woman’s refusal to consent, discussed in Chapter 3.

Reflecting the largely opportunistic nature of most sexual assaults even more dramatically is another allegation of rape by members of the Valencian elite. Described in a letter written by the Jurats, the victim of the assault was the daughter of an unnamed prohom, a member of the city's rich bourgeois class, who the letter claims was assaulted and raped "in the middle of the public and royal road" by a company of men that included the knights Ramon de Thous, Joan Pardo de la Casta, and Miquel Dapiera, as well as their squires. In response, the Consell ordered a bounty of five hundred florins for the capture of Ramon de Tous, quite probably because he was the highest ranked of the attackers and therefore was deemed the ringleader of the incident, and two hundred florins for each of the other men.

This incident is especially notable because, unlike the other cases mentioned above, it engendered an unusually strong reaction, evidenced by the very fact the Jurats and Consell concerned themselves with it at all and, likely, because such flagrant, public attacks on a young woman of relatively high social position were still relatively uncommon and were certainly socially proscribed. At the same time, the fact that Tous and his companions believed that they could commit such a brazen, public act of violence and were certain enough of their ability to

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70 AHM, Manuals de Consells A-24 (1408–12), ff. 349r–350r (Apr. 28, 1411). This incident is also mentioned by Narbona. Narbona Vizcaíno, Pueblo, poder y sexo, p. 129. It may well be the case that the Ramon de Tous here is the same as the Ramonet de Tous who attacked the sailor Girat de Termens ten years earlier, in an incident discussed in the previous chapter, though this can not be stated conclusively. Further, it may also be the case that this assault was strategic, in that it was intended to bring dishonor to the girl, her father, and her family. Unfortunately, there is no mention at all made in the document itself that the assault was related to the bandositats, which had largely died down at this point, or to other conflict between the families of the attackers and the victim.
evade punishment that they followed through with it is also significant in its illustration of the values that underpinned knightly notions of masculinity and entitlement. Further, the participation of squires in the assault and rape could only have served as a potent object lesson in the performance of knightly and aristocratic masculinity, however distasteful it may have been to the Jurats and Consell.

As for the girl attacked by the gang, the surviving account makes no further mention of her and is silent with regards to her eventual fate. However, from what is known from the research of other scholars who have examined similar cases, it is likely that her prospects, both marital and social, would have been significantly diminished; girls who were the victims of such attacks often faced sizable barriers to marriage in the future, especially if they were from the higher social classes for whom sexual purity was more closely equated with familial honor.  

In other cases involving accusations of rape, however, the sexual relationship between the victim and attacker is often not nearly as clear cut as those just described. Often, there was significant haziness surrounding the issue of consent, making many of the sexual encounters described in the cases even closer in tenor to those described by Martorell in Tirant lo Blanc, in which the line between consent and coercion was itself frequently indistinct. Thus, because coercion was not always viewed negatively, as has already been discussed, the interpretation of such incidents becomes even more difficult. Unfortunately, because many of these instances of sexual violence were not brought before the criminal courts, but instead were resolved privately,

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71 The importance of virginity for girls has been widely noted. Two of the many examinations on these attitudes throughout the societies of medieval Europe are those of Guido Ruggiero, who focuses more on sexual criminality (i.e., more on premarital sex as a potentially criminal act), and Kim Phillips, who focuses more on sexuality as a demarcator of maturity and the passage through the life cycle. See Ruggiero, Boundaries of Eros, p. 154 and passim; Phillips, Medieval Maidens, esp. pp. 146–62.

For those of somewhat lower status, there was less even concern given to the fate of the girl by the authorities, as long as the rape did not break set social taboos, such as having been committed by a non-Christian or against prepubescent children. On the one hand, this may be because sexual chastity was comparatively less important for women of the lower classes, but it may also reflect a simple lack of concern precisely because the girls were from groups within society with less social and political influence, and who were therefore more easily ignored. Both of these possibilities are addressed by Ruggiero. Further, a case from the Valencian courts that involves the first exception can be found in AHM, Lettres Missives G3-8 (1403–05), f. 108v (Feb. 5, 1405). One that is indicative of the second possibility is found in AHM, Lettres Missives G3-7 (1400–03), ff. 156v–57r (Jul. 28, 1401).

72 Along much the same lines, Ruggiero found several examples of cases in which long-term sexual relationships began as rapes before transitioning to a more stable format. Concluding, he states that "especially at the lower social levels a certain element of violence was associated with sexuality." Boundaries of Eros, p. 101. One wonders if such relationships could truly be described as consensual, however, since it would seem that the threat of violence, introduced at the commencement of the sexual relationship, would have lingered over it from then on. Additional texts that deal with the issue of rape in feudal society have already been mentioned in Chapter 3, but two worth mentioning, in particular, are Kaeuper, Chivalry and Violence, esp. pp. 225–30; and Gravdal, Ravishing Maidens.
records of rape or illicit sex between members of the elite classes are extremely rare. As suggested in Chapter 3, however, in the discussion of Joanot Martorell’s dispute with his cousin about his fornication with Damiata, the issue at the core of the dispute appears to have been as much that the cousin, Joan de Montpalau, refused to marry Damiata afterwards as it was that the fornication had occurred in the first place. Moreover, in her case, although she had given consent to the sexual encounter, since that consent was given under false pretenses, with Monpalau allegedly having married her clandestinely, coercion, even if not of a physical nature, still lay at the center of their relationship.

Similarly, returning to the accusations made by Sperança de Monpalau against the squires Perito Voltayna and Jaume Vidal, this case also offers a similarly interesting glimpse of another means through which young men of the elite pursued sexual gratification outside of the regulated context of the bordell. As was the case in her accusation against Voltayna, in her accusation against Vidal, she accused the latter of having abducted and raped several young, female servants from other households in the immediate neighborhood where he and Sperança lived, as well as having robbed at least one after having assaulted her.73 Again, it is clear that Sperança intended for these allegations to damage Vidal’s reputation and to establish a pattern of behavior that would place the alleged attack she had suffered within a broader context. Further, as can be seen from the other examples cited above, her characterization of him may well have been viewed as intrinsically credible, given the behavior ascribed to squires and young members of elite households in general.

In his response to her charges, however, while he largely sidestepped most of Sperança’s accusations, which is perhaps telling in and of itself, Vidal gave a very different account of at least one of his sexual affairs with a local servant. In short, Vidal claimed that Sperança herself had offered him the opportunity to sleep with one of her servants, after noticing him admiring the girl during one of his visits to Sperança’s house. This in itself is interesting because, although clearly intended to damage Sperança’s reputation, it suggests, at the very least, that the sexual activities of young servant women were not unknown to those they served. Also notable is Vidal’s assertion that, after hearing Sperança’s offer, he replied that he did not wish to pursue the tryst unless the girl herself desired it. When asked by Sperança, Vidal claimed that the servant

73 She alleges that Jaume Vidal took several young servant girls (moças) “from their homes” for his sexual gratification – essentially implicating him as a rapist. Similarly, she claims that he had abducted young girls (fadrines) and had transported them out of the city, though she neglects to specify what became of them. ARV, Gobernació, Criminum 4.258 (1450–53), mn. 2, f. 40v (Jan. 26, 1452).
consented and, therefore, the two met at a nearby house owned by Vidal's master, where they then had sex with each other – with Sperança’s full knowledge and consent.

Thus, while Vidal never fully explains away Sperança's allegations, one still suspects a kernel of truth lay at their core. He seems, at least tacitly, to admit that had had sexual relations with young servant women from his neighborhood. Where he drew the line, however, was in his implied assertion that these sexual encounters, like that with Sperança’s servant, were entirely consensual.\(^\text{74}\) Whichever interpretation of his sexual activity may have been correct – that offered by Vidal or that offered by Sperança – both of their descriptions highlight what appears to have been a social economy of sex and fornication that existed outside the bordell and that appears to have been largely unaffected by the efforts of secular and religious authorities to restrict it.

Furthermore, the sheer amount of social fluidity that both Sperança and Jaume Vidal describe in their testimony is also striking, in which one finds squires of the Master of Montesa’s household chatting with Sperança and other members of her household in the street and visiting her home to socialize with her, despite the fact that Eiximenis advised young women against even risking a glance out of a window, lest they be seen by young men and their gaze interpreted as some sort of sexual invitation. Yet, in the testimony of both Sperança and the squires, as well as in the court record more generally, there is no indication that this state of affairs was viewed as either extraordinary or unseemly. Instead, despite all of the warnings of moralists about the dangers of men and women interacting with each other on a quotidian, social basis, it appears that they continued to do so, more or less, with impunity. Thus, when Jaume Vidal described his alleged relationship with Sperança’s servant, the casualness of his description, as if it is nothing at all out of the ordinary (beyond Sperança’s offer to arrange it, that is) seems to be particularly important.\(^\text{75}\)

\(^{\text{74}}\) Jaume Vidal should not necessarily be seen as particularly "enlightened" in his desire for his partner’s consent before having sex with her. Elsewhere, in his testimony, he does not hesitate from calling her, essentially, a loose woman, claiming that she "had sex with all of the villains and blacks who served her neighbors." Whether Vidal considered himself to be a villain as well, sadly, is left unspecified. Further, his assertion that Sperança had arranged the encounter is a fairly blatant attempt to damage her credibility before the court, which makes his testimony rather less credible in some respects.

\(^{\text{75}}\) This is by no means conclusive evidence, but it does suggest either that (1) the accusations were largely fabricated by Sperança; (2) the victims were of sufficiently low status that the crimes against them went unreported; or (3) the sexual encounters were, for the most part, consensual. Of these, the latter two are certainly the most likely, with the lack of corroborating testimony about Jaume Vidal’s sexual predation being the factor that tips the scales, for the moment, towards the final explanation.
In any event, despite the fact that Sperança made every attempt to portray the encounters between Jaume Vidal and the various serving girls of the neighborhood as non-consensual, no mention is ever made, even by Sperança, of any women or their masters ever bringing charges against him. In fact, the court appears to have been largely uninterested in any of Sperança’s accusations of sexual malfeasance made against Vidal. Similarly, the “loose morals” of Sperança’s moça aroused an equally negligible reaction either from the court or, it seems, from the neighborhood in which she lived. In this respect, then, the testimony of Sperança and of Jaume Vidal both can be seen as generally affirming what appears to have been a more or less commonly upheld tacit acceptance of premarital sex, at least for young men of the elite with female members of the lower classes. This adds further support to the notion advanced by Ruggiero and Rossiaud that premarital fornication was generally tolerated even outside the publicly condoned context of legalized prostitution in the bordello, even if it was publicly and legally deemed to be illicit and immoral.\(^76\) Further, although many of these encounters feature young women as victims of male sexual aggression, it is possible, at least in some cases, to also see momentary glimpses of female sexual agency in instances of extramarital fornication. Unfortunately, these glimpses are relatively few and far between.

Where one also sees some glimmer of female agency in sexual encounters outside the bordell is in cases that deal with instances of clandestine marriage, in which a young man or woman married without the consent of at least one spouse’s parent or legal guardian. While not particularly common, likely due to the laws enacted in the 1340s that permitted parents to disinherit or withhold the dowry of children who married without parental consent, such cases do appear sporadically in the records of the Valencian courts, with most of the cases brought by members of the bride’s family, claiming that they had not consented to the girl’s marriage.\(^77\) On the other hand, following Ruggiero, since premarital fornication was often preceded by promises to marry, and since the Church continued to treat such promises as equivalent to de facto marriages, regardless of whether they had been witnessed by anyone other than the contracting parties, the line between premarital fornication and religiously licit marital sex remained fairly indistinct. Moreover, since many clandestine marriages ended in marriage anyway, with the practice used to legitimize premarital sex in a marriage that would eventually be publicly

\(^{76}\) For example, see Ruggiero, *Boundaries of Eros*, pp. 154–68.

\(^{77}\) For a brief description of this and other restrictions of clandestine marriage, see Wessell Lightfoot, *Women, Dowries and Agency*, p. 22.
recognized, as was the case between Tirant and Carmesina in *Tirant lo Blanc*, most of the time, instances in which such marriages occurred would remain invisible within the archival record. Only in cases when something went seriously wrong, such as occurred in the case of Damiata Martorell, would written documents be created that could be consulted by modern historians.\(^{78}\)

What is more, even in cases where clandestine marriages did occur and were reported to the Valencian courts, the actual marriage, in which both parties gave consent to each other, is often glossed over, and instead is characterized as an attack by the male partner on the female – most frequently, kidnapping and rape – rather than as acts that occurred under the aegis of marriage, albeit clandestine.

One notable example of such a case is found in a complaint made before the Governor’s court, in which a young Muslim man named Ahmet Loratge was accused of having kidnapped and raped a Christian girl named Elionor de Sos, the daughter of a *ciutadan honrat* from the town of Sogorb. In this case, however, the underlying presence of a pre-existing sexual relationship between Ahmet and Elionor, which the initial accusation attempts to suppress, almost certainly because of the confessional difference between the two, points to what was likely, instead, a clandestine but consensual, sexual relationship between the “attacker” and his “victim.”

Laying out its account of what had occurred between Ahmet and Elionor, the initial complaint against Loratge that was made by Elionor’s relatives states that Loratge and his family were tenants attached to land surrounding the fortress of Castelnou, where Ahmet also served as a member of the household staff. Similarly, Elionor was also a servant (*moça*) in the castle,

\(^{78}\) Again, see Ruggiero, *Boundaries of Eros*, pp. 154–55. This general view also accords well with the path that Martorell charts for his characters in *Tirant lo Blanc* itself, outlined in Chapter 3, in which sex followed "words of the future," but preceded the actual marriage. It also accords well with a common strand seen in several court cases, such as that against Luca di Tono, in which he was accused of having agreed to marry the servant Margalida, after which she consented to have sex with him and, allegedly, aided in the robbery of her master's home.

Beyond the Iberian peninsula, Gene Brucker’s micro-historical monograph, *Giovanni and Lusanna*, describes a roughly similar situation to that experienced by Martorell’s sister, and is emblematic of the difficulties that clandestine marriage arrangement could create when they went awry. In that case, a young, Florentine patrician, Giovanni, was accused by his artisan-class mistress, Lusanna, of having married her clandestinely in order to have sex with her. Yet, since the marriage was never formalized or made public, Giovanni eventually abandoned Lusanna and married another woman of equal social class, who brought a large dowry with her, leaving Lusanna in the lurch. In essence, the clandestine "marriage" was, at least in Giovanni's eyes, something more akin to a concubinage arrangement, which he seems to have had little compunction about terminating when a better opportunity arose. For Lusanna, however, at least according to her later allegations, the affair had been a real marriage and, as a result, she came before the court to request that Giovanni should be compelled recognize that the marriage had occurred and return to her, forsaking his second wife. In the end, though, in what amounted to a he said/she said case, Giovanni’s greater wealth and status won out and Lusanna’s petition was denied, leaving her, in effect, defamed as a fornicator. Brucker, *Giovanni and Lusanna*. 
although she was also related to the castellan (alcaide) of the castle, who held it on behalf of an absentee lord. According to the initial complaint, Ahmet kidnapped Elionor, apparently without provocation, and attempted to carry her off "to the land of the Moors" (la terra dels moros) with the assistance of several friends and relations. In addition, when he arrived in Muslim territory, the complaint alleged that he would have compelled Elionor to convert to Islam and, likely, would have sold her into slavery. Furthermore, the complaint also alleges that, after kidnapping her, Loratge also had raped Elionor and had even permitted others to do the same. Thus, in its characterization of events, Ahmet is portrayed unequivocally as a dangerous sexual predator whose crimes were even more transgressive because they broke religious boundaries and taboos.

Perhaps even more significant, though, is the additional evidence that is buried within these allegations that suggests that Ahmet’s actions were not as flagrant, or as diabolical, as the initial case tries to make them appear. For example, in the initial accusation, it is conceded that at least one sexual encounter had occurred between Ahmet and Elionor even before her kidnapping and alleged rape, and it is noted that Ahmet had already been denounced for fornication with Elionor. Further, because of this he had been forced to flee the castle and was ashamed to be seen in the community. Yet, in testimony given by one of Loratge’s alleged conspirators, it is asserted that Ahmet and Elionor had not only fornicated once but on numerous occasions. Further, it was also alleged that her master and relation, the castellan, knew of the relationship, but allowed it to continue because Ahmet had promised to convert to Christianity and to marry the girl. Therefore, remarkably, even premarital sex with a non-Christian was tolerated, as long as there was a promise of conversion that accompanied the promise of marriage. Even more significantly, this version of events is later confirmed by testimony given by Elionor herself.

In a letter written to the court by a representative in Orihuela, where Elionor had eventually been found and taken into custody – although Ahmet continued to evade capture – Elionor

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Books: 79 The charges against Ahmet and his co-conspirators are laid out in two complaints. The first is incomplete, but the second has survived in its entirety. See Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Gobernació, Litium 2.204 (1413), nn. 33, f. 6r (Nov. 8); Ibid., nn. 33, f. 13r. The name of Ahmet Loratge has been modernized, as it appears in several forms in the document, both as "Azmat" and "Famet." The substitution of "Ahmet" is conjectural, but seems to be the most likely Arabic name that the scribes were trying to transliterate.

Notably, in another part of the case, it is alleged that Elionor was an illegitimate child of a Moorish mother. This could explain why she was a servant in the household of her relative, rather than living in the household of her socially prominent father. According to the record, while growing up, she had been "often among moors." 80 Most of these statements are included in testimony found in Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Gobernació, Litium 2.205 (1413), nn. 49, ff. 32r–39r.
testified that she had consented to sex with Ahmet on various occasions. However, as indicated in the testimony above, she stated that she had done so because he had pledged to convert to Christianity and to marry her, both of which, she said, "would please her." Therefore, in direct contradiction to the complaint lodged on her behalf by her father and paternal relatives, her own testimony asserts that her sexual relationship with Ahmet was consensual, with marriage being the expected result. Further, in testimony that continued to contradict the allegations of kidnapping and rape in their entirety, Elionor also testified that she had willingly run off with Ahmet, having even gone so far as to lower herself down from her room in the castle by a rope, since the gates were generally kept locked at night. Additionally, she unequivocally denied having been raped, either by Ahmet or anyone else. Instead, she acknowledged that, after running away with him, she had had consensual sex with him in the home of a man who had agreed to hide the couple.

Thus, in her testimony, Elionor emerges from the pages as much more than a passive victim of a nefarious scheme put in place by Ahmet. Instead, she becomes a willing participant pursuing her own sexual and romantic desires, even though they conflicted with the desires of her family. Similarly, while it is hard to say whether Ahmet ever intended to convert to Christianity, it does seem that his feelings for her were genuine. After their initial affair became known, Ahmet was said to have begged the bailiff and his wife for permission to marry Elionor. In the end, though, he was denied permission to do so, perhaps because the public outing of their sexual relationship before Ahmet had actually converted had made the entire situation untenable. What can be said, though, is that it was after they were denied a legitimate path to marriage that the lovers took matters into their own hands and attempted to flee, thereby effecting the marriage that they were otherwise denied. Further, in Elionor’s actions one sees at least a suggestion that young women had some avenues, even if rather extreme or socially dangerous, to follow their heart’s desire and pursue sexual relationships with young men whom their families deemed “unsuitable” for them. Unfortunately for Ahmet and Elionor, it appears that the social and religious barriers placed between them were too much to surmount.

While not as dramatic in its undercurrent of romantic love as that between Ahmet and

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81 *Ibid.*, nn. 49, f. 27v. [ell se casararia ab ella i ella dix li que li plahia.]

82 Analyzing the testimony that Elionor gave, it is quite likely that several of her claims were intended to protect her own life and welfare, following her “recovery” by Christian authorities: she had slept with and run off with an "infidel," after all. Even given this, however, hers is still a touchingly romantic story of two young people who fell in love, ignoring the religious and cultural divide that was supposed to keep them separate.
Elionor, a second case also centered on allegations of an inappropriate, clandestine marriage is nonetheless illuminating in that it shows how seriously the courts took the wishes and desires of young people, and especially young women, in rendering its decision on these matters. In spite of all the roadblocks that were put up to block young people from contracting secret marriages, when they did occur, the wishes of the contracting minors still mattered, especially when the court attempted to determine whether consent had been given by both parties. This case was brought before the Governor’s court by Ferrer Cardona, who was acting in his role as the legal guardian of an infanta named Cilia Martí. According to his accusation, his ward, Cilia, normally lived in the household of her paternal grandmother, but at one point had traveled to the town of Cuenca, in the Kingdom of Castile, with her maternal aunt, to celebrate Christmas with her maternal relations. At the heart of the case, though, was the allegation that, while in Cuenca, Cilia had married a young man there, a notary, clandestinely and without Cardona's knowledge or consent. Moreover, the implication made by Cardona is that the girl, who is described in the records as "less than fifteen years years old" (menor de XV anys), was forced into the marriage by her maternal relations. This was important because if consent had only been given under duress, it would render the marriage completely invalid. Consequently, Cardona requested that the girl be retrieved from Cuenca, returned to Valencia, and the marriage should be annulled.

Yet, as in the accusations made against Ahmet Loratge, here too additional wrinkles make the situation more complex than it initially appears. Foremost among them is that, at the time of her marriage, Cilia had only just met her husband-to-be; in short, this was not a clandestine marriage contracted because of pre-existing romantic attachment. For Cardona, this is the smoking gun that justifies his legal claim of Cilia’s coercion and the greatest indication that she had not given proper consent. According to his accusation, after arriving in Cuenca, her aunt, several cousins, and her eventual groom's father all began to pressure Cilia into marrying the young man that they had selected for her, the notary. This turn of events was particularly galling for Cardona because, he claimed, it spoiled plans that he had for her to marry a relative from her father’s side of the family, in Valencia. Therefore, in addition to the secretive nature of the marriage itself, one also finds the implication that interfamilial politics and infighting between Cilia’s paternal and maternal relations over her fate – and likely her dowry and inheritance – was also part of the dispute.

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83 ARV, Gobernació, Litium 2.207 (1414), beginning at mn. 3, f. 46r. (Feb. 16).
Luckily, as was the case for Elionor de Sos, here too the court sought out the testimony of the girl at the center of the affair. Therefore, the record states, on several occasions representatives of the court traveled to Cuenca to question the girl and verify whether she truly had desired to enter into the marriage that she had contracted. On each occasion, Cilia confirmed that she had entered into the marriage freely and that, even though she had not known her spouse previously, she was satisfied with the match and happy with her status. Further, she told the officials that she did not wish to return to Valencia, but instead wished to remain in Cuenca with her new husband. Therefore, satisfied that she had not been coerced, and likely with little capacity to change matters in any way, since she was living outside the boundary of the kingdom, the court acceded to her wishes and permitted the marriage to stand.

In short, although her marriage was contracted under potentially questionable circumstances, the court nonetheless placed her wishes and her desire to remain married to the notary in Cuenca above the interests of her paternal relations (i.e., Ferrer Cardona) and her wish to remain in Cuenca was respected. Thus, although clandestine marriage, or any marriage contracted without parental consent or that of a legal guardian, was technically prohibited, there were always exceptions to the rule and, foremost among them, appears to have been that the desires of young people should be taken seriously and their agency should be respected. As was the case in the examples given in Chapter 1, in which the courts regularly acceded to the wishes of adults in the face of opposition from their curadors or other legal guardians, so too did this occur when Cilia Marti’s will clashed with that of her guardian, Ferrer Cardona. The fact that the court was willing to make these accommodations for young women is even more notable because it suggests a society in which, despite the prescription of ecclesiastical writers, the agency of women was was acknowledged, and, although certainly circumscribed by societal expectations of “proper” behavior, women could exert some amount of control of her body and over her future.

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84 Cilia's testimony begins on f. 48v, but is quickly interrupted, continuing in mn. 4, f. 38r.
85 That such cases occurred periodicaly can also be seen in the case of a girl named Francescha, who was married to "a youth named Ramon, servant." The marriage is described as a "clandestine marriage" carried out by force, but whether the girl did not want the marriage is unclear. The allegations arise out of a complaint by her father against another man, with whom the father was having a dispute, and, as a result, the events are described purely in terms of a malicious capture and illegitimate espousal. Unfortunately, there is no testimony from either the captor nor the girl, and the father's account does not always accord with common sense. In the end, one is left with the suspicion that the conflict was much more complex than described in the initial accusation. For this case, see ARV, Gobernacio, Criminum 4.279 (1433), beginning at mn. 4, 11r (Feb., day not given).
86 Moreover, her aunt, who had been in prejudice for her role in the matter, was entirely exculpated.
Conclusion: Sexuality and Aristocratic Identity

While the bordell was a critical focal point of adolescent male exposure to the behaviors – sexual and otherwise – that collectively constituted “masculinity” in later medieval Valencia, it was certainly not the only such locus. Opportunities for members of both sexes to pursue physical interactions and sexual relationships outside of the context of Christian matrimony were not uncommon in late medieval Valencian society, particularly for young men, but also, to a somewhat surprising extent, for young women. What is more, as earlier historians working both in medieval Iberia and farther afield have established, these premarital sexual experiences were, very often, tolerated, at least tacitly, by society at large, and were even expected to occur by some. After all, if Tirant lo Blanc can be understood as a model for knightly behavior, then sexual prowess was clearly a vital element of knightly identity, just as sexual domination – "getting your way" – was a vital element of how aristocratic males demonstrated that prowess. Thus, the examples given above, and especially in the instances of sexual violence, coercion, and rape by members of the aristocracy or those in their households show the aggressive sexuality that Joanot Martorell imbued into his characters is closely mirrored by the similar performance of aggressive masculinity carried out by young members of aristocratic households in the bedrooms of the medieval city of Valencia, as well as in its streets.

On the other hand, this chapter also demonstrated that young men were not only sexual predators. The cases of Ahmet Loratge and, perhaps, Jaume Vidal – as well as those young men who maintained long-term affective relationships with amigas – certainly suggest this. Thus, while instances of sexual violence certainly occurred, these examples indicate that consensual, premarital sexual relationships were not unheard of between young men and women. In fact, these relationships offered some opportunity for young women to engage in premarital sexual expressions as well, even if such behavior was more socially perilous for them than for their male partners. In many of the cases discussed in this chapter, including those of Sperança and Perito Voltayna and even Castellana Castellar and her previous lovers, women can consistently be seen as possessing a remarkable level of agency in pursuing their own independent romantic and sexual desires, despite any social expectation that they should remain virginal while unmarried and, at least in the mind of ecclesiastical authors, should deny their sexual desire and
identity entirely. Nonetheless, even within these more constrained parameters, some women were able to exert some level of autonomy over their own bodies and over their lives and, as a result, successfully belied the ideal espoused by ecclesiastics of the purely passive, asexual woman.

Similarly, the sexual identity of girls from somewhat lower classes deserves further study to better understand how they understood their own relationship with sex and sexuality. After all, as seen in the case of Sperança and Jaume Vidal, he reported that her servant, the unnamed moça, had all too willingly agreed to sleep with him, with little encouragement needed. This would seem to suggest that there were opportunities for young women to engage in sex before marriage and gain an insight into their own identities as sexual beings. On the other hand, while her erstwhile lover, Jaume Vidal, showed little hesitation in having sex with her, so too did he also show little hesitation to describe her as essentially a slut or a whore, when doing so would prove advantageous to him. Thus, although Jaume Vidal certainly enjoyed the pleasure of the girl's sexual agency, he still was content to hold her to the rigid standards of the virgin/whore dichotomy that permeated much of the ecclesiastical writing, and popular belief, of this era—as well as those that followed.

Further, while this chapter has focused on outright occasions of sexual intercourse, since these were the cases most frequently brought before the court, there also remains the significantly more hidden realm of flirtation, demonstrated by Martorell in episodes such as Diafebus’s “exploration” of his betrothed Stephania’s bodice. These forms of flirtatious sexual contact that scholars like Peter Bailey have described as "parasexuality" and that Kim Phillips has described as "everything but [sex]" and "central to court culture" remain areas in need of additional examination within the premodern Iberian context. See Phillips, Medieval Maidens, p. 163. Bailey is cited by Phillips here.
Conclusion: Marriage, Majority, and the Ambiguous Entrance into Adulthood

In bringing this study to a close, three additional cases will be discussed that encapsulate many of the themes addressed in this study. Most particularly, the three cases highlight the ambiguity of the transition from adolescence into adulthood, as well as the imprecise measure that marriage represented as a signifier of independent adulthood, despite what the laws may have said. In essence, while adolescence was clearly recognized as a distinct life-stage and as a vitally important period of transition to adulthood, and was therefore delineated with a good deal of precision in the Furs, its duration was often ill-defined in actuality. These problems also remained especially pronounced while the parents of a child remained alive, and the father in particular, since the precise definitions and delineations of the rights of legal minors and young people, for the most part, applied only to those who were free from their father’s potestas, as seen in Chapter 1. Thus, in the three cases that will be examined here, all of which involve members of the aristocracy or patriciate, issues pertaining to marriage, property, and the passage of a child from parental authority and into a state of independent “adulthood” will be particularly highlighted. Analysis will also include discussion of how the events described in each case reflect the particular values and societal practices adopted and embodied by young people, and discussed in Chapters 2 through 5.

Thus, in these cases, what will emerge most strongly is that the exit from adolescence and the entrance into adulthood was an intensely personal process and one that varied, sometimes dramatically, depending on individual circumstance. For some, adulthood arrived in the manner outlined by the Furs, in which marriage, or early parental death, led to a relatively independent adulthood early on. For others, however, minority and dependence, being also the most significant indicators of adolescence, continued far past the point when, according to the Furs, adulthood should have arrived. Further, for some, such as those who participated in bandositat violence, discussed in Chapter 4, continued minority brought additional benefits. For others, however, perhaps especially the sons of aristocrats (or other members of the elite) who anxiously anticipated the title, wealth, and status they would achieve after the death of their parents, minority could not end soon enough.
The first of the cases is similar in many respects to those already discussed in earlier chapters because it involves a marriage contracted by a young woman, but not fully solemnized, from which members of the bride’s family then tried to withdraw. In particular, the case is useful because it highlights how Valencian society had come to understand marriage to be a mechanism through which a child would exit from patria potestas, discussed in Chapter 1, while also highlighting once more the respect and consideration that Valencian courts gave to the independent agency of young people themselves. Despite the fact that many rights granted to minors by the Furs had increasingly been restricted over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the courts continued to give what might be seen as surprisingly deep attention to the desires and wishes of young people themselves, especially in matters having to do with marriage.

In this case, the extant record tells that, on October 30, 1422, a notary named Bertran de Boes came before the court of the Governor to lodge a complaint on behalf of the “honored” (honrat) Anthoni Arahuet, whose title identifies him as a member of the city’s patrician elite. In his complaint, he asserted that his client had recently become engaged to a young woman, the “honored maiden” (honrada donzella) Ursula, “the daughter of the honored Arnau Faura,” and that the couple had “contracted and confirmed [their] matrimony through words of the present tense, commonly known as esposalles,” with Faura promising a dowry of twenty thousand solidi.\(^1\) However, soon after their engagement, it appears that Ursula’s father reconsidered his agreement to the marriage, and, according to Boes and Arahuet, he began to throw up obstacles that prevented the marriage’s formal solemnization, described as the “nupties,” that would make public and final the vows that had been said in private. In particular, Faura cited the recent heat wave and the outbreak of disease that it had engendered in the city as reasons to postpone the ceremony, during which time, Arahuet alleged, he also tried to convince Ursula to back out of the marriage and to “disrupt the said matrimony.”\(^2\) His efforts were unsuccessful, however, and Ursula remained committed to her marriage to Arahuet. Soon after, likely because of his daughter’s intransigence, Faura and Ursula disappeared completely, causing Arahuet to appeal to

\(^{1}\) Archivo del Reino de Valencia, Gobernació, Litium 2.228 (1422), mn. 17, ff. 3r&v (Oct. 30). The case continues in 2229, mn. 21, ff. 25r–26v. Ibid., f. 3r. [diu que com entre lo dit n’Anthoni Arahuet e la honrada donzella na Ursula, filla del honrat n’Arnau Faura, sia stat tractat e format matrimoni per paraules de present, vulgarmnt apellades esposalles.]

\(^{2}\) Ibid. [volgues dar loch que les nupties se celebrassen entre los dits sposats per dar total perfecció al dit matrimoni.]
the Governor’s court for assistance in finding his bride and her duplicitous father. Thus, blaming
Faura for delaying the marriage because he was either unwilling or unable to pay the agreed
dowry, Arahuet also asked that, once found, the court should ensure that the marriage would
finally be completed.

Following what appears to have been a protracted search by the officials of the Governor’s
court, the girl and her father were found in the home of a family friend who was a local
merchant, at which point Ursula was placed under house arrest in the merchant’s home until the
matter of her marital status could be sorted out. Notably, she was forbidden from speaking to
either her parents or other relations, and also was forbidden from speaking to Arahuet or his
representatives. Unfortunately, the record of the incident ends relatively quickly after this point,
since the court had, in essence, completed the task set out for it by Arahuet. Consequently, the
court record does not mention if or how the marriage between Ursula Faura and Anthoni Arahuet
came to pass. Nor does it mention what eventually happened to Ursula’s father.

There is, however, some indication of what might have happened. In the final paragraphs of
the record, it is noted that, after receiving his notice that he could not visit Ursula, Anthoni
Arahuet petitioned the court for permission to speak to the girl. Initially, the court refused his
request, but eventually Arahuet asked that Ursula herself be asked by the Governor if she still
believed herself to be espoused to Arahuet, if she still desired to marry him, and if she wished to
see him and to speak with him. In essence, Arahuet was asking the court to place all of the
matters surrounding the Ursula’s marriage and her fate entirely into her own hands, letting her
decide, through her responses, whether she wanted to marry Anthoni Arahuet or not. If he was
lying, or if Ursula herself no longer desired the marriage, she only had to say no to these three
questions.

Remarkably, the court agreed to Arahuet’s request and the following day, the Governor
himself, accompanied by a scribe, visited Ursula to ask her the questions suggested by her fiancé.
In response, she unequivocally stated that she still believed herself to be joined to Arahuet and
that she still desired for the formal recognition of the marriage to take place. Perhaps most
notably, though, in that it suggests a measure of actual affection between the couple, she told the
Governor that she would “take pleasure if her fiancé should come to speak with [her].”

Although frequently shrouded behind the staid and formal tone of legal language, this brief mention of Ursula’s pleasure is significant because it places her will in direct opposition to that of her father. Further, it is also significant because, on the following day, the Governor’s court granted permission to Anthoni Arahuet to visit Ursula two times, accompanied by a court official, so that he could speak to her.

Unfortunately, the content of their conversations is unknown because it is at this point that the record ends. Nonetheless, although matters are left somewhat unresolved in this case, from the way in which it ends, it very much seems that Ursula and Anthoni eventually became man and wife. Moreover, the willingness of the court to accede to Ursula’s wishes and to ignore the will of her father is remarkable. So too is it remarkable that, in this case, the entire decision as to whether the marriage between Anthoni and Ursula would occur was placed entirely in her hands. She was given an open path to walk away from her ‘husband’, by revoking her consent in response to the Governor’s questions, but she did not and, consequently, Anthoni Arahuet was given access to visit her and, one would imagine, work out a way for the two to convince (or compel) her father to give his consent to the match and to pay the dowry that he had promised her.

Such instances in which the Valencian courts placed the will and desire of a young person on an equal status to that of his or her parent or guardian has already been seen in the both the first chapter, in cases such as that of Francesca Aragonés and the various adult males discussed there, and in Chapter 4, in the cases dealing with clandestine marriage. There, as here, one sees the Valencian courts regularly taking care to consider the desires of young people themselves, rather than simply acceding to the demands of parents, guardians, or “adult authority.” Thus, at least before the sixteenth century, one sees the Valencian courts and the Furs frequently recognizing the independent agency of young people and adolescents that, even if not absolute, lent them some measure of control over their own lives. In the case of Ursula Faura, this agency even included the decision to exit from her father’s patria potestas, which her marriage to Anthoni Arahuet would bring about. Thus, the vision of adolescence projected by the actions of the

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3 ARV, Gobernació, Litium 2.229 (1422), nn. 21, f. 26r. [hauria gran plafer que lo dit son sposat vingues a perlar ab ella.]
Governor’s court in Ursula Faura’s case accords with that seen elsewhere in this study – namely, that adolescence was a period in which young people were encouraged to emerge from the shadow of paternal authority and to begin to exercise their own judgment and will as independent agents, acting on their own behalf.

At the same time, though, the courts and the Furs also sought to protect young people from catastrophic harm. Thus, in the case of Ursula and Anthoni, even when Ursula had almost entirely backed Anthoni’s version of events, the court did not summarily pass judgment and reunite the couple, but instead allowed for a process of reconciliation to begin, with the two supervised visits being the first step. Again, however, despite the fact that the record ends at this point, it does not appear that the court itself saw its work as done, and it is likely that the court continued to act as Ursula’s “guardian” at least until the dispute between her father and her fiancé was resolved. Even here, it seems, the court held back to some extent to prevent any additional, unforeseen harm to come to the girl.

Nonetheless, the fundamental impression given by the courts in their dealings with adolescents is that they were not seen as incompetent or incapable of participating in important decisions that affected their lives or welfare. Rather, their opinions were frequently considered to be among the most important for the courts to consider when rendering their decisions, thereby signifying a basic recognition that adolescents in later medieval Valencia should (and did) have some measure of agency during the adolescent period and as they began their transition from dependent childhood to adulthood.

In the second case to be considered here, a slightly different picture to that seen in Ursula Faura’s case emerges. While Faura’s case suggests that her marriage would have represented something of a clear break from her dependence on her father and, at the very least, demonstrates her willingness to exert her own agency against the will of her father, the second case shows that marriage did not, in itself, effect an adolescent’s transition to adulthood. Instead, in this case, even after marriage and the child’s ostensible exit from patria potestas, some measure of dependence continued, with parents continuing to exercise authority over their children long after their child’s marriage and even after their own death.

The primary means through which this control continued was through restrictions and conditions placed on property inherited by a child from one or both parents. In the case at hand, these issues came into play when the “noble” Ramon(et) Costa, lord of the castle of Rugat and
other lands, appeared before the court of the Governor in May 1413 to block the forced sale of a portion of his estate to repay creditors.⁴ The crux of his argument was that the land could not be sold because the property in question was part of an endowment given to Costa when he was married and while he was still an adolescent. Therefore, the initial marriage contract drawn up by Ramon’s relatives, including his father, Pere de Bellvis, and the relatives of his bride was centrally important to determine whether the property could, in fact, be sold.⁵

The marriage contract that was drafted between the two families reads very much like a modern-day prenuptial agreement. In many respects, this is exactly what it was, in that it specified in great detail the rights and privileges that each party to the contract would hold over their shared assets. In the case of the gift from his father, which the document states was valued at around 12,000 *libres* – a tidy sum – these conditions were so central that it, and the entire marriage contract, was copied into the court record dealing with Costa’s attempt to sell it, giving an excellent view into how Pere de Bellvis was able to control his son’s behavior even after he had exited from his father’s *potestas*.

More than all other matters, the marriage contract concerns itself with the various conditions that were put in place to govern the marital gift (*donació*) that Costa was to receive from his father, with the list of conditions extending to several folio pages and including specifications for all manner of eventualities, including various mandates that would only come into force if his son had one child, others that only applied in the case of multiple children, and still others that depended on the ration of male to female descendants. Moreover, these provisions extended out for several generations. Thus, by including such provisions and conditions in his gift, one sees the possibility of the hand of Pere de Bellvis extending into the lives of descendants far removed

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⁴ *Ibid., Gobernació, Litium* 2.202 (1413), nn. 11, ff. 11r&v (May 5). The case continues in the same mano, from ff. 26–32r. In the actual record, the petitioner is named as Ramon, but in the attached documents, written years earlier, he is named as Ramonet, likely because of his younger age at the time and, therefore, suggestive of his minority or relative youth at the time of his marriage.

⁵ It is not particularly unusual that fathers and sons among the aristocratic, titled elite would not have shared the same surname. Sometimes children adopted the surnames of particularly prominent members of their immediate maternal family, for instance. In other instances, names were changed as individuals received additional titles or territories. In some instances, some individuals even used two entirely different names to reflect their familial connection to different lineages. It may also be the case that Ramon(et) Costa adopted a different surname than his father because the Bellvis were descended from *mudejars*. Therefore, perhaps the change represented an attempt to distance Ramon further from his Muslim forebears. For the history of the Bellvis lineage, see Hinojosa Montalvo, *Diccionario de historia medieval*, v.1, pp. 313–16.
from Bellvis himself.\(^6\)

Even more notably, though, is the fact that, according to the terms of the marital contract, although the property was ostensibly “given” to Ramon(et) Costa by his father, in actuality Costa had no real control over it. Instead, control of the property remained firmly in the hands of Costa’s father, Pere de Bellvis, until the latter’s death.\(^7\) On the one hand, it is a classic example of a *usufruct* arrangement in which the assets of the parental generation are legally transferred, but with the understanding that, in fact, the property would only truly be handed over when the parent died. For Ramon(et), despite the fact that his marriage released him from legal dependence on his father, the stipulations of the gift that his father gave to him, which one might assume was intended to help him establish an independent life, instead appears to have further extended his dependence.

In addition to the provision governing his marital gift, Ramon(et)’s father appears to have further assured his son’s continued dependence by also specifying in the contract that both Ramon(et) and his bride were not to live in their own house but would continue to live with Pere de Bellvis in the latter’s residence. This almost certainly would have meant that Ramon(et) would have remained, for all intents and purposes, dependent on his father for his livelihood and maintenance.\(^8\) Further, while it is likely that this occurred because Ramon(et) was expected, eventually, to inherit his father’s estate (and this ultimately did occur), in the meantime, it created a potentially awkward situation reminiscent of that described by Duby, in which elder sons and their parents lived in a state of persistent tension, with the ostensibly independent “adult” child, unable to establish himself as truly independent – and therefore not really an “adult” either. From all appearances, this is exactly the hazy middle ground between adolescence and adulthood that Ramon(et) himself experienced, until his father died and he truly came into his own adulthood by becoming the master of his own household and property. Thus, for Ramon(et) marriage was a step towards adulthood, but was not the final step.

The final case builds on the themes just discussed but even more dramatically demonstrates the indistinct and often protracted passage from adolescence to adulthood that was experienced

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\(^6\) A similar situation is seen in the third example, discussed below.

\(^7\) ARV, *Gobernació, Litium* 2.202 (1413), nn. 11, f. 26v.

\(^8\) *Ibid.*, nn. 11, f. 27v.
by some young people, and perhaps especially among the upper classes, as they struggled to emerge from from the paternal dependence of legal minority into the independent majority of adulthood. In addition, the case vividly illustrates several themes discussed in Parts II and III of this study, by highlighting how the understandings of aristocratic, knightly, and masculine identity advanced by the authors discussed in Part II and embodied by the individuals discussed in Part III were also reflected in the life and actions of one particularly important and socially prominent aristocratic Valencian youth.

The case that provides the bulk of the information that will be utilized here is part of a much longer and more protracted chain of litigation carried out over several decades between the Duke of Gandia, Alfons II (el Jové), and Joan and Pere de Luna, a father and son who had served in the household of Alfons’s father, who was also called Alfons (I, el Vell).\(^9\) Also, as was the case for Ramon Costa in the previous example, while none of the disputants in this case would have been considered “young” when the cases were argued actually argued before the court between 1414 and 1422, with Alfons was around sixty years old or more when the litigation commenced, the events that initiated the legal dispute occurred much earlier and extended back to Alfons II’s youth and his relations with his parents while they were still alive.\(^10\)

At its core, the dispute between the Alfons II and the Lunas was centered on the fact that, in her will, Alfons’s mother, Violant d’Arenos, had disinherited her son of the barony of Arenos, her ancestral land, and had given it, instead to Joan de Luna. Therefore, the basic question being argued was whether the title and lands of Arenos, which Violant had inherited from her parents and which had formed part of her dowry when she married Alfons’s father, Alfons I (el Vell), could legally have been alienated and given to someone other than her natural heir. As such, a

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\(^9\) All of the cases pertaining to their dispute that were consulted for this study are contained in the Littium registers of the Gobernació. The first cases are from 1414 and the later judicial process was begun in 1422. For these, see the cases that begin at the following marks: ARV, Gobernació, Littium 2.207 (1414), mn. 8, f. 37r (Apr. 17); Ibid., mn. 10, f. 43r; ARV, Gobernació, Littium 2.228 (1422), mn. 15, f. 24r (Oct. 13). The last case is particularly extensive, continuing on for several hundred folios and, therefore, is the most valuable source of information. Strangely, while both Alfonsos, father and son, were particularly prominent members of the Valencian aristocracy their dispute with the de Luna is almost entirely overlooked in the secondary literature, including by both Hinojosa Montalvo and Iglesias Costa, both of whom discuss both men in their works. Hinojosa Montalvo, "Arenos," in Diccionario de historia medieval, v. 1; "Alfonso II, duque de Gandia," in Ibid., v.1; "Gandia," in Ibid., v. 2; Manuel Iglesias Costa, Historia del condado de Ribagorza (Huesca (Spain): Diputación de Huesca, 2001), pp. 263–72.

\(^10\) It even appears that Alfons may have already died when the final cases were brought, in October 1422. According to another source, Alfons died, without a legitimate heir, in August of that year. Ibid., pp. 272–73.
good deal of attention is given to both the will created by Violant as well as to that of her father, which also contained stipulations that were alleged to have bearing on the case.

In addition to the purely technical and legal matters of the case, the dispute between Alfons II and the Luna is also illuminating because both parties made frequent, qualitative statements about the nature of the relationship that had existed between Alfons and parents while they were alive and it is in these statements that an intriguing picture of Alfons II emerges, in which he appears to have lived in a state of protracted “quasi-minority” for almost fifty years.

From the description of Alfons II’s childhood and adolescence that is offered by both parties in the case, albeit at different points and for different purposes, it is clear that his was not a “normal” upbringing by any stretch of the imagination, even among the aristocracy. For example, although he spent the first years of his life in his parents’ household, when he was seven years old, the young Alfons was handed over to the the English prince of Wales as a hostage and was taken to England in place of his father, who had been captured at the battle of Najera in 1367, while fighting against the Castilian king Pedro I (el Cruel). Consequently, rather than being brought up by his parents in his father’s household, Alfons spent the next twenty-two years of his life – including his entire adolescence – in England, until he was ransomed, around 1390.

Little is said in the court records about his experience in England, but given that it generally was considered an incumbent responsibility of aristocratic heads of household to educate the young people living under their roof, it is likely that he received some level of education and training, along the lines of that which was laid out in Chapter 2 of this study. Given these circumstances, it is likely that he was trained in the basic skills of a knight and warrior, as well as in those necessary for a successful life at court. In addition, it is likely that he received instruction in reading and writing, especially since the dukes of Gandia were known as significant patrons of the arts.

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11 The English were aligned with Pedro as he fought both against his Aragonese counterpart, Pere IV (el Ceremoniós), in one of the many conflicts between the two kingdoms during the later medieval period.
12 The obligation of lords to educate young members of their household is discussed in “In School and at Court,” in Chapter 2.
13 Recall that both Ausiàs March and Joanot Martorell emerged from families in service to the dukes of Gandia. Moreover, they were also intimately involved as patrons of Eiximenis, as discussed in Chapter 2.
Following Alfons’s return to Valencia at age twenty-nine, the case has much more to say. In essence, what one sees in the descriptions given of the young Alfons is a man bridling under the limitations imposed on him by the simple fact that his parents remained alive. Thus, while Alfons married the daughter of the Navarrese king in 1391 and was conceded the title of Count of Denia by his father at that time, the documents also indicate that he remained largely dependent on his parents for material and financial support afterwards, receiving 50,000 *solidi* each year from his father to support himself, his wife, and his household.\(^{14}\) Even given these concessions from his father, which gave him a title and lordship over one of his father’s primary feudal possessions, and in spite of the fact that his father had objected to his marriage to the Navarrese princess, Alfons II appears to have been not at all satisfied with his situation. Shortly thereafter, it seems that Alfons commenced what soon became a protracted quarrel with his father and mother that eventually resulted in Alfons II’s complete banishment from his father’s territory, unless given express permission by his father to enter it.\(^{15}\) Moreover, in a brief biography of Alfons II, Hinojosa even mentions that his father considered disinheriting him entirely, before being talked out of it by his cousin, King Martí I.\(^{16}\)

At several points in the various cases filed by each side, there are suggestions made about the causes for the falling out between Alfons and his parents. Among the most notable is that Alfons II, after his return, had surrounded himself with unsavory and disreputable companions and servants, who not only corrupted Alfons, but caused no end of trouble for his parents. Consequently, according to one of the cases, the elder Alfons eventually forced his son to send away several of the worst offenders, but the result was only further rancor between the two as the younger Alfons (who was, after all, married and in his thirties at this point) bridled against his father’s continued interference in his affairs.\(^{17}\)

As shown in Chapter 2, both Eiximenis and Llull had warned about the danger that evil companions posed for young aristocrats and the destruction that they could bring. So too did Eiximenis warn about the problems that could crop up between parents and older children over

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\(^{14}\) Archivo del Reino de Valencia, *Gobernació, Litium* 2.230 (1422), nn. 35, f. 15r. The elder Alfons did not receive the title of “Duke of Gandia” until 1399, but continued to hold titles over Ribagorza and Prades, as well as that of “Constable of Castile.” He also continued to administrate Arenos for his spouse, Violant.

\(^{15}\) *Ibid.*, nn. 35, f. 16r.


\(^{17}\) ARV, *Gobernació, Litium* 2.230 (1422), nn. 8, f. 38r.
matters of inheritance. Therefore, in the case of the two Alfoneses, it is possible to see real-world parallels that may well have inspired Eiximenis’s own writings. Moreover, one wonders if Eiximenis even may have had the younger duke of Gandia in mind when he advised fathers to take a keen interest in the education of their children. Unfortunately, in the case of Alfons II and his father, the captivity of the younger son for such a long time resulted in his education and moral formation being left in the hands of others. Consequently, his father was unable to take the active role in his son’s moral education that Eiximenis believed to be so vitally important.

More than anywhere else, though, the impatience of the younger Alfons to emerge from his father’s shadow and assert his own independence can be seen in an episode that shortly followed his expulsion from his father’s lands. As the situation is recounted by his opponents, the Luna, at some point after his father was named duke of Gandia in 1399 by Martí I and was given additional territories, Alfons II is said to have “invaded” his father’s territory with a force of “more than seventy or eighty men-at-arms on horseback,” including some of his most notorious companions and those of whom the elder Alfons disapproved most fiercely. With this force, Alfons was said to have ridden without permission or prior notice into the town of Gandia around dawn, while the duke and duchess were still asleep. Arriving at his father’s palace, he left his armed troop just outside the front gate, apparently ready to respond with violence at Alfons’s command, and entered into his father’s home where Alfons I, learning of his son’s actions, quickly confronted his son. Apparently, Alfons I yelled at and berated his son, calling him an “evil son” and “dishonest, disloyal, and disobedient,” before attacking him physically. His son, it appears did not reciprocate his father’s violence, and Alfons I’s anger seems to have cowed his son somewhat, since the latter retreated from his father’s palace and made his way, along with his followers, into a nearby church. He did not, however, immediately quit his father’s duchy.

From the perspective of Alfons II’s later accusers, this encounter, in which he had come onto his father’s land and into his house, unbidden and accompanied by a good-sized military force,

18 These accusations were made by the representative of Pere de Luna, in 1422. At this point, almost all of the principal disputants in the case were dead, but Pere was still trying to gain title to the barony of Arenos, which, since Alfons II died without heir, otherwise would revert to the Crown. It appears that de Luna was ultimately unsuccessful in his bid, as other sources note that the barony of Arenos passed to Alfons’s illegitimate son, Jaume, in 1425. For the accusations against Alfons, see Ibid., nn. 35, ff. 16r&v.

19 Ibid., nn. 35, f. 16v.
represented a blatant challenge to his father’s authority and a direct repudiation of his father’s banishment. Furthermore, Alfons I appears to have viewed the incident in much the same manner and, because of his continued mistrust of his son, he assembled a force of 100 men-at-arms and 100 horses specifically for the purpose of protecting himself from his son’s aggression. Alfons II, for his part, was accused of having fortified the town of Denia, of building (and of using) a variety of siege engines, and of having amassed a force of some 200 bowmen and 150 armed cavalry, which, it is implied, he intended to use to attack his father. Thus, again, in the protracted conflict between the two Alfonses, one sees the echoes of Duby, with the younger Alfons chomping at the bit to enter into his full inheritance and full autonomy, but prevented from both by the continued presence of his father.  

Moreover, given the discussion of the culture of violent masculinity and knightly, aristocratic constructions of honor and prowess found in Chapters 3 and 4, it is little wonder that the conflict between the Alfons II and his father so quickly took on tones of threat, intimidation, and violence. As discussed there, the practice violence and the capacity to show dominance over others were deeply intertwined with aristocratic conceptions of honor and formed a fundamental element of aristocratic male identity that continued to define the Valencian aristocracy and patrician elite well into the fifteenth century, if not even later. In fact, at another point in the case, Pere de Luna’s representative at court specifically highlights Alfons II’s frequent use of violence, intimidation, and fear to enforce his will. For example, following his mother’s disinherition of him and her donation of the barony of Arenos to the Luna family, the accusation against him by the Luna claims that he openly threatened to murder both father and son and arranged attacks on both of them, through intermediaries. Ultimately, he was perceived to be such a significant threat to Joan de Luna, who had inherited the territory from Alfons’s mother, that Joan was forced to go into hiding for an extended period. Further, in his accusations against them, Alfons did not hesitate to use the basest of allegations to try to tarnish the reputations of his opponents. At one point, he even went so far as to allege that Joan de Luna had bewitched his mother with a potion and, as a result, had coerced her into having an affair

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20 Again, issues related to these are also discussed extensively in Eiximenis’s *Lo Crestià*, and are discussed at length in Chapter 2.
22 See, for example, *Ibid.*, nn. 34, f. 46r & mn. 25, f. 38v.
with him, eventually leading to her gift. Similarly, he also made several allegations accusing Joan of being illegitimate and of low birth, therefore making him unworthy of the title he had come to hold.23 Thus, in the actions of Alfons against the Luna family, one sees patterns of behavior that are rooted in values and attitudes seen both in Martorell’s description of the “ideal” knight, Tirant lo Blanc, as well as in patterns of behavior seen in Chapter 4, in the various conflicts between squires as well as between the aristocratic families who used them, and their own children, as their proxies. In both, the performance of aristocratic masculinity was in many respects an intricate dance in which status and honor were intimately linked with one’s ability to impose oneself on others through aggressive physical (and sometimes verbal) contest.

More than all else, though, the case of Alfons of Gandia demonstrates how “youth” and “minority,” in the broadest sense of the words, could be seen as continuing far beyond what might be called the physical onset of adulthood. In Alfons’s case, his protracted minority meant that he did not marry until he was nearly thirty and, arguably, did not emerge from the shadow of dependence to his father until he was nearly fifty. In short, Alfons was, in many respects, a “minor” for most of his life. Moreover, based on the evidence provided by the testimony in the various cases he filed (and those filed against him), it appears quite likely that Alfons saw himself in very similar terms: that is, he perceived his own entrance into adulthood as incomplete, which, ultimately caused him to lash out at his father and mother with an adolescent-like hostility and protracted rebellion against their continued authority over him. In fact, one way of looking at the stream of litigation that he initiated against Joan and Pere de Luna, which continued for almost a decade, was that his mother’s disinheritance of him, ultimately, represented yet another way in which she continued to exert control over him even beyond her death, by denying him the land and title that he considered to be “rightly” his. Moreover, being a nobleman immersed in the ethos of aristocratic masculinity and the aristocratic culture of honor, the “dishonor” that he had incurred because of his mother’s disinheritance could only be rectified by a demonstration of Alfons’s “prowess” and dominance over his deceased mother, by winning back the territory and title she had intentionally denied him. Therefore, only by “reconquering” the lost title and territory, even if his conquest was in the courts rather than on the battlefield, could he truly consider himself to be fully free from the restraining hands of his parents that he

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23 Later in the case, Alfons was forced to recant these allegations.
may have believed continued to hold him back for so much of his life.

In sum, while this study has explored several models of adolescence and the transition to adulthood (including legal, social, and literary models), it must always be remembered that the transition to adulthood did not follow one established path, but was experienced differently even among those of the relatively homogenous group that made up the privileged elite of late medieval Valencian society. For every young, orphaned adult thrust into the adult world at age twenty, there was an Alfons of Gandia, who may not have considered himself to be fully “adult” even at the time of his death, at age sixty or more. So too for young women: for every case of a young woman who successfully asserted her agency in the selection of a spouse or in the pursuit of her own marital or economic interests, there was also a Damiata Martorell, who appears never to have fully emerged from her dependence on her family and her brother after the scandal that her clandestine marriage had brought upon her. For the former, the assertion of agency likely signified a break from paternal authority and the assumption of “adult” responsibility; for the latter, the end of adolescence and the entrance into adulthood was rather more complex than the arrival of physical or sexual maturity or the simple attainment of a specific age. In fact, for those like Damiata, who was never able to marry after her affair with Joan de Montpalau became public, her continued dependence on her brother and family may have meant that she never truly entered into “adulthood” or legal majority (at least, not until she had received her monetary settlement from Joan de Montpalau around 1445, nearly a decade after the initial events had transpired).  

Thus, while adolescence had a strictly defined, legal definition that was clearly laid out in the Furs and recognized by the courts, the emergence from adolescence into a state of independent adulthood was always a negotiation between parents and their children, and, with the particular circumstances of each child’s entrance into adulthood, reliant on the specific nature of that relationship.

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24 This payment has already been mentioned above, in Chapter 3, and can also be found in Martorell and Galba, *Tirante el Blanco: Versión castellana impresa en Valladolid en 1511*, p. xxi.


______. *Justicia Criminal series.* *Denunciacions* 50. 1400.

______. *Justicia Criminal series.* *Cedules* 15. 1401.

______. *Justicia Criminal series.* *Cedules* 16. 1402.

______. *Justicia Civil series.* *Curatelas i Tutelas* 1.913. 1402.

______. *Justicia Criminal series.* *Cedules* 17. 1403.

______. *Justicia Civil series.* *Curatelas i Tutelas* 1.914. 1406.

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