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Between Court and Village: The Evolution of Aristocratic Spaces in Early Modern Spain

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Article abstract

In May 1561, King Philip II informed the town hall of Madrid that he had chosen their town as the site for his royal residence and court. That year, the city was swiftly transformed into the Catholic king's court and the heart of his vast monarchy. It also became the principal political and cultural space for the nobility. Yet the greatest noble houses, particularly those in Castile, were initially resistant to the establishment of a sedentary royal court and continued to exercise and represent their status at their own traditional courts. Increasingly, however, they were obliged to reside in Madrid in order to ensure direct access to the king's grace and favour. Throughout the seventeenth century, the Spanish aristocracy became courtiers through necessity rather than conviction. In response to this situation, and without neglecting their noble estates and interests, they created their own spaces at court, and over time were able to colonize the royal capital and convert it into their own natural habitat.

Between Court and Village: The Evolution of Aristocratic Spaces in Early Modern Spain[1]

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In May 1561, King Philip II informed the town hall of Madrid that he had chosen their town as the site for his royal residence and court. That year, the city was swiftly transformed into the Catholic king's court and the heart of his vast monarchy. It also became the principal political and cultural space for the nobility. Yet the greatest noble houses, particularly those in Castile, were initially resistant to the establishment of a sedentary royal court and continued to exercise and represent their status at their own traditional courts. Increasingly, however, they were obliged to reside in Madrid in order to ensure direct access to the king's grace and favour. Throughout the seventeenth century, the Spanish aristocracy became courtiers through necessity rather than conviction. In response to this situation, and without neglecting their noble estates and interests, they created their own spaces at court, and over time were able to colonize the royal capital and convert it into their own natural habitat.

En mai 1561, le roi d'Espagne Philippe II communiqua aux autorités municipales de Madrid son désir d'installer sa cour et sa maison dans cette ville. Cette décision marqua non seulement l'avenir de Madrid, qui en peu de temps se vit transformée en cour de ce roi catholique et en centre de la monarchie, mais aussi celui de ses élites. Les grandes maisons, principalement celles de Castille, résistèrent dans un premier temps à l'influence de la cour royale et poursuivirent les pratiques traditionnelles associées aux espaces de pouvoir locaux, jusqu'à ce que la présence permanente de leurs membres à Madrid fût nécessaire à garantir un accès direct à la grâce et à la faveur du roi. Au long du XVIIe siècle, la noblesse devint une aristocratie de cour, par nécessité plutôt que par conviction. Pourtant, elle sut tirer parti de cette situation et, sans négliger ses propres intérêts, elle parvint, au fil du temps, à faire de la cour du roi son nouveau milieu de prédilection.

In 1774, letters that Philip Dormer Stanhope, Count of Chesterfield (1694–1773) had written to his son were published. Seventeen years later, in 1791, the 6th Count of Fernán Núñez, Carlos Gutiérrez de los Ríos Rohan-Chabot (1742–95), submitted his own *Carta a sus hijos* (Letter to his sons) to the Parisian printer Pierre Didot.[2] The count, who was Spanish ambassador to the

1. This study was undertaken as part of the project PID2019-106575RB-I00 generously funded by the Spanish government. It has been translated from Spanish by Jeremy Roe.

2. Philip Dormer Stanhope Chesterfield, *Lord Chesterfield's Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

French court, decided to publish the "posthumous letter" that he had initially written in 1786 to accompany his will in order to ensure that the "final and truest demonstrations of my paternal affection" reached his sons free of errors.[3] Written in the same vein as the letters that Chesterfield had sent his first-born son in his capacity as father and tutor, Fernán Núñez addressed the topos of the education of noble heirs in a single missive. He emulated a book that he had always kept at hand since his "earliest years" as an "incentive" to himself, *El hombre práctico o discursos varios sobre su conocimiento y enseñanza* (The practical man or various discourses on knowledge and teaching),[4] which his grandfather, the 3rd Count of Fernán Núñez, had himself published in 1686.

As a characteristic example of this pedagogical genre of European aristocratic literature, the younger count's *Carta a sus hijos* is an exceptional compendium of what he stated were the "civil and Christian duties [and] particular advice and warnings, which you [my son] bring to mind." In this singular manual, he insists on reminding his descendants of the need to aspire to "the Nation's utmost positions […] and be worthy of the Monarchy's top honorific distinctions." However, he does not forget to remind his sons that a gentleman's first obligation is to tend to his estates and vassals. The most significant admonition in this sense is his declaration that "living at Court is not necessary for any reason" as it contributes to "the Kingdom's ruin and loss of equilibrium." In his view, the court is not an appropriate destination for second sons and still less so for the first-born. One could "attend the court from time to time" but with one's eyes set on one's "own estates."[5]

At the end of the eighteenth century, noble absenteeism from court had become universal among the Spanish aristocracy, yet as an unequivocal sign of the changing times, Fernán Núñez—in a wholly aristocratic expression of open disdain for the court—denounced the nobility's disregard for their livelihood in his *Carta*. He pointed out that his parents had run up debts due to their "continued residence" at the court, thereby losing "their villages" and the respect of "vassals who only heard their landowners' name when they went

3. Carlos Gutiérrez de los Ríos y Rohan-Chabot, *Carta de Don Carlos de los Ríos, XXII Señor y VI Conde de Fernán Núñez a sus hijos* (París: Imprenta de Pedro Didot, 1791), 3–4.

4. Francisco Gutiérrez de los Ríos y Córdoba, *El hombre práctico o discursos varios sobre su conocimiento y enseñanza*, ed. Jesús Pérez Magallón and Russell P. Sebold (Córdoba: Publicaciones Obra Social y Cultural Caja Sur, 2007).

5. Gutiérrez de los Ríos, *Carta de Don Carlos de los Ríos*, 194–95.

to demand money from them […] to cover their meaningless excesses and luxurious lifestyle."[6] The gradual abandonment of the aristocracy's traditional residences had led to a phenomenon that defined eighteenth-century Spanish society, which the historian Santiago Aragón Mateos astutely defined as "el señor ausente"[7] (the aristocratic absentee landlord) that had taken hold in all the major noble families who were residing at the king's court.

The count's views demonstrate how the distinctive features of noble culture survived into the final years of the *ancien régime*. Aristocrats did not disdain serving the king, both within and far from the palace; instead, they considered it an unavoidable duty to serve him "faithfully [and] even shed […] the very last drop of blood from [their] veins." Given Fernán Núñez's prolonged grand tour of Europe as ambassador, which had kept him away from his estates for over two decades (1772–94), he himself demonstrated a clear vocation for such service. Indeed, the foundations upon which noble culture was built during the early modern period—feudal estates, the court, and service to the king—are lucidly portrayed in this singular piece of advice for young noblemen.

The aim of this study is, first, to analyze the evolution of traditional spaces of the nobility following the establishment of the Spanish Habsburg court in Madrid, and second, to consider the impact of the nobility's own cultural models on the royal court. The high nobility's adaptation to the courtly ecosystem occurred gradually over the course of the seventeenth century. As Jeroen Duindam underscored in his refutation of Norbert Elias's classic thesis on the courtly domestication of the European aristocracy, the seventeenth-century nobility managed to maintain control of themselves and their estates during the process of their adaptation to the world of the court.[8] Just as Versailles did not lead to the subjugation of the French nobility tamed by the crown, as Denis Richet claimed,[9] the Madrid court did not put an end to the nobility's strong ties to its ancestral possessions.

6. Gutiérrez de los Ríos, *Carta de Don Carlos de los Ríos*, 195. On these and other texts by the count, see Carolina Blutrach, "Autobiografía y memoria en el diario de viajes del VI conde de Fernán Núñez," in *Espacio, tiempo y forma. Serie IV Historia Moderna* 29 (2016): 65–84.

7. Santiago Aragón Mateos, *El señor ausente. El señorío nobiliario en la España del Setecientos* (Lleida: Editorial Milenio, 2000), 21–49.

8. Jeroen Duindam, *Myths of Power: Norbert Elias and the Early Modern Court* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1994).

9. Denis Richet, *La France Moderne: l'esprit des institutions* (Paris: Flammation, 1973).

Living at the king's court in no way meant that the nobility renounced their liberty to decide their own future (to serve or not to serve), or their direct control over their estates. On the contrary, against the pervasive claim that the Spanish aristocracy had been moulded into obliging courtiers during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,[10] one should recall that, as Ignacio Atienza has underscored, this social group never relinquished their ties, roles, and bonds to their estates.[11] That same nobility, as Ruth Pike has also commented, concerned itself with increasing its own resources by participating in commercial and financial activities or investing in manufacturing.[12] According to the chronicler Salazar y Mendoza, their shared sense of aristocratic duty was scrupulously observed, for example, by the Duke of Arcos, Rodrigo Ponce de León (†1630), one of the Andalusian grandees. While he emulated his bellicose ancestors and took part in a number of the king's military campaigns, he maintained his principal residence at his court in Marchena (Seville), "which given its location and comforts, has always been deemed well suited to governing the [duke's] other estates."[13]

Although many nobles took up residence at the royal court during the seventeenth century, their traditional seigneurial seats continued to be the pre-eminent spaces for the representation of their noble authority. The wealth of documentation on the nobility offers innumerable testimonies on the perception of the court and the courtly among the landowning aristocracy. This article does not seek to provide a conclusive study, but instead undertakes an initial rereading of the distinctive levels of what was a European-wide phenomenon, and whose variations in Spain merit closer scrutiny.

As many courts as there are landlords

In Castile, the seigneurial courts had been created in accordance with specific aristocratic models, yet they nonetheless clearly reflected the model of the

10. See Fernando Bouza, "Corte es decepción. Don Juan de Silva, Conde de Portalegre," in *La corte de Felipe II,* ed. José Martínez Millán (Madrid: Alianza, 1994), 451–502.

11. Ignacio Atienza Hernández, "El señor avisado: programas paternalistas y control social en la Castilla del siglo XVII," in *Manuscrits* 9 (January 1991): 178.

12. Ruth Pike, *Aristocrats and Traders: Sevillian Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972).

13. Pedro Salazar y Mendoza, *Cronico de la excellentisima casa de los Ponce de Leon* (1620), 231–33.

royal court. Intended as the seats of aristocratic power, these courts reached their height of importance in the late Middle Ages and at the start of the early modern period, articulating the nobility's right to exercise authority and justice. Following the wane of the Burgundian dynasty in Castile and the Trastámara dynasty's rise to the throne, the high nobility of Castile and León underwent a period of redefinition. The result was the emergence of new lineages that displaced some of the older ones,[14] which led to a profound "ennoblement of space" across the kingdom.[15]

The nucleus of these noble spaces was reinforced through building programs planned to enhance the nobility's authority and magnificence through a representational symbolic language that was increasingly combined with architecture.[16] The ducal *villages* (towns with specific municipal privileges), considered the most original creations of the Spanish Renaissance, emerged thanks to profound architectural and urban transformations that established specific and long-lasting typologies.[17] Initially these noble courts tended to be located in the villages or cities that were the principal seats of their aristocratic estates. Over time, however, other seemingly secondary or peripheral places acquired court status or retirement: for example, Sanlúcar de Barrameda (dukes of Medina Sidonia), Marchena (dukes of Arcos), and Berlanga de Duero (dukes of Frías). One of the most famous retreats was the Sotofermoso de la Abadía (Cáceres), belonging to the dukes of Alba.[18]

14. Concepción Quintanilla Raso, *La nobleza señorial de la Corona de* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2008).

15. Salvador de Moxó, "Los señoríos: en torno a una problemática para el estudio del régimen señorial. (conclusión)," in *Hispania. Revista española de historia* 94 (1964): 399–430.

16. Antonio Urquízar Herrera, *Coleccionismo y nobleza. Signos de distinción social en la Andalucía del Renacimiento* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2007), 35. See also Begoña Alonso Ruiz, "La nobleza en la ciudad: arquitectura y magnificencia a finales de la Edad Media," *Studia histórica. H.ª moderna* 34 (2012): 217–53.

17. See Esther Alegre Carvajal, *Las villas ducales como tipología urbana* (Madrid: Ediciones UNED, 2004).

18. See Carlos J. Hernando Sánchez, "La cultura de la villa entre Nápoles y España: los jardines de los Toledo en el siglo XVI," in *Dimore signorili a Napoli. Palazzo Zevallos Stigliano e il mecenatismo aristocratico dal XVI al XX secolo*, ed. A. E. Denunzio (Naples: Intesa San Paolo, 2013), 11–48. Other renowned examples were the dukes of Béjar's El Bosque (Salamanca) and the dukes of Lerma's La Ventosilla (Burgos).

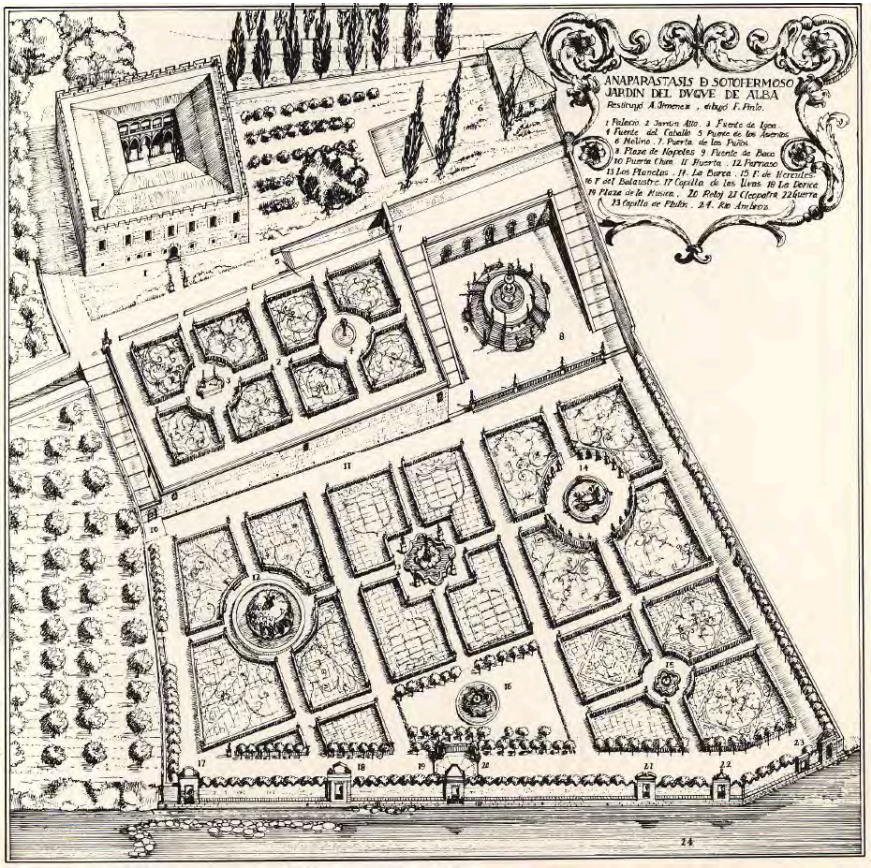

Figure 1. Palace and gardens of *Sotofermoso de la Abadía.* Alfonso Jiménez Martín, "Sotofermoso." From *Revista Periferia* 2 (1984): 73.

The process of establishing the court culture of the European monarchies, which began in the late fifteenth century and reached its peak in the seventeenth,[19] did not result in the seigneurial courts' disappearance. Instead, they took on different uses—as high nobles, above all those committed to serving their king, were obliged to reside for long periods at the royal court, or distanced from it

19. See P. Vázquez Gestal, *El espacio del poder: la corte en la historiografía modernista española y europea* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 2005).

while appointed to embassies, viceroyalties, and governmental posts.[20] From Charles V's reign on, the Castilian aristocracy gradually assumed a new model of prestige. They gained noble status by undertaking senior roles at court and in government positions across the Hispanic monarchy, a development that is well-illustrated by the first three dukes of Alba (1472–1582) and others from the House of Toledo, and which in turn generated new relationships between the crown and nobility.[21]

Philip II's decision to establish the court in Madrid in Spring 1561 put an end to its itinerancy.[22] The majority of Spain's grandees and aristocracy did not renounce their own courts for the royal court but kept them active for a considerable period. The transfer of one's household to Madrid involved a degree of sumptuary expenditure that not all the noble houses were prepared to assume. Moreover, Madrid was not an attractive location due to the limitations of available houses and the scarcity of building sites. There was also a sense that the royal decision might be provisional. Philip abandoned the Castilian court's mobility, a practice his father had maintained and which had helped reinforce past monarchs' physical and symbolic presence across much of the territory of the Crown of Castile.[23] Given the political nature of Charles V's conglomerated dynastic possessions, the model of his imperial court was primarily delineated by his travels across his European domains, despite spending long periods in Brussels, Vienna, Toledo, Madrid, and Valladolid. Because of his court's

20. Fernando Bouza, "Servir de lejos. Imágenes y espacios del *cursus honorum* cortesano de la España de los Austrias," in *Europa, proyecciones y percepciones históricas*, ed. Ángel Vaca Lorenzo (Salamanca: Ediciones de la Universidad de Salamanca, 1997), 71–86.

21. Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla, *Iberian World Empires and the Globalization of Europe 1415–1668* (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 190. For more information on Alba, see William S. Maltby, *Alba: The Biography of Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, Third Duke of Alba, 1507–82* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983) and Henry Kamen, *The Duke of Alba* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004).

22. Alfredo Alvar Ezquerra, *El nacimiento de una capital europea: Madrid entre 1561–1606* (Madrid: Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 1989).

23. Francisco P. Cañas Gálvez, "La itinerancia de la corte de Castilla durante la primera mitad del siglo XV," in *e-Spania. Revue interdisciplinaire d études hispaniques médiévales et modernes* 8 (December 2009), doi.org/10.4000/e-spania.18829.

transience, only a few grandees accompanied the emperor on his constant journeys, while almost all others chose to reside on their own estates.[24]

By establishing Madrid as the centre from which he governed his immense possessions, Philip II introduced an innovation unwelcomed by the high nobility. The court's itinerancy had permitted frequent personal communication with the monarch and the principal political figures who effectively controlled the Spanish Habsburg territories. For both the king and the nobility, this type of court had been very useful. Philip II, however, opted for a location that ensured its indefinite permanence and avoided the high costs of both the monarch and his considerable entourage's continual movement. Although it lacked the historical tradition of such principal cities of Castile as Burgos, Toledo, or Valladolid, Madrid not only reaffirmed the kingdom's centrality in the Spanish Monarchy's territorial conglomeration, but also favoured its regional nobility. It thus maintained the Castilian tradition that from the thirteenth century had privileged the kingdom's geographical centrality as the setting of sovereign power.[25] Being neither an episcopal see, nor the seat of any high noble families, Madrid allowed the monarch to create a court that suited him.[26] The king also had a network of royal palaces adjoining the city that provided seasonal residences away from court (El Pardo, Aranjuez, El Escorial, Valsaín, etc.).[27]

Nonetheless, Madrid was not fully consolidated as a court until the mid-seventeenth century.[28] To a large extent, it was the nobility's presence in the royal palace that contributed to the success of Philip's decision. Between 1547, when Burgundian etiquette was introduced into the household of a young

24. The presence of nobles in the imperial entourage was highly relevant, as is indicated by the household of the empress and her children. See Carlos J. de Carlos Morales, "La continuidad de la Casa de Castilla y su presencia en el séquito imperial," in *La corte de Carlos V*, ed. J. Martínez Millán (Madrid: SECC, 2000), 85–93.

25. Cañas Gálvez, "La itinerancia de la corte."

26. John H. Elliott, "The Court of the Spanish Habsburg: A Peculiar Institution?," in *Spain and Its World, 1500–1700* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 142–61, dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511523427.002.

27. Miguel Morán and Fernando Checa, *Las Casas del Rey. Casas de campo, cazaderos y jardines. Siglos XVI y XVII* (Madrid: El Viso, 1986).

28. María José del Río Barredo, *Madrid. Urbs Regia. La capital ceremonial de la Monarquía Católica* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2000), 78.

crown prince,[29] and 1598, the year of Philip's death, the nobility managed to gain control of most of the key domestic posts in the monarch's service, and to deploy court ceremony to consolidate their position of privilege.[30] Yet the Spanish grandees and other powerful aristocrats maintained a merely intermittent presence at court during Philip II's reign, one that was subject to the obligations of carrying out their palace and governmental responsibilities. An insight into this practice is offered by Mateo Vázquez, the king's secretary. In March 1585 he wrote to Hernando de Vega, president of the Council of Finance, with regard to the king's forthcoming journey to Zaragoza, where he would hold *cortes* (parliament) and celebrate the betrothal of his daughter, the Infanta Catalina Micaela, to the Duke of Savoy. Vázquez commented that "like penitents in procession, the Grandees will each return to his own house, each having to bear the penance of their debts."[31]

As previously stated, the establishment of a fixed court initially prompted serious resistance among the high nobility, who continued to be deeply attached to their estates. However, many nobles considered the court an opportunity to gain access to the king's patronage and favour. The first wave of nobles to pursue this goal soon became a serious problem for public morality and civic order, as the nobles' indolence was unsuccessfully addressed by the king and the Council of Castile on numerous occasions. Complaints about the "idleness of the nobility living at court […] due to their not having a motive to attend the palace during the King's lengthy absences"[32] and the excesses of the "Grandees [who] take to bed late in the morning and rise at sunset," were submitted to the 1586 *Junta de Reformación* (Committee for reform), its third meeting held with the aim of restoring public behaviour in under fifteen years.[33]

29. Charles C. Noel, "La etiqueta borgoñona en la corte de España (1547–1800)," in *Manuscrits* 22 (2004): 139–58.

30. Santiago Fernández Conti, "La nobleza castellana y el servicio palatino," in *La Monarquía de Felipe II: la Casa del Rey*, ed. José Martínez Millán and Santiago Fernández Conti, 2 vols. (Madrid: Fundación Mapfre-Tavera, 2005), 1:636–45.

31. Carta de Mateo Vázquez a Hernando de Vega, Zaragoza, 18 de marzo de 1585, Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan [hereinafter IVDJ], Envío 56, caja 74, s/f.

32. Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia de Felipe II, Rey de España*, ed. José Martínez Millán and Carlos J. de Carlos Morales (Salamanca: Junta de Castilla y León, 1998), 3:1155.

33. Ignacio J. Ezquerra Revilla, "La Junta de Reformación de 1586: *tapadas*, comedias y vicios cortesanos," in *Revista de Historia Moderna* 30 (2012): 267–82.

Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, the monarch's principal historian, provided many reasons for the presence of licentious nobles with too much time on their hands. Philip II's isolation, a key feature of his concept of majesty,[34] did not favour direct contact between the nobles and their king, despite the fact that in his final years he increased public appearances in the company of his sons.[35] When he left the palace to go hunting or to visit one of his other royal residences, he usually did so with a small entourage. The court had attracted a high number of grandees and nobles, many of them second sons who aspired to enter the service of the heir to the throne. However, their expectations were frustrated by the aged monarch's decision to deny them "access to the Prince's chamber, where they would often gather seeking an opportunity [to serve and educate the future heir], thereby insulating [the prince] from their bad customs."[36]

The excesses of these youthful gentlemen included gambling, the "pursuit of women," and "nightly plebeian mischief." In 1586, the Count of Paredes and the marquises of Cogolludo and Peñafiel were banished for these reasons.[37] In the summer of that year, Mateo Vázquez complained that never "had the court been so open and [yet so] lost as today." The secretary complained to the Count of Barajas, president of the Council of Castile, that Madrid is "filled with vagabonds," while many "cities and places" in this kingdom are afflicted with people who so adamantly pursue "their evil ways, [they] consider that at court nobody will notice [them], nor will they be punished." The main cause of alarm was not only the "young gentlemen, whose [sole] quest is a life of unrest, sensuality, and scandal," but also the "lords of great renown" who competed for the favours of the "principal women" making "highly sensual and public gestures" whose "irreparable damage […] is to be feared." The solution was to obligate all those nobles who "had no just and inexcusable causes to be at court" to return to their estates.[38] Except for the banishment of nobles involved

34. Fernando Bouza, "La majestad de Felipe II: construcción del mito real," in *La Corte de Felipe II,* ed. José Martínez Millán (Madrid: Alianza, 1994), 37–72.

35. Maria José Rodríguez-Salgado, "The Court of Philip II of Spain," in *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of Modern Age, c. 1450–1650*, ed. Ronald Asch and Adolf M. Birke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 205–44.

36. Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia de Felipe II,* 1155.

37. Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia de Felipe II*, 1155.

38. "Memoria de algunas de las cosas que se han avisado passan estos días en Madrid en que parece conviene poner la mira, con particular attención y cuidado para el remedio que puedan tener," Mateo

in scandals and excesses, no specific measures were implemented to restrict the grandees' access to court.

Philip II's control over his son's household ceased upon his death, when Philip III took control of his own affairs. Distancing himself from his father's example, he built his court under the influence of his favourite, the Marquis of Denia. The young monarch's succession drew the attention of the principal title-holding nobles, who sought a new form of relationship with their lord and master. Before long, the king announced substantial changes to the organization of his household, and substantially altered his own entourage by increasing the number and status of those who served him; in his final years, his father had scarcely filled the vacant posts in the royal household. The presence of a new queen within ten years and subsequently other members of the royal family, such as Philip III's sons, the *infantes*, and his nephews, the princes of Savoy, also contributed to attracting a greater aristocratic presence at court. From an economic perspective, the far-reaching changes made by the king suggest the introduction of a new concept of the court; the restrained expenditure of his early years, akin to his father's budget (240,000 ducats a year), gave way to the expenditure of around a million ducats in 1619.[39]

The shower of favours with which Philip III began his reign prompted a flood of nobles to arrive at court. The confirmation of Francisco de Sandoval y Rojas (1st Duke of Lerma in 1599), as *valido* or prime minister of the monarch, led to an influx of relations, lackeys, and allies. The new appointments for the Council of State, made under the marquis's influence, returned this important synod of the monarchy's governance to political centrality following more than a decade of neglect under the *Junta de Gobierno* introduced by Philip II.[40] It was

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Vázquez to the Count of Barajas and his answer in the margin, Madrid, 8 July 1586, Hispanic Society of America [hereinafter HSA], Box 7, Folder III/24, in Santiago Martínez Hernández, *"Por estar tan acostumbrados a cometer semejantes excesos*: una aproximación a la violencia nobiliaria en la corte española del Seiscientos," in *Nobilitas: Estudios sobre la nobleza y lo nobiliario en la Europa Moderna,* ed. Juan Hernández Franco, José A. Guillén Berrendero, and Santiago Martínez Hernández (Madrid: Doce Calles, Editum, FCNE and Fundación Séneca, 2014), 275–76.

39. Carlos J. de Carlos Morales, "Gastos y financiación de las casas reales," en *La Monarquía de Felipe III: la Casa del Rey*, 4 vols. ed. José Martínez Millán and Maria Antonieta Visceglia (Madrid: Fundación Mapfre Tavera, 2008), 1:1229–58.

40. See Patrick Williams, "Philip III and the Restoration of Spanish Government, 1598–1603," *English Historical Review* 88.4 (1973): 751–69.

not only the *valido's* family members who gained promotion, but also the noble houses that actively sought to form part of the Sandoval family's patronage network, along with many others who were attracted by the promising opportunity of graces, positions, and privileges. The grandees included the dukes of Medina Sidonia, Medina de Rioseco (admirals of Castile), Medinaceli, Peñaranda, Terranova, Infantado, and Osuna; the count-dukes of Benavente; and the counts of Lemos, Fuentes, Altamira, and Alba de Liste.[41] The competition for space led to Madrid's best residential locations being taken up by the houses of the richest and most powerful, which were established in the area around the royal palace (Alcázar)[42] and the Prado Viejo,[43] a zone that gained importance following the palace complex that Lerma built in a matter of years.

Despite the appealing prospects of the young monarch's court for the nobility, uncertainty over whether the court would remain in Madrid persisted during Philip III's reign. The king's frequent movement[44] across Castile and the frequent and lengthy royal festivals held in Castilian cities, hunting lodges, country retreats, and royal residences kept him away from court for long periods. The king's concern to maintain more direct contact with his citizens, whose vote in the *Cortes* was important to meet the crown's fiscal needs, dovetailed with the Duke of Lerma's strategy to isolate the monarch from possible rivals and adversaries. The transfer of the court to Valladolid in 1601, as masterminded by Lerma, caused a major commotion not only in Madrid, which went into decline during the court's five-year absence, but also among the nobility who had settled on the city as a place of residence.

Nonetheless, a considerable number of the nobility followed their sovereign and transferred their residences to Castile's historic court city. Valladolid, which had been granted the status of a city in 1596, was still recovering from the fire that had demolished part of its urban centre in September 1561. The king, the

41. Antonio Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism in the Spain of Philip III, 1598–1621* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 98.

42. Virginia Tovar Martín, "El palacio real de Madrid en su entorno," in *El Real Alcázar de Madrid. Dos siglos de arquitectura y coleccionismo en la corte de los Reyes de España*, ed. Fernando Checa (Madrid: Nerea, 1994), 63–70.

43. Concepción Lopezosa, *El Paseo del Prado de Madrid. Arquitectura y desarrollo urbano en los siglos XVII y XVIII* (Madrid: FAHA, 2006).

44. Patrick Williams, "Lerma, Old Castile and the Travels of Philip III," *History* 73 (1988): 379–97, dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-229X.1988.tb02158.x.

Duke of Lerma, and many of the high nobility fostered the city's ephemeral renaissance thanks to their architectural patronage.[45] However, their investments gave little return, as just five years later the nobility were taken by surprise when in January 1606 the king decided to make Madrid his court once more.[46] Philip III's entrance into Madrid in March marked the beginning of the city's consolidation as the monarchy's court, a process that was completed by his son Philip IV and that was accompanied by the residences established in the town by a large section of the Castilian titular nobility. Yet, despite the profound urban changes that Madrid underwent during Philip III's reign,[47] there remained the sensation that the move was only provisional, which led to the main Castilian cities continuing to compete as possible future seats for the court.[48]

The court's chaotic return to Madrid left no scope for any ordered planning. In July 1606, the court "lacked lodgings for the king's ministers and servants" and it was full of "many people from all parts of the kingdom." There was a lack of accommodation for the more than six hundred "counsellors, ministers and servants of the royal household," as well as the unlimited number of staff, whose costs dwarfed the modest expenditure of Philip II's reign.[49] Despite the discomfort and the high expenditure incurred while living in Madrid with its inadequate resources and high rents, grandees and the titular

45. Jesús Urrea, *Arquitectura y nobleza: casas y palacios de Valladolid* (Valladolid: IV Centenario de la Ciudad de Valladolid, 1996).

46. See Alfredo Alvar Ezquerra, *El cartapacio del cortesano errante. Los traslados de corte de 1601 y 1606* (Madrid: Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 2006).

47. The major urban development undertaken during the reigns of Philip III and Philip IV contributed to the perception of Madrid as a permanent court, despite the former's travels. See Jesús Escobar, *The Plaza Mayor and the Shaping of Baroque Spain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). The architectural projects and decorative programs undertaken at the Alcázar—sole royal residence in the town until the 1630s—and the construction of the palace complex of the Buen Retiro from then on were an incentive for the nobility. See Steve N. Orso, *Philip IV and the Decoration of the Alcazar of Madrid* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); José Manuel Barbeito, *El Alcázar de Madrid* (Madrid: COAM, 1992); Fernando Checa, ed., *El Real Alcázar de Madrid. Dos siglos de arquitectura y coleccionismo en la corte de los Reyes de España* (Madrid: Nerea, 1994); John H. Elliott and Jonathan Brown, *A Palace for a King: The Buen Retiro and the Court of Philip IV*, revised and expanded edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

48. Río Barredo, *Madrid. Urbs Regia*, 90–1.

49. Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, *Relaciones de las cosas sucedidas en la corte de España desde 1599 hasta 1614* (Salamanca: Junta de Castilla y León, 1997), 283.

nobility established themselves at court on a heretofore unheard-of scale. This was due to a large extent to the rise of Lerma as *valido*, which in turn led to a gradual recovery of the dynamism of the palace as a cultural and political space and the role of the aristocracy in government.[50] The high nobility sensed in the monarch's new style of rule an opportunity to recover from decades of manifest courtly and political subordination.[51]

Over the course of the seventeenth century, the court would be consolidated as the primary stage upon which to promote the interests of the upper ranks of the nobility. Madrid reinforced its status as a capital and ceremonial court during the reign of Philip IV, a monarch who placed a still greater emphasis on the visibility of his majestic status.[52] Madrid was the principal setting for the exercise of the monarchy's power, as it not only decided on the political direction and government of its vast possessions across the world, but also—and this was of the utmost importance for the elite—matters of greater relevance for the nobility, such as marriage contracts, the management of their estates, and the aristocratic economy.[53]

At this time, the nobility's perception of the court changed, and they began to show strong support for Madrid, a city that, in the words of architectural historian Jesús Escobar, underwent one of "the most significant urban renovations in European history."[54] The nobility's increasing presence was

50. See Patrick Williams, *The Great Favorite: The Duke of Lerma and the Court and Government of Philip III of Spain, 1598–1621* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006); Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism.*

51. Adolfo Carrasco Martínez, "Los grandes castellanos ante el valimiento," in *La declinación de la Monarquía Hispánica en el siglo XVII*, ed. Francisco J. Aranda (Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 2004), 607–15; "Los Grandes, el poder y la cultura política de la nobleza en el reinado de Carlos II," *Studia histórica. Historia Moderna* 20 (1999): 93.

52. Río Barredo, *Madrid, Urbs Regia*, 171–204. Fernando Bouza, "The Majesty of Philip IV: Between Painted and Storied," in *Diego Velázquez: The Early Court Portraits*, ed. Mark A Roglán and Gabriele Finaldi (Dallas: Meadows Museum, 2012), 39–40.

53. Yun-Casalilla, *Iberian World Empires,* 168–69.

54. Jesús Escobar, "A Forum for the Court of Philip IV: Architecture and Space in Seventeenth-Century Madrid," in *The Politics of Space: European Courts ca. 1500–1700*, ed. Marcello Fantoni, George Gorse, and Malcolm Smuts (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 2009), 121; and "Arquitectura y urbanismo en el Madrid del siglo XVII: proceso, adorno y experiencia," in *Arquitectura y espacio urbano en Madrid en los siglos XVII y XVIII*, ed. Carmen Priego (Madrid: Museo de Historia de Madrid, 2007), 50–65.

accompanied by its active patronage of religious foundations[55] and a renewed phase of aristocratic residential construction. The grandees, who had mainly rented properties until then, began to invest considerable sums in the purchase of building sites. In 1647, the Count of Lumiares, son of the Marquis of Castelo Rodrigo, obtained the property of La Florida for 14,000 ducats, an impressive sum for an heir apparent yet to inherit his own estate. In 1659, the Count of Peñaranda bought the house that had served as the Ottoman ambassador's residence for 51,000 ducats; the following year, the Count of Alba de Liste's son spent 60,000 ducats to purchase the house of Antonio de Valdés.[56] Nonetheless, despite the high demand for palaces, noble architectural projects remained of inferior quality to religious and royal ones, and Madrid continued to have the appearance of a royal and conventual city until well into the eighteenth century.[57]

Almost all the kingdom at court

The process of drawing the nobility to the court, therefore, was gradual but inevitable. The youthful Philip IV inaugurated his reign in 1621 with unprecedented munificence. Numerous members of the nobility, attracted by their keen expectations of the king's favours, headed to Madrid in the weeks following his father's death. The entrance of these grandees accompanied by their families and servants was an event very much worthy of record at a court that had recently witnessed the fall from grace of the Duke of Lerma and his relations. As chronicler Almansa y Mendoza recorded, between July and August 1621 the dukes of Gandía, Béjar, and Cardona, the Duchess of Osuna, the Marquise of Velada, the marquises of Carpio, Ayamonte, Villanueva del Fresno, and Villamanrique; the counts of Sinarcas, de los Arcos, and del Real; and the Countess of Oropesa all made their public appearance at court. The arrival of the Marquis of Astorga was deemed "famous" as he came accompanied by "all

55. Almost 60 percent of the convents founded with noble patronage in early modern Spain were created between the mid-sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries alone. See Ángela Atienza, *Tiempo de conventos. Una historia social de las fundaciones en la España moderna* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2008).

56. Madrid, 19 September 1659 and 15 November 1660, letters from Felipe Izco de Quincoces to the Duke of Gandía, Archivo Histórico de la Nobleza [hereinafter AHNOB], Osuna, CT. 20, D. 1–78.

57. See Pedro Navascués, *Palacios madrileños del siglo XVIII* (Madrid: Artes Gráficas Municipales, 1978).

the court and twenty-three Grandees" and escorted by the Marquis of Frechilla and the Duke of Aarschot.[58]

Although not all settled permanently at the court, the considerable number who did accentuated the nobility's exodus from their estates, which was first noted at the end of Philip II's reign. The roster of Philip IV's gentlemen of the chamber lists the high rank of the nobles who served the monarch in private. The nobility's progressive running up of debts from the end of the sixteenth century was subject to cyclical crises of liquidity[59] and conditioned by their gradual dependence on the monarch's favours and salaried appointments.[60] The increase of their expenses, above all sumptuary ones, and the decline of their incomes from their rural estates undermined part of their autonomy. The contemporary writer and playwright Jerónimo de Barrionuevo perceptively portrayed this situation in his *Avisos* when he recorded how the king had granted a favour to the son of the deceased Count of Linhares entitling him to the father's privileges. Barrionuevo noted that this further encouraged all those who aspired to the position of general of the galleys of Spain, a position "sought after by the grandest and vainest gentlemen of Spain, who all want to serve in order to be able to eat."[61]

While the young king liked to surround himself with grandees and aristocrats—he had been brought up with them since childhood—the high number of them at court posed a risk for the kingdom, or so thought his *valido*, the Count-Duke of Olivares, who also viewed those closest to the monarch as a threat to his own position as favourite. Olivares created the *Junta de Reformación*—which, following its lack of achievement, was replaced in 1622 by the *Junta Grande de Reformación*—in order to try to address the kingdom's principal problems.[62] Since the end of the sixteenth century, Castile had lived

58. Andrés de Almansa y Mendoza, *Obra periodística*, ed. Henry Ettinghausen and Manuel Borrego (Madrid: Castalia, 2001), 192–99.

59. Charles Jago, "The Influence of Debt on the Relations between Crown and Aristocracy in Seventeenth-Century Castile," in *Economic History Review* 26 (1973): 218–36, dx.doi.org/10.2307/2594250.

60. See Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla, *La gestión del poder. Corona y economías aristocráticas en Castilla (siglos XVI–XVIII)* (Madrid: Akal, 2002), 184–96.

61. Madrid, 29 de abril de 1656, Jerónimo Barrionuevo, *Avisos (1654–1658)*, ed. Antonio Paz y Melia (Madrid: Atlas, 1968), 2:383.

62. John H. Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares: The Statesman in an Age of Decline* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), 115.

through a precarious economic situation that had been aggravated by the high taxation imposed by the monarchy. The kingdom suffered the consequences of a faltering economy, depopulation, rising rural poverty, and the nobility's ever-increasing debts.

The *Junta*, presided over by Fernando de Acevedo, archbishop of Burgos and president of the Council of Castile, addressed the issue between spring and autumn 1621, offering a detailed diagnosis of the causes of the kingdom's depopulation; the measures proposed to address this concern were clearly framed in terms of the nobility. "For the last few years" the nobles who had come to live at court had abandoned "their houses and lands," spent in excess of their means, and consumed "their income in vain pursuits," even falling into debt. The crown, which had to seize the property of some of the grandees to halt the collapse of their estates (for example, the houses of Osuna, Benavente, and Feria, among others) could not, however, prevent them from continuing to live at court and "spending in the same manner." Such behaviour not only put the future of their houses at risk but rendered them incapable of serving the king when he needed their help. So long as they were "free of debts and rich," it was believed they would serve as the "kingdom's walls." Therefore, when not serving the king, it was deemed necessary they should live on "their estates where they would have to spend little and thereby have sufficient resources and wealth."[63]

The *Junta* proposed to the king that given that "almost all the Kingdom comes to this court leaving its principal towns, villages and hamlets depopulated," he should order all the grandees, title bearers, and gentlemen who have vassals to return to their lands, except for those who "have a position in one of the royal households or councils." The court would be a more amenable place if the nobles who lived lives of leisure returned to their estates and came only at the king's bidding, "as is done in France, where if the King does not demand their attendance, those not employed in the royal household […] are to be found in their [estates'] villages." And while "all courts of princes past and present have sought to conserve their splendour and authority," the order that these nobles should abandon the court was a necessary measure "for the sake of justice and

63. Consultation by the *Junta de Reformación* on "the creditors of estates and entailed inheritances," s.l. s.d., Archivo General de Simancas, Patronato Real, Leg. 15, Doc. 18.

for the governance of their vassals." The public good required those nobles with no court employment to leave Madrid and reside on their estates.[64]

Nonetheless, in the end, no specific measures were taken to encourage the nobles to leave the court, since to do so would be negatively perceived as banishment. Instead, it was the Count-Duke of Olivares's dire relations with the majority of the grandees throughout his period as *valido* that led a number of them to abandon the court. There were specific moments when their absences became notorious, such as in October 1634 when the 4th Duke of Alba, along with other members of his family, abruptly left Madrid in protest against the trial of the duke's cousin, the Duke of Fernandina, who was accused of disobedience. His nephew, the 5th Duke of Alba, Antonio Álvarez de Toledo and Beaumont, despite having served as the king's *mayordomo mayor* (lord high steward), died four years later in the garden of Abadía (Cáceres) without having returned to court.[65] In early 1641, his son Fernando, the 6th duke, withdrew to his estates accompanied by the dukes of Arcos, Béjar, Medinaceli, and Medina Sidonia, refusing to take orders from the Count of Monterrey, whom Olivares had appointed as head of the army in Portugal.[66]

The "strike of the grandees," as it has been called, established an open strategy of opposition towards the *valido*, and while not upheld by all, it was widespread among the Castilian aristocracy and led to the departure of grandees and other titular nobles from court during Olivares's final years as *valido*, returning only after the count-duke's fall from power in 1643. That year, the Council of Castile reviewed the 1622 *Junta de Reformación*'s enquiry into how the increasing presence of nobles at court had resulted in the kingdom's depopulation, when "Grandees came as rarely to court as when they came to greet the President of the Council of Castile."[67] The Spanish grandees' frequent

64. "Medios propuestos por los Señores de la Junta de Reformacion para remediar la despoblación," Archivo General de Simancas [hereinafter AGS], Patronato Real, leg. 15, Doc. 17. "La Junta que se haze los domingos por la tarde en cassa del Presidente, a 23 de mayo de 1621. Diose copia al señor Presidente, en 16 de noviembre de 1621."

65. Gascón de Torquemada states that it had been the king who ordered Alba and his family members to leave for their estates; see Jerónimo Gascón de Torquemada, *Gaçeta y nuevas de la corte de España desde el año 1600 en adelante*, ed. Alfonso Ceballos-Escalera y Gila, marqués de la Floresta (Madrid: Real Academia Matritense de Heráldica y Genealogía, 1991), 369.

66. Elliott, *The Count-Duke*, 610.

67. "Copia de una consulta de la Junta de Reformación de los domingos por la tarde de 23 de mayo de 1621," Madrid, 1643, Archivo Histórico Nacional [hereinafter AHN], Consejos, 7157, s/f.

wish to live on their own estates and retire to them from court was an eloquent expression of their independence. The Duke of Gandía, Francisco Diego de Borja y Doria, represented the ideals of a perfect nobility, one that respected its own "natural laws" which stipulated that the obligation of every noble was "to tend to his flock and practice free will."[68]

One pattern studied has been that of the Andalusian nobility, based on the idea that aristocrats from this region of Castile wished to reside permanently on their vast territorial possessions and have little to do with the court.[69] This notion of an anti-courtier aristocrat has been ascribed to the dukes of Medina Sidonia, who emulated a similar practice observed by the dukes of Bragança at their court in Vila Viçosa, Portugal.[70] The ducal court of the Medina Sidonia family in Sanlúcar de Barrameda (Cádiz) is perhaps the best exponent in Castile of a status that many other Iberian grandees chose to uphold: what Fernando Bouza aptly termed "the village counter-court."[71] The Count of Portalegre (ca. 1532–1601), for instance, considered that only those with the good fortune to possess their own *aldea* (village, rural retreat) to retire to when they were not blessed with royal favours could afford to disdain the court.[72]

Moreover, the Medina Sidonia were not exceptional among Spanish grandees, especially in privileging the life of an aristocrat over that of a courtier. Other major Andalusian aristocrats, such as the dukes of Medinaceli, Arcos,[73] and Alcalá, with significant incomes and vast possessions, similarly held this

68. Letter from Izco de Quincoces to Gandía, 15 September 1660, AHNOB, Osuna, CT. 20, D. 1–78. I am grateful to Fernando Bouza for bringing this correspondence to my attention.

69. This custom not only revealed the nobility's autonomy as regards the monarch, but also contributed to the conservation of royal authority in Andalusia. Luis Salas Almela, "La agencia en Madrid del VIII duque de Medina Sidonia, 1615–1636," *Hispania* 224 (September–December 2006): 911.

70. For other examples of noble houses, see Mafalda Soares da Cunha, *A Casa de Bragança (1560–1640). Práticas senhoriais e redes clientelares* (Lisboa: Editorial Estampa, 2000); and Luis Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia. El poder de la aristocracia, 1580–1670* (Madrid: Marcial Pons & Centro de Estudios Andaluces, 2009), particularly "La corte ducal de Sanlúcar," 53–103.

71. Bouza, "Servir de lejos," 83.

72. Fernando Bouza, *Imagen y propaganda. Capítulos de historia cultural del reinado de Felipe II* (Madrid: Akal, 1998), 219–34.

73. David García Hernán, *Aristocracia y señorío en la España de Felipe II. La Casa de Arcos* (Granada: Universidad de Granada & Ayuntamientos de San Fernando and Marchena, 1999).

attitude.[74] However, the dukes of Osuna, whose estates covered much of the historic territory of Castile and a major part of western Andalusia, nevertheless maintained an active presence at court and in various seats of government beyond the peninsula.[75] No less active were the dukes of Béjar—owners of the Andalusian estates of Gibraleón and Belalcázar—who gained renown for their service to the monarchy from Charles V onwards, without renouncing their right to reside in their ducal town of Béjar (Salamanca).[76] Of all the Andalusian grandees, the most prominent were the dukes of Sessa, admirals (*almirantes*) of Naples, who had created a powerful transregional identity. Since its predecessor, Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba (d. 1515), the family had dedicated itself to serving the monarchy and managing its numerous noble estates in Andalusia, Catalonia, and Naples; they were also seen as trusted governors and administrators. The nobility's proverbial hierarchical nature, which regulated their power down to the very last detail, provided a meticulously organized network that responded to their physical absence from their lands.[77]

74. David García Hernán, "Los señoríos en la Baja Andalucía en la Edad Moderna," in *Los señores en la Andalucía Moderna. El Marquesado de los Vélez,* ed. Francisco Andújar and Julián P. Díaz (Almería: Instituto de Estudios Almerienses, 2007), 77–115.

75. For the ducal house, see Ignacio Atienza Hernández, *Aristocracia, poder y riqueza en la España moderna. La Casa de Osuna siglos XV–XIX* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1987).

76. Santiago Fernández Conti, "Zúñiga y Guzmán, Álvaro," in *La Corte de Carlos V, III. Los Consejos y los consejeros de Carlos V*, ed. J. Martínez Millán (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2000), 481–84. In the ducal *villa*, a number of urban and architectural projects were undertaken during the sixteenth century, including *el Bosque*, a suburban *villa* on the outskirts of Béjar. See José Muñoz Domínguez, "Ideas del duque de Béjar para el real sitio de Aranjuez en 1580," in *Studia histórica. Historia Moderna* 40.2 (2018): 305–43, dx.doi.org/10.14201/shhmo2018402305343. The repairs to the Gibraleón palace and garden in 1627 suggest that this site was used frequently as a temporary residence, AHNOB, Osuna, C. 383, D. 71–84.

77. "Ordenanzas y reglas de procedimiento dadas por el duque de Baena [y Sessa] a los cargos públicos de su casa, administración y señoríos" [ca. 1618], AHNOB, Baena, C. 456, D. 5. I am grateful to Fernando Bouza for bringing these documents to my attention. In contrast to the nobility's image as negligent spendthrifts, their instructions for management of their estate finances reveal that they were particularly concerned about their estates, the welfare of their servants and vassals, the sound management of their resources, and the defence of their private interests. See Helen Nader, *Liberty in Absolutism Spain: The Habsburg Sale of Towns 1516–1700* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), especially ch. 2, "Lord of Land and Subjects"; see also Yun-Casalilla, *La gestión del poder*; and David García Hernán, *El gobierno señorial en Castilla. La presión y concesión nobiliaria en sus documentos (siglos XVI–XVIII)* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 2010), 45–50, 123–44.

Beyond Andalusia, the nobles of Castile, Aragón, and Valencia deployed similar strategies. In places distant from the Castilian centre of power, such as Sicily, Naples, and Flanders, the tendency was still more pronounced—as was the case of princely families such as the Moncada (dukes of Montalto), Caraffa (princes of Stigliano-Sabbioneta), and Cröy (dukes of Aarschot-princes of Arenberg), who held court in their magnificent residences on their estates in evident competition with their regional viceregal and governmental courts.[78] In Spain, the constables of Castile and dukes of Frías, for example, continued to own palatial residences across Castile (in the towns of Burgos, Frías, Medina de Pomar, Casalarreina, Villalpando, Pedraza, and Briviesca). When the Revolt of the Comuneros (1520–02) took on a marked anti-nobility attitude on their estates, the House of Frías bestowed the status of noble court on another town, Berlanga de Duero (Burgos).[79] Other nobles, the dukes of Villahermosa, were accustomed to living in the palace at Pedrola (Zaragoza), while the dukes of Infantado and Gandía kept the prestige of their respective courts in Guadalajara and Gandía (Valencia).[80]

A fact that should not be overlooked is that a major part of these noble houses descended from royal Castilian, Aragonese, and Portuguese lineages, a distinction that elevated them to the height of the Iberian noble hierarchy.

78. See Monique Chatenet and Krista de Jonge, eds., *Le prince, la princesse et leurs logis. Manières d´habiter dans l´élite aristocratique européenne (1400–1700)* (Paris: Éditions A et J. Picard, 2014); see also Lina Scalisi, ed., *La Sicilia dei Moncada. Le corti, l´arte e la cultura nei secoli XVI–XVII* (Catania: Sanfilippo Editore, 2006) and Mirella Mafrici, ed., *Alla Corte Napoletana: Donne e Potere dall´età aragonese al Viceregno austriaco (1442–1734)* (Naples: Fridericiana Editrice Universitaria, 2012). For viceregal courts, see Manuel Rivero, *La edad de oro de los virreyes. El virreinato en la Monarquía Hispánica durante los siglos XVI y XVII* (Madrid: Akal, 2011), 133–73.

79. Esther Alegre Carvajal, "Prestigio, ciudad y territorio. El papel de Berlanga de Duero dentro de la estructura de poder de los Velasco, duques de Frías," *Tiempos Modernos* 6.18 (2009), online, tiemposmodernos.org/tm3/index.php/tm/article/view/147; Begoña Alonso, María Cruz de Carlos, and Felipe Pereda, *Patronos y coleccionistas. Los Condestables de Castilla y el arte (siglos XV–XVII)* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 2005).

80. See José A. Morejón Ramos, *Nobleza y humanismo. Martín de Gurrea y Aragón. La figura cultural del IV duque de Villahermosa (1526–1581)* (Zaragoza: Institución 'Fernando El Católico,' 2009), 241–308; Santiago La Parra López, "El nacimiento de un señorío singular: el ducado gandiense de los Borja," *Revista de Historia Moderna* 24 (2006): 31–66; Helen Nader, *The Mendoza Family in the Spanish Renaissance, 1350 to 1550* (Rutgers: Rutgers University Press, 1979); and Adolfo Carrasco Martínez, *El poder de la sangre. Los duques del Infantado* (Madrid: Actas, 2010), 177–91.

For centuries, they fought to preserve the privileges of their bloodline by implementing strategies intended to guarantee the highest possible degree of independence from the crown. The need to distinguish themselves from the rest of their peers shaped the creation of their courts. Their domestic spaces were far more developed than those of the rest of the titular nobility; as Mafalda S. Cunha has commented with regard to the dukes of Braganza, their palace structure was akin to the royal model.[81] The case of the dukes of Medinaceli—descendants of the ill-fated prince don Fernando de la Cerda, first-born son of King Alfonso X de Castile (1221–84)—sheds further light on the grandees' courts. Like other Spanish grandees, the Medinaceli deployed a highly complex and diversified administrative structure to oversee their vast estates, and their household was organized in accordance with a domestic etiquette that included unequivocal royal features.[82] The dukes established their difference on the basis of this distinction. Indeed, the 8th Duke of Medinaceli himself, Antonio Juan Luis de la Cerda, reminded Philip IV that in his house, secular pre-eminences were treated like descendants of the royal lineage. Invoking their status as "princes of the blood of our lords and kings," they deemed legitimate their use of the exclusive trappings of sovereigns, such as having open carriages, using a curtain and a processional canopy pallium, and presenting golden keys to the gentlemen of their chamber. During the duke's stay in Seville as captain general of the Coasts of Andalusia, he was upbraided for his use of distinctive trappings unlike other nobles of Castile, and for using the term "palace" to refer to his Seville residence, when that was a term exclusively used for a monarch's dwelling.[83]

81. For the principal Portuguese noble house with royal lineage, see Mafalda S. Cunha, "Cortes señoriales, corte regia y clientelismo. El caso de la corte de los duques de Braganza," in *Espacios de poder: cortes, ciudades y villas (s. XVI–XVIII)*, ed. Jesús Bravo (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2002), 1:56.

82. Salas Almela, *Medina Sidonia*, 53–103.

83. Medinaceli was obliged to address a public memorandum to the king after being denounced to the president of the Council of Castile for his use of regalia; see "Copia del Memorial Público dado por el Excelentisimo Señor Duque de Medina Celi Abuelo del que murio en Pamplona," Real Academia de la Historia [hereinafter RAH], Colección Pellicer, t. 1, fols. 71–74. The Council of Castile's lawsuit against the duke for the use (or "wrongful appropriation") of these prerogatives was revived in 1641 and 1644 because of the accusation made in Seville against his use of carriages with six mules, AHN, Consejos, legajo 7157, s/f.

The dukes of Medinaceli—also counts of El Puerto de Santa María (Cádiz)—kept their residence in Madrid even when in the mid-seventeenth century they were incorporated into the marquisate of Alcalá de la Alameda (Huelva) and the duchy of Alcalá (Seville). In this as in many other cases, the distance between a grandee's estates and the king's court was not a decisive factor in shaping their relationship to Madrid. The proximity of an estate to the court did not necessarily guarantee more direct or fluid contact with the king. Indeed, the nobles who resided permanently on their estates, such as the Medina Sidonia, made recourse to intermediaries, as they clearly understood that their interests had to be represented at court.[84] It is evident that all the grandees, whether or not in the king's service, understood Madrid's importance and maintained a presence in the city, which had in a short period become a centre of world power.

Madrid, *urbs nobiliorum*

Despite the high nobility's wavering attitudes, the royal court was firmly based in Madrid by the second half of Philip IV's reign. The fall of the Count-Duke of Olivares and the rise of his nephew, Luis de Haro, as royal favourite led to a substantial change in the relationships between the monarch and the nobility.[85] The latest royal favourite reaffirmed his role as minister by reviving the ties with the Castilian aristocracy, following decades of distrust and distance. A markedly aristocratic court defined itself through the construction of new spaces for the nobility. For decades, the nobles had lived hemmed in together in rented houses without the comforts of their magnificent ancestral homes. However, the two principal houses in Madrid built by members of the nobility provided exemplars of noble palace architecture that endured for over a century. Both houses belonged to the same family, the Sandoval: the Duke of Lerma's *huerta*, or garden residence, in the Prado de San Jerónimo, and the palace of his son, the Duke of Uceda, on the Calle Mayor, in front of the Alcázar.[86]

84. Luis Salas Almela, "La agencia en Madrid del VII duque de Medina Sidonia, 1615–1636," *Hispania* 66.224 (September–December 2006): 909–58.

85. Alistair Malcolm, *Royal Favouritism and the Governing Elite of the Spanish Monarchy, 1640–1665* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

86. Cristóbal Marín Tovar and Emilio Borque Lafuente, *El palacio de Uceda. La Capitanía General de Madrid* (Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa, 2017).

These two buildings served as the most frequent models of noble residences, whether at court, as a suburban villa or garden house, or as an urban palace. While Lerma's residence gave rise to various imitations at different locations in the city, Uceda's, due to its size, remained for the next two centuries the court's largest noble residence, with four corner towers and two large patios. Only the palace of the counts of Oñate on the Calle Mayor was comparable in size. However, not all the noble houses in Madrid were intended to reproduce their owners' seigneurial courts. As the English ambassador to the Madrid court commented to the Duke of Medinaceli in 1677 that in Spain "each lord is a Parliament," so each grandee was also a court in his own right.[87]

By the seventeenth century, the nobility had overcome its initial resistance to residing at the royal court in Madrid and begun to create a variety of independent aristocratic spaces. The limits of the city's boundaries as drawn by Philip IV in 1625 did not prevent the nobility from steadily basing themselves in the town's centre, its extramural neighbourhoods, and within a one-hundred-kilometre radius. An authentic *villeggiatura* of *huertas*, *quintas*, manor houses, rural residences, and hunting lodges grew up around Madrid, to which the nobility would retire to seek respite from the disillusionment of court life and the king's service. The court of the Catholic monarchy, therefore, seemingly emulated Rome, whose population, as Patricia Waddy has pointed out, included the families of the Roman patriciate, as well as the pontiffs and cardinals.[88]

The Spanish nobility's correspondence is peppered with accounts of these houses devoted to leisurely pursuits. The interest awakened by these types of spaces reveals the relevance that architectural arts had for them. For example, the Count of Portalegre insisted that the Marquis de Poza write to tell him about the garden he had created for his house "about which they say marvellous

87. Juan A. de Valencia Idiáquez, *Diario de noticias de 1677 a 1678*, in *Colección de Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España* (Madrid: Imprenta de M. Ginesta, 1877), 71. Cited in Carrasco Martínez, "Los grandes," 113.

88. Bouza, *Imagen y propaganda*, 210; Patricia Waddy, *Seventeenth-Century Roman Palaces: Use and the Art of the Plan* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990); "Many Courts, Many Spaces," in *The Politics of Space: European Courts ca. 1500–1700*, ed. Marcello Fantoni, George Gorse, and Malcolm Smuts (Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 2009), 209–30. See also Bouza, *Imagen y propaganda*, 210; David R. Coffin, *The Villa in the Life of Renaissance Rome* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979) and *Gardens and Gardening in Papal Rome* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991).

things," requesting that he send him a plan of its layout,[89] and also news of the attractions of the Marquis of Auñón's house, with its "garden brimming with flowers" in which plays were staged.[90]

The studies of Miguel Lasso de la Vega have underscored the importance and quantity of the country residences and villas in Madrid and its environs, among which worthy of note were those of the dukes of Pastrana (Chamartín), constables of Castile (Fuente del Berro), and dukes of Béjar (La Moraleja). Somewhat further from the court but relatively close to it were found, among many others, the Casa del Bosque in Buitrago de Lozoya and the Castle of Manzanares el Real, both of which belonged to the dukes of Infantado.[91] The Spanish nobility had traditionally built such houses on their own estates, and their use, which had been conserved for centuries, was now transferred to the court. Some of the gardens and suburban *villa* even began to function as authentic noble courts. These residences were not only intended as dwellings for the nobleman, his family, and their servants, but also as sites for self-representation, social interaction, pleasure, leisure, and a retreat from worldly affairs. Although little is known about these centres that encouraged the nobles' autonomy while at court, a singular phenomenon during the seventeenth century is that the majority were built for only one noble and lost their use as noble residences after their original owners' death or were simply torn down.

The scale and configuration of these noble spaces at the royal court corresponded to the uses and functions they were intended to fulfil. Enclosed by walls to provide greater privacy, villas such as the those of the admirals of Castile, the counts of Monterrey, and the marquises of Castelo Rodrigo had exterior galleries and gardens on various levels decorated with sculptures, fountains, lakes, and grottoes.[92] Their domestic interiors were intended for their

89. Lisbon, 5 September 1598, letter to Juan de Silva, Count of Portalegre, to Francisco de Rojas, Marquis of Poza, Real Biblioteca de Madrid [hereinafter RB], MSS. II/2209, 48.

90. Letter to Juan Ruiz de Velasco, ayuda de cámara de Felipe II, to the king's secretary Mateo Vázquez, Madrid, 4 June 1583, IVDJ, envío 56, caja 75, 6, 19.

91. Miguel Lasso de la Vega Zamora, *Quintas de recreo y casas de campo aristocráticas alrededor de Madrid*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 2006–07).

92. Mónica Luengo Añón, "El jardín barroco o *la terza natura*. Jardines barrocos privados en España," in *Mecenazgo y Humanidades en tiempos de Lastanosa: Homenaje a Domingo Ynduráin*, ed. Aurora Egido and José Enrique Laplana Gil (Zaragoza: Instituto de Estudios Altoaragoneses & Institución "Fernando el Católico," 2008), 95–96.

owners' private enjoyment, as well as for the staging of all types of celebrations and festivities. Their rich display of artworks was another important feature, above all of paintings and sculptures, which their owners displayed in rooms open to visitors. They also provided a focus for cultural patronage and were the ideal location to host academies and erudite gatherings,[93] music recitals, plays, balls, masques, and other festive spectacles. The nobles' residences were both private and semi-public spaces, as Felipe Vidales notes with regard to the library that the 7th Marquis of Carpio kept at his *huerta* of San Joaquín, which was decorated with paintings by Bassano, Veronese, Tintoretto, Rubens, and Van Dyck, and which served as a conversational meeting place for the elite.[94]

The Duke of Lerma had established this model of suburban noble *villa* in Madrid, albeit for the purpose of converting his residence into a retreat where he could isolate himself with the king away from the court. Rather than a country house, the duke's *huerta* was a small city within the court. In many aspects it emulated the functions of royal residences. Philip III, who visited it on numerous occasions, saw the advantages to be gained from a well-equipped residence that permitted him to retire from the court without having to leave it, a model that predated the Palace of the Buen Retiro, which the Count-Duke of Olivares created to please Philip IV two decades later.[95]

93. On academies' noble patronage, see José Sánchez, *Academias literarias del Siglo de Oro español* (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1961); Julio Vélez-Sainz, *El Parnaso español: canon, mecenazgo y propaganda en el Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Visor Libros, 2006). On the academy of the admirals of Castile, see Cesáreo Fernández Duro, *El último Almirante de Castilla, don Juan Tomás Enríquez de Cabrera* (S.l.: s.e., 1910), 266.

94. Felipe Vidales del Castillo, "Una biblioteca escrita. Proyección intelectual del VII marqués del Carpio a través del primer inventario conocido de sus libros," in *Culturas del escrito en el mundo occidental. Del Renacimiento a la Contemporaneidad*, ed. Antonio Castillo Gómez (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2017), 213–27.

95. Bernardo J. García García, "Espacios de la privanza. Las residencias del favorito como extensión de los Reales Sitios en tiempos del duque de Lerma (1599–1618)," in *Felix Austria. Lazos familiares, cultura política y mecenazgo artístico entre las cortes de los Habsburgo*, ed. B. J. García García (Madrid: Fundación Carlos de Amberes, 2016), 393–440.

Figure 2. Jusepe Leonardo, *Palace and gardens of Buen Retiro* ca. 1637, oil on canvas, Madrid. Patrimonio Nacional.

Aside from the principal houses and three convents (those of the Capuchins, Saint Catherine of Siena, and Saint Anthony), to which it was connected by passageways, the *huerta* had a gallery with views of the *prado* (meadow), patios, orchards, fountains, flower gardens, a small zoo, an arena, and a bullring. Its special configuration as a space that served to display the duke's noble and political status while also providing for leisurely pursuits and a retreat from court life inspired the construction of other noble residences in Madrid.[96] Other houses with similar flower gardens and orchards were those of the counts of Monterrey in the Prado Viejo, the counts of Oñate, and the counts of Baños in Recoletos as well as the Quinta de Mirafuentes belonging to the dukes of Frías (constables of Castile).[97]

96. Concepción Lopezosa, "La residencia del Duque de Lerma en el Prado de San Jerónimo, traza de Gómez de Mora," *Madrid. Revista de arte, geografía e historia* 1 (1998): 457–86; Lisa A. Banner, *The Religious Patronage of the Duke of Lerma, 1598–1621* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009). Although there is no inventory of these spaces, see Aurelio de Colmenares y Orgaz, Conde de Polentinos, *Antiguas huertas y jardines madrileños* (Madrid: Sociedad Española de Amigos del Arte, 1947).

97. Jesús Ponce Cárdenas and Ángel Rivas Albadalejo, *El jardín del conde de Monterrey. Arte, naturaleza y panegírico* (Madrid: Delirio, 2018); and Juan Montero Delgado et al., *De todos los ingenios los mejores. El Condestable Juan Fernández de Velasco y Tovar, V Duque de Frías (c. 1550–1613)* (Sevilla: Real Maestranza de Caballería de Sevilla, 2014), 112–15.

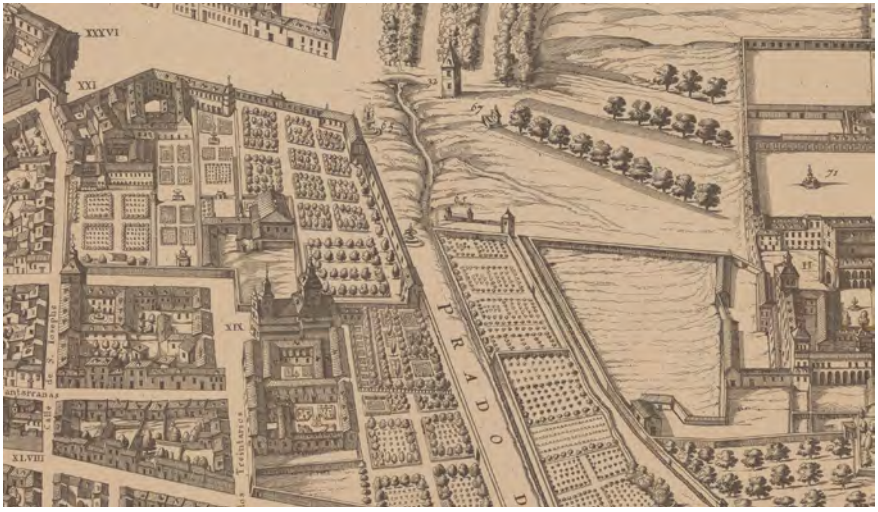

Figure 3. The Lerma palace and garden complex. Pedro Teixeira, *Topographia de la Villa de Madrid* (Antwerp: Ioannis et Iacobi van Veerle, 1656).

Three noble residences in Madrid—the Marquis of Carpio's *huerta* of San Joaquín, the Marquis of Castelo Rodrigo's La Florida, and the Admiral of Castile's *huerta*—rightly gained the greatest fame for their beauty and the extraordinary quality of their collections, while serving as exemplars of the court's social and political life. The *huerta* of the admirals of Castile was started by Vittoria Colonna, grandmother of Juan Gaspar Enríquez de Cabrera, 10th Admiral, who turned it into his own village retreat at court. One noble recorded in his diary how amid the splendour of the Enríquez family's Madrid court, one could enjoy superb "music and chocolate" with "honest conversation," and that there were also "weighty disputes and confrontations stemming from complaints by some nobles who had not been given positions" by the king.[98]

La Florida, owned by the marquises of Castelo Rodrigo, was unmistakably the largest and most extensive noble estate in Madrid. Bought in 1647 by the

98. Bouza, *Imagen y propaganda*, 206–10; Santiago Martínez Hernández, *Escribir la corte de Felipe IV: el Diario del marqués de Osera, 1657–1659* (Madrid: Doce Calles & CEEH and FCNE, 2013), 63–64. Cristina Agüero Carnerero, "El ocaso de los Enríquez de Cabrera. La confiscación de sus propiedades en la Corte y la supresión del almirantazgo de Castilla," in *Tiempos Modernos*, 33.2 (2016): 132–53.

3rd marquis for his residence at court, after his death in 1675 the neighbouring land and gardens were purchased, expanding the estate to ten times its original size. It was intended as a suburban villa on the banks of the river Manzanares and was surrounded by a boundary wall. It consisted of a palace and various pavilions, fountains, water features, and terraced gardens that displayed a good part of the marquis's exceptional sculpture collection. There were also grottoes, lakes, a dovecote, stables, a chapel, a henhouse, a washhouse, snow-house, water wheel, cattle sheds, and additional gardens for flowers, fruit trees, and vegetables. This exceptional palace complex dominated, for more than a century, the city's north-eastern part at the juncture of the roads from Castile and El Pardo.

Figure 4. School of Madrid, *Huerta de la Florida*, oil on canvas, ca. 1670 (Colección Abelló, Madrid).

The property was practically self-sufficient for all the domestic needs of a household run akin to a royal residence. Various monarchs sought to gain possession of it in order to incorporate it into the royal estate as a natural extension of their properties, Casa de Campo and the woodlands of El Pardo. It was finally obtained in 1792 by Charles IV and converted into the Royal Residence of La Florida and Mountain of Príncipe Pio.

La Florida's location gave it incalculable value. While its proximity to the Alcázar meant that the royal palace could be reached swiftly, its suburban location gave it the typical characteristics of a manor house. There, the marquises of Castelo Rodrigo were able to revive lost aspects of their identity, namely their palace in Lisbon on the banks of the Tagus and their manor house at Queluz, which had been repossessed by John IV of Portugal in 1641. For decades, La Florida provided a gathering place for the Portuguese aristocracy who chose to remain faithful to the Habsburgs in the wake of the Portuguese Bragança uprising in 1640. The marquis managed to re-create at La Florida a small Portuguese court in the heart of Castile frequented by monarchs, grandees, ministers, and ambassadors.[99]

When not only Madrid was court

In one of his poems, the Admiral of Castile declared that to have been "disillusioned at court" was the "best of ways" to resign one's self to the peace of village life.[100] The admiral had acquired his personal Eden at the court with the specific intention of not having to abandon it when the disillusionment became overwhelming. Even the aristocracy who had embraced the court *en masse* never forgot their origins. Nonetheless, a parallel phenomenon accompanied the lengthy process of integration of the upper ranks of the nobility into the life and culture of the Madrid court. The grandees' major investments in their estates during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reveal that they also continued to pay attention to their interests and to their noble prestige and reputation away from court. The persistent stereotype of the Spanish nobility

99. See María Teresa Fernández Talaya, *El real sitio de La Florida y La Moncloa: evolución histórica y artística de un lugar madrileño* (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid, 1999); Paulo Varela Gomes, "Damnatio memoriae. A arquitetura dos marqueses de Castelo Rodrigo," in *Arte y diplomacia de la Monarquía Hispánica en el siglo XVII,* ed. José Luis Colomer (Madrid: CEEH and Fernando Villaverde Ediciones, 2003), 351–76.

100. Juan Gaspar Enríquez de Cabrera, almirante de Castilla, *Fragmentos del ocio* (1683), 22.

as inattentive and neglectful of the management and care of their estates is disproven by the fact that the nobility always maintained close ties with their ancestral possessions despite living at some distance from them. The urban expansion and building projects that continued to take place on their estates contrasts with the oft-repeated theme of noble absenteeism. As there is yet no extensive study on this expansion, my article concludes with an overview of case studies to demonstrate the nobility's care and maintenance of their estates—while playing a central role in the establishment of Madrid as capital and court of the Hispanic monarchy.

The transformation of the village of Lerma into a ducal city was perhaps the most singular noble architectural project of the seventeenth century. It was the work of one man, the 1st Duke of Lerma, who undertook an urban and architectural project that was unprecedented in Castile. It was completed in just over fifteen years (1601–17) at the same time that his grand Madrid residence, his house at Ventosilla (Burgos), and the Palace of la Ribera (Valladolid) were being built.[101] No other Iberian aristocrat was ever capable of carrying out similar architectural projects in such distinctive locations. Many other grandees undertook important projects on their estates despite the court having become a highly aristocratic urban centre. For example, in the early seventeenth century the 5th Marquis of Villafranca, Pedro de Toledo y Colonna, finalized several projects at the castle of Villafranca del Bierzo (León), that adapted it to the comforts and tastes of a palace residence.[102] In 1623, the 7th Duke of Medinaceli commissioned the royal architect Juan Gómez de Mora to build a large palace in the village of Medinaceli (Soria), which was inspired by the ducal palace at Lerma.[103] Three decades later, the Duke of Cardona y Segorbe, despite owning the largest palatial residence in Madrid, which was the property of his wife, the Duchess of Lerma, began construction to convert his villa in Lucena (Córdoba) into a palace. Regrettably, an untimely exile left it unfinished.[104]

101. See Luis Cervera Vera, *El conjunto palacial de la villa de Lerma*, 2 vols. (Valencia: Castalia, 1967), and Javier Pérez Gil, *El palacio de la Ribera. Recreo y boato en el Valladolid cortesano* (Valladolid: Ayuntamiento de Valladolid, 2002).

102. Joan Bosch Ballbona, "La fortaleza que quiso ser palacio. Noticia de Camillo Camiliani en España (1604)," in *Locvs Amoenvs* 12 (2013–14): 79–106.

103. Antonio Sánchez González, ed., *El arte de la representación del espacio. Mapas y planos de la Colección Medinaceli* (Huelva: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Huelva, 2017), 320–21.

104. Manuel García Luque, "Un palacio para el Duque: don Luis de Aragón y la reforma del castillo de Lucena (1649–1654)," in *Las Artes y la Arquitectura del Poder*, ed. Víctor Mínguez (Valencia: Publicacions

In 1700, the arrival of the Bourbons to the Spanish throne did not alter the nobility's customs, as they continued to build imposing residences on their noble estates throughout the eighteenth century. While serving as ambassador in Paris and Lisbon in 1785, the Count of Fernán Núñez designed and oversaw the construction of a new palace on his estates in Córdoba province, following the neoclassical style, in order to replace the historic fortress house destroyed by the 1755 Lisbon earthquake, as well as a new urban expansion project for his estate.[105] At the same time, the Duke of Berwick, Liria, and Veragua built his lavish palace in Madrid, which was designed according to French classicist trends, initially by Louis Gilbert and then completed by Ventura Rodríguez.[106] The Duke of Alba also undertook an ambitious building program both at the court and in the countryside. In 1769, he acquired the Buenavista Palace as a permanent court residence[107] and commissioned Jacques Marquet to build a new palace and gardens in Piedrahíta (Ávila).[108] Scarcely fifty kilometres from the Alba residence, the dukes of Béjar, who had established themselves in Madrid following the accession of Philip V, made major interventions to their ducal residence in Béjar (Salamanca) and their villa, el Bosque. The 11th Duke of Béjar, lord high steward to Fernando VI, commissioned Buonaventura Ligli, a painter from Verona, to decorate the house and also added French garden features such as a *potager* (kitchen garden) and a *fonderia* (botanical distillery) which was tended by botanists from Montpellier.[109]

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de la Universitat Jaume I, 2013), 843–58.

105. See José Antonio Vigara Zafra, "El palacio del VI conde de Fernán Núñez: la arquitectura como exaltación simbólica del linaje durante la Ilustración," in *Tiempos Modernos* 29.2 (2014).

106. Carlos Sambricio, "Arquitectura," in *El Palacio de Liria*, ed. Jacobo Siruela (Madrid: Atalanta, 2012), 67–97.

107. The building was demolished on the orders of his granddaughter and successor, the 13th Duchess of Alba who commissioned a new design from Ventura Rodríguez and Juan Pedro de Arnal; see Fernando Chueca Goitia and Carlos de Miguel, *Modelo para un palacio en Buenavista: Ventura Rodríguez* (Madrid: Plutarco, 1935).

108. Raimundo Moreno Blanco, "Jacques Marquet y la construcción del palacio de los duques de Alba en Piedrahíta (Ávila)," *Academia. Boletín de la Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando* 112–13 (2011): 87–113.

109. Documents related to the work undertaken by Ventura de Lirios for the San Andrés tower at the palace in Béjar, AHNOB, Osuna, C. 259, D. 18–19. See José Muñoz Domínguez, Juan F. Sánchez Sancho, and Urbano Domínguez Garrido, *Catálogo de la exposición Delirios, Venturas y Desventuras. La villa de Béjar desde el siglo XVIII* (Béjar: Caja Duero, 2008); José Muñoz Domínguez, "La Fuente de la Sábana y

During the mid-eighteenth century, Madrid's appearance was transformed, first by the new palace that Philip V built on the ruins of the Alcázar, which had been destroyed by fire in 1734, and, later thanks to the major urban reforms undertaken by Charles III (1716–88). The city also assumed extraordinary significance as a centre of power for the new monarchy of Spain and as a new model of kingship. However, the early years of the new Bourbon court under Philip V had not been especially welcoming to Spanish aristocracy; in 1701, the monarch put the prerogatives and privileges of the peers and dukes of France on the same level as the Spanish grandees. In the midst of the War of Succession, when the need for their support was at its greatest, the monarch snubbed the grandees. In turn, this led to their disaffection in response to the king's renunciation of his responsibilities as sovereign, and this was felt for decades after. However, the grandees eventually recovered their influence and status during the reigns of Ferdinand VI and Charles III.[110]

From the mid-eighteenth century onwards, there was a substantial change to the city's spatial configuration due to Charles III's personal initiative, which had a notable influence on the nobility's own palace architecture. Inspired by the example of the royal palace, the grandees of Spain undertook new challenges when building their own residences, which went from being prominent houses to palaces in the true sense of the word. In the late eighteenth century, the nobles placed a greater emphasis on their residences' exterior façades, building them on a larger scale with superior quality and more open spaces. Emulating the palaces of the dukes of Berwick and Alba, the dukes of Sessa-Counts of Altamira commissioned the famed architect Ventura Rodríguez to design their colossal palace at the city's centre. The dukes of Osuna undertook construction of both a new urban residence in Las Vistillas and a manor house in Barajas, which included gardens designed in the French neoclassical style.[111]

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la etapa barroca de la villa suburbana El Bosque de Béjar," *VLC Arquitectura* 5.1 (April 2018): 2341–50, dx.doi.org/10.4995/vlc.2018.7980.

110. This decision prompted a revolt among the grandees who refused to attend Philip V's court throughout the summer of 1705; see Antonio Terrasa Lozano, "El asunto del banquillo de 1705 y la oposición de la Grandeza a las mudanzas borbónicas: de la anécdota a la defensa del cuerpo místico de la monarquía," *Cuadernos dieciochistas* 14 (2013): 163–97. See also Pablo Vázquez Gestal, *Una nueva majestad. Felipe V, Isabel de Farnesio y la identidad de la monarquía (1700–1729)* (Sevilla-Madrid: Fundación de Municipios Pablo de Olavide & Marcial Pons, 2012), 320–21.

111. Carlos Caballero Casado, "El jardín de los Duques de Osuna en las Vistillas: intervención arqueológica en un hito paisajístico de Madrid," in *The Archaeology of Crop Fields and Gardens*, ed.

Figure 5. El Bosque of the Dukes of Béjar, Béjar (Salamanca).

Throughout the early modern period in Europe, there was a gradual transformation of the landed aristocracy into a court nobility.[112] Numerous factors shaped this process in Spain, such as the chronic debts incurred by the high nobility and their economic dependence on the crown, in addition to the progressive abandonment of their traditional residences and estates as they assumed an increasing role in the monarchy's politics and government. Absenteeism was endemic among the members of the landed aristocracy who

Jean-Paul Morel, Jordi Tresseras, and Juan Carlos Matamala (Bari: Edipuglia, 2006), 175–88, and Carmen Añón Feliu, *El "Capricho" de la Alameda de Osuna* (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid, 2003).

112. See Duindam's magnificent comparative study, *Vienna and Versailles: The Courts of Europe's Dynastic Rivals, 1550–1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

held long-term posts in the king's service, such as palace and council posts, or who served on diplomatic and viceregal missions. Over time, the need to ensure a more direct and personal relationship with the monarch, one that could even be passed on to their heirs, obliged the nobility to grow accustomed to the court environment with its rivalry and competition for honour and favours. In contrast to the exclusive status they enjoyed on their estates, the nobility were forced to live alongside their peers in a setting that demanded constant calibration of the relationships among equals, albeit nuanced by differences in rank, family history, and wealth.

The gradual restraint imposed on the aristocracy by the monarchy during the seventeenth century ended up in converting almost all the upper echelons of the noble hierarchy into courtiers. This did not necessarily mean they had become "domesticated," since the titular nobility did not renounce their signs of status. Indeed, their public displays, including their habitual violent rituals such as duels, often went against the monarch's authority. Nor did they accept the norm of being court servants. As an example, almost all the members of the 4th Count of Oropesa's family had resided on their estates, and he insisted on doing the same, despite Philip II offering him the position of president of the Council of Castile and viceroy of Naples: "throughout his life he never wanted to leave his house for a life at court, nor for any other occupation."[113]

Nonetheless, the noble families who did establish residences at the king's court demonstrated great versatility in reproducing and deploying at the royal court their own aristocratic models and means of displaying their prestige. The grand noble courts gradually disappeared from their traditional sites in the various villages and countryside as a result of the continued absence of their owners. At the same time, however, they gave rise to new ways of representing noble power at the royal court. There, the nobility's deft use of court ceremony guaranteed their privileged access to the monarch and their ability to influence all matters that concerned them. Adapting to a space that was expressly intended for the exaltation of the monarch's image and authority, the Spanish nobility ensured their social and political pre-eminence for centuries by converting Madrid into their natural habitat.

113. Bartolomé de Molina, *Breve tratado de las virtudes de don Juan Garcia Alvarez de Toledo, Monroy, y Ayala, Quinto Conde de Oropesa, y Deleytosa* (Madrid: por la viuda de Cosme Delgado, 1621), f. 30.