

## Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



# The Albuquerque Ducal Court and the Literary Patronage of Hernán López de Yanguas during Charles V's Reign

Diego Pacheco Landero

Volume 43, numéro 4, automne 2020

Spaces of Power of the Spanish Nobility (1480–1715)  
Les espaces de pouvoir de la noblesse espagnole (1480–1715)

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1076826ar>  
DOI : <https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v43i4.36382>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

### Résumé de l'article

Le triomphe de Charles Quint pendant la Guerre des Communes (1520–1521) et les particularités du règne de cet empereur – période de paix, caractérisée par l'absence de ce dernier et une cour itinérante – contribuèrent à l'épanouissement des cours de la haute noblesse castillane. Cet article s'intéresse à l'une d'entre elles, la maison ducale d'Albuquerque à Cuéllar, et à son mécénat. L'analyse des farces de l'humaniste Hernán López de Yanguas proposée ici permet d'illustrer l'intérêt et la participation du duché aux affaires politiques impériales.

### Éditeur(s)

Iter Press

### ISSN

0034-429X (imprimé)  
2293-7374 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

### Citer cet article

Pacheco Landero, D. (2020). The Albuquerque Ducal Court and the Literary Patronage of Hernán López de Yanguas during Charles V's Reign. *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 43(4), 55–78.  
<https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v43i4.36382>

# The Albuquerque Ducal Court and the Literary Patronage of Hernán López de Yanguas during Charles V's Reign<sup>1</sup>

DIEGO PACHECO LANDERO

Universidad Complutense de Madrid

*This article investigates the political and cultural practices of the ducal House of Albuquerque to demonstrate its commitment to one of the basic principles of Charles V's foreign policy, that of maintaining peace among Christians and warring against the Turk. It studies the specific conditions of the emperor's reign that allowed the high noble courts of Castile to flourish. Among these courts, the ducal House of Albuquerque at Cuéllar is exemplary for its literary patronage of the humanist and dramatist Hernán López de Yanguas (1487–1547?), whose plays served to express the duchy's involvement in imperial politics.*

*Le triomphe de Charles Quint pendant la Guerre des Communes (1520–1521) et les particularités du règne de cet empereur – période de paix, caractérisée par l'absence de ce dernier et une cour itinérante – contribuèrent à l'épanouissement des cours de la haute noblesse castillane. Cet article s'intéresse à l'une d'entre elles, la maison ducale d'Albuquerque à Cuéllar, et à son mécénat. L'analyse des farces de l'humaniste Hernán López de Yanguas proposée ici permet d'illustrer l'intérêt et la participation du duché aux affaires politiques impériales.*

In contrast to the studies on royal courts that have been carried out over the last thirty years, Spanish historiography has paid relatively little attention to those of the high nobility.<sup>2</sup> While the role of seigneurial courts as distinct patrons and promoters of artistic production has been examined by scholars of literature, art history, and musicology, their political and social dimensions

1. This study is part of the research undertaken in the Universidad Complutense research group Elites and Agents in the Hispanic Monarchy: Forms of Political Articulation, Negotiation and Patronage (1506–1725), UCM-GR3 / 14 - 971683. Teaching and research staff in training, FPU16/02583, Department of Modern History and Contemporary History of the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. All translations in this article are my own.

2. See Norbert Elias's classic study, *The Court Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), analyzed by Jeroen Duindam, *Myths of Power: Norbert Elias and the Early Modern European Court* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1994); see also John H. Elliott, "The Habsburg Court: A Peculiar Institution," in *Spain and Its World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 142–61; Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke, eds., *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age c. 1450–1650* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); and Jeroen Duindam, ed., *Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), dx.doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004206229.i-444.

have almost always been neglected.<sup>3</sup> This may be due to the fact that, depending on a lineage's power and historical circumstances, relatively few nobles could sustain courts. Marxist historiography also may have influenced trends in analysis, favouring research on the conflictive relationship between nobles and vassals.<sup>4</sup> It was assumed that a noble's presence at his seigneurial court was due mainly to his own concerns. Recently, however, studies have begun focusing on these courts as integrative spaces for diverse political, economic, and social communities, thus linking them as parts of a united realm, without challenging the centralized model dependent upon the royal court.<sup>5</sup>

Charles V's reign first combined a series of particular conditions that facilitated the creation of noble courts as regional centres of power. Established according to knightly values, the court of the dukes of Albuquerque in Cuéllar serves as an excellent example, as it allowed the duchy to concentrate on its own government and project the lineage's power and greatness. The court patronized activities such as the farces of the playwright Hernán López de Yanguas—the analysis of which, in the context of the seigneurial court, allows us to distinguish the kinds of festivities that helped the dukes demonstrate their support towards the crown and mobilize their loyal vassals to the emperor's cause.

3. For Spanish noble courts, see Óscar Perea Rodríguez, *Las cortes literarias hispánicas del siglo XV: el entorno histórico del Cancionero general de Hernando del Castillo (1511)* (Madrid: University Complutense, 2004); Marina Núñez Bernal, *El mecenazgo nobiliario en la literatura de la época de los Reyes Católicos* (Madrid: University Complutense, 2009); Esther Alegre Carvajal, *Las villas ducales como tipología urbana. El ejemplo de la villa ducal de Pastrana* (Madrid: UNED, 1999); Leticia Gómez Fernández, *Música, nobleza y mecenazgo. Los duques de Medina Sidonia en Sevilla y Sanlúcar de Barrameda, 1445–1615* (Cádiz: University of Cádiz, 2017); Roberta F. Schwartz, *En busca de la liberalidad: Music and Musicians in the Courts of the Spanish Nobility, 1470–1640* (Illinois: University of Illinois, 2015).

4. Lawrence Stone's *The Crisis of Aristocracy* analyzed the economic and social aspects of estates and the relationship between nobles and their vassals. For Spain, see Ignacio Atienza Hernández, *Aristocracia, poder y riqueza en la España moderna. La Casa de Osuna, siglos XV–XIX* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1987); and Adolfo Carrasco Martínez, *El régimen señorial en la Castilla moderna: las tierras de la Casa del Infantado en los siglos XVII y XVIII* (Madrid: University Complutense, 1991).

5. Mafalda S. da Cunha, *A Casa de Bragança 1560–1640: práticas senhoriais e redes clientelares* (Lisbon: Estampa, 2000); and Luis Salas Almela, *De la corte ducal a la Corte real: los duques de Medina Sidonia, 1580–1670. Estrategias de poder nobiliario* (Florence: European University Institute, 2006).

### Seignorial courts during Charles V's reign

It is difficult to exaggerate the consequences that the rebellion by the Castilian communities, known as the war of the Comuneros, had for the relations between the crown and the realm.<sup>6</sup> As the contemporary poet and playwright Juan del Encina lamented, “In the year 1521 in Spain, there were so many losses, plagues, and torments, that counting them would be impossible.”<sup>7</sup> The imperial victory in the fields of Villalar that same year ended the political instability that had originated in 1504 with the death of Isabel of Castile, and strengthened Charles V's disputed authority over the most powerful states he had inherited. Moreover, the Comuneros' defeat, which determined Charles's triumph, served to confirm the Castilian nobility's social pre-eminence. From then until the end of the Habsburg dynasty in 1700, the high nobility would play a prominent role in the Spanish monarchy.

After the conflict, however, there remained some concerns among the main nobles, such as the Admiral of Castile, Fadrique Enríquez, who scolded the young emperor for not having rewarded the Spanish nobles for their excellent service. His discontent was shared by a large part of the leading aristocrats.<sup>8</sup> Why did such malaise prevail among the higher nobility? The reason was principally related to expectations raised from 1504 to 1521. Following the death of Isabel I in 1504, her daughter, Juana of Castile, became proprietary queen, although she either did not want to, could not, or was not permitted to rule, which in

6. For the war, see Juan Ignacio Gutiérrez Nieto, *Las Comunidades como movimiento antiseñorial. La formación del bando realista en la guerra civil castellana de 1520–1521* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1973); Joseph Pérez, *La revolución de las Comunidades de Castilla (1520–1521)* (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1985); and Aurelio Espinosa, *The Empire of the Cities: Emperor Charles V, the Comunero Revolt and the Transformation of the Spanish System* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009), dx.doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004171367.i-364.

7. Juan del Encina, “Coplas del año mil quinientos veinte uno,” (XVI century), Biblioteca Nacional de España [hereinafter BNE], Mss. 17510:143r.

8. According to the admiral, “it was inhumane not to assuage those who had served yet were never heard nor seen.” Real Academia de la Historia [hereinafter RAH], Political discourse of the admiral of Castile to Charles V, Salazar y Castro, G-23: 56v. Adolfo Carrasco Martínez, “La consolidación del poder de la alta nobleza castellana y la formación de la conciencia nobiliaria en tiempos de crisis, 1490 y 1530,” in *De la unión de coronas al imperio de Carlos V*, ed. Ernest Belenguier Cebrià (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal Conmemoraciones Centenarios Carlos V y Felipe II, 2001), 183–210, 210.

turn caused a crisis of royal power.<sup>9</sup> During the Catholic monarchs' mandate, the great nobles had been isolated from the decision-making processes and were mere executors of the royal dictates. Consequently, some nobles aspired to reverse the prevailing dynamics by taking advantage of the critical political situation to increase their assets and seignorial estates.<sup>10</sup>

Additionally, history was in their favour. Most of the prominent noble families subdued by the Comuneros descended from families that had gained their wealth and power during the turbulent early reigns of the Trastámara kings: Pedro I (1334–69); Juan II (1405–54); and Enrique IV (1425–74). After contributing to the emperor's triumph, the high nobility did not receive any more individual or general concessions.<sup>11</sup> Only the privileged social position of those called "cousins" (*primos*) of the king was confirmed. Nonetheless, the aristocracy's consistently stable social position reinforced a series of dynamics begun in the medieval period that led to the creation of seignorial courts and increased during Charles V's reign. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a new nobility had prospered in the shadow of the Trastámara monarchs that deployed the system of primogeniture to ensure the hereditary transmission of jurisdictional domains obtained as grants (*mercedes*) from the crown.<sup>12</sup> Although the war of the Comuneros did not modify the map of the high nobility's estates, it did achieve the stabilization of their geographical limits, since under the Catholic monarchs Castile enjoyed a long period of inner

9. Bethany Aram, *La reina Juana. Gobierno, piedad y dinastía* (Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2001), dx.doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv10vkzv0. Juana's marginalization clouded her legitimacy and denied her rightful power; see José Manuel Nieto Soria, "La monarquía como conflicto de legitimidades," in *La Monarquía como conflicto en la Corona castellano-leonesa (c. 1230–1504)*, ed. José Manuel Nieto Soria (Madrid: Sílex, 2006), 13–71.

10. María Concepción Quintanilla Raso, "Élites de poder, redes nobiliarias y monarquía en la Castilla de fines de la Edad Media," *Anuario de estudios medievales* 37.2 (2007): 960–73.

11. For example, the dukes of Infantado's influence diminished in Guadalajara after the war of the Comuneros; see Adolfo Carrasco Martínez, "La alta nobleza ante la revuelta: Guadalajara, los Mendoza y las Comunidades," in *Castilla en llamas: La Mancha comunera*, ed. Miguel Gómez (Ciudad Real: Almud, 2008), 83–104.

12. Salvador de Moxó, "De la nobleza vieja a la nobleza nueva. La transformación nobiliaria castellana en la Baja Edad Media," *Cuadernos de Historia* 3 (1990): 1–210; and Luis Suárez Fernández, *Nobleza y monarquía. Entendimiento y rivalidad: el proceso de construcción de la Corona española* (Barcelona: RBA, 2006).

peace. Their reign marked the end of the expansion of the nobles' territorial and jurisdictional possessions.<sup>13</sup>

The political stability enjoyed by the seigneurial courts during this period contributed to the increase of permanent residences that followed the order and composition of the royal court. They were divided into two areas: one dedicated to domestic service, and the other to governing the estate's economic, political, and jurisdictional interests. The seigneurial courts were frequently located in *villas* that gave the name to nobles' main titles, such as the Duke of Béjar, the Count-Duke of Benavente, and the Marquis of Astorga. It was not unusual, however, for smaller localities with more financial and political incentives to become new sites of seigneurial courts.<sup>14</sup>

Because the political decisions of Charles V and his counselors after the war of the Comuneros diminished the nobles' hopes of acquiring new domains at the expense of their estates, the nobles strengthened their bond with the traditional base of their power—their estates—and with the localities that had been assuming the functions of a capital. One example of this was the city of Seville, the metropolis of the Indies trade. It had been for an extended period the centre of the rivalries between the House of Guzmán (the dukes of Medina Sidonia), and the House of Ponce de León (the dukes of Arcos). During the war of the Comuneros, the Duke of Arcos's brother took the royal palaces (*alcázares reales*) by force, from where he was later evicted *igni ferroque* by the allies of the Duchess of Medina Sidonia.<sup>15</sup> Once the conflict ended, the tensions between the families diminished; from 1532 on, the House of Medina Sidonia would reside mainly at their palace in Sanlúcar de Barrameda on the Atlantic seacoast, while the House of Ponce de León strengthened their relationship with the town of Marchena.<sup>16</sup> While the influence of the high nobility, such as that of the Constable of Castile and the Duke of Infantado, remained strong, it

13. Bartolomé Yun-Casilla, *La gestión del poder. Corona y economías aristocráticas en Castilla, siglos XVI–XVIII* (Madrid: Akal, 2002), 107–09.

14. Examples are the powerful duchy of Medina Sidonia that established its court in the port of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, instead of the city of Medina Sidonia. Also, the dukes of Infantado preferred the royal city of Guadalajara to their eponymous localities.

15. Prudencio de Sandoval, *Historia de la vida y hechos del emperador Carlos V* (Madrid: Atlas, 1955), 1:263–64.

16. Antonio Urquizar Herrera, "Las casas del desengaño, sus animales, y los límites de las colecciones artísticas de los duques de Medina Sidonia en Sanlúcar de Barrameda," in *El duque de Medina Sidonia*:

was tested during the war and subsequently waned, although not all seigneurial courts were affected equally.

Charles V's rule also served to strengthen the seigneurial courts' importance. His extended absence from the Iberian Peninsula weakened the nobles' attraction to the power that the royal court in Castile would have had with his presence. Even though the emperor designated different governors during his journeys, his itinerant court remained the site where final decisions were reached for countless affairs. The Castilian high nobility knew how to exploit the government's lack of centralized power when its interests collided with the Castilian delegate of royal authority.<sup>17</sup> It was not surprising, therefore, that there was little incentive to reside in a debilitated royal court. Although the cities of Valladolid, Madrid, and Toledo were the preferred places that hosted the court, it remained itinerant, forcing the high nobility to travel and spend considerably during the court days in order to maintain the honour of their lineage and house.<sup>18</sup> On Charles V's departure after holding court, those who were not part of the emperor's retinue returned to their domains. This practice continued throughout Charles's reign until Philip II permanently established the court in Madrid in 1561. The emperor's reign was thus undeniably a prosperous time for seigneurial courts.<sup>19</sup>

Even though the nobles' courts were smaller than the royal court, their owners' frequent presence along with their households had a decisive impact on the town's daily life. The sizable households became an essential space of courtly life, requiring significant resources that only the vast seigneurial estates possessed. Although a more complex administration involved higher expenses, having a large household was a status symbol. The seigneurial courts reflected a microcosm where the power of the noble and his lineage was displayed. They

---

*Mecenazgo y renovación estética*, ed. José Manuel Rico García and Pedro Ruiz Pérez (Huelva: University of Huelva, 2015), 100. Others note 1524; see Gómez Fernández, 129.

17. María José Rodríguez Salgado, *The Changing Face of Empire: Charles V, Philip II and Habsburg Authority 1551–1559* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

18. When the 2nd Duke of Béjar died in 1532, sources affirmed that “there is no memory in Castile of a nobleman leaving so much wealth. It was because for many years, the duke lived almost permanently in his castle.” RAH, copy of letter from Tavera to Charles V, Medina del Campo, 2 November 1531, Salazar y Castro, G-23: 72r.

19. Máximo Diago Hernando, “La proyección de las casas de la alta nobleza en las sociedades políticas regionales: el caso soriano a fines de la Edad Media,” *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 39 (2009): 843–76, 845.

were spaces of power that connected the periphery with the centre and permitted the diffusion of new courtly models. They also were areas of sociability where it was possible to build not only vertical but also horizontal networks. The nobles surrounded themselves with members of the local elite, the lower nobility, or *hidalgos* and squires, who served in the highest positions of the court and were the privileged recipients of political messages.<sup>20</sup>

### The duchy of Alburquerque's court in Cuéllar

From the early sixteenth century, the ducal House of Alburquerque stood out as one of the most powerful and wealthy noble families in the kingdom of Castile.<sup>21</sup> With an annual income of approximately 16,000 ducats, the dukes were among the most influential magnates of the kingdom, beneath only the dukes of Frías (45,300 ducats), Medina Sidonia (37,300 ducats), and Alba (21,300 ducats).<sup>22</sup> Beltrán de la Cueva, 3rd Duke of Alburquerque, Count of Ledesma and Huelma (1478–1560) was the grandson of the 1st Duke of Alburquerque and son of Francisco de la Cueva and Francisca of Toledo (sister of the 2nd Duke of Alba). From 1526 to 1560, coinciding with Charles V's reign, Beltrán de la Cueva was head of the ducal House of Alburquerque. Throughout his life, the duke was greatly involved in the political affairs of the monarchy, having served as viceroy of Aragon (1535–39) and Navarra (1552–60).<sup>23</sup> His family members also became implicated in Charles V's political affairs: his uncle Pedro de la Cueva was the family member most trusted by the emperor. Charles V

20. For Portuguese lineages, see Mafalda S. da 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. Juan Bravo Lozano (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2002), 1:51–68, 52–53.

21. On the Alburquerque court, see Balbino Velasco Bayón, *Historia de Cuéllar* (Segovia: Diputación Provincial, 1974); Emilio Olmos Herguedas, *La Comunidad de Villa y Tierra de Cuéllar a fines de la Edad Media: poder político concejil, ordenanzas municipales y regulación de la actividad económica* (Valladolid: University of Valladolid, 1998); Óscar Perea Rodríguez, "Una posible corte literaria del siglo XV: la de Beltrán de la Cueva, duque de Alburquerque," in *Convivio: estudios sobre la poesía de cancionero*, ed. Víctor Beltrán and Juan Salvador Paredes Núñez (Granada: University of Granada, 2006), 633–84.

22. Data from 1510, BNE, Mss. 10.160:100r–101v. The humanist Marineo Sículo documented their increased wealth years later: Alburquerque 25,000, Alba 50,000, Medina Sidonia, 55,000, and Frías, 60,000; see Lucio Marineo Sículo, *De las cosas memorables de España* (Alcalá de Henares: 1539), f. 24v.

23. See Porfirio Sanz Camañes, "Cueva y Toledo, Beltrán de la," *DBE-e*, accessed 2 December 2019, [dbe.rah.es/biografias/21385/beltran-de-la-cueva-y-alvarez-de-toledo](http://dbe.rah.es/biografias/21385/beltran-de-la-cueva-y-alvarez-de-toledo).



also favoured the siblings of the 3rd duke: Luis de la Cueva was captain of the emperor's Spanish Guard, while Diego was steward of Infanta María of Austria, and María de la Cueva was lady-in-waiting to Empress Isabel. Another sibling, Bartolomé de la Cueva, was appointed cardinal in the 1540s, thanks to the emperor's intercession, and joined the imperial faction at the papal court. The duke favoured the development of a small court in Cuéllar, a town near Segovia, which reflected the magnificence of his lineage, as King Enrique IV had granted in 1465 the *villa* of Cuéllar to his *privado*, the duke's grandfather.<sup>24</sup>

In the 1530s, the estate included five towns and their villages, measuring approximately 4,690 km<sup>2</sup>, where forty thousand people lived.<sup>25</sup> The dukes of Alburquerque chose Cuéllar as the location of the ducal court from all the *villas* of their estate because it was the most populated (1,700 inhabitants) and the richest.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, it was located in the centre of Castile, although what was more significant was its vicinity to towns such as Valladolid, Medina del Campo, and Segovia, prosperous urban zones and, above all, the seats of the king and his ambulatory court.<sup>27</sup>

Toward the end of the fifteenth century, the town strengthened its position as head of the ducal estate, as the regular presence of the duke and his family facilitated the concentration of resources from across the estate. It also favoured

24. Antonio Rodríguez Villa, *Bosquejo biográfico de don Beltrán de la Cueva, primer duque de Alburquerque* (Madrid: Luis Navarro, 1881); see also Alfonso Franco Silva, *Estudios sobre don Beltrán de la Cueva y el ducado de Alburquerque* (Cáceres: University of Extremadura, 2002), and María del Pilar Carceller Cerviño, *Realidad y representación de la nobleza castellana en el siglo XV. El linaje de la Cueva y la casa ducal de Alburquerque* (Madrid: University Complutense, 2006). According to (incomplete) archival documentation, in 1526 at least sixty servants were at the service of the ducal family. Archivo de la Chancillería de Valladolid (hereafter, AChV) Sala de Hijosdalgo, c. 227, doc. 1:9v–14r.

25. The number is reached by multiplying the taxed family units (9,812) by a coefficient of four. Juan Manuel Carretero Zamora, *La Averiguación de la Corona de Castilla, 1525–1540. Los pecheros y el dinero del reino en la época de Carlos V* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 2008), 3:775.

26. Other relevant cities were more populated, such as Alba de Tormes (481), Sanlúcar de Barrameda (799), and Medina de Rioseco (2,057). However, Medina del Campo, a city under royal jurisdiction, had 10,117 inhabitants; see Carretero Zamora, 3:1408, 1367, 1497, 1596, 1590.

27. Pedro Juan de Villuga, *Repertorio de todos los caminos de España* (Madrid: Reimpresiones Bibliográficas, 1950), 44–45. Although Cuéllar was located between Segovia and Valladolid, the main road did not pass through; see Bartolomé Bennassar, *Valladolid en el Siglo de Oro: una ciudad de Castilla y su entorno agrario en el siglo XVI* (Valladolid: Ayuntamiento de Valladolid, 1989), 118–20. Cuéllar had a prestigious grammar school founded in the fifteenth century; see Balbino Velasco Bayón, "Obras benéfico-sociales en Cuéllar," *Estudios segovianos* 74/75 (1973): 227–31.

the development of a site where leisure was essential.<sup>28</sup> The strong socioeconomic presence of the ducal house in the town was reflected in the numerous examples of their patronage and pious works, and made visible in the many Alburquerque coats of arms that adorned the town's houses, churches, doors, and walls.<sup>29</sup> The ducal court deployed its influence through a cultural mosaic of pleasure and power that included architecture and other cultural practices such as music, dramatic performances (such as those by López de Yanguas), and bullfights.<sup>30</sup> Yet little has been written about the Alburquerque court from the perspective of its cultural contributions and its political development. This article intends to shed light on the court's rich cultural activities and its political role. The epicentre of the Alburquerque ducal court was the imposing fifteenth-century castle-palace in Cuéllar. Surrounding the palace, the dukes built a series of small country residences that served as sites of solace and of rest from administrative tasks. The two principal residences were Serreta, located within a pine forest and designed for hunting, and the Buengrado palace, whose gardens, fountains, and ponds were designed for the nobles' recreation. A generation later, with the families' favourable economic status, the duke added a third residence called Nueve Fuentes.<sup>31</sup> Renovation work carried out during the first half of the sixteenth century softened the castle-palace's severe façade, the most notable change being the addition of large galleries of carpal arches. The first gallery was located at the castle's south wall, facing the gardens, with the forest at the back of the building. The second, constructed in two heights along the wing of the family apartments, backed onto the parade ground. Such additions formed part of the renovation of the old noble castles, in which openings became more

28. For this period, no documentation is available on the towns' general incomes, although some sources say they were similar to Mombeltrán, a *villa* of intermediate economic rank that gave the ducal treasury approximately 1,226,000 maravedís per year between 1506 and 1526. Only 10 percent of Mombeltrán's income was designated for the maintenance of the town; the remaining 90 percent went to Cuéllar; see Alfonso Franco Silva, "La fiscalidad señorial en el valle del Tiétar: el ejemplo de Mombeltrán," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 34.1 (2004): 125–216, 170–71.

29. The main buildings were the convents of Santa Clara and San Francisco, which housed the dukes' tomb. See Miguel Ángel Marcos Villán, "Acerca de los sepulcros de alabastro de la iglesia del convento de San Francisco de Cuéllar (Segovia), panteón de don Beltrán de la Cueva, I duque de Alburquerque," *Boletín del Museo Arqueológico Nacional* 1.2 (1998): 199–220.

30. Otto Brunner, "La 'casa grande' y la 'oeconomica' de la vieja Europa," in *Nuevos caminos de la historia social y constitucional* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Alfa, 1976): 97–123.

31. Juan Armindo Hernández Montero, *La arquitectura de la casa ducal de Alburquerque en el marquesado de Cuéllar* (Madrid: Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Madrid, 1994).

relevant than walls, as Italian Renaissance architecture displaced the Flemish Gothic style.<sup>32</sup>

The castle also held a library, which after the 2nd duke's death in 1526 was inventoried at 119 volumes: a rich although unextraordinary collection.<sup>33</sup> Other library collections were larger, such as that of the duke's brother-in-law, the 2nd Duke of Alba, with 186 books, while the 3rd Count of Feria had 284. The Marquis of Tarifa's library registered 260 books. Moreover, the 2nd Duke of Alburquerque was not as accomplished a bibliophile as the Duke of Calabria, who in his Valencian library accumulated up to eight hundred books.<sup>34</sup> Unlike the libraries of humanists or other men of letters, those of nobles did not easily divulge to what extent their contents reflected their owners' taste; the ducal library's contents reveal that Alburquerque's taste went beyond the typical nobility's library.<sup>35</sup> The collection did not fail to include religious books (the Bible, lives of saints), and not only housed valuable technical books on the government of an estate (legislation, crops, animal care) but also many literary works, including classical authors (Caesar, Sallust, Livy, Cicero, Aristotle). The collection likewise included Stoic philosophy (Seneca) that would become a standard guide for courtiers in the seventeenth century.<sup>36</sup>

The significant presence of entertainment literature is striking. The duke owned many romances of chivalry, comparable to *Don Quixote's* fictional library: *Amadis de Gaula*, *Esplandián*, *Palmerín de Oliva*, *Primaleón*, *Tirant*

32. Early examples of similar renovations are the castles of Alba de Tormes and Coca; see Herbert González Zyma, "El castillo de Alba de Tormes, simbolismos clásicos en un edificio medieval," *Anales de historia del arte* extra 2 (2013): 65–80, or Luis Vasallo Toranzo, "El castillo de Coca y los Fonseca. Nuevas aportaciones y consideraciones sobre su arquitectura," *Anales de historia del arte* (2014): 61–85.

33. María del Pilar Carceller Cerviño and Elisa Ruiz García, "La biblioteca del II duque de Alburquerque (1467–1526)," *Estudios Medievales* 1 (2002): 361–400. See also Antonio Antelo Iglesias, "Las bibliotecas del otoño medieval, con especial referencia a las de Castilla," *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma, Serie III, Hª Medieval* 4 (1991): 285–350.

34. Carlos Sanllehy y Girón, *La biblioteca del duque de Calabria* (Barcelona: Asociación de Bibliófilos de Barcelona, 1958).

35. The 4th Count of Benavente, for instance, seems to have accumulated the latest publications without knowing their content; see Antonio Paz y Melià, *Sales españolas ó agudezas del ingenio nacional* (Madrid: Imprenta y fundición de Manuel Tello, 1890), 261–62.

36. Clara Marías Martínez, "Principales fuentes del estoicismo y epicureísmo en bibliotecas del primer Renacimiento (1500–1556)," in *Literatura medieval y renacentista en España: líneas y pautas*, ed. Natalia Fernández Rodríguez and María Fernández Ferreiro (Salamanca: University of Salamanca, 2012), 663–95, 668.

*lo Blanc, Clarián de Landanís, El caballero de la Cruz, El noble Arderique, El conde Partinuplés, and Reinaldos de Montalbán.*<sup>37</sup> The library also included works about real heroes, such as Charlemagne and Joan of Arc: in total, twenty-seven titles. The entire collection was estimated at 18,961 maravedís; in comparison, the Marquis of Tarifa's collection was worth approximately 225,000 maravedís.<sup>38</sup> The books were not merely entertainment, but imparted precise forms of behaviour.<sup>39</sup> Knightly courage, courtesy with women, and loyalty towards the king stood out among the most prominent features that the duke and his relatives exhibited during the tournaments held in 1527 in honour of the birth of the future Philip II.<sup>40</sup> The Duke of Alburquerque's upbringing included these chivalric values. Although the library belonged to his father, and we have no knowledge of his contributions during his government, we do know that several plays were performed at the court of Cuéllar; however, we cannot presume that the court functioned as a literary court, unlike other seigneurial courts such as that of the Admiral of Castile.<sup>41</sup> The plays, therefore, need to be analyzed for us to understand and situate their political focus and purpose.

At the end of the 1520s and early 1530s, the graduate (*bachiller*) Hernán López de Yanguas entered the ducal house in its service as a writer.<sup>42</sup> López de Yanguas was born in 1487, probably in the town of Yanguas. His first works—which were dedicated to the counts of Aguilar, the lords of Yanguas—reflect

37. The duke had most of the seventeen cycles of chivalric novels, as suggested by Lucía Megías, except for those printed between 1530 and 1540: *Belianís de Grecia, Félix Magno, Florambel de Lucea, Florando de Inglaterra* and *Morgante*. See José Manuel Lucía Megías, *De los libros de caballerías manuscritos al Quijote* (Madrid: Sial Ediciones, 2004), 34–36.

38. A luxurious edition of the Bible, for example, was worth 75,000 maravedís; see María del Carmen Álvarez Márquez, “La biblioteca de Don Fadrique Enríquez de Ribera, I marqués de Tarifa (1532),” *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos* 13 (1986): 1–40, 10.

39. José Ramón Trujillo, “Los nietos de Arturo y los hijos de Amadís. El género editorial caballeresco en la *Edad de Oro*,” *Edad de Oro* 30 (2011): 415–41, 420.

40. Elisa Ruiz García, “Relación de las fiestas caballerescas de Valladolid de 1527: un documento inédito,” *Emblemata* 9 (2003): 127–94, 157–58. See also Pedro Cátedra, “Fiestas caballerescas en tiempos de Carlos V,” in *La fiesta en la Europa de Carlos V* (Seville: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los centenarios de Carlos V y Felipe II, 2000), 93–117.

41. However, see Perea Rodríguez, *Una posible corte*, 633–34. The Admiral of Castile maintained ties with various humanists (Doctor Villalobos, Gonzalo Fernández of Oviedo, Friar Luis of Escobar, Marineo Sículo, and the musician Gabriel Mena); see Núñez Bepalova, 322–61.

42. The timing was important because it coincided with the 3rd Duke of Alburquerque's succeeding his father in 1526, and with his emergent career in the emperor's service.

his connection to his place of origin.<sup>43</sup> Before publishing his first work, López received a graduate degree, possibly from the foundation of the bishops of Osma in Santa Catalina. As the literary critic Espejo Surós reminds us, he could also have collaborated with intellectuals at the recently founded Universidad Complutense at Alcalá de Henares, although the references are scarce and he was apparently not enrolled in any courses.<sup>44</sup> Like other men of letters of his time, he sought financial stability by entering the church and receiving a regular income from the parish of Santa María, Yanguas, although his commission was not without conflict, causing him to litigate with the ecclesiastical authorities. These economic difficulties may have been the reason López de Yanguas decided to serve at the Alburquerque court in Cuéllar.

Once he entered the duke's service, López dedicated three plays to members of the House of Alburquerque. The first was a five-act eclogue about the threat of the Turks (*Turkesan Farce*), dedicated to Diego de la Cueva, the Duke of Alburquerque's brother. Two other works were written for the duke's young sons, Francisco Fernández de la Cueva (*Peace's Farce*) and Gabriel de la Cueva (*Sayings of the Seven Wise Men of Greece*). The dedication to Francisco is particularly interesting as it was the first written and the most extensive of all three. Surprisingly, it appears at the end of the play. The author uses a metaphor to reiterate "how much he owes [to Francisco] for the mercies he received." He compares the duke's firstborn to the noblest birds (pelican, swan, stork, eagle, and hawk) that embody a series of virtues such as generosity, lineage, piety, and mercy.<sup>45</sup>

43. For a biography of López de Yanguas, see Javier Espejo Surós, *La obra dramática de Hernán López de Yanguas: teatro y religión en la primera mitad del siglo XVI* (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 2013), 89–92; and Julio F. Hernando and Javier Espejo, "La Farsa Turquesana de Hernán López de Yanguas (ca. 1530), estudio y edición," *Lemir, textos medievales y renacentistas*, 11 November 2019, [parnaseo.uv.es/Lemir/Textos/FarsaTurquesana/Index.htm](http://parnaseo.uv.es/Lemir/Textos/FarsaTurquesana/Index.htm). For his works, see Espejo Surós, *La obra dramática*, 79–96. See also Javier Espejo Surós, "Hernán López de Yanguas (1487–1550)," *Diccionario Filológico de Literatura Española. Siglos XVI y XVII. Textos y Transmisión*, ed. P. Jauralde (Madrid: Castalia, 2010), 585–91.

44. Espejo Surós, *La obra dramática*, 82–83.

45. Dedications formed part of the system of patronage. For an analysis of López de Yanguas's dedication, see Núñez Bepalova, 31–58; Fernando González Ollé, *Hernán López de Yanguas. Obras dramáticas* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1967), 123–25; and María S. Arredondo et al., *Paratextos en la literatura española (Siglos XV–XVIII)* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2009), 293–303, 367–78, and 379–92. For strategies of social promotion, see Carmen Sanz Ayán, "El fracaso de un modelo de proyección

Given the didactic character of part of his dramatic production, it is likely that López de Yanguas also served as teacher or tutor at the court. His university degree and the knowledge of classical authors qualified him in the role of preceptor to the duke's children. López de Yanguas's dedication to the duke's children, as well as its rhetoric, suggests a master-pupil relationship, reinforcing the possibility of his role as preceptor in the ducal house, although there is no extant documentation in the ducal archive to this effect.

López's main cultural contribution to the court, however, was to organize diverse celebrations, for which he composed two farces, possibly performed in the castle-palace with ducal family members participating as actors.<sup>46</sup> The prologue of the *Peace's Farce* announces that "the plot and the purpose of this work are only to entertain the reader and audience."<sup>47</sup> At the beginning of the *Turkesan Farce*, one of the shepherds calls out:

Los que estáys en el allarde:  
 Dios os guarde.  
 Porque me passo de largo,  
 ya me olvidaba el cargo  
 que me dieron la otra tarde. (Hernando and Espejo, lines 1–6)

(Those of you in the show,  
 May God protect you  
 Because I've paid no attention  
 And forgotten the part  
 I was assigned the other afternoon.)<sup>48</sup>

---

cultural en la consolidación de un linaje de origen financiero: el I marqués de Robledo de Chavela," in *Estrategias culturales y circulación de la nueva nobleza en Europa (1570–1707)*, ed. Giovanni Muto and Antonio Terrasa (Aranjuez: Doce Calles, 2016), 19–44.

46. Nobles began acting in court theatre in the sixteenth century; see María Luisa Lobato, "Nobles como actores: el papel activo de las gentes de palacio en las representaciones cortesanas de la época de los Austrias," in *Dramaturgia festiva y cultura nobiliaria en el Siglo de Oro*, ed. Bernardo García and María Luisa Lobato (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2007), 89–114, and Teresa Ferrer Valls, *La práctica escénica cortesana: de la época del emperador a la de Felipe III* (London: Tamesis, 1991), 68–69.

47. González Ollé, 77.

48. The play's protagonist-shepherd introduces the plot: "embían a decir conmigo / que calléys primeramente / porque son grandes señores, / y aun pastores, y también avrá correos. / Tienen muy

Both plays belong to the literary genre of the dramatic eclogue, first written by the playwright Juan del Encina, who in the early 1490s wrote eclogues for the 2nd Duke of Alba, the Duke of Alburquerque's uncle, that were performed at the ducal castle of Alba de Tormes.<sup>49</sup> Under the formal cover of the pastors' dialogues amid a bucolic landscape, Encina explored various topics, from the sacred and burlesque to the amorous and political, all accompanied by music.<sup>50</sup> One of Encina's themes had been proposed by Álvaro Bustos as a genre per se: the "political eclogue of sayaguesa."<sup>51</sup> López de Yanguas displays Encina's influence in his works, especially in his highly political commentary. His shepherds, who speak in *sayagués*, the dialect used in plays for rustics, add the comic note. In this example from the *Turkesan Farce*, they comment crudely on Suleiman the Magnificent:

Silvano: Es un nuevo Lucifer.

Pelayo: Es un hideputa puto.

Silvano: De ruyn casta debe ser.

Pelayo: Un vellaco,

muy mayor ladrón que Caco.

Silvano: Dios le dé su maldición

pues hoça como berraco

la sagrada religión (Hernando and Espejo, lines 267–74).

---

fuertes desseos / de mostrar bien sus primores" (lines 9–15; They send me to tell you / to keep quiet, first of all / because there are great lords, / and even shepherds, / and there will also be couriers. / They have a very strong desire / To display their good talents). All citations of *Farsa Turquesana* are from Hernando and Espejo, eds., "La *Farsa Turquesana*." "Great lords" could have the double meaning of referring to the characters (sultan, pope, emperor) of the eclogue or the nobles themselves.

49. Miguel Ángel Pérez Priego, "La égloga dramática," in *La égloga: VI encuentro internacional sobre poesía del Siglo de Oro*, ed. Begoña López Bueno (Madrid: University of Sevilla, 2002), 77–89.

50. Encina imitated and translated Vergil's *Bucolics*: see Jeremy Lawrance, "La tradición pastoril antes de 1530: Imitación clásica e hibridación romancista en la *Traslación de las Bucólicas de Virgilio* de Juan del Encina," in *Humanismo y literatura en tiempos de Juan del Encina*, ed. Javier Guijarro (Salamanca: University of Salamanca, 1999), 101–21; and Richard Sherr, "A Note on the Biography of Juan del Encina," *Bulletin of the Comediantes* 34.2 (1982): 159–72, dx.doi.org/10.1353/boc.1982.0014.

51. Álvaro Bustos Táuler, "Juan del Encina, Francisco de Madrid y el género de la égloga política sayaguesa," *Criticón* 126 (2016): 15–29. This genre connects with the satirical poetry of the previous century; see Charlotte Stern, "The *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo* and the Early Spanish Drama," *Hispanic Review* 44.4 (1976): 311–32, dx.doi.org/10.2307/472354.

(Silvano: He's a new Lucifer ...

Pelayo: He's a fag son of a bitch.

Silvano: Evidently he's from despicable stock.

Pelayo: A reprobate, and an even worse thief than Cacus.

Silvano: God damn him for rooting up our sacred religion like a pig.)

However, the author diminishes the significance of the shepherds since they do not have leading roles. The protagonists of López de Yanguas's farces are both allegories such as Peace, War, Justice, World, and Time in *Peace's Farce*, and historical characters, such as Sultan Suleiman, Charles V, and Pope Clement VII in his *Turkesan Farce*. He also included new features that Bartolomé Torres Naharro—another illustrious playwright from the early sixteenth century—had introduced in his poems, such as a larger number of characters and the division of the play into five acts.<sup>52</sup> Given the historical events addressed in his farces, they were probably composed after the second half of 1529.

The *Peace's Farce* praises the Treaty of Cambrai (5 August 1529), which ended the war between François I of France and Charles V. And although there are no extant documents, the dukes most likely organized other similar events to celebrate the peace treaty.<sup>53</sup> The play begins with the announcement of the peace treaty by a messenger, giving entry to World and Time, who praise the gifts gained by the new accord. When Justice and Peace enter, they meet War wearing the habit of a pilgrim, whom they tie up and beat, assisted by World and Time.<sup>54</sup> In the end, they pardon and release War, then dance and acclaim the emperor and empress and their children. The *Turkesan Farce* was probably composed shortly after the historical event it depicts.<sup>55</sup> It stresses the danger

52. BNE, Bartolomé Torres Naharro, *Propalladia*, 1517, R/8079:2r.

53. González Ollé, act 5, lines 15–17. All citations are from González Ollé, who numbers the verses by acts.

54. "Mundo: a traydora me declina / Justicia: dalde, dalde, sacudilde / Paz: Dale hermana. / Justicia: plazeme de buena gana / Paz: tú, Mundo en los pestorejos / Guerra: estos deven ser los viejos / que acusaron a Susana" (World: The traitor rejects me. / Justice: Hit her, hit her, shake her. / Peace: Give it to her, sister. / Justice: It's my pleasure / Peace: You, World, hit her across the cheeks / War: These must be the elders who accused Susanna!), González Ollé, act 4, lines 23–29.

55. In his first speech, Suleiman enumerates his continuous conquests since the 1520s (Belgrade, Rhodes, and Hungary). Since he does not mention his first defeat in Vienna (21 September 1529 to 15 October 1529), the play was considered written before the news about Suleiman's defeat reached Spain.



that the Ottoman empire represented and the hope that the Christian world, led by the emperor, will strongly respond. After Suleiman threatens Clement VII with invading Rome, the alarmed pope sends for aid from the emperor, who travels immediately to Rome. As in the other farces that end with a chorus or solo, this play ends with all the characters singing in a chorus celebrating the happy alliance against the Ottomans.

The plays convey precise political premises, which, under the notion of the Horatian *docere et delectare*, were shared by the duke and projected onto the seignorial court. Patronized by the House of Alburquerque and published around 1529–30, both farces express the same basic principles of Charles V's politics at this time. In Yanguas's plays, music, dance, and instruments occupy an essential part. Moreover, the presence of the ducal chapel enlivened the performances, simultaneously reinforcing their distinctive messages. While the *Turkesan Farce* represented the conflict with the Ottoman Empire and emphasized the holy war, the *Peace's Farce* dealt with peace as the source of all good, evidently influenced by Erasmian thought.<sup>56</sup> Despite the difference in content, the two farces have a series of aspects in common. Indeed, they follow the Renaissance notion that divergent opinions helped to articulate an argument and to reaffirm the main idea by opposing it to a wrong alternative idea.<sup>57</sup> Praising peace, for example, had a limited application to the Christian world because it was only the prelude of the war against the Turks.<sup>58</sup> In the *Peace's Farce*, the character War deploys the fame and remembrance of those courageous men who have combatted in her defense. The play thus points out how conflict affords the opportunity for men to ascend to a higher rank, giving

---

Espejo Surós, however, proposes a later date given the mention of Charles V's coronation in Bologna in 1530. Espejo Surós, *La obra dramática*, 135–37.

56. The pacifism of López de Yanguas's play was associated with that of Erasmus; see Javier Espejo Surós, "Cuerpo y gesto en el teatro moral renacentista: la *Farce de la concordia*, circa 1529," *Teatro de palabras* 2 (2008): 71–92, 72–73. For another view, see Bustos Táuler, 17–18.

57. See, for example, the theological discussion between Suleiman's messenger and the pope's messenger. Hernando and Espejo, lines 715–854.

58. When they received the news of the Peace Treaty, they exclaimed: "Nunca otra nueva se oyó / tal para Jerusalem" (No other news was heard / as for Jerusalem); a little later, Time said that one would not hear again about war "porque nuestro emperador / contra turcos la destierra" (because our emperor / exiles it from the Turks), González Ollé, act 1, lines 113–14 and 158–59; Gonzalo de Arredondo, *Castillo inexpugnable, defensorio de la fee (...) y exortación para yr contra el Turco y le vencer y anichilar la seta de Mahoma y toda ynfedelidad y ganar la Tierra Santa* (Burgos: Juan de Junta, 1528).

the contemporary examples of Hernán Cortés, conqueror of Mexico, and the soldier Antonio de Leiva, who became prince of Ascoli for his merits in the wars of Italy.<sup>59</sup>

If the *Peace's Farce* was a prelude to the crusade, the *Turkesan Farce* went one step further. When Suleiman declares himself to be the descendant of the sultans Murad, Mehmed, and Selim, his purpose is to remind everyone that he comes from a lineage of conquerors and that, consequently, the Ottoman threat is nothing new. For greater emphasis, Suleiman verbalizes his immense power, describing his recent conquests and the central territories of his vast empire.<sup>60</sup> He calls himself "lord of Jerusalem / and of the Sinai mountain"<sup>61</sup> so as to taunt the Christians to try and recover the sacred sites.

The prominence given Suleiman's threat reveals the duke's position toward one of the key challenges of imperial politics. The size of Charles V's empire allowed two possible conflicts with Islam, one on the Danube and the other on the western Mediterranean coast. His German advisers, led by the emperor's brother, and the Castilians, led by the empress and Cardinal Tavera, fought for Charles to prioritize security; in the farce, the absence of the pirate Barbarossa, who truly represented an obstacle for the Castilians, reveals the duke's inclination to reinforce Charles V's military presence to fight Suleiman on the Danube rather than on the Mediterranean.

The members of the House of Alburquerque could not have ignored the invitation to participate in the crusades.<sup>62</sup> Suleiman embodied a tyrannical and heretical monarchy: the opposite of *monarchia*, the emperor's and pope's conception of a universal and suitable government.<sup>63</sup> Because François I was still perceived as a doubtful ally after signing the peace treaty, the *Peace's Farce*

59. González Ollé, act 3, lines 119–29.

60. Hernando and Espejo, lines 60–64.

61. Hernando and Espejo, lines 107–08.

62. Alonso de Santa Cruz, *Crónica de Emperador Carlos V* (Madrid, RAH, 1922), 140–41. Don Luis brought a Turkish saber as loot; see Antonio Rodríguez Villa, *Inventario del moviliario, alhajas, ropas, armería y otros efectos del Excmo. Sr. D. Beltrán de la Cueva tercer Duque de Alburquerque. Hecho en el año 1560* (Madrid: Imprenta de D. G. Hernando, 1883), 81. From this episode, Francisco of Rojas Zorrilla composed the comedy *El desafío de Carlos V*.

63. López de Yanguas could have known the work *De regimine mundi* by Miguel of Ulzurrun, published in 1525, defending the superiority of imperial power; see Ana Azanza Elío, "Teocracia pontificia vs. cesaropapismo en la corte de Carlos V," *Hispania Sacra* 52 (2000): 99–105. See Bernd Schimmelpennig, "The Two Coronations of Charles V at Bologna, 1530," in *Court Festivals of the European Renaissance*:

identifies him as Danger (“the boasting / dangerous king of France”), an epithet that was not accidental. It had been used decades earlier for the French king, Charles VIII.<sup>64</sup> The *Turkesan Farce* questions François’s participation in the crusade against the Ottomans, as supposedly the kings of England and Portugal would do. The French king is not to be trusted, partly because he refused in 1526 to comply with the Madrid treaty. The duke and his vassals were aware of the French “Danger” after having fought against the king between 1520 and 1524.

By contrast, the play solemnizes the alliance between the two great powers of Christianity, the pontiff and the emperor. Pedro de la Cueva participated in this alliance when he was appointed to negotiate the convocation of a council in 1532. Yet while Charles V did not doubt the pope’s commitment, neither did he forget his previous alliance with France in the 1520s. The character of War expresses the tension between Clement VII and the emperor, using the double meaning of “pilgrim” (*romera*), a term used to characterize War, to refer to his own pilgrimage and departure from Rome.<sup>65</sup>

In the farce, Charles V’s reign ushers in a new golden age. World brags about not having had a similar peace in its long history (“after God created me / more than five thousand years / there was never a peace like this one,” González Ollé, act 1, lines 66–67). At the play’s end, López de Yanguas goes one step further and describes Charles as a messiah. Parodying Vergil’s Eclogue 4 of the *Bucolics*, he has World exclaim:

Mundo: ya es tornada  
otra vez la edad dorada  
Saturno ya resucita  
la plata y cobre se quita  
la de hierro es acabada (González Ollé, act 5, lines 95–99).

---

*Art, Politics and Performance*, ed. J. R. Mulryne and Elizabeth Goldring (New York: Routledge, 2017), 137–52, 138.

64. Federica Accorsi, “La Égloga de Francisco de Madrid: un ensayo bucólico de finales del s. XV” in *Literatura medieval y renacentista en España: líneas y pautas*, ed. Natalia Fernández Rodríguez and María Fernández Ferrero (Salamanca: SEMYR, 2012): 333–40. For another opinión, see Bustos Táuler, 15–29.

65. González Ollé, act 2, lines 167 and 225–28. Since the emperor and the pope reconciled after the sack of Rome, the farce’s criticism is less severe than in Alfonso of Valdés, *Diálogo de las cosas acaecidas en Roma*, an Erasman humanist’s recounting of the sack. For the historical context see José Martínez Millán, ed., *La corte de Carlos V* (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la conmemoración de los centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2000), 3:15–42.

(World: That golden age  
 Has returned again  
 Saturn now resuscitates  
 Silver and copper are gone  
 The iron age has ended.)

The emperor, aided by Fortune, is chosen to recover the holy sites.<sup>66</sup> When Charles receives the request for aid from the pope, he willingly agrees to help “without wasting ink and paper.” The character Diligent, the pope’s messenger, was responsible for communicating to the pontiff the emperor’s predisposition to help. He has not finished pronouncing “he would be / so speedily and even more so than me [Diligent] / in Rome by the direct route,” when Charles immediately appears on the scene. López de Yanguas’s intention is to portray the emperor as more diligent even than the character Diligent, who is diligence itself.<sup>67</sup>

En nuestros extremos  
 tal César tenemos  
 que por él veremos  
 a Jerusalén (González Ollé, act 5, lines 232–35).

(In our extreme times  
 We have so great a Caesar  
 That because of him we will see  
 Jerusalem.)

In times of difficulty, Charles V was perceived as blessed by fortune, destined for the crusades. Since the emperor’s birthday, 24 February 1500, fell on Saint Matthew’s feast day, he was associated with the notion of fortune, as Matthew was chosen by Christ to take Judas’s place.<sup>68</sup> It is also possible to

66. The theme of Charles V’s good fortune has been studied by Geoffrey Parker, *Carlos V. Una nueva vida del emperador* (Barcelona: Planeta, 2019), 235–36.

67. Hernando and Espejo, lines 707 and 872–74. The critics deal with the increase of taxes such as the *alcabala*, Hernando and Espejo, lines 315–19 and 295–96.

68. Juan Manuel Carretero Zamora, “Le sort de Mathias ou Charles ‘Le Chanceux’ (Charles de Gand et la succession à la Couronne de Castilla, 1500–1518),” in *Bourgogne et la Monarchie Hispanique (Études*

attribute a double dimension to Jerusalem in both farces. The conquest of earthly Jerusalem, the Holy Land, was the goal of war, whereas the heavenly Jerusalem allegorizes the new golden age initiated by Charles V's reign.

### Conclusion

The example of the ducal court in Cuéllar provides an insight into the bright universe of seigniorial courts. Although the court of Albuquerque did not display the same splendour as others, such as the court of the Duke of Infantado, analysis reveals how the noble and his family's presence altered the dynamics of an estate's everyday life. By establishing a permanent household, the court received all required resources for its sustainability. Consequently, activities such as celebrations that accompanied the liturgical calendar became more frequent, creating a cultural atmosphere of literary patronage. It is probable that other playwrights besides Hernán López de Yanguas were at the service of the Albuquerque family, although his farces are the only ones preserved. The chronological closeness between the writing and the printing of the compositions indicates that it was the playwright's patron, the Duke of Albuquerque's wish to facilitate diffusion of the farces.

The playwright made use of the premise of entertainment when writing his plays to introduce political concerns such as peace between Christians and war against the Ottomans. The possible performance of the two farces at the castle of Cuéllar raises significant questions. Both works—the *Turkesan Farce* and the *Peace's Farce*—suggest compatibility between the duke and the political intentions of Charles V in the early 1530s. The ducal court, like other seigniorial courts, was a peripheral centre of monarchy that dispensed specific political messages. The festive atmosphere of the performances increased the spreading of the messages, not exclusively addressed to the duke's family. Possibly an unknown "public," capable of assimilating a concrete image of Charles V and its relevance for his reign, also received these messages. The splendour and magnificence of the House of Albuquerque stood for the pleasures of peace and the love of a messianic sovereign.

---

*de histoire politique et financière*), ed. Juan Manuel Carretero Zamora (Paris: Presses Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2020), forthcoming.

Celebrations were ideal occasions for the inclusion of various social levels and the delivery of common messages. At the same time, the community confirmed and redefined the prevailing hierarchies and organized the social order.<sup>69</sup> The ducal court constituted the centre of power, together with the highest level of noble offices, the governors of the town (nobles and non-nobles), and the canonry of Cuéllar. The latter two groups of the local elite were selected as the favoured audience, although they were not part of the structure of the ducal household. They constituted the fundamental components of the microcosm of seigniorial courts as they were part of various networks.

The farces revealed the 3rd Duke of Alburquerque's political views and his support of the emperor among the Castilian nobles.<sup>70</sup> Unlike the emperor's coronation trip in 1520, his investiture in Bologna in 1530 was enthusiastically accepted by the Castilian nobility, who, along with many of the lower nobility, accompanied Charles on his journey to Italy. The emperor's initial difficulties in Spain shifted in the decade of the 1530s with the departure of some of his Flemish advisers, who favoured the integration of Hispanic elites at his service. Also, his marriage to Isabel of Portugal and the birth of an heir helped to diminish the challenges. The appointment in 1532 of Pedro Álvarez de Toledo, Marquis of Villafranca (the 3rd Duke of Alburquerque's cousin) as viceroy of Naples is an excellent example of the opportunities that the emperor's service offered the Castilian nobility.<sup>71</sup> The competition among noble families reinforced the decision-making power of the emperor. Therefore, the farces that López de Yanguas wrote for the House of Alburquerque underscore the support of the House of Alburquerque for the emperor's politics.<sup>72</sup> The playwright also intended to convince and mobilize the networks and resources of the high nobility to serve the crown.<sup>73</sup> The nobles accepted and supported the political

69. Fernando Bouza Álvarez, "Cortes festejantes. Fiesta y ocio en el *cursus honorum* cortesano," *Manuscrits* 13 (1995): 185–203.

70. The 3rd Duke of Alburquerque shared the idea of peace with France and the alliance with the pope against the "true" enemy the Ottoman empire.

71. Charles V's confessor suggested the Duke of Alburquerque as a replacement for the deceased viceroy of Naples (at the time the cardinal Pompeo Colonna was interim viceroy). M. Salvá et al., *Colección de documentos inéditos para la Historia de España*, vol. 19 (Madrid: Imprenta viuda de Calero, 1849), 62.

72. Parker, 238–45.

73. The case of Rodrigo de Bazán is exemplary. In 1527, he was a carver for the 3rd Duke of Alburquerque and most probably watched Yanguas's farce. In 1535, he became a lieutenant in Charles V's Spanish

ideals of the monarchy, seeking opportunities to receive new privileges. However, having a common ethos helped overcome the initial distrust between the high nobility and Charles V. In 1528, the French king challenged the emperor to settle their differences by means of a duel, which Charles accepted, despite the risks involved and the unequal physical characteristics between the two, but not before soliciting advice from the Castilian nobles.<sup>74</sup> His decision was consistent with the chivalrous mentality of the time which was also shared by his subjects. In a world where chivalric literature was at its peak and in which games of chivalry were frequent at court, Charles V's response strengthened his authority and power, but also gained him admiration. The duke, who had grown up influenced by the exemplary stories of legendary knights and of his noble ancestors, could not remain oblivious to the emperor's leadership, although it was almost impossible that a duel between two reigning monarchs would take place. Even though firsthand testimonies are scarce, the duke accepted the image of Charles V depicted by the *Turkesan Farce* as a natural and courageous leader.

Most evident during the latter half of the 1520s was the extent to which the Albuquerque nobility participated actively in uniting with Charles's imperial forces.<sup>75</sup> The duke's brothers, Luis and Diego, had accompanied Pedro de la Cueva, the duke's uncle, as part of the emperor's retinue in Bologna.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, they played an essential role in the following years of his reign, as Pedro, extraordinary Spanish ambassador in Rome, and Luis fought the Ottomans in Hungary and Tunisia. In 1530, Charles V granted the title of Marquis of Cuéllar to the duke's firstborn son, Francisco, who would join his uncles in the emperor's Tunisian campaign in 1535.<sup>77</sup> In what may be taken as a response to the House of Albuquerque's patronage, both of López de Yanguas's plays, *Peace's Farce*, which was dedicated to Francisco, and the *Turkesan Farce* concluded with songs acclaiming the imperial family. They proclaimed the

---

Guard, due to the duke's brother's intercession.

74. Charles V measured approximately 160 cm, whereas François I measured almost 190 cm. The duel never took place; see Parker, 232–34.

75. Martínez Millán, 3:92 and 96.

76. Santa Cruz, 90.

77. Yanguas underlines the familiarity of Don Francisco with the emperor; see González Ollé, dedicatory, lines 53–56.

pope and the emperor's crusade against the Turk, demonstrating the mutual trust that had developed between the emperor and the nobility. One year after Charles's coronation as emperor, the Duke of Alburquerque was granted the most exclusive order of chivalry, the highly prestigious Order of the Golden Fleece, founded by Philip the Good of Burgundy in 1429 to unite the knighthood against the Turks and recapture the Holy Sepulchre, whose sovereignty was held by Charles.<sup>78</sup> That same year, the honour bestowed upon him was shared with the emperor's son, the future Philip II.



Figure 1. The bailey and the gallery on the façade, both in Renaissance style. Castle of the dukes of Alburquerque, Cuéllar (Segovia). Photos in this article by the author.

78. Sandoval, 3:171.





Figure 2. The gallery on the southern wall of the castle, towards the gardens.  
Castle of the dukes of Albuquerque, Cuéllar (Segovia).