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RULES AND STATUTES OF THE SPANISH MILITARY ORDERS OF CALATRAVA AND SANTIAGO: THE EVOLUTION OF TWO ATTITUDES TOWARDS WOMEN (12TH–15TH CENTURIES)

KEYWORDS

history; the Middle Ages; military orders; women; Santiago; Calatrava; normative sources; Iberian Peninsula

ABSTRACT

Rules and statutes of the military orders regulated the daily life of the members, their behaviour, their membership, and the relationship they must maintain between them and with people outside of the orders. Hence, the analysis of normative sources may provide insight into the study of women who lived inside and outside of the military orders in the Iberian Peninsula. Most of them mention lay and conventual sisters. However, they also speak of other women, such as “half-sisters”, Moors and even concubines. The aim of this paper is to study the place of women and their relationship with the orders, according to the rules and statutes. Is their presence and their relationship with brothers only determined by their gender? What do the main evolutions of those sources, from the 12th to the 15th century, reveal about the attitudes of the orders towards women? Focusing on the two main Spanish orders, Calatrava and Santiago, this article attempts to answer these questions by examining the different profiles found in the normative sources. It begins by introducing the main differences of both orders in their inclusion and exclusion of women, and presents the main changes and evolutions that occur until the Late Middle Ages. What can be observed is that the attitudes of

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Calatrava and Santiago were first markedly different, especially towards the integration of women into the orders and the conjugal chastity to which women are often associated. It appears that it was changing with the development of the orders until the 15th century, when the gap between men and women members may have become less relevant than between lay and cleric members.

The Iberian Peninsula is a particular place, for it is both a land behind the lines for the Holy Land – the Templars had several commanderies to supply the Crusades at the East, especially in Aragon and Castile, as did the Hospitallers – as well as a frontier in the war between the Christian world and the Muslims. This war led to the creation of national military orders. The first of them was the Order of Calatrava, created in 1158 by the Cistercian abbot Raimundo de Fitero with the agreement of the King Sancho III. The Order took its name from the fortress of Calatrava, which enjoyed a strategic position during the Spanish Reconquest (*Reconquista*), as it opens the way to the city of Toledo. That is why the fortress was first placed under the protection of the Templars since 1147.¹ The second was the Order of Santiago, created between 1170 and 1175. It was first a knighthood, founded with the support of King Fernando II of León to protect the city of Cáceres against the Almohad Empire. A few months after its creation, the knighthood took a religious dimension thanks to the archbishop of Compostela and became the Order of Santiago the following year. In 1172, the Order was established in Portugal and confirmed by a papal bull of Alexander III in 1175.² A few smaller orders were also created during this period, most of them affiliated to the Order of Calatrava. These were the Order of Évora, created in Portugal between 1175 and 1176 (which later became the Order of Avis since 1211), the Order of San Julián del Pereiro founded in León in 1176 (which became the Order of Alcántara after both Orders merged in 1218), and the Order of Montesa, created between 1317 and 1318.

¹ Joseph O'Callaghan, "The Affiliation of the Order of Calatrava with the Order of Cîteaux," in *The Spanish Military Order of Calatrava and its Affiliates* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1975), 180.

² Maria Cristina Pimenta, "Ordre portugais de Santiago," in *Prier et combattre, dictionnaire européen des ordres militaires au Moyen Âge*, ed. Nicole Bériou and Philippe Josserand (Paris: Fayard, 2009), 851–852.

Since their creation, the military orders were regulated by normative sources. The rule (*regula, regla, precept, ley*) is the heart of them. It defines an ideal “way of life”, based on two models, Saint Augustine’s rule or Saint Benedict’s rule.³ Despite this ideal dimension, any breach of the rule was to be punished and, in order to adapt it to daily life and local conditions, the rule was maintained and updated by statutes (*estatutos, definiciones, establecimientos*). These are rich materials for historians, offering offer valuable information on the internal organization of the orders, on the daily life of the members, their behavior, their membership, and the relationship they were expected to maintain between them and with people outside of the orders. Hence, the analysis of normative sources may offer a better perspective into the study of women who lived inside and outside military orders in the Iberian Peninsula. The aim of this article is to study the place of women and their relationship with the orders, according to their rules and statutes. Is their presence – or absence – in the normative sources, and their relationship with the brothers only determined by their gender? What do the main evolution of the rules and statutes, from the creation of the orders in the 12th century, to the end of the Spanish Reconquest in the 15th century, reveal about women’s condition in the orders? To answer these questions, I will focus on the two main Spanish Orders: Calatrava and Santiago, for their rules and statutes seem to show two different attitudes towards women. I will try to draw a part of the answer and to write about the different women profiles we find in the rules and statutes, introducing firstly the main differences between both Orders in their inclusion and exclusion of women. In the second part, I shall try to present the main changes and evolution that occur during the Late Middle Ages.

I. WOMEN AND THE SPANISH MILITARY ORDERS: INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

A) Calatrava

At its creation, the Order of Calatrava did not provide for the admission of female members, unlike the Order of Santiago. This difference may be explained by Calatrava’s affiliation. Indeed, after its creation, the Order of Calatrava was placed

³ Cécile Caby and André Vauchez, *L’histoire des moines, chanoines et religieux au Moyen Âge. Guide de recherche et documents* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 72 defines the rule as it “exprime un idéal, les principes qui doivent orienter la vie du monastère et du monde”.

under the supervision of the French Order of Cîteaux, specifically one of its first daughters, the abbey of Morimond, in 1186. The three versions of the rule of Calatrava, written in 1164, 1186 and 1199, during the General Chapter of Cîteaux, are based on the rule of Saint Benedict.⁴ Of course, as it is a military order, Calatrava's rule was adapted to the warrior mission of the friars against the Saracens.⁵ What about women in the rule? None of the versions mentions the presence of female members. The only occurrence of women is related to the vow of chastity that the brothers must profess, with the two other monastic vows of obedience and poverty. And, not to mention their military purpose, this may be explained by the fact that the Order of Cîteaux was somewhat reluctant to admit women as sisters as well. Indeed, according to it, austerity was not inherent to female nature.⁶ Moreover, women were also depicted negatively in the Cistercian rule, according to which they make the brothers "go soft". This idea was also employed in other orders, such as the Temple and the Teutonic Order.⁷ In the statutes of the Order of Calatrava and of its daughters, women outside the Order were, most of

⁴ The three versions of the rule have been published in *Bullarium Ordinis Militiae de Calatrava*, ed. Juan Francisco Álvarez de Baquedano, Ignacio José Ortega y Cotes, and Pedro Ortega-Zúñiga y Aranda (Madrid, 1761).

⁵ *Bullarium Ordinis Militiae de Calatrava*, ed. Álvarez de Baquedano, Ortega y Cotes, and Ortega-Zúñiga y Aranda, fol. 17v–18v: [...] *la Orden de Calatrava tiene Regla particular por sí, sacada de la Regla de Sant Benito, no segun la aspereza de vida que en ella fue pesta à sus monges, sino moderada, y templadamente, segun a los fundadores de esta Orden, a al Capitulo general del Cistel parescio ser mas conveniente para el fin, y efecto que en esta Religion de Cavalleria se pretendió [...]*; Joseph O'Callaghan, *The Spanish Military Order of Calatrava*, 176; *Statuta capitulorum generalium ordinis Cisterciensis, ab anno 1116 ad anno 1786*, vol. 2, ed. Joseph-Marie Canivez (Louvain: Bureaux de la Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, 1933–1941), I, xxvi–xxxii.

⁶ Colette Beaune, *Education et cultures. Du début du XIIe siècle au milieu du XVe siècle* (Paris: SEDES, 1995), 325. Cistercian nuns must wait the 13th century to get their own statutes. This is an answer to the increasing of affiliation demands of female communities to Cîteaux, according to Marcel Pacaut, *Les moines blancs. Histoire de l'ordre de Cîteaux* (Paris: Fayard, 1993), 157–159; Bernard Lucet, *Les codifications cisterciennes de 1237 et de 1257* (Paris: CNRS, 1977), 348–357. The attitude of Cîteaux towards its female members during the 12th and the 13th centuries is fueling historiographical debate since the 1960's; it proves a kind of "misogyny" from cleric men, according to Ghislain Baury, "Émules puis sujettes de l'ordre cistercien. Les cisterciennes de Castille et d'ailleurs face au Chapitre Général aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles," *Cîteaux – Commentarii cistercienses* 52 (2001): 27.

⁷ Kristjan Toomaspoeg, "Manquements et dérèglements dans l'ordre Teutonique (XII^e–XV^e siècle)," in *Enfernements II. Règles et dérèglements en milieu clos (IV^e–XIX^e siècle)*, ed. Isabelle Heullant-Donat (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2015), 359; Helen Nicholson, "Women in Templar and Hospitaller Commanderies," in *La Commanderie. Institution des ordres militaires dans l'Occident médiéval*, ed. Anthony Luttrell and Léon Pressouyre (Paris: Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques, 2002), 127.

the time, related to the vow of chastity. In 1336, the Cistercian abbot Renaud of Morimond forbade to any woman with easy virtue (*mujer de sospeccion*), whether she is Moorish or Christian, to live and spend the night with the brethren. They were required to live inside a feminine convent.⁸ Moreover, statutes from the late Middle Ages of the Order of Alcántara warned the brothers away from receiving concubines (*mancebas, concubinas*) in their house. They were considered as tainted beings (*mesquina carne*) who threatened the brothers' souls.⁹ In 1418, the Order of Calatrava forbade the knight brothers to receive any *publice concubinas* or *feminas suspectas*, who were at least concubines, maybe prostitutes.¹⁰ As already mentioned, every breach of the rule was subject to punishment. Breaching the chastity vow was punishable by the loss of the horse and weapons for a year, and the offending brother was obliged to eat and drink bread and water three days a week.¹¹

While the Order warned against women outside the Order, two female monasteries were created and attached to the Order of Calatrava in the 13th century: San Felices de Amaya and San Salvador de Pinilla. Both are in Castile, away from the borders with al-Andalus. San Felices de los Barrios near Amaya, in the diocese

⁸ Joseph O'Callaghan, "The Earliest 'Difiniciones' of the Order of Calatrava, 1304–1383," in *The Spanish Military Order of Calatrava and its Affiliates* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1975), 279: *Item, mandamos que ninguna mujer de sospeccion, siquiera sea mora, o cristiana, no venga a dormir, ni a estar en el castiello de Alcañiz mientras que el convento hy sea.*

⁹ Derek Lomax, "La reforma de la orden de Alcántara durante el maestrazgo del Infante Don Sancho, 1411–1413," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 11 (1981): 766–767: [...] *algunos de los dichos vaualleros y freyles, no se nembrando de sus buenas famas ne de la salud de sus ánimas ni mucho menos del voto expreso y promisión que a Dios en su orden hizieron, por la fraqueza de la mesquina carne quieren seguir sus malos apetitos y voluntades desordenadas trayendo su vida dissoluta públicamente teniendo mancebas en sus casas y en otras partes en grande offensa de Dios y de la regla non lo deuiendo hazer.*

¹⁰ Joseph O'Callaghan, "Las definiciones de la Orden de Calatrava, 1383–1418," *En la España medieval* 19 (1996): 122: *Demum dolener reperimus quod non solum ad nostrum sed fere ad omnium pervenit notitiam quod quamplurimi milites et fratres [sepedicte] milit[ie de] Calatrava... exigentibus publice concubinas et feminas suspectas in domibus suarum habitationum tenere, quod in infamiam eiusdem ordinis redundare dignoscitur et non in modicum periculum anima [suarum] dominum magistrum ipsius militie hortamur in domino et solícite eidem iniungimus et mandamus ut dictos milites et fratres inducat, moneat et omni cohercione etiam usque ad privationem suarum comendarum... si opus fuerit, constringat ut tales concubinas et mulieres suspectas a domibus suarum habitationum expellant, rebelles aut renitentes secundum regularia statuta debite castigando [...].*

¹¹ Derek Lomax, "Algunos estatutos primitivos de la orden de Calatrava," *Hispania* 21 (1961): 494: *Qui fratres suum traditorem uel fornicatorem maliciose apellauerit tribus diebus grauiori culpe subiaceat et omnibus Vitis feriis eiusdem anni sit in pane et aqua. Qui in fornicatione deprehensus fuerit uno anno perdat equum et arma, in terra tot illo anno comedat et tribus diebus in ebdomada sit in pane et aqua, disciplinam quoque singulis sextis feriis accipiat.*

of Burgos, may have been created in the 10th century. It was at that time a male monastery.¹² In 1188, it entered the possessions of the Order of Calatrava by a donation from Alfonso VIII of Castile. It became a female community between 1219 and 1220.¹³ The monastery of San Salvador de Pinilla is situated near Atienza, in the province of Guadalajara. Founded in 1218, it seems that it was not associated with the Order from its creation, because the first mention of this convent as a subsidiary of Calatrava dates only from 1262.¹⁴ It would appear that from 1228, the General Chapter of Cîteaux forbade the foundation of new female communities in the Kingdom of Castile. This was later approved in 1240, providing Cîteaux's permission.¹⁵ Calatrava's nuns (*freylas, sorores*) were required to follow the rule of Saint Benedict, the precepts of the Cistercian friars, and to wear the white habit of Cîteaux. At the head of the convent was an abbess. The recruitment of new sisters required the permission of the Master of the Order of Calatrava, otherwise by the abbot of Morimond. Sisters were mainly widows or women who pronounced chastity vow, and sometimes there were the daughters of knight brothers of Calatrava. Indeed, one theory explaining the creation of female convents is that Calatrava needed these convents to receive women of the families of knight broth-

¹² Carlos de Ayala Martínez, "San Felices de Amaya, monasterio medieval de la Orden de Calatrava," in *Medievo Hispano: estudios in memoriam del Prof. Derek W. Lomax* (Madrid: Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 1995), 17–34.

¹³ Carlos Barquero Goñi, "Entre la contemplación y la guerra: las freiras de las órdenes militares," in *Mujeres en silencio: el monacato femenino en la España Medieval*, ed. José Ángel García de Cortázar and Ramón Teja (Aguilar de Campoo: Fundación Santa María la Real del Patrimonio Histórico, 2017), 275; *Bullarium Ordinis Militiae de Calatrava*, ed. Álvarez de Baquedano, Ortega y Cotes, and Ortega-Zúñiga y Aranda, 47–49; Alan Forey, "Women and the Military Orders in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries," *Studia Monastica* 29 (1987): 72; Rafael Sánchez Domingo, *Las Monjas de la Orden Militar de Calatrava. Monasterio de San Felices (Burgos) y de la Concepción (Moralzarzal-Madrid)* (Burgos: Editorial La Olmeda, 1997), 67. It is the most important of both monasteries and was situated near the Cistercian female convent of Las Huelgas.

¹⁴ Carlos de Ayala Martínez, *Las órdenes militares hispánicas en la Edad Media (siglos XII–XV)* (Madrid: Latorre Literaria, 2007), 178; Alan Forey, "Visitations in Military Orders during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries," *Viator* 46 (2015), 99.

¹⁵ *Statuta capitulorum generalium ordinis Cisterciensis*, 2, ed. Canivez, 68; Ayala Martínez, *Las órdenes militares hispánicas*, 177.

ers who maybe would have been marginalized.¹⁶ The functioning of Calatrava's women communities appears to be similar to those of Cistercian nuns in Castile.¹⁷

B) Santiago

In his bull of confirmation of the foundation of the Order of Santiago, written in 1175, Pope Alexander III justified the presence of women by a commonplace of the Christian literature: as the Christian world is divided between those who choose the singular vow and those who are married, and as Christ is born from a man and a woman, then the Order has to accept men and women, single and married.¹⁸ Thus, the Order of Santiago was the first military order – with a military purpose since its creation – to accept women and married members as full brothers and sisters.

The rule of the Order of Santiago was influenced by Saint Augustine's rule. Contrary to the rule of Calatrava, women are already included in the first version of the rule, written in Latin between 1170 and 1173. Women were part of the Order, referred to as *mulieres* (women) and *uxores* (wives). From the 12th to the 15th centuries, Santiago's women were welcomed in seven convents, one hospital (San Mateo de Avila in Castile) and one commandery (Destriana in León).¹⁹ According to Santiago's rule, if a single woman entered the Order, she would be asked whether she wanted to get married or not. The rule of 1281 does not

¹⁶ Raquel Torres Jiménez, "Mujeres de órdenes militares, siglos XII–XVI. La realidad cotidiana en el Monasterio Calatravo de la Asunción de Almagro según la visita de 1546," *Revista de las órdenes militares* 11 (2020): 80.

¹⁷ Ghislain Baur, "Les ordres militaires hispaniques et l'économie cistercienne. Le temporel des sœurs de Calatrava (XIII^e–XV^e siècles)," *e-Spania* 16 (2013), <https://doi.org/10.4000/e-spania.22864>.

¹⁸ *Bullarium Equestris Ordinis Sancti Iacobi de Spatha*, ed. Antonio Francisco Aguado de Córdoba, Alfonso Antonio Alemán, and José López Agurleta (Madrid: Matriti: ex typographia Joannis de Ariztia, 1719), 13: *Quia universa turba fidelium in coniugatos, et continentes distinguitur, et Dominus Iesus Christus non solum pro viris, sed et pro foeminis quoque de foemina nasci voluit, et cum hominibus conversari, habeantur in ipso Ordine, qui coelibem, si voluerint, ducant vitam.* This extract is also known thanks to Sam Zeno Conedera, *Ecclesiastical Knights: The Military Orders in Castile, 1150–1330* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 43–44.

¹⁹ María Soledad Ferrer Vidal Y Díaz Del Reguero, "Los monasterios femeninos de la Orden de Santiago durante la Edad Media," in *Las órdenes militares en el Mediterráneo occidental, s. XII–XVII: coloquio celebrado los días 4, 5 y 6 de mayo de 1983* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 1989), 41–50.

mention single women anymore.²⁰ Married sisters and brothers were required to follow a chastity vow some time of the year, during fast, days of the Virgin and Apostles, and during Christian holy days. If they breached this vow, they were accused of adultery.²¹ The morality of members of the Order was examined during annual inspections of commanderies and convents.²² They lived in houses according to liturgical life: most of the time they lived together in the same house, but during Lent, both wife and knight had to go to convents with single members.²³ When a knight brother went to the battlefield or elsewhere for a mission, his wife did have the choice of staying home or living with conventual sisters during his absence.²⁴ Whatever she decided, she was always required to have the Master's permission. During the 13th century, the rule was completed concerning widows: with the permission of the Master (or the commander), a widow could become a conventual sister, but she also had the possibility to marry again. The younger a widow was, the more she would be encouraged to get married (since she was still able to bear children). A widow was still under the Order's supervision.²⁵ Moreover, a brother's violence was forbidden against his wife, just as against any other brother. Therefore, starting from the 13th century, a knight brother who killed his wife received the same punishment as if he had killed another brother: he was

²⁰ Derek Lomax, *La Orden de Santiago (1170–1275)* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Escuela de Estudios Medievales, 1965), 221–231; María Echániz Sans, *Las Mujeres de la orden militar de Santiago* (Salamanca: Junta de Castilla y León, Consejería de Cultura y Turismo, 1992), 49.

²¹ Jean Leclercq, "La Vie et la Prière des Chevaliers de Santiago d'après leur règle primitive," *Liturgica* 2 (1958): 354: *Cum mulieribus suis non conveniant quando ieiunant nec in solemnitatibus Sancte Marie, Sancti Iohannis Baptiste, Apostolorum nec in aliis festiuitatibus maioribus. Nam omnis uehemens amator proprie coniugis adulter est.*

²² Enrique Gallego Blanco, *The Rule of the Spanish Military Order of St. James (1170–1493). Latin and English texts* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 168–169: *Otrosí sepan que uida fazen los freyres casados y sus dueñas.*

²³ Lomax, *La Orden*, 224: *Ali do fuere el conuento de los freyres que no han mugeres. En las dos quaresmas los freyres que ouieren mugeres conuiento tengan e las mugeres con aquellas que non an maridos.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 224: *Mas si los freyres fueren sobre moros o en otros negocios de la casa e sus mugeres quisieren seer en la claustra con las freyras, sean recibidas e tenganlas ondrada mientras tro a que sos maridos uengan a aquesto sea en prouidentia del maestre.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 224: *[...] si alguna quisier casar digalo a so maestro o a so comendador, que con so mandado se case e segun que dixo el apostoligo, Muerto el uaron suelta es la mugier de la ley del uaron, con quiquier case tanto en nuestro senmor. E de perdon nos dize Quiero las biudas mancebas casar e que engendren fiios e non dar ocasion al diable e aquesto mismo conuiene a gardar de los uarones;* Echániz Sans, *Las Mujeres*, 49.

clapped in irons and received the annual punishment (“downgraded”) until the Master received advice from the Pope to decide a punishment for murder.²⁶

Concerning women’s communities, some masters seem to have been more involved than others in the creation and supervision of women’s communities. Pelayo Pérez Correa was the Order of Santiago’s Master from 1242 to 1275. He was sometimes called *pater et magister*, highlighting the importance of a kind of spiritual kinship in the Order. He participated to the creation of new female communities and wrote statutes setting guidelines for women’s lives and the protection of the power of women commanders (*commendadoras*) of the Order.²⁷ *Commendadoras* had a kind of decision-making authority, which could not be completely dissolved by the Master. Nevertheless, they did not have the same role as commanders and priors: *commendadoras* did not have the military obligations of the first or the sacerdotal mission of the second. They were able to lead and administrate convents (female and mixed) whenever those institutions could be exempted of commander’s administration; this was the case in the convents of Sancti Spiritus of Salamanca and of San Pedro de la Pierda. The *commendadora* was elected by sisters and then confirmed by the Master of the Order. She was assisted by a *subcommendadora*. One of them achieved posterity: Sancha Alfonso de León, *commendadora* of the convent of Sancti Spiritus of Salamanca. According to the Order, she was the legitimate daughter of Alfonso X of León and Teresa, and entered the Order as a virgin around 1269. She took the habit the next year, in the convent of Santa Eufemia de Cozuelos, and died in 1271. Then, she was beatified in 1705, on Santiago’s demand. She is still the target of a cult, and is exposed wearing Santiago’s habit beyond death, in the convent of Las Comendadoras de Santiago, in Toledo.²⁸ In 1251, Pelayo Pérez Correa announced a statute protecting female convent’s territories from the Master and from the commanders.²⁹

²⁶ Lomax, *La Orden*, 229: *Si porauentura deuenier que Dios non mande que algun frayre mate so frayre o a otro de qual se quier orden si pudiere seer sea preso e sea metido en fierros e denle penitencia de I anno tro que el maestro se conseie con el apostoligo quel de penitencia de grand homicidio. [...] Otrosi si algun freyre a so mugier matare esso mismo le fagan.*

²⁷ Barquero Goñi, “Entre la contemplación y la guerra,” 262.

²⁸ Jesús Ángel Sánchez Rivera, “Configuración de una iconografía singular: la venerable doña Sancha Alfonso, comendadora de Santiago,” *Anales de Historia del Arte* 18 (2008): 167–209.

²⁹ Philippe Josserand, *Église et pouvoir dans la péninsule Ibérique: les ordres militaires dans le royaume de Castille (1252–1369)* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2004), 836 (Les statuts santiaguistes de Pelayo Pérez Correa): *[E]stablesçemos que las heredades que agora an los monesterios de las dueñas que nin maestre nin comendador non las den a ningund omne en prestado.*

Hence, normative sources show two different attitudes towards women from both Orders of Calatrava and Santiago. Nevertheless, this began to change especially during the 15th century, a period which is marked by the end of the Spanish Reconquest and by the reforms of the Catholic Kings. It appears that the differences that once divided the orders were beginning to disappear.

II. THE SPANISH MILITARY ORDERS' REFORM AND ITS INFLUENCE ON WOMEN

A) Secularization of the military orders

From the end of the 13th to the end of the 15th century, statutes showed a progressive secularization of the Spanish military orders.

One of the major changes occurred in the Late Middle Ages. The Order of Calatrava allowed marital chastity to knight brothers in 1438.³⁰ Introducing the vow of conjugal chastity enabled brothers of the Order to create legitimate lineages, and then to avoid having illegitimate children, as well as it contributed to a renewal of the Order's members (just as in the Order of Santiago).³¹ Lineage was an important element in the military orders' life. During the Late Middle Ages, the highest offices of the Orders became accessible only to influential lineages, and the commanderies were eventually privatized.³² Thus, the late statutes of Calatrava prohibited the brothers from marrying a woman who did not come from a pure lineage. This mainly referred to Jewish, Muslim and converted women.³³ Calatrava's daughters did the same between the end of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century.

³⁰ *Catalogo de las obligaciones que los comendadores, cavalleros, priores y otros religiosos de la Orden de Calatrava tienen en razon de su avito y profesion con declaracion de como obligan en el fuero de la consciencia algunos de ellos: y la forma de rezar, que han de guardar los legos*, ed. Francisco Rades y Andrada (Toledo: J. de Ayala, 1571), fol. 67v-68r.

³¹ Enrique Rodríguez-Picavea Matilla, *Señores, caballeros y comendadores. La orden de Calatrava en la Edad Media* (Madrid: La Ergástula, 2014), 257.

³² Carlos de Ayala Martínez, "Les commanderies des ordres militaires en Castille et León au Moyen Âge. Étape d'une évolution," in *La Commanderie. Institution des ordres militaires dans l'Occident médiéval*, ed. Anthony Luttrell and Léon Pressouyre (Paris: Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques, 2002), 88.

³³ *Catalogo de las obligaciones*, ed. Rades y Andrada, fol. 69v: *Yten ningun Comendador ni Cavallero se puede casar con muger que no sea limpia de linage, sin raza de Iudia, Conversa, ni Mora: so pena que su Magestad le puede quitar la Encomienda, y sino la tuviere, inhabilitarle para ella.*

Signs of secularisation can be found in the daily life of the military orders and especially among knight brothers, which may be regarded as a way to be closer to the dominant social group. For instance, some of Calatrava's brothers seem to have worn a colored habit, despite the prohibitions written in the statutes,³⁴ and Santiago's knights were no longer obliged to wear the habit except for ceremonies and religious feasts. Thus, they no longer differentiated themselves from the secular world.³⁵ As for the vow of chastity, during the General Chapter of Ecija in 1485, Santiago's knight brothers asked for the restrictions to be reduced.³⁶ And, although it was forbidden in the Christian world, normative sources indicate the existence of cohabitation with partners (*companeras*) who are distinguished from wives.³⁷ This can be explained by the fact that the Order of Santiago was mainly composed of members from the upper class and marked by the secular world, where this kind of cohabitation still existed.³⁸ Additionally, Santiago's statutes promulgated by Enrique of Aragon in 1440, directed at *alcaldes mayores* (urban civil servants responsible for justice and police) and *alguasiles* (civil servants put in charge of the executive), reveal some information concerning prostitutes, notably called *mancebas publice* or *encobiertas* (hidden women). They do not refer to women directly in contact with brothers, but to women living in the lands and cities that were ruled by the Order of Santiago. In fact, women were usually controlled by *alguasiles*. They were required to know whether women were married or

³⁴ O'Callaghan, "The Earliest 'Difiniciones,'" 280: *Item, mandamos que los freyres ni vistan ni traigan paños de color que corran en bermejo, ni blanco, ni de otra color, e segun los estatutos de la orden antiguos, e segun las constituciones e ordenaciones de nuestro señor papa Benedicto, sobre questo feytas*; id., "Las definiciones de la Orden de Calatrava, 1383–1418," 113: *Item mandamos que lors freiles no vistan ni traigan paños de colores colorado amarillo ni verde ni de otra color reprehensible, mas usen de paños honestos e honestas colores [...]*.

³⁵ Jossierand, *Église et pouvoir*, 184; María Echániz Sans, "Austeridad versus lujo: el vestido y los freiles de la Orden de Santiago durante la Edad Media," *Anuario de estudios medievales* 23 (1993): 357–382.

³⁶ Daniel Rodríguez Blanco, "La reforma de la Orden de Santiago," *En la España Medieval* 5 (1986): 935–936: *suplicamos que Su Santidad dispense a los caualleros que como quier que ayvan ajuntamiento con sus mujeres en los días de ayuno o en las fiestas proybidas de la Regla o en sus vigiliias que no yncurran en pecado mortal e que detales ajuntamientos se acusen a sus confesores e que ellos les ynpongan sus penitengias saludables segund que a los otros fyeles casados legos que en orden de casados viven*.

³⁷ Lomax, *La Orden*, 225: *El maestre establezca comendador que aya a dar a los freyres que estan en el conuiento e a los freyres que estan en sus casas con sus mugieres e con sus companeras e deles de la necessarias cosas de la casa segun es el poder*; Rodríguez Blanco, "La reforma," 941, notices the existence of this way of life during the Late Middle Ages, in the Order of Santiago.

³⁸ Georges Duby, *Le chevalier, la femme et le prêtre* (Paris: Hachette, 1981), 49.

not, if they were single and lived alone, and if they did receive men in their house, how many. Indeed, the number of affairs, in which women were involved or entangled had an impact on whether they were considered prostitutes. In the Iberian Peninsula, this number changed according to local authorities and was set by local regulation (*fueros*).³⁹ Santiago's statutes also ordered the *alguasiles* of Santiago's cities and lands to punish women having more than four or five affairs and engaging in prostitution with a prison term and a fine of sixty maravedís.⁴⁰ Those statutes highlight the boom of prostitution in cities during the Late Middle Ages, and the increase of its control in the Iberian places since the 14th century.⁴¹

Female communities were mainly composed of noble women or women issued from the upper-middle society (for instance, in the convents located in urban environments). For that matter, when a new member entered the order, he was subjected to an inspection of his morality, intelligence, relationships, social status, and wealth. In the female communities, hierarchy was based on the age of the members and on their social status. In the Order of Santiago, the sisters were gradually called *dueñas* in the sources, a reference to their social status. They were also referred to as *caballeras* from the 16th century, reminding them of their belonging to knightly society. Normative sources also refer to "half-sisters" (*consorores*). Those women were not sisters, they did not profess monastic vows, but rather, were the servants of sisters. In that way, sisters preserved the privilege of their social condition. Since the 13th century, normative sources referred to a social distinction through the habit. In 1249, only nobles could wear it. In 1259, knights and noble women were allowed to wear the scallop to be distinguishable from lower members.⁴² Normative sources also mention the presence of Moors (*moros, moros*). Since the 12th

³⁹ Jacques Rossiaud, *Amours vénales. La prostitution en Occident, XII^e–XVI^e siècle* (Paris: Aubier, 2010), 38–39, says that that women having more than eleven affairs in the city of Alfombra are called prostitutes. Moreover, some cities make a difference between women having their affairs publicly (they are called *meretrices*) and discreet women who shall not be touched by infamy.

⁴⁰ Ángela Madrid Y Medina, "Establecimientos de don Enrique de Aragón y don Alonso de Cárdenas," *Revista de las Ordenes Militares* 3 (2005): 178: *Los alguasiles de las nuestras villas o logares de nuestra Orden acostumburan de guardar a algunas mugeres que non son casadas synon solteras e non tyenen amigo conoçido, las quales en sus casas se dan a quatro o çinco o más omes a los que quieren, a quien disen putas, ramerias o encobiertas, que nin son amigas, nin son públicas, e después lieuan cohecho.*

⁴¹ Rossiaud, *Amours vénales*, 44.

⁴² María Echániz Sans, "Las Mujeres de le Orden Militar de Santiago: el monasterio de Sancti Spiritus de Salamanca," vol. 1 (PhD Diss., Universidad de Barcelona, 1988), 160; Alain Demurger, *Moines et Guerriers. Les ordres religieux-militaires au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Seuil, 2010), 202; Lomax, *La Orden*, 94.

century, the Order of Santiago owned slaves won in battles against al-Andalus. In 1304, the statutes of the Order of Calatrava, written by the abbot of Morimond, ordered the commanders to declare houses and movable items such as bread, wine, cattle, oil, olives, and Moors. They were a property of the Order, and therefore brethren should not give them or sell them without the Master's consent.⁴³ Normative sources often distinguish Moorish men from Moorish women. This could perhaps highlight that they had a different role or a different market value due to their gender. For instance, in the East, a prisoner's function was determined according to his gender, age, social condition, and (in some cases) beauty. Concerning his price, a man would be more expensive than a woman or a child. On the contrary, in the north-east of the Iberian Peninsula, the price of a young woman could increase, especially if she was pregnant.⁴⁴ Moorish women or slaves could work in male commanderies or houses as servants, maids or even as washerwomen.⁴⁵

B) Enclosure of female communities

The 15th century is marked by the end of the Spanish Reconquest and by the rule of Catholic Kings. On the one hand, noble society's influence on the military orders was increasing and charges were privatized by the highest families including the royal family (King Fernando of Castile became Santiago's administrator). On the other hand, an enclosure of conventual brothers and sisters can be noticed, especially of female communities. In fact, during the Late Middle Ages, it seems that the gap between lay and cleric members of the orders was intensifying as well.

⁴³ O'Callaghan, "The Earliest 'Difiniciones,'" 265: *Et, mandamos que [los comandadores traigan el capitulo escrito] de sus casas, e del pan, e del vino, e de los tozinos, e de los ganados, e de las cabañas, e de los [percanes], si les obieren, e de bueyes, e de moros, e de moras, e de aceyte, e de los [olivares, i de cuenta como los gastaron. E si de otra manera lo bicieren] pierdan las casas que tobieren, e los cavallos e las armas.*

⁴⁴ Charles Verlinden, *L'esclavage dans l'Europe médiévale. Tome Premier: Péninsule Ibérique – France* (Bruges: De Tempel, 1955), 366; Yvonne Friedman, "Captivity and Ransom: The Experience of Women," in *Gendering the Crusades*, ed. Susan B. Edgington and Sarah Lambert (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001), 124. In the Order of the Hospital, slaves are also exchanged against property and castles, as it is analyzed in *Cartulaire général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem*, vol. 1, 1100–1200, ed. Joseph Delaville Le Roulx (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1894), 408.

⁴⁵ Verlinden, *L'esclavage*, 363; Forey, "Women and the Military Orders," 69.

Until the 15th century, enclosure did not always seem observed, as in Santiago's convents during the 12th century, but it changed with the development of the Order.⁴⁶ In 1281, the rule ordered women who did not want to get married to live a conventual life.⁴⁷ Normative sources reminded brothers and sisters of enclosure during the 14th century, as in the Order of Montesa in 1331. Then, the conventual reform was strengthened during the reign of Isabella of Castile at the end of the 15th century. The queen enjoyed some influence over the orders. For example, she participated in the foundation of a Hospitaller convent in Seville and of a Santiaguist convent in Granada. Above all, she was named Master of Santiago, Calatrava and Alcántara by Pope Alexander VI, in 1493. Santiago's normative sources written by Alonso de Cárdenas during the end of the 15th century are an eloquent example. Alonso de Cárdenas was the last Santiago's Master, from 1474 to 1492 (between 1474 and 1476, at the same time as Rodrigo Manrique), thanks to the queen's support.⁴⁸ In 1480, the General Chapter of Ocaña took place, which had an impact on daily life of the sisters of Sancti Spiritus of Salamanca. Santiago's sisters were usually removed from the General Chapter; however, some sisters of Sancti Spiritus of Salamanca took part in the General Chapter of Ocaña with their *comandadora mayor*. At that time, sisters' rights in the election of their *comandadora* was threatened by the Order, and sisters asked for the Chapter to guarantee their right to elect the *comendadoras* of the convent. The Chapter consented to do so, in exchange for the redaction of a new rule: a feminine version of Santiago's rule.⁴⁹ The aim of this rule was to reinforce austerity and enclosure of the convent of Sancti Spiritus. In addition to the new regulations on dress, profession, and novitiate, it explicitly excluded the sisters from the organs of power and government of the Order of Santiago. Besides, it suppressed conjugal chastity, which was replaced with perpetual chastity. From now on, widows were also prohibited from remarrying.⁵⁰ Furthermore, in 1494 the General Chapter ordered the sisters to be buried inside the cloister as a means of keeping them well away from the secular

⁴⁶ Helen Nicholson, "The role of Women in the Military Orders," *Militiae Christi: Handelingen van de Vereniging voor de Studie over de Tempeliers en den Hospitaalriders vzw* 1 (2010): 215. For example, in the Hospitaller convent of Sigena in Aragon, nuns kept some independence inside the convent and remain in contact with their family members.

⁴⁷ Lomax, *La Orden*, 224: *Aquella que non quisiere casar more en el monasterio* [...].

⁴⁸ *Bullarium Equestris Ordinis Sancti Iacobi de Spatha*, ed. Aguado de Córdoba, Alemán, and Agurleta, 400–407.

⁴⁹ This rule has been studied by Echániz Sans, "Las Mujeres," 223.

⁵⁰ Lay sisters of the Order of Santiago are also subject to an intensification of the rules concerning daily life in 1485, according to Rodríguez Blanco, "La reforma," 936.

world, even after they died.⁵¹ This is in opposition to a practice that can be found in particular among the brothers and high dignitaries of the Order of Santiago since the 14th century, inherited from the secular world. This practice involved choosing one's own burial place, sometimes outside of the Order's lands (which normative sources prohibited), in some cases in a family tomb.⁵² However, reform did not manifest itself evenly across all of Santiago's convents. For instance, in 1509, the female community of Santa Maria do Paraíso (previously the convent of Santos-o-Velho) was impacted by the reform concerning liturgical duty of the nuns, but they still were allowed to observe conjugal chastity.⁵³

CONCLUSION

Normative sources speak of different types of women within and outside of the military orders, and about the relationships of these women with the orders (i.e., lay and conventual sisters, "half-sisters", and "fringe" women such as Moorish and concubines). The attitudes of the orders, according to the rules, may be based on their gender, but this was not the defining factor in shaping these attitudes. The inclusion or exclusion of women, and their place in the orders, was often based on their social rank and skills. They were also influenced by external context. If the attitudes of the orders of Calatrava and Santiago are markedly different towards women, and especially towards their integration in the orders and the chastity vow to which women are often associated, it appears that it was changing with the development of the orders until the Late Middle Ages. Then, perhaps the gap between men and women members became less relevant than between lay and cleric members.

⁵¹ María del Pilar Calzado Sobrino, "Religiosidad femenina en la Edad Media. Mujeres en las órdenes militares: freilas santiaguistas," *Cuadernos Kóre. Revista de historia y pensamiento de género* 7 (2012): 169.

⁵² Carlos de Ayala Martínez and Philippe Josserand, "Vida y Eternidad. La actitud de las órdenes militares en Castilla ante el problema de la muerte (ss. XII–XIV)," in *Deus vult: miscellanea di studi sugli ordini militari*, ed. Cristian Guzzo (Tuscania: Penne & Papiri, 2011), 65–66.

⁵³ Joel Silva Ferreira Mata, "Around a theme: the female community of the Order of St. James in Portugal: a journey from the late 15th century to the 16th century," in *As ordens militares. Freiles, guerreiros, cavaleiros. Actas do VI Encontro sobre Ordens Militares*, vol. 2, ed. Isabel Cristina Fernandes (Palmela: Gabinete de Estudos sobre a Ordem de Santiago, 2012), 543–551.

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