EL GRAN CAPITÁN

An Influence on Ignatius and the Spiritual Exercises?

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Until the age of twenty-six he was a man given up to the vanities of the world; and his chief delight used to be in the exercise of arms, with a great and vain desire to gain honour. And so, being in a stronghold which the French were attacking …. [1]

SO, FAMOUSLY, BEGIN Ignatius' reminiscences of the young man that he had been thirty or so years earlier.[2] The disastrous events at that stronghold, the citadel of Pamplona, and Iñigo's wounding, surgery and incipient convalescence follow in laconic but graphic detail. It is only a couple of pages later that we reach the even better known scene where he is reclining on his couch, his thoughts torn between 'the things of God', encapsulated in a life of Christ and stories of the saints, and 'worldly' ambitions and dreams arising from his memories of chivalric novels and fantasies centred on a certain lady. And this lady is no mere countess or duchess, but higher than these! No doubt there really was such a lady but, in due course, Ignatius could easily perceive that she was, equally, a figment of his fevered imagination.

It is clear that the princess represents something of great significance for Ignatius, that as she merges with the damsels of his books of chivalry she represents an idealized womanhood. From other sources we know that real flesh-and-blood women had held a strong attraction for him, too.[3]

I am much indebted to Joseph A. Munitiz SJ for making important and helpful suggestions for the improvement of this article.

1 *Autobiography*, n.1.
2 Iñigo did not take the name Ignatius until his time in Paris, long after his conversion.
3 See, for example, Cándido de Dalmases, *El padre maestro Ignacio: breve biografía Ignaciana* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1982); Cándido de Dalmases, *Ignatius of Loyola, Founder of the Jesuits: His Life and Work* (St Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985), 33.

It is significant that, a little later in the story, when he is favoured with a 'visitation' of Our Lady and the child Jesus,

> He was left so sickened at his whole past life, and especially at matters of the flesh, that it seemed to him that there had been removed from his soul all the likenesses that he had previously had painted in it. Thus from that hour until August 1553, when this is being written, he never again had even the slightest complicity in matters of the flesh.[4]

Against this background writers, be they historians, hagiographers or those specialising in spirituality, have tended to focus on the struggle in the dreamy invalid between the desire to leave all for Christ and the attractions of courtly life and love, with a special place accorded to those dances that his deformed leg put at jeopardy. As I believe there is some imbalance in that focus, it is necessary to turn aside for a moment and glance at Spanish history during the era of Iñigo's birth and maturity.

The Historical Background

Politically, 'Spain' did not exist before the reign of Ferdinand, king of Aragon and Isabella, queen of Castile. They married in 1469 and, a few years later, set about the long process of unifying their dominions, a task left unfinished at the premature death of Isabella (1504)—and perhaps still unfinished. To the 'Catholic Kings', as they are jointly known, the Muslim Kingdom of Granada was both an affront to their sovereign ambitions and a challenge to their Christian zeal. And the protracted campaign of *reconquista* served another useful purpose, in that both nobles and the common people became more loyal, more susceptible to the mystique of monarchy; parallels easily come to mind.

A ten-year campaign ended with the surrender of the city of Granada in 1492, the year after Iñigo was born. To Europe at large this conquest seemed to be of far more significance than rumours of some 'New World' following on the voyages of discovery. The couple went on strengthening royal authority and taming dissident tendencies until Isabella's death, after which Ferdinand continued, with determination, guile and few scruples, though with limited success. Meanwhile Castile's dominions were rapidly expanding in the New World, and Aragon pursued a successful military policy in southern Italy.

[4] *Autobiography*, n. 10.

At the start of the long Granada campaign, Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba (1453–1515) was not yet thirty. He was Andalusian, and therefore a subject of the Castilian queen. Montilla, his home, was near both Córdoba and the Muslim border, so he was already a veteran of border skirmishes, well versed in Muslim tactics and techniques, and had the advantage of familiarity both with the terrain and with the Muslims' language. A younger son of middling nobility, he was overshadowed by grandees and, of course, the monarchs themselves, who were closely involved in the campaign. Gradually his versatile military skills and value as a negotiator trusted by both sides brought him further prominence.

Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, *by Mateo Inurria*

By the time Granada had surrendered, Gonzalo's place among the leaders was assured and he was appointed commander-in-chief for the subsequent Italian campaigns, eventually becoming viceroy ruling over southern Italy and Sicily, duke of Sessa and a grandee of Spain. Such was his success and his well-earned reputation for leadership, courage, courtesy, originality and sagacity that he has remained known to history as *el Gran Capitán,* the Great Captain.[5] After his victory over the French at Cerignola (1503) he initiated the custom of the 'call to prayer' (*toque de oración*), summoning his troops to pause and pray for those killed in battle, who included his opposite number, the duke of Nemours—a

[5] The title originated with Queen Isabella, who referred to her Castilian subject as *mi gran capitán,* and with Gonzalo's troops in the Italian campaign. In *The Military 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Military Leaders of All Time* (New York: Citadel, 1996), the US military historian Michael Lee Lanning puts Gonzalo at number 28. Since the operative word is *influential*, it is not surprising that George Washington tops the list. The Great Captain appears above Hannibal, Robert E. Lee and Montgomery.

custom that persisted for centuries afterwards. Gonzalo's subsequent victory at the River Garigliano (also 1503) came to be much admired by military historians, and his training and tactical methods left a lasting mark on Spanish armies which, later in the sixteenth century, increased in size and were the strongest in Europe.[6]

Ignatius the Soldier

It seems to me that Gonzalo should feature prominently in any account of the background to Ignatius' conversion and ideals. But first, in this military context, I return to Ignatius himself. He has sometimes—mainly in books of piety—been called 'the soldier saint'. The elliptical nature of the phrase is obvious: his soldiering was over well before any signs of sanctity appeared. But some have objected to the word 'soldier' even as applied to the young Iñigo prior to his wounding and conversion. Thus, my fellow Jesuit Paul Edwards dismisses the term 'soldier' as applied to Ignatius. In a fascinating and valuable comparison of Ignatius and Don Quixote he sums up: 'My comparison between the two will have served some purpose if it helps to dispose of the common misconception of the "soldier saint" ….' Surprisingly, he immediately continues, 'The wars of the nineteenth century were conducted very differently from the minor clashes in the Pyrenees in which Ignatius had his brief spell of "action"…', and he goes on to mention railway systems, ever-expanding munitions factories, parade-ground drill and even Clausewitz.[7]

Indeed it is clear that Iñigo was not a *modern* soldier of that sort, but Edwards' criteria would exclude *el Gran Capitán* himself. Certainly, Gonzalo was keen on *training*, and certain types of drill were essential to his army's success. As for the knight Iñigo, there is more reason to believe that he was thoroughly trained in the arts of warfare that pertained to his status than to believe the contrary. Being a *hidalgo* and knight, the skills required of him would, of necessity, be mainly those of dexterity with sword and lance, tactical sense and command of men. Custom and culture would also require of him courtesy, self-control and style: all of them useful in minor diplomatic missions such as he certainly

[6] 'A commander of genius, quick to learn the lessons taught him by the enemy, and to apply them to his own troops. As a result, just as these years saw the creation of a professional diplomatic service that would serve Spain well for many years to come, so also they saw the creation of a professional army, whose skill and *ésprit de corps* were to win Spain its great victories of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.' J. H. Eliott, *Imperial Spain, 1469–1715* (Penguin, 2002 [1963]), 133.

[7] 'Loyola and La Mancha', *The Way Supplement*, 55 (Spring 1986), 3–15, here 7.

undertook.[8] Edwards used to point out that at Pamplona Iñigo behaved unprofessionally, in that he pressured his superior officer to prolong the defence when, according to the conventions of the time, it would have been appropriate to sue for honourable terms of surrender. He would not be the first or last *soldier* to behave unprofessionally.

This has been a lengthy painting of the background, and it is time to come to my main point. While the romantic novels and the idealized princess have always loomed large in biographies of Ignatius (those in English, anyway) and studies of discernment, it seems to me that the part played in his formation by down-to-earth military matters has been misleadingly understated.

However, it is difficult to discuss even a saint's connections with sixteenth-century military and political affairs without seeming to accept their presuppositions. But the fact is that while a person of that time might abhor warfare as such he (or it could be a 'she', as will be seen) could sincerely believe that dynastic rights should be upheld, with force if necessary, and that 'defence of the Faith' was legitimate, especially if it involved reclaiming lands that had once been in Christian hands, or repelling threats to Christendom—'crusading'. To recognise the sincerity of these principles is not to applaud or justify them.

Queen Isabella was greatly revered for her piety, learning and determination but, in particular, for her close involvement in the Granada campaign, notwithstanding pregnancies and births.[9] Iñigo's father, too, served in that campaign; and two of his brothers served in Gonzalo's army of Italy, one of them being killed there. From 1506 Iñigo himself was a page at the castle of Arévalo, where Isabella had once lived. Only a couple of years earlier Isabella had died and Gonzalo had brought the Italian campaigns to a victorious conclusion.[10]

[8] Elliott, *Imperial Spain*, 114, writes of the younger sons of the great noble families, 'Since their resources tended to be limited, they were likely to devote themselves in particular to careers in the Army or the Church, or to serve the Crown as diplomats or administrators'.

[9] Isabella 'proved herself to be one of the ablest quartermaster-generals in history' (J. F. C. Fuller, *The Decisive Battles of the Western World and Their Influence upon History*, 3 volumes [London: Eyre and Spottiswood, 1954–1956], volume 1, 538). Iñigo's 'time in Arévalo, in the household of a senior adviser to Ferdinand and Isabella, would have brought him close to a court-led religious reformation in Spain' (Philip Endean, 'Who Do You Say Ignatius Is?' *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* [November 1987], 30). Isabella's piety was not without fanaticism, and the history of Spain after the *reconquista* was marred by oppression, forced conversions and expulsions of Moors and Jews. The Spanish Inquisition originated with Isabella and Ferdinand. See, for example, Elliott, *Imperial Spain*.

[10] Yet another link: Iñigo's cherished sister-in-law, the chatelaine of Loyola who gave him the spiritual reading, had been a lady-in-waiting to Queen Isabella and received from her the gift of a panel of the Annunciation, since treasured at Loyola.

Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba at the siege of Montefrío, *by José de Madrazo*

It is surely inevitable that, from his own family and from the courtiers and knights who surrounded him, the youth must have become steeped in stories of military exploits and of courage, valour, courtesy and royal leadership—similar values to those found in the romantic novels—but with the sure knowledge that these were based on fact. The facts were so harsh, indeed, as to bring family and court mourning as well as trophies; so much of what he heard referred, not to centuries past, but to the years of his own young lifetime, and he was hearing much of it from eye-witnesses. No doubt the facts were embroidered and selected in the telling; no doubt there was romanticising. Even so, the impression made on the young man (undistracted by films, radio or television) must have been very profound. And it is likely that his admiration for Gonzalo and what he represented endured, despite some disillusionment—disillusionment, not with the Great Captain himself, but with the way things turned out. Long before Gonzalo died in 1515 he had been saddened by his king's suspicion, jealousy in view of such military glory and fame, and accusations of disloyalty.[11]

Iñigo's father Beltrán died when the youth was in his mid-teens; but it is not difficult to imagine this stern father during the boy's impressionable years seeking to mould his character with tales of the Granada campaign, and especially with memories of the idolized queen and of Gonzalo, the soldier whose fame and prestige came to outstrip all others. As it happened, Iñigo was becoming a knight and courtier at a relatively

[11] In the following century another great servant of the Spanish crown was used, cast aside and ended his days lamenting 'mi honor': this was Ambrogio Spinola, whose long and successful siege of Breda (1625) was immortalised in Velázquez's painting.

peaceful time in Spanish history. If he had grown up ten years later he would very likely have been cheerfully swept into the protracted warfare between Charles V and Francis I of France, which included the crushing imperial victory of Pavia (1525); by that time no one would have denied him the description 'soldier'.

Cándido de Dalmases, however, appears to disagree. Dalmases was thoroughly immersed in Ignatian scholarship, and his comparatively short work *Ignatius Loyola, Founder of the Jesuits* was intended to present in a distilled form his own industry and that of preceding generations. He writes,

> To avoid the danger of exaggeration, it is appropriate to mention here the fact that Iñigo was never a professional soldier; nor was his father or his eldest brother Martín García. He was certainly a gentleman (*gentilhombre*) who served the Duke of Nájera, Viceroy of Navarre, carrying out errands or executing requests.[12]

The words 'never a professional' here could mislead us (and perhaps misled Paul Edwards) into thinking that this 'gentleman' was just a glorified errand boy, but Dalmases adds, 'when occasion required he took up arms and participated in military expeditions': such a one was in 1520 when he helped the duke quell a rebellion in his own Nájera. The next year saw the Pamplona episode.

Such military involvement was certainly not out of character: according to local court proceedings in 1515, Iñigo for many years had gone about wearing 'long locks down to his shoulders, and part-coloured hose and a coloured cap' and 'usually appeared in public in a leather cuirass and breastplate, carrying sword, dagger, musket, and all other sorts and descriptions of weapons'.[13] It is hard to resist the image of a porcupine. A fellow page from the Arévalo days testified, 'When [the Treasurer of Castile] died Iñigo wished much to follow soldiering'.[14] Ignatius' Jesuit protégé and disciple, Ribadeneira, wrote of him as 'a soldier, disorderly and vain'.[15]

[12] Dalmases, *Ignatius of Loyola, Founder of the Jesuits*, 36–37. The duke of Nájera, Iñigo's patron, was the nephew of Gonzalo's wife, María Manrique de Lara.
[13] James Brodrick, *The Origin of the Jesuits* (Chicago: Loyola, 1997 [1940]), 3, drawing on MHSJ SSI 1, 588–592.
[14] Quoted in Mary Purcell, *The First Jesuit: St Ignatius Loyola, 1491–1556* (Dublin: M. H. Gill, 1956), 30.
[15] Quoted in Purcell, *First Jesuit*, 31.

It seems to me, then, that what we know of Ignatius' actual background would fairly suggest that the word 'soldier' is apt, though not in an exclusive sense, and that the culture of soldiering in which he lived must have made a profound and lasting impression on him. As for the books of chivalry, it should not be concluded that they inculcated only courtly *love*.

The Influence of Military Culture

John F. Wickham writes on 'The Worldly Ideal of Iñigo Loyola':

> First of the feudal qualities was Prowess, '… personal bravery, physical strength, and skill in the use of arms. As warfare was the chief occupation of the nobleman, he was bound to value the traits which made a man an effective soldier.' Next to this came Loyalty—devotion to a Lord, to whom one had sworn fidelity …. A third quality is Generosity—open-handed largesse, which brought great honor to the giver.[16]

This could be a portrait of *el Gran Capitán*; and equally a portrait of the man Iñigo aspired to be. A little later in Wickham's article he adds,

> By the fifteenth century the literary phenomenon of chivalry had degenerated in Italy, England and France. But Spain had a different history. Forces were at work there which were to reproduce in the following century what the other nations had long since experienced ….[17]

After reading Wellington's despatches, the young John Henry Newman was asked what he thought of them. 'Think?', he replied, 'It makes one burn to be a soldier'. Retelling this, J. A. Froude remarks, 'He could admire enthusiastically any greatness of action and character, however remote the sphere of it from his own'.[18] Froude's essay was published in 1899, and it is likely that many university undergraduates would have been swept up by similar enthusiasm at that time, and particularly in 1914. They were soon to discover the enormous gulf between their naïve dreams and the realities of the front line.

[16] John F. Wickham, 'The Worldly Ideal of Iñigo Loyola', *Thought*, 29/2 (Summer 1954), 209–235, here 213. Wickham acknowledges his debt to Sidney Painter's study, *French Chivalry: Chivalric Ideas and Practices in Medieval France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1940), quoted in this extract.
[17] Wickham, 'Worldly Ideal of Iñigo Loyola', 217.
[18] J. A. Froude, *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, volume 4 (London: Longman's Green, 1907), 201.

Iñigo, by contrast, had every reason to know what he would be committing himself to. And just because he confesses his impracticality in his amorous daydreaming, it does not follow that he was impractical in military matters. The practical skills and insights manifested in his years as Jesuit General were surely a case of grace building on nature rather than miraculous transformation. The Spiritual Exercises contain a number of military allusions. These can be interpreted rather differently depending on whether they are assumed to be vague remarks of a quixotic character or insights into the real man of real experience.

In Exx 93 the Earthly King …

> … speaks to all his people, saying, 'My will is to conquer the whole land of the infidels. Hence, whoever wishes to come with me has to be content with the same food I eat, and the drink, and the clothing which I wear, and so forth. So too each one must labour with me during the day, and keep watch in the night, and so on, so that later each may have a part with me in the victory, just as each has shared in the toil.'

And the response? 'If someone did not answer his call, he would be scorned and upbraided by everyone and accounted as an unworthy knight [*perverso caballero*]' (Exx 94). It seems likely that there is here an echo of what Ignatius had heard of Isabella and Ferdinand in Andalusia, and of Gonzalo both there and in Italy (Gonzalo, whose personal standard was embroidered with the words *Jesu Maria)*.

Ferdinand and Isabella in 1469

A comrade in arms, Hernán Pérez del Pulgar, wrote of Gonzalo, 'Never did he break faith with his wife, although many and great temptations to do so came his way …. He was the first captain in whom Christian piety and military discipline were united.'[19] Pulgar also says of his friend and hero, 'Neither lack of sleep nor hunger affected him when on his fighting campaigns, and when need required he took upon himself the hardest tasks and greatest risks'.[20] In a modern biographer's description,

> He commanded in a humane manner; he did not need to order; he invited his subordinates not merely to share the risk of the enterprise, but also the honour and prestige which would follow their vigorous action.[21]

With today's sceptical approach to biography we may wish to allow for exaggeration on the part of Pulgar and others; what matters for our present topic is the impression formed on the young Iñigo and his fellows.

Speaking of the tempting spirit Ignatius writes,

> … the enemy acts like a military commander who is attempting to conquer and plunder his objective. The captain and leader of an army on campaign sets up his camp, studies the strength and structure of a fortress, and then attacks at its weakest point. (Exx 327)

Surely he would be recalling Pamplona, but along with that memory there would be knowledge of other sieges as well. The long Granada campaign included many a siege, and when Iñigo the Pilgrim first set foot in Italy it was at Gaeta, famously impregnable and famously taken by Gonzalo through victory in the field: it was here that one of Iñigo's brothers had been killed.

[19] Quoted in Mary Purcell, *The Great Captain: Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba* (London: Alvin Redman, 1963), 125.

[20] Purcell, *Great Captain*, 159. Hernán Pérez del Pulgar (not to be confused with his elder contemporary, the chronicler Hernando del Pulgar) was himself equal to Gonzalo in courage and daring. Iñigo must have heard of Pulgar's celebrated deeds of courage including his entering Granada at night, pinning a paper displaying *Ave Maria* to the main door of the mosque and then with a few companions fighting his way out and back to the Christian camp. For this and other such deeds Pulgar became known as *El de las Hazañas* (He of the Exploits). Inigo's determination to fight on at Pamplona rather than surrender was in the tradition of Pulgar; but the young Basque lacked not only experience but the company of battle-hardened veterans. Given the culture of the time it is significant—and hardly surprising—that the *Autobiography* begins, 'Until the age of twenty-six he was a man given up to the vanities of the world …'; and no surprise that the snare of 'honour' is highlighted in the Second Week of the Exercises.

[21] Luís María de Lojendio, *Gonzalo de Córdoba: el Gran Capitán* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1942), quoted in Purcell, *Great Captain*, 114.

It is tantalising to imagine Iñigo's development if this Basque had indeed enlisted in a force commanded by Gonzalo, whose biographer remarks at one point, 'The Biscayans were proving more unruly than ever … he used to say that he would much rather be a lion-tamer than rule that nation'.[22] The young man would certainly have found a kindred spirit. In prospective retreatants he looked for 'magnanimity'. Annotation 5 begins: 'The persons who make the Exercises will benefit greatly by entering upon them with great spirit and generosity [*con grande ánimo y liberálidad*] toward their Creator and Lord' (Exx 5). Magnanimity in its various senses characterized *el Gran Capitán*. On one occasion,

> When Gonzalo made gifts of money to war veterans the steward protested at unnecessary expenditure. 'Don't be stingy', said his lord. 'The best way to enjoy what God gives us is to give it to others.' [23]

These sentiments are close to Ignatius' own, and the words could almost be those of St Robert Bellarmine to his stewards at Capua and Rome.[24] Iñigo's first patron, Velázquez de Cuéllar, was also famed for his generosity.[25]

In Ignatius magnanimity and generosity were allied to a sense of fairness to the other person and, with fairness, honesty of speech, and with these frankness. He would speak his mind, but if there were serious reasons not to, then he would avoid untruth, as when his brother tried to dissuade him from leaving Loyola: he answered 'in such a style that, without departing from the truth (because now he had a great scruple about that), he slipped away from his brother' (*Autobiography*, n.12). And when the situation called for frank criticism, 'just as it does harm to speak evil about officials among the ordinary people while they are absent, so it can be profitable to speak of their bad conduct to persons who can bring about a remedy' (Exx 362). Perhaps, in his youth but surely in Rome, he would have heard of the example of the Great Captain during the reign of Pope Alexander VI.

With fairness, honesty of speech and, with these, frankness

[22] Purcell, *Great Captain*, 147.
[23] Purcell, *Great Captain*, 220.
[24] James Brodrick's *Robert Bellarmine, Saint and Scholar* (London: Burns and Oates, 1961) abounds in examples and descriptions of St Robert's practical charity. 'Sometimes on coming back from business [Bellarmine] would find as many as three hundred [of the poor] awaiting him, and then he would rub his hands with delight and say to his distracted almoner, Pietro Guidotti: "These are the people, Peter, who will get us to heaven"; "his standing orders to his almoner, according to this man's own account, were: 'Be as close-fisted as possible with me, but as open-handed as you can to the poor"' (163–164).
[25] Dalmases, *Ignatius of Loyola, Founder of the Jesuits*, 30.

> What [Gonzalo] saw in the Vatican and in Rome did not please him … the commander left Rome, but not without speaking his mind to the Pope, a Spaniard like himself. Gonzalo's 'admonition' mentioned the scandal of the papal court and household, 'which words the Pope received with great confusion and shame'. Some chroniclers tell us that Alexander was 'amazed at The Great Captain's fluency in conversation and at how well informed he was about many matters foreign to his profession'.[26]

The question arises: if Iñigo was indeed much influenced by the military culture of his time, his social milieu and his background, did the events of 1521–1523 bring a complete break and a rejection of what had earlier so impressed him? It seems unlikely. At Monserrat this young knight arranged for his sword and dagger to be left at Our Lady's altar, not to be broken or flung over a cliff. The wording of the Call of the King, especially Exx 95, is significant. Having described the ideal of the Earthly King in attractive terms, Ignatius continues:

> *How much more worthy of our consideration* it is to gaze upon Christ our Lord, the eternal King … 'whoever wishes to come with me must labour with me, so that through following me in the pain he or she may follow me also in the glory'. (emphasis added)

He has transposed his ideals and enthusiasms into a higher key, but without either rejecting the former ones or swallowing them whole. He applies discernment, *discreción*. He knows all too well how love of possessions and honour(s) could lead to pride; he abhors honours for himself or his Jesuits, but with lay people he is anxious to see that wealth, status and prestige are rightly ordered and used for worthy purposes—unless it be God's will that they be given up. Francisco de Borja, duke, grandee and viceroy, well illustrates the first and then, after his wife died prematurely, the second.[27]

[26] Purcell, *Great Captain*, 117–118.

[27] Borgia used his position as duke of Gandía to be charitable: 'Borgia loved his subjects and, motivated by sentiments of social justice, was concerned for their welfare. Extrapolating from testimonies offered at his canonization process, we have abundant evidence that he was particularly generous toward the poor and needy.' (Cándido de Dalmases, *Francis Borgia, Grandee of Spain, Jesuit, Saint* [St Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1991], 53) Francis' wife died in 1546, and shortly afterwards he made the Spiritual Exercises and decided to apply to become a Jesuit. Dalmases recounts the somewhat complicated process by which Francis vowed to follow this vocation but, in accordance with Ignatius' wishes, continued to administer his estates for a few years during which he founded a small university at his own Gandía, endowed the Roman College and financed the printing of the *Spiritual Exercises*. It was not until 1551 that Francis, former viceroy of Catalonia, wrote to his

Precisely in the military sphere, Ignatius has no love of militar*ism* but sees his companions Bobadilla, Laínez and Nadal as performing a worthy function when they act as military chaplains. He goes further. Being a man of his time, he sees the crusading instinct as laudable (but would no doubt have been downright horrified, for example, at the cruelty and rapacity of the Fourth Crusade). And so, in 1552, Ignatius wrote two letters to Nadal in Sicily (Sicily, incidentally, had been secured for Aragon fifty years earlier by Gonzalo).[28] One letter is asking for Nadal's general advice, the other making a series of concrete suggestions. He hopes to see a powerful force assembled to overcome the Turkish naval threat in the Mediterranean; and he probably hopes that Nadal will use his influence and persuasion on the viceroy, and that the viceroy will use *his* influence and persuasion on the Emperor, hard-pressed as this man was in so many directions. Position and power can be put to good use, as Ignatius sees it, but woe to those who do not perceive the subtle moral dangers.[29]

I have argued that Ignatius was significantly influenced by the prestigious monarchs of his youth and, particularly, by Gonzalo de Córdoba, *El Gran Capitán,* and the age's military culture, of which Gonzalo was the most famous embodiment—and one of the most honourable. The links are largely speculative. What is beyond speculation is that the young Ignatius' ideals became ever more firmly centred on the *summo y verdadero capitán, que es Christo nuestro Señor,* the supreme and true commander, Christ our Lord (Exx 143).

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friend Charles V, 'as your vassal and your servant and as Comendador of the Order of Santiago', requesting the Emperor's permission to enter the Society (Dalmases, *Francis Borgia*, 74).

[28] Both 6 August 1552, in *Ignatius of Loyola: Letters and Instructions*, edited and translated by Martin E. Palmer, John W. Padberg and John L. McCarthy (St Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2006), letters 2774, 2775.

[29] The papal bull establishing the Society of Jesus in 1540 is fittingly entitled *Regimini militantis Ecclesiae* ('To the Government of the Church Militant').