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HASTILUDE, TOURNAMENTS, AND HERALDRY AS KEY FACTORS FOR THE RISE AND SPREAD OF KNIGHTHOOD IN ENGLAND AND FRANCE DURING THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES

Miguel Pablo SANCHO GÓMEZ*

Abstract: In this article, we try to draw a line of argument to explain the birth and development of several closely related phenomena such as tournaments, (with its important sports and social attributes), cavalry, and heraldry. Although the tournament and its variants had a marked character of military training, at the end of the period they became phenomena of social and political importance, although the competitive spirit was never lost. The growing formation of medieval noble retinues and the importance of cavalry led also to the proliferation of personal badges and emblems, which were finally ruled and organized by heraldic science. Both the blazons and individual knight disputes and / or between teams needed experienced judges and referees, so we will also mention the origin of the King of Arms and the heralds, figures in charge of such a task, and will try to illustrate the vision of the Church on such phenomena, as well as its reflection in the literary sources.

Keywords: cavalry; joust; tourney; heraldry; medieval; sports; King of Arms; heralds

1. Introduction

The quintessential expression of aristocratic leisure activities during an important part of the period were tournaments and joust games, featuring both social and sportive ceremonies with broad ramifications and close ties with key concepts such as hunts, heraldry, war and politics¹. Thus, hastilude also became a main part of such armigerous background in the West².

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¹ See useful overviews in Simon Barton, *The Aristocracy in Twelfth-Century León and Castile*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997; Andrew Cowell, *The Medieval Warrior Aristocracy: Gifts, Violence, Performance, and the Sacred*. Boydell & Brewer, Cambridge, 2007.

² See Andrew Ayton, *Knights and Warhorses: Military Service and the English Aristocracy under Edward III*. Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 1999, p. 34; the term is referring to many kinds of martial games. The word comes from the Latin *hastiludium*, literally “lance game”. The better-known hastiludes are the tournaments, although there were also other medieval games. See Juliet Barker, *The Tournament in England: 1100–1400*. Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 1986, pp. 138-139.

Nevertheless, even such facets of life were included in the much wider spectrum of medieval practices and customs. To show the involvement of aristocratic attitude with tournaments, evidence highlights the key role of warfare in shaping the image of Chivalry and its progression. Despite clerical admonition and recurring papal ban, the chivalric ethos got its main aims through tournaments and jousts. Several authors tried to insufflate Christian values and the service of God in such ceremonies, much before Ramon Llull (c. 1232- c. 1315) developed his main ideas about the topic in his *Book of the Order of Chivalry* between 1279 and 1283³. However, such attempts tended to be fruitless. Actually, the mounted fighter self-awareness goes back in time, anticipating the creation of the first Military Orders. The Knights Templar, active around 1119, grew together with the birth of chivalric consciousness but separate from the main result of its way of life and knightly thought, the tournament⁴.

2. Development of Knighthood

The word knight, from Old English *cniht* (“servant”) is a cognate of the German word *Knecht* (“bondsmen”)⁵. The functional position of the knight as an armoured mounted warrior evolved in France long before it was introduced into England by the Norman conquest, and from about 800 onwards was represented in vulgar Latin by the word *caballerius* — whence all of the Romance words for it were derived, beginning with the Old French. The Old English *cniht*, which before the Conquest of 1066 had been associated with the military retainers of the English thegns, was respelled and adopted as the normal designation in the now inferior language of England as the equivalent of the Norman *chevalier* — the word presumably employed by all English knights themselves until the Thirteenth Century. In the Germanic dialects of the continent, the cognate words of the *knecht* family were by contrast attached to the inferior position represented

³ See Llull, *The Book of the Order of Chivalry / Llibre de l'Ordre de Cavalleria / Libro de la Orden de Caballeria. Introduction and translation into English and Spanish* by A. Cortijo Ocaña. John Benjamins Publishing, Philadelphia, 2015. See also Richard W. Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, pp. 275-280.

⁴ For the Templars, see Terence Wise & Gerry Embleton, *Armies of the Crusades*. Osprey Publishing, Oxford, 1978; Alan J. Forey, *The Military Orders: From the Twelfth to the Early Fourteenth Centuries*. MacMillan, Basingstoke, 1992; Malcolm Barber (ed.), *The Military Orders: fighting for the Faith and caring for the sick*. Routledge, London, 1994; Fernando Pozas, *La caballeria medieval y el ideal templario*. Editorial Ojeda, Barcelona, 2012; Helen Nicholson & Wayne Reynolds, *Knight Templar 1120-1312*. Osprey Publishing, Oxford, 2004; Helen Nicholson, *The Military Orders*, In Richard W. Jones, Peter Coss (eds.), “A Companion to Chivalry”, Boydell & Brewer; Woodbridge, 2019. pp. 69–84.

⁵ Friedrich Kluge, *An Etymological Dictionary of the German Language*, translated by John Francis Davis. G. Bell & Sons, London, 1981. p. 182; Heinrich Mutschmann *The Place-Names of Nottinghamshire: Their Origin and Development*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2012, p. 78.

in Old French by *escuier* and in Middle English by *scuier*, and the words for 'knight' were based on the quite unrelated word *ridder*. Originally the German term depicts some kind of unfree or subjugation state, that remained later in the *ministeriales* of the Holy Roman Empire⁶.

As early as the Anglo-Saxon Ninth Century, it evolved from meaning a simple servant or humble young person, to become the household retainers. From these beginnings of the feudal man offering his service, to the modern-day image of the knight, little time passes. After 1000, we find it used to describe a rider, escorting his lord and fighting on horseback. Thus, the early knight is not a member of a specific social class and has no rank. His mission and background are primarily at a military and tactical level. Flori reconstructed the process by which the simple knights came later to be included in the theoretical 'Order' of Warriors, invented around 1030, and originally restricted to princes. The members of this societal order took up the responsibilities (at least theoretically) to protect the kingdom, the Church, and the weak that until then had been restricted to the king himself. In reality, as far as we can tell from contemporary complaints about their behaviour, most knights ignored completely this set of duties, along with those required by their common Christian faith⁷.

The word *chevalier* (*caballero* in Spanish), which appears later in France around 1100, has approximately the same military meaning⁸. Coming from the Vulgar Latin, this word will stick around amid the new social and political trends of the age, forming the core for the new armed and mounted class. The ritual and symbolic knighting ceremony appears around 1300 as consequence of ongoing social changes; the word "kighthood" came to represent the rank or dignity of a knight⁹.

The old Germanic tradition of handing weapons to the youngest men in the tribe is present in the kighthood ceremonies, when a future knight gets his

⁶ Benjamin Arnold, *German Knighthood, 1050-1300*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1985, pp. 53-76; Peter Coss, *The Origins and Diffusion of Chivalry*, in Richard W. Jones, Peter Coss (eds.), "A Companion to Chivalry", Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge, 2019, pp. 7-38.

⁷ See Benjamin Arnold, *German...*, pp. 100-140; Robards Brooks, *The Medieval Knight at War*. Barnes & Noble Books, London, 1997; Jean Flori, *Ricardo Corazon de Leon*. Edhasa, Barcelona, 2008, pp. 293-319; Roman J. Jarymowycz. *Cavalry from Hoof to Track*. Greenwood Publishing Group, Westport, (CT.), & London, 2008, pp. 34-55; Peter Sposato & Samuel Claussen, *Chivalric Violence*, in Richard W. Jones, Peter Coss (eds.), "A Companion to Chivalry", Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge, 2019, pp. 99-118.

⁸ Joachim Bumke, *The Concept of Knighthood in the Middle Ages. Translated by W. T. H. Jackson and Erika Jackson*. (AMS Studies in the Middle Ages, number 2). AMS, New York, 1982, p. 16; Robert W. Jones, *Marshalling the Chivalric Elite for War*, in Richard W. Jones, Peter Coss (eds.), "A Companion to Chivalry". Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge, 2019, pp. 85-98.

⁹ Jean Flori, *Caballeros y caballería en la Edad Media*. Paidós, Barcelona, 2001, pp. 33-46; David Simpkin, *The Organisation of Chivalric Society*, in Richard W. Jones, Peter Coss (eds.), "A Companion to Chivalry", Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge, 2019, pp. 39-56.

chivalric outfit and gear, amongst other festivities and a solemn mass¹⁰. It was in Germany where the word *ritter* evolves from the early concepts of a mounted retainer to the fully developed concept of a knightly class reaching the nobility with full awareness of their interests and aims¹¹. The Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) with its many scenarios, multiple characters and the sheer amount of military campaigns, pitched battles, sieges and minor skirmishes, was an essential feature, not only at a political level, but also for the spreading of tournament games and the knightly class. After many generations of sharing the armies and fields together, knights from Burgundy, France, England, Spain, Scotland, the Low Countries and Germany forged common bonds and a strong commitment and camaraderie thanks to Chivalry¹².

Thus the word *miles*, with its Latin and Roman roots, was a generic term. The warrior fighters in medieval society got the label of *milites*, but progressively the word went together with the concept of chivalry, and by the Twelfth Century ended up meaning the noble knights in a broad sense.¹³

Therefore, we can glimpse three essential concepts that created the concept of knighthood: first of all, the household personnel on horseback, secondly the Germanic traditions concerning service with arms within a retinue, and finally the Christian (and to a lesser degree Roman) amalgam, working to put together all these traits. The process took place in the successor lands of the Barbarian Kingdoms in the West, where such key concepts lead us to the Aristocratic values held since then¹⁴.

3. The Tournament. Origins and Role

The first events traced back as the forerunners of the tournaments are certain ceremonies held in Frankish times; periodical mustering of feudal armies and parades in front of the Merovingian kings bore a remote resemblance with the posterior image of the tourneys. The *buburt*, a kind of military game originated in Germany, it is also a close precedent¹⁵.

¹⁰ Joachim Bumke, *Courtly Culture: Literature and Society in the High middle Ages*. Translated by Thomas Dunlap. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1991, pp. 231–233; Jean Flori, *Caballeros...*, pp. 15-26; Ralph Moffat, *Arms and Armour*, in Richard W. Jones, Peter Coss (eds.), "A Companion to Chivalry", Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge, 2019, pp. 159-186.

¹¹ Joachim Bumke, *The Concept...*, pp. 9-22.

¹² See Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years War. England and France at War c. 1300 - c. 1450*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989, pp. 6-36.

¹³ Jean Flori, *Ricardo...*, p. 305. Joachim Bumke, *Höfische Kultur: Literatur und Gesellschaft im hohen Mittelalter*. DTV, Munich, 1986; See also Maurice Keen, *Chivalry*. New Haven & London, Yale University Press, 1984, pp. 102-103 and 107-113.

¹⁴ Benjamin Arnold, *German...*, pp. 22-53; William K. Kibler, *Medieval France: An Encyclopaedia*. Garland Publishing, London & New York, 1995, p. 969.

¹⁵ Games were also known as *bohord* or *béhourd*. Richard W. Barber & Juliet R. V. Barker, *Tournaments: Jousts, Chivalry and Pageants in the Middle Ages*. Woodbridge, Boydell Press,

We also have examples, which date back to Hellenistic or Late Roman times, of combat training or exercises to show skills and prowess at arms both on foot and on horseback. However, the genesis of our subject brought clear marks pointing to medieval societies and the Carolingian cultural background then predominant in North-western Europe, although the concept itself seems older¹⁶. R. Barber stated, “it harks back to the military games which Tacitus describes among the German tribes, but the exact development of these into mock warfare remains uncharted”¹⁷.

Around the year 1062, we can glimpse the first signs suggesting the early precedents of a gathering with sport and competition purposes concerning the military and riding skills, although this date and the name of the supposed “inventor” of the tourney, Godfrey of Preully, seem to be a patent fraud¹⁸.

The idea of “turning” (from the Latin *tornare*, “to turn”) fits with the prior image of a circuit of meetings all along the realms and lordships in the West, a reality well established by 1150. In the beginning, this tournament had no variations, relying exclusively on the *mêlée* concept¹⁹.

The wielding of a lance, charges with horses, and the use of stirrups and heavy armour represented the trademarks of Norman warfare, the most successful at its time, so, mounted warriors would be obviously seeking new opportunities to obtain such skills. Therefore, games and sports related to lances and riding could be interesting and useful ways of doing it²⁰. Nevertheless, although the martial characteristics are evident, we are primarily talking about mostly unadulterated sport²¹.

Our first reliable tournament dates only from the year 1127, in Wurzburg. However, it is reasonable to infer that this was a process, which started in the middle of the Eleventh Century and continued until its final form. Roger of Hoveden (fl. 1174–1201) defined *torneamentum* as “military exercises carried out,

1989; Sebastien Nadot, *Rompez les lances! Chevaliers et tournois au Moyen Age*. Editions Autrement, Paris, 2010, pp. 2-10.

¹⁶ See Katherine Welch, *The Roman arena in Late-Republican Italy: a new interpretation*, “Journal of Roman Archaeology”, 7 (1994), pp. 59-80; Tim J. Cornell, *On War and Games in the Ancient World*, in Tim J. Cornell & Thomas B. Allen (eds.), “War and Games”, Boydell Press Rochester (NJ.) & Woodbridge, 2002, pp. 37-58.

¹⁷ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight and Chivalry*, p. 160. See as well Tacitus, *Germania* I 24.

¹⁸ Noted to be a bogus. See Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, pp. 160 ff.

¹⁹ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, p. 163; Richard W. Kaeuper, *Medieval Chivalry*, pp. 208-232.

²⁰ Joachim Bumke, *The Concept...*, pp. 22-46; David Nicolle & Angus McBride, *The Normans*. Osprey Publishing, Oxford, 1987; Jean Flori, *Ricardo...*, pp. 307-308.

²¹ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, p. 159: “Yet tournaments must be firmly classified as sport, despite their military and political overtones, in that they very quickly became an end in themselves: although spectators of all classes were present at tournaments, they were primarily for the enjoyment of the participants”. Cf. Jean Flori, *Bohemundo de Antioquia*. Edhasa, Barcelona, 2009, pp. 25-37.

not in the knight's spirit of hostility (*nullo interveniente odio*), but solely for practice and the display of prowess (*pro solo exercitio, atque ostentatione virium*)²². Hoveden, together with Geoffrey Chaucer (c.1343-1400) and Jean Froissart (c. 1337-c. 1405) were the essential authors for the literary development of Chivalry²³. It is necessary to remark the fruitful function played in the spreading of such new trends by some early literary characters whose stories become essential pieces in forming the base and functions of Chivalric culture; Chrétien de Troyes (fl. c. 1160–c. 1183), needs to be mentioned here²⁴.

It is possible to get awareness of the early popularity of these sporting practices. In 1091, William and Robert Rufus were camped on a beach in Normandy, besieging the famous monastery of Mont-Saint-Michel, and tournaments between besiegers and defenders were organised for entertainment during the dull moments. When the tide was low, groups of knights crossed the pickets to hold knightly competitions in the sand²⁵. Such a sportive confraternity above the belligerent measures of war brings us to the idea of a new class with bonds stronger than mere political interest.

Tournaments usually started on Mondays or Tuesdays; by doing so there was plenty of time for the different events and celebrations to end before the coming of the truce and peace of the sacred days, when fighting halted. However, we have evidence of tourneys that took place even on Sundays.

The increasing difficulty to wage baronial wars in England, due to the centralization and extended powers of the monarchs, made the tournaments in Northern France the only way to look for new riches amongst most knightly retinues²⁶. Kings, although displeased with the political ramifications that

²² See Robert Coltman Clephan, *The Tournament: Its Periods and Phases*. Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, New York, 1967, p. 247.

²³ See John Gardner, *The Life & Times of Chaucer*. Open Road Media, New York, 2010; Jean Froissart, *Cronicas. Edición a cargo de V. Cirlot y J. E. Ruiz Domenec*. Ediciones Siruela, Madrid, 1988; Richard W. Kaeuper, *Literature as Essential Evidence for Understanding Chivalry*, in Richard W. Kaeuper & Christopher Guyol, "Kings, Knights and Bankers. The Collected Articles of Richard W. Kaeuper", Brill, Leiden, 2015, pp. 204-220; Joana Bellis & Megan Leitch, *Chivalric Literature*, in Richard W. Jones, Peter Coss (eds.), "A Companion to Chivalry", Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge, 2019, pp. 241-262.

²⁴ See, for the key role of the character, Marcelle Altieri, *Les Romans de Chrétien de Troyes: Leur perspective proverbiale et gnomique*. A. G. Nizet, Paris, 1976; Jean Frappier, Raymond J. Cormier, *Chrétien de Troyes: The Man and His Work*. Ohio University Press, Athens (OH.), 1982.

²⁵ William II of England, King between 1087 and 1100; Robert III (Curthose), was the Duke of Normandy from 1087 until 1106, and unsuccessfully claimant to the throne of England. See David Crouch, *The Normans. The History of a Dynasty*. Hambledon Continuum, New York & London, 2007, pp. 136 and 164.

²⁶ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, p.160; Matthew Strickland, *War and Chivalry: The Conduct and Perception of War in England and Normandy, 1066-1217*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996, pp. 104-112.

tourneys may bring, and restless because of the gatherings of numerous armed men, were often as enthusiastic, as knights themselves, about such games. In this way, already Henry I (1100-1135) liked to leave his kingdom periodically, to attend the tournament circuit in France²⁷. Soon after him, Henry, known as “the Young King”, became the most important patron of the tournament world, hand in hand with Phillip I, count of Flanders (1143-1191)²⁸.

It is in this knightly society, where chivalric fashion and behaviour flooded every aspect of Aristocratic life, in which the key figure of William Marshal appeared²⁹. Sent to the continent by his uncle, the earl of Salisbury, he joined the brilliant retinue of William of Tancarville, one of the most important Norman lords tied to the king of England and known as a “Father of Knights”³⁰. After becoming renowned in the circuit of France, he ended up in the entourage of the Young King, always surrounded himself with a large number of knights; his proverbial *larguesse* was in fact proof of his Chivalric way of life, and one of the reasons for his economic shortages and subsequent downfall.

The overall experience of William Marshal with Henry was good, although several moments of great stress and tensions arose. But the rebel son, already ill and on the verge of collapse, made amends both with his friend William and his father the old king, and died repentant and in peace, yet penniless. However, on his deathbed he gave his Crusader and pilgrim cloak to the Marshal, asking him to fulfil the frivolously made vow to visit Jerusalem. William took the duty as a personal task and accomplished the will of the Young King. This brings us a good measure of the true feelings between these two men and the chivalric code of behaviour active in the Plantagenet circles³¹. Needless to say, this case

²⁷ In the beginning kings forbade to call a tourney in England, so the knights went overseas to Normandy and France to join the circuit. Paul E. Szamach, Teresa M. Tavormina, & Thomas J. Rosenthal (eds.), *Medieval England. An Encyclopaedia*. Garland, New York, 1998, p. 178. Later, Richard I identified six sites for allowed tournaments, and gave a scale of fees by which patrons could pay for a license. The King defied openly the papal ban on tournaments (1194) because he considered such feature as a very valuable training ground for his knights, as well as a profitable source of additional income. See also Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, pp. 167-168.

²⁸ Matthew Strickland, *Henry the Young King, 1155-1183*. New Haven & London, Yale University Press, 2016, pp. 239-258. See also Richard W. Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, pp. 93-97.

²⁹ See Georges Duby, *Guillermo el Mariscal*. Altaya, Barcelona, 1996, pp. 67-95; Richard W. Kaeuper, *Lancelot, and the Issue of Chivalric Identity*, in Richard W. Kaeuper & Christopher Guyol, "Kings, Knights and Bankers. The Collected Articles of Richard W. Kaeuper", Brill, Leiden, 2015, pp. 221-242.

³⁰ David Crouch, *William Marshal. Knighthood, War and Chivalry, 1147-1219*. Routledge, London & New York, 2002, p. 25. Prince Henry (1155 – 1183) got his famous sobriquet because his father actually crowned him king in 1170, at Westminster. See Matthew Strickland, *Henry the Young King...* pp. 34-94.

³¹ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, pp.164-166.

wasn't the only one: at the heyday of the tourney sport, long private retinues existed, thus enhanced the popularity of the tournament circuit. Nevertheless, the circuit could be a ruinous activity that led to bankruptcy due to the large sums spent on horses, arms and armour, as well as ransoms. On the other hand, a skilled and brave individual had the chance to climb the social ladder, finding powerful patrons and collect a small fortune from prizes and spoils. It was possible to build oneself a very strong household retinue with lesser knights.

Let's use William Marshal again as an eloquent example. Tancarville brought the young Marshal in his retinue to Northern France. Thanks to the profit won in the tournament circuit, he was able to fund his trip back to England³². After roaming Maine and attending tournaments in Le Mans and other towns from 1167 onwards, his cache and wealth had increased, allowing him to look for higher goals. Marshal found an able partner in Roger de Gaugi. Between 1177 and 1179, they captured 103 knights in just ten months, increasing their fortunes notably.

In the next century, other examples flourished and the patronage of young and promising young knights kept on unrestrained. The Hainault dynasty, in close connection with the Plantagenet house, makes a vivid picture of such Aristocratic circles with plenty of chivalric and knightly values. Count William I was renowned as the greatest tournament holders of his era³³.

Courtly politics became closely linked to the tournament circuit and Knightly literary trends, creating a kind of overall Aristocratic culture which was well understood and represented in the lordships and kingdoms from Spain to the Holy Empire and beyond³⁴.

4. Different kinds of Tournaments: evolving through time

Inside the broad term of *tournament*, we can find several different kinds of knightly sports: the first and foremost form of tournament was the *mêlée*. This consisted of a match between two teams and could involve numerous knights on each side. These matches featured rules and penalties. Carried out within a predetermined area, it was a predetermined time limit. There would have been team tactics, and as in every sport, fouls, cheats and tricks. The Count of Flanders

³² David Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000–1300*. Routledge, London & New York, 1992, p. 99.

³³ William I, Count of Hainault (c. 1286 – 1337). See also Jean Devaux, *From the Court of Hainault to the Court of England: the example of Jean Froissart*, in Christopher Allmand (ed.), "War, Government and Power in Late Medieval France", Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 2000, pp. 9-10: "over a period of some thirty years, count William proved to be one of the greatest organizers of jousts and pas d'armes in northern Europe".

³⁴ See Johannes Laudage & Yvonne Leiverkus (eds.), *Rittertum und höfische Kultur der Stauferzeit*. Böhlau Verlag, Köln, 2006; Teófilo F. Ruiz, *A King Travels: Festive Traditions in Late Medieval and Early Modern Spain*. Princeton University Press, Princeton & Oxford, 2012, pp. 210 ff.

used to hold his retinue of knights until the other teams wore out, joining the match with fresh strength and thus winning easy captives and ransoms³⁵. Other times contests got out of control, becoming brawls, with extensive damage to crops, fields, villages, vineyards and other properties. Some forbidden weapons, especially missiles and projectiles, won universal animosity. The crossbow was the utmost despicable and infamous one, regarded as cowardly and villainous by knights.

During the Thirteenth Century, in extreme cases, there might have been up to three thousand men in a *mêlée* and it would have covered a large area. In the Fourteenth Century, tournaments took place in more confined spaces. Sometimes a wooden castle or other defensive facilities be built, with one team attacking it while the other defended.

However, the *mêlée* from older tournaments gave way to jousts. The “joust” was a single combat between two champions and progressively substituted the older style showdown of erratic and often anarchic free-for-all between two knightly groups and their squires³⁶. The term derived from Old French *tijoste*, and already by 1300, it was becoming mainstream on the continent. Much more emphasis relied on the training and development of skills, as it was pure prowess and technique that were essential for winning. Ulrich von Liechtenstein (1200-1278), Austrian knight and minnesinger of great fame, was key in the spreading of this new tournament model. Apart from his celebrated work *Frauendienst*, Ulrich also left us a large collection of other songs and poems, along with interesting information about himself. According to legend, he broke 307 lances at a famous Klosterneuburg contest, in which he remained unbeaten. Thanks to Ulrich himself, jousts were already popular and held in many kingdoms and lordships around 1250, at least in the Holy Roman Empire. It seems that the new game originated in Styria and hence spread around Europe. Around 1400 jousts became mainstream and completely replaced the *mêlée* and other older variations.

The very rules of this new growth of tourney activity made the reliance on special officials indispensable to keep the scores and watch over the increasingly more organised and improved sportive contests. Thus, we can say that with the arrival of the joust, tournaments advanced one-step further in the direction of pure sport, distancing itself from its old connection with warfare. By the end of our period, the meaning of being a joustier became far removed from that of a battlefield knight. In fact, heralds are believed to have emerged quite informally in the later Twelfth Century from the profession of itinerant *jongleurs*, and initially specialized in identifying and praising princes and leading knights in

³⁵ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, p.165. We need to note that ruling tournaments meant also the ruling war, to a great effect for lessening its evils.

³⁶ Nigel Saul, *A Companion to Medieval England: 1066-1485*. Tempus, Stroud, 2005, pp. 286-287.

the context of tournaments. They were not attached to royal and princely households, and did not become a recognized profession until various dates after 1400³⁷. Nevertheless, emblematic arms — initially restricted to princes, and only extended to knights in general between about 1190 and 1250 — are more likely to have been the creation of the noble ‘armigers’ themselves, who were still regarded as the principal experts in their ownership and use until the early decades of the Fifteenth Century³⁸.

Regulations by René of Anjou, in 1434, showed the need for a King of Arms to organise and announce contest three or four months in advance. This would allow knights enough time to prepare and travel to participate. In addition, between six and twelve judges oversaw the safe progress of the different contests and the correct qualification of matches. However, new trends also meant drastic changes in the old and primitive significance of the tournament. “*As the joust developed, it came more and more to resemble a rather crude form of fencing match*”³⁹.

The third and last of the most important variations was the “passage of arms” or in French *pas d’armes*, a type of hastilude that evolved around 1380 and popular up to the 1490s. A knight, alone or with his companions, took over a certain location, usually near to crossroads or towns, sending word to any other knights travelling around that they were welcome to fight⁴⁰. We find one of the first examples of the quintessential French knight in the Marshall Jean Le Maingre, better known by his nickname *Boucicaut* (1366-1421)⁴¹. The Spanish Pero Niño (1378-1453), was also a prominent figure in this modality. The knight, or team of knights, stayed in the spot for one month, holding jousts daily with whoever wanted to clash with them⁴². Certainly, it was the final stage of chivalry and knightly values in a world turning into a completely different scenario due to

³⁷ They also seem to have had relatively little to do with the emergence of what since about 1630 have been called ‘heraldic’ arms (and other emblems), and acquired a ‘regulatory’ role only in the fifteenth century and only in a handful of countries, though they probably played a significant role in the creation of the descriptive language now called ‘blazon’ (ideally suited to their needs as tournament criers).

³⁸ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, p.167.

³⁹ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, p.173. See also Sidney Anglo, *How to Kill a Man at your Ease: Fencing Books and the Duelling Ethic*, in Sidney Anglo (ed.), “Chivalry in the Renaissance”, Boydell Press, Woodbridge [England] & Rochester (NY.), 1990, pp. 1-13, for the developing of medieval knight into modern duellist up to the Seventeenth Century.

⁴⁰ Richard W. Barber, *Chivalry in the Tournament and Pas d’Armes*, in Richard W. Jones, Peter Cross (eds.), “A Companion to Chivalry” Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge, 2019, pp. 119-138.

⁴¹The aforementioned “Passage of Arms” dates to 1389. See Robert Coltman Clephan, *The Medieval Tournament*, p. 32 ff.

⁴² See Noel Fallows, *Jousting in Medieval and Renaissance Iberia*. Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2010, p. 230.

the emergence of new social classes, firearms and firepower, and the rise of the Modern state. “*From the pas d’armes to the duel it was a short step*”⁴³.

Since a tournament was often a celebration, there would also be dancing, feasting and drinking as well. Tournaments usually took place over three days, with the participants introduced and paraded on the first day, jousting on the second and the tournament itself on the last. There were judges, and prizes to those who had distinguished themselves. It is not clear how they managed to judge a massive mêlée and even the scoring systems varied. Generally, the highest score was for unhorsing an opponent, the second highest for breaking a lance on an opponent, and the lowest for striking the opponent’s helmet. The knights usually had three charges at one another. Such a phenomena carried the flourishing of a broad genre of literature and manuals⁴⁴.

We can find very curious and interesting data concerning such events. We hear of a Robert, Lord Morley, attending a London tournament in 1340. Robert himself appeared dressed as the pope, and his retinue knights fought in the jousts wearing cardinal clothes⁴⁵.

5. Rules

Marking the perfect identification with sport, the aforementioned referees and judges worked together in order to signal winners and to keep the scores and plays in the contests. After the joust prevailed, breaking the rival’s spears or lances led to high scoring, which sometimes was enough to win the day. Prearranged agreements between the participants could allow the fight to continue after unhorsing; commonly, both knights agreed to resume the match on foot, using swords, maces or clubs. In such situations, and after suffering a severe number of blows, one of the contestants would surrender. In England, and especially after Edward I Longshanks (1272-1307), blunted weapons were mandatory, but fatal accidents could still arise. Nevertheless, after surrendering, the game was over, and knights would go on to the next step (if not badly mauled) to the acts and celebrations of the tournament days, including dancing, feasting and prize giving⁴⁶.

Hard feelings or grudges occurred after heated and disputed matches, but the tournament societies tended to the contrary, that is, a cordial mood and fraternity between knights, even featuring in the statutes of such organisations as compulsory. Such was the case of the famous Round Table, in Flanders; the

⁴³ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, p. 180.

⁴⁴ Matthew Bennett, *Manuals of Warfare and Chivalry*, in Richard W. Jones, Peter Coss (eds.), “A Companion to Chivalry”, Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge, 2019 pp. 263-280.

⁴⁵ Maurice Keen, *Origins of the English Gentleman: Heraldry, Chivalry and Gentility in Medieval England, C.1300-c.1500*. Tempus, London, 2002, p. 48.

⁴⁶ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, pp. 170-171. Edward I regulations (*Statuta Armorum*, 1292) turned tournaments into events patronized and at the service of the Crown.

society held tournaments for three days in a mutual agreement and friendly environment⁴⁷. The lists, palisades, close ranks of knights and the tilts evoke the eternal imagery of the medieval world, as R. Barber noted, “a festival of Chivalry itself”⁴⁸.

More often than not, the whole process ended up with the negotiations for a ransom. Prospect of booty moved a large amount of the participants to gather in distant places and try their luck in order to improve their social or economic positions, which was often weak. This was the key feature that made tournaments profitable and attractive for the lesser knights, although in the same way, it could possibly lead the contestants to complete ruin. Overall, the number of participants and the figure of the errant knight, widespread in our literary sources, make us think that such a financial collapse was far from being the norm, even for the humblest of the attendants.

At the very end of our research period, in 1466, the English nobleman John Tiptoft published a detailed and precise set of rules for the penalties, prizes, scoring and rules that organised the sport thoroughly. Such a late date proves the survival of the knightly tones in Aristocracy that was on the verge of the Renaissance and how the English knight stood firmly in the mentality spectrum before transforming into the Gentleman or courtesan of later dates⁴⁹.

6. Tournaments, Literary Trends, Society and Politics

In feudal societies, one of the main characteristics of the landed nobility was the display and ostentatiousness of status. Therefore, sports and competitions, especially those related to horse riding, hunting, and falconry were common, since they offered the perfect conditions to highlight the noble and knightly virtues. Tournaments followed these steps, and soon it is possible to trace such chivalric gatherings together with other important days in the medieval world. Breeding horses and dogs suitable for aristocratic sports was a mark of distinction worn with pride at all levels and pursued with enthusiasm, not only amongst laymen⁵⁰. The French Pope Clement VI (reigned 1342-1352), “*secular in*

⁴⁷ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, pp. 174.

⁴⁸ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, pp. 177.

⁴⁹ For the later developments of tournament see Malcolm Vale, *War and Chivalry: Warfare and Aristocratic Culture in England, France, and Burgundy at the End of the Middle Ages*. Duckworth, London, 1981, pp. 64-88; also Richard Britnell, *The Closing of the Middle Ages? England, 1471-1529*. Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, 1997; John McClelland, *Body and Mind: Sport in Europe from the Roman Empire to the Renaissance*. Routledge, London, 2007; John A. F. Thomson, *the Transformation of Medieval England 1370-1529*. Routledge, LoLondon, 2014, pp. 93-118. See also Matthew Woodcock, *The End of Chivalry? Survivals and Revivals of the Tudor Age*, in Richard W. Jones, Peter Coss (eds.), “A Companion to Chivalry”, Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge, 2019 pp 281-300.

⁵⁰ David Crouch, *The Image... op. cit.*, pp. 232-236, for the great importance of hunting in Aristocratic society.

outlook, determined rather to rule as a prince than a pope”, created a court that R. Barber defines as “*luxurious, profligate and even debauched*”. His royal palace at Avignon had the famous *Chambre du Cerf*, decorated “*with entirely secular frescoes showing the pleasures of hawking, hunting and fishing [...] and “depicted aristocratic falconers*”. Such an example must be a valid one and shows us the expected behaviour tied to the membership of noble society⁵¹.

Retinues for hunting or falconry also meant retinues for hastilude sports as well. The same companions were prone and required to form part of every event of aristocratic society; due to the long time spent together and the many common activities, politics, sports and hunting merged. This way, Richard II used a tournament in London (1390) with the aim of alienating the count of Hainault from the king of France, almost with success⁵².

The armed retinues of mounted men in armour meant to continue warfare through other means. Squires and household troops present at the contests were often joining the fray, if personal issues between lords were pending, with the result of considerable ill feelings and severe political tensions in broad areas. This negative part of tournaments moved even the knightlier and enthusiastic kings to legislate and rule carefully in order to avoid such problems. During weaker reigns, the magnates and their powerful-armed men could create considerable turmoil and political instability⁵³.

As a widespread phenomenon, tournaments had inconveniencies that sometimes could get some sombre tones. Many times, injuries and wounds increased the already high level of violence in some lands. Death of rulers during matches could easily lead to instability or political turmoil. We have many examples in the sources, leading from lesser nobles to very kings. Count Baldwin VII of Flanders (1111-1119) stunned by a blow received during a tournament at Eu, and thus was unable to assist his lord, the king of France Louis VI (1108-1137), in his war against Henry I of England. Due to such wounds he contracted an illness in Abbeville that lead to his death soon after⁵⁴.

However, if the chivalric world was able to develop itself, and knighthood to become a wide and respected social phenomenon throughout Christendom, it was due to not only the military deeds or prowess at warfare or from the sport. The sense of common duty and class from a much broader cultural change

⁵¹ Richard W. Barber, *The Penguin Guide to Medieval Europe*. Penguin Books, London, 1984, pp. 54-57.

⁵² See. Christopher Gravett, *English Medieval Knight 1300-1400*. Osprey Publishing, Oxford, 2002, p. 50.

⁵³ See Saul, *A Companion...*, p. 286: “Tournaments”, during John Lackland (1199-1216) and Henry III (1216-1272) reigns “*were being used as a cover for political opposition*”. [...] “*When kingship was weak, tournaments posed a threat to royal authority*”. See also David Crouch, *The Normans...*, p. 111, who stated that tournaments were “*perfect occasions to conspiracies*”.

⁵⁴ David Crouch, *The Normans...*, p. 187.

coming from the appearance of troubadours and *jongleurs*, and to a lesser extent the minnesinger in Germany: a new lay literary class for the first time in many years.

Bertrand de Born (c. 1140 – c. 1215) was key in the development of courtly themes in England, France and the Low Countries. The style and its first adherents were indeed originally from Provence, and had Occitan backgrounds. The new songs became popular and helped the tournament themes to be known. Perhaps some of them did not even belong to the lower nobility classes, and we know that in the Empire many knight-singers were of servile origin. A large part of these characters travelled continuously, going to many cities and courts, thus lending their services to whomever wanted to listen or pay them. In this way, their art spread quickly along the western castles and palaces. Giraut de Salignac (exact *floruit* unknown) and Aimeric de Peguilhan (c. 1170 – c. 1230) were other important troubadours. The latter, although from merchant stock, was held in high esteem and later very influential.

The music and songs developed in this way became one more part of the sports circuit. Tournaments soon developed social ramifications and could mark anniversaries, celebrations, political gains and even agreements and marriages as well. After returning victorious from France in the autumn of 1347, Edward III spent nearly the whole of the following year celebrating tournaments, six in total. The same situation came up three years earlier, when the king was waging war successfully on the continent (in Brittany). The king then celebrated tournaments from 19th to 25th of January in 1344⁵⁵.

Tournaments were also solemn occasions when a fighter could be dubbed a knight. We know of many contests in which gallant participants were getting knightly status due to their brave performances or prowess. Barons, counts, kings and even emperors were able to knight contestants if they felt pleased by their worthy behaviour or skill at arms. In this way, Emperor Sigismund dubbed a butcher's son a knight because of his gallant deeds. Many a patrician from the privileged and rich *Richerzēche* class from the German towns were joining the crusades against pagans in Lithuania, or attending the tournaments, because their bigger wish was to become knights and thus ennoble their families. Weddings and other religious ceremonies could also include the dubbing of knights. The other occasions when a warrior could get knightly status was the much prestigious ordering in the battlefield. Thus, the Flemish noble and diplomat Gillebert de Lannoy (1386-1462), at the service of Burgundy, got the high honour this way in Poland, dubbed by the Teutonic Knight Ruffe von Pallen. In addition,

⁵⁵ Hugh E. L. Collins, *The Order of the Garter. Chivalry and Politics in Late Medieval England 1348-1461*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000, p. 12; Richard W. Barber, *Edward, Prince of Wales and Aquitaine: A Biography of the Black Prince*. Viking, London, 1978, pp. 42-43. See also Juliet Vale, *Edward III and Chivalry: Chivalric Society and its Context, 1270-1350*. Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 1983.

the most glorious death was confined to battle; being killed in a tournament always brought tragic connotations, but falling while defending God, one's lord, the country or Chivalry meant eternal glory and respect. One of many examples is that of the French Geoffroi de Charny, killed at the battle of Poitiers, while carrying the king's sovereign banner, the *Orijlamme*⁵⁶.

However, war was always war. The inclusion of some of each of these sets of duties in most of the lists of ideal qualities and behaviours recommended for knights or noble men-of-arms in the forty-six treatises composed in the various vernacular tongues of Latin Europe before the 1490s failed to have any significant influence on the real cultural ideals of many noble knights, who continued to admire only valour, prowess, wealth and high social rank, trustworthiness in dealings with fellow noblemen, and a willingness to do whatever was necessary to increase and defend their personal and lineal 'honour'.

7. Heraldry and Tournaments

Something resembling heraldry begins to be noticeable soon after 1100, probably following the direct stimulus of the tournament⁵⁷. This is because the earliest heraldry is that associated with the persons of counts and other great magnates, as the way tournament developed in the Eleventh Century show, with nobles leading teams of knights on to the field (the aforementioned *mêlée*). The task for a count's team was to protect their lord from capture, so it was of the utmost importance to know where he was. Heraldry assisted in identifying and rallying to him. This theory of the origins of heraldry makes sense because the lords were prone to hang heraldic covers on his horse thus getting more noticeable⁵⁸.

Although we glimpse common knights carrying uniform equipment that identified them as belonging to a lord's company in the 1150s and 1160s, the only

⁵⁶ Lannoy was one of the first members of the Golden Fleece, inaugurated by the duke Phillip the Good in 1430. See also Malcolm Vale, *War and...*, pp. 33-63; Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy*. Boydell Press, London & New York, 2002, pp. 29-98; for Charny, Steven Muhlberger, *Jousts and Tournaments: Charny and Chivalric Sport in the Fourteenth Century France*. Chivalry Bookself, Union City, 2003. Battle took place 19th September 1356. It was a disaster for the French. Cf. Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years...*, p. 42; Richard W. Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe*, pp. 284-288. His homonymous son fought as a crusader at another disaster, Nicopolis (1396).

⁵⁷ Maurice Keen, *The Origins...*, pp. 11-13: "*Tournament practice seems almost certainly to have been important in forming the rules that governed the ways in which a right to a prisoner should be established*" [...]. See also Robert W. Jones, *Heraldry and Heralds*, in Richard W. Jones, Peter Coss (eds.), "A Companion to Chivalry", Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge, 2019, pp. 139-158.

⁵⁸ Paul E. Szamach, Teresa M. Tavormina, & Thomas J. Rosenthal (eds.), *Medieval England. An...* p. 354. Nigel Saul, *A companion...*, pp. 131-133; Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years...*, p. 50.

individuals with early heraldry identified were the lords themselves⁵⁹. We need to say that tournament celebrations were far more frequent than all-out wars or big level military campaigns, not to say pitched battles, so it is very likely to find heraldic origins there.

The appearance of specialist heralds during the Thirteenth Century, no doubt assisted the fragmentation of the older parage-based heraldry into more individualised and narrower lineages of shields. Heraldry began working within tournaments, and later nationally, compiling directories of arms, which must have generally demonstrated the bad practice of sharing arms. As knights began to receive the privilege of arms around 1250, the capacity for confusion must have become an irritant to these emerging professionals⁶⁰.

The antiquity of lineage was at the heart of the idea of nobility. If there was ever a way of making such a power tangible, it was heraldry. A coat of arms deliberately evoked the inheritance of privilege and wealth that descended with the lineage⁶¹. After some time, heralds and their works became famous and used all over Christendom, as in the case of the Dutch Claes Heynen (c. 1345-1414) with his famous *Gelre Armorial*.

The surcoats, far from being mere identification devices for tournaments and battlefield, were much more. Common Law in England show a myriad of examples of how coats of arms linked with surnames, and indeed to rights to lands, demesnes, manors and holdings. Bequests and inheritances came with the obligation to bear the family's arms and take the surname. If a family already had a coat of arms, ruling courts asked to sum up, sharing or splitting, both arms. When a nobleman was donating such a precious item, as M. Keen put it, "*He was doing more, and much more, than putting on a uniform that would identify him, useful though it would be for that purpose. He was making simultaneously a very public statement about his place and associations in the chivalrous world, in circumstances which in that martial and chivalrous world were deemed especially significant*"⁶².

Let's bring William Marshal up again as an eloquent example. He was a simple knight as a youth, just dubbed, with no banner, using the arms of his lord, Tancarville, as a junior member of his retinue. Until 1180, he would not use his own coat of arms in a tourney, and even then, it was based closely in the arms of his second lord, the Young King⁶³. His arms also featured a lion. The lion was an important symbol taken from the coat of arms of the very king, Henry II (1154-1189)⁶⁴.

⁵⁹ David Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility. Constructing Aristocracy in England and France, 900-1300*. Pearson Education Limited, Edinburgh, 2005, pp. 156-157.

⁶⁰ David Crouch, *The Birth...*, p. 160; see also Maurice Keen, *The Origins...*, pp. 25-42.

⁶¹ David Crouch, *The Birth...*, p. 161.

⁶² Maurice Keen, *The Origins...*, p. 42.

⁶³ David Crouch, *The Image...*, p. 178.

⁶⁴ David Crouch, *William...*, p. 47.

In the Fourteenth Century and on, coats of arms kept their importance and became increasingly subject to law, courts and rules, because the service of arms in the gentry maintained its roll well after 1500, especially in England and Spain (with the lesser nobility class in the latter known as *hidalgos*). Therefore, the art featuring arms and heraldic gear became a successful way to maintain unity in an armigerous class menaced by social changes and the new challenges brought by the first signs of the Modern world⁶⁵.

8. Hastilude, Christianity, and the Church

It was not long after the first reports of the tournaments and knightly gatherings all over the lands that leading figures from the Western Church in Rome, England, France and the Holy Empire started to complain about the new social developments, defined by some contemporary authors as a true craze⁶⁶. Sometimes comparisons aroused between the mood of a rugby club, where players and fans drink together after a match to remember the highlights, and the conversations and sharing of experiences that the knights did in the drinking parties after the tournaments. The French knight and writer Jean de Bueil (1406-1477), and the very William Marshal offer such examples⁶⁷.

The Clerical establishment frowned upon such fervour and passion. As R. Barber put it, “Neither pope nor king welcomed the armed gatherings” [...] but “it provided an outlet for the exercise of knightly prowess which could no longer be expended in the old way in a society that was becoming more orderly and subject to restraints”. Therefore, the outcome was “a grudging toleration to the new sport”⁶⁸.

But in the time of The Crusades, and with big challenges from within the Church in the form of heretical movements, the clergy could find no satisfaction at all in such order of things: “Yet the Church attitude was still guarded: it encouraged knighthood, but only in order to control and tame the warrior instinct”⁶⁹.

One of the first measures made by Innocent II (1130-1143) was a complete ban of tournaments, although it was widely ignored. He repeated his anathema to that “un-Christian sport” at the Lateran council of 1139, and Alexander III did the same at the Lateran council of 1179. Eugene III (1145-1153) also harshly criticised the tournaments in the synod of Reims (1148), but all to no avail. Theoretically, a fallen knight in the circuit had no right to be buried

⁶⁵ See Steven Slater, *The History and Meaning of Heraldry: An Illustrated Reference to Classic Symbols and Their Language*. Southwater, London, 2004; Maurice Keen, *The Origins...*, pp. 87-143.

⁶⁶ David Crouch, *The Image...*, p. 174; Richard W. Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe*, pp. 73-80.

⁶⁷ See. Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years...*, p. 43; David Crouch, *William...*, pp. 35-36.

⁶⁸ Richard W. Barber, *The Knight...*, pp. 161-162.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 215.

in holy ground, but even such a radical measure was circumvented. Tournaments were deeply rooted in the chivalric world, spreading even to the Holy Land and the Byzantine Empire⁷⁰.

However, the world of the knight was also a world of repentance, remorse and regret after the faults⁷¹. After all, the dubbing of a knight always took place inside a church or other nearby Christian building; it was accompanied with vigils in prayer and a mass, and the very weapons were turned sacred that way: “*at the ceremony of his dubbing his sword had been blessed so that, with the approval of the Church thus clearly implied it might become a sword for justice*”⁷². It’s possible to find progressively numerous cases where the devotion, religious feelings and Christian charity appeared in close connection with chivalric societies and even knightly orders. One remarkable situation in Fourteenth Century England comes offered by the ambitious and thoughtful plans of King Edward III (1327-1377)⁷³.

Such plans crystallised in the Order of the Garter. To equal the number of 26 members (including the king) with the idea of Christian charity, 26 royal pensioners (Alms knights) were recruited; such poor knights ate and lived in the facilities of the Garter at Windsor, and in turn attended religious services and prayed at the masses for the souls of the deceased companions. The origins of such men were in the wars of the king, especially in France: injury, old age or financial ruin due to the payment of ransoms brought them to a helpless state, so Edward III in gratitude installed them at St. George College⁷⁴. Collegiate churches with canons, vicars and priests were the idea of both Edward III and King John II in France, for their projects concerning new chivalric orders. Nevertheless, contrarily to the Garter, the Order of the Star suffered greatly due to the decimation of its members at the battle of Poitiers (1356) and vanished thereafter⁷⁵. The enhancement of the Chivalric Orders numbers among the measures taken by Edward III in England; king created offices, seals, clerks, ushers, bureaucracy and ceremony to strengthen the identity and union of the Order and its sense of membership⁷⁶.

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*, p.161: tournaments held at Antioch in 1156; Kyriakidis, *Warfare in Late Byzantium*, p. 57 points out to the celebration of tournaments in Fourteenth Century Constantinople, although probably the phenomenon was not widespread as in the Latin West.

⁷¹ Jean Flori, *Ricardo...*, p. 362.

⁷² Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years...*, pp. 41-42.

⁷³ Ian Mortimer, *The Perfect King. The Life of Edward III, Father of the English Nation*. Vintage, London, 2008.

⁷⁴ Hugh A. F. Collins, *The Order...*, pp. 9, 13, 20-21, 29.

⁷⁵ The French idea went back to 1344; probably the English, in close relation then with Castile and visiting the country for crusading in 1343, got some glimpses of the project after witnessing the “Order of the Band” created by king Alfonso XI (1312-1350).

⁷⁶ Hugh A. F. Collins, *The Order...*, p. 30. See also D'Arcy Jonathan Dacre Boulton, *The Knights of the Crown: The Monarchical Orders of Knighthood in Later Medieval Europe, 1325-1520*. Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2000.

Burgundy, France, Spain, England, the Holy Empire and even Hungary were taking these same steps in the Fifteenth Century, when the Chivalric Orders developed not so much as a sport club, but as a means of enhancing the progression of absolute power of monarchs, striving together with the aim of developing the strongest and most centralised countries. “*Chivalry was coming to mean life in the public service under the ruler’s direction*”⁷⁷.

In the same way, popular saints like St. Michael, St. George, St. Denis, St. Demetrius, Santiago (in Spain), and Edward the Confessor (in England), had strong links with both war, Chivalry and Tournaments throughout the medieval period⁷⁸.

9. Conclusions

With this paper, we have tried to offer a clear framework of the main characteristics of knightly sports and games in the western medieval world. It is clear that Chivalry had strong links to the aforementioned sports and show the aristocratic status and noble way of life. Tournaments often worked as training grounds and substitutes for wars, but always showed clear sportive conditions. As time went on and rules and tourneys got increasingly more organised and detailed, the sportive component became bigger and more important. At the end of the Fifteenth Century, tournaments became social ceremonies full of pageantry and completely divorced from the idea of warfare and the true style of fighting of the later heavy cavalry.

We need to note that to a great effect, the ruling of tournaments also meant the ruling of war; heralds, Kings of Arms and knightly behaviour, although in no way universally upheld or respected, tended to create a more uniformed and balanced way of waging war. Monarchs went to great lengths to lessen the evils suffered by the civil population in both towns and country, and a general awareness of such misdemeanours raised the first ideas of which things shouldn’t feature in war.

Lastly, we must mention the very knightly and chivalric mentality. Fame, recognition, glory and a sense of occasion were the essential features of Aristocratic thought. Even if reckless or temerarious, the willingness to fight and achieve great deeds were the ultimate meaning of a knight’s existence. Hastilude sports proved the suitable background for the development, training and

⁷⁷ See. Christopher Allmand, *The Hundred Years...*, p. 45; see also Peter Coss & Maurice Keen (eds.), *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England*. Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2002, p. 209 ff.; Thomas A. Green (ed.), *Martial Arts of the World: An Encyclopedia*. ABC-Clio, Oxford, 2004, 384 ff., 390 ff.

⁷⁸ See Andri Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005, p. 530; Andrea Ruddick, *English Identity and Political Culture in the Fourteenth Century*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2013, pp. 289 ff.

expression of that particular way of life, an essential feature of the long gone medieval world in the West.