

DEATH, POWER, AND QUEENSHIP: FUNERAL PORTRAITS FOR QUEEN MARGARET OF AUSTRIA IN ITALY*

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ABSTRACT

In 1611, Queen Margaret of Austria of Spain died at the age of twenty-six after giving birth to her eighth child. This event triggered a series of customary rituals, funeral orations, and publications in homage to the queen throughout the Iberian world, threading narratives about the queen's life that highlighted her virtuous behavior and religious piety. This article focuses on the books of funeral ceremonies produced in Italy, specifically in Naples and Florence, which offered an idealized vision of the deceased monarch to endure in the collective memory. The relationship between texts, emblems, and engravings contained in the books outline a posthumous portrait of the queen as a model of queenship worthy of imitation by attributing specific functions and virtues to the female ruler while revealing the political use of Margaret as a symbol connecting the Spanish Crown with the Italian territories.

KEY WORDS: funeral accounts; commemoration; queenship; Margaret of Austria; Italy.

MUERTE, PODER Y REGINALIDAD: RETRATOS FUNERARIOS PARA LA REINA MARGARITA DE AUSTRIA EN ITALIA

RESUMEN

En 1611, la reina de España Margarita de Austria falleció a la edad de veintiséis años tras dar a luz a su octavo hijo. Este acontecimiento desencadenó una serie de rituales, sermones fúnebres y publicaciones en homenaje a la reina a lo ancho de todo el mundo ibérico, los cuales hilvanaban narrativas sobre su vida que destacaban su comportamiento virtuoso y piedad religiosa. Este artículo se enfoca en los libros de honras fúnebres producidos en Italia, específicamente en Nápoles y Florencia, en los que se construye una visión idealizada de la monarca difunta que perduraría en la memoria colectiva. La relación entre textos, imágenes emblemáticas y grabados contenidos en los libros delinean un retrato póstumo de la reina como modelo de reginalidad digno de ser imitado al atribuir funciones y virtudes específicas a la gobernante femenina, a la vez que revela el uso político de Margarita como símbolo conector de la Corona española con los territorios italianos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: relaciones fúnebres; conmemoración; reginalidad; Margarita de Austria; Italia

«¿What do we do, soul of mine?», royal chaplain Diego de Guzmán de Haro (1566-1631) exclaims in his biography of the queen of Spain Margaret of Austria (1584-1611)¹. Faced with the difficult task of describing the queen's death, the biographer resorts to quoting Saint Jerome's question to condense the emotional distress provoked by such a memory. The queen, consort of king Philip III (1578-1621), was only twenty-six years old and passed away shortly after giving birth to her eighth child, Prince Alfonso.

Published in 1617, Guzmán de Haro's biography recounts Margaret's death at El Escorial six years earlier as a soul-crushing experience for himself and the royal family but also as an event of supernatural proportions that impacted emotionally the entire realm. Not only had the queen foreseen her imminent death from childbirth on several occasions—an intuition that made her reflect on the destination of her soul in the afterlife and carefully settle her affairs². On the night of her passing, October 3, 1611, the heavens echoed the queen's last breath with a frightening thunderstorm, seemingly responding to the overwhelming grief felt by her subjects. While the birth of the prince had filled the people with joy, who celebrated with fireworks and lights «so high, that they seemed to match the stars, and the number of the lights in the sky increased, since it also became happy and serene those nights when it saw the joy of the ground³», the news of Margaret's death eight days later influenced natural conditions, covering the skies with clouds, «which is the mourning that in such sad events is usually shown⁴». However, on this occasion, the lugubrious signs even reached the kingdom of Naples. According to Guzmán, «dark clouds, rough waters, terrifying bolts of lightning, and furious winds» threatened to sink the galleys at sea⁵.

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¹ «¿Que hacemos alma mia?» Diego de Guzmán de Haro, *Reyna Católica: Vida y muerte de D. Margarita de Austria, Reyna de España* (Madrid, Luis Sánchez, 1617), 231r (all translations from primary sources are mine unless otherwise stated).

² *Ibidem*, 221.

³ «...con alegría vimos, que fueron grandes fuegos, y luzes tan altas, que parecia emparejauan con las estrellas, y aumentauan el numero de las luzes del cielo, el qual tambien se puso alegre y sereno aquellas noches al uer el alegría del suelo.» *Ibidem*, 225r.

⁴ «...pocos días despues con su tristeza se enlutó, y cubrio de nublado, que es el luto que en semejantes tristes sucessos se suele poner.» *Ibidem*, 225r.

⁵ «Lo cierto es, que en el Reyno de Napoles este día se vieron oscuros nublados, recias aguas, espantosos rayos, furiosos vientos, y el maro con ellos alterado con peligro de perderse y anegarse las galeras de aquel Reyno que andauan por el mar.» *Ibidem*, 233. The connection between queen Margaret and weather conditions has also been addressed by Paula Plastić in relation to Margaret's entries in Italy, in "Magna Margarita: Margarita de Austria (1584-1611), relaciones de sucesos y la reginalidad moderna" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California Davis, 2021), 76-79.

Thus, Margaret's death appeared as a transcendental moment, with nature as an active force signaling the potential impact of circumstances affecting the future of the realm and as a medium of communicating news of political importance across space, thus unifying distant territories under Spanish rule in a shared sentiment of loss.

In an earthlier dimension, the funeral ceremonies held in honor of the late queen reinforced the same sense of unity. From Madrid and Lima to Milan and Naples, Margaret's death sparked a series of customary rituals throughout the Spanish empire and its allied states, including the city of Florence and the Italian territories that witnessed her journey to Spain to wed King Philip III in 1598. The printed accounts describing these ceremonies would perpetuate the memory of the events as well as the image of Margaret's life enacted through them. This article focuses on two accounts or *relaciones concerning Margaret's funerals in Italy*, namely the Neapolitan funerals, published in 1612 in Tarquinio Longo's print shop, and the Florentine account elaborated by Giovanni Altoviti, also printed in 1612 by Bartolommeo Sermartelli e Fratelli (figs. 1 and 2). I examine how these accounts communicated notions of queenship and female exemplarity aimed at enduring in the collective memory. The funeral books portray Margaret as a model of queenship worthy of imitation by underscoring her virtuous life, her role as a mother in the continuation of the crown, and her loyalty to the king. I argue that these accounts reveal pervasive gendered constructions of death and power by attributing specific roles and virtues to the female ruler.



Figs. 1. Giovanni Altoviti. *Essequie della sacra cattolica e real maestà di Margherita d'Austria regina di Spagna*. Florence, 1612. Printed book, 51 pages (folio). Italian Festivals 12, Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

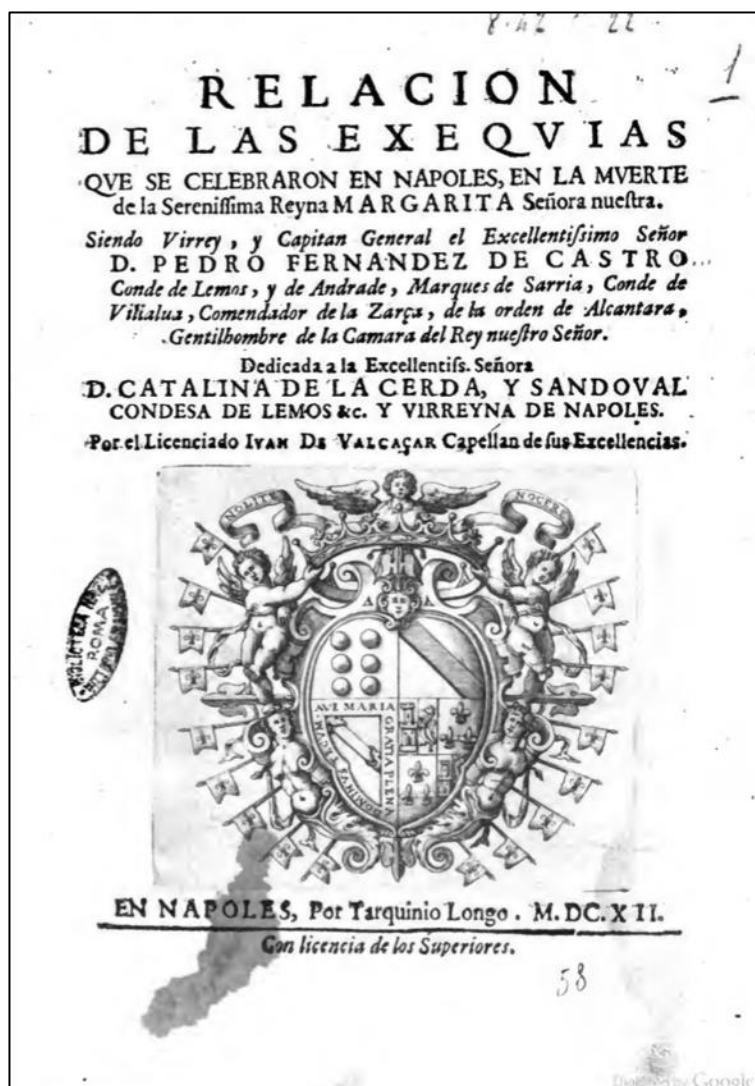


Fig. 2. Juan de Valcázar. *Relacion de las exequias que se celebraron en Napoles, en la muerte de la Serenissima Reyna Margarita señora nuestra*. Naples, 1612. Printed book, 2 parts, 104 and 78 pages respectively, (quarto). BVVE052683, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma.

While the funeral ceremonies consisted of public events of an ephemeral nature and accessible only to the attendants, the printed accounts, due to their tangibility, durability, and reproducibility, sought to perpetuate the memory of such ceremonies beyond the specific moment of the ritual. Like other festival books, they allowed for the event's details to reach further audiences and last throughout time—or, at least, the version of the event that was of interest to the commissioners to preserve and promote. The definition provided by Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly in her study on festival books in the early modern period is entirely applicable to the funeral

accounts under scrutiny here⁶. In each case, the ceremony and its corresponding account were commissioned by the same political authority; the books, published in vernacular languages, record not only information about the organization of the events and their celebration, but also details on the participants, encomiastic poems in honor of the queen created for the occasion, and images of the decorations⁷.

Early modern printed funeral books also played a fundamental part in declaring compliance with the funeral protocol established by the courts as much as an expression of diplomatic relations. However, ultimately, the books provide a mediated image of the events informed by the particular interests of those involved in their production⁸. More than an accurate description of the ceremonies, they are indicative of the control of their patrons, “whose acts of magnificence were promoted well after the festivities had ended, allowing readers who had not been present to become participants in the festival rhetoric,” and who utilized the printed accounts as a means of promoting their legitimacy and authority.⁹ Therefore, the funeral books constitute a record of the funeral ceremony with profound political implications whose declared faithfulness to the events should be very carefully considered.

The accounts of Margaret’s funerals in Florence and Naples provide two significant cases of funeral books contrasting in format, patronage, and political implications. Closely related to these aspects, the books also differ in their approach to Margaret’s life. Although both texts highlight the virtues attributed to Margaret as an exemplary queen, they diverge in their emphasis on the queen’s actions beyond the private sphere, that is, her political influence in the public sphere. While the Neapolitan account restricts the impact of the queen to her role as daughter, mother, and wife, the Florentine book demonstrates greater interest in underscoring her participation in political decisions as a manifest of the political and family ties of the ruling dukes with the Spanish Crown.

⁶ For a description of festival books in the early modern period see Matteo Casini. “Words and Acts. Books of Ceremonies in Renaissance Italy,” in *Il potere della parola, la parola del potere tra Europa e Mondo arabo-ottomano, tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna*, ed. Antonella Gheretti (Venice: Filippi Editore, 2010), 113–127; Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly. “Festival Books in Europe from Renaissance to Rococo,” *The Seventeenth Century*, vol. 3, no. 2 (September 1988): 181–201; Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly. “The Early Modern Festival Book: Function and Form,” in *Europa Triumphans: Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe*, vol. 1, eds. J. R. Mulryne, Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly and Margaret Shewring (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2004), 3–18, and “True and Historical Descriptions?: European Festivals and the Printed Record,” in *The Dynastic Centre and the Provinces: Agents and Interactions*, eds. Jeroen Duindam and Sabine Dabringhaus (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 150–159. See also Minou Schraven. “The Representation of Court Ceremonies in Print. The Development and the Distribution of the Funeral Book in Sixteenth-Century Italy,” in *News and Politics in Early Modern Europe, 1400-1800*, ed. Joop W. Koopmans (Louvain: Peeters, 2005), 47–60.

⁷ Watanabe-O’Kelly, “Festival Books in Europe”, 183.

⁸ Watanabe-O’Kelly, “The Early Modern Festival Book”, 15.

⁹ Schraven, “The Representation”, 48.

POLITICS AND ARTIFICE IN GIOVANNI ALTOVITI'S FLORENTINE ACCOUNT

On October 4, 1611, the Tuscan ambassador at the court of Philip III Orso Pannocchieschi d'Elci notified the Secretary of State at the Florentine court Belisario Vinta of queen Margaret's death. The ambassador had kept Vinta informed of the queen's declining health since her delivery, but this time, his letter announced her passing and expressed his surprise at an event that, in spite of the situation, he considered unforeseen: «I send this letter on the most painful occasion that could ever be offered to me in this Court, which is the death of the queen of Spain Margaret, may she be in Heaven, which occurred after eight days of illness, but to me so unexpected because it took away ... she who was the protection and reputation of this Most Serene House [of Medici]¹⁰.» Pannocchieschi's words reveal the political importance of the queen for the court he represented. Margaret's sister was Grand Duchess of Tuscany Maria Maddalena (1587-1631), wife of the Grand Duke Cosimo II de Medici (1590-1621), a strategic marriage that reinforced the political alliance between Spain and Florence¹¹.

Upon receiving the official news of Margaret's death, the Grand Duke entrusted senators Donato (1540-1617) and Niccolò dell'Antella (1560-1630) and a team of intellectuals and artists led by court engineer Giulio Parigi (1571-1653) with the preparation of the funerals in honor of the late queen. The experience of the Antella brothers and Parigi in the organization of significant public events had been tested in previous occasions, particularly the funeral ceremonies for Philip II in 1598 and King Henry IV of France in 1610¹². Their participation in the new project would guarantee the design of an iconographic program in accordance with the occasion, as well as the successful display of magnificence that characterized public festivities commissioned by the court.

The obsequies for Margaret were held at the Church of San Lorenzo, on the 6th of February 1612. The luxurious printed version of the event was commissioned to Giovanni Altoviti (d.1635?), a court intellectual and diplomat, who saw his manuscript approved for print by the representative of the Bishop of Florence only two days after the ceremony¹³. The book contains detailed etchings representing the

¹⁰ «Spedisco questo corriere con la più dolorosa occasione che mi si potesse offerir in questa Corte, che è la morte della Regina Magherita di Spagna che sia in Cielo, succeduta con otto giorni d'infirmità, ma per me tanto improvvisa che mi ha levato ... chi era l'amparo et reputatione di cotesta Serenissima Casa.» Medici Archive Project MAP, Doc ID 14349, vol. 4941, f. 955.

¹¹ Edward Goldberg, "Artistic Relations between the Medici and the Spanish Courts, 1587-1621: Part I," *The Burlington Magazine*, 138, 1115 (1996): 105. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/886739> (accessed 2 November 2022).

¹² Anna Maria Testaverde. "Margarita de Austria, reina y dechado de virtudes," en *Glorias efimeras: Las exequias florentinas por Felipe II y Margarita de Austria* (Valladolid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 1999), 219.

¹³ O. J. Rothrock, "Jacques Callot and Court Theatre 1608-1619: Studies in Court Theatre and its Printed Propaganda in the Background of Callot's Artistic Individuality", vol. I (Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 1987), 240. *ProQuest*, <https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/jacques->

decorations of the façade, the interior of the church, and the catafalque (fig. 3). Selected scenes from the queen's life adorned the naves, framed by black draperies, emblems, and skeletons. A sumptuous catafalque epitomized the symbolic center of the event, condensing the spiritual virtues and temporal power of the late monarch. The funeral iconographic program conveyed a clear message: the collapse of all human work, including royal power, in the face of death, only surpassed by the late queen through the virtues and pious actions she performed in life. In the account, Altoviti summarizes this idea as follows:

In effect, the concept of this entire funeral arrangement was to represent that death, although it triumphs over eternal goods—which is already expressed in the external façade—, nevertheless has no triumph or power over the interior ones, which are the virtuous habits; on the contrary, the virtues, triumphing over it, lead their possessors to the desired end of true happiness (Altoviti 8)¹⁴.



Fig. 3. Decoration of the façade of the Church of San Lorenzo. Giovanni Altoviti. *Essequie della Sacra Cattolica e Real Maesta di Margherita d'Austria Regina di Spagna*, p. 7, etching, 18 x 22,7 cm.

callot-court-theatre-1608-1619-studies/docview/303615254/se-2?accountid=15172 (accessed March 3, 2023).

¹⁴ «Conciosiacosache [sic] il concetto di tutto questo funerale apparato, fu di rappresentare, che la morte, benche de beni eterni trionfi, il che già nella facciata di fuori rimane espresso, tuttavia non hà trionfo alcuno, ne potere sopra gl'interni, che sono gl'abiti virtuosi, anzi di lei le virtù trionfando, conducono i possessori di esse al desiderato fine di vera beatitudine.» See also Testaverde 219.

Margaret's virtuous behavior allowed her thus to triumph over death and achieve eternal life. Her exemplary behavior was explained through the allegorical representations of virtues attributed to the queen, including the cardinal and theological virtues accompanied by additional qualities such as Magnificence, Humility, Clemency, Glory, and Immortality, placed throughout the interior of the church and crowning the catafalque.

This discourse of salvation was likewise reinforced through the twenty-six paintings representing moments of the queen's life created in grisaille or *chiaroscuro giallo*, imitating relief sculptures¹⁵. The artists Antonio Tempesta (1555-1630), Jacques Callot (1592-1635), and Raffaello Schiaminossi (1572-1622), who were brought from Rome to carry out the task probably recommended by Parigi, reproduced the paintings in the printed account with slight variations. For the selection and design of the scenes, Florentine intellectuals and artists inquired about previously published funeral accounts and even requested access to the designs that were being prepared for other funeral ceremonies held on the same occasion, as demonstrated by the exchange between the Florentine diplomat Camillo di Francesco Guidi (1555-1623) and Alessandro Beccheria, Medici representative in Milan (active 1594-1613). Since his patron, Cosimo II, desired to commemorate the queen of Spain with lavish ceremonies, Guidi insisted that Beccheria provide him with a detailed description of the «architectural plans, designs, and sermons» for the obsequies that would be held in Milan, as well as a description of the queen's entry into that city¹⁶. After his request was answered, Guidi thanked Beccheria, acknowledging that the information received allowed for the Florentine catafalque to be improved, and promised to send him Altoviti's account once printed¹⁷. This exchange shows the close relationship between the different ceremonies held in Margaret's memory and the desire of each court to surpass their neighbors in magnificence. Most surely, the eminently visual narrative of the Florentine account must have impressed Beccheria and the Milanese readers since it contrasted extraordinarily with the unadorned account published in the Northern city¹⁸.

¹⁵ For an overview of the paintings see Monica Bietti. "Los lienzos con historias de la vida de Margarita de Austria, reina de España, 3 de octubre de 1611-6 de febrero de 1612," in *Glorias efímeras: Las exequias florentinas por Felipe II y Margarita de Austria* (Valladolid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 1999), 225-228.

¹⁶ Medici Archive Project (MAP), Doc ID 11345, vol. 3137, f. 620 and Doc ID 11295, vol. 3137, f. 438.

¹⁷ MAP, Doc ID 11296, vol. 3137, f. 444 and Doc ID 11337, vol. 3137, f. 314.

¹⁸ The Milanese funeral was celebrated on December 22, 1611. The account was authored by Giovanni Battista Piccaglia under the title *Relatione del funerale et esequie fatte in Milano: per ordine della Cat. Maestà del potentiss. re di Spagna don Filippo Terzo nostro signore* and published the following year. A textual description of the emblems was published separately in Spanish and Italian as *Geroglifici in morte della Catholica Reina Nostra Signora* by the printer Marco Tullio Malatesta, in 1611. The funeral account contains the description of the designs, the names of important attendants, and the funeral oration in Latin by Tommaso Gallarato. It also includes a copy of Philip III's letter informing of the queen's death and commanding the Constable of Castile and Governor of Milan Juan Fernández de Velasco to celebrate the rites as customary. The same letter seems to have been sent to the viceroys of Naples and Sicily, AGS, Estado, leg. 1878, fol. 218.

The etchings included in Altoviti's account occupy most of the volume—29 folios of images contrast with 21 of text. The images represent the designs of the façade, a view of a nave, and the catafalque, along with copies of the paintings of Margaret's life. Each of these scenes occupies a page; in the case of the life scenes, the images are accompanied by an explanatory legend in Latin and its corresponding commentary in Italian.

The excellence of the etchings and their prominence in the volume complement the textual content of the work, which is exceptionally ekphrastic. Altoviti described the decorations and the catafalque in detail and devoted only the last two pages to offering a brief narrative of the funeral rites. Throughout the book, language privileges the artists' mastery and ability to execute the iconographic program, particularly emphasizing the emotional effect that the decorations would produce on the viewers. The terms *meraviglia*, *varietà*, *artifizio*, *orrore*, or *magnificenza* and *pompa* (wonder, variety, artifice, horror, or magnificence and pomp) contribute to the liveliness of the descriptions, revealing the interest in transmitting to the reader the excellence of the works produced for the event, while proclaiming the distinction and authority of their commissioner. Thus, for example, the note that accompanies the scene of Margaret and Philip III's wedding in Valencia explains that “due to the magnificence of the arrangements, due to the wonder of the spectacle, the eyes of the spectators were dazzled in such a way that the virtue of the Queen couldn't be revealed as highest” (26)¹⁹. Later, Altoviti states that during the funeral:

the magnificence of the Grand Duke was praised by everyone, and with it not less than with the prudent government of the states, he once again resembled his great father, and with such magnanimous displays of piety and servitude demonstrated how much in his royal soul the ancient reverence of his elders towards the House of Austria and the Crown of Spain had been transfused and strongly impressed (Altoviti 51)²⁰.

Consequently, Margaret's funeral in Florence and the corresponding printed account signified a spectacular commemorative and aesthetic experience typical of the long artistic tradition of the Medici state devised to promote the greatness of the Grand Duke and his political position as an ally of the Spanish rulers²¹. The magnificence of the funerals reflected the magnificence of the Medici.

The paintings, currently preserved in the Uffizi Gallery, were made by artists of varied talents and designed to be observed from below, in contrast to the scenes printed in the book, whose high-caliber creators paid meticulous attention to details and gave their images greater expressiveness, as they were intended for close scrutiny

¹⁹ «... dalla magnificenza de gl'apparati, dalla meraviglia de gli spettacoli non erano gl'occhi de rimiranti abbagliati in maniera, che adessi la virtù della Regina maggiore non si scoprisse.»

²⁰ «... da tutti s'udiva commendare la magnificenza del Gran Duca, e che egli con quella non meno, che col prudente governo degli Stati, si rendesse al suo gran padre somigliante, e con si magnanimi ofizii di pietà, e d'ossequio dimostrasse quanto nel suo Reale animo fusse transfusa, e vivamente impressa l'antica reverenza de suoi maggiori verso la casa d'Austria, e la Corona di Spagna.»

²¹ This strategy begins with the celebration of the first grand funeral in San Lorenzo, the obsequies dedicated precisely to Michelangelo Buonarroti in 1564, as demonstrated by Goldberg, “Artistic Relations” and Rothrock, “Jacques Callot and Court Theater”.

by the reader. Orville Rothrock has stated that the pictorial cycle resembled a procession in which the viewer, not the parade, moved through the church's interior space²². However, the sequence of engravings with their explanatory phrases made possible the pause for meditation, in the manner of an emblem or a monument immortalizing each phase of the queen's life on paper.

The funeral account constructs a narrative of Margaret's life that takes as a point of departure the moment when she becomes a decisive figure in the Spanish monarchy's constellation by depicting Philip II discussing the arrangements of her marriage with the future Philip III. This is the only scene where Margaret is absent, thus extolling the figure of the Prudent King as the force determining the queen's destiny. The account justifies Philip II's decision, explaining that the king considered «not so much the majesty of her noble house as the splendor of her virtue» (Altoviti 12), a reasoning that, on the one hand, obscures the true process through which the marriage came to fruition²³. On the other hand, the text contradicts the marriage policy of the Spanish Habsburgs, which traditionally privileged inter-family unions as a strategy for securing stability and influence in foreign relations and the expansion of their power across territories²⁴.

The next images focus on Margaret's reaction to the news of her engagement and, more importantly, her journey across Italy and her arrival in Valencia to wed Philip III from 1598 to 1599²⁵. Nine of the twenty-six plates represent Margaret's presence in Italy (plates 4-12). The scenes highlight the admiration and joy of those present at her triumphal entries into the cities of Venice, Ferrara, Mantua, Milan, and Genoa, echoing the descriptions of the festival books published on the occasion of her trip. Altoviti's account becomes thus peculiarly ambiguous in terms of classification: its particular attention to the queen's sojourn can be added to the numerous celebratory books that circulated around courts and which functioned as media of information and perpetuation in the collective memory of the political relations between the Hapsburg and the Peninsula. Interestingly, Margaret did not visit Florence at the time; however, the organizers of the Florentine funerals, aware of the utmost importance of her stay in Italian territories, privileged the scenes related to her journey as a

²² Rothrock, "Jacques Callot and Court Theater", 208.

²³ «... non tam avgvstae domvs maestate, qvam praeclarissimarvm virtvtvm splendore.» Initially, Philip II decided to engage the prince to Margaret's eldest sister, Catherine, but the young archduchess died shortly after. The king chose, then, her other sister Gregoria Maximiliana, but she too, died from a serious illness before realizing the marriage. Margaret was then selected as the prince's future bride in 1598, at age fourteen.

²⁴ For a profound analysis of Hapsburg marriages as a political strategy, see Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2000) and *The World is Not Enough: The Imperial Vision of Philip II of Spain* (Waco, Texas: Markham Press Fund, 2001); and Joseph F. Patrouch. "«Bella Gerant Alii.» Laodamia's Sisters, Hapsburg Brides: Leaving Home for the Sake of the House," in *Early Modern Hapsburg Women: Transnational Contexts, Cultural Conflicts, Dynastic Continuities*, eds. Anne J. Cruz and Maria Galli Stampino (Farnham; Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), 25-38.

²⁵ The weddings were celebrated by proxy in Ferrara Cathedral on the 13th of February 1599, officiated by the Pope Clement VIII. In the absence of Philip III, his cousin, the Archduke of Austria Albert VII, acted as the groom in his place. The archduke was also married to the *infanta* Isabel Clara Eugenia, represented by the Duke of Sessa. The two couples would finally reunite in Vinaroz, and the *misas de velaciones* took place in Valencia on April 18.

mechanism for enmeshing the city into the narratives of that event and underscoring the significance of the Peninsula for the queen's personal and political life.

The descriptions of the Italian sojourn emphasize the humility with which the queen accepts her destiny and highlight her «virtue» as causing admiration in the onlookers. This word, *virtù*, with which Margaret is repeatedly described, acquires variable meanings throughout the scenes, being associated with modesty, wisdom, beauty, goodness, or religious faith. But the long Italian journey also acts as a declaration of the crucial role of the institution of marriage for the queen's entrance into political life. On the one hand, the trip is a preamble to the eventual fulfillment of her duty as a sovereign, that is, providing a successor to the throne. This theme occupies engraving 19, which describes the baptism of Philip III, explained in the following terms:

To fulfill Margaret's prosperity, nothing else was necessary than the fruits of her fertility, so desired by the entire Christian republic; therefore, the Baptism represented in the next painting was a sign of the establishment of her fortune, showing at the same time how grateful she was to Heaven for her virtue, since by God she was destined to perpetuate the succession and security of such an Empire (Altoviti 30).²⁶

Margarita's fertility was her greatest virtue since it allowed her to fulfill the function for which she was predestined as queen. Ensuring the continuity of the Spanish empire through her birthing of an heir was not only an act that led to her personal satisfaction; it was also crucial for international politics since it represented political and religious stability for the Spanish empire's subjects and allies.

On the other hand, the account describes Margaret's influence on foreign policy through the arrangements of her sisters' marriages, reinforcing the idea of Margaret's political mediations having a more international projection. Two engravings emphasize the use of marriage to strengthen political alliances at Margaret's initiative. First, Margaret is depicted negotiating the union between the Polish king Sigismund III Vasa (1566-1632) and her sister Costanza (1588-1631) in order to create a joint force to fight the threat of the Tartars and Turks (35). Later, she is shown receiving the ambassador of the Grand Duke of Tuscany Ferdinando I (1549-1609) to agree on the marriage in 1608 of her other sister, Maria Maddalena, with the future Cosimo II, commissioner of the Florentine funerals²⁷. This scene mimics the one involving Philip

²⁶ «Acolmare la prosperità di MARGHERITA altro, che i frutti di sua fecondità bramattissimi da tutta la Christiana republica, non mancava; onde il Battesimo nel quadro seguente effigiato, era segno dello stabilimento di sua fortuna, accennando insieme quanto fusse in Cielo gradita di sua virtù, poi che da Iddio, a perpetuare la successione, e la sicurezza di tanto Imperio, lei fù destinata» (emphasis in the original).

²⁷ Maria Galli Stampino has addressed Maria Maddalena's role as co-regent with Christine of Lorraine after Cosimo's death in 1621, particularly her patronage of theater and music performances in the context of diplomatic visits and court entertainments as demonstrations of her influence in Medici and Florentine politics. See Maria Galli Stampino. "Maria Maddalena, Archduchess of Austria and Grand Duchess of Florence: Negotiating Performance, Traditions, and Taste," in *Early Modern Habsburg Women: Transnational Contexts, Cultural Conflicts, Dynastic Continuities*, eds. Anne J. Cruz and Maria Galli Stampino (Farnham; Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), 40-56.

II mentioned above, but this time, the roles have changed, and the queen decisively influences the future of political relations between the Spanish crown and the Italian duchy. The image is also the penultimate engraving of the series; therefore, it constitutes a prelude to the end of the series in which the Grand Duchy of Tuscany appears as the beneficiary of the virtues that the previous images managed to portray. As the text clearly indicates, Margaret was aware of the importance of marital unions as «a means for the strengthening of states and the growth of forces» (Altoviti 34). Several images also highlight Margaret's religious zeal either through the founding of convents (Altoviti 34) or through her intercession with Philip III to send troops to assist Emperor Ferdinand II after the Ottoman occupation of Kanisza in 1601 (Altoviti 32), which, along with the marriages, illustrates how much she looked after her family and religious interests²⁸.



Fig. 4. The death of the queen. Giovanni Altoviti. *Essequie della Sacra Cattolica e Real Maesta di Margherita d'Austria Regina di Spagna*, p. 37, etching, 13 x 18 cm.

The last image synthesizes the discourse about Margaret's life traced throughout the account (fig. 4). The text explains that the queen «[w]orthy of heaven, she rushes to it» (Altoviti 37)²⁹. The queen consort of Spain lies in her bed, agonizing

²⁸ In 1611, Margaret founded the Augustines convent of La Encarnación in Madrid. In her will, she included a clause in favor of the Royal College of the Society of Jesus in Salamanca, which led to the foundation of La Clerería in 1617.

²⁹ «Coelo digna in coelvm properat».

after several days of fever. Desiring to die blessedly, her hands embrace a crucifix against her chest; another cross hangs over the headboard. One of the priests approaches her while another one carries the holy oils to officiate the last rites to the queen—probably her confessor Richard Haller, Father Francisco de Arribas, confessor of the *infanta* Ana, the *Prior* of San Lorenzo de El Escorial Father Andrés de San Gerónimo, or Diego de Guzmán himself, who witnessed the scene³⁰. Surrounded by her family, her closest subjects, and confessors, who, on their knees, repentantly pray for the salvation of her soul, the queen turns her eyes to heaven. On the upper right corner, a *rompimiento de gloria* reveals a choir of angels and the Virgin Mary maternally holding the Child. The intervention of the spiritual dimension in the scene, with the intercessory image of the Virgin, indicates that the devout sovereign abandons this world through an exemplary death that leads her to salvation in the afterlife.

The death of Margaret of Austria is presented as an ideal of *ars moriendi* modeled after the iconographic tradition of the Dormition of the Virgin, where the queen, oblivious to earthly temptations, faces her passing with serenity and confidence. The presence of the Virgin with Christ Child in her arms connects the two women as mothers and figures associated with piety and family devotion. The humility characterizing Margaret's depiction throughout the account anticipates the connection between the Virgin and the monarch. As the inscription accompanying the engraving indicates, Margaret died as virtuously as she had lived, her death being the ultimate expression of her embodiment of queenship at the Spanish court and beyond.

EMBLEMS FOR A QUEEN: THE NEAPOLITAN FUNERALS

The account of Margaret's Neapolitan funerals appeared in two editions: in Italian, written by the scholar Ottavio Caputi, and in Spanish by Juan de Valcázar, chaplain of the viceroys of Naples. The text is the same in both versions, differing only in language and details omitted in the Spanish version—which suggests a possible translation from Italian to Spanish. *For my analysis*, I will focus only on the Spanish version by Valcázar, titled *Relación de las exequias que se celebraron en Nápoles en la muerte de la Serenísima Reyna Margarita Señora nuestra*.

The *relación* of queen Margaret's funerals in Naples follows the more-or-less standard structure for this specific genre of festival books, but it comprises two parts, published in two different volumes. The first part contains the narration of the tribute, from the moment the viceroy received the news of Margaret's death to the celebration of the funeral rites at the cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta on February 26 and 27, 1612. This first part of the account contains four full-page plates representing the archangels Saints Michael, Gabriel, and Rafael, and the guardian angel, as well as 91 woodcuts of the *impreses* decorating the church, designed by members of the Society of Jesus and two local literary academies, the *Accademia degli Oziosi* and the *Accademia dei Sileni*. A short explanatory text accompanies each image, in most cases, declaring the names of their authors and the reference to the classical or Renaissance texts inspiring the Latin *mottoes*. The second part comprises 152 poems written in Latin,

³⁰ See Guzmán de Haro, *Reyna Católica: Vida y muerte de D. Margarita de Austria*, 232v.

Italian, and Spanish by the members of the literary circles mentioned above. As in the case of Altoviti's account, the illustrations distinguish the Neapolitan funeral books from other examples consisting of only a verbal description of the decorations, and the inclusion of the poems in the second part offers a glimpse of the opportunity for creative production that public celebrations such as royal funerals provided to artists and intellectuals in the early modern period³¹.

As soon as the news of Margaret's death was received in Naples, the viceroy himself, Pedro Fernández de Castro, VII count of Lemos (1576-1622), who occupied the position from 1610 to 1616, mobilized his court to organize the funeral³². The *relación* emphasizes the count's key role in securing that the funerals were celebrated in due time and manner, including his instructions for distributing mourning clothes and the performance of masses throughout Naples. The text offers several details about the changes in the Royal Palace to observe the mourning rituals and the viceroy's commission of the traditional catafalque and *impresa* to local artists. Moreover, the account describes the funeral procession from the Palace to the cathedral, a multitudinary parade that included more than five hundred people on horseback alone (Valcazar 102-103).

The Count of Lemos was a relevant political figure in the Spanish government who had been president of the Council of the Indies and would later be named president of the Council of Italy. As a patron of the arts, he supported and inspired the works of Spanish writers such as Lope de Vega, Miguel de Cervantes, Francisco de Quevedo, and Antonio Mira de Amescua. While in Naples, he continued to have an active role in the artistic sphere, favoring the creation of the *Accademia degli Oziosi*, the literary circle whose members took part in the decorations for Margaret's funerals³³. In addition, the author of the Italian version of the funeral account, Ottavio Caputi, was a member of the *Accademia dei Sileni* who had previously written the account of Philip II's funerals in Naples, published in 1599. Thus, as Paule Desmoulières underscores, Margaret's funerals served as a «tribute to [the viceroy's] political power and the cultural project he defended» by including artists that he personally championed³⁴. While the splendid procession and the ephemeral decorations could

³¹ The account of Margaret's funerals in Lima also includes the descriptions of the emblems and the poetic works in Latin and Spanish produced for the occasion. The ceremonies were commissioned by the viceroy, the Marquis of Montesclaros Juan de Hurtado de Mendoza y Luna (1571-1628), and took place a year after Margaret's death because the two official letters with the news of her passing had been lost on the way. The confirmation of her death reached Lima at the end of October 1612. See Martín de León, *Relacion de las exequias que el Ex.mo Sr. D. Iuan de Mendoza y Luna marques de Montesclaros, virrei del Piru hizo en la muerte de la reina nuestra S. Doña Margarita* (Lima: Fr. Franciscu, de Bexarano Augusturiensis scudebat, 1612), ff. 3v-4r.

³² For an exhaustive biography of the Count of Lemos and documents related to his life and work, see Manuela Sáez González, *Vida y obra del VII Conde de Lemos Don Pedro Fernández de Castro*, 2 vols. (A Coruña: Hércules de Ediciones, 2023). For his role as viceroy of Naples, see Chapter Five, vol. 1, 139-239.

³³ *Ibidem*, vol. 1, 209-211.

³⁴ Paule Desmoulière, ««Come ad una tanta regina si conveniva»: funérais italiennes pour Marguerite d'Autriche-Styrie (1611-1612),» *e-Spania. Revue interdisciplinaire d'études hispaniques médiévales et modernes*, 17 (2014): 5.

impact emotionally and visually only the attendants, the emphasis on translating the literary and artistic skills displayed in the ceremonies to the published account speaks of a motivation to impact a broader audience among the elites of Spanish and Italian courts³⁵. The lavishness of the funeral ceremony would permit the viceroy to assert his position in Naples, with the distant ruler's death providing an opportunity for strengthening the sense of community between the crown and Neapolitan citizens. The rich printed account allowed him to extend his legitimacy and authority beyond Naples and show his diligent service to the Spanish ruler.

Furthermore, both versions of the account were dedicated to the vicereine, the countess of Lemos Catalina de la Cerda y Sandoval (1580-1648). In the prefatory words, the authors stated that the vicereine was the wife of a most virtuous prince (Caputi 4) and that she was a witness of the ceremonies. Accordingly, she was the ideal reader of the account insofar as she could appreciate the veracity of the descriptions in all fairness. However, Catalina de la Cerda was not only the viceroy's wife. She was also the daughter of the Duke of Lerma, Francisco Gómez de Sandoval y Rojas (1553-1625), who held the reins of government as *valido* or favorite of King Philip III. As scholars like Magdalena Sánchez and Diana Carrió-Invernizzi have shown, Lerma exercised his control at court by placing relatives in key positions, including the queen's entourage. Lerma's sister, Catalina de Zúñiga y Sandoval, and his wife, Catalina de la Cerda, were appointed *Camarera Mayor* or First Lady of the Bedchamber of queen Margaret³⁶. Through the strategic union with her cousin, the VII Count of Lemos, Lerma's daughter would also contribute to reinforcing the family status by becoming Naples' vicereine.³⁷ Consequently, Margaret's funeral accounts, dedicated to the daughter of the powerful *valido*, are also statements of the prestigious position of the Lerma family at the Spanish court and their decisive influence on the empire's affairs. More importantly, however, in the Spanish version, Valcázar states that the vicereine Catalina was a most virtuous lady whose presence conferred authority to an already magnificent spectacle and who, through her religiosity and piety, had demonstrated

³⁵ The book demanded a learned audience with the skills and knowledge necessary to decipher the *impresa* and the Latin inscriptions.

³⁶ See Magdalena Sánchez. *The Empress, the Queen, and the Nun: Women and Power at the Court of Philip III of Spain* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 43, and Diana Carrió-Invernizzi. "Las virreinas en las fiestas y el ceremonial de la corte de Nápoles en el siglo XVII," in *Fiesta y ceremonia en la corte virreinal de Nápoles: siglos XVI y XVII*, eds. Giuseppe Galasso, José Vicente Quirante and José Luis Colomer (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, 2013), 312-315.

³⁷ Catalina de la Cerda, the Duke of Lerma's wife, replaced the Duchess of Gandia as *Camarera Mayor* in 1599, much to the queen's discontent. She performed her duties for two years until she was replaced by her sister-in-law, Catalina de Zúñiga, who remained in this role until Margaret's death. Catalina de Zúñiga was the VI Countess of Lemos and had been vicereine of Naples from 1599-1601. Lerma's daughter became VII Countess consort of Lemos by marrying precisely her cousin, Catalina de Zúñiga's son Pedro Fernández de Castro, VII Count of Lemos. A few years after her husband's death, she retired to the convent of the Clarissas they had founded in Monforte de Lemos, Galicia, where she would become a nun in 1634 and would remain until her death in 1648. See Alejandra Franganillo Álvarez, "Catalina de la Cerda y Sandoval." *Diccionario Biográfico, Real Academia de la Historia*. <https://dbe.rah.es/biografias/136891/catalina-de-la-cerda-y-sandoval>.

her love for the late queen (3-4)³⁸. Valcázar's text implies that the queen's exemplary devotion set a role model for the vicereine and that the latter succeeded in following in the queen's footsteps. The rhetorical discourse of praise reveals the notions of paradigmatic behavior associated with women in positions of influence but it also points to the function of these funeral texts as mediums setting exemplary models for female readers. Therefore, Margaret's funeral account aligns in its edifying approach with the goals of other genres, such as biographies or eulogies, and underscores the position of the queen as a woman in court. The account's literary and visual portrait of the queen builds on her role as a representative of her family's prestige, as a saintly woman devoted to charity and the defense of the Catholic faith, or as the vehicle of dynastic and imperial continuity³⁹.

Margaret was the daughter of Archduke Charles II of Austria (1540-1590) and Maria Anna of Bavaria (1551-1608). Hence, she belonged to the branch of the House of Hapsburg that descended from the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I (1503-1564). In contrast, her husband, King Philip III, belonged to the Spanish Hapsburgs, descendants of Ferdinand's brother, Emperor Charles V (Charles I of Spain, 1500-1558). The Neapolitan *relación* describes various decorative elements alluding to these family connections, most notably the double-headed eagle, a symbol of the dynasty. Along with large statues of angels, the catafalque included four Latin inscriptions signaling Margaret's origins and status as queen of Spain. However, the program defines her only in relation to her male relatives. One inscription described her as «Margaret of Austria, daughter of Archduke Charles of Austria, granddaughter of Emperor Ferdinand, wife of King Philip II of Naples and III of Spain» (19)⁴⁰. Another text referred to her as «Margaret of Austria, a descendant of emperors, wife of a king, mother of a king» (19) and then another as a «granddaughter of Caesar», that is, of emperor Ferdinand I (20)⁴¹. Furthermore, the artists reinterpreted three symbols to identify three of her male ancestors: a bouquet of flowers stood for her father; a ship for her grandfather, Emperor Ferdinand, and a sun between clouds embodied Emperor Rudolf, founder of the House of Hapsburg (52-53). The symbols, recreated as emblems with Latin inscriptions, represented the queen's transit and her soul's salvation. Thus, the account mixes the eschatological ideas of the afterlife with the notion of the everlasting memory of the dead, becoming a printed monument honoring not only Margaret but her ancestors as well.

The omission of the female members of Margaret's family unveils the definition of dynastic continuity through the paternal line and the relegation of women

³⁸ «Pero lo que añadió al espectáculo particular autoridad fue la presencia de V.E., en cuya persona, entre las gracias exteriores de que juzga la vista, resplandecían sus virtudes, particularmente la Religión y la Piedad, con las quales mostró V.E. el amor, que tuuo, y hoy tiene a su Majestad.»

³⁹ For additional examples aimed at presenting Margaret as an exemplary women, including Diego de Guzmán's biography, see Sánchez, *The Empress*, 71-77 and Cécile Vincent-Cassy, *Les saintes vierges et martyres dans l'Espagne du XVIIe siècle: culte e image* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2011), 255-259.

⁴⁰ «Margarita Austriacae Caroli Archiducis filiae. Ferdinandi imperatoris nepoti. Filippi Neapolis Regis II. Hispaniarum III. Vxoris».

⁴¹ «Margaritam Austriacam, Imperatorum prolem, Regis uxorem, Regum matrem» and «Margarita ab Austria Hispaniarum Regina, Caesarum nepti, Regum matri».

like Margaret to a secondary role in the narratives of their own lives. Margaret's marriage to Philip III continued the Hapsburgs' strategy of strengthening alliances and expanding their influence over multiple territories. Consequently, the funeral ceremony ensured the presence of all the regions over which both sides of the family ruled through 56 coats of arms adorning the church's central nave. From Castile and the Indies to Naples and Austria, the coats of arms symbolized the power of the Hapsburgs and the political alliance between the two branches of the Hapsburgs favored by Margaret's and Philip III's union.

The reference to Margaret's lineage also certified her noble status and value as a queen capable of ensuring the continuation of the dynasty. Several *impreses* indicated that she had fulfilled her goal as ruler by providing an heir to the throne. One *impresa* summarized this idea in the form of a rose losing its petals but exposing the bud at its center. Valcázar explains that the queen, even though she died, had left the certainty of the Spanish crown to her children, similar to the rose that, after losing her petals, shows «five leaves over the bud as if they were a crown» (87). Likewise, the decorations praised Margaret's fertility, considering her deliverance of eight children and her death due to complications of childbirth. Her motherhood appears frequently in the account through images of plants or trees, such as the fig tree or a vine with the *motto* «*Ut radicem super multas*» alluding to the biblical parable of the spreading vine from Ezequiel 17:4-6 in the Vulgate Bible (23). A *motto* and motif taken from Alciato's *Emblems* were equally used to depict the queen's love for her children, particularly the dove that dies while securing a warm nest for her eggs during the winter (23). The dove's great love for her chicks, or «*prolis amore*», represented Margaret's love and sacrifice for her offspring. Thus, the *impreses* illustrated Margaret's life, and even her death, as embodiments of exemplary commitment to the family's interests. In this funeral portrait, she emerges as a caring and protective mother, but most importantly, as a woman aware of her duties as a queen who accomplished her role impeccably.

Other motifs, such as the moon or the Evening star accompanying the sun, emphasized the queen as a devout wife who embraced her role with humility and utmost respect and loyalty to the king. The *relación* defines her love for the king as only surpassed by her love for God, and multiple images allow the writer to reflect on the queen's pious life. Recurrent images of phoenixes, trees with fruits, birds protecting their eggs, or even bees acquire a symbolic dimension by being associated with the queen's virtues of charity and religious devotion (27 and 49). Throughout the text, she is described as a most pious woman whose life was guided by her dedication to her family and her faith. According to the account, she woke up every day before dawn to pray, liberally helped the poor with alms, and generously supported the church. Since she «always had her thoughts directed to Heaven, without being fond» of material things, she could be considered a saint, a woman whose upright conduct ensured her eternal salvation (31)⁴². The images of pearls are this narrative's ultimate expression. Associated with Margaret's name because of its meaning in Latin, the pearl is the most ubiquitous symbol in the queen's funeral accounts, mostly related to her beauty and

⁴² «... para significar la Santidad de la Reina, y que tuuo siempre sus pensamientos dirigidos al Cielo, sin aficionarse a las cosas de la uida».

spiritual life. Pearls often eclipsed other jewels embellishing the queen's dresses in her portraits as symbols of her lineage and role as a mother⁴³. In Valcázar's view, just like a pearl, when appropriately set, becomes a highly valued jewel adorning the body, Margaret's virtues adorned her spirit and allowed her to triumph over death.

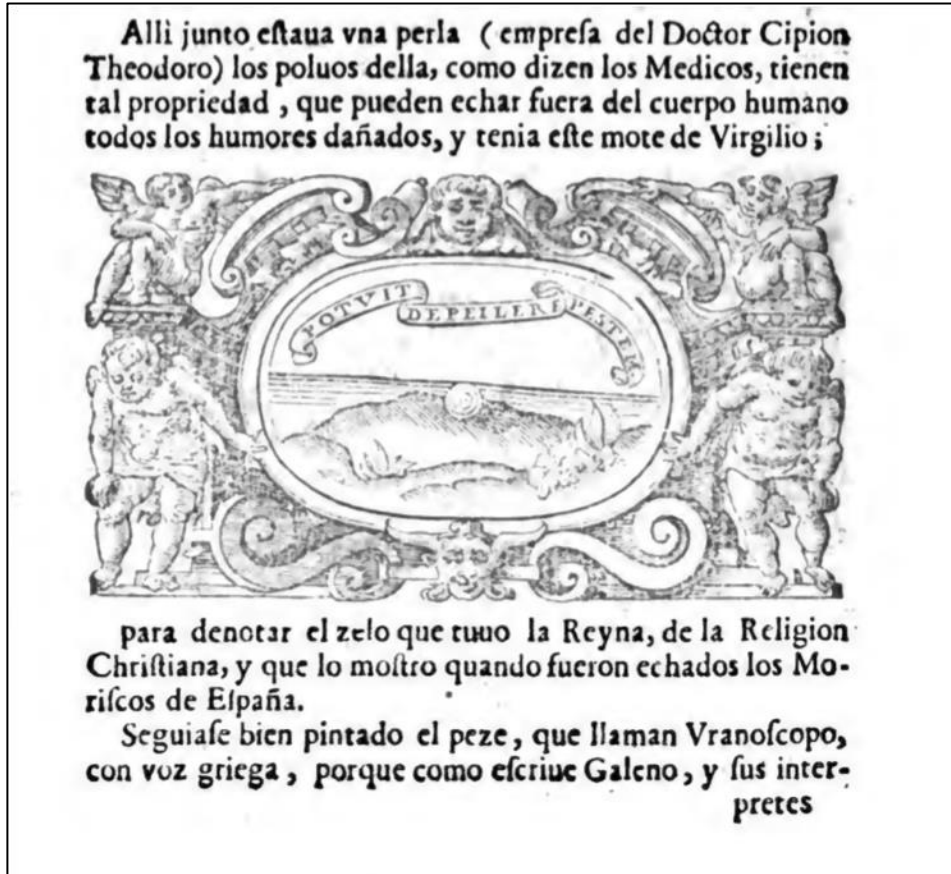


Fig. 5. Juan de Valcázar. *Relacion de las exequias que se celebraron en Napoles*, part I, p. 32, woodcut, size unknown.

In this way, Margaret's depiction adjusts to the standards set for women: it replicates an idealized image of the perfect queen defined by her piety and her ruling

⁴³ Margaret's image is also linked to the famous Crown Jewel called *La Peregrina*. This sizeable pear-shaped pearl belonged to Philip II and became a jewel associated with Spanish queens. Margaret was portrayed wearing this unique pearl on several occasions by Bartolomé González and Juan Pantoja de la Cruz. For an analysis of the connection between the image of the pearl and the idea of pilgrimage derived from Latin etymology see Vincent-Cassy, *Les saintes vierges et martyres*, 259. Regarding the symbolic connotations of the pearls in Margaret's portraits, see María Cruz de Carlos Varona. "Reginalitat i retrat en les corts Felip III i Felip IV / Reginalidad y retrato en las cortes de Felipe III y Felipe IV / Queenship and Portraiture in the Courts of Philip III and Philip IV," in *Anima: Pintar el rostro y el alma*, ed. Pablo González Tornel (Valencia: Museo de Bellas Artes; Ediciones TREA, 2022), 242.

in the private sphere. Margaret's funeral accounts in Naples disregarded any influence she may have exerted in Philip III's government and public life, a subject that recent biographies have reassessed⁴⁴. Only one passage in Valcázar's *relación* points to Margaret's participation in politics (fig. 5). The *impresa* represents a pearl over a rock with a phrase from Book IX of the *Aeneid* (verse 328), «*potuit depellere pestem*», meaning «not by augury could he avert his doom» (32). The accompanying note explains that Margaret demonstrated to be a vigorous defender of religion when the *Moriscos* were expelled from Spain in 1609 and compares her virtue and power to that of pearl dust, used by doctors for their expurgating properties. While the passage alludes to Margaret's influence on the expulsion, the emphasis is not on her abilities as a ruler but on her motivations as a profoundly religious figure. The account's misleading sketch of Margaret as a woman circumscribed to the spheres of religion and domestic affairs justified the inclusion of this brief comment that, paradoxically, offers a glimpse into her active intervention in politics⁴⁵.

The narratives about Margaret's life threaded in her Neapolitan account unveiled the expectations regarding the queen's behavior and responsibilities in the male-dominated space of politics at court. The text proposed an idealized vision of Margaret's life in which her influence in political decision-making is ignored to favor an image of religious piety and subordination to her male counterparts. According to this view, Margaret stood as a paradigm of queenship because of her upright conduct, her devotion to her family, and her faith. The funeral and the printed account functioned thus as a means to promote such a model to be imitated by other women, especially the vicereine, the Countess of Lemos Catalina de la Cerda. At the same time, the funeral account served the purpose of presenting Catalina's husband, Pedro Fernández de Castro, as a man who, in his position of power as viceroy of Naples, responded to the interests of the Spanish Crown but also negotiated successfully with the local artists and the elites.

CONCLUSIONS

The funeral accounts honoring queen Margaret's memory in Florence and Naples trace a narrative of her life that presents her as a figure adorned with the highest virtues. The books reveal the expectations regarding the queen's role and responsibilities and portray Margaret as a paradigm of queenship defined by her devotion to her family and her faith. Both texts perpetuate an idealized vision of Margaret's life in which her influence on political decision-making is nuanced to favor an image associated eminently with religious piety and decision-making in the private sphere. She represents a model for other rulers to imitate while, at the same time, becoming a means of reinforcing political connections between Italian territories and Spain. Like other festival books, the accounts exploit the political implications of

⁴⁴ See Sánchez, *The Empress*.

⁴⁵ Altoviti's account does not mention the expulsion of the *Moriscos*, which could be interpreted as a political statement, since Florence was not a territory under direct Spanish rule.

Margaret's death to highlight the status of their patrons, unveiling the self-fashioning strategies carried out by the Count of Lemos and Grand Duke Cosimo II as protectors of the arts and defenders of interests aligned to those of the Spanish Crown. The queen's death, that is to say, both the beginning of her soul's journey into the afterlife and the memory of her presence among the living, becomes thus an event of political and supernatural significance, a view later reinforced by panegyrists and biographers like Diego de Guzmán. Ultimately, the funeral accounts shed light on the multifaceted connection between death and power across the Spanish empire and the gender distinctions informing commemoration practices in the early modern world.

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