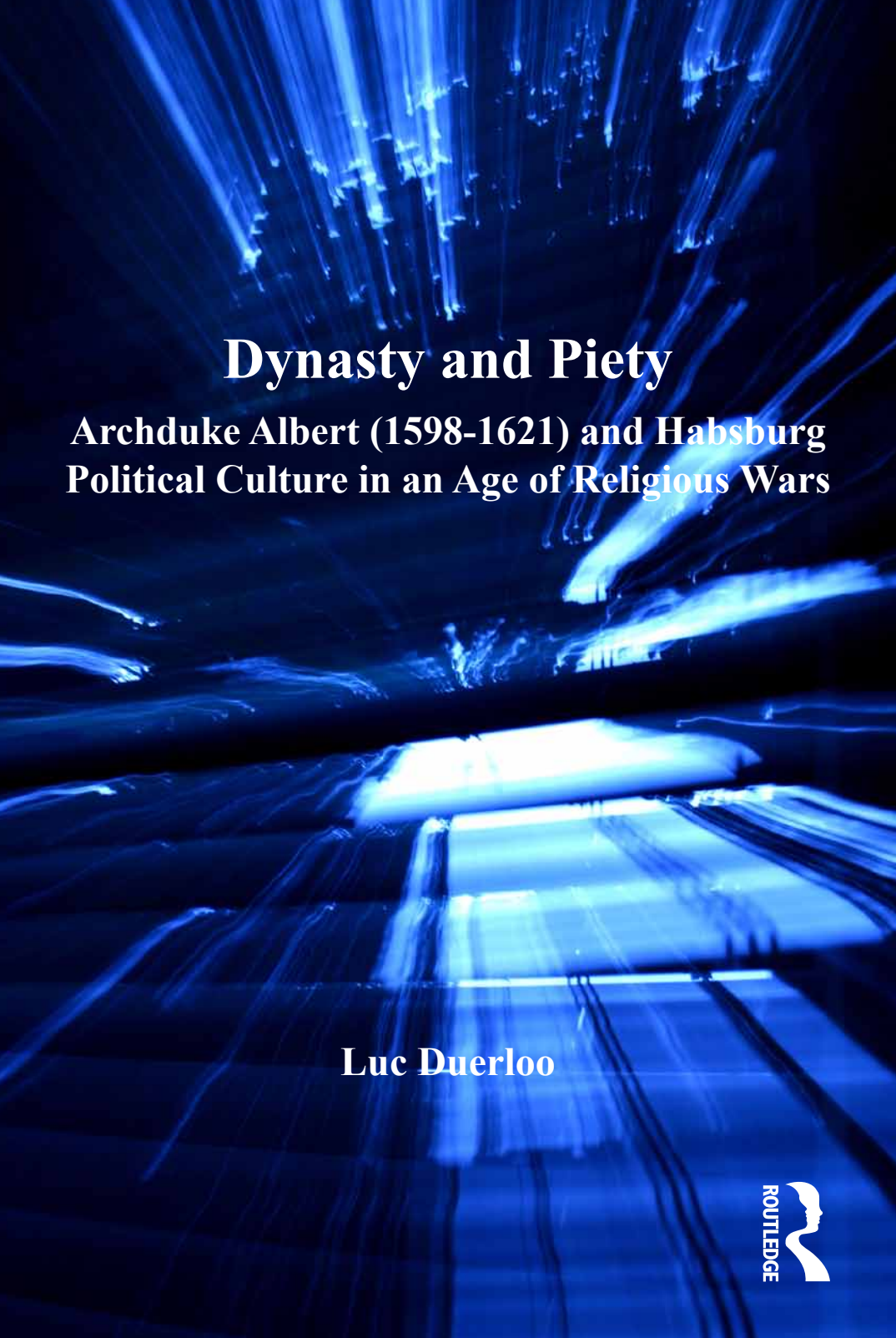

Dynasty and Piety

Archduke Albert (1598-1621) and Habsburg Political Culture in an Age of Religious Wars

Luc Duerloo

ROUTLEDGE

Dynasty and Piety

Winner of the Filips van Marnix van Sint-Aldegonde Prize 2011

The youngest son of Emperor Maximilian II, and nephew of Philip II of Spain, Archduke Albert (1559–1621) was originally destined for the church. However, dynastic imperatives decided otherwise and in 1598, upon his marriage to Philip's daughter, the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia, he found himself ruler of the Habsburg Netherlands, one of the most dynamic yet politically unstable territories in early-modern Europe.

Through an investigation of Albert's reign, this book offers a new and fuller understanding of international events of the time, and the Habsburg role in them. Drawing on a wide range of archival and visual material, the resulting study of Habsburg political culture demonstrates the large degree of autonomy enjoyed by the archducal regime, which allowed Albert and his entourage to exert a decisive influence on several crucial events: preparing the ground for the Anglo-Spanish peace of 1604 by the immediate recognition of King James, clearing the way for the Twelve Years' Truce by conditionally accepting the independence of the United Provinces, reasserting Habsburg influence in the Rhineland by the armed intervention of 1614 and devising the terms of the Oñate Treaty of 1617. In doing so the book shows how they sought to initiate a realistic policy of consolidation benefiting the Spanish Monarchy and the House of Habsburg.

Whilst previous work on the subject has tended to concentrate on either the relationship between Spain and the Netherlands or between Spain and the Empire, this book offers a far deeper and much more nuanced insight in how the House of Habsburg functioned as a dynasty during these critical years of increasing religious tensions. Based on extensive research in the archives left by the archducal regime and its diplomatic partners or rivals, it bridges the gap between the reigns of Philip II and Philip IV and puts research into the period onto a fascinating new basis.

Luc Duerloo is professor of early modern political history at the University of Antwerp, Belgium. He has published on the Habsburgs, the politics of piety and the Belgian nobility.

1 Frans II Pourbus, Portrait of Archduke Albert, 1599.
Albert is cast as sovereign and military commander.
Madrid, Patrimonio nacional, Monasterio de las Descalzas reales.

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Contents

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List of Figures

Preface

I remember exactly where this book originated. It was during one of those long conversations over gin and tonic in the salon of Bedford Gardens. Robert Oresko and I were discussing the Albrecht & Isabella exhibition, a venture that sought to present a new approach to the politics and artistic patronage of the Archducal Court and was held at the Royal Museums for Art and History in Brussels in the fall of 1998. And it was Robert who pointed out that the exhibition called for a monograph on the reign of the Archdukes. Like the exhibition, the book could break new ground by taking the court as its vantage point. It seemed a fairly straightforward project. Quite a bit of research had been done already. So I took the plunge. Little did I know that I would be writing these lines more than a decade later, let alone that Robert – whose encouragement and critical reflections meant so much in the initial stages – would no longer be there to read them.

The original plan was to quarry the largely neglected diplomatic records of the reign for the inside knowledge needed to understand the workings of the court. Quite soon, however, the wealth of that material and the new perspectives that it allowed on the international relations of the early seventeenth century imposed a change of course. Instead of confirming the established idea that the archducal regime operated essentially on the domestic level, I made it my brief to analyse its role in the international arena. The court receded to the background, its place being taken by the August House of Austria. Habsburg history, as I came to understand, is essentially dynastic history, the collective if at times strained enterprise of Europe's leading ruling house to preserve and wherever possible extend its power, to further Tridentine Catholicism as its imperial ideology and to shield its global economic foundations from all too eager interlopers. The Habsburg system revolved round a network of courts, spread out across Europe like a constellation of stars, with the Spanish

court as the brightest of them all. It was held under constant surveillance by the other key players of the day; chiefly, though not solely, the papacy and the French and English monarchies.

The historian tracing the Habsburg past needs an appetite for travel and companions who are willing to put up with a lot. For many years Tonia Dhaese encouraged me to pursue this project, allowing me to leave for research journeys abroad and spend long hours upstairs indulging in or – depending on the moment – toiling over yet another chapter. The pace at which the project grew into a rambling edifice did not make it easy for her. In the course of my quest our sons, Karel-Alexander and Andreas, were taken to places where children their age rarely come: the Palazzo ducale in Mantua, the Lobkovicz collections at Nelahovezes, the Villa Farnese in Caprarola or the *Santa Casa* in Loreto. I guess there must be some pedagogue out there who is shaking his head now, murmuring that this must have done some irretrievable damage. Be that as it may, they have certainly redefined the boundaries of indulgence. One of my fondest memories is the younger of the two asking me when I would be opening another exhibition, because he had really enjoyed going to the reception. Although it is not quite an exhibition I have in store this time, the merriment will be quite the same at the book launch.

It was not for the three of them, but circumstances were not always conducive for research or writing. The polytechnic where I was teaching at the time of the book's inception put little value on research that had no immediate bearing on business studies. Its location in central Brussels enabled me to make frequent – if somewhat stealthy – visits to the archives there, but that was it. Trips to libraries and archives abroad were a matter of my own time and money. A semester off to write was simply out of the question. Fortunately, the situation improved dramatically when I was invited to join the Department of History of the University of Antwerp in 2003. At times exhaustive enumerations may seem overly diplomatic, perhaps even obsequious. Yet one is definitely in order here. With their panoply of talents and engaging personalities, Marnix Beyen, Bruno Blondé, Bert De Munck, Henk De Smaele, Helma De Smedt, Hilde Greefs, Guido Marnef, Tim Soens, Peter Stabel, Herman Van Goethem and Maarten Van Ginderachter have turned the department into a unique and inspiring place to teach and to pursue research. It is such a privilege to work with them. I am particularly grateful for their encouragement and their readiness to allow me to wander off every now and then so that I could write in peace. The many promising researchers that have come to our department contribute in no small measure to its vibrant atmosphere. They will not take it ill when I single out one of them for special thanks. Ever since Dries Raeymaekers agreed to make the Archducal Court the subject of his doctoral dissertation, he has been a trusted sparring partner, never parsimonious on his appreciation nor on his critical comments. The research expedition we

undertook together to explore the holdings of the Vatican is bound to remain one of my fondest memories of the entire project.

My own supervisor, the late Jan Buntinx, taught me the joys of archival research – the coalface of the historical profession – and as such did much to stake out the itinerary of this project. One day an able pen ought to write a *Guide Michelin* to assist the historian roaming foreign archives. The research guides that are presently at our disposal do not prepare us for the sense of history that permeates the rooms and corridors of the castle of Simancas, or for the sudden awareness of succeeding generations of scholars when securing a seat overlooking the Minoritenplatz. Nor do they award stars for the excitement to be found in exploring the high-tech end of archives at Kew or for the privilege of getting the military salute when flashing a reader's ticket of the Secret Vatican Archives to a Swiss guard. Memorable perks indeed, yet at the end of the day it is the archivists and the librarians that make these repositories work. My indebtedness to them is greater than I can possibly express here. While I am painfully aware that naming one is short changing many others, I nevertheless feel compelled to single out the truly Viennese hospitality of Michael Göbl at the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv. Other supportive gestures deserve to be recalled here too. Roger Clark and Robert Oresko enabled me to work through the State Papers at the National Archives by inviting me to mind their house during one of their trips abroad and extending me full library privileges. David Starkey – the father of court history and an unfailing enthusiast of the project – and James Brown let me use their art deco place when I needed to work at the British Library. Though not entirely in the same league, the amenities of the Academia Belgica likewise contributed in no small measure to three successful weeks in Rome.

Writing a monograph takes time and – probably even more – undivided attention. As I have already mentioned, I had the good fortune to benefit from periods in which I could forget about students and meetings and just concentrate on the reign of the Archdukes. In the spring semester of 2008 the School of Historical Studies of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton awarded me the Hans Kohn Membership. The Institute delivered on every single item of its mission. It offered a highly stimulating research atmosphere, top-notch resources and a homely environment at a convenient train ride from Manhattan. In less than a fortnight my output soared. I therefore owe a great deal to Jonathan Israel, the standard bearer of early modern history among the faculty, as well as to my sponsors Immanuel and Vera Kohn. I am no less grateful for the visiting scholarship that the Department of History of Columbia University extended to me in the spring of 2010. While I had covered a lot of ground in the meantime, there were still a few challenging chapters to finish. One of the great powerhouses of American academe, the Butler Library, rarely disappointed me when I was tracking a book that I had almost given up on, or when I needed to check a reference. I am most grateful

to Martha Howell, who pairs enthusiasm to efficiency in an inimitable way, for making it all possible.

Listing all the colleagues and friends – two categories that often overlap – who helped me along with anything from a well-timed pat on the back to unlimited access to pick their brains is simply an impossible task. At the risk of incurring the righteous ire of some others, I can only name a few among those that immediately come to mind. In spite of his many duties, Marc Wingens found the time to read the entire manuscript and fill the margins with pertinent comments and suggestions. Whatever mistakes the reader will still encounter are due to my determination to have it my way every now and then. Others fielded specific and much appreciated skills, for which I owe them. Philippe Delbart has a rare ability to summon books from unexpected places. Staf Janssens, René Vermeir and Hans Cools went well beyond the call of collegial duty when sharing invaluable hints and leads on Spanish and pontifical sources. It was invariably rewarding as well as fun to toss ideas around with David Parrott, Olivier Chaline, Toby Osborne and Jonathan Spangler. Susan Koslow, Cordula van Wyhe née Schumann, Margit Thøfner and Sabine van Sprang kept me on my toes, reminding me of the importance of art for the Archducal Court by sending me their latest publications or alerting me to them. Among those unfailing in their encouragement I have to mention Philip Mansel, Mary Hollingsworth, Malcolm Smuts, Henk van Nierop, Judith Pollmann, Jeffrey Muller, Paul Arblaster, Magdalena Sánchez, Peter Arnade and Antonio Feros. At Ashgate, I could always count on the skills and professionalism of Tom Gray and Sarah Wardill. It takes more than an author and a subject to make a book. This book is no exception.

Writing *Dynasty and Piety* turned out to be a journey of discovery. I first met Jay 'Thore' Santarina in Grand Central Terminal. We have since become spouses. Thore hails from very different fields of interests, yet his companionship, warmth and wisdom have left an unmistakable imprint on this book. Even for us it would be hard to put our finger on it. There is no point in scanning the text or plowing through the footnotes. The reader will look in vain for traces of a dish of adobo with a glass of wine after a long day of writing, followed by a movie on the couch. But believe me, it's in there somewhere and it makes all the difference.

Luc Duerloo
Antwerp – Stamford, CT

List of Abbreviations

ACA	Archief en Cultureel Centrum Arenberg, Edingen
AEL	Archives de l'État à Liège
AGS	Archivo general de Simancas
ARA	Algemeen Rijksarchief, Brussels
ASV	Archivio Segreto Vaticano
Aud	*Audiëntie*
BAV	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
BFZ	Biblioteca Francisco de Zabálburu, Madrid
BHStA	Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv
BK	*Belgische Korrespondenz*
BL	*Barberini Latini*
BN	Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris
BuA	*Briefe und Acten zur Geschichte des Dreissigjährigen Krieges in den Zeiten des vorwaltenden Einflusses der Wittelsbacher*
CCE	*Correspondance de la Cour d'Espagne sur les affaires des Pays-Bas au XVII*ème *siècle*
CIL	*Correspondencia de la infanta archiduquesa Doña Isabel Clara Eugenia de Austria con el duque de Lerma y otros personajes*
CODOIN	*Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*
CVS	*Collection des voyages des souverains des Pays-Bas*
DSS	*Duitse Staatssecretarie*
FA	*Fondo Altamira*
FB	*Fondo Borghese*

HHStA	Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna
KS	*Kastenschwarz*
MsF	*Manuscrits français*
NA	National Archives (formally Public Record Office), London
ÖA	*Österreichische Akten*
PC	Repertorium P, Abteilung C
RSG	*Resolutiën der Staten-Generaal van 1576 tot 1609*
S.l.	Sine loco
SP	*State Papers*
SSF	*Segretaria di Stato, Fiandra*
SSO	*Secretarie van Staat en Oorlog*

To my father and mother
Adriaan Duerloo (1926–2010)
Gerda Maes (1931–2008)

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Introduction

The Most Serene, Highborn Prince and Lord, Lord Albert, Archduke of Austria, Duke of Burgundy, Lothier, Brabant, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, Limburg, Luxembourg, Guelders and Württemberg, Count of Habsburg, Flanders, Tyrol, Artois, Burgundy, Palatine in Hainaut, Holland, Zeeland, Namur and Zutphen, Margrave of the Holy Roman Empire, Lord of Frisia, Salins, Mechlin, the City, Towns and Lands of Utrecht, Overijssel and Groningen, the Oldest Archduke and Common Fief-Holder of the August House of Austria, Knight of the Order of the Golden Fleece, Captain-General of the Catholic King's Army in the Netherlands, and so on, died shortly after midday on Tuesday 13 July 1621 at the Koudenberg Palace in Brussels. His demise led to an outpouring of panegyrics.[1] In one of these, Guillaume de Rebreviettes – a French nobleman and writer on religious subjects – claimed that 'His Most Serene Highness, not wanting that a material tomb was erected in his honour, has left us a mystique tomb that is far more precious and admirable'. He then proceeded to describe this tomb as a pyramid that had 13 steps, each built with a different precious stone. By ascending the 13 flights of stairs, Archduke Albert rose above the planetary orbits. Each landing successively corresponded with the acquisition of one of the three theological virtues, one of the four cardinal virtues and one of six gifts of the Holy Spirit. Beyond the stars and the sphere of the prime mover awaited a true apotheosis in which the deceased was crowned with the crown of immortality.[2] No matter how hyperbolic, the feelings of de Rebreviettes were echoed by a fair number of his

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[1] Jan Papy and Toon Van Houdt, 'The Image of Archduke Albert in Seventeenth-Century Funeral Literature', in Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo (eds), *Albert & Isabella, 1598–1621, Essays* (Turnhout, 1998) pp. 319–34.

[2] [Guillaume de Rebreviettes], *Apothéose chrestienne ou panégyrique sur les grandes vertus du sérénissime archiduc Albert, grand prince des Pays-Bas et de Bourgogne* (Brussels, 1622).

2 *Archduke Albert Ascending the Thirteenth Stair of his Mystique Tomb*, after Guillaume de Rebreviettes, *Apothéose chrestienne …*, 1622. Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek.

contemporaries. Among them was Gilles Waulde – a canon of the collegiate church of St Ursmer at Binche – who had encountered Albert on a number of occasions and whose history of the locally venerated saints described Heaven as the place 'where at present the Most Serene, pacific, most devout and just Archduke Albert has arrived with St Ursmer and his companions'.[3]

The overwrought language of the panegyric proved ephemeral, the assurances of apotheosis elusive. There was no crown of immortality awaiting Albert. Once praised by King James VI and I as the oracle of the House of Habsburg, Albert has since sunk to the level of a largely unknown quantity in early seventeenth-century politics and international relations.[4] He has never been the subject of a monograph in English – a distinctly safer road to lasting scholarly notoriety than baroque panegyrics. He did get a lengthy, if rather stereotypical, treatment in the sweeping and romantic monograph that Miss L. Klingenstein devoted to his spouse, the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia, back in 1910.[5] The fact that this book was republished without further ado after a century should not, however, be misconstrued into a quality label. It merely illustrates the way that copyright laws interplay with a clear need in the scholarly community. Readers of other languages do not fare any better. The French counterpart to Klingenstein's work by Countess Marie Hennequin de Villermont came off the press in 1912.[6] Alike in title as well as in its rhetorical treatment of the subject, the book is still being quoted for lack of a better alternative. Two years earlier the accession of Albert I and Elisabeth as King and Queen of the Belgians inspired a number of publications on their namesakes and predecessors, the Archdukes Albert and Isabella. Echoing the visceral ideological battles between clericals and anticlericals that pervaded Belgian political life at the time, they would either describe their reign in the most glowing of terms as a victory for Catholicism or denounce it as a time of religious oppression and bigotry.[7] The one exception was published by

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[3] Gilles Waulde, *La vie et miracles de St Ursmer et de sept autres saints avec la chronique de Lobbes* (Mons, 1628) p. 509.

[4] NA, *SP* 77/13/2, fol. 267: Doncaster to Naunton, 9 June 1619 ns.

[5] L. Klingenstein, *The Great Infanta Isabel, Sovereign of the Netherlands* (London, 1910).

[6] Marie [Hennequin] de Villermont, *L'infante Isabelle: Gouvernante des Pays-Bas* (2 vols, Tamines and Paris, 1912).

[7] The title of Ernest Discailles, *La légende des bons souverains: Les archiducs Albert et Isabelle* (Brussels, 1910) speaks for itself, while every page of Henri Lonchay, 'Philippe II et le mariage des archiducs Albert et Isabelle', Académie royale de Belgique, *Bulletin de la Classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques et de la Classe des beaux-arts*, 5ème série, 12 (1910): pp. 364–88 simply oozes the Black Legend. See Denis Diagre, 'L'archiduc Albert, souverain-modèle ou ange exterminateur?', in Anne Morelli (ed.), *Les grands mythes de l'histoire de Belgique, de Flandre et de Wallonie* (Brussels, 1995) pp. 117–28, and Werner Thomas, 'La Corte de los archiduques Alberto de Austria y la infanta Isabel Clara Eugenia en Bruselas, 1598–1633: Una revisión historiográfica', in Ana Crespo Solana and Manuel Herrero Sánchez (eds), *España y las 17 provincias de los Países Bajos: Una revisión historiográfica, XVI–XVIII*, Estudios de historia moderna: Colección maior, 22 (2 vols, Córdoba, 2002) vol. 1, pp. 359–61.

Victor Brants.[8] A volume of insightful essays on selected topics, it notably stimulated research on the role of the archdukes in the propagation of the Catholic Reformation in the Habsburg Netherlands, but did not result in a fully fledged monograph.[9]

It is not for the want of subject matter though, nor for a general lack of relevance to the momentous events of the early seventeenth century. The younger son of an emperor and the brother of two more, brother-in-law to two successive kings of Spain – while at the same time the nephew of the first and the uncle of the other – Albert was, from the start of his political apprenticeship at the age of 20 to the time of his death four decades later, constantly involved in high level decision making among the Habsburgs. In the course of those years he rose from viceroy of the newly acquired kingdom of Portugal to governor-general and finally co-sovereign of the Habsburg Netherlands. He commanded armies in the field and directed several sieges, meeting with success as well as failure. At the Battle of Nieuwpoort, he came face to face with death. Subsequently forced to surrender the tactical command of the Army of Flanders, Albert kept on supervising matters of strategy, the appointment of cadres and the endless challenges of logistics and subsidies. It was not, however, as a warrior prince, but as a peacemaker that Albert gained the esteem of his fellow rulers. His conciliatory stance in the negotiations leading to the Peace of Vervins with Henry IV of France, the Treaty of London with James VI and I and the Twelve Years' Truce with the United Provinces was not wasted on his contemporaries. It gained him the reputation of a pacific prince, a reputation that would prove an asset during the ensuing crises over the succession in the Rhenish duchies of Jülich, Kleve and Berg. Whereas these elements of the narrative can still be more or less gleaned from the existing literature, Albert's involvement in the affairs of the Holy Roman Empire and of the Austrian Habsburgs has been largely ignored. Yet his ambition to succeed his brother Rudolf II as emperor acted as the catalyst that triggered the *Bruderzwist* between Rudolf and his eventual successor Matthias.[10] In a similar vein, his demands eventually found their way into the Oñate Treaty. His immediate response to the Bohemian Revolt contributed in no small measure to saving the Crown of St Wenceslaus for the dynasty. This book sets out to

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[8] Victor Brants, *La Belgique au XVIIe siècle: Albert et Isabelle: Études d'histoire politique et sociale* (Louvain and Paris, 1910).

[9] Alexandre Pasture, *La restauration religieuse aux Pays-Bas Catholiques sous les archiducs Albert et Isabelle, 1596–1633, principalement d'après les Archives de la Nonciature et de la Visite ad limina*, Recueil de travaux publiés par les membres des conférences d'histoire et de philologie, 2ème série, 3 (Louvain, 1925), and Hendrik Josef Elias, *Kerk en staat in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden onder de regeering der aartshertogen Albrecht en Isabella, 1598–1621*, Recueil de travaux publiés par les membres des conférences d'histoire et de philologie, 2de reeks, 22 (Antwerpen, 1931).

[10] Luc Duerloo, 'Der ehrgeizige Jüngste: Erzherzog Albrecht und die Nachfolge Rudolfs II.', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für* österreichische *Geschichtsforschung*, 118 (2010): pp. 103–39.

integrate the various strains of Albert's actions into a coherent narrative that will clarify his role in the international arena of the final years of the sixteenth and the opening decades of the seventeenth centuries.

Any such endeavour is tributary to the impulse that a generation of Anglo-American historians gave to the study of early modern Spain from the 1960s onwards. Foremost among them is Sir John H. Elliott, who once revealed that his interest in the decline of Spanish power in the seventeenth century had been kindled by witnessing the decline of that other empire on which the Sun never set. His work has brought about a fundamental reappraisal of the composite Spanish monarchy in the reign of King Philip IV. He is also to be credited with having set his student Geoffrey Parker on the trail of the Spanish Road and of the Prudent King who struggled to maintain the war effort in the Low Countries by toiling well into the night over memoranda in the solitary study of one of the royal residences in and around Madrid. Between the two of them, the works of Elliott and Parker cover the opening decades and the final stages of the Eighty Years' War, the conflict that did more than any other to bring down Habsburg hegemony in Europe. It was not until the 1990s, however, that the intervening decades of the reign of Philip III became a subject in their own right.[11] Building on the insights of the Anglo-American tradition, Bernardo José García García broached the policy of pacification that is traditionally ascribed to Don Francisco Gómez de Sandoval y Rojas, duke of Lerma.[12] The *valimiento* of the duke was reconsidered by Antonio Feros and Patrick Williams.[13] Magdalena S. Sánchez portrayed the influence of three women of power close to the throne.[14] Key issues of the present study were furthermore treated by Paul C. Allen in his book on the grand strategy of Philip III, by Alison Deborah Anderson for the succession crisis in Jülich and Kleve, and by Alicia Esteban Estríngana for the finances of the Army of Flanders and the end of the archducal regime.[15] Through the efforts of these and a number

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[11] Luis Salas Almela, 'Realeza, valimiento y poder: En torno a las últimas aportaciones sobre el reinado de Felipe III', *Hispania: Revista española de historia*, 70 (2010): pp. 165–79. I am grateful to Antonio Feros for drawing my attention to this review article.

[12] Bernardo José García García, *La Pax Hispanica: Política exterior del Duque de Lerma*, Avisos de Flandes, 5 (Louvain, 1996).

[13] Antonio Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism in the Spain of Philip III, 1598–1621*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern History (Cambridge, 2000); Patrick Williams, *The Great Favourite: The Duke of Lerma and the Court and Government of Philip III of Spain, 1598–1621* (Manchester, 2006).

[14] Magdalena S. Sánchez, *The Empress, the Queen and the Nun: Women and Power at the Court of Philip III of Spain*, The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, 116th series, 2 (Baltimore and London, 1998).

[15] Paul C. Allen, *Philip III and the Pax Hispanica, 1598–1621: The Failure of Grand Strategy* (New Haven and London, 2000); Alison Deborah Anderson, *On the Verge of War: International Relations and the Jülich-Kleve Succession Crisis, 1609–1614*, Studies in Central European Histories (Boston, 1999); Alicia Esteban Estríngana, *Guerra y finanzas en los Países Bajos católicos: De Farnesio a Spínola, 1592–1630* (Madrid, 2002); Idem, *Madrid y Bruselas: Relaciones de gobierno en la etapapostarchiducal, 1621–1634*, Avisos de Flandes, 10 (Louvain, 2005).

of other scholars, the times of the Pious Philip III have emancipated from a neglected and often caricaturized interlude that was sandwiched between the glorious reigns of the Prudent King and of the Planet King, to a worthy subject.

Unfortunately, the picture that has emerged so far lacks a convincing view on the archducal regime in the Habsburg Netherlands. Established ideas simply do not square with what comes out of archival research. The tension between the two becomes particularly noticeable whenever Allen, in his *Pax Hispanica*, resorts to phrases such as 'the archduke continued to act unilaterally to protect his own', 'Albert was once again taking matters into his own hands' or 'as usual, however, the archduke had moved rapidly to undercut the Spanish position'.[16] He employs these to rationalize Albert's failure to slavishly execute the policies set forth by Madrid as a way of indulging in a personal agenda. Yet marking it down as mere self-serving contrariness would be missing the point. The real issue here concerns the sovereignty of Albert and Isabella. The archdukes ruled as the designated heirs of the Austro-Burgundian composite state. Their court was reputed for its particular splendour.[17] Their ambassadors and resident envoys were received with all due honours by their fellow princes. The papacy, the kings of Spain, France and – as of 1604 – England had permanent diplomatic representatives in Brussels. Judging by these standards, few contemporaries would have found any fault with calling them sovereign princes. The dissenting view was advocated by the United Provinces. Pamphlets published in the Republic were quick to claim that the archducal regime was nothing more than a facade, obscuring Spanish designs to subdue the freedom-loving Dutch by deceit after all attempts to vanquish them by the force of arms had failed.[18]

Modern historians have drawn similar conclusions. In a series of articles published between 1923 and 1930, Joseph Lefèvre qualified the Archducal Netherlands as 'abnormal' since they were 'neither an independent state, nor a province of the Spanish Monarchy'. The anomaly, he argued, resided in the regime's dependence on the Spanish Army of Flanders for its defence and in

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16 Allen, *Philip III and the Pax Hispanica*, pp. 79, 82 and 111.

17 Dries Raeymaekers, *'Siempre un pie en palacio': Het hof en de hofhouding van de aartshertogen Albrecht en Isabella, 1598–1621* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, UniversiteitAntwerpen, 2009) pp. 162–73.

18 See *Copie van zekeren brief geschreven by een van qualiteyt aan den abt van N. wesende tot Brussel: Ende van de dotatie ofte cessie der Nederlanden aen de Infante van Spaignen, met de annotatien op de zelve, mede-brenghende int kort het voornemen van den Spaenschen raet, tot waerschouwinge van alle vrome liefhebbers der Nederlantsche rechten en de vrijheden* (S.l., 1599), and the rhymed *Toets ofte proef-steen aengaende het placcaet van de doorluchtighe Isabella Clara Eugenia, Infante van Spangien ende souvereyn princesse over de verheerde Nederlanden, onlancx uutghegaen: Of de coninck Philips haer vaeder, soo goedertieren ende lieffelyck met de Nederlanden by-sonder met die van Hollandt ende Zeelandt ghehandelt heeft, als sy daer in verhaelt* (S.l., s.a.). See also: Bram De Ridder, *'Le vray chemin pour parvenir à une bonne et solide paix': De Akte van Afstand als pacificatiestrategie tijdens de Nederlandse Opstand, 1597–1600* (unpublished master's dissertation, KULeuven, 2011) pp. 76–80.

the tutelage exercised by the so called Spanish ministry, a group of officials that was meant to ensure that Brussels adhered closely to the policies set forth by Madrid.[19] In the eyes of someone writing at the zenith of the sovereign nation state, such restrictions stood in the way of the supreme authority that a truly independent polity was supposed to exercise. Dubbing this the 'total Spanish domination school', the diplomatic historian Charles Howard Carter offered an alternative interpretation of the status of the archducal regime. He refused to be drawn on the dichotomy of domination and independence, and instead proposed 'it all depends' as a formula to encapsulate a regime that had to operate with varying degrees of autonomy.[20] Subsequently Hugo De Schepper and Geoffrey Parker pooled their expertise to stake out the respective spheres of influence of Brussels and Madrid. They determined that the judiciary – with the significant exception of military justice – fell within the exclusive sphere of the archducal regime. Finances were handled by competing institutions depending on whether the money originated from the Netherlands or from Spain. Matters of religion and international trade were a joint responsibility, while foreign policy and defence were said to have been entirely in the hands of the Spanish crown.[21] Even if neither of these articles used the actual term, the situation they described was basically that of a protectorate.

This approach still serves as the frame of reference today. It does pose some nagging difficulties though. As mentioned above, it offers no satisfactory explanation for the liberties that Albert took – repeatedly and with impunity – regarding Madrid's instructions in military and diplomatic affairs. It moreover adheres implicitly to the classical vision of sovereignty, as formulated by Emerich de Vattel in the middle of the eighteenth century. Such an approach was already anachronistic in Lefèvre's days, since it measured the international status of the archducal regime with the standards of a later epoch. It has become even more anachronistic now. Sovereignty has moved on since the days when the monolithic nation state was imposed as the panacea for all ills at the peace conferences of Versailles, Saint-Germain and Trianon. Rather like the Archducal Netherlands, many European states are now part of a permanent military alliance that makes them largely dependent on the protection accorded by a power from overseas. Rather like the Archducal Netherlands, that state

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[19] Joseph Lefèvre, 'Les ambassadeurs d'Espagne à Bruxelles sous le règne de l'archiduc Albert, 1598–1621', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 2 (1923): pp. 61–80 (with the quote from p. 80); Idem, 'Le ministère espagnol de l'archiduc Albert', *Bulletin de l'Académie royale d'archéologie de Belgique*, 1 (1924): pp. 202–24; Idem, 'Don Juan de Mancicidor secrétaire d'État et de guerre de l'archiduc Albert', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 4 (1925): pp. 697–714; Idem, 'Les châtelains militaires espagnols des Pays-Bas à l'époque de l'archiduc Albert, 1598–1621', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 9 (1930): pp. 831–52.

[20] Charles Howard Carter, 'Belgian "Autonomy" under the Archdukes, 1598–1621', *The Journal of Modern History*, 36 (1964): pp. 245–59.

[21] Hugo De Schepper and Geoffrey Parker, 'The Formation of Government Policy in the Catholic Netherlands under "the Archdukes", 1596–1621', *The English Historical Review*, 91 (1976): pp. 241–54.

of dependency comes with strings attached in the diplomatic arena. When tensions run high with outside powers, all sorts of restrictions on trade have to be observed. Special relationships among these allies have dragged some of them into quarrels that were definitely not their own. Although this state of affairs has prevailed for over 60 years now, few if any are suggesting that these countries should not be treated as sovereign anymore because they have surrendered so many of their powers. The public debate has merely shifted to the question of how much more sovereignty these states might be willing to cede to international organizations in order to address security, economic or environmental issues. Political scientists are challenging the classical concept of sovereignty, arguing that its principles have chiefly been honoured in the breach.[22] Historians should reconsider their frames of reference too.[23]

When it comes to the Archducal Netherlands, most of the available literature fails to see the analogy. This book has therefore been written on the assumption that the Habsburg Netherlands should for all intents and purposes be considered a sovereign state during the reign of the Archdukes Albert and Isabella, albeit a state that had to operate within the typical constraints of a middling power. Even after the secession of the northern provinces of the Low Countries and the waves of emigration from the southern, the archdukes could still boast slightly over one million obedient subjects. That figure put them somewhere in the pecking order between the kings of Denmark and the kings of Scotland. In spite of the ravages wrought by decades of civil war, the Habsburg Netherlands compared favourably to many regions in terms of density of the population, the level of urbanization and the industriousness of the citizenry. Within the old boundaries, only Amsterdam had outgrown Brussels and Antwerp. The southern economy had suffered tremendously, though not fatally, as its resilience would amply demonstrate during the Twelve Years' Truce.[24] Forced to reckon with the restrictions imposed by the depressed situation, the Court of Brussels saw its room for manoeuvre in the international arena still further constrained by the hostility of more powerful neighbours. At the accession of Albert and Isabella, the United Provinces considered the restoration of dynastic rule in the south a permanent threat to their political liberties and to the survival of the Reformed religion. The Dutch leadership had not quite abandoned the ambition to free the suffering population from Spanish tyranny and its hispanicized henchmen. Bourbon France was rapidly regaining strength after decades of religious wars. Just

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22 Stephen D. Krasner, 'Rethinking the Sovereign State Model', *Review of International Studies*, 27 (2001): pp. 17–42.

23 Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400–1900* (Cambridge, 2010).

24 Denis Morsa, 'Een ongeluks eeuw?', in Paul Janssens (ed.), *België in de 17de eeuw: De Spaanse Nederlanden en het prinsbisdom Luik* (2 vols, Brussels, 2006) vol. 1, pp. 100–133; Raymond Van Uytven, 'Landschap en milieu', in Janssens (ed.), *België in de 17de eeuw*, vol. 2, pp. 223–79.

as much as his Valois predecessors, the new king was determined by reasons of state to break out of the Habsburg encirclement. In England, on the other hand, the change of dynasty ushered in a climate of detente. It was, however, frequently marred by differences over religion and by the seditious activities of exiles living in the Habsburg Netherlands. Much as the archducal regime might have wanted to distance itself more from the Spanish monarchy, circumstances left it with no choice. Then again, the nature of its special relationship with its close dynastic ally and patron was not as one sided as is commonly assumed. Every alliance has its own characteristics, the shared interests or values that make it work. In the case at hand, dynasty and piety, the ties of blood and the shared zeal for the Catholic Reformation, played a determining role. All of this merits being explored in a separate chapter, which will propose an alternative frame of reference.

Middling powers constitute a vague category, lacking clear boundaries. Intuitively they are understood to encompass states that are too small to compete singlehandedly with the great powers, but too big to be ignored completely. In practical terms they are the lesser states that great powers prefer to have on board as allies in times of conflict. The standard historical narrative keeps them in some sort of limbo, summoning them forth – to use the words of Prufrock – 'to swell a progress, start a scene or two'. Such treatment is consistent with a grand narrative that pictures early modern international relations as the inevitable transition from hegemony to the balance of power. The underlying paradigm is one imbued with progress and Darwinism. It does not tarry long with those states that are presumed to be on the receiving end, let alone enquire into their aims and ambitions or their – admittedly somewhat fraught – quest for coherent policies. Yet middling powers at times lead their mightier patrons to entanglements that are not of their own choosing, as the Court of Madrid was to experience in its dealings with that of Munich over the future of the Palatinate. For that reason alone, they should not be discarded as a subject that lacks interest, or will therefore not sell. This is particularly true for that sweep of middling powers that ran from the Low Countries to Northern Italy and served as the foremost zone of confrontation between the Habsburg and the French monarchies. As the late Robert Oresko never got tired of arguing, understanding ducal houses such as the Lorraine and Savoy, the Mantuans and Bavarians, is a critical step towards understanding the system of early modern international relations.[25] It should merely be added that the Archducal Netherlands were very much in the same league.

[25] Robert Oresko, 'The House of Savoy in Search of a Royal Crown in the Seventeenth Century', in Robert Oresko, G.C. Gibbs and Hamish M. Scott (eds), *Royal and Republican Sovereignty in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Memory of Ragnild Hatton* (Cambridge, 1997) pp. 272–350; Idem and David Parrott, 'Reichsitalien im Dreissigjährigen Krieg', in Klaus Bußmann and Heinz Schilling (eds), *1648: Krieg und Frieden in Europa* (3 vols, Münster and Osnabrück, 1998) vol. 1, pp. 141–60.

In order to fully make its points on archducal sovereignty and on middling powers, this monograph deals with a subject that is routinely considered non-existent: the foreign policy of the Court of Brussels during the reign of Albert and Isabella. In spite of the habitual denial that there was any such thing, archival sources document it to abundance. A multitude of diplomatic papers, consisting of instructions and reports of the archducal envoys abroad, has been preserved in the archives of Brussels and Vienna. The correspondence of the foreign ambassadors and their secretaries accredited to the Court of Brussels awaits the historian in the Vatican, Simancas, Paris, London and Munich. Apart from Charles H. Carter, few have taken up the challenge of working their way through these voluminous and scattered sources. The organization of the records on the archducal side revealed four significant characteristics. First of all, the diplomatic correspondence was handled by several secretaries of state, depending on the language in which the other court was usually addressed. The Secretary attached to the Council of State and Privy Council wrote in Latin to the Holy See, in French to France, England and Lorraine, and in Dutch to the United Provinces. The Secretary of State and War handled the correspondence with Spain. The Secretary of State for Germany was in charge of the Holy Roman Empire – including Northern Italy – as well as Scandinavia and Poland. Meanwhile Albert's Cabinet Secretary, Antonio Suárez de Arguello, received parallel dispatches from diplomats abroad. Most of these eventually found their way to the papers of the German Secretariat of State. Secondly, levels of available research into these archival collections are quite uneven. The correspondence preserved in the Secretariat of State and War has been calendared.[26] In keeping with the established idea that the archducal regime was little more than an adjunct to the Spanish monarchy, it has been scrutinized time and again. The papers of the Secretary of the Council of State and Privy Council have been split up rather arbitrarily. A large part of the diplomatic correspondence concerning France and England was evacuated to Vienna at the end of the eighteenth century. It now constitutes the *Registratur Alberts und Isabellas* of the section *Belgien* in the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv.[27] The documents left behind in Brussels have been incorporated into the collections of the *Audiëntie*.[28] The latter have been used for a few – mostly outdated – studies.[29] The archives of Vienna remain

[26] Arthur Gaillard and Emile De Breyne, *Inventaire sommaire des archives de la Secrétarie d'État et de guerre* (Brussels, 1906); *Correspondance de la Cour d'Espagne sur les affaires des Pays-Bas au XVII*ème *siècle*, Henri Lonchay, Joseph Cuvelier, et al. (eds) (6 vols, Brussels, 1923–37).

[27] Ludwig Bittner (ed.), *Gesamtinventar des Wiener Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchivs: Aufgebaut auf der Geschichte des Archivs und seiner Bestände*, Inventare der Wiener Haus-, Hof- undStaatsarchivs, 5 (5 vols, Vienna, 1938–40) vol. 4, p. 245.

[28] Harald Deceulaer, *Inventaris van het kernarchief van de Audiëntie, 1344–1744* (Brussels, 2008); Edgar de Marneffe, *Inventaire sommaire des papiers d'État et de l'Audience* (Brussels, 1906).

[29] Paul Henrard, *Henri IV et la princesse de Condé, 1609–1610* (Brussels and Paris, 1885); Leopold Willaert, 'Negociations politico-religieuses entre l'Angleterre et les Pays-Bas

to be explored to the full. The same can be said for the German Secretariat of State. The proficiency in palaeography needed to study these records has deterred many.[30] Not surprisingly, it has recently proven a treasure house for the intrepid.[31] Only by combining all of these diplomatic sources can a more convincing picture of the archducal regime emerge.

Thirdly, the entire configuration pointed towards the dominant role that Albert took in the formulation of foreign policy. The flow of information was not diverted to the archducal favourite Don Rodrigo Niño y Lasso, Count of Añover, nor to a seasoned minister such as Jean Richardot, a trusted general of the stature of Ambrogio Spínola, a patronizing Spanish ambassador like Don Baltasar de Zúñiga or a stern confessor named Fray Iñigo de Brizuela. Every bit in emulation of Albert's uncle and mentor Philip II, it converged on the archduke's cabinet. Just as hesitant and prudent when making up his mind, he would consult with the favourite, the minister, the general, the ambassador and the confessor, but in the end the decision would be his to take. Fourthly, and finally, there was Isabella, or rather there was not. Her near absence from the sources is most frustrating to the contemporary historian. Apart from some formal letters dictated by protocol and her more lively than consistently political correspondence with Lerma, there is hardly anything to go by.[32] This is the quandary. Here is a princess who had been introduced to the mysteries of statecraft by her father. Who proved an energetic regent in her widowhood. And yet as a ruling spouse she almost never showed her hand in the affairs of state. In the public eye 'she delighteth much in rurall pastimes, he in devotion and managing of affaires'.[33] What the public – or for that matter the historian – could not observe was how the archducal couple discussed the political situation when they withdrew after lunch, on their walks through the park or on their outings in the countryside. Occasionally the sources allow a glimpse of what went on. These instances have been duly incorporated, but are too

catholiques, 1598–1625, d'après les papiers État et de l'Audience conservés aux Archives générales du Royaume de Belgique à Bruxelles', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 6 (1905): pp. 47–54, 566–81 and 811–26; 7 (1906): pp. 585–607; 8 (1907): pp. 81–101, 305–11 and 514–32; 9 (1908): pp. 52–61 and 736–45; L.V. Goemans, 'Het Belgische gezantschap te Rome onder de regeering der aartshertogen Albrecht en Isabella, 1600–1633', *Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis bijzonderlijk van het aloude hertogdom Brabant*, 6 (1907): pp. 3–14, 70–82, 145–53, 228–39, 257–79, 403–16 and 524–32; 7 (1908): pp. 66–84, 181–93, 206–12, 255–70, 350–58, 459–73, 505–18 and 574–80; 8 (1909): pp. 5–11, 88–100, 237–54 and 361–78; Thomas Roggeman, *Nu zijn wij dan goede vrienden! Intergouvernementele betrekkingen tussen de Verenigde Provinciën en de Zuidelijke Nederlanden tijdens het Twaalfjarig Bestand, 1609–1621* (unpublished master's thesis, Universiteit Gent, 2008).

30 Éduard Laloire, *Inventaire des archives de la Secrétarie d'État allemande* (Brussels, 1929).

31 For instance, Monique Weis, *Les Pays-Bas espagnols et les états du Saint-Empire, 1559–1579: Priorités et enjeux de la diplomatie en temps de troubles* (Brussels, 2003).

32 *Correspondencia de la infanta archiduquesa Doña Isabel Clara Eugenia de Austria con el duque de Lerma y otros personajes*, Antonio Rodríguez Villa (ed.), (Madrid, 1906).

33 NA, *SP* 77/11/1, fol. 33: Trumbull to Winwood, 24 April 1614 ns.

few and far between to permit generalizations. Only a massive amount of conjecture could overcome that hurdle.

The archival sources used for this monograph set it apart from those that have studied the archducal regime through the distorting mirror of the Spanish *Consejo de Estado* or Council of State. Operating at the hub of the Spanish monarchy, the councillors had unrivalled access to information, even when hampered by a considerable time-lag. Yet their real limitation lay – as Magdalena Sánchez has rightly suggested in her article on the Oñate Treaty – in basically keeping to what they were appointed to do, namely minding the interests of the monarchy.[34] It is generally accepted that the interests of a composite monarchy as a whole did not necessarily coincide with those of its constituent parts. It is, for instance, well known that Spain's policy to continue the war with the Dutch levied a heavy toll on the Portuguese overseas empire. What is usually not understood, and may sound quite paradoxical at first, is that the interests of a monarchy need not always correspond with those of the monarch, let alone with those of his dynasty. Philip III was not only the King of Spain; he was just as much the head of the House of Habsburg. In the latter capacity, he had to consider a whole array of interests that were quite often at odds with those of the kingdoms and principalities under his rule. Thus – to add one more example – it made perfect sense for the Council of State to raise objections to Albert being elected emperor and to sum up how it could damage the interests of Spain. The advice did not, however, dissuade Philip from supporting his brother-in-law's candidacy in what he deemed to be the overriding dynastic interest.[35] This is one of the overarching arguments of the monograph. There was a strong – and often overlooked – dynastic dimension to Habsburg grand policy. As rulers of composite monarchies, the kings of Spain in Madrid, the emperors in Prague or Vienna, the Archdukes Albert and Isabella in Brussels and the ruling archdukes in Innsbruck and Graz, as well as their respective councillors, were constantly balancing off those interests common to all of their provinces with those particular to one or some. This was indeed the realm of the *Consejo de Estado*, the Imperial *Geheime Rat* and the kindred councils at the other Habsburg courts. By extension, this has become the realm of mainstream research. Consciously or not, concentrating on these domestic factors alone confines the subject to the anachronistic horizons of the emerging national states. In order to get the full picture, the dynastic interest needs to be taken into account as well.

The true or perceived hegemony exercised by the House of Austria in the European arena ultimately depended on the unison and cooperation of all of its reigning members. In the period under consideration, the dynasty was about to learn that lesson the hard way. The divisions laid bare during the

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[34] Magdalena S. Sánchez, 'A House Divided: Spain, Austria, and the Bohemian and Hungarian Succession', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 25 (1994): pp. 887–903.

[35] Duerloo, 'Der ehrgeizige Jüngste', p. 113.

Bruderzwist convinced its rivals that it had become vulnerable, an impression that was to have devastating effects. Here again, common factors could be distinguished from particular. For the dynasty as a whole, it was imperative to defend its holdings and, whenever the occasion presented itself, to extend them. Maintaining its *reputación* – that intangible but indispensable capital in international politics – demanded continuous attention.[36] The particular, on the other hand, changed in accordance with the lifecycles of the various members of the August House. Infantes and archdukes needed to be provided for.[37] They were entitled to revenues befitting their station. Those designated to rule sought appropriate brides. Those who were not often pursued benefices in the *Germania sacra*. Some had children, some did not. The numbers tell their own story. When the future Emperor Charles V was declared of age in 1515, there were only three archdukes. At the time of his abdication in 1555, there were nine. Four years later Albert's birth brought the figure to 11. Numbers fluctuated in the course of his lifetime, falling back to nine in the opening years of his reign in the Netherlands and rising to 15 in 1612. The second half of the 1610s brought rapid decline, with Albert's death reducing the circle of archdukes to eight. Meanwhile the proliferation of male heirs had put considerable stress on the dynasty's resources, not least because it had yet to establish the principle of primogeniture in some of its possessions.[38] Their sisters, the infantas and archduchesses, were generally destined to marry royalty or at the very least within a restricted circle of ducal sovereign families. Their unions served the dynastic interest by sealing peace treaties, renewing alliances or strengthening the ties between the branches of the August House. In their widowhood, they might be called upon to act as vicereine or governess. Others preferred the solitude of the monastery. Until 1606 the archduchesses invariably outnumbered the archdukes. As of that date the figures were more or less equal. Within the span of Albert's lifetime their number ranged from 17 in 1590 to nine at the time of his death. In either case the dynasty suffered from abundance rather than shortage. Dowries were a delicate and costly matter of *reputación*. The marriage market was shrinking due to the extinction of some royal houses and the conversion to Protestantism of others. Particular care was called for when selecting a husband for one of the infantas, as the offspring might one day claim the Spanish inheritance. As this book aims to demonstrate, a whole array of dynastic contingencies were a constant feature of Habsburg grand policy.

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[36] John H. Elliott, 'A Question of Reputation? Spanish Foreign Policy in the Seventeenth Century', *Journal of Modern History*, 55 (1983): pp. 475–83.

[37] All members of the House of Habsburg bore the title of archduke or archduchess. The younger sons and the daughters of the King of Spain were, however, known by the title of infante or infanta, while the eldest son held the title of prince.

[38] Gustav Turba, *Geschichte des Thronfolgerechtes in allen habsburgischen Ländern bis zur pragmatischen Sanktion Kaiser Karls VI., 1156 bis 1732* (Vienna and Leipzig, 1903).

Contrary to what the modernization paradigm might suggest, monarchy was on the ascendant in early modern Europe. Republics were almost without exception in decline, with quite a few following the path of Florence and succumbing to princely rule. In that respect the United Provinces were very much the exception that proved the rule. The triumph of monarchy reinforced the legitimacy of dynastic logic in the international arena. The underlying assumption was that power – and in particular sovereignty – had been privatized and that foreign relations were a species of civil law arrangements among ruling families. Dynastic ambitions, alliances and rivalries preoccupied the diplomatic corps. The war of succession was arguably the quintessential early modern war.[39] Dynastic rivalries festered for generations.[40] Much of the history of international relations could be retold in terms of a dreadfully complex pedigree.

Dynastic logic did not go uncontested, however. In the course of the sixteenth century, two – no less compelling – challengers entered the field. One was religious logic, the other the reason of state. Religiously motivated conflicts were not new, of course. Ever since the eighth century Christians had confronted Muslims. Apart from the Albigensian Crusade in the early thirteenth century and the Hussite Wars in the early fifteenth, these conflicts were, however, as a rule located at the fringes of Latin Christianity. The dialectics of the Protestant and Catholic Reformations etched the religious divide right across the continent. Rulers took sides and used various forms of coercion to ensure that their subjects worshipped accordingly. The principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* not only initiated policies of confessionalization, but also stimulated the confessionalization of politics. Domestic and foreign arenas got inextricably mixed. Religious dissent and its suppression undermined the legitimacy of the state. Networks of solidarity connected the members of a given church to their suffering coreligionists abroad.[41] Reciprocated suspicion fostered alliances along confessional lines.[42] Three camps emerged towards the end of the sixteenth century. Lutheran princes on the whole defended the status quo. Tridentine Catholicism had passed from the Church Suffering to the Church Militant, confident that it would one day emerge from the struggle as the Church Triumphant. International Calvinism was no less combative in seeking to spread the truths of the Second Reformation. Very much like

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[39] Johannes Kunisch, *Staatsverfassung und Mächtepolitik: Zur Genese von Staatenkonflikten im Zeitalter des Absolutismus*, Historische Forschungen, 15 (Berlin, 1979).

[40] N.M. Sutherland, 'The Origins of the Thirty Years' War and the Structure of European Politics', *The English Historical Review*, 57 (1992): pp. 587–625.

[41] Daniel H. Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe: Religious Conflict, Dynastic Empires and International Change*, Princeton Studies in International History and Politics (Princeton, 2009).

[42] John M. Owen IV, 'When Do Ideologies Produce Alliances? The Holy Roman Empire, 1517–1555', *International Studies Quarterly*, 49 (2005): pp. 73–99.

the Cold War of the twentieth century, the confrontation between the camps bread a logic of its own. With it came stereotypes. Whether described as heretics or papists, the opposite side was presumed to harbour dark designs against the true faith. Alternative policies towards the perceived enemy were advocated in the corridors of power. Zealots wanted to apply religious logic as the central tenet of decision making, both domestic and foreign. They saw violence as a legitimate means to serve their holy cause.[43] The *politiques* – a label that originated in the French Wars of Religion – opposed any such move, pleading that only persuasion could restore Christian unity.

It would be most convenient if the reason of state had simply been the opposite of religious logic. Things were not that simple, though. The model under consideration was not an antinomy but triangular. Usually – if somewhat brazenly – ascribed to Machiavelli, the logic of the reason of state originated in the hotbed atmosphere of the Italian city states. At its inception it focussed on the preservation of the state and held that hallowed concepts of morality should not apply when pursuing that goal.[44] By the end of the sixteenth century the doctrine had taken on a wider meaning in the international arena. Henry IV of France demonstrated as much by example when he assured the archducal ambassador in Paris that 'For reasons of state he could not nor should suffer that the House of Habsburg extended its domination over the lands of Kleve and Jülich'.[45] While using the term in August 1609, the king was well aware that he held no legitimate claim to the duchies on the Lower Rhine, nor did he intend to make one. He surely understood that his support for the Protestant claimants was likely to endanger the survival of Catholicism in the region. Yet he felt obliged to pursue a policy that defied dynastic as well as religious logic. Behind that stance lay the concept that the French crown had a set of fixed interests and that defending these was of paramount importance. Strategic considerations such as preventing further Habsburg encirclement ranked high among them. Other such interests were of an economic nature. Access to the rich trades of the Indies fell into that category. Either way this definition of the reason of state belonged essentially to the realm of geopolitics.

Upon comparison, it could be argued that the three competing forms of logic operated on different – and often layered – timescales. The reason of state moved at the almost imperceptible Braudelian pace of time. Religious logic was engaged in a game of chess on the intermediate time range, while singularly aware of the imminence of the Day of Judgement. Dynastic logic was very much about dealing with the contingencies produced by the ever

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[43] Matthias Pohlig, 'Konfessionskulturelle Deutungsmuster internationaler Konflikte um 1600: Kreuzzug, Antichrist, Tausendjähriges Reich', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 93 (2002): pp. 278–315.

[44] Maurizio Viroli, *From Politics to Reason of State: The Acquisition and Transformation of the Language of Politics, 1250–1600*, Ideas in Context (Cambridge, 1992) p. 194.

[45] HHStA, *Belgien*, PC 17: Peckius to Albert, 3 August 1609.

fleeting configuration of the ruling houses in the function of perpetuating their dominion. All three options lay open, albeit that the pursuit of the reason of state was regarded as lacking in the virtues of justice and prudence that were supposed to guide any polity with a claim to morality. For Albert and his generation of rulers, grand policy was every bit about choosing between these alternative forms of logic. The outcome of their deliberations helped to constitute the political culture of their regime and of their times. Diplomats were constantly reporting on the lines of argument developed over pending issues. As such the diplomatic records of the day that form the basis of this book offer a much broader insight into the way in which the international arena functioned than its title might suggest at first glance.

The above can be summarized in four basic objectives: establishing a narrative of the reign of the archdukes; making sense of the archducal regime as a sovereign polity under the concepts of the day; exploring the case of a middling power in the early seventeenth-century international arena; and contemplating the alternative types of logic underlying foreign relations in that transitional period. The first of the objectives imposes a narrative structure, tracing an itinerary through Albert's life that could – with an appropriate dose of baroque hyperbole – be likened to the mystique ascent of the pyramid described by de Rebreviettes. The first two chapters deal with basic elements. They respectively cover Albert's background and prior political experience, and consider the intricate relationship between the Archducal Netherlands and the Spanish monarchy. Mars and Mercury rule over the next three chapters, lording over the fortunes of war and peace in the Low Countries, Habsburg strategies to bring an end to the conflict and the negotiations leading to an end of the hostilities with England and the United Provinces. Jupiter is on the ascendant in Chapter 6 which discusses the succession of Rudolf II. The cardinal virtues of prudence and force – situated by de Rebreviettes in the spheres of the Moon and the Sun – are then called upon to deal with the succession crisis in the Rhenish duchies of Jülich, Kleve and Berg. The realm of Saturn spreads in the three final chapters as the archducal regime confronts the issues of the succession in the Netherlands, the Hereditary Lands and the Holy Roman Empire, the approaching end of the Twelve Years' Truce and the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War. Falling short of an apotheosis by at least two flights of stairs, the conclusion will instead ponder the wider objectives of sovereignty, middling powers and competing forms of logic in the international arena of the early seventeenth century.

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Wet Paint

On 13 July 1598, the inhabitants of Hal, a small town some 16 kilometres from Brussels, and the pilgrims who had come there to venerate the renowned Black Madonna, witnessed an unusual ceremony. The previous day, Cardinal-Archduke Albert had arrived in the town, accompanied by all the pomp and circumstance due to an archbishop of Toledo, primate of Spain, papal legate and grand-inquisitor of the kingdom of Portugal. That morning, however, Albert went to mass dressed as a secular prince and girded with a sword. In the course of the service, the archduke solemnly deposited his cardinal's robes on the altar of the Lady Chapel.[1] Thus he marked his resignation from the clergy and his return to the laity. It was a highly symbolic act, performed at an equally symbolic place.

Our Lady of Hal was held in high esteem among Catholic princes. The reportedly miraculous Black Madonna had come to Hal via Sophia of Thuringia, duchess of Brabant, who had in turn received it from her mother, St Elizabeth of Hungary. The future Louis XI of France and even England's Henry VIII had once sought her heavenly intercession. In recent decades Our Lady of Hal had acquired the reputation of being a staunch supporter of the Catholic cause in its fight against Protestantism.[2] None other than the learned Justus Lipsius would

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[1] Juan Roco de Campofrío, *España en Flandes: Trece años de gobierno del archiduque Alberto, 1595–1608*, Pedro Rubio Merino (ed.) (Madrid, 1973) p. 220; *Correspondance d'Ottavio Mirto Frangipani, premier nonce de Flandre, 1596–1606*, Armand Louant and Leon Van der Essen (eds), Analecta Vaticano-Belgica, 2ème série: Nonciature de Flandre, 1–3 (3 vols, Brussels, 1924–42) vol. 2, pp. 358–60.

[2] Remy Janssens, 'Zeven eeuwen madonnaverering te Halle', in *Halle 700 jaar Mariastad*, Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Geschied- en Oudheidkundige Kring, 7 (Halle, 1967) pp. 9–27.

in a few years extol her miraculous interventions in his elegant Latin prose.[3] Archduke Albert had a particular devotion for the Madonna of Hal.[4] He came to pray at her shrine before his first solemn entry into Brussels in February 1596 and returned at the outset and at the end of his first military campaigns in the Netherlands. Now he had come to make the Madonna witness to the most dramatic turn of his career. After he left Hal, he settled matters at the court in Brussels while preparing for his journey to Spain.[5] There he was to marry the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia and then return as joint successor of King Philip II as ruler of the Netherlands. The date was not a coincidence either – 13 July is the feast of the saintly Emperor Henry II. According to tradition he was a prince who would have preferred to abandon his worldly titles and possessions in order to become a monk. Yet he took on the burden of ruling the Holy Roman Empire out of a sense of obligation towards the Church and his subjects. This life Archduke Albert now set out to emulate. He surrendered one of the most prestigious titular churches in Rome and the largest ecclesiastical incomes in both Spain and Portugal. Henceforth he would live the life of a secular prince, defending Catholicism and fighting its enemies. The symbolism of the date went ever further, for it indicated that Albert might one day assume a role in the government of the Holy Roman Empire.

The Education of an Archduke

Archduke Albert was profoundly aware that he 'descended of many emperors and kings'.[6] He considered it his birthright to partake in government. He was born in Wiener Neustadt on 13 November 1559. His father was Emperor Maximilian II, his mother the Infanta Maria, the sister of King Philip II. Both his grandfathers had been emperor: Ferdinand I and his elder brother Charles V. The imperial couple had an unusually large family. Even though six of their 16 children died in infancy, they were still left with six boys and four girls to provide for. Albert was the tenth child and the fifth of the surviving sons. No dynasty had a script for such numerous offspring. This meant that Albert's future was, to say the least, by no means clear from the start.

The marriage of Maximilian and Maria was the first in a series of unions between the Spanish and the Austrian branches. It set a precedent that would determine Habsburg matrimonial policies for the remainder of the sixteenth

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3 Justus Lipsius, *Diva Virgo Hallensis: beneficia ejus et miracula fide atque ordine descripta* (Antwerp, 1604).

4 Luc Duerloo, 'Pietas Albertina: Dynastieke vroomheid en herbouw van het vorstelijk gezag', *Bijdragen en mededelingenbetreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 112 (1997): p. 7.

5 Roco de Campofrío, *España en Flandes*, pp. 78, 92, 135, 155 and 220–31.

6 HHStA, *Belgien* PC 47: Boisschot to Albert, 9 November 1612. A similar expression can be found in: ARA, *Aud* 79: Commissioners of the Conference of Boulogne to Albert, May 1600.

and into the seventeenth centuries. The match proved a happy one, although the partners were of a very different temperament and convictions. Maximilian was thoroughly bred in humanist culture and openly showed sympathy for Lutheranism. His criticism of Spanish policies in the Netherlands, reservations about the decrees of the Council of Trent, insistence on taking the communion in both kinds and refusal to receive the last sacraments on his deathbed may have eased religious tensions in the Holy Roman Empire. They certainly both annoyed and worried Madrid and Rome. Maria, on the other hand, brought with her all the fervour, splendour and credulity of Spanish Catholicism.[7] She also proved a committed patron of the Jesuit Order, the vanguard of the Catholic Reformation.

Philip II had reasons to be concerned about Maximilian's convictions. As head of the House of Habsburg, he realized the dangers of religious division among his kinsmen. He also wished to protect the reputation of the dynasty as the champion of Roman Catholicism. Most of all Philip was worried that Maximilian's Protestant leanings might contaminate the next generation of the Austrian branch. When the physical and mental health of Don Carlos deteriorated after his accidental fall in April 1561, these worries gained particular urgency.[8] Don Carlos was at that stage the king's only child and heir. In the event of his death, the Spanish possessions would, under the present circumstances, be inherited by the children of Maximilian and Maria. Therefore Philip deemed it essential to ascertain that these potential heirs would remain loyal members of the Catholic Church. In order to do so, Philip invited the two eldest sons of the imperial couple, the Archdukes Rudolf (born in 1552) and Ernst (born in 1553), to come and complete their educations at the Spanish Court. Maximilian was against the idea; Maria supported it. She overcame her husband's reluctance and the boys travelled to Spain during the winter months of 1563–64.[9]

The following June the four remaining sons of Maximilian and Maria – the Archdukes Matthias (born in 1557), Maximilian (born in 1558), Albert and Wenzel (born in 1561) – were taken from their nurses and given their own establishment. Some two years later, care for their education was entrusted to Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq.[10] Busbecq was a native of the county of Flanders and a humanist cast in the Erasmian mould. He entered the service of the Austrian Habsburgs in 1554 as a member of the delegation that journeyed to England to congratulate Philip II and Mary Tudor on their marriage. Later that year Ferdinand I sent Busbecq to the Ottoman Court, where he was to

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7 Bohdan Chuboda, *Spain and the Empire, 1519–1643* (New York, 1977) pp. 103–8 and 151–2.

8 Geoffrey Parker, *Felipe II: La biografía definitiva* (Barcelona, 2010) pp. 406–16.

9 Parker, *Felipe II*, p. 413; Chuboda, *Spain and the Empire*, p. 148.

10 Heinz Noflatscher, *Glaube, Reich und Dynastie: Maximilian der Deutschmeister, 1558–1618*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens, 11 (Marburg, 1987) pp. 37–9.

serve as imperial ambassador until 1562. True to his humanist calling, Busbecq used this mission to collect Latin and Greek manuscripts and to record the inscriptions that he discovered on ancient monuments. His interests went further though. Being a keen botanist, he was instrumental in introducing tulips, horse-chestnuts and lilac trees in Western horticulture. The lengthy letters that he sent to his friend Nicholas Michault related his journeys in the Balkans and Anatolia, and were full of sharp and unusually balanced observations about Ottoman institutions and society. These letters were first published by the Plantin press in 1581 and went through several editions and translations.[11] Albert would come to honour his former tutor. After he became governor-general of the Netherlands, he saw to the execution of Busbecq's last wish – to have his heart entombed in the family mausoleum in Bousbecque.[12]

By the time Albert celebrated his tenth birthday, the dynastic situation had changed in a number of ways. Maximilian II had succeeded his father Ferdinand I as emperor in July 1564. It was therefore time to prepare for the next generation.[13] The three main pillars on which the power of the Austrian Habsburgs rested – Hungary, Bohemia and the Holy Roman Empire – were elective monarchies. A smooth transition of power could only be assured by formally electing an heir. Political wisdom held that this should be done sooner rather than later. In each case the electorate was part Catholic, part Protestant. This meant that it would be hard to find a majority in favour of a prince living at the uncompromisingly Catholic court of Philip II. The Estates of Bohemia had voiced their discontent about the Spanish education of Archduke Rudolf twice already and Protestants in Hungary and the Empire were likely to feel the same.[14] Hence it was imperative that he would return to Vienna. As a result of the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, Philip II had married Elizabeth de Valois, a daughter of the French King Henry II and Catherine de'Medici, in 1559. She was his third wife and 18 years his junior. After a number of miscarriages, the couple was blessed with two daughters, the Infantas Isabella Clara Eugenia (born in 1566) and Catalina Michaela (born in 1567). Yet another miscarriage caused the queen's death in October 1568. A few months earlier, in late July, the unfortunate Don Carlos had also died. So in less than three months, Philip

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[11] Augerius Ghislenius Busbequius, *Itinera Constantinopolitanurum et Amasianum* (Antwerp, 1581).

[12] A.H. Huusen, *Het leven van Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq en het verhaal van zijn avonturen als keizerlijk gezant in Turkije, 1554–1562* (Leiden, 1949) pp. 9–27; Zweder Rudolf Willem Maria von Martels, *Augerius Gislenius Busbequius: Leven en werk van de keizerlijke gezant aan het hof van Süleyman de Grote* (Groningen, 1989) col. 318–24 and 368; Idem, 'On His Majesty's Service: Augerius Busbequius, Courtier and Diplomat of Maximilian II', in Friedrich Edelmayer and Alfred Kohler (eds), *Kaiser Maximilian II: Kultur und Politikim 16. Jahrhundert*, Wiener Beiträge zur Geschichte der Neuzeit, 19/1992 (Vienna, 1992) pp. 168–81.

[13] José Martínez Millán, 'El archiduque Alberto en la corte de Felipe II, 1570–1580', in Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo (eds), *Albert & Isabella, 1598–1621, Essays* (Turnhout, 1998) pp. 27–8.

[14] Chuboda, *Spain and the Empire*, p. 148.

II had lost his male heir and his third wife. A new marriage was needed to secure the future of the Spanish branch. It was decided that Philip would marry the Archduchess Anna, the eldest daughter of Maximilian and Maria, who had formerly been promised to Don Carlos. With this match, the age gap separating the spouses widened to 22 years. It would be the second of the marriages between the two branches of the House of Habsburg, making Philip not only the cousin and brother-in-law of Maximilian, but also the son-in-law.[15]

Part of the arrangement was that two of the younger archdukes would accompany their sister to Spain and take the places of Rudolf and Ernst. Initially Albert and his elder brother Maximilian were to go, but Maximilian fell ill shortly before Anna was to depart. Apparently a lottery then determined that Wenzel would take his place.[16] Under the supervision of Busbecq, the party set out on 1 August 1570 to Speyer, where Anna and her brothers said farewell to their father. They then followed the Rhine towards the Low Countries. At Nijmegen they were greeted by the Don Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, duke of Alva, who had seemingly restored order in the Netherlands. The journey continued to Bergen-op-Zoom, Antwerp, Middelburg and Flushing. From there the company sailed to Spain, landing in Santander on 7 October. During the following weeks it travelled slowly to the heart of Castile. At Valladolid Anna and her brothers were reunited with Rudolf and Ernst. All five entered Segovia on 12 November and Anna married Philip two days later. By the spring she was pregnant. On 4 December she was delivered of the long-awaited son, Fernando. In the meantime Rudolf and Ernst had sailed from Barcelona, with Busbecq again acting as their chaperone.[17]

The Archdukes Albert and Wenzel remained at the Spanish Court, where they ranked immediately after the royal couple and their children. Due to his seniority, Albert was asked to hold the Infantes Carlos Lorenzo (born in 1573) and Philip (born in 1578) at their baptisms. Philip II gave the archdukes their own household. The principal offices of *mayordomo mayor* and *ayo*, or governor, of the two princes went to Don Juan de Ayala, a trusted veteran of the Spanish diplomatic service, who had represented the monarchy at the Council of Trent. The king, however, laid down the educational programme for his nephews and kept a close eye on their progress. His ambassador at the Imperial Court kept Maximilian and Maria informed.[18] Every now and then portraits were sent to the parents so that they could see how the boys had developed.[19] Philip II imposed a strict schedule on the archdukes. On ordinary days they rose at six

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15 Parker, *Felipe II*, pp. 453–7.

16 Noflatscher, *Glaube, Reich und Dynastie*, pp. 42–3.

17 Henry Kamen, *Philip of Spain* (New Haven and London, 1997) pp. 136–8; von Martels, *Augerius Gislenius Busbequius*, col. 330–35.

18 Martínez Millán, 'El archiduque Alberto en la corte de Felipe II', pp. 28–31.

19 Luc Duerloo and Werner Thomas (eds), *Albrecht & Isabella, 1598–1621: Cataloog* (Turnhout, 1998) pp. 32–3.

in the morning. After reciting their prayers, they had breakfast and attended mass. From eight until ten, Albert, Wenzel and their Danish tutor, Matthias Otthen, read Latin historians, an exercise designed to teach them both the intricacies of the language and the precepts of statecraft. Lessons started with the *Veni Creator* and likewise ended with prayers. Then came lunch, followed by some time to play and relax in their own rooms and an hour of music between twelve and one. In the afternoon the archdukes had three more hours of Latin, during which they studied the oratory of Cicero and the conversational style of Terence. At four it was time to play with noblemen of their age. Dinner was served at six. Afterwards they were allowed to stroll in the gardens until nine o'clock, when the royal family recited the rosary. The archdukes then retired to their rooms, where they spent some time in private prayer before going to bed. There were no classes on Sundays. Instead the archdukes were encouraged to read devotional literature and were given some money to accustom them to giving alms to the poor.[20] This rather austere regime seems to have suited Albert. Philip II was proud to report that his nephew excelled 'in his studies and in everything'.[21] In many ways he was the kind of son Philip longed to have. The endearment was obviously reciprocated, although some suggested it was not entirely disinterested.[22]

While Albert and Wenzel grew up under his watchful eye, Philip II was making plans for their futures.[23] As they were the youngest sons of the imperial couple and their chances of ever succeeding to any sovereignty seemed highly improbable, he thought it best for them to pursue ecclesiastical careers. Archduke Wenzel was sworn into the Order of Malta at an early age. He was given the particularly rich bailiwick of Lora and promised the priory of Castile, the highest and most lucrative office the Order had to offer in the realm.[24] This was not to be, however, for Wenzel died in September 1578 at the age of 17. For Archduke Albert, the targets were set even higher. The ultimate aim was to put him on the archiepiscopal seat of Toledo and thus make him the Cisneros of the next reign. It was common knowledge that the revenue of the archbishopric of Toledo was second only to that of the Holy See. The position became vacant in May 1576, but Albert was judged to be too young at that stage. Instead the king appointed the bishop of Cuenca, Gaspar de Quiroga. He clearly meant it to be a stop-gap episcopate, for the nominee was

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[20] Francisco Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria: Vice-rei e inquisidor-mor de Portugal, cardeal legado do papa, governador e depois soberano dos Países Baixos: Historia e arte* (Lisbon, 1961) pp. 28–31.

[21] Quoted in Kamen, *Philip of Spain*, p. 207.

[22] *Relazioni di ambasciatori Veneti al senato*, Luigi Firpo (ed.), Monumenta politica et philosophica rariora, series 2 (11 vols, Turin, 1965–83) vol. 9, p. 165.

[23] Hans Khevenhüller, *Geheimes Tagebuch, 1548–1605*, Georg Khevenhüller-Metsch and GüntherProbszt-Ohstorff (eds) (Graz, 1971) pp. 84 and 90.

[24] Noflatscher, *Glaube, Reich und Dynastie*, p. 57.

already in his mid-sixties. Quiroga would nevertheless thwart Philip's plans by living for another 17 years, dying at the age of 82 in November 1594.[25] In order to pave the way for Albert's succession to the archdiocese, Philip II ensured that his nephew became a cardinal. Pope Gregory XIII announced the appointment in the Consistory of 3 March 1577, indicating that it had been made *ex peculiari gratia* because the recipient was only 17.[26] Initially Albert belonged to the order of cardinal-deacons, but he was promoted to the ranks of the cardinal-priests the following year. The brief announcing his promotion was dated 3 May, the feast of the Discovery of the Holy Cross.[27] It was not a coincidence, for upon receiving the red hat on 12 February 1580, Albert was given the Santa Croce in Gerusalemme as titular church. The Santa Croce was one of the seven principal churches of Rome and the only one among them that served as a titular church. It had become vacant only a few months before, upon the death of Cardinal Francisco Pacheco, one of the leaders of the Spanish party in the Eternal City.[28] In the meantime the king had also provided Albert with a pension of 20,000 ducats that was to be paid out of the income of the see of Toledo. He furthermore reorganized the archduke's household, by adding a number of clerics to his entourage.[29]

The appointment of the young archduke to the cardinalate may have been unusual, but it was not entirely without precedent. It showed a number of interesting similarities with the recent elevation of Marquess Andreas of Austria to the College of Cardinals. Andreas (born in 1558) was a morganatic cousin of Archduke Albert and had just failed to be elected prince-bishop of Münster. To some degree the Curia was to blame for this failure, because it had made conflicting promises about which candidate it would be supporting. As a sort of consolation prize, the likewise 17-year-old Andreas was named Cardinal-Deacon of Santa Maria Nuova in November 1576. The appointment was also a kind of pledge that the Vatican would henceforth back his ambition to obtain a suitable position in the *Germania Sacra*.[30] No less important in terms of precedents were the cardinals who belonged to the dynasties of the Italian principalities. The Gonzaga, d'Este, de'Medici and later on also the Farnese made it a point of always having one of their kin in the College of Cardinals. They were partly motivated by Italian political realities, partly using it as a means to enhance the prestige of their dynasty. Outside Italy only the dukes

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25 Martínez Millán, 'El archiduque Alberto en la corte de Felipe II', pp. 33–4.

26 ARA, *Aud* 640A, fol. 1: Brief of Gregory XIII, 11 March 1577.

27 ARA, *Aud* 640A, fol. 2: Brief of Gregory XIII, 3 May 1577.

28 Thomas James Dandelet, *Spanish Rome, 1500–1700* (New Haven and London, 2001) pp. 134–5.

29 Martínez Millán, 'El archiduque Alberto en la corte de Felipe II', pp. 34–5.

30 Günter von Lojewski, *Bayerns Weg nach Köln: Geschichte der bayerischen Bistumspolitik in der zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Bonner historische Forschungen, 21 (Bonn, 1962) pp. 125 and 144–5.

of Lorraine and to a lesser degree the kings of Portugal had so far pursued comparable policies. With the appointments of Andreas and Albert, it looked as if the Habsburgs were about to follow their examples.

Archduke Albert later admitted that he had not relished the idea of becoming a prelate and that he had wept a lot after the decision was announced.[31] His lack of enthusiasm may have been the reason why he seemed in no hurry to take higher orders. Still, as far as one could judge from the outside, he took his tasks as a cardinal seriously. Unlike many of the other dynastic cardinals, his morals and celibacy never garnered scandal or gossip. Shortly after his appointment he began studying theology under the guidance of Sebastián Pérez de Aguilar, a former professor of the University of Salamanca. Albert pursued the subject until 1583, when he thanked Pérez for his efforts by having him awarded the bishopric of Osma.[32] He also adopted the habit of reciting the breviary daily, a practice that he would continue even after resigning from the cardinalate.[33]

Viceroy of Portugal

Across the border with Portugal, the royal line of Aviz was dying out. In August 1578, the army that King Sebastian had led in the hope of conquering Morocco was annihilated at the battle of Alcazar-el-Kebir. The king disappeared without a trace. The Portuguese crown then went to his great-uncle, Cardinal-Prince Henry. He was 63 and the last surviving male of the dynasty. However, having been ordained a bishop, there was no way he could renounce his dignities, marry and produce a legitimate heir. During his brief reign, various pretenders presented their claims to the succession. Philip II, whose mother had been the eldest sister of the cardinal-king, held the strongest hand. His main contender was Dom Antonio, prior of Crato, the illegitimate son of one of Henry's brothers. After Henry's death in February 1580, Philip sent in an army under the command of the Duke of Alva to claim his inheritance and expel Dom Antonio and his supporters. In April 1581 he travelled to Tomar, where the assembled Cortes recognized him as King Philip I of Portugal. From Tomar the journey went to Lisbon. Philip would reside there for the next year and a half.

Cardinal-Archduke Albert was at the king's side when he went to inspect Alva's army in June 1580 at Badajoz.[34] The following spring he travelled with his uncle to the newly conquered kingdom, arriving in Lisbon on 29 June. Queen Anna had died in Badajoz in October and Philip, a widower for the fourth

31 Roco de Campofrío, *España en Flandes*, p. 220.

32 Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, p. 31.

33 Roco de Campofrío, *España en Flandes*, p. 220.

34 Parker, *Felipe II*, pp. 467–71.

time, had left his children in Castile, which made Albert his closest relative in attendance. As a result the months they spent together in Portugal became a period of intense political training for the archduke. The consolidation of the new regime took up most of their energy. The loyalty of the Estates needed to be assured and the last remnants of Dom Antonio's party had to be dealt with. Full control over the kingdom's territories and possessions was established in the summer of 1583 when the last islands of the Azores were forced to abandon the pretender's cause.[35] In the meantime Philip II had seen to it that Dom Antonio was deprived of the priory of Crato. The priory belonged to the Order of Malta and produced the largest ecclesiastical income in the realm. By handing its administration to Albert on 8 May 1585, a considerable amount of political power and financial means were secured for the Habsburg cause.[36]

In April 1582 Empress Maria and her youngest daughter, the Archduchess Margaret (born in 1567), arrived in Portugal.[37] Philip had not seen his sister for a quarter of a century; Albert had been away from Austria for more than a decade. The Empress had been a widow since October 1576 and she had persuaded Rudolf II to allow her to return to Spain. She brought Margaret with her, because Philip was considering marrying his 14-year-old niece. The archduchess, however, had a different kind of husband in mind. Strengthened in her resolution by the saintly Cardinal Carlo Borromeo, she took the habit of a Poor Clare in the convent of the *Descalzas Reales* in Madrid on her 17th birthday, 25 January 1584.[38] During her stay in Lisbon, Philip II offered Maria the viceroyalty of Portugal, but she declined. She preferred to spend the rest of her widowhood close to her daughter in the *Descalzas*, thereby emulating the example of the monastery's founder and her sister, the Infanta Juanna.

With Philip eager to return to Castile and Maria refusing to stay on as his representative in Lisbon, the viceroyalty of Portugal quite logically fell to Cardinal-Archduke Albert. It could be that the king had this solution in mind all along and that the proposal to his sister may just have been a matter of tact, for he was already making arrangements in favour of his nephew as early as June 1581. Be that as it may, the formal appointment of Albert as viceroy was enacted on 31 January 1583. Ten days later Philip, Maria and Margaret set out on their journey to Madrid. Albert saw them off as far as Setúbal. He was 23 and his political life now began in earnest.[39] Philip had drawn up detailed instructions. As viceroy, Albert could be called the alter

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35 Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, pp. 58 and 61–81; Parker, *Felipe II*, p. 910.

36 Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, pp. 321–44; H.J.A. Sire, *The Knights of Malta* (New Haven and London, 1994) p. 152.

37 Kamen, *Philip of Spain*, p. 247.

38 Magdalena S. Sánchez, *The Empress, the Queen and the Nun: Women and Power at the Court of Philip III of Spain*, The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, 116th series, 2 (Baltimore and London, 1998) pp. 77–9.

39 Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, pp. 81–2, 88 and 90.

ego of the king. Only important matters of state had to be referred to Madrid via the newly constituted Council of Portugal. Even then the urgency of a problem could force the viceroy to take immediate action, in the hope that his policy would afterwards be ratified. In general all decisions should be taken in consultation. Depending on the gravity of the issue at hand, the matter could either be put before the entire Council of State or considered among a restricted number of councillors.[40] The instructions stressed the importance of accessibility. Philip expected his viceroy to hold public audiences twice a week. He added that hearing mass in public every day, or at least as often as possible, and visiting convents on saint's days would make it easier for petitioners to come forward.[41] On 9 February 1583 Pope Gregory XIII acceded to Philip's repeated request to make Albert papal legate for Portugal. The original appointment, which arrived within a few weeks after he had become viceroy, stipulated that his term of office would be limited to two years. Another brief, dated 16 November 1584, rendered it indefinite. By virtue of this office, Albert was invested with a vast share of the spiritual jurisdiction that was normally reserved for the papacy. He could visit all ecclesiastical institutions, judge a wide range of cases, hand out or remit penalties, give dispensations and indulgences, dispose of all benefices in the see of Lisbon and appoint protonotaries as well as notaries.[42] In fact his presence made the Catholic Church of Portugal largely autonomous or, to be quite precise, largely dependent on the new Habsburg regime.[43] Up to a point the cardinal-archduke was almost as much the alter ego of the pope as he was the alter ego of the king. It was an impressive accumulation of power and there was more to come. Prompted once more by Philip II, Pope Sixtus V issued the bulla *Inter alias curas* on 25 January 1586, announcing that Albert would be the next inquisitor-general. With this last appointment, Albert gained control of the powerful machinery of the Portuguese Inquisition. It was a tested instrument, maintaining the religious monopoly of Catholicism and monitoring the integration of the New Christians. By the same measure, it also constituted an important instrument of regal power.[44] This arrangement had its precedents. During the minority of King Sebastian, Cardinal-Prince Henry had likewise combined the offices of regent, papal legate and inquisitor-general.[45]

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[40] António de Oliveira, *Poder e oposição política em Portugal no período filippino, 1580–1640* (Lisbon, 1990) pp. 11–14.

[41] The full text of the instructions is in Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, pp. 509–17.

[42] Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, pp. 289–319.

[43] Anthony David Wright, *The Early Modern Papacy: From the Council of Trent to the French Revolution, 1564–1789* (Harlow, 2000) p. 153.

[44] Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, pp. 245–87.

[45] Federico Palomo, 'Para el sosiego y quietud del reino: En torno a Felipe II y el poder eclesiástico en el Portugal de finales del siglo XVI', *Hispania, Revista Española de Historia*, 64 (2004): pp. 70–71.

Albert wielded these extensive powers for a decade. They enabled him to strengthen the Habsburg regime in Portugal and to repress its opponents. The symbiosis of Church and state was particularly evident when the Invincible Armada was fitted out in Lisbon in the spring of 1588. As viceroy, Albert reviewed the preparations of the fleet and inspected the troops as they were about to board the ships. As papal legate, his presence at the religious ceremonies leading up to the expedition gave credence to the idea that it was truly a godly enterprise. On one such occasion, Albert and the fleet's commander, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, followed the royal banner in procession from the cathedral, where it had been blessed by the archbishop, to the Convent of the Dominican nuns, so that the revered prioress, Maria da Visitação, could shed some drops of blood from her stigmata upon it. In the wake of the defeat of the Armada, a commission of the Inquisition found the stigmata to be self-inflicted wounds. The inquest also proved that the prioress was an undercover supporter of the exiled Dom Antonio. Acting as legate and inquisitor-general, Albert thereupon stripped Maria da Visitação of her powers and exiled her to a convent in the countryside, where she spent the rest of her days doing penance.[46] It was not the only case in which he needed to combine his temporal and spiritual powers to purge the country of the remaining partisans of Dom Antonio among the clergy. In dealing with these remnants of resistance, his powers to visit even those religious institutions enjoying exemption from ordinary jurisdiction, to reform their ways and to chastise the disobedient, were of great importance in the consolidation of Habsburg rule.[47]

Albert likewise had to confront the emergent Sebastianism, the belief that King Sebastian had not perished at Alcazar-el-Kebir and would one day return to claim what was rightfully his. In its more tangible form, Sebastianism resulted in the appearance of two false Sebastians, who had to be apprehended and exposed as impostors. But there was also a more spiritual variant of the movement about. Many clergymen preached that Portugal had fallen under Habsburg rule because of its sins. Once these sins were redeemed, the former king would return, ushering in an era of prosperity and happiness. This messianic variant was potentially far more destabilizing and proved much harder to repress.[48] The threat of insurrection resurfaced in yet another guise, when Dom Antonio landed at Peniche at the end of May 1589. With him came an army of 12,000 Englishmen and a fleet commanded by Sir Francis Drake. The English wanted to avenge the Armada; the pretender hoped to provoke an uprising. While his army marched towards Lisbon, Drake's fleet blocked the Tagus near Cascais. From then on the campaign faltered. The expeditionary force

46 Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, pp. 151–3 and 268–9.

47 Palomo, 'Para el sosiego y quietud del reino', pp. 71–8.

48 Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, pp. 223–7.

quickly ran out of supplies. The population did not rise against the Habsburg regime. It was clear that the Portuguese distrusted the Protestant army that was invading their country. By piling up men, arms and provisions in the capital, Albert stood prepared to withstand a long siege. From the south came news that an army of relief was on its way. Realizing the odds were against them, the English withdrew after only three weeks. Their retreat was considered an important victory and much of the credit for it was given to Albert.[49]

The failure of Dom Antonio's invasion proved that there was more to Habsburg rule than just repression. Religion played a decisive role. It was typical that the successful defence of Lisbon came to be attributed – at least in part – to the presence of a collection of relics in the city's church of São Roque. Most of these relics had been salvaged from Protestant parts of Germany. They had been presented to the Jesuits of São Roque by Don Juan de Borja, a son of the saintly Jesuit General Francis de Borja, in January 1588. Through his presence, Cardinal-Archduke Albert had contributed to the solemnity of the proceedings.[50] It was one example out of many. Church and state worked hand in glove and so did patronage and punishment. The vicar general of the Augustinian Canons Regular was, on the one hand, deprived of his office for his involvement with Dom Antonio. Yet, on the other hand, Albert came to lay the foundation stone of the São Vincente de Fora, the order's prestigious new church in Lisbon. The traditional Carmelites were regarded with suspicion; the Discalced Carmelites were invited to found a convent in Lisbon in 1584.[51] The nuns returned the favour by naming the convent after St Albert, the author of their order's rule. It earned them the nickname of *Albertas* and the patronage of the archduke. He was still sending them a trimestrial allowance in 1606.[52]

It was a token of the influence Albert had undergone during his years in Portugal. He had arrived as a novice in politics. He left as an experienced politician. By January 1589, Philip II was pondering whether Albert's abilities might not be put to better use in Madrid. The king was growing old. Like most monarchs who have ruled for a long time, he had serious doubts about the capacities of his heir, Prince Philip.[53] Albert seemed the ideal figure to direct the transition from the present reign to the next. The archduke was the king's nephew as well as the heir's maternal uncle. He had spent roughly two decades in the peninsula. Even though Spanish was not his native tongue, it had become his first language. Being a cardinal meant that he would not sire a branch that could rival the king's. He was simply the ideal relative and

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49 Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, pp. 167–95.

50 Palomo, 'Para el sosiego y quietud del reino', pp. 87–8.

51 Palomo, 'Para el sosiego y quietud del reino', pp. 72–3.

52 ARA, *DSS* 326: Prioress Antonia da Cruz to Fleckhammer, 20 July 1606. See also Idem, *SSO* 665: Account of Carillo, 1605.

53 Parker, *Felipe II*, p. 910.

councillor to watch over the affairs of state until the next king had reached greater maturity. The decision to recall him to Madrid was announced in Lisbon on 5 July 1593. A committee of five took over the viceroyalty. Albert would, however, remain papal legate and inquisitor-general, with lieutenants performing most of these duties. He left Lisbon on 15 August, the day of the Assumption of Our Lady, and travelled via Setúbal, Evora and Badajoz, arriving at the Escorial on 11 September.[54] Philip rode out in his coach to meet him. Entering the palace, he honoured his nephew by walking to the right and directing the crown prince to walk to the left of him. The prince disliked the arrangement and had to be rebuked, an ominous sign of things to come.[55] A fortnight later the king issued his instructions. The cardinal-archduke was to live and work in Madrid, taking over a number of the king's duties. In the morning Albert would give audiences. In the afternoon he and the crown prince would join a select group of the king's ministers on the *Junta de Gobierno*. The *Junta* had a double purpose. It relieved the king of many ordinary matters. Only a limited number of decisions still had to be forwarded to him for approval. At the same time, the *Junta* was meant to train Prince Philip in the business of kingship. For reasons of protocol the prince presided, but Albert could not resist giving his young nephew the occasional lecture on politics.[56] This may well explain why the Venetian ambassador reported that the prince often left the meeting after about an hour. When the *Junta* had finished its business, there were other council meetings for Albert to attend.[57]

One outsider concluded that the cardinal-archduke had become the principal minister of the Spanish monarchy.[58] The arrangement certainly gave Albert a great deal of power and visibility. It seemed to usher him in as regent in all but name. Yet when looking at it from inside the court, things were not that clear-cut. Don Cristóbal de Moura, Marquess of Castel Rodrigo, had been the king's most influential advisor for a number of years. He was in no mood to surrender that position. Soon the court was full of rumours about the rivalry between the Portuguese-born marquess and the cardinal-archduke. Courtiers were uncertain about what the outcome of their confrontation would be or whether it would be settled in the lifetime of Philip II.[59] In the longer run, an even deeper tension threatened to destabilize the arrangement. Prince Philip's

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54 Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, pp. 345–53.

55 Kamen, *Philip of Spain*, p. 302.

56 Parker, *Felipe II*, pp. 910–11; Paul C. Allen, *Philip III and the Pax Hispanica, 1598–1621: The Failure of Grand Strategy* (New Haven and London, 2000) pp. 3 and 249 note 8.

57 Antonio Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism in the Spain of Philip III, 1598–1621*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern History (Cambridge, 2000) pp. 28–30.

58 *BuA*, vol. 5, p. 6.

59 Santiago Martínez Hernández, *El marqués de Velada y la corte en los reinados de Felipe II y Felipe III: Nobleza cortesana y cultura política en la España del Siglo de Oro* (Salamanca, 2004) pp. 315–16.

dislike of his uncle's tutelage was all too apparent. All that was needed to overturn the arrangement was for someone to exploit that resentment.

Death was not only approaching for King Philip: it was also about to call on Cardinal Quiroga. The king had been preparing Albert's succession to the see of Toledo for more than a decade. On 7 November 1594, Pope Clement VIII at last signed the bulla appointing Albert titular archbishop of Philippi and coadjutor with the right of succession to the archbishopric. Five days later Quiroga died. All that was left to do now was to have the cardinal-archduke ordained. So far, Albert had only taken lower orders. He had been tonsured by the nuncio on 12 May 1577.[60] He became a subdeacon on 1 July and a deacon on 24 July 1578.[61] These stations had in common that they could still be renounced. The ordination to priest or to bishop could not. The ceremony was to take place at the *Descalzas reales*. Shortly before the appointed day, Empress Maria insisted that the service be postponed by a week, because the church of the convent had just been whitewashed and the paint was still wet. Within that very week, the news arrived that Archduke Ernst had died in Brussels on 20 February 1595. The Spanish Court went into mourning and the ordination was postponed. This time, it was postponed for ever.[62]

The Withdrawn Prince

There are only a few portraits of Albert dating from this period.[63] One by Alonso Sánchez Coello depicts him at the onset of puberty. It shows an introvert youngster leaning somewhat gingerly on a huge dog.[64] The same artist produced another life-size shortly after Albert became a cardinal. This time the sitter appears to be slightly uncomfortable and insecure.[65] Judging by the picture that was painted by Luis Velasco something like a decade later, self-consciousness apparently asserted itself with age, yet the aloofness remained.[66] Albert was clearly a man who preferred to keep his distance. In this respect, his nature was to be in stark contrast with that of his future spouse. Highlighting a revealing detail, the sympathetic but not uncritical portrayal of Albert and Isabella by the nuncio and later cardinal Guido Bentivoglio mentioned that he would address all ambassadors and grandees as *usted*,

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60 Khevenhüller, *Geheimes Tagebuch*, p. 94.

61 Khevenhüller, *Geheimes Tagebuch*, p. 99; Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, pp. 37 and 361–70.

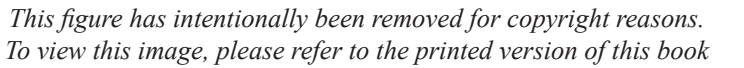
62 Roco de Campofrío, *España en Flandes*, pp. 5–6.

63 Caeiro, *O arquiduque Alberto de Áustria*, pp. 434–5.

64 Duerloo and Thomas, *Albrecht & Isabella*, pp. 32–3.

65 This painting is now in the Lobkowicz Collections in the Czech Republic.

66 Duerloo and Thomas, *Albrecht & Isabella*, pp. 33–4.



3 Alonso Sánchez Coello, *Portrait of Cardinal-Archduke Albert*, 1577. Prague, Lobkowicz Collections.

whereas she would speak to them in the more informal *vos*.[67] Perhaps it was because Albert was quite small in stature. Bentivoglio was putting it gently when he stated that Isabella was taller than her husband, but shorter than most other women. He furthermore described the archduke as lean and with noble lineaments, having the blond hair and the pronounced chin that were so characteristic of a Habsburg.[68]

In keeping with the habits of this dynasty, Albert spoke little and in a soft voice. His demeanour was grave and composed.[69] In fact his studied appearance hid a very shy man, who hated crowds and found it difficult not to blush in the presence of women. When the news of his resignation from the clergy was about to become official, he practised entertaining female guests in private before he ventured to dine with them in public.[70] The gravity and aloofness of Spanish Court ceremonial actually helped him cope with his shyness. At audiences, all that was expected of him was that he stand motionless, listen attentively and give non-committal replies.[71] For those accustomed to dealing with the verbosity of a king like James VI and I, an audience with Albert could be a testing experience. One ambassador extraordinary got so frustrated by the archduke's behaviour that he was sure 'a man of lesse spirite and more dulnes did I never speake unto in all my life'.[72] An experienced observer like Bentivoglio knew better. 'He is a prince of impenetrable secrecy,' he wrote, 'and no less with his face than with his words. One can never discern from his face, that is always equal and serene, any commotion that stirs his mind.'[73] A Spanish ambassador agreed wholeheartedly. He compared the archduke to Trajanus, the first Roman emperor born in Spain and reputedly the most competent ever to rule the empire, adding wryly 'that of all his good faculties, there is none in which the two are as alike as in dissimulation'.[74]

His English counterpart, William Trumbull, noticed Albert 'delighteth much … in devotion and managing of affaires'.[75] Bentivoglio concurred: 'He is immune to fatigue when tending to affairs and finds his greatest pleasure in matters of

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[67] Guido Bentivoglio, *Relationi fatte dall' illustrissimo e reverendissimo signor cardinal Bentivoglio in tempo delle sue nuntiature di Fiandre e de Francia*, Erycius Puteanus (ed.) (2 vols, Cologne, 1629) vol. 1, p. 130.

[68] Bentivoglio, *Relationi fatte dall' illustrissimo e reverendissimo signor cardinal Bentivoglio*, vol. 1, pp. 115–18.

[69] Bentivoglio, *Relationi fatte dall' illustrissimo e reverendissimo signor cardinal Bentivoglio*, vol. 1, p. 115.

[70] Roco de Campofrío, *España en Flandes*, pp. 191–2.

[71] Geoffrey Parker, *The Grand Strategy of Philip II* (New Haven, 1998) pp. 15–17.

[72] NA, *SP* 77/12/3, fol. 310: Bennet to Winwood, 18 May 1617 ns.

[73] Bentivoglio, *Relationi fatte dall' illustrissimo e reverendissimo signor cardinal Bentivoglio*, vol. 1, p. 116.

[74] AGS, *Estado* 622: Zúniga to Philip III, 5 February 1603, summarized in *CCE*, vol. 1, pp. 127–31.

[75] NA, *SP* 77/11/1, fol. 33: Trumbull to Winwood, 24 April 1614 ns.

state, being the only one to give audience every morning and evening for many hours and always with unbelievable attention and benignity.'[76] Output, however, did not match input. If Albert had anything in common with Philip II, it was that both found it very difficult to decide. In the case of Albert, his irresolution made him lean heavily on the advice of those councillors and courtiers who enjoyed his confidence. 'He will never,' wrote one French ambassador, 'give a definite answer on his own, no matter of how little consequence it may be.'[77] Consultations with his entourage often took a lot of time. Arguments for and against were pondered endlessly. Still, the final decision was Albert's. No one ever claimed that he was ruled by any one minister. His time-consuming way of transacting business exasperated Trumbull, who called it 'his own naturall slacknes', and prompted Bentivoglio to comment that the archduke 'without doubt is better suited for peace than for war'.[78] As with so many who suffer from indecision, it was almost impossible to make Albert think again once he had come to a conclusion. 'This prince beeinge inflexible,' Trumbull sighed on another occasion, 'whene he hath once settled a resolution, there is nothing but necessity or fame that can move him to change his mynde.'[79]

His upbringing at the Spanish Court ensured that Archduke Albert became a deeply religious man. In time it would earn him the epithet 'the Pious'.[80] Even when overburdened by the responsibilities of government, his religious exercises claimed a considerable part of his daily routine. He never started the day without going to mass. When his health failed later in life, he acquired a papal dispensation allowing him the use of a portable altar and to attend mass through a window that connected his bedroom to his oratory.[81] Every day Albert spent several hours in private prayer. Once he was overcome by fatigue, fell from his prie-dieu and had to keep to his bed for two days.[82] As ruler of the Netherlands, the archduke would on average take part in a public devotion once in every three days. The people could see him attending services in the court chapel, participating in processions and pilgrimages, visiting monasteries or honouring relics. In all these facets, the *pietas Albertina* served as an important

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[76] Bentivoglio, *Relationi fatte dall' illustrissimo e reverendissimo signor cardinal Bentivoglio*, vol. 1, p. 116.

[77] BN, *MsF* 16128, fol. 42: Berny to Puisieux, 3 February 1607.

[78] NA, *SP* 77/12/2, fol. 158: Trumbull to Winwood, 3 September 1616 ns; Bentivoglio, *Relationi fatte dall' illustrissimo e reverendissimo signor cardinal Bentivoglio*, vol. 1, p. 116.

[79] NA, *SP* 77/14/1, fol. 117: Trumbull to Naunton, 18 June 1620 ns.

[80] Aubertus Miraeus, *Vita Alberti Pii, sapientis, prudentis belgarum principis commentarius* (Antwerp, 1622).

[81] ARA, *Aud* 445, fol. 257: Albert to van Ortenberg, 26 November 1610;*Correspondance des nonces Gesualdo, Morra, Sanseverino avec la Secrétarie d'État pontifical, 1615–1621*, Lucienne Van Meerbeeck (ed.), Analecta Vaticano-Belgica, 2ème série: Nonciature de Flandre, 4 (Brussels, 1937) p. 62.

[82] ASV, *FB* III 98/2, fol. 24: Frangipani to Aldobrandini, 9 February 1602; BN, *MsF* 16125, fol. 28: Le Fèvre to Villeroy, 22 February 1602.

instrument for the restoration of Habsburg rule over the Netherlands.[83] Albert's piety was just as much part of his decision-making process. In his mind there was no clear boundary between the earthly and the divine. Prayer was a means of seeking counsel; sacred history a source for emulation. Contemporary biographers noted with admiration that he would only proceed with the nomination of a bishop or an abbot after having taken Holy Communion.[84] It was by no means a coincidence that many of the momentous decisions of his reign were issued or publicized on significant saint's days. In that sense, the choice of 13 July for the renunciation of his ecclesiastical functions provided a good example of his general modus operandi. Hence an historian studying the archducal regime should always have a liturgical calendar at hand.

Trumbull's predecessor in the Brussels embassy, Sir Thomas Edmondes, felt little sympathy for all this. 'How strangely,' he observed with irony and disbelief, 'this prince is possessed with superstition and other high ideas.' He was appalled by Albert's unquestioning allegiance to Roman Catholicism.[85] Edmondes had been instructed to present the archdukes with a copy of King James' *Apologia*, a refutation of papal claims to supremacy over princes in temporal affairs. Prompted by the nuncio, Albert refused to accept the book. For a man of Edmondes' background, this insult and the kind of blind obedience that inspired it were clearly beyond comprehension.[86] Bentivoglio, who had been doing the prompting, lauded Albert for his religiosity and piety, rare honesty, great love of justice and marvellous moderation.[87] Others found his character less praiseworthy. He was known to detest people who openly contradicted him.[88] Ministers, courtiers or commanders that had made a mistake could expect to be sanctioned.[89] Trumbull was furthermore convinced that Albert was 'extreemely meene in his nature'.[90] Money was certainly a prime preoccupation, though obtaining it took precedence over

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[83] Luc Duerloo, 'Archducal Piety and Habsburg Power', in Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo (eds), *Albert & Isabella, 1598–1621, Essays* (Turnhout, 1998) pp. 267–87; Idem, 'Pietas Albertina', pp. 1–18.

[84] Hendrik Josef Elias, *Kerk en staat in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden onder de regeering der aartshertogen Albrecht en Isabella, 1598–1621*, Recueil de travaux publiés par les membres des conférences d'histoire et de philologie, 2de reeks, 22 (Antwerpen, 1931) p. 153.

[85] NA, *SP* 77/9, fol. 52: Edmondes to Salisbury, 3 July 1609 ns.

[86] William Brown Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History (Cambridge, 1997) pp. 84–98; Leopold Willaert, 'Negociations politico-religieuses entre l'Angleterre et les Pays-Bas catholiques, 1598–1625, d'après les papiers État et de l'Audience conservés aux Archives générales du Royaume de Belgique à Bruxelles', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 6 (1905): pp. 821–2.

[87] ASV, *SSF* 12A, fol. 6 and 32: Bentivoglio to Borghese, 11 and 18 July 1609; Bentivoglio, *Relationi fatte dall' illustrissimo e reverendissimo signor cardinal Bentivoglio*, vol. 1, p. 115.

[88] AGS, *Estado* 628: Consult of the Council of State, 16 January 1614, summarized in *CCE*, vol. 1, fol. 417–18.

[89] NA, *SP* 77/7, fol. 198: Edmondes to Salisbury, 10 July 1605 ns.

[90] NA, *SP* 77/9, fol. 40: Trumbull to Salisbury, 10 May 1610 ns.

hoarding it. The archduke knew how to spend lavishly, particularly when it would enhance his own reputation. For reputation was of overarching importance. The stoic exterior hid a man of great ambition. Commenting on one particular incident, both Edmondes and the French ambassador typified Albert as *magni in parvis et parvi in magnis*.[91] They were struck by the contrast between his readiness to make far-reaching concessions during negotiations and his unyielding punctiliousness when it came to protocol. Disputes over precedence or privilege were met with intransigence, even to the point of disturbing friendly relations with other courts. 'There are no princes in this world,' wrote one French envoy trying to settle a quarrel over manners of address, 'more jealous and punctual in such matters as these.'[92] Four years later, his successor was still struggling with the affair. In exasperation he called upon Paris to judge 'how this prince persists in his stubbornness of not wanting to return to his ancient form of address and how glory precedes all other interests and affairs, which they would rather have ruined than to diminish their glory by a single point'.[93] Yet overbearing pride was not the driving force here. It rather seems that uncertainty about the diplomatic status of his possessions went hand in hand with Albert's timidity, to strengthen his resolve not to compromise his status in any way.

One departing nuncio in Brussels informed his successor that it was easiest to converse with the archduke in Spanish or Latin, but that the prince was able to understand Italian and French and that he furthermore spoke German and Dutch.[94] He was probably not aware that Albert also had a working knowledge of Portuguese.[95] Estimating a tutor's influence is always a difficult task, but it seems safe to assume that Busbecq laid the foundations of Albert's language skills. He likewise seems to have instilled in his pupil a fascination for all things oriental; a fascination that would only deepen during Albert's subsequent lengthy stay in Lisbon. Among the objects known to have been in his possession were Turkish tents, a Persian dagger, an Indian bed and cutlery, considerable quantities of Ming porcelain and a fair amount of bezoars.[96] Finally, it is quite likely that Busbecq, who purchased mathematical instruments and clocks on behalf of Emperor Rudolf II, equally awakened

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91 NA, *SP* 77/9, fol. 52: Edmondes to Salisbury, 3 July 1610 ns; BN, *MsF* 16129, fol. 77: Berny to Henry IV, 10 July 1609.

92 BN, *MsF* 16129, fol. 285: Berny to Puisieux, 25 July 1610.

93 BN, *MsF* 16130, fol. 274: Préaux to Puisieux, 28 May 1614.

94 *Correspondance du nonce Giovanni-Francesco Guidi di Bagno, 1621–1627*, Bernard de Meester (ed.), Analecta Vaticano-Belgica, 2ème série: Nonciature de Flandre, 5 (Brussels, 1938) p. 9.

95 ARA, *SSO* 508: Correspondence with Portugal, 1596–98.

96 ARA, *DSS* 428, fol. 152: Albert to Bruneau, 14 October 1619; Idem, 331: Inventory of presents to Emperor Rudolf II, 1608; and NA, *SP* 77/7: 243: List of objects sent from Spain, 1605; Duerloo and Thomas, *Albrecht & Isabella*, pp. 72 and 173–6. See also Eddy Stols, 'De triomf van de exotica of de bredere wereld in de Nederlanden van de aartshertogen', in

Albert's interest in such objects and pursuits.[97] During his reign in the Netherlands, part of the normal workload of the archducal envoys and agents across Europe was to provide him with the latest inventions in these fields.[98] While Albert employed established local talents such as Michel Coignet on a regular basis, he would also try to attract foreign instrument makers to his court in Brussels.[99] The passion went well beyond collecting mechanical marvels. His aids would buy any book that they could find on fortifications, the most mathematical of martial arts.[100] His correspondence contains letters from Tycho Brahe and Joannes Kepler.[101] As early as the spring of 1609, Albert was using a lens telescope, only a few years after its invention.[102] All in all, his interests and pursuits were very much like those of his renowned elder brother, Rudolf II. The oddity is that, whereas Rudolf is generally known as a mannerist virtuoso, Albert got stuck with the reputation of a baroque bigot.

The Marriage of the Infanta

The death of Archduke Ernst gave a wholly unexpected twist to Albert's career. Philip II had sent Ernst to Brussels as part of his plans for his succession and

Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo (eds), *Albert & Isabella, 1598–1621, Essays* (Turnhout, 1998) pp. 297–8.

97 Eliška Fučikova, 'Prague Castle under Rudolf II: His Predecessors and Successors', in Eliška Fučikova, et al. (eds), *Rudolf II and Prague* (London and New York, 1997) p. 26.

98 ARA, *SSO* 490, fol. 63: Carillo to Albert, 18 March 1600; Idem, 665: Account of Carillo for 1605–1608; and Idem, 481, fol. 32 and 45: Albert to Alarcon, 29 August and 25 October 1609. HHStA, *Belgien*, PC 14: Ayala to Albert, 10 September 1603; Idem, PC 19: Prats to Simon, 3 May 1611; and Idem, PC 26: Watchmaker Chesnon to Boisschot [1619]. The last letter describes three zoomorphic watches. Other precious watches are described in ARA, *DSS* 467, fol. 65: Heinrich Kolowrat to Suárez, 15 June 1613.

99 Most of this correspondence ended up in the German Secretariat of State and has hence remained largely unknown. See ARA, *DSS* 314, fol. 177: Michel Coignet to Archduke Albert, s.d.; Idem, 331: della Faille to Fleckhammer, 5 September 1608; Idem, 344: Correspondence between Heinrich Stolle and Suárez, 23 April to 19 November 1616; Idem, 426, fol. 40–161: Zeelandre to Suárez, 24 September 1616 to 8 April 1617; Idem, 429, fol. 191: Bruneau to Suárez, 3 September 1620; and Idem, 462, fol. 265: della Faille to Suárez, 2 April 1609. See also Duerloo and Thomas, *Albrecht & Isabella*, pp. 178–86.

100 ARA, *SSO* 527: Correspondence between Suárez and Balthasar I Moretus, 8 May 1619 to 30 April 1621. Similarly Albert's ambassador in London was proud to report that he had been able to purchase a copy of William Gilbert, *De magnete, magneticisque corporibus et de magno magnete tellure: Physiologia nova, plurimis et argumentis et experimentis demonstrata* (London, 1600), a work that dealt with magnetism and static electricity, ARA, *Aud* 365, fol. 183: Hoboken to Albert, 15 March 1607.

101 ARA, *DSS* 319: Tycho Brahe to Hutterus, 6 June and 26 July 1601; and Idem, 323: Joannes Kepler to Rudolf II [1604].

102 ASV, *FB* II 114: 127: Bentivoglio to Borghese, 2 April 1609. Perhaps this was one of the pair of *lunettes en forme longue* that the archducal ambassador in Paris sent to Albert in 1609: HHStA, *Belgien*, PC 16: Peckius to Prats, 22 March 1609. See also Klaus Ertz, *Pieter Breughel de Jonge, 1564–1637/8 – Jan Brueghel de Oude, 1568–1625: Een Vlaamse schildersfamilie rond 1600* (Lingen, 1998) pp. 208–9.

for the appeasement of the Netherlands. Now these plans had to be revised. The matter on which they all hinged was the marriage and the dowry of the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia. The infanta was born at Valsaín near Segovia on 12 August 1566, the first child of the marriage of Philip II and Elizabeth de Valois. As her parent's marriage had formed part of the peace agreed between Spain and France at Cateau-Cambrésis, she was sometimes called Isabel de la Paz.[103] Taking on new meanings under changing circumstances, the epithet resurfaced more than once in the course of her life.[104] Her official name was somewhat unusual, insofar as she had been given three Christian names in a time that most princes still went through life with just one or two. The infanta took the first name of both her grandmother, Isabella of Portugal, and of her ancestor, the formidable Queen Isabella the Catholic. She was born on the feast of St Clare and her mother believed that her first successful pregnancy was due to the intercession of St Eugene of Toledo, whose relics she had returned to Spain as part of her dowry.

From the very beginning, thoughts about the infanta's future oscillated between two poles. Being the eldest daughter of the king of Spain, she would normally contract a highly prestigious marriage. In this line of thought, the question was whether the emperor or the kings of France or Portugal would be preferred. It was, on the other hand, quite possible that she might one day inherit the Spanish monarchy. Shortly after her birth, Philip II came to realize that Don Carlos was totally unfit to succeed him. He told Maximilian II as much in a letter in November 1567.[105] The next January, the king put his son in confinement. From then on Don Carlos behaved ever more bizarrely, until he died in late July. As a consequence of his death, Isabella became heir presumptive shortly before her second birthday. In December 1571 the birth of Prince Fernando robbed her of that position. Still, none of the four sons that Philip II begot of Archduchess Anna enjoyed particularly good health. Fernando and Diego (born in 1575) both died around the age of seven. Carlos Lorenzo was not yet two at the time of his death. The only son to remain was the Infante Philip, and his health gave cause for concern rather often.[106] Isabella, however, had a robust constitution. She would, in fact, outlive almost

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[103] Marie [Hennequin] de Villermont, *L'infante Isabelle: Gouvernante des Pays-Bas* (2 vols, Tamines and Paris, 1912) vol. 1, pp. 1–22.

[104] On the road to the Netherlands in 1599, Isabella's confessor wove this theme in the treatise he was writing on the peace. The text was later published as Andrés de Soto, *Declaración de los bienes y excellencias de la paz* (Antwerp, 1621). In 1613 the archducal ambassador in Paris forwarded a letter addressed *A l'Altessa Serenissima la Princesa Doña Isabel d'Austria i de la Pas, señora i condessa de los estados de Flandes*, see HHStA, *Belgien*, PC 21: le Bailly to Albert, 28 November 1613.

[105] Chuboda, *Spain and the Empire*, p. 148.

[106] Parker, *Felipe* II, pp. 406–35 and 457–467. See also Gustav Turba, 'Beiträge zur Geschichte der Habsburger aus den letzten Jahren des spanischen Königs Philipp II.', *Archiv für österreichische Geschichte*, 86 (1899): pp. 315–17.

every other Habsburg of her generation. Hence, it made sense to handle the matter of her marriage with the utmost care until the time that Prince Philip had reached an age that he could have children of his own.

Father and daughter were particularly close. From a very early age, Isabella and her sister, Catalina Michaela, would flutter about the king as he was going through his papers. Often he would send the two of them over to his secretary with the documents that he had signed. When Isabella was only three, she was already calling for paper and ink, so that she could write just like her father. By the time she turned 20, she read state papers to him and was invited to comment on what reply should be given. Observers said that she even had access to the most secret of documents. Philip passed on his love of the outdoors to her. He taught her the pleasures of gardening, of exercise and lengthy walks, and of the hunt, training her to shoot and showing particular pride when she had killed her first deer. When his health declined in later life, she was always at his side.[107]

Over the years this closeness made it more and more difficult for the king to make up his mind about the infanta's marriage. The imperatives of dynastic politics were difficult to escape, however. Unless they were in plentiful supply or there was no way to endow them properly, infantas, just like other princesses, were far too valuable pawns on the chessboard of international politics to be sacrificed to one's private interests. In the complex moves leading up to a decision about Isabella's marriage, Archduke Rudolf was predictably one of the strongest contenders. Plans to arrange the match were aired as early as 1568.[108] The mutual advantage was obvious. The union would renew the ties between the Spanish and the Austrian branches. It would make Isabella empress once Rudolf succeeded his father Maximilian II. In case she became King Philip's heiress, the couple would rule over a monarchy that would surpass that of Charles V in size. Despite these advantageous prospects, the negotiations dragged on for ever. Rudolf drove a hard bargain, demanding that the infanta would be given the Netherlands or some other considerable part of Philip's possessions as dowry.[109] He had his reasons for doing so. In the course of the eight years that he had lived at Philip's court, Rudolf had become resentful of Spanish power. He feared that the union would reduce him to a mere satellite of Spain.[110] Possession of the Netherlands could be a means of redressing

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[107] Parker, *Felipe II*, pp. 905, 932 and 950; [Hennequin] de Villermont, *L'infante Isabelle*, vol. 1, pp. 31–46.

[108] R.J.W. Evans, *Rudolf II and his World: A Study in Intellectual History* (Oxford, 1973) p. 55.

[109] Karl Vocelka, *Die politische Propaganda Kaiser Rudolfs II., 1576–1612*, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für die Geschichte Österreichs, 9 (Vienna, 1981) pp. 174–6. A detailed, if somewhat romanticized, account of the negotiations is in [Hennequin] de Villermont, *L'infante Isabelle*, vol. 1, pp. 66–76.

[110] Herbert Haupt, 'Kaiser Rudolf II. in Prag: Persönlichkeit und imperialer Anspruch', in Jürgen Schultze (ed.), *Prag um 1600: Kunst und Kultur am Hofe Rudolfs II.* (Freren, 1988) p. 48.

the balance of power between the two branches of the House of Habsburg. Philip II had reasons to be cautious too. As the negotiations were about to be intensified in the late 1570s, the king received the first warnings about Rudolf's behaviour from his ambassador at the Imperial Court. It appeared that the emperor suffered from melancholy. His mental state had made him indecisive, distrustful and a victim to all sorts of unfounded anxieties.[111] From then on, his condition went from recovery to relapse, but the shadow of depression was never very far away.[112] Bearing the fate of Don Carlos in mind, the reports made Philip very hesitant about the proposed marriage.

Meanwhile, events in France had a way of interfering with the negotiation process. In 1574 Philip was sufficiently alarmed by rumours of a possible marriage between Queen Elizabeth I and François de Valois, duke of Alençon (and future duke of Anjou), to propose the eight-year-old Infanta Isabella as an alternative bride.[113] Ten years later, the death of the Duke of Anjou opened entirely new perspectives. It was clear that his brother, King Henry III, would be the last ruler of the House of Valois. According to Salic law, the crown ought to pass from him to his distant cousin, King Henry of Navarre, the leader of the French Huguenots. The thought of seeing a Protestant on the throne of France was simply unbearable to Philip II. Fortunately, it was not overly difficult to find jurists prepared to speak out against the validity of Salic law. It was just as fortunate that Henry III had three sisters who had come of age: Elizabeth, the third wife of Philip II; Claude, who had married the Duke of Lorraine; and Margaret, the estranged wife of Henry of Navarre. Elizabeth was the eldest of the three. Speculating that Salic law could be swept aside, this meant that her two daughters would come up as the next in line for the succession.[114] There was even a back-up plan. If Isabella's rights on the entire kingdom were to be rejected, she could still claim the strategic duchy of Brittany which had come to the French crown through the female line.[115]

In the decade following the death of the Duke of Anjou, Philip's marriage strategies for Isabella increasingly focussed on the French succession crisis. He finally showed his hand by sending Don Lorenzo Suárez de Figueroa y Córdoba, duke of Feria, as ambassador extraordinary to the Estates General held in Paris in March 1593. The duke was instructed to see to it that the infanta's rights to the French throne were recognized by the assembly.

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111 Chuboda, *Spain and the Empire*, p. 160.

112 H.C. Erik Midelfort, *Mad Princes of Renaissance Germany* (Charlottesville and London, 1994) pp. 125–31.

113 [Hennequin] de Villermont, *L'infante Isabelle*, vol. 1, p. 58.

114 Roland Mousnier, *L'assassinat d'Henri IV, 14 mai 1610* (Paris, 1964) pp. 91–4.

115 Albert Mousset, 'Les droits de l'infante Isabelle-Claire-Eugenie à la couronne de France', *Revue hispanique*, 16 (1914): pp. 46–79; Agostino Borromeo, 'Clément VIII, la diplomatie pontificale et la paix de Vervins', in Jean-François Labourdette, Jean-Pierre Poussou and Marie-Catherine Vignal (eds), *Le traité de Vervins* (Paris, 2000) p. 335.

Inevitably the question of her marriage came up during the negotiations. Following his instructions to the letter, the duke proposed Archduke Ernst as the most suitable husband.[116] As the oldest brother of Rudolf II, Ernst had thus far acted as governor of the archduchies of Austria, where he had proven a committed supporter of the Catholic Reformation.[117] Given the likelihood that Rudolf would die without legitimate issue, and presuming that Ernst and Isabella would succeed in becoming king and queen of France, it looked as if the empire of Charlemagne might be restored. Things did not proceed this easily though. The discussions in the Estates General were heated, making it clear that the outright Habsburg takeover bid had failed to convince the assembly. By the middle of June, Feria offered a compromise. Once Isabella's rights were recognized, Philip II would make a truly French and Catholic prince his son-in-law. His only proviso was that the choice would be left to him.[118] The new proposal was interpreted as a sign of Spanish duplicity, and members of the *Parlement* of Paris came out in defence of the Salic law.[119] With the atmosphere in the Estates turning awkward and bribes failing to sway the delegates, Philip made a last offer. He proposed to marry the infanta to the young Charles of Lorraine, duke of Guise, whose murdered father had been the leader of the Catholic League. But the opportunity – if ever there was one – had been wasted. The initial intransigence of the Spanish delegation and the lore of the Salic law had paved the way for the conversion of Henry of Navarre and his coronation as King Henry IV.

Ever ready to tag an ironic comment onto his past experiences, the new French king would later tell the archducal ambassador in Paris that if he 'had been a catholic, he would very much have hoped to have the Serene Infanta in marriage'. Whereupon Peter Peckius, who was never short of words either, riposted that 'to his understanding, it would not have been with the Netherlands as a dowry'.[120] For, while picking up the pieces of his failed French policy, Philip's thoughts had turned towards his possessions in the north. By that stage the Netherlands had suffered a quarter of a century of civil war. The rebellious provinces had declared their independence and had succeeded in internationalizing the conflict. In the summer of 1585, Queen Elizabeth I had agreed to support the rebels with men and money, a commitment that soon dragged her into open war with Spain. King Henry IV

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[116] Gustave Baguenault de Puchesse, 'La politique de Philippe II dans les affaires de France, 1559–1598', *Revue des questions historiques*, 13, vol. 25 (1879): pp. 51–6.

[117] Haupt, 'Kaiser Rudolf II. in Prag', p. 48.

[118] Baguenault de Puchesse, 'La politique de Philippe II dans les affaires de France', pp. 56–7.

[119] Mack P. Holt, 'La paix de Vervins et l'Édit de Nantes: une victoire des politiques', in Jean-François Labourdette, Jean-Pierre Poussou and Marie-Catherine Vignal (eds), *Le traité de Vervins* (Paris, 2000) p. 301.

[120] HHStA, *Belgien*, PC 15: Peckius to Albert, 2 February 1607.

joined the fray in January 1595. He wished to avenge the Spanish interventions in France's Wars of Religion and sought to secure his newly won throne by uniting the country in a war against a foreign enemy. As a result, Philip II was now waging war on three fronts. The monarchy was desperately short of resources. The third bankruptcy of his reign would soon become inevitable.[121] Realizing that he would never see the end of the conflict, the king sought to reduce his commitments without too much loss of *reputación* for the Spanish monarchy, and without surrendering the strategic advantage of a power base to the north of France. The idea of ceding the Netherlands to another ruler was not entirely new. It had already been considered as early as 1539.[122] Don Luís de Requessens had raised the idea of a cession to the Infanta Isabella in 1574.[123] The time had come to put these projects into effect.

There were no more reasons to postpone the marriage of the Infanta Isabella either. She celebrated her 27th birthday in August 1593; the crown prince had turned 15 in April. The Infanta Catalina Michaela had married Charles Emmanuel I, duke of Savoy, in 1585. So far she had borne him four sons and two daughters. One more boy and three girls were to follow. It had become clear to all, except to Rudolf II himself, that he would never make up his mind about marrying Isabella. All hopes of placing her on the throne of France had vanished. Philip stuck to his plan of giving Isabella to Archduke Ernst in marriage. The infanta would receive the Netherlands as dowry. In order to prepare the ground, Ernst arrived as governor-general in the Netherlands in the summer of 1594. Nobody seemed to take into account that he was already a very sick man. He did not make it until the next spring.

Governor-general of the Netherlands

Philip II now had to decide who would replace Ernst. Since Isabella was going to receive the Netherlands as dowry, her husband had to be a Habsburg. Otherwise this prized possession of the dynasty would be lost forever. Emperor Rudolf II was out of the question. So was his next remaining brother, Archduke Matthias, who had supported the cause of the rebellious States General by accepting their invitation to become governor-general in October 1577. His tenure of office had been a dismal failure. Inexperienced and impetuous, he exerted no influence whatsoever on the course of events in the Netherlands. The rebel camp had split into the Calvinist Union of Utrecht

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121 Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567–1659: The Logistics of Spanish Victory and Defeat in the Low Countries' Wars* (Cambridge, 1975) p. 150.

122 Rafael Valladares, 'Decid adiós a Flandes: La Monarquía Hispánica y el problema de los Países Bajos', in Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo (eds), *Albert & Isabella, 1598–1621, Essays* (Turnhout, 1998) p. 48.

123 Henry Kamen, *The Duke of Alba* (New Haven and London, 2004) p. 130.

and the Catholic Union of Arras. Peace talks held under the auspices of the emperor in Cologne had led nowhere. When Matthias resigned in 1581, people had almost forgotten that he was still around. Philip, however, would neither forget nor forgive his nephew's adventure.[124] Next was Archduke Maximilian, but he was a largely unknown quantity in Madrid. His ill-fated attempt to become king of Poland in 1587 had ended in over a year of imprisonment by his rival, Sigismund III Wasa.[125] Philip, understandably, preferred to give his confidence to someone with a more convincing record. Compared to his three surviving brothers, Albert seemed the ideal partner for Isabella. He shared many of Philip's characteristics, tastes and views. In the course of his lengthy stay on the peninsula, he had been profoundly influenced by the political culture of the Spanish Court. He knew the monarchy from the inside and had acquired a wide network of friends and clients. As viceroy of Portugal, he had demonstrated his talents as an administrator. The defence of Lisbon had earned him a certain reputation as a military commander. Above all else, his loyalty to the king was beyond any doubt. For once King Philip felt little or no hesitation when he appointed Cardinal-Archduke Albert governor-general and captain-general of the Netherlands on 26 April 1595.[126]

During the following months, Albert prepared for his journey to the north. The reform of his household stood high on the agenda. The most sensitive appointment was that of *mayordomo mayor* or grandmaster of the household. After Albert's return to Madrid and the death of Don Juan de Ayala, the post had been taken up by the imperial ambassador, Count Johann Khevenhüller. Since Khevenhüller would have to continue his diplomatic mission in Madrid, the office was now given to Don Francisco de Mendoza, who was best known by his title of Admiral of Aragon. At the end of July 1596, Don Francisco was also appointed general of the cavalry, one of the most senior ranks in the Army of Flanders.[127] These appointments made him potentially the second most powerful man in the Netherlands. If he showed himself an able politician and managed to retain the confidence of the archduke, he might well dominate the upcoming reign as Albert's favourite, the Lerma of the archducal regime.

With an entourage of many noblemen and clerics, Albert left Madrid on 28 August 1595. The party travelled at a slow pace via Saragossa to Barcelona. At times it seemed almost a pilgrimage. They stopped at Daroca to venerate the Holy Corporals and made it a point of entering Saragossa on 8 September, the day of the Birth of the Virgin. The next day was spent in veneration of Our Lady del Pilar. Albert and his companions then moved on to Montserrat,

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[124] Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477–1806* (Oxford, 1998) pp. 190–204.

[125] Noflatscher, *Glaube, Reich und Dynastie*, pp. 151–5.

[126] Kamen, *Philip of Spain*, p. 303.

[127] Roco de Campofrío, *España en Flandes*, pp. 6–7 and 120; and not *maestre de campo general* as in Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road*, p. 108.

where they paid homage to the Black Madonna.[128] It was also at Montserrat that the party was joined by Philips Willem, prince of Orange, the eldest son of William the Silent. In 1566, Alva had ordered his abduction from Louvain, where he was studying at the university, and had arranged for him to be shipped to Spain. Even though he was kept there as a hostage, Philip II – who was also Philips Willem's godfather – allowed him to continue his studies in Alcalá de Henares. In the process, his loyalty to the king and his adherence to Catholicism were carefully cultivated. As a gesture of reconciliation, he was now allowed to return to his estates in the Netherlands.[129]

The company sailed from Barcelona and reached Savona by late October. It met a spectacular welcome at the Court of Savoy in Turin, with tours of palaces, churches and fortifications, comedies, balls, tournaments and exchanges of rare presents. In between the festivities, Albert held long meetings with Duke Charles Emmanuel, discussing the wars of the monarchy.[130] Meanwhile some 8,000 infantrymen and 600 cavalry converged on the city. The backbone of this small army consisted of Spanish *tercios*, with Italians making up the rest of the contingent.[131] Together with the substantial sums of money that Albert was bringing, these men would have to reinvigorate the war in the Netherlands. When all was ready, the soldiers and Albert's party took the well-known Spanish Road northwards. The pass of Mont Cenis was crossed in early December; Besançon was reached shortly after the New Year. Travelling through the territories of the Dukes of Lorraine, Albert became acquainted with most members of that dynasty. On 23 January 1596 he and his party crossed the border between Lorraine and the Netherlands. Close to Ciney, Ernst of Bavaria, elector of Cologne and prince-bishop of Liège, came to pay his respects. On 10 February Albert stopped in Hal, where he spent the night praying in the Lady Chapel. The following day he made his solemn entry into Brussels. Pious visits punctuated the last part of the journey just as much as the first. While his party recuperated in Savona, Albert went to a nearby shrine of the Virgin of Mercy to give thanks for their safe passage across the Mediterranean. At Mondoví, a representative of the Duke of Savoy related the wondrous events ascribed to the local icon of Our Lady. In other resting places, important relics were held up for veneration. Thus in Turin on 21 November, the celebration of the feast of the Presentation of the Virgin was given particular lustre by a display of the Holy Shroud.

Albert and his men arrived in the Netherlands at a critical juncture of the war. The tide was running against the Habsburgs. The Army of Flanders was

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128 Roco de Campofrío, *España en Flandes*, pp. 9–19.

129 W.C. Mees, *Philips Willem van Oranje* (The Hague, 1965) pp. 38–49; Fernand Hermans, *Een katholieke prins van Oranje begraven te Diest*, Jaarboek 1984 (Diest, 1984) pp. 21–5.

130 Roco de Campofrío, *España en Flandes*, pp. 21–42.

131 Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road*, p. 278.