

Confession and complicity: Margarita de Austria, Richard Haller, S. J., and the court of Philip III¹

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Women have not fared very well in the historiography on court politics in early modern Spain. Scholars have generally assumed that men, be they kings, councilors of state, *privados*, or confessors controlled court life and policy-making almost exclusively. A closer examination of Queen Margarita de Austria, wife of Philip III (1598-1621), however, reveals that our ideas about the early modern Spanish court have to be revised. Women were at the center of informal networks of influence in Spain. They had regular access to the king and to other representatives of the male political world. Most importantly of all, Spanish royal women were quite skilled at using their family connections and their supposedly apolitical religious roles to voice their opinions and influence policy making during the reign of Philip III. No evaluation of politics in Spain in the early modern period can be complete without an expanding notion of the court and the power royal women exercised within that court. This article takes up this task by examining the influence of Margarita de Austria at Philip III's court and her relationship with her Jesuit confessor, Richard Haller.²

When Margarita de Austria arrived in Spain in 1599 to marry Philip III, she brought with her Richard Haller, her German Jesuit confessor. Haller was supposed to return to Central Europe because Spanish royal custom dictated that the queen of Spain should have a Spanish Franciscan

¹ I would like to thank Bernardo José García García for his comments and suggestions which helped me in revising this article.

² On Margarita de Austria and her role at the Spanish court see, María Jesús Pérez Martín, *Margarita de Austria. Reina de España* (Madrid, 1961).

confessor.³ Nevertheless, Margarita was able to break with tradition and keep her Jesuit confessor until her death in 1611. She successfully convinced her new husband that her difficulties speaking Castilian made it imperative for her to have a German-speaking confessor. In so doing, the queen retained a close associate, mentor, and friend upon whom she could rely for both spiritual and political advice. In turn, the Austrian Habsburgs gained a strong spokesman in Spain because Richard Haller also continuously represented Austrian Habsburg interests at the Spanish court.

Margarita de Austria and Richard Haller were drawn into a close relationship with each other upon arriving at the Spanish court. Both queen and confessor faced opposition from Philip III's royal favorite, the Duke of Lerma. The Duke of Lerma recognized the crucial role played by the queen's confessor at the court and the potential power of Margarita de Austria. As early as 1599, Lerma had encouraged Philip III to replace Haller with Fray Mateo de Burgos, a Spanish Franciscan priest. Lerma believed that Mateo de Burgos would be indebted to him for the appointment and might then report to Lerma the general content of his conversations with the queen.⁴ At the very least, Mateo de Burgos could hopefully discourage or even prevent the queen from exercising any significant political influence at the Spanish court. Moreover, by removing Richard Haller from the court, Lerma could help prevent the formation of an Austrian Habsburg court faction centered around the queen. Such a faction could interfere with Lerma's control over court politics.

Lerma's plan to replace Haller with Mateo de Burgos was in keeping with his policy of surrounding Margarita de Austria with his own relatives and dependents in order to attempt to control her actions and even her speech.⁵ In 1600, Lerma convinced Philip III to replace the Duchess of

³ *Relazione di Francesco Soranzo*, 11 October 1602, in Nicolo Barozzi and Guglielmo Berchet, *Relazioni degli Stati Europei. Lettere al Senato dagli Ambasciatori Veneti nel Secolo Decimoseptimo*, Serie I: Spagna, vol. 1 (Venice, 1856), p. 162; Ciriaco Pérez Bustamante, *Felipe III. Semblanza de un Monarca y Perfil de una Privanza* (Madrid, 1950), p. 85. For the original instructions concerning Margaret's confessor see, Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, (hereafter HHSTA), Spanien Varia 3, letter from Guillén de San Clemente to Archduchess María, 18 September 1598. See specifically point #7: "Que podrá llevar un confessor de aquí a España, mas con condicion, que se havra de bolver luego porque a las Reynas de España se suele dar alla Confessor de tales calidades como conviene." It is interesting to note that when Margarita de Austria and Philip III's daughter, the Infanta María, went to Central Europe to marry Ferdinand III, she took Father Diego de Quiroga, her Spanish Capuchin confessor. The Austrian Habsburgs attempted unsuccessfully to replace this confessor with an Austrian Jesuit. See Robert Bireley, S.J., *Religion and Politics in the Age of the Counterreformation. Emperor Ferdinand II, William Lamormaini S.J. and the Formation of Imperial Policy* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1981), p. 161; John H. Elliott, *The Count- Duke of Olivares. The Statesman in an Age of Decline* (New Haven and London, 1986), pp. 394-95.

⁴ Lerma followed this same approach in 1608 when he advised Philip III to choose Luis de Aliaga as his confessor. Aliaga had been Lerma's confessor, and Lerma trusted that in Aliaga he would have a close associate. Lerma's plan backfired: although Aliaga did win the appointment, he proved to be one of Lerma's chief enemies and rivals at the Spanish court.

⁵ For Lerma's use of a familial network at the Spanish court see, Antonio Feros Carrasco, "Gobierno de Corte y Patronazgo Real en el Reinado de Felipe III (1598-1618)," unpublished tesina de licenciatura (Madrid, 1986).

Gandía, who had been appointed by Philip II as *camarera mayor* to Margarita de Austria, with his wife, the Duchess of Lerma. The poor health of Lerma's wife led Lerma to have her replaced in 1601 by his sister, the Countess of Lemos.⁶ Lerma also maneuvered for one of his closest confidantes, Pedro de Franqueza, to become Margarita de Austria's secretary.⁷ In this way, Lerma hoped to control the queen's correspondence and to monitor her activities. He also removed most of the Austrian ladies-in-waiting who had accompanied Margarita de Austria from Central Europe to Spain and tried very hard, but unsuccessfully, to remove from the court the queen's closest lady-in-waiting and friend, María Sidonia Riderer. Unable to remove her, Lerma arranged for her to marry a Spanish nobleman, the Count of Barajas, on whom Lerma thought he could count to prevent close and daily contact between María Sidonia and the queen. This move, however, proved useless because the two women continued to have regular contact with each other. Lerma also went so far as to tell the queen that she was not allowed to speak to her husband about political matters at any time, especially during private moments together when no one else was there to overhear the queen's comments.⁸ Lerma threatened to have Philip III travel extensively without the queen if she refused to comply with his demands.⁹ Nevertheless, the queen still managed to speak with Philip III about familial and political matters, and to communicate her wishes and opinions to him through other individuals such as Richard Haller and the royal almoner, Diego de Guzmán.¹⁰

As Margarita fulfilled her wifely duty and bore Philip III children, she gained greater influence with and affection from her husband. Philip now felt indebted to his young wife and was grateful to her for giving him heirs. This was particularly the case after Margarita de Austria gave birth to their first son, the future Philip IV, in April 1605. So, for example, in 1606, Margarita de Austria openly questioned Lerma's political and financial policies and went so far as to warn Philip III that the *Junta de Desempeño* set up by Lerma in 1603 to improve the monarchy's financial

⁶ Presumably the Duchess of Lerma's illness prevented her from performing her duties fully, duties which included sleeping in the queen's bedroom whenever Philip III was not present. For the rules governing the queen's household see, Archivo General del Palacio Real, Sección Histórica, Caja 50, Ordenanzas de Felipe II para la Casa de la Reina Doña Ana, fols. 314-339v. For Philip III's rules for Margarita de Austria's household see, Biblioteca Nacional (hereafter BN), Madrid, Ms. 1007, "Etiquetas de la Casa de la Reina," 9 July 1603, fols. 1-78v.

⁷ Franqueza received the appointment as the queen's secretary in 1602.

⁸ BN, Madrid, Ms. 2752, "Historia de Joan Kevenhuller de Aichelberg," pp. 1140-41.

⁹ For Philip III's travels during the first few years of his reign see, BN, Madrid, Ms. 2347, "Las Jornadas que ha hecho Su Magd." fols. 343-358. See also Patrick Williams, "Lerma, Old Castile and the Travels of Philip III of Spain," *History*, vol. 73, n. 239 (October 1988), pp. 379-97.

¹⁰ On Diego de Guzmán, see his "Memorias del Cardenal Diego de Guzmán," Real Academia de la Historia (hereafter RAH), Madrid, Colección Salazar, 9/476 and 9/477. See also Diego Ortiz de Zúñiga, *Anales Eclesiasticos y Seculares de la muy noble y muy leal Ciudad de Sevilla* (Madrid, 1677), pp. 645-59.

situation had only worsened Spain's economic problems.¹¹ Margarita was probably also at least partly responsible for the first political crisis of the Duke of Lerma's tenure: the arrest and trial of her secretary and Lerma's close associate, Pedro de Franqueza, in 1607.¹² In the choice of her confessor, as in other ways, the Duke of Lerma was not successful in imposing his will on Margarita I a testimony to the strong character of the young queen and to the genuine affection which quickly developed between Margarita de Austria and Philip III.

Faced with a mutual enemy in Lerma, Margarita de Austria and Richard Haller formed a close bond. Both individuals had an ambivalent attitude toward the Spanish court. The queen was only fifteen years old at the time of her marriage, and she was not fluent in Castilian. Her youth and her language difficulties led her to seek the company of other German-speaking individuals at the Spanish court; in addition to Haller, these included Philip III's aunt (and grandmother), Empress Maria (who had been Empress of the Holy Roman Empire from 1564 to 1576, but who in 1581 retired to the convent of the Descalzas Reales in Madrid) and the empress's daughter, Margarita de la Cruz (a nun at the same convent). Margarita also sought the company of her Austrian lady-in-waiting, María Sidonia, as well as that of the Austrian Habsburg ambassador in Madrid, Hans Khevenhüller. With these individuals, Margarita often spoke in German, something which was disturbing to the Duke of Lerma because he and his associates could not understand the language, and thus could not monitor these conversations. Margarita's troubles at the Spanish court eventually led her to tell Hans Khevenhüller that she would "much rather be a nun in a convent in Goricia (Styria) than Queen of Spain".¹³ Despite her many frustrations with the Spanish court, Margarita became a strong political player there and did not shun her royal duties.

Haller, for his part, had not wanted to go as confessor to Margarita de Austria. Prior to his appointment as Margarita's confessor, Richard Haller served as rector of the Jesuit university at Graz.¹⁴ Haller, who had been born in Nuremberg, represented Bavarian interests at the court in Graz and

¹¹ See Archivo Segreto Vaticano, Fondo Borghese, Ser. II, n. 272, Nunziatura di Spagna 1605-1606, fols. 58r-58v; 67r-67v. I have not seen the original letter but have consulted the transcribed copy in Bernardo José García García, "El Duque de Lerma y la Pax Hispánica," unpublished tesina de licenciatura (Madrid, 1991), pp. 163-64.

¹² R.A. Stradling, *Philip IV and the Government of Spain, 1621-1665* (New York, 1988), p. 6.

¹³ BN, Madrid, Ms. 2751, "Historia de Joan Kevenhuller de Aichelberg," p. 1140-1141. For the German version see, HHSTA, Spanien, Diplomatische Korrespondenz (hereafter SDK), Karton 13, Die Geheime Korrespondenz des Kaiserlichen Botschafters am Königliche Spanischen Hof in Madrid. Hans Khevenhüller, Graf von Frankenburg an Kaiser Rudolf II, vol. VI, 1606, fol. 331r.

¹⁴ Richard Haller was born in Nuremberg in 1550. He entered his noviciate in 1569. He was rector at the Jesuit university in Innsbruck and at Ingolstadt (Bavaria) before becoming rector at Graz. Haller died in Madrid in January 1612. See Carlos Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jesus* vol. IX (Paris, 1900), pp. 49-50.

was in favor of closer cooperation between the Styrian branch of the Austrian Habsburgs in Graz and the Wittelsbachs in Bavaria. Ferdinand's mother, Archduchess Maria of Bavaria, was from the Wittelsbach family. Thus, the court in Graz had a strong contingent of individuals who were favorably disposed toward Bavaria. Haller was among those individuals in Graz who favored a marriage between the Styrian branch of the Habsburgs and the Wittelsbachs.¹⁵ For this reason, he clashed with Archduke Ferdinand's Jesuit confessor, Bartholomew Viller, who originally discouraged the Styrian-Bavarian marriage tie.¹⁶

Bartholomew Viller had grandiose, international plans for the Styrian Habsburgs. Viller was instrumental in having Archduke Leopold, Ferdinand's younger brother, chosen as bishop of Passau, a move which angered the Wittelsbachs. Moreover, Viller was also a key negotiator for the marriage of Margarita de Austria to Philip III because he thought that the marriage could greatly enhance the political future of the Styrian line. Once this marriage was successfully negotiated, Viller suggested Richard Haller as Margarita's confessor.¹⁷ Haller correctly interpreted this action as an attempt by Viller to remove his rival from the political arena in Graz. For Haller, this appointment signaled an exile from familiar territory and an inability to defend Bavarian interests at the Habsburg court in Graz or to interfere in political developments in Central Europe. Nevertheless, he quickly found in Margarita a close ally through whom he could exercise an important spiritual and political role. In Spain he not only advised and counseled the queen but he also remained abreast of political developments and negotiated issues for the Austrian archdukes and for the Wittelsbachs. His position as confessor thus accorded him a degree of power and leverage which he could employ in the international arena. The relationship between Margarita de Austria and Richard Haller was one of mutual dependence, much like that between many early modern women and their confessors.¹⁸

The association between Margarita de Austria and Richard Haller clearly shows the extent to which spiritual guidance could readily be

¹⁵ The Bavarian faction in Graz wanted Ferdinand to marry his Bavarian cousin, Maria Anna of Wittelsbach. Although Bartholomew Viller originally discouraged this marriage, he eventually agreed to the plan because Archduke Ferdinand and Archduchess Maria desired the union. Viller even helped negotiate the marriage of Ferdinand to Maria Anna. See Johann Andritsch, "Landesfürstliche Berater am Grazer Hof (1564-1619)," in *Innerösterreich. 1564-1619* (Graz, 1968), p. 105.

¹⁶ Viller was Archduke Ferdinand's confessor from 1597 until 1617. On Viller's career see, Johann Andritsch, "Landesfürstliche Berater," pp. 73-117. On Archduke Ferdinand's confessors see, Robert Bireley, S.J., *Religion and Politics in the Age of the Counterreformation*.

¹⁷ On Viller's role in choosing Haller as Margarita's confessor, see Johann Andritsch, "Landesfürstliche Berater," pp. 105-06.

¹⁸ See, for example, Jodi Bilinkoff, *The Avila of Saint Teresa. Religious Reform in a Sixteenth-Century City* (Ithaca and London, 1989), pp. 187-96. I have borrowed the term "mutual dependence" from Jodi Bilinkoff (p. 193).

translated into political advice. The relationship also highlights the fluid line between religion and politics at the early modern Spanish court. Confessors often acted as negotiators for and representatives of the queen with the male political world. Males attempted to limit female action to domestic and religious realms. Women used these realms to further their political ends and therefore consciously worked through confessors to voice their political concerns. Margarita de Austria entrusted Richard Haller with carrying messages to councilors of state and with reporting events at the Spanish court to her Austrian Habsburg relatives. So, for example, in 1602 Haller gave a petition to Cristóbal de Ipeñarrieta, the secretary of the Council of Finance, asking for 100 ducats for Juan Ox, one of the queen's servants (who regularly took her mail to Central Europe).¹⁹ In this case, the money was given to Haller, who then used it to buy a chain [cadena] for Ox as a form of repayment. Thus, Haller not only delivered the petition, but he then was entrusted with receiving and using the money. This incident demonstrates not only what early modern historians have long known about a royal confessor's duties—that they regularly transcended the religious sphere—but also that queen's confessors often worked within female court networks and were instrumental in taking female concerns to the male hierarchy.²⁰ Far from acting independently at the Spanish court, Haller served as Margarita de Austria's representative and worked for the queen; she certainly did not work for him.

Posthumous accounts of Margarita de Austria's life, however, downplayed the queen's independence and emphasized her subordination to her confessor. According to male observers, Margarita de Austria demonstrated great deference toward Richard Haller. Diego de Guzmán, in his biography of the queen,²¹ noted Margarita's complete obedience to her confessor.

*A su confessor estava tan rendida y obediente, que le podía dezir lo que sentía con tanta libertad, como si fuera una novicia de una religión. Y en cierta ocasión le dixo, Padre dígame V.R. (que con este respeto hablava alguna vez, y en secreto a su confessor) lo que estoy obligada a hazer en conciencia, que yo lo haré, aunque me cueste la vida....También dixo en otra ocasión, que no podía sufrir confessor, que no dixesse las verdades lisas y claras.*²²

¹⁹ Archivo General de Simancas (hereafter AGS), Consejo y Juntas de Hacienda, Leg. 428, Casa Real, #18, Valladolid, 13 September 1602. Haller wanted the money to buy a chain (cadena) for Ox in order to repay him for bringing letters from Archduchess Maria to her daughter, the queen. His request was approved.

²⁰ For a detailed study of one confessor's crucial influence in the making of political policy see, Robert Bireley, S.J., *Religion and Politics in the Age of the Counterreformation*.

²¹ Diego de Guzmán, *Reyna Católica. Vida y Muerte de Doña Margarita de Austria* (Madrid, 1617).

²² *Ibid.*, fols. 112v-113.

In the funeral sermons he delivered at the queen's death, Jerónimo de Florencia also emphasized the queen's submission to her confessor.²³ Moreover, according to Florencia and Guzmán, Margarita de Austria treated Richard Haller (and all priests) with tremendous deference, something which a queen was not commanded to do, but was mandatory for a religious novice.²⁴ In this way, she supposedly exemplified the saintly, pure queen who modeled herself after a nun and thus confirmed and even surpassed the established social norms for women and for rulers.

It is not surprising that priests such as Guzmán and Florencia who were writing commemorative works about a dead queen should emphasize her religious piety and her devotion to her confessor. After all, these men wanted to create an ideal picture of the queen which subsequent generations of royal women would use as a model for their own lives. In fact, Philip III hoped his daughter Ana would read Guzmán's biography of her mother and follow her example.²⁵ Yet by emphasizing Margarita's deference and devotion to Haller, Guzman and Florencia implied that Haller greatly influenced Margarita in her decisions and in her assessment of the Spanish court. This was certainly the opinion of the Duke of Lerma and his associates who thought that Haller spoke poorly of them to the queen. So, for example, a confidante of Rodrigo Calderón, Lerma's closest associate at the Spanish court, informed Calderón that Haller was an "enemigo capital de V.Md. [Calderón] y que según dicen algunos no haze a V.Md. buenos oficios con la reyna" and that Haller had gone so far as to claim that he had in his possession numerous documents which incriminated Calderón.²⁶ Although Haller certainly disliked the Duke of Lerma and Calderón, it seems unlikely that he was responsible for instilling these sentiments in the queen. Rather, the queen from her arrival in Madrid disagreed with the Duke of Lerma's policies and criticized these policies openly. She and Haller shared a distrust of Lerma and his companions. The queen certainly disliked Rodrigo de Calderón and the

²³ Florencia delivered two sermons at the queen's death, the first was dedicated to Philip III and the second to the Duke of Lerma. For the first sermon see "Sermon que predicó Gerónimo de Florencia a Felipe III en las Honras de Margarita de Austria," 18 November 1611, BN Madrid, Varios Especiales (hereafter abbreviated VE) 5493. For the second sermon see "Segundo Sermon que Predicó el Padre Gerónimo de Florencia...en las Honras que hizo a la...Reyna D. Margarita...," 19 December 1612, in Micael Avellán, *Oracion Funebre...*, BN Madrid, R/24245, fol. A2.

²⁴ See the rules for a religious novice in Juan de la Cerda, *Vida Política de todos los Estados de Mujeres* (Alcalá de Henares, 1599); Juan Luis Vives, *La Mujer Cristiana*, (1523) ed. Lorenzo Riber (Madrid, 1949). The biographies written about nuns such as Sor Margarita de la Cruz and Sor Mariana de San José emphasize their obedience to their confessors. See Juan de la Palma, *Vida de la Serenisima Infanta Sor Margarita de la Cruz* (Seville, 1653), and Luis Muñoz, *Vida de la Venerable M. Mariana de S. Joseph* (Madrid, 1643).

²⁵ Quoted in Gil Gonzalez Dávila, *Historia de la Vida y Hechos del Inclito Monarca Amado y Santo D. Felipe Tercero* (Madrid, 1771), p. 191.

²⁶ BN Madrid, Ms. 12859, Don Diego de Alderese to Rodrigo Calderón, Madrid, 2 September 1609, fols. 113-114.

known animosity between Calderón and the queen led to speculation that Calderón had poisoned the queen and might even have bewitched her. Although Calderón was criminally prosecuted for these charges, he was not found guilty of them.²⁷ This distrust of key figures at Philip III's court bound the queen and her confessor ever closer.

Male observers such as Rodrigo Calderón might have preferred to see Haller's influence behind the young queen's actions because it corresponded to early modern male perceptions that women were incapable of rational thought and determined action, and that women were easily influenced and swayed. Yet the queen formed her own decisions and employed Haller as the spokesman of her demands to the male political world. Certainly the Venetian ambassadors, who were usually quite adept at uncovering the inner workings of the Spanish court, recognized Margarita's interest in political matters and her desire to have a say in the making of decisions. The Venetian ambassador, Ottaviano Bon, reported in 1602 that Queen Margarita de Austria "is capable of great things, so much so that she would govern if she could in a manner different from that of the king [Philip III]."²⁸ In fact, Bon implied that the queen's political intuition was sounder than her husband's. Whether one agrees with Bon that the queen's political instincts were superior to those of her husband, it is clear that she was in her own right a major political force at the court.

Margarita de Austria and Richard Haller functioned as representatives of the Austrian Habsburgs in Spain. Haller brought requests to the Council of State from the Austrian Habsburgs for assistance in their struggle against the Turks. The Austrian Habsburgs made these requests directly to Haller, but they also wrote Margarita de Austria who undoubtedly used Haller to bring these matters to the attention of Philip III's ministers. Emperor Rudolf also requested the queen's assistance in settling the matters of Finale and Piombino (two imperial fiefs in Italy over which both the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs claimed control).²⁹ In a letter of 1604, Rudolf II wrote to Margarita de Austria asking her "con sus buenos officios con el Rey ayude, para que en lo del Final y Piombin Su Magestad se resuelva, como la razón y equidad lo pide. Y no desseara otra cosa mas, sino que en esto y en todo lo demás V. Magd. oye muy despacio

²⁷ Angel Ossorio, *Los Hombres de Toga en el Proceso de D. Rodrigo Calderón* (Madrid, 1918).

²⁸ Relazione di Ottaviano Bon, 21 December 1602, in Barozzi and Berchet, *Relazioni degli Stati Europei*, p. 247.

²⁹ On Finale see Friedrich Edelmayr, *Maximilian II., Philipp II. und Reichstagen. Die Auseinandersetzungen um das Reichslehen Finale in Ligurien* (Stuttgart, 1988) and José Luis Cano de Gardoqui, *La Incorporación del Marquesado del Finale (1602)* (Valladolid, 1955). On the Spanish-Austrian conflict over imperial fiefs in Italy during Philip III's reign see Magdalena S. Sánchez, "Dynasty, State, and Diplomacy in the Spain of Philip III." unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Baltimore, MD, 1988), pp. 171-211.

a mi Embaxador el Kevenhiler y le diesse credito como solia el Rey que sea en gloria...”³⁰ Rudolf obviously believed that Margarita could use her good graces with Philip III to pressure him to settle the question of Finale and Piombino in a manner favorable to the Austrian Habsburgs.

Richard Haller corresponded regularly with the queen’s mother, Archduchess Maria, and with the queen’s brother, Archduke Ferdinand, and reported to them events at the Spanish court, particularly those which touched the queen. They in turn requested his assistance in bringing matters to the attention of Philip III. For example, in 1604, Archduchess Maria wrote to Philip III that the queen and Haller would inform him of Rudolf II’s resolution in several diplomatic negotiations.³¹ In this way Haller acted as a direct representative of the Austrian Habsburgs and as a type of diplomat. Haller also corresponded with the Duke of Bavaria about matters at the Spanish court which touched upon the duke’s interest (such as Spanish support for the Catholic League).³² The confessor’s political role created hostility between himself and Philip III’s royal favorite, the Duke of Lerma. Margarita’s close association with Haller and their conversations in German combined to create much animosity between Lerma and the queen, and between Lerma and Haller.

Although Haller’s position was strictly defined as a spiritual office, as the queen’s confessor he had daily and private access to Margarita de Austria, access which allowed him to discuss political matters with the queen and to work with her to further the interests of the Austrian Habsburgs. The confessor was responsible for saying daily mass within the queen’s chamber and for listening to her confession.³³ He met with her daily, and had unlimited access to her. In this way, his office paralleled that of the king’s confessor, who also had frequent access to Philip III. The king’s confessor, however, usually occupied a position on the Council of State and thus he had a well-defined political role. Haller’s political role was less well-defined; he was not asked to serve on the Council of State or on any other state councils. Yet the Spanish court environment, which allowed royal confessors a political voice, undoubtedly also made it acceptable for Haller to express his opinion on political matters.

The queen’s regard for her confessor is evident in her will, as well.³⁴ In the will, the queen referred to Haller as “mi muy fiel confesor... como

³⁰ BN, Madrid, Ms. 915, Rudolf II to Margarita de Austria, Praga, 2 January 1604, fols. 84r-v.

³¹ BN, Madrid, Ms. 915, Archduchess Maria to Philip III, Graz, 21 March 1604, fol. 87r-v.

³² See P. Arthur M. de Carmignano de Brenta, O.F.M., *Mission Diplomatique de Laurent de Brindes auprès de Philippe III en Faveur de la Ligue Catholique Allemande* (Padua, 1964), pp. 42-43, p. 63 nota 132, and p. 66.

³³ RAH, Madrid, Ms. 9/476, “Memorias del Cardenal Diego de Guzmán,” 21 May 1609, fol. 39.

³⁴ For the queen’s testament see, RAH, Ms. M-63, fols. 309v-320r. In leaving money to her closest friends and servants, Margarita de Austria mentioned Richard Haller first, but noted that her confessor did not wish her to give him any monetary gift. See fol. 316v.

quien no pretende ni a pretendido jamás nada ni quiso que le mandase algo ni para sí ni para sus deudos.”³⁵ Nevertheless, the queen asked Philip III to compensate Richard Haller liberally and in a manner befitting a “faithful confessor.” Margarita de Austria furthermore entrusted Richard Haller with ensuring that the terms of her testament were carried out. In this way, the queen raised her Jesuit confessor to the level of her husband and of the Duke of Lerma, the other executors of her will. Margarita de Austria left a good share of her wealth to a Jesuit school in Salamanca. This in itself was proof of her continued devotion to Richard Haller and her respect for the Jesuits. She knew that her heirs would question this gift to the Jesuits (Philip III would delay this foundation for several years after Margarita’s death), and perhaps anticipating her husband’s reaction, the queen chose Richard Haller to defend her dying wishes.

As a Jesuit priest, Richard Haller had occasion to interact frequently with fellow Jesuits at the Spanish court and at the Jesuit residence in Madrid. In particular, Haller seems to have worked in cooperation with Diego de Guzmán, Philip III’s royal almoner and a close associate of Margarita de Austria. As royal almoner, Diego de Guzmán spoke with Philip III regularly after lunch at which time the king would decide on dispensing alms to the poor, the needy, and the deserving.³⁶ Guzmán was also regularly present at the audiences which Philip III gave after his midday meal.³⁷ He also attended meetings of the Council of State.³⁸

Diego de Guzmán exercised an important say in the court of Philip III and had contact with the queen long before he was appointed royal almoner in December 1608. Prior to his appointment as almoner, Guzmán was the chaplain of the Descalzas Reales where he received his appointment in 1602 through Empress Maria’s intercession with Philip III.³⁹ As chaplain of the Descalzas, Diego de Guzmán had daily contact with Empress Maria and the nuns of the monastery, including the Empress’s daughter, Sor Margarita de la Cruz. He also was in charge of the many religious celebrations in the monastery, most of which were attended by the king and queen. Moreover, as chaplain he was responsible for saying the daily masses at the monastery, masses which Philip III and

³⁵ RAH, Ms. M-63, fol. 319r.

³⁶ See, for example, RAH, 9/476, fol. 17 (12 May 1609); fol. 72 (28 July 1609); and 9/477, fol. 34 (13 August 1610); fol. 85 (24 May 1611).

³⁷ See, for example, RAH, 9/476, fol. 94.

³⁸ Although it is unclear whether Philip III ever actually gave Diego de Guzmán the title of councilor of state, Guzmán notes in his memoirs that he attended meetings of the Council of State. See RAH, 9/476, 30 May 1609, fol. 41. Feliciano Barrios lists Diego de Guzmán on the list of Philip III’s councilors of state but does not give a date of appointment. See Feliciano Barrios, *El Consejo de Estado de la Monarquía Española*, p. 349. Guzmán continued to serve as royal almoner under Philip IV.

³⁹ British Library, Additional Manuscripts 28,424, Borja to Lerma, 12 December 1601, fol. 236. Philip III may have originally suggested Diego de Guzmán to the Empress, but she chose him among a list of possible candidates for chaplain of the monastery.

Margarita de Austria attended regularly. Although he was appointed royal almoner in 1608, Diego de Guzmán continued to serve as royal chaplain of the Descalzas until April 1609.⁴⁰ Guzmán undoubtedly served as a conduit for information and requests from the Descalzas to the royal palace, and vice versa. His close association with the monastery even after 1609—he continued to celebrate masses there and to plan religious festivities—ensured that the needs of the cloistered nuns of the Descalzas received royal attention. Guzmán was also closely associated with the queen and was often present at audiences which she gave.⁴¹ He worked with her in the reformation of the royal monastery of Santa Isabel⁴², and in the foundation of the royal monastery of the Encarnación.⁴³ Guzmán also oversaw the queen's charitable deeds and was no doubt privy to the secret expenses of Margarita de Austria.⁴⁴ In his memoirs, Diego de Guzmán recorded visiting Margarita de Austria in her private chapel (*oratorio*) almost every morning. Guzman often met with the queen's confessor, Richard Haller, in the Jesuit Residence in Madrid. Guzmán noted eating with and speaking to Richard Haller at the Jesuit house. For example, after being appointed tutor to the Infanta Ana, an office which Diego de Guzmán did not desire, Guzmán went to the Jesuit residence where he discussed the matter with Richard Haller.⁴⁵ Thus, Diego de Guzmán was a crucial link in the queen's network of influence at the Spanish court.

Margarita de Austria and Richard Haller also had contact with other prominent Jesuit priests, including the court preacher, Jerónimo de Florencia, a preacher who won much favor with the queen and who was critical of the Duke of Lerma's influence at the court.⁴⁶ Florencia was one

⁴⁰ In his memoirs Guzmán writes that he finished all his duties at the Descalzas monastery on 26 April 1609. RAH, 9/476, fol. 33.

⁴¹ RAH, 9/476, fol. 67.

⁴² José Luis Sáenz Ruiz-Olalde, O.A.R., *Las Agustinas Recoletas de Santa Isabel La Real de Madrid* (Madrid, 1990), pp. 46-95. For the original documents from the queen and Diego de Guzmán concerning the reformation of Santa Isabel see, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid, Clero, L. 7677 "Relación que la Reyna Nuestra Señora mando embiar a Don Francisco de Castro..." 8 folios without folio numbers.

⁴³ On the royal monastery of the Encarnación see, María Leticia Sánchez Hernández, *El Monasterio de la Encarnación de Madrid. Un Modelo de Vida Religiosa en el Siglo XVII* (Ediciones Escorialenses, 1986).

⁴⁴ In his biography of the queen, Guzmán talks about being privy to her secret charitable acts and donations. See Diego de Guzmán, *Vida y Muerte de Doña Margarita de Austria*, fol. 142r-142v.

⁴⁵ RAH, 9/476, fol. 124, 19 January 1610. Although Guzmán does not record specifically that he spoke to Haller about his appointment, the juxtaposition of his account of his appointment with that of his meeting with Haller clearly implies that the two occurrences were related. Diego de Guzmán seems to have believed that the Duke of Lerma had him appointed tutor to the Infanta Ana so as to limit the royal almoner's ability to be at royal audiences.

⁴⁶ On Florencia's political influence, particularly in the last year of Philip III's reign see, Matías de Novoa, "Memorias de Matías de Novoa," in *Colección de Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España*, vol. LXI, (Madrid, 1611), pp. 121, 132; BN, Madrid, Ms. 17.858, "Relaciones de 1618 a 1621," fol. 290; BN, Madrid, Ms. 2352, "Sucesos del año 1621" fol. 9r.

of Margarita de Austria's favorite preachers; Diego de Guzmán regularly noted that Florencia often gave sermons at the queen's masses.⁴⁷ Florencia also delivered the funeral sermons at the queen's death. These sermons show that he was critical of the Duke of Lerma and that Florencia saw the queen as a chief proponent of an anti-Lerma court policy.⁴⁸ In the first sermon he delivered at Margarita's death, Florencia had the queen deliver political advice from the grave: she urged Philip III to govern in a manner which would bring him eternal salvation and to look after the welfare of the monarchy which was like a second wife to a king.⁴⁹ Florencia also had Margarita urge *privados* to use their great power to help the powerless.⁵⁰ Florencia thus made the queen represent good government and love of the republic. By having Margarita de Austria provide advice to the king and his councilors, Florencia implied that the queen disapproved of the politics at the Spanish court, and that the queen had sound political judgement. The death of the queen and the occasion of a eulogy provided an opportunity for the preacher himself to criticize court politics, albeit through the safe mouth of the deceased queen. Florencia's sermons ultimately had a strong impact on Philip III. In 1618, the king claimed that one of Florencia's sermons had inspired him to dismiss the Duke of Lerma.⁵¹

Lerma's agenda for foreign policy sharply differed from that of Margarita de Austria and Richard Haller. Throughout Philip III's reign, the Duke of Lerma sought to concentrate Spanish attention on the Iberian peninsula. Faced with increasing economic difficulties, the Spanish government debated where best to employ its limited financial resources. Lerma argued that these resources should best be employed in securing the Iberian territories, and should be focused on the Mediterranean.⁵² For this reason, he discouraged giving unlimited support to the Austrian Habsburgs in Central Europe, and he encouraged Philip III to sign a truce with the Dutch provinces in 1609.⁵³ Lerma also supported a rapproach-

⁴⁷ See for example Guzmán's numerous references to Florencia's sermons in RAH, 9/477.

⁴⁸ See "Sermon que predicó Gerónimo de Florencia a Felipe III en las Honras de Margarita de Austria," 18 November 1611, and "Segundo Sermon que Predicó el Padre Gerónimo de Florencia...en las Honras que hizo a la...Reyna D. Margarita..." 19 December 1612, in Micael Avellan, *Oracion Funebre*.

⁴⁹ Florencia, "Sermon que Predicó a Felipe III en las Honras de Margarita de Austria," fol. 17-17v.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, fol. 18.

⁵¹ BN, Madrid, Ms. 2348, "Sucesos desde el año 1611 hasta 1617," fol. 402v.

⁵² Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic and the Hispanic World 1606-1661* (New York, 1982), pp. 12-14; Bernardo José García García, "El Duque de Lerma y la Pax Hispánica," pp. 78-166; John H. Elliott, "Foreign Policy and Domestic Crisis: Spain, 1598-1659," in *Spain and its World 1500-1700* (New Haven and London, 1989), p. 116-18; Peter Brightwell, "The Spanish Origins of the Thirty Years' War," *European Studies Review*, vol. 9 (1979), pp. 423-24.

⁵³ This truce was in keeping with Lerma's and Philip III's attempt to pursue pacifistic policies, a desire motivated at least in part by the economic problems of the Spanish kingdoms and the tremendous financial drains which the war in Flanders represented for the Spanish monarchy. On the truce see, Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic and the Hispanic World*, pp. 1-95; Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt* (New York, 1981), pp. 239-40; 263-64.

ment with France and was instrumental in negotiating the marriage of Philip III's daughter Ana to Louis XIII of France, and of Prince Philip (the future Philip IV) to Isabel de Bourbon.⁵⁴ The Austrian Habsburgs did not welcome Lerma's peaceful overtures toward France because they thought these maneuvers were at the expense of Spanish-Austrian relations. Consequently, throughout the reign of Philip III, those individuals (such as Margarita de Austria and Richard Haller) at the Spanish court who supported Austrian Habsburg interests were constantly at odds with the Duke of Lerma and his policies.

Although Lerma attempted to prevent the queen from challenging his authority at the Spanish court, Margarita remained at the center of a court faction which championed the interests of the Austrian Habsburgs and which therefore opposed the policies of the Duke of Lerma. This "Austrian Party" wanted the Spanish monarchy to concentrate its resources on Central Europe and on assisting the Austrian Habsburgs in their struggle against the Turks, against the German Protestants, and against the Dutch "rebels."⁵⁵ Individuals such as Margarita de Austria, Sor Margarita de la Cruz, and Richard Haller emphasized the familial ties between the two Habsburg branches and the need to work together to protect the common "House of Austria." For them, the Spanish kingdoms and those of the Austrian Habsburgs were part of a common patrimony, a common inheritance which it was essential to maintain. Therefore, they saw this as the chief concern of the Spanish monarchy, one that superseded any attempt to protect and defend the Spanish kingdoms. Their concerns were motivated by familial and dynastic interests and not by any thorough understanding of the financial situation in the Iberian peninsula. Thus, the policies which they advocated clashed directly with the plans of the Duke of Lerma.

Nevertheless, this Austrian faction was often successful in winning the attention of Philip III and causing him to concentrate on Central Europe. Through the pressure of Margarita de Austria and Richard Haller (until their deaths, respectively in 1611 and 1612), and through the work of Margarita de la Cruz and councilors of state such as the Duke of Infantado and Baltasar de Zúñiga (after he returned from Central Europe in 1617), Philip III ultimately pursued a foreign policy which was favorable to the Austrian Habsburgs. This was particularly evident in 1618 when the Spanish monarchy decided to assist Archduke Ferdinand and the Austrian

⁵⁴ On these marriages see Pedro Mantuano, *Casamientos de España y Francia. y Viage del Duque de Lerma Llevando la Reyna Chrissma. Dona Ana de Austria al Paso de Beobia y Trayendo la Princesa de Asturias Ntra. Sra* (Madrid, 1618); F. Tommy Perrens, *Les Mariages Espagnols sous le Regne de Henri IV et la Regence de Marie de Medicis* (Paris, 1869); Francisco Silvela, *Matrimonios de España y Francia en 1615* (Madrid, 1901).

⁵⁵ On the Austrian (or German) Faction see Edouard Rott, "Philipp III et le Duc de Lerme (1598-1621)," in *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique*, 1 (Paris, 1887), pp. 26-27; John H. Elliott, "Foreign Policy and Domestic Crisis: Spain, 1598-1659." p. 117.

Habsburgs in suppressing the Bohemian Revolt. This decision in turn involved Spain in the Thirty Years' War, a war which was disastrous for the financial and political future of the Spanish monarchy.⁵⁶

From all accounts, Margarita de Austria demonstrated great strength and determination in pressuring Philip III in matters which were particularly dear to her. She regularly asked Philip III for financial assistance for her brother, Archduke Ferdinand. In October 1600, the queen convinced Philip III to give Ferdinand a monthly stipend of 5000 ducats.⁵⁷ Ferdinand valued his sister's influence and even after Margarita's death in 1612, Ferdinand continued to use her memory to negotiate matters at the court. In his instructions to an ambassador he was sending to the Spanish court in 1613, Ferdinand listed individuals at the Spanish court on whom the ambassador could count because they had had great affection for Margarita de Austria.⁵⁸ Philip III's affection and regard for his wife also caused him to delay pursuing his claims to the Bohemian and Hungarian thrones until after Margarita's death. These claims brought him into direct competition and conflict with Archduke Ferdinand, Margarita's brother. Although the issue had been brought up by Guillén de San Clemente, the Spanish ambassador in Central Europe, as early as 1603, and again by his successor, Baltasar de Zúñiga in 1611, it did not receive serious attention until 1612.⁵⁹ Margarita's influence with Philip III was personal and familial; they had an affectionate, close relationship. The king listened to her requests and to her comments, as for example in 1610 when, following her advice and that of his aunt, Sor Margarita de la Cruz, the king agreed to consider Rudolf II's request to have princes treated the same as Spanish grandees at the court.⁶⁰

Margarita de Austria also encouraged Philip III's tendencies toward piety and religious devotion. During her lifetime, the queen maintained

⁵⁶ On the Spanish decision to enter the Thirty Years' War see, Peter Brightwell, "The Spanish Origins of the Thirty Years' War," pp. 409-31; Brightwell, "Spain, Bohemia and Europe, 1619-21," *European Studies Review*, vol. 12 (1982), pp. 371-99; Brightwell, "Spain and Bohemia: The Decision to Intervene, 1619," *European Studies Review*, vol. 12 (1982), pp. 117-41.

⁵⁷ HHSTA, SDK, Karton 13, Khevenhüller to Rudolf II, letter from 11 October 1600, fol. 57r-57v.

⁵⁸ HHSTA, Familien Akten, #106, fol. 86: "...con quien podreys...tratar con buena confianza pues cierto estoy que no dexaran de mostrar mucha afficion a esta casa por la que deven de tener a la memoria de la Reyna mi hermana..."

⁵⁹ On the Bohemian and Hungarian issue see, Otto Gliss, *Der Onate Vertrag*, (Frankfurt/Main, 1934); Peter Brightwell, "Spain, Bohemia and Europe, 1619-1621," pp. 374-76; Magdalena S. Sánchez, "Dynasty, State, and Diplomacy," cp. 7. For San Clemente's recommendation see AGS, Estado Alemania, Leg. 707, fol. 235, 31 January 1603. For Zúñiga advice see AGS, Estado Alemania, Leg. 709, fol. 152, Prague, 10 February 1611.

⁶⁰ HHSTA, Spanien Hofkorrespondenz, Karton 2, #7, letter from Margarita de la Cruz to Rudolf II, 18 December 1610, fol. 155: "Pocos dias a quescrivi a VMd diciendole como el Rey dios le guarde por averselo suplicado la Reyna y yo hiciesse md a los principes de honrrar los entratarlos como a los grandes de aca esta resuelto de hacerlo solo se a testarado en algunos inconvenientes...." Rudolf II wanted this privilege for his ambassador, the Prince of Castiglione.

close relationships with several religious individuals. While in Valladolid, she developed a close friendship with Sor Mariana de San José, an Augustinian nun who was the prioress of a convent in Palencia. When the court returned to Madrid, Margarita found a way to bring Mariana de San José to Madrid: namely by having her first appointed prioress of the reformed convent of Santa Isabel, and subsequently designated prioress of the royal convent of the Encarnación. After Margarita's death, Mariana de San José remained in close contact with Philip III and with the Spanish court. She often reminded Philip III of the dead queen's wishes and undoubtedly encouraged him to assist Margarita's relatives in Central Europe. According to Matías de Novoa, Mariana de San José was a sharp critic of the Duke of Lerma's influence and was instrumental in Lerma's fall.⁶¹

The queen also maintained good relations with Philip III's first two royal confessors, Fray Gaspar de Córdoba and Diego de Maldonado, both of whom joined her in her criticism of Lerma's policies. Through her connections to these confessors, the queen was also able to reach Philip III and to influence his decisions. Papal nuncios found a ready associate in Margarita de Austria as well. Throughout her time at the Spanish court, the queen met regularly with the papal nuncio and encouraged her husband to pursue those policies which were beneficial for the future of Christianity. In all these ways, Margarita de Austria benefited from the fact that Philip III was a pious individual who spent much of his day in churches and convents. The queen often accompanied him to these churches and convents, and thus these occasions provided opportunities for Margarita to speak with Philip III and to influence his decisions. By couching her advice in the language of piety and by stressing the need to defend Christianity, Margarita de Austria could be certain of gaining her husband's ear. Philip III continued to pay visits to convents after Margarita's death and he continued to listen to the advice of religious individuals such as court preachers and priests (Jerónimo de Florencia and Juan de Santamaría), nuns (Mariana de San José and Sor Margarita de la Cruz), and his confessor, Luis de Aliaga. These individuals were, on the whole, opponents of the Duke of Lerma, and thus by listening to their advice, Philip III eventually asked Lerma to leave the court. In this way, Margarita de Austria's influence at the Spanish court was felt long after her death in 1611. This was certainly the opinion of Matías de Novoa who held the queen responsible for the king's trust of religious individuals:

Finalmente la decían que el Rey, como liberal y generoso, les hacía [a Rodrigo Calderón y a otros] demasiadas mercedes, y que ya [Felipe III y Margarita] tenían muchos hijos y era menester moderarlas [las mercedes] y reservar algunas para ellos; que no se les

⁶¹ Matías de Novoa, "Memorias de Matías de Novoa," vol. LXI, pp. 101-02.

diese tanta mano en el Gobierno, que era ceder de la liberalidad Real y pasar de señor a siervo...La Reina, como era de bonísimas entrañas y docilísima de condición, admitía la plática porque la decían que la aconsejaban con celo verdaderamente religioso, y que aquello lo decía el Espíritu Santo, con lo cual...hablaba al Rey en lo que la persuadían los religiosos, y como verdaderamente le amaba sobre todas las cosas, apretaba también la dificultad en querer que la voluntad del Rey no se divertiese en otra que la suya.⁶²

Although Margarita certainly encouraged her husband's piety, and although she continued to influence Philip decisions even after her death, it should be noted that the king's reliance on religious individuals was in keeping with his own pious nature which had been fostered by his education and Philip II's upbringing.

Margarita de Austria was also instrumental in several projects connected to religious life in the Spanish kingdoms. By most accounts, the queen strongly favored the expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain. Philip III's resolution to do so in 1609 signaled a victory for the queen. Margarita had promised to found a convent in Madrid as an act of thanksgiving for the expulsion of the Moriscos. Thus, she successfully pressured Philip III to allow her to found the royal convent of the Encarnación in Madrid, a convent she founded shortly before her death.⁶³ Actual construction, however, was not begun until after her death. Her will stipulated that the convent be adjacent to and connected by an underground passage with the royal palace. Philip III carried out his wife's wish and the building was inaugurated in 1618. The queen also played a crucial role in the renovation of the convent of Santa Isabel.⁶⁴ She moved the nuns from their old convent to a new one, and put them under the control of the royal almoner, Diego de Guzmán, a reform which several nuns disliked. The queen was also in frequent contact with nuns in convents both in Madrid and in Valladolid; she made it a practice to visit convents to pray and eat with nuns on an almost daily basis. Finally, as mentioned above, the queen maintained close connections to the papal nuncios who saw her as a crucial link to Philip III and the Spanish court. Margarita had a tremendous influence over this dense network of religious foundations and individuals. Although men regarded piety and religion as acceptable, i.e. non-political, realms for women, it is clear that Margarita (and other early modern royal women) used precisely these realms to exercise a strong political voice both in international and domestic policy.

⁶² Matías de Novoa, "Memorias de Matías de Novoa," vol. LXI, p. 104.

⁶³ On the rules for the foundation and formation of the convent, see BN, Madrid, Ms. 6955, "Escritura de Obligación que Otorgaron la Priora y Monjas del Convento de la Encarnación de Madrid."

⁶⁴ On the renovation of Santa Isabel see. José Luis Sáenz Ruiz Olalde, O.A.R., *Las Agustinas Recoletas*, pp. 37-118.

The relationship between Margarita de Austria and her confessor illustrates the way in which early modern royal women exercised influence at a court. Royal women, because of their lineage and upbringing, were political creatures. Their marriages were politically motivated and they served in foreign countries as unofficial diplomatic representatives for their relatives. Royal women, regardless of the moral tracts prepared for them by theologians and confessors, did not accept subordination to males, especially when their lives and training had prepared them to fulfill necessary political functions. This was particularly true of Habsburg women who often served as regents or governesses of Habsburg territories.⁶⁵ Habsburg women worked through their own familial networks at a court in order to exercise a political voice. Crucial to these networks were confessors, nuns, preachers, ladies-in-waiting, and servants. Because the accepted realms for early modern royal women were family and religious piety, women such as Margarita de Austria could use these realms as the basis through which to gain power and influence politics at the court. At the same time, by couching arguments in the language of piety and familial devotion, and by delivering messages through individuals such as confessors, early modern royal women consciously employed male notions about female behavior to their own advantage.

⁶⁵ So, for example, Margaret of Austria, Charles V's aunt, governed the Netherlands from 1507 to 1515, and again from 1519 to 1530. She was replaced at her death by Maria of Hungary, sister of Charles V, who ruled until 1555. Empress María, daughter of Charles V, served as joint-regent of Castile from 1548 to 1551; Isabel Clara Eugenia, Philip III's sister, served as joint ruler of the Netherlands from 1598 to 1621, and as sole ruler from 1621 to 1633. As A.W. Lovett points out, the Habsburgs required "fortitude and self-sacrifice" of their females. *Early Habsburg Spain. 1517- 1598* (Oxford and New York, 1986),p. 25.