Nuptial Journeys: A Cultural History of Wedding Travel in Selected Habsburg Unions ca 1450–1550

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Abstract

Using the case study of Habsburg trans-European wedding alliances between 1450 to 1550, and drawing upon a significant reservoir of sources, this thesis shows that transfers of princely brides(grooms) were not an inconsequential side effect of weddings but were an ideal channel through which to negotiate the social status of dynasties, serve monarchical splendour and memory, prepare elite individuals for their new role and integrate them into their new environment, interact with foreign individuals and form relationships with them. Chapter One looks into logistical aspects and finds that planning and execution expressed the dynastic-political expectations of splendour and social standing of both wedding parties. Chapter Two examines the massive group of people accompanying the prince(ss), that was to serve her/his everyday needs but also to ameliorate the prince(ss)'s transition and project her/his and the dynasty's social standing. Chapter Three addresses the staging of ceremonies, growing over time, which was an occasion to prolong the wedding festivities and to

connect with the sacred sphere. Chapter Four looks into the marital transition and dissects the acts of separation and incorporation. Their phased progress and volatility points to the fact that the journey exceeds the anthropological concept of rites of passage. Drawing upon the empowering effect of liminality, Chapters Five and Six argue that the princesses engaged in preparation for their future role, participated in decision-making on the way, and used the journey to build relationships via gift-giving. Chapter Seven deals with the afterlife of the transfer in panegyric literary compositions and, by pinpointing the recurrent motifs of triumphalism and travel danger, it asserts that the voyages were an ideal instrument for dynastic memorialisation and propaganda. In general, this thesis questions the scholarly categories of ritual, festival, and ceremony, since these fall short of precisely defining the complex phenomenon of bridal journeys.

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Abbreviations

AG	Archivio Gonzaga
AGAD	Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie [The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw]
ASE	Archivio segreto estense
ASFi	Archivio di stato di Firenze
ASMi	Archivio di stato di Milano
ASMn	Archivio di stato di Mantova
ASMo	Archivio di stato di Modena
AT	Acta Tomiciana
BJ	Biblioteka Jagiellońskae [The Jagiellonian Library in Cracow]
BSB	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek
CVS	Carteggio Visconteo-Sforzesco
FA	Familienakten
FHKA	Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv
FUK	Familienurkunden
HHStA	Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv
HS	Handschrift
OeStA	Österreichische Staatsarchiv
ÖNB	Österreichische Nationalbibliothek
MdP	Mediceo del Principato
MS	manuscript
TLA	Tiroler Landesarchiv

Introduction

> You must strive not to make a low profit in prestige even though You will suffer the distress of the journey, for the occasion of this sort presents itself rarely.[1]

In this way Diomede Carafa, the senior Neapolitan courtier, addresses Beatrice of Aragon (1457–1508), the future queen of Hungary. As the princess was about to set off to her husband and new realm (in 1476), Carafa handed her an opuscule, containing this and many other suggestions on how to take advantage of the nuptial journey. This type of travel—far from having something in common with tourism or leisure activities—was a direct consequence of political and dynastic manoeuvering, typical of medieval and early modern Europe. If a ruler, on account of various motivations (searching for foreign allies, boosting of social-standing, not wanting to be relative to one's own liegemen, etc.), chose to wed a daughter from another princely house, the new queen had to necessarily come from abroad. Such a transfer was a prerogative of the ruling class, since aristocracy usually did not participate in the long-distance marital unions, if it did, such weddings were concluded within the royal court that consisted of foreign ladies-in-waiting, brough by a foreign queen.[2]

Generally, the prospects for a marital union were first discussed with a third–party court that functioned as the first, indirect point of contact with the potential wedding parties.[3] If both houses were prompt to conclude the alliance, they started direct negotiations, at first selecting a suitable candidate for marriage from amongst

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[1] Diomede Carafa, *De institutione vivendi. Tanítás az életvezetés szabályairól. Emlékeztető Magyarország fenséges királynéjának [Teaching on Lifestyle. Memorial for the Hungarian Queen]*, ed. Péter Ekler (Budapest: Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, 2006), 30, https://www.academia.edu/8553308/.
[2] E.g., Empress Maria of Spain brokered marriages between her Spanish ladies and scions of the Central European nobility. Joseph F. Patrouch, *Queen's Apprentice: Archduchess Elizabeth, Empress Maria, the Habsburgs, and the Holy Roman Empire, 1554-1569* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 29.
[3] Karl-Heinz Spieß, 'Europa heiratet. Kommunikation und Kulturtransfer im Kontext europäischer Königsheiraten des Spätmittelalters', *Historische Zeitschrift. Beihefte* 40 (2006): 441–6.

the royal daughters, taking into account her physical and mental qualities. Then, envoys and painters were sent to another court to investigate the princess's manners or capture her physical look in portrait. After or during that, the marital contracts, specifying dowry, dower, and other dotal assignments were debated. When everything was settled, the husband usually sent a magnificent embassy to fetch the wife and perform nuptials by proxy at her court. Only then could the new queen (or duchess, etc.) begin her bridal journey, in the company of her husband's delegation and an even more sumptuous retinue of her fellow-country(wo)men, culminating with the first meeting with the spouse, coronation, and nuptial festivities. The journey was thus a necessary—but not particularly interesting step—in this process.

This is the story reiterated by scholarship as well as popular literature. But if nothing else, through Carafa's counsel, quoted at the very beginning, cracks start to appear. Could there be more to this journey? Why would the Neapolitan dignitary assert that this was an opportunity of a rare kind and that had to be taken advantage of? This thesis argues that wedding travel was not an inconsequential by-product of the international princely marriage, on the contrary, it played a crucial role for medieval and early-modern dynasties and their members. By looking into cultural (social, instructional, literary, gender) factors in selected Habsburg weddings it will be shown that these journeys were ideal tools to negotiate the social status of princely houses, propagate splendour and magnificence, create dynastic memory, enable integration of foreign brides, or prepare princely individuals for their new role.

Historical background

When did the first bridal journey take place? Or, since when have people travelled to get married? Was it a unique feature of the European Middle Ages? It is

difficult to answer these questions but archaeological findings suggest that marital migrations might be older than we think and they might well go back to the Bronze Age. The remains of a young female, ca 3,400 years old, found in Denmark and known as the Egtved Girl, reveal that she originated outside the territory of her burial and travelled intensively in her last years over long distances; her garments were made of material of foreign origin too.[4] Researchers suggest that she might have come from southwestern Germany,[5] Norway or south-eastern Sweden.[6] Did she come to present-day Denmark as a result of intermarriage between tribal elites?[7] The marriage scenario, however, is not the only possible explanation here, as Sophie Bergerbrant argues there could have been plenty of reasons for her intensive mobility: she could have been an itinerant priestess and travelled to perform special rituals, she could have been visiting her relatives, she could have learnt or taught some special skill etc.[8] If the Egtved Girl really travelled to get married "abroad", there is one particular indicator: she was buried with clothes from her homeland, meaning she must have carried some objects when transferring to the new environment. Was it a precursor of the later bridal trousseaus? We do not know yet, as we do not know anything specific about the journey itself, whether it was accompanied by some special rituals or customs. Further research is yet to explain this and other cases of mobility in the Bronze Age but it may well document the exchange of brides between prehistoric elites. After all, in the same time period as the Egtved Girl presumably lived—or even long before it—we possess

[4] Karin Frei et al., 'Tracing the Dynamic Life Story of a Bronze Age Female', *Scientific Reports* 5 (21 May 2015): 10431.
[5] Frei et al., 5.
[6] Sophie Bergerbrant, 'Revisiting the "Egtved Girl"', in *Arkeologi og kulturhistorie fra Norskekysten il Østersjøen. Festskrift til professor Birgitta Berglund [Archeology and Cultural History from the Norwegian Coast to the Baltic Sea. Essays in Honour of Professor Birgitta Berglund]*, ed. Ragnhild Berge and Merete Moe Henriksen (Trondheim: Museumsforlaget, 2019), 32.
[7] Frei et al., 'Tracing the Dynamic Life Story of a Bronze Age Female', 5.
[8] Bergerbrant, 'Revisiting the "Egtved Girl"', 31–33.

literary evidence of inter-dynastic marriages amongst the rulers of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, or Mycenaean Greece. The ancient empires kept open channels of communication and strengthened their political alliances through exchange of gifts and artisans or through intermarriage between their elites. For instance, King Kadashman-Enlil of Babylonia and Amenophis III of Egypt joined their children in a marital alliance in the mid-fourteenth century BCE, while Ramesses II of Egypt married the daughter of Hittite king in the thirteenth century BCE.[9]

Again, we do not know much about the transfers of Egyptian or Mesopotamian princesses, but we are relatively well informed about the wedding transfers of ancient Roman brides, aristocratic and plebeian alike. This *domum deductio,* leading the bride to the groom's house, was deemed the most constitutive aspect of the Roman wedding: it was the procession, not the consummation of marriage or the marital contract that made the wedding.[10] Even the very phrase for getting married in Latin—*ducere uxorem*—meant "leading the wife".[11] According to Karen Hersch, who tries to reconstruct all stages of the Roman wedding, the first phase took place in the bride's natal house when she got dressed and the dotal tablets were signed. Subsequently, she walked to the groom's house in the company of children and other attendants carrying a basket and a torch, perhaps accompanied by the obscene songs *(Fescennine verses)* and the throwing of nuts too. After reaching the groom's threshold, she smeared the doorpost with wolf and pork fat and festooned it with a piece of wool. Inside the house, the bride proclaimed her willingness for marriage by the phrase *Ubi tu Gaius, ego Gaia* and the groom offered her fire and water. The bride handed over golden coins to

[9] Kristian Kristiansen, *The Rise of Bronze Age Society: Travels, Transmissions and Transformations* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 68, 74.
[10] Karen K. Hersch, *The Roman Wedding. Ritual and Meaning in Antiquity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 56, 220 and elsewhere.
[11] Hersch, 141–2.

the husband, and his house gods *(Lares)*. The wedding feast followed, and after that, the bride was led to the bedroom. This elaborated set of rituals connected the nuptials with Roman history and traditions, but more importantly, it was meant to guarantee the legitimacy of the wedding by presenting the bride to the wider public and attributing to her the traditional female virtues. Her garments symbolized virginity, fertility, chastity, fidelity, and industry, the child companions were a sign of innocence and marital fidelity, the basket with distaff and spindle alluded to the female tasks in the household, while the torch and anointment of the door could have had an apotropaic function.[12]

It is hard to tell whether such a complex set of rituals accompanied passages of women from other ancient civilisations. As a wider cultural phenomenon, however, dynastic intermarriages were a common practice throughout the entirety of Antiquity and they naturally continued in the Middle Ages as well, although there were periods when rulers both in (the European) West and East favoured marrying local noblewomen rather than foreign princesses. The Carolingian and Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in the ninth and tenth centuries and in the Byzantine Empire up to the thirteenth century are the most visible examples.[13] Choosing a bride from one's own nobility could be a way to gain support and establish ties within one's own domain, or, in the Byzantine case, to manifest one's own self-sufficiency and autonomy that did not need to rely on multiple marriage alliance with foreign powers.[14] On the other hand, the marital bond with one's own subjects sometimes caused more problems than

[12] The summary of the rites in Hersch, 223. The particular features and the symbolic meaning of the *domum deductio* are elaborated in Chapter Seven.
[13] Robert Bartlett, *Blood Royal: Dynastic Politics in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: University Press, 2020), 11–7.
[14] Ibid. Byzantines did participate on the bride-exchange even before the radical changes of the empire in the twelfth century but mostly it was one-way stream—they sent their princesses abroad but the emperors usually did not take any wife outside the empire.

it helped to solve, for instance, the king started to be involved in the petty wars of his aristocratic relatives or the king-related nobles could lay claim to the throne and thus cause further unrest.[15]

Nevertheless, from the year 1000 on, the medieval dynasties exchanged brides in great measure, and one can even state that the mutual exchange of princesses defines the cultural and political boundaries of medieval Europe.[16] International conjugal alliances were a means by which to connect to another dynasty, to seal and manifest peace and friendship, and it could bring useful artistic, scientific or business connections, but similarly as with marriages to the local nobility, they could be a source of potential discord for every party involved. For kings, it could be much more difficult to annul matrimony with a woman backed by their powerful royal relatives; on the other hand, the princesses married abroad could feel estranged from their new environment, at best, feeling homesick (if it is even possible to apply a modern-day category for such emotion), and at worst, provoking explicit hatred on account of the novel modes of dressing or tablemanners that these elite women often brought with themselves.[17] Naturally, the pitfalls of these interdynastic unions, which were based on power interests rather than seeking marital harmony, led several critics to voice their concerns. The Venetian humanist Francesco Barbaro in his treatise *De re uxoria* promotes the moral qualities of the future wife rather than her dynastic potential.[18] Similarly, Erasmus of Rotterdam in his educational treatise for Charles V advocates that a queen be chosen based on her moral profile rather than her status. Then, she

[15] Bartlett, *Blood Royal*, 14.
[16] Bartlett, 15–6, 20.
[17] Bartlett, 25–31.
[18] Margaret L. King, 'A Return to the Ancient World?', in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History, 1350–1750*, ed. Hamish Scott, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 18–19.

should be chosen from among local noblewomen or, at most, from the princesses from neighbouring countries, rebuking thus the cruelty of royal fathers who do not hesitate

> to send [their daughters] away, sometimes, to remote regions, to men entirely different in language, appearance, character, and thought, as if they were being sent into exile, when they would be happier to live in their own land, even with somewhat less pomp.[19]

Judging from these words, it might seem that Erasmus criticises royal intermarriages because of their inhumanity, and he partially does, but his main point is the interest of the state. Drawing examples from history he finds that these unions do not contribute in building peace but they sow even more discord and wars.[20] Naturally, one cannot miss the obvious irony that the objections to the international marriage alliances were addressed to Charles V, whose dominions and power stemmed exactly from such unions and who more than anybody else epitomized the use of such wedding diplomacy.

This and any other sort of criticism did not stop the practice of interdynastic unions, which, by extension, meant that princely figures traversed the continent in search of their new spouse since the dawn of the Middle Ages. The first description of a medieval bridal journey comes from Gregory of Tours, although it is a wedding transfer like no other. In 584, the Frankish Princess Rigunth, daughter of King Chilperic, was about to be married to the king of the Visigoths and to travel with all honours from Paris to Toulouse to meet her spouse. Yet her journey faced difficulties from the very beginning: the servants joined her entourage only under threats of force and imprisonment, and some of them allegedly rather hanged themselves than be

[19] Desiderius Erasmus, *Literary and Educational Writings, 5 and 6: Volume 5: Panegyricus / Moria / Julius Exclusus / Institutio Principis Christiani . Querela Pacis. Volume 6: Ciceronianus*, ed. A. H. T. Levi, Collected Works of Erasmus (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 278–9.
[20] Ibid.

separated from their families. Others drew up their last wills asking their relatives to open them, and thus consider them dead, as soon as the princess crossed the border of Hispania. Rigunth was supplied with such an amount of gold, silver, and gems that it took fifty carriages to transport them but only at great expense to the royal treasury and thanks to the tricks of Riguth's mother. Leaving Paris, one of the princess's wagon axles broke, which was seen as a bad omen. What is more, during the journey many companions escaped from the entourage stealing horses and parts of the trousseau. As the king refused to cover the travel expenses from the royal treasury, the bridal company went plundering poor people on the way, seizing livestock and crops.[21] Meanwhile, King Chilperic, Riguth's father, died and a rival duke did not miss the chance to rob the princess of her treasure and put her into custody where he held her in austere conditions for two years until she was finally released and sent back to her mother Fredegund.[22]

For Gregory, Rigunth's journey was a story of calamities: by using Biblical examples he does not hesitate to compare the brutal treatment of the entourage to the Massacre of the Innocents, or to interpret the pillaging on the way as the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy about a plague of insects. It is a story about the misery that the royal pair of Chilperic and Fredegund brought upon their daughter and her companions by being more concerned about their own wealth and prestige than their daughter's welfare, and more so, it fits well into Gregory's negative portrayal of Fredegund.[23] But besides his portrayal of misfortunes, he also records the basic elements of the bridal journeys as they would be carried out even hundreds of years after: prior to the

[21] Gregory of Tours, *Libri historiarum X*, ed. Bruno Krusch and Wilhelm Levison, Monumenta Germaniae historica, Scriptorum rerum Merovingicarum ; t.1, pars 1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1951), VI, 45.
[22] Gregory of Tours, VII, 9 and 39.
[23] E. T. Dailey, *Queens, Consorts, Concubines: Gregory of Tours and Women of the Merovingian Elite* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 132–140.

princess's departure, a delegation from her spouse reached her court, most probably to fetch her. Her entourage is made up of servants, noble personages, and a military escort; their total count allegedly amounted to four thousand people. The bride bade farewell to her parents in tears and kisses and before the first encounter with the groom she and her retinue adorned themselves to display her splendour, and thus her status as well.

The fragments of these elements from time to time appear in many medieval sources. For instance, Jean of Joinville in his *Life of Saint Louis* mentions very briefly that he accompanied "the king's sister to Hagenau to the German king".[24] Apart from the mere information that some bridal journeys obviously occurred, this short sentence shows far more important detail: it testifies that the bridal journeys were events involving such prominent and senior members of the court as Joinville, who was the king's counsellor and confidant. As the first chapter of this work reveals, this was a standard practice and the nuptial voyage encompassed many reputable figures of the day, that all were to manifest the high status of the prince(ss) and political unity of her/his homeland vis-à-vis a foreign ruling house.

This was just one solitary mention of spousal travel in one chronicle: there must be hundreds of them. Given the omnipresence of interdynastic unions in the medieval and early modern times,[25] Europe must have been criss-crossed by princely brides and grooms—daughters and sons of kings, dukes, imperial electors, margraves, etc.—making their way to their future spouses. Yet, the subject has not received adequate attention.

[24] Jean Joinville, *Histoire de saint Louis, Credo et Lettre à Louis X*, ed. Natalis de Wailly (Paris: Librarie de Firmin Didot frères, fils et cie, 1874), 347. It was Blanche of France (1282–1305), sister of Philip IV, marrying duke Rudolph III, son of King Albert I, in 1300.
[25] Spieß, 'Europa heiratet. Kommunikation und Kulturtransfer im Kontext europäischer Königsheiraten des Spätmittelalters', 437–40.

Literature review

The theme of the bridal journey has not been absent from scholarship, however it has been viewed solely as a form of geographical travel, or, at best, examined in terms of its political importance. This rather traditional approach is evident even in the latest pieces of scholarship: the editors of the collective volume *Prinzessinen unterwegs* (2018), despite many significant inputs into the study of female-travel problematics in early modern Europe in general, do not go beyond the conventional approach and characterize the bridal journey as a "notwendige Folge dynastischer Heiratspolitik" serving only as the means of political communication (e.g. visual representation of claiming superiority over another dynasty in clothing, or manifestation of power in the remote provinces).[26] The volume's only bridal-journey study by Christian Gepp and Stefan Lenk, concentrating on the transfers of Empress Maria Theresia of Habsburg's two daughters [1768/9] is a good example of the above-mentioned approach.[27] Firstly, despite a strong source base, the study does not provide the reader with a parallel comparison of the two journeys (it treats them separately), it does so only very briefly in the final words. It only touches (in the conclusion) upon topics such as differences in status or the educational tasks undertaken during the journey. For instance, the authors mention the existence of the instructions drafted by Maria Theresa for her daughters, but state only that "it was written for the princesses to prepare themselves for their future role," which, if more elaborated upon, would

[26] Annette C. Cremer, Anette Baumann, and Eva Bender, eds., *Prinzessinnen Unterwegs. Reisen Fürstlicher Frauen in Der Frühen Neuzeit* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2018), 40.
[27] Christian Gepp and Stefan Lenk, 'Reisen aus Staatsräson. Die Brautfahrten der Erzherzogin Maria Carolina 1768 und der Erzherzogin Maria Amalia 1769', in *Prinzessinnen unterwegs. Reisen fürstlicher Frauen in der frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Annette C. Cremer, Anette Baumann, and Eva Bender (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2018), 171–90.

give an interesting comparative model for the conduct book by Diomede Carafa (quoted in the beginning of the work).[28]

The first attempt to try to slowly shift from the orthodox political perspective is a study by Karl-Heinz Spieß (1997).[29] Besides giving a general background to the weddings that involved long-distance travel, Spieß briefly points out several functions of the bridal journey: a representative one (a), which served to manifest the prestige of the uniting families. Then, a diplomatic one (b): the bridal journey, Spieß states, was a substitute for non-existing royal assemblies, hence why the bride was accompanied by high-ranking members of nobility. This diplomatic layer was at the same time strongly connected with a meticulously planned "Staatsschauspiel", the festive function (c).[30] Spieß also briefly mentions various other issues such as legal background, or the practicalities of the journey, such as the first meetings of the newlyweds, the bridal entourage, language differences, etc.

A definite breakthrough comes with Christiane Coester's study (2008/10) which clearly understands bridal-journey problematics within their cultural dimension.[31] According to her, the bridal journey is "a social act" that possesses a hidden symbolic value, lying in the dynastic representation of power and wealth that was crucial for the bridal journeys.[32] She divides the bridal journeys into three types—a classic one (a), during which the bride travels to the court of her future groom; (b) a type during which a groom travels and stays at the court of his bride, and (c) the

[28] Gepp and Lenk, 176–7.
[29] Karl-Heinz Spieß, 'Unterwegs zu einem fremden Ehemann. Brautfahrt und Ehe in europäischen Fürstenhäusern des Spätmittelalters', in *Fremdheit und Reisen im Mittelalter*, ed. Irene Erfen and Karl-Heinz Spieß (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1997), 17–36.
[30] Spieß, 27–28.
[31] Christiane Coester, 'Crossing Boundaries and Traversing Space. The Voyage of the Bride in Early Modern Europe', in *Moving Elites: Women and Cultural Transfers in the European Court System. Proceedings of an International Workshop (Florence, 12-13 December 2008)*, ed. Giulia Calvi and Isabelle Chabot (Florence: European University Institute, 2010), 9–20.
[32] Coester, 10.

scenario when the groom travels to pick up and accompany the bride to his court, which, according to Coester, occurs in the case when the woman outranks the man in terms of noble hierarchy.[33] Coester then shifts her focus and concentrates on the crossing of borders during the nuptial journey—that is, what it meant for a young bride to transfer to a foreign environment, and to cross not only geographical but ritual boundaries as well—the passing of authority from the parents to the husband.[34] She notices and comments on the physical visualization of such a passage that was often manifested by the changing of the bride's dress or hairstyle.[35] Coester's study is thus a key pioneering point of reference for further research, and sheds significant light on the previously uncharted territory of the cultural side of bridal travelling in terms of ritual passage and its visualisations, or behavioural rules. Nonetheless, given the limited scope of an article and a book chapter respectively, Coester and Spieß could not provide a deeper analysis of the proposed subjects, nor focus on other aspects of the nuptial journeys, such as gender or literary dimensions. Still, they must serve as a point of reference throughout this thesis as their concepts will be tested on a wider sample of cases.

Apart from the above-mentioned studies, there has been an interesting attempt by Molly Taylor-Poleskey to unravel the trajectory of the nuptial transfer in respect to political and confessional boundaries via digital mapping tools.[36] Otherwise, bridal journeys have been treated in scholarship as a prelude to princely weddings—at least for the 15th and 16th centuries. There is a small number of studies for later periods,[37]

[33] Coester, 11.
[34] Coester, 12–16.
[35] Coester, 16–18.
[36] Molly Taylor-Poleskey, 'Mapping the Journey up the Rhine: Digital Representations of the Palatinate Wedding Route', in *The Palatine Wedding of 1613: Protestant Alliance and Court Festival*, ed. Sara Smart and Mara R. Wade (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz in Kommission, 2013), 371–90.
[37] Cited in Cremer, Baumann, and Bender, *Prinzessinnen unterwegs. Reisen fürstlicher Frauen in der frühen Neuzeit*, 11–12.

which are, however, not particularly enriching in terms of their methodological approaches (as we saw above in Gepp and Lenk's study). Late-medieval and early-modern princely weddings have been examined in several branches of scholarship—festival and ritual studies, court, queenship, and literary studies.

Scholarship on court or princely festivities, despite going back to the very beginning of cultural history (Burckhardt, Huizinga), has evolved radically. An earlier approach, regarding festivities solely in their performative role, has shifted to an analysis of the constructive function of ceremonies. Public festivities are no longer seen as the mere representation of social consensus, rather, their active role for society is accentuated (in constructing social structure or memory).[38] Simultaneously, a debate about the messages of public festivities has been taking place. Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly tried to discern two types of celebrations ("ceremonies" and "spectacles", the former having a constructive role for power structures and the latter serving the purpose of entertainment only), and like many others, she stresses the message of power on the performative or constructional level of festivities.[39] Most recently, the hermeneutical set for the analysis of ceremonies has been broadened (by J. R. Mulryne and others) and they have started to be scrutinized also from the viewpoint of their educative function, or from the perspective that they could serve as a *lieu de mémoire* or a dialogue (between a ruler and a city, for instance).[40]

Early-modern festivals are elaborated also by the closely related field of court and palace studies. Starting with *Die Höfische Gesellschaft,* the pioneering work of

[38] Peter Burke, *What Is Cultural History?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004), 90–94.
[39] Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'The Early Modern Festival Book: Function and Form', in *Europa Triumphans: Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe*, ed. J. R. Mulryne, Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Margaret Shewring (Aldershot: MHRA in conjunction with Ashgate, 2004), 5–6.
[40] For instance, J. R. Mulryne, ed., *Ceremonial Entries in Early Modern Europe: The Iconography of Power*, European Festival Studies (Farnham, Surrey, England, UK ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015).

Norbert Elias (first published in 1969 but written much earlier),[41] court studies has grown into a vibrant field that examines the princely surrounding in physical, economic, social, cultural, and artistic terms, bringing together examples from all around medieval and early-modern Europe.[42] Various festive occassions at court are a constant theme,[43] however attention has also been paid to residences[44] and their role in constructing gender identity,[45] cultural patronage,[46] or global comparisons.[47]

Closely connected to festival studies are studies of ritual. "The widest possible disagreement" about the exact definition of the term *ritual,*[48] has led some scholars to try to cut the Gordian knot of differences between rituals and ceremonies. However, a functionalist view, today prevailing, claiming that the boundary between ritual and ceremony does not (or hardly) exist, opens an intriguing possibility for evaluating

[41] The most recent English edition: Norbert Elias, *The Court Society*, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott, Rev. ed. (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2006).
[42] E.g. A. G. Dickens, ed., *The Courts of Europe: Politics, Patronage, and Royalty 1400-1800* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977); Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke, eds., *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age c.1450-1650* (London: German Historical Institute ; Oxford University Press, 1991); J. S. A. Adamson, ed., *The Princely Courts of Europe: Ritual, Politics and Culture under the Ancien Régime 1500-1750* (London: Seven Dials, 2000); Jeroen Frans Jozef Duindam, *Vienna and Versailles: The Courts of Europe's Major Dynastic Rivals, 1550-1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Martin Gosman, A. James Macdonald, and Arie Johan Vanderjagt, eds., *Princes and Princely Culture, 1450-1650* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).
[43] J. R. Mulryne and Elizabeth Goldring, eds., *Court Festivals of the European Renaissance: Art, Politics, and Performance* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); J. R. Mulryne, Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Margaret Shewring, eds., *Europa Triumphans: Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe*, vol. 1, 2 vols (Aldershot: MHRA in conjunction with Ashgate, 2004); Alison Cole, *Italian Renaissance Courts: Art, Pleasure and Power*, Renaissance Art (Laurence King Publishing) (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2016).
[44] Marcello Fantoni, George Gorse, and R. Malcolm Smuts, eds., *The Politics of Space: European Courts ca. 1500-1750* (Rome: Bulzoni, 2009); Hans Patze and Werner Paravicini, eds., *Fürstliche Residenzen im spätmittelalterlichen Europa* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1991); Peter Johanek and Hans Patze, eds., *Vorträge und Forschungen zur Residenzenfrage* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1990). See also other volumes from the Thorbecke's *Residenzforschung* series.
[45] Maria F. Maurer, *Gender, Space and Experience at the Renaissance Court: Performance and Practice at the Palazzo Te* (Amsterdam: University Press, 2019).
[46] E.g. Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, *Court Culture in Dresden: From Renaissance to Baroque* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002).
[47] Tülay Artan, Jeroen Duindam, and Metin Kunt, eds., *Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires: A Global Perspective* (Leiden: Brill, 2011); Jeroen Duindam, 'The Court as a Meeting Point: Cohesion, Competition, Control', in *Prince, Pen, and Sword: Eurasian Perspectives*, ed. Maaike van Berkel and Jeroen Duindam (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 32–128.
[48] Dušan Zupka, *Ritual and Symbolic Communication in Medieval Hungary under the Árpád Dynasty (1000–1301)* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 15.

ritual acts with the tools of festival studies, and vice versa. For instance, Dušan Zupka examines the role in political communication of the *adventus regis*, and while stressing the term ritual, it is essentially a festival study.[49] The points raised by Philippe Buc about the discrepancy between *ritual-in-text* and *ritual-in-performance* (i.e. how rituals are portrayed in the texts and how they were performed in reality), and the possible remedy proposed by Dalewski and Althoff—that texts always reflected reality to some extent, being embedded in tradition or being written to meet certain audience's expectations – could help to overcome problems with interpreting the accuracy of festival books also.[50] Ultimately, as I argued elsewhere, since the bridal journey fulfilled the role of ritual transition taking place in every nuptials, it must be examined from a ritualistic (or more precisely, anthropological) point of view as well. For the analysis of spousal travel it means that the particular points of transfer must be viewed from the perspective of separation and incorporation of the bride, that are essential steps for every rite of passage in van Gennep's sense.[51]

Writing about the cultural aspects of (not only bridal) travel alludes to cultural-transfer studies. Regarding queens and elite women, this branch of scholarship has brought significant insight into different levels of cultural interaction, for instance it has helped to distinguish various degrees of a queen's influence/agency, being either an agent, instrument, or catalyst of cultural exchange.[52] Current research scrutinizes how queens facilitated cultural exchange (in art, literature, indirectly in commerce as

[49] Zupka, 117 onwards.
[50] Philippe Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Princeton N.J ; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009); Zbigniew Dalewski, *Ritual and Politics: Writing the History of a Dynastic Conflict in Medieval Poland*, East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450-1450 ; v. 3 (Leiden : Biggleswade: Brill ; Extenza Turpin distributor, 2008); Gerd Althoff, *Die Macht der Rituale: Symbolik und Herrschaft im Mittelalter* (Darmstadt: Primus, 2003).
[51] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
[52] Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly and Adam Morton, eds., *Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics, c. 1500-1800* (London: Routledge, 2017), 3–7.

well), but also how cultural transfer influenced confessional and dynastic politics, overcame gender limitations, or posed personal or religious frictions.[53] Nonetheless, since cultural transfer was a long-term procedure, despite starting with the wedding and the bridal journey (by means of trousseaus and gift-giving),[54] it is hardly discernible during the bridal journey itself and cultural transfer studies concentrate mostly on the post-nuptial life of queens.

The second major branch of scholarship that has dealt with princely weddings, and thus indirectly with bridal journeys, is queenship and gender studies. These studies have undergone significant changes as well: from the traditional approach of the nineteenth century, viewing women through their role in the domestic sphere, to the radical changes brought by the feminist movements, when attention was brought to the issues of gender, power, and status.[55] The currently flourishing field of queenship studies, represented mainly by the Palgrave book series *Queenship and Power*, focuses on the issues of the queen's agency, authority, identity, or patronage, expanding the field through the use of new methodological tools or concentrating on hitherto unexamined geographical regions.[56] However, despite its wide range, the current trend in queenship studies has completely overlooked the phenomenon of the bridal journey,

[53] Watanabe-O'Kelly, *Queens Consort,* 7–11 et passim*;* Almut Bues (ed.), *Frictions and Failures. Cultural Encounters in Crisis* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017).
[54] Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, "Cultural Transfer and the Eighteenth-Century Queen Consort," *German History* 34, no.2 (June 2016): 279–280, 285–287. Some of the studies from the "Marrying Cultures" project deals with the trousseaus, for instance Almut Bues, "Art Collections as Dynastic Tools: The Jagiellonian Princesses Katarzyna, Queen of Sweden, and Zofia, Duchess of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel," in *Queens Consort,* ed. Watanabe-O'Kelly, 15–36; Giedrė Mickūnaitė, "United in Blood, Divided by Faith: Elena Ivanovna and Aleksander Jagiellończyk," in *Frictions and Failures,* ed. Bues, 181–200.
[55] Zita Eva Rohr and Lisa Benz, *Queenship, Gender, and Reputation in the Medieval and Early Modern West, 1060-1600*, Queenship and Power (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan/Springer, 2016), xviii–xx.
[56] E.g. Katarzyna Kosior offers in her brand new monograph a bold comparison of Polish and French queenly ceremonies: Katarzyna Kosior, *Becoming a Queen in Early Modern Europe: East and West* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019). Other principal works in this field, e.g.: John Carmi Parsons, ed., *Medieval Queenship* (New York: StMartin's Press, 1993); Theresa Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe* (New York, 2013); Margaret Schaus, ed., *Women and Gender in Medieval Europe: An Encyclopedia [Electronic Resource]* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

perhaps, on the grounds of biographical approach or the too narrow chronological-geographical scope, which does not allow for deeper analysis of nuptial travel. Alternatively, not being aware of Carafa's conduct book (see the discussion of sources) which opens up the issue of queen's agency on the way in a very vivid manner, the field lacked a necessary incentive to delve into this issue.

A good starting point for bridal-journey research is also the huge collection of case studies about the lives of queens, and although some of them may seem to be written in a rather old-fashioned biographical style, they still provide useful context and a source basis for individual weddings. Some older works even published a selection of archival sources, which still remain unpublished today or perished in the course of the turbulence of the modern age.[57] The case studies, naturally, evolve and incorporate cutting-edge trends in the field as well, and there are plenty of works which do not concentrate on the sterile biographical accounts of princely women, but observe their broader cultural impact (patronage of arts and pageantry, religious activities, mediation of social and gender norms, etc.). From the most recent publications, Christopher Mielke, for instance, examined the material culture (e.g. seals, manuscripts, stained glass portraits) connected with Hungarian royal consorts, which reveals a staggering amount of queenly influence and power.[58] Revisiting the marriage of Queen Mary and Philipp II of Spain, Alexander Samson tries to shake up the long-established negative view of the union.[59]

As Karl-Heinz Spieß pointed out, the bridal journey involved a strong diplomatic element as well. Since the premodern state lacked a central system of

[57] E.g. Felice Calvi, *Bianca Maria Sforza-Visconti : regina dei romani imperatrice germanica e gli ambasciatori di Lodovico il Moro alla corte cesarea secondo nuovi documenti* (Milan: Vallardi, 1888).
[58] Christopher Mielke, *The Archaeology and Material Culture of Queenship in Medieval Hungary, 1000-1395* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021).
[59] Alexander Samson, *Mary and Philip: The Marriage of Tudor England and Habsburg Spain* (Manchester: University Press, 2020).

bureaucracy, diplomatic relations depended strongly on the social status of the actors involved. That is why the persons for the bridal trains were carefully selected, and it is at the end of the fifteenth century that a branch of jurisprudence discussing the finest differences in status (so called *jus praecedentiae)* is born.[60] The field of diplomatic history, however, has undergone significant changes in the past two decades. John Watkins's call for a modern re-evaluation of this rigid discipline aimed to break traditional periodization, to shift from traditionally-examined geographical areas, and to use a more interdisciplinary approach, exploring the previously unobserved cultural implications of diplomatic practices, the role of women in diplomacy, or cultural differences during marriage negotiations.[61] This trend continues and evolves in the most recent scholarship as well. The so-called New Diplomatic History, based on the axiom that sociocultural practices are the very basis on which political relations were created, highlights symbolic communication, diplomatic ceremonies, gift-giving, ambassadors' agency, and many other cultural aspects hitherto ignored.[62] John Watkins's most recent claim that early modern "diplomacy is no longer the monopoly of credentialed diplomats"[63] is especially valid for bridal journeys, which, given their internationality, elevated all their participants to the status of diplomatic agents.

Finally, literary studies. As John Watkins, who examined correlation between the interdynastic marriage and literature, states, "interdynastic marriage loomed so large in the medieval and early modern imagination that writers addressed it in works

[60] Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, "Die Wissenschaft der feinen Unterschiede. Das Präzedenzrecht und die europäischen Monarchien vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert," *Majestas* 10 (2002): 127–129.
[61] John Watkins, 'Toward a New Diplomatic History of Medieval and Early Modern Europe', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38, no. 1 (2008): 1–14.
[62] Tracey Amanda Sowerby and Jan Hennings, eds., *Practices of Diplomacy in the Early Modern World c.1410-1800* (London: Routledge, 2017), 2–5.
[63] John Watkins, 'Premodern Non-State Agency: The Theoretical, Historical, and Legal Challenge', in *Beyond Ambassadors: Consuls, Missionaries, and Spies in Premodern Diplomacy*, ed. Maurits A. Ebben and Louis Sicking (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2021), 34.

that had nothing to do with any particular match".[64] Mutatis mutandis, wedding journeys found their way into numerous literary genres, far exceeding chronicles, travelogues, or diaries. However, the impact of this event on—for example—medieval romances or plays is yet to be revealed. A solitary attempt has been made by Antonio Cueto who made an intriguing analysis of the *epithalamia* poems in light of the classical *deductio* scheme.[65]

Sources

The source corpus, used in this thesis, is vast, but consists only of textual forms.[66] As a whole, they can be divided into three main groups: narrative texts (chronicles, travelogues, festival books), correspondence including other various forms of archival documentation (inventories, financial logs, contracts), and literary sources. Since as a case study for this thesis the corpus of Habsburg weddings was chosen (more in methodology), this exposition is relevant mostly to these unions.

Before delving into each of these groups, the cornerstone of the topic, that is *De institutione vivendi* by Diomede Carafa, must be addressed. This oeuvre constitutes the only preserved medieval and early-modern conduct book for the bridal journey.[67] Although some minor instructional texts pertinent to the nuptial journeys are extant, such as mandates for envoys and leading members of the bridal train and household

[64] John Watkins, *After Lavinia: A Literary History of Premodern Marriage Diplomacy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017), 9.
[65] Antonio Serrano Cueto, 'Historia y ficción poética en la deductio moderna: El largo viaje de la novia en tres epitalamios latinos del siglo XV en honor de la Casa de Aragón', *Euphrosyne*, no. 42 (2014): 67–86.
[66] There are some visual objects related to the bridal journey theme but there are either too schematic (e.g. parts of frontispieces portraying the queenly figure on horse or wagon) or too enigmatic (e.g. the paintings of biblical queens travelling in the triumphal processions or the cycle of St Ursula) to be organically involved with the subject areas of this work. The evaluation of the visual sources would need a far deeper and autonomous analysis.
[67] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*.

ordinances, none of them reaches the complexity and scope of *De institutione.* Born in 1406 or 1408 in Naples, Carafa spent almost an entire life in the service of the Aragon monarchs, even helping them to conquer his homeland. His loyalty brought him many influential titles and positions, amongst those being a tutor and private counsellor to the members of royal family. Even though lacking the scholarly background, he authored several *memoriali* (one of them is *De institutione),* addressed to the Aragonese princes and princesses, in which he tried to encapsulate his recommendations for military and courtly life, diplomatic encounter, or good government, which he acquired from his own experience.[68] Originally written for Beatrice of Aragon (1476), *De institutione* envisages a whole set of activities which the queen on the way to her husband might engage in, and thus prepare herself for her imminent life- and status-change. These encompass, but are not limited to, methods of obtaining the favour of her soon-to-be husband, how to treat the foreign envoys and courtiers, how to take care of the bridal household, which gestures and acts to use during the farewell to her family and the first encounter with her husband, how to use her new language, and most important of all, how to create a positive public perception. This range of themes strongly contrasts with other extant instructional sources, for instance Charles V's instruction for the journey of his nephew Maximilian II to Spain [1548], which in three pages mostly covers etiquette issues (e.g. how to address Italian and Spanish lords).[69] Therefore, given its unique character, Carafa's work will be heavily used throughout the entire thesis, even though it was not

[68] Tommaso Persico, *Diomede Carafa. Uomo di stato e scrittore del secolo XV* (Naples, 1899); Carlo Vece, 'I memoriali ungheresi di Diomede Carafa', *Prospettive Settanta* 4 (1992): 467–87; Éva Vígh, 'Virtù di vita civile tra Napoli e Buda: Memoriali di Diomede Carafa', *Nuova Corvina* 4 (2008): 30–38.

[69] "La orden que paresce quel illustrissimo mo principe Maximiliano mi sobrino deue tener", stored in HHStA, FA 86, 3. A close reading of the text in Leandro Martínez Peñas, 'Etiqueta En Las Instrucciones de Carlos V al Príncipe Maximiliano En 1548', in *Rito, Ceremonia y Protocolo. Espacios de Sociabilidad, Legitimación y Transcendencia*, ed. Feliciano Barrios Pintado and Javier Alvarado (Madrid: Dykinson, 2020), 167–80.

addressed to a princely figure marrying into/out of the House of Habsburg. Since it was first published only in modern times, there is little chance that any Habsburg had an opportunity to consult it;[70] still, the precepts contained in it might have reflected contemporary conventions and ideals that have not survived in any other source.

The narrative sources cannot be stricly categorised as they oscillate between the genre of chronicles and diaries on one side, and festival books on the other. Firstly, there are larger chronicles, on a national or city-level, which sporadically refer to, or fully describe, the ceremonies and festivities related to bridal journeys: to this group belong for instance Rui de Pina (for Eleanor of Portugal, 1451/2), Jan Długosz (for Elizabeth of Habsburg, 1454), Marino Sanuto (for Margaret of Parma, 1533), and Lorenzo Padilla (for Joanna of Castille, 1496).[71] A great advantage of this sub-category lies in its relatively good accessibility, because as well-known sources, they have been (re)published since the dawn of modern scholarship. On the other hand, there is a potential pitfall as well: since the chronicles, as great national/city narratives, were written long after the events they portray, the evidence they provide could be of a rather schematic and stereotypical nature. Although they could be the only source for the particular journey (e.g. Elizabeth of Habsburg, 1454) and possess interesting

[70] The luxuriously decorated Latin manuscript, now stored in the Biblioteca Palatina in Parma, was probably sent as a wedding gift to Beatrice in 1476 or soon afterwards—a simpler, unadorned version in Neapolitan vernacular which was handed over to the princess upon her departure from the hometown is not extant—was originally a part of the Biblioteca Corviniana at Buda Castle. Before the capture and subsequent destruction of the library by the Ottomans, two princesses connected to the Habsburgs, Anne of Bohemia and Mary of Hungary, could have had access to it, but this hypothesis remains wishful thinking. Csaba Csapodi, *The Corvinian Library; History and Stock* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1973), 206–7.

[71] Rui de Pina, *Chronica de el-rei d. Affonso V*, ed. Gabriel Pereira, vol. I (Lisbon: Escriptorio rua dos Retrozeiros, 1901); Jan Długosz, *Joannis Dlugossii Annales seu Cronicae incliti regni Poloniae. Lib. 12: 1445-1461*, ed. Krzystof Baczkowski (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN : Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 2003); Marino Sanuto, *I diarii di Marino Sanuto*, ed. Guglielmo Berchet, Nicolò Barozzi, and Marco Allegri, vol. 57, 58 vols (Venice: F. Visentini, 1902); Lorenzo de Padilla, *Crónica de Felipe I. llamado el Hermoso*, ed. Miguel Salvá and Pedro Sainza de Baranda, Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España: 8 (Madrid: Imprenta de la viuda de Calero, 1846).

details, they are not very rich in documentation and this work uses them only sporadically.

Of a more revealing character are the *Chroniques* of Jean Molinet as well as the *Historia Austrialis* (known also as *Historia Friderici)* and *Commentaries* by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini that provide information on journeys related to the Low Countries (Maximilian I, 1477, Joanna of Castile, 1496, Margaret of Habsburg, 1497 and 1501) and Eleanor of Portugal respectively.[72] In contrast to the chronicles mentioned above, these texts devote longer sections to nuptial transfers, reporting the entire course of events and specifying the logistical and ceremonious details, but unlike the festival books they do not eschew moments of crisis and sometimes, provide the reader with their own evaluation of the episodes. Their special attention to the journeys might be explained by the positions of the authors, who as court historiographers and/or as (in Piccolomini's case) direct participants of the prince(ss)'s passage, were at the centre of events. Regarding the occupation of the creators, one ought to be always cautious about the potential encomiastic bias, however, as modern scholarship reveals, a positive predisposition towards the princely patron is not as automatic as one might think.[73]

The same applies for the oeuvres of Cerbonio Besozzi, documenting the passage of Maximilian II [1548], and an anonymous diary of Ferdinand of Bavaria's

[72] Jean Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, ed. Jean Alexandre Buchon, vol. 2 (Paris: Verdière, 1828); Jean Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, ed. Jean Alexandre Buchon, vol. 5 (Paris: Verdière, 1828); Pope Pius II, *Historia Austrialis*, ed. Julia Knödler, vol. 1, 2 vols, Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum. Nova Series 24 (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2009); Pope Pius II, *Historia Austrialis*, ed. Martin Wagendorfer, vol. 2, 2 vols, Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum. Nova Series 24 (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2009); Pope Pius II, *Commentaries*, ed. Margaret Meserve and Marcello Simonetta, vol. 1, 3 vols, I Tatti Renaissance Library 12 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

[73] Jean Devaux and Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin, 'Introduction', in *Jean Molinet et son temps. Actes des rencontres internationales de Dunkerque, Lille et Gand (8-10 Novembre 2007)*, ed. Jean Devaux, Estelle Doudet, and Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 1–14; Pius II, *Historia Austrialis*, 2009, 1:30–5.

trip to Italy on the occasion of Joanna of Habsburg's nuptials [1565].[74] Besozzi, being included in the wedding train as a musician to Cardinal Madruzzo of Trent,[75] was an eye witness of the events and he offers a long and vivid portrait of the journey, describing ceremonies and entertainment offered to the prince, but it is not limited to this. Again, on account of his occupation Besozzi pays greater attention to the deeds of his patron, but again, he does not pass in silence over the issues and critical points brought up en route. Moreover, in the tradition of travelogue literature, he pays attention to the environment and cultural differences. The Bavarian log too is a no less vivid account of the Ferdinand's journey. As a result of various delays, the prince was behind schedule of the main bridal train and thus he and his household had to travel separately, and thus the text is not a direct portrayal of the bride's movement. Nonetheless, this diary is a precious piece of documentation as it preserves the stories, sometimes of a very unflattering character, of what had happened to the bridal company just a short time before.

The version of the events, as exposed by Ferdinand's diary, contrasts strongly with the travel accounts, compiled for the 1561 and particularly the 1565 journeys of Eleanor, Joanna, and Barbara of Habsburg.[76] These two pieces can be categorized as so-called festival books.[77] Naturally, we possess many others representives of this genre from earlier times as well,[78] but they were usually confined to the documentation

[74] Cerbonio Besozzi, *Die Chronik des Cerbonio Besozzi, 1548-1563*, ed. Walter Friedensburg, Fontes rerum Austriacarum. Erste Abteilung, Scriptores 9 (Vienna: In Kommission bei Carl Gerold's Sohn, 1904); Max von Freyberg, ed., 'Herzog Ferdinands, dritten Sohnes Herzog Albrechts V von Bayern im Jahre 1565 unternommene Reise nach Italien', in *Sammlung Historischer Schriften Und Urkunden*, vol. 4 (Stuttgart, 1834), 277–362.

[75] Gerhard Rill, 'BESOZZI, Cerbonio', in *Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani*, 1967, https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cerbonio-besozzi_(Dizionario-Biografico).

[76] TLA, Ferdinandea 31, pos. 27, *Beschreybung der Rayss gen Mantua*; TLA, HS 5565.

[77] Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'The Early Modern Festival Book'."

[78] E.g. for Catherine of Habsburg's (1549) "L'entrata della serenissima et illustrissima signora Caterina d'Austria...", stored in ASMa, AG, fol. 199, f. 85, or *Kurtze Beschreibung Deß Einzugs Der Jungen Künigin Zu Cracaw, Vnnd Der Hochzeit Deß Jungen Künigs Auß Polen, Mit Römischer Kü. May.*

of the princess's final solemn entry. Aside from the two long accounts, there are many much shorter texts that specify the order of ceremonies but are more similar to plain ambassadorial reports.[79] Heavily concentrating on an order and character of ceremonies, enumerating numbers and names of the participants, these accounts present the journey as a continuous passage of triumphs and public entertainment.

A completely separate kind of narrative document is the travelogue by Nicholas Lanckman of Falkenstein, written for the transfer of Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2].[80] As one of the leading figures of the reception embassy, Lanckman records not only the progress of the princess's journey to her husband, Emperor Frederick III, but also the adventures of the embassy on the way to Lisbon as well as the course of wedding festivities in this city. The details included in this extensive account shed light not only on logistical and ceremonial features but also on the princess's agency and an elaborated set of rituals that was staged for Eleanor's farewell. Published and translated into German for the first time at the beginning of the sixteenth century, this text was dedicated to Eleanor's son, Emperor Maximilian I, and thus it should be read in the context of the emperor's *Ruhmeswerk.*[81]

Ferdinandi Tochter, Mit Mancherley Gepreng Vnd Ceremonien Geschechen Den IIII. Maij, Vnd Etlich Tag Hernach. Anno MD.XLIII. (S.l., 1543).

[79] 'Reise Erzherzog Maximilians von Wien (Cöln) nach Gent' in Joseph Chmel, ed., *Actenstücke und Briefe zur Geschichte des Hauses Habsburg im Zeitalter Maximilian's I.*, vol. 1, Monumenta Habsburgica. Sammlung von Actenstücken und Briefen zur Geschiche des Hauses Habsburg in dem Zeitraume von 1473 Bis 1576 (Vienna: Kaiserlich-königliches Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1854); M. Brassart, ed., *Documents concernant le voyage de l'archiduchesse Marguerite en Espagne, En 1497, et celui que fit en ce pays l'archiduc Philippe le Beau, en 1501.* (Brussels: F. Hayez, 1883).

[80] The most up-to-date edition with a translation to Portuguese: Nicolaus Lanckmann, *Leonor de Portugal, imperatriz da Alemanha: diário de viagem do embaixador Nicolau Lanckman de Valckenstein*, Colecção Medievalia 6 (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1992).

[81] Erwin Koller, 'Die Verheiratung Eleonores von Portugal Mit Kaiser Friedrich III. in Zeitgenössischen Berichten', in *Portugal - Alemanha - África. Do Imperialismo Colonial*, ed. A.H. de Oliveira Marques, Alfred Opitz, and Fernando Clara (Lisbon: Colibri, 1996), 44.

The second important group of documentation is princely and diplomatic correspondence, mostly in an unpublished form,[82] even though a large quantity of epistolary material, especially for the older periods, found its way into nineteenth-century editions.[83] Occasionally we are fortunate enough to have direct testimonies from the members of the princess' entourage, or even from the princesses themselves.[84] This sort of evidence is crucial for the reconstruction of the material aspects (e.g. bridal train and its rationale, overall logistics) but it is also indispensable for the analysis of ceremonial features, protocol involved with the farewell and the first meeting of the newlyweds, as well as for the prince(ss)'s actions leading to and on the way to his/her consort (e.g. gift-giving, linguistic interaction, first epistolary exchange with the newlyweds, and so forth).

Of no lesser significance are legal and financial sources, namely wedding contracts and fiscal logs, although for our wedding sample they are not so revealing as correspondence. The marital treaties can contain the terms relating to the princess's passage, specifying its dates, locations, and costs. For Maximilian's trip to Spain [1548] we even possess an entire account book pertinent to the journeys alone, which shed light not only on the itinerary, but also on the everyday reality of the travel experience, such as the number of horses required, lodging costs, or the gifts bought and given during the journey.[85]

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[82] E.g. ASMi, CVS, fol. 1467 (Bianca Maria Sforza, 1493/1494); ASMo, ASE, Ambasciatori Germania fol. 25 and 26 (Barbara of Habsburg, 1565); ASMn, AG 199 and 444 (Catherine of Habsburg, 1549), 200 and 447 (Eleanor of Habsburg, 1561); HHStA, Oberthofmeisteramt, Ältere Zeremonialakten, 1 Akten (Joanna and Barbara of Habsburg, 1565).

[83] A dossier of documents for the nuptials and transfer of Eleanor of Scotland [1448] in Joseph Chmel, ed., *Die österreichische Geschichtsforscher*, vol. 2 (Vienna: Verlage bei Carl Gerold, n.d.), 448–68. A register of Maximilian II's letters [1548] published in Johann Loserth, ed., *Die Registratur Erzherzog Maximilians (Maximilians II) aus den Jahren 1547-1551*, Fontes Rerum Austriacarum. Zweite Abtheilung, Diplomataria et Acta 48 (Vienna: In Commission bei Carl Gerold's Sohn, 1896).

[84] The letters of Bianca Maria, recounting labors of the journey, to her sister Anna are stored in ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri 1583/9.

[85] For Maximilian II's journey to Spain: Ferdinand Menčík, ed., *Die Reise Kaiser Maximilian II. nach Spanien im Jahre 1548* (Vienna: In Commission bei Carl Gerold's Sohn, 1898).

A completely different source category presents itself with literary sources, mainly wedding poems and orations, so-called *epithalamia.* This term may denote various literary compositions, such as lyric or epic poems, orations in prose or in verse, that have some connection to matrimony and draw on the classical tradition of nuptial songs, exhorting a bride to enter a groom's bed *(thalamos),* along with the *hymenaei* and other songs that were sung during the Roman nuptial procession, *domumductio,* which is described in the first section of the Introduction. The evidence emerges that various kinds of songs were sung in the course of this Roman (and also during a slightly different Greek) ceremony: during the procession, at the start of the nuptial night, during the waking-up of the wedding pair, or in the course of the morning following the wedding night. These songs provided inspiration for poets, most likely, in the earliest stages of Greek literature in the seventh century BC, however the most classic pieces of the epithalamic genre, which began to denote every kind of wedding-related composition, were authored by Sappho, Theocritus, Catullus, Statius, Claudian, and others.[86] Drawing upon actual wedding traditions, these epithalamia are a valuable source for reconstruction of the ancient nuptials, however, they are not without challenges as they present a highly idealized version of events, taking place in a flamboyant atmosphere and under the auspices of gods, highlighting the virtues of the newlyweds (virginity of the bride and bravery of the groom)

Although some forms of lyric epithalamium, imbued with religious mysticism, survived throughout the Middle Ages,[87] the revival of this genre took place with Renaissance Humanism. Having recognized its value for panegyrics, the humanists and court poets started to recreate it, trying to extol their princely donors and shaping

[86] Virginia J. Tufte, *Poetry of Marriage: The Epithalamium in Europe and Its Development in England* (Alhambra: Tinnon-Brown, 1970), 10 onwards.
[87] Tufte, 71–85.

their wedding feasts as a divine enterprise. Since the passage of the bride played a major role in the ancient Roman ritual and subsequently, in the poetry, the humanists subconsciously adopted not only the genre as such but its emphasis on the journey as well. The rhetorical epithalamium, mostly bearing the form of an oration, had a slightly different origin than its lyrical counterpart and evolved from medieval wedding sermons. However, its panegyrical undertone is similar, if not more intense: as Anthony D'Elia, who studied a large sample of fifteenth-century Italian nuptial orations, showed, humanist authors did not hesitate to use this medium to propel political propaganda by lineage, dynastic history, wealth, or personal virtues of the newlyweds.[88] What is more, these texts served as a platform for expressing views on sex and marriage, and very often, they did not eschew extolling bodily pleasures either.[89]

There are many of these rhetorical and poetic pieces, first in Italy, where humanists revived the genre of wedding poetry in the 15th century, but later across Europe as well. For the marital unions in our sample, there are up to twenty pieces extant: three lyric and one in-prose compositions for Bianca Maria Sforza [1493];[90] one poetic piece for Anne of Bohemia [1521];[91] five poetic pieces and one in-prose for

[88] Anthony F. D'Elia, *The Renaissance of Marriage in Fifteenth-Century Italy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Anthony F. D'Elia, 'Marriage, Sexual Pleasure, and Learned Brides in the Wedding Orations of Fifteenth-Century Italy', *Renaissance Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 379–433.

[89] D'Elia, *The Renaissance of Marriage in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, 83–116.

[90] The poetic ones are printed in Regina Kisser, 'Lateinische Epithalamien auf die Hochzeit Maximilians I. mit Bianca Maria Sforza', 1994. Dal Mayno's wedding speech was first published (Giasone Dal Mayno, *Oratio Jasonis nitidissima in sanctissimum matrimonium foelicissimasque nuptias Maximiliani Regis et Blancę Marię reginę Romanorum* (Basel: Johann Bergmann von Olpe, 1494).) and later produced in the form of an embellished manuscript, stored in ÖNB, Cod. Ser.n.12.594.

[91] Caspar Ursinus Velius, *De nuptiis sereniss(imi) et illustriss(imi) d(omi)ni d. Ferdina(n)di Hispaniaru(um) principis, archiducis Austriae, ducis Burgu(n)diae etc. et sereniss(Imae) d(omi)nae d. Annae reginae Hungariae, Austriae archiducissae etc. Casp(Ari) Ursini Velii carmen.* ([Vienna]: [Per Ioannem Singrenium], 1521).

Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543];[92] four lyric ones for Catherine of Habsburg [1553];[93] and two poetic and one in-prose epithalamium for Joanna of Habsburg [1565].[94] Unfortunately, despite the high number of these texts, only a handful of them are relevant for the analysis of the bridal journey's motifs.

Methodology and research questions

As the first step leading to this work I set the chronological limits of my primary research focus, deeming that a panoramic overview of the entire medieval and/or early-modern period would far exceed the scope of a doctoral thesis. Influenced by my previous scholarly experience and the origin of Carafa's work which was a startpoint of my investigation into bridal journeys as a whole, I opted for the time span of 1450–1550. This period offers several advantages from a methodological point of view. Firstly, its length (one hundred years) enables the observation of changes, trends, and a potential evolution in the way nuptial travelling occured, especially so given the chosen century saw many precipitous changes impacting society on a macro-level (such as Humanism, Reformation, the invention of the printing press), as well as the

[92] Mat. Franconius, *Oratio in splendidissimas nuptias, et foelicem hymenaeum potentissimi Sigismundi Augusti regis Poloniae, et illustrissimae principis ac serenissimae reginae Elizabet.* ([Cracow]: [Mathias Scharffenberg], 1543); Christophorus Cernota, *Apparatus nuptiarum serenissimi Sigismundi Secundi Augusti [...] atque inclytae reginae Elisabes* (Venice: [Per Ioan. Snt. et Petrum Fratres de Sabio], 1543). The other four are published in Mieczysław Brożek and Jakub Niedźwiedź, eds., *Szesnastowieczne epitalamia łacińskie w Polsce [The 16th-century Latin epithalamia in Poland]* (Cracow: Księgarnia Akademicka, 1999), 210–317.

[93] Bartolomeus Reisacher, *Epithalamium quo describitur triumphus virtutum in serenissimi ac potentissimi Sigismundi Augusti regis Poloniae, magni ducis Lithuaniae, totius Brussiae domini ac aaeredis etc. ac illustrissimae principis Catharinae, archiducissae Austriae, etc., invictissimi ac serenissimi Rom(anorum), Hung(ariae) et Bohe(miae) regis Ferdinandi etc. filiae nuptiis celebratus.* (Vienna: Michael Zimmermannius, 1553). The other three are published in Brożek and Niedźwiedź, *Szesnastowieczne epitalamia łacińskie w Polsce [The 16th-century Latin epithalamia in Poland]*, 342–397.

[94] Petrus Angelius Bargaeus, *Epithalamium in nuptias Francisci Medicis et Ioannae Austriacae reginae* (Florence: In officina Iuntarum Bernardi F., 1566); Antonius Renerius, *In Francisci Medicis et Ioannae Austriae Etruriae principum nuptiis hymeneus.* (Florence: Apud filios Laurentii Torrentini et Carolum Pectinarium socium, 1565); Ioannes Guadagnius, *In nuptias Francisci Med(icis) Floren(tiae) et Senen(sis) p(rincipis) et s. Ioannae Austr(iae) r.n.* (Florence: Apud filios Laurentii Torrentini et Carolum Pectinarium socium, 1568).

monarchical and dynastic sphere that is of concern for this research (the dawn and development of ceremonial rules and precedents for later periods; a gradual end to itinerant kingship and establishment of more permant residences). Secondly, this time span provides a convenient source situation in terms of quality (more in-detail and better preserved records, moreover the emergence of completely new genres, such as festival books, Humanistic wedding poems and orations) and quantity (neither the scarcity of earlier centuries nor the overabundance of the later ones).

Having established the time scope, I proceeded to pinpoint the interdynastic unions taking place within it. That is why, as the second step, I created a working database of the most significant European princely weddings in ca. 1450–1550.[95] Even including only the royal and ducal houses of Latin Europe (which is also a problematic term after the beginning of Luther's movement), the list amounted to almost three hundred entries. Again, it was necessary to narrow the scope down to a feasible number of cases. Having compared the geographical extent of marital politics of three major European dynasties, Valois, Jagiellonian and Habsburg (Fig 1 and 2),[96] the latter was chosen as a source sample.

[95] I included the main branches of all royal houses of Latin Europe (therefore excluding Moscow, Moldova, or Wallachia). Concerning Italy and the Holy Roman Empire, I picked the duchies of Milan, Mantua, Ferrara, Florence, and Parma from Italy, and several most important political units of the Holy Roman Empire, namely the electorates (Bavaria, Saxony, Brandenburg), duchies of Brunswick, Mecklenburg, Pomerania, Prussia, Savoy, Württemberg, since the members of these units at least once married to a princely house outside Italy or the German lands, respectively.

[96] The visual design of these diagrams are inspired by the ones in Karl Heinz Spieß's article, which show the marital exchange of among the English, French, Danish, and Hungarian princely houses in 1200–1500. Karl-Heinz Spieß, 'Internationale Heiraten und Brauschätze im Spätmittelalter', in *Die Visconti und der deutsche Südwesten. Kulturtransfer im Spätmittelalter / I Visconti e la Germania meridionale. Transferimento culturale nel tardo medioevo*, ed. Peter Rückert and Sönke Lorenz (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2008), 124–9.

Given their geographical extent, stretching from Portugal to Poland, from Scotland to Florence, this corpus of weddings was the most likely candidate to yield valuable results in terms of their cultural (i.e. social, gender, literary) implications. The particular marriage policy of the Habsburgs led to a transnational web of nuptial

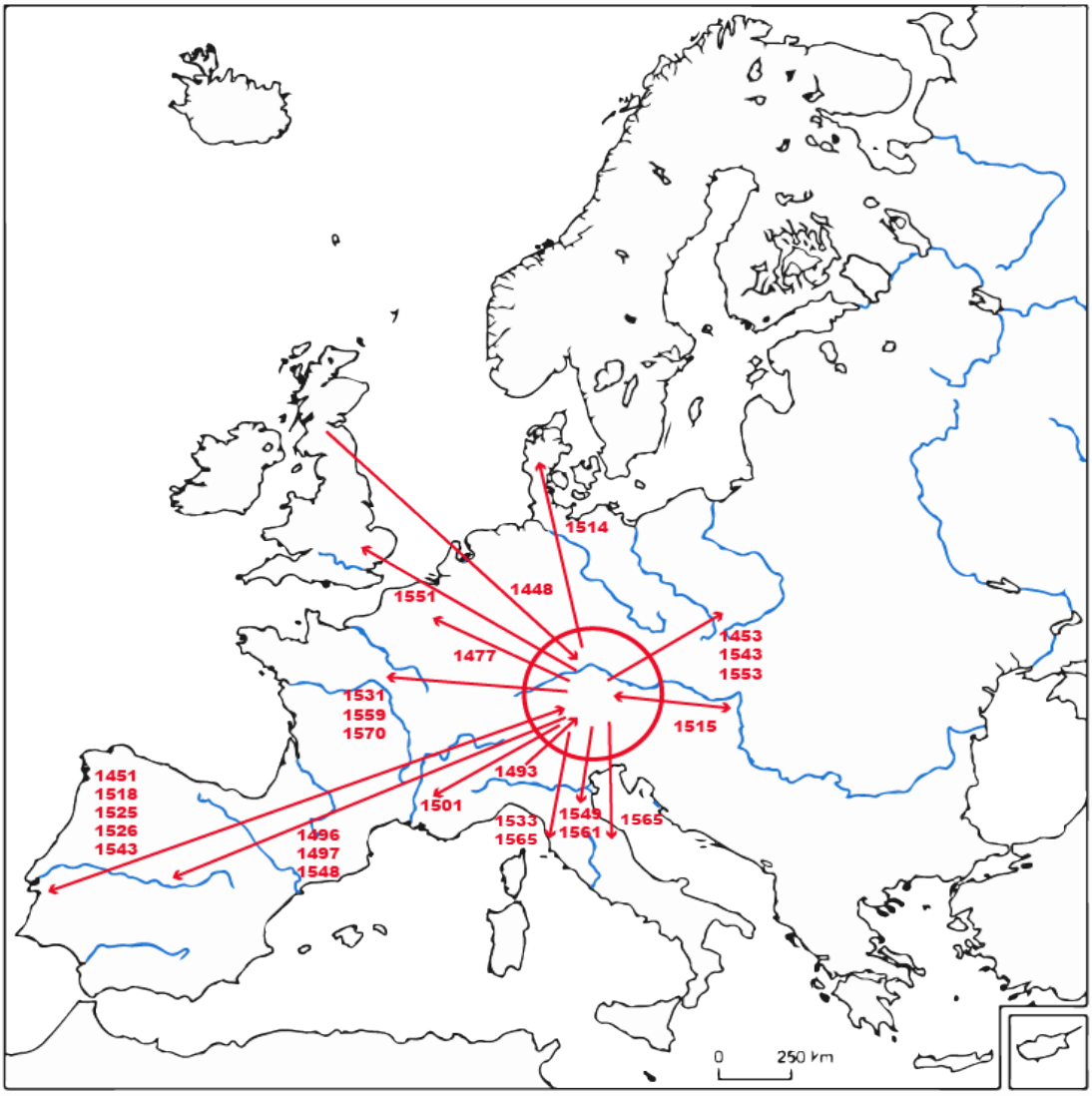


Figure 1 Map showing twenty six Habsburg transnational (excluding German) marriages in ca. 1450–1550 (both Austrian and Spanish branch). As we can see, the Habsburg nuptial net covers almost the entire Europe. Naturally, neither this nor the following map does not show the journeys' actual trajectories, that is, many princesses wedded in the House of Habsburg did not travel to Austria (in the circle). Rather, it represents the sheer scope of the Habsburg matrimonial web in this timeframe.

alliances, or, as Paula Sutter Fichtner puts it, a spectacular matrimonial conglomerate,[97] and Habsburg members, either males or females, thus had to travel to

[97] Paula Sutter Fichtner, "Dynastic Marriage in Sixteenth-Century Habsburg Diplomacy and Statecraft: An Interdisciplinary Approach," *The American Historical Review* 81, no. 2 (April 1976): 243.

many, and sometimes quite distant, parts of Europe, overcoming cultural or later religious differences.[98] None of the other princely houses offers a more trans-European set of wedding alliances, since due to their firmly localised power centres they did not tend to stretch their wedding bonds beyond their most immediate neighbours (Figure 2). The Habsburgs wed their neighbours as well, however, their domains—at least in

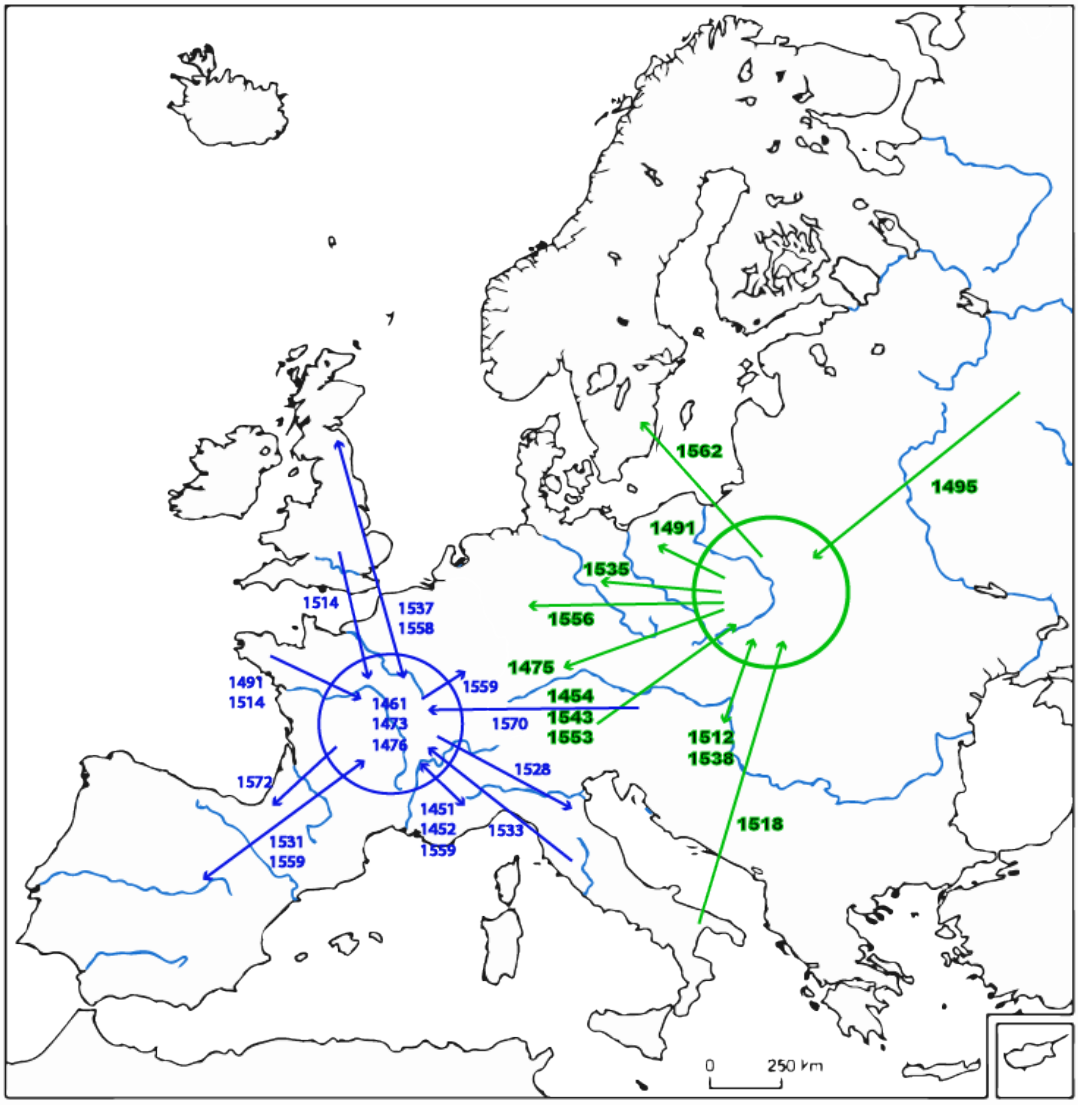


Figure 2 Comparative scheme of the Valois (in blue) and the Jagiellon (in green) marriages ca 1450–1550. In comparison to the Habsburg wedding alliances, members of the Valois and Jagiellon wed (with some exceptions) their neighbours.

[98] The overall evaluation of the Habsburg marital alliances from the 13th to 18th century in Joseph F. Patrouch, '"Bella Gerant Alii." Laodamia's Sisters, Habsburg Brides: Leaving Home for the Sake of the House', in *Early Modern Habsburg Women: Transnational Contexts, Cultural Conflicts, Dynastic Continuities*, ed. Anne J. Cruz and Maria Galli Stampino (Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2013), 25–38.

this period—lacked a centralised basis, and therefore their marriage trajectories cut across the whole of Europe.

Also, the Habsburg geographical instability in this period is important from the point of view of the court and dynastic ceremonies, which are likely to be more liable to negotiations and changes than the more stabilized courts of the Jagiellonians and the Valois. Sure, as Katarzyna Kosior showed, even the French and Polish royal houses prioritized in wedding protocol the current political needs over their dynastic customs, however, the ceremonial variations quoted in her study still seem minor in comparison with the Habsburgs (for instance, no Valois or Jagiellonian king travelled to the bride, etc.).[99] Examining such a dynamic princely house as the Habsburgs would thus yield a much better understanding of the wedding transfer, which is not tied to a stable protocol of only one cultural sphere or dynastic tradition, but open to constant negotiations of wedding parties.

The chosen timespan (1450–1550) is also a period for which the notoriously-known Habsburg motto *Bella gerant alii, tu felix Austria nube* is most fitting. By a series of very fortunate marital unions the house extended its rule over a great part of Europe: the marriage of Maximilian I and Mary of Burgundy [1477] brought control over a majority of domains previously controlled by the Valois dukes of Burgundy. The offspring of this union, Margaret and Philip, concluded the double marriage with the heirs of Castille-Aragon, Joanna and John [1496/7]. A sudden death of the latter meant acquisition of the two Iberian kingdoms and by extension also vast territories that the Spanish crown held in Europe and as time went on in America too. Maximilian I, personally participating in the first crucial match and brokering the second one, managed to negotiate even the third one, which, however, came to fruition only after

[99] Kosior, *Becoming a Queen,* 23–59.

his death. The second double wedding [1515/21], this time with the Jagiellonian dynasty ruling over Bohemia and Hungary, between Maximilian's grandchildren Ferdinand and Mary on one side and Anne and Louis on the other, enabled the Habsburgs to lay claims of the two Central-European kingdoms. Soon afterwards, with the death of King Louis II in the battle of Mohács against Ottomans, this claim was indeed advanced and it laid foundation of the future Habsburg monarchy. The acquisition of these territories was boosted by the imperial status, held by senior members of the house incessantly from Maximilian I's father, Frederick III.[100]

However the main advantage of the Habsburg marital web, that is its pan-European range, is at the same time its main disadvantage: the documents are spread across the countries around the continent in several languages, making the research in every archive that would be relevant to the Habsburg weddings virtually impossible. Therefore, as a result of my linguistic, financial, and temporal limitations,[101] I decided to concentrate my investigation on eighteen marital unions taking place in this period as shown in Tab. 1 below (maps of the respective journeys can be found in Appendix).

Table 1 The sample of Habsburg weddings

Prince(ss)	Parents	Spouse	Journey
Eleanor of Scotland	James I, king of Scotland; Joan Beaufort	Sigismund, count of Tirol	October 1448 (Tours) — 12 February 1449 (Meran)
Eleanor of Portugal	Edward, king of Portugal; Eleanor of Aragon	Frederick III, HR emperor	12 November 1451 (Lisbon) — 24 February 1452 (Pisa)

[100] Karl Vocelka, *Habsburgische Hochzeiten 1550-1600: kulturgeschichtl. Studien zum manieristischen Repräsentationsfest*, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für neuere Geschichte Österreichs ; Bd. 65 (Vienna ; Cologne ; Graz: Böhlau, 1976), 11–13.

[101] Due to a limited timespan, worsened by the effects of the pandemic, I was not able to properly investigate the cases of other three daughters of Philip the Fair and Joanna of Castile, namely Eleanor, queen of Portugal [1518] and France [1531], Isabella, queen of Denmark [1515], and Catherine, queen of Portugal [1525]; as well as the marriage of Emperor Charles V with Isabella of Portugal [1526].

Elizabeth of Habsburg	Albert II, king of the Romans, Bohemia, Hungary; Elizabeth of Luxembourg	Casimir IV, king of Poland	? 1454 (Vienna?) — 10 February (Cracow)
Maximilian I	Frederick III'; Eleanor of Portugal	Mary of Burgundy	21 May 1477 (Vienna) — 18 August (Ghent)
Bianca Maria Sforza	Galeazzo Maria Sforza, duke of Milan; Bona of Savoy	Maximilian I, HR emperor	2 December 1493 (Milan) — 23 December (Innsbruck)
Joanna of Castile	Ferdinand II, king of Aragon; Isabella, queen of Castile	Philip the Fair, duke of Burgundy	22 August 1496 (Laredo) — 9 December (Brussels)
Margaret of Habsburg	Maximilian I; Mary of Burgundy	John, prince of Asturias	21 January 1497 (Vlissingen) — 6 March (Santander)
Margaret of Habsburg (2nd)	Maximilian I; Mary of Burgundy	Philibert II, duke of Savoy	27 October 1501 (Brussels) — 8 December (Geneva)
Anne of Bohemia	Vladislaus II, king of Bohemia and Hungary; Anne of Foix-Candale	Ferdinand I, HR emperor	? (Innsbruck) — 26 May 1521 (Linz)
Mary of Hungary	Philip the Fair; Joanna of Castile	Louis II, king of Bohemia and Hungary	1521 (Innsbruck) — ? (Buda) precise dates known but it is presumed that it happened in summer
Elizabeth of Habsburg	Ferdinand I; Anne of Bohemia	Sigismund II Augustus, later king of Poland	21 April 1543 (Vienna) — 5 May (Cracow)
Maximilian II	Ferdinand I; Anne of Bohemia	Maria of Spain (1st grade cousin)	10 June 1548 (Augsburg) — 13 September (Valladolid)
Catherine of Habsburg	Ferdinand I; Anne of Bohemia	Francesco III Gonzaga, duke of Mantua	8 October 1549 (Innsbruck) — 22 October (Mantua)
Catherine of Habsburg (2nd)	Ferdinand I; Anne of Bohemia	Sigismund II Augustus, king of Poland	? 1553 — 30 July (Cracow)

Eleanor of Habsburg	Ferdinand I; Anne of Bohemia	Guglielmo I, duke of Mantua	14 April 1561 (Innsbruck) — 26 April (Mantua)
Barbara of Habsburg	Ferdinand I; Anne of Bohemia	Alfonso II d'Este, duke of Ferrara	14 November 1565 (Innsbruck) — 5 December (Ferrara)
Joanna of Habsburg	Ferdinand I; Anne of Bohemia	Francesco I de' Medici, later duke of Ferrara	14 November 1565 (Innsbruck) — 16 December (Florence)

Archival research was conducted in the four major North Italian archives (Milan, Mantua, Modena, Florence), two Viennese archives—mostly the Habsburg House Archive (HHStA) and partially the State Archive (OeStA). Due to Covid-19 restrictions I was not able to visit the Tyrolese archive Innsbruck (TLA) personally but some documents were sent to me in electronic form. As stated in the discussion of sources above, a great amount of narrative, epistolary, or finance-related material has been published since the eighteenth century and I heavily relied on them. Although a deeper archival investigation of some weddings in the sample is missing I believe that the documentation gathered from the Italian and Austrian archives is sufficient for my analysis.

The Habsburgs as a dynasty and its marital policy has been elaborated by many scholars. A list of numerous excellent monographs or exhibition catalogues covering the lives, cultural patronage, or residences of the Habsburg emperors, kings, queens, archdukes and archduchesses in this period would be long.[102] From the plethora of studies, one has to highlight the five-volume biography of Emperor Maximilian I by

[102] A selection of the most recent ones: Geoffrey Parker, *Emperor: A New Life of Charles V* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020); Sabine Haag, Dagmar Eichberger, and Annemarie Jordan Gswend, eds., *Women. The Art of Power. Three Women from the House of Habsburg. Exhibition Catalogue of the Kunsthistorisches Museum* (Vienna: KHM-Museumsverband, 2018); Sabine Haag and Veronika Sandbichler, eds., *Ferdinand II: 450 Years Sovereign Ruler of Tyrol: Jubilee Exhibition: An Exhibition of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, in Cooperation with the National Gallery in Prague and the Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences: 15 June-8 October 2017* (Ausstellung Ferdinand II, Innsbruck: Haymon, 2017).

Hermann Wiesflecker (published in 1971–86) that offers an excellent historic introduction to the second half of the fifteenth century as a whole. More specifically, the Habsburg weddings, as a key element of the house's success in this period, have been also addressed.[103] From the two major works on the subject, Cyrille Debris's comprehensive study represents a basic—yet impressive in size—handbook for Habsburg nuptials in the high and late Middle-Ages, showing in great detail the motivations for a marriage, its diplomatic background, the forms of dotal agreements, and the rites involved.[104] Karl Vocelka's book, chronologically placed in the second half of the sixteenth century, on the other hand, opts for a totally different approach.[105] Rather than looking into every marriage concluded in this time frame and presenting an overall picture of dynastic marital policy, he offers a collection of case studies and in each of these points to a particularly characteristic feature of contemporary princely espousals, such as material preparations of ceremonies, proxy rites, or juridical background. However none of these works, like the other scholarly literature as shown above, pays attention to the wedding journeys.

This thesis thus aims to fill this void. At the same time, it does *not* aspire to be an exhaustive evaluation of Habsburg wedding journeys in the second half of the fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth century. Rather, using the rich Habsburg-related documentation, it aims to shed light on the phenomena connected with nuptial travelling. In a sense, it is a case study but the "case" does not mean one wedding but one princely house which serves as a probe into virtually untouched issues. The

[103] A slightly later period examines Margaret M. McGowan, ed., *Dynastic Marriages 1612/1615: A Celebration of the Habsburg and Bourbon Unions* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).
[104] Cyrille Debris, *'Tu Felix Austria, nube': la dynastie de Habsbourg et sa politique matrimoniale à la fin du Moyen Age (XIIIe-XVIe siècles)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005).
[105] Vocelka, *Habsburgische Hochzeiten 1550-1600*.

objective is thus not to reconstruct the precise course of every journey in the sample but to reveal wider socio-cultural patterns with the help of the surviving material.

This thesis illustrates the centrality of wedding transfers for premodern dynasties[106] and monarchical order on various strata. Given the combination of their singularity (for the dynasty, princely figures, realms—princesses were not expected to be seen again), multiterritoriality (covering many political and geographical lands), supranationality (encompassing different royal and social customs), liminality (emancipating the princesses), and potential danger (inherent in all premodern travel) the bridal transfers were a perfect instrument to project the splendour and magnificence of the dynasties united in the marital alliance, to negotiate power and rank on the international level, to prepare the royal wives for their upcoming role, to forge relationships and bonds with foreign figures, and to extol and memorialize the dynasty. It is an event that does not fit any typologies of royal rituals or premodern travel. This thesis examines these functions in seven sections, whose order is roughly inspired by the chronological timeline of the journey (preparation—execution—memory) but in the end takes a more thematical approach which is necessary for a comparative analysis of the phenomena. Inevitably this approach delays, for instance, the analysis of the voyage's starting point—the bride's farewell—to the central part of the thesis, but I believe that each element must be treated within its thematic group. In the end, a strict adherence to chronological order would result in much overlap and repetitions and miss the arguments hidden in various segments of the journey.

[106] From the various meaning of this word, I understand the term *dynasty* not as synonym for monarchy or monarchical rule (if I refer to these aspects, the terms *monarchical* or *political* are used) but as a collective group, tied with kin relations and most importantly, a shared identity and agenda. Natalia Nowakowska, 'What's in a Word? The Etymology and Historiography of Dynasty – Renaissance Europe and Beyond', *Global Intellectual History (Abingdon, England)*, 2020, 1–22.

The first chapter addresses the material side of the transfer. The point of analysis here is not to reconstruct the trajectories or roads of the particular journeys but to focus on the material setting of the travel, that is, its logistics. Drawing comparisons with another type of travelling royalty, i.e. royal tours, the chapter shows the anxieties, motivations, and social networks that enabled—and sometimes complicated—the spousal transfer. The second part tackles the most noticeable aspect of the journey, the massive entourage accompanying the prince(ss). Its distinct but intertwined parts, bridal household and aristocratic retinue, are scrutinized with respect to their origins and functions. Whereas the latter served to project political unity and dynastic splendour on the outside, the former—besides fulfilling the everyday needs of the princess en route—performed a more intimate role, helping the princess with integration into her new environment or shaping her public perception. As the group in the closest proximity to the new queen or duchess, it had clear power connotations and the two wedding parties vigorously negotiated the appointments and the unbalanced structure often became a source of later conflicts.

Chapter Three looks at ceremonies and festivals on the way. Firstly, it examines the transfer as a continuous stream of triumphs, solemn entries, spectacles, and entertainments. This highly choreographed staging, boosted by a newly emerging genre of festival books, functioned as an extension of the wedding festivities, often paid for by third-parties. Moreover, as it is argued, a trend towards greater festivization, i.e. a qualitative and quantitative expansion of festive occasions, is discernible, which can be explained by the popularity of royal progresses or the gradual end to itinerant kingship. Moving on to the sacral dimension of the journey, that is, visiting holy shrines, participation in the liturgy, blending of the travel schedule with the liturgical calendar, shows that the spousal transfers had a connection with the

sacred and the participants sought divine aid en route to ensure a happy outcome to the trip as well as the entire marital union.

Chapter Four shifts the ceremonial focus from the macro to the micro level, looking into ritual transition occurring in every nuptial, but having special meaning in the transfer of princely brides. Consisting of separation, liminal period, and incorporation, this ritual passage was diversified, blurred, and sometimes did not conclude with the wedding either. Verbal, non-verbal, and material means employed in this process are examined and it is demonstrated that the bride was not a submissive object, "handed over" from one male authority to another, but she took a very active part in it. Moreover the gender differences between travelling bride and groom, not very visible in the material or festive layers, are clearly brought to light in this chapter. The males appear to have participated only partially in the ritual transition, moreover the protocol in meeting the spouse was gender-based: whereas the incoming brides were usually united with the husbands in an extramural setting, the incoming grooms found their spouses in the intramural one.

Elaborating on the liminal character of the transfer, Chapters Five and Six argue that the bridal journeys enabled the princesses, empowered by a temporary absence of male authority, to exercise a significant amount of influence and agency and to use it for engaging in self-training (Chapter Five) as envisaged by Carafa's conduct treatise, or building social ties with people on the way by means of gifts (Chapter Six). Last but not least, Chapter Seven examines the afterlife of the journey in literary compositions. By looking into the newly emerged genre of epithalamia, Humanistic wedding poems and orations, as well as the semi-biographical works of Emperor Maximilian I, this section contends that the nuptial transfers were an ideal

framework for preserving dynastic memory and self-affirmation, either by exploiting the motifs of travel dangers or triumphalism.

By so doing, this thesis will produce a highly interdisciplinary piece of research that will establish bridal journeys as an autonomous type of travel and shed light on the reasons behind their hitherto overlooked cultural dynamics on the trans-European scale. It will contribute strongly to several branches of scholarship, not only to Habsburg studies, but to royal and court, festivity and ritual, gender and women, diplomatic, and literary studies.

Regarding terminology, I use throughout the work the phrases bridal, nuptial, wedding, spousal journey, transfer, or passage interchangeably. I do not try to eschew the term *bridal* when speaking about wedding travel as a whole, that means, referring to the male transfers as well as this adjective is synonymous to *nuptial* in certain collocations (e.g. bridal couple, bridal suite, etc.). The brides and grooms surveyed in this thesis held a whole range of born or wedded titles (emperor—empress, king—queen, archduke—archduchess, duke—duchess, infant—infanta, and so forth), however, as my objective is to write about nuptial travel in general, I mostly use the term princess/prince, only when speaking about concrete persons I use their special title (e.g. archduchess or infanta). In order to be consistent, I use anglicised names for all princely figures coming from the House of Habsburg (Frederick III, not Friedrich; Joanna, not Johanna or Giovanna d'Austria) and other dynasties up to the year 1500 (for instance, Joanna not Juana of Castile; Eleanor not Leanor of Portugal; but Maria not Mary of Spain, Guglielmo not William Gonzaga). Also, the modern and English—if existing—names of cities and towns are used. All translations are mine; due to a rich palette of languages I decided to translate all stand-alone quotations into English.

Where the source of the quotation is not printed elsewhere, I put the original into the footnotes (the exception are the quotes from epithalamia). For better orientation, I assigned to each prince(ss) discussed in the actual text her/his wedding date in square brackets; when an example outside of my Habsburg sample is introduced, the date in the brackets is preceded by an asterisk. Also, to avoid confusion between the two Maximilians in the sample, I use their later ordinals as Holy Roman emperors, although this is highly anachronistic in the time of their respective journeys when they were not emperors nor kings of Romans, only archdukes of Austria.

1 Ways and means

The first point of analysis is the props that enabled the actual physical transfer of the (bride)grooms, namely route, means of travel, and lodgings. At the first sight, there is nothing that would set these aspects apart, in other words, one would presume that the travel of princ(ess)es would be the same as for any other medieval traveller. However, this chapter aims to prove the very opposite: these mundane matters did not lack the political and dynastic meanings that stemmed from the inner nature of princely nuptials.

The first feature that singles out bridal journeys in contrast to the other types of premodern mobility is their scope: they involved not only a princely traveller and her/his household but also a massive enterprise in terms of human resources. As we will see in Chapter Two, it always involved several hundred, if not thousands of people, which made these journeys one of the biggest royal events in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In overall scale, bridal journeys are only comparable to royal summits, such as the Field of Cloth of Gold in 1520 (which was attented by roughly 1130 English and the same amount of French noblemen)[107] or *Italienzugs* of the emperors-in-waiting (for instance, Frederick III was allegedly accompanied by four thousand knights).[108] Yet unlike imperial rides or royal summits which happened only once or twice a century, wedding journeys occurred much more often. Due to their scope, they posed significant logistical challenges, and what is more, negotiations with the other wedding party and third-party hosts could add to the complications. The

[107] Glenn Richardson, *The Field of Cloth of Gold* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2013), 171.
[108] Pius II, *Historia Austrialis*, 2009, 1:151.

Ferrarese envoy in 1565 for instance recounts how the cardinal of Trent—third-party host—is anxious about the arrival of the bridal company amounting to three thousand horses, and "does not know how to lodge them, reckoning that Trent cannot supply it".[109]

In order to proceed smoothly, simultaneous movement of such a mammoth group of people had to be carefully planned—the itinerary, taking into account safety measures, timetable, and accessible accommodation capacities needed to be drafted beforehand. Still, even with enormous effort to ensure an easy transition, the bridal trains were often confronted with circumstances that forced them to improvise and compromise in terms of material comfort or missed deadlines. How did the nuptial travellers and their companions react to such a change of plan? And why, despite all the intricate planning, did many journeys take place in an inconvenient season of the year? What were the motives behind the timetable? Also, regarding the means of travel, how were hundreds of horses acquired?

The materiality of medieval and early modern travel, naturally, has not been ignored by scholarship.[110] Nonetheless, logistics of spousal journeys has not been considered on a large-scale group of cases, and as a result, its overall implications have not been evaluated. Delving into timing and route, means of travel, and lodgings, this chapter shows that the planning and execution of spousal transfers were very much politically and dynastically motivated. As a major royal/ducal ritual, bringing together two princely houses, their dominions, and many times, third-party players, the date of

[109] "Cardinale hora si ritroua in grandissimo fastidio perche dice d'aspettare da tre millia cavalli con le Altezze, et non sa come alloggiarli giudicando che Trento non habbia da poter supplire." Ippolito Bellincini to Alfonso d'Este, Trent, 14 November 1565, ASE, Ambasciatori Germania 26, (not foliated).
[110] To name just a few: Brian Paul Hindle, *Medieval Roads and Tracks*, 3rd ed. (Princes Risborough: Shire, 1998); Valerie Allen and Ruth Evans, eds., *Roadworks: Medieval Britain, Medieval Roads* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016); Norbert Ohler, *The Medieval Traveller*, New ed. (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2010).

departure was liable to complicated negotiations that tried to fit in with all parties' demands. Although the journeys, as one of a few monarchical ceremonies that exposed its partakers to physical danger, were carefully planned in order to prevent catastrophe and discomfort, paradoxically, dynastic agenda eclipsed this all. Therefore, material considerations were not only a physical backbone of this important event but a forum that for the first time echoed ambitions, motivations, and desire for magnificence of the princely houses united in marriage.

As a point of comparison, analogies will be drawn with other types of mobility, connected with medieval and early modern monarchy, that is, the royal progress and partially the *Italienzug* of Frederick III, during which he met his spouse Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2].[111] Despite different motivations, nuptial journeys and these travels share many common points also in outer form, so a comparative analysis of these two might produce a better comprehension of the modes in which the princely figures and their surroundings operated.

1.1 Timing and route

The route of the bridal journey was usually debated in advance as it was necessary to prepare not only lodgings, but also supplies and safe-conducts for the numerous retinue accompanying the princess. Walter von Stadion was responsible for the smooth transition of Bianca Maria's journey [1493]. As the itinerary was originally supposed to lead through Chur, Bregenz, Bludenz, and Lake Constance, coming to an end in Freiburg, he took care in preparing of lodgings and an abundance of provisions

[111] The topic of *Romzugs* is generally understudied, there are several articles and even books (e.g. Veronika Proske, *Der Romzug Kaiser Sigismunds (1431-1433): Politische Kommunikation, Herrschaftsrepräsentation und Rezeption* (Vienna, 2018), non vidi) looking into particular cases but an overall study of this phenomenon is yet to be done. For Frederick III's ride, I am using Piccolomini's account in *Historia Austrialis*.

at every stop on the planned route. The special arrangements were made in the final destination, the quarters were distributed according to the person's rank, supplies for many guests and several thousand more horses were provided, even adornments, such as tapestries or lanterns, were ordered.[112] Yet all this thorough preparation was abandoned since the route of the journey had to be changed due to the poor quality of the roads, which would thwart the plans of Bianca in Freiburg by Christmas.[113]

The other obstacles for movement were natural elements, such as rivers. Waterways, if navigable, were often used to transport princess's belongings and trousseau, and even to accelarate the moving of the bridal company for some legs of the journey, since this type of transport could have been six times cheaper than travel by land.[114] But rivers could became an obstacle too: as a result of a frequent scarcity of fords and bridges the bridal company often faced the dilemma of whether they should alter the originally-planned route. On the way from Correggio to Bologna, Joanna of Habsburg's [1565] retinue was supposed to make an overnight stay in San Giovanni in Persiceto but this way was quite long, and on the top, it encompassed the crossing of two rivers by narrow bridges that would slow down the progress even more. On the suggestion of the local lord, the competent authorities in the bridal train thus decided that it would be better to travel and stay in Castelfranco Emilia which was closer and had good accommodation capacities, and moreover, the road thereto involved only one water crossing with a solid bridge.[115] Although Joanna and her

[112] Heidemarie Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza. Versuch einer Biographie' (Dissertation, Graz, 1966), 37–8. As a source for this piece of information, Hochrinner quotes a set of letters, collected in "Registraturbuch König Maximilians I. 1493, MSS Pap. XV" which I have not managed to locate and consult yet.
[113] Hochrinner, 39.
[114] Maribel Dietz, *Wandering Monks, Virgins, and Pilgrims: Ascetic Travel in the Mediterranean World, A.D. 300/800* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 12–17.
[115] "[È quasi impossibile a poter andar in una giornata da Correggio a Santo Giovanni [in Persiceto] per esser il camino di 24 miglia lunghissime il quale portarà tanto più tempo quanto che lì sono gli dui fiumi di Secchia et Panaro da passare che in quel dirito non hanno ponti che siano sufficienti a passare se non pochissimi cavalli per volta perché non sono passi che siano molto frequentati. S. S. Ill.ma [Carlo

companions still followed the original course,[116] their deliberation demonstrates how the bridal train cooperated with regional officials so as to avoid difficulties and delays. Sometimes the local government took an even more active part in the facilitation of the journey. For instance, Venetians let a pontoon bridge be constructed over the Adige river near Rovereto for Maximilian II's voyage to Spain [1548],[117] and nearly two decades later also for Joanna and Barbara's journeys [both in 1565].[118]

Still, the most important element in the planning of the route was the current political landscape. If a hostile third-party ruler lay between the domains of the two wedding parties, his realm had to be bypassed, as the passage of the bride would be— at best— not properly received, or—at worst— directly threatened. Often in these cases the marital union sealed alliance against such third-party ruler, so it would be only logical for him to curb the journey by every possible means. This was precisely the case of the Spanish-Habsburg double wedding of 1496/7 that was directed against France. As a result, the French territory had to be circumvented by sea and the entire Spanish navy was sent to escort both princesses.[119] When Franco-Habsburg relations ameliorated a couple of years later, Margaret of Habsburg [1501] could traverse France to reach her second husband, the duke of Savoy. Similar political motivations were behind the route of Frederick III [1451/2] on his imperial ride: several rulers of Italy proposed his territories to be chosen as a way to Rome, accusing their rivals of perfidy.

Borromeo] discorre et se fonda sopra il parere che li dano detto Signor Conte [Francesco Gonzaga, Conte di Novellara] et suo agente [Antonio Montarencio] che seria bene andar a Castelfranco [Emilia] che serà camino di miglia 16 et non si haverà da passare se non il Panaro che ha un ponte che supplirà benissimo per esser il fiume strettissimo et serà né più né meno alloggiata sua Altezza..." Polidoro Castelli to Prince Francesco de' Medici, Dolce, 25 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 512.

[116] TLA HS 5565, p. 22.

[117] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 34.

[118] "Detti Signori venetiani hanno fatto un ponte sopra l'Adice ad un luogo che si chiama a Dolcè..." Polidoro Castelli to Bernardo Giusti, Trent, 17 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 379.

[119] Hermann Wiesflecker, 'Maximilian I. und die habsburgisch-spanischen Heirats- und Bündnisverträge von 1495/96', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 1–2, no. 67 (1959): 33–4.

Italian rulers and city-states vied for the emperor's visit because they strove to achieve investiture of their domains or to get prestige by hosting such a prominent traveller.[120]

Some wedding parties left no stone unturned in laying down the groundwork for the smooth transition. Queen Isabella of Castille dispatched several letters to England, notifying both King Henry VII of England and the Spanish ambassador about the passage of the Spanish fleet transporting her daughter Joanna [1496] to Flanders and Margaret of Habsburg [1497] back to the Iberian Peninsula. Should any of these princesses enter an English port, the king is asked to provide them with a cordial reception and to treat them as his own daughters.[121] Eleanor of Portugal's naval voyage [1451/2] did not involve such arrangements with third parties but Frederick III in the mandate for his representatives in Portugal specified that the princess's fleet should arrive at the Italian port of Talamone, and then, proceed to Siena where they were supposed to meet.[122] In the meantime, he sent to Talamone a delegation consisting of German ladies and noblemen, led by his secretary Michal Pfullendorf and Aenea Silvio Piccolomini, future pope Pius II.[123] They were supposed to fix the prices for supplies and to obtain safe-conducts for Frederick, coming down to Italy to meet Eleanor and receive the imperial crown. Since both Eleanor and Frederick were running late, Piccolomini recalls in his *Commentaries* how he and the rest of the welcome party had to wait in Talamone for sixty days, "that were very dull for him and his party".[124] A

[120] Pius II, *Historia Austrialis*, 2009, 1:91–2.
[121] G.A. Bergenroth, ed., *Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers Relating to the Negotiations Between England and Spain Preserved in the Archives at Simancas and Elsewhere. Henry VII. 1485–1509*, vol. I (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1862), 119–20.
[122] Aires Augusto Nascimento, Maria Filomena Andrade, and Maria Teresa Rebelo da Silva, eds., *Princesas de Portugal: contratos matrimoniais dos séculos XV e XVI*, Colecção Medievalia 5 (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1992), 84.
[123] A safeconduct (from 4 October 1451) for the legation, asking free passage for their persons and belongings through all ports, passes, bridges, and towns. HHStA, FUK 624.
[124] Pius II, *Commentaries*, 1:103, 111.

devoted classicist like Piccolomini, however, took advantage of the spare time by visiting the nearby ancient monuments in Monte Argentario and Ansedonia.[125]

Eventually though, Eleanor arrived in Livorno, not Talamone, creating significant logistical chaos: the German welcome delegation had to quickly move several kilometres north; at the same time, the princess with her Portuguese company could not disembark in Livorno because that was not the port agreed upon, nor could they continue sailing to Talamone due to the direction of the wind. After a day of waiting, Eleanor and the marquis of Valença, a commander of the fleet, called council which decided to send an envoy to Frederick asking him for guidance. Soon after Frederick resolved the matter by sending an additional group of nobles that should have joined the one coming from Talamone, and together they were supposed to greet the future empress in Pisa.[126]

Nonetheless such deviation from plans was not uncommon, especially when a naval passage was involved. Margaret of Habsburg [1497] too found herself in a different Iberian port to the rest of her navy. While the rest of the ships found a safe haven in Laredo, a strong sea wind blew away the princess's ship to Santander. Similarly as in Eleanor's case above, Margaret also did not hesitate to immediately send a special envoy to her husband and his royal parents, informing them about her whereabouts.[127] One can thus conclude that even though accidents and mishaps, leading to alteration of the proposed course of events, happened often, it was crucial for the bridal company to maintain contact with the host wedding party.

[125] Pius II, 1:111.
[126] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 66–70.
[127] Brassart, *Documents concernant le voyage de l'archiduchesse Marguerite,* 4; Molinet, *Chroniques* 5:67–8.

Adverse meteorological conditions were a particular nemesis of the nuptial transfer. Queen Isabella of Castile was allegedly quite worried about the sea passage of her daughter, Joanna [1496]. In one of his letters, the historian Pietro Martire d'Anghiera relates that after the princess's departure, the queen kept interrogating experienced navigators (amongst them was—according to Hermann Wiesflecker and Gillian B. Fleming—Christopher Columbus)[128] day and night about what sort of sea conditions the navy could be facing and what might have delayed Joanna's arrival in Flanders. Isabella's precupations were based upon the fact that the current season (autumn) was not a favourable time for sailing:

> [She] lamented over the [cruel] destiny of being obliged to send her daughter to remote Flanders in a season in which the sea was almost impassable due to the proximity of winter. On top of that, because of the enmity of the French, there was a shortage of regular mail by land.[129]

Eventually, the Spanish princess reached her destination safe and sound, yet her navy lost two ships—one Genovese carrack got stranded on a sandbeach and another caravel smashed into it, breaking into two parts.[130] The lack of information about the princess's progress, manifesting in Isabella's frustration, again reveals the importance of continuous contact (with either wedding party) which the bridal expeditions were supposed to maintain. That reveals the level of importance which the dynastic leaders attached to the transfer, which, unlike other royal rituals, really involved a significant risk to life and limb.

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[128] Wiesflecker, 'Maximilian I. und die habsburgisch-spanischen Heirats- und Bündnisverträge von 1495/96', 34; Gillian B. Fleming, *Juana I. Legitimacy and Conflict in Sixteenth-Century Castile* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 18.
[129] Pietro Martire d'Anghiera, *Epistolario*, ed. José López de Toro, vol. 1 (Madrid: Gongora, 1953), 324–5.
[130] Ibid.

Ostensibly in contradiction to the previous statements, all the effort striving to secure a smooth journey, did not necessarily equate with the selection of the best period of year for travelling. Hence, in the end, the careful arrangements could have been thwarted by bad weather, occurring especially in the winter months. As we can see from Tab. 2 (below), ten out of the seventeen bridal travellers in our sample had to make their journey during some if not all winter months (marked in red). In comparison, the royal tours, at least those of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, mostly took place during the summer and autumn months (from August to October), the progresses in winter were limited to the London area.[131]

Table 2 Starting and ending dates of the wedding transfers in our Habsburg sample.

Prince(ss)	Departure	Arrival
Eleanor of Scotland	Tours, October 1448	Meran (Tyrol), 12 February 1449
Eleanor of Portugal	Lisbon, 12 November 1451	Pisa, 24 February 1452
Elizabeth of Habsburg	Vienna, ?	Cracow, 10 February 1454
Maximilian I	Vienna, 21 May 1477	Ghent, 18 August 1477
Bianca Maria Sforza	Milan, 2 December 1493	Innsbruck, 23 December 1493
Joanna of Castile	Laredo, 22 August 1496	Brussels, 9 December 1496
Margaret of Austria	Vlissingen, 21 January 1497	Santander, 6 March 1497
Margaret of Austria (2nd)	Brussels, 27 October 1501	Geneva, 8 December 1501
Mary of Hungary	Innsbruck, ? 1521	Buda, 1521 (precise dates not known but it is presumed that Mary arrived in Hungary in summer)
Anne of Bohemia	Innsbruck, ? 1521	Linz, before 26 May 1521
Elizabeth of Habsburg	Vienna, 21 April 1543	Cracow, 5 May 1543
Maximilian II	Augsburg, 10 June 1548	Valladolid, 13 September 1548

[131] Neil Samman, 'The Progresses of Henry VIII, 1509–1529', in *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy and Piety*, ed. Diarmaid MacCulloch (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), 62; Mary Hill Cole, 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses', in *The Progresses, Pageants, and Entertainments of Queen Elizabeth I*, ed. Jayne Elisabeth Archer, Elizabeth Goldring, and Sarah Knight (Oxford: University Press, 2007), 43, 50.

Catherine of Habsburg	Innsbruck, 8 October 1549	Mantua, 22 October 1549
Catherine of Habsburg (2nd)	Vienna, July 1553	Cracow, 30 July 1553
Eleanor of Habsburg	Innsbruck, 14 April 1561	Mantua, 26 April 1561
Joanna of Habsburg	Innsbruck, 14 November 1565	Florence, 16 December 1565
Barbara of Habsburg	Innsbruck, 14 November 1565	Ferrara, 5 December 1565

Putting the prince(ss)'s life in jeopardy could have had serious repercussions for dynastic plans or the political landscape. One of the most notorious examples (although not from bridal travel) is the White Ship disaster of 1120, during which perished Edward I's only legitimate male heir, threw the English crown into a long war of succession.[132] So how can one account for taking such a risk, given the level of importance inherent in the wedding journeys? There are several ways to elucidate this apparent contradiction. An unfavourable timetable for the journey might have stemmed from the specific demands of one wedding party. On the one hand there could have been a desire to slot the nuptial festivities into a major Christian or dynastic feast (more about this in Chapter 3.2), on the other one, an instict to avoid cancelation of the marital project as a whole. Even though international princely unions often staged the proxy nuptials, matrimony not corroborated with a sexual act, the so-called consummation, was still potentially prone to annulment if one wedding party changed its mind. Only a successful bridal transfer and sexual intercourse could prevent this from happening.[133] This fear was clearly behind the timetable of Joanna of Castile [1496] whose parents were worried that Maximilian I would delay the wedding until

[132] Charles Spencer, *The White Ship: Conquest, Anarchy and the Wrecking of Henry I's Dream* (London: William Collins, 2020).
[133] Spieß, 'Unterwegs zu einem fremden Ehemann', 26.

the end of the war against the French. Since the double marital alliance between the Habsburgs and Spain was tied to military assistance, the union might have lost its meaning once the campaign was over.[134]

Apart from this, the husbands might have asked the brides to travel in the hibernal months on the grounds of other personal reasons, as we will see in the chapter about sacred time, or alternatively it might have been the will of the stars, or more precisely, a prediction by the courtly astrologer. Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] had to wait several days until Ambrogio da Rosate announced the right time to make a quick sail across Lake Como.[135] However his prediction of sunny weather turned out to be rather unreliable as the very next day the princess's entourage had to face a terrible storm and nearly a shipwreck.[136]

The husband's demands, whatever they were, often resulted in clashes, as some royal parents were not so enthusiastic about the potential dangers of travel caused by the winter season and intentionally kept postponing the departure of their daughter. In my Masters dissertation I showed how arduously the Polish envoys, taking care of Bona Sforza's transfer [*1518], had to negotiate with Isabella of Aragon, the princess's mother, over the time of departure.[137] Out of "motherly affection" towards her daughter, Isabella purposely kept postponing the date of departure, "so her daughter does not have to sail in winter months".[138]

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[134] Wiesflecker, 'Maximilian I. und die habsburgisch-spanischen Heirats- und Bündnisverträge von 1495/96', 33.
[135] Tristano Calco, 'Nuptiae augustae, hoc est, Maximiliani imperatoris cum Blanca, Joannis Galeacii Mediolanensium ducis sorore', in *Thesaurus antiquitatum et historiarum Italiae, mari ligustico et Alpibus vicinae*, ed. Joannes Georgius Graevius, vol. 2 (Leiden: Petrus Vander, 1704), col. 530.
[136] Calvi, *Bianca Maria Sforza-Visconti*, 35.
[137] Patrik Pastrnak, 'Flores Italiae. Talianské princezny v strednej Európe v neskorom stredoveku [Italian Princesses in the Late Medieval Central Europe]' (Olomouc, Palacky University, 2018), 17–18.
[138] Stanislaus Gorski, ed., *Acta Tomiciana. Tomus Quartus - Epistolarum, Legationum, Responsorum Actionum et Rerum Gestarum Serenissimi Principis Sigismundi Primi, Regis Polonie at Magni Ducis Lithunie* (Kórnik: Biblioteka Kórnicka, 1855), 239–40.

Discussions and debates of this sort are sometimes present in our Habsburg sample too. Many times even the representatives of another wedding party took into consideration the princess's safety. Eleanor of Habsburg [1451/2] was originally scheduled to arrive in Italy and meet with her husband by November 1.[139] We are even told that the envoys of Frederick III, her future husband, sent to Portugal to fetch the princess, actively sollicited for setting out before winter comes.[140] In the end, due to various factors (absence of wind, lengthy journey preparations, and over-elaborate festivities, see Chapter 4.1) Eleanor did not leave her homeland before mid-November, long after her scheduled arrival, and her flotilla had to face numerous storms on the way. In light of this it is doubtful to what extent the envoys really demanded the expeditious departure. Nicolas Lanckman, the author of this piece of information, was, after all, a member of the said embassy and might have inserted the urge for the before-winter transfer in order to exonerate himself from the princess's delayed and turbulent, life-threatening voyage. Sometimes the postponement of the parting with an intention to avoid a hibernal journey actually made the situation much worse. The Castilian fleet that accompanied Joanna of Castile [1496] to Flanders and was supposed to bring Margaret of Habsburg [1497] back to the peninsula suffered terrible losses while wintering in the ports of Zealand. Not accustomed to withstand the cold temperatures, the escort reportedly lost several thousand of its members.[141]

The whims of weather were not the only source of vexation for the logistics of wedding transfers. A delay in the journey might have been caused by the preparation of festivities at the husband's court—Elizabeth of Habsburg [1454] was asked to wait

[139] Pius II, *Historia Austrialis*, 2009, 1:146.
[140] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 32.
[141] Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, 1828, 5:66–7; Fleming, *Juana I. Legitimacy and Conflict in Sixteenth-Century Castile*, 21–22.

on the outskirts of Cracow, in Skawina, because the *apparatus pro splendore magnificencie regis* were not finalized yet.[142] Eleanor of Scotland's journey [1448] from Paris to Tyrol was originally supposed to lead through Alsace and Basel, but after her arrival in Belfort it became clear that this route was dangerous, since local aristocrats were in the middle of a small war. What is more, the news arrived warning the bridal company that a certain knight was planning a robbery during the crossing at Lake Constance.[143] As a result, a decision was made to proceed through Savoy and the Swiss cities Bern, Luzern, and Zürich, where the envoys of Duke Sigismund, Eleanor's groom, immediately managed to secure safe-conducts.[144] Ultimately however, aside from two exceptions not from our wedding sample—Joan of England [*1348] and Joan of France [*1371][145]—no prince(ss) was harmed or killed in the course of her/his nuptial transfer (to the best of my knowledge), so despite delays and accidents the overall goal was achieved.

1.2 Travel means

The means of travel used for the bridal journey did not differ from other premodern travel, but given their goal—to convey a princely bride or groom, and by extension their social rank—they must have had a special angle, highlighting magnificence of the event. A preparatory list of items for the journeys of Mary of Hungary and Anne of Bohemia [1521] specifies three different types of wagon that

[142] Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae, Lib. 12*, 177.
[143] Chmel, *Die österreichische Geschichtsforscher*, 2:459.
[144] Chmel, 2:462.
[145] The first Joan was daughter of King Edward III, and on the way to her spouse, Peter of Castile, she ran directly into the Black Death in southern France. The second one was daughter of Philip VI and betrothed to John of Aragon. She unexpectedly fell ill and died in Béziers. Mary Anne Everett Green, *Lives of the Princesses of England, from the Norman Conquest* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1857), 253–7; Marguerite A. Keane, *Material Culture and Queenship in 14th-Century France: The Testament of Blanche of Navarre (1331-1398)* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2016), 2.

were used.[146] Firstly each princess had at her disposal two personal, golden wagons *(Leibwagen guldiner),* which might have resembled the *Prunkwagen* stored in Graz that were presumably used during Eleanor of Portugal's journey [1451/2].[147] Then there were two *Koblwagen*, suitable for transportation of the members of the ladies' court, as this was a type of longer and round-vaulted carriage which was mostly reserved for women. And lastly, there was one *Camerwagen* for each bridal train, most likely for the shipment of the princess's trousseau. Each wagon was dragged by four horses, except for the golden one to which six horses were hitched, and covered by various cloths, according to the wagon's type—the golden ones were covered with golden, red velvet, and "London" *(lindisch)* red woollen blankets, the other two types with less costly materials. For greater comfort the wagons were equipped with carpets, velvet and London-cloth cushions.

Other princesses, such as Bianca Maria Sforza [1493], were left with horses and mules until the groom sent them carriages.[148] Departing from Trent, Barbara of Habsburg [1565] was given a pair of horses, and a pair of ornamented litters in the name of her groom Duke Alfonso II of Ferrara who even sent a horse for Barbara's sister Joanna [1565], travelling with her for the first leg of the journey.[149] On the other hand, Florentines sent mules all the way to Bologna to pick up Joanna's baggage.[150] These examples elucidate how the mundane objects could have become occasions for

[146] OeStA, FHKA AHK NÖHA, W 61/A-36, f. 29r–30r.
[147] Peter Weninger, ed., *Ausstellung Friedrich III. - Kaiserresidenz Wiener Neustadt: St. Peter an der Sperr, Wiener Neustadt ; 28. Mai bis 30. Oktober 1966* (Vienna: Amt der Niederösterr. Landesregierung (Kulturreferat), 1966), 357.
[148] Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 36.
[149] "...fuori della Terra [Trent] a un mezzo miglio dove vi arrivando si trovò un paro di d'achinee e un paro di lettighe benissimo addobbate, et un cavallo; le chinee et le lettighe dall'Illustrissimo Cardinale da Este furono donate alla Regina Barbera in nome del Signor Duca [Alfonso II Este] et il cavallo alla Serenissima Regina Giovanna..." Sigismondo de' Rossi to Duke Cosimo I, Rovereto, 23 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 236.
[150] "Bisognarà poi havere provisione de muli assai per portare le robbe et le carrette ancor a Fiorenze." Polidoro Castelli to Bernardo Giusti, Trent, 17 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 379.

gift-giving, the infinite dance of courtesies that accompanied princely weddings. In this respect, materiality as one facet of the journey points to its cultural-social layer which will be addressed in depth in Chapter Six.

Our sample of weddings enables us to observe the technical development of transport to some extent. Over the course of time the wagons were replaced with lighter and more comfortable coaches *(Gutschi)* that can unarguably be traced back to 1561 journey of Eleanor of Habsburg to Mantua,[151] although it is likely that they were used even sooner as this type of carriage, differing from its predecessors by added suspension, regularly operated in the main European cities by 1550. The carriages *all'ongaresca*, recorded in the 1549 entry of Catherine of Habsburg to Mantua, might indicate the same travel vessel, alluding to its Hungarian origin.[152] Coincidentally, the oldest still-extant coach was also in use during a princely wedding in 1561, when Dorothea of Denmark married Duke William of Brunswick-Lüneburg.[153]

The choice between a wagon and coach could have been motivated by other intentions other than the simple comfort of the traveller. Preparing the transfer to Florence four years later [1565], Joanna of Habsburg's steward asked the Florentine envoy Sigismondo de' Rossi what kind of vehicle was used in Italy, carriage or coach, presumably, in order to equip the bridal entourage with the means of travel that would seem appropriate to the other wedding party. De' Rossi replied that they used both but added that the steward and Austrians should not bother about either of them since all

[151] "...mit sambt andern Hern in sechs kostlichen Gutschi oder Carete genandt ankomen und Ihr Fürstliche Durchleit empfangen." *Beschreybung der Rayss gen Mantua*, TLA, Ferdinandea 31, pos. 27, f. 3r.

[152] C.C. (?), *L'Entrata della serenissima et illustrissima signora Caterina d'Austria sposa del eccelentissimo duca di Mantoua et marchese di Monferrato nella detta sua citta, con l'ordine di tornei, giostre, banchetti, comedie, musiche, et altri sontuosi apparecchi fatti per la venuta sua, cosa non meno marauigliosa da vedere, che degna d'etterna memoria*, ASMn, AG 199, f. 84/2v.

[153] Julian Munby, 'From Carriage to Coach: What Happened?', in *The Art, Science, and Technology of Medieval Travel*, ed. Robert Odell Bork and Andrea Kann (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), 50–2. Munby claims that the earliest types of coaches or *kotchi* were light and fast but did not have suspension.

will be taken care of by the Florentines.[154] They indeed sent not only carriages, but also horses and cases prior to the departure from Innsbruck.[155]

An essential part of every wagon or carriage were draught animals, mostly horses. The Vienna archives store a detailed inventory of horses and their equipment assembled before the joint journey of Barbara and Johanna of Habsburg to Italy [1565].[156] This seemingly dreary piece of administrative record unveils the sheer scope of socio-cultural ties that were necessary in order to assemble the horse-power for (still only a part of) the bridal trains. As the process was administered by their brother, Archduke Ferdinand, then residing in Bohemia, it took place in Prague.

Beside the various horse types (palfrey, wagon horses) and their appearances (white, brown, dapple grey, pied, red-and-black pied) the account specifies the origin of the particular animals, offering a fascinating glimpse into the social network involved in the preparation. Two horses and six palfreys were acquired from Jews; one white and one pied palfrey by local aristocrats, Lord Úlický from Plešnice, a lesser nobleman, and William of Rosenberg, High Treasurer of Bohemia; two horses were offered by burghers; one horse was provided by a judge at the appellation court and one by some Spaniard. The wagon horses were obtained from a peasant and one from a burgheress. Although not visible at the first glance, the archduke's relatives were also involved: one riding and two wagon horses were also procured by Carl Welser and Catherine of Lokšany, the brother and aunt, respectively, of Ferdinand's

[154] "Il Signor Maiordomo di queste Alteze mi domandò quello che s'usava in Italia, o cocchio o carretta, et io li risposi, l'uno et l'altra, ma che quando questo Sua Signoria me lo domandassi percosa che havesse a servire per sua Alt.a potevano fare senza pigliarsi fastidio niuno per due cose: l'una che di già era provvisto al tutto, et l'altra che era non meno spesa grande al condurre simile cose, ch'è fastidiosa perchè si devono condurre per schiena di muli et che allo arrivo di Sua Alt. troverebbe cocchio, carretta, et lettiga..." Sigismondo de' Rossi to Prince Francesco I, Innsbruck, 26 July 1565, ASFi, MdP 516a, f. 905.
[155] Sigismondo de' Rossi to Bartolomeo Concini, Innsbruck, 5 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 247.
[156] HHStA, Obersthofmeisteramt, Ältere Zeremonialakten (1562–1836), 1 Akten, f. 120–121v.

morganatic and (for some time) secret wife Philippine Welser.[157] Also, as demonstrated by the map below (Fig. 3), the geographical origin of the horse-providers is intriguing: it stretched across Poland (two of three mentioned Jews were from there), Prague and other Bohemian cities (Kutná Hora, Havlíčkův Brod), and Augsburg in Bavaria where Carl Welser was based.



Figure 3 A geographical origin of persons providing horses for the 1565 joint journey. The operation was coordinated by Ferdinand of Tyrol, then governor of Bohemia, so it is not clear whether the horses were gathered in Prague (dashed lines) or shipped gradually to Innsbruck which was the starting point of the bridal transfer, in red. (For better orientation, the map with modern-day political borders was chosen.)

Although discussed briefly, the details about the means of transport lay bare important features of wedding travel. Firstly, the high status of the bridal travellers was inevitably mirrored in the vehicles used, so much so that these objects did not perform only their primary, functional goal but also accrued a deeper symbolic

[157] Jaroslava Hausenblasová, 'Archduke Ferdinand II—"Administrator and Governor" of the Lands of the Bohemian Crown', in *Ferdinand II: 450 Years Sovereign Ruler of Tyrol: Jubilee Exhibition: An Exhibition of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, in Cooperation with the National Gallery in Prague and the Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences: 15 June-8 October 2017*, ed. Sabine Haag and Veronika Sandbichler (Innsbruck: Haymon, 2017), 26.

meaning since they materialized the hierarchical claims of the royal/ducal son or daughter. Secondly, in arranging these mediums, the mutual respect and expectations of the wedding parties entered into play, and to achieve the highest possible splendour the bridal train followed the most recent trends in transport. Lastly, agglomeration of the massive quantity of time to facilitate travel would not have been possible without a fascinatingly interconnected web of people, who only when brought together were able to provide a princess with the means to move. In this sense, Archduke Ferdinand's horse inventory attests—more than any other source—to what sort of impact the bridal journeys had at the contemporary society. Even for the relatively small expedition of 1565 (in comparison with others in our source sample amounting to only a few hundreds, not thousands) it was necessary to approach people from all around southern Germany, Bohemia, and Poland in order to provide a sufficient number of horses.

1.3 Lodgings

The bridal entourages, incorporating several hundred people, posed a considerable challenge to every host, be that a city, local lord, or monastery, and to the logistics of the journey as a whole. If the progress was not to cause chaos or embarrassment to each of the involved parties, the issue had to be addressed beforehand. Annibale Cavriani, sent on a diplomatic errand to Innsbruck and Vienna concerning the wedding of Guglielmo of Gonzaga and Eleanor of Habsburg [1561], refers to how he met Balthasar of Trautson, a son of the imperial marshal who was a dear friend of his. Asked where he was heading, Trautson answered that he was going back to Rovereto, where he was a castellan, to prepare lodgings for upcoming Eleanor's upcoming passage, after having done the same in three or four other towns

in Tyrol.[158] This short episode gives us only a glimpse of the extensive operation that the arrangement of quarters for the bridal train posed.

In contrast, when the English monarchs set off around their domains they could rely on a stable web of manors, palaces, monasteries, aristocratic or episcopal residences. The qualities of the host location could have decided whether the king would choose to visit a particular liegeman or not. The host, being responsible for the financial side, aimed for the best reception possible, as the sovereign's stay was a clear indication of favour and augmentation of his status.[159] For the nuptial journey the situation was more complicated in several aspects.

With regards to finances the families usually split the expenses for the wedding transfer, for instance, in both Habsburg-Gonzaga weddings [1549 and 1561] the bride's relatives paid for costs made up to Trent whereas the groom paid the rest.[160] This copied a older practice that is traceable in the pre-fifteenth century Habsburg unions.[161] However in our sample it is possible to find other, more asymmetric forms of financial arrangements. For instance the expenses for Eleanor of Portugal's transfer [1451/2] were covered by 10,000 florins deducted from her dowry (amounting to 60,000 florins in total);[162] Margaret of Habsburg's voyage [1497] to Spain was completely in the hands of the Catholic monarchs, her future in-laws.[163] One can thus conclude that the final financial settlement was always dependent on the terms

[158] "... che era stato in tre o quattro luoghi di questo contato di Tirolo, doue egli haueua a far et che le haueua poste all'ordine per il passaggio della serenissima sposa, et che andaua a Rouereto, doue è capitano et castellano, per preparar anco in quel luogo alloggiamento per Sua Altezza." Cavriani to Duke Guglielmo, Bolzano, 23 January, 1561, ASMn, AG 200, f. 166r.
[159] Samman, 'The Progresses of Henry VIII, 1509–1529', 66–8; Cole, 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses', 36.
[160] "... che Sua Maesta habbia da far la spesa fin a Trento per farvi condurre mia moglie, si come fu capitolato alle infelici nozze signor mio fratello che in gloria sia, le quali me hanno dato danno per piu di cento mila scudi. Da Trento in qua io faro poi la spesa..." An instruction for Mantua envoy at the imperial court, Mantua, 16 October 1560, ASMn, AG 200, f. 135.
[161] Debris, *Tu felix Austria, nube*, 384.
[162] Nascimento, Andrade, and Silva, *Princesas de Portugal*, 74.
[163] See pages 51, 57, 117.

negotiated in the wedding contract, however the whole issue deserves further research, drawing upon a wider sample of weddings from different periods and geographical parts of medieval and early-modern Europe.

However, as we can see from the example stated in the beginning of this sub-chapter, the financial responsibility for a particular leg of the journey did not necessarily overlap with overall logistical responsibility. Rovereto, lying between Trent and Mantua, should technically have been been under the management of the Mantuans, yet Trautson takes instruction from his Habsburg lords. On the other hand Florentine envoys in 1565 tackled the means of travel and housing arrangements between Bologna and Firenzuola, even though according to old Habsburg practice (as described by Cyrille Debris)[164] they should have done so for the entire Italian leg of the journey, starting from Trent, as this was the place of a ritual handover of the bride.[165] Generally, it seems that each wedding party supervised logistical provision in its respective territory; if the bride or groom passed through the dominions of the third party, this planning was left at the discretion of the host.

One example of third-party hosting is Genoa. For Maximilian II's visit, the Genovese magistrate selected houses and rooms in the city for the retinues of the princes and his companions. The burghers whose residences were chosen were ordered under pain of financial penalty, ranging from 25 to 100 scudi, to make their houses prepared and accessible to the persons, and were made responsible for the allocation of guests, as well as the guests themselves; in some special cases the burghers were also commanded to provide additional beds.[166] Alternatively the local administration

[164] Debris, *Tu felix Austria, nube*, 384.
[165] ASFi, MdP 518, f. 298, 379.
[166] The decrees from 14 and 16 July 1548, printed in Cesare Malfatti, ed., *El archiduque Maximiliano, gobernador de España: su viaje a Valladolid en 1548 y su boda con la Infanta María : Crónicas y documentos* (Barcelona: Talleres de la Sociedad Alianza de Artes Gráficas, 1948), 169–70.

could have cooperated with the guest's agents. As we will see in the next chapter, hosting of such prominent guests was an attractive opportunity and the cities vied for the honour to shelter princely brides or grooms. In 1452, the Sienese wanted to honour the future emperor and empress, scheduled to meet before their city gate, to such an extent that they let Frederick's quartermaster assign the houses for lodging at will.[167]

Big cities could have sufficient capacities for accommodating a massive crowd of incomers even without distributing the houses of the burghers. In Bologna, for instance, six hostels were capable of providing shelter to all the Germans accompanying Joanna of Habsburg.[168] Other locations were not so well-equipped to house such a massive group of individuals, so the entourage had to be split and accommodated in different places, or divided-up and made to proceed gradually in parts.[169] Alternatively the need for a temporary breaking-up of the retinue could be caused by the climate, for instance, Maximilian II had to divide his entourage into three parts for the Spanish leg of the journey where "the summer heat makes one suffer from thirst, taverns and hostels are rare, water is scarce and unsanitary, there are almost no wells or springs, so many prepare a small flask [...] well suited for drinking." [170]

The princesses and their inner circle were usually guaranteed the most luxurious shelters, such as palaces or monasteries. But unlike in royal progresses, where monarchs could alter the route depending on the quality of accommodation, the travelling bride(groom)s—unable to change direction at will—might have faced conditions that were much less appropriate for their status. Before the departure of

[167] "Accessit autem imperialis scalcus, cui pro arbitrio suo mansiones commode assignate sunt." The city magistrate to A. S. Piccolomini, Siena, 4 February 1452, printed in Pope Pius II, *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*, ed. Rudolf Wolkan, vol. 4, Fontes Rerum Austriacarum. Zweite Abtheilung, Diplomataria et Acta 68 (Vienna: In Kommission bei Alfred Hölder, 1918), 64–5.
[168] Polidoro Castelli to Prince Francesco de' Medici, Bologna, 3 December 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 718.
[169] For example, TLA HS 5565, p. 17.
[170] Malfatti, *El archiduque Maximiliano*, 201; Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 47.

Joanna and Barbara of Habsburg from Innsbruck [1565], the Florentine ambassador Bernando Grazzini reassured Duke Cosimo that the Tyrolese mountains up to Trent, as harsh as they are, had many good lodgings since "every house is an inn, full of stoves, beds, and stables".[171] Yet the same could not be said about the cities beyond Trent, as the princesses were soon to experience. In Dolcè, a town lying between Trent and Verona, both princesses and their ladies' courts allegedly had to sleep on the floor as they were no beds or benches.[172] The steward of Ferdinand of Bavaria, travelling to Joanna's wedding in Florence a week after the princesses, records his memories of the town in his diary:

> ... although it is called nicely *Dolce* [meaning "sweet" in Italian], it was actually quite *amarum* [bitter]. In the hostel, [...] downstairs, there was a kitchen, and then, moving upstairs by a shabby ladder with narrow rungs, there was a hall with no doors, windows, even fewer chairs and beds, but with one long table before a stove and two bedsteads with a little straw.[173]

Eventually Ferdinand managed to get slightly better lodgings than the princesses, as the local vicar offered him a room at his house. Although the chamber in the vicar's house, unlike the hostel, had a clean bed with mattresses, the Bavarian prince allegedly still grumbled about it because it was not a soft, feather bed as he was accustomed to from home. The author of the diary concludes the episode by saying that this is "not uncommon in Italy".

Despite this resolute statement, substandard accommodation was not solely an Italian feature. Describing the journey to her sister, Bianca Maria Sforza gives an account of the poor conditions of lodgings in the Alpine valleys. In the Benedictine

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[171] "Per queste montagne per aspre chelle sieno nelli alloggiamenti risoluti per quelle regine sino a Trento, si trovano tutte le commodità perché ogni casa è hosteria, et ogni hosteria è copiosa di stufe, letti et stalle et d'ogni altra cosa, il che non avverà nelle montagne dell'Eccellenza Vostra." Bernardo Grazzini to Cosimo I, Innsbruck, 9 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 298.
[172] Freyberg, 'Herzog Ferdinands', 288.
[173] Freyberg, 287.

monastery of Müstair, the bridal company was not only given a "sad" wine to drink and even worse bread in such a small quantity that many of them did not dine at all, but what more they had to sleep on bunks. "Straw was the finest bed, for those who had it," she laments, "fire is not used here, and the stoves have an idle stench."[174] At the other places, such as in the Cistercian monastery in Stams,[175] the future empress and her companions received a much better reception, yet these lodgings did not deserve as vivid a portrayal as the bad ones. This seems to be the pattern for other journeys—we possess very few descriptions of the enjoyable lodgings whereas the inferior quality of the accommodation tends to be depicted in the darkest possible tones.

This stereotypical portrayal and accusing the other culture of having inferior (accommodation) standards brings our attention to the issue of otherness, perceived strongly during transition into another cultural ambience. En route to their spouses, brides and grooms did not encounter only foreign ways of lodgings but also foreign forms of behaviour or customs that might have differed heavily from the bride/groom's original cultural background. Medieval people were well-aware of these differences and Carafa even offered the queen a caveat:

> Having passed Italy, You will enter Germany. The life and customs of this nation are very different from ours. Still, Your Majesty should treat everybody in a kind and gracious way, manifesting that You are related to the emperor by blood.[176]

[174] "... uenessimo alogiamento in un monasterio de monachi negri, doue trovassimo tristo vino et pegior pane, et molti ne restarno senza cena perche non gliero da manzare. El dormir de le piu gente fu sopra le banche, la paglia seria stata optimo lecto lecto a chi n'hauesse hauuto. Fogo non si gli usa et le stufe puzzano de poltrone." Bianca Maria to Anna Sforza, Mals, 15 December, 1493, ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri1583/9, (not foliated).
[175] Bianca Maria to Anna Sforza, Innsbruck, 27 December, 1493, ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri 1583/9, (not foliated).
[176] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 29–30.

In general medieval encounters with the "other" always brought about questions concerning the observer's own identity, constructing the "other" as an inverted reflection of the self, either in a positive or negative sense. The strange and foreign, associated with the sense of not knowing and not belonging, helped to uncover, or to create the identity of the onlooker by reaffirming their awareness of belonging to a certain social, religious, or economic group.[177] Hence, it is not without relevance that Carafa's counsel reiterates the queen's social status, an important part of her identity that should serve as a shield vis-à-vis the suspicious inspection of the foreigners, who might have questioned another part of her identity, that is, her ethnicity. The uncomfortable accommodation offered by foreigners, although documenting the logistical problems of the bridal journeys to some extent, must be read in this perspective too.

Beyond the inferior quality of material furnishings, accommodation could have become a culturally-based problem from another point of view too, as the documents for Bianca Maria Sforza's unrealized but planned journey to Hungary [1488] reveal. In preparing proper housing for the Hungarian delegation that was to fetch the princess in Milan, the ducal counsellors Pietro da Gallarate and Pietro Landriano exhorted Duke Lodovico Sforza to consider the possibility of lodging the foreign guests not in the burghers' houses but in the ducal palace since "this nation [=Hungarian] is very different, not only in language but also in lifestyle".[178]

[177] Lieselotte E. Saurma-Jeltsch, 'Facets of Otherness and Affirmation of the Self / Lieselotte E. Saurma-Jeltsch', in *Images of Otherness in Medieval and Early Modern Times: Exclusion, Inclusion and Assimilation*, ed. Anja Eisenbeiss and Lieselotte E. Saurma-Jeltsch (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2012), 9–14; Marina Münkler and Werner Röcke, 'Die ordo-Gedanke und die Hermeneutik der Fremde im Mittelalter: Die Auseinandersetzung mit den monströsen Völkern der Erdrandes', in *Die Herausforderung durch das Fremde*, ed. Herfried Münkler (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1998), 701–66.
[178] Bartolomeo Calco to Lodovico Sforza, Milan, 28 April 1489. ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 20.

Why did the counsellors deem cultural differences an obstacle to lodging the foreign guests with locals? Different languages and customs might have given rise to tensions or even conflicts—to draw Habsburg but not wedding-related examples—Flemings in the retinue of Charles V during his first visit to Spain were refused accommodation and attendance at a holy service in Valladolid since they had caused upheaval and crime.[179] Philip II's sojourn in Genoa (1548) even sparked armed conflicts between the locals and the Spaniards, who did not respect the rule of not entering the city space at will.[180]

Gallate and Landriano's suggestion about the separate lodgings for Hungarians, on the other hand, does not seem to be propelled by the fear of cultural clashes. On the contrary, they claim that the cultural differences could be a reason why the hosts would not be able to offer a proper reception:

> ...because they [=the burghers] would not know how to make their [=Hungarian] stews [perhaps an early form of goulash?] and to take care of them according to their custom, which would lead to the displeasure of both sides.[181]

The ignorance of Hungarian customs could have led to an unpleasant experience for the visitors and subsequently cast a shadow over the hospitality of the Milanese, and by extension, over the public image of the duchy. In general, the concept of premodern hospitality greatly differed from the modern understanding of the term. As Felicity Heal demonstrated, generous reception and entertaining of the guest did not stem from the mood or character of the particular host but from the overall atmosphere of social

[179] Bethany Aram, 'Voyages from Burgundy to Castile: Cultural Conflict and Dynastic Transitions, 1502–06', in *Early Modern Dynastic Marriages and Cultural Transfer*, ed. Joan Lluís Palos and Magdalena S. Sánchez (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2016), 108.
[180] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 71–2.
[181] "... non saperiano farli quelli soi potagii et tractarli secundo el costume loro, in modo che da l'uno et l'altro canto ne sequiria pocha contenteza..." Bartolomeo Calco to Lodovico Sforza, Milan, 28 April 1489. ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 20.

relations, in which generosity and largesse were closely tied with power and status. As a moral virtue, hospitality was one of the best ways to articulate the favourable reputation and thus the political position.[182]

Therefore, ill-prepared reception could have been offensive on every occasion, and even more so in times of princely nuptials when the stakes were particularly high with respect to foreign relations. It was thus crucial to not displease the other wedding party in any aspect, something Archbishop Arcimboldi also warns against as we will see in the next chapter. He suggests excluding from the bridal train politically inconvenient individuals, or to remind travel companions to wear long dresses since the Hungarians "greatly condemn these short clothes".[183] Thus awareness or ignorance of cultural differences could have been one of the key points in marital diplomacy, very much present before and during the wedding journeys that brought together people from various backgrounds.

To sum up, the analysis of three aspects related to the material side of the wedding transfer, namely route, means of travel and lodgings, show the massive extent of the whole enterprise and the level of significance premodern society ascribed to getting it right. Even though its organizers, personified by a good number of royal or ducal envoys, tried to secure a smooth course of events, adversity in the form of poor weather, security threats, shortage of supplies or accommodation standards resulted in alteration of original plans that were not always met with the satisfaction of the participants. Responsibility for the logistical planning and carrying out of the journey did not lie with only one or both wedding parties or their subordinates but involved

[182] Felicity Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, Oxford Studies in Social History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 2–22.
[183] Bartolomeo Calco to Lodovico Sforza, Milan, 2 April 1489. ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 19.

third-party states or cities that not only provided free-of-charge housing but took charge of ameliorating road communications and assisted in finding solutions to the ad hoc route alterations.

Besides these seemingly obvious findings, a close inspection revealed several distinctive features of the wedding travel in comparison, for instance, with traditional royal tours. Firstly, since the journeys were a direct consequence of marital alliance between two royal/ducal houses, they had an inevitable international dimension, even more so, if the territory of a third-party state had to be crossed. This internationality is mirrored in the presence of cultural differences, but these are solely a smokescreen for a deeper issue. Each of the parties, involved in the execution of the voyage, wanted to boost its own social standing vis-à-vis a foreign dynasty or state, and that is why it aimed for the highest standards e.g. in means of travel or overall reception—the complaints about inferior accommodation are not a rebuttal but a confirmation of the high expectations connected with the event. Criticism that the other "culture" had shabby beds was not a form of xenophobia but affirmation of one's own identity and aspirations for a place in the contemporary social hierarchy, resulting in power, influence, and prestige. The intricate planning was thus a result of these diplomatic ambitions.

Secondly, the personal and dynastic motivations for highlighting the splendour of the event, for instance, to slot the bride's arrival into the major Christian holidays (taking place around winter time), added up to logistical complications. The motives that from a modern point of view seem non-essential often trumped practical considerations. And lastly the level of social networking, fundamental for the bride's passage: for every material aspect examined in this chapter it was necessary to connect hundreds of people that did not participate in the event directly but they formed its

physical backbone—by providing horses, wagons, chambers, or intelligence (about roads, directions, potential bandits). Such a level of coordination and management is astonishing even today. All these aspects set the spousal journey apart from royal tours that circulated monarch's own domains, were seasonly repeated, and the future of dynasty did not depend on them. Furthermore, they differed in another particular detail: the bridal voyages always brough along much more people than a monarch, traveling around his domains. The entourage, another crucial part of the wedding transfer is therefore the subject of the next chapter.

2 Entourage

In bridal journeys, one particular detail almost always stands out: the greatness of the princesses' train. Why could brides and grooms not travel alone or with a small train instead of hundreds of people? Descriptions of their voyages are swarming with detailed lists of prominent figures who came the whole way with the spouse. Eleanor of Portugal was accompanied from Portugal to Italy by three thousand people[184] of whom 580 were noblemen on horseback.[185] Maximilian I's retinue to Burgundy consisted of 800–1200 people;[186] Bianca Maria Sforza's retinue was made up of 600 horses;[187] Joanna of Castile arrived on the shores of Flanders with an armada coming close to 15,500 people;[188] Elizabeth of Habsburg came to Poland in 1543 with 1,200 horses.[189]

These numbers might seem astonishingly high, and naturally, we must look at them with a due amount of scepticism. However even the entourages of queens from earlier times came to hundreds. Anna of Schweidnitz accompanying her husband Emperor Charles IV for the imperial coronation in Rome [*1354] had a retinue of 1,000 people; Elizabeth of Pomerania, another of Charles IV's wives, travelled to her coronation in Rome with a 500-member retinue. At Charles IV's funeral, Elizabeth together with her daughter Catherine and daughter-in-law Joanna were attended by 100 ladies-in-waiting.[190] Even the first well-documented medieval bridal journey of

[184] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 54.
[185] Pina, *Chronica de El-Rei D. Affonso V*, I:125.
[186] Karl Rausch, *Die burgundische Heirat Maximilians I.* (Vienna: Carl Konegen, 1880), 175–6.
[187] Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 33.
[188] Fleming, *Juana I. Legitimacy and Conflict in Sixteenth-Century Castile*, 17.
[189] Mulryne, Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Shewring, *Europa Triumphans*, 1:394–5.
[190] Amalie Fößel, *Die Königin im mittelalterlichen Reich: Herrschaftsausübung, Herrschaftsrechte, Handlungsspielräume* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2000), 87–88.

the Frankish Princess Rigunth [*584] was no exception as her train comprised several thousand people.[191] Given the source for these numbers—the chronicles, that often written years after the event and/or they had a tendency to hyperbolize—it is understandable that historians have misgivings about them. Nonetheless, even if not precisely accurate, these numbers communicate a sense of massiveness, so the key to understand them is not to reject them as a rhetorical exaggeration—that could have been this case to some extent but not in the early-modern times when we possess precise names of the participants—but to discern their proper value. Do they all refer to the number of noblemen? Or ladies-in-waiting?

Already in the account of Rigunth's journey [*584], it is possible to see that the membership of her bridal train is not homogenous but consists of several components: servants, nobles, and soldiers. A similar structure is discernible in other medieval bridal journeys too, such as for Christine of Norway [*1257/8] who was led to Castile by distinguished Norsemen,[192] but only in the fifteenth and sixteenth century do we possess sufficient data to reconstruct the three parts of the bridal entourage:

a) prince(ss)'s court or household, her/his closest company (in German *Hofstaat*), that was to fulfil her/his everyday needs and serve her personal representation; on top of that the princesses had at their disposal a female section, the ladies' court (in German *Frauenzimmer*);

[191] Gregory of Tours, *Libri historiarum X*, VI, 45.
[192] Gudbrand Vigfusson, ed., *The Saga of Hacon and a Fragment of the Saga of Magnus*, trans. George Webbe Dasent, vol. 4, Icelandic Sagas and Other Historical Documents Relating to the Settlements and Descents of the Northmen on the British Isles (London: H. M. Stationery Office, by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1894), 313.

b) noble entourage consisting of aristocratic persons and their equipage (in German *Brautgefolge* or *Brautzug)*, which was to represent her status and status of her family on an international level;
c) armed escort which provided a safeguard for the whole travelling company.

These types sometimes overlap or are mixed together, or more frequently sources relate to only one of them so that what is presented as a final tally of the princess's train is in fact the sum of her court that does not include the military or noble escort. Aside from the different functions, these groups also varied in their duration: the military escort and the noble entourage were temporary, assembled only for the purpose of being a short-lived bridal chaperon, whereas the bride(groom)'s court in many cases stayed with the prince(ss) after the arrival, although as we will see later, in case of princesses the husbands tended to discharge the fellow-countrymen of their wives and to staff their households with their own liegemen. As we will see, such attempts resulted in many conflicts after the wedding.

Court studies have recently started to examine of the queen's household. Besides the prosopographic reconstructions of particular courts, their organization and way of functioning, the bigger questions have been posed as well: what was the place of these groups of people, especially females, in the wider field of politics? Did they possess any sort of influence? What were the boundaries imposed upon the ladies-in-waiting and what was the reaction if these rules were breached? The collection of essays edited by Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben brings all these questions into the foreground and shows that the ladies's court functioned as an informal centre of

power, education, or marital politics.[193] The aspects foregrounded in this tome are demonstrated in some studies in the collective volume, edited by Theresa Earenfight,[194] and Werner Paravicini and Jan Hirschbiegel's edited opus that looks into the relationship between a physical and personal *Frauenzimmer* (since in German, this term might refer to the female chambers as well), its development, rules, and functions in opposition to the male household.[195] It attributes a primary role to the ladies's court: "Höfischer Glanz is nur durch die Gegenwart von Frauen zu erreichen, das wußte schon das hohe Mittelalter."[196] The courts and households of particular queens or duchesses, reconstructing their everyday life, structure, system of patronage and consumption have been studied by several doctoral dissertations.[197] However, no study has ever looked in the structure of the bridal train and compared its origin, structure, and function on a wider corpus of cases. This chapter aims to offer the first comparative analysis of this collection of people in respect to their material, social, and diplomatic purpose.

In the following subchapters two parts of the bridal train, namely the princess's court and the noble entourage, are addressed. Relying on various forms of narrative (travel reports and Carafa's instructional treatise) and archival documentation (e.g. ambassadorial reports, inventories, ordinances, etc.) these groups of people are scrutinized in terms of their structure, selection, and functions. Firstly the household

[193] Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben, eds., *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting across Early Modern Europe* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2014).
[194] Theresa Earenfight, *Royal and Elite Households in Medieval and Early Modern Europe. More than Just a Castle* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2018).
[195] Jan Hirschbiegel and Werner Paravicini, eds., *Das Frauenzimmer. Die frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit* (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2000).
[196] Werner Paravicini, 'Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit', in *Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. Jan Hirschbiegel and Werner Paravicini (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2000), 23.
[197] E.g. Orsolya Réthelyi, 'Mary of Hungary in Court Context (1521-1531)' (Dissertation, Budapest, 2010); Sarah Jemima Bercusson, 'Gift-Giving, Consumption and the Female Court in Sixteenth-Century Italy' (PhD Thesis, Queen Mary College, University of London, 2009).

as the core of the entire expedition is examined. After a comparison of the nuptial and "standard", male and female courts, attention is paid to an analysis of the household offices, their evolution in time, and regional variants. With the use of various sorts of archival documentation, the chapter tries to find answers to what were the qualifications for household members, how these were people selected, and what set of rules they, especially the women, were expected to follow. As it will be shown, this group of people was not solely personnel taking care of the prince(ss)'s needs. On the contrary, if governed properly, it was a powerful tool of representation and it also played an irreplaceable role in the incorporation of the bride into a new environment. As the clashes over its staffing and the post-wedding future demonstrate, the nuptial parties perceived them as a prolongation of their dynastic interests and that is why they had clear power connotations.

Whereas the household aimed to project the prestige of the bridal traveller, the aristocratic retinue was supposed to do so for the entire dynasty or state. This, much larger group is scrutinized in the second sub-chapter. Although the rules (number of participants, their status, attire, manners) for this expedition—either the one from the princess's homeland or the reception embassy by the husband—were vaguely accepted for centuries, the sources in our wedding corpus formulate them explicitly for the first time. The crucial role of this *cortège* in diplomatic encounter (vis-à-vis foreign dynasty), ceremonial splendour, and political statements is best revealed in the cases when the (still unwritten) protocol is breached or contested, as the sub-chapter shows. Nonetheless, dynastic and state interests were not the sole factors influencing their composition, as other reasons for including a particular personage were also at play. As a whole this chapter aims to demonstrate the principles, purposes, and conflicts related to the persons following the prince(ss) to her/his new land, which all point to

the fact that these individuals literally personified many issues connected with princely nuptials. Its analysis can thus help us to understand another layer to this type of event.

In order to prevent misunderstanding, the terms *bridal* or *nuptial entourage, train, retinue* or *cortège* apply to the description of the entire company of the bride. The terms *princess's court* or *household* denote only the first part of the bridal train whereas the *ladies' court* or *Frauenzimmer* refers to its female segment; the terms such as *noble entourage* or *aristocratic retinue* (adjectives are interchangeable) stand for the second part of the nuptial train.

2.1 Bridal court

"... and after Her Majesty proceeded the highest stewardess and the entire chamber of ladies of Her Majesty..."[198] With these words, the anonymous author describes Johanna of Habsburg's arrival in Florence [1565]. How could a physical unit follow somebody? Originally, the term *Frauenzimmer* or "chamber of ladies", conveying the impression of physical space, truly denoted the compartments where the king's consort and her female companions resided. Very soon, however, the meaning shifted to include the individuals inhabiting it as well, that is the female household.[199] Yet as Michail Bojcov suggests, the *Frauenzimmer* or the ladies' court was a group of people formed around the queen or princess rather than a mere collection of women at a princely court. He even goes further and discerns two meanings of this term in medieval sources: in a broader sense, a more frequent one, the *Frauenzimmer* corresponded to the entire queen's court *(Hofstaat)* and contained

[198] TLA, HS 5565, p. 41.
[199] Paravicini, 'Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit', 15–6.

not only ladies-in-waiting and female servants—which was the narrow, less common sense—but also male servants, priests, chancellor, silver steward, tailors, squires, and other queen's court office-holders, craftsmen, or artists.[200] Conversely the king's court was not made up of male figures alone, and as Bojcov clearly demonstrated, women were not restricted to the queen's court nor were only ladies of rank presented: "Die Frau bei Hofe hat nich ein Gesicht, sondern mehrere, eigentlich genauso wie der Man bei Hofe."[201] Therefore, according to him, the gender boundaries at court did not match the boundaries of *Frauenzimmer*.

Tempting as it sounds, the Habsburg queen's (or empress's) household[202] is usually denoted both in sources and modern scholarship as *Hofstaat*, whereas the term *Frauenzimmer* is reserved for the female part of it.[203] This terminology also applies to the court of travelling brides in our sample. Bojcov's comments however call our attention to the fact the the princess' court was not a strictly feminine space. In other words, femininity was not a distinctive feature of the queen's household, distinguishing it from the king's one. More broadly speaking, the question whether and in which form the queens possessed separate courts from kings has been elaborated by scholarship for some time.[204] For a long period of the Middle-Ages, sources are not

[200] Michail Bojcov, '»Das Frauenzimmer« oder Die Fraue bei Hofe«?', in *Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. Jan Hirschbiegel and Werner Paravicini (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2000), 328–9.
[201] Bojcov, 337 et passim.
[202] There is no generally accepted distinction between these the princely court and household, see for instance Ronald G. Asch, 'Introduction: Court and Household from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries', in *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age c. 1450–1650*, ed. Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1–38. and other chapters in the volume. Many scholars, however, tend to agree that the household was responsible for the material infrastructure. Réthelyi, 'Mary of Hungary in Court Context (1521-1531)', 17. I use both terms interchangeably.
[203] Katrin Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting at the Imperial Court of Vienna from 1550–1700: Structures, Responsibilities and Career Patterns', in *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting across Early Modern Europe*, ed. Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben, Rulers & Elites ; v. 4 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2014), 77.
[204] The concise overview of the debates in Réthelyi, 'Mary of Hungary in Court Context (1521-1531)', 17–19.

particularly clear whether queens held their own court or supervised the main (husband's) one, although sporadically one can find mentions of separate queen's court officials.[205] Only in cases where the queen's trajectory differed from her husband, is it possible to see better the contours of her own household that was arguably financially and organisationally detached from the husband's one.[206] The situation is gradually clearer in the fifteenth century as the sources are more specific, but this period of time also marked the shift from an itinerant to more centralised form of rule and the establishment of permanent residences for the Habsburg rulers, which automatically translated into a merging of the two courts.[207]

Given its very nature, the bridal journey is one of few occasions when the court of the princess is clearly visible in the sources. If we compare the court lists of four Habsburg brides (Tab. 3, below), we can see its clear structure and hierarchy. Similar to a standard queen's court, this travelling court more or less mirrored the offices of the king's court the contours of which could be seen in the list of Maximilian II's household prior to his departure for Spain (Tab. 4, below). The main difference was the office of marshal *(Hofmarschall).* As the second highest office-holder, he could deputize for the steward *(Hofmeister)*, had judicial power over the other courtiers and was responsible for handling the visits of foreign individuals, and in cooperation with

[205]Fößel, *Die Königin im mittelalterlichen Reich*, 82.
[206] Fößel rejects as unsubstantial the hypothesis that queen's court officers played subordinate role in respect to the king's officers; Brigitte Streich produces evidence of the separate financial record for *curia domini* and *curia domine* as soon as in 1350. Fößel, 82, footnote 418; Brigitte Streich, 'Frauenhof Und Frauenzimmer', in *Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Jan Hirschbiegel and Werner Paravicini (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2000), 251. In contrast, J. L. Laynesmith argues that even though the queen's court was a distinct entity it was closely linked to and dependent on the king's court. J.L. Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queen. English Queenship 1445–1503* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 222, quoted in Réthelyi, 'Mary of Hungary in Court Context (1521-1531)', 19.
[207] Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting at the Imperial Court of Vienna from 1550–1700: Structures, Responsibilities and Career Patterns', 77.

the quartermaster he took care of the prince's lodgings.[208] The absence of this position in the princess's court can be accounted for by the presence of the high stewardess *(Hofmeisterin)* whose responsibilities copied the chamberlain's. In addition, the stewardess was head of the ladies' court *(Frauenhof* or *Frauenzimmer)*, the innermost part of the princess's household, that consisted of unmarried noble ladies-in-waiting *(Jungfrauen),* chamber ladies and female servants. This group of women was a major difference between the household of the bride and groom (cf. Tab. 3 and 4). Again, the bridal court slightly differed from a standard queen's court, for instance there were no attendants for nursing and raising children *(ayas)*.[209] Therefore it seems that the court positions were established in such a way that there was enough of a workforce to cover all the princess's representative and everyday needs, but equally there was no superfluity that would lead to extensive financial burdens.

Table 3 Comparison of the bridal courts of the four Habsburg princesses

Court office	Mary of Hungary [1521][210]	Catherine of Habsburg [1549][211]	Eleanor of Habsburg [1561][212]	Barbara of Habsburg [1565][213]
Hofmeister (lord steward)	1	1 (as mayordomo)	1	1
Hofmeisterin (lady stewardess)	1	1 +2 servants (as mayordoma)	1	1
Obriste Kammererin (main chambermaid)	–	1+1 servant (cameriera mayor)	1	1
Frauenzimmer (ladies court)	9 Jungfrauen (noble ladies-in-waiting)	9 (6 donzelle + 3 stewardess's daughters/niece)	3 (as Nachjungfrauen)	7 Jungfrauen
Kammerjungfrauen (chambermaids)	3	1 (una servente della camera)	4	–
Jungfrau dienern (female servants)	3	1 (una servente delle donzelle)	1 (as Kammerdienerin)	4

[208] Ferdinand Menčík, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der kaiserlichen Hofämter* (Vienna: In Commission bei Carl Gerold's Sohn, 1899), 18–9.
[209] Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting at the Imperial Court of Vienna from 1550–1700: Structures, Responsibilities and Career Patterns', 79.
[210] OeStA, FHKA AHK NÖHA, W 61/A-36, f. 36–39.
[211] ASMn, Archivio Gonzaga 444, f. 604.
[212] TLA, Pestarchiv, Akten I, 176.
[213] TLA, Ferdinandea 23 (not foliated).

Wäschin (laundry lady)	1	1 (as lauandara)	1 (as Leibwäschin)	1 (as Leibwäschin)
Jungfrauwärterin (keeper of the ladies)	–	–	1	1
Unterhofmeister (vice-steward)	1	–	1	1
Obrister Kammerer (main chamberlain)	–	1 (as cameriere mayor)	–	1
Kammerdienern (chamber servants)	–	2 (as servitori della camera, uscieri)—also ushers	1	2
Obrister Stäbel- and Küchenmeister (main kitchen and rod steward)	1 (just Stäbelmeister)	–	1	1
Fürschneider (carver)	1	1 (as scalco)	1	2
Truchsess (steward)	6*	8 (as gentiluomini chi servono alla bocca)	4	6
Schenk (cup-bearer)	1	–	2 (as Mundschenk)	2 (as Mundschenk)
Silberkammerer (silverware chamberlain)	5*	2+2 servants (as credenzieri con garzoni)	1	1
Silberwäscher (silwerware cleaner)	2	–	1	1
Zinwäscher (zinc cleaner)	–	–	1	
Untersilber- und Lichtkammerer (vice silver and light chamberlain)	–	–	1	1
Edlknaben (pages)	4	6 (as paggi)	4	–
Pfennigschreiber (accountant)	1	–	1 (as Küchen- und Pfennigmeister)	1 (as Küchen- und Pfennigmeister)
Leibartz (physician)	1	–	–	–
Gardarober (master of wardrobe)	1	–	–	–
Caplan (chaplain)	1	1 (as cappellano)	2	–
Türhüter (door keeper/usher)	2	2 (as servitori della camera uscieri)—also chamber servants	1 (as Kammertürhüter)	1 (as Kammertürhüter)
Portier (porter)	1	–	–	–
Furrier (quartermaster)	1	–	3 (1 as Kammerfurier)	1 (as Kammerfurier)
Kellner (cellaler)	1	–	3 (1 as Zehrgadner)	1 (as Zehrgadner)
Küchenschreiber (kitchen clerk/accountant)	1	–	1 + 1 interpreter (Dolmetch)	1
Zuschroter (butcher)	1	–	1	1

Koch (cook)	5 (one of them specializing in cooking pâté)	1+servants (as cuoco con garzoni)	4 + 4 servants	1
Frauenzimmer und Gesindküche (the kitchen staff for ladies and servants)	4	–	3 (as Tafeldienern, table servant, and Küchenträger, kitchen courier)	–
Mundbäcker (baker)	–	–	1	–
Stallmeister (master of horses)	–	1	1 (as Obrister Stallmeister)	–
Unterstallmeister (vice master of horses)	–	–	1	–
Stall (stable staff)	7+1 smith	6 (as stafieri)	5+1 smith	–
Wagenknecht (coachman)	8	–	5 (as Führleut and Anheber zu den Hoblwagen)	–
Lacayen (lackeys)	4	–	4	–
Sänftenmeister (supervisor of litters)	1	–	2 (as Sänftenknecht)	–
Füttermeister (supervisor of animal fodder)	1	–	1 + 1 servant	–
Schneider (tailor)	1	1	1	–
Drummerschlager (drummer)	1	–	–	–
Pfeifer (piper)	1	–	–	–
Trompeter (trumpeter)	–	–	=1 of cellarers	
Hofwäschin (court laundry woman)	1	–	–	–
Tapezierer (tapestry-maker)	1	–	=chamber servants and quartermaster	–
Trabanten (servants)	–	–	9	–
TOTAL - people	86	49+	89	41
TOTAL - offices	36	17	40	24

After the *Frauenzimmer* there was a group of officials in charge of the kitchen (cooks, kitchen staff, baker, butcher, and in one case, a cook specializing in the preparation of pâtés), the serving of meals (stewards, carvers, cup-bearers, pages), and taking care of silverware (chamberlain and vice-chamberlain of silverware and cleaners). Interestingly, in two cases it is possible to find a separate group of kitchen personnel waiting only on the *Frauenzimmer* and servants. The next cluster of

courtiers, crucial for the logistics of the journey,[214] was responsible for taking care of the means of travel, that is, of horses (master and vice-master of horses, stable servants, lackeys, manager of horse fodder) and carriages (coachmen, managers of litters); the allocation of the lodgings was supervised by the quartermaster. Last, it was possible to find courtiers performing various other duties, such as managing finances (accountants), meeting the health and spiritual needs of the princess (physician, chaplains), or providing necessary parts of ceremonies—music (pipers, drummers, trumpeters) and attire (tailor, tapestry-maker). Maximilian II's [1548] court (Tab. 4, below) is organized according to the same pattern although one can find more gendered positions, such as barbier or preparer of guns, within it.

Table 4 A list of Maximilian II's household[215]

Position	Number
Obrister Hofmeister (main steward)	1
Obrister Kammerer (main chamberlain)	1
Obrister Stallmeister (main master of horse)	1
Hof und Geld Marschalch (court and money marshal)	1
Kammerling (chamber servant, *cubicularius)*	1
Kuchen- und Stabellmeister (kitchen and rod steward)	1
Mundschenken (cup-bearers)	2
Truchsess (steward)	6
Ander vom Adel (other noblemen–without position)	13
Hofkaplan (court chaplain)	2
Obrister Silberkammerer (main silverware chamberlain)	1
Untersilberkammerer (vice silverware chamberlain)	1
Leibartz (physician)	1
Wundartz (surgeon)	1
Gardarober (master of wardrobe)	1
Leibbarbier (barber)	1
Hof Kücheneinkaufer (kitchen buyer)	2

[214] Barbara of Habsburg's court list does not record any of these offices but it is very unlikely that it was truly a case as these persons were inevitable for management of the journey. It remains unclear why these offices were for some reason left out from the list (it does not seem that some part of the record was damaged or lost).
[215] OeStA, FHKA AHK NÖHA, W 61/A-36, f. 323–27.

Kammertürhüter (chamber usher)	1
Kammer- und Hoffurrier (quartermaster)	1
Trompeter (trumpeter)	6
Paucker (timpanist)	1
Trabanten Hauptman (chief of servants)	1
Trabanten (servants)	30
Controller und Pfeningmeister (controller and master of coin)	1
Silberdiener (silverware servant)	1
Koch (cook)	2
Unterkoch samt Küchenbuben (vice cook and kitchen boys)	3 or more
Zuschrotter (butcher)	1
Kellner (cellaler)	1
Tafeldiener (table servants)	2
Furier (quartermaster)	1
Leib- und Hofwäschin (laundry lady)	1
Rossbereiter (horse preparer)	1
Wagenfurier (coachman)	1
Fütterschreiber (fodder supervisor)	1
Harnaschmeister (master of armour)	1
Sattelknecht (saddle servant)	1
Hofschmidt (smith)	1
Stallknecht (stable servant)	4
Lacayen (lackeys)	4
Büchsenspanner (rifle preparer)	1
Kammertrabanten (chamber servants)	2
Eseltreiber (donkey driver)	4
TOTAL	111

These main groups were present in all households in Table 1 and 2, however each of them varied in number of both offices and office-holders. One would expect a greater diversification of positions over the course of time, nevertheless this presumption is only partially true. Although we can see some extent of delegation of duties in the later cases as some officers started to possess deputies (vice steward, vice silver and light chamberlain, vice master of horse), generally the first court in Tab. 3, Mary of Habsburg's [1521], entailed roughly the same amount of assignments (36) as Eleanor of Habsburg's [1561] one forty years later. Even the total number of courtiers does not automatically grow over time, there are ups and downs (86—111—49—89—

41), but these fluctuations must be attributed to a flawed source basis[216] rather than to deliberate actions of the brides' paternal authorities—there is no reason why Ferdinand I, father to Maximilian, Catherine, Eleanor and Barbara, would send one child with a 41-person court and another double the size.

Not even the issue of status apparently influenced the total count; Mary [1521] and Eleanor's [1561] households are numerically equivalent but though was about to marry a king, and the latter a duke. After all, sources use the title "archduchess of Austria, born queen of Bohemia and Hungary" for Catherine, Eleanor, and Barbara, which made them all equal in their regal status, no matter what type of hierarchical ranks the husbands they were about to wed possessed. Alternatively the variations might have been caused by the demands of the other wedding party, since, as we will see, there were negotiations about the structure of the household prior to the journey. Based on my sample, it is possible to conclude that the total numbers of the court stayed roughly the same, amounting to about ninety persons. The only change possible to trace is the slow expansion of court offices across several deputies. However, to prove this alternation, a much larger sample of bridal households from late-medieval and early modern Europe would be needed. Judging from the material presented here, it seems that the final tally of attendants was sufficient to cover the everyday needs of the prince/princess en route and there was no great need to expand it.

Discussing the structure and numbers of the household, we do not face only temporal but also regional challenges. All the examples debated above reflect the German practice that was appurtenant to Habsburg princesses marrying abroad. But what were the courts of the brides entering the House of Habsburg like? Joanna of Castile [1496] came with seventeen ladies-in-waiting, one of them being a senior

[216] See the footnote 213.

noblewoman; Eleanor of Scotland [1448] was accompanied by seven damsels but nothing certain can be said about their hierarchy. Leaving Lisbon, Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2] was surrounded by three countesses, twenty-four selected ladies, three widows, and a few maids.[217] Comparing this generic description with the state of the contemporary Portuguese court, for instance, we can deduce the internal hierarchy of the princess's female companions—the ladies were probably unmarried *donzelas,* while widows and countesses can be identified with *donas*. There is no high stewardess but the *donas* served as *camareiras* (chamber ladies) who, unlike in the German practice, did not only take care of the queen's bedroom and wardrobe—those servants were called *covilheiras* (cubicularia)—but wielded authority over *donzelas* and many times managed the queen's properties.[218] Stunnigly there are a relatively high number of ladies (ca. 30) that sharply contrasts with the contemporary or later cases (see Tab. 5, below). This could be explained by the high status of Eleanor's husband, soon-to-be Emperor Frederick, and by extension, of Eleanor herself. However this rationale cannot justify why Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] came to her husband Maximilian, also aspiring to an imperial crown, in the company of only four ladies. More so, nothing certain can be said about the status or offices of these ladies, but Daniela Unterholzner argues that one of them, Violanta Cayma, probably performed the role of stewardess.[219]

Table 5 Comparison of the Frauenzimmer and the entire court of several Habsburg brides

Bride	Ladies-in-waiting/Frauenzimmer (total)	Entire household

[217] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 52.
[218] Rita Costa Gomes, *The Making of a Court Society: Kings and Nobles in Late Medieval Portugal* (Cambridge: University Press, 2003), 65–9.
[219] Daniela Unterholzner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza (1472–1510). Herrschaftliche Handlungsspielräume einer Königin vor dem Hintergrund von Hof, Familie und Dynastie' (Dissertation, Innsbruck, Leopold–Franzens Universität Innsbruck, 2015), 80.

Eleanor of Scotland (1449)[220]	7	?
Eleanor of Portugal (1452)[221]	30	50?
Bianca Maria Sforza (1493)[222]	4	?
Joanna of Castile (1496)[223]	17 (16 + 1 matron)	96
Margaret of Habsburg (1497)[224]	12	72
Mary of Hungary (1521)	17 (9 + 1 stewardess + 7 maids)	86
Catherine of Habsburg (1549)	17 (9 + 1 stewardess + 7 maids)	49
Eleanor of Habsburg (1561)	12 (3 + 1 stewardess + 1 keeper + 7 maids)	89
Barbara of Habsburg (1565)	15 (7 + 1 stewardess + 1 keeper + 6 maids)	41

Arguably the Milanese did not have such precise rules in arranging the princess's court. The evidence for this can be found in the letters between the Milanese state secretary Bartolomeo Calco and Lodovico il Moro, then *de facto* ruler of Milan, regarding Bianca's entourage, unfortunately not for her wedding with Maximilian I but for an unrealized wedding with John Corvinus [1488], the illegitimate son of King Matthias of Hungary. Due to Matthias's death and other political shifts, this transfer never took place, but these talks give us an intriguing glimpse into the preparatory actions of the princess's court. As these sources mostly relate to the composition of the noble entourage, we will discuss this source in greater detail in next sub-chapter, but there are useful remarks made on the princess's court.

[220] Margarete Köfler and Silvia Caramelle, *Die beiden Frauen des Erzherzogs Sigmund von Österreich-Tirol* (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 1982), 28.
[221] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 54.
[222] Unterholzner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 203–4.
[223] Christopher Hare, *The High and Puissant Princess Marguerite of Austria* (London and New York: Harper & Brothers, 1907), 66; Fleming, *Juana I. Legitimacy and Conflict in Sixteenth-Century Castile*, 17.
[224] Joseph Chmel, ed., *Urkunden, Briefe und Actenstücke zur Geschichte Maximilians I. und seiner Zeit* (Stuttgart: Literarischer Verein, 1845), 134–5.

The selection of ladies-in-waiting and household members that were to travel and stay with Bianca in Hungary was left at the discretion of Bona of Savoy, Bianca's mother.[225] However, discussing the composition of the entire entourage, two of Lodovico's counsellors and the state secretary Calco advised for other persons to be added, namely a *gentil donna*, a noble lady, who would accompany Bianca and return back to Milan. In their view, it would be inappropriate *(pocho condescente et honorevole)* for her status to travel only with with those ladies who would stay with her.[226] That is why the counsellors advise sending at least four of these *matrone* and they even give precise tips about who should fill these posts. Ultimately, however, the final decision rested with Lodovico. In most cases these would be wives of prominent aristocrats, some of whom were also to travel with the princess.

Several years afterwards, when Bianca did travel [1493] to her future husband Maximilian, she was accompanied by four ladies, as stated above. However, only one of these women—the already mentioned Violanta Cayma who travelled with her husband Pier Giorgio Caymo—was married, thus filling the description of *matrona,* while the other three, albeit of noble descent, were still unwedded and only married afterwards.[227] Furthermore none of these females left Bianca right after the wedding in Austria was over, but stayed with her for several years. Was the proposition of the Milanese state counsellors an ad hoc idea trying to imitate the practice of the other courts, or did it mirror a generally accepted notion of what the bridal entourage should look like?

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[225] ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 18. Printed in Iván Nagy and Albert Nyári, *Magyar diplomacziai emlékek Mátyás király korából: 1458-1490 [Monuments of Hungarian Diplomacy from the Time of King Matthias]*, vol. 4 (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvkiadó Hivatala, 1878), 27–9.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Unterholzner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza (1472–1510)', 203–4, 225.

We possess a strong hint that the latter is true. After five days of travelling, envoys and other prominent members of Bianca's entourage sent a letter to Lodovico informing him about the progress of the journey. Apart from many other issues, they address a sudden problem connected with the ladies' court, stating that "since *madonna* Michela could not bear the toil of the journey, it was necessary to leave her in the town of Gravedona where she is to wait for *madonna* Griseida" with whom she would return to Milan.[228] Following this statement, they go on to say that Bianca strongly recommends inviting Michela to her mother's court and wishes her post to be taken up by Catelina da la Seda and one other lady from her *donne discrete*.

From this brief passage of text we can presume that Bianca's female retinue was much more numerous: there was definitely a lady (Griseida) who was expected to come back to Milan after the journey was over, otherwise there was no point in Michela waiting for her. Then, Michela's replacement was hardly going to be someone not already physically present in the entourage—it would take additional time and financial costs to dispatch somebody from Milan to catch up with the bridal train. The entire formulation "Bianca wishes her post to be taken by [...]" thus must be understood as a statement rather than a request: the princess was announcing her decision, not asking to assign somebody else from her ladies' court to Michela's place.

Though it demonstrates the existence of other female personages in Bianca's surrounding, this account raises more questions than answers. Who were Michela and Griseida? The generic title *madonna* does not give away any particular details about their status. We know that Griseida was to return, therefore, she probably joined the princess's company only for the period of the journey for representative purposes,

[228] The similar manouver is documented for Eleanor of Scotland's journey but this time it was her groom's envoy looking for the ad hoc replacement. Chmel, *Die österreichische Geschichtsforscher*, 2:466–7.

precisely according to the suggestion of the Milanese counsellors. That being the case, she—and by the same token Michela as well—would be married, older, and of noble origin. Michela clearly held a role within the travelling court that needed to be filled in order to proceed smoothly with the journey. What was the post? And why it was reassigned to two women, not only one? What duty could Michela perform alone but her substitutes had to split between them? We can only guess. Judging from the title *madonna* it was definitely not a low-status job, like a laundry maid or other female servant. Apparently it was an office of the main chamber lady, responsible for the princess's attire and discipline of the other ladies, and as such, a crucial person to the princess's court. Bianca delegated it to two of her *donne discrete*, a term that might denote anything, but most probably refers to the ladies in Bianca's proximity, perhaps chambermaids.

That being the case, Bianca's female circle would resemble the German model consisting of older noblewomen, unmarried ladies-in-waiting, chambermaids, and servants, a structure similar to what we have seen in the Habsburg cases and in the case of Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2]. After all, the standard (post-wedding) court of Bianca's mother, Bona of Savoy, copied this pattern precisely, consiting of four female companions *(compagne)*, twelve ladies *(donzele)* and several chambermaids, along with many other male officers.[229] As I showed in my Masters dissertation, the same composition of the ladies' court is documented for another Italian but non-Habsburg bride Bona Sforza, Bianca's niece, travelling to Poland fifteen years after her nuptials [*1518].[230] But also in Bona's case there were discussions prior to departure about the number of women accompanying the princess. Isabella of Aragon, Bona's mother (her

[229] Gregory Lubkin, *A Renaissance Court: Milan under Galeazzo Maria Sforza* (Berkeley ; London: University of California Press, 1994), 59, 62.
[230] Pastrnak, 'Flores Italiae', 26.

father Gian Galeazzo was deceased), picked two older noblewomen and six younger ladies for the princess's train but Polish ambassadors tried to reduce the number of older noblewomen to one, claiming a lack of financial resources for transporting those ladies safely back home. Eventually the ambassadors' attempts fell short as Isabella stood her ground, saying that "nothing is more indecorous than the wife of such a great king traveling without an appropriate retinue"; even Emperor Maximilian I, an orchestrator of the wedding, intervened, supporting Isabella's assertion that "Lady Bona ought to have a retinue appropriate for a queen".[231]

Evidently the necessity of a numerous and prestigious bridal retinue of the princess, in this case, its female part was an accepted notion throughout the European royal families, although not everywhere embedded so firmly. In the end the Polish envoys argued with the structure of the entourage on the grounds of limited budget, not a different regional custom. All things considered, we can presume that the foreign bridal courts and their female segments were also numerous and stratified, as it was commonly deemed appropriate long before 1450. Konrad von Megenberg, for instance, writing around the mid-fourteenth century, classifies the queen's damsels into *ancillae maiores,* consisting of the court dames and noble ladies, and *ancillae minores,* involving female cooks, chamber maids and other servants.[232]

Let us now look more closely at the composition of the *Frauenzimmer* of the Habsburg brides which, as we have seen, shares many common features with the non-German ladies' courts. Besides the main stewardess and the unmarried maidens, there were chamber maids *(Kammerjungfrauen, puellae cubiculariae)* who were responsible for the princess's wardrobe, that means taking care of various kinds of

[231] Gorski, *Acta Tomiciana*, 241, 232; Pastrnak, 'Flores Italiae. Talianské Princezny v Strednej Európe v Neskorom Stredoveku [Italian Princesses in the Late Medieval Central Europe]', 25.
[232] Quoted in the footnote 459 in Fößel, *Die Königin im mittelalterlichen Reich*, 88–9.

garments and jewels, helping the princess with dressing, and serving her in various everyday needs, such as waiting at the table.[233] As persons in the closest proximity to the princess, they even slept in the same bedroom and maintained candlelight to keep an eye on her.[234] The noble and unmarried maidens were not involved in a direct service to the princess, their main role was representation—they were supposed to be her company during various social events, either as passive (audiences, church services, ceremonial entries) or active participants (dances, ballets).[235] Undoubtedly, it is this role, along with their noble origin, that keeps them in the spotlight of the sources. Lastly, there was female personnel, performing the lowest-status menial jobs, such as laundry or kitchen work.

The administrative head of the *Frauenzimmer* was a stewardess *(magistra curiae, Hofmeisterin, mayordoma)*. Her main duty was the administration of the daily routine within the ladies' court and she was responsible for complying with the court ordinances and placating potential conflicts. In addition, she helped to coordinate contact with the outer world, that is, she and the princess decided which persons were allowed to make visits to the *Frauenzimmer* or with whom the ladies could be in touch by correspondence.[236] In terms of implementing the court rules and oversight, the stewardess was helped by the keeper of ladies *(Jungfrauwärterin* or

[233] Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting at the Imperial Court of Vienna from 1550–1700: Structures, Responsibilities and Career Patterns', 81.
[234] Helene Kottanner (prominent female personage at the court of Elisabeth of Luxembourg, wife of King Albert II of Habsburg) in her memoirs records an episode when one of the queen's two chambermaids caused fire by knocking over the candle; Helene as a governess of the young princess slept in the room of her protégée. Helene Kottannerin, *The Memoirs of Helene Kottanner (1439-1440)*, ed. Maya Bijvoet Williamson (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1998), 24.
[235] Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting at the Imperial Court of Vienna from 1550–1700: Structures, Responsibilities and Career Patterns', 80.
[236] Unterholzner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 79–80; Michail Bojcov, 'Zum Frauenzimmer am Innsbrucker Hof Erzherzog Sigmunds', in *Der Innsbrucker Hof. Residenz und Höfische Gesellschaft in Tirol Vom 15. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. Heinz Noflatscher and Jan Paul Niederkorn (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2005), 210.

Fräuleinhofmeisterin)[237] but the authority of the latter was limited to the noble ladies-in-waiting. The stewardess, on the other hand, was partially (subordinated to the steward) in charge of the princess' entire household and as a person with direct access to the princess, she played an important role during many ceremonial occasions, for instance, during audiences, baptism, and coronations.[238] The superior position of the stewardess is also clearly projected throughout the course of the bridal journey as we can see her dining with the princess and travelling with her in the same coach.[239]

Usually this office was held by a senior noblewoman, a countess or baroness;[240] either a widow (such as in the case of Eleanor of Habsburg, 1561) or the wife of the princess's steward (Bianca Maria Sforza, 1493, Mary of Hungary, 1521). Previous experience was seemingly a good qualification for the post as many stewardesses served for a long time several generations of one princely family.[241] Other skills were also valuable—Maximilian II recommends Ursula, widow of the count of Nagarollo, as a stewardess for his sister Catherine, soon to be married off to Mantua [1549]. Ursula, Maximilian writes, is a woman of honourable lineage, character and reason, and on top of that she speaks sufficient Italian and German, so "she can carry out the famous office of *Hofmeisterin* in the way that would honourably and profitably suit the duke of Mantua and my sister".[242] Naturally, Maximilian's

[237] Katrin Keller uses a term "mistress of the maids" to translate a title of this office, which is, according to me, slightly misleading as it suggests the supervision of the female personnel rather than the noble part of the *Frauenzimmer.* Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting at the Imperial Court of Vienna from 1550–1700: Structures, Responsibilities and Career Patterns', 81.
[238] Keller, 81–3.
[239] TLA, HS 5565, p. 29; TLA, Ferdinandea 31, pos. 27, *Beschreybung der Rayss gen Mantua*, f. 4v.
[240] Hofmeisterin: Mary of Hungary—Lady Elisabeth, countess of Sahn; Catherine of Habsburg—countess of Pescini; Eleanor of Habsburg—Lady Susanna from Tobar, baroness, widow; Barbara of Habsburg—Lady of Kunigsegg, born countess of Fürstenberg. FHKA, NÖHA, W 61/A-36, f. 36; ASMn, Archivio Gonzaga 444, f. 604; TLA, Pestarchiv, Akten I, 176, f. 2v; TLA Ferdinandea 23 (not foliated).
[241] For instance, Else Pellendorffer was a stewardess to Eleanor of Portugal and then also to her daughter Kunigunde; Fößel, *Die Königin im mittelalterlichen Reich*, 89.
[242] Loserth, *Die Registratur Erzherzog Maximilians (Maximilians II) aus den Jahren 1547-1551*, 429–30.

reference did not come out of nowhere, he was approached by Ursula in Trent on his own bridal expedition to Spain in 1548. Managing the ladies' court was a lucrative job for every noblewoman as it entailed a good social standing, a regular financial income, and valuable social contacts, but could have been an even more sought-after post for a lady who might have lost financial security due to her husband's passing, although the salary could not have been the primary motivation for elite widows who were well provided for by their dowers.

As already mentioned, one of the stewardess's main tasks was the administration of the court's rules. In German lands the life of the *Frauenzimmer* was regulated by court ordinances, issued irregularly by the 1480s. We possess one ordinance from 1483, authored by Duke Sigismund of Tirol for the court of his second wife Catherine of Saxony, and a bulk of others for the joint court of Anne of Bohemia and Mary of Hungary who lived together for several years prior to their weddings [1521].[243] Stemming from a belief that women were more predisposed to sin, these ordinances aimed to set not only the organizational but also the behavioural standards of the court. The daily routine, types of work and entertainment, permission of visitors, sleeping spots, allocation of places during meals, holy services, or processions, as well as rules for correspondence, were laid out by these documents. Besides the stewardess, the important role of implementing the rules was played by the steward—who could in certain circumstances reside directly in the *Frauenzimmer* in the case that his wife served there, if not he had to leave the chambers by 8 pm—and also porters who were responsible for guarding the entrance to the chambers.[244]

[243] Bojcov, 'Zum Frauenzimmer am Innsbrucker Hof Erzherzog Sigmunds'; Paul-Joachim Heinig, 'Umb merer Zucht und Ordnung Willen. Ein Ordnungsentwurf für das Frauenzimmer des Innsbrucker Hofs aus den ersten Tagen Kaiser Karls V. (1519)', in *Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelater und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Jan Hirschbiegel and Werner Paravicini (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2000), 311–23.
[244] Heinig, 'Umb merer Zucht und Ordnung Willen', 314–6.

Sigismund's ordinance requested the stewardess and the ladies-in-waiting to take an oath of obedience and to swear loyalty to the duke and the duchess but only "in the things pertaining to their honour", which might have been a clause protecting the woman from the inappropriate behaviour and demands of the duke.[245] The *Hofmeisterin* further swore to fulfil the duchess's wishes, to keep her secrets, and to report everything that might harm her patroness. The other ladies were required to abstain from idleness and unnecessary talking during dining, and to not break from the duchess's company during trips to the countryside or gardens.

Unfortunately, we do not possess any *Frauenzimmer* ordinances for the bridal journey, all cited examples were intended for periods of stability within a special residential circle, even though this stability was only relative as the queen or duchess frequently set off for various kind of trips. The ordinances, after all, anticipated such situations and stressed instruction in what order the ladies should proceed or that they should never stray from the princess and stewardess's sight. Nevertheless we can presume that similar types of behavioural regulations were also deemed necessary for the ladies accompanying the princess to her husband. A strong hint to this is to be found in Carafa's model version of the bridal journey. The Neapolitan court doyen dedicates two paragraphs to the way the ladies' court should be ruled. These lines are unique, as the medieval and early modern conduct literature seldomly commented on the manners of ladies-in-waiting and never on the females accompanying travelling brides.[246] In addition, they disprove to some extent the notion, spelled-out by Jeroen Duindam, that the Franco-Italian female households were somewhat laxer than their

[245] Bojcov, 'Zum Frauenzimmer am Innsbrucker Hof Erzherzog Sigmunds', 204–5.
[246] Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben, eds., 'Introduction', in *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting across Early Modern Europe* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2014), 14.

German counterparts when it came to regulating the man—woman contact.[247] What were these recommendations?

De institutione exhorts the queen to be personally involved in arranging the chambers of her ladies, especially their windows and doors, which should be rigorously enclosed because these things "tend to be a cause of much temptation". Then, the ladies should be strongly advised to shun overly close relationships.[248] In another section Carafa speaks about the necessity of appointing an overseer, or rather several, since one could be delayed by the narrowness of the roads. Riding before the ladies these watchers should keep an eye on the women so they would not be stopped by men and indulge in talks with them. If provoked to speak, the ladies should not respond, unless they have permission to do so.[249]

It is hard to tell whether this level of standards was sought-after also for companions of the travelling bridegrooms or if they were limited to the females, thus making these moral ideals a clear gender difference in the travel of princely bride and groom. Carafa however did author another occasional work dedicated to a prince transferring to another court to marry[250] and even though counsels contained in this text are aimed the post-wedding life in the foreign environment rather than the journey, there is a section advising the prince that he should take care of the comportment of his courtiers, as the behaviour of his subordinates will cast fame (or shame) on his persona.[251] Nonetheless, in general, chastity was deemed as the most important virtue

[247] Duindam, 'The Court as a Meeting Point: Cohesion, Competition, Control', 42.
[248] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 35–36.
[249] Carafa, 24.
[250] Federico d'Aragona (1451–1504, ruling as king of Naples in 1496–1501) , a brother of Beatrice of Naples to whom Carafa addressed his *De institutione.* Federico moved to France to wed Anne of Savoy, a niece of King Louis XI of France in 1479. Although producing a daughter, the marriage was short-lived as Anne died three years later. The young widower then opted to return to Naples, leaving his child behind at the French court.
[251] Diomede Carafa, *Memoriali*, ed. Franca Petrucci Nardelli (Rome: Bonacci editore, 1988), 321–2.

of queens, given their crucial role in maintaining dynastic lines. If any shadow of doubt could have been cast on the queen's virtuousness, the legitimacy of her offspring as royal heirs would also be questioned.[252] Therefore projecting chastity and devoutness was a desideratum for any royal/ducal bride and this could be achieved by orderly management of the ladies' court too.

In the same way as the ordinances, Carafa's guidelines aim to protect moral standards in the *Frauenzimmer* by limiting its contact with the outer world. In his view, the controlling measures applied during the journey should be the same as for the time spent at a fixed abode (i.e. before and after the wedding)—he starts with a statement that Beatrice used to take care of these matters very carefully even before, meaning, before her transfer to the husband. Therefore we can presume that the women accompanying the princess were required to fulfil the same strict instructions regulating their behaviour during the bridal journey as during the daily court routine, perhaps even more severe, as the journey provided many dangers and, as Carafa puts it, temptations to the chastity of the ladies. The potential lack of self-restraint associated with travel led premodern society to look suspiciously on travellers as a whole, but especially on travelling women.[253] If the noble bride and her female companions wanted to preserve their chaste reputation, they needed to cast aside any shadow of licentiousness and to look more like a group of nuns than noble ladies, which was the ultimate ideal presented in the *Frauenzimmer* ordinances.[254] On the other hand, if the ladies managed to fulfil this image, it could enhance the overall

[252] Elena Woodacre, 'Saints or Sinners? Sexuality, Reputation and Representation of Queens from Contemporary Sources to Modern Media', *De Medio Aevo* 10, no. 2 (2021): 372.
[253] Patricia Akhimie, 'Gender and Travel Discourse: Richard Lassels's "The Voyage of the Lady Catherine Whetenall from Brussells into Italy" (1650)', in *Travel and Travail. Early Modern Women, English Drama, and the Wider World*, ed. Patricia Akhimie and Andrea Bernadette (Lincoln, London: University of Nebraska Press, 2018), 125–35.
[254] Bojcov, 'Zum Frauenzimmer am Innsbrucker Hof Erzherzog Sigmunds', 211.

public reputation of their patroness. Therefore, we can say that the *Frauenzimmer,* or more precisely the way it was governed, could be used for propaganda purposes as well.

With the company of the ladies-in-waiting, the princess had at her disposal a group of persons to fulfil her everyday needs, to represent and promote her status but also, if properly led, to boost her public image. But what was there for the ladies? As stated before, being a stewardess of the ladies' court was a lucrative position for its social contacts, financial income and so forth, and this also applies to the ladies-in-waiting. But besides the financial and social benefits, potentially interesting for every member of the court, there was another advantage of serving as a court maiden: a lucrative marriage to a prominent courtier or nobleman. The Habsburg court especially served as a place for concluding marriages and an integration mechanism for the nobility from various parts of their often culturally disconnected and culturally diverse domains.[255] That is why aristocratic families did not hesitate to spend time and money to acquire the position of lady-in-waiting for their daughters who, if admitted to the queen's court, could significantly enhance the social standing of both themselves and their families. Admittance was highly competitive, with waiting lists for the potential candidates.[256] The prestige linked with the position required a prospective lady to be equipped with a trousseau as if she were about to enter into marriage.[257]

Nonetheless, the profitable marriage and advantages associated with court service were of a long-term character, that is, materializing long after the bridal

[255] Patrouch, *Queen's Apprentice*, 31; Václav Bůžek and Géza Pállfy, 'Integrace šlechty z českých a uherských zemí ke dvoru Ferdinanda I [Integrating the Nobility from the Bohemian and Hungarian Lands at the Court of Ferdinand I]', *Český časopis historický* 101, no. 3 (2003): 562.
[256] Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting at the Imperial Court of Vienna from 1550–1700: Structures, Responsibilities and Career Patterns', 84.
[257] Beatrix Bastl, 'Das Österreichische Frauenzimmer. Zum Beruf der Hofdame in der frühen Neuzeit', in *Das Frauenzimmer. Die Frau bei Hofe in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Jan Hirschbiegel and Werner Paravicini (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2000), 366–70.

journey was over. A key condition of success was the ability to stay in the princess's service after the wedding.[258] From the point of view of the princess, the bridal journey marked the first instance when she could possess her own autonomous court, separate from the court of her mother or sisters, although there are examples of princesses having their separate court already in childhood. Even though some ladies or officials may have served the princess during her maiden life, naturally the bridal court needed to be composed from new recruits as well, as it was unrealistic to staff it with the persons from the queen or king's surroundings only. We have seen above the petition of countess of Nagarollo applying for the job of Catherine of Habsburg's [1549] main stewardess. Maximilian II's recommendation could increase her odds, but eventually she did not succeed in securing the post. Usually the positions were assigned to the family members of court functionaries,[259] for instance, the countess of Pescini, who unlike Ursula of Nagarollo clinched the post of Catherine's *Hofmeisterin,* and brought along her two daughters and a niece to Mantua.[260] The bridal household thus could have become another occasion of courtly patronage.

Although important as the first of its kind, the bridal court was usually short-lived and in most cases it underwent significant changes once the wedding was over and the princesses started to settle down in their new environment. Generally their consorts tended to staff it with subjects and aristocrats from their own domains, and at

[258] There is a well-known case of the Four Maries, ladies-in-waiting of Mary, Queen of Scots (1542–1587), who accompanied their mistress to France and back to Scotland. Their devout service (one of them, Mary Seton, even followed the queen into the captivity in England) brought them not only marriages to the first-rank nobility but also a place in popular memory. However, as Rosalind K. Marhall showed, these four females were only one part of Queen's Mary's ever changing ladies' court. Rosalind K. Marshall, 'In Search of the Ladies-in-Waiting and Maids of Honour of Mary, Queen of Scots: A Prosopographical Analysis of the Female Household', in *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting across Early Modern Europe*, ed. Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2014), 209–30.

[259]Keller, 'Ladies-in-Waiting at the Imperial Court of Vienna from 1550–1700: Structures, Responsibilities and Career Patterns', 88.

[260] ASMn, Archivio Gonzaga 444, f. 604.

the same time, to eliminate foreign courtiers who were deemed to be a disruptive or even openly hostile element.[261] If and in what number the princess's fellow-countrymen could stay was left at her husband's discretion. The matter was in many cases addressed prior to the wedding. For instance, the wedding contract of Eleanor of Portugal and Emperor Frederick III [1451] stipulates that

> [...] for her greater solace, pleasant company and service *(pro sui maiori solatio atque opportuna societate),* the most illustrious infanta will be able to bring along and keep with herself in Germany some of the Portuguese noble officials and servants, that were associated with her earlier on, both male and female, and the most illustrious King of Romans [= Frederick] will consider the way and number he finds suitable for them to say and have a (court) position."[262]

Although only one Portuguese lady-in-waiting is known to have stayed with Eleanor,[263] most probably there were more of them.[264] The joint *Frauenzimmer* of Mary of Hungary and Anne of Bohemia prior to their weddings [1521] included an eight-years-old "morin" servant.[265] Is it possible that she might have been a descendant of Eleanor's attendant of Moorish origin? If so, it must have been the third generation of such a servant given the great time distance (almost seventy years).

Nevertheless, the provision set forth in Eleanor's wedding contract is rather vague and in the end it leaves everything at Frederick's discretion. But there are examples of more precise arrangement. Besides names and offices, the household list of Catherine of Habsburg [1549], written prior to her wedding, also includes information about who from the court officials is going to stay and who is not. The future duchess of Mantua (the author of the list did not forget to write down that the

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[261] Spieß, 'Unterwegs zu einem fremden Ehemann', 33.
[262] Nascimento, Andrade, and Silva, *Princesas de Portugal*, 78.
[263] Spieß, 'Unterwegs zu einem fremden Ehemann', 33, footnote 82.
[264] Paul-Joachim Heinig, 'How Large Was the Court of Emperor Frederick III?', in *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age c. 1450–1650*, ed. Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 140–1.
[265] Heinig, 'Umb merer Zucht und Ordnung Willen', 313.

princess is also going to stay) is allowed to keep most of her *Frauenzimmer* (six noble damsels, chamber lady, two chamber maids, a laundry lady), a tailor, a cook, a chaplain, six pages, six stable servants, and two chamber servants, which in total makes twenty seven individuals.[266] A similar number is found in the German court of Barbara of Habsburg [1565] in Ferrara (32).[267] Eleanor of Habsburg's [1561] *Frauenzimmer* in Mantua consisted of four German and four Italian ladies-in-waiting, one high stewardess (ethnicity unknown) and two vice stewardesses, each of them from a different ethnic group.[268] Although it might seem like a high number, all of these positions are minor in terms of authority; all leading office-holders of Catherine's household, like the high steward, stewardess, chamberlain, stable master, were expected to leave so their places could be filled with appointees of the princess's husband. It seems that for kings and dukes it was probably not so important *how many* but rather *who* of their wives' courtiers would remain, as the possibility of staffing the power positions with their own liegemen would enable them to control the whole court.

A similar pattern emerges for Catherine's second marriage to Sigismund II Augustus of Poland [1553]. Two undated instructions for Polish envoys negotiating her bridal household give further proof to this hypothesis. In the first mandate, Sigismund explicitly refuses 34 out of 47 positions, Catherine is allowed to bring only four ladies-in-waiting and some minor household office-holders (doctor, physician, pages, smith, kitchen and *Frauenzimmer* servants, laundry ladies).[269] In the second, *secretior* instruction the envoys are given some leeway in negotiation and eight more

[266] ASMn, AG 444, f. 604.
[267] Elena Taddei, '"Fremde Fürstinnen in Ferrara". Heiratsmigration zwischen Integration und Fremdsein im 16. Jahrhundert', in *Migration und Reisen. Mobilität in der Neuzeit*, ed. Elena Taddei, Michael Müller, and Robert Rebitsch (Innsbruck, Vienna, Bolzano: Studien Verlag, 2012), 48.
[268] Freyberg, 'Herzog Ferdinands', 302.
[269] AGAD, Metryka koronna, Ksiegi poselstwew, PL 14, f. 143v–146r.

officials are permitted to come, but only a few of those are high in the household hierarchy (chamberlain, main kitchen steward, main chef).[270] As the main reason for rebuttal of other German courtiers is stated the right of Polish nobility to hold these posts and "our people cannot be deprived of these services, since they belong to them based on privilege", and to do so, would ignite *obtrectationes et offensiones hominum nostrorum.*[271]

Even though this might have been one of the king's motivations, it was certainly not the only one as some comments in the *secretior* mandate show: discussing the position of Catherine's secretary, Sigismund is prepared to accept him only if he will be "content with his status, not sumptuous nor ambitious."[272] Also, the mainchamber maid is allowed to come "only if she would not claim a higher authority", meaning, that she would not be in charge of the female household—because "there will be matrons here who would do that".[273] Clearly, staffing of a bridal household that would be transformed to the queen's court after the wedding had power connotations and it was crucial for a king to control it by appointing nominees from his own aristocracy. In addition to gaining control, the sovereign would get the favour of his own nobility.

Yet the court leadership made up of the husband's subjects could not have been as effective a tool as it might seem. Bianca Maria's [1493/4] compatriots are a good example. Allegedly the Italians disrespected the orders of her new German high steward: one of them kept entering and leaving the residence in spite of the steward's ban, while another refused to follow the order saying he would do so only if Bianca

[270] Ibid., f. 146r–147r.
[271] "...haec omnia munia ademi non possunt apud nos certis hominibus, quibus ex privilegio debentur..." Ibid., f. 145r and 146v.
[272] Ibid., 146v.
[273] Ibid., 146v and 145v.

herself commanded him.[274] Violanta Cayma, one of the chief ladies-in-waiting, wielded such power over the princess that she could easily manipulate Bianca to squander money or disregard Maximilian's decisions. The princess was reportedly so fixated on her damsel that she was even screaming "Oh, my Violanta" in her sleep. The tipping point of Maximilian's patience came when the dame started to meddle into the foreign policy by conspiring with the Neapolitan ambassador. Gradually the Italians were sent back to Milan and three years after the wedding Bianca Maria was surrounded by an almost entirely German court.[275]

Bitter conflicts and the partisanship of the courtiers with respect to their origin was by no means confined to Bianca Maria and Maximilian. Carafa recommends Beatrice thank her husband for allowing her to keep the Italian ladies but in the same breath he advises her to warn these ladies to live harmoniously with the Hungarian ones, to take care that no word or action offends them. Frankly and cynically, he explains why—these new attendants, assigned by the husband, are not like the ones at her home court. While the latter always strove to portray the princess in a favourable light in the father's eyes, the former will do their best to do quite the opposite and make the king resentful towards her.[276]

This remark of Carafa introduces us to the question of why the princess requested some members of her bridal court, or better said, her countrymen to continue in her service long after the wedding, or even until the end of her life. As we have seen, Eleanor of Portugal's wedding [1451/2] contract explicitly states that they should remain with the princess for "consolation, pleasant company, and service". Apparently these individuals were supposed to help the princess in adjusting to her new reality, to

[274] Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 115–6.
[275] Ibid., 115–8.
[276] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 38–9.

mitigate the emotional shock connected with marriage and the transfer to a new country. Right before her arrival in Florence, Joanna of Habsburg [1565] addressed a letter to her brother Ferdinand (representing fatherly authority, since her father was already deceased) asking him to allow Georg von Helfenstein, her current high steward, to stay with her.[277] "My lord husband as well as his father, duke of Florence," she starts, "without my asking, allowed me to keep—for my sake—in Florence, for the time being, [...] some German persons that are pleasant to me."[278] Joanna would like to keep Count Helfenstein as head of her forthcoming household not only because of his reputation but especially because of "confidence in and familiarity towards him" and in order "to seek his counsel". In addition, both Joanna's husband and father-in-law reportedly were familiar with him and thought of him well.[279]

We do not know how long Helfenstein stayed in Florence—most likely he departed right after the nuptial festivities since he also served as a governor of Tyrol and the local government officials (just four days after Joanna's letter) asked Archduke Ferdinand to not let Helfenstein stay longer in Florence;[280] and a year after the 1565 wedding he took part in the siege of the Hungarian city of Veszprém.[281] Joanna's older sister Eleanor, marrying Duke Guglielmo of Mantua four years earlier [1561], had

[277] HHStA, Obersthofmeisteramt, Ältere Zeremonialakten (1562–1836), 1 Akten, f. 196–7.
[278] "... durch meinen frundtlichen geliebten Herrn unnd versprochnen Gemahel den Prinzen, sonder gleichermassen durch seiner lieb herrn Vatern, den Herzogen zu Florenz guetwillig, one mein begern, zugelassen würdet, fur mich selbs ain Zeitlanng, meiner Gelegenheit nach ain Teutsche Hofhaltung unnd etlich mir gesellige annemliche Teutsche Personen bey mir zu Florenz habe halten. Ibid.
[279] "Und ich dann inn Sonnderhait von Ansehen und Erhaltung der Reputation wegen, meinen jezigen obristen Hofmaister, Georgen Grauen zu Helffenstein, zu Versehung bemelten Ambts, aus meinem sonndern zu im tragenden Verthrawen und Erkanntnus, auch seiner habennden schickhlich und Erfarenhait. Und damit ich mein khunfftige Hofhaltung in allem desto statlicher, wie sich geburt, regiern, und in meinen Zuefallennden geschofften bey ime Rat suechen mëchte. Sonnderlichen auch in Erwegung das er meinem geliebten Herrn unnd Gemahel, gleichermassen auch seiner Lieb herrn Vattern hierzue gar wol, Irer liebden selbs gethonem vermelden nach, wol gefellig, auch denselben bekhanndt ist, je gern bei mir ain Zeitlang behalten wolte." Ibid.
[280] "...dass er sich nach vollendter fürstlich Hochzeyt mitnichten lennger aufhalten lassen." HHStA, Obersthofmeisteramt, Ältere Zeremonialakten (1562–1836), 1 Akten, f. 198–9.
[281] Paul Friedrich von Stälin, 'Helfenstein, Graf Georg Von', in *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, 1880.

more luck in getting this type of associate, even without her petition. Around the time Eleanor set forth from Innsbruck, Annibale Cavriani, the Mantuan envoy in Vienna briefs his patrons back home that the emperor (Ferdinand I, then still alive Eleanor's father) had appointed Maximilian von Dornberg, a court counsellor, "a well-educated gentleman, very qualified, who speaks and writes not only Italian and German, but also other languages" to stay with the future duchess, to help her in speaking Italian and to advise her in other matters.[282] Besides the excellent recommendations which Dornberg received,[283] Cavriani himself vetted the appointee since he had not been familiar with him before: he invited Dornberg to dinner and spoke with him about various matters, and as a result found him very virtuous, shrewd, but above all very pleasant.[284] Writing to the duke, Cavriani sums up his praise of Dornberg by saying:

> I write this to You because You will be able to take advantage of him by courtesy and affection and to have him at your command because he is a well-born gentleman. Your Excellency knows that one can control this type of person with sweetness but for [the controlling of] donkeys one needs a stick.[285]

In sum, the princess's chosen assistant needed not only to possess certain skills, such as linguistic competence, but he was also supposed to have positive personal traits and

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[282] "Havendo la Maesta dell'Imperatore deliberato di mandar un gentilhuomo a posta a stare a Mantova appresso la serenissima signora sposa, ha fatto elettione del signor Massimigliano Dorimberg da Gorizia, del suo consigliere aulico, gentilhuomo letterato molto qualificato et che parla et scrive non solo le lingue italiana et alamanna, ma dell'altre ancora. Questo di ordine di S. Maesta Ceserea havera da star sempre appresso la serenissima signora duchessa et di avisar in qua, cosi in nome di Sua Altezza." Cavriani to the castellan of Mantua, Vienna, 14 April, 1561, ASMn, AG 447, f. 407; "...questo consiglier ch'ha deliberato di mandar Sua Maesta Ceserea appresso Sua Altezza accio che la possi servire et aiutar per parlar' Italiano et per altre cause." Cavriani to Duke Guglielmo, Vienna, 18 April, 1561, ASMn, AG 447, f. 409.

[283] "... in questa corte é laudato non solo dal conte Scipione, et da molti cauaglieri, ma da tutta la corte et dall'Imperador istesso." Cavriani to Duke Guglielmo, Vienna, 18 April, 1561, ASMn, AG 447, f. 409.

[284] "Et perche io non l'ho conosciuto personalmente che hora, per esser egli nuovo qui in corte, l'ho invitato a mangiar meco e hauendo raggionato con lui di più cose, l'ho trouato molto uertuoso, et al mio giudicio, accorto et sauio. Et oltre di ciò tanto amoreuole, quanto se possa dir." Cavriani to the castellan of Mantua, Vienna, 14 April, 1561, ASMn, AG 447, f. 407.

[285] "Questo gli lo dico, perche potrà con cortesie et amoreuolezze ualersi di lui, et hauerlo al suo commando, perche é gentil'huomo ben nato, che ben sà Vestra Signoria che simil persone si governano con dolcezza, et gli asini co'l bastone..." Cavriani to Duke Guglielmo, Vienna, 18 April, 1561, ASMn, AG 447, f. 409.

social manners that made him viable for the princess's husband as well. Unlike Eleanor, Joanna's case shows that the princess, facing a change in her life circumstances, actively negotiated with both sides, her native and in-law families, to obtain a trusted and familiar person that was to help her with the transition.

The fellow-countrymen at court did not only provide "consolation" or other types of emotional support during or after the marital transfer but their presence could have stemmed from a very practical skill which they and the princess shared—the language. As we will see later on, almost no princely bride came to her new home with a command of her husband's primary language. Leaving the princess surrounded by foreign-speaking courtiers would be not only psychologically drastic but also very impractical in terms of her everyday needs, such as those of a spiritual character. The chaplain in Catherine of Habsburg's retinue [1549] was the only person who could hear her confession as long as she was not able to speak Italian, and it is thus logical that such a person would stay with the princess.

On the other hand, the great number of foreign-speaking courtiers could have led to the segregation of a princess who, having created her own cultural ghetto, no longer felt the necessity of interacting with the husband's environment. The presence of fellow-countrymen could give her a pretext to not even try to learn the language. That was certainly the case of Bianca Maria Sforza [1493], the expulsion of whose courtiers did not help her in mastering German. Many other princesses never learned their husbands' tongue, and conversely, many others acquired such a level of language proficiency that they were not only able to write letters (Eleanor of Portugal, 1451/2) but also translate literary works (Eleanor of Scotland, 1448).[286] Both types of

[286] Katherine Walsh, 'Verkaufte Töchter? Überlegungen zu Aufgabenstellung und Selbstwertgefühl von in die ferne verheirateten Frauen anhand ihrer Korrespondenz', *Jahrbuch vorarlberger Landesmuseumsverein* 135 (1991): 137–9; Albrecht Classen, 'Eleonore of Austria's Pontus Und Sidonia (ca. 1450): A Duchess Promotes Courtly Mores and Ethical Values through a Translation

princesses held a circle of compatriots as household members, so obviously there was no causal link between language competence, reflecting the princess's incorporation into the new environment, and the presence of fellow countrymen.

2.2 Noble entourage

The second part of the bridal train consisted of nobles that joined the princess's company strictly for the period of the journey and wedding. However as we have seen, the princess's company could undergo drastic changes in the months following the wedding. In this respect there is a fine line between them and office-holders and servants who served at the bridal court likewise for a limited time; nonetheless, in contrast to the latter, the noble-entourage members did not hold any position in the household.

We have seen above how the Milanese state secretary Bartolomeo Calco and state councillors discussed the necessity of noble matrons in the bridal court of Bianca Maria for her unrealized transfer to Hungary [1488]. A far more intricate debate arose between Calco and other state representatives concerning the whole bridal train. The first draft of the retinue was authorized by Lodovico il Moro and it contained a list of persons together with an instruction for Calco to write to all of the selected members of the retinue to be prepared to depart on the chosen date.[287] Nevertheless the entourage continued to be further reviewed as Calco examined the Lodovico-approved list with the Milanese archbishop, Guidantonio Arcimboldi.[288] According to the prelate the list

Project, Or: The Scottish Princess at an Austrian Court: Women as Cultural-Literary Ambassadors across Europe', in *Reading Medieval European Women Writers: Strong Literary Witnesses from the Past* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2016), 253–96.

[287] Bartolomeo Calco to Lodovico Sforza, Milan, 28 February 1489, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 17.

[288] Bartolomeo Calco to Lodovico Sforza, Milan, 2 April 1489, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 19.

was well conceived, because, allegedly, as a person quite aware of Hungarian affairs,[289]

> he understood that the Royal Majesty [=the King of Hungary] would strive to send a delegation so prestigious that no other ruler had ever sent, both in terms of the number of people, the overall pomp and ornaments.[290]

As a response to the endeavours of the other wedding party, it is necessary—as Arcimboldi urges—for the Milanese to answer with the same amount of splendour. The archbishop then examined closely the proposed list and he suggested excluding some individuals due to their alleged lack of resources to meet the expectations on pomp, splendour, or behaviour standards. Another issue was the personal retinues of nobles. Arcimboldi left the decision at Lodovico il Moro—whether he would let nobles pick their company by themselves or would appoint to every noble a specific cortège. However the total number of persons in Bianca's retinue should involve at least six hundred people.[291]

The archbishop's propositions draw attention to several issues. Firstly they point to the fact that the aristocratic entourage was more an assemblage of many cortèges than one homogenous entity, as each nobleman had at their disposal a small group of servants taking care of his needs. From a detailed list of Eleanor of Habsburg's [1561] retinue (Tab. 6) we can see that these small nuclei varied according to the person's rank: counts *(Graf)* and barons *(Freiherr)* travelled with a larger number of horses than knights *(Ritter)* or lesser noblemen. Although the number of

[289] Arcimboldi really did visit Hungary as an ambassador and in 1493–4 he also accompanied Bianca Maria on her bridal journey. Nicola Raponi, 'ARCIMBOLDI, Guidantonio', in *Dizionario Biografico*, 1961, https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/guidantonio-arcimboldi_(Dizionario-Biografico).
[290] "Nondimancho, perche essendo in Ungheria, havea compreso la Maesta Regis sforzarsi di mandare la Legatione soa tanto honorevole, quanto facesse may alcuno altro potentato, si de numero de persone, como de pompa et ornamenti..." Bartolomeo Calco to Lodovico Sforza, Milan, 2 April 1489, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 19.
[291] Ibid.

horses does not necessarily correspond to the number of people involved as some servants could have travelled on wagons or by foot, it still indicates a greater cortège for each individual aristocrat.

Table 6 The noble entourage of Eleanor of Habsburg (1561)[292]

Name	Number of horses
Herr Albig, Graf zu Sultz	6
Herr Phillips, Graf zu Liechtenstain	6
Herr Cristoff, Freyherr zu Wolkenstain	5
Herr Casper, Freyherr zu Wolkenstain	5
Herr Cristoff, Freyherr zu Welsperg	5
Herr Georg, Freyherr zu Fürmian	5
Herr Georg, Freyherr zu Spaur	5
Herr Sigmundt von Tun	5 and one donkey
Herr Pangraz Kuen, Ritter	4
Herr Jacob Trapp, Ritter	4
Herr Jacob von Payrsperg, Ritter	4
Herr Reinprecht Hendl, Ritter	4
Doctor Mathias Alber, Orator und sein Sun Mathias Philips Albert	both 5
Martin von Payrsperg	3
Hanns Botsch	3
Sebastian Fueger	3
Melchior Fueger Zeugmaister	3
Beernhardt Künigl	5
Sigmund von Tun der Junger	3
Victor von Tun	3
Hanns Veit von Annenberg	3
Carl Kuen Haubtman auf dem Nons?	3
Adam von Tereng	4
Franz von Trautmanstorf	3
Georg Fueger der Junger	3
Caspar Payr zu Caldis?	3
Ludwig von Tagiss?	4
Hanns Sinkhmoser zu Jufal?	3
Sigmund Händl	3
Hanns Langermantl	3
Rudolpf von Vels	2
Wolf Cristoff von Elrichingen?	2
Erasim? von Andrian?	1
Balthasar Frelich	2
Benedict Sebenstreit	2

[292] TLA, Pestarchiv, Akten I, 176.

Babtista Leopardt	2
Rudolff Weiche?	2

Secondly it turns our attention to the mathematics of the retinue. Arcimboldi's mention of the six hundred threshold marks a solitary attempt to spell out the contemporary expectations regarding the magnitude of the bridal train. Why did Archbishop Arcimboldi assert that the bridal train was supposed to amount to at least six hundred? Possibly this idea could have stemmed from previous experience as there is every reason to assume that the retinue of Bona of Savoy, Bianca Maria's mother, also involved several hundred people.[293] Most likely, however, Arcimboldi, as a skilled diplomat, learned the numbers involved in the last Hungarian royal wedding, that of Matthias Corvinus and Beatrice of Aragon in 1476.[294] To fetch Beatrice in Naples, the king of Hungary sent a committee amounting to 529 horses,[295] a number very close to the one suggested by the Milanese archbishop two decades later on.

Yet Beatrice's own company added up to merely half (350 Neapolitans), so one might ask why—if the Milanese found themselves in the same situation as the Neapolitans before—the archbishop did not think of this number and instead follow the standards of the groom's party? Aside from a traditional rivalry among the Italian states which could have been sufficient grounds to account for this, one might think of another, more sophisticated reason. If based on the anticipation that the Hungarians would behave similarly as in 1476 and would send again a company amounting to six

[293] Lubkin, *A Renaissance Court*, 51.
[294] He might have heard them during his own diplomatic errands in Hungary and Naples, or from the Venetian ambassador Sebastiano Badoer who was an ambassador to the king of Hungary around the 1476 nuptials (and even addressed a congratulatory oration to him) and to the duke of Milan around the 1488 wedding preparations. Giorgio Cracco, 'BADOER, Sebastiano', in *Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani*, 1963, https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/sebastiano-badoer_(Dizionario-Biografico).
[295] Albert Berzeviczy, *Aragoniai Beatrix magyar királyné életére vonatkozó okiratok [Documents Related to the Life of Beatrix of Aragon, Queen of Hungary]* (Budapest: Magyar Tud. Akadémia, 1914), 27–9.

hundred, the archbishop's suggestion aims to match this number, and by extension, to match the splendour and magnificence of the other wedding party. Such course of thinking would be in line with other actions of the Milanese as they left no stone unturned in obtaining information about the king of Hungary's intentions so they could act accordingly. Their special envoy, Gianantonio Olive, was supposed to inquire not only about the journey's logistics, festivities planned in Hungary, and Bianca Maria's future status, but should also find out details about the Hungarian embassy in terms of its numbers, as well as the names and ranks of the individuals involved.[296]

In the end Bianca did not get a chance to travel to Hungary and thus, we do not know to what extent the archbishop's propositions would have materialized. For her wedding with Maximilian I [1493/4] we do not possess any sources pertaining to the organization of the entourage, curiously enough though, when leaving Milan to reach her husband, Bianca Maria's bridal train amounted to six hundred horses—yet this time it became a source of frustration (mostly because of financial reasons) for Maximilian's officials as a much lower number had been expected.[297] Is this a coincidence or proof that Arcimboldi's advice was in fact followed, only on a different occasion? There are several hints that the preparatory steps for the unrealized journey in 1488 were recycled in 1493, for instance some aristocrats who accompanied Bianca to the imperial court had also been designed to do so in the Hungarian transfer.[298] The

[296] Iván Nagy and Albert Nyári, *Magyar diplomacziai emlékek Mátyás király korából: 1458-1490 [Monuments of Hungarian Diplomacy from the Time of King Matthias]*, vol. 3 (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvkiadó Hivatala, 1877), 382–5. Olive's mission probably gave rise to a list of wedding gifts I discovered in Bianca Maria's folder in ASMi. This inventory records the presents given by Matthias Corvinus to Beatrice of Aragon and then, by the royal pair to the Neapolitans accompanying Beatrice to Hungary. A most plausible explanation for the existence of this list in Bianca Maria's folder is that it served as a blueprint for her trousseau, again, aiming to match King Matthias's magnanimity. See my forthcoming article about this hitherto unknown inventory 'Mechanics of royal generosity: The wedding gifts from King Matthias Corvinus and Beatrice of Aragons's wedding (1476)'.

[297] Margrave Christoph of Baden to Maximilian I, Mals, 15 December 1493. HHStA, Reichskanzlei, Maximiliana 2–2, fol. 91.

[298] ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 66.

same could have been the case for the size of the entourage but there is also a possibility that Arcimboldi's suggestion was an expression of contemporary trends, putting emphasis on the massive size of the noble entourage. After all, Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2] was accompanied by a very similar number of noblemen (580).[299] Be that as it may, this is the first instance articulating an appropriate number for the nuptial train.

A far more important question we should be asking is why this massive retinue of noble individuals was needed in the first place? Sure, the bridal household was necessary was assuring the everyday needs of the princess and the military escort was much needed for personal safety. But why was there a need for any more than a moderate group of nobles? Why could not the wedding entourage amount to around 200 hundred people, as it was usual for royal tours?[300] Or even a smaller number, up to 50 people, which Emperor Charles V had at his disposal when visiting France?[301] In other words, why the household and a due safety guard was not sufficient for accompanying the bridal traveller? For Arcimboldi the size of the entourage is one element—the other one being the attire—in communicating the pomp and splendour of their own country; failing to reach a certain level of representation is according to him a reason to exclude some noblemen from participation in the bridal escort. To understand the logic behind this system we must look at instances when it was contested or defied by one wedding party.

[299] Pina, *Chronica de El-Rei D. Affonso V*, I:125.
[300] Cole, 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses', 30; Siobhan Keenan, *The Progresses, Processions, and Royal Entries of King Charles I, 1625-1642* (Oxford: University Press, 2020), 16.
[301] R.J. Knecht, 'Charles V's Journey through France, 1539–40', in *Court Festivals of the European Renaissance: Art, Politics, and Performance*, ed. J. R. Mulryne and Elizabeth Goldring (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 159.

Such was the case of Frederick III and Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2]. Despite the high level of expectation from the Portuguese side that a marriage to the soon-to-be emperor would be a very prestigious event, which might catapult the status of the entire dynasty and monarchy, the Habsburg groom was sending very mixed signals. To fetch his upcoming wife he sent to Portugal two low-status priests, one being his personal confessor and another a chaplain, with only a handful of servants, so that the entire delegation came to only five horses. One of the clerics, Nicolas Lanckman, left us a very colourful description of their arduous expedition across Europe. Before reaching the Portuguese borders the embassy was captured and robbed of all their money and clothes by a group of brigands:

> On the mountain of Rabanel (?) raiders came with three hundred horsemen and foot soldiers, and with a great booty of men and animals. At first they attacked the pilgrims, hurting and capturing all who were in the company of the pilgrims and deprived the envoys of their bigger robes, money, and one horse. Then, their captain, a certain knight, arrived and they [= the envoys], fear-strickened, laid down before him, kissed his feet, kneelt before him and venerated him. They showed him safe-conduct letters from the princes, kings, and captains, but he did not care about this at all. Again, raising their hands to the sky, they asked for mercy out of Christian love, saints James and George, and out of regard for the most serene king of the Romans [= Frederick III], presenting his letter of free passage. The captain, moved by compassion, took the letter of the lord emperor with due respect and ordered to set them [= the envoys] free, but to not hand them back any of their stuff. [302]

Even with a financial sum borrowed from the Medici bank in Santiago de Compostella, the Germans were unable to acquire an appearance befitting to imperial envoys, so, as soon as they put their feet on Portuguese soil, they were seized by local authorities.[303] After their release their journey continued but Lanckman omits that prior to their arrival in Lisbon, the envoys stopped in Coimbra where the local bishop, seeing their wretchedness, gave orders to buy fine robes at his own expenses and dress

[302] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 22–24.
[303] Ibid., 24–26.

them in them, and to give them money, beds, and servants. According to the chronicler Rui de Pina, who recorded this episode, the bishop did so because "they did not come in mien and attire appropriate to the ambassadors of such a lord and [to those] who should celebrate such a prominent marriage"[304]. Neither the king of Portugal was happy about the Emperor's deputies: on the outside he paid them respect and "received them with joy"[305] but other reports say that he was offended by the smallness and quality of the German embassy, consisting of two priests, as he considered it something "low and insulting".[306] Not even the oration one envoy, Jacob Motz, addressed to the king, helped to correct the bad impression:

> The most serene emperor [= Frederick] sent priests because every divine work, either in the Old or New Testament, is done in this way. That is why during the incarnation it is prophetically said: "I am sending my angel before you," that is, a priest. And again: "He will go before him in the spirit and virtue of Elijah." [...] The most serene king of the Romans [= Frederick] wanted to abide by the norms and rules of the prophets and the evangelists, and that is why he sent these two men [...][307]

No matter how biblically Motz wanted to spin Frederick's actions, even Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, the future pope Pius II, who was at that time in Frederick's service, criticises the choice of embassy, entrusted to two priests "that were hardly to be trusted".[308] Ultimately this fiasco did not lead to the dissolving of the marriage but

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[304] "...e que não vinham em auto e habitos como cumpria a embaixadores de tamanho Senhor e que tão alto casamento haviam de fazer..." Pina, *Chronica de el-rei D. Affonso V*, I:121.
[305] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 28.
[306] This report is preserved in the memories of Christoph Ungenad, a Styrian vagrant knight, who happened to be in Lisbon during the arrival of the German embassy and eventually joined Eleanor's bridal train. Hieronymus Megiser, ed., *Annales Carinthiae, pars secunda, das ist ander Theil der Chronicken deß löblichen Ertzhertzogthumbs Khärndten* (Leipzig: Abraham Lamberg, 1612), 1102. Quoted in Koller, 'Die Verheiratung Eleonores von Portugal Mit Kaiser Friedrich III. in Zeitgenössischen Berichten', 46.
[307] "M. Iacobi Motzii theologi, legati caesarei coram serenissimo Alphonso rege Portugaliae oratio, pro filia eius Lionora Friderico caesari desponsanda", published in Marquardus Freherus, ed., *Germanicarum rerum scriptores aliquot insignes, hactenus incogniti, qui res in Germania & Imperio sub Friderico III. & Maximiiano I. impp. memorabiliter gestas, illo aevo litteris prodiderunt.*, vol. 2 (Frankfurt am Main: Typis Wechelianis apud Claudium, 1602), 15–6.
[308] Pius II, *Historia Austrialis*, 2009, 1:147.

certainly contributed to Frederick's aura of being a scrooge,[309] not only in comparison with the lavish wedding festivities in Lisbon and subsequently Eleanor's Portuguese entourage, but also with the other coeval monarchs sending convoys of hundreds to fetch their brides, as we have seen above. Apparently, holding already the highest title among European rulers, Frederick had little to lose in prioritizing financial costs over the construction of international reputation, which is the stance that prevailed in Habsburg marital plans several times. The double weddings from 1495/6 and 1515/21 effectively neutralized the necessity of paying the dowry,[310] and what is more, the bridal journeys of Joanna of Castile and Margaret of Habsburg [1496/7] were solely in the hands of the Spanish. Maximilian I was even explicitly asked by his estates not to spend any more funds on the preparation of the entourage or the nuptials in general since the other wedding party would take care of everything.[311]

Yet it would be misleading to think that the Habsburgs did not recognize the importance of the magnificent bridal entourages when the political situation demanded it. Travelling to wed Mary of Burgundy [1477], whose domains were under serious threat from the king of France, Maximilian I was able to cobble together a massive noble entourage, involving up to 1,200 people. There were delegations from imperial princes, namely the electors of Mainz, Trier, Brandenburg, the margrave of Baden, the dukes of Jülich and Saxony, the bishop of Metz, landgrave of Hessen, and many other lords and knights.[312] Even though many of these German princes were convinced to participate only by the high price which they were paid by the Burgundian side, Maximilian's huge train was met with cheery salutes in the cities pertaining to Mary's

[309] Koller, 'Die Verheiratung Eleonores von Portugal mit Kaiser Friedrich III. in zeitgenössischen Berichten', 48–9.
[310] Wiesflecker, 'Maximilian I. und die habsburgisch-spanischen Heirats- und Bündnisverträge von 1495/96', 16.
[311] Chmel, *Urkunden, Briefe und Actenstücke zur Geschichte Maximilians I. und seiner Zeit*, 136.
[312] Rausch, *Die burgundische Heirat Maximilians I.*, 175–6.

hereditary lands, lifting their spirit in the fight against the French.[313] Also on other occasions the Habsburg princes and princesses travelled to their spouses with massive retinues: Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543] came to Poland with 1,200 horses,[314] her brother Maximilian II set off to Spain with 600 horses.[315]

The massive noble entourage is a crucial feature in understanding what the bridal journey really meant for premodern society. The splendour of the princess/prince's retinue, manifested by the high number and status of their companions, was momentous for the construction of the status of the princess/prince and by extension their entire house. Lacking the regular bureaucratic apparatus of officials and relying on more personalized communication, premodern rulers used various tokens of social estimation to negotiate their own position when encountering foreign power holders.[316] Princely weddings were a unique chance for such encounters and each wedding party did not miss any chance to exhibit its sumptuousness, that is, its high social rank. As Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger puts it, premodern social hierarchy was a fiction that needed to be realized through visual signs.[317] The same could be said for the monarchical power: rulers for the entire medieval period expressed their authority and majesty through the extravagant display of wealth,[318] which was only inflated with the arrival of the Renaissance theory of magnificence.[319] The aristocratic entourage was one component in the bridal journey's arsenal of splendour and prestige.

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[313] Hermann Wiesflecker, *Kaiser Maximilian I.: das Reich, Österreich und Europa an der Wende zur Neuzeit*, vol. 1 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1971), 130–1.
[314] Mulryne, Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Shewring, *Europa Triumphans*, 1:394–5.
[315] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 33.
[316] Christian Windler, 'From Social Status to Sovereignty – Practices of Foreign Relations from the Renaissance to the Sattelzeit', in *Practices of Diplomacy in the Early Modern World c.1410-1800*, ed. Tracey Amanda Sowerby and Jan Hennings (London: Routledge, 2017), 254–66.
[317] Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, 'Die Wissenschaft der Feinen Unterschiede. Das Praezedenzrecht und die Europäischen Monarchien vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert', *Majestas* 10 (2002): 127.
[318] Robert Antonín, *The Ideal Ruler in Medieval Bohemia* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2017), 339–62.
[319] A. D. Fraser Jenkins, 'Cosimo de' Medici's Patronage of Architecture and the Theory of Magnificence', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970): 162–70.

Botched and mishandled, Frederick III's delegation shows that not only the number but also the social standing of the envoys was important, as the king of Portugal was frankly insulted by the "mission of priests". In general this case is quite unique, as bridal trains usually strove to include the most prominent members possible. The enumeration of distinguished personages involved in the escorting of the bride or groom culminated in the final joyous entry. From the sixteenth century onwards festival books meticulously specify each one of them, describing their attire, trimming, and armour. An occasional print *Hochzeitlicher Einzug der Jungern Königin zu Cracau,* for instance, across eleven pages spells out in detail order of the entry wedding procession of Elizabeth of Habsburg into Cracow [1543]—bishop, dukes, land lords, their attire, household servants, the number of horses, and various types of soldiers and horsemen. Its purpose was not only to communicate the order and hierarchy of the ceremonious march but more importantly to manifest the density and prestige of its participants that directly translated into the splendour of the royal wedding and the dynasties united in it.

At the same time, the selection of the most significant members of the nobility was a clear political statement and it expressed an affirmative stance towards the marital union. In a way the present aristocracy symbolised the body of the realm giving its consent to the marriage, since this union was not only a pact between two families but between two realms (or principalities). This trait surfaces in the course of the assembly of Joanna's bridal train prior to her journey to Florence [1565]. Strictly speaking, this episode involves the structure of the household, not the aristocratic entourage, but given the fine lines between these two, the results can be extrapolated to the latter as well. Ferdinand, Joanna's brother, suggested to appoint as chief chamberlain none other than Annibale Cavriani, a Mantuan and ambassador at the

court in Vienna, whose reports from the 1561 wedding are richly used in this chapter. Responsible for the due arrangements, the Tyrolese government strongly advises against this choice:

> [...] we doubt if the said Cavriani should be appointed as chief chamberlain, which is a highly confidential office, since he is not from [the nation of] Your Lordship but from the Italian nation, and thus, he would hold the office alongside other German-born counts, barons, and knights. And then, [...] appointing of a Mantuan as a chief chamberlain might cause speculation or displeasure of the gracious lords, the duke and prince of Florence [= Joanna's in-laws]. [...] Your Majesty should therefore choose another man from your loyal German subjects.[320]

Despite having previous work experience, being in the service of Catherine of Habsburg in Mantua, Cavriani possessed one quality that disqualified him from holding a position in the bridal household—his Italian, or more precisely, Mantuan origin. Seen from the perspective of either of the wedding parties (the Habsburgs and the Medicis) this was apparently a problem: the Florentines might have had issues with the fact that a representative of the rival Italian state would be a chamberlain of the new duchess, and the Tyrolese and other Austrian aristocracy might have been offended by being sidelined for the sake of a foreigner.

[320] "Und haben uns Ire Fürstliche Durchleit ainen anderen mit Namen Hanibalen Caurianen, wellicher ain Mantuanar und der gewesten Hertzogin zu Mantua yetz Khunigin zu Pollen unnserer gnedigisten Frawen diener gewest ist, zu Obristem Camerer zugebrachten gnedigist fürgeschlagen. Dabei khünden aber Eure Kay(serliche) May(estät) wir in Unnderthenigkait nit verhalten, das unns bedencklichen fallen will gedachten Kauriana zu dissem Obristen Camerer als ainem ansehelichen Vertrauten Ambt, als der nit Irer F(ürstlichen) D(ürchleit) sonder der Welschen Nation, da doch sonnst die andern Hohen Ambter mit Teutschen gebornen Grauen, Freyherrn unnd von der Ritterschaft ersetzt werden zu gebrauchen. Und das solches bey unnserm gnedigen Herrn dem hertzogen und Printz zu Florentz das ain Mantuaner zu Obrister Camerer verordnet werden solle, in mer weg, als Eur. Kay. Mt. selbst gnedigist zuermesssen nachgedenckens oder misfallen geporn mochte. Ist auch hiemit aus allerlay beweglichen Ursachen die wir haben. Unnd zuverhiehung allerlay Weitleuffigkhait unnser unnderthenigister Rat und guet bedunckhen, das gedachter Cauriana hierzue nit, sonder ain andere Eurer Mt. gefellig Teutscher Underthon fürgenomen werde." The Tyrolese government to Ferdinand of Tyrol, Innsbruck, 16 September 1565, HHStA, Obersthofmeisteramt, Ältere Zeremonialakten, 1 Akten, f. 67v–68v.

Although the wording hints at the importance of Germanness, it is doubtful whether Cavriani's ethnicity as such was a thorn in the Tyrolese government's flesh. By the mid-sixteenth century, the court of the Austrian Habsburgs was a multi-ethnic place, welding together aristocrats from numerous hereditary lands (Austria, Bohemia, Hungary) or other parts of Europe.[321] Although the local Austrian and South-German nobility held the upper hand in terms of the court offices, the Innsbruck officers can hardly be accused of xenophobia. Far more important was the fact that Cavriani was not a direct subject of the Habsburgs, which, by extension, reveals that the bridal household was not a sole assemblage of personnel that could have been made up of anonymous professionals. On the contrary, it bore a strong political meaning, aiming to represent the aristocratic community of the kingdom or duchy that entered the marital alliance with another one. Due to the personal character of princely power in medieval and early modern times, interdynastic marriage was always an act of foreign relations, a pact that was signed by the family ties of the rulers.[322] Therefore the noble entourage as well was a key tool in promoting the political meaning and social standing of the wedding, which, as stated above, was not a goal *per se* but had direct diplomatic repercussions.

The two prelates, sent to Lisbon to escort the future empress Eleanor [1451/2], would conform to this principle but come up short in another, perhaps even more important respect. The discussions concerning the composition of Bianca Maria's retinue [1488] indicate what sort of individuals were eligible for this role. According

[321] Volker Press, 'The Imperial Court of the Habsburgs: From Maximilian I to Ferdinand III, 1493–1657', in *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age c. 1450–1650*, ed. Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 289–313; Bůžek and Pállfy, 'Integrace šlechty z Českých a Uherských Zemí'.

[322] As John Watkins argues, Queen Elizabeth I in her decision to not marry, i.e. to not participate in interdynastic marriage system, was a precursor of the new ways of diplomacy that was not tied to kin relations of rulers. John Watkins, 'Marriage à La Mode, 1559 : Elisabeth de Valois, Elizabeth I, and the Changing Practice of Dynastic Marriage', in *Queens & Power in Medieval and Early Modern England*, ed. Carole Levin and R. O. Bucholz (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 91–4.

to Archbishop Arcimboldi they were expected to meet high standards of conduct and representation, that is persons from the highest echelons of society that did not lack appropriate garments or certain behavioural manners. Arcimboldi suggests to cross out from the list of the planned entourage everybody who cannot satisfy these criteria:

> [...] it seemed to him [=the archbishop] that some people, especially the prelates, should be dismissed, some for not having the ability and means to bear themselves as the duty *(bisogno)* requires, and others for not having the convenient [outer] appearance to which is paid great attention and which is highly esteemed in that country [=Hungary, Bianca's destination].[323]

Two priests, representing Frederick III in Lisbon, as persons from his intimate circle would probably have had little difficulty in conforming to Arcimboldi's norm, yet their low status would definitely be felt to be something offensive. If such low-ranking clergymen were to be found in the bridal train, they usually occupied the position of the princess's confessors or orators but not as leading members of the noble entourage. Ecclesiastical figures can be found in the noble retinues, but they maintained the ranks of bishop, archbishop, or cardinal, that were usually linked with some secular office as well. Maximilian I [1477] travelled with the bishop of Metz, Mainz, and Trier, the last two also being imperial electors; Bianca Maria Sforza [1493/4] was accompanied by the archbishop of Milan and the bishop of Chur; Philibert of Savoy dispatched Aymon di Montfalcon, a bishop of Lausanne, to fetch Margaret of Habsburg [1501];[324] on his way to Spain, Maximilian II [1548] was

[323] "... glie parso essergline alcuni, maxime de Prelati, quali fusse bene lassarli da canto, partim per non havere quella faculta et modo di mettersi in punto secondo ricerceria il bisogno, et altri per non essere diquella apparisentia saria conveniente, al che in quello paese se ha gran advertentia et ne fano non picola estimatione." Bartolomeo Calco to Lodovico Sforza, Milan 2 April 1489, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 19.
[324] Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, 1828, 5:152.

assisted by the Christoforo Madruzzo, cardinal and prince-bishop of Trent;[325] many cardinals also (Carlo Borromeo, Ludovico Madruzzo, Luigi d'Este, and others) took part in the journeys of Eleanor [1561], Barbara and Joanna of Habsburg [1565], some as representatives of the wedding families, some as local lords or papal envoys.[326] The pope, naturally, did not order the cardinals to join the travelling company without any reason: the duke of Florence, for instance, explicitly asked the pontiff to command Cardinal Borromeo to participate in the bridal train, on account of his family ties.[327] Their high social rank promoted the importance of the whole enterprise and to some extent mirrored the high status of the princess or prince. That is why Frederick III's legation, absolutely disproportionate to the imperial rank, caused such confusion.

Aside from high status as an element highlighting the prominence of the wedding parties and the event itself, there could have been other aspects qualifying somebody as a member of the noble entourage. Firstly, the brides and grooms were often accompanied by some of their closer or distant kinsmen, sometimes these personages were put in charge of the entire bridal train. The head of Eleanor of Portugal's entourage was Afonso of Braganza, marquis of Valença, her paternal uncle,[328] although originally her brother Prince Fernando was destined to escort her since he wanted to visit their uncle, King Alfonso of Naples.[329] But even Afonso was given the title of marquis of Valença only thirteen days before the departure and since

[325] Rotraud Becker, 'MADRUZZO, Cristoforo in "Dizionario Biografico"', in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 2006, https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/cristoforo-madruzzo_(Dizionario-Biografico).
[326] *Beschreybung der Rayss gen Mantua Anno 1561,* TLA, Ferdinandea 31, pos. 27; Brigitte Grohs, 'Italienische Hochzeiten. Die Vermählung der Erzherzoginnen Barbara und Johanna von Habsburg im Jahre 1565', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 3–4, no. 96 (1988): 331–81.
[327] Camillo Montecuccoli to the duke of Ferrara, Vienna, 19 October 1565, ASMo, ASE, Ambasciatori Germania 26, (not foliated). Pope Pius IV came from one of the branches of the Medici family.
[328] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 50.
[329] Pina, *Chronica de el-rei D. Affonso V*, I:125.

it was the first time this sort of noble position was bestowed on somebody,[330] it seems that the king aimed to intentionally promote the rank of the leader of the expedition. Ferdinand of Tyrol accompanied his sister Catherine to Mantua [1549][331] and then again to Cracow [1553].[332] Joanna of Habsburg in 1565 was supposed to be joined by her cousin Prince Ferdinand of Bavaria but since the decision about his involvement was made at short notice, he missed the departure of the main bridal train from Innsbruck and travelled with a week's delay after the princess.[333]

Secondly the princesses or princes could have specifically wished some trustworthy and familiar persons to join them on the journey. A solitary piece of evidence for this claim can be found in the correspondence of Maximilian II. Before his wedding journey to Spain [1548], he personally wrote to Count Pernštejn asking him to allow his two sons, Jaroslav and Vratislav, to accompany him, promising to keep them from danger.[334] Vratislav, who had already served at the prince's court as a cupbearer *(Mundschenk)*, was allowed to go, but Jaroslav not, on account of their father's long illness. Probably Count Pernštejn feared that in the case of his imminent death both sons would be far away, and thus there would be no one to administrate their domains. Maximilian however repeated his request one month later, giving thanks for the permission granted to Vratislav but asking for Jaroslav too, if not for the

[330] Martins António Costa, 'O casamento de Leonor e Frederico III (1451-1452) e as relações entre Portugal e o sacro império nos finais da idade média [The Marriage of Leonor and Frederick III (1451-1452) and the Relations between Portugal and the Holy Empire in the Late Middle Ages]', *Medievalista Online* 24 (July 2018): 20.
[331] ASMn, AG 199, f. 85.
[332] Stanisław Orzechowski, *Panagyricus nuptiarum Sigismundi Augusti Poloniae regis. Priore correctior et longe locupletior. Addita est in fine Bonę reginę luculenta laus* (Cracow: Lazarus Andreę, 1553), [C/r], https://www.wbc.poznan.pl/dlibra/publication/197118/edition/180771?language=en.
[333] Grohs, 'Italienische Hochzeiten', 348.
[334] Loserth, *Die Registratur*, 408–9. The letter is dated on April 20, 1548, approximately two months before the departure.

entire journey to Spain then at least for the small leg of it (up to Genoa) that should by no means put him in harm's way.[335]

One aspect that stands out is the request for permission from the companions' father. Could not Maximilian just give orders? Why did he need approval? How crucial the father's approval was is shown by another potential companion, Philip, the young duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg who was not allowed to follow the Habsburg on his bridal way because Maximilian had not consulted his father first. Philip begs Cardinal Madruzzo to communicate his excuse to Maximilian, expressing his willingness to join the company and his displeasure at his father's decision, calling it "quite strange because great lords and potentates do not usually implore their servants, instead, it is necessary that they [= the servants] beseech them [=the lords] in the humblest way...".[336] Even though Maximilian was not an emperor yet, as an archduke and Emperor Charles V's nephew, he ranked much higher than the dukes of Brunswick, and that is why in Philip's view there were no reasons for Maximilian to ask anything from them, for he could have simply commanded it. Yet it seems that contemporary convention required that if a nobleman wanted to join the bridal company, he had to seek the consent of his fatherly authority, which, in this case, had the last word, no matter how high the prince or princess's status was.

This policy could have been an act of courtesy, made out of respect towards the law of fatherly power over children, but it might have stemmed from a very practical reason—many noblemen in the prince or princess's service were underage. For instance a couple of letters pertaining to the preparatory process of Barbara and Joanna of Habsburg's journey [1565] request permission from the fathers of young

[335] Loserth, 416. The letter is dated on May 18, 1548.
[336] Philip of Brunswick to the cardinal of Trent, Augsburg, 26 June 1548, printed in Malfatti, *El archiduque Maximiliano*, 185.

courtiers, already in the princesses' service, to be allowed to be in the bridal trains as well. Even though the letters do not specify the age of the courtiers, it is obvious they had not come of age yet since they had served as *Edelknaben* (pages).[337] Young age was probably also the issue in the case of the above-mentioned Philip of Brunswick, at the time of Maximilian's passage only fifteen years old, but not for Vratislav and Jaroslav of Pernštejn, who were both over eighteen years old. In their case, Maximilian seems to have acted out of respect and deference to their father, an act which for some reason he did not repeat in the case of young Brunswick, which automatically resulted in the father's refusal.

Both Pernštejn sons must have shown their loyalty by faithful service since Maximillian justifies his request by "trust in both of them",[338] a quality—if we are to speculate—that might set them apart from Brunswick. Similarly, as shown in the previous chapter, when Joanna of Habsburg [1565] begged her brother to keep with her in Florence the German high steward, she also substantiated her plea according to trust and familiarity.[339] Having at one's side a trusted servant or confidant could have been a particularly useful asset for the prince or the princess facing the arduous journey or a new phase in their life. Maximilian's letters prove that the selection of noble companions was not based solely on the grounds of rank, social prestige, or family ties, but it might have been also based on the more personalized needs of the prince or princess.

The last factor important in the formation of the entourage was a symmetry between two wedding parties. This aspect is quite visible in Arcimboldi's suggestions

[337] Letters from Georg of Oppersdorf and Sebastian of Boimont to Ferdinand of Tyrol, Racibórz, 4 October, and Bolzano, 8 October 1565, respectively, HHStA, Obersthofmeisteramt, Ältere Zeremonialakten (1562–1836), 1 Akten, f. 88 and 90. Both fathers granted their permissions but demanded that the sons will not stay abroad for long.
[338] "...aus dem gn. vertrauen, so wir zu inen beiden tragen..." Loserth, *Die Registratur*, 408.
[339] See page 106.

for Bianca Maria's retinue [1488], discussed at the beginning of this sub-chapter. Being familiar with the King of Hungary's ways the archbishop states that Hungarians will certainly send to Milan to fetch Bianca the most splendid embassy, so the Milanese must match this level of splendour in number of people, sartorial lavishness, and overall pomp. As stated above, the Milanese went to such great lengths of finding out who would be in the other wedding party's legation that they even dispatched a special messenger to Hungary. Getting this information wrong could have thwarted wedding plans.

It was expected that Elizabeth of Austria would be accompanied to Poland [1553] not only by her brother Ferdinand of Tyrol but also another brother, Maximilian II, who was supposed to join the company. Maximilian indeed set off with his sister but in Olomouc, roughly halfway between Poland and Vienna, he turned back due to an illness. Unaware of this change of plans, Elizabeth's groom King Sigismund II Augustus sent a special squadron of knights, headed by Jan Drohojowski,[340] a bishop of Kujawy, to welcome him at the borders of the kingdom. Yet without Maximilian coming the bishop's welcome delegation was futile and Sigismund was reportedly greatly displeased, having thought that the presence of such a prominent guest—at that time an expected heir to the imperial throne—would help to embellish the wedding.[341]

As already repeated several times, the attendance of distinguished persons could highlight the prominence of the journey and wedding but at the same time it automatically entailed higher costs pertaining to the required hospitality, for instance, sending a special troop welcoming those individuals, arranging luxurious lodging,

[340] Drohojowski was also a head of the bridal train of Princess Sophia Jagiellon travelling to Wolfenbüttel two years later on. Jan Pirożyński, *Die Herzogin Sophie von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel aus dem Hause der Jagiellonen (1522-1575) und ihre Bibliothek: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutsch-polnischen Kulturbeziehungen in der Renaissancezeit* (Wiesbaden: In Kommision bei Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), 38.
[341] Orzechowski, *Panagyricus*, [Ciii/v].

presenting them with precious gifts, etc. That is probably why Guglielmo, duke of Mantua, did not want to invite any other princes or dukes for his wedding with Eleanor of Habsburg [1561]. The duke's wish had a direct impact on the structure of Eleanor's entourage as it was originally planned that she would be escorted by her brother, Archduke Charles, and reportedly it caused great bewilderment at the Viennese court:

> All the greatest lords of the court and mainly the first councillors of the Holy Imperial Majesty say publicly and everywhere that they are astounded that Your Excellency [=Guglielmo] had ordered to say that You do not want most serene Duke Charles, brother of the most serene bride, such a high lord, at Your nuptials. It seems to them that it is not appropriate to refuse the prince greater than You are, if he wants to accompany the sister.[342]

From the point of view of the main court officials and councillors, Guglielmo's refusal of the archduke, who stood above him in the social hierarchy, was inexcusable. This points to the fact that there was a common notion of correct behaviour, or more precisely, protocol in these situations, and its transgression was not taken lightly and could have had serious repercussion on the prince's image.

Realizing the potential harm to his reputation, Guglielmo tried to set things right and instructed his ambassador Cavriani to rationalize his aversion to the prominent guests by claiming that he was not planning great pageantry or sumptuous nuptials at the time of the originally scheduled wedding date, but that now he would like to invite the neighbouring Italian princes as well to welcome the archduke and honour so as in every respect.[343] Cavriani personally conveyed his words to the

[342] "Tutti e principali signori della corte, et massimamente i primi consiglieri di Sacra Maesta Cesarea dicono publicamente et in ogni luogo che si merauigliano che Vostra Eccelenza habbia mandato a dir di non uoler alle sue nozze il serenissimo arciduca Carlo, fratello della serenissima sposa, tanto alto signore parendo loro che non sia lecito di ricusar che un prencipe maggior di lei venga ad accompagnar la sorella." Cavriani to Duke Guglielmo, Vienna, 9 February 1561, ASMn, AG 200, f. 194v–195r.

[343] "Poscia che Sacra Maesta haura intese il tutto, potra risolver quel tanto che le parra intorno alla venuta in qua del detto Prencipe Carlo, se ui fosse di mandato cosa alcuna di cio, da quelle che dicevano ch'era bene invitar esso Prencipe, potrete lora risponder, che non si volea far invito alcuno, sempre che il sponsalitio si fosse fatto al Carneuale passato et che ben si fa hora questo invito, nondimeno non s'intende di fare grande apparato, né nozze sontuose, ma che bene non si lassera gia d'honorar in quelche

Emperor Ferdinand but apparently it did not make any difference, as the emperor repeated that Guglielmo had made known his wishes and after all, it was already too late for Charles to prepare as Eleanor was scheduled to depart in two weeks.[344] A similar answer was given by the archduke himself, who, after having been invited by Cavriani, responded that he would be happy to come, but that now it was too late.[345]

Guglielmo addressed the issue one more time, instructing Cavriani to reiterate all the reasons why the invitation for Archduke Charles was mishandled, and again blaming the rescheduling of the wedding.[346] But all the same, the prominent guest from Austria did not turn up. Be the duke of Mantua's intentions genuine or not, his communication caused much confusion and dissatisfaction, not only in the imperial court but also in adjacent Venice, which indicated she would not be sending the usual delegation to the nuptials since the duke of Mantua allegedly did not want the great powers present.[347] Also the Habsburgs probably considered this an insult since their excuses of being too late for the archduke to arrive do not hold up in comparison with the other instances, e.g. in the above-mentioned journey of Joanna of Habsburg to Florence when her cousin Prince Ferdinand of Bavaria caught up with the main bridal train just before the final destination.[348]

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si potra detto Prencipe,..." Duke Guglielmo to ambassador Cavriani, Mantua, 20 March 1561, ASMn, AG 200, f. 219.

[344] "Al che Sua Maesta rispuose che era troppo tardi et che quando ella desideraua di mandar l'Arciduca, Vostra Eccellenza le fece intender che non voleva a modo alcuno." Cavriani to Duke Guglielmo, Vienna, 31 March 1561, ASMn, AG 200, f. 232r.

[345] Cavriani to Duke Guglielmo, Vienna, 31 February 1561, ASMn, AG 200, f. 228.

[346] The instruction for ambassador Cavriani, Mantua, 9 April 1561, ASMn, AG 200, f. 258.

[347] "Quello di Vinegia mi dice... di non mandar altremente un'ambascieria, si come e suolita di far in simili casi, et cio per hauer inteso... che Sua Eccellenza non uoule che princip d'alcuna sorte uadano a casa sua, di che egli et ogni uno resta stupefatto et confuso." Cavriani to the castellan of Mantua, Vienna, 9 February 1561, ASMn, AG 200, f. 199.

[348] TLA, HS 5565, 39.

In sum, the bridal train, a massive group of people accompanying the princely groom or bride, was made of two main parts, the prince/princess's household and the noble entourage. Generally, the former carried out the everyday needs of the prince/princess and every individual was given a special position whereas the latter was an ad hoc assemblage of aristocrats and their small suites, that was to reflect the social standing of the prince/princess, dynasty, and entire kingdom, thus having a more diplomatic role. However this narrow definition does not apply universally as the princess's household, and especially its female part, also assisted in the construction of the princess's reputation, or facilitated the process of the princess's incorporation into the new environment. On the other hand, the members of the noble entourage could have been chosen for their moral qualities, or conversely, they could have been excluded due to financial reasons. Overall the wedding parties opted for equipping the brides/grooms with the greatest noble entourage possible as this gathering of prominent individuals created the ceremonial splendour and magnificence that directly translated into social standing. In a way, the entourage stood acted as a vehicle—an animated triumphal carriage, so to speak—that enabled the journey to fully shine and bring its dynastic, political, and social importance into the spotlight. As a whole, it operated as a non-accredited diplomatic agent that better than anything conveyed to the outer world the magnificence and power that imbued the bridal travel. The examples of rulers who betrayed this principle (Frederick III, Guglielmo Gonzaga) shows the rejection of this system did not eventually lead to the souring of direct political relations but added to the cheap public image of the monarch, which did more severe harm to his reputation.

3 Public and sacred ceremonies

In the previous chapters, attention was drawn to the material aspects of the bridal journey, the entourage, travel means, and lodgings. But none of these perspectives gives an idea about how the journey actually unfolded. How did it proceed? What did everyday life during the voyage look like? As a matter of fact, sources make little or no mention about what the material routine of the day to day on the bridal track might have looked like. If there is no mishap in the form of adverse weather, an ambush of pirates, or another memorable moment, everything we are left with is descriptions of ceremonial and festive events. In that sense the bridal passage resembles a continuous series of joyous entries to cities, religious rites, banquets, dances, musical and theatrical performances, and various other pastimes.

Naturally, a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century traveller could move without most or any sort of this revelry. A good example is Francesco de' Medici, a husband of Joanna of Habsburg who, after having visited Joanna in Innsbruck and her relatives in Vienna and Munich shortly prior to the wedding, caught up with Joanna's train in Trent and made it to Florence in a third of the time that Joanna had spent on the way. Francesco had left Trent on 21 November 1565 and on 1 December Joanna already addressed a letter to him expressing joy at his safe arrival in Florence; whereas the princess, having departed from Trent just two days after Francesco, reached the outskirts of Florence as late as 8 December, roughly two weeks later.[349] Evidently the bridal journey could have been much faster, without involving an elaborate sequence of celebrations. Then why was it so slow-moving, elaborate, and ostentatious?

[349] TLA HS 5565, 6 and 35; Joanna's letter to Francesco from Correggio in ASFi, MdP 5926, f. 78.

One possible explanation that comes to mind is the princess's entourage, a massive group of people, whose movement was inevitably slow and clumsy. Still, as we have seen above, due to residential or meteorological conditions, the bridal train could be split and travel separately from the prince or princess. Logistics, clearly, were not the main reason for the protracted progress of the bridal voyage. The following chapter argues that by means of a gradual staging of various public festivals and rites, bridal journeys functioned as a highly choreographed prelude to the wedding celebrations and their inversion in time. In so doing, the uniting dynasties were helped by third-party cities and rulers who did not hesitate to host the prince/princess transiting their domains with a due amount of magnificence, as will be argued, to accumulate social capital for the future. Travelling with festive occasions was not dissimilar to other types of royal mobility (progresses or *Italienzug*) but the unique character of the nuptial transfer, connecting transnationality, multi-territoriality, dynastic and political meanings, resulted in a special and powerful ceremonial blend that was not limited to the public spectacle but had deep links to the sacrality of monarchical power. This is especially evident when looking at the return journeys of the royal wives to their homeland, Catherine of Habsburg [1553], travelling back to Austria after an unsuccessful marriage with the Sigismund II Augustus of Poland was greeted with no festive splendour.[350]

Furthermore the journeys in our Habsburg sample show steady growth in the frequency of the festive events, so whereas the transfers taking place by the mid-fifteenth century include only a handful of them, the brides/grooms travelling a century after barely took a step without pageants of all kinds. This gradual festivization, as it will be shown, was caused by the logistics of travel and the emergence of new source

[350] Walter Pillich, 'Königin Katharina von Polen in Linz', in *Historisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Linz 1966*, ed. Archiv der Stadt Linz (Linz, 1967), 173.

genres, but could also be explained by changes in the court system gradually becoming more stable, and thus shifting the festive locus of splendour to the sort of mobility at hand—the bridal journey. The ceremonial events, however, were far from non-problematic triumphal processions as portrayed by the festival books, and this chapter will bring to light evidence proving that there were times of tension and crisis that propelled the participants to seek refuge in the supernatural, thus revealing an apotropaic function to these ceremonies.

The connection with the transcendental will be then addressed in the following sub-chapter. The wedding transfer was connected to the sacred sphere in various manners: visiting holy shrines and relics, participating in the liturgy, and even by its very schedule. As the bridal journey and premodern travel in general always exposed people to situations (shipwrecks, illness, bandits or pirates, etc.) that threatened their lives, it was obvious that travellers sought divine protection, especially so if the transfer was imbued with such a political and dynastic significance. However, there was another angle to this as well, since reverence of the holy objects or making small pilgrimages on the way was clearly connected to the spouse's transition to the new status and realm. As many of these acts of piety were often part of coronation—that immediately followed the nuptial transfer—it is the contention of this sub-chapter that the bridal journey was a prelude to this ceremony. Therefore in both aspects, public and sacred—the chapter problematizes even this division—the voyage served as a prologue to the main finale of the princely nuptials, wedding and coronation, a prologue stretched in time and space that very much boosted the strength of the monarchical event.

3.1 Festivals and spectacles

Royal tours have attracted the attention of many scholars and by no means only historians. Clifford Geertz, for instance, looked into the progresses of Elizabeth I and by comparing them with Indonesian and Moroccan examples he deemed them to be a continuous campaign of revival of the queen's charisma, defined as one's ability to connect to the core values and collective imagery of society (the so-called "centre"). According to him, the allegorical or pictorial images used during the entries were aimed to put Elizabeth at the heart of the values they represented, and thus to transform the queen into a moral idea, the very "centre" of society.[351] Pivotal historical studies by Roy Strong, on the other hand, recognized the critical role of early-modern progresses in shaping and popularizing power.[352] Since princely processions and voyages have been often analysed alongside other court festivals[353] it was critical to discern a major source genre for these events. Helen Watanabe–O'Kelly, who established a clear definition of these documents, also pointed out their main limitations: being a compound of history and panegyric, these accounts must be handled with a due amount of caution with respect to their dynastic and political goals.[354]

The joyous entry, a crucial part of most royal processions in general and one of the high points of the princely wedding as a highly choreographed event involving

[351] Clifford Geertz, 'Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power', in *Local Knowledge. Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 121–46.
[352] Roy Strong, *Art and Power: Renaissance Festivals, 1450-1650* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1984).
[353] It would take several chapters to summarize the entire massive scholarship on the court and civic festivals across entire early-modern Europe, looking into numerous aspects of the festivities, such as the revival of classical imagery, visual arts, music, or theatre. The most influential collections of studies: Mulryne, Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Shewring, *Europa Triumphans*; Mulryne and Goldring, *Court Festivals*; J. R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring, *Italian Renaissance Festivals and Their European Influence* (Lewiston ; Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992).
[354] Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'The Early Modern Festival Book'.

many symbolical layers, has also been widely studied.[355] Speaking strictly about the entries that were part of the wedding and followed the first meeting of the bride and groom, M.A. Katritzky studied an enormous bulk of festival accounts regarding Joanna of Habsburg's arrival to Florence [1565], and by scrutinizing often conflicting data in them, she produced a most probable course of events, paying attention to the symbolic meanings disguised in sartorial details, an order of precedence, or gestures being used.[356] Julia de la Torre Fazio or Anne-Marie Legaré concentrated on the political and dynastic messages encoded in the ephemeral architecture or tableaux vivants raised for the entry of the bride, that were not only meant to extol the persona of the bride and the dynasty but also to introduce her to the new realm and her new role by displaying the city's history or female virtues respectively.[357] Alexander Samson examined the ways in which the entry of Philip of Spain to London [*1554] cast a positive image on the whole marital union, that was felt to be a threat by the English people.[358] Yet besides Mitchell Bonner who rather descriptively and without deeper analysis reconstructed Margaret of Habsburg's [*1598] progress through northern Italy,[359] little attention has been paid to the solemnities which took place

[355] E.g. Mulryne, *Ceremonial Entries in Early Modern Europe*; Marie-Claude Canova-Green, Jean Andrews, and Marie-France Wagner, eds., *Writing Royal Entries in Early Modern Europe* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013).
[356] M. A. Katritzky, 'The Diaries of Prince Ferdinand of Bavaria: Commedia Dell'Arte at the Wedding Festivals of Florence (1565) and Munich (1568)', in *Italian Renaissance Festivals and Their European Influence*, ed. J. R. Mulryne and M. Shewring (Lewiston ; Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990), 143–72.
[357] Julia de la Torre Fazio, 'The Grand Entry of Elizabeth of Valois into Spain (1559)', in *Ceremonial Entries in Early Modern Europe: The Iconography of Power*, ed. J. R. Mulryne, European Festival Studies (Farnham, Surrey, England, UK ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 149–65; Anne-Marie Legaré, 'Joanna of Castile's Entry into Brussels: Viragos, Wise and Virtuous Women', in *Virtue Ethics for Women 1250-1500*, ed. Karen Green and C. J. Mews (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011).
[358] Alexander Samson, 'Changing Places: The Marriage and Royal Entry of Philip, Prince of Austria, and Mary Tudor, July–August 1554', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 36, no. 3 (Fall 2005): 761–84.
[359] Bonner Mitchell, *The Majesty of the State: Triumphal Progresses of Foreign Sovereigns in Renaissance Italy, 1494-1600* (Firenze: Olschki, 1986), 189–208.

before this grand finale, that is, to the ceremonial entries and other festivities taking place over the course of the entire bridal journey.

From the first medieval descriptions of the bridal journeys, the solemn entries to cities stand out. The saga describing Christine of Norway's transfer to Castile [1257] states that she was greeted "with such great honours [...] whenever she came", but in fact, for only a handful of towns we do possess more elaborate descriptions of what these "honours" might have looked like. Two miles before Girona, the princess was met by the earl and the bishop with a squadron of three hundred men (probably military). Then the earl led the princess to the city, holding the bridle of her horse.[360] A similar scenario was repeated in Barcelona, Zaragoza, and on the final stop, Valladolid.[361]

Christine's journey somehow resembles the earliest examples from our Habsburg sample, although at first the sources are not particularly specific. Eleanor of Scotland [1448] passed many large cities such as Lyon or Geneva yet no description of ceremonial entry or welcome delegations has survived, apart from the ones sent by her husband to Zurich and Kempten.[362] Maximilian I [1477] and Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] are documented to have made only three entries, but as we can see in Tab. 7 (also visualized in the maps in Appendix), the number of ceremonial entries as well as other festivities, such as solemn banquets, hunts, or dances, show a gradual, though not steady growth: Margaret of Habsburg, travelling by the turn of the sixteenth century to Savoy, made an entry to every greater city on the way; the same is recorded for Maximilian II [1548]. Despite a temporary hiatus in the cases of Catherine [1549] and Eleanor of Habsburg [1561], the growing amount of entries continues and reaches

[360] Vigfusson, *The Saga of Hacon and a Fragment of the Saga of Magnus*, 4:312.
[361] Vigfusson, 4:312–3.
[362] Köfler and Caramelle, *Die beiden Frauen*, 28–9.

its highest point in the voyage of Joanna of Habsburg [1565], who was ceremoniously greeted in almost every other city. Similarly, as time goes by, the bridal travellers received more frequent and more elaborate types of honours, as various forms of entertainment were prepared for their stay.

Table 7 List of festivities made during several bridal journeys (without the final entry)

Princess/Prince	Ceremonious entries	Solemn banquets	Other festivities
Eleanor of Scotland (1448)	Lyon?, Geneva?, Fribourg?, Kempten	Fribourg?	–
Eleanor of Portugal (1451/2)	Ceuta, Pisa	–	–
Maximilian I (1477)	Köln, Leuven, Brussels	–	Dendermont (water tilting)
Bianca Maria (1493)	Como, Mals, Innsbruck	Innsbruck	Como (boat race)
Joanna of Castile (1496)	Antwerp	–	–
Margaret of Habsburg (1501)	Reims, Châlons-en-Champagne, Arcis-sur-Aube, Troyes, Dijon, Dole	Dole	–
Maximilian II (1548)	Trent, Mantua, Milan, Genoa, Barcelona, Zaragoza, Olivares de Duero	Trent, Mantua, Milan, Genoa, Olivares de Duero	Trent (castle siege), Mantua (hunt), Vigevano (hunt), Barcelona (dances, plays), Lleida (bullfight), Osera de Ebro (bullfight), Zaragoza (dances in costumes, joust, bullfight), Calatayud (bullfight), Almazan (bull and hare hunt), El Burgo de Osma (bullfight)
Catherine of Habsburg (1549)	Trent, ?, Villafranca	Trent	–
Eleanor of Habsburg (1561)	Brixen, Trent, Rovereto, Villafranca	Trent	Brixen (dances), Trent (dances)
Joanna of Habsburg (1565)	Brixen, Bolzano, Neumarkt-	Bolzano, Trent,	Bolzano (dances), Trent (dances, fireworks), Mantua (hunt, theatrical

	Egna, Trent, Rovereto, Mantua, Correggio, Bologna, Firenzuola, Cafaggiolo, Prato	Mantua, Correggio	performance), Correggio ("dragon" fireworks), Bologna (fireworks, knighting of pages, horse race, dances), Cafaggiolo (skirmish), Poggio a Caiano (roe hunt)

How can we account for this festivization of the bridal journeys? Why is there a dearth of festive occasions in the 1450s and an abundance of them in the 1550s? What changed? As John Adamson argues, princely courts became generally more ostentatious by the mid-sixteenth century as a result of adopting more permanent residences, often in the urban environment that provided more opportunities for a rivalry in magnificence.[363] When explaining the connection between courts and celebrations, Helen Watanabe–O'Kelly, on the other hand, put emphasis on political instability: public festivals were supposed to counter uncertainty and to establish firmly in power those rulers whose reign was threatened by the capricious political climate of the sixteenth century. Hence, according to her, there is a direct relationship between the political situation and the number of festivals.[364] It is my contention that there are at least four factors determining the expansion of number and scope of festive occasions throughout the nuptial transfers: route, source situation, the general atmosphere of royal progresses, the end to peripatetic kingship, and the dawn of more precise rules for ceremonies.

The first limiting (or expanding) factor for the gradual staging of the journey is the choice of route. The contrast between an overland and naval journey is most obvious in two weddings of Margaret of Habsburg: the first, to Infante John of Spain

[363] John Adamson, 'The Making of the Ancien-Régime Court 1500–1700', in *The Princely Courts of Europe: Ritual, Politics and Culture under the Ancien Régime 1500-1750*, ed. John Adamson (London: Seven Dials, 2000), 11.
[364] Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'The Early Modern Festival Book', 5.

[1497], was preceded by tumultuous sea travel, lacking any sort of ceremonial splendour, whereas her journey to the second, to Duke Philibert II of Savoy [1501], was paved by numerous solemn entries and pastimes. Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2], too, had little chance to be ceremoniously welcomed: aside from the first meeting with Frederick before the gates of Siena and subsequent entry to the city, she was greeted only in Ceuta and Pisa. For the latter there are no precise descriptions extant, but the former does provide us with a few details. There was definitely some form of extramural greeting as Lanckman's account, the main source for the journey, specifies that a city delegation consisting of local officials, aristocracy, clergy, and commoners went to welcome Eleanor who subsequently entered the city "to the voice of trumpets and pipes", a phrase that may hint at more elaborate festivities taking place. Intriguingly, Lackman explicitly mentions that approximately thirty persons disembarked and went into the city, while the rest stayed on ships, which means that only a small fraction of Eleanor's bridal train (a mere 1% from a total of some three thousand) took part in the ceremony.[365] Given the particular material realities of the journey (naval route, huge entourage requiring lodgings, etc.) it is understandable that the entire bridal company did not go ashore, nonetheless, thirty persons was still a very small portion of it. All the same, this could be another hint of how different ceremonies were by 1450s in comparison to later travels.

Another, more important reason for festivization lies in the source basis. The first half of the sixteenth century marks the emergence of official records of festivals, the so-called festival books. The rise of this multi-dimensional genre, combining features of chronicle, panegyric, instructional literature, and genealogy, was precipitated by the invention of printing which enabled the spread of court splendour

[365] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 56.

far beyond its physical ambient; yet it is also true that many festival books remained unpublished and there were early-modern courts with a strong festive culture lacking a tradition of festival books.[366] Thus, even though the influence of this source genre should not be overemphasised—as there were clearly festivals without festival books—it had a long-lasting impact on the way we study early-modern culture and the bridal journeys: for the pre-1500 travels in our sample we possess no festival books, meticulously relating the progress of rituals on the way; all we are left with is letters of ambassadors or brief chronicle entries. The first festival books are preserved from the weddings of Elisabeth [1543][367] and Catherine of Habsburg [1549],[368] however the emphasis of both is put mainly on the final entry to Cracow and Mantua respectively, not on the festivities en route. This approach changes with Eleanor [1561][369] and Joanna of Habsburg [1565],[370] whose respective voyages gave rise to two unprinted festival books elaborating on the celebratory aspects of the entire transfer.

In these two accounts the bridal journey is one big triumphal procession, consisting of an almost never-ending sequence of solemn entries, pageants, and entertainments. The ideal royal entry generally, according to G.J. Schenk, consisted of six phases: preparations by the receiving body and the visitor (a); *occursio*—an extramural greeting and invitation to enter the city (b); *ingressus*—entering the city gates (c); *processio*—a procession through the streets to the church (d); *offertorium*—a visit to the main church coupled with a thanksgiving liturgy (e); *Einherberung*—accompanying the visitor to his quarters (f).[371] According to two festival books, Joanna

[366] Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'The Early Modern Festival Book', 6.
[367] *Kurtze Beschreibung deß Einzugs*.
[368] C.C. (?), *L'Entrata della serenissima et illustrissima signora Caterina d'Austria [...]*, stored in ASMn, AG 199, f. 84.
[369] *Beschreybung der Rayss gen Mantua,* TLA, Ferdinandea 31, pos. 27.
[370] TLA, HS 5565, p. 29.
[371] Gerrit J. Schenk, *Zeremoniell und Politik: Herrschereinzüge im spätmittelalterlichen Reich* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2003), 238–42 et passim.

and Eleanor's entries came very close to this classic model at numerous instances: upon arriving in the city the local authorities and their military escort usually awaited the princess outside the city borders, greeted and invited her to enter. Somebody from the princess's train answered their invitation, whereupon the entire train entered the city to the sound of cannons and musical instruments, parading the streets adorned with triumphal arches, lanterns, tapestries, textiles, and crests. The procession headed to the main church where the princess was given a cross to kiss and holy water, and the choral *Te Deum laudamus* was chanted. Afterwards, the bridal visitor is ceremoniously—with a military escort and solemn music—led to her lodgings where another welcome delegation, this time mostly consisting of prominent females, awaited her.

Each of the six parts of the entry could have been even more diversified, consisting of several steps. For instance a threefold scheme of the extramural greeting is visible in Margaret of Parma's entry [1533] to Verona. The illegitimate daughter of Charles V was first greeted six or eight miles outside the city by the four most prominent citizens who offered her accommodation in the city. The second stage, taking place two miles before the city gates, involved a local captain, a bishop, and "the entire youth", who made a speech to the princess, also inviting her to the city. This time, Charles de Croÿ, head of the bridal train and bishop of Tournai, answered on the princess's behalf, expressing thanks for such honours. And finally, one mile before the city Margaret was greeted by the Veronese podestà and local ladies who all dismounted from carriages and made reverence to the eleven-year-old princess, wanting to kiss her hand, but she refused. The account does not specify the liturgy in the church, so the entire ceremony ends with their arrival at the accommodation

arranged for the guests.[372] A similar multi-step form of greeting is recorded for Joanna and Barbara of Habsburg [1565] in Trent or Mantua,[373] so there was clearly a trend towards the diversification of welcoming rituals.

In the towns where there was no ceremonial entry, the festival books did not forget to mention the *occursio*–style (the phase *b* of the ideal entry) welcome group of the local representatives; if the princess passed the third party's territory, its representatives ceremoniously greeted her on the borders and accompanied her throughout the entire leg of the journey stretching across their domains. For instance, a Venetian embassy, led by the captain of Verona with sixty horses, was waiting for Joanna [1565] before Rovereto and stayed in her presence up until the Mantuan borders where, in turn, the duke of Mantua's envoys waited for the princess to welcome her with a solemn oration.[374] Even in the absence of a formal welcome, the princess by no means passed by in silence, unrecognized, or lacking even a tiny ray of ceremonial splendour. A strong cannonade from nearby castles followed Joanna's steps throughout the entire county of Tyrol;[375] likewise, Eleanor [1561] was saluted with artillery at every place she passed.[376] This type of honour bears witness to the fact that the festivization process gradually conquered every blank space of the journey and from now on, every step of the princess would go down in history. In stark contrast to this, Eleanor of Portugal [1453], despite having a massive armada at her side, travelled almost incognito—when arriving close to Marseille or Genoa, the locals did not know them nor were the Portuguese keen to disclose their identity, and when asked, they

[372] Sanuto, *I Diarii di Marino Sanuto*, vol. 57, cols 644–5.
[373] TLA, HS 5565, p. 3–4, 10–11.
[374] Ibid., p. 10.
[375] Ibid., p. 2.
[376] *Beschreybung der Rayss gen Mantua,* TLA, Ferdinandea 31, pos. 27, f. 2v.

only reticently replied: "Peace be between us and you. We are Christians coming from the world's end and with God's help, we wish to see Rome."[377]

A century later, the cities were not only aware of the princess's arrival but they competed in producing special ways to entertain the prominent bridal traveller on top of the banquets and balls that were almost ubiquitous. In Trent, Joanna [1565] witnessed a two-hour long mock siege of a wooden castle that was "very nice to watch".[378] During one of three days of rest spent in Mantua, the princess first attended Mass and a subsequent banquet. In the afternoon, she and the cardinals in her retinue went for a "very entertaining" hunt to the adjacent area of Marmirolo where fifteen boars and one fallow deer were caught. Another banquet in the evening was followed by an allegorical *commedia Flaminia* performed by Jews and lasting for five hours.[379] In Bologna eighteen pages approached Joanna, and Cardinal Borromeo, as a papal legate, knighted them. Subsequently, five small-statured riders competed in a horse race *(palio)*.[380] Various kinds of spectacles and pastimes, albeit far less frequently than presented in the festival books for Joanna and Eleanor, are documented for earlier journeys too. Maximilian I [1477] took part in a water jousting tournament during his stay in Dendermond;[381] for Bianca Maria's visit [1493] to Como "the most beautiful race of the boats was made. They sailed across the water of Lario [Lake Como] with such speed and ease as if they competed with the winds—a game most widely appreciated and finished with loud applause."[382]

[377] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 66. A similar encounter between the bridal train and locals on page 62 there.
[378] TLA, HS 5565, p. 7.
[379] TLA, HS 5565, p. 14–5.
[380] Ibid., p. 29.
[381] Rausch, *Die burgundische Heirat Maximilians I.*, 176.
[382] Primo Luigi Tatti and Giuseppe Maria Stampa, *Annali sacri della città di Como*, vol. 3 (Milan: Stamperia di Carlo Giuseppe Gallo, 1734), 412–3.

Hospitality was not confined to pageantry but took a very material form as well. Maximilian I [1477] was given three barrels of wine, one bull, and three oxen by the city of Cologne; one barrel of wine, two oxen, and twelve rams by the city of Maastricht; three barrels of wine and two oxen by the city of Diest.[383] The city of Reims presented Margaret of Habsburg [1501] with a collection of venison (deer, boar, roe deer, peacock, partridge, rabbits) and four vessels of hippocras, a sort of mulled wine that was well-suited for that time of year (the beginning of November); the princess received similar gifts in almost every city: in Châlons-en-Champagne (wine, roe deer, peacocks, pheasants, bison veal), Troyes (venison), Bar-sur-Seine (wine), Châtillon-sur-Seine (wine), Dijon (wine), Saint-Jean-de-Losne (wine), Dole (wine, mutton, veal, capons, wild birds, horses fed with oats), Salins-les-Bains (golden goblet), Pontarlier (fatty beef).[384]

In general, solemn entries of medieval rulers to cities were connected with gift-giving from the side of the host, usually after the sovereign took up residence somewhere in the city. Ideally a delegation of the magistrate would approach the guest on the same day as the arrival occurred—if it was already too late, the matter was postponed until the next day—and with a short speech would present the gift. The offerings in the form of provisions were conferred straight away as they were intended for immediate consumption.[385] In the case of the king's entry, gifts from the urban population were an important part in the entire ceremony of the royal adventus as it was an effective tool for consolidating a relationship between the city and the ruler, creating a mutual obligation between the two.[386]

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[383] Chmel, *Actenstücke und Briefe*, 1:159.
[384] Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, 1828, 5:155–9.
[385] Schenk, *Zeremoniell und Politik*, 391–7.
[386] Neil Murphy, 'The Court on the Move: Ceremonial Entries, Gift-Giving and Access to the Monarch in France, c. 1440–c.1570', in *The Key to Power?: The Culture of Access in Princely Courts, 1400-1750*, ed. Dries Raeymaekers and Sebastiaan Derks (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2016), 52.

Material goods offered to the princely grooms and brides, on the other hand, were part of the overall welcome and reception offered to these visitors. This is observable for Maximilian I [1477]: while some Flanders cities supplied him with various commodities, others, such as Brussels or Dendermonde, are recorded to have organized various forms of entertainment instead.[387] We can safely say that both gifts and pastimes were material and immaterial sides of the same coin, that is, paying respect to the distinguished traveller. Aside from providing an honorary reception to an individual, which might have been profitable for the city in the long run as we will see later in the chapter, the richness of the gifts could have become a way in which to vie with rival cities, since, as we know, this was frequently the case during royal adventus.[388] Other cities used gift-giving as a sort of advertisement for their artisanal products, that is, to make the princes/princesses the new customers. Such a case is documented for Anne of Bohemia [*1382]: when travelling to England to wed Richard II, she passed through Nuremberg and the magistrate presented her with two goblets, produced in the local jewellery workshops. In later periods, Nuremberg would even establish a permanent repository of precious items for use as presents during princely visits.[389]

The above-shown presents given to Maximilian I [1477] and Margaret [1501] produce evidence that donations in the form of provisions were quite common. This was not true only for urban benefactors—even the third-party authorities whose territories the brides/grooms crossed arranged for this form of largesse. The Venetian government, for example, regularly dispatched tens of carts, loaded with various kinds

[387] Chmel, *Actenstücke und Briefe*, 1:159–60.
[388] Schenk, *Zeremoniell und Politik*, 393.
[389] Ute Kümmel, 'Heirat, Reise, Beute. Kulturtransferprozesse anhand von spätmittelalterlichen Fürstenschätzen', in *Kulturtransfer am Fürstenhof: höfische Austauschprozesse und ihre Medien im Zeitalter Kaiser Maximilians I. / Matthias Müller, Karl-Heinz Spiess, Udo Friedrich (Hg.).*, ed. Matthias Müller, Karl-Heinz Spieß, and Udo Friedrich (Berlin: Lukas Verlag, 2013), 114.

of food, beverages, and refreshments to the place where the Habsburg bride or groom would travel. Besozzi, recording the journey of Maximilian II [1548], remembers:

> In Bussolengo, the prince was presented by those Venetian lords with approximately thirty wagons of confections, cheeses, sausages, tongues, hams, calves, young goats, capons, birds, fish, Malvasia, Moscatello, and other excellent wines, which the next day, he [= Maximilian] let drink to his court, especially Germans, who took care of it all and [drank it] quite quickly and happily with their headpieces, hats and other ad-hoc-prepared utensils.[390]

A similar delivery was prepared for Catherine [1549], Eleanor [1561], Joanna and Barbara of Habsburg [1565] in the Venetian-controlled town of Dolce.[391]

In the preparation of divertissements, the hosts did not hesitate to draw on local customs. For instance bullfighting games were staged for Maximilian II [1548] in several Iberian cities, such as in Lleida where "the most beautiful hunt of bulls was done, and it was very pleasing to watch these Spaniards going so valiantly with a sword and a cape to attack those robust and angered bulls and wound them without being harmed", as Besozzi, a chronicler of the prince's journey, narrates. Much less pleasing, however, was the *corrida* performed in Zaragoza, which Besozzi describes as "a horrendous and dangerous hunt of wild bulls", or in El Burgo de Osma, where "another dangerous hunt was done, during which a bull broke through a barrier made of massive beams and jumped into the crowd smashing and hurling people around on all sides".[392]

The festivals could quickly become lethal and the sources are not quiet about such unfortunate incidents. Fifteen people were stabbed in a tightly-packed crowd assembled for Eleanor of Habsburg's nuptials [1561] in Mantua; cannon shots fired

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[390] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 34.
[391] C.C. (?), *L'Entrata della serenissima et illustrissima signora Caterina d'Austria [...]*, stored in ASMn, AG 199, f. 84/2r; *Beschreybung der Rayss gen Mantua,* stored in TLA, Ferdinandea 31, pos. 27, f. 2v; TLA, HS 5565, p. 10.
[392] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 50, 52, 55.

for the welcome of Joanna of Habsburg [1565] in Prato killed two men.[393] Cannons also crippled a boy watching Maximilian II's entry [1548] to Cremona, shattering his hand up to the elbow. The latter accident, however, became an occasion for the prince to show his generosity and compassion as he granted the victim an annual life pension of 100 scudi.[394] A major enemy of pageantry and travelling in general was weather that hindered even the most fundamental ceremonials. Icy and muddy roads, storms, and other meteorological calamities were quite common and their use in rhetoric and commemorative works will be addressed in the last chapter.

However, what the festival books, especially those from Joanna and Eleanor's journeys [1561/5], leave out are the instances of inconvenience and conflict that would cast a shadow on the splendour of the ceremonies. In the festival book, Joanna's progress is a triumphal procession, flowing smoothly from city to city. Yet the diary of Ferdinand of Bavaria, travelling to Florence a week after the princess, presents a slightly different picture. Besides the shabby accommodation in Dolce in which Joanna and her ladies' court had to sleep on the floor, the Bavarian memoir retells other unfortunate stories. When the future duchess and her retinue held an after-dinner dance in Bussolengo, some uninvited "local parasites" *(Leckher vom flecken)* came to the hall gates and demanded entry. Having been turned down by the porters, they began to throw punches and rocks through the windows, and allegedly also started to shoot, which created havoc amid the dancing company. The incident was so grave that the local governor from Verona and subsequently the Venetian government (in whose territory Bussolengo belonged) started a thorough and extensive investigation into the case, even using torture in order to catch and punish the culprits. Another mishap

[393] *Beschreybung der Rayss gen Mantua,* TLA, Ferdinandea 31, pos. 27, f. 7r; TLA, HS 5565, p. 33.
[394] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 35.

occurred in a nearby town of Villafranca where a throng of people in the hall where Joanna was having breakfast pushed the princess's stable master whereupon he hit a Venetian page in the face, some say with a stirrup which the stable master held in his hand, so the page's mouth "was quite drooped on one side".[395]

Discord arose also over the order of precedence during the solemn entry to Mantua. Joanna and Barbara, traveling together up until this point, were also supposed to make a joint entrance to the city. However both princesses had their own cardinal—a papal legate in the entourage, and as a result each of these prelates had his processional cross. Since there could not be "two crosses but only one [in the procession], one of the legates had to yield his own. But neither of them was willing to do that." Ultimately a compromise was reached according to which Barbara would make an entrance on one day and Joanna on another.[396]

Even the spectacles and entertainments organized by the Mantuan hosts, so favourably described in the festival book, struck a totally different chord amongst the members of Joanna's bridal train according to the Florentine envoy de' Rossi, who relates to his lords that "these feasts were done with such a small degree of order and disarray that these German lords and knights who accompany Her Highness [=the princess] were very annoyed [...] because they were bumped and pushed from the crowd and could not see anything".[397] Rather than an expression of malicious joy, this affair serves as a cautionary tale and the envoy subsequently advises his lord to take extraordinary measures so that the Germans would leave Florence "satisfattissimi" in every aspect. However, according to the Venetian report, this did not happen either,

[395] Freyberg, 'Herzog Ferdinands', 297–8.
[396] Ibid., 299.
[397] Sigismondo de' Rossi to Prince Francesco de' Medici, Mantua, 30 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, fol. 569.

and the Germans eventually badmouthed the duke of Florence perhaps even more than the duke of Mantua.[398]

Be that as it may, all of these episodes reveal that the festival book describing Joanna's progress keeps out of sight negative and unfavourable aspects of the journey. Moreover, the botched entry to Mantua is outrightly falsified as the two cardinals are portrayed as making a joint solemn entry, and only a hint in the form of Princess Barbara not participating in the entry and waiting for her sister at the stairs of the ducal palace gives the real course of events.[399] In contrast with other early-modern festival books, this account was not printed, and neither its author nor addressee are known. Written in German, the author must have been a member of the bridal train who had good access to the princess, as he is well-informed about everything that happened in her proximity (e.g., he knows who attends private dinners), but on the other hand not well-versed in Latin, as he makes mistakes in transcribing the Latin inscriptions on the triumphal arches.[400] Nothing certain, aside from being a German, can be said about the creator of the festival book describing Eleanor's journey to Mantua [1561] either.[401]

The lack of information about the authors' background makes it harder to understand their real motives, however the accounts give a clear impression that the princess's passages are glorious undertakings preluding the final triumph; every instance of the voyage is imbued with pomp and magnificence. The objective is obvious: to push the declaration of dynastic grandeur even further, to glorify the union

[398] "È vero che li tedeschi, che hanno accompagnato la principessa in Italia, son partiti da Fiorenza malissimo sodisfatti per le poche cortesie che li sono state usate, ed in Bologna, al mio ritorno, intesi che andavano publicamente dicendo male del duca, biasimando la sua alterezza e sopra tutto l'avarizia." Arnaldo Segarizzi, ed., *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al senato. Firenze*, vol. 3 (Bari: Gius. Laterza et figli, 1916), 193–4.
[399] TLA, HS 5655, p. 11.
[400] For instance, misreading *Ingredere* for *Lugredere* on the triumphal arch in Prato, TLA, HS 5655, p. 34.
[401] Alfred Auer et al., eds., *Nozze italiane: österreichische Erzherzoginnen im Italien des 16. Jahrhunderts. Ausstellungskatalog des Kunsthistorischen Museums Wien 2010* (Innsbruck : Vienna: Schloss Ambras ; KHM, Kunsthistorisches Museum, 2010), 97–9.

and by extension the persons and families joining together. One must, however, be careful to deem it a form of propaganda—as John Adamson sharply points out, magnificence and representational display were rather expressions of dynastic self-affirmation, cementing an image which the princely house wanted to identify with and to preserve for posterity.[402] As the festive display also served to affirm social status, it was vital to prolong it for as long as possible. Yet, no matter how long the wedding festivities either at the bride's or groom's home lasted, there were always material limitations (finances, manpower) which dictated that they could not last indefinitely. The seemingly vacant space of the bridal transfer could have been an optimal way of extending the festivities without much pain and effort, especially given the fact the financial burden for staging this extension fell on the local hosts, often not even vassals of the wedding parties: the festival book for Joanna's travel does not forget to mention that the princess and her entire entourage was *costfrei gehalten*.[403] Such versions of events could serve as a blueprint for similar occasions in the future, being a part of an emerging dynastic ceremonial, which in the Habsburg case did not form a single handbook but rather consisted of a vast collection of records from the past.[404]

The increasing tendency towards festivization is thus connected to the development of the festival book as a genre, but this is by no means a sole reason for that—there is no such source extant for Maximilian II [1548], yet Besozzi's chronicle is swarming with festivities of all sorts. The disproportion between the good source base for a particular case and the scope of festivals is easily visible in the journeys of Eleanor of Scotland [1448] and Maximilian I [1477] in which almost all points en route are known but only a handful of ceremonies are documented (see Fig. 3 and 6 in

[402] Adamson, 'The Making of the Ancien-Régime Court 1500–1700', 34–40.
[403] TLA HS 5655, p. 16, 21, 22.
[404] Duindam, *Vienna and Versailles*, 195.

Appendix), but most importantly, in the case of Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] whose transfer is documented—aside from in-detail ambassadorial reports—in Tristano Calco's text *Nuptiae Augustae*.[405] This account could well have become a festival book, and in its first part (description of the proxy wedding in Milan), partially is; yet, as the princess leaves her home court, not much is said about the festivities and Calco is forced to change the tone, concentrate on the menial details and fill the blank places with orations.

Hence festivization must be explained by other factors. One of them is the interconnection between mobility and power taking place in this period too. On the one hand the sixteenth century was, as Roy Strong put it, a time of royal tours, and rulers from all around Europe made progresses around their domains in order to consolidate their power, popularise the monarchy's values, or simply to find pleasure and pastimes.[406] Yet rather than stemming from financial motives, i.e. to hand over the expenses needed for holding court to the host, the progress could re-establish bonds between ruler and subjects by providing the latter with direct access to the monarch, as was the case of Elizabeth I in England, who seemed to have a personal inclination towards constant journeying around the country.[407] It was, however, Emperor Charles V, a prototype of the nomadic ruler that allegedly never spent two weeks in the same place,[408] who first began to systematically use festival books as a mass medium, placing himself at the epicentre of the sequence of triumphs.[409] During his victory passage through Italy in 1535/6 following his successful campaign in Tunis, he was

[405] Calco, 'Nuptiae Augustae'.
[406] Strong, *Art and Power*, 77. For Charles V's progress through Italy see p. 82–5.
[407] Cole, 'Monarchy in Motion: An Overview of Elizabethan Progresses'.
[408] R.J. Knecht, 'Court Festivals as Political Spectacle: The Example of Sixteenth-Century France', in *Europa Triumphans: Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe*, ed. J. R. Mulryne, Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Margaret Shewring, vol. 1 (Aldershot: MHRA in conjunction with Ashgate, 2004), 19.
[409] Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'The Early Modern Festival Book', 7–8.

magnificently welcomed in Messina, Naples, Siena, and Florence with a series of awe-inspiring and carefully-staged processions combining triumphal arches, allegorical, mythological, and historical statues, and paintings.[410] This imagery, coupled with a revival of classical features and a strong emphasis on the recording of events had an impact on other courts[411] and definitely also on the portrayal of Joanna and Eleanor's bridal journey in the respective festival books discussed above.

On the other hand, this period is characterized by a slow and gradual transition from the peripatetic court to the establishment of more stable residences. Although far from being drastic and abrupt, this shift had serious repercussions on both the outer and inner aspects of the early-modern court, such as the number of courtiers, architecture, and space, or relations between the prince and courtiers.[412] Traditionally, this residential court is perceived as a move towards greater centralization and absolutism, aiming to tame the local aristocracy by depriving them of their domains and real share of power, but John Adamson in his seminal essay managed to shake up this model and to offer a more diverse account of events.[413] Nevertheless, the change from an itinerant to a more sedentary kingship might have influenced the festivization of the bridal journeys as well: as the courts and their splendour started to be restricted to one place, the wedding transfer became a useful option for visualizing monarchy outside its usual residential stage. In other words, a greater emphasis on ceremonies during nuptial passages could have been compensation for fixing the ruler and court, which, as a result, hindered its contact with a broader public that had to be reached by printed booklets recounting the course of festivals. Nonetheless, this claim deserves

[410] Strong, *Art and Power*, 82–5.
[411] Knecht, 'Court Festivals as Political Spectacle: The Example of Sixteenth-Century France', 22.
[412] R. Malcolm Smuts and George Gorse, 'Introduction', in *The Politics of Space: European Courts ca. 1500-1750*, ed. Marcello Fantoni, George Gorse, and R. Malcolm Smuts (Rome: Bulzoni, 2009), 19–20.
[413] Adamson, 'The Making of the Ancien-Régime Court 1500–1700', 15–7.

far deeper analysis that would concentrate on the later periods in which both trends (festivization and "immovable monarchy") are clearly visible.

However, despite the interconnection between mobility and pageantry, the bridal journeys differ from other tours of early-modern monarchs: unlike the full-time sovereigns travelling around their domains, the journey of the noble bride or groom was a unique, one-way journey, culminating in the event that caused it, that is the princely nuptials. To understand the precise extent of their dissimilarity, we must first outline the meaning of the premodern court festival as a whole. Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly discerns two types: ceremonies (a), which helped to create power structures, and spectacles (b), which served as symbolic representation of such power. According to this distinction, coronations, royal entries, and funerals, for instance, can be classified as ceremonies, while ballets, tournaments, or various sports are forms of court spectacle.[414] In the case of the bridal journeys, their final phase (i.e. arrival and entry of the new queen, her coronation, and nuptial ceremony) is usually considered to be part of the power-construction category of "ceremony" as these rites established the new royal consort and were vital for the preservation of the monarchy and dynasty; whereas the wedding banquets, theatres, and the entire accompanying pageantry simply fall into the area of spectacles that facilitated the interpretation of ceremonies. But what about the festivities taking place during the entire course of the bridal journey? Did they have a deeper meaning or were they just an extended series of spectacles?

In general, ceremonial entries created a legal bond between a monarch and their subjects, especially after a king visited the city for the first time after his ascension to

[414] Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'Early Modern European Festivals—Politics and Performance, Event and Record', in *Court Festivals of the European Renaissance: Art, Politics, and Performance*, ed. J. R. Mulryne and Elizabeth Goldring (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 15–6; Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'The Early Modern Festival Book', 5–6.

power; they were acts of mutual recognition and association.[415] The keys offered to the ruler only to be subsequently handed back were a symbol of mutual relationship, sometimes corroborated by a reciprocal oath with the subjects swearing fealty and the king confirming urban liberties.[416] Naturally, the advent of new royal consort did not have such strong power connotations, but being part of the wider cycle of dynastic ceremonies, constantly renewing power relations within the monarchy,[417] it also aimed at the primary function of solemn entries, though not as directly as the king's advent right after his accession to the throne. This was the case not only for the final entrance as the other cities lying on the princess's route also missed no chance to venerate their new queen. In a way, they were an extension of the grand finale, serving a similar dynastic function, yet at the same time, serving another goal too. As Jullia de la Torre Fazio points out, during Elizabeth of Valois's tranfer to Spain [1559] cities like Pamplona, Guadalajara, Alcala or Madrid welcomed the princess with sumptuous decorations and triumphal arches, that not only paid respect to her, extolling Elizabeth's virtues and pedigree, but also fashioned their urban identity by highlighting, for instance, the ancient traditions or military achievements of a particular city.[418]

A similar scenario is visible in our Habsburg sample on numerous occasions too, for instance Maximilian I's magnificent arrival [1477] into Ghent and other Burgundian cities cast the prince, coming with a potent and splendid entourage (although partially financed by his bride), as protector and saviour of the heterogeneous Burgundian power-conglomerate that faced massive instability after the

[415] Schenk, *Zeremoniell und Politik*, 509–10.
[416] Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'Early Modern European Festivals', 15; Murphy, 'The Court on the Move: Ceremonial Entries, Gift-Giving and Access to the Monarch in France, c. 1440–c.1570', 49.
[417] Duindam, *Vienna and Versailles*, 182.
[418] de la Torre Fazio, 'The Grand Entry of Elizabeth of Valois into Spain (1559)'.

death of the last Valois duke and an existential war with the king of France. Maximilian I's journey to Flanders raises another interesting point: although his itinerary started in Vienna and passed tens of towns and cities, among them such important ones as Graz or Salzburg, the sequence of triumphal entries only began in Köln where his entire entourage, consisting of imperial princes' delegations, assembled.[419] Up until this point, he appeared to progress without any "honours". Clearly, this proves that the underlying goal of staging the triumphal journey, that is to foster the spirit of the future subjects and impress them, impacted its final form.

Nevertheless, Elizabeth of Valois and Maximilian I were so lavishly received only in the cities belonging to their new dominions, in other words, they were welcomed by their subjects, so power relations may have accounted for the rationale of the ceremonies. However, what reason had third-party cities to greet ceremoniously a princely bride or groom passing through their territories? As already said, the bridal journey could be used as a sort of free-of-charge and convenient way to prolong the nuptial festivities from the side of the wedding parties. But what was the motivation of the third-party lords to stage a ceremony for a foreign princess or prince?

The general system of hospitality, inherent in the premodern society, has already been mentioned and it can partially explain why cities and towns sought to gain honour and prestige by hosting foreign figures.[420] Nonetheless, there might have been a more concrete motivation and the hints for that can be found in the inscriptions on the triumphal arches arranged for a princess's solemn procession. If we compare dedications from three cities in which Eleanor and Joanna [1561/5] were saluted, as recorded in the two festival books, all of them contain messages that can be subdivided

[419] Rausch, *Die burgundische Heirat Maximilians I.*, 175.
[420] Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England*, 309.

into three main groups, with each of these groups being presented (with one exception) in every city. The first group recognizes the princess as a traveller ("Blessed he who comes in the name of the Lord") and wishes her comfort and peace during her sojourn in the city ("May you enter with the right foot", "Auspicious hospitality"). A similar tone is adopted by the *commedia flaminia* performed for Joanna and Barbara in Mantua, which staged (among others) ancient gods, Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, and allegorical figures representing three Italian rivers, Mincio, Po, and Arno, all wishing good luck to the princesses and offering their services.[421] The image of three rivers mostly likely symbolized three power players involved in the festivity, Mincio standing for the Mantuan host, Arno and Po for Florence and Ferrara whose rulers Barbara and Joanna were about to marry, and therefore the coupling of these rivers might express hopes for peace and cooperation between traditional Italian rivals.

Secondly some inscriptions address the rationale of the princess's visit, that is, her matrimony, and by utilizing quotations from ancient Latin poetry or simple phrases they wish to the princess marital harmony ("By the bond of inextricable harmony", "Blessed are souls united in a blessed bond") and fertility ("Long-lasting and fortunate fertility", "The strong are generated by the strong"). The choice of Virgilian verses alluding to the Golden age, linked with the arrival of a promised child, marks a shift into eschatology, a motif commonly used in Renaissance wedding poetry.

Table 8 Inscriptions from triumphal arches from three cities ceremoniously welcoming Eleanor and Joanna of Habsburg

City (Princess, Date)	Triumphal arch inscription	English translation
Trent (Eleanor, 1561)[422]	Adsis dextero pede et fausto sydere	May you enter with the right foot and [under] the auspicious star

[421] TLA HS 5565, p. 14–5.
[422] *Beschreybung der Rayss gen Mantua,* TLA, Ferdinandea 31, pos. 27, f. 2r.

	Longa et beata foecunditate Concordiae vinculo inextricabili	By the long-lasting and fortunate fertility By the bond of inextricable harmony
	Christianae concordia[e] instauratoribus *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini*[423]	To the restorers of the Christian concord *Blessed he who comes in the name of the Lord*
Correggio (Joanna 1565)[424]	Di(vae) Joannae di(vi) Ferdinandi imperat(oris) filiae Corrigienses erexerunt Iam *durae quercus sudabunt roscida mella; Aspice venturo laetentur ut omnia seclo*[425]	Erected by the people of Correggio for divine Joanna, a daughter of the divine Emperor Ferdinand Now, *the hard oaks will distil dewy honey; See how all things rejoice in the age that is at hand*
Bologna (Joanna 1565)[426]	Foelices anime felici foedere juncte Foelix coniugium	Blessed are souls united in a blessed bond Blessed marriage
	Omnia nunc florent, nunc Felsina laeta triumphat *Forte[s] creantur fortibus*[427]	Everything is in bloom now, now joyful Bologna is in triumph *The strong are generated by the strong*
	Chara Deum *soboles Magnam* nostri *Incrementum*[428] Faustum hospitium	*The offspring dear* to God, [of you], our *big advancement* Auspicious hospitality

The last and for our analysis the most interesting group of inscriptions are those more personally targeted at the princess, which try to spell out the mutual relationship, albeit very vaguely. Each of the cities from Tab. 8 identifies the princess within her dynastic context by using expressions involving exalted adjectives ("divine", "dear-

[423] Cf. Mark 11:9; Luke 19:38; or John 12:13.
[424] TLA HS 5565, p. 18–9.
[425] Cf. Virgil, *Eclogues* IV, v. 30 and 52.
[426] TLA HS 5565, p. 26.
[427] Cf. Horace, *Odes* IV, 4, v. 29.
[428] Cf. Appendix Vergiliana, Ciris, v. 398: "cara Iovis suboles, magnum Iovis incrementum".

to-God") or claiming accomplishments ("To restorers of the Christian concord"), that served as a sort of marmoreal panegyric, designed to extol the House of Habsburg. But in the end this demonstration of deference only stressed other deferences already being paid by the host city. Part of one Bolognese inscription, nonetheless, encapsulates the reason for such honours as it connects the princess's visit with a vague idea of future benefits ("...our big advancement"). Did the cities really expect something in return for the warm reception?

One brief mention relating to the entrance ceremony of Margaret of Parma [1533] to Verona suggests that this might have been the case. After the princess's stay the local officials reported back to the government of Venice that they provided her with "the accommodation in this city since our illustrious *signoria* holds the imperial Majesty in high esteem". The officials probably repeated this rationale to the princess in the course of the extramural greeting since the same letter relates that Margaret, in the words of her translator, expressed gratitude for their good wishes and promised she would remember them and retell them to the emperor, either personally or via correspondence.[429] Apparently the Veronese and ultimately the Venetians used the princess's stay in their territory to curry favour with the emperor. As in this case the sources are not specific about the particular demands or goals that the hosts were pursuing, their approach might be seen as the accumulation of social capital, potentially useful in the future.

This sharply contrasts with the sequence of receptions which Margaret's father, Emperor Charles V experienced during his journey through France in 1539–40. As the Habsburg's visit marked a turn in Franco-imperial relations after years of fighting, Francis I, the king of France, saw it as a way to strengthen their newly-established

[429] Sanuto, *I diarii di Marino Sanuto*, vol. 57, col. 645.

union and possibly to make Charles yield the duchy of Milan to French rule. These political goals set the tone for the entire passage of the emperor: pageantry and triumphal arches in the cities emphasised the political concord and friendship of the two monarchs, offered biblical blessings for the traveller, and extolled the imperial dynasty. The level of hospitality offered to the emperor, as R. J. Knecht points out, far exceeded the usual standards when welcoming a noble guest, for instance, Charles V was authorized to appoint all vacant offices in the kingdom and pardon prisoners, which were powers reserved to the king himself.[430] In comparison with the motives behind the hospitality offered to the princely brides and grooms, Charles V's reception was much more politically-driven and articulated. The reception and pageantry organized for the travelling brides seems to have been motivated by a combination of the general rule of hospitality, offered to almost every noble traveller, and vague prospects of future political gains.

The end of the fifteenth century also marks the dawn of more precise rules for ceremonial entries to cities in general, which might have been the last factor contributing to the festivization. The first papal ceremonial treatise by Agostino Patrizi Piccolomini (1488) set the rules for welcoming a queen. She should be received as any other king or emperor—welcomed with a sumptuous triumphal entry, with a few exceptions: she is not allowed to kiss the pope's face *(osculum oris),* but only his hands and shoes, nor is she allowed to be seated among the cardinals, but cardinals may accompany her to her chambers. During the liturgy there should be prepared a special chapel where she could hear the mass. The queen is prohibited from taking part in the liturgy, however she is to be specially greeted on the stairs of St Peter basilica, offered a cross to kiss, and after singing a responsory and *Te Deum* she is to be led to the main

[430] Knecht, 'Charles V's Journey through France, 1539–40'.

altar where a prelate should bless her.[431] Besides rank we can see strongly gendered attitudes that impacted the different treatment of a visiting queen in contrast to a king.

There are no explicit rules for the organization of the queen's triumphal entry in Patrizi's ceremonial, however, most likely it was similar to the king's entry—the first in the order of entry were non-clerical servants of the cardinals and the papal courtiers, and the secular curial officials. Then a prefect or senator of the city proceeds, accompanied by the imperial envoy, if present. After that, the military squadrons come, followed by the college of cardinals, ranked from bishops to deacons. The king should walk or ride at the end, between two deacons, and after him, two or three of his secretaries. The procession should be concluded by other clerical members of the cortege, ranking from archbishops to abbots.[432] Precedence is given to the papal representatives (college of cardinals), perhaps claiming papal superiority.

Similar rules started to emerge in the other cities as well. The Genoese ceremonial manual from 1568 established a rule for the reception of a queen, duchess, or other lower princess. The queen should be welcomed by the doge who is to bend the knee before her and ride on her right side in the procession, if other queens or princely figures are not present (if so, the doge should ride after them). The minor noble ladies are only to be greeted at the gates of the city, without dismounting from horses or giving them precedence in the procession. In the case that the princely women were born in the imperial or royal house but wed to a duke or minor prince, they should be treated like queens and not lower princesses.[433] However, even with these meticulous distinctions, issues may have been raised, if, for instance, a visiting

[431] Agostino Piccolomini Patrizi, *Rituum ecclesiasticorum sive sacrarum ceremoniarum ss. romanæ ecclesiæ libri tres non ante impressi* (Venice: Gregorii de Gregoriis Excusere, 1516), lvi.
[432] Ibid., lv.
[433] Luigi Volpicella, 'Trattato dele cerimonie laiche appartenenti alla signoria di Genova', in *Atti della società ligure di storia patria*, vol. XLIX (Genoa: Sede della Società ligure di storia patria, 1921), 68–71.

noble lady claimed for herself a higher rank than the city of Genoa acknowledged, as in the case of Christina of Denmark (1521–1590) in 1588. The controversy about the way she should have been greeted, based on her merely nominal title, shows that noble status was not something given, but rather constantly negotiated.[434]

The uncertainty and struggles over rank regarding ceremonial rules are attested to in our sample as well. Apart from the already-mentioned precedence conflict between two cardinals before entry to Mantua, one case, the entry of Maximilian II to Barcelona [1548], stands out. As the city magistrates planned for the prince's arrival, there was no agreement whether he should be greeted with a canopy or not. Despite direct orders from Prince Philip II, the brother of Maximilian's bride and his cousin, the majority of the officials were against the usage of the canopy, claiming that this honour was a prerogative of their sovereign alone. The viceroy of Catalonia failed to persuade the magistrates, reminding them not only of Philip's orders but also of Maximilian's royal rank.[435] A new letter from Philip probably did not arrive in time to enforce his previous order since the pier arranged for the Habsburg's disembarkation lacked a canopy. As Besozzi informs us, this "made Maximilian indignant and [instead of getting off at the prepared platform] he disembarked with other personages on a frigate."[436]

Maximilian had every reason to be resentful: before the journey, he was given the precise protocol, authored by Emperor Charles V, about how he ought to address Italian and Spanish lords based on their rank (for instance, *excelencia* for the duke of Savoy, *senoria* for Venice, *senoria illustrissima* for the dukes of Florence, Mantua,

[434] Giulia Galastro, 'Wondrous Welcome: Materiality and the Senses in Diplomatic Hospitality in Sixteenth-Century Genoa', in *Practices of Diplomacy in the Early Modern World c.1410-1800*, ed. Tracey Amanda Sowerby and Jan Hennings (London: Routledge, 2017), 97–113.
[435] Malfatti, *El archiduque Maximiliano*, 191.
[436] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 45.

Ferrara, and Urbino, *vos senor* for Spanish viceroys and grand prelates),[437] but when it came to his position, the other side did not treat him properly. Therefore, on one hand, this episode proves the rigidness of Spanish court etiquette,[438] but on another it also shows deep holes in the—in this period still only emergent—system which was not yet aware of all eventualities.[439] As Maximilian was not a hereditary ruler of the country and his wedding to Infanta Maria was not supposed to make him king, it is understandable that the Barcelona officials found themselves in a precarious position. Given the choice between offending the visitor, no matter how noble, and the crown by attributing a symbol of power to somebody who did not deserve it they opted for the former, which must have seemed safer. The precise guidelines for the reception of a foreign king were established only at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and interestingly, it stipulated that the visitor be honoured with the canopy as a sign of his noble rank, so subsequent developments proved the Barcelona officials wrong.[440]

This incident in Barcelona, or, more precisely, its repercussions, reveals something far deeper about early-modern ceremonies and why people went to such lengths to get them right. After his sojourn in Barcelona, Maximilian caught a severe quartan fever, a type of malaria, that did not put his life in jeopardy but resulted in an unnecessary delay. An indisposition caused by travel was not uncommon, for instance Isabella of Habsburg [*1515] was still feeling unwell from her journey during her coronation in Copenhagen;[441] Joanna [1565] suffered from catarrh and headache prior

[437] HHStA, FA 86, 3.
[438] Bruno Pederzolli, 'Il viaggio in Spagna del cardinale Cristoforo Madruzzo (1548) nella cronaca di Cerbonio Besozzi', *Studi trentini di scienze storiche* XLI (1962): 20.
[439] Christina Hofmann, *Das spanische Hofzeremoniell von 1500-1700* (Frankfurt am Main ; New York: P. Lang, 1985), 45 et passim.
[440] Hofmann, 132–135.
[441] Jørgen Hein, 'Isabella of Austria, Queen of Denmark', in *Los inventarios de Carlos V y la familia imperial = The Inventories of Charles V and the Imperial Family*, ed. Fernando Checa Cremades, vol. 3 (Madrid: Fernando Villaverde, 2010), 2615.

to her final advent to Florence.[442] What is stunning about Maximilian's sickness is not the fact it happened but why it happened, at least according to the reasoning of his companions. The prince alone, judging from his sparse correspondence, attributed the disease to a turbulent sea voyage, impacted by a strong wind.[443] His attendants blamed the different climate of the Iberian peninsula but there were some, as Besozzi recounts, who doubted this and "considered the main reason to be the fact that during disembarkment from the navy His Majesty was not received with such solemnity as was due to his dignity and rank, according to the fashion in which it was done in all the cities he had passed in Italy".[444]

This brief comment suggests that the early-modern mindset linked the seemingly (at least for the modern eyes) futile and superficial ceremonies with an almost magical meaning. Ceremonial entries to cities equated, at least from the perspective of Maximilian's fellows, to good omens, assuring protection and a safe course of events. A tiny bit of ceremonial inaccuracy could put the whole journey into jeopardy, or even, endanger the bride(groom)s themselves. The court's piety in general had talismanic traits,[445] aiming to ascertain divine protection, but the apotropaic level which the episode about Maximilian's botched entry reaches points to a deeper layer of meaning to early-modern ceremonies that has not been considered by modern scholarship. Aside from the sacral-religious dimension, this quasi-magical function might go back to the ritualistic roots of the wedding transfer and the concept of liminality that will be addressed in the following sub-chapter.

[442] HHStA, Obersthofmeisteramt, Ältere Zeremonialakten (1562–1836), 1 Akten, f. 197.
[443] Loserth, *Die Registratur Erzherzog Maximilians (Maximilians II) Aus Den Jahren 1547-1551*, 435–7.
[444] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 49.
[445] Adamson, 'The Making of the Ancien-Régime Court 1500–1700', 25.

3.2 Holy occasions

The transcendental dimension of royal power has bewildered historians for a long time. A fundamental oeuvre on this subject, *Les rois thaumaturges* by Marc Bloch (first published in 1924), states decisively:

> [...] au regard de l'opinon commune, les rois n'étaient pas de purs laïques. La dignité même dont ils étaient revêtus les parait, croyait-on généralement, d'un caractère presque sacerdotal.[446]

The anointing of kings during coronations, together with deeply-embedded popular imagery, propelled the idea of a sacral character of royal authority. This enabled belief in the healing touch (especially efficient for treatment of scrofula) of French and English monarchs, which is the primary focus of Bloch's study. The semi-divine nature of monarchical power was highlighted by another keystone work, *The King's Two Bodies* by Ernst Kantorowicz (first published in 1957).[447] The king, anointed by God's grace, is a perfect *christomimētēs,* an impersonator of Christ, since he possesses two natures, a divine and a human one, with the former referring to the king's office and the latter to his physical individuality.[448]

As the previous sub-chapter showed, wedding journeys were naturally connected with the sacral sphere, as they usually ended with the coronation ceremony, which was a key element of the sanctity associated with royal power. But was the transcendency present even before it, in the course of the transfer? And in what way? This section shows that the sacrum was omnipresent during wedding transfers and it influenced even its timetable and course, either for securing divine help or enhancing

[446] Marc Bloch, *Les rois thaumaturges: étude sur le caractère surnaturel attribué à la puissance royale particulièrement en France et en Angleterre* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1961), 185–6.
[447] Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: University Press, 2016).
[448] Ibid., 48.

the overall prestige of the event. Moreover, religious acts were a pivotal means in the ritual transition of the bride, introducing her to the new family and realm.

As already briefly shown in the section about travel routes, sacrality had an imminent impact on the schedule of the transfer. As I showed in my Masters dissertation, the main points along the journey of Bona Sforza to Poland [*1518] were purposely chosen to coincide with the major Christian feasts (Christmas, Easter time) or important dates in the dynastic calendar.[449] This applies for many weddings in our sample too: although Eleanor of Portugal and Frederick III [1452] were married (15 March, Wednesday) and crowned (19 March, Sunday) by the pope in Lent, it was around the time of *Laetare* Sunday, which was considered as a joyful break in the period of abstinence and penitence and was connected with the benediction and distribution of the golden rose by the pope.[450] Moreover their wedding festivities did not occur instantaneously but were postponed until Eastertide (from 9 April on).[451] The same period of the year was marked by the union of John of Castile with Margaret of Habsburg [1497].[452] On the other hand, Christmas was chosen for Margaret's second nuptials [1501] with the Sabaudian duke, as well as for Joanna of Habsburg's [1565] and Bianca Maria Sforza's [1493], although for the last-mentioned princess the festivities were held off until spring due to delays.[453] The wedding and coronation of Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543] at the Wawel Cathedral in Cracow took place just two days before the feast of St Stanislaus (8 May), the holy patron of Poland whose shrine

[449] Patrik Pastrnak, 'A Bridal Journey: The Case of Bona Sforza' (MA Thesis, Budapest, Central European University, 2017), 18–9.
[450] James Monti, *A Sense of the Sacred: Roman Catholic Worship in the Middle Ages* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), 310–4.
[451] Pius II, *Historia Austrialis*, 2009, 1:166; Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 74–6.
[452] Max Bruchet, *Marguerite d'Autriche, Duchesse de Savoie* (Lille: Imprimerie L. Danel, 1927), 24.
[453] Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, 1828, 5:160–7; Grohs, 'Italienische Hochzeiten', 370–80; Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 37–8.

is located in the centre of the cathedral. Since the saint's feast fell on Tuesday, it is understandable that the royal nuptials and coronation were moved to Sunday which was deemed to be a more festive day. Many coronation ordos demanded the act to take place on Sunday or another holy day;[454] it is thus natural that the similar principle applied to the timetable of the royal wedding as these two rituals were often intertwined. However, as this topic is not reflected in scholarship, it would deserve a proper investigation.

Alternatively the wedding date might have been intentionally chosen to coincide with an important event in the history of the royal house or newlyweds themselves. When the nuptials could not take place at Christmas or at Easter, Gugliemo Gonzaga, duke of Mantua, asked that his bride, Eleanor of Habsburg [1561], would arrive on the day of St George, as this day marked the duke's accession to power. In seeking to fulfill his wish, Guglielmo and his officials did not hesitate to address various figures at the Vienna and Innsbruck courts, even his bride:

> [I heard that] Your Highness [= Eleanor] will make entry to this city on the Saturday after St George and I desire it to be done in another way, on the very day of the feast. It is quite reasonable because on the same day I took possession of this land. [...] That is why I beg of Your Highness with all my heart [...] to accelerate the arrival in such a manner that the entry would be made on the day of St George...[455]

Unfortunately for the duke, at the time of his request the die had been already cast and Eleanor could not meet the proposed date. Despite its ultimate failure, the amount of

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[454] Osvaldus Balzer, ed., 'Ordinatio caerimoniarum in coronationibus reginarum Poloniae observandarum', in *Corpus iuris polonici*, vol. 3 (Cracow: Sumptibus academiae litterarum, 1906), 208–12; Roy Strong, *Coronation: From the 8th to the 21st Century* (London: Harper Perennial, 2006), 32.

[455] "... che l'Alteza vestra farà l'entrata in questa nostra città il sabbato doppo san Giorgio, et io disidero oltre modo, che la ui si faccia quel proprio di della festa, poiche è ben ragioneuole, che si come io l'istesso giorno pigliar il possesso di questa terra [...] la priego hora con tutto il cuore à uoler esser contenta [...] di far [...], che s'affretti la uenuta in maniera, che la entrata qui si faccia per ogni modo il giorno di san Giorgio..." Guglielmo of Gonzaga to Eleanor of Habsburg, Mantua, 1 April 1565, ASMn, AG 200, f. 234.

energy spent for this demand points to the fact that the blending of the bridal journey (or more precisely, its final stage) with the dynastic calendar was of utmost importance. Tristano Calco noticed that the first meeting of Bianca Maria Sforza with Maximilian I [1493] occurred on the same liturgical feast (Laetare Sunday) as when the groom's parents met.[456] Although this information is incorrect (on this religious festival Frederick III and Eleanor were crowned, they had actually met for the first time a month before)[457] and it is not stated that the meeting was staged on this day intentionally as a result of Maximilian's wish, it is likely that the notion of importance of this date circulated during the festivities.

A very common feature during the Habsburg bridal voyages are various religious events, such as Masses, and visits to holy shrines. For Maximilian II's journey [1548] there are recorded only three masses, two in Trent and one in the abbey of Montserrat outside Barcelona, one coinciding with the feast of St Vigilius, a holy patron of Trent, and another with the Assumption of Virgin Mary.[458] On the other hand, Joanna of Habsburg seems to have attended Mass much more frequently—we have it documented in eight out of twenty four days that she spent on the way.[459] Even before the journey, the Florentine envoy reported to his master that the Habsburg princesses in Innsbruck are extremely religious, as every day they heard three or four Masses in the morning and they prayed the canonical hours throughout the day, allegedly "having the house constantly full of Theatines".[460] Given this pre-wedding

[456] Calco, 'Nuptiae augustae', col. 533.
[457] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 70.
[458] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 31–2, 48.
[459] TLA, HS 5565, two in Trent (p. 6, 8), three in Mantua (p. 12, 14 15), San Benedetto (p. 17), Correggio (p. 21), Bologna (p. 30).
[460] "...che hanno dicontinovo la casa piena di Teatini, odono ogni mattina tre e quattro messe e offizii, et il giorno vespro et compieta..." Florentine envoy Sigismondo de' Rossi to Prince Francesco, Innsbruck, 8 July 1565, ASFi, MdP 516a, f. 669.

daily routine, it is thus highly likely that Joanna started each day with hearing Mass during her bridal journey as well.

Was this behaviour just one of the early manifestations of *pietas Austriaca*, a fervent devoutness typical to the Habsburg house mostly during the Baroque?[461] By no means were Masses a unique feature of Habsburg traveling brides and grooms. Mooring in the port of Grimaud on the Provencal coast on 25 December, a friar had no misgivings in singing Mass for Eleanor of Portugal [1451] and her companions even aboard the ship.[462] Recording the journey to the 1565 Florence wedding, the diary of Ferdinand of Bavaria mentions eight days when the prince heard Mass, the same amount as Joanna. The account also hints at the possibility that the prince actually started every day with attending Mass, since upon departure from Neumarkt-Egna he wanted to go to the holy service but could not find any priest because the mayor of the city was "not very Catholic".[463] Usually having a chaplain in its ranks,[464] the main bridal train would not be affected by the repercussions which nascent Protestantism had on the local clergy, but Ferdinand's smaller retinue depended heavily on priests from the towns it was passing through.

Presence at the liturgy, however, was only one form of religiosity performed during the wedding journeys. When possible, princesses and princes made quick visits and detours to see and venerate holy shrines, relics, and other devotional objects lying on or nearby their route. During her stop in Ceuta, Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2] made a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Africa;[465] after arrival at Marseille many

[461] Anna Coreth, *Pietas austriaca. Ursprung und Entwicklung barocker Frömmigkeit in Österreich* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1959).
[462] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 64.
[463] Freyberg, 'Herzog Ferdinands', 284.
[464] See pages 83–5.
[465] Pina, *Chronica de el-rei D. Affonso V*, I:125.

from her entourage wanted to visit the cave of Mary Magdalene.[466] In Genoa, Maximilian II [1548] went to see the "Clainat" in the cathedral, certainly the *Sacro Catino*, an emerald bowl, believed to be a chalice used by Christ at the Last Supper.[467] Joanna of Habsburg [1565] missed almost no chance to interact with the sacred objects: she visited the remains of Simon, *bambino di Trento*, a child allegedly sacrificed by Jews in 1475;[468] she venerated relics of Christ's blood, the holy cross, a piece of the sponge given to Christ on the cross, and remains of St Anselm in Mantua as well as unspecified relics in San Benedetto di Po, and saw and kissed the *Sacra Cintola*, a girdle of the Virgin Mary stored in Prato.[469]

None of the above-quoted instances of devotional practice is accompanied by a commentary expounding the reasons for venerating each relic or attending Mass at particular date. Therefore we can only speculate at the grounds on which the prince or princess acted in this way. Most of the sites were probably visited out of personal piety or curiosity, either of the princess or her companions, who clearly saw the journey as a chance to explore foreign lands, or make a small pilgrimage on the way, as is evident from Eleanor of Portugal's above-quoted stay in Marseille [1451/2] or Frederick III's envoys who on the way to Portugal visited Santiago de Compostella. Yet certainly the journeys created a window of opportunity for seeking divine grace, sometimes not only by passing holy shrines: the passage of Barbara and Joanna of Habsburg [1565] through Trent and Bologna gave rise to plenary indulgence for all people presented in the particular churches. The papal bulls, granting remissions of 200 days and 40 years

[466] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 62.
[467] Ferdinand Menčík, *Die Reise Kaiser Maximilian II. nach Spanien im Jahre 1548* (Vienna: In Commission bei Carl Gerold's Sohn, 1898), 10.
[468] Stephen Bowd, 'Simon of Trent', in *Oxford Bibliographies*, accessed 13 December 2020, https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195399301/obo-9780195399301-0433.xml.
[469] TLA HS 5565, p. 8, 12, 15, 17, 34.

in Purgatory for each spot respectively, were read by Carlo Borromeo, a legate who accompanied Joanna at the behest of the pope.[470] Although a proclamation of indulgences was a standard part of the entry of the papal legate into a city,[471] only Trent and Bologna are recorded to have witnessed this privilege which must have been a special courtesy from the side of the pope, alongside the bare act that he sent legates to join both bridal trains (of Joanna and Barbara).

But there could have been other motivations for visiting holy shrines. By the late Middle-Ages, the veneration of the *Sacra Cintola,* approached by Joanna in Prato [1565], had become popular especially among upcoming mothers who sought divine protection during pregnancy and labour by means of the holy object.[472] Did Joanna have this purpose on mind while worshipping this relic? Was she supposed to revere it due to her planned role of mother? The source describing this event provides us with no further details, nevertheless Joanna would not be a unique princess in approaching a holy object with potential to help her with motherly duties. Travelling to wed William II of Hesse, Yoland of Lorraine [*1500] also stopped at a shrine possessing the relic believed to help in pregnancy, the cloak of St. Elizabeth in Marburg. Moreover, St. Elizabeth was an actual ancestor of Yoland's groom and the Hessian house used her cult to promote its social status. Visiting such a dynastic shrine would also be the first step of introduction into the sacred circle of the family the princess was about to enter by marriage.[473] In this sense, veneration of relics would be another way the journey visualized the ritual transition of the bride, another means of

[470] Ibid., p. 5 and 27.
[471] Antonín Kalous, *Late Medieval Papal Legation. Between the Councils and the Reformation* (Rome: Viella, 2017), 114.
[472] Katherine M. Tycz, 'Material Prayers and Maternity in Early Modern Italy: Signed, Sealed, Delivered', in *Domestic Devotions in Early Modern Italy*, ed. Maya Corry, Marco Faini, and Alessia Meneghin (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2018), 263–4.
[473] Patrik Pastrnak, 'The Way of Becoming a Good Queen: The Bridal Journey as a Preparation for the Queenly Role', in *Queens in waiting,* ed. Sarah Betts and Chloë McKenzie (forthcoming).

materializing her new role as mother and wife, and therefore it would be a fundamental part of the ritual level of the journey. Strong evidence for this hypothesis is adoration of the dynastic shrine/saint prior to the princess's departure from home, as documented for Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2] in our sample,[474] but also known from other medieval cases: Joan of France [*1371] before her journey to Aragon visited the dynastic burial place at Saint-Denis and moreover, she was given a special sum to distribute to various churches around Paris; Margaret of York [*1468], leaving England, made a small pilgrimage to the shrine of Thomas Becket.[475] On the other hand, pilgrimages to the kingdom's holy patron and other devotional acts (e.g. fasting) were part of coronation rites,[476] which again points to the fact that the bridal journey had no less sacral meaning.

But religious acts could even have been connected with the more material side of the journey as well. It seems that Maximilian II's visit [1548] and subsequent attendance at Mass in the monastery of Montserrat was motivated by a quartan fever the prince contracted after leaving Barcelona.[477] In the midst of a severe sea storm, Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2] and her closest advisors pledged to send at their expenses two persons to make a pilgrimage to Santiago, and as a result of their vow "the storm and wind calmed down".[478] Both cases show that religiosity was used as a means to ensure the smooth progress of the journey, endangered by natural forces or mishaps.

[474] See pages 176–8.
[475] Keane, *Material Culture and Queenship in 14th-Century France*, 2; Christine B. Weightman, *Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy, 1446-1503* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1989), 45–7.
[476] Aleksander Gieysztor, 'Gesture in the Coronation Ceremonies of Medieval Poland', in *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual*, ed. János M. Bak (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 157.
[477] The marquis of Aguilar to Prince Philip II, Barcelona, 16 August 1548, printed in Malfatti, *El archiduque Maximiliano*, 202.
[478] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 62.

This brings us to the reflections from the end of the previous sub-chapter. Did both religious and ceremonial acts in the course of the wedding transfer have an apotropaic function, serving to ward off evil and usher in good luck, necessary for the next period of their lives? This narrative is not very visible in the sources but we can catch a rare glimpse which shows that at least for some contemporaries it was very much actual, or at least, they were reminded of this side of reality in times of crisis, such as illness of the prince/princess. Such use of the sacral means is understandable, given the level of peril lying in every premodern transfer. What this chapter brings is the insight that protection, or safe passage, could have been achieved by proper execution of the "public" ceremonies. The botched first reception of the incoming prince might have been the source of evil and physical harm. Or at least so some people believed. If that was the case, magnificence and triumph, omnipresent during the nuptial travel, was not only the utterance of social rank and power but it had a magical character as well. In Montesquieu's words, with which Marc Bloch starts his book, "ce roi"—in our case le voyage—"est un grand magicien".

In conclusion, in the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, bridal journeys began to be more ceremonial and this trend towards greater festivization can be explained by the emergence of a new medium of recording, by the influence of other royal progresses, and by the gradual transition from a peripatetic to a residential model of princely courts. Festival books carefully crafted an image of the wedding passage as one continuous stream of triumphs, and thus cast it as a protracted prelude to the nuptial festivities, often paid by the third-party cities and princes who saw the visit of the noble groom/bride as a means to build useful social links for the future. Conflicts and moments of crisis, excluded from the glorious-style narrative of the

festival books, were by no means rare but ultimately, bear witness to the degree of effort which premodern society expended in getting these acts right, not only in order to fulfil the ceremonial rules or to propel dynastic self-affirmations, but to guarantee semi-magical protection for the bridal traveller. This was further supported by invoking sacral means that played an irreplaceble role during the nuptial transfer. Blending of the Church calender with the wedding timetable, small pilgrimages, participation in liturgy, indulgences—all of this point to the fact that these journeys were supposed to be a blessed time for the newlyweds, families, dynasties, and everybody involved. Moreover they help to highlight the holy elements, connected with monarchical power, that were present in coronation rites, so we can say that the journey served as a prolongation—in reverse time—of this sacred rite.

4 Ritual transition

The previous section looked into the ceremonies, public and religious, which can be labelled as a stream of big monarchical and dynastic feasts. Given the unique character for the life of a particular prince(ss) and realm, these nuptial celebrations indulged in extraordinary panache for which the journey was an ideal conveyor. However besides these rites, taking place at a macro level, there was also a micro level—the ritual transition which from an anthropological point of view occurs in every marriage. Again, the bridal journey, many times stretching across the continent, was a perfect way how to visualize this passage in an actual physical movement. This rite of passage is an exceptional feature, distinguishing the nuptial transfer from other types of royal mobility in the premodern era. The following chapter delves into modes that facilitated the princess's detachment from the old authority (father) and the new one (husband), from the old environment to the new one.

As a result, the two edges of the transition, that is the separation and inclusion, are addressed. Both these stages are marked by various encounters and their inversions, i.e. farewells, the most prominent of which are, naturally, with the parents (or other relatives) and the new husband and his kin. This chapter thus also analyses ways of staging the first meeting within the wider perspective of the bride/groom's integration, along with its counterpart—the separation from the native milieu. As it will be argued, these processes were not instantaneous but gradual, not necessarily even ending with the wedding.

The crossing of symbolic borders, present in wedding rites, was the backbone of Christiane Coester's study,[479] but otherwise the subject is nearly untouched by

[479] Coester, 'Crossing Boundaries'.

modern scholarship. A notable exception is Katarzyna Kosior, who in her thought-provoking work that examines the genesis of queens in early-modern France and Poland, also brings attention to the nuptial transition.[480] By scrutinizing rituals and the order of ceremonies, connected with royal weddings, Kosior argues that the rite of passage enabled the projection of (often manifold) dynastic identities as well as emotions and anxieties that were by no means staged. Kosior also analysed the first meetings of royal newlyweds, but aside from her, scholars have usually concentrated on the bride's integration from the long-term perspective, not pinpointing the features of these processes during the bridal transfer (more in the second sub-chapter).

This section draws upon the anthropological work of Arnold van Gennep, according to whom the nuptial rites (like other rites of passage) represent rituals of incorporation that are preceded by rituals of separations and the time of liminality. Symbolic acts, such as destroying toys or other childhood items, were meant to demonstrate a breaking-off from the native family and the age of immature; on the other hand, exchange of gifts or sharing a common meal were supposed to facilitate the union of two individuals.[481] However, how were these rites performed in the case of not ordinary nuptials? How did princesses, daughters and soon-to-be wives of kings, cross this symbolic border? How did they leave their native family and enter the new one? And was it only a family matter or a state one as well? Were these rites set in stone or agreed upon on-site, taking into account various local customs? And was the process the same for travelling grooms?

As nobody has examined the processes of integration and separation of medieval and early-modern princely spouses on a transnational comparative scale, this

[480] Kosior, *Becoming a Queen*, 23–59.
[481] Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 116–145.

chapter attempts a close inspection of both procedures. At first, the farewell to the native dynasty and a broader range of acts that were meant to alleviate the disconnection of the bride are addressed, demonstrating that rather than a solitary event (an emotional valediction) this was a continuous series of steps. The same will then apply to the second part of this chapter, the first meeting with the spouse and the unifying rituals. Especially for the segregative rites, the analysis will rely heavily on Eleanor of Portugal's [1451/2] voyage, as this case presents an unprecendentedly well-documented account of farewell ceremonies, but also other examples juxtaposed with Carafa's ideal scenario will be employed. The section also brings light gender differences and demonstrates that the travelling grooms, even though not passsing from one male authority to another, participated partially in the process, which was caused by political-propagandistic needs. As such, this chapter thus problematises the anthropological concept of nuptial transition and points to this organic character of this rite which was often a result of the compromise between actors with different cultural backgrounds.

4.1 Farewell and separation

Unlike the first meetings of the princely newlyweds, in-detail descriptions of the farewell rites are much rarer. In our Habsburg sample, the most elaborate account of the separation rites is to be found for Eleanor of Portugal's [1451/2] departure from Lisbon. The princess was led by the king Edoarde, her brother, with great solemnity to the Sé (the city cathedral) where a solemn pontifical mass was sung. Unfortunately the sermon is not extant but according to the summarizing chronicle's report, the

bishop addressed the departure by adding words of comfort for Eleanor.[482] Having finished the mass, the bishop said many prayers for a prosperous journey by sea and land, and then, made a benediction over the princess. Unfortunately, we do not possess the liturgical ordo, prescribing prayers for this occasion but most likely it copied the rites for departing travellers,[483] mixed, perhaps, with a prayer for blissful marriage. As the solemn procession, consisting of the princess, members of the royal family, and aristocracy, was coming out of the Sé,

> Eleanor turned to the cross, fell on her knees—almost as if she were prostrated on the ground—and entrusted herself to the God and to the Passion of the Lord Jesus Christ. And having received permission by Saint Vincent, a holy patron [of the cathedral], under whose protection she was born and baptised, she crossed the doorstep with the queen [her sister-in-law] who accompanied her outside of the city, although being pregnant and close to giving birth.[484]

With a high level of certainty, the gesture performed by Eleanor for which Lanckman could not find a fitting name, can be identified as *genuflexio proclivis,* an interstage between prostration and genuflexion during which the body rests on the knees while the upper part is inclined forwards, with the head sometimes touching the ground. Along with genuine prostration (i.e. lying on the ground), this posture was associated with veneration and obeisance towards a figure with a transcendental aura (God, kings) in its most radical, albeit positive form.[485] By enacting such an exaggerated pose, the princess was highlighting the bond with the saint that was about to be broken, and at the same time it was understood as a necessary step for obtaining the authorization of the divine power to leave. One can draw analogy to the sacrificial offer of coins to

[482] Pina, *Chronica de el-Rei D. Affonso V*, I:124.
[483] M. Cecilia Gaposchkin, 'Sacralizing the Journey. Liturgies of Travel and Pilgrimage before the Crusades', in *Travel, Pilgrimage and Social Interaction from Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, ed. Jenni Kuuliala and Jussi Rantala (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), 205–25.
[484] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 50.
[485] Dmitri Zakharine, 'Medieval Perspectives in Europe: Oral Culture and Bodily Practices', in *Body—Language—Communication. An International Handbook on Multimodality in Human Interaction*, ed. Alan Cienki et al., vol. 1 (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2013), 349.

Lares Familiares which the bride in ancient Rome was supposed to make.[486] Both cases represent a typical feature of separation rites that often involved emancipation from the family's deities.[487]

The procession then paraded through the entire city to the port where a *karraca* ship was already moored. Eleanor together with her family members, ladies' court and Frederick's orators boarded the ship and had a common dinner. The actual departure, however, did not take place immediately afterwards but almost half a month later: the solemn boarding of the ship took place on October 25, while the actual departure from the city occurred on November 12! The span of several weeks was used for getting other naval vessels ready and loading them with necessary supplies. Yet quite surprisingly the princess over the entire course of this time stayed aboard, while "every day, the lord king with her sisters would visit the lady bride for [the giving of] consolation".[488]

As soon as all the ships were fully prepared, the king and his councillors came anew to Eleanor and "... called all captains, soldiers and men-at-arms, officials and leaders of ships to make again the pledge to serve bravely and faithfully, and if necessary, to give their lives. Then, he ordered all captains and soldiers to obey under penalty of death the lord marquis of Valença, the commander of this expedition on sea and land." Having received the oath from the retinue members, the king led many talks with Frederick's envoys, entrusting them with his sister and wishing them the best. At the end the king embraced the ambassadors "as it was usual" *(more solito)*.[489]

[486] Hersch, *The Roman Wedding. Ritual and Meaning in Antiquity*, 176–7.
[487] Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 130.
[488] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 50.
[489] Ibid.

However not even this marked the conclusion of the farewell rites. On November 4 Eleanor, her ladies' court, Frederick's envoys, and a few other unspecified persons, boarded a larger boat and sailed to the chapel of a certain hermit.[490] The point of this short trip was not dissimilar from the pompous rites taking place several weeks before in the Lisbon cathedral, although this time it had a slightly more personal edge. The hermit heard Eleanor and her companions' confession, whereupon Mass was sung and the Eucharist served. After these devotional acts, the princess entrusted *(commendauit)* herself and her entourage to the hermit with "gifts and offerings", meaning she asked for his prayers during the perilous voyage she was about to make. However not everything revolved around spiritual matters, as the day was not completed until Eleanor made a serving of confections *(prelibacionem de zukaro)* and "small fish with bread" *(pisciculis cum pane)*, probably a mix of dessert with an anchovy-style hors d'oeuvre, as the main banquet took place later on at Eleanor's main ship mooring in the Lisbon port.

The next morning (5 November) a priest carrying the Eucharist in a vessel hung on his neck came aboard the princess's *karraca* and recited a shortened Mass *(missa sicca)*, giving everybody benediction. We do not know the point of this liturgy since it was neither a holiday nor Sunday; most likely it had been anticipated they would finally set off, but the weather conditions must have changed because only on November 12 were the anchors raised and all the ships left port "with a good wind and hoisted sails". The king sailed out on his own vessel as well, accompanying his sister for three or four miles and even bidding her farewell from afar with certain signs *(a*

[490] Although Lanckman does not state its name, he gives specifics that it lies in the last part of the Earth *(finibus terre),* just like Finisterre in Galicia, and that it is dedicated to Virgin Mary. Given the location and the patron, the safest candidate is the sanctuary of Our Lady of Cabo *(Nossa Senhora do Cabo)*, situated a few kilometres south from Lisbon.

longe certis signis ualedicens eam).[491] Unfortunately, Lanckman is not more detailed about the character of these signs, whether these were visual (and if so, what sort of visual? a flag?) or acoustic.

Be that as it may, Eleanor's valediction was a convoluted process, consisting of at least three farewells:

a) spiritual: the solemn ceremony in the cathedral, pilgrimage to the hermit, Mass onboard;

b) dynastic–political: receiving an oath of loyalty aboard Eleanor's ship;

c) familial: final departure and escorting the princess for several kilometres.

Although Lanckman provides us with this well-detailed account, it raises more questions than it answers. Why was the farewell diversified in such a way? Was it intentional or the result of accident? Why did Eleanor have to be confined to her ship cabin instead of waiting in the royal residence until everything would be ready? Why did the solemn farewell rites not take place on the day of the actual departure?

Adverse meteorological conditions, like storms or absence of wind, can account for the delay between the first official farewell in the cathedral and the reception of the oath. It is indeed the explanation given by our other narrative source, the chronicle of Rui de Pina.[492] Yet the usually well-informed Lanckman makes no mention of this sort of hindrance; on the contrary, his report gives the impression that the leaving procedure unfolds according to a plan: he openly admits that the logistical preparations continued even after the princess took up residence on her ship. The inauspicious weather, in my view, might explain only the discrepancy between the

[491] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 54.
[492] Pina, *Chronica de el-rei D. Affonso V*, I:125.

second farewell (the reception of the oath) and the departure, since the ceremonies and gestures exchanged at this instance point to the fact that this was the intended date of departure.

In order to understand the entire course of events, one has to look at what preceded them. Starting on October 13, there was an incessant sequence of sumptuous public celebrations, such as triumphal parades, tournaments and hunts, dances and theatrical performances, and banquets.[493] Imbued with extragavance and opulence, these unusually elaborate festivities were not only to subscribe the first union of a Portuguese royal with the emperor but also to heal the wounds of the kingdom after public unrest.[494] The pontifical service on the 25th October, coupled with the blessing for the journey and farewell rites could be thus deemed as a highpoint of these festivities that were a sort of valediction as well. The elaborate character of these public pageants points to the fact that they must have planned well in advance, which probably hindered changes in respect to the material planning of Eleanor's bridal armada, and thus it prevented a successful synchronizing between the ceremony and logistics of leaving.

Alternatively, it is likely that everything was unfolding in a more disorganized way than it seems, since Frederick's ambassadors raised the issue of Eleanor's departure only two months before it, pressing the king to dispatch the princess before winter. A lack of further details prevents us from getting the full picture but it appears that the Portuguese did not want to rush and expected the princess to depart the next year, which would naturally have thwarted Frederick's design for him and his spouse

[493] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 38–48.
[494] Costa, 'O Casamento de Leonor e Frederico III', 17–9.

to meet on the way to Rome. The prolonged departure could be the result of a rushed preparatory process that did not plan the choreography of the separation rites correctly.

Still, having said that, the fact that Eleanor resided for approximately three weeks in relatively austere conditions on the ship remains astonishing. This conundrum suggests that those conditions might have not been austere at all, or—more likely—that the ritual of separation from the paternal threshold performed in the cathedral was regarded as binding to such an extent that it impeded Eleanor to set foot on her native soil again. Returning to the palace after taking leave of Saint Vincent, the holy patron of the city, might have made the impression of trespassing and offending the good will of the divine. Eleanor, however, did step onto Portuguese territory during her visit to the hermit. This low-key pilgrimage-style trip happened after the second farewell (the reception of the oath) when all material planning was over and the company was ready to set off. At this point the only thing hampering the departure was weather and that is why Eleanor's one-day excursion—as well as the *missa sicca* a day after—might have been a sort of intercession for the good winds. That would explain why these religious events occurred in a vacuum of important Church holidays and in (on the surface) no relation to the actual departure. Finally, it is not beyond imagination that many of these events (residing on the ship, making a short pilgrimage) were motivated by Eleanor herself, who took a very active role during the journey, as we will see later on.

Be that as it may, Lanckman's account bears witness to the fact that the farewell rites were divided into several phases; they involved the highest Church dignitaries and ceremonies (bishop, liturgy in the cathedral) as well as lower clergymen (the hermit, the priest officiating *missa sicca* aboard), plus the secular power in the form of the king demanding the oath of loyalty from the bridal entourage

and entrusting his sister to the ambassadors' hands. At the same time, the princess appears to have taken (or the protocol instructed her?) a very active role in these rites as she personally asked the holy patron of the city for permission to leave, she partook in devotional acts (confession, offerings) in the hermitage, and she even threw little banquets. From her point of view, the farewell had three layers: firstly, there was an official dynastic-state dimension to this (rites in the cathedral and subsequent solemn procession); secondly a legal one as the king handed her over to Frederick's envoys, and hence her male authority was transferred from the brother (since her father was deceased) to the husband. Lastly there was a personal layer, which, unlike the former two aspects, puts Eleanor into a very dynamic position, as she committedly participated in the official state cult as well as conducted a very personalized spiritual preparation.

Although we miss any clear evidence from our Habsburg sample that these forms of farewell rites were a wider contemporary standard, there are hints in the departures of other fifteenth-century princesses. Almost identical to Eleanor's, the parting ceremony of Isabel of Portugal [1429] also staged public festivities (banquet, jousts), a solemn Mass in the Lisbon cathedral, and joyous procession through the city. Having been escorted aboard a ship, the princess had to wait several days to set out, being visited by her father and brothers in the meantime.[495] Furthermore, the account of the day specifies that Isabel too had to stay inside the vessel for several days, "waiting for the dispositon and preparation of other ships and people that were meant to go with her".[496] In light of this, Eleanor's farewell appears to be based on a Portuguese precedent, if not on a general medieval notion: Margaret of York [1468]

[495] Monique Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne. Une femme au pouvoir Au XVe siècle* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 1998), 31–32.
[496] Louis-Prosper Gachard, ed., *Collection de documents inedits concernant l'histoire de la Belgique*, vol. 2 (Brussels: Louis Hauman et Comp., 1834), 77.

was seen off with a parade, church service, and a pilgrimage to the shrine of St Thomas Becket in Canterbury.[497]

Despite the quantity of steps documented in Eleanor's departing process, one element is not very dominant—a personal goodbye to the family, which is perceptible in other cases and is tackled by Carafa's manual for the journey too. The escort for a small leg of the journey, as occured during Eleanor's parting, probably had these connotations, but the senior Neapolitan courtier advises a much more expressive valediction. The princess leaving her parents ought to

> [...] deliver an oration before your lord father, in which You will express your immense *(immortales)* thanks to him for all things that his fatherly liberality has granted you. Secondly, most arduously implore him to remember You as often as possible, for Your own sake and also to make everybody understand how much he loves You. Then, [beg of him] to mercifully forgive You, if, perhaps, you have hurt His Majesty in word or deed; lay the blame [for your offense] on the ignorance of the youth age that is prone to errors and falls. In addition, fall on Your knees and ask him to give You blessing—as we would say as Christians—to give you benediction. Do not ask for it without bending the knees.[498]

Therefore, according to *De institutione,* the separation rites from the princess's side almost resemble the sacrament of confession, however not to God but to her father as main authority she is about to leave. The speech of the princess was supposed to consist of three parts: thanksgiving for fatherly generosity, begging forgiveness for past misdeeds and asking for the father's good graces in the future. Having almost a religious dimension, this profession points to the relationship between father and daughter, where the former seems to play a semi-godly figure that is not only able to forgive sins but more importantly, gives his blessing if asked for by the genuflected daughter.

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[497] Weightman, *Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy, 1446-1503*, 45–7.
[498] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 16–7.

Nonetheless, there is a second stage to this ritual as well. Carafa also presumes that the father would accompany the princess for some distance after setting off. At the final point of farewell, this time outside of the court setting, the confessional act has to be repeated. Again, the princess should plead for benediction but also add physical gestures: she is expected to kiss the father's hands and feet and to shed tears.[499] Both these actions were a clear expression of reverence; however, what is interesting—one might say, almost un-medieval—about Carafa's counsel is the insertion of verbal elements. The Middle Ages generally prioritized physicality over orality,[500] so the reinforcement of gestures with speeches, suggested by *De institutione,* points to a special significance of the rite.

In sketching out these counsels for Beatrice of Aragon, Carafa probably looked for inspiration in the events taking place a few years before. When leaving Naples to meet her husband, Eleanor, Beatrice's elder sister and soon-to-be duchess of Ferrara "was dismissed with tears of joy by her lord father and all her illustrious brothers", but her father, King Ferrante, accompanied her for two days of the journey, up to the river Garigliano. Here, "at the separation and departure of the daughter from the father, the hearts of both were moved and weeping was renewed. Not only these two [cried] but also all others standing nearby and accompanying [them]."[501] The case of this Aragonese princess, reverberated in Carafa's writing, casts the separation of the bride as a solely daughter-father event, as if this relationship were a metaphor for the whole of the princess's binding with the native milieu. Other people are reduced to the background while the two central figures engage in the act of dissolving their bond, in

[499] Ibid, 20.
[500] Zakharine, 'Medieval Perspectives in Europe: Oral Culture and Bodily Practices', 353.
[501] Angelo de Tummulillis, *Notabilia temporum di Angelo de Tummulillis da Sant' Elia*, ed. Constantino Corvisieri (Livorno: Tipografia Francesco Vigo, 1890), 193.

Eleanor of Aragon's above-cited example manifested by crying and weeping, and in Carafa's instruction the formal speech and gestures of reverence.

The reduction of the separation rites that were part of the dynastic nuptials to the father-daughter theme cannot be taken as an expression of some special emotional relationship between these two. Quite the contrary, it is an inversion of the bride and groom's dynamic, naturally not in romantic terms but in ritualistic and legal ones. In the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century monarchic setting, the father persona cannot be understood in the modern parental role—the father of the princely bride was also a sovereign and head of the dynastic clan, wielding absolute power over his subordinates, in this case his daughter. The appreciative speech recommended by Diomede Carafa can be thus seen not as an expression of the princess's personal affection but as a formal break with her native community, represented by its head—the father. It is an exchange of male authorities, the father is replaced by the husband, and as we will see the rituals of the first encounter between bride and groom will be analogous to the rites of separation.

Aside from Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2] and Carafa, the sources from our Habsburg samples are not particularly specific about farewell traditions. Normally, two features of the valediction are extant: weeping and accompanying. With regard to the weeping, special caution is needed: though it might have been a sign of personal affection or grief over leaving "dear ones", there are hints that this behaviour was more complex. After a joint voyage up to Trent, Barbara and Joanna of Habsburg [1565] bade farewell to one other (ultimately, however, they met again for a brief period of time in Mantua). As the former was leaving, the Florentine ambassador Sigismondo de' Rossi noticed that "even though she [= Joanna] had wept over her sister's parting, nonetheless it seemed to me that she is much more cheerful now than [she was] in her

company".[502] Also Carafa's instruction "to not forget to shed a tear" sounds enigmatic. If weeping was a sign of sorrow or other passion, one might ask why it was necessary to advise it. More than an emotional compulsion, it was a regulated form of behaviour that was meant to express not a personal proclivity between persons, but a dynastic bond and liaison. Furthermore the inflated scenes of sorrow and misery at the bride's departure were probably heavily inspired by a literary tradition of the *deductio* scheme, discussed in the last chapter. On top of that, this grief-stricken last farewell of the bride—a victim of matrimonial politicking—to the parents is intrinsically contradictory since it presents parents as both injured and guilty party of interdynastic marriage.

A more frequent custom, extant in the sources, is the accompanying of the bride for a certain distance. We have seen this even in the naval departure of Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2] when her brother, the king, sailed alongside the princess's ship for a couple of nautical miles. The distance and time spent on this prolonged leaving ceremony varies; the same applies for the composition of the farewell company, i.e. the members of the princely family that participated in the escort. Joanna and Barbara [1565] were accompanied by their sisters Magdalene and Helen as far as Steinach am Brenner, which is the first town after the starting point in Innsbruck (roughly thirty kilometres), and turned back the same day.[503] Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] spent a longer period of time in the company of her family that travelled with her as far as Como (fifty kilometres from Milan), where two-day festivities took place.[504] Joanna of Castile [1496] too was escorted to the port of Laredo by her mother, Queen Isabella,

[502] "... la regina Giovanna..., la quale ancorche havesse pianto la partita della sorella, non dimeno gli me è parso vedergli più allegrezza di quando ella era in compagnia." Sigismondo de' Rossi to Duke Cosimo I, Rovereto, 23 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 236.
[503] TLA, HS 5565, p. 1.
[504] Tatti and Stampa, *Annali sacri della città di Como*, 3:412–3.

and her siblings Infante John and Infantas Maria and Catherine, future queens of Portugal and England respectively.[505] Margaret of Habsburg's voyage to her second husband [1501] involved a two-phase escort. Firstly she parted from Brussels in the presence of her sister-in-law Joanna of Castile and *madame la Grande*, i.e. Margaret of York, widow of Charles the Bold and Margaret's step-grandmother. Having accompanied the bride for *demye lieue* (half a league) from the city, these two ladies took leave of Margaret, who proceeded to Hal. Half an hour after Margaret and her entourage lodged in this town, she was joined by her brother Duke Philip the Fair. The next day, Philip led his sister a quarter of league outside of Hal until they bade farewell to each other *(ung quart de lieu où se fit le adieu).*[506]

As already seen at other instances, our Habsburg sample seems to problematize the entire process, taking into account various other potential choices. The three above-cited examples give evidence to three kinds of escort—a short one-day trip, involving only a few relatives (Barbara and Joanna); a longer excursion spanning several-days that entailed the wider family and was coupled with additional pageantry (Bianca Maria, Joanna of Castile); and a multi-stage process of accompanying with various kinsmen taking part at various points of the journey (Margaret). There can hardly be found any paradigm other than the fact that this escorting took place.

Even though many princesses from our sample were at the time of their bridal voyages already fatherless, and another member of the princely family had to step in as the main authority, there are also Habsburg brides still had living fathers. Yet these parents were by no means physically involved in seeing their daughters off. That was the case of Margaret of Habsburg [1497 and 1501], Catherine [1549 and 1553], and

[505] Padilla, *Crónica de Felipe I.*, 36–7.
[506] Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, 1828, 5:154.

Eleanor [1561]. This fact seems to undermine Carafa's point about the father's central role in the separation—not only is there no evidence of thanksgiving oration or gestures of gratitude from the princess's side but the princely parents do not seem to have been personally present. On the other hand, the fact that a brother could deputize for a father in seeing off the family member points to the collective character of dynasty, in which other members—especially the first-born son— also played prominent roles.[507] This applies especially to the Habsburgs in this period, whose dominions were scattered over various parts of Europe, and that is why proper "dynastic functionality" required the participation of more of its members.

Alternatively the whole leaving process could be considered from a slightly different angle. All above-mentioned cases of the bridal farewell operate with a multi-staged, instead of abrupt and instantaneous departure. Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2] underwent a solemn ceremony and a symbolic crossing of the threshold, only to be visited aboard the ship by her family for several more weeks and to organize a special pilgrimage to the hermitage. Other Habsburg brides were accompanied for some distance, either for a one-day leg of the journey or for several days. And quite surprisingly those princesses lacking any formal farewell (quoted in the last paragraph) had a very close relative in their entourage. For instance Catherine of Habsburg [1549 and 1553] was accompanied to both Mantua and Cracow by her brother Ferdinand of Tyrol,[508] while there were plans that Eleanor [1561] would travel to Mantua in the company of her brother Archduke Charles as well, but as a result of not an unwelcoming reaction from her husband this scenario was abandoned.[509]

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[507] Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini, eds., 'Introduction', in *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe: Rulers, Aristocrats and the Formation of Identities* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015), 13–4.
[508] C.C. (?), *L'entrata della serenissima et illustrissima signora Caterina d'Austria [...]*, stored in ASMn, AG 199, f. 84/1.
[509] See pages 127–9.

The practice of escorting was not a prerogative of the family bidding farewell to its departing member. We saw a similar way of acting in Chapter 3 when tracing the princess's steps through a third-party territory: the representatives of the foreign power waited for the bridal traveller on the border and followed her/him until the last quarters of their domain. This habit was a sort of reverence paid to the princess and her dynasty and a part of the wider hospitality offered to any traveller of high rank. However, this was not the point of the escort in course of the bride's farewell. As anthropological studies point out, the separation rites of the bride or groom sometimes need to be repeated more than once as the bond with the native group is so powerful that a single act would not be sufficient to break it.[510] The strength of family ties might account for the multi-step process of the princess's parting that aimed to alleviate the harsh reality of transition. At the same time, one must not forget a tendency that gave rise to the festivization, discussed in Chapter 3. By the same token we can speak about the festivization of the separation and incorporation, which stretched these procedures over the whole course of the bridal journey. Unfortunately though, evidence for these rites is so scarce that it prevent us from tracing the gradual growth of this type of festivization.

4.2 Meeting the spouse and incorporation

As already repeated several times, the separation of the bride from her native milieu was a slow, continuous process rather than an abrupt event that tends to get attention in the poetic portrayals of princely nuptials. In numerous cases we have seen several stages to the farewell rites. This phasing is even more visible in the opposite

[510] Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 129.

pole to leaving, that is, the incorporation of the bride. Although marking a significant point in this procedure, the encounter with the spouse was neither a starting nor final point of the integration, extended well beyond the nuptials and hence beyond the scope of this thesis as well. For the purpose of this analysis, only the integrative rituals leading to the princely wedding, and thus being a part of the bridal journey, will be addressed.

The second caveat to this sub-chapter is the different position of the male and female wedding traveller in relation to the entire separation–incorporation scheme. Not coincidentally, the previous sub-chapter has examined the farewell rites of the princesses alone and no grooms from our Habsburg sample have appeared in the analysis. The travelling bridegroom does not seem to be subjected to a comparable process of separation which one can observe in the brides' departures. Similarly, the system of integration is asymmetrical—aside from the first encounter and a few other minor traits, we lack other pieces of information that would corroborate the same pattern of transition in male and female bridal journeys. This imbalance might be explained by a legal reason, that is, the grooms did not pass through a change in male authority, changing father for husband as the brides did. Still, as this section shows, a limited form of incorporation is traceable also for the incoming princes.

The issue of a princess's integration to the new environment was addressed by several scholars, mostly from a long-term perspective. From the studies relevant to our time scope, Elena Taddei has studied three Ferrarese duchesses, Lucrezia Borgia, Renée of France, and Barbara of Habsburg, and by comparing their different positions and attitudes towards foreign courts she examined their negative/positive perception by the Ferrarese subjects or their role in cultural transfer.[511] Taddei concludes that even

[511] Taddei, '"Fremde Fürstinnen in Ferrara"'.

though each of these duchesses actively engaged in the cultural and political exchange, in only one of them (Renée of France) was this process deemed a threat and mostly because of the flawed nature of the incorporation, or rather because of the princess's refusal to integrate. Bethamy Aram, too, looked into tensions and conflicts caused by the different cultural backgrounds of Philip the Fair and Joanna of Castile [1496]. As the native circles of both newlyweds were deeply suspicious of each other, the integration of Joanna completely failed.[512]

However these two and other studies concentrated on the bride's incorporation in the period following the nuptials. Aside from often-cited studies by Karl-Heinz Spieß and Cristiane Coester, who devoted several paragraphs to this topic, nobody has examined the integrative process over the course of the bridal journey on a wider comparative scheme. Many queenly biographies have mentioned this as a part of the wedding's description, but more thematically oriented research would be much needed. Correspondingly,only Katarzyna Kosior has studied the first encounters of newlyweds in a systematic manner, using examples from sixteenth-century France, England, and Poland.[513] She singles out several forms and functions of this crucial, but often by scholars anecdotally-treated ceremony, and her study will serve as a starting point of this chapter's analysis.

Kosior recognizes three conditions for the first meeting to have special significance. Firstly, a royal bride had to be of foreign origin, i.e. she could not be a member of the local aristocracy; secondly, the future queen could not be brought up at the same court as her future husband, i.e. she could have been a princess from abroad but she could not have arrived as a child; and lastly, it was necessary to perform a

[512] Aram, 'Voyages from Burgundy to Castile: Cultural Conflict and Dynastic Transitions, 1502–06'.
[513] Katarzyna Kosior, 'First Meetings of Early Modern Royal Couples in Poland, France, and England: Protocol, Ceremony, and Emotion', *Zeitschrift für slavische Philologie* 76, no. 2 (2020): 317–38.

proxy wedding prior to the encounter. Given her source base, Kosior comes up with a more linear structure for the procedure, in which the groom always waits within close distance of his residence for the bride to come. Other models, like the husband travelling to fetch his wife or meetings "en route outside of the husband's realm were a rarity in the sixteenth century".[514]

On the other hand, our Habsburg sample attests to the fact that the very opposite was possible: as we can see from Tab. 9 (below), almost twenty-five percent of the weddings saw the grooms travelling to reach the bride (B), and the same percentage of the princely pairs met outside the husband's domain (Catherine and Eleanor of Habsburg, 1549 and 1561) or met as children (Mary of Hungary, Anne Jagiellon, 1515). Moreover, the variant taking into consideration male travel (B) could have had two forms—either it was a complete transfer to the wife's court (Maximilian I and II, 1477 and 1548), or the groom visited the bride shortly before the ceremony in her court and returned home, that is, he did not fetch her and lead her to his territory (Barbara and Joanna of Habsburg, 1565).

Table 9 The first encounters of the newlyweds

	A. Linear model (bride meeting husband outside his residence/other place in his domain)	B. Male transfer/ visit	C. Other
Princess/prince	Eleanor of Scotland [1448]	—	—
	Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2]	—	—
	Elizabeth of Habsburg [1454]	—	—
	—	Maximilian I [1477]	—
	Bianca Maria Sforza [1493/4]	—	—

[514] Kosior, 320.

	Joanna of Castile [1496]	—	—
	Margaret of Habsburg [1497]	—	—
	Margaret of Habsburg [1501]	—	—
	—	—	Mary of Hungary [1515/21] (meeting in childhood)
	—	—	Anne Jagiellon [1515/21] (meeting in childhood)
	Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543]	—	—
	—	Maximilian II [1548]	—
	—	—	Catherine of Habsburg [1549] (husband's visit during the bride's journey)
	Catherine of Habsburg [1553]	—	—
	—	—	Eleanor of Habsburg [1561] (husband's visit during the bride's journey)
	—	Joanna of Habsburg [1565]	—
	—	Barbara of Habsburg [1565]	—
TOTAL	9	4	4

To complicate matters even further there were irregularities in the linear, i.e. classic type of meeting as well (A). Having reached the arranged point of encounter (Innsbruck), Bianca Maria Sforza had to wait several months for her bridegroom Maximilian I to show up. At the end, therefore, it was Bianca expecting Maximilian, not the other way around.[515] How did the way the encounter was staged impact the

[515] Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 46–7.

ceremony? What was the protocol—though still unwritten—for the first meeting? This section will thus address all means of incorporation, namely verbal, non-verbal, and material. Firstly attention will be turned to the "handing-over" ceremony, which, as will be contended, was not a constant practice but rather one of many tools used in the continuous process of the bride's integration. In this light also orations and gestures, as well as gifts of carriages or garments, will be examined. Then the way of staging the first encounter will come under scrutiny, and it will be argued that social, political, but most importantly gender aspects had a decisive impact on the protocol of the newlyweds's encounter. Although still volatile and seldom fixed in written rules, an etiquette for this ceremony emerges in this period.

The degree of prominence which the sources attribute to the first meeting varies, sometimes it is described as a staged rite, sometimes it is passed without much attention. However, in almost every female case in our sample a phased process of integration is observable. Usually it took the form of a welcome delegation(s), consisting of the husband's relatives and distinct subjects that reached the princess's train quite early in her journey, sometimes even as soon as halfway. A classic example for this practise is Poland. Three princesses from our sample that travelled to Cracow (Elizabeth 1454, Elizabeth 1543, Catherine 1553) were introduced to the kingdom in almost exactly the same way. Elizabeth [1454] was greeted by the Polish delegation in Cieszyn, a semi-independent duchy in Bohemian Silesia, lying on the western borders of the kingdom of Poland, while two later princesses were welcomed even sooner, in Olomouc (halfway between Vienna and Cracow).

What was the purpose of this welcome delegation? According to the chronicler Długosz, the embassy sent to Elizabeth [1454] amounted to two thousand horsemen,

involving most prominent Polish nobles and their wives. Officially, they were sent to "receive the new spouse" *(ad excipiendum novam coniugem)* which might sound as a general term, but further on the account states that Elizabeth was "handed over to the power of the Polish nobles" *(in potestatem baronum Polonie tradita)* and some of the princess's chaperones returned home from there.[516] On the other hand, in welcoming Catherine [1553] in Olomouc, there is no sign of "receiving" or "handing-over" the bride: the three Polish potentates "came to meet Catherine in Olomouc, wishing her a happy and prosperous arrival and bringing her all sorts of kindness *(omnia officia)* from her husband."[517]

As one of these emissaries was *lingua promptus* (prompt in speech), it is likely that these wishes took the shape of a formal oration. Unfortunately this speech is not extant, but we have a similar one, delivered to Elizabeth [1543] at the same spot, from ten years before. After the praise of the princess's virtues and parentage, the sermon sums up the wedding negotiations, ending with the bridegroom's great desire to see his wife:

> [...] he would deem nothing more distant than the day on which he could take pleasure in seeing and embracing his most beloved bride. That is why, according to his and his father's will and in accordance with God's, we have been sent to You [...] to salute You as our queen and lady and to escort You to your kingdom and dominion with as much honour and reverence as possible.[518]

[516] Długosz, *Annales Seu Cronicae. Lib. 12*, 177.
[517] Orzechowski, *Panagyricus*, [C iii].
[518] "[...] nihil vt ei fuerit longius quam diem illum videre quo Maiestatis tue sponse charissimae aspectu et complexu frui posset. Quare vt serenissimi patris, et serenissimi filii, vno utriusque animo, vna deorum et concordi voluntate missi sumus, qui tibi ad serenissimum sponsum tuum proficiscenti obuiam prodiremus, teque quod faelix faustum et fortunatum Deus esse velit, reginam nostram et dominam salutaremus, ac in regnum dicionemque tuam, quo summo possumus honore ac reuerentia deduceremus." BJ, MS 245*,* AT, tomus XVII (1542–1543), f. 550.

Using the term "to escort" alludes to the reception and handing-over more than a sole salutation. Yet the speech does not stop at stating the purpose of the mission, but actively urges her, quoting Psalm 44:

> Listen, daughter, and pay attention. Forget your people and your father's house because the king has conceived a strong desire for your beauty.[519]

The persona of the orator—the bishop of Płock and Cracow, Samuel Maczejowski—might account for this strong religious undertone. But biblical quotes are not the only rhetorical devices that are heavily used— the oration is filled with praises and exaltations that draw heavily from the epithalamic tradition discussed in Chapter Seven. It presents to the princess his in-laws:

> How great is the goodness, how great is the excellent and heroic strength of the most serene Lord, King Sigismund I of Poland [...] whose fame would fill up the entire world—this one would have you as a dear daughter. [...]
> Also the most serene Queen Bona [Sforza], whose name itself refers to goodness *(bonitas)*, [...] will surely neglect no service of kindness that a mother ought to bear towards a daughter."[520]

The platitudes and phrases of this sort can be seen as a genuine form of panegyric, but there can be another angle to them. From the princess's perspective they might have served to ease the tension caused by the separation from her native habitat, and to shape the new family in the contours of the old one, as Kosior argues.[521] The upcoming father-in-law, King Sigismund, will cherish her as his own child, as will the mother-in-law. Given Bona Sforza's hostile attitude towards this wedding and the whole

[519] "Audi filia et vide, et inclina aurem tuam, et obliuiscere populum tuum et domum prius tuis, quoniam concupiuit Rex decorem tuum." AT XVII, f. 550.
[520] "Quanta sit bonitas, quam excellens, et heroica virtus serenissimi domini Sigismundi primi Poloniae regis, domini nostri clementissimi, cum totum orbem fama sui nominis impleuerit, non potest sibi esse inauditum, is te filia loco charam habebit. [...] Sed et serenissima Bona regina, quae et nominae ipso bonitatem refert [...] faciet proculdubio, vt et nominis et originis et officii sui memor, nullum humanitatis in se officium pretermittat, quod quidem a matre in filiam proficisci oportet." AT XVII, f. 552.
[521] Kosior, 'First Meetings'.

Polish-Habsburg alliance,[522] this statement might sound like a rather cynical way to sugar-coat dynastic hypocrisy. This might have been one of the goals of this rhetoric, after all it was a part of the festivizied bridal journey in which every act had a staged character. But the main factor was to function as another point of contact (the first being the reception embassy) between the travelling princess and the foreign court, as another step in the phase-out integration.

Was the welcome delegation something other than a prolonged greeting, an act of courtesy anticipating the encounter with the husband? The terms "handed-over" *(tradita)* and "to receive" *(ad excipiendum)* the wife from Elizabeth's 1454 journey give the impression that another act was taking place here—a formal transferral of the bride from one party to another. It is not a coincidence that the language of these terms is dehumanizing and refers to the princess as if she were goods—it is the language of law and contractual obligation that were at the core of the medieval and early-modern dynastic wedding. Thomas A. Bauer, in his work on the 1475 Landshut wedding, claims that the reception had a binding legal meaning and was connected with a speech in Latin, "the language of law", and this ceremony, usually done at the halfway point, differed from a formal greeting that might have been done in the vernacular.[523]

Within our wedding corpus there are also examples that explicitly state that some law-binding ritual took place and encompassed more than a greeting speech. The best documented is in the case of Bianca Maria Sforza [1493]: upon leaving the home territory of Milan and entering the County of Tyrol (that is, that Habsburg territory) she was greeted first by Gaudenz of Matsch, a local landlord and a man well-versed in

[522] Przemysław Jędrzejewski, 'Elżbieta Austriaczka—Królowa polska i wielka księżna litewska (1526–1545)', *Res Gestae. Czapismo historyczne*, no. 1 (2015): 110.
[523] Thomas Alexander Bauer, ed., *Feiern unter den Augen der Chronisten: Die Quellentexte zur Landshuter Fürstenhochzeit von 1475* (Munich: Utz, 2008), 80.

German and Italian politics.[524] Then, right before the town of Mals, the princess was met by a delegation of more than two hundred knights and the same amount of foot soldiers, led by three *oratori del serenissimo Re*: Margrave Christoph of Baden, the cousin of Bianca's husband Maximilian, Count Eitel Friedrich II of Hohenzollern, a close associate to Maximilian, and Heinrich von Hewen, the local bishop of Chur (Coira). Giasone dal Mayno leaves us a very detailed account of the encounter:

> The said margrave with other lords and gentlemen [...] were [assembled] in great order in this valley, and then they saw Her Majesty the Queen [=Bianca] approaching them on foot from a distance of more than one crossbow-shot. Having seen this, the lord marquis [=Ermes Sforza, Bianca's brother] and we, the orators of Your Excellency, dismounted from our horses and we all went together to the cloth of the Queen where she was met by the lord margrave [...] After displaying reverence, full of great signs of deference *(grandi segni de submissione)*, the count of [Hohen]zollern—although he was a military man from the noble house, possessing a great authority at the Majesty the King [=Maximilian I]—made a Latin speech, a very ornate and elegant one [...][525]

Dal Mayno then goes on give the gist of the oration:

> ... that they [=the envoys] were sent to the foot of these mountains to receive *(ricogliere)* Her Majesty [=Bianca Maria], and to show her that the entrance to this country *(patria)* is open and free to pass through further and to reach His Majesty the King, her husband, who is awaiting her with a great desire and anxiety as the one who was elected as his female companion and the dearest thing he has in this world, hoping that her prudence, modesty, goodness, and prosperous physical disposition would result in not small honour, benefit and

[524] Giasone dal Mayno and other envoys to Lodovico Sforza, [Mals, 16 December] 1493, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 55/1; Calco, 'Nuptiae Augustae', 531. Both sources speak about "conte di Amatia" greeting Bianca Maria, only Calco attaches a name "Gaudentius Columna" to the italicised title of the counts of Matsch. Until his fall to disfavour, Gaudenz of Matsch (1436?–1504) was a consequential person in the service of the Habsburgs (e.g. Duke Sigismund of Tirol's *hofmeister* and Maximilian I's governor of Tirol in case Duke Sigismund should die) and the Sforzas in Milan, where he married a daughter of the chancellor Cecco Simonetta. J. C. Muoth, 'Der Vogt Gaudenz von Matsch, Graf von Kirchberg, Der Letzte Seines Stammes', *Jahresbericht der Historisch-Antiquarischen Gesellschaft von Graubünden* 16 (1886): 4–51.

[525] "El predito signor Marchese con li altri signori et gentilhomini destesi con le gente sue et carrete in grandissimo ordine in vno piano de questa valle como uideno uenire la Maesta de la Rgina li ueneno incontro ad pede pui de vno tracto de la balestra. et el signore Marchese ueduto questo acto in siema con noi altri oratori de la Excellentia vesttra dismontoe ad pede et ueneno tutti alla staffa de la Regina fui doue ella fu scontrata dal Marchese de Bada el vescouo de Coyra et Conte de Zoler li qual dopo la reuerentia facta piena de grandi segni de submissione el Conte de Zoler, benche sia homo militare et de nobilissima casa et de grande auctorita presso la Maesta del Re [...] fece una oratione latina molto ornata et elegante [...]"Giasone dal Mayno and other envoys to Lodovico Sforza, [Mals, 16 December] 1493, ASMi, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 55/2.

exaltation of the Holy Empire and the House of Austria would be preserved through her offspring.[526]

Even from this abridged version, the speech contains several common points with the one delivered to Elizabeth of Habsburg in Olomouc [1543]: there are elements of the panegyrical (extolling of the princess's virtues) and epithalamic (the husband anxiously expecting his bride) traditions, coupled with the political and dynastic framework that give rise to the wedding. Similarly, too, the term "reception/to receive" is used, but interestingly the princess is not handled so passively—on the contrary she is only notified that there are no obstacles standing in her way to reach her husband. In other words, the envoys do not appear to be couriers who were intended to pick up the parcel at the border, but rather an animated and polite signpost welcoming the princess on behalf of her new kingdom and dynasty. In this sense, the greeting at the borders of the husband's dominion is similar to the way the princesses were treated when passing the third party's territory, discussed in Chapter Two. Also in this case there is a strong element of hospitality combined with the mutual exchange of deference.

Fortunately though, we are not left with the description of this encounter and speech alone. After Hohenzollern's oration, they all remounted their horses and proceeded to the nearby town of Mals where they made a triumphal entry which culminated at the local church with the bishop leading prayers. The next morning, the Milanese envoys went to pick up Ermes Sforza, Bianca's brother, and together they accompanied Bianca Maria to the church, where the Mass was celebrated. Following

[526] "... che erano stati mandati loro tre signori al pede de questi monti per ricogliere la Maesta sua, et per dimonstrargli che l'ingresso de questa patria gliera aperta et libera a passare auante et andare da la Maesta del Re suo consorte la quale laspect con grandissimo desiderio et brama de uederla como quella che ha electa per compagna et pui cara cosa che habia in questo mundo, sperando per la prudentia modestia et bonta sua et dispositione prospera del corpo ne debia uscire non picolo honore commodo et exaltatione al sacro imperio con la prole mantenuto de la causa de Austria" Ibid.

that, Giasone dal Mayno made a slightly improvised response ("I made the answer with the words that appeared convenient to me") to the oration delivered the previous day by the count of Hohenzollern, and then:

> the lord marquis [= Ermes Maria Sforza] in the most prudent way presented the queen to the margrave of Baden, according to the instruction of Your Excellency. And having done this, he took his leave and together with the other lords, he returned [to Milan].[527]

Evidently this act was more than a welcome reception offered by any host at any point of the bridal journey, or a chronicler's figure of speech. In the sacral environment of the church a member of the bride's family formally hands her over to a member (representative) of the husband's family. Once again, the princess is reduced to a parcel with its carriers leaving right after the successful delivery. Corroborating the importance of this event, the bride's relative and a significant part of the bridal entourage departs as soon as he is done with this task. This seems almost identical to the "handing-over" of Elizabeth of Habsburg in 1454, discussed above. Is it thus possible that this rite was a standard part of the bridal journey?

The answer seems to be negative. Such ceremonies of delivery were definitely not carried out during the naval voyages—both Joanna of Castille [1496] and Margaret of Habsburg [1497] were welcomed upon their disembarkations but the sources speak neither about handing-over nor a section of their retinues leaving before the nuptials took place.[528] Even for the princesses taking overland routes there is not enough evidence to substantiate the claim that this rite was a repeated and expected practice. A roughly corresponding act to Bianca's "handing-over" occurred in Trent in 1565.

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[527] "Dopoi el signore Marchese molto prudentamente presentoe la Regina al Marchese de Bada secundo la commissione de vestra Excellentia. Et cum questo ha tolto licentia et insieme con li altri quali hano ad ritornare..." Giasone dal Mayno and other envoys to Lodovico Sforza, [Mals, 16 December] 1493, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 55/3.

[528] Brassart, *Documents concernant le voyage.*, 4–5; Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, 1828, 5:61–65.

Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, brother of the duke of Ferrara, approached Barbara of Habsburg saying that he had an order from his brother, the duke, to receive her delivery *(ricevere in consegna)* and to escort her to Ferrara to conclude the wedding. The princess responded that having been sent by her brother, the emperor, to wed the duke she did not want to go against his wishes, so she had given her consent to the marriage. Having said that, the cardinal touched the princess's hand and addressed to her "words of deepest submission". Immediately afterwards, Barbara's sister Joanna handed-over was in the same way to the Florentine emissary, Paolo Giordano Orsini. The ceremony was concluded by Cardinal Borromeo's oration, whose content is not known other than that it invoked the names of the potentates involved in the double-wedding and it contained "all possible forms of kindness *(amorevolezze)*", which points to its strong panegyrical tone.[529]

Comparing this to Bianca's handing-over [1493], one finds many similar features—representatives of the brides' family (Georg of Helfenstein, Joanna's high steward, and Cardinal of Trent, Cristoforo Madruzzo) physically and orally consign the princesses to the husbands' plenipotentiaries. However unlike the 1493 ceremony which saw Bianca's brother and other noblemen from her retinue return home right after the act, the *consegna* of 1565 did not alter much: both Helfenstein and Madruzzo accompanied the princesses for the rest of their ride. The account describing Joanna's journey briefly refers to only one change—after the "presentation", the princess and her personnel's costs started to be funded by the duke of Florence.[530] However, as we saw in Chapter One, the sharing of travel expenses was already agreed upon in the wedding contracts and in many cases princesses were often offered cost-free reception

[529] Polidoro Castelli to Prince Francesco I, Trent, 21 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 436.
[530] TLA, HS 5565, p. 7.

by local powerholders.[531] The transfer of financial accountability was thus settled long before the rite of handing-over, so it does not seem that these two events have any sort of causal relation.

Yet there might be a loose connection between the delivering ceremony and the proxy wedding. In many cases princely families tended to organize a wedding at the bride's court during which the groom was represented by a proxy, mostly his close relative. Such a rite was supposed to confirm the union and to dispel fears of cancellation by one party. Most likely the 1565 consignment ceremony in Trent had been originally planned to be a proxy wedding but at the very last moment Emperor Maximilian II issued an order to proceed with the delivering ceremony instead.[532] It is thus possible that this rite could have been deemed a softer version of the wedding by proxy, yet this argument falls short in the cases of Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] and Catherine of Habsburg [1553] who are documented as having undergone both of these ceremonies.[533]

On the other hand, there are princely brides that do not seem to take part in either of these rites. Rather than a constitutive act of the wedding (i.e. changing male

[531] See pages 64–5, 150.

[532] The rationale of the emperor's decision is not clear, Brigitte Grohs speculates that Maximilian was afraid that one of the grooms, Francesco de' Medici, would present in Trent during the ceremony, since the prince was at that time still returning from his visits of Vienna and Munich. Francesco's presence in Trent would tip the scales in the precedence conflict between Florence and Ferrara in favour of the former, which would automatically have alienated the latter. A complete reconstruction of events is not entirely possible as I was not able to locate the crucial document "Verzaichnus wie es zu Triendt ergangen" upon which Grohs builds her argument. Grohs, 'Italienische Hochzeiten', 350–1. The Ferrarese ambassador at the Viennese court, on the other hand, refers back to his master in a cipher that Francesco's delay was intentionally orchestrated by a powerful clique at the court who would "spare no effort to put the duke Florence more superior". Camillo Montecuccoli to Alphonso d'Este, Vienna, 24 October 1565, ASMo, ASE, Ambasciatori Germania 26, dossier "Conte Camillo Montecuccoli, 9–24 October" (not foliated).

[533] Bianca: the wedding by proxy took place on 30 November 1493 in Milan before her departure and Maximilian I was represented by his chamberlain Caspar von Meckau, Cardinal Melchior of Meckau, and others. Calco, 'Nuptiae Augustae', 528–9; Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 19–26. Catherine was wedded by proxy in Vienna in June 1553, Jan Przerębski, royal secretary and bishop of Chełm, stood in for the absent groom during the nuptial rite, while the proxy bedding ceremony was performed by Prince Mikołaj Radziwiłł (not known which one as in this period there were two influential figures bearing this name and title). Orzechowski, *Panagyricus*, [c].

authorities), the rite of delivery (and the proxy wedding as well) should be treated as one, albeit quite distinct, point in the otherwise phased process of the bride's integration. Handing-over at the frontiers visualizes well, as Christiane Coester puts it, the amalgam of geographical and symbolical border-crossing (from the native to the husband's land; from daughter to wife) which lay at the centre of the bridal voyage.[534] Nonetheless, at least our Habsburg sample does not confirm its constant use and fixed place in the bride's reception. Its usage is circumstantial and it seems to be driven by personal or wider political motives.

Eleanor of Portugal's case [1451/2] hints at the possibility that the handing-over rite was more inherent to the German cultural circle. After the princess's disembarkation and solemn entry to Pisa, a dispute arose between the Portuguese from her company and the welcome delegation sent by Frederick III. The marquis of Valença and the Germans fought over the right to lead the infanta to the future emperor. Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, who eventually won the prerogative for himself, left us two slightly different descriptions of the episode. In the first, the issue was resolved as a result of his interceding and the "marquis, holding the princess's hand, assigned her to Aeneas's hands and wanted a chirograph to be made that would attest that he has done so on the emperor's orders".[535] In the second redaction of the chronicle, Piccolomini adds more details to the story. Reportedly the marquis justified his claim on account of his and the king of Portugal's honour, the German plenipotentiaries also understood the role of leading the bride in terms of honour, and more so, they did not want to defy Frederick's orders. As none of the sides wanted to yield, the decision was left to the princess who allegedly replied:

[534] Coester, 'Crossing Boundaries', 9.
[535] Pius II, *Historia Austrialis*, 2009, 1:154.

> Since my parents were buried and I was just a little girl until this point, I was under the power of my brother and I never violated any of his commands. If the envoys of my lord emperor were sent to lead me to him, I cannot refuse.[536]

Eleanor's speech must be taken with a due grain of salt as it might have been a way to extol the virtues (especially obedience) of the new empress from Piccolomini's side. Still, there must have been some sort of disagreement in Pisa about the handing over as it is mentioned, though again in a slightly different light, also in Piccolomini's *Commentaries*.[537] As each of the nuptial delegations, the Portuguese and the German, had different ideas as to how the princess should be presented to the groom, it is possible that the strict handing-over ceremony to the husband's emissaries was a Central-European practice, although this does seem unlikely in light of the pan-European examples put forth by Christiane Coester.[538] Judging from our Habsburg sample, in which the handing-over ceremonies are fairly rare (and even thus contested—as in the just-quote example of Eleanor of Portugal) they were not a fixed ritual, but a much more extensive investigation would be needed to corroborate this hypothesis.

What is certain, however, is the frequency of the welcome delegation: for Catherine's case [1553], to give an example, three welcome groups other than the one charged with the "handing-over", are documented: one led by the two most distinct women in the kingdom, the second, a special envoy to greet Maximilian II, who was supposed to accompany his sister but changed his mind due to a sudden illness, and lastly the convoy of eight carriages.[539] The frequency of these embassies would point

[536] Pius II, *Historia Austrialis*, 2009, 2:577–8, 580.
[537] Pius II, *Commentaries*, 1:110–3.
[538] Coester, 'Crossing Boundaries', 15.
[539] See page 127.

to the fact that they were all a part of the gradual introduction of the new royal wife without any legalistic value.

These delegations, dispatched to meet the princess *(venire obviam)*, were a very frequent form of the bride's integration. In the so-called linear model of the first encounter (see Tab.9, above), even the husband participated in this sort of behaviour, travelling to some fixed spot before his residence and expecting the bride there. As Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543] was coming closer to Cracow, her bridegroom Sigismund Augustus, accompanied by four thousand nobles and knights, rode off to a meadow a quarter of a mile from the city. While a part of his retinue detached and went on to meet the approaching princess, Sigismund took up a provisional residence in the prepared tents. As the bridal train finally arrived, the future queen descended from her carriage and she and her ladies-in-waiting went on to the red carpets, spread out before the tents. The prince came out of the tent and they both gave each other their hands and bowed to the ground. Subsequently solemn orations, lasting for half an hour, on behalf of each party, were delivered, whereupon everybody mounted their travel vehicle again and a triumphal entry commenced.[540]

An almost identical scene took place ten years later when Sigismund Augustus was marrying Elizabeth's sister Catherine [1553], only this time the young king was in the company of his mother Bona Sforza and his sisters as well.[541] With a due amount of variation, a similar course of events is traceable in the other cases: Margaret of Habsburg [1497] was met outside of Burgos by both her future husband John of Castile and her father-in-law, King Ferdinand of Aragon. Again, as the princess was approaching, "numerous noble knights and mighty barons saluted her", that is, many

[540] *Kurtze Beschreibung deß Einzugs*, 1–2. Printed and translated in Mulryne, Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Shewring, *Europa Triumphans*, 1:394–7.
[541] Orzechowski, *Panagyricus*, [e ii/v]–[e iii].

delegations went to greet her. Finally having arrived, Margaret wanted to kiss the king's [=Ferdinand's] hands but he refused. Nonetheless the Habsburg princess stood her ground and managed to kiss not only Ferdinand's but also John's hands.[542]

Since the bridal journey was planned in conjuction with the imperial ride to Rome, Elizabeth of Portugal [1451/2] did not meet her husband, soon-to-be Emperor Frederick III, at a spot within his domains but on the outskirts of Siena. But in other respects this encounter is unrecognizable from the classic one: at first, she was greeted by a group of Sienese citizens; then a squadron of knights led by Frederick's brother Albert rode off to meet her. This delegation was followed by a company commanded by Ladislaus the Posthumous, his cousin and protégé and an heir to the throne of Bohemia and Hungary, and finally, a procession of the local clergy. Frederick, surrounded by prelates and noblemen, was waiting between the second and the third gate into the city and as the newlyweds saw one another, they immediately got off their horses and embraced each other. As in other cases, formal speeches and solemn entry followed.[543]

Nonetheless these recurrent habits were often twisted. Sometimes the first meeting with the husband was not immediately followed by a triumphal procession to the city but by the nuptial ceremony and consummation of marriage. Both Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] and Margaret of Habsburg [1501] experienced this course of events: Margaret met her second husband Philibert II of Savoy in the Benedictine priory of Romainmôtier. The duke arrived one hour after the princess, greeted her and retired to his chambers until the evening that was spent in dances. Probably the same night Philibert and Margaret were married and afterwards, "they lay together until

[542] Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, 1828, 5:68–9.
[543] Pius II, *Historia Austrialis*, 2009, 1:155–6.

twelve o'clock", which—unlike in other cases[544]—did not cause outrage among the monks residing there.[545] Even after her safe arrival to Innsbruck, Bianca Maria [1493] had to wait more than two months to meet her consort Maximilian I who was hesitant to do so, blaming a lack of time amidst the French invasion of Italy and the Turkish threat.[546] Still, the first encounter did not take place in Innsbruck but in the nearby Hall in Tirol, where Bianca was transported by ship. As soon as Maximilian arrived with a small retinue (again, it is the bride waiting for the groom), Bianca fell on her knees only to be raised again by "hands, kisses, and flattering words", which the future emperor gave her. After the usual speeches, Maximilian accompanied Bianca to her chambers, holding her hand. He himself withdrew to his chambers to finish "other negotiations" until the banquet was prepared, which was followed by card games and other entertainments, and the same night, without any other ceremony (but an oration), the newlyweds shared the marriage bed.[547]

Some princesses even saw their husbands coming from a longer distance, sometimes even meeting them halfway. Catherine [1549] and Eleanor [1561], both heading towards Mantua, met the grooms in Trent and Villafranca respectively. Other than the usual speeches, there are no particular details extant about these first meetings but both of them are interesting from another point of view: having met and greeted their wives, the Mantuan dukes returned back home the very same day, so technically they did not "lead" the brides but let them continue as previously. Thus, their salutation

[544] Joanna of Castile's younger sister Isabel also consummated the marriage in a monastery, which was allegedly deemed as scandalous behaviour by the monks. Fleming, *Juana I. Legitimacy and Conflict in Sixteenth-Century Castile*, 22.
[545] Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, 1828, 5:159–60.
[546] Hochrinner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza', 45–6.
[547] Balthasare Pusterla, Giasone dal Mayno, and Erasmo Brasca to Lodovico Sforza, Innsbruck?, 10 March 1494, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 70–1; Calco, 'Nuptiae Augustae', 533.

resembles more an honorary visit rather than the union of the newlyweds, which is the impression the classical linear model gives.

An even more extreme example of such encounters can be found in the marriages of Barbara and Joanna of Habsburg [1565]. Both Alphonso II d'Este, the duke of Ferrara, and Francesco de' Medici, the prince of Florence, had paid visits to their future wives months and weeks before the wedding transfer even started. Alphonso made a trip to Innsbruck, where the Habsburg princesses resided, already in July and Francesco in October whereas the princesses set out to their husbands as late as mid November. Unfortunately there are no exact accounts of the first encounters, we only know that both princes donated precious gifts to their fiancées, spent a few days in their company and subsequently moved on to Vienna to greet Joanna and Barbara's brothers, Emperor Maximilian II and the Archduke Charles.[548] The Medici prince then prolonged his trip even further, paying a visit to Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol, at that time residing in Prague, and afterwards stopping at the Bavarian court in Munich too. This detour caused a significant delay to the bridal journey of his future wife Joanna, who was originally (together with her sister Barbara) scheduled to depart from Innsbruck on November 8, but since her consort-to-be was still lagging behind she had to leave one week later.

At first sight these excursions seem to break with the principle that the groom is the goal of the wedding migration, or, in other words, the final point in the gradual process of integration. Nonetheless, this breach of conventions is only superficial: each of the grooms meeting his spouse earlier than on the day of the final solemn entry then returned to his court, so technically he was still the metaphorical highpoint of the journey. These precursory visits alternate only the customary course of the first

[548] Grohs, 'Italienische Hochzeiten', 340–3.

encounters, not the entire bridal transfer; rather than a total overhaul, one should deem them an addition to usual practice. Nonetheless, this distinction still has not answered the question: What was the point of such visits? Why did some grooms wait for the brides to come to their residences (or places of the wedding and coronation) while others went ahead and travelled a long distance to visit them first?

One explanation may lie in the social disparity of the newlyweds—in every case involving the groom's visit or encounter at a longer distance from the final point of the journey (Margaret 1501, Catherine 1549, Eleanor 1561, Barbara and Joanna 1565) the princess outranked her future consort in terms of social status, she being the daughter of a king/emperor and he being a duke. The extant sources highlight this class difference by referring to the Habsburg brides first as *geborne Kunigin zu Ungarn und Böhmen* and only afterwards listing their archducal titles.[549] Having considered the frequency of welcome delegations which the groom's party usually sent to meet the princess, it would be understandable if a minor prince felt obliged to personally make the first salutation to a higher-ranking female. After all, outside our source corpus there were princes who journeyed all the way to their bride's residence, attended the nuptial ceremony there, and conducted new wives back to their lands.[550] Christiane Coester has concluded that such a scenario was a direct result of the groom's inferiority and she has established it as the third type of bridal journey.[551]

Yet, in contrast to Coester's claim, as we can see, the lower status of the male spouse did alter the course of events, but not in a simple or automatic way. No source illuminates why Francesco III Gonzaga of Mantua [1549] went all the way up to Trent to hail Catherine, while his brother Guglielmo [1561] only went as far as Villafranca.

[549] TLA, HS 5565, p. 1;
[550] Such as Alphonso II's parents, Ercole II d'Este and Renée of France in 1528.
[551] Coester, 'Crossing Boundaries', 11.

Not even the royal pedigree of Eleanor of Scotland [1448] forced Duke Sigismund of Tyrol to personally fetch his consort.[552] More so, the visits of the Florentine prince and Ferrarese duke in Innsbruck [1565] were also motivated by the intense precedence conflict of these two. Francesco de' Medici's last-minute voyage to salute his future wife seems to have been driven entirely by Alphonso's activities on the same field. As the Florentine envoy de' Rossi recounts, during the sojourn of the duke in the Tyrolese capital, Francesco's fiancée Joanna

> ordered one of her staffers who speaks Italian to tell me that rumours have it that Your Excellency [= Francesco] would come here, asking me if it is true or not, and that I should inform Your Excellency about the manners of these Ferrarese, which were not appreciated in many respects [...] They [= the Ferrarese] arrived on coach horses and in such order that it makes one call them poor vagabonds, rather than gentlemen of the duke of Ferrara. And what is more, they brought with themselves some sort of lousy folk *(gentame)* that hang out in the chambers of these lords.[553]

Despite the inappropriate demeanour of Alphonso's companions, which might have caused malicious joy to the Florentines (who probably exaggerated the story greatly), the harsh truth was that de' Rossi had not heard anything about Francesco's trip and the main goal of the letter was actually to enquire into the prince's intentions.

So far we have dealt with the first encounters that were a result of the bride's progress into the groom's territory with him either waiting at a fixed spot or making an excursion to meet the incoming princess. Aside from some exceptions, this sort of rendezvous occurred in an open-space location that enabled for the due pageantry to

[552] Köfler and Caramelle, *Die beiden Frauen*, 27–9.
[553] "Mi ha di poi l'Altezza della Regina Giovanna mandato a dire per uno staffiere suo, che parla Italiano et del quale si serve in fare qualche imbasciata, fatto intendere che si dice pubblicamente che Vestra Eccelenza viene qui, con farmi domandare se è vero o se io ne so cosa niuna, et che se fosse che io dovessi avvisare l'Eccelenza Vestra del modo tenuto da questi signori ferraresi, il quale non è punto piaciuto per più respetti [...] venuti tutti su cavalli di vettura et talmente alla sfilata, che si potevano piutosto chiamare poveri viandanti che gentilhomini del Duca di Ferrara. Et oltre di questo hanno menato con loro una sorte di gentame, quail bazzicano per le camere di quei signori." Sigismondo de' Rossi to Francesco de' Medici, Innsbruck, 30 July 1565, ASFi, MdP 516a, fol. 947.

be fully displayed, be it the attire of the distinct individuals, crowds of common folk and military squadrons present, or the parade that followed the meeting. Therefore in its outer form these meetings mirrored the conventions for royal summits, which relied heavily on a public element as well, and sometimes even occurred solely in open space, like at the Field of Cloth of Gold between Henry VIII and Francis I in 1520.[554]

On the other hand, Margaret, Barbara, and Joanna [1501, 1565], who all engaged with their future spouses in the intramural setting of palace or monastery, while also expecting their arrival, did not take part in the extramural welcoming ride-off. Thus, to some extent, these three princesses mirror the scenario that was common in male nuptial journeys. In contrast to the travelling brides, the travelling grooms did not find their consorts awaiting them at the gates or fields adjacent to their residential city but inside of palaces. They also met an influx of welcome delegations, although these might have been a part of solemn entries to the cities. Maximilian I [1477] was on the way to Mary of Burgundy greeted outside the walls of Brussels and Ghent, but having arrived at the latter, which was also Mary's seat, he did not rush to meet his bride. First, he withdrew to the hostel where he changed into the clothes Mary had sent him. Having received Mary's message that she was ready to meet him, the young Habsburg headed towards the palace, where such a dense crowd of people assembled that he reached the palace stairs only with utmost difficulty. His bride and her step-mother, Margaret of York, came out to meet him in a lobby before their chambers. Maximilian first kissed Margaret and only then his future wife.[555] Then a peculiar rite followed, described by Albrecht III Achilles, elector of Brandenburg, personally present in Maximilian's entourage:

[554] Gerald Schwedler, *Herrschertreffen des Spätmittelalters: Formen, Rituale, Wirkungen* (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2008), 305–10; Richardson, *The Field of Cloth of Gold*.
[555] Chmel, *Actenstücke und Briefe*, 1:160.

> Immediately afterwards, the duke [= Maximilian] was informed that the lady [= Mary] had hidden a little carnation *(Nelkenblumlein)* somewhere in her robes and his grace had to search for it. Quite modestly, he started with his two fingers to grab and to search, but he managed to find it only when advised by the bishop of Trier to open the lady's garment.[556]

When Maximilian found the carnation, a protracted reading of the wedding contract followed that made Maximilian grump that the long speeches were not why he had come there. Having signed the documents, he donated to his bride a large gem, and the evening was concluded with a sumptuous banquet.[557] Let us pause at the peculiarity of searching for the carnation. This odd scene found its way into many historical works yet no author has tried to explain it.[558] The meaning of this stunt remains ambiguous: on one hand, carnation flowers, imported to Europe from the Middle-East by Ottomans by the end of the 14th century, reaching Flanders just a few years before the nuptials of Maximilian and Mary in 1477, were a luxurious commodity and thus a strong vehicle of social status.[559] They were also associated with marriage and love as it was believed their cloves were an aphrodisiac. The last and probably the most intriguing way in which to read this odd rite is to look at the flower in terms of its religious symbolism: among many other spiritual meanings associated with this plant, its English and Latin name *(carnatio)* alike alludes to the incarnation of Christ.[560] Except the loose connection between the name of Christ's mother and the princess (Mary), there is additional evidence that the first encounter of Mary and Maximilian could have

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[556] Julius von Minutoli, ed., *Das kaiserliche Buch des Markgrafen Albrecht Achilles. Kurfürstliche Periode 1470-1486* (Berlin: F. Schneider, 1850), 516–7.
[557] Chmel, *Actenstücke und Briefe*, 1:160.
[558] Debris, *Tu felix Austria, nube*, 386–7; Hermann Wiesflecker, *Kaiser Maximilian I.: das Reich, Österreich und Europa an der Wende zur Neuzeit*, vol. 5 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1986), 132–3.
[559] John Block Friedman, 'Dürer's Rhinoceros and What He or She Was Wearing: Carnations, Luxury Gardens, Identity Formation, and Urban Splendor, 1460–1550', *Journal of Material Culture* 20, no. 3 (2015): esp. 282.
[560] Sam Segal and Klara Alen, *Dutch and Flemish Flower Pieces: Paintings, Drawings and Prints up to the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 1 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2020), 58.

borne reference to the biblical story. Prior to Maximilian's arrival, the imperial envoys were sent to ratify the marriage and accordingly to Jean Molinet's chronicle, the bishop of Metz addressed an oration to Mary:

> "You are blessed amongst the women *(Tu es bien heurée entre les femme),* you are in Emperor Frederick's grace, you will have his son as your husband and through him you will have a child who will save your people from the darkness of death. He will have a great name amongst men because he will be a son of the most noble prince." The lady rejoiced in these kind and comforting words [...] and responded: "I am a humble servant *(petite ancelle)* of my most excellent lord. May everything which pleases him happen, it is my pleasure to fulfil his will."[561]

If we are to trust Molinet who uses strong biblical metaphors throughout his account of the marital union (Maximilian being for him almost a Christ-like figure coming to save Burgundy from the French),[562] the meeting of Mary and the imperial envoys is framed as the second annunciation and the carnation flower during the first encounter of the nuptial couple might have been a reference to this biblical rhetoric. Be that as it may, the memory of the flower-searching ceremony probably had a deep impact on Maximilian, as the scene of him holding a carnation appears in his portraits by Joos van Cleve,[563] and it might be echoed also in Antonio de Predis's picture of Bianca Maria Sforza who has the flower tucked behind her girdle. As this depiction of Maximilian's second wife predates their first encounter,[564] the carnation could have been a strategy to present the second marriage in terms of sentimental memories of the

[561] Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, 1828, 2:94–5.
[562] Wiesflecker, *Kaiser Maximilian I.*, 1971, 1:131–2.
[563] Fernand Mercier, 'La valeur symbolique de l'oeillet dans la peinture du Moyen-Age', *Revue de l'art* LXXI (137AD): 233–36; Marissa Bass, 'Workshop of Joos van Cleve, Portrait of Maximilian I (1459-1519), Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Antwerp, c. 1530', in *Early Netherlandish Paintings, Online Coll. Cat.*, ed. J.P. Filedt Kok (Amsterdam, 2010), hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.9629.
[564] Pierre Terjanian et al., *The Last Knight: The Art, Armor, and Ambition of Maximilian I* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2019), 135.

first one, and to cast Bianca in the same positive image that Mary impressed on Maximilian.

Aside from the carnation rite, the most interesting fact from this first meeting is the location of the bride during the ceremony. One cannot find her in the extramural greeting delegations, as the bridegrooms awaiting their consorts used to do. Her "ride-off" is restricted to the hallway of the palace. This same pattern emerges again almost a century after when another Habsburg male travels to reach his spouse—before approaching Valladolid, Maximilian II [1548] was saluted by a delegation of Spanish noblemen led by Philip II, his cousin and bride's brother, Pedro Fernández de Velasco y Tovar, a constable of Castille, and Giovanni Poggio, a papal nuncio to the Spanish court. Maria, the bride, again, was waiting in the palace in the company of her ladies-in-waiting, but this time, Maximilian II did not stop at his lodgings to change his clothes, but headed directly to see her. No precise descriptions of their encounter are extant, Besozzi mentions only briefly how the future spouses exchanged short greetings of mutual respect and courtesy.[565]

Though hard to decipher, there must have been a general acceptance of the rule that the bride was not supposed to ride off to meet her spouse. This hypothesis is supported by the episode during Maximilian I's second nuptials to Bianca Maria Sforza [1493/4]. As the soon-to-be empress arrived at the agreed place of their encounter first, she and her train had to wait for the groom to show up. Being aware that he might run late, Maximilian explicitly ordered Bianca and her train to not come off to meet him further than to the palace gate.[566] We can see similar arrangements during the first encounters of the travelling grooms from outside our Habsburg sample.

[565] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 57.
[566] "Sua Mayesta non volse se gli andasse incontro se non fin a la porta del pallatio." Balthasare Pusterla, Giasone da Mayno, and Erasmo Brasca to Lodovico Sforza, 10 March 1494, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 70r.

For instance, Philip of Spain [*1554] went to see Mary I first secretly and then publicly, during both of these occasions Mary waited for Philip inside Winchester Palace.[567] Ercole II d'Este [*1528] was also presented to his upcoming bride, Renée of France, inside of the residence at Saint Germain-en-Lay;[568] and Anne of Denmark [*1589] did not ride off from her temporary lodging in Oslo to greet the arriving James VI of Scotland either.[569] This bulk of cases from various parts of sixteenth-century Europe thus hints at the existence of a non-written protocol that required the women, waiting for their consorts, to take a passive role, regardless of their status (be it a regnant queen or infanta), perhaps signaling modesty and decorum, which are after all queenly qualities that Carafa recommends as well.

After this long exposition of the various ways that the first encounter of the princely newlyweds in our Habsburg could look, let us inspect closely the language of acts and symbols used in these encounters that propelled the integration of the incoming spouse. This symbolic interaction could have been of a threefold character: verbal, non-verbal, and material. The verbal side of the integratory process, i.e. welcoming orations, has been already examined in the examples of Bianca Maria Sforza [1493] and Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543]. To summarize them briefly, these speeches accentuated affection with which the future husband, her family, and the entire kingdom/duchy awaited the new queen or duchess, highlighting the dynastic significance of the marital union and exploiting panegyrical and biblical phraseology.

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[567] *Narratione assai piu particolare della prima, del viaggio, et dell'entrata del Serenissimo Prencipe di Spagna, [...] con la Serenissima Regina,* ([Rome]: [1554?]), p. 5; Andrés Muñoz, *Viaje de Felipe Segundo á Inglaterra ... y Relaciones varias relativas al mismo suceso*, ed. Pascual de Gayángos y Arce (Madrid: La sociedad de bibliofilos españoles, 1877), 70–2.
[568] Bartolommeo Fontana, *Renata di Francia, duchessa di Ferrara. Sui documenti dell' Archivio Estense ... e dell'Archivio secreto Vaticano, etc.*, vol. 1 (Rome: Forzani e c., 1889), 26.
[569] David Stevenson, *Scotland's Last Royal Wedding: The Marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1997), 35.

The non-verbal aspect of this first contact with the future spouse and his/her lead-in delegations occurred on the level of bodily acts. Similarly as for the farewell, Diomede Carafa in his manual did not forget to include counsel as to how the queen should behave face-to-face to her never-before-seen spouse. First, he addresses the possibility that the husband might come to meet her in disguise:

> It is probable that before You arrive [to your husband's court], your husband would come to meet you incognito—to investigate and observe Your appearance and manners. That is why it is necessary that You treat those who would come to meet you in such a way that even if the disguised king would be present, he would learn Your excellent prudence. And if You recognize the king, still, try to hide Your discovery until he clearly wishes to expose himself. Even then, try to look surprised, as if it were hardly believable. When it will be no longer possible for him to hide, immediately get off the horse and honour him according to his status and do not grant him anything except clasping of hands *(coniunctio dextrae)*.[570]

A few lines ahead, Carafa offers another piece of advice for the first meeting:

> I have no doubt that You will be scared *(expaveas)* during the first meeting with Your husband, and by no means I blame You for that. Bashfulness is suitable for a woman because it is a sign of chastity; in the same way, reticence in speaking—unless asked—and seldom speaking out is more appropriate. When asked, courteously [You should] reply to everybody but with the fewest words possible. You should maintain this manner [in communication] with everybody, but especially with the king.[571]

This counsel, like the entire treatise, reflects the author's and broader contemporary view of the woman's total subservience to the man's will. Intriguingly, however, Carafa implements a psychological (if we can call it that) element, and, trying to delve into the princess's emotions, he advises—in his typical manner— to use a negative or difficult situation as to propel social prestige.

Even more remarkable is Carafa's tip on how to behave during the king's coming in disguise. This manner of first meetings was very popular in medieval and

[570] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 30–1.
[571] Ibid., 34.

early modern Western Europe, the notoriously known example of the princely husband concealing himself before the bride is Henry VIII's initial contact with Anne of Cleves. Ultimately this encounter turned sour as the fourth wife of the Tudor king did not react properly to the masked Henry, although, strictly speaking, she acted according to Carafa's intentions (that she most probably had never heard of).[572] Carafa was probably inspired to incorporate his advice against the disguised husband by the events of the Milanese princely nuptials in 1468. Galeazzo Maria Sforza, running into his wife Bona of Savoy, was announced to her as the duke's brother, not as the duke himself. Only after a while, she recognized him, recalling the duke's portrait. Immediately she got off the horse—which Carafa would approve—and they embraced and kissed one another—which Carafa would not endorse.[573]

Looking at the encounters documented in our Habsburg sample, there are no such incognito meetings, except for the one between Frederick III's parents, Duke Ernest the Iron and Cymburgis of Masovia, which predates our timeframe by a couple of decades and about which we know little.[574] Also speaking about the actual encounters, there does not seem to be a general pattern in the use of gestures. The princely couple might have bowed to each other and clasped hands (Elizabeth of Habsburg, 1543, Catherine of Habsburg, 1553),[575] or embraced each other (Eleanor of Portugal, 1452).[576] These can be deemed to be a symmetrical form of behaviour, while other cases are clearly asymmetrical, with one part, usually the bride, assuming the inferior role: knelt before the husband (Bianca Maria Sforza, 1494) or kissing his

[572] Kosior, 'First Meetings', 326–9.
[573] Lubkin, *A Renaissance Court*, 53.
[574] Johann Jakob Fugger, *Spiegel der Ehren des höchstlöblichsten kayser- und königlichen Erzhauses Oesterreich [...]* (Nuremberg: Endter, 1668), 415.
[575] Elizabeth: *Kurtze Beschreibung deß Einzugs*, 1–2. Printed and translated in Mulryne, Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Shewring, *Europa Triumphans*, 1:394–7. Catherine: Orzechowski, *Panagyricus*, [e iii].
[576] Pius II, *Historia Austrialis*, 2009, 1:155–6.

hands (Margaret of Habsburg, 1497).[577] These variations might be partly explained by different local customs, for instance, the Mantuan envoy Vivaldini warns his lord intending to meet Catherine of Habsburg in Trent [1549] that "during the first meeting with his spouse, the lord duke should not dare to kiss her but only to touch her hand and to embrace her, according to the German tradition".[578] Nonetheless, Carafa makes no mention that the clasping of hands is alien to Italian custom, so it is doubtful whether the rules for encountering the spouse were culturally-based or a product of ad hoc deliberation. Still, Vivaldini's remark is a clear testimony that the rules of the first meeting were discussed beforehand and it is possible that there was an existing protocol regulating it.

One common feature appearing in many cases (and in numerous instances when facing the welcome legations) and likewise recommended by Carafa is dismounting from the horse or carriage. At least in the spirit of Carafa's *De institutione*, this act from the side of the bride was supposed to express not only a courtesy but a broader sense of subservience and willingness to obey a new authority. In this respect, the dismounting from the horse and other acts of reverence (kneeling, kissing the hands) would mirror the farewell rites as envisaged by Carafa. As I argued in my previous work, these gestures marked the end of the princess's transition from the one male authority (father) to another (husband). Katarzyna Kosior also claims that these physical deeds "demonstrated control over the bride and his [=the groom's] own masculinity".[579] Yet in the cases of our sample, the power dynamics are not as clear as one would think: many times the actions (e.g. embracing, clasping hands) are well-

[577] Bianca: Balthasare Pusterla, Giasone dal Mayno, and Erasmo Brasca to Lodovico Sforza, Innsbruck?, 10 March 1494, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 70–1; Calco, 'Nuptiae Augustae', 533. Margaret: Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, 1828, 5:68–9.
[578] Ottaviano Vivaldini to Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga and Margaret Paleologa, 27 September 1549, Trent, ASMn, AG 444, f. 599v.
[579] Kosior, 'First Meetings', 329.

balanced with neither side looking inferior, or the husband actively trying to stop the wife's gestures of submissiveness. Although the latter argument might be rebuffed as a sort of courtesy from the husband's side, still, it can indicate that the situation was much more complicated. Rather than accentuating the groom's dominance, the rituals performed during the first meeting manifested unity and integration, which can be understood on a personal (a union of two people joining together in matrimony), a family-dynastic (receiving a new member of the princely house) or wider social level (welcoming a new queen/duchess). All of these aspects are palpably present also in the welcoming orations, as shown in the previous parts of this chapter.

Besides speeches and gestures, this integration could have been propelled by material means, especially gifts. Presents of all sorts were an integral part of the princely nuptials as a whole, representing their union (e.g. by the exchange of rings during betrothal). As Natalie Zemon Davis points out, gifts also helped to strengthen alliances created by marriage (with husband, his parents, etc.) or they could contribute to the festival character of the event.[580] Except the dowry (that could partly consist of precious objects) and other dotal sums (such as *donatio propter nuptias* or *Morgengabe*), the wedding gave rise to many other instances of gift-giving. The same applies for the bridal journeys—presents were being exchanged between the nuptial couple, between the travelling prince/princess and the people she/he met with, and so on. For now, let us focus on two types of gift which were exchanged during the bridal transfer and closely tied to the process of incorporation: clothes and carriages.

In the course of the numerous journeys within our Habsburg sample, a recurrent pattern emerges: prior to the bride's arrival, the groom dispatches, along with

[580] Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford: University Press, 2000), 46–7.

one of the welcome delegations, one or more highly ornamented carriages or coaches. Catherine of Habsburg [1553] received a golden wagon drawn by eight horses a day before her first meeting with her husband,[581] and the same princess was given two "very costly" carriages made precisely for her entry to Mantua in 1549.[582] Bianca Maria Sforza [1493], who ran into three fine carriages sent by her husband right before entering the Habsburg lands in Mals, was probably greatly captivated by them as she meticulously describes their semblance in a letter to her sister Anna:

> The first one was entirely ornamented by carvings and the ducal [=Milanese] crest, covered by golden and crimson drapes, drawn by six white horse. The second was similar to the first one, but the carvings were not so delicate and there was the royal [=Habsburg/German] crest, and eight red horses. One can see nothing but gold. A superb thing. The third was dark with four horses.[583]

Apart from the princess's fascination, this report shows that the carriages were not only a means of travel but also luxury items that were not only to honour the new queen/duchess but to demonstrate her high-status and the magnificence of the nuptials. Furthermore, displaying the crests of both dynasties highlighted the unifying element of the gift, which was not only a vehicle of physical transport but also, in a way, a sort of matrimonial propaganda on wheels.

Another important means in the incorporative process was attire. The sartorial element was crucial during the wedding: as Ulinka Rublack demonstrated, dress in the Renaissance was not solely about ornamentation but could manifest a personal or

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[581] Orzechowski, *Panagyricus*, [d].
[582] C.C. (?), *L'Entrata della serenissima et illustrissima signora Caterina d'Austria [...]*, stored in ASMn, AG 199, f. 84/2v.
[583] "...la prima tuta dintaglio de releno cum le arme ducale, tuta fornimenta de drapo doro cremesino cum sei caualli bianchi. La secunda quasi simile de la prima, pur dintaglio non tanto sutille cum le arme Regale, cum caualli octo rossi. Non se vede altro che oro. Cosa superbissima. La terza de bruna tuta cum 4 caualli." Bianca Maria to Anna Sforza, Mals, 15 December 1493, ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri 1583/9 (not foliated).

national identity.[584] Since the inter-dynastic marriages were one of the relatively rare occasions for premodern monarchs to meet, they functioned, to use Kirsten O. Frieling's term, as small-scale international fashion forums, during which not only wedding guests but also a wider public could encounter and study foreign dress styles.[585] Foreign fashion could have been exhibited not only by the main arriving protagonist, that is, the soon-to-be queen or duchess, but also by her trousseau, which served as a reservoir of otherness for the future, and by her fellow-countrymen and women. Nevertheless the arrival of the bride could have worked as a premodern form of fashion show only if the dress was not laden with purpose to incorporate the individual into the new environment, as we have seen earlier in this chapter. Christiane Coester concisely but thoroughly demonstrated that accepting the fashion of the husband's cultural circle was a recurrent theme during many international marriages and it was a sign of endorsement of the new culture from the bride's side.[586] Thus, the changing of clothes could have had a symbolic meaning which was sometimes reinforced by performing this ritualistic change during the wedding ceremony, as documented for Princess Hedwig Jagiellon's (1457–1502) marriage to George the Rich [1475].[587]

Even though Christiane Coester tentatively presumes that the brides always did (or, were expected to) undergo some physical transformation, e.g. changing of clothes or adornments, in order to adapt to the new environment, this was not always

[584] Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: University Press, 2010), 126–138 et passim.
[585] Kirsten O. Frieling, 'Dressing the Bride: Weddings and Fashion Practices at German Princely Courts in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries', in *Sartorial Politics in Early Modern Europe: Fashioning Women*, ed. Erin Griffey (Amsterdam: University Press, 2019), 78.
[586] Coester, 'Crossing Boundaries', 16–8.
[587] Frieling, 'Dressing the Bride: Weddings and Fashion Practices at German Princely Courts in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries', 84–5.

the case.[588] Jean Molinet did not omit to write down that Joanna of Castile [1496] made a solemn entry to Antwerp riding a mule *à la mode d'Espaigne*, a remark that the chronicler makes in portraying the princess's unusual bed with a canopy too.[589] Molinet uses the same expression for Margaret of Habsburg's dress, worn during her proxy wedding with the duke of Savoy [1501],[590] which either attests to a wider popularity of the Spanish fashion or, more likely, to new cultural identity of the princess, who, being briefly wed to John of Castile [1497], spent only several months in the Iberian peninsula but during the nuptials made a solemn entry to Burgos dressed *à la mode franchoise.*[591] Many times, as Diana Antilles demonstrated in the case of Valentina Visconti (1371–1408), precious items, being a part of the bride's trousseau, could have possessed, for instance, emblems of both her husband and father, which can be interpreted as a willingness to accept the new identity (of the princely consort) but also to retain the ancestral one. What is more, there are strong hints that these endeavours were Valentina's deliberate efforts.[592] A similar willingness is observable for Eleanor of Habsburg [1561], who, prior to her departure for Mantua, communicated to her husband that at the right time, she would "voluntarily adopt the Italian fashion, but she cannot [do it] now, since wearing something light on the head [as the Italian fashion requires] would harm her [= Eleanor] because of the cold".[593]

The predominance of one's cultural code, not only in terms of attire but also, for example, regarding the style of ceremonies or dining, was always the result of

[588] Coester, 'Crossing Boundaries', 16–8.
[589] Molinet, *Chroniques de Jean Molinet*, 1828, 5:62–3.
[590] Ibid., 159.
[591] Brassart, *Documents Concernant le voyage.*, 6.
[592] Diana Antille, 'Valentina Visconti's Trousseau: Mapping Identity through the Transport of Jewels', in *Moving Women Moving Objects (400-1500)*, ed. Tracy Chapman Hamilton and Mariah Proctor-Tiffany (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 247–71.
[593] Annibale Cavriani to Duke Guglielmo Gonzaga, Innsbruck, 25 January 1561, ASMn, AG 200, fol. 171.

numerous factors, such as the personal motivations of the newlyweds or dynasties or a wider political climate. The latter is visible in Maximilian I's acceptance [1477] of Burgundian fashion, which was to strengthen the unity of the Burgundian dominions in times of crisis. Generally speaking, each wedding party made an effort to culturally prevail, for instance, Emperor Maximilian II let the Florentines know that he would be much pleased if the nuptials of his sister Joanna [1565] would be performed *all'alemanna* (in the German style).[594] Sometimes, but not within our sample, insistence on one's cultural code and the refusal to compromise was so strong that it led to clashes and open hostility. Such was the case of the Muscovite princess, Elena Ivanovna, who not only brought wedding dress for herself and her groom in the Muscovite style along with many Orthodox religious items (e.g. icons), but also refused to board a carriage sent to her by the husband, and the entire nuptial ceremony was confessionally split with each of the spouses following her/his religious custom.[595]

Sartorial items as a token of integration worked regardless of the gender of the nuptial travellers. Both bridegrooms in our sample, Maximilian I [1477] and Maximilian II [1548], were given clothing shortly before the first encounter with their spouses—the former found it in his lodgings following his solemn entry into Ghent and preceding his meeting with Mary of Burgundy;[596] whereas the latter was presented with two silver trays, loaded with richly made shirts, handkerchiefs and other clothes a day before his final arrival in Valladolid and the introduction to his spouse Maria.[597] Interestingly, at least for the 1477 occasion, the gift of clothes was not made at one instance only, but Mary kept sending Maximilian a new outfit on numerous days

[594] Sigismondo de' Rossi to Francesco de' Medici, San Giovanni in Persiceto, 3 December 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, fol. 643r.
[595] Giedrė Mickūnaitė, 'United in Blood',185–7.
[596] Chmel, *Actenstücke und Briefe*, 1:160.
[597] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 56.

between his arrival and the nuptial ceremony: the day after his arrival, he was presented with a golden and silver robe in the Burgundian fashion, with an overgarment made from black atlas silk; on another day, with a robe from white atlas silk, a red-atlas overgarment and a golden chain, and a day after that with a black-silk robe in the Italian style.[598] The mention of the "Burgundian fashion", but more importantly, the use of black was strongly tied to the Valois dukes of Burgundy, especially Philip the Good, who propagated this colour in the princely sphere in general. More specifically, black was tied to the fashion of the sixteenth- and seventieth-century Spanish Habsburgs who—as the descendants of Maximilian I and Mary—claimed Burgundian legacy.[599] The garments, imbued with such strong ties to the previous Burgundian dukes, were without doubt an attempt to present continuity with the past and legitimacy of the Habsburg prince as a husband to the heiress of the Burgundian lands, but at the same time, a powerful tool to cast Maximilian in Burgundian style, i.e. to incorporate him.

To summarize the main findings of this chapter, both separation and incorporation of the brides, rather than being single events, were multi-staged and phased processes. Rites of separation were not a simple farewell to family, laden with tears or other emotional expressions as literary depictions might suggest, but a complex amalgam of official church liturgy and escorting by the family. Although Carafa's treatise advises an active role for the departing princess who ought to address a quasi-confessional speech to her father, our Habsburg sample shows that fathers seldom participated in seeing their daughters off. On the other hand, it was other family

[598] Chmel, *Actenstücke und Briefe*, 1:161.
[599] Michel Pastoureau, *Black: The History of a Color* (Princeton, N.J.; Oxford, UK: Princeton University Press, 2008), 102–3.

members who deputised for parents and often, they accompanied the princesses up to the final point of the journey. This points to the fact that the separation and incorporation of the brides was often blurred or overlapping. The integrative process could have been performed orally (welcoming speeches by embassies meeting the bridal train), materially (by gifts of carriages or clothes), or by gestures displayed during the first encounter of the newlyweds. Rather than expressing male dominance, each of these modes highlighted the unification and junction. In some journeys, the so-called "handing-over" of the bride is traceable, however its circumstantial use suggests that it was only an ad hoc ceremony or a variation of the proxy wedding, and a sort of reinforced version of the traditional multi-staged welcoming process that, in contrast to the "handing-over", emerges as a recurrent pattern in every journey. Regarding the first meeting of the spouses, the overwhelming majority of princesses in our sample saw their consorts right before the final solemn entry, with the husband waiting in an extramural setting, but there were instances when the grooms made visits to their brides prior to or in the early stages of the journeys, which might have been motived by inequalities in social rank or political situation. Last but not least, this sub-chapter also brings to light the issue of gender: the ritual transition and staging of the first meeting constitutes a clear gender difference between female and male spousal transfer. The travelling grooms do not seem to have undergone any rite of separation or farewell to the family. However one can palpably trace some tokens of inclusion (i.e. garments) offered to the arriving males that were to convey the image of the incoming prince in a politically convenient form. Furthermore the comparison of the staging of the newlyweds' first meetings reveals the existence of gendered protocol, probably accepted thoroughout medieval and early modern Europe: whereas the incoming brides made their first contact with the husband in an extramural setting, the

incoming bridegrooms are always presented to their consorts in an intramural one. From the sources at hand it remains unclear what the rationale was behind this convention, perhaps it was meant to reinforce the notions of male activity and female passivity. However as we shall see in the next section, the travelling brides, empowered by the liminal moment, were by no means a compliant pawn but rather spiritedly entered the stage.

5 Self-training on the way

The previous chapter was heavily influenced by van Gennep's tripartite scheme of rites of passage, consisting of separation, margin, incorporation; however, the focus was placed on the first and the third one. But how was the liminality present during the bridal transfer? This chapter will draw on the anthropological concept of liminality as established by Victor Turner, who, expanding on van Gennep's work, addressed this phase, marked by the crossing of a threshold. [600] He argues that

> liminality or of liminal *personae* ("threshold people") are necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classification that normally locate states and positions in cultural space. Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial.[601]

Translated into our topic, the travelling princesses were moving within the sort of zero-zone—they were already segregated from their old family and not yet united with the new one; they left the old fatherly authority but had not yet entered that of the husband's. The ambiguity connected with the bridal transfer thus opened a window of possibilities for the princess who could test her power and learn new abilities. Carafa's propositions about how the journey should serve as a preparation for the queenly role would thus be embedded in the very character of the transfer.

This section, drawing upon the unique manual book for the journey, Carafa's *De institutione*, examines the agency of the travelling princes/princesses and argues that the nuptial transfer was used as a self-training ground for the princely brides who, given the journey's liminality, could test their skills and powers. This "educational"

[600] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process. Structure and Anti-Structure* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977).
[601] Turner, 94–5.

purpose of the journeys has been partially examined by scholars, for instance Felix Labrador Arroyo analysed the way in which the queen's entries to cities might have served as a means to present her and inaugurated her reign.[602] Similarly, Katarzyna Kosior traced how the wedding festivities instructed the queen about her new duties by visualizing female virtues in various religious and historical figures.[603] However, no study has paid attention to the active role of the queen (or more generally, of any princess) in the instructive process as it was laid out by Carafa's *De institutione*.

In previous chapters we have seen Carafa's instructions regarding the comportment of the entourage or gestures during the farewell and the first meeting. However this was just a small portion from the main potential of the treatise which, in a sense, represents a real game changer: unlike other sources we possess, it stresses the role of the bride during the journey, endowing her with not only a list of jobs but also with the capacity to fulfil them.

What were the tasks Carafa assigns to the princess? He brings up many issues, such as gift giving, financial matters, the queen's entourage, correspondence, or language; however all of these matters share one ultimate goal: they are a means by which the bride should win her husband's favour and acquire knowledge of his way of life. Using written communication she can keep in contact with her husband, assuring him of her love; by dealing responsibly with finances and the redistribution of gifts she can prove herself a good administrator; in relation to the husband's courtiers, sent to fetch her up and accompany her, she can show a due amount of deference and enquire about the husband's mores.

[602] Felix Labrador Arroyo, 'Preparing for a Queen: Maria Anna of Neuburg's Royal Entry into Spain', *The Court Historian* 23, no. 2 (2018): 182–97.
[603] Kosior, *Becoming a Queen*, 120 et passim.

The list of activities the princess could engage in during the journey is long. But was any of this counsel actually followed, or alternatively, were they based on shared values of late-medieval society? Or were they only inventions and desiderata of the Neapolitan seneschal? As already shown in the introduction to this thesis, Carafa's life and literary work would suggest that the former option is more likely. Having served his entire life the Aragonese kings of Naples, Alphonso I and Ferrante I, Carafa epitomised a faithful courtier and a man of many talents. Starting as a squire to Alphonso, whom he helped conquer his native kingdom of Naples, Carafa gradually rose to prominence and was charged with various military and diplomatic errands.[604] Carafa himself never studied and his writings were based on the daily routine of his courtly and diplomatic experience. As Carlo Vece argues, no other writer of the Renaissance period produces such an amount of spontaneity and necessary realism.[605]

We can thus presume that his manual, originally addressed to Beatrice of Naples, was at least to some extent based on contemporary expectations. But that still does not answer the question: was any noble female figure acting in accordance with these guidelines? Did any princess utilize her wedding journey as a mode of self-instruction? By a close scrutiny of some aspects—management of the court and gaining favour, and the language learning—this sub-chapter will show that many aspects tackled by Carafa are traceable in the bridal journeys in our Habsburg sample, and that indeed princes and princesses used this transfer as a form of preparation for their future role as consorts. Furthermore, it will be demonstrated that there were other spheres of this self-coaching which Carafa did not envisage at all but which were actively exercised by the travelling brides. On top of this, the gender differences in

[604] Persico, *Diomede Carafa*, 74, 101 et passim.
[605] Vece, 'I memoriali ungheresi di Diomede Carafa', 468.

this process will be examined, demonstrating that travelling brides and grooms shared some amount of agency or, in some respects, incapacity.

As we have seen in Chapter Two, the group of people accompanying the prince/princess to his/her spouse was of a massive quantity. Furthermore, the original entourage was often enlarged by the groom's embassy which was to perform the betrothal and the wedding by proxy in the bride's home country and then to accompany her back to the husband. The reception company was thus the first contact the noble bride made with her husband's milieu in general. Carafa explicitly warns to treat every one of these envoys in a special way, the princess should win everybody over, if necessary by material means too.[606]

Generally these envoys were sent not only to escort the princess, but to observe her mores and refer everything back to their lord. Sometimes, they were dispatched not as a numerous embassy but as individuals that were supposed to stay with the princess over a longer period of time and keep her in touch with the husband's court. Sigismondo de' Rossi arrived in Innsbruck at the beginning of July, more than five months before Joanna of Habsburg [1565] set off for Florence. As soon as he arrived, he dispatched a letter describing his first encounter with the future duchess:

> I did not neglect to let Her Majesty the Princess know (who stays in good health) that if it had pleased her, I would have come to serve her. She let me know that at that time she did not want that, but it would have pleased her instead if I rested a bit [...] They [= the princesses] hear three or four Masses every morning, take part in the liturgy of hours and pray vespers and compline every day... which is not a little effort *(fastidio)*. Since I am new to this service, I cannot assess this in more detail.[607]

[606] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 30.

[607] "Non mancai fare intendere all'Altezza della Principessa (la quale sta benissimo) se si contentava che io andassi a servirla, et ella mi fece dire che per quella volta non voleva, perché si contentava che io mi riposassi et che quando fossero più cavalcate, haverei possuto tenerle conpagnia [...] odono ogni mattina tre e quattro messe e offizii, et il giorno vespro et compieta, dove bisogna per l'antico uso ci concorrino tutte, il che è fastidio non picciolo. L'essere io così fresco in questo servizio, causa che io

Two interesting points from this relation stand out. Firstly, the princes's behaviour towards the emissary of her husband seems to be defined by a sense of magnanimity. She treats him in an honourable way by a "random act of kindness"—giving him time to relax, arguably, with the intention in mind to make a favourable impression on him, that will be forwarded on to her husband.

Secondly, in forming his judgement on Joanna, de' Rossi was obviously not satisfied with the official news but actively solicited for the opinions of the courtiers. Apparently, the first, unfiltered image he got was hearsay about the princess's extreme religiosity, which is traditionally interpreted by scholars as a sign of bigotry, incompatible with the frivolous Florentine milieu.[608] In fact, descriptions of the bride's devoutness were desirable as they accounted for good manners and were by no means limited to the Habsburg princesses, renowned for their piety: to draw an example from outside of our sample, Polish envoys sent to fetch Bona Sforza [*1518] up in Bari reported back to King Sigismund I of Poland about the future queen's behaviour during her journey, stating that she exhibits "innate and natural honesty", and although looking really tired she keeps saying that she is not tired at all, quite the opposite, that she travels with pleasure *("libenter")*. Her female retinue is so well-ordered and decent that it resembles a nunnery *("monasterium virginum")*.[609] As shown in the chapter discussing the female household (2.1), such characterisations were much sought-after

non posso ragguagliare d'altro particolare." Sigismondo de' Rossi to Francesco de' Medici, Innsbruck, 8 July 1565, ASFi, MdP 516a, fol. 669.

[608]Grohs, 'Italienische Hochzeiten', 380–1; Caroline P. Murphy, *Murder of a Medici Princess* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 185.

[609] Stanisław Ostroróg and Jan Konarski to Sigismund I, Celje, 6 March 1518, printed in Władysław Pociecha, *Królowa Bona: (1494-1557): czasy i ludzie odrodzenia [Queen Bona: Times and People of Renaissance]*, vol. I (Poznań: Poznań. Tow. przyjaciół nauk, 1949), 270–2.

as they would vindicate the queen from any suspicion of unchastity that would threaten the legitimacy of her offspring too.

Nonetheless, according to Carafa, the examination of morals should be a two-way stream: the queen should use the contact with the foreign emissaries to learn the husband's manners, habits, and likings:

> During the journey, be curious to learn the king's nature and morals from the noblemen who would accompany You, so You would learn what he does like and what does not, before You start to live with him. This should be done during the journey, so [after the arrival] the noblemen could refer to the king how much You want to learn his ways—and I think nothing will please him more.[610]

Did princesses try to acquire such knowledge, not only to familiarize themselves with their husband's ways but also to gain his favour by doing so? We have two pieces of evidence confirming that this could have been the case. After reaching the port in Livorno, Eleanor of Portugal [1452] and her counsel decided to send Lackman, one of Frederick III's orators in her retinue, to locate his lord and to consult on the further course of events—whether the princess should stay in the port or should proceed to meet her husband. When Lackman successfully fulfilled his mission, Eleanor "diligently and boldly" asked him about the health of the emperor and whether Lackman had related to him the events of the journey, and whether Frederick had shown any compassion for this. Lackman replied that he did not only retell everything to the emperor but Frederick allegedly burst into tears out of "great love".[611]

The second event depicting the princess inquiring about the groom stems from the meeting of Eleanor of Habsburg [1561] with the Mantuan envoy Cavriani, whose

[610] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 34.
[611] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 70.

reports were heavily used in Chapter One. Writing to his master about the bride's physical appearance, Cavriani describes his conversation with the princess:

> The most serene Lady asked me about the nature of Your Excellency [= Duke Guglielmo Gonzaga] since she had been imagining him. I replied with those words which Your Excellency had instructed me to say, whereupon Her Highness [= Eleanor] replied [asking] what is up to her to do. I told her [everything] because Her Highness is a woman and a stranger; [she said] that if Your Excellency will be a good and loving [husband], she will be a loving and obedient [wife], and that Your Excellency can be sure that he will have as a wife the best and the most beautiful of all the sisters, and that she stays without [Your] sweet company only with heavy heart [...] [Afterwards] she asked me to let Your Excellency know everything that she told me.[612]

Whereas the first Eleanor is documented enquiring only about the husband's health and reaction to her travel calamities, the second one seems to make a conscious effort to learn her spouse's character and at the same time to shape herself as a perfect match and wife.

As the previous example of Bona Sforza reveals, the husband's envoys kept observing the bride over the course of the wedding transfer as well. De' Rossi, accompanying Joanna [1565], refers from Bologna that "Her Majesty is in good health and very good spirits, she does nothing else but ask me when we will arrive in Florence, not thinking anymore of Innsbruck".[613] Naturally, it is highly arguable whether these reports reflect the seen reality or if the Florentine emissary slightly sugar-coated them in order to fulfil the prince's expectations. I believe that it reflects at least the princess's effort to make a favourable impression on her new subjects and

[612] "[...] havendomi dimandato la serenissima predita Madama de la natura de Vestra Eccelencia sicome elle si immagino, io li ho ditto qual tanto che ella mi disse sue Alteza. mi ha risposto che tocca a Vestra Eccelencia a far quello li ho ditto per che sua Alteza e dona et forestiera et che se Vestra Eccelencia gli sara bono et amorevole che ella gli sara amorevolissima et obedientissima et che Vestra Eccelencia po ben tener per fermo che ella ha per moglie la migliore et la piu bella de tutte lor sorelle, et che gli preme insino al cor de restar priva de cossi dolce conpagnia [...] me ha pregato che io faccia saper a Vestra Eccelenza quello mi ha detto et cosi gli e lo scrivo [...]" Annibale Cavriani to Duke Guglielmo Gonzaga, Innsbruck, 25 January 1561, ASMn, AG 200, f. 171.

[613] Sigismondo de' Rossi to Francesco de' Medici, Bologna, 3 December 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 643v.

by extension on her husband. On the other hand, Joanna's sister Barbara, married the same year to the duke of Ferrara, probably wanted a chance to interact with her husband's envoys but was not given this opportunity. Only a month before the departure for Ferrara, she received a messenger and letter from her husband

> that consoled her a great deal, because—as I have heard from good places—it seems that she was dissatisfied by such a delay of Your Excellency in sending her a gentleman to stay here with her, especially when the excellent lord of Florence did so many months ago [for her sister].[614]

Evidently, Barbara was disappointed in seeing that her sister had been delegated a special emissary who could keep her in contact with the future husband and who, as we will see later on, could teach her Italian. Unlike Joanna, however, Barbara actively engaged in a letter exchange with Alphonso, as the collection of correspondence from the Modena state archives reveals.[615] The first letter, dated June 19, reacts to Alphonso's message, expressing joy at their engagement and her willingness to enter into marriage. Her following letters have a similar tenor: in a letter from July 13, Barbara is pleased to hear that Alphonso will visit her in Innsbruck;[616] on August 30 she thanks him for keeping her posted about his journey to Vienna.

Nonetheless, as time goes by, the messages start to feature more concrete matters: in an epistle from September 4, Barbara explores the possibility of inviting her sister Eleanor, at that time duchess of Mantua, to the nuptials. Conversely, Alphonso begins to use Barbara as an intermediary between him and the imperial court—he sends her a packet to be forwarded to the ambassador in Vienna (September

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[614] "[...] li e stata de grandissima consolazione e maggiormente perché per quanto ho presentito da boni lochi pareva che fuse mal contenta della tanta tardanza di Vestra Excelencia a mandarli gentiluomo aposta a resider qui da lei esendone uno tanto tempo fa per lo Excelencia Signor principo di Fiorenza [...]" Camillo Montecuccoli to Alphonso d'Este, Innsbruck, 9 October 1565, ASMo, ASE, Ambasciatori Germania 26, dossier "Conte Camillo Montecuccoli, 9–24 October" (not foliated).
[615] ASMo, ASE, Casa e stato 167, (not foliated).
[616] See pages 209–11.

4) and Barbara furthers back to Ferrara a dispatch from Vienna (October 1). The princess maintains correspondence with the spouse even during the journey: in the letter from November 21, she thanks Alphonso for sending his brother, Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, who was to perform the delivery ceremony in Trent and to consign the gifts.

What did the letters look like? In the one dated October 1, Barbara writes:

> [...] I thought I would do a thing not unpleasant to Your Excellency if I, in these few words, would notify You how—by the grace of the lord, our God—I am healthy, hoping that the same applies for Your Excellency. I recommend myself from my heart to Your Excellency, wishing you every kind of prosperity. [...]
> The loving bride *(amorevole sposa)* of Your Excellency.[617]

What might be seen as a tedious exchange of pleasantries and platitudes is actually a sophisticated process, if viewed within Carafa's logic. According to *De institutione*, the queen should regularly write letters during the journey, either to her husband, mother-in-law, family members, or the pope. The main point of doing so is the construction of the queen's prestige, especially in the eyes of her husband and mother-in-law. There is also a practical side to this, so the king would be well-informed about the progress of the journey.[618] Engaging in a formal or informal correspondence with family members or other influential personages, seeking and providing pieces of information or acting as a negotiator, was one of the most important tasks for a woman of high rank,[619] hence doing the first steps prior to or

[617] "... ho pensato de far cosa non ingrata a Vostra Eccellenza in se me con queste poche parolle a notificare gli como io per la gratia del Signor nostro dio son sana, con speranza che il medesimo sia de Vostra Eccelenza alla quale raccomandandomigli de core gli desidero ogni prosperita. [...] De Vostra Eccellenza Amorevole sposa" Barbara of Habsburg to Alphonso d'Este, Innsbruck, 1 October 1565, ASMo, ASE, Casa e stato 167, (not foliated).
[618] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 29, 31, 45–46.
[619] Catherine Ferrari, 'Kinship and the Marginalized Consort: Giovanna d'Austria at the Medici Court', *Early Modern Women* 11, no. 1 (2016): 48.

during the wedding transfer would be highly desirable training for the future role of the princely consort.

Barbara's above-quoted letter is proof that the princesses used correspondence to curry favour with their future spouses, manifesting servility and loyalty. Furthermore, this message attests to the fact that these acts were driven by her personal biddings—aside from the wording "I thought" that strongly hints that, there is an aspect lost in translation, namely, that all letters sent by Barbara to Alphonso were written in (not very good) Italian and probably by her own hand, as the shaky and non-polished handwriting would suggest. Since four of the eight letters concerned possess corrected draft versions, it is plausible that someone was also proofreading the princess's letters. All things considered, the amount of care (frequency of letter exchange, choice of the husband's language, personal execution of the handwriting) which Barbara spent in pursuit of this action is strong evidence that she was consciously following a procedure that was to put her in her husband's good graces.

By no means was Barbara the only princess from our Habsburg sample to use correspondence as an act of subservience and deference in the language of her future domains. For example, her sister Eleanor [1561], too, sent numerous letters to her husband Guglielmo Gonzaga, also by her own hand and in Italian, signing herself as *amantissima* or *observantissima sposa*.[620] On top of that, she also got in touch with his mother-in-law, Margaret Paleologa, expressing her perpetual obligation as a most dedicated daughter[621]—precisely in line with Carafa's counsel—and this connection paid off later on as Margaret probably did offer useful guidance and instruction to Eleanor.[622] Likewise, Guglielmo and Eleanor did not exchange only mutual

[620] ASMn, AG 200, f. 189, 226, 245, and 430, dossier X, f. 122, 124.
[621] ASMn, AG 430, dossier X, f. 126.
[622] Bercusson, 'Gift-Giving, Consumption and the Female Court in Sixteenth-Century Italy', 65.

pleasantries but communicated about very practical matters as well, such as the date of Eleanor's solemn entry to Mantua.[623] The princess answered by humble apology, saying that she would like to fulfil the duke's wishes but it is beyond her power as the whole process was already set in motion.[624] It is questionable to what extent the princess could carry out this task but it is intriguing that Guglielmo at least thought so, and Eleanor did not want to lose her husband's good graces.

The letters of the bride to the groom are dominated by expressions of respect and subservience that had a clear objective: to gain the husband's favour. A strikingly different tone was used in the correspondence to other personages, such as to family members. The contrast between styles is evident in the journey-written communication of Bianca Maria Sforza [1493]. Her one and only letter to Maximilian I prior to their encounter is written in a similar tenor to the letters of the Habsburg princesses quoted above: she cannot express her thankfulness for the love Maximilian showed to her nor express the joy in her soul.[625] On the other hand, Bianca's letters to her sister Anna, duchess of Ferrara, present a totally different picture. She portrays narrow and snowy roads in Alps which forced her to walk, talks about places with lousy accommodation or the reverse, about places abundant with good food and wine, while not being silent about her feelings of sadness and loneliness in a foreign land.[626]

Clearly, the princess modulated her writing style to family and husband. Whereas the family is given an exaggerated account of her travel hardships,[627] the latter is approached with a significant amount of reverence, precisely in terms of Carafa's counsel—to keep in touch with the family and to win the husband over. This

[623] See pages 166–7.
[624] Eleanor of Habsburg to Guglielmo Gonzaga, Innsbruck, 6 April 1561, ASMn, AG 200, f. 245.
[625] The letter printed in Calvi, *Bianca Maria Sforza-Visconti*, 50.
[626] ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri 1583/9 (not foliated).
[627] See pages 68, 221, 275–6.

sort of correspondence, especially the one to the husband, could be considered an important method for the princess's self-instruction, her first steps in defining her relationship with a new authority.

Yet, the attitude of reverence and the assurances of love were not the sole aim of the mail communication that Carafa had in mind. It was the princess' duty to act as an intermediary in the eventual disputes between the courtiers from her homeland and the new ones, to treat everybody in a friendly manner, especially those who are to be assigned to her by the husband. In case a member of her train loses a horse, she should reimburse him or her; if somebody is sick she should personally visit such an individual or take care that he or she will be visited in the princess' name.[628]

Unfortunately, no evidence from our Habsburg sample bears witness to the fact that a princess played the role of mediator but we do possess some episodes proving that she kept an eye on the entourage members during the journey. A young countess in the retinue of Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2] passed out during a sea storm, but the immediate reaction of the future empress—a proposition to make a sacred vow of sending two men for an expiatory pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella—seems to be addressing the overall critical situation rather than the case of the sick damsel.[629] However when an almost identical episode occurred during Bianca Maria's voyage [1493] as one of her damsels, *madonna* Michela, could not go ahead due to exhaustion, the princess personally weighed in *(ne ha dato gran carico)*, recommending Michela to be accepted into the ladies's court of Bianca's mother.[630] An even greater act of compassion is recorded for Barbara of Habsburg [1565]. The Venetian ambassador Contarini tells a story that as the princess was about to make her final entry to Ferrara,

[628] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 21, 28–29.
[629] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 62.
[630] See page 91.

she heard that one of the local noblewomen in her company was pregnant and had just started to go into labour. Barbara reportedly immediately left her chambers to help her, saying that she wished to help with sisterly *amorevolezza e carità.*[631] The two latter examples show that the princess was in some way involved in the care for her close companions, sometimes by direct aid and in other instances by securing the lady's future within another court.

Nonetheless, the source situation is more favourable for one of the most interesting points of Carafa's treatise, the issue of language. The inability to speak in the same language as her husband and his subjects was often a cause of distress for princesses. Language incompetence might have resulted in negative sentiments on the part of subjects or it might have caused an estrangement in the marital life of the princely couple. Carafa rightly foresees this, saying that unless the queen learns the language of her new kingdom there is no doubt she will encounter many troubles in dealing with everyday matters either with the husband or the people in her proximity, especially ladies-in-waiting.[632]

As a remedy to this, he suggests using the bridal journey as a starting point of language instruction:

> Therefore, every day during the journey [you should] command somebody from those who would accompany you, somebody who is well-versed in the language, to teach you something [from the language]. And thus after you arrive to the kingdom you will [continue to] learn more easily from the damsels who will be in your service.[633]

[631] Arnaldo Segarizzi, ed., *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al senato. Ferrara, Mantova, Monferrato*, vol. 1 (Bari: Gius. Laterza et figli, 1912), 14.
[632] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 41.
[633] Ibid.

The queen should thus take advantage of two factors of the journey: first, the presence of (in Beatrice's case) Hungarian native speakers in the bridal train, and second, the long duration of the journey to begin learning the language.

But was this counsel ever followed? Did any queen use her bridal journey to acquire knowledge of her husband's language? These questions are extremely difficult to answer as we possess only a little direct evidence. Nicolas Lanckman informs us that Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2] began to learn German already in Lisbon, after she had met with the envoys of her future husband, soon-to-be Emperor Frederick III.[634] Lanckman however immediately after goes on to say that she could not acquire much German, being hindered with other more pressing issues. But she was determined to proceed with diligent learning during the sea voyage to Italy where she was to meet Frederick.[635] We do not know whether she actually did so, as Lanckman's diary never raises the issue of language again. But Eleanor's correspondence from her later years shows that—if not during the journey then definitely after her arrival—she became well-versed in German.[636] In the end, Carafa does not insist that the queen should learn the language during the journey perfectly, he simply says that the journey is an ideal time to start the process, given the accessibility of potential tutors and abundance of spare time.

Lanckman's report provides us with another important detail. The princess started to learn only after she had met with the ambassadors. It is thus possible that the arrival of the Germans not only inspired this process but also provided the princess with actual tutors in the language, since distant Portugal might have been quite

[634] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 32.
[635] Ibid.
[636] Amalie Fößel, ...'...von gots gnaden Römische Kaiserine, zu Allen zeiten mererin des Reiches und Kunigin... Zu den Handlungsräumen und Strategien spätmittelalterlicher Kaiserinnen', in *Nur die Frau des Kaisers?: Kaiserinnen in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Bettina Braun, Katrin Keller, and Matthias Schnettger (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2016), 40.

deficient in providing qualified German teachers. That brings us to the actual way in which the language instruction was to be carried out. In those regions of the medieval world that lacked multi-ethnic communities, vibrant mercantile movement (the Low Countries and parts of Italy), or a tradition of schoolbook literature (such as late medieval England and France), it was sometimes quite difficult to acquire the linguistic competence other than Latin. With only a handful of travelogues that could have included a phrase or two in the foreign language, it always came down to personal interaction. This might have taken the form of travel to the far-off region, or of a meeting with the foreign-speaking agents, be they merchants, pilgrims, or ambassadors.[637]

On top of that, by the 1500s, even the most educated princes did not usually learn languages (other than Latin), unless there was a specific reason such as marital union with the external dynasty. Even in that case the instruction was very rudimentary, probably based on translating the foreign texts.[638] If one (of noble or common origin) wanted to learn the language properly, it was necessary to spend some time abroad. Elena Taddei has demonstrated how the Este archive in Ferrara is swollen with the letters of German princes recommending their subjects or courtiers, eager to learn Italian, for ducal protection.[639] It seems that in the end, the personal interaction

[637] Bernhard Bischoff, 'The Study of Foreign Languages in the Middle Ages', *Speculum* 36, no. 2 (1961): 209–24.
[638] Benjamin Müsegades, 'Lernen durch Lesen oder Sprechen? Reichsfürstliche Französischkenntnisse am Übergang vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit', in *Adel und Mehrsprachigkeit in der Frühen Neuzeit: Ziele, Formen und Praktiken des Erwerbs und Gebrauchs von Fremdsprachen*, ed. Helmut Glück, Mark Häberlein, and Andreas Flurschütz da Cruz (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag in Kommission, 2019), 17–32.
[639] Elena Taddei, '"Nach Italien nit allein zur Erlehrnung der Sprach." Ferrara als Ort des Fremdsprachenerwerbs im 16. Jahrhundert', in *Adel und Mehrsprachigkeit in der Frühen Neuzeit: Ziele, Formen und Praktiken des Erwerbs und Gebrauchs von Fremdsprachen*, ed. Helmut Glück, Mark Häberlein, and Andreas Flurschütz da Cruz (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag in Kommission, 2019), 33–48.

with the foreign-speaking environment was a crucial condition for acquiring the language.

That is why Eleanor could have started her linguistic preparation only after she was given a way to do so—the actual speakers and tutors in one person. The presence of foreign figures was not a facilitating condition; it was an essential one. This is probably why the court ordinance for the journeys of Anne of Bohemia and Mary of Hungary [1521] orders one or two French-speaking ladies-in-waiting from Mary's entourage to swap place with one or two Hungarian-speaking ladies-in-waiting from Anne's.[640] Even though these two princesses lived for several years after the wedding arrangement at the First Vienna Congress (1515) together in Innsbruck, and most likely the linguistic interaction went on for some time, it was still deemed necessary to include a foreign-speaking companion for the princesses' journeys to their husbands, most likely as a means to practise the language on a daily basis.

These examples may indicate that there was at least a general sentiment that it would be convenient for the princess to get some rudiments of the language. Nevertheless, the language issues were usually not part of marital contracts, so technically nothing legally bound the princess to acquire such a skill. If the one side of the marital union did not ask for it—as in the case of Catherine of Aragon when the English demanded the young princess would be trained in French by her sister-in-law, Margaret of Habsburg[641] (again presence of a foreign individual is needed)—it would have fallen to each individual princess to either acquire the knowledge of language, rely on their knowledge of Latin, or use an interpreter. Bianca Maria Sforza [1493/4]

[640] Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Hofkammerarchiv, Nieder-Österreichische Herrschaftsakten, W-61/A-36, fol. 36r, quoted in: Orsolya Réthelyi, 'Jagiellonian-Habsburg Marriage Policy and Cultural Transfer. The Question of Household and Court Ordinances', in *Das Wiener Fürstentreffen von 1515. Beiträge zur Geschichte der habsburgisch-jagiellonischen Doppelvermählung*, ed. Bogusław Dybaś and István Tringli (Budapest: Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2019), 359.
[641] Bergenroth, *Calendar of Letters*, I:156.

communicated with Maximilian via an intermediary (e.g. a secretary),[642] Joanna of Castile [1496] probably through Latin, in which the princess was so well-versed that she could answer by herself the formal oration addressed to her.[643].

What did linguistic training look like? To draw an example from outside of our Habsburg sample, Catherine of Valois in Shakespeare's *Henry V* begs of her lady-in-waiting Alice to teach her some English as the older damsel has been in England and speaks the language quite well. Yet this lesson proves itself to be totally useless since the French princess demands to hear only the English expressions for the body parts, which naturally results in her total unpreparedness in a real-time dialogue with her groom.[644] In the end, Catherine's language instruction sounds as if were written for theatrical effect rather than depicting actual practice. Still, by raising the language issue, Shakespeare might have attempted to humanise the political union, to portray its personal and practical implications which often brought a heavy sacrifice.[645]

Fortunately, we are not left with dramatic and far-fetched portrayals. Sigismondo de' Rossi, a Florentine envoy, refers to Francesco de' Medici about the communication he had with the prince's bride-to-be, Joanna of Habsburg [1565] in Innsbruck, a couple months before their wedding. For the first time the princess and the envoy met

> in their gardens, where they [= the courtiers] went every night to get a bit of cold air after dinner. Keeping her promise, Her Majesty gave me *buona sera* and then she said to me I am *benvenuto* in Italian. Then, [speaking in German] she had the Lord Steward tell me that she would not continue speaking further, being afraid I would tease and make fun of her. I encouraged her to continue speaking with me in Italian, which made her say that she would like to give me the honour to speak with me every time I would come to make her company—

[642] Balthasare Pusterla, Giasone dal Mayno, and Erasmo Brasca to Lodovico Sforza, Innsbruck?, 10 March 1494, ASMi, CVS, Potenze Sovrane 1467, f. 70–1.
[643] Fleming, *Juana I. Legitimacy and Conflict in Sixteenth-Century Castile*, 22.
[644] William Shakespeare, *Henry V,* ed. Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 3.4 and 5.2. References are to act and scenes.
[645] Sandra Logan, *Shakespeare's Foreign Queens: Drama, Politics, and the Enemy Within* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 210.

> and [to speak] as many Italian words as I would say to Her Majesty in German. I agreed to this and every evening [...] we engaged in dialogue in such a way that would make Your Excellency [= Francesco de' Medici] laugh a lot, if You were present."[646]

We can see that a language interaction again began shortly after the ambassador's arrival and that the instruction started with small steps, the ten words the princess vowed to learn. Unlike Shakespeare's Catherine of Valois, Joanna's choice of real-life greetings might have served her well in a conversation. The frequency of language learning, and the use of the foreign courtiers in doing so, is precisely what Carafa had in mind writing his counsels. There are hints that at least the language interaction of Joanna with Sigismondo de' Rossi continued once she embarked upon her voyage: in a letter to his master, de' Rossi apologizes for not writing more frequently because, as he rather mysteriously puts it, he did not have "an opportunity [to do so] since Her Highness [= Joanna] does not allow me to return to my quarters until she goes to bed".[647] Were they practising Italian? Be that as it may, except this brief comment we possess no other hard evidence (for Joanna or other princesses) suggesting that linguistic training took place en route. In this sense Carafa probably asked for too much, as the dangers and toil of travel were already quite physically and mentally challenging.

[646] "[...] Sua Altezza mi haveva promesso fra due giorni di parlare con meco dieci parole italiane, et andando io la sera a far servitù a Sua Altezza a un loro giardino, dove vanno ogni sera a pigliare il fresco doppo cena, mi fu da Sua Altezza osservato la promessa, con darmi la buona sera, et dirmi ch'io fussi il benvenuto in Italiano; et di poi mi fece dire dal Signor Maiordomo in tedesco, che non seguitava a parlare più oltra perché dubbitava che io non mi burlassi, et ridessi di lei, dove io per dargli animo a seguitare di parlare meco Italiano, gli feci dire che mi volesse far grazia di parlare meco ogni volta che io andassi a farli servitù, tante parole italiane quante io parlerei con Sua Altezza in Todesco, il che mi fu conceduto, et ogni sera faccendomi io dare ogni giorni lezzione, facciamo un dialogo di maniera che darebbe che ridere assai all'Eccelenza Vostra se fosse presente." Sigismondo de' Rossi to Francesco de' Medici, Innsbruck, 15 July 1565, ASFi, MdP 516a, f. 757.

[647] Sigismondo de' Rossi to Francesco de' Medici, San Giovanni in Persiceto, 3 December 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 642r.

Nevertheless, his counsel was probably meant more generally: language was not only a means of communication but also a very visible sign of culture. By embracing it the princess manifested her will to be a part of the husband's society and culture. Failing to do or even more, creating one's own cultural ghetto consisting of fellow-countrymen courtiers, could have led to much marital discord and ultimately resulted in a political crisis. One good example for this could be Renée of France (1510–1574) who retained an expensive French court long after her marriage to Ercole II of Ferrara (1508–1559). Despite initial promises, she preferred the French fashion over Italian and communicated in French or through an interpreter. As Elena Taddei argues, this attitude might have expressed both the protection of Renée's strong cultural identity and on the other side the awareness of her superiority in rank over her husband since she married well below her status.[648]

This might have been a reason why many princely women retained their native language—it was an indicator of their cultural and hierarchical identity. That is something Carafa strongly opposed, as he advocated that the queen should try to subordinate herself totally to the husband's will. In other words, the learning of language was not only useful for practical purposes but could also serve as a means to acquire the husband's good grace. This is also the sense we get from Rossi's encounters with Joanna of Habsburg [1565], as in one other letter she purportedly thanks Francesco for sending Rossi to her as a sign of affection. [649] She clearly entertains the Florentine envoy—and by extension, the young Medici—with some language conversation because she tries to win him over.

[648] Taddei, '"Fremde Fürstinnen in Ferrara"', 52.
[649] Sigismondo de' Rossi to Francesco de' Medici, Innsbruck, 22 July 1565, ASFi, MdP 516a, f. 841.

And that is exactly what Carafa meant by his language counsel for the journey: to show the husband willingness, to send a message of subordination to his will, to manifest her openness to embrace a new culture and family. That was a sort of preparation the princess could have been actively involved in during the journey, and it fits well within his overall plan for the princess to search for the husband's good graces.

Despite the long list of tasks, some of which were discussed in greater detail in previous parts, there were still some possibilities as to how the queen could have used her bridal journey to prepare herself for the future role, which Carafa does not envisage at all. Let us concentrate on one of them, namely the maintenance of family memory. This effort is quite vividly described in Lanckman's description of Eleanor of Portugal's journey [1451/2]. As the bridal company departed from Lisbon, it sailed along the coastline, and having passed Gibraltar it made a stop in the Portuguese-occupied city of Ceuta in Africa. During her stay in the city, Eleanor visited one garden where she planted (with her own hands) a little tree, stating that she did so in memory of herself. Having done so, she entrusted the care of the tree to a local gardener, paying him one ducat for this service. A couple of days later, the captain of Ceuta went on a military expedition, and having victoriously come back, he brought a rich booty and many captured "pagans". Eleanor, seeing that, ordered—in her name and for the memory of hers—the captives to be set free. [650]

Both episodes illustrate the ways in which the future empress engaged in the preservation of memory. For a long time now, scholars have recognized the crucial role queens played in maintaining dynastic memory: on the one side, by patronage of the visual, sculptural, or literary arts, they were erecting lasting monuments to the

[650] Lanckmann, *Diário de viagem*, 58.

living and dead.[651] On the other, queens initiated an active process of remembrance by funding religious rituals or public celebrations.[652] It can be argued that this is precisely what Eleanor was doing with the acts which—according to her (and Lanckman)—were performed in order to memorialize her. By utilizing both material (the tree) and immaterial (mercy for the prisoners) vehicles, she consciously erected a living monument to her deeds, which is the job she will be later responsible for executing for the entire family.

To sum up, Carafa's manual endows the bridal journey with a special ethos, framing this geographical transfer as an opportunity for the princess to better prepare for her future duties, given the absence of direct male authority and the presence of the new courtiers in her wedding train. Even though these journeys were often physically quite arduous, we can detect clear signs that his advice was followed to a great extent. The princesses used their journey to make a good first impression on the new courtiers who came to fetch them; they employed an obsequious correspondence to win their spouses over, and if necessary, they were ready to intervene in court management. Carafa's counsel to start learning the husband's language was often left at the princess' discretion and in the presented cases the linguistic encounter resembles flirtation with language rather than actual instruction. Still, it was deemed highly advisable for a princess to learn the language sooner or later in order to avoid marital estrangement stemming from cultural difference. In addition, there were other options, not envisaged by Carafa, which the princess might have used en route as preparation for her new position. She could engage in the remembrance process, and thus, to train herself for

[651] Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe*, 248.
[652] Valerie L. Garver, *Women and Aristocratic Culture in the Carolingian World* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2009), 69.

a role as a keeper of family memory, as Eleanor of Portugal did. However, what is striking about the just-quoted episode from Eleanor's journey is her intervention in the course of events. Her active role is visible at other instances too: aside from the liberation of enslaved Saracens and planting the commemorative tree it is the princess who suggests a redeeming pilgrimage to Santiago in Compostela during a sea storm, or calls for a council at the port of Livorno, as described earlier in this chapter. Was this a case for other princely brides as well? Were they involved in the decision-making that had a deeper impact on the flow of the journey? This will be the subject of the next section.

6 Agency and interaction

The rhetoric of medieval and early-modern sources (e.g. speaking about "delivering the bride", shown in Chapter Four) as well as many historians intentionally or unintentionally (using terms as the "marriage market") tends to reduce princely brides to a means of dynastic politics, to denote them as "sold daughters". This narrative was shaken-up by Katherine Walsh who reacted to the book intended for a popular market entitled *Habsburgs verkaufte Töchter* by Thea Leitner, which circulated the idea, reinforced by feminist studies, that noble daughters were a compliant tool of male manoeuvring. Taking a number of various quickly-sketched examples, Walsh demonstrates that many fifteenth-century women of the highest rank engaged in agile diplomacy, intervened in political and family matters, or actively collaborated in their own incorporation into the husband's environment.[653] Also playing upon Leitner's book title, Jörg Rogge expands upon Walsh's thesis, rebuffing the language of coercion and oppression when speaking about high-ranking women while also interpreting their precarious conditions in a more complex way:

> The cited examples show that noble women and princesses lived in a permanent state of tension, which was a result of, on the one side, the expectations pointed at them to fill their social roles, and on the other side the attempt to be or to remain themselves. The observable conflict of behaviour of the princesses is a consequence of their attempts to enact face-to-face the expectations of their role, and possibly to develop or to gain their individual identity in opposition to the husband and the family.[654]

[653] Walsh, 'Verkaufte Töchter?'.

[654] Jörg Rogge, 'Nur verkaufte Töchter? Überlegungen zu Aufgaben, Quellen, Methoden und Perspektiven einer Sozial– und Kulturgeschichte hochadeliger Frauen und Fürstinnen im deutschen Reich während des späten Mittelalters und am Beginn der Neuzeit', in *Principes: Dynastien und Höfe im späten Mittelalter : interdisziplinäre Tagung des Lehrstuhls für Allgemeine Geschichte des Mittelalters und Historische Hilfswissenschaften in Greifswald in Verbindung mit der Residenzen-Kommission der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen vom 15.-18. Juni 2000*, ed. Cordula Nolte, Karl-Heinz Spiess, and Ralf-Gunnar Werlich (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2002), 266.

In light of this, the expression "sold daughters" irrefutably comes short of grasping the situation of late-medieval and early modern princesses. However, these, and many other studies proving and exploring queens' agency *(Handlungsraum)* concentrate on post-wedding life.[655] Can we trace a comparable level of agency during the spousal journey? All of Carafa's advice presupposed the queen's capability for independent action, and as we have seen, this was not just his idiosyncracy but rather it mirrored the comportment of many princely brides that were most likely not even aware of his treatise. Yet did their sphere of influence stretch outside the issues related to their queenly self-training; in other words, was their voice heard in making decisions that influenced the entire wedding transfer?

This chapter will show that besides self-instruction, the absence of male authority during the nuptial transfer enabled the princess to wield a certain degree of influence. This aspect is even more striking in gender comparison to the wedding transfers where the males are not documented to be more dominant or authority-wielding. Nonetheless, both grooms and brides used their trips to participate in the encountering of people. They entered into dialogue with them, though unfortunately, the only language that has survived is gift-giving. The material objects, circulated in the course of the journey were by no means merely polite offerings—quite contrarily, they highlighted splendour of the event, and what is more, they materialized the bonds and relations established during interaction. The journey, again, was an ideal occasion

[655] For instance, Bettina Braun et al., *Nur die Frau des Kaisers?: Kaiserinnen in der frühen Neuzeit*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung ; Bd. 64 (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2016); Unterholzner, 'Bianca Maria Sforza'. To name a study concentrating on the low-ranking women, Joyce de Vries examined agency of the seventeenth-century Bolognese females based on the content of their trousseaus. Joyce de Vries, 'Setting up House. Artisan Women's Trousseaux in Seventeenth-Century Bologna', in *Challenging Women's Agency and Activism in Early Modernity*, ed. Merry E. Wiesner (Amsterdam: University Press, 2021), 65–84.

to build as many new connections and relationships as possible, connections that were to be capitalized on in the future.

Some sources suggest that the princesses had, if not a final, then at least a strong auxiliary say on different matters arising on the road. This is clearly visible for Joanna of Habsburg [1565] who is presented at various instances making decisions that altered the journey to some extent: in Mantua, the count of Mirandola invited her to his town but she excused herself and opted to visit a nearby monastery instead.[656] Several days afterwards, the princess was so determined to inspect another monastic site that the entire bridal train had to travel with lanterns in darkness.[657] Finally, leaving Mantua, Duke Guglielmo reportedly wanted to accompany Joanna for a longer distance but the princess "did not consent to it, saying that she did not want it out of love towards the lady duchess [= of Mantua, Eleanor of Habsburg, Joanna's elder sister] who was pregnant".[658]

Another important hint presents itself with Margaret of Habsburg [1497]'s sojourn in Southampton where the fleet transporting her to Spain had to take shelter from a terrible storm. As soon as King Henry VII learned about the princess's docking, he sent court officials to welcome her, and furthermore he wrote two letters inviting her to stay in the port as long as she needed, with a postscript that if she indeed decided to stay longer, she should let him know so he could visit her personally.[659] Rather than approaching Fadrique Enríquez de Velasco, the admiral of the fleet, the Tudor monarch addresses the princess directly and clearly, he deeming her someone who is

[656] TLA, HS 5565, p. 13.
[657] TLA, HS 5565, p. 17.
[658] Sigismondo de' Rossi to Francesco de' Medici, San Giovanni in Persiceto, 3 December 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 642r.
[659] Bergenroth, *Calendar of Letters*, I:137–9.

in charge, at least in some respects. Even if this argument can be rebuffed on the grounds that it was more well-mannered to address the princess rather than the admiral, it still puts the bride at the centre of the decision-making, since, at the very least, she had to communicate the will of the host to the navy's commander. Naturally, Margaret—and Joanna too—was not personally commanding every move of the armada (or entourage, in Joanna's case) or involved in the overall planning of the route, but the princess's will was considered as a decisive factor in some instances. These moments could cover situations caused by objective reasons, such as adverse weather (Margaret's unplanned stop in England), but they could originate from the princess's subjective motivations that might have resulted in small alternations of the itinerary (Joanna's choice of visiting the shrine instead of the nobleman).

The relatively great freedom of operation the travelling brides possessed strongly contrasts with the male journeys in our Habsburg sample. The encounter with their new self, or in other words, self-training as envisaged by Carafa is hardly traceable in these voyages, and in some respects it is completely logical and in line with Carafa's and wider contemporary views on the subjected role of woman. On the other hand, one would expect the grooms, given their gender, to have greater autonomy in their actions than their female counterparts. Nonetheless, at least for the journeys of Maximilian I and II [1476 and 1548] this is not the case at all. According to the much later source called *Ehrenspiegel des Hauses Österreich,* commissioned by the Fugger family in the mid-sixteenth century, Maximilian I waited in Cologne until Mary of Burgundy sent him funds (100 thousand ducats) and letters commanding him to meet her in Ghent. The allocation of this substantial amount of money allegedly made Mary's mother-in-law state that Maximilian's father, Emperor Frederick III, "is

cheap".[660] Although the transfer of finances is documented by the contemporary sources as well,[661] the entire episode definitely does not cast Maximilian in a dominant position or present him in the masculine ideal. Given the character of the *Ehrenspiegel,* aiming to memorize the famous deeds of the House of Habsburg, this might have been a deliberate strategy to emphasize the dynasty's rise to glory from "humble origins".

Maximilian II [1548] presents an even more distinct example. Even though we can trace his agency in gift-giving, as it will be shown later, or staffing his noble entourage (see Chapter Two), one episode from the sea leg of his journey reveals that he did not possess a greater authority than his female counterparts. When passing Marseille, which was a French territory, the prince's armada was on the brink of armed conflict. At this time, relations between the Habsburgs and the French were tense again as the ten-year Truce of Nice from 1538, that had put an end to the Italian wars, did not last and both sides renewed fighting already in 1542–44.[662] According to Besozzi's chronicle, at first, multiple gifts and acts of friendship were exchanged between Maximilian and the French, but this allegedly made Leone Strozzi, a commander of the French fleet stationed there, very jealous. Strozzi first issued a rather hostile welcome statement to the Habsburg fleet, delineating a very strict route that the imperials had to follow in order to avoid a cannonade from the fortresses. However, one Habsburg galley, not knowing about the set boundaries, made too deep an incursion into the port and as a result cannons from the nearby fortress were fired and the main sail of the ship was hit. Having heard this, Andrea Doria, the commander of

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[660] *Ehrenspiegel des Hauses Österreich, Buch VII,* BSB, MS Cgm 896, f. 15v, accessible online: https://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/0010/bsb00103106/images/index.html?id=00103106&seite=36&fip=193.174.98.30&nativeno=&groesser=150%25.

[661] Rausch, *Die burgundische Heirat Maximilians I.*, 175.

[662] R.J. Knecht, *The Rise and Fall of Renaissance France 1483–1610* (London: Fontana Press, 1996), 210–7.

the imperial fleet, was angered and wanted to retaliate. Only the swift intervention of Cristoforo Madruzzo, cardinal of Trent, who stated that they did not come here to start a war but to conduct successfully the young prince to the wedding, calmed Doria's passions and prevented an imminent battle.[663]

What is stunning about this episode is not the Franco-Habsburg hostility but rather the strange behaviour of the young Habsburg. Even after Strozzi's cold welcome, Maximilian reportedly remained "quite stunned and let the prince of Doria speak with his eyes pointed at him".[664] Then, Maximilian was totally side-lined after the firing upon the galley, which can be partly explained by the fact that he might not have been on the same ship as Admiral Doria was but nor was the cardinal! Besozzi explicitly states that Madruzzo immediately boarded a boat and made it to the admiral's ship just in time to intervene. Although the cardinal's emotional speech ("To prove I am not speaking out of cowardliness, I am ready to attack the French the first, to win or to die!") could have been exaggerated by Besozzi, who was on the cardinal's payroll,[665] it remains clear that Maximilian does not seem to exert any action in the decision-making, and what is more, his opinion is not even sought after.

Another sphere of influence for the nuptial travellers were the people they ran into when traversing great distances. Due to the very character of the bridal journeys (convoluted logistics, increasing festivization, etc.) but also, perhaps, stirred by personal motivations, princes and princesses were not silent by-passers but actively interacted with the environment and its inhabitants. Carafa in his instructional treatise addresses numerous instances during which the queen could make personal contact with particular individuals. For instance, he presupposes that Beatrice of Aragon, for

[663] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 43–44.
[664] Ibid., 43.
[665] Pederzolli, 'Il viaggio in Spagna', 18.

whom his *De institutione* was written, would pay a visit to her sister Eleanor, married to the duke of Ferrara, and he instructs the queen to consult on the details of the visit with the husband's reception delegation.[666] Then, the sojourn in Rome—which eventually did not happen, as Beatrice took a naval route instead—ought to be used for forging bonds with the pope. The princess is supposed to deliver a speech, expressing joy at meeting the "dearest friend of both Your father and husband". The audience with the pope, however, should not be limited to the exchange of pleasantries: the princess should strive to obtain papal indulgence and to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist from the pope's hands, both of which were very powerful vehicles of personal piety. Yet there is another option for how Beatrice could profit from her acquaintance with the supreme pontiff: she should exhort him to support an unspecified "liberating expedition", probably a crusade against the Turks, and what is more, she should stand in as a temporary envoy of her husband in case he asks her for some matter to be processed.[667]

The princess's influence should not stop at the pope. On the contrary, perhaps even great attention ought to be given to dealing with cardinals in Rome. A counsel regarding this sort of encounter reflects Carafa's many years of diplomatic experience and cunning:

> It is thus necessary to pay attention to the cardinals' conduct: each of them, and especially in Rome, lays no lesser claim [to everything] than kings usually do in their realms. Hence, Your Majesty cannot by any means offend any of them by keeping them waiting [to meet you]; You should not only kindly speak to every one of them but also go a great distance ahead to meet them. [...] Because the cardinals are from diverse nations, they will give testimony about Your life and morals in their respective countries .[668]

[666] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 27.
[667] Ibid., 25–6.
[668] Ibid., 24–5.

After giving warning about the cardinals' pretentiousness, the canny Neapolitan seneschal basically encourages the queen to give the prelates precedence, i.e. to lower her status in exchange for international reputation, as the college of cardinals consisted not only of Italians but also of clergymen from all around Europe who kept very vivid correspondence with their native regions. Carafa, nonetheless, does not only stress the importance of meetings with prominent persons, in fact, he goes far beyond that: the princess ought to make a good impression on everybody to whom she will encounter on the way:

> Your Majesty had to execute such a long journey most auspiciously, so Your excellent and outstanding innate qualities, which nature provided You with, would shine forth to many people. That is why it is necessary that You must strive to make not low profit in prestige even though You will suffer the distress of the journey. For the occasion of this sort presents itself rarely.[669]

In general, meeting individuals is yet another sort of strategy in Carafa's overarching plan, visible in almost every counsel he gives, according to which the princess ought to build her prestige throughout the journey because it is a unique opportunity to interact with so many regions and their inhabitants. This view puts the entire phenomenon of wedding travel into a new perspective—it is no longer a dynastic festivity but an event that propelled individualized goals.

Again, however, we are faced with the same dilemma—was this Carafa-envisaged plan somehow based in practice, i.e. did it reflect a contemporary custom, or was it only his wishful thinking? Despite the extensive number of sources, the description of princes/princesses' face-to-face interaction with common or noble people are rather rare. The financial log of Maximilian II's ride to Castille [1548] contains many entries showing the prince attributing a small sum to people he

[669] Carafa, *De institutione vivendi*, 30.

serendipitously ran into: for instance, prior to Innsbruck, he met "some females" to whom gave one crown (equal to one gulden and thirty kreutzers); in Valenza in Italy, Maximilian gave orders to award three guldens to a barefooted monk and thirty guldens to a woman for some unspecified aid in Barcelona.[670] Almost on a daily basis, the young Habsburg was leaving *Letzgeld*, a farewell tip, for accommodation and breakfast provided to him by innkeepers in minor towns. Often the administrators of these inns were females (e.g. in Sterzing or Colma, both in Tyrol before Bolzano; or in Bujalaroz, a town between Leida and Zaragoza in modern Spain).[671] Concurrently the auxiliary staff, such as chamberlains, porters, servants, and waiters at taverns or lodgings were remunerated, unsurprisingly, in much less generous fashion than their masters.[672]

Another group Maximilian encountered was the group of people taking care of his entertainment, namely singers, musicians, dancers and jesters. As the prince's entourage seems to lack artisans of any sort, performers responsible for his enjoyment had to be recruited ad hoc from the towns and villages he passed. In bigger cities, the preparation of entertainment was done side by side to the organization of festivities, so, for instance, the Mantuans employed jesters from relatively distant Piedmont, but also smaller towns such as Ala in the Trentine region did not hesitate to hire violinists from Ferrara to provide company for the travelling archduke.[673] Sometimes, Maximilian generously tipped unforeseen funny acts, such as in Genoa, where "one seafarer climbed the main mast of the galley and made various pastimes", probably acrobatic stances which brought him seven guldens from the prince's pocket.[674]

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[670] Menčík, *Die Reise Kaiser Maximilian II. nach Spanien im Jahre 1548*, 5, 9, 10.
[671] Menčík, 5, 6, 13.
[672] E.g. the servants in Sterzing were givine only four gulden and thirty-two kreuzers, which is a ninth of the *Letzgeld* left to their mistress. Ibid.
[673] Ibid., 7, 13.
[674] Ibid., 11.

Unfortunately, no precise description of dialogues or actions during these meetings is extant. Without question the prince was personally involved: nearly all of these small quantities of money or tips are marked as made *auf f(ürstlicher) D(urchlaucht) Beuelch* (according to an order of His Princely Highness) or *von f(ürstlicher) D(urchlaucht*) (by His Princely Highness), which means Maximilian himself mandated the payments and thus they derived from his biddings. There can be little doubt that the Habsburg prince—definitely unconsciously—acted in line with Carafa's guidance. Although the commoners, performers, or mariners were arguably not the sort of acquaintances that *De institutione* urges to seek, the result is the same: money which Maximilian distributed conferred on him an aura of magnanimity and generosity, a public image that every late-medieval or early-modern monarch strove to achieve and which is the primary objective of Carafa's treatise. As Felicity Heal put it, visible acts of generosity were central to sixteenth-century kingship as it was a direct channel of mutual bond between subjects and ruler. This two-way dynamic was the part of the larger organism because premodern society was, as Heal explains,

> an asymmetrical universe in which the realities of power move through systems of patronage and the bonds between men: and there are few more effective ways of expressing those realities than through the public articulation of generosity.[675]

Perhaps an even more frequent type of assignment in Maximilian's financial log than tips in cash are material gifts. As Suzanne Butters brilliantly showed, both means of giving, precious objects and cash, were not just performative gestures of respects, but created a strong sense of obligation. That is why prominent figures were anxious to safeguard their "gifty" public image—not only in maintaining their generosity but also

[675] Felicity Heal, *The Power of Gifts: Gift-Exchange in Early Modern England* (Oxford: University Press, 2014), 89.

in monitoring how others might interpret the received gifts. When, for example, the Florentines wanted to send a present to Wolfgang Rumpf von Wullross, a powerful personage at the court of Emperor Rudolf II, as a token of gratitude for Rumpf's support in diplomatic matters between the emperor and Tuscany, it was met with objections: having heard about the incoming gifts, Rumpf, concerned about the public backlash, valiantly protested but eventually gave in, as the Florentines started to propagate the story that these offerings were made on the occasion of his wedding. Since a similar pattern is documented for another Austrian nobleman too, nuptials were probably deemed a legitimate excuse to win somebody's favour or corrupt him.[676]

This does not come as a surprise, since, as the already quoted passage from Natalie Zemon Davis's book asserts, gifts were an integral part of the princely marriage ceremony.[677] Aside from the exchange of goods in the form of dowry and other dotal offerings that were inherent to matrimony, there were other types of donations from either of the wedding parties or third-parties that directly translated into the social status of the newlyweds and both dynasties concerned. The gifts from the groom to the bride (or vice-versa) might have been a way to establish harmony between the spouses, disrupted not only by a wife's dowry but also by social inequalities. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, who examined non-dotal marriage gifts in fifteenth-century Italy, argues that grooms ranking lower than their brides tended to attribute more precious gifts as a way of compensating for this social imbalance.[678] Furthermore, gifts circulating over the course of the nuptials were tied to the projecting of the social prestige and magnificence to the outer world, in Susan Mosher Stuard's

[676] Suzanne B. Butters, 'The Uses and Abuses of Gifts in the World of Ferdinando de' Medici (1549-1609)', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 11 (2007): 265–9.
[677] Davis, *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France*, 46–7.
[678] Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 220.

words, they drew the event and its participants into the spotlight.[679] Jitse Jasperse showed how the precious items, collected in the trousseaus and displayed at the final entries, were an ultimate method of communing power and influence.[680]

Bearing all of these perspectives in mind, one can better evaluate the presents recorded in Maximilian II's financial accounts and gift-giving occasions from other bridal journeys. In Maximilian's case, the gifts seem to have played a similar role to cash, i.e. to remunerate individuals for a service provided, that is why even such precious items as golden chains or silver goblets were left as a tip. It is hard to define a criterion according to which some people were presented with cash or a gift; it appears that the valuable objects were assigned to more prominent individuals whereas the (relatively) petty cash was given to minor ones. In addition to the expression of gratitude and magnificence, these offerings can be read as feedback on the festivities and entertainments from the prince's side too: Maximilian personally ordered payments and gifts to the horse preparer and stable boys of Mantua who probably took care of the hunt organized for the prince in the adjacent area of Marmirolo.[681] Besozzi, the chronicler of Maximilian's journey, describes it as a little terrestrial paradise.[682]

Sometimes, the service might have been status-saving: a day following his arrival to Barcelona, the prince mandated to reimburse one mariner with fifteen guldens for a pair of trousers the said mariner had given to Maximilian on the galley.[683] It remains unclear why the Habsburg was in urgent need of trousers from a low-ranking sailor (had he been of high-status, his name and title would have been

[679] Susan Mosher Stuard, 'Brideprice, Dowry, and Other Marital Assigns', in *The Oxford Handbook of Women and Gender in Medieval Europe*, ed. Judith Bennett and Ruth Karras (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 153.
[680] Jitske Jasperse, *Medieval Women, Material Culture, and Power: Matilda Plantagenet and Her Sisters* (ARC, Amsterdam University Press, 2020), 17–35.
[681] Menčík, *Die Reise Kaiser Maximilian II. nach Spanien im Jahre 1548*, 7.
[682] Besozzi, *Die Chronik*, 35.
[683] Menčík, *Die Reise Kaiser Maximilian II. nach Spanien im Jahre 1548*, 11.

preserved). It is possible he got wet or sick as we know that Maximilian did not take the sea voyage well: he recounts in letters to several recipients how he got fever from the stormy sea[684] and even a letter has come down to us describing how the prince spent a long time observing ships in Genoa (prior to the sea leg of the journey) and testing whether he would get dizzy or not.[685]

As we have seen in Chapter Three, the hosting sovereign often provided the bridal traveller with various sorts of gifts, sometimes even in the form of provisions. Venice did so for every Habsburg bride(groom) in our sample, although the city was not visited by either of them. This points to an intriguing fact—the benefactor did not have to be physically present during the gift-giving, which means that the nuptial travellers could interact with persons or institutional bodies remotely. There are strong hints that this was a rule rather than an exception: in July 1548, as Maximilian II made his way through northern Italy, Ercole II, duke of Ferrara, addressed a letter to Cristoforo Madruzzo, cardinal of Trent and member of Maximilian's entourage. Ercole sends a pair of hunting dogs, the best and the most beautiful ones from his kennels, together with some provisions (salami, lettuce, candies), asking the cardinal to forward them to Maximilian.[686]

A similar pattern of distant gift-giving or bonding emerges for the travelling females as well. In a letter to Joanna of Habsburg [1565], Isabella Gonzaga, marchioness of Pescara, excuses herself for not being able to personally visit her and kiss her hands, so she sends in her stead certain nobleman.[687] Even more personal is

[684] Loserth, *Die Registratur*, 435–440.
[685] Prince of Ascoli to Philip II, Genoa, 21 July 1548, printed in Malfatti, *El archiduque Maximiliano*, 194.
[686] Duke of Ferrara to the cardinal of Trent, Ferrara, 4 July 1548, published in Malfatti, 188–9.
[687] Isabella of Gonzaga to Joanna, Casale, 2 December 1565, HHStA, Oberthofmeisteramt, Ältere Zeremonialakten, 1 Akten, f. 175.

the letter of Suor Paola Gonzaga[688] to the same princess.[689] This nun from the Corpus Christi monastery in Mantua thanks Joanna for *amorevolezza et gentilezza* which the princess showed to her, probably during Joanna's visit to the monastery.[690] Paola then begs of her to have *memoria di me* and as a token of her affection she sends her some flowers. The passage of the bridal traveller was thus clearly seen as an opportunity to create or retain links by means of gifts. In like manner to the corruption attempts elucidated by Suzanne Butters, the bridal journey, too, was a legitimate cause to exhibit one's largesse to the princely figure, and in so doing, to induce a sense of obligation in her/him, deeply rooted in the nature of the gift.

The presents circulated in the course of the bridal journeys could have been a way not only to connect with new people, either absent or present, but also with the old ones. Having received the rich Venetian offering in Dolce, Joanna of Habsburg [1565]—unlike her brother Maximilian II—decided to send the Malvasia wine and sweet treats to her unmarried sisters Margaret, Magdalene, and Helena in Innsbruck. The Florentine envoy, describing this scene, adds that he would personally ensure that nothing would be dispatched to Innsbruck while they were still in Venetian territory, as this act would probably offend the hosts.[691] Since the report about the redistribution of the gifts came down to us only because of the envoy's misgivings, it is possible that this was a common practice and that material objects flowed in many directions, but every time with the intention to create or strengthen the connections between individuals. Bridal journeys therefore had an irreplaceable place in this system as they

[688] The daughter of Duke Francesco II Gonzaga was already during her life revered as a model of piety and even Emperor Charles V in 1530 personally paid a visit to her. Sally Anne Hickson, *Women, Art and Architectural Patronage in Renaissance Mantua: Matrons, Mystics and Monasteries* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 94–96.
[689] Suor Paola Gonzaga to Joanna, Mantua, 1 December 1565, HHStA, Oberthofmeisteramt, Ältere Zeremonialakten, folder 1 Akten, f. 173.
[690] TLA HS 5565, p. 13.
[691] Polidoro Castelli to Francesco I de'Medici, Dolce, 25 November 1565, ASFi, MdP 518, f. 512.

endowed these persons with a reason to interact, and thus they were a unique forum for making contacts that would extend far beyond the time of the journey. However, this network of relationships was not the only thing that remained from the transfer—even more enduring was the panegyrical rendition of the journey, serving the purposefully-created dynastic memory, which will be addressed in the next chapter.

7 Memory and praise

After discussing the material, festive, instructive, and social dimensions of the journeys, there is one aspect left to tackle. What was the afterlife of these extraordinary events like? Did they have a role in creating the dynastic memory? And if so, in what way? This chapter demonstrates that spousal journeys were a powerful tool for subsequent memorialization and panegyric by entertaining the two—at first sight contradictory—images of the transfer. One of them is triumphalism, apparent in its festival staging (Chapter 3.1), another is travel peril and uncertainty that is offset by meticulous preparation (Chapter One) and the acts of piety (Chapter 3.2). The newly emerged genre of wedding orations and poems, the so-called epithalamia and the epic compositions sponsored by Emperor Maximilian I, elaborated on these motifs, imprinting on the journey an image of a heroic odyssey, and thus bestowing upon it a powerful propagandistic (to contemporary as well as the future audience) and self-affirmative (for the dynastic identity) effect. One may argue that a certain degree of panegyrical hyperbolism is present also in other narrative or even epistolary sources (see the discussion below); these literary compositions however do so unequivocally, blatantly, and with the clear agenda that often contrasts with the version of events depicted by the other types of evidence.

Epithalamia, a comprehensive term for various wedding poems and orations, share recurrent topics of the genre, discerned by second-century rhetoricians, such as invocation of gods, praise of ancestry, the extolling of newlyweds, and exhorting them to love each other and to bear offspring.[692] Surprisingly, however, scholars have not paid the same amount of attention to each form (poetic-lyric and in-prose) of

[692] Tufte, *Poetry of Marriage*, 130–1.

epithalamium. Whereas D'Elia's book constitutes the only work which examines Renaissance epithalamia in prose on a large comparative scale, their poetic counterparts have been widely studied. To name only the most recent works, Matthew Tibble, for instance, looks into wedding poems written for the union of Mary of Tudor and Philip II of Spain, and by juxtaposing literary motifs in these compositions, he exposes different perspectives on Queen Mary I regarding her power status and gender.[693] Christof Ginzel, on the other hand, examined wedding poetry composed for the Palatine wedding of 1613 as an architectural monument, constructed by poetic bricks and mortar, that was to convey a sense of stability and endurance in times of crisis.[694] Marion Rutz analysed the interconnections between politics, diplomacy and literature in four epithalamia from the 1512 wedding of King Sigismund I of Poland and Barbara Zápolya.[695] Although these and many other works successfully exposed epithalamia in their wider perspective, not confined to literary analysis but pointing to their dynastic or political use, a broader, trans-European analysis of Neo-Latin genre of epithalamia, in both of its forms, is much needed.

As already mentioned, epithalamia were closely tied to the traditions of ancient-style wedding rites, in which the procession played a dominant role, and thus they could operate within the context of the bridal transfer. However, analysis of the traveling theme in Renaissance wedding poetry is almost untouched by modern scholarship. A solitary study authored by Antonio Cueto distinguishes a tripartite scheme, named after the Roman procession *deductio.* As Cueto shows, this poetic

[693] Matthew Tibble, *Nicolaus Mameranus: Poetry and Politics at the Court of Mary Tudor*, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions ; v. 220 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 51–72.
[694]Christof Ginzel, *Poetry, Politics and Promises of Empire: Prophetic Rhetoric in the English and Neo-Latin Epithalamia on the Occasion of the Palatine Marriage in 1613* (Göttingen : Bonn: V&R Unipress ; Bonn University Press, 2009), 213–66.
[695] Marion Rutz, 'Panegyrics and Politics: Three Polish and One Prussian Epithalamium for the Wedding of Zygmunt I and Barbara Zápolya in 1512', *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie* 76, no. 2 (2020): 245–89.

structure presents the passage of the bride through a traumatic departure from the family (1), an arduous journey (2), and happiness of meeting the the groom (3). The first phase features stereotypes of grieving, begging the parents to grant her a permit to leave them, and the whole scene is reinforced by gestures of embrace and tears. These acts—but in a more joyous atmosphere—are then repeated at the first encounter with the husband, who is portrayed to be ardent with desire to see and to join with his spouse. The central part, the procession, is executed under the auspices of the gods from classical mythology. The reception of the bride is connected with exhortations to enter the groom's house and his bed, with assurances that the initial fear and bashfulness will turn into marital joy.[696]

In one of my previous works, I tried to apply this scheme to the analysis of poetic works connected with the already much mentioned wedding transfer of Bona Sforza [*1518].[697] The epithalamia and propemptica (farewell poems), but mostly the in-verse travelogue written on the occasion of this journey, constructed a gradual passage from sorrow to joy. The authors of these literary pieces skilfully remodelled the arduous journey, taking place between the late winter and the early spring season, and exaggerated the harshness of the weather during the first leg of the journey while stressing positive aerial conditions in the latter parts of it. The emotions of the main protagonist are externalized to the entirety of nature: thus, for example, when Bona Sforza bids farewell to her mother in Italy, everybody cries: nature, Neptune as the god of the sea, and Eurus, the god of the eastern wind. Conversely, as Bona approaches her husband, the sun starts to shine and every place the princess passes begins to resemble *locus amoenus,* the motif of the pleasant place. The aim of this rhetorical

[696] Cueto, 'Historia y ficción poética', 72–4.
[697] Patrik Pastrnak, 'Bona Sforza's Bridal Journey to Poland as Imaginary Traveling and Jagiellonian Propaganda', *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie* 76, no. 2 (2020): 289–315.

strategy was to posit the princess as a heroine who overcame the dangers of travel, while at the same time to cast her husband, the king, as a long-awaited object of desire.

Another form of literary rendition presents itself with the corpus of texts sponsored and partially authored by Maximilian I. The theme of spousal travel is reflected in two of these texts: his own ride to Burgundy serves as a background to the heroic poem *Theuerdank*, whereas in the emperor's autobiography *Weißkunig* is inserted a translated (into German vernacular) and slightly edited account of Eleanor of Portugal's [1451/2]—Maximilian's mother— journey by Nicolas Lanckman. The extensive literary programme that Maximilian sponsored and in which he often probably stepped in as an author was completely governed by the aim of building the *Gedechtnus*. This memory should have been institutionalized, entrusted to scholars, and unlike old monastic annals it was supposed to accessible to everybody. How did these two ways of rendition, the humanistic and "maximilianist", differ and what did they have in common?

This chapter will thus look at the two ways the epithalamic poems and orations, composed for the Habsburg princesses could reshape the bridal transfer, namely triumphalism and crisis. In an analysis of the epithalamia, Cueto's tripartite scheme will be used and as we will see that the themes inherent to this literary model were also employed in other literary compositions. Images of pain and distress used in the Renaissance wedding poetry were heavily exploited to serve encomiastic goals also in Maximilian I's *Weißkunig and* the *Theuerdank,* which will be addressed in the latter part of this chapter. All in all, it will be argued that the memorialization of the wedding journeys materialized in various literary genres by means of refashioning them as a jubilant or Herculean venture, aimed to extol the dynasty, either adding up to the splendour of the nuptial festival or creating the dynastic self-affirmation, that is,

dynastic memory. Especially in the *Theuerdank,* the goal was not to preserve memory of one event but the entire life of the emperor, therefore using the framework of the wedding transfer as a *lieu de mémoire.* Even though full of recurrent motifs and clichés, these literary compositions—together with the festival books, conserving the ceremonial splendour in a slightly different way—were crucial for shaping the original and distinct character of the House of Habsburg in both the present and for posterity.

Petrus Roysius, the author of the wedding poem for the union of Sigismund II Augustus of Poland and Catherine of Habsburg [1553], describes the princess's transition in this way:

> Beautiful Catherine already left her fatherly house
> and after a long farewell she abandoned those fertile lands
> of yours, joyful Vienna, and she is closer now to the country
> of Lech, arriving at the borders of her husband, the king.[698]

After the welcome embassy, sent by the king to Olomouc, urging Catherine to speed up, the princess is coming to the borders:

> When, with a joyful step, the bride touched
> Lech's borders and august [or Augustus's] kingdoms, a virtuous group
> of matrons, together with beautiful girls, came to meet her. [...]
> These [women] received the incoming bride on the first threshold
> of the kingdom, wishing her favourable marriage,
> exhorting her to step into [the realm] with her right foot...[699]

[698] "Exierat iam pulchra domo Catharina paterna / Post longumque vale fecundos liquerat agros, / Laeta Vienna, tuos propioraque rura tenebat / Lechiadum ad regis fines ventura mariti." Petrus Roysius, 'De apparatu nuptiarum Sigismundi Augusti et Catharinae, caesaris Ferdinandi filiae', in *Szesnastowieczne epitalamia łacińskie w Polsce [The 16th-century Latin epithalamia in Poland]*, ed. Mieczysław Brożek and Jakub Niedźwiedź (Księgarnia Akademicka, 1999), 376.

[699] "Iam Lechi attigerat fines augustaque regna / Laeto sponsa gradu, cum se fert obvia contra / Matrum casta cohors, pulchris stipata puellis. [...] Hae sponsam primo venientem in limine regni / Excipiunt faustumque precantur cunctae hymenaeum / Hortanturque pede ingrediatur laeta volenti..." Roysius, 378.

When Catherine approached Cracow ("walls of Gracchus", legendary founder of the city), King Sigismund Augustus rode off to the field outside of the town of Balice to wait for her:

> As the king saw the arriving [princess], walking on the fields
> with a joyful step, he watched her with a steady gaze from the distance,
> and at once his entire heart burst into flames
> seeing the bride's rosy cheeks.[700]

The final entry into the city of Cracow is an explosion of jubilation:

> When the bishop finished his speech, the following roar
> of the present folk reached the heavens, hills echoed the shouting
> and the joyful roar of the people who occupied many fields
> far and wide, yearning to see the mentioned bride
> and the new queen. [...]
> Many thousands of people [are there], glittering in gems and gold [...]
> You would say that all the treasure of the world
> was heaped here...[701]

This portrayal is by no means unique, as the same author, Petrus Roysius, renders the first meeting of Catherine's elder sister Elizabeth [1543] with the same king:

> Now, even though the king's heart is wholly agitated,
> seeing the queen's [=Elizabeth's] face and rosy cheeks,
> and eyes shining like the sun's rays...[702]

These and other examples of *epithalamia* poems employ a whole set of motifs and literary techniques. As I tried to show in the case of Bona Sforza [*1518], whose nuptials with King Sigismund I of Poland gave occasion to many poetic compositions, the prominent themes were restlessness, gradation, and most importantly, the *deductio* scheme. These motifs are featured in the epithalamic poetry extant from the Habsburg

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[700] "Rex ut conspexit venientem et laeta prementem / Arva gradu, obtutu stans eminus haesit in uno, / Protinus et toto concepit pectore flammam / Flagrantes sponsae vultus atque ora tuendo." Roysius, 380.
[701] "Finierat fari antistes fremitusque secutus / Cunctorum it caelo, colles clamore resultant / Et laeto populi fremitu, qui plurimus agros / Complerat late studio sponsae ante videndae / Reginaeque novae. [...] Milia totque hominum gemmis auroque micantium, [...] Gazam omnem dicas terrarum et divitis orbis / Congestam [...]" Roysius, 382.
[702] "Hic, quamquam toto turbatus pectore rex est / Reginae ut vidit vultus flagrantiaque ora, / Luminaque aetherei radios aequantia solis..." Petrus Roysius, 'De apparatu nuptiarum Sigismundi Secundi Augusti, Poloniae Regis, atque Reginae Elisabes, Ferdinandi, Romanorum Regis filiae', in *Szesnastowieczne epitalamia łacińskie w Polsce [The 16th-century Latin epithalamia in Poland]*, ed. Mieczysław Brożek and Jakub Niedźwiedź (Cracow: Księgarnia Akademicka, 1999), 252.

unions as well. The most common theme from the *deductio* is the traumatic and often dramatized departure. Roysius presents the farewell scene of Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543] to her mother, Anne of Bohemia:

> The dear mother mourns the departure of the daughter
> for long, she holds her in embrace,
> saying: "My child, goodbye, goodbye!"
> "Go!"—Having said that, her eyes became sodden
> with tears, testifying to the gentle pain of the mother.
> "Go!"—she says—"Unite yourself with the honourable Polish king."[703]

Christophorus Cernota describes the scene more succinctly, however he also hints at the protracted and emotion-laden valediction:

> Again, the parents held their daughter in embrace,
> and long were saying "Goodbye," and [the same did] the brothers and sisters.[704]

The farewell is portrayed as an intimate act between grief-stricken parents and a daughter who possesses a higher duty that rationalizes this unnatural rupture from the native family. The common gesture of embrace expresses the kinship bond that is about to be broken as the new union, with the husband and his family, will be forged:

> The sky was purple, surrounded by gold,
> when the spouses pleasantly clasped hands.[705]

Although the farewells are permeated with a sense of tragedy, the course of the journey communicates splendour and magnanimity, manifested by the immensity of the princess's entourage and their attire and accoutrements. The toil of travel might take some toll on the princess's body ("the queen is tired from the long journey"),[706] but the overall atmosphere is filled with joy and pomp. The final happiness is

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[703] "Illam cara parens a se discedere maeret, / Et longum 'mea nata, vale, vale', inquit, euntem / Amplexa; 'I', lacrimisque genae maduere subortis / In verbo. Tenerum matris testata dolorem / 'I', inquit, 'digno regi socianda Polono'." Roysius, 244.

[704] "Complexi rursus natam tenuere parentes, / Et longum dixere 'Vale' fratresque, sororesque." Cernota, *Apparatus nuptiarum*, [Cii v].

[705] "Purpureus tunc axis erat circundatus auro, / Sub quo coniugii placuit coniungere dextras." Cernota, [Cv r].

[706] Roysius, 'De apparatu nuptiarum Sigismundi Secundi Augusti, Poloniae regis, atque reginae Elisabes, Ferdinandi, Romanorum regis filiae', 244.

foreshadowed by the motif of restlessness that exhorts the bride to speed up to reach her groom, or, on the other hand, by the portrayal of the husband as anxious or inpatient:

> [... the king] cannot suffer any more delay.
> He blames the sky, rotating so lazily on its axis,
> he blames the roads and vastness of the fields [...][707]

In this poem, Sigismund Augustus is even said to be tempted to break with tradition:

> Three times, [the king] wanted to cancel custom and well-known practice
> to give a loose rein to his horse and ride to Balice,
> three times the council, three times reason stopped him
> to not break with ancient custom and ceremony.[708]

Other poets use an inverse structure and rather than dissuading the groom and reining his passions, they encourage him to take action:

> Spur fast horses, Augustus, the bride of yours,
> daughter of the king of Romans, is approaching.
> Ride to meet her! This is how the girl should be received...[709]

The husband's anxiety is one of the motifs of the *deductio* scheme and was supposed to counteract the feelings of unease and tension of the bride leaving her domestic threshold.[710] To counter the groom's emotional state, the bride is constantly urged to hurry up, while also given assurances that not the future spouse but the entire kingdom is impatiently awaiting her arrival.[711]

Interestingly, this positioning changes in the poem by Pietro Bargeo, composed for the nuptials of Joanna of Habsburg and Francesco de' Medici [1565]. The

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[707] "Nec suffere moras rex iam valet amplius ullas. / Incusat caelum, pigro quod volvitur axe, / Incusatque viam spatiosique aequora campi..." Roysius, 250.
[708] "Ter voluit morem et notum rescindere ritum, / Immissis et equo Balicem ruere actus habenis: / Consilio ter se, ter se ratione repressit, / Antiqui ne quid moris ritusve refellat."Roysius, 250.
[709] "Frena citis properentur equis, Auguste, propinquat / Romani regis filia, sponsa tibi. / Obvius exibis; sic excipienda puella est..." Clemens Ianicius, 'Epithalamion serenissimo regi Poloniae Sigismundo Augusto', in *Szesnastowieczne Epitalamia Łacińskie w Polsce*, ed. Mieczysław Brożek (Cracow: Księgarnia Akademicka, 1999), 224.
[710] Cueto, 'Historia y ficción poética', 72.
[711] Pastrnak, 'Bona Sforza's Bridal Journey', 301–2.

epithalamium reflects the fact Francesco visited his soon-to-be wife just a couple weeks before she sets out,[712] and transforms the groom's zeal into the quest of reaching his beloved one:

> Hit the road! Do not sluggishly prolong your joy!
> Every labour should be felt light by those who are in love.[713]

This time, it is the groom who is exhorted to reach the bride as soon as possible. In doing so he is affronted with many perils, confronted with aggravated weather conditions or arduous geographical terrain:

> The icy winter cannot delay him in traveling,
> no rains, no heavy snow, no rivers,
> widened by many streams [either] [...]
> He cannot end his labours until
> he happily sees the face of his wife.[714]

Joanna's departure is then put in a jubilant mode, omitting any dangers that the perilous track might pose to her:

> The joyful virgin left the paternal gods
> and stepped into the bed of the beloved husband [...][715]

Thus, although Bargeo's work does not employ the *deductio* in its common form, it still oscillates between the themes of triumph and labour, while also using the traditional figure of restlessness. In other poems—when the spouses did not meet beforehand—the first meeting is presented as a culmination of their mutual desires and although in real life the orations were delivered by delegates, in the poetic rendition it is often the groom who addresses the wife:

> [The king] said: "Oh, the dear light, restored to my eyes,
> at last, I was allowed to receive you! At last, I could see you,

[712] See pages 209–11.
[713] "Carpe viam. neque tu lentus tua gaudia differ / In longum. solet esse leuis labor omnis amanti." Bargaeus, *Epithalamium in nuptias*, 9–10.
[714] "Non illum glacialis hyems remoratur euntem, / Non imbres, denaeque niues, non amnibus aucta / Flumina ab innumeris [...] Nec prius inceptos potuit finire labores, / Coniugis ante suae laetus quam constitit ora." Ibid., 10.
[715] "Sic virgo cum laeta domum patriosque penates / Linquit, et in chari thalamos ingressa mariti est." Ibid., 18.

my sweet bride, my only delight,
the only hope of our kingdom, of our salvation.
Proceed to the kingdom! Learn to call it yours..."[716]

As we have seen in Chapter Four, the welcome speeches worked with similar tropes (exhortations to enter the new realm, identifying the princess's arrival with the fulfilment of common hopes—to bear a prodigy and thus to certify dynastic continuity), so this portrayal from Roysius's poem might have been inspired by an actual oration. By reattributing these words to the groom, however, the dynamic between the newlyweds is shifted onto a more personal, almost romantic level—mirroring the relationship with parents during the farewell—and thus it humanizes the matrimony, concluded by political motivations, and presents it as a great love story. This inherent encomiastic technique is accompanied by explicit praises of the groom and the bride (beauty, prodigy, virtues, etc.) or more implicit ones, for instance when the princess asks to defer the sexual act of consummation until the next day because "in her heart, she carries the great and omnipotent lord of Olympus",[717] meaning the Eucharist. This postponement of the marital joy (and purpose of the matrimony), contradicting the spirit of epithalamic tradition, is deemed licit as it lays bare the princess's piety. God's protection and will, sanctioning the union, is as omnipresent in the poems as God himself, yet as we have just seen, not clothed in traditional Christian terms but rendered in classical terms, sometimes corresponding to one Greek or Roman deity (Jupiter), sometimes to many of them. The divine powers protect the princess on her way (e.g. Apollo sending a special carriage) and pledge to support her during maternity (Juno promising to help with breastfeeding).[718] Gods, nymphs,

[716] "Pauca refert: 'O clara oculis lux reddita nostris, / Ut tandem accipio te! ut tandem cernere coram / Te, dulcis mea sponsa, datum! mea sola voluptas, / Nostri o spes regni, nostrae o spes una salutis / Succedas regnis. Disce haec tua regna vocare..." Roysius, 'De apparatu nuptiarum Sigismundi Secundi Augusti, Poloniae regis, atque Reginae Elisabes, Ferdinandi, Romanorum regis filiae', 252–54.
[717] "... pectore magnum / Dum Regnatorem fert omnipotentis Olympi..." Roysius, 270.
[718] Cernota, *Apparatus nuptiarum*, [Bii].

Graces, and classical heroes contribute also to the overall splendour of the meeting of the spouses and wedding festivities.

Such a triumphal interpretation of the journey had its counterparts in the prose epithalamia as well. Giasone dal Mayno, Milanese orator, made a speech on the wedding of Bianca Maria Sforza and Maximilian I in 1494. In it, he addresses the groom:

> It is hardly credible and it must be attributed to the divine will... [...] The queen [= Bianca Maria Sforza] made a long journey to Your Majesty in the midst of winter [...] No rain, no snow fell from the sky. No cold, no ice, tightened in rigid stiffness, stood in her way—on the contrary, many roads were covered with summer-like dust. Sunny rays of divine splendour brought delight and everyday shone on the mountains and fields, and produced heat beyond the standards of winter time. The Alps of Rhetia, neighbouring the sky, which divide Germany and Italy, savage and inhospitable, calmed down during the imperial transit as if they were trying to lower themselves.[719]

This version of events, however, is in a direct contradiction with Bianca Maria Sforza's letters to her sister Anna, duchess of Ferrara. In them she paints a totally different picture of the journey which was far more problematic. As the princess made a crossing of an alpine mountain pass,

> the coldest wind blew right to my heart, the snow was high, covered with ice and powdered like flour. Pathways were narrow with many places where one could easily fall into an abyss. [...] Laments here, curses there.[720]

[719] "Nam quod uix alias nisi diuinitus factum credi posset. Serenissima Regina et comitibus mediae hyeme longum iter ad maiestatem tuam facientibus, nullae unquam pluuiae nullae e celo niues deciderunt. Non frigora, non obduratae glaties quasi rigoribus contractis obstiterunt, quin etiam plaerisque itineribus pulueres quasi estiui affuerunt. Solis radii diuina augustae speciae delectati, et montanis et campestribus locis quotidie circumfulxerunt et ultra rationem hyberni temporis incaluerunt. Rheticae alpes caelo uicene que germaniam ab Italia disterminant, asperrimae et quasi iniuae, in augustae transitu subsedisse et quasi se inclinasse vise sunt." Giasone dal Maino, *Epithalamion zur Hochzeit Maximilians mit Bianca Maria Sforza,* ÖNB, Cod. Ser. n. 12594, fol. 10r.

[720] "... cum fredissimo vento chi ce passaua fin al cuore, neve altissime et glazate che se puluerizauero como farina. Sentieri streti et in molti lochi periculosissimi de cascar nel abisso. [...] lamenti di qua, biasteme di la..." Bianca Maria Sforza to Anna Sforza, Mals, 15 December 1493, ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri 1583/9 (not foliated).

In another letter, the princess describes how "the wind was so cold and terrible that I thought that somebody had just blown a trumpet into my ears".[721]

Although Bianca does not explicitly mention any storm or blizzard and she speaks about "nice and very tempestuous (?) air", the voyage was clearly not as ideal as dal Mayno's speech would like us to believe. In many places, she describes poor accommodation and inferior food,[722] or, in one instance, a fire that broke out in one of the lodgings and killed twenty four horses. Reportedly the princess observed the affliction of the animals with her own eyes:

> I saw how it [=the horse] was shaking as if it had been bitten by a tarantula. Its tail and eyes were burned, and it was paralysed, though still alive. God Almighty, save us from such dangers.[723]

How can one account for such a conflicting depiction of one journey? Should dal Mayno's rendition be dismissed as a typical example of rhetorical falsification? In my view, the rejection of the Milanese orator's picture would cause the misunderstanding of his overarching goal: he strove to shape the journey and the wedding union as a consequence of divine will, materialized in a smooth, sun-drenched transition during which no one suffered or died. Moreover, he tried to present Bianca Maria as the new lady of the territory, saying that nature already accepted her by lowering or bending itself to her: "Because it was appropriate that every piece of this land would yield to its lady."[724]

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[721] "Lunedi per un vento frigidissimo et tanto terribile che ne pareva sonar nele orechie como trombe ad un tratto." Bianca Maria Sforza to Anna Sforza, Imst, 19 December 1493, ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri 1583/9 (not foliated).

[722] See page 68.

[723] "Uno ho viduto chi trema como fusse morduto dala tarantola, ha brusato la coda, li ochii, e la zoppa, pur vive. Idio ce defendi da tali presagii." Bianca Maria Sforza to Anna Sforza, Imst, 19 December 1493, ASMo, ASE, Carteggio con principi esteri 1583/9 (not foliated).

[724] "Nam terrarum dominae terras quascunque obsequi congruum fuit." Giasone dal Maino, *Epithalamion,* ÖNB, Cod. Ser. n. 12594, fol. 10r.

The leniency of the natural elements thus represents the acceptance of the princess, in other words, nature pays homage to its new mistress by taming its savage traits. In doing so, dal Mayno —as well as the authors of the epithalamic poems— aimed to extol the princess and the dynasties uniting in marital union, as this was the main objective of the Renaissance wedding speeches. However, the praise was not a purpose in itself but was intended to exalt the prestige of the royal/imperial pair, that in the premodern world equated directly to social standing and power. On the other hand, Bianca Maria's account could also have been exaggerated, with her seeking to present herself as a heroine in the eyes of her younger sister, perhaps, in order to gain her sympathies. The princess is documented as having used this epistolary strategy, articulated by the strong employment of emotions, also in correspondence with other family members, with the goal of expressing a mutual bond or to intervene in political matters.[725]

As already seen in the wedding poem by Pietro Bargeo, describing Francesco de' Medici's trip to his future wife, another strategy for memorializing the bridal voyages was focusing on travel hardships. This technique is also visible in Maximilian I's autobiography *Weißkunig,* namely in the portrayal of the bridal transfer of the emperor's mother, Eleanor of Portugal [1451/2]. The *Weißkunig* takes over whole passages from Lanckman's chronicle of the journey, and aside from translating them into the German vernacular (Lanckman's travelogue was written in Latin), it highlights the colourful parts while sometimes omitting the parts that were probably inconvenient for the memory and self-presentation of the dynasty. For instance the most embarrassing part, the mediocre reception embassy, consisting of two priests and a

[725] Christina Antenhofer, 'Emotions in the Correspondence of Bianca Maria Sforza', in *Maximilian I. (1459–1519)*, ed. Heinz Noflatscher, Michael A. Chisholm, and Bertrand Schnerb (Innsbruck; Vienna, 2011), 267–85.

handful of their servants who got robbed on the way, is only hinted at in the *Weißkunig*. So, whereas Lanckman gives an in-detail account of how the delegation ran into bandits who took away all the precious possession the imperial envoys were carrying, the *Weißkunig* briefly states that "in the land of Astorga, following the city of León, the embassy suffered great trouble from robbers".[726] Similarly, a humiliating crossing of the Portuguese borders and the initial imprisonment of the envoys, portrayed vividly by Lanckman, is omitted and instead the delegation is said to be accepted with many honours *(mit grosser erung)*.[727]

Erwin Koller spotted several other discrepancies between the two texts and she pointed out how, in several instances, the *Weißkunig* tries to cast the events in a more positive light for the House of Habsburg,[728] but a more in-depth comparison of these two writings would be needed. The scope of this thesis does not allow for such an analysis, but in essence we can say that the compilers of the *Weißkunig* did not deem the travel hardships the Portuguese princess had to suffer en route, as inappropriate. Quite contrarily storms, the scattering of ships, fights with pirates, and other troubles are shown to their full extent. Unlike the afflictions that befell the reception delegation, these were not left out from the narrative. The robbery experienced by the imperial envoys to Portugal stemmed from the mediocre character of the delegation as such—if it had consisted of a proper military escort, as was usual in other bridal journeys, it would have never been subjected to this ordeal. Hence, incorporation of this accident into the *Weißkunig* might have made a reader ask how such a thing could happen and

[726] Alwin Schultz, ed., *Der Weisskunig. Nach den Dictaten und eigenhändigen Aufzeichnungen Kaiser Maximilians I. zusammengestellt von Marx Treitzsaurwein von Ehren- Treitz*, Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses 6 (Vienna: Adolf Holzhausen, 1888), 6.
[727] Ibid.
[728] Koller, 'Die Verheiratung Eleonores von Portugal Mit Kaiser Friedrich III. in zeitgenössischen Berichten'.

inevitably, the frugality of Emperor Frederick III, Eleanor's husband and Maximilian's father, would be exposed.

On the other hand, stressing the princess's tribulations could have been a very efficient tool to present her as a heroine. Focusing on the travel dangers in relation to the bridal-journey discourse was important for two reasons. Firstly, as Shayne Aaron Legassie pointed out, medieval travel writing often used the hardships of travel as a very effective way to gain prestige and value in the eyes and ears of their listeners and readers because travelling as an activity was always deemed suspicious. Therefore,

> [t]ravelers and travel writers alike sought to preempt objections to their untertakings by appealing to the inherent dignity of travail. [...] the inevitable hazards of travel endowed it with a heroic aura.[729]

Having endured some form of labour would justify the travel and put it in a positive light. Although the wedding transfer could have been deemed a justifiable type of travel, as they were prompted by necessity rather than by a personal incentive, the narrative focusing on toil and travails clearly had the potential to re-stylize the journey as an epic odyssey.

Secondly, and despite what has just been said, bridal journeys could have been deemed as even more suspicious activity than regular travel because they combined the traditionally mistrustful pursuit (i.e. travelling) with the female gender that was considered more prone to sin and misconduct. Travelling or movement in general were in clear contradiction with stability and domesticity, viewed as attributes of the virtuous woman. Furthermore, it was believed that the journey was automatically connected with many threats to a woman's chastity, being a direct channel to expose

[729] Shayne Legassie, *The Medieval Invention of Travel* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017).

her to many sinful encounters, especially during the nuptial travel when brides lacked the father or husband's authority. To counter this mistrust, as Patricia Akhimie writes,

> [travel a]ccounts combat the stigma by first of all being subsumed by other narratives [of family, religion, and state], legitimating travel by linking it with domestic and with familial duties (wifely, motherly), and thus with the ideological imperatives (service to the state, religious devotion).[730]

This was certainly the case with the bridal journeys that were motivated by political decisions and/or dynastic goals, however, as Akhimie later states, a dramatic course of the voyage helped to provide an almost saintly image for the woman on the way.[731] Furthermore, by the same token, as Diana Pelaz Flores comments, difficulties that the princesses or queens experienced on the way do not reveal their emotions of panic or fear, but quite contrarily, their steadfastness and constancy of character.[732] Therefore, one can surely conclude that this combination of travel and travail was also on the minds of the Humanistic poets and court chroniclers, striving to memorialize and extol the event in the epithalamia or the *Weißkunig*.

Nevertheless, both approaches—whether the authors and poets chose to exaggerate the severity of the travel ordeals or rather opted for presenting an auspicious passage, rhyming with the triumphalism of the nuptials—took advantage of these problems and used them as material for praising the wedding, dynasties, or particular princesses. This attitude changes by the end of the sixteenth century. As Louise Nyholm Kallestrup has shown, the tumultuous journey of Anne of Denmark to Scotland [*1589] resulted in witchcraft trials. In Copenhagen, several women were accused and convicted of having caused the storm that made Anne's flotilla take

[730] Akhimie, 'Gender and Travel Discourse: Richard Lassels's "The Voyage of the Lady Catherine Whetenall from Brussells into Italy" (1650)', 128.
[731] Ibid., 135.
[732] Diana Pelaz Flores, 'El medio acuático en los viajes de las reinas a través de las crónicas de la baja edad media', in *El agua en el imaginario medieval. Los reinos Ibéricos en la baja edad media*, ed. Maria Isabel Del Val Valdivieso (Alacant: Universitat d'Alacant, 2016), 176.

provisional shelter in Norway.[733] The accusations of sorcery levelled against the earl of Bothwell in Scotland were also based on his position as admiral of the royal fleet at the time of the journey.[734] This is a completely different approach, trying to find a culprit for the meteorological and other types of misfortune and rather than trying to exploit their potential for rhetoric and dynastic memory. Ultimately, however, this change attests to the fact that bridal journeys and princely weddings were not performed in an immutable unitary style but that they reflected the wider social atmosphere.

The exploitation of travel dangers is, however, not confined to the literary presentation of female wedding transfers. Pitfalls and dangers lurking on the nuptial track provide a framework for the heroic journey of the knight Theuerdank in the namesake epic poem, commissioned and probably also authored by Maximilian I.[735] After the death of her father, Princess Ehrenreich begs Theuerdank to come to her, as they had been previously promised to marry each other and that was her late father's wish:

> [The messenger] said "The gracious lord, be sure:
> I was sent here to You
> by my lady, called Ehrenreich,
> a mighty and rich queen,
> unequalled in honour.
> And she commanded me with words
> to find You as soon as possible,
> to give to You her greetings.
> [...] You should thus come with me
> to her, so she will have
> a man who dares to do,

[733] Louise Nyholm Kallestrup, 'Wrath and Fear. Lutheranism and the Marginalisation of Witches in Early Modern Denmark', in *Marginality, Media, and Mutations of Religious Authority in the History of Christianity*, ed. Laura Feldt and Jan Bremmer (Leuven: Peeters, 2019), 178–9.
[734] Lawrence Normand and Gareth Roberts, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland: James VI's 'Demonology' and the North Berwick Witches* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 35–6.
[735] Melchior Pfinzing, Marx Treitz-Saurwein, and Maximilian I, *Theuerdank*, ed. Karl Haltaus (Quedlinburg: Gottfried Basse, 1836). The summary of the poem in English in: Stephan Füssel, *The Theuerdank of 1517. Emperor Maximilian and the Media of His Day* (Köln, London: Taschen, 2003), 56–86.

what is appropriate for a knight...”[736]

Theuerdank happily accepts the invitation but refused to come straight to the bride:

> [Theuerdank replies:] “Now, the day has come
> which I have desired so much,
> about which I have learned from
> chronicles and histories.
> So tell to your lady:
> I do not want to see
> until I will have done
> so many good deeds that
> she can marry me with honour.”[737]

Thirsty for adventure, the knight sets out to reach his bride but in the course of the journey he must face and overcome traps and ambushes, laid by the three devil’s captains, Fürwittig, Unfalo, and Neidelhart. Having successfully prevailed in every trial, Theuerdank marries Ehrenreich, however the consummation of the matrimony is postponed until the knight’s return from the crusade, and thus the end of the story remains open.

As soon as the poetic opus, accompanied by more than a hundred woodcuts from prominent German artists, saw the light of day (ca. 1512), it was no secret that Theuerdank stood for Maximilian, Ehrenreich for Mary of Burgundy, and the whole storyline for Maximilian’s passage to Flanders in 1477. The plot was, naturally, strongly romanticized, in the tradition of the medieval *chansons de geste* or *Heldenbücher* by court minstrels and troubadours. However, as Heinz Engels points out, the *Theuerdank* differs from this poetic tradition in two important aspects: firstly, the hero manages to triumph over every difficulty with some sort of moral gravitas, and secondly, the tale has the appearance of “reality”.[738] There are no giants, dragons,

[736] Pfinzing, Treitz-Saurwein, and Maximilian I, *Theuerdank*, 11, chap. VIII, v. 18–31.
[737] Ibid., v. 45–53.
[738] Heinz Engels, ‘Der Theuerdank als autobiographische Dichtung’, in *Kaiser Maximilians Theuerdank* ([Plochingen]: Müller und Schindler, 1968), 6–7.

or other mythical creatures standing in Theuerdank's way, on the contrary he is confronted with problems that might very well happen in the real world:

> Theuerdank did not expect anything bad from him [=Unfallo],
> without any concern he goes to hunt the chamois [...]
> The peasant [sent by Unfallo] acts according to his orders,
> and loosens one boulder
> which hurtles down towards the hero [...]
> He [=Theuerdank] falls down to the ground.
> The rock is rolling above him,
> so it was necessary that he duck
> otherwise, his life would be brought
> to an end.[739]

This sense of realism is boosted by the attached *Clavis* ("the key"), authored by one of the poem's co-editors, Melchior Pfinzing, which specifies the exact place where a particular incident occurred to Maximilian and sometimes reinterprets the particular episode, imprinting an allegorical meaning on it.

Maximilian probably deemed his journey and subsequent nuptials to Mary of Burgundy as one of the most significant points of his life, as he addresses it in the *Weißkunig* too (though, unfortunately, not the journey itself) and he even planned to create a more light-hearted version of the *Theuerdank,* entitled *Freydal.* Unfortunately, the text of the *Freydal* was never completed and only its outline and visual part (scenes of the tournaments the hero participated in) has come down to us. The *Theuerdank* thus remains Maximilian's main opus devoted thematically to his wedding journey. However, although the plot is framed by the actual wedding and voyage, the episodes—if they really happened at all—are inspired by the entire life of the emperor. The poem could well have been entitled, in Jan-Dirk Müller's words, *pericula et memorabilia facta*—dangerous and memorable deeds.[740] In a way, therefore, the

[739] Pfinzing, Treitz-Saurwein, and Maximilian I, *Theuerdank*, 80, chap. LV, v. 24–5, 28–30, 32–36.
[740] Jan-Dirk Müller, *Gedechtnus. Literatur und Hofgesellschaft um Maximilian I.* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1982), 110.

literary rendition of Maximilian's journey served as a *lieu de mémoire* of his reign, transposing his lifetime into the quest for his (allegedly) beloved wife.

Yet the *Theuerdank* is not only a recreation of the wedding transfer in terms of heroic literatur—it was also meant to convey a didactical message in allegorical language. The three devil's captains, Fürwittig, Unfalo, and Neidelhart, ought to represent the three phases of human life and three temptations connected with them, as their names suggest: Fürwittig symbolizes carelessness and voluptuousness of youth, Unfalo exemplifies dangers which a mature individual may run into while fulfilling his/her plans, and Neidelhart encapsulates hate and spite, amassed over years. Theuerdank, who is an everyman and God-chosen at the same time, must overcome snares and threats posed by these evil qualities not only in the outer world but also in his heart. The hero's quest is thus also a journey to his inner self, to self-understanding and self-observation.[741] In light of this, one might rightly ask to what extent the poem is even an autobiography and if it is not better, as Rabea Kohnen suggests, to understand it as a pure literary composition that was given some traits from actual events in order to boost its significance.[742]

In the end, we must ask the question why it was beneficial to commemorate the bridal transfer in various literary forms. For Maximilian I and his oeuvres, as has already been said, the answer is rather simple: the emperor's zeal to construct memory, *Gedechtnus,* for himself was well known, and it was epitomized in a sentence from the *Weißkunig*:

> A man who does not construct memory of himself while being alive, will have none after death, and he will be forgotten with the bell's toll.[743]

[741] Engels, 'Der Theuerdank Als Autobiographische Dichtung', 8–10.
[742] Rabea Kohnen, 'Das mer gehoert zuo eim Ritter auserkorn – Überlegungen zum Theuerdank', in *Maximilians Ruhmeswerk. Künste und Wissenschaften im Umkreis Kaiser Maximilians I.*, ed. Jan-Dirk Müller and Hans-Joachim Ziegeler (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 287–8.
[743] "...wer ime in seinem leben kain gedachtnus macht, der hat nach seinem tod kain gedächtnus und desselben menschen wird mit dem glockendon vergessen..." Schultz, *Der Weisskunig*, 66.

Nevertheless, it was not only meant to record the past, but to translate the heroic deeds of the ancestors in the present, and thus to bring legitimization to the dynasty by extoling its roots.[744] By imitation of medieval Arthurian romances, taking place in the *Theuerdank* (and partially in the *Weißkunig,* but not in relation to the journey), Maximilian aimed to create the impression of an ideal knight chosen by God to defeat infidels, to reform the church, and to usher in long-lasting peace. His marriage to the heiress of Burgundy, a hub of chivalric traditions, must have strengthened this self-perception of his.[745] The place of the bridal journey is indisputable in the process—it not only provided material to frame artistic portrayal but as a vehicle for the heroic acts, and it played a crucial role for dynastic memory, even to such an extent that the literary journey replaced the actual one: the passage of Eleanor of Portugal in the *Weißkunig* is dramatized whereas the voyage of Maximilian to Flanders, otherwise not very rich in memorable deeds, was transformed in the *Theuerdank* to symbolize the emperor's life-long quest for *Ehre* (honour) and *Gedachnus.*

There are more similarities between this approach and the epithalamia than one might think. The wedding poems and orations, too, took advantage of the brides' transfer and they did not understand it in terms of its physical dimension only. Naturally, there were elements of it that could have served as suitable material for encomiastic ends, such as very common pictures of travel toils or adverse weather. Analogously to the *Theuerdank,* however, they could have altered the overall image to match the *deductio* scheme, which results in the fact that many of these epithalamic compositions could well have worked for any dynastic wedding. In other words, if one did not know the title and addressees, one could find it difficult to determine the

[744] Müller, *Gedechtnus. Literatur und Hofgesellschaft um Maximilian I.*, 80–82.
[745] Gerhild S. Williams, 'The Arthurian Model in Emperor Maximilian's Autobiographic Writings Weisskunig and Theuerdank', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 11, no. 4 (1980): 3–22.

nuptials for which the particular epithalamium was composed. This is not to say that the poems and orations are monotonous or identical, on the contrary each of them approaches the task with a slightly (or totally) different angle, while at the same time following the rules of the genre. But the way in which they shift the actual bride's transfer to the metaphorical one is as much detached from reality as Maximilian's chivalric quest, yet, at the same time, comparably important since it played a crucial role for the encomiastic goals of the authors. On the other hand, the close similarity in how Eleanor of Portugal's journey is presented in a seemingly factual report (Lanckman's travelogue) and a self-promoting-literary opus (the *Weißkunig)* opens the question of to what extent we may take the chronicles or travelogues to be a relatively reliable source for bridal journeys. The same applies for correspondence because, as we have seen in the case of Bianca Maria Sforza's letters above, even this form of evidence was steeped in rhetorical techniques. In the end, one may conclude that we can say virtually nothing about *how* the particular bridal journey happened but almost everything about *what* the contemporary rulers and writers wanted us to see. And it seems they wanted us to see glory, pageantry, heroism.

Still, in determining the final purpose of these literary compositions, one must be cautious. Maximilian-sponsored and authored writings were surely a part of his commemorative programme, adding to the self-affirmative process of his princely house. History was a crucial tool in shaping the identity of a dynasty, which was always a group extending beyond kin relations: it was an imagined community with shared myths, traditions, and genealogies, that extended endlessly into the past as well as the future. That is why the past, present, and future of the princely house were closely connected, and history, for instance, served as a teaching material for dynastic

youth, or backed up their power aspirations.[746] Emperor Maximilian I was one of the first rulers who recognized the possibilities of printing and purposely used writings and visual media to spread his propaganda throughout Europe, not limiting oneself to the literature but also producing propagandistic leaflets, for instance, to incite the people against a government that he was fighting.[747] Yet speaking of the epithalamia, many scholars (my past self included) have treated them as a tool of propaganda too, but this claim should be subject to further analysis as many other motivations could have been involved.[748]

Perhaps we should treat them as dynastic memorials too. In this respect, an attachment to the second edition of Orzechowski's *Panagyricus*—which, per se, is not an epithalamic oration but rather a chronicle of the wedding, interspersed with some encomiastic elements—is interesting. In it the author reacts to the criticism of some (probably prominent) people that he forgot to mention or diminished in the first edition of the text. Orzechowski defends himself, saying that it is not his job to extol them, but rather the king's nuptials. Did he mean that he intended to memorialize it for posterity, to spread the king's glory abroad, or to just curry the monarch's favour and gain a small profit for himself?

Be that as it may, Orzechowski's apologia is a rare testimony that the people involved in the royal wedding were anxious about their place in history. Also, it is one of the few reports about the reception of memorial works related to the bridal journeys in this period. The response, no matter how negative, that the first edition of Orzechowski's work received attests to the wider audience, probably consisting of

[746] Geevers and Marini, 'Introduction', 11–2.
[747] Füssel, *The Theuerdank of 1517. Emperor Maximilian and the Media of His Day*, 7–22.
[748] See the thematical cluster of studies, looking into the sixteenth-century Polish epithalamia, in Zeitschrift of Slavische Philologie 76, no. 2 (2020); Jacqueline Glomski, *Patronage and Humanist Literature in the Age of the Jagiellons* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 117 onwards.

aristocracy. Although many epithalamia were printed shortly after the nuptial festivities, we know very little about the number of copies or impact of these texts. Riccardo Bartolini, a humanist describing the First Vienna Congress (1515), bemoans the princes' lack of interest in panegyrics:

> Nowadays, the princes are not interested in digressions and a cultivated way [of speaking] but they wish the matter to be executed briefly, taking pleasure in clichés instead, even if the oration is full of their praise. If we follow the precepts of the ancient [orators] and the Ciceronian speech, the princes either do something else or sleep.[749]

Despite this unflattering characterization, Orzechowski's defense as well as the amount of energy and resources which Maximilian I expended in creating his commemorative corpus of texts points to the very opposite: these works were crucial means for building the prestige and storing fame for posterity.

To sum up, bridal journeys found their ways into contemporary literature in many forms; this chapter examined two of them—epithalamia and heroic epic. The genre of classicized wedding poems and orations, epithalamia, revived in the fifteenth century, engaged with the voyage within the frame of *deductio* that cast the bride's transfer as a poetic transition from sorrow to joy. The jubilant mood of the first encounter with the husband fosters the overall triumphant atmosphere of the journey. Some wedding poems as well as other literary representations opted to instead highlight the uneasiness of the travel and by doing so, they strove to confer a heroic aura onto the bridal traveller. Both approaches were meant to extol not only the event but its protagonists and their dynasties, and thus, build dynastic memory and identity and propagate it, for the contemporary as well future audience. All in all, the bridal journeys were transformed into tools of this process.

[749]Riccardus Bartholinus, *Odeporicon*, ed. Eva Frimmová (Trnava: Filozofická fakulta TU, 2014), 74.

Conclusion

The impact which the bridal journeys had on medieval and early modern society was immense: hundreds of diplomats, envoys, aristocrats, city officials, low-status personnel, soldiers, artists, musicians, poets and humanists were involved in preparing, executing, and commemorating them. Each nuptial transfer was a little earthquake that resonated across all layers of society, and, as we have seen, this tremor only grew bigger over time. Stretching far beyond the mere physical movements of the future royal/ducal spouse, the journeys snowballed into a myriad of other meanings that epitomised the very character of a society based on prestige, magnificence, honour, and glory. The story of nuptial travelling is fascinating and rich, yet it is not a story easy to tell because this type of travel is a perfect condensation of monarchical order, dynastic agenda, value system, and social networks in this period. It is dynasty in motion and prestige on wheels. In order to grasp the role of this event one has to re-evaluate many facets of the world that, in Huizinga's words, was half millennium younger than ours.

Drawing upon the previous partial studies that only outlined some of the themes (such as a representative or ritual function) of this type of travel or treated the journeys separately, this work—drawing upon a wider sample of weddings—conducted a comparative analysis of several key aspects of wedding transfers, many of which necessarily overlapped. In the first part, attention was drawn to the material parameters of the wedding transfer. In contrast to other types of travel the bridal journeys were marked by a special agenda regarding schedule, character, and expectations of the wedding parties. This often resulted in a contradictory situation: on the one hand, there was a careful planned route, travel means, and lodgings that required a great mobilization of financial means and social networks; on the other,

high demands almost led to catastrophies as many brides were forced to make their way in the midst of winter (due to timetabling that overlapped with the Church calendar, etc.) or find shelter in inappropriate settings—a scenario that would never happen on a traditional royal tour. After all, the analysis showed that the logistics were by no means free of political and dynastic agenda.

One of the logistical difficulties of the wedding transfer was the court surrounding the prince(ss), which in overall numbers far exceeded one's expectations. Elaborating on Karl-Heinz Spieß's comment of the centrality of nuptial retinue for political representation, this work provides an unprecendented close study of this unusual court and shows that it was indeed crucial for diplomatic relations, but distinguished its other functions, such as serving the personal prince(ss)'s needs and prestige, facilitating the bride's integration to the new environment, levelling the dynastic expectations, etc. Its two parts, the bridal household and aristocratic retinue, share many of these functions but they are clearly distinguished. Far from performing only menial jobs in service of the prince(ss), the former, if properly governed, could have become a source of personal prestige for the bridal traveller. Furthermore, as the discussions and negotiations about its structure reveal, it had clear power connotations and could foreshadow marital life of the royal pair. The noble entourage, on the other hand, was a declaration of political unity vis-à-vis a foreign dynasty or monarchy, and thus providing prestige on a macro level. Magnificence, expressed by the high number or rank of its members, highlighted the persona of the bridal traveller, and by extension, of the entire dynasty.

The splendour and grandeur is articulated not only by the people involved in the process but by the process itself: the bridal journey is first and foremost a triumph and festival. The transfers are not natural flows but cycles of staged ceremonies. In

contrast to the previous studies, the third chapter does not try to reconstruct the order of these festivities, but it demonstrates that these solemn occassions, gradually increasing in number and scope over time—the so-called festivization, were meant to prolong the magnificence connected with the princely wedding, to spread it spatially and to offer the third-party host a possibility to participate in it. The festivization can be explained by several factors, most of them taking place precisely in the selected timespan. Among these causes one has to count the emergence of ceremonial protocol and festival books, the trend of sumptous royal progresses, and arguably also the end of peripatetic kingship. However, Chapter Three also tackles the public but also sacred ceremonies that pointed to the semi-holy status claimed by the medieval and early modern monarchs. Not only the bridal travellers took part in the liturgical calendar but they actively solicited holy shrines and sites, either as part of introductory rituals (into a new environment) or for apotropaic purposes. As the wedding journey—unlike most others monarchical rites—was connected with a real threat to one's life, it is only natural that bridal travellers and their companions sought divine help in diverting potential danger. However, as unique evidence presented in this chapter shows, some civic ceremonies (or more precisely, their proper execution) might have also had this protective function, in other words, the protocol was understood in magical terms.

The special character of the bridal transfer is further bolstered by another, ritualistic layer, that is, the ritual transition taking place in the wedding. Drawing upon an anthropological concept of rites of passage, Chapter Four examined the ways by which the bride was segregated and integrated. Discussing the farewell to the family and native land, as well as the first meeting of the newlyweds, who often saw each other for the first time just prior to the wedding, the section shows both acts were only singular points in the gradual and phased process, that for a future queen or duchess

they had extra meaning, as she needed not only to meet her spouse, but also her new domain as represented by delegations of their new subjects, or by gifts. The incorporation culminated with the gestures performed during the first meeting with the husband that were to highlight unity. Overall, these findings complicate the concepts of previous historians (Coester, Kosior), who have tended to present a more constant pattern of the process and instead offers a much more complicated picture with many variables. To quote one example, Coester's typology of the bridal journeys (shown in Introduction) seem to be clearly untenable in light of the diverse ways and circumstances the Habsburg brides and grooms travelled to their spouses. Moreover, it also questions the anthropological concepts and ask again the question, voiced some time ago by János Bak in his introduction to the volume about coronations, if historians are not too quick to accept concepts and methods from other disciplines, and if the findings from different cultures can be applied to medieval Europe.[750] This appears to be especially true for the bridal journeys which evade not only the schemes of rite of passage but also categorizations between public-sacred ceremony, festival-ritual, and festival-spectacle.

One of other other major findings of this work is confirmation of my previous work on Carafa's conduct book that has been solitary evidence that the brides, empowered by the liminality of the journey, actively used the journey as a sort of self-instruction or preparation for their future role. They engaged in correspondence with the husbands and mothers-in-law, acted as intermediaries with them and their family, took care of their household, tried to learn a new language, and supervised dynastic memory. Although the language of sources (let alone the modern popular literature) tends to reduce them to a form of merchandise handed-over at the borders, these

[750] János M. Bak, 'Coronation Studies—Past, Present, and Future', in *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual*, ed. János M. Bak (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 9–10.

women proved to be active agents during the transfers, always in the middle of decision-making and sometimes altering the route out of their own bidding. The centrality of their agency is brought to light in Chapter Six, which showed how bridal travellers used the journey for social networking by means of material offerings. Although many scholars have examined the princess's education and agency, these two chapters offer a brand new perspective of these issues that were not limited to the only princess's childhood or post-nuptial life.

And lastly, Chapter Seven showed that the journeys proved to be an ideal medium to memorialize and extol the finest moments of dynastic history, by dressing them in classicized or heroic robes. As a result, the brides and grooms are put side by side with ancient gods or refashioned as champions of virtues, overcoming obstacles on the way. Both forms, triumph and odyssey, adds to the grandeur resonating across the continent. By conducting an analysis of the Renaissance wedding poems and orations, and chivalric poems, the chapter offers a fresh view of these compositions, that have been treated separately as a means of propaganda or pieces of literature, linking them with each other and thus revealing their ulterior agenda of dynastic memorialization.

This overview of particular chapters does not do justice to all the themes that surfaced in several places of this work. First of all, the gender comparison of nuptial travellers, which is the aspect not considered by previous scholarship at all, must be mentioned. Despite some clear differences (such as the presence/absence of the ladies' court in the retinue), the male and female nuptial transfers did not differ as much as I anticipated, most surprisingly so regarding the agency of the travellers. The emasculating accidents of the two princes in our sample (Maximilian I in need of her bride's funds in order to travel, Maximilian II sidelined during the episode in

Marseille) points to the fact that procedures were far from being linear and uniform and other considerations (status, age, dynastic goals) entered the play. On the other hand, some patterns are visible too, especially in the protocol of the first meetings, in which the gender of traveller presupposed the choice of setting (either intra- or extramural one).

The second aspect worth highlighting is the material culture, connected with the spousal voyages. At first, they took the form of carriages, wagons, coaches, and horses, but as the thesis progressed, various types of garments, food provisions, jewellery, and even flowers appeared. Besides their primary functions (e.g. carriages to transport people/baggage, food to nourish them, etc.), these physical objects were employed in a never-ending cycle of obligations and hospitality. The nuptial transfers opened yet another window of possibilities to enter the gift-centred economy and as shown, hosts and travellers alike engaged in interaction that led to a reciprocal relationship aiming to the future. Furthermore, these items were very efficiently used in the integration process as well as they manifested the ritual change occurring in the marital passage.

Still, there are many aspects of bridal travel that could not be covered by this work. Aside from other dynasties, periods, and geographical areas, that would potentially (dis)prove ideas proposed by this work or suggest new ones, it would be worthy of attention to look into the journeys of elite children, transferred to the foreign courts as designated spouses for the unmatured royal heirs. Did they look the same as the journeys of adult princes(ses)? Similarly, how did the travel pattern differ in cases of lower princes or high-ranking aristocrats? Perhaps an even more important aspect, worthy of enquiry, is the perspective of the bridal hosts, especially cities. This thesis worked mostly with the material that originated at the princely court, but how did the

urban populace perceive the sumptuous visits of foreign royalty? Such analysis would be particularly interesting for the cities which lay on frequent routes of spousal transfers, such as Trent. And lastly, the biggest potential of the bridal travel research lies in its potential for digital humanities and various ways of spatial analysis. If a comprehensive geographical catalogue of all wedding transfers were compiled, it would not just help to visualize the complex web of interdynastic alliances but also to trace the journeys' trajectories in respect to political or confessional borders, qualify and quantify festivities and thus (dis)prove my festivization theory, or compare regional and temporal variants of, for instance, handing-over rituals, and so forth. Overall, the digital mapping of the nuptial transfers would reveal a much clearer picture of medieval and early modern monarchy and dynasty since these journeys stood in their epicentre. I firmly believe that this thesis will not be a solitary enquire into nuptial travel but rather be one of many future ones, illuminating the fascinating world of this 'monarchy in motion'.

Appendix

The itineraries of the nuptial journeys used as a sample in this work, excluding four of them: for Mary of Hungary and Anne of Bohemia [1521] there is not enough data to map their journey; for Elizabeth of Habsburg [1543] there is not enough data either but it must have copied the routes of her namesake [1454] and sister Catherine [1553]; Barbara of Habsburg [1565] travelled together with her sister Joanna up to Mantua and then turned to nearby Ferrara.

The blue marks are documented places or stays, the red ones indicate solemn entries and the green ones denote the place of the first meetings of the newlyweds.



Figure 4 Eleanor of Scotland's journey (1448)



Figure 5 Eleanor of Portugal's journey (1451/2)

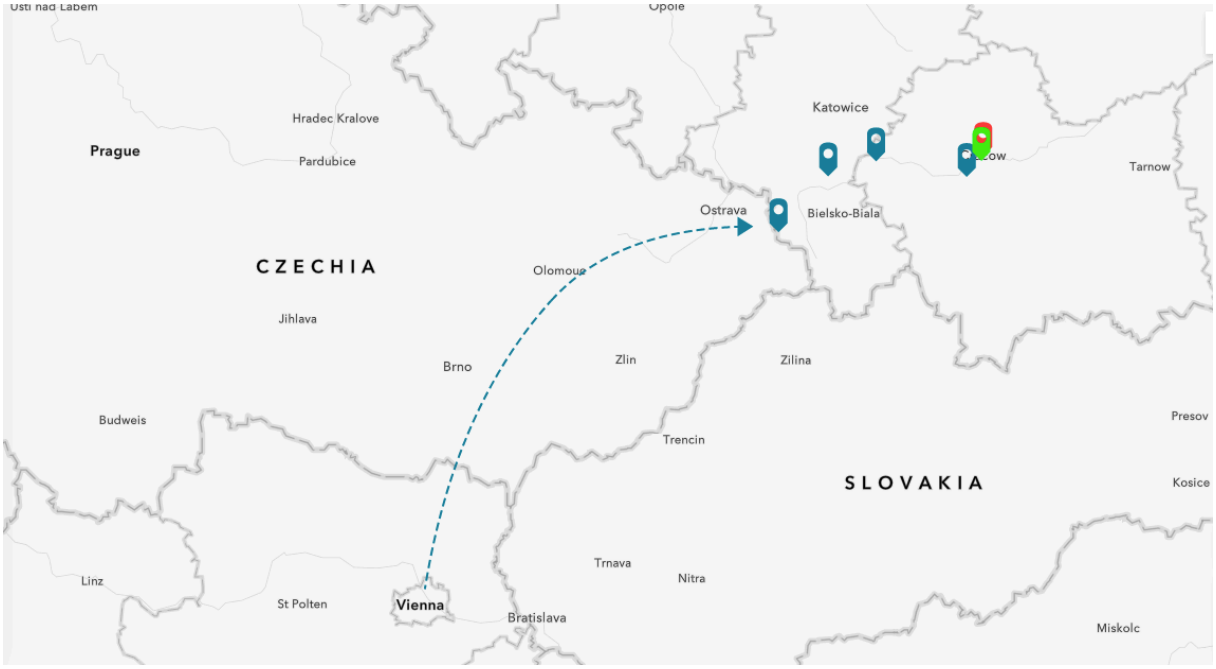


Figure 6 Elizabeth of Habsburg's journey (1454)



Figure 7 Maximilian I's journey (1477)



Figure 8 Bianca Maria Sforza's journey (1493)

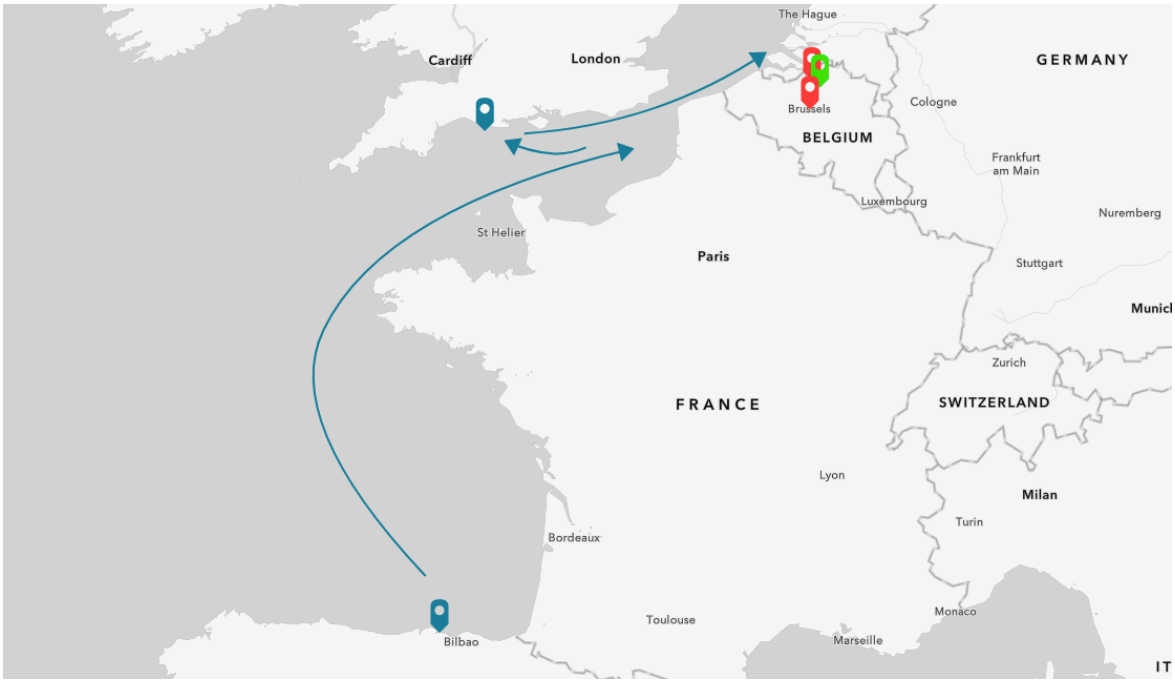


Figure 9 Joanna of Castile's journey (1496)



Figure 10 Margaret of Habsburg's journey (1497)

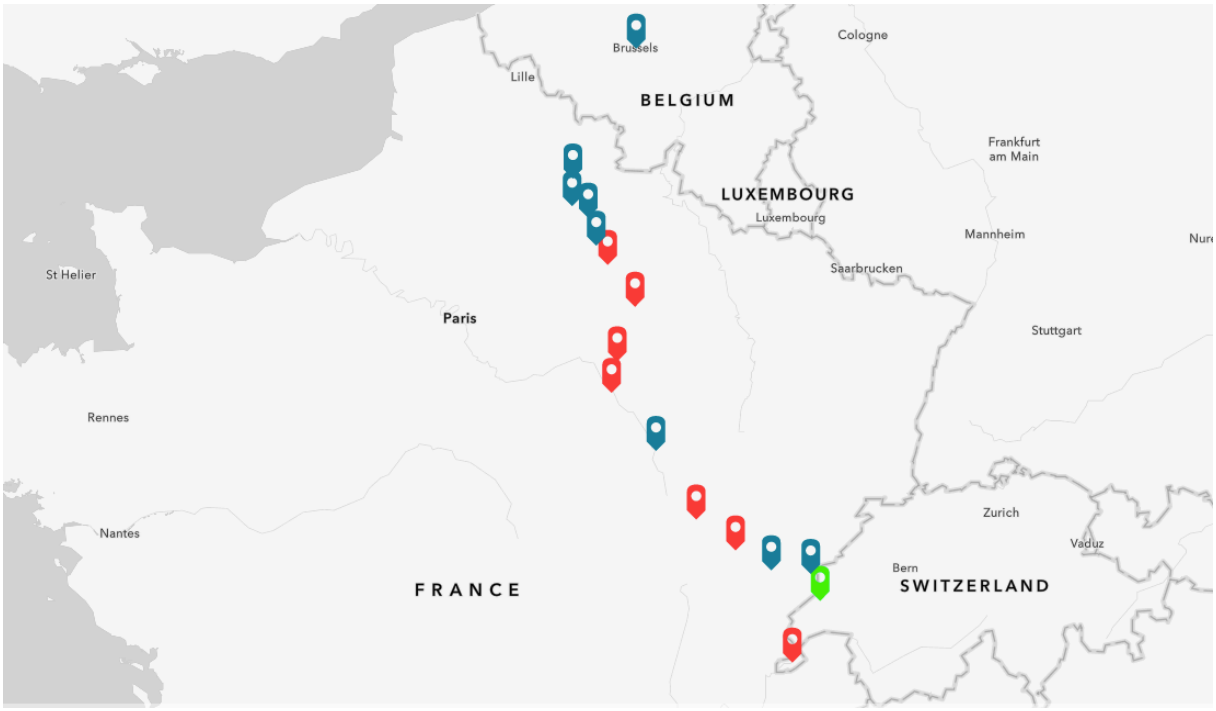


Figure 11 Margaret of Habsbur's second journey (1501)



Figure 12 Maximilian II's journey (1548)



Figure 13 Catherine of Habsburg's journey (1549)

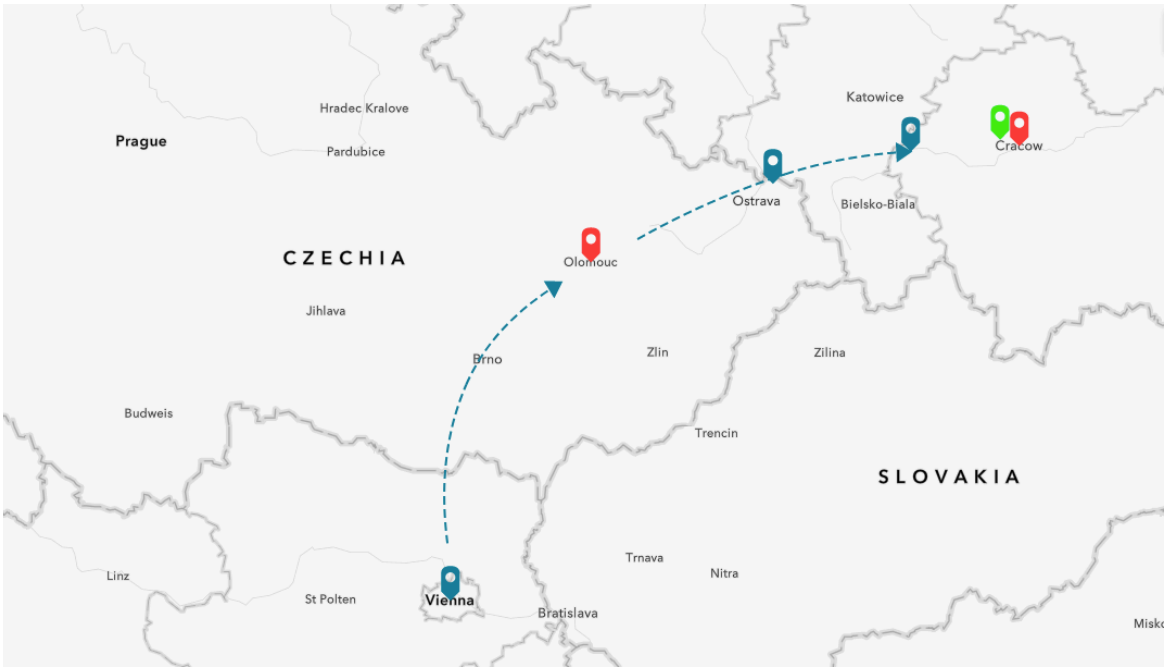


Figure 14 Catherine of Habsburg's second journey (1553)



Figure 15 Eleanor of Habsburg's journey (1561)



Figure 16 Joanna of Castile's journey (1565)

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