

Books and Prints at the Heart of the Catholic Reformation in the Low Countries (16th–17th centuries)

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Books and Prints at the Heart of the Catholic Reformation in the Low Countries (16th–17th centuries)

Edited by

Renaud Adam
Rosa De Marco
Malcolm Walsby



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Abbreviations

- Bibliotheca catholica* *Bibliotheca catholica neerlandica impressa 1500–1727*
(The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954).
- BT Elly Cocx-Indestege, Geneviève Glorieux and Bart Op de Beeck, *Belgica Typographica, 1541–1600. Catalogus librorum impressorum ab anno MDXLI ad annum MDC in regionibus quæ nunc Regni Belgarum partes sunt* (4 vols., Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1968–1994).
- DPD Peter van Huisstede and J.P.J. Brandhorst, *Dutch Printer's Devices. 15th–17th Century: A Catalogue* (3 vols., Nieuwkoop: De Graaf Publishers, 1999).
- ICC-ODIS *Impressa catholica cameracensia. A Database on the Religious Book and its Networks in the Ecclesiastical Province of Cambrai (1559–1659)*, on line: <https://www.arts.kuleuven.be/nieuwetijd/english/odis/ICC_search>.
- ISTC *Incunabula Short-Title Catalogue*, on line: <http://data.cerl.org/istc/_search>.
- NB Andrew Pettegree, Malcolm Walsby, *Netherlandish Books. Books Published in the Low Countries and Dutch Books Printed Abroad Before 1601* (2 vols.; Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2011).
- NK Wouter Nijhoff, Maria Elizabeth Kronenberg, *Nederlandsche bibliographie van 1500 tot 1540* (3 vols., The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1923–1971).
- PP Léon Voet, *The Plantin Press at Antwerp (1555–1589). A Bibliography of the Works Printed and Published by Christopher Plantin at Antwerp and Leiden* (6 vols., Amsterdam: Van Hoeve, 1980–1983).
- STCV *Short Title Catalogue Flanders*, on line: <www.stcv.be>.
- USTC *Universal Short Title Catalogue*, on line: <<https://www.ustc.ac.uk>>.
- VD 16 *Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts*, on line: <<http://www.vd16.de>>.

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Thesis Prints Dedicated to Archduke Leopold William of Austria, in the Service of the *Pietas Austriaca*

Gwendoline de Mùelenaere

1 Introduction

The Habsburg dynasty, which ruled the Southern Netherlands in the Early Modern period, governed in accordance with the principles of the *Pietas Austriaca*. These principles included the adoration of the Virgin Mary, the veneration of the Holy Cross, the Saints and the Eucharist, and the affirmation of Christian virtues. The expression *Pietas Austriaca*, from Baroque literature, was chosen as the title of a foundational study published by Anna Coreth in 1959.¹ The author gives the following definition of the term: “*Pietas Austriaca* was the piety – understood as a virtue of rulers – of the house of Austria’s sovereigns of both the German and Spanish lines. The special meaning of this term was based on the conviction that God had given the house of Austria a certain mission for the empire and the church, because of the religious merits of its ancestors, or, more particularly, of the great ancestor Rudolph of Habsburg”.² *Pietas Austriaca* does not refer to Austria as a geopolitical concept, but rather, it relates to the House of Austria. The term denotes the religious and political ideology according to which the strictly Catholic Habsburgs governed one of the largest empires in Europe.

In the introduction to Coreth’s book, William Bowman insists on the fact that “*Pietas Austriaca*, with its strong belief in the real power and presence of the divine in religious practices and persons, was ‘the’ guiding principle of the Habsburgs. In other words, Habsburg rulers did not engage in acts of piety primarily as public rituals (although they certainly were that as well), but because they genuinely believed in the political and even military efficacy of performing these acts”.³ Far more than being just a propagandist instrument

1 Anna Coreth, *Pietas Austriaca* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2004).

2 Coreth, *Pietas Austriaca*, p. xxii.

3 William D. Bowman ‘Introduction’, in Coreth, *Pietas Austriaca*, p. xii.

of symbolic or rhetorical effects in the eyes of the Habsburg monarchy, *Pietas Austriaca* played a significant role, from Rudolph I onwards, in establishing the family's political legitimacy and in reinforcing its sovereignty.⁴ The monarchs acted as advocates of faith with the intention of gathering together the multiple territories to be ruled in a "religious and well-disciplined unity".⁵ *Pietas Austriaca* resulted in the progressive establishment of an iconographic tradition based, among other things, on legends⁶ and historical events, on religious practices and on respect for Christian virtues,⁷ as well as on the recycling of characters and episodes from classical mythology and literature, adapted to the Catholic Faith.⁸

Although *Pietas Austriaca* is expressed under varied guises and in diverse contexts, it is nonetheless necessary to identify the personal intentions of prominent representatives of this particular form of intensely visible piety.⁹ The ceremonial prints dedicated to Archduke Leopold William of Austria,

4 Bowman 'Introduction', in Coreth, *Pietas Austriaca*, p. XIII.

5 Vesna Cunja Rossi, *I Gesuiti, Trieste e gli Asburgo nel Seicento* (Trieste: Minerva, 2005), p. 109.

6 For instance, according to the dynastic legend, the origins of the Habsburgs' success date back to an episode in the life of Rudolph, Count of Habsburg, who is reported to have demonstrated his piety by giving his mount to a priest holding the viaticum.

7 For example, Werner Telesko studied the iconography of an illustrated broadsheet designed around the figure of Ferdinand II. Dating from 1636, the illustration stages the veneration of the Holy Cross. Telesko notes the recurrence of some characteristic features within the imperial iconography. Those 'fixed components' are among other items borrowed from the catalogue of virtues of Ferdinand II, as recorded by Wilhelm Lamormaini in 1638 (Werner Telesko, 'Transmediality in Early Modern Printmaking in the Example of a Broadsheet on Emperor Ferdinand II (1578–1637)', in Federico Italiano and Michael Rössner (eds), *Translation: Narration, Media and the Staging of Differences* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2012), p. 149).

8 An essay by Marie Tanner shows the many ways the Habsburgs tried to link their past to their present situation and employed historical events to consolidate their political position by laying claim, in this case, to the glory of Ancient Rome. See Marie Tanner, *The Last Descendant of Aeneas: the Hapsburgs and the Mythic Image of the Emperor* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

9 Werner Telesko, 'The Pietas Austriaca. A Political Myth? On the Instrumentalisation of Piety towards the Cross at the Viennese Court in the Seventeenth Century', in Herbert Karner, Ingrid Ciuliovà and Bernardo J. Garcia Garcia (eds), *The Habsburgs and Their Courts in Europe, 1400–1700. Between Cosmopolitanism and Regionalism* (Louvain: KU Leuven, 2014), p. 177, note 2. For instance, Luc Duerloo has shown how Archduke Albert expressed the *Pietas Austriaca* throughout his regency of the Low Countries: Luc Duerloo, '*Pietas Albertina*. Dynastieke vroomheid en herbouw van het vorstelijke gezag', *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 112 (1997), pp. 1–18; 'Archducal Piety and Habsburg Power', in Thomas Werner and Luc Duerloo (eds), *Albert and Isabella (1598–1621). Essays* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), pp. 267–283.