

**Julia Hodapp, Habsburgerinnen und
Konfessionalisierung im späten 16.
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Julia Hodapp's detailed analysis of the endowments, burials, and graves of five women of the Habsburg family who died in the later 16th and early 17th century grew out of a dissertation completed at the University of Tübingen in 2016 under the supervision of Renate Dürr. Based largely on unpublished sources held in over a dozen libraries and archives in Austria and Vatican City, the book provides a clear presentation of the specific, documented activities of these archduchesses as they established religious houses, buried close family members, were buried, and set up funerary monuments for themselves and others. Hodapp also includes a short discussion of the various (unsuccessful) attempts to beatify two of the women: the widowed Queen of France, Elizabeth of Habsburg (1554–1592) and her aunt, Archduchess Magdalena (1532–1590).

The book contains a useful genealogical chart as well as a thorough bibliography (mostly of German-language and some English-language works) and will be of tremendous use for scholars interested in the activities of these oft-overlooked but important women as they worked to help solidify the foundations of Roman Catholic practice in the years following the Council of Trent in an oft-hostile, Protestant-filled environment. Using case studies from all three of the subsets of the Habsburgs' hereditary lands after their division in 1564 following the death of Emperor Ferdinand I (Tyrol, Vienna and Lower Austria, and »Inner Austria« with its capital of Graz), Hodapp helps to explain the success of the Counter-Reformation undertaking in these territories. In the process, she relativizes the familiar story of the influence of the Jesuits and brings to the foreground the importance of the Poor Clares.

The importance of women's orders in the so-called Counter-Reformation »cloister offensive« started earlier than often believed, Hodapp argues. She provides clear evidence of this fact through a discussion of the foundation of religious ladies in Hall in Tyrol undertaken in the later 1560's by Archduchesses Magdalena (see above) and Helena (1543–1574), the house of Poor Clares in Vienna (Mary, Queen of Angels) founded by Archduchess Elizabeth in 1582, and the similar house of Franciscans nuns (Am Paradies) founded by Elizabeth's aunt and first cousin Maria of Wittelsbach in the quarters of the one-time Protestant school in Graz in 1602. Although they did not take holy orders, Elizabeth and Maria became »Habsburg nuns« in a time when the very idea of being a nun was in dispute.



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Hodapp argues that Habsburg women were given particular roles in the areas of preparation for death, funerals, burials, and memorials. She proceeds to analyze in detail these activities, particularly concentrating on those of the increasingly well-known Bavarian wife of Archduke Karl (1540–1590), Maria. (Who, interestingly enough given the title of the book, was a Habsburg through marriage not birth, although her mother – and sister-in-law – Anna, who lived from 1528–1590, was a Habsburg. The other four women discussed were Habsburgs via their fathers, with Elizabeth being a Habsburg through both parents.) Archduchess Maria has been the subject of a recent biography by Katrin Keller; Hodapp's work should be seen in some ways as a supplement to this work¹.

Archduchess Maria had at least fifteen children and some of them died young. One of Hodapp's important contributions in this book is to show the roles that dead girls played in the creation of the image of the dynasty and its members' religious affiliations. Her precise descriptions of the funerals and burials of the teenagers Katharina Renea (1576–1595) and Gregoria Maximiliana (1581–1597; intriguingly named after her godfather Pope Gregory XIII!) are among the highlights of the monograph. The funeral corteges had to traverse Protestant-occupied territories between the residence city of Graz and the chosen burial church at the canonry in Seckau, and the Protestant burghers had to acknowledge if not the religion of the deceased, at least their social standing. These 1590's funerals predated the full implementation of the Counter-Reformation by Archduchess Maria's son, the later emperor Ferdinand II (1578–1637). Hodapp argues that such undertakings, along with others such as Maria's personnel policies, laid the groundwork for Ferdinand's later famed successes.

One of the general themes emphasized by Hodapp (sometimes with a bit of repetition which could have been handled by stricter editing) relates to the importance of examples given by Habsburg women in other territories, particularly those active in Iberia and Bavaria. The Austrian lands become the space where influences from each of these territories are put into practice by the Habsburg princesses Hodapp studies. The Iberian and Bavarian Habsburgs include the influential widow of the Crown Prince of Portugal, Juana (1535–1573), who founded the important house of Poor Clares in Madrid, the so-called Convent of the Descalzas Reales (1557). Another important Habsburg princess whose activities helped influence her relatives in the Austrian lands was Duchess Anna of Bavaria (1528–1590), the mother of the oft-discussed Archduchess Maria of Inner Austria. The key conduit between Iberia and central Europe, of course, was the crucially important Holy Roman Empress María (1528–1603), consort to Emperor Maximilian II and older sister of Juana².

¹ Katrin Keller, *Erzherzogin Maria von Innerösterreich (1551–1608). Zwischen Habsburg und Wittelsbach*, Vienna 2012.

² The importance of Empress María has recently been underlined by Alexander Koller. See: Id., *Maria von Spanien, die katholische Kaiserin*, in:



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One difficult-to-translate concept which dominates Hodapp's discussion is »sphere of action« (*Handlungsraum*). She falls back on this construction again and again when describing the activities of the Habsburg princesses she analyses. The use of this term relates to the general emphasis in the book on detailed descriptions of what archival and printed sources tell us about what these women did, as opposed to the broader consequences of their actions. Hodapp's title seems to indicate that she would like her argumentation to be seen in the context of the older »confessionalization« discussion tied to the writings of the German historians Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling, but her bibliography only cites one 1983 article by Reinhard about this model. The book is better at outlining what these women did than on what the effects of their actions were. That would have required a different, perhaps more bottom-up approach than the court-centered, top-down one Julia Hodapp adopted.



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