

IN THE KING'S NAME

# The Portrait of Juana of Austria in the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum



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**BILBOKO ARTE  
EDERREN MUSEOA  
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ARTES DE BILBAO**

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In the 1550s Princess Juana of Portugal was a regular subject for portrait artists, being one of the leading women in the House of Austria, the dynasty that dominated the political scene in Europe throughout the 16th century. The youngest daughter of Charles V and Isabella of Portugal, she had a special role to play in her father's geopolitical strategies, first as the wife of the heir to the Portuguese throne, to whom she bore a posthumous son who would eventually come to the throne of Spain's neighbour, and subsequently as regent of the Emperor's peninsular territories. This track record is more than enough to justify the sheer range of portraits made of Juana of Austria in a particularly significant period for the genesis and development of the court portrait in much of Europe. Although it was said that the Princess was so personally reticent as to appear at her audiences veiled, with her face hidden<sup>1</sup>, artists such as Cristóbal de Morales (documented between 1551 and 1571), Sir Antony More (also known, among other names, as Antonio Moro (1519-1576), Alonso Sánchez Coello (c. 1532-1588) and Sofonisba Anguissola (1535-1625) all painted Juana in some of the most significant portraits of the decade. All followed the precepts or conventions that shaped the portraits of the Habsburgs, where the individual image of the subject is inextricably bound up with the image of the dynasty to which she belonged and the subordinate role that, as a woman and regent, it was her lot to play.

Sánchez Coello produced one of the most characteristic portraits of Juana in around 1557 [fig. 1]. The painting, which has been in the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum since April 1990, had previously been in the Larreta collection in Buenos Aires, until it was sold in 1988<sup>2</sup>. The painting became part of the Bilbao Museum collection at a time when the court portrait was once again coming into vogue as a subject for scholarly study and appreciation. Indeed, the work was actually presented as part of an exhibition entitled *Alonso Sánchez*

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1 Flórez 1761-1770, vol. II, pp. 873-874.

2 Gaya Nuño 1958, p. 297, no. 2565; Breuer-Hermann 1984, pp. 201-202, no. 6. It was auctioned in 1988 and in 1990 Global Company S.A. sold the painting to the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum (inv. no. 90/15). Full details in Galilea 1993, vol. II, pp. 503-510. The painting measures 116 x 93.5 cm.



1. Alonso Sánchez Coello (1531-1588)  
*Portrait of doña Juana of Austria, Princess of Portugal*, c. 1557  
Oil on canvas, 116 x 93.5 cm  
Bilbao Fine Arts Museum  
Inv. no. 90/15

*Coello and the Art of the Portrait at the Court of Philip II*, which consisted of fifty works by the painter from Valencia and other contemporary artists who worked in the genre, including Antony More, Cristóbal de Morales, Juan Pantoja de la Cruz (c. 1553-1608), Sofonisba Anguissola and Jorge de la Rúa (born Georges van der Straeten, documented between 1556 and 1578). By including works from such a variety of artists, the exhibition demonstrated the coherence of portraits from Philip II's reign, a coherence that went beyond the "family likeness" logically to be found amongst most of the characters included in the exhibition. Essentially, this coherence stems from the conception involved in portraying a family that played the leading role in government in much of Europe in the second half of the 16th century, and which projected in its images a vision proper to the family's position in the world, to its interests and dynastic destiny. While a portrait of the king and his family had to present a good likeness of the features of each individual, it also had to convey a concept of the Habsburg majesty, the standard repetition of which would eventually strengthen within the genre the idea of tradition; the establishment of a series of conventions repeated by painter after painter until they forged a "court painting procedure" which Juan Miguel Serrera brilliantly expounded and explored in the exhibition catalogue<sup>3</sup>. Serrera's essay was instantly hailed as a seminal study of the portrait genre and has subsequently been quoted in essays and critical approaches published on the subject since 1990<sup>4</sup>. Many of these essays were associated with the events commemorating Charles V and Philip II organized in recent years, in which the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum's portrait of Juana of Austria has taken part<sup>5</sup>.

But if the acquisition of this portrait, showing Juana of Austria elegantly garbed in black and holding a portrait of Philip II at her breast, was timely, coming as it did during the ongoing upward shift in appreciation of the portrait in Spain, and of Alonso Sánchez Coello in particular, interest in Juana of Austria has also grown in recent years. Juana attracts increasing attention both as regards her political and religious trajectory and in her capacity as a collector and promoter of art. Hers is a feminine character that, in some respects, a number of writers have tried to bolster with the image of Juana seen in her portraits, in what is an interesting exercise in reorienting our perception of the portraits as representation, substitutes for the actual person they embody<sup>6</sup>. In recent years, the classic biographies by Carrillo (1616), Flórez (1761-1770), Danvila y Burguero (1900), Tormo (1917), Bataillon (1952) and Fernández de Retana (1955)<sup>7</sup> have been joined by new appraisals by Rodríguez-Salgado (1988), Martínez Millán (1994) and Villacorta Baños-García (2005)<sup>8</sup>. In a broad overview of her artistic milieu, these studies tend to concentrate particularly on Juana of Austria's founding in Madrid of the monastery of the Descalzas Reales<sup>9</sup>, although they do also analyze her possessions, with interest growing in her library, portrait gallery, jewels, relics and reliquaries, liturgical pieces and rare or exotic objects<sup>10</sup>, with more recent essays looking into the role played by Juana and her sister the Empress María as patrons of the arts.<sup>11</sup>

But the greatest influence on Juana, described by Gregorio Marañón in his biography of Antonio Pérez as "perhaps the most interesting in the Spanish branch of the Austrias"<sup>12</sup>, was precisely her condition as a woman and the secondary role to which she was confined as the third daughter of the Imperial marriage and

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3 Serrera 1990.

4 For a review of the current status of the court portrait, Portús 2000b.

5 Madrid 1998, no. 136; Madrid 2000, no. 8.2. The work has also been included in other temporary exhibitions based on the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum collection: Padua/Rome 1991, pp. 34-35, cat. 10; Budapest 1996, pp. 50-52, cat. 1.

6 Falomir 1998 and Portús 2000a.

7 Carrillo 1616, Flórez 1761-1770, Danvila 1900, Tormo y Monzó 1917, Bataillon 1952 and Fernández de Retana 1955.

8 Rodríguez-Salgado 1988, Martínez Millán 1994 and Villacorta 2005.

9 Tormo y Monzó 1915; Tormo y Monzó 1917; García Sanz/Triviño 1993; Sánchez Hernández 1997; Ruiz Gómez 2000; Sancho 1995, pp. 145-161.

10 Pérez Pastor 1914; Tormo y Monzó 1944; Checa 1989; Checa 1992, pp. 177-183; García Sanz/Jordan Gschwend 1998; Marías 1998; García Sanz/Ruiz Gómez 2000.

11 For a review of the latest opinions on Juana's artistic role in Tojas 2000 and Jordan Gschwend 2000.

12 Marañón 1982, p. 187; quoted in Martínez Millán 1994, p. 75.



2. Juan Pantoja de la Cruz (c. 1553-1608)  
*Juana, Princess of Portugal, sister of Philip II*  
Oil on canvas, 208 x 126 cm  
Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid  
Deposited in the Spanish Embassy, Buenos Aires  
Inv. no. P-4159

her inevitable subordination to the dynastical logic of her father the Emperor and, subsequently, of her brother, King Philip II. Her early awareness of belonging to a great family and the spartan education that served to mould still further her obedient, submissive nature, fully explain both the course of the Princess's life and the conventions adopted in the portraits of Juana, which highlighted her physical features and her membership of a dynasty, a society and a concept of State in which gravity, remoteness, severity and impassivity were considered essential virtues of good governance<sup>13</sup>.

When, at the age of 22, Juana of Austria had her portrait painted by Alonso Sánchez Coello in 1557, she already had a remarkably intense past behind her. She was born on the 24th of June 1535, feast of St. John the Baptist, in a palace close to the Real Alcázar owned by a high imperial functionary called Alonso Gutiérrez, who had already made his Madrid residence available for the birth, in 1528, of María, future Queen of Bohemia and Empress of Austria. Juana was brought up in a markedly pro-Portuguese atmosphere, largely because of the origins of her mother, the Empress Isabella, who died when the Infanta was four. Besides, both Juana and her sister had to adapt to a peripatetic court, which saw them living fairly frugally in Alcalá, Ocaña, Madrid, Guadalajara, Toro, Aranda and Tordesillas. Juana's first biographer, father Carrillo, gives a

<sup>13</sup> Representations of the physical features of the sitter and her dynastic virtues were informed by the theory of the two bodies of the King, which embraced all members of the House. Ruiz Gómez 2004a.

version of the Infanta that goes a long way to matching the ideals that mid-16th-century society required of women: “she was a saintly Princess and an example of marvellous virtues”, outstanding for her honesty, prudence, discretion, humility and modesty. As well as Spanish, she learnt Portuguese and Latin while very young. She also enjoyed music, the taste for which she never lost, playing several instruments skilfully. To ensure she was never idle, Juana occupied her leisure hours in “needlework”, sewing and embroidery<sup>14</sup>. She is also described as a docile youngster —“she is one of the most obedient daughters there could ever be”<sup>15</sup>—, with a painstaking religious education that was to make of her a deeply spiritual woman, guided and advised by one of the great people of the age, Francis Borgia, son of the Dukes of Gandia. During Juana’s childhood, Borgia was married to the Portuguese lady Leonor de Castro, a member of the Empress’s circle. Borgia introduced her to the current of renovation known as “observance” or “recollection”, marked by an introspective spirituality and which was associated with what in northern Europe was called the *Devotio moderna*<sup>16</sup>.

In her early years, Juana occasionally sat for portraits, recorded in the princess’s inventories for 1553 and 1573. The first of these refers to the existence of childhood portraits of Juana and Philip, possibly by Jan Vermeyen<sup>17</sup>. The portrait of the Infanta may be one of the two noted in 1573: one of the young girl “shows a fountain” and another of Juana “when a child with a string of pearls for a waist cord and fan in her hand,” an early reference this to the fan, an object that Portuguese ladies were just beginning to see as an exotic prop denoting luxury and sophistication<sup>18</sup>, and which would eventually become a standard accessory in portraits of ladies at the Spanish court.

From 1548, after María’s marriage to Maximilian of Austria, Juana was left in charge of Prince Charles, with whom she would strike up a close relationship, temporarily interrupted in October 1552 when the infanta left for Lisbon to effect her marriage to Juan Manuel of Portugal, son of John III and her aunt Catherine of Austria. To mark the wedding, in which the Infanta re-edited and reinforced the family ties between the crowns of Spain and Portugal, at least two highly significant portraits of Juana were made, which have since been attributed to Portuguese artist Cristóbal de Morales (Cristóvão de Morais)<sup>19</sup>. Of the first of these portraits, painted in Toro in March of that year, Morales himself made a replica which is now part of the Queen Elizabeth II of England’s collections (London, Hampton Court Palace); a three-quarters portrait, of which there also exists a full-length version, by Juan Pantoja de la Cruz (Prado Museum, Madrid, currently in deposit in the Spanish Embassy in Buenos Aires) [fig. 2]. Juana wears a low-cut dress, a high gorget with a small frill and, on her head, a low-crowned cap. She stands resting her left hand (in which she holds a pair of gloves) on the arm of a chair, while she places her right hand at stomach level, a gesture never to be repeated in any subsequent portraits of the Princess. However, the other elements that go to make up the image repeat the formula then taking shape in the court portrait: full-length, natural scale representations, with the body turned slightly away, in a *contrapposto* that enlivens the powerful verticality of the figure. The face, set at three-quarters on to avoid both the frontal and the profile view, is lit from the front to cancel any shadows that might interfere with the correct way of looking at the subject. Her mouth is closed to hide the teeth, and the hands low down, pointing up the subject’s unruffled nature. Shortly before this portrait of Juana was executed, Portuguese

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14 Carrillo 1616, pp. 4-6.

15 Fernández de Retana 1955, p. 58. Fragment of a letter to the Emperor from the Count of Cifuentes, Steward to the Infantas, November 1644 (Archivo General de Simancas, Estado, leg. 67, f. 94).

16 The religious formation of the Infanta and its consequences in the years in which she acted as Regent in Valladolid, and her decision to “join” the Order of the Jesuits, are all narrated in Martínez Millán 1994 and in a recent essay, Villacorta 2005.

17 Jordan Gschwend 2000, p. 440, note 64. *Inventario de los bienes pertenecientes a su alteza la princesa de Portugal, doña Juana de Austria*. Lisboa, 1553 (BDR, inv. no. F/29, fol. 65r).

18 Pérez Pastor 1914, nos. 52, 53; García Sanz/Ruiz Gómez 2000, p. 145. On the introduction of the fan as accessory in Portugal from 1540, Jordan Gschwend 1999; Jordan Gschwend 2000, pp. 441-443.

19 The attribution to Morales is due to Breuer-Hermann 1984, pp. 105-107, 165, 315-316. For Kusche 1998, p. 354, it is the work of Antony More and shows Juana before her marriage. On Morales, Jordan Gschwend 1994, pp. 32-47.



3. Antonio Moro (1519-1576)  
*The Empress María of Austria, wife of Maximilian II*  
Oil on canvas, 181 x 90 cm  
Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid  
Inv. no. P-2110

painter and essayist Francisco de Holanda (1517-1584) had discussed the formula in the first Renaissance treatise on the genre: *Do tirar polo natural* (1549)<sup>20</sup>. In his treatise, Holanda described the practices that were then coming into their own in the Court circles of the Austrias, where Titian (c. 1485-1576) and Antony More were stellar figures<sup>21</sup>. Indeed, a few months before the portrait of Juana, More had painted *María of Austria* [fig. 3] in Spain in 1551, producing an image that faithfully upholds Holanda's prescriptions, while also being a forceful feminine portrait of power (at that time María was governing as Regent of the kingdom in the absence of her father and her brother) and the formulation of which would become fully established in the portraits of Juana. In the portrait of María, a column is included as part of the background in a clear allusion to the House of Habsburg's links with the mythical Hercules<sup>22</sup>. The column also denotes royal power, strengthened here by the placing of María's left arm on a desk symbolizing the tasks of government, in a repeat of Philip II's gesture in the portraits by More (Bilbao Fine Arts Museum, c. 1549-1550) and Titian (Prado Museum, 1551). The richness of the robes, the inclusion of valuable jewels and the characteristic amber gloves simply reinforce an image of majesty that is likewise underscored by the inexpressiveness, or restraint, of the face, set in the cold, mask-like calm common to all the members of the dynasty.

20 Alves 1986.

21 For a summary of the role of both in creating the genre in Ruiz Gómez 2004a.

22 On the symbolism associated with this feature, Rosenthal 1971 and Manzini 2000.



4. Studio of Antonio Moro (1519-1576)  
*Portrait of Juana of Austria, daughter of Charles V*  
 Oil on panel, 99 x 81.5 cm  
 Musées Royaux des Beaux Arts de Belgique, Bruxelles  
 Inv. no. 1296

From a somewhat later moment is the other portrait of Juana of Austria associated with her status as a Portuguese princess, now in Brussels [fig. 4]. The lady's face repeats the London model, almost certainly because it was based on the same sketch from the life. The young, inexpressive woman wears the jewels gifted her by the king and queen of Portugal in October 1553; they gleam all the brighter against her high-necked black satin dress, a concession to contemporary fashion which, from then on, would be Juana's habitual garb. She also sports a *leque*, a Japanese fold-up fan, and a pair of amber gloves, while her right hand rests on the head of a small black servant, in an explicit allusion to Portuguese dominions. The allusion also underscores the princess's high condition<sup>23</sup>, this young woman with a beautiful face, so elegant in appearance, knows how to keep her distance. On this evidence, Luis Sarmiento de Mendoza, Spanish ambassador in Lisbon, seems to have hit the mark when in a letter to the emperor he described Juana as "an angel though a little dry in character"<sup>24</sup>. However that may be, this is still the most expressive portrait of Charles V's daughter as a Portuguese princess, anticipating as it does some of the elements that would become court portrait trademarks, including the Oriental fan, the presence of the servant and Juana's gesture towards him, and which we see shortly afterwards in Sánchez Coello's *Portrait of Isabella Clara Eugenia and Magdalena Ruiz* or in Rodrigo de Villandrando's *Philip IV with the Dwarf Soplillo*, both in Prado Museum.

<sup>23</sup> Jordan Gschwend 1994, pp. 105-110.

<sup>24</sup> Danvila 1900, p. 43. Letter from Luis Sarmiento to the Emperor on 17th December 1553 (Archivo General de Simancas, Estado, leg. 376); Toajas 2000, p. 105.



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5. Antonio Moro (1519-1576)  
*Catherine of Austria, wife of John III of Portugal*  
Oil on panel, 107 x 84 cm  
Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid  
Inv. no. P-2109

In Lisbon, Juana de Austria lived with one of the “strong women” of the Austrias, her aunt and mother-in-law the Queen Catherine, who was very much accustomed to proclaiming the magnificence of royalty through a highly active patronage of the arts. Such patronage included the diffusion of the image of the House of Austria by means of the “status” portrait, a genre which, in line with the family strategy, explains why so many specialists were to be found at the Portuguese court in these crucial years of the reign of John III and Catherine<sup>25</sup>. In 1552 Antony More produced a portrait, from which the portrait of Juana in the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum derives directly: I refer to the half-length portrait of Queen Catherine [fig. 5]. Dressed in a rich black “robe” and headgear with “earmuffs”, this robust, forceful image of the Queen makes clear the representational nature of More’s portraits. Catherine’s presence is so real that the painter has included an odd trompe l’oeil in the shape of a fly painted on the kerchief María holds. Among other possible explanations<sup>26</sup>, this detail almost certainly reflects More’s satisfaction with the portrait’s verism. This satisfaction, however, does not prevent the artist from including several symbolic elements, which, without being new, make Catherine’s power and her capacity to govern visible to the viewer. A paper, an instruction or a note, lies on the desk she stands by. In her hands are three objects that had already become accessories suited to ladies in this kind of image: a pair of amber gloves, a richly-embroidered kerchief and a soft fan, a black velvet *boa graça* with

25 Jordan Gschwend 1994; Villacorta 2005, pp. 177-180.

26 Jordan Gschwend 1994, p. 40.

gold backstitching considered a deliberate attribute of the subject's queenly status<sup>27</sup>. She wears no fewer than eight rings on her fingers, four rubies on the right hand and four emeralds on the left, leaving the middle finger on either hand free. According to Jorge Ferreira de Vasconcellos, Catherine usually wore ten ruby and emerald rings on the most important feastdays<sup>28</sup>. In my view, this is not a trivial point; although it was not new for high-born ladies to wear rings on a number of fingers, María of Austria must have really enjoyed wearing them, and it is possible that this is one of a number of fashion enthusiasms she transmitted to Juana. Although in the 1552 and 1553 portraits—except for Pantoja's late version—the Princess wears no rings, in subsequent portraits they were quite usual, as they were with the other female members of the House during the reigns of Philip II and Philip III.

Juana's life at the Portuguese court came to an end in early 1554. Her husband, the sickly Prince Juan Manuel, died on January the 2nd, two weeks before the birth of his posthumous heir, Prince Sebastian. It couldn't have been long before the young Princess began to feel very uncomfortable at the Portuguese court. Charles V soon enforced his daughter's marriage settlement, calling her home to take charge of the peninsular lands of Castile after the departure of María and Maximilian and in the absence of Philip, then betrothed to Mary Tudor<sup>29</sup>. In May of that year, Juana left Portugal for good, settling in Valladolid to carry out the tasks of government after receiving the powers sent by her father from Brussels and her brother's own instructions. In September 1557, Charles V renounced his rights in favour of his son Philip, who would not return to Spain for another two years. Juana of Austria had to direct some quite delicate political, economic, military and religious affairs; at the same time, fully aware of her subordinate, circumstantial position, she began designing her subsequent position at the court<sup>30</sup>. She finally solved the latter problem by founding the Monastery of the Descalzas Reales in Madrid, a move that partly reflected her deeply religious temperament—as did her commitment as a Jesuit—while providing her with a temporary residence that, after her death, became permanent when she was buried there [fig. 6].

During her years as regent, Juana's extremely reserved, utterly unshowy nature was no obstacle to a number of portraits being made of her, although all of them, except for the one by More in around 1559, were based on the same model, from which several ones with minor variations were produced. In those years, the portraits of Juana always showed the same image of Habsburgian restraint and remoteness, in line with the comments of writers of the time, who talk of a "beautiful and distinguished" woman (M. de Brantôme), "Spanish of haughty ways" (the ambassador Paolo Tiepolo), who had "a slight masculine air", this with regard to her proven will, remoteness and reserve (the ambassador Badoero)<sup>31</sup>. In her recent studies of the portraits from this period, Annemarie Jordan compiled a complete gallery of likenesses with their different derivations in minor portraits, medallions, cameos and engraved or sculptured portraits. Jordan considers, I think correctly, that the Princess took a conscious, active part in the conception of these images<sup>32</sup>. Fernando Marías sees the representations of Juana of Austria and her sister María as providing the essential models for subsequent portraits of stateswomen in general<sup>33</sup>.

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27 Jordan Gschwend 2003.

28 Jordan Gschwend 1994, p. 46, note 17; Ferreira de Vasconcellos. *Triunfos de Sagrador em que se tratao os feitos dos cavalleiros da segunda Tavola Redonda*. Coimbra, 1554.

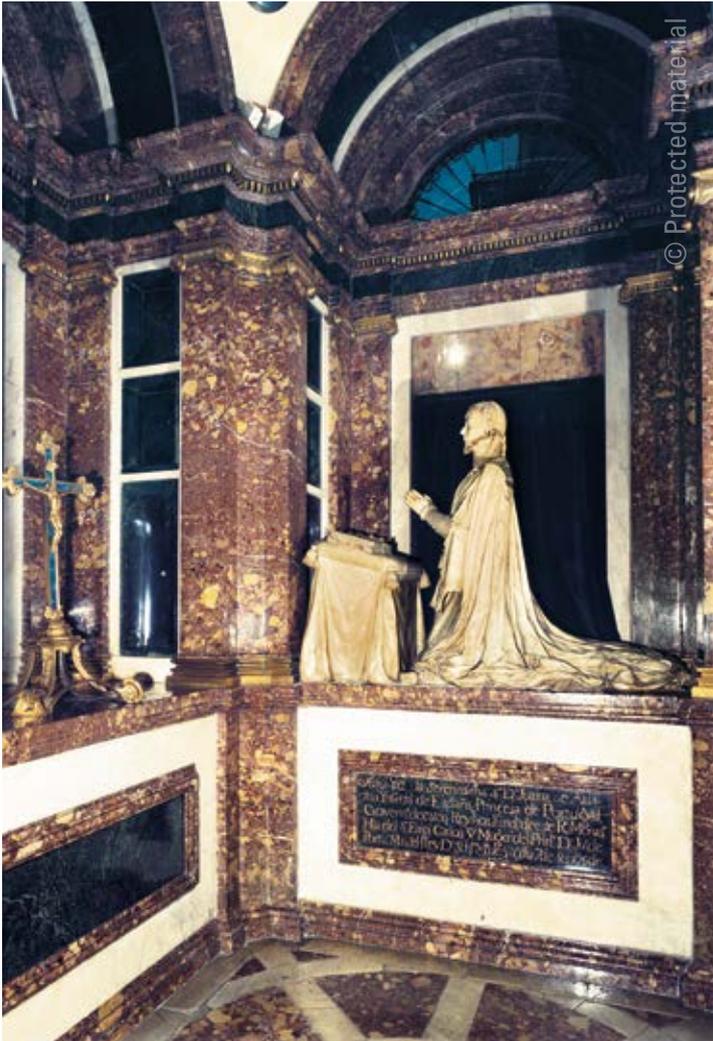
29 Villacorta 2005, pp. 183-198.

30 On her years in government, Martínez Millán 1994, pp. 79-99.

31 For character sketches and notes on Juana's physique, together with a range of contemporary opinions, Martínez Millán 1994; Toajas 2000.

32 Jordan Gschwend 2002.

33 Marías 1998, p. 449.



6. Pompeo Leoni (1533-1608)  
*Cenotaph of Juana of Austria*  
 Carrara marble, 130 x 160 x 90 cm  
 Monastery of the Descalzas Reales, Madrid

To judge by the surviving portraits of the princess, the image of her as ruler did not take shape until 1557, three years after the death of her husband, Juan Manuel. She had spent these years ruling, exercising the powers delegated by her brother, not her father. We do not know whether in the intervening time the rigours of mourning prevented the princess from having that kind of “visibility”. Whatever the reason, it should be remembered that it was then, in 1557, that Alonso Sánchez Coello settled in Valladolid after leaving Portugal for good and before becoming Philip II’s “portraitist” in the following decade. Stephanie Breuer-Hermann believes the only remaining portraits by Sánchez Coello from that time are the Prince Charles in the Prado Museum and two of Juana; the one now in Ambras Castle in Innsbruck [fig. 7], signed and dated in 1557, and the one in the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum [fig. 1], probably produced at the same time and based on the same sketch from the life<sup>34</sup>. In his portraits, Sánchez Coello, who trained with Antony More first in Brussels and later in Lisbon, remained faithful to the Flemish painter’s models, as is clear from the two portraits of Juana from the late 1550s, where composition, pose and symbolic elements follow the models of the two paintings by More I mentioned above: The Empress María and Catherine of Austria. The two women were very close

34 M. Kusche believes these two portraits to be by Rolan de Moys, one of Martín de Gurrea y Aragón’s painters, grounding her opinion on the painter’s hypothetical relations with the Princess from 1557 on. Such a relation, unsupported by documents, is posited on the basis of Ms. Kusche’s stylistic appreciations and Juana’s links with Martín de Gurrea y Aragón, Duke of Villahermosa, who brought the Flemish painter to Spain (to Saragossa, to be precise) in 1559. Kusche 2003, pp. 102-103.



7. Alonso Sánchez Coello (1531-1588)  
*Portrait of Juana of Austria with mastiff*  
Oil on canvas  
Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien  
Inv. no. GG 3127

family models for Juana, without forgetting her aunt María of Hungary (portrayed by Titian in 1548)<sup>35</sup>, whose capacity for work and high intelligence made her an example to follow, as “an ideal, virtuous widow at the political service of her family and the House of Habsburg”<sup>36</sup>, and with whom Juana had much in common<sup>37</sup>. It was hardly by chance that Philip II’s sister took heed of these models. María of Hungary and the Empress María had acted as a substitute for the absent head of state, just as Juana of Austria was called on to do in 1557. Catherine of Portugal had also given proof aplenty of her skills as a politician and ruler, though without ever having held official responsibilities. Juana was very well placed to appreciate the status and wisdom of her mother-in-law and her aunt at the Portuguese court, whose influence must have weighed on the Princess herself to some extent. Her introspective, taciturn nature seems to have clashed with Catherine’s character, judging by Spanish Ambassador Sarmiento de Mendoza’s reports to the Emperor: “It is advisable (that the Princess) should not be thus (dry) with the Queen (Catherine) who is wise and has understood the matter of Portugal and conducts the Kingdom better than ever, and so it is that nothing more is done than her will”<sup>38</sup>. In his portrait of Catherine [fig. 5], Antony More had managed to capture her extraordinary personality and the

35 Of the lost original we know several workshop studio versions with variations, the most popular and valued being the one in Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs.

36 Jordan Gschwend 2000, p. 451.

37 Rodríguez-Salgado 1988, p. 5.

38 Danvila 1900, p. 43, Luis Sarmiento to Charles V, 17th December 1553; Toajas 2000, pp. 105-106. On Juana’s relationship with Queen Catherine, and her complex situation in Portugal, Villacorta 2005, pp. 169-171, 183-187 and 198-201.



8. Juan Pantoja de la Cruz (c. 1553-1608)  
*Portrait of the Empress María of Austria*  
Oil on canvas, 183.5 x 102.5 cm  
Monastery of the Descalzas Reales, Madrid

elegant ease of someone who enjoyed a high degree of power. If we bear in mind Juana's position in 1557, it's not hard to understand why she should have taken the portrait of Catherine as a sort of benchmark; the similarities between the two portraits show how much the Spanish princess needed to emulate others at the time, and certainly how she responded to the notion of family tradition that was a such a major priority for all members of the House of Austria. In the princess's case, though, that priority might well have become a personal way of measuring up to Queen Catherine. Juana had a copy of that portrait and the one of her sister María, although in a half-figure version which, together with other family images that were increasingly stored in the Descalzas Reales monastery, could be seen as a gallery of dynastic portraits<sup>39</sup>.

The full-length portrait of Juana in the Ambras Castle was made for the court of Vienna<sup>40</sup>. Accompanying the princess is a large hunting dog, on whose head Juana lays her left hand, a gesture instantly calling to mind *Charles V with a Dog*, a portrait with known versions from 1532 (J. Seisenegger, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna) and Titian's 1533 work in the Prado. Decorating the dog's collar are the arms of Castile and Portugal, in a subtle visualization of the dynastic alliance that strengthened the power of the Habsburgs. The family is also evoked in the column occupying the right-hand background of the portrait. The work contains a direct allusion to More's portrait of Queen Catherine, since Sánchez Coello (perhaps at the subject's

39 García Sanz/Ruiz Gómez 2000, p. 143.

40 Jordan Gschwend 2000, pp. 40-42, 96 and 183; Jordan Gschwend 2002, pp. 45-48 and 56.

request) recovered for this portrait the fly that Antony More had painted on the Queen's kerchief. References to the emperor and to Juana's links to Castile and Portugal are not repeated in the version in the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum, where what predominates over everything else is the situation of Juana as ruler in Philip II's absence.

In the Innsbruck and Bilbao portraits, Juana is dressed in black satin, with a full robe in the fashion of the second half of the century, featuring a high, completely closed neck that keeps the head high and enhanced by the white ruff. Until the 1580s, single colour robes were favoured, albeit in rich fabrics such as damask, velvet or satin, and highlighted by different kinds of needlework in relief<sup>41</sup>. The state of conservation of the two portraits (the paint surface is slightly worn on both) makes it hard to say whether the robe represented originally boasted complicated, luxurious needlework<sup>42</sup>. What does stand out is the triple row of small buttons that adorn the dress, which, together with the details of cuffs and neckline, give the subject a finely achieved look of sober elegance<sup>43</sup>. The Princess is usually described as appearing as a widow in these portraits. Although it's certainly possible, it is not something one can be absolutely definite about; such a statement needs qualifying at the very least. Black was not exclusive to widows. It was considered a difficult, delicate colour (getting a jet-black tint was certainly not easy, nor was maintaining it); used in many solemn ceremonies, at the time it had become associated with the aristocracy and, in the House of Austria, with magnificence<sup>44</sup>. María of Austria is portrayed as a widow after her return to Spain, in the Juan Pantoja de la Cruz portrait in the Portrait Gallery at the Descalzas Reales in Madrid [fig. 8], and in Blas de Prado's *grisalla* (an oil technique using grey tones only) showing María with Prince Charles (in Toledo's Santa Cruz Museum). Juana's sister has a nun-like look, as, besides a veil, she wears the traditional widow's cap ("reverend caps" Cervantes calls them in the *Quixote*)<sup>45</sup> covering all but the actual oval of the face, similar to the way Juana must have dressed in the early stages of widowhood, when she covered her face with the typical veil<sup>46</sup>. Although Juana also has her head partially covered in the two portraits in question, María's aspect is rather different, with a headdress of pearls and white thread rounded off with a short cape called a *manteleta* on the shoulders and clasped at the front. The caps in the two paintings are in fact quite similar, the only variation being in the way they are worn. In the Bilbao painting, the flap or fringe-piece that covered part of the forehead has been drawn back to show Juana's characteristic hairstyle, piling her abundant copper-coloured hair from the central parting. It is perhaps this particular feature—the short cap with front fringe or flap covering part of the forehead—that defines the Princess's condition as a widow, at least in the Ambras painting. It's the same cap María of Bavaria, Duchess of Styria, wears in Pantoja's 1603 work *Birth of the Virgin* in the Prado Museum, in which Queen Margarita's mother does not wear black, despite having done so to begin with (she was widowed in 1590), when she also used the full cap and veil<sup>47</sup>.

In the Bilbao portrait, the princess also displays a small but representative sample of her own patrimony, typical of ladies of high position. She holds a small selection of rings with precious stones (two rubies are

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41 Bernis 1990. On this type of robe, see p. 90.

42 The *Inventario de los bienes muebles que pertenecieron a Felipe II*, 1576, details the embroidering on the dress Juana wears in the More portrait in the Prado (P-2112): "Another full-length brush on canvas portrait of the Princess of Portugal, the donna Juana, dressed in a black satin robe, the right hand posed on a chair and in the left hand a pair of gloves".

43 The buttons may have been from the set of seventy-nine glass buttons gifted by Catherine of Portugal on the occasion of the Prince and Princess's wedding. Jordan Gschwend 2000, p. 437.

44 Jordan Gschwend 2002, p. 45.

45 Chapter XLIX of the first part of the novel, *Donde se trata del discreto coloquio que Sancho Panza tuvo con su señor don Quijote*.

46 When the Princess met her brother Philip after leaving Portugal, she was "much covered in mourning, so that, for a goodly time the Prince could not see her very beautiful face, until H.H. had beseeched her many times to reveal and lift a little the veil that she wore down over the eyes". A. Muñoz. *Viaje de Felipe segundo a Inglaterra*. Zaragoza, 1554, in Villacorta 2005, p. 202.

47 This is how we see her in *María de Baviera con sus nueve hijos recibe la comunión de San Carlos Borromeo*, Monastery of the Descalzas Reales, Madrid.

well in evidence) set in gold. She wore these jewels on both hands, even the right, which is gloved. Included in the 1573 inventory are Juana's rings, "of gold and all sorts", and a list of more than one hundred leather gloves treated with amber. Most of these smooth, aromatic accessories came from Ciudad Real and Yepes, although also included on the list are "twelve pairs from Guadalupe, with the backs sewn", a possible allusion to the model she sports in the Bilbao portrait<sup>48</sup>. The cloth kerchief and soft fan, a *boa graça* or fly-whisk of black-dyed feathers or silk fringes, allude once again to Catherine's portrait, as does the plinth tenuously drawn in the background, completed to the left with a row of broad ashlar stones. Although Annemarie Jordan thinks they might be "an allusion to the Monastery of the Descalzas Reales, which was under construction at the time"<sup>49</sup>, I prefer Ana María Galilea's suggestion that they provide "an undetermined frame that seeks to simulate a palatial interior"<sup>50</sup>; in this view of things, the stones are essentially an extra stage prop reinforcing the high position of the regent.

One fundamental variation between the Innsbruck and Bilbao pictures is the element hanging from the front clasp of the *manteleta* cape. The orange-toned *berrueco* ruby seen in the Austrian painting, one of the many jewels the Princess possessed, is replaced by a medallion with the likeness of Philip II, a reference to her dependence, dynastic filiation and subordination to the king, especially pertinent in view of Juana's position (likewise, the standing of the women members in general) within the family. As occurs with most of the portraits of the Princess, it is this image that launches and naturalizes a specific formula for female likenesses: the portrait within a portrait, a means of reinforcing the status and lineage of the woman in question, while reflecting her affections<sup>51</sup>. Miniature portraits were *a priori* personal objects, belonging to the private realm. However, the fact that Juana of Austria wears such an object turns this portrait into a declaration of submission and respect. As Ángel Aterido has noted, the presence of Philip's likeness "goes beyond the devoted keepsake of the brother; it is a visible mention of the person she represents in the exercise of power, as the use of such portraits exceeds the sphere of the private. As the men habitually wore the Order of the Fleece, from which women were excluded, in their appearances, the women resorted to incorporating their fathers or brothers as a sort of "mark of the Habsburgs"<sup>52</sup>. Such masculine presences would be a long-lasting feature in portraits of the women of the dynasty<sup>53</sup>, as revealed in later examples like Queen Isabella of Valois (Prado Museum), and The Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia and Magdalena Ruiz (also in Prado Museum) and, of the same Infanta, the portrait the Prado Museum has in deposit at the Monastery of El Escorial [fig. 9] outside Madrid, which, in terms of composition and iconography is an imitation of the portrait of Juana in the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum. It is worth remembering that at the time this portrait of Isabella Clara Eugenia was being painted, Philip II's daughter took charge of the government of the Low Countries in the King's name.

The miniature with Philip II's likeness originates in a portrait of the king almost certainly produced by Antony More. Rather than the 1549 portrait in the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum, this would be a later work representing Philip as King of England, of which there are many known copies and versions, although none of them is considered to be original [fig. 10]. Matthews dates this portrait between 1555 and 1558, which could condition the date of execution of Juana's portrait<sup>54</sup>. However that may be, the fact that Juana chose to include

48 Pérez Pastor 1914, pp. 355-356. Also alluded to are seven pairs of different measures of her sister the Empress, the Emperor and "other princes", most likely for use as a stencil for Juana's dispatches. In 1573, Juana also had "five and half pairs of box sticks to compose and return gloves."

49 Jordan Gschwend 2002, no. 9.

50 Galilea 1993, p. 505.

51 On the significance of the "portrait within a portrait", Portús 2000a. On portraits on medallions and their use as gifts, Bouza 1998.

52 Madrid 2000, p. 366, no. 8.2.

53 As late as the 19th century, in some photographs of Isabella II in which she included a miniature effigy of her husband Francisco de Asís. Ruiz Gómez 2004b.

54 Matthews 2000.



9. Juan Pantoja de la Cruz (c. 1553-1608)  
*Portrait of the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia*  
Oil on canvas, 112 x 89 cm  
Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid  
Deposited at the Monastery of El Escorial  
Inv. no. P-717

the image of her brother as King consort of England justified the position she herself occupied in Spain. In this respect, the image is exceptional. From 1559, with Philip II once more on Spanish soil, Juana was to be sidelined to her definitive secondary role, although she would retain great influence with the rest of the family. Other portraits were made of Juana, but these tended to make use of her position as a member of the Habsburg dynasty, rather than alluding to her direct relation with Philip II. One last image of her as a stateswoman is to be found in Antony More's magnificent portrait in the Prado, where, significantly, the miniature with the portrait of the King has been replaced by a small golden effigy of Hercules, as a generic reference to the dynasty. In the later portraits, that reference would take on more definite form with the inclusion of the cameos and miniatures of her father, Charles V. This development reveals much about her situation at the Spanish court, where she always preferred to underline her direct family ties to the Emperor, eschewing, if not so much her close parentage with the King, then at least in her painted portraits, her role as mother of King Sebastian of Portugal.

Nothing is known of the Bilbao portrait until 1958, when it was divulged by Gaya Nuño. It may have been one of a small series of four family portraits by Alonso Sánchez Coello that Philip II gifted to Ferdinand I's ambassador Adam von Dietrichstein, who was in Spain from 1564 to 1571. The portrait of Juana was sold in Buenos Aires in the early 20th century by a descendant of Dietrichstein, and later became part of the Agustín Larreta Anchorena collection<sup>55</sup>.

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55 Galilea 1993, p. 503.



10. Antonio Moro (1519-1576)  
*Philip II*  
Oil on canvas, 41 x 31 cm  
Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid  
Deposited at the Monastery of El Escorial  
Inv. no. P-2118

Rosemarie Mulcahy has described it as the most beautiful of Juana's portraits. While acknowledging the damage to the paint surface, Joan Sureda has praised its "splendid composition" and the play of light and shadow, rather more daring than in the portrait by More. It is certainly a fine example of the art of Sánchez Coello, one that Jordan at least deems a masterpiece<sup>56</sup>. But most importantly, the portrait in the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum emerged as a prototype for the portraits of women members of the House of Austria, an image in which the basic principles of the court portrait were established with undeniable competence, flair and skill.

<sup>56</sup> Mulcahy 1990; J. Sureda Pons in Padua/Rome 1991, no. 10; Jordan Gschwend 2002, no. 9.

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