

Carla Pinto: *'K et B retramées d'or pur: Art and the politics of Beatrice of Portugal in Savoy, between France and the Empire'*

In the second half of the seventeenth century Samuel Guichenon mentioned at one point in his *Histoire Genealogique de la Royale Maison de Savoye* the names and genealogies of the eleven French princesses who had married into the House of Savoy. Among them, the eighth, Beatrice of Portugal, is described as “daughter of King Manuel, prince of blood of France, of the branch of Burgundy”. This description, which reveals disregard of the conventional naming practices of the dynasties prevailing in Portugal – Manuel’s dynasty was that of Avis, founded by the marriage of an illegitimate son of Pedro I of Portugal and an English princess of the house of Lancaster – illustrates the strongly held image of a political, dynastic and cultural dominion of France over Savoy. In some ways, this image does correspond to reality in the long term, particularly during the period of occupation of the Duchy by France in the mid-16th century, but a finer analysis of events dismantles this apparent hegemony and, instead reveals a representation and affirmation of an independent power. Such is the case of the episode of Duke Charles II’s marriage to the second daughter of the Portuguese king (1521-38), and the subsequent favouring of their son, Emmanuel Philibert, by the Emperor Charles V and the dominance of pro-Hapsburg imperial policy over that of the Valois, a reversal for which Duchess Beatrice was largely responsible. In this presentation, I will emphasize the role of Beatrice of Portugal in defining a policy of consolidation of the Savoyard elites and a gradual approach to the economic, military and cultural diplomacy of the Empire through both artistic objects and documents.