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REFLECTION

Cultural Transfer and the Eighteenth-Century Queen Consort

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Dynastic marriage in the Europe of the *ancien régime* is built upon the assumption that a high-born woman will leave her natal family and the territory she grew up in and travel to the court and territory of her spouse. She knows that she is unlikely ever to see her home or any member of her family again. She is already married by proxy to her future husband before she leaves home, although she has never met him. She is fortunate if she and her husband have a common language in which they can communicate, if they are of the same confession and if they share at least some interests. It is also a matter of luck whether the couple like each other when they meet. No matter how successful or otherwise the personal interaction between king and consort turns out to be, she has to conform to the norms and expectations of her new subjects and of her marital dynasty, norms and expectations of which she often only becomes aware when she fails to satisfy them. She has been chosen by her future husband, after all, because of the dynastic and political capital she can bring to the marriage. Dynastic capital attaches to a Habsburg, a Bourbon or a Wittelsbach, political capital attaches to the daughter of an actual or possible ally. Her overt duties are clear: she has to provide her spouse and her new dynasty with at least two male children ('an heir and a spare') and ideally also with a string of daughters who can be used in future marriage bargains. Her other duties and functions are to project her husband's magnificence through her appearance, to be a visible model of piety and charity for her subjects, to maintain useful unofficial links with her own dynastic network, and to be a focus for the emotions of her subjects.[1]

The question this article poses is whether and to what extent queens consort functioned as agents of cultural transfer when they moved from their natal to their marital court.[2] The most cursory acquaintance with the journeys of these queens tells us that they did not travel alone. They were often accompanied by ladies-in waiting, maids and grooms, sometimes by a chaplain or by musicians. They always brought objects with them, from clothing to jewellery to books. Once they were established in their new home, they were often instrumental in introducing new artistic forms and ideas. At

[1] On this latter point see Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, '"Mit offentlich-ausgebrochenen Liebes=Thränen". How and why Early Modern Festival Books Depict Emotions', *History of Emotions—Insights into Research,* November 2014, DOI: 10.14280/08241.34. *https://www.history-of-emotions.mpg.de/en/texte/mit-offentlich-ausgebrochenen-liebesthranen-how-and-why-early modern-festival-books-depict-emotions/.*

[2] See *www.marryingcultures.eu*, the website of the collaborative research project 'Marrying Cultures: Queens Consort and European Identities, 1500–1800', funded by HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area) from 2013 to 2016. Jill Bepler (Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel), Almut Bues (German Historical Institute, Warsaw) and Svante Norrhem (Lund University) are Principal Investigators on the project and Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly (University of Oxford) is Project Leader. This article draws on discussions with members of the Marrying Cultures team and on research undertaken as part of the project.

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the same time, they invariably maintained close links with their natal court, frequently writing home and maintaining a network of correspondence with parents and siblings, including with sisters who had married into other courts. They were often a port of call for travellers from their country of origin. The question is whether these women were able to graft elements that they had brought with them onto the culture they found when they arrived in their new country and so create a new cultural synthesis. Were consorts so active as collectors and cultural patrons that one could say that it was part of the definition of their role? If they were active, to what extent was that influenced by their formation at their natal court? Or was it the case that the cultural role queens consort played varied from instance to instance, so that some consorts were able to function as active agents of cultural transfer, while others were used as instruments and others again were mere catalysts, bringing about change simply by their presence?[3] Other questions that arise when thinking about the cultural role of consorts include to what extent it was dictated by confessional or political considerations, and whether the dynastic link between two territories provided economic benefits for both, encouraging trade and the circulation of new processes of manufacture.[4]

I. Theories of Cultural Transfer

In attempting to answer these questions, I turned to the various theories of cultural transfer and cultural exchange. In 2012 the historian Simone Lässig edited a Special Number of *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* devoted to translation as a useful concept for historians.[5] In her introductory article, she pointed out that translation studies learnt to problematize the whole notion of adequate linguistic translation partly under the influence of postcolonial studies and gender studies, which demonstrated how notions of language and power and the awareness of cultural barriers make communication across cultures difficult and sometimes even impossible. She reminded the reader that 'cultural translation' always goes beyond language and involves questions about values, patterns of thought and behaviour, about structures of knowledge, about concepts and

[3] See the exposition of this distinction, first formulated by Svante Norrhem and Elise Dermineur at *http://fnzinfo.hypotheses.org/406/*.

[4] The consorts investigated in the Marrying Cultures project are: Elisabeth (1526–1545) and Katharina (1533–1572), Archduchesses of Austria, consorts of Sigismund II August, King of Poland; Sofia Jagiellonka (1522–1575), consort of Heinrich II the Younger, Duke of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel (1489–1568), and her sister Katarzyna Jagiellonka (1526–83), consort of Duke Johan of Finland (later Johan III, King of Sweden); Anna Katarzyna Konstancja Waza (Anna Catharina Konstanze, 1619–1651), Princess of Poland, consort of Philipp Wilhelm I of Pfalz-Neuburg, as patron of music; Hedwig Eleonora von Holstein-Gottorf (1636–1715), Queen of Sweden; Charlotte Amalie von Hessen-Kassel (1650–1714), Queen of Denmark; Marie-Louise de Gonzague-Nevers (1611–1667), consort of Władysław IV Vasa and then of his brother Jan II Kazimierz Vasa, Kings of Poland; Catarina of Bragança (1638–1705), consort of Charles II of Great Britain and Ireland; Maria Amalia, Princess of Saxony (1724–1760), Queen of the Two Sicilies (1738–1759), Queen of Spain (1759–1760); and Luise Ulrike (1720–1782), Princess of Prussia and Queen of Sweden.

[5] Simone Lässig, 'Übersetzungen in der Geschichte—Geschichte als Übersetzung? Überlegungen zu einem analytischen Konzept und Forschungsgegenstand für die Geschichtswissenschaft', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 38, 2, Übersetzung (April—June 2012), pp. 189–216; see also Stefanie Stockhorst (ed.), *Cultural Transfer through Translation: The Circulation of Enlightened Thought in Europe by Means of Translation* (Internationale Forschungen zur Allgemeinen und Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft, 131) (New York and Amsterdam, 2010) and Peter Burke und Ronnie Po-chia Hsia (eds), *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2007).

terms and about social practices. She cited Homi Bhabha's work of the 1990s, in which he calls the very notion of 'culture' into question by stating that culture is translation.[6]

But is cultural translation the same thing as cultural transfer? The latter notion was developed as a means of combatting the nationalism that nineteenth-century historians and modern historians writing about nineteenth-century history were prone to, because they were writing about a period in which there were such things as clearly defined 'nations'. This made it easy for them to study so-called 'influence', whereby a nation or a great writer or painter was said to influence a less developed culture or writer or painter. This kind of investigation always implied a value judgement and of its very nature always inscribed nationalism more firmly into the discourse by showing how one culture dominated another.

It was to move away from this that Michel Espagne and Michael Werner proposed a different way of thinking about cultural relations between France and Germany by making scholars aware of the transnational dimension of culture.[7] However, even here, as Lässig points out, the assumption was that it was possible to work out which was the 'receiving' culture and which the 'transmitting' culture and it still sounded as if cultural transfer was uni-directional. I then turned to the further development of these ideas by Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann.[8]

They moved the debate on with their notion of *histoire croisée* or, as they called it in German, *Verflechtung*. This is related to what postcolonial scholars call 'entanglement' and which the latter use to try and overcome the Eurocentrism of much research into colonial cultures. *Histoire croisée* posits a multi-directional relationship between two cultures, the investigation of which means that the observer, the point of view and the object being observed are themselves entangled in the process. To talk about *histoire croisée* means to realize that the phenomena being compared, whatever they are, are always historically constructed and that, in examining these historical processes, the examination must also understand itself as an active factor in the entanglement. *Histoire croisée* foregrounds the logic of reception, the mechanisms of choice, and the strategies for adopting the new phenomenon. Werner and Zimmermann stress that cultural transfer is concerned by definition with processes, that terms such as culture and nation are themselves processes, that the boundaries that are drawn between cultures are fluid, and that permanently new definitions and meanings arise from this. They call the very concept of 'transfer' into question, as it implies a beginning and an end

[6] Homi Bhaba, *The Location of Culture* (London, 1994).

[7] Michel Espagne and Michael Werner, 'Deutsch-französischer Kulturtransfer im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert: zu einem neuen interdisziplinären Forschungsprogramm des CNRS', *Francia*, 13 (1985), pp. 502–10; Günter Berger and Franziska Sick (eds), *Französisch-deutscher Kulturtransfer im Ancien Régime* (Tübingen, 2002); Michel Espagne and Matthias Middel (eds), *Von der Elbe bis an die Seine: Kulturtransfer zwischen Sachsen und Frankreich im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1993); Matthias Middell, 'Transnationale Geschichte als transnationales Projekt: Zur Einführung in die Diskussion', *Historical Social Research*, 31, 2 (2006), pp. 110–17; Rudolf Muhs, Johannes Paulmann and Willibald Steinmetz (eds), *Aneignung und Abwehr: Interkultureller Transfer zwischen Deutschland und Großbritannien im 19. Jahrhundert* (Bodenheim, 1998); Paulmann, 'Internationaler Vergleich und interkultureller Transfer: Zwei Forschungsansätze zur europäischen Geschichte des 18. bis 20. Jahrhunderts', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 267 (1998), pp. 649–85.

[8] Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, 'Vergleich, Transfer, Verflechtung: Der Ansatz der *Histoire croisée* und die Herausforderung des Transnationalen', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 28 (2002), pp. 607–36; Werner and Zimmermann (eds), *De la comparaison à l'histoire croisée* (Paris, 2004).

to the process and a clear definition of the receiving culture, and so brings the notion of a fixed national culture in again by the back door. They maintain that *histoire croisée* or *Verflechtung* opens up a richer and more subtle picture of the interaction between two cultures, coming closer to the notion of 'shared history'. They stress that asymmetries as well as connections need to be examined, that all definitions, all divisions of space and time have to be seen from several points of view, that the *longue durée* must always be considered together with short-term actions and that the enquiry will itself be self-reflexive. They also ask whether there are such things as 'transnational social spaces'. In short, *histoire croisée* sees processes of exchange taking place on the local and the global level simultaneously, it posits an interweaving of spatial and temporal networks, of political, economic, intellectual, artistic and human dynamics or movements, in which the actors, places and societies change during the process of exchange.

Wolfgang Schmale's work is another important intervention in the debate.[9] For him culture is to be defined as sets of coherences—'time-specific encodings of material and historical relationships'—which are 'distinguishable from one another but not distinct from one another'.[10] He distinguishes between what he calls 'culturemes' and 'structuremes'. Culturemes have personal and spatial connotations and an essential identity—for example, they can be said to be 'German' or 'aristocratic'—whereas structuremes are phenomena such as 'printing' or a particular architectural style, where their origin is not their defining feature. He lays great stress on the mediators (the *Vermittlungsinstanz*) in the process of cultural transfer, an important element investigated, for instance, by Veronika Hyden-Hanscho.[11] Gesa Stedman and Margarete Zimmermann also argue for a broad definition of culture that includes the material and the immaterial, the 'high' and the everyday.[12] They too stress the importance of researching the channels and the agents of transfer and the transposition of terms and of symbolic meanings. They urge us to examine what happens to the thing that has been transferred in its new context and to look at the possible blind spots in the transfer process, and they usefully bring 'gender' into the analysis as a fruitful category. Finally, the term 'cultural exchange(s)' has now won favour with historians.[13] Michael North, for instance, prefers

[9] Wolfgang Schmale (ed.), *Kulturtransfer: kulturelle Praxis im 16. Jahrhundert* (Innsbruck, 2003); Wolfgang Schmale, 'Theory and Practice of Cultural Exchange Within Europe', in Veronika Hyden-Hanscho, Renate Pieper and Werner Stangl (eds), *Cultural Exchange and Consumption Patterns in the Age of Enlightenment: Europe and the Atlantic World* (Bochum, 2013), pp. 18–24.

[10] Wolfgang Schmale, 'Cultural transfer': *http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/theories-and-methods/cultural-transfer*, p. 28 (accessed 9 May 2015).

[11] Veronika Hyden-Hanscho, *Reisende, Migranten, Kulturmanager: Mittlerpersönlichkeiten zwischen Frankreich und dem Wiener Hof 1630—1730* (Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte Beihefte, 221, Stuttgart, 2013).

[12] Gesa Stedman and Margarete Zimmermann (eds), *Höfe—Salons—Akademien: Kulturtransfer und Gender im Europa der Frühen Neuzeit* (Hildesheim, 2007).

[13] Robert Muchembled (ed.), *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe,* 4 vols (Cambridge, 2006–2007). Other relevant titles are: Thomas Fuchs and Sven Trakulhun (eds), *Das eine Europa und die Vielfalt der Kulturen: Kulturtransfer in Europa 1500–1800* (Berlin, 2003); Andrea Langer and Georg Michels, *Metropolen und Kulturtransfer im 15./16. Jahrhundert: Prag—Krakau—Danzig—Wien* (Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Mitteleuropa Band 12, Stuttgart, 2001); Mathias Müller, Karl-Heinz Spiess and Udo Friedrich (eds), *Kulturtransfer am Fürstenhof: höfische Austauschprozesse und ihre Medien im Zeitalter Kaiser Maximilians I.* (Berlin, 2013); Dorothea Nolde and Claudia Opitz (eds), *Grenzüberschreitende Familienbeziehungen: Akteure und Medien des Kulturtransfers in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Cologne, Vienna, 2008); Gesa Stedman, *Cultural Exchange in Seventeenth-Century France and England* (Farnham, 2013).

it to the term 'cultural transfer', because it too conveys the idea of movement going in several directions at once, rather than the uni-directional connotations of 'transfer'.[14]

II. Queens Consort and Cultural Transfer

How useful are these theories when applied to individual consorts and their courts?

My case study is Maria Amalia, Princess of Saxony and Poland (1724–1760), who on her marriage became Queen of the Two Sicilies, before moving to Spain in 1759 where she reigned for only one year as Queen of Spain. She was married by proxy in Dresden in May 1738 to the Bourbon Carlo, King of the Two Sicilies (1716–1788),[15] and then, accompanied by her brother the Electoral Prince Friedrich Christian (1722–1763), journeyed from Dresden down to Naples.[16] The question that presents itself immediately is whether, in the eighteenth century, Saxon court culture and Neapolitan court culture were two distinct entities. Just as translation can only take place when there are different vernaculars, so cultural transfer can only take place if different cultures come into close contact with one another. If there is an international court culture to such an extent that the court can be termed a 'transnational space', then the notion of the 'foreign' queen consort is an anachronism stemming from modern ideas of national identity.

In the case of Maria Amalia, several factors smoothed her path in the transition from Dresden to Naples. The first was that, though French was the language she used most easily—all her letters to her family throughout her life were in French, for instance, as were those of her husband to his parents—she could already speak Italian. When the Spanish ambassador Count Fuenclara came to Dresden to conduct the marriage negotiations, she was able to reply in Italian.[17] The second was that the music she was used to hearing, playing and singing was Italian, even in some cases Neapolitan. Her music teacher was Giovanni Alberto Ristori (1692–1753), an Italian who had come to Dresden with his father's opera troupe, when it was brought there by August II, King of Poland (Friedrich August I, Elector of Saxony, August the Strong), Maria Amalia's grandfather.[18] Ristori followed Maria Amalia to Naples. The court composer in Dresden during her youth was the famous Johann Adolf Hasse (1699–1783), who had trained in Naples in the 1720s, where he was given the soubriquet of 'il Sassone'. He was called to Dresden as court composer in 1730 by Maria Amalia's father, then Electoral Prince of Saxony. Hasse's opera *Alfonso* was performed for Maria Amalia's wedding in 1738.

[14] Michael North (ed.), *Kultureller Austausch: Bilanz und Perspektiven der Frühneuzeitforschung* (Cologne, Vienna, 2009).

[15] This monarch was known by different names at different times in his life. As King of Naples he was Carlo VII, as King of Sicily he was Carlo IV, as King of Spain from 1759 to 1788 he was Carlos III. I will refer to him simply as Carlo or as Carlo di Borbone until he ascends the Spanish throne, when he becomes Carlos.

[16] Grateful thanks are due to Maureen Cassidy-Geiger, Pablo Vazquez Gestal and Jóhannes Ágústsson for generously sharing their own research on Dresden.

[17] Johann Ulrich König: *Vollständige Beschreibung aller Solennitäten bey dem hohen königlichen Sicilianischen Vermählungs-Feste: welches im May-Monath des Jahres 1738 an dem Köngl. Pohln. und Churfürstl. Hofe zu Dresden in Vollmacht prächtigst vollzogen worden auf Befehl des Hofes ausgefertiget* (Dresden, Leipzig: Friedrich Hekel und Georg Conrad Walther, 1738), p. 36.

[18] Cantata Composta per Comando della Serenissima Principessa Amalia, e cantata dalla Reale Altezza sua Il felicissimo Giorno del Nome della Maestà del Rè. Musica di Giov. Alberto Ristori. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Dresden Mus.2455-J-4.

The third factor was what made Maria Amalia a suitable bride for Carlo di Borbone in the first place: she was a Catholic. This was due to her grandfather's and then her father's conversion to Catholicism in order for each of them in turn to be elected to the crown of Poland. As long as the Electors of Saxony adhered to the Lutheran faith, they belonged to a Protestant dynastic network linking them with the Scandinavian countries and with Brandenburg. After August the Strong's conversion to Catholicism in 1697, the Wettins were eligible to intermarry with the royal and ducal houses of Spain, France, Austria and the Italian territories. These confessionally defined dynastic networks covered Europe and all their members were aware of their connection to each other. This meant that a king or queen addressed as 'ma chère soeur' or 'my esteemed cousin' a prince or princess whom he or she had never met and never would meet, simply because they were dynastically connected.

Maria Amalia not only shared the religion of her husband and her people—she had been brought up in the tradition of Habsburg piety espoused by her mother Maria Josepha.[19] Even allowing for the writer's desire to present the young queen in the best possible light, Maria Amalia's religious fervour was clearly appreciated by her subjects, as Count Giuseppe Maria Salvatico, the Saxon ambassador in Naples, reported on 13 August 1743:

> H.M. the Queen goes every day to hear these sermons [of the Jesuits] with such an exemplary devotion that she has in this way attracted in a special way everybody's love and veneration, so that, when this sovereign leaves the aforesaid church to get into her carriage, she is always accompanied by the blessings of the people and by many good wishes for her well-being.[20]

Her devout religious observance throughout her life was remarked on again and again by all the foreign ambassadors in Naples in their reports to their home courts.

The fourth factor was that some of the features of daily life at court in Naples were similar to what she was used to in Dresden. Chief among them was the importance of, and from a modern point of view the inordinate amount of time devoted to, hunting. Writing from Warsaw on 3 December 1738, Count Brühl assured José Joaquín de Montealegre, the Marquis de Salas, his opposite number in Naples:

> I am moreover convinced that the Queen of the Two Sicilies will not fail to demonstrate her ability to shoot when hunting, having had, as with all her other lovely qualities, such great teachers as her Royal Father and Mother. [21]

Maria Amalia, like her own mother, was expected to accompany her husband on his frequent hunting expeditions and nearly always did so.[22]

[19] See Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'Religion and the Consort: Two Electresses of Saxony and Queens of Poland (1697–1757)', in Clarissa Campbell Orr (ed.), *Queenship in Europe 1660–1815: The Role of the Consort* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 252–75.

[20] Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden (hereafter HStA Dresden) 10026 Geh Kab 2829/11. Relation 33, '13. Août, 1743. S.M la Reine va tous les jours entendre ces Sermons [of the Jesuits] avec une dévotion si exémplaire, qu'Elle s'est atirée par là d'une façon particuliere l'amour et la véneration de tout le monde, de sorte que, quand cette souveraine sort del la sudite Eglise pour se metre en Carosse, Elle est toujours acompagnée des benedictions de ce peuple et de mille voeux qu'il fait pour la prosperite'.

[21] Archivio di Stato di Napoli (ASNA), Ministerio degli Affari Esteri, Busta 883, 3 Dec. 1738: 'Je suis d'ailleurs persuadeé, que la Reine des Deux Siciles ne manquera pas de donner à la chasse des preuves de Son habilité, en fait de tirer, y aïent eu, comme pour toutes Ses autres belles qualités, de si grands Maîtres que les sont des Serenissimes Pere et Mere'.

[22] She laments wryly the misfortune of being married to a passionate huntsman in a letter to her sister-in-law Maria Antonia on 28 Nov. 1751 (HStA Dresden, Nachlass Maria Antonia (1724–1780) Nr. 18, 11).

Other elements of Neapolitan culture will have been strange to her. She had to fit into the recently founded royal court of Naples whose organization and ceremonial had been laid down before her arrival by her mother-in-law Elisabetta Farnese, Queen of Spain (1692–1766), and the all-powerful minister in Naples, Don Manuel de Benavides y Aragón, Count and then First Duke of Santiesteban del Puerto (1683–1748).[23] Maria Amalia's entourage was clearly worried that she might have to dress in the Spanish fashion, but happily this was not the case. Count Joseph Gabaleon von Wackerbarth-Salmour (1685–1761), her brother's majordomo who accompanied them to Naples, reported to Maria Amalia's father that her costume (perhaps the fur-lined sleeveless velvet over-dress, the Polish *kontusz*, that she and her parents, the King and Queen of Poland, were often portrayed wearing) delighted her new husband so much that he put aside the five chests of clothing that he had prepared for her and ordered all the Neapolitan ladies to copy what Maria Amalia was wearing.[24] In Naples she will have seen for the first time the *cuccagna*, which always formed part of any major celebration. In its simplest version it consisted of a tall pole at the top of which hams and other foodstuffs were hung as prizes for anyone who could fetch them down, but it could mean any structure covered in foodstuffs and sometimes clothing, for which the poor people of Naples could scramble. For the celebration of the marriage of the King and Queen of the Two Sicilies in Naples on 10 July 1738, Wackerbarth-Salmour described how 'a colossal chariot, which is called a *cuccagna*, covered with all sorts of edible things' was drawn past the Royal Palace in Naples for the people to rob.[25] To celebrate the birth of an heir nine years later, on 19 November 1747 another very lavish *cuccagna* was laid on, this time in the shape of a kind of edible landscape.[26]

Court culture in the two cities was, therefore, similar in some aspects but not in others. From the objects that were sent between the two courts we can judge what commodities were considered novel in each place and therefore worthy to be given as representative gifts. The most important of the commodities that the new queen brought with her from Dresden was porcelain from the Meissen factory founded by her grandfather August II, King of Poland, in 1710. The Dresden court was the first in Europe to discover the secret of Chinese hard-paste porcelain and, as Maureen Cassidy-Geiger has shown, this porcelain, prized not for its material which was in itself valueless, but for its delicacy and for the technique of its manufacture, was often used as a diplomatic gift.[27] Cassidy-Geiger calls Meissen porcelain Saxony's 'gift of national identity', in the same way that amber was the

[23] See Pablo Vazquez Gestal, 'Corte, Poder y Cultura Politíca en el Reino de las Dos Sicilias de Carlos de Borbón (1734–1759)', Madrid, unpubl. PhD thesis, p. 356. Vazquez Gestal points out that the model for the Naples court was the Spanish court, whose ceremonial had been laid down by Charles V and Philip V in the sixteenth century, *ibid*. p. 316.

[24] Wackerbarth-Salmour, HStA Dresden 10026 loc. 784/2, 20 June 1738.

[25] 'Un chariot Colossal, qu'on appelle de Cocquagne [*sic*], chargé de toutes sorte de comestibles'. Quoted from the report dated 10 July 1738 by Joseph Anton Gabaleon von Wackerbarth-Salmour (1685–1761). With thanks to Maureen Cassidy-Geiger for giving me access to her transcription.

[26] *Narrazione delle solenni reali feste fatte celebrare in Napoli da sua maestà il Re delle Due Sicilie Carlo Infante di Spagna Duca di Parma, Piacenza &c. &c. per la nascita del suo primogenitor filippo Feal Principe delle Due Sicilie* (Naples, 1749), p. 11. This is an elephant folio with a magnificent engraved frontispiece and 15 double-page engravings, some of which fold out.

[27] Maureen Cassidy-Geiger, '"J'ai recus le Soir le monde marqué": A Crown Prince of Saxony on the Grand Tour of Italy, 1738–1740', in *International Fine Art and Antique Dealers Fair (Handbook)* (New York, Oct. 2004), pp. 21–31; and Cassidy-Geiger, *Fragile Diplomacy: Meissen Porcelain for European Courts* (New Haven, 2008).

typical gift associated with Brandenburg. On her arrival Maria Amalia brought a Meissen service with her decorated with the alliance arms of Saxony-Poland and the Two Sicilies, porcelain was sent at her request to Naples on several occasions either for her own use or to give as gifts, and in 1747 her parents sent her the famous green Watteau service to celebrate the birth of her first son. Other members of the Dresden court also sent porcelain to important figures in Naples. On 11 February 1743 Wackerbarth-Salmour wrote to the Marquis de Salas that he had taken advantage of a shipment of gifts from the King and Queen of Poland to Maria Amalia and her husband to send the Count 'a little chocolate service of Saxon porcelain . . . this trifle which has no other value than that it is produced by our country here'.[28] Friedrich Gottlob Adolph, Baron von Warnsdorf (1704–1758), Secretary to the Saxon Legation in Naples from 1749 to 1751 and thereafter until 1758 ambassador himself, was constantly dealing in porcelain.[29] In 1743 Carlo di Borbone founded a porcelain factory near his palace of Capodimonte in Naples, which he dismantled on his departure for Spain and re-established in Madrid near the Buen Retiro palace. Even though these factories could only produce soft-paste porcelain, the constant circulation of Meissen porcelain in Naples provided the impetus and the inspiration.

What objects went in the other direction? A large consignment of gifts sent from Naples to Maria Amalia's parents in Dresden in October 1742 gives us an insight into what were considered Neapolitan 'gifts of national identity'.[30] The most important objects in the thirty-three chests entrusted to the sea-captain Francesco Consoli were a large ivory crucifix, two *presepi*,[31] one made of red coral with coral figures, the other made of red coral with ivory figures, and a representation of the Fall of Lucifer in ivory.[32] August III, Maria Amalia's father, found the latter so remarkable that he put it into the Green Vault in Dresden, to join other remarkable carved or turned ivory objects. It can still be seen there today in the Ivory Room. It is about 40 cms high and is a virtuoso display of skill with over 140 tiny figures of angels and devils carved from a single tusk.[33] The chests also contained chocolate, wine, various kinds of salami and

[28] 'Un petit Service à Choccolat de Porcellaine de Saxe renfermé . . . cette bagatelle n'a d'autre prix que celui d'être une production de ce pais ci'. ASNA, Ministerio degli Affari Esteri, Busta 889.

[29] ASNA, Ministerio degli Affari Esteri, Busta 885bis.

[30] ASNA, Ministerio degli Affari Esteri, Corrispondenza col Conte di Bruhl 1738–1741, Busta 884. See, dated 28 Sept. 1742, 'Inventario di tutti li generi, e Capi di Robbe, galantarie, ed arredi, che d'ordine di S.M./Dia gu.di/ si rimettono alla M.tà del Re di Polonia a carico di Francesco Consoli destinato da S.M. con detto carico.
Num.o 15.M.L. Un Santo Cristo d'avorio di palmi tre, e quarti tre, e mezzo, con sua croce riposto in una cassetta con sua controcassa, imballata con telaccia, e paglia, con sua jncerata
Num.15.M.R. Un Presepe di coralli dossi con sua guarniz.ne di fiori, e personaggi anche di detti coralli
Altro Presepe di Coralli dossi con Personaggi d'avorio, con capanna, e fiori d'argento massiccio, diposto in un altra Cassetta con sua chiave e mascatura
La Cascata di Lucifero d'avorio con guarniz.ne di fiori d'argento massiccio intorno diposto in una Cassetta con sua chiave, e mascatura'.

[31] A *presepe* is a Neapolitan Christmas crib in which the Holy Family is represented among many scenes from Neapolitan life. There was a great flowering of the *presepe* tradition in the eighteenth century but *presepi* are still on sale everywhere in Naples today, along with other religious figures.

[32] Grünes Gewölbe, SKD, Inv.-Nr. II 131. With thanks to Jutta Kappel, Deputy Director of the Grünes Gewölbe, Dresden, for information about this object and other similar extant examples.

[33] See Dirk Syndram and Martina Minning (eds), *Die Kurfürstlich-sächsische Kunstkammer in Dresden: Das Inventar von 1741* (Dresden, 2010), p. 834, where it appears in the *Nachtrag* or appendix to the 1741 inventory and its provenance as a gift from Maria Amalia is specifically mentioned. The nativity scene described on p. 808 ff. in the same inventory and sold at auction in 1834 could possibly be one of the *presepi*.

clothing. The shipment arrived in Dresden on 28 or 29 March 1743. Carved religious figures and *presepi*, not to mention wine and salami, are the objects that many a traveller still brings back from Naples today, and Maria Amalia clearly thought that these were objects that her parents could not get in Saxony and that would give them pleasure.

If these gifts to and fro illustrate the difference between the two court cultures, music is where they meet most closely. Composers, performers and scores went to and fro in both directions in an ongoing process of cultural transfer.[34] Maria Amalia's music teacher Ristori came to Naples in the autumn of 1738, some months after she arrived there herself.[35] Ristori was in Naples in time to compose music for her fourteenth birthday celebrations and the opera *Temistocle* for the nameday of Philip V of Spain, Maria Amalia's father-in-law, on 19 December 1738. His *Adriano in Siria* was performed on the same occasion a year later.[36] Hasse remained Saxon *kapellmeister* until 1763, but no fewer than twelve of his operas were performed between 1737 and 1747 in the Teatro di San Carlo, the Naples court opera house, from scores sent from Dresden.[37] Maria Amalia remembered with particular fondness an opera by Hasse called *L'Asilo d'amore* with a libretto by Metastasio, which she claimed to have heard in Dresden and wished to include in the celebrations for the birth of her third daughter in 1743.[38] It turned out that no such opera existed, but Hasse set to and wrote it and sent the score to Naples, though it is uncertain if the opera was ever actually performed there. Hasse came to Naples in person in 1758 after the outbreak of the Seven Years War in 1756. The departure of Maria Amalia's father and his court for Warsaw to escape the Prussian occupation meant that there could be no musical performances in Dresden. Hasse's opera *Demoofonte* therefore received its premiere in Naples on 4 November 1758, and on 20 June 1759 his new setting of Metastasio's libretto *La Clemenza di Tito* was premiered. On 4 November 1759 Hasse's *Achille in Sciro* and on 26 January 1760 his *L'Artaserse* were both performed in Naples for the first time. However, by then Maria Amalia had already left Naples for Spain.

Another major composer who came from Dresden to Naples is Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714–1787). In 1747 he had composed the opera *Le nozze d'Ercole e d'Ebe* for the double wedding in Dresden of Friedrich Christian, Electoral Prince of Saxony, and his sister to Maximilian III Joseph, Elector of Bavaria, and his sister. In 1752 he arrived in Naples, where his opera *La Clemenza di Tito* received its premiere on 4 November. A Neapolitan who spent time in Dresden and then returned to Naples was the composer and singing teacher Nicola Porpora (1686–1768). He was *kapellmeister* in Dresden between 1748 and 1752 in competition with Hasse and returned to Naples in 1759. Gennaro Manna (1715–1779) was a Neapolitan whose works went in the other

[34] See Paologiovanni Maione, 'La musica "viaggiante" nelle carte dei ministri napoletani a Dresda nel Settecento', in Claudio Bacciagaluppi, Hans-Günter Ottenberg and Luca Zoppelli (eds), *Studi Pergolesiani* (Bern, 2012), pp. 101–70.

[35] See Jóhannes Ágústsson, 'Giovanni Alberto Ristori at the Court of Naples 1738–1740', in *ibid.*, pp. 53–100.

[36] Hanns-Bertold Dietz, 'The Dresden-Naples Connection, 1731–1763', *The International Journal of Musicology*, 5 (1996), pp. 95–130, p. 104.

[37] According to Paologiovanni Maione and Francesca Seller, *Teatro di San Carlo di Napoli: Cronologia degli spettacoli 1737–1799* (Naples, 2005) these are the Hasse operas performed during this period: *Tito Vespasiano* (1738), *Demetrio* (1739), *Issipile* (1742), *Didone abbandonata* and *Semiramide riconosciuta* (1744); *L'Antigono* and *Tigrane* (1745), *Ipermestra*, *Catone in Utica*, *Lucio Popido* and *Cajo Fabrizio* (1746) and *Siroe* (1747).

[38] Dietz, 'The Dresden-Naples Connection', p. 106.

direction, that is, from Naples to Dresden. After the premiere of his opera *Achille in Sciro* in 1745, he was invited to compose a *Serenata* in Naples in honour of the wedding of the Dauphin to Maria Teresa of Spain. The Saxon ambassador sent a copy of the *Serenata* to Dresden and this led to Manna being commissioned to set to music the libretto *Addio di Nice à Tirsi* by Maria Antonia of Bavaria, the young Electoral Princess of Saxony.[39] Singers also went to and fro between the two courts. Friedrich Christian, Maria Amalia's brother, was instrumental in bringing the soprano Maria Santina Cattaneo to Naples in December 1739. Caterina Regina Mingotti, the wife of the impresario Pietro Mingotti, who had sung the title role in Gluck's opera at Friedrich Christian's wedding in 1747, came to Naples in 1750 with her husband's troupe and was immediately granted an audience with Maria Amalia.[40]

Just as German composers such as Hasse trained in Italy, so did the painter Anton Raphael Mengs (1728–1779). He was the son of a Saxon court painter, who went to Rome, Venice and Florence to learn his trade and then came back to Dresden in 1749 as Senior Court Painter (*Oberhofmaler*) at the Saxon court. In 1759 he came to Naples to paint the royal family and then accompanied Maria Amalia and her husband to Madrid the same year, returning again to Madrid in 1761 after another sojourn in Italy.

Quite a different cultural connection between Saxony and the Two Sicilies is that of trade.[41] The Saxon official Ludwig Talon was sent to Italy between 1749 and 1751 to investigate the possibilities for encouraging the export of Saxon goods, in particular cloth, to Naples.[42] He wrote a lengthy, thorough and clear account of all aspects of trade between various Italian territories and Saxony, with an extensive section on trade with Naples.[43] Between 14 September 1751 and 1 February 1752 a trader called Balthasard Anglez in Naples sent six letters enclosing in all sixty-two small samples of dyed and woven cloth to his opposite number Captain Jäger in Dresden as examples of what the Saxons could sell in Naples if they could manufacture it.[44] The Saxon ambassador in Naples between 1749 and 1751, Alexius Graf d'Olonne (1693–1752), made strenuous efforts to get permission for Saxony to open a consulate in the port of Naples and to be given the same customs privileges that other nations had.[45] It was hoped by the Saxons that Maria Amalia's presence in Naples would be favourable to them. Another practical link between Saxony and the Two Sicilies is that a Saxon mining engineer was sent down to Sicily to help with exploration there.[46]

We can, therefore, say that there was an ongoing process of exchange between Saxony and the Two Sicilies on a number of different levels.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 114.

[40] HStA Dresden, 10026 Geh. Kab. Loc. 28331 Des Generals Grafens von Olonne aus Neapel erstattete Relationes de Anno 1750 et 1751, report of 21 April 1750, fol. 86a.

[41] Günther Meinert, *Handelsbeziehungen zwischen Sachsen und Italien 1740–1814* (Weimar 1974).

[42] See Judith Matzke, *Gesandtschaftswesen und diplomatischer Dienst Sachsens 1694–1763* (Leipzig, 2011), p. 370.

[43] HStA Dresden, 10078 Landes-Ökonomie-, Manufaktur- und Kommierziendeputation Nr. 734. Die Commercien=Angelegenheiten mit Neapolis und Italien betr. Ao 1751. 93 folios.

[44] ASNA, Ministerio degli Affari Esteri, Busta 885bis. The cloth samples are as brightly coloured as if they had been made yesterday.

[45] HStA Dresden, 10026 Geh. Kab. Loc. 28331 Des Generals Grafens von Olonne aus Neapel erstattete Relationes de Anno 1750 et 1751, fol. 178a-194b.

[46] *Ibid.* fol. 1: 'Le Sr. Burgsdorff, Conseiller des mines de nôtre Cour a obtenu le Tître de Directeur-General des Mines des Deux Roîaumes, avec un Plein pouvoir absolute et illimité dans cette charge et des appointements de 12.00 Ecus'.

III. Was Maria Amalia an Agent of Cultural Transfer Between Dresden and Naples?

What do the connections between the two territories tell us about Maria Amalia's own role? To answer this question, we have to examine her life more closely. She is typical of many consorts, in that her marriage was brokered with the young Bourbon prince, the son of the king of Spain by his second wife Elisabetta Farnese, to seal a peace. Carlo had taken back the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily from the Austrians and peace with the Austrians was concluded in 1735. However, it was not ratified until the Treaty of Vienna of 1738, which also brought to an end the War of the Polish Succession, in which the Austrians (related to Maria Amalia) had supported the election of Maria Amalia's father as King of Poland, while the French (related to Carlo) had supported Stanisław I Leszczyński, the rival candidate. Carlo's marriage to Maria Amalia, therefore, sealed the peace between the Bourbons, the Habsburgs and the Wettins. She arrived at the borders of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies on 31 May 1738 after her proxy wedding in Dresden on 9 May. She did not celebrate her fourteenth birthday until 24 November of the same year. She was fortunate in that her husband was immediately taken with her when they met, writing to his parents in Spain:

> I should like to tell Your Majesties that she is much more beautiful than her portrait, that she has the personality of an angel, is very lively and has much esprit and that I am the happiest of men and the most fortunate in the world. I scarcely know how to tell you how much we love each other. [47]

The young couple consummated the marriage immediately and Carlo gives a detailed account of the wedding night in his letters to his parents in a letter of 8 August, ending with the ecstatic statement: 'I am the happiest man in this world to have this wife who will be my companion for my whole life'.[48]

All the reports from her early days in Naples make clear that the young queen had to find her feet in her new environment, so there was no question of her immediately playing a leading role in the cultural life of the court. In addition, she quickly became pregnant and in 1740 gave birth to her first child, a girl. The birth was celebrated with great magnificence and, as the Saxon ambassador Pont reported to Dresden, the king was 'as happy about it as if it were a Prince'.[49] Unfortunately this daughter was the first of five. It took Maria Amalia until 1747 to give birth to a son, to the great rejoicing and relief of her husband, her own parents, her mother-in-law in Spain and the Bourbon dynasty generally. This boy turned out to be mentally impaired, something it took his parents years to admit, so that, when his parents departed for Spain to ascend the Spanish throne in 1759, he had to be set aside as heir to the throne of the Two Sicilies. Fortunately, Maria Amalia had given birth to another five sons and two daughters in

[47] 'Je diroy aussi à vos M.M. qu'elle est beaucoup plus belle que le portrait, qu'elle à un geni d'un ange fort vife, et beaucou d'esprit, et que je suis l'homme le plus content, et le plus fortunée de ce monde, je ne sçauroy dire combien nous nous aimons'. Carlo di Borbone: *Lettere ai sovrani di Spagna*, ed. Imma Ascione, vol. II, 1735–1739 (Naples, 2002), pp. 323–24. He wrote almost a thousand letters to his parents between 1720 and 1744.

[48] '[je] suis l'homme le plus heureux de ce monde, ayant cette femme qui doit estre ma compagne toute ma vie'. *Ibid.*, p. 331.

[49] HStA Dresden, Geh. Kab 10026/8 Des Residenten Pont Nouvellen: The king was 'en est aussy content sy c'était un Prince'. The official account of the festivities is: *Relazione delle Feste Fattesi in Napoli per la nascita della Ser. Reale Infanta delle Due Sicilie* (Napoli: Francesco Ricciardo, 1740).

the meantime. In all, she had thirteen pregnancies in twenty-two years and buried five of these children. Not only was she constantly pregnant, but pregnancy made her very ill and her suffering never diminished. As she described it to her eldest brother the Electoral Prince Friedrich Christian on 5 January 1744 when she was pregnant for the third time:

> I am not capable of doing anything, having to stay seated almost all the time on a sofa with a basin under my mouth and faint so often that I always have to have someone near me for fear my face will be on the floor.[50]

On 7 March 1752, in a letter to her sister-in-law Maria Antonia of Bavaria, a woman she had never met but with whom she maintained a sisterly correspondence, she wrote, on hearing that Maria Antonia might be pregnant:

> Because of the affection that I have for you I wish you always a long break between one pregnancy and the next, for indeed it's a dog's life to be pregnant every year, no one knows that better than I and I assure you that I am sick of it, but we have to do the will of God who arranges everything for our good.[51]

Not only, therefore, was she pregnant for much of her twenty-one years in Naples but her pregnancies were disabling, so that it is open to question how culturally active she could be under these circumstances. During her last year in Spain, a country that she hated, Maria Amalia's health never recovered from the measles she caught shortly after her arrival.[52] After her death, the doctor described her as a woman weakened by many pregnancies, ill before she ever left for Spain, coughing during the whole journey and then more or less continuously ill from her arrival until her death.[53] She was also grieving for her eight-year-old son Ferdinando (1751–1825), who had been left behind as the next king of the Two Sicilies and whom she knew she would never see again. She was impatient to have in her possession the portrait of him being painted by 'Menx' (Anton Raphael Mengs) but it was taking a long time for the painting to be sent from Naples to Madrid.[54]

Given the physical and emotional restrictions imposed on them by pregnancy and child-bearing, therefore, many queens consort were culturally most active as widows. A striking illustration of this is Hedwig Eleonora, Duchess of Holstein-Gottorp, Queen of Sweden (1634–1715). She was a wife for six years from 1654 to 1660 and a financially well-off widow for fifty-five years. She gave birth to one son, who lived to become king as Charles XII, so her position was secure. Had she been bearing a child almost every year, she would never have been able to commission the palaces of Drottningholm and Strömsholm and to rebuild and improve the palaces of Ulriksdal and Karlberg, not to mention her collecting activities.

[50] 'Je ne suis pas capable de ne rien faire me fallant presque toujours être assise sur un canapée avec le bassein dessous la bouche et des evanuissement [*sic*] fort souvant qu'il me fait toujours tenir une personne proche de moÿ de peur de ne pas donner le visage en terre'. HStA Dresden, Nachlass Friedrich Christian 12527 Nr.22, letter no. 99.

[51] 'La tendresse que j'ai pour vous, vous souhaite d'avoir toujours un long repos entre une grossesse, et l'autre car ma foi c'est une vie de chiens que d'être grosse tous les ans, personne mieux que moy le sait et je vous assure que j'en suis bien lasse, mais enfin il faut faire la Volonté de Dieu qui fait tout pour nôtre bien'. HStA Dresden, Nachlass Maria Antonia (1724–1780) Nr. 18, letter no. 14.

[52] See her letter to Franz Xaver on 31 Nov. 1759 from Madrid: HStA Dresden 12531 Fürstennachlass Xaver (1730–806), No. 37.

[53] Archivo General de Simancas (AGS), Estado, Libro 317, Doc 50: Report by the doctor, Dr Fis. Vincenzo Muzio Zona.

[54] AGS, Libro 317, letter 26, 8 April 1760.

In her own person, like all consorts, Maria Amalia exemplified the *histoire croisée* of two territories. After the Seven Years War broke out, she was in constant communication, both from Naples and from Spain, with her brothers, Electoral Prince Friedrich Christian in Dresden and the army officer Franz Xaver in France, to try to bring about peace between Prussia and Saxony. Her remarkably frank letters from Spain to Bernardo Tanucci (1698–1783), the long-standing Chief Minister in Naples, bear witness to her anguish at the fate of her country of origin and her efforts to use every means within her power to help it.[55] This demonstrates the way in which consorts were always facing two ways simultaneously: they never lost their consciousness of and loyalty to their own dynasty, yet they were duty-bound to identify themselves with the dynasty they married into. Through the children they produced two dynasties were linked forever and the fate of two territories was therefore also connected.

If we focus on the transfer of culture in the narrow sense and ask to what extent Maria Amalia was a *Vermittlungsinstanz*, to use Wolfgang Schmale's term, then the answer is that her role as mediator varied according to the circumstances. Her arrival in Naples led to dissemination of Meissen porcelain there, and the subsequent founding of the Capodimonte porcelain factory there and the later founding of the Buen Retiro factory in Madrid, even if the manufacture of hard-paste porcelain could not be replicated. Here Maria Amalia was an instrument of cultural transfer rather than an active agent. In the case of music and musicians, her presence in Naples encouraged and intensified pre-existing musical connections between the two cities, which went in both directions. The painter Mengs would surely not have travelled from Dresden to Naples and then to Spain to paint members of the royal family, had she not been Queen of the Two Sicilies and then of Spain. In these cases we can say that Maria Amalia was an active agent of cultural transfer. However, in the case of the development of trade relations between Saxony and the Two Sicilies, her presence in Naples acted at best as a catalyst, for she played no direct role here.

The *histoire croisée* of the two territories continued to some extent after Maria Amalia's death in 1760. The dynastic connection between the Bourbons and the Wettins meant that her widower Carlos III, now king of Spain, continued to press diplomatically for a good outcome for Saxony in the Seven Years War. The only member of his wife's family whom Carlos knew personally was her brother Friedrich Christian, who had accompanied her to Naples after her wedding in 1738. Friedrich Christian succeeded as Elector of Saxony in 1763, the year the Seven Years War came to an end, but reigned for only six weeks. Carlos had no direct personal connection to the rulers of Saxony after his death. A more significant and longer-lasting example of the entanglement of the two territories was the export of Saxon cloth to Naples, which was still flourishing in 1808. The Zittau linen producer Carl Ernst Haupt speaks in that year of his excellent business dealings with Naples, unlike with any other territory in Italy, and of his satisfaction at being allowed to sell all kinds of linen there without restriction.[56]

Finally, it must be acknowledged that there are specific features of court culture that distinguish cultural transfer between courts from other cases of transfer. The first and most obvious is that the two partners in the exchange were equal and symmetrical. The

[55] Several times she refers to the 'povera città di Dresda' under Prussian occupation in her letters to Tanucci, for instance on 19 Aug. 1760. AGS, Libro 317, letter 45.

[56] See Meinert, *Handelsbeziehungen* (note 41), p. 253.

second is that, by the mid-eighteenth century, the influence of France on court culture was so pervasive that to a certain extent we can speak of the court as a transnational space. This does not mean that a princess, if unpopular, did not have her foreign origins thrown in her face—*l'Autrichienne* (the Austrian woman) as an appellation for Marie Antoinette in France—or that she herself did not remind her subjects of her own (superior) foreign origins—as Luise Ulrike of Prussia did in Sweden. Nonetheless, by that date most persons of royal blood wrote and spoke to each other in French, danced French dances and wore French fashions, while the operas they attended were by German composers with libretti in Italian. In earlier centuries it was far more likely that a consort would bring a distinctively foreign culture with her from her natal court—examples being the arrival in Poland-Lithuania of Bona Sforza in 1518 as the second wife of Zygmunt the Old or of Catherine of Braganza in England in 1662 as the consort of Charles II. We can answer the question posed at the beginning, therefore, in the affirmative: queens consort did play a role in the process of cultural transfer between courts, but this varied from century to century, from instance to instance and from territory to territory and was often determined by how personally active the women concerned could be.

How can the study of consorts and cultural transfer develop further? We need to look at forgotten consorts. While certain consorts are the subject of repeated investigation—the Medici queens of France, for instance—others simply sink from view. This may be because most of their correspondence has been lost or even because no one has thought to look for it, because they died at a relatively young age or, as in the case of Maria Amalia, because they are overshadowed by their successor, the Austrian princess Maria Carolina (1752–1814). These women can often shed new light on the problem we have been investigating here. We also need to rethink our modern notions of centre and periphery and reassess the cultural role of Scandinavia, Poland-Lithuania and Portugal. We need to pay more attention to trade negotiations and artists' commissions, which means solid work in the archives. And we need to persuade our museum colleagues to let us into their store rooms where those objects, rarely thought worthy to be displayed, are often precisely those that can tell us most about cultural exchange.

Abstract

Dynastic marriage in the Europe of the *ancien régime* is built upon the assumption that a high-born woman will leave her natal family and the territory she grew up in and travel to the court and territory of her spouse. Were these foreign-born queens consort able to graft elements that they had brought with them onto the culture they found when they arrived in their new country and so create a new cultural synthesis? What elements from their marital court did they send back home? In other words, did these women function as agents of cultural transfer between their natal and their marital courts, and to what extent was this an ongoing process? What were the factors—personal and political—that enabled one queen to be an active cultural agent and another not? What theories of cultural transfer are useful in examining the influence of these queens? Are there specific features of court culture that distinguish cultural transfer between courts from other cases of transfer? By the mid-eighteenth century is the influence of France so pervasive that the court has become a transnational space? The example chosen to illuminate these questions is Maria Amalia, Princess of Saxony and Poland (1724–1760), who on her marriage in 1738 became Queen of the Two Sicilies and from 1759 was Queen of Spain.

Keywords: court culture, cultural transfer, Naples, Saxony

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