

The Spaces of the Court of Cagliari

Many similarities existed between the capitals of the Spanish Monarchy where the king was not physically present. They shared a common urban layout characterized by the royal palace which housed the viceroy and his court and which was also the place where the law courts and Crown offices were located. In fact, in the absence of the king and his ministers who assisted him in the task of governing, it was the presence of the king's main representative and the country's leading judicial bodies that distinguished the capital from the other cities of the same domain¹. The passage of time was also marked in a similar way in the various capitals: the viceroy's installation ceremonies were held from time to time, all of them more or less alike, given that, however different the formulas may have been, there was always a triumphal procession that culminated in the viceroy swearing an oath to respect the laws and customs of the kingdom in keeping with the Aragonese Monarchy's policy of governing through separate pacts; the liturgical calendar also marked out the feast days to be celebrated solemnly, while jubilees or occasions of mourning involving the royal family were honoured in similar fashion and simultaneously in every city. And yet, the similarities of spaces and times did not mean that there weren't profound differences between the Hapsburg capitals, from Naples, Europe's largest city in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to Maiorca, heart of the homonymous "hidden kingdom" which coincided with the Balearic islands². Each of the Hapsburg capitals had its own characteristics that depended on a number of factors ranging from the city's or the nation's own particular history, to historical details behind the urban layout, the political situation at the time and economic trends.

Cagliari was the capital of the Kingdom of Sardinia, a little known island, exotic in the eyes of all the Catholic King's other subjects, so that it had even earned the epithet of the "*Indias por acá*", the Indies of here³. Moreover, in comparison with the other capitals, it was a small town: in the first parliament of Ferdinand the Catholic, celebrated between 1481 and 1485, for the purpose of distributing the donative, 848 households were counted, equivalent to slightly more than 5,000 persons; at the beginning of the seventeenth century a new fiscal census counted 1967 households for a total of 12,000 persons, a figure that would nearly double by the end of the century. Thus, Cagliari had a tiny number of inhabitants compared to the other capitals of

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¹ M. Berengo, *L'Europa delle città. Il volto della società urbana extraeuropea tra Medioevo e di Età moderna*, Turin, Einaudi, 1999, pp. 26-38.

² The expression has been borrowed from the title of E. Belenguer Cebriá's beautiful book, *Un reino escondido: Mallorca de Carlos V a Felipe II*, Madrid, Sociedad para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 200.

³ The comparison between *indios* and the inhabitants of Sardinia is made, for example, in Archivo Histórico Nacional de Madrid, *Inquisición*, leg. 766, f. 75, Ludovico de Cotes to the General Inquisitor, Castellaronese, 18 October 1546, in G. Sorgia, *Due lettere inedite sulle condizioni del clero e dei fedeli in Sardegna nella prima metà del secolo XVI*, in *Atti del Convegno di Studi religiosi sardi*, Padova, Cedam, 1963, pp. 97-106.

the Monarchy⁴ while the entire population of Sardinia during the Spanish period amounting to roughly 300,000.

A small capital city in a thinly populated island kingdom, useful in the Hapsburg Mediterranean as a defensive bastion of the Catalan coasts against the raids of the Barbary corsairs and Ottoman Turks, Cagliari certainly didn't have large resources to invest in public urban building projects. In addition, the small area on which the Castello was built, the town's most important neighbourhood, set aside for public offices and noble residences - a conscious choice made at the time of the Aragonese conquest (1326) - meant renovation was difficult in the sense of the kind of visual upgrading of the urban landscape that was being tried out in many other capitals of the Spanish Monarchy between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Nonetheless, Sardinia's most important city managed to retain its pre-eminent position on the island effectively struggling against its rival Sassari which challenged its primacy by cultivating a pleasant appearance.

The *Epitome de Cerdeña y Caller su corte* is a description of the city as it appeared in the second half of the seventeenth century written by the Piarist Efsio Giuseppe Soto Real (1633-1690), pseudonym of Efsio Giuseppe Siotto, a native of the Sardinian town of Nuraminis⁵. A prolific writer, he founded the Piaris School of Tempio in Sardinia after having given a good account of himself in various Piarist institutes, especially in Norcia. Between the second half of the 1660s and the early 1670s Soto Real was removed from Sardinia to Madrid after being accused of having taken part in the conspiracy against the viceroy, Manuel de los Cobos, marquis of Camaras (?-1668)⁶. In Madrid, however, Soto Real continued his work as a priest and preacher and obtained considerable success before going on to become a writer and publishing, among other works, the *Epitome de Cerdeña y Caller su corte* in 1672 which is a brief descriptive account of the Kingdom of Sardinia and of Cagliari, its most important city, seat of the viceregal court. The success of this booklet and the "repeated requests by several Gentlemen and Ministers"⁷ resulted in a second edition of the work appearing in 1678 with a dedication to don Pedro de Aragon Folch de Cardona (1611-1690)⁸.

The *Epitome* contains a first section which deals with the history of Sardinia that begins from the mythical landing of Sardus, son of Libyan Hercules, who gave the island its current name. The text goes on to provide a geopolitical tour a brief description of the six provinces into

⁴ The calculation is based on the assumption that every household comprised 6 persons: cfr. F. Corridore, *Storia documentata della popolazione di Sardegna (1479-1901)*, Torino, Carlo Clausen, 1902. Less generous estimates by P. Malanima, *L'economia italiana. Dalla crescita medievale alla crescita contemporanea*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2002: he believes that Cagliari had ten thousand inhabitants at the beginning of the seventeenth century and twenty thousand at the beginning of the nineteenth. In any case, Palermo in the sixteenth century had fifty thousand inhabitants, Milan one hundred thousand, Naples one hundred and fifty thousand and the population of these towns is thought to have increased and even doubled during the course of the seventeenth century.

⁵ P. Martini, *Biografia sarda*, Cagliari, reale stamperia, 1838, 3 voll. vol. III, pp. 154-161; P. Tola, *Dizionario degli uomini illustri di Sardegna*, Torino, Tipografia Chirio e Mina, 1857, vol. I, pp. 225-227.

⁶ Cfr. *infra*.

⁷ The first edition was lost. E.G. Soto Real, *Epitome de Cerdeña y Caller su corte*, s.l. [Madrid], 1678, p. 1r: «repetidas instancias [de] algunos Señores y Ministros».

⁸ On this figure and his importance as a patron see D. Carrió Invernizzi, *El gobierno de las imagenes. Ceremonial y mecenazgo en la Italia española de la segunda mitad del siglo XVII*, Madrid, Iberoamericana, 2008.

which the island was divided (Cagliari, Arborea, Barbagia, Gallura, Sassari and Logudoro) and of its various royal cities (Cagliari, Sassari, Oristano, Iglesias, Alghero, Castellaragonese and Bosa) and a list of the religious dignitaries, all appointed by the king. This is followed by a list of the Sardinian nobility which also includes the sovereign himself since “His Majesty is not just King of Sardinia and as such possesses all rights in every part of the Kingdom and surrounding islands, but in Sardinia itself he is the marquis of Oristano, count of Goceano: a title that His majesty includes among his privileges”⁹. The work concludes with a praise of the city of Cagliari arranged in alphabetical order: a list from A to Z of the various saints who lived or were born there, as well as another list, also in alphabetical order, of all the city’s honorific titles and which was gleaned from classical and modern authors.

An important part of the text is reserved for the city of Cagliari, the island’s main port and seat of the court¹⁰. The description of the city’s layout is extremely concise: Cagliari is a fortified town endowed with twelve bastions and towers and fortresses “of a very sturdy and beautiful construction”¹¹. The second half of the seventeenth century marked the conclusion of the long process of reinforcing the city’s bastions which had begun in the first half of the sixteenth century and had consumed most of the kingdom’s resources as well as the energies of a considerable work force under the direction of military architects renowned in Europe such as Rocco Capellino (1510-1579) and the members of the Paleari Fratino family¹².

Furthermore – as Soto Real pointed out – the city Cagliari enjoyed political importance because of the presence of the viceroy and the Kingdom’s leading law courts. It was the location of the tribunals (the Reale Udienza which was divided into two sections, civil and criminal; the court of the royal Procurator and the Vicariate) but not of the Tribunal of the Inquisition which had been moved to Sassari in 1563, of the nobility and of the most important military commands, as well of as numerous religious and educational institutions. Besides the cathedral, there were three collegiate churches. In addition to the university, the city was also host to four colleges destined for scholastic training: one belonging to the Cathedral, one to the City, one to the Society of Jesuits and one to the Piarists. The Society of Jesus could also boast of four houses, each with its own rector.

⁹ Soto Real, *Epitome de Cerdeña y Caller su corte*, p. 17v: «Su Magestad no solamente es Rey de Cerdeña, que como tal tiene todos sus derechos en todo el Reino, y sus Islas, pero aun en la misma Cerdeña es Marques de Oristan, Conde de Goceano: titulo que Su Magestad se pone en sus privilegios».

¹⁰ Ivi, p. 11v.

¹¹ Ivi, p. 13v: «de fortissima, y hermosissima canteria».

¹² D. Scano, *Forma Kalaris*, Cagliari, Società ed. italiana, 1934; M. Rigoldi, *Lo sviluppo urbano di Cagliari: da piazzaforte a città moderna*, in «Studi sardi», XVIII, 1962-1963, pp. 570-603; A. Romagnino, *Cagliari-Castello: passato e presente di un centro storico*, Milan, Electa, 1982; M. Rassu, *Baluardi di pietra. Storia delle fortificazioni di Cagliari*, Cagliari, Aipsa, 2003. Particular aspects of the fortification works are covered in S. Cisci, *Cagliari Bastione di San Rémy. Indagini archeologiche presso il complesso monumentale Passeggiata Coperta-Porta dei Due Leoni*, in «ArcheoArte», 1, 2010, pp. 117-143; A. Pirinu, *Forma e progetto della piazzaforte di Cagliari nel periodo 1552-1578. L'arrivo degli specialisti Rocco Capellino e i Paleari Fratino*, in *Identità e frontiere. Politica, economia e società nel Mediterraneo (secc. XIV-XVIII)*, edited by L.J. Guía Marin, M.G.R. Mele and G. Tore, Milan, Franco Angeli, 2005, pp. 200-217; Id., *La piazzaforte di Cagliari nel Cinquecento. Il disegno della tenaglia di San Pancrazio. Comparazioni stilistiche/costruttive*, in «Theologica & Historica. Annali della Pontificia Facoltà teologica della Sardegna», XXII, 2013, pp. 395-416.

Various religious monuments contributed to embellishing the urban landscape: the basilica of San Saturnino; the elevated sanctuary on the site of the prison of Sant'Efisio; the crypt inside the cathedral containing the bones of "Cagliari's countless saints"¹³, martyrs whose remains had been discovered in the city's surroundings during the early seventeenth century. The city was also the headquarters of the consulates of other nations: French; Florentine; Genoese, who congregated in the church of San Caterina; Sicilians who worshiped in the church of Santa Rosalia.

Significantly, Soto Real does not devote much attention to the royal palace, the seat of the court. In describing it he says that the main hall was hung with the portraits of all the viceroys, beginning with the *infante* don Alfonso, just like the great hall of the archbishop's palace was decorated with portraits of all the archbishops of Cagliari, from saint Clement, pope and martyr, the city's first archbishop. Soto Real's silence about the royal palace, the centre of courtly life, is justified by the building's general simplicity and the tumultuous events it had undergone over the centuries. In fact, the building which served as the venue for the court had been chosen between 1326 and 1327 by the *infante* Alfonso, later Alfonso IV the Kind (1299-1336) following the Aragonese military victory over the Pisans. Alfonso, who had initially camped outside the walls of Cagliari, after his enemies had been defeated and put to flight, decided to take up residence in the Castello di Castro, the fortified part of the town. He installed himself right in the Castle complex overlooking the main square where the cathedral and the buildings of the archbishop's curia were situated, and where between 1330 and 1332 the town council had been authorized to build its own meeting place. From that moment on, the palace became the main seat of the sovereign and his lieutenant. Property of the curia, over the course of time, it had to undergo a number of alterations in order to suit the needs of government: during the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the interior spaces were redesigned in keeping with the requirements of a more centralized administration. However, it turned out to be extremely difficult to enlarge the building harmoniously since its location on the edge of a cliff meant there was little space on the sides for expansion. Thus, the palace grew haphazardly, every time it became necessary to add a new space until it comprised more than forty rooms¹⁴. Its size, however, wasn't matched by its magnificence as the tiny resources available for upkeep made it difficult to maintain. Luigi Guglielmo Moncada (1614-1672), upon arriving in Cagliari in 1644 to take up the post of viceroy, complained about the building assigned to him which was almost in a state of ruin and he ordered the immediate repair of the floors that were without covering, of the roofs full of cobwebs and the rooms that had no doors or keys¹⁵. Even worse

¹³ Ivi, p. 15r: «son sin numero los Santos de Caller». Sulla questione see A. Saiu Deidda, *Il Santuario dei Martiri a Cagliari. Le testimonianze di S. Esquirro e J.F. Carmona*, in «Annali della Facoltà di Magistero dell'Università degli Studi di Cagliari», 10, 1980, pp. 111-152; Ead., *Una nuova lettura del Santuario dei Martiri nel duomo cagliaritano sulla base di alcune considerazioni di Giovanni Spano*, in «Studi sardi», XXV, 1978-80, pp. 95-107; D. Mureddu, D. Salvi and G. Stefani, *Sancti innumerabiles. Scavi nella Cagliari del Seicento: testimonianze e verifiche*, Cagliari, S'Alvure, 1988; A. Piseddu, *L'arcivescovo Francesco Desquivel e la ricerca delle reliquie dei martiri cagliaritani nel secolo XVII*, Cagliari, Edizioni della Torre, 1997.

¹⁴ B. Anatra, *Il palazzo nella storia, la storia nel palazzo*, in *Il Palazzo regio di Cagliari*, Sassari, Ilisso, 2000, pp. 7-21.

¹⁵ Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, *Consejo de Aragón*, leg. 1337, cit. in F. Manconi and C. Pillai, *Feste cagliaritanne e cerimonie di palazzo*, in *Il Palazzo regio di Cagliari*, cit., pp. 171-183, p. 171; on the state of the palace upon the arrival of viceroy Moncada and on his disappointment see I. Mauro and V. Manfrè, *Le "obras superfluas" di Luigi Guglielmo Moncada. La rappresentazione del potere vicereale a Cagliari nella "crisi"*

was that Moncada had come to Cagliari with a numerous household which appeared to be impossible to lodge in the narrow spaces allotted to it. But the problems besetting the royal residence were not resolved by the viceroy or by his successors: every time works were undertaken they were only done partially and were never able to solve, once and for all, the critical issues, some of them very serious, that had resulted from a history *ad hoc* additions (tottering roofs, crooked stairways, collapsing beams, worn out tapestries, humidity, bad smells, etc.).

For that matter, most of the ceremonies celebrated for the greater glory of the Crown and its viceroy did not take place inside the palace, which had been conceived as a private residence and administrative centre, but – like in all the capitals of Europe during this period – in the open air, so as to allow the presence of crowds of onlookers who would ensure the success of the festivities and endorse their propaganda value. While the documentary evidence on this is fragmentary, possibly due to the lack of a literary tradition that had deep roots elsewhere, the ceremonies involving the viceroy, the island nobility, the great officers and the people of Cagliari were held in the square in front of the palace and the Cathedral: but this wasn't a regularly shaped square, nor even a very large one, but only an asymmetrical widening arranged on several levels (the true square itself and the little square annexed to it, in front of the Cathedral) and characterized by the presence of noble residences with their facades¹⁶. It was here that the ceremonies took place that marked public life in Cagliari, where the festivities celebrated throughout the Monarchy were reproduced again on the municipal stage and which defined the square, much more so than did the viceroy's residence, as being the authentic royal space in which to represent and display monarchical power.

When festive occasions were celebrated the square was reached by a long procession that wound its way through the streets, either starting from the dock, then moving along the via Barcellona and, thus, away from the sea, before it climbed up to the gate of the Dogana (Customs gate), or alternately, starting from the church of the Vergine di Bonaria, entering the city through the gate of the Leoni (Lions gate), then taking the main street that debouched into the area in front of the Cathedral and the royal palace. The dock was the starting point for the processions celebrated in 1618 and which marked the transfer to the specially built crypt of relics that had been found in the necropolis of San Lucifero on the outskirts of the city. The festivities went on for a whole week, during the daytime with processions that involved all the members of Cagliari's society (the viceroy, the civic authorities, the confraternities, royal judges and citizens, nobleman, religious orders, officials, the clergy...), at night with magnificent fireworks. The celebration culminated in a tournament which was held right on the square, on a *tablada* specially created for the occasion, in front of two raised platforms

degli anni Quaranta del Seicento, in *Cagliari and Valencia in the Baroque Age. Essays on Art, History and Literature*, edited by A. Pasolini and R. Pilo, Valencia, Albatros, 2016, pp. 183-213; on Luigi Guglielmo Moncada see R. Pilo, *Luigi Guglielmo Moncada e il governo della Sicilia (1635-1639): gli esordi della carriera di un ministro della Monarchia Cattolica*, Caltanissetta, Sciascia, 2008; L. Scalisi, R. L. Foti, *Il governo dei Moncada in La Sicilia dei Moncada. Le corti, l'arte e la cultura nei secoli XVI-XVII*, edited by L. Scalisi, Catania, Domenico Sanfilippo Editore, 2008, pp. 43-54.

¹⁶ M. Schirru, *Piazza Palazzo e la Plaçuela. Estetica ed evoluzione dello spazio urbano rappresentativo nel borgo cagliaritano del Castello*, in *Analisi, rappresentazione e simulazione del paesaggio urbano. Le piazze di Cagliari*, edited by P. Casu and C. Pisu, Orthacesus (Cagliari), Sanshi editore, 2011, pp. 23-36.

which accommodated the viceroy with his family, ladies and knights¹⁷. The same route through the city was taken the following year when duke Emanuele Filiberto of Savoia (1588-1624) made a stop in Cagliari on his way to take up the post of viceroy of Sicily: the ladies who looked out from their balconies to pay homage to him were later invited to the palace for a *sarao* where he danced with the vicereine¹⁸. A splendid tournament was later celebrated in 1652 to mark the capture of Barcelona: on that day Cagliari's young noblemen had the opportunity to show their loyalty to the Crown by taking to the streets with banners specially designed for the occasion with fantastic imagery representing motifs of the sovereign's military glory and mutual friendship among the Monarchy's various territories¹⁹.

To the Greater Glory of the Monarchy

The *Epitome de Cerdeña y Caller su corte* which contains only the odd mention of the royal palace, does speak about the sepulchre of Martin the Younger (1374-1409) which was built between the 1670s and 1680s by the Milanese sculptor Giulio Aprile²⁰. As early as the mid seventeenth century, the viceroy Moncada had already expressed the wish to raise a funeral monument suitable for housing the relics of the viceroy which were then in the Cagliari cathedral; however the sepulchre was only built some decades later²¹. In fact, in the second half of the seventeenth century, in all likelihood orders were given by Fernando Joaquín Fajardo de Zúñiga Requesens, marquis of Los Velez (1635-1693), viceroy of Sardinia from 1673 to 1675, to mobilize vast resources for the building of a cenotaph to the Aragonese sovereign who had died in Cagliari probably of malaria on June 25, 1409. Martin landed in Sardinia for the purpose of continuing his conquest of the island and to fight against the Judicate of Arborea. After his victory at the battle of Sanluri, forty kilometres from Cagliari, Martin died upon re-entering the city and as Jerónimo Zurita relates in his *Anales* "he was buried in that city amongst a great

¹⁷ S. Esquirro, *Santuario de Caller, y uerdadera historia de la inuencion de los cuerpos santos hallados en la dicha ciudad, y su Arcobispado*, en la catholica y siempre fidelissima ciudad de Caller, en la emprenta del doctor Antonio Galcerin, por Iuan Polla, 1624; S. Bullegas, *L'effimero barocco. Festa e spettacolo nella Sardegna del 17. secolo*, Cagliari, Cuccu, 1995; A. Pasolini, *Cagliari clau del Regno di Sardegna: i pubblici festeggiamenti per los cuerpos santos (1618)*, in *Capitali senza re nella Monarchia spagnola. Identità, relazioni, immagini (secc. XVI-XVII)*, Palermo, Mediterranea, 2018, under publication.

¹⁸ *Relación de lo que se hizo en el recibimiento y hospedaje del Serenissimo Señor Principe Filiberto Generalissimo de la mar en la Ciudad de Caller y Reyno de Cerdeña*, in Manconi and Pillai, *Feste cagliaritanes e cerimonie di palazzo*, cit., pp. 181-183.

¹⁹ Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia Madrid, *Collección Salazar y Castro*, U 11, ff. 280-291, *Copia de carta que un Amigo escribe à otro. Dando raçon de las Fiestas que se han hecho, en la Ciudad de Caller Reyno de Cerdeña, por la felicissima nueba, de la Reducion del Ciudad de Barcelona*; S. Caredda, *Un agente de la Corona hispánica en Cerdeña: Pedro Martínez Rubio (1614-1667) y la relación de las fiestas calaritanas por la rendición de Barcelona (1652)*, in *Las relaciones de sucesos en los cambios políticos y sociales de la Edad moderna*, edited by J. García López and S. Bodas Cabarrocas, Barcelona, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Servei de Publicacions, 2015, pp. 259-269.

²⁰ G. Cavallo, *Un artista lombardo in Sardegna. Giulio Aprile. Maestro di quadro e di architettura. Scultore, marmista e architetto*, in *Studi in onore di Mons. Antioco Piseddu*, Cagliari, Zonza, 2002, pp. 135-188; Id., *Ingegneri, architetti, marmorari e scultori liguri e lombardi nella Sardegna tra il 17. e il 18. secolo*, in *Storia della Cattedrale di Cagliari dal medioevo al barocco*, in «Artisti dei laghi», 1, 2011, pp. 859-886.

²¹ Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, *Consejo de Aragón*, leg. 1097, s.f., Luigi Guglielmo Moncada al Filippo IV, Cagliari, 24 novembre 1648, cit. in S. Caredda, *La committenza artistica dei viceré valenzani nella Sardegna del Seicento*, in *Cagliari and Valencia in the Baroque Age. Essays on Art, History and Literature*, cit., pp. 165-181, p. 181.

multitude of banners and tombs of noblemen and knights who had died in past wars for the conquest and defence of that kingdom”²². Probably the tomb in Cagliari was intended to be only temporary, but Martin the Elder, who may have wished to transport the remains to the monastery of Poblet died shortly thereafter without carrying out his plan²³. Thus Martin the Younger’s relics long remained in the cathedral in a chapel located to the right of the presbytery where every year on All Soul’s Day a mass was celebrated: the only tribute to the young king who had died in Sardinia after winning a battle that finally won the island for the crown of Aragon.

In 1669 during difficult restoration work of the area of the church presbytery, the tomb was moved and Martin the Younger’s remains were temporarily placed, still inside the cathedral, in the chapel of the Nativity where they would stay until the new sepulchre was commissioned which would later occupy the entire front of the left transept²⁴. The monumental work was executed in Genoa and was later sent, starting in June 1676 to Cagliari where in the autumn of the same year it began to be put up, though not without some controversy between royal officials and the archbishop of Cagliari Pietro Vico who was irritated by the tomb’s magnificence which covered an entire wall. In 1677 the viceroy Francisco de Benavides de la Cueva, count of Santisteban gave another commission to Giulio Aprile for two statues of Justice and Faith which were intended for the great lateral niches. In 1680 during the interim mandate of Melchor Sisternes work began on the floor of the transept and commissions were given for the altar and railing, the latter no longer existing. The transfer of the remains didn’t occur in the manner the viceroy Antonio López de Ayala Velasco, count of Fuensalida, had hoped for. Instead of a solemn public ceremony, the bishop Antonio Díez de Aux ordered that the move take place at night and privately. It was only on the following All Souls’ Day that a catafalque was raised in front of the tomb, lined with black cloth, adorned with the arms of Aragon, the crown and the sceptre in silver and lit up by 24 torches, just as had been done for centuries in celebrations honouring the dead sovereign²⁵.

The monument which was built in a style common in late seventeenth century funereal architecture (fig.1) is truly imposing: made of polychromatic marble and geometric inlay, the composition is divided into different levels, all richly decorated with white marble statues: four warriors in armour and shields (each of which was probably intended to symbolize one of the kingdoms of the crown of Aragon: the finishing touches were never completed), weeping cupids, angels bearing escutcheons, heads of cherubim and caryatids. The sarcophagus rises up in the centre of the space over which opens a dark niche containing the statue of Martin the

²² J. Zurita, *Anales de la Corona de Aragón*, Zaragoza, Institucion Fernando el Católico - CSIC, 1978, t. X, p. 918: «fue sepultado en aquella ciudad entre una gran multitud de banderas y sepulturas de los ricos hobres y caballeros que murieron en las guerras pasadas por la conquista y defensa de aquel reino»; D. Scano, *Morte e sepoltura di Don Martino d’Aragona Re di Sicilia*, in «Mediterranea», III, 1929, pp. 3-19; A. Boscolo, *La politica italiana di Martino il Vecchio re d’Aragona*, Padova, Cedam, 1962, pp. 125-160.

²³ Several Sardinian scholars like Giovanni Spano disagree (*Guida della città e dintorni di Cagliari*, Cagliari, Timon, 1861, p. 46) and believe that Martin’s body was moved to the royal mausoleum in Poblet.

²⁴ L. Siddi, *Le sedi istituzionali nel Regno di Sardegna all’indomani del compromesso di Caspe: la riscoperta di tre importanti testimonianze*, in *El compromiso de Caspe (1412), cambio dinásticos y constitucionalismo en la Corona de Aragón*, edited by M.I. Falcón Pérez, Zaragoza, Ibercaja-Diputación General de Aragón, 2013, 2 voll., II vol., pp. 796-804.

²⁵ G. Cavallo, *La cattedrale di Cagliari*, Rotary Club Cagliari Est, Monastir, 2005, pp. 52-56 and pp. 117-118.

Younger who is portrayed in seventeenth century garb, with a gorget, a short cape and in his train two statues of Faith and Justice in two distinct niches. Looming over the whole composition is the triumphant figure of Death wearing costly fabrics and wielding a scythe.

Certainly the richly adorned sepulchre corresponds to late baroque taste; however, there is more behind the sumptuous trimmings than just conformity to the dominant artistic style. The enormous resources lavished on the magnificent tomb corresponded to the important political investment it was intended to represent. On the one hand, the tomb met the need for propaganda to deal with internal conditions on the island. At the end of the 1660s centuries old factional rivalries had ended up involving even the viceroy Manuel de los Cobos, marquis of Camarasa who was assassinated under the windows of the viceregal palace²⁶. The court of Madrid interpreted this event with all its after effects as an act of rebellion to be put down by sending out a new viceroy and holding a trial for the guilty parties. The raising a monument to the memory of Martin the Younger, one of the leading figures in the conquest of Sardinia and one of the generals who had led the family heads that had later established themselves on the island and were now a visible part of its ruling elite, was thus intended to recall the Sardinians back to their obedience to the Crown. Thus, the wound inflicted by the murder of the viceroy would be healed and the kingdom invited to respect the pact made centuries earlier at the time of the Aragonese conquest²⁷.

But it may also be possible to interpret the construction of the magnificent tomb during the troubled 1660s as both an invitation and, at the same time, as a warning to remain loyal to the Monarchy. In 1674 a rebellion broke out in Messina in which the role played by France gave the conflict an international character. The French presence in Messina threatened not only Sicily but also, and especially, the kingdom of Naples. Given this state of affairs, it was inadmissible that in Sardinia, where an uprising had only recently been put down and which lay at the strategic heart of the Mediterranean, the fire of rebellion should be allowed to reignite²⁸. The creation of a funeral monument to one of the conquerors, who had brought with him, as members of his army, many of the heads of the leading Sardinian families, was intended to be a reminder of the centuries' old bond and common roots between the Monarch and the

²⁶ F. Manconi, *Don Agustín de Castelvì, "padre della patria" sarda o nobile-bandolero?*, in *Banditismi mediterranei. Secoli XVI-XVII*, edited by F. Manconi, Rome, Carocci, 2003, pp. 107-146; Id., *Reivindicaciones estamentales, crisis política y ruptura pactista en los Parlamentos sardos de los virreyes Lemos y Camarasa, in Corts i Parlaments de la Corona d'Aragó. Unes institucions emblemàtiques en una monarquia composta*, edited by R. Ferrero Micó and L. Guia Marín, Valencia, Universidad de Valencia, 2008, pp. 493-500; J. Revilla Canora, *El asesinato del virrey Marqués de Camarasa y el pregón general de Duque de San Germán (1668-1669)*, in *De la tierra al cielo. Líneas recientes de investigación en historia moderna*, edited by E. Serrano, Madrid, Institución Fernando el Católico, 2013, pp. 575-584; Id., *'Tan gran maldad no ha de hallar clemencia ni en mi piedad'. El asesinato del marqués de Camarasa, virrey de Cerdeña (1668)*, in *«Revista Digital Escuela de Historia»*, 12, 2013; Id., *Del púlpito al destierro: las élites religiosas sardas en torno al asesinato del virrey Camarasa*, in *«Tiempos modernos»*, 36, 2018, pp. 169-190.

²⁷ S. Caredda, *Propaganda y mitificación del príncipe: el mausoleo de Martín el Joven de Aragón*, in *Las artes y la arquitectura del poder*, edited by V. Mínguez Cornelles, Castelló de la Plana, Universitat Jaume I- Servei de Comunicació Publicacions, 2013, pp. 2211-2224.

²⁸ L. Ribot, *La Monarquía de España y la guerra de Mesina (1674-1678)*, Madrid, Actas Editorial, 2002; F. Benigno, *Lotta politica e sbocco rivoluzionario: riflessioni sul caso di Messina (1674-78)*, in *«Storica»*, 13, 1999, pp. 7-56; S. Barbagallo, *La guerra di Messina 1674-1678. "Chi protegge li ribelli d'altri principi, invita i propri a' ribellarsi"*, Naples, Guida, 2017.

island's elites. Evoking ties that recalled common origins was an argument that had already been expressed in the early seventeenth century, when economic difficulties related to participation in the Thirty Years War had begun to be felt and had led the Crown to request an extraordinary donative²⁹. From that moment on, the feeling among Sardinia's leading noble families that they shared with the Monarchy the same ancient Catalan, Aragonese and Valencian roots became an integral and substantial ingredient in the rhetoric deployed by the sovereigns of the house of Hapsburg: a physical representation of which was the monumental tomb of Martin the Younger raised at a difficult time when the Crown needed to be sure it could count on all its forces.

Royal Monasteries between Oristano and Cagliari

Efísio Soto Real in his *Epítome de Cerdeña y Caller su corte* goes to some length in describing the dense network of monasteries that characterize Cagliari. All the major religious orders had a house in the city: the Scolopians, the Dominicans, whose house was founded in Saint Dominic's own lifetime; the Friars Minor Conventual; the Friars Minor Observant, also endowed with a novitiate house; the Friars of Saint Peter of Alcantara; the Capuchins who had two houses; the Augustinians who had a convent outside the town and in which, according to popular legend, Saint Augustine had once lived; the calced Carmelites endowed with their novitiate house, the calced Mercedarians³⁰; the calced Trinitarians with their novitiate; the Minims of Saint Francis of Paola; the Benedictines. Soto Real makes no mention, however, of women's convents in the city.

Some women's monasteries in Cagliari could boast of their noble origins. The Clarissan convent of Saint Margherita di Stampace dated its foundation to the period before the Aragonese victory over the Pisans. Nevertheless, in spite of the subsidies it obtained from the Crown, in spite of the close relationship between the Clarissans and Queen Eleonora (1325-1375), wife of Peter IV the Ceremonious of Aragon (1319-1387), and whose personal court included two Clarissans, the order never enjoyed official royal recognition³¹. Similarly, while the convent of Santa Lucia in Castello, founded in 1539 by the viceroy Anton Folch de Cardona (c. 1483-c. 1555) and his wife Maria de Requesens (1488-?), included among its members ladies from the aristocracy and urban elite, it never received any formal recognition apart from the occasional alms thrown its way by the Crown³². On the other hand, the title of royal site

²⁹ Archivio di Stato di Cagliari, *Antico Archivio Regio, Parlamenti*, reg. 168, ff. 28-38v, *Proposición a los tres estamentos de Sardeña por don Lluís Blasco del Consejo del Rey nuestro Señor en el Supremo de Aragón, embiado por su Magestad al negocio que contiene* [Cagliari, 1626]; *Il Parlamento straordinario del viceré Gerolamo Pimentel marchese di Bayona (1626)*, edited by G. Tore, in *Acta Curiarum Regni Sardiniae*, 24 voll., vol. XVI, Cagliari, Consiglio Regionale della Sardegna, 1998.

³⁰ *Ibidem*: cfr. *infra*.

³¹ M.G. Meloni, S. Sitzia, A. Pala and M. Schirru, *I monasteri delle clarisse a Cagliari e a Oristano (secoli XVI-XVII). Fondazione, ruolo sociale, patrimonio artistico*, in *Clarisas y dominicas. Modelos de implantación, filiación, promoción y devoción en la Península Ibérica, Cerdeña, Nápoles y Sicilia*, edited by G.T. Colesanti, B. Garí and N. Jornet-Benito, Florence, Firenze University Presse, 2017, pp. 95-126; on the sovereigns of Aragon's preference for mendicant orders see M.G. Meloni, *Ordini religiosi e politica regia nella Sardegna catalano-aragonese della prima metà del XIV secolo*, in «Anuario de estudios medievales», 24, 1994, pp. 831-855.

³² M.G. Meloni, *La fondazione del monastero di Santa Lucia a Cagliari tra dinamiche socio-politiche e religiose (prima metà del XVI secolo)*, in *Il monachesimo femminile nel Mezzogiorno peninsulare e insulare*

was bestowed on the Clarissan monastery of Oristano, heir to an earlier Franciscan community dating back to the mid-thirteenth century. A fervent devotee, the king of Arborea Pietro II de Bas Serra (?-1241) refounded the maonastery in 1343 and gave it its first endowment, and it was here, after his death that his widow Costanza di Saluzzo (1314-1348) took refuge³³. In 1368 Pietro II's brother Mariano VI d' Arborea, after a reign of twenty years granted a perpetual legacy to the convent of 260 lire a year on the condition that the sisters pray for the royal family who retained the right to visit at certain times of the year and that thirteen noviates should be taken in, perpetually endowed and to be chosen by the sovereign and his descendents. The Crown, under the terms of this patronage, would appoint priests to follow the convent's life and would orient its liturgical celebrations, issuing instructions in this regard: this attention that had begun with the sovereigns of the Judicate and had continued with the Aragonese finally reached Charles V who conferred the royal title on the convent.

In Cagliari only two male convents could boast of royal patronage. The first was the Dominican convent named after Saint Dominic and founded in 1254 by the friar Niccolò Fortiguerra da Siena. Like the Sardinian Franciscan convents present in the city, in 1329 the convent of San Domenico was detached from the Tuscan province and united with that of Aragon and Catalonia: a formal transition that meant severing ties with the Pisan convents and replacing the Tuscan friars with brothers whose origins were in the peninsular kingdoms of the Crown of Aragon. In 1418 the convent managed to obtain royal patronage conferred by Alfonso the Magnanimous who also donated a sizeable piece of land so that the friars could enlarge their building. Royal protection was confirmed in 1533 when Charles V had the imperial arms put up on the front of the portico, and then again in 1598 when Philip II donated the sum of 1500 gold ducats which were spent to complete the cloister³⁴.

The second convent that enjoyed royal patronage was the house of the Mercedarians at the church of the Madonna della Bonaria. The church building had been constructed between 1324 and 1325 in order to provide a parish for the camp that had sprung up on the hill. It was dubbed Bonayre because of its healthy air and it was from here that the *infante* Alfonso d'Aragon besieged Cagliari, a centre of the Pisans' territorial power. At the time of its founding the *infante* Alfonso, in the name of his father James II the Just (1267-1327) endowed it with lands and a sizeable revenue, while also providing for a priest to be appointed who would serve Mass, a certain Guglielmo Jordá. After Cagliari was taken in 1326, the church of Bonaria, which was far from the city centre, was abandoned, though it continued to enjoy the right to receive the

(XI-XVI secolo). *Fondazioni, ordini, reti, committenza*, edited by G. Colesanti, M.G. Meloni, S. Paone and P. Sardina, Cagliari, CNR-Istituto di Storia dell'Europa Mediterranea, 2018, pp. 51-89. On the viceroy and his wife, accused of witchcraft and later absolved by the court of the Inquisition, see G. Tore, *Dare udienza ai sudditi, controllare i viceré. La visita generale di Pietro Vaguer nella Sardegna di Carlo V (1542-1546)*, in *Identità e frontiere. Politica, economia e società nel Mediterraneo (secc. XIV-XVIII)*, edited by L.J. Guía Marin, M.G.R. Mele and G. Tore, Milan, 2005, pp. 243-292

³³ L. Demontis, *Costanza di Saluzzo regina-giudicessa d' Arborea e fondatrice del monastero di Santa Chiara di Oristano (1343)*, in «Antonianum», 93, 2018, pp. 31-64.

³⁴ F.M. Giammusso, *Il convento di San Domenico a Cagliari. Note e documenti*, in «Infolio», 29, 2012, pp. 39-43.

revenue it had been granted. On October 17, 1335 king Alfonso IV the Kind (1229-1336) donated the church to the Mercedarians with the intention of settling a religious order on the island that was particularly close to the Crown. His early death prevented the donation from taking immediate effect; it was, however, brought to fruition by king Peter IV who ordered that after Guglielmo Jordá died, a group of friars should settle there. Strong opposition by the archbishop of Cagliari to the church being donated to the Mercedarian Order led to renewed confirmation by the sovereign in 1339; but it wasn't until 1397 that the Mercedarians began to occupy the sacred building; continued friction with the archbishop of Cagliari resulted in a further act by sovereign, king Martin, who on September 26 1402 placed the prior and the convent under special royal protection. This did not put an end to the claims of the archbishops of Cagliari with regard to the church and its dependencies, also because, in spite of royal protection, the friars were having great trouble collecting the moneys due to them from the Crown since the prolonged war to conquer Sardinia was complicating administrative procedures in the kingdom. It was only in 1420, after the conflict had ended, that the question of the Mercedarian establishment could be raised again, thanks also in part to the Cagliaritan's devotion to a small wooden statue of the Madonna shown holding in her arm the Child and which was called the Madonna of the Miracle. The sanctuary outside the walls became a reference gathering place for a variously composed group of Catalan and Aragonese merchants, ship owners and craftsmen who had moved to Cagliari and who were prospering from maritime business³⁵. It is no coincidence that the oldest of the *ex voto* present in the church was tiny ivory ship that had been donated between the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth century by a pilgrim on his way to the Holy Land and which was endowed with miraculous properties: in spite of being located inside the church it always pointed with its bow in the direction of the winds blowing off the gulf of Cagliari. Many people from Cagliari and elsewhere came to the sanctuary to consult it before undertaking a sea journey and also to ask for the protection of the Virgin. The Madonna di Bonaria thus became one of the many Marian faces seafarers addressed their prayers to³⁶. Veneration of the statue of the Madonna, the work of a fourteenth century Catalan artist, and which was believed to be miraculous because it had bled after being stabbed by a soldier angry over a gambling loss³⁷, gave way in the late fifteenth century to a cult around a another image of the Madonna with Child, which according to legend had arrived miraculously from the sea inside a chest. Of high artistic value, probably from Naples, the statue of the Virgin wearing magnificent clothes in imitation of damask, may have been the work of an artist who had trained on the Iberian peninsula at the end of the fifteenth century and it may have been commissioned by the Mercedarians themselves, or possibly it

³⁵ M. Tangheroni, *Il "Regnum Sardiniae et Corsicae" nell'espansione mediterranea della Corona d'Aragona. Aspetti economici*, in *La Corona d'Aragona in Italia*, edited by M.G. Meloni and O. Schena, Sassari, Carlo Delfino, 1993-1997, 5 voll., vol. I, pp. 49-88; S. Tognetti, *Il ruolo della Sardegna nel commercio italiano del Mediterraneo del Quattrocento. Alcune considerazioni sulla base di fonti toscane*, in «Archivio storico italiano», CLXIII, 2005, pp. 87-131.

³⁶ R. Porrà, *Il culto della Madonna di Bonaria di Cagliari. Note storiche sull'origine sarda del toponimo argentino Buenos Aires*, Cagliari, Arkadia, 2011; M.G. Meloni, *I santuari del mare nel Mediterraneo catalano-aragonese e spagnolo (secoli XV-XVI)*, in *I santuari e il mare*, edited by I. Aulisa, Bari, Edipuglia, 2014, pp. 195-205.

³⁷ A. Franco Mata, *Influencia catalana en el arte sardo del siglo XIV*, in *La Corona d'Aragona in Italia*, cit., vol. V, pp. 233-248; A. Pala, *La statua della Madonna del Miracolo nel Santuario di Bonaria a Cagliari*, in «Theologica et Historica», XXII, 2013, pp. 363-386.

arrived in Sardinia as a result of a shipwreck³⁸. Whatever the case, a legend arose about the miraculous arrival which attests to the link between the sanctuary and the Mediterranean.

In the sixteenth century not only had the cult of the Madonna di Bonaria spread through a large part of the Mediterranean but thanks to royal protection, the sanctuary became the first place many travellers visited after arriving in the kingdom of Sardinia: bishops and viceroys stopped here before making their solemn entry into the city³⁹, and so did visitors sent out by the sovereign before they undertook their tour of inspections. Thus, during the Spanish age the sanctuary became one of the many signs of the ties binding Cagliari to the Crown: it was no coincidence that a Burin engraving done at the end of the sixteenth century on the order of the rector of the sanctuary Antioco Brondo (?-1619), the Virgin is prominent in the centre of the page and at her sides Saint Cecilia, titular of the cathedral of Cagliari and Eulalia, patroness of Barcelona. Standing out among the many figures framing the image and which almost in the manner of a comic strip tell the story of the Order of the Mercedarians are the portraits of two sovereigns: Alfonso the Kind who founded the church in 1325 and Peter the Ceremonious, generous donor of the church complex to the Mercedarians in perpetual memory to the predecessors of the house of Hapsburg⁴⁰.

A remote island, poor in resources when compared to many other States in the Monarchy, the Kingdom of Sardinia, thus, participated in the shared cultural and religious identity of the Habsburg crown: this explains why the heart of Cagliari was the site for places of royal power, of the catholic faith, of public celebrations, visible manifestations of the subjects' homage to the reigning dynasty.

³⁸ R. Serra, *Per il "maestro della Madonna di Bonaria"*, in «Studi sardi», XXI, 1968-1970, pp. 65-72; M.G. Scano Naitza, *Percorsi della scultura lignea in estofado de oro dal tardo Quattrocento alla fine del Seicento in Sardegna*, in *Estofado de oro. La statuaria lignea nella Sardegna spagnola*, Cagliari, Janus, 2001, pp. 21-55, pp. 23-25; Ead., *L'apporto campano nella statuaria lignea della Sardegna spagnola*, in *La scultura meridionale in età moderna nei suoi rapporti con la circolazione mediterranea*, edited by L. Gaeta, Galatina, Mario Congedo Editore, 2007, 2 voll. vol. II, pp. 123-171, pp. 123-125; M. Passeroni, *La Madonna di Bonaria: storia degli studi, aspetti stilistici, tecnici, iconografici*, in *I segni della devozione. Sant'Efisio e la Madonna di Bonaria: filologia e culto del restauro dei due simulacri più venerati della Sardegna*, edited by P. Olivo and M. Passeroni, Cagliari, Grafiche del Parteolla, 2010, pp. 23-38.

³⁹ F. Tola, *"Esta illustre y magnifica Ciutat de Caller": cerimonie di accoglienza dell'arcivescovo nella Cagliari del XVII secolo*, in *Capitali senza re nella Monarchia spagnola. Identità, relazioni, immagini (secc. XVI-XVII)*, cit.

⁴⁰ M.G. Meloni, *Il santuario della Madonna di Bonaria. Origine e diffusione di un culto*, Rome, Viella, 2011.