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# Mariana of Austria and Imperial Spain: Court, Dynastic, and International Politics in Seventeenth-Century Europe

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

MARIANA OF AUSTRIA AND IMPERIAL SPAIN: COURT, DYNASTIC, AND  
INTERNATIONAL POLITICS IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPE

By

Silvia Z. Mitchell

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty  
of the University of Miami  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Coral Gables, Florida

May 2013

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Mariana of Austria and Imperial Spain:  
Court, Dynastic and International Politics in  
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Philip IV's death on September 17, 1665 inaugurated the sole royal minority of Habsburg Spain, an event that provoked tremendous anxiety in Europe due to the extent of the Spanish Empire and the potential consequences of a contested succession had the child-king, Carlos II, died without an heir. This dissertation analyzes the historical influence of Queen Mariana of Austria (1634-1696), who ruled Spain at this difficult juncture and emphasizes the significance of the period for the overall history of Imperial Spain. It investigates the office of regent, a female political office *par excellence*, within the context of the Spanish Habsburg court and interprets her political intervention within the multiple Spanish traditions that sanctioned female authority. Besides analyzing the structures that gave Mariana authority, this study is equally concerned with policy matters and the significance of her actions in broader international contexts. This revisionist history of Carlos II's minority contributes to a recent scholarly body of work that has challenged the paradigm of Spanish decline. Based on state, court, and private papers, I contend that Mariana of Austria ushered in a period of innovation and change in the realms of foreign policy, the practice of kingship, and the political culture of the Spanish Habsburg court. All of these are essential to understanding the Spain of Carlos II and European international politics during the second half of the seventeenth century.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ADM	Archivo Ducal Medinaceli, Seville and Toledo
AGP	Archivo General del Palacio, Madrid
AGS	Archivo General, Simancas
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid
AHNNS	Archivo Histórico Nacional Nobility Section, Toledo
BNM	Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid
RAH	Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid
C.	Caja
E.	Estado
f.	folio
Hist.	Sección Histórica
Leg.	Legajo
Mss.	Manuscript
r.	recto (front folio page)
v.	verso (reverse folio page)

## INTRODUCTION

Before leaving Saint Germain, France, in the late summer of 1679 to meet her husband, the Spanish king Carlos II (1661, r. 1665-1700), Maria Louise of Orleans (1661-1689) received extensive political instructions. This document laid out strategies for winning the king's affection and trust, described court politics in her soon-to-be adopted home, and made specific recommendations for dealing with the queen mother, Mariana of Austria (1634-1696) whom, her advisors anticipated, could very easily overshadow the young princess and thus diminish her potential influence. "You should neither oppose her too much nor trust her too much," the writer cautioned, "for there are dangers with both extremes: if you oppose her, she has the power to make your life difficult and soon rumors against you will surely emerge from her palace; if you trust her too much, she could exercise on your person the hateful authority of her parental rights. But in either case, you should not neglect to be solicitous of her." "Nature," they reminded her, "made her grand."<sup>1</sup> The French royal family had already begun to pave the way for Maria Louisa's smooth insertion into the court of the Spanish Habsburgs. Louis XIV had instructed his ambassador, the Marquis of Villars, to pay respects to the queen mother, who was still living in the city of Toledo after a mandatory "retirement" had kept her away from Madrid for the previous two-and-a-half years. The Duke of Orleans, father of the bride and younger brother of the French king, assured Mariana personally that he had already instructed his daughter to "show Your Majesty the respect and affection that

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<sup>1</sup> "Con la reina M[adr]e conviene mantener una correspondencia independiente entre los dos extremos de quexa, y confianza, en uno, y otro ai peligro, pues quejosa podra dar comodidades en su Palacio alas Asambleas de v[uest]ras murmuraciones, y confiando se pasara facilmente a ejercitar en v[uest]ras acciones la odiosa autoridad de su parentesco, no os descuideis en atenderla mucho pues Naturaleza la hizo grande...." AHN E. leg. 4818, exp. 52. All translations are the author's unless otherwise noted.

she should have to a Mother and to a Queen like you, in whom such great circumstances come together.”<sup>2</sup>

The attention that the French family paid to the queen mother reveals considerably more than just the customary respect according any royal matriarch. Mariana of Austria had deeply shaped the Spain that Marie Louise was about to encounter, having been the dominant political figure while ruling during her son’s decade-long minority and exercising influence during her exile as well. Her regency brought substantial transformations to the court of the Spanish Habsburgs, while her foreign policy had European and even global ramifications. Under her leadership, the Spanish monarchy formed major military and diplomatic alliances with the English and the Dutch that contributed to a realignment of military and diplomatic blocks in Europe. As regent for Carlos II, Mariana recognized the independence of Portugal in 1668. In her name, Spain undertook the colonization of a group of islands in the Pacific, the Marianas, which remained part of the Spanish Empire until 1898. Mariana assumed the reins of a monarchy facing serious problems; yet, her intervention proved crucial for the conservation of the Empire during the later seventeenth century. Her active intervention in these crucial political and diplomatic issues also reveals that Spain continued to be a central player in the European stage.

This study focuses on the political trajectory and legacy of Mariana of Austria during the period in which she ruled as regent for Carlos II and the two and a half years of her exile. The period that began with Carlos II’s accession to the throne on September

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<sup>2</sup> “...y puedo asegurar a V[uestra] M[agestad] que he encargado a mi hija sobre todo que tenga a V[uestra] M[agestad] el respeto y cariño que deve tener a Una Madre, y a Una Reina, en quien concurren tan grandes circunstancias como en V[uestra] M[agestad]” The Duke of Orleans to Mariana, 4 August 1679. AHN E leg. 2729.

17, 1665 and culminated with the king's marriage in late 1679 forms a distinct stage in the history of early modern Spain. During these years, Mariana essentially redefined Spain's position in Europe, shaped the politics of the court, and indelibly marked both. Mariana's rule during Carlos II's minority deepens our knowledge of this traditional and, yet often controversial, form of female rule.<sup>3</sup> A close study of the sole royal minority of Habsburg Spain offers a unique opportunity to shed light on two essential components of monarchy in the early modern world: the king and the court. Both experienced deep transformations as they first adapted to the rule of a child-king and then as that child-king made his transition to personal and political adulthood. Finally, the size and scope of the Spanish Empire inevitably meant that the politics in Madrid bore broader European and even global implications. My dissertation brings all these issues together and thus articulates a revisionist history of Spain in the later seventeenth century, offers new perspectives on Spanish rulership with implications not just for women but for men as well, and broadens the analytic framework of the regency's court politics by situating them within geopolitical and international perspectives.

### **Towards a Revisionist History of Late Seventeenth-Century Spain**

Important studies by John H. Elliott, Antonio Feros, Magdalena S. Sánchez, Paul C. Allen, and others have laid the basis for a revisionist history of seventeenth-century Spain.<sup>4</sup> Research on the Spain of Carlos II in the later part of the century, however, has

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<sup>3</sup> For recent and groundbreaking studies on female regency, see Katherine Crawford, *Perilous Performances: Gender and Regency in Early Modern France* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2004); Fanny Cosandey, *La Reine de France. Symbole et pouvoir, XVe-XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000); and Theresa Earenfight, *The King's Other Body: Maria of Castile and the Crown of Aragon* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> For example, John H. Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares: The Statesman in an Age of Decline* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); Antonio Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism in the Spain of Philip III of Spain, 1598-1621* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Magdalena S. Sánchez, *The Empress,*

trailed far behind. The main reason for this lack of interest has been the association of the king and the period with the “decline of Spain,” a theme that has dominated the historiography. Although the nature, extent, and even the existence of decline remains the subject of debate, most scholars would agree that the literature on the topic has been shaped by historical- and national-specific concerns and thus is best understood within the context of when, where, and by whom that history was produced.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps most importantly, the notion of decline and the succession crisis that could have plunged Europe into war have conditioned the way scholars have written the history of the Spain of Carlos II. Highly effective eighteenth-century Bourbon historiography has also done its part by presenting the Bourbon dynasty as the best alternative to the Habsburgs.<sup>6</sup> Finally, the virtually complete identification of the figure of the king with the decline of Spain has deeply colored the way the period has been understood.<sup>7</sup>

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*the Queen and the Nun: Women and Power at the Court of Philip III of Spain* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); R. A. Stradling, *Philip IV and the Government of Spain, 1621-1665* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Paul Allen, *Philip III and the Pax Hispanica, 1598-1621: The Failure of the Grand Strategy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Although the literature on Spanish decline is enormous, a series of articles published in *Past and Present* and other journals during the 1970s and 1980s debating the topic deserve special mention. John H. Elliott “Self-Perception and Decline in Early Seventeenth-Century Spain,” *Past and Present* 74 (1977): 46-61. (This article followed his “Decline of Spain,” *Past and Present* 20 (1961): 52-72); Henry Kamen, “The Decline of Spain: A Historical Myth?” *Past and Present* 81 (1978): 24-50; and Jonathan Israel’s response, *Past and Present* 91 (1981): 170-180. Also see J. N. Hillgarth, “Spanish Historiography and Iberian Reality,” *History and Theory* 24/1 (1985): 23-43. For a lucid overview of the debates on the historiography of decline in the United States by Anglo-Saxon historians, see Richard Kagan, “Prescott’s Paradigm: American Historical Scholarship and the Decline of Spain” *The American Historical Review* 101/2 (April 1996): 423-446. For the context of the historiography of decline as it developed in Spain, see John H. Elliott, *History in the Making* (New Haven and London: Yale University, 2012), particularly chapter 4: “Perceptions of Decline,” pp. 114-135.

<sup>6</sup> For this last point, see Luis Ribot, *Orígenes políticos del testamento de Carlos II. La gestación del cambio dinástico en España. Discurso leído el día 17 de octubre de 2010* (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2010), p. 17-23.

<sup>7</sup> The vocabulary used to describe Carlos has contributed to creating a sense of finality about his entire reign: “wretched,” “a dying pathological entity,” “enfeebled,” “deformed,” “retarded,” are some of the adjectives used to describe the king. See, for an example, the review of Landon-Davies’s book in *Hipania*, vol. 47/2 (May 1964): 427-428, Lynch, *Spain under the Habsburgs. Volume Two: Spain and America*,

Nonetheless, not everyone has been willing to accept this picture of decay and decline in its entirety. Henry Kamen was one of the earliest scholars to challenge the belief that the Spain of Carlos II presented a period of complete stagnation.<sup>8</sup> Luis Ribot's foundational essay in a volume commemorating the three-hundredth anniversary of the death of Carlos II in 2000 marked a historiographic turning point.<sup>9</sup> Six years later, Ribot published the first monographic study of Habsburg Spain that gave the reign of Carlos II serious consideration, devoting two full chapters (about a third of the book) to it.<sup>10</sup> Influenced by these works, more recent studies have focused on how Spain survived rather than merely chronicling an inevitable decline. The decade of 1680s appears now to be a time of economic and demographic recovery, particularly evident in non-Castilian territories.<sup>11</sup> Christopher Storrs, for example, has recently called attention to the resilience of the Spanish Empire.<sup>12</sup> He convincingly argues that Spain survived virtually intact and even expanded slightly during the last decades of Habsburg rule and he attributes this positive development to the substantial military, commercial, and even financial resources that Carlos II and his ministers were able to deploy. In turn, these findings cast

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1598-1700, Second Edition (New York: New York University Press, 1981), p. 249; and John H. Elliott in his classic *Imperial Spain, 1469-1716* (London: Penguin Books, 2002), p. 361, to name just a few. Sensationalist descriptions of Carlos as a physically deformed king, intellectually incapable, and sexually impotent have provided an ideal historical metaphor to portray the decline of a once-powerful empire, but do nothing to help us understand the period, instead they add to the misunderstandings.

<sup>8</sup> Henry Kamen, *Spain in the Later Seventeenth-Century, 1665-1700* (London and New York: Longman, 1980).

<sup>9</sup> Luis Ribot, "Carlos II: El centenario olvidado," *Studia histórica. Historia moderna* 20 (1999): 19-44.

<sup>10</sup> Luis Ribot, *El arte de gobernar: Estudios sobre la España de los Austrias* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2006).

<sup>11</sup> Bartolomé Yun Casalilla, "Del centro a la periferia: la economía española en al época de Carlos II," *Studia histórica. Historia moderna* 20 (1999): 45-76, p. 51.

<sup>12</sup> Christopher Storrs, *The Resilience of the Spanish Monarchy, 1665-1700* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2006).

new light on the history of the early Bourbons because it has become clear that the seeds of their eighteenth-century reforms had been planted during the reign of the last Habsburg.<sup>13</sup> The figure of the king, too, is undergoing revision. A collection of essays published in 2009, and dedicated to Carlos II and his court, has done much to overturn the previous representations of the king that were usually little more than caricatures.<sup>14</sup>

All these new studies provide a good framework in which to situate a reconsideration of Carlos II's minority and the important historical developments of the period. Mariana's rule laid the groundwork for later transformations in how the court operated, transformations which included a recasting of roles for the government councils, a reordering of the relationship between crown and aristocracy, and the possibility of a greater political role for women. The regency, for example, provides the key to understanding the central role of the aristocracy in the decision-making process in the later part of Carlos II's reign.<sup>15</sup> The regime that emerged in 1680 took shape during Mariana's exile and as a direct result of it. Furthermore, Mariana's regency set the foundation for many of the reforms that were consolidated in the 1680s, including but definitely not limited to those of the royal households. In foreign policy, too, Mariana innovated. Under her leadership, Spain obtained several major diplomatic

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<sup>13</sup> Antonio Ramón Peña Izquierdo, *De Austrias a Borbones: España entre los siglos XVII y XVIII* (Leon: Editorial Akrón, 2008); Carmen Sanz Ayans, *Los Banqueros de Carlos II* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1989); and Javier Santiago Fernández, *Política monetaria en Castilla durante el siglo XVII* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 2000).

<sup>14</sup> Luis Ribot, ed. *Carlos II: El rey y su entorno cortesano* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, 2009); and ídem, *Orígenes políticos del testamento de Carlos II*. Scholars have begun to appreciate Carlos II's interest in art, music, and science. See, for example, Bonaventura Bassegoda, "La decoración pictórica de El Escorial en el reinado de Carlos II," in *Arte and Diplomacia de la monarquía hispánica en el siglo XVII*, José Luis Colomer, ed. (Madrid: Fernando Villaverde Ediciones, 2003): 35-59.

<sup>15</sup> Several scholars have noted the increased power of the aristocracy during the last decades of Carlos II's reign. See, Ribot, *El arte de gobernar*; and Adolfo Carrasco Martínez, "Los grandes, el poder y la cultura política de la nobleza en el reinado de Carlos II," *Studia histórica. Historia moderna* 20 (1999): 77-136.



accomplishments that became a good foundation for the kind of resilience that characterized the Spanish monarchy until the end of Habsburg rule. Finally, Mariana's regency and her exile are critical to an understanding of the nature of Spanish kingship and the Habsburg court.

### **Mariana of Austria and the Problem of Regency**

There is little doubt that female rule during royal minorities in the medieval and early modern periods has been accompanied by great disorder and violence, leading scholars to refer to this type of rule as the "problem" of regency. Mariana's regency, too, experienced its share of conflicts and disorders, including her own exile and the threat of civil war in at least two occasions. These Problems have certainly contributed to fashion a distorted image of Mariana as a ruler and reaffirm the notion of Spain's decline in these years. Until relatively recently, the historiography on Mariana often unwittingly echoed the nineteenth-century paradigm that viewed women as naturally incapable of ruling.<sup>16</sup> Historians writing in the 1980s, for example, still assumed that Mariana had no real power and surrendered what little she had to her favorites, much in that earlier tradition.<sup>17</sup> Even those writing as revisionists, such as Henry Kamen, repeated these same stereotypes.<sup>18</sup> Research on Mariana herself is still relatively undeveloped, but a new generation of scholars is slowly undermining older interpretations that have largely

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<sup>16</sup> In the early twentieth century, the Spanish historian and political figure, Gabriel Maura (1879-1963), produced a study of Carlos II's minority that was based on exhaustive historical research and that has influenced subsequent scholarship on the period and the principal figures, including Mariana of Austria. Gabriel Maura, *Carlos II y su corte. Ensayo de Reconstrucción biográfica*. 2 vols. (Madrid: Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos, 1911 and 1915).

<sup>17</sup> Francisco Tomás y Valiente, *Los validos en la monarquía española del siglo XVII: Estudio institucional* (Mexico: Siglo Veintiuno, 1982), p. 19; Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, "Introducción," in *Testamento de Felipe IV. Edición facsímil* (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1982), I-LIV, p. XXXIII; and John Lynch, *Spain under the Habsburgs*, p. 258.

<sup>18</sup> Kamen, *Spain in the Later Seventeenth-Century*, p. 329.

denied Mariana any role as a central political figure.<sup>19</sup> Recent groundbreaking studies by Laura Oliván and Mercedes Llorente, for example, have challenged the myth of Mariana's disempowerment by focusing on previously unexplored aspects of her political life. Oliván made significant archival discoveries that document the existence of Mariana's extensive diplomatic networks and evidence of her political engagement.<sup>20</sup> By carefully studying the regency portraits, Llorente has convincingly demonstrated how Mariana effectively deployed images of power and authority.<sup>21</sup> My dissertation provides a revisionist view of Mariana, not only by identifying her role in preserving the Spanish monarchy in a period of transition and turmoil, but also by analyzing how she exercised a quintessential, yet often controversial, form of female rule—that of regent.

Scholarship in several related fields forms an excellent foundation on which to base a new interpretation of Mariana's rule as regent. The growing field of queenship studies has taught scholars to attend to the nuances inherent in different forms of female rule. While the term "king" almost invariably refers to a male who exercised sovereign power, the term queen had several juridical meanings. A proprietary or regnant queen, for instance, was a woman who had inherited sovereignty through her own succession rights.

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<sup>19</sup> Maria Victoria López Cordon, "Mujer, poder y apariencia o las vicisitudes de una regencia," *Studia histórica. Historia moderna* 19 (1998): 49-66; idem, "Las mujeres en la vida de Carlos II," in *Carlos II: El rey y su entorno cortesano*, Luis Ribot, ed. (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, 2009), 108-139. JoEllen M. Campbell, "Women and Factionalism in the Court of Charles II of Spain," in *Spanish Women in the Golden Age*, Magdalena S. Sánchez and Alain Saint-Saenz, eds. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996), 109-124; Eleanor Goodman, "Conspicuous in Her Absence: Mariana of Austria, Juan José of Austria, and the Representation of Her Power," in *Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*, Theresa Earenfight, ed. (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 163-184. Laura Oliván Santaliestra and Mercedes Llorente have contributed important studies. See below.

<sup>20</sup> Laura Oliván Santaliestra, *Mariana de Austria: imagen, poder y diplomacia de una reina cortesana* (Madrid: Editorial Complutense, 2006); idem, "Mariana de Austria en la encrucijada política del siglo XVII," Ph.D. diss. (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2006).

<sup>21</sup> Mercedes Llorente, "Imagen y autoridad en una regencia: Los retratos de Mariana de Austria y los límites del poder," *Studia histórica. Historia moderna* 28 (2006): 211-238.

Such female rulers had stepped into an essentially masculine office—that of king. Women who ruled in their own right, therefore, had to find strategies to navigate an essentially masculine role and still meet the social and political requirements of their own gender identity.<sup>22</sup> Regency, on the other hand, necessitated an alternative approach, particularly if it took place during a minority.<sup>23</sup> A queen consort who became a regent continued to exercise what was essentially a feminine office, albeit one that required a different performance of power. Early modern political theorists believed that the love of a mother would make her more likely to protect the person of the child-king, a notion that gave queen mothers a strong claim to rule on their sons' behalf.<sup>24</sup> In monarchies that adhered to the principle of Salic Law women were considered even more attractive choices as regents precisely because they were excluded from the throne.<sup>25</sup> These two aspects of female regency—maternal love and political exclusion—benefitted both the ruler and the monarchy and gradually gendered the office essentially feminine.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Some of the most important studies on proprietary rulers have been on Isabel I of Castile and Elizabeth I of England. For gender analysis on these two monarchs, see for example, Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1994); and Barbara F. Weissberger, *Queen Isabel I of Castile: Power, Patronage, Persona* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Tamesis, 2008).

<sup>23</sup> Other cases in which women assumed regencies could be during a king's absence while in military activities, illness, or incapacity.

<sup>24</sup> Harriet L. Lightman, "Sons and mothers: Queens and Minor Kings in French Constitutional Law" Ph.D. diss., Bryn Mawr College, 1981. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/303105526?accountid=14585> (accessed December 8, 2012).

<sup>25</sup> Salic Law refers to the juridical principle that women were excluded from inheriting the throne. Although scholars now agree that Salic Law was an "invention" of early modern jurists, it was in use nevertheless in France. See Eliane Viennot, *La France, les femmes et le pouvoir: L'invention de la loi salique* (Ve- XVIe siècle) (Paris: Perrin, 2006) and Sarah Hanley, "The Family, the State, and the Law in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth- Century France: The Political Ideology of Male Right versus and Early Theory of Natural Rights" *The Journal of Modern History* 78 (June 2006): 289-332. Salic Law was introduced in Spain by Philip V (r. 1700-1746), a Bourbon by birth, although it was never fully accepted, and Isabel II inherited the throne in 1833.

<sup>26</sup> Crawford, *Gender and Regency in Early Modern France*, pp. 11-19.

This development is well documented for France, where the monarchy had multiple minorities in the early modern period. By contrast, the Habsburgs accepted female regency as they did many other political roles for women. Habsburg women could be regents, governors, and surrogate mothers, but also they could rule in their own right and pass on succession rights to the next generation, something that royal women in France could not do. These two distinct approaches to female regency shaped the different way women exercised it. Queen mothers in France, for example, were usually given tutorship rights (control over the king), but only gradually gained governorship rights; in most cases their political prerogatives were limited, at least in juridical terms. These conditions did not pertain to the Spanish Habsburgs, who considered women full members of the political enterprise. Mariana of Austria possessed, not surprisingly, full political prerogatives during her reign as regent. She exercised a unified regency—that is, held both tutorship and governorship rights, and had the full legal force of her husband's testament behind her.

Even if individual monarchies constituted regency differently, it is clear that the office became closely associated with queen mothers or other maternal figures (grandmothers and aunts, for example). Considering the obvious preference for queen mothers to exercise regency during a minority, why were factional struggles endemic during such rule? Threats of civil war, controversial favorites, usurpation of power by male relations, and periods of exile abound in the history of regencies.<sup>27</sup> Studies of

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<sup>27</sup> Examples of uncles that deposed the mothers and took power or attempted to include Ludovico Sforza for his nephew Gian Galeazzo Sforza taking power from the boy's mother, Bona of Savoy. See Gregory Lubkin, *A Renaissance court: Milan under Galeazzo Maria Sforza* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). Another example took place at the accession of Francois II (r. 1559-1660) to the throne at the age of fifteen, an event that opened the door to serious factional struggles between his uncles, the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine, and his mother, Catherine de Medici. The regency of Marie de Medicis

individual regencies make clear that the personalities involved may have played a role in these power struggles. This was certainly the case with Mariana, who attempted to extend her regency for an additional two years and who managed to stay in power longer than her husband's testament mandated. Nonetheless, we can also identify structural problems that perhaps made it impossible to change the "plot" of regency.

Ruling during a royal minority inevitably meant ruling during a time of crisis.<sup>28</sup> In order to understand why, we must understand the process of succession as a time of insecurity. Between the death of a king and the coronation and proclamation of the new ruler, monarchies even if to lesser or greater degrees, experienced an interregnum.<sup>29</sup> The "body politic" stabilized again once one elected the Pope or anointed the king.<sup>30</sup> Political theorists developed the notion of the king's two bodies to argue that although the king dies physically, the monarchy, or the political body of the king, never perishes.<sup>31</sup> Ernst Kantorowicz's theory of the king's two bodies helps us understand the implications of royal minority to the monarchy: although there was a king who embodied sovereignty, his age prevented him from exercising that sovereignty. Until the king came of age, his "two bodies" (the physical and the political) were, at the very least, temporarily out of

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during Louis XIII is another case in point of severe factional struggles and exile. Crawford, *Gender and Regency in Early Modern France*, chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>28</sup> For instance, the age of the minor king at the time of his accession, the presence of siblings, and also the gender of the siblings, all influenced the level of anxiety a minority provoked.

<sup>29</sup> Sergio Bertelli, *The King's Body: Sacred Rituals of Power in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, Burr Litcheffeld, trans. (University Park: University of Pennsylvania, 2001), chapter 3, particularly p. 61.

<sup>30</sup> Although Bertelli also points that rituals of coronation could be mired by violence, *The King's Body*, pp. 59-61.

<sup>31</sup> Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology, with Preface by William Chester Jordan* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1997).

joint.<sup>32</sup> Thus most regencies during royal minorities required two distinct authorities: a tutor to care for the physical body of the king and a single person or Regency Council to attend to the political body of the “king”: the monarchy. The fact that these two functions were explicitly divided reveals a great deal about the theoretical underpinnings of monarchy. Even if the same person assumed both roles, the two functions were still considered different aspects of a regency. During extended periods of interregnum—that is, minorities—queens naturally emerged as the ideal choice to rule. Their role was completely congruent with the main political function of a queen: to ensure the continuity of the body politic.

Thus, regency was a paradigmatic form of female rule; yet it was also by definition a time of insecurity. Although the traditional assumption has been that disorder during a minority resulted from resistance to female rule, it was the minority itself that principally contributed to the “problem” of regency. To complicate matters further, during the early modern period minority rule always had an international dimension. The great religious struggles and geopolitical competition among monarchies meant that often the women who ruled on behalf of their minor sons began their reigns facing foreign threats the minority itself had provoked.<sup>33</sup> The end of the minority was also a very difficult period because it required mothers and sons to redefine their roles. In France, the residual authority of the queen mother was re-enacted as part of the rituals of kingship

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<sup>32</sup> Kantorowicz theory of the king’s two bodies has come under close scrutiny of late, and scholars working on different monarchies have added great nuance to the notion of sovereignty. For a concise and lucid overview of the debates today, see Bernhard Jussen, “*The King’s Two Bodies Today*” *Representations* 106 (Spring 2009): 102-117.

<sup>33</sup> The way the Spanish Habsburg took advantage of all the minorities in Valois and Bourbon France provide some obvious examples. Louis XIV also took advantage of Carlos II’s minority to attack the monarchy.

that marked a king's emancipation, and then became an integral part of that king's rule.<sup>34</sup> The transition also depended on individuals and, in fact, personalities and individual political ambition cannot be left out of the equation either. Queen mothers who ruled as regents often had strong personalities and many of them were unable to surrender power gracefully. This could be (and frequently was) a source of conflict. Transitions from royal minority to royal emancipation were not uncommonly followed by exiles (of the queen-mother or other prominent political figures) and severe factional struggles.<sup>35</sup>

Mariana's regency during Carlos II's minority illustrates all these political situations. Although Mariana assumed her position with extensive prerogatives, her rule took place during a time of insecurity caused by the minority itself. Mariana's power derived from political traditions that sanctioned female authority in myriad of ways. Yet, once Carlos II came of age, her maternal power became a formidable political liability, making her transition out of the formal spheres of power fraught with problems. International historical forces had a concrete impact on the politics of the court as well. Mariana faced foreign threats as soon as she became regent. Finally, the personality and political ability of many people involved, including that of Mariana and Carlos, also shaped the nature of the factional struggles of the period. By taking into account how the office of regent operated in the Spanish Habsburg court, the extensive traditions of female authority in Spain and among the Habsburgs, the international situation in Europe,

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<sup>34</sup> See Fanny Cosandey for an insightful discussion of the *lit de justice* upon the king's majority, "Puissance maternelle et pouvoir politique. La régence des reines mères" *Clio. Histoire, femmes et sociétés* 21 (2005), <http://clio.revues.org/1447> (accessed Dec. 2, 2012). In Mariana's case, her residual power had been legalized with the office of curator, a loose form of guardianship that was supposed to take place after the tutorship ended when Carlos II turned fourteen.

<sup>35</sup> See footnote 33 above. Mariana of Austria's regency followed this pattern as well.

and the personalities of the political actors, my dissertation offers a radically new, and dramatically different, picture of Mariana of Austria and her regency.

### Sources

Critics of political history as practiced before the cultural turn of the 1980s argued that it ignored the political agency of women and all others except political elites (high ministers and aides). Thus, in response to such critiques scholars began to exploit other documentary sources in order to recover the involvement of multiple political actors. Historians of women, in particular, have been very effective in expanding the scope of archival research to investigate the ways in which women not only participated in, but actually forcefully shaped, the political process. An identification of informal networks of family and religious institutions, the politics of space, discursive practice, and the gendering of political offices have opened up significant new vistas on the complex way women actually acted in politics.

Magdalena S. Sánchez's study of the Habsburg women in the court of Philip III, for example, identified their influence by analyzing the court and the convent of the Descalzas Reales as gendered political spaces. Sánchez's study was particularly groundbreaking because she looked beyond traditional archival repositories, by, for example, investigating the royal household records. Theresa Earenfight's investigation of the office of queen lieutenantcy, a specific form of regency, demonstrated that queens formed an integral part of the "corporate" system of monarchy in the medieval crown of Aragon.<sup>36</sup> The conditions of Mariana's regency illustrate that queens remained as much part of that "corporate" system of monarchy during Habsburg rule as during the medieval

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<sup>36</sup> Theresa Earenfight, "Partners in Politics," in *Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*, Earenfight, ed. (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), xiii-xiv, p. xiv.



period: their power had been institutionalized in the queen's royal household. Mariana's tutorship rights placed the king under her jurisdiction. The fact that he lived in her royal household and was served by its members created an unprecedented situation in the court of the Spanish Habsburgs by effectively eliminating the king's royal household for an entire decade. Although the arrangement allowed Mariana to monopolize power by having absolute control over the person of the king, this new organization of the court nevertheless created problems. As Sánchez and others have already shown, the court was a gendered space: the king's and the queen's households, for example, created exclusively masculine and feminine spaces in which power negotiations took place.<sup>37</sup> The organization of the court during the regency propelled Mariana and her entire household to the top of the political hierarchy thus destabilizing the gender balance between women and men. The household records deposited in the Archivo del Palacio in Madrid reveal the institutional consequences of this shift and the broader political implications of Mariana's regency.

Women's history and gender analyses have allowed historians to question several master historical narratives. By focusing on women and gender, scholars working on Iberia, for example, have reformulated large historical processes and broader historical concepts, such as state building, the Reconquista, peasant society in the age of expansion, monarchy in the kingdom of Aragon, and the social history of aristocracy during the early modern period. As a group, these studies question the validity and universality of the thesis famously advanced by Joan Kelly— that female authority in Europe suffered serious

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<sup>37</sup> John H. Elliott, "Philip IV of Spain: Prisoner of Ceremony," in *The Courts of Europe: Politics, Patronage and Royalty, 1400-1800*, A. G. Dickens, ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), 169-189.

setbacks with the advent of the Renaissance.<sup>38</sup> Early modern Spanish women (from peasants to queens) do not appear to have exercised power or influence by subverting a patriarchal order.<sup>39</sup> Instead, they acted within deeply ingrained and well-established parameters that both accepted and relied on female authority.<sup>40</sup> The history of Mariana of Austria's regency recovers the significance of an important female ruler and by doing so fulfills one of the main goals of women's history: to document the contributions of women to history. But it also puts Mariana of Austria squarely at the center of the history of the Spanish Habsburg court, Spain, and Europe. By identifying and evaluating Mariana's policies, it too challenges the dominant historical narrative of the period and the figure of the queen—one that relates a process of inevitable decline and female political incompetence. Furthermore, it is not by merely inserting women into the traditional and masculinized narrative that a new perspective on the history of Spain and European diplomacy emerges. Rather, only by considering the wide array of women's role, as political agents, as subjects of dynastic strategy, and as partners in the enterprise of state does an accurate history of these times emerge.

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<sup>38</sup> Joan Kelly-Gadol, "Did Women had a Renaissance?" in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, and Susan Stuard, eds. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987), 175-201. This influential essay was published in the first edition of the collection in 1976.

<sup>39</sup> Some of these important studies include Heath Dillard, *Daughters of the Reconquest: Women in Castilian Town Society, 1100-1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1984); Allyson Poska, *Women and Authority in Early Modern Spain: The Peasants of Galicia* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2005); Earenfight, "Partners in Politics," and *idem*, *The King's Other Body*; Grace E. Coolidge, *Guardianship, Gender, and the Nobility in Early Modern Spain* (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010); Alexandra Parma Cook, "The Women of Early Modern Triana: Life, Death and Survival Strategies in Seville's Maritime District," in *Women in Port: Gendering Communities, Economies, and Social Networks in Atlantic Port Cities, 1500-1800*, Douglas Catterall and Jodi Campbell, eds. (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2012), 41-68.

<sup>40</sup> Helen Nader, "Introduction: The World of the Mendozas," in *Power and Gender in Renaissance Spain: Eight Women of the Mendoza Family, 1450-1650*, Helen Nader, ed. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois, 2004), 1-26, p. 3.

The nature of an early modern state, even one that already possessed a sophisticated bureaucracy, still required the approval and signature of the ruler to implement measures. Mariana's powerful hand is most evident in the abundant state and diplomatic papers. Thus, State Council deliberations, ambassadors' reports, and her correspondence, but also diaries and memoirs, mainly from the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid and Archivo General de Simancas in Valladolid, form some of the most important sources for this study. The Aytona papers in the Archivo Ducal of the Medinaceli family supplement the state papers and permit an examination of Mariana's most important political partnership: the one she established with Guillén Ramón de Moncada, the fourth Marquis of Aytona (1615-1670).

The role of institutions (such as the court and the councils of government), guardianship laws, and geopolitical considerations all are considered in analyzing the politics of the court. Weight is also given, however, to first-person accounts. Mariana's correspondence with Carlos, written during the time of her exile from 1677 to 1679 and housed in the Archivo Histórico Nacional, for example, uncovers the queen's personality and the young king's predicament as he dealt with his mother. The correspondence shows how they modified their personal relationship as mother and son *and* their political relationship as queen and king. The culture, political and otherwise, of seventeenth-century Spain also profoundly shaped events and personal decisions. Chronicles, gazettes, and texts that circulated at crucial times during the regency shed additional light on how micro-strategies of power developed in Mariana's court in Madrid and during her exile in Toledo. Most are found in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid, although many are

also held among the private papers of the nobility in the Archivo Histórico Nacional, Nobility Section in Toledo and the Fundación Medinaceli.

### **Organization of the Dissertation**

This dissertation has three analytical goals: (1) to document the structural, political, and cultural conditions Mariana encountered when she assumed the regency and the subsequent spatial and political organizational shifts that followed (Chapters 1 and 2); (2) to identify Mariana's role in steering Spanish policy, follow her evolution as a stateswoman, and evaluate the political system that developed under her rule (Chapters 3 and 4); and (3) to investigate the political crisis that resulted in her exile and the shift in political conditions that allowed her return to court (Chapters 5 and 6). In pursuing these goals, I argue, it is possible to shed a crucial revisionist light on the politics of the court and on the Spanish monarchy's standing in the European stage during the last decades of Habsburg rule.

Chapter One, "The Foundations of Mariana's Regency," contextualizes Mariana's political authority, identifies the extent and nature of her sovereignty, and establishes her juridical status as queen "tutor, governor, and curator." Her right to rule was an extension of the social and legal practices of early modern Spanish society where women influenced their families and the state in a variety of ways and, in line with Habsburg traditions, a dynasty in which women participated alongside the male members to advance the interests of the family. The chapter re-interprets Philip IV's testament based on these traditions. It suggests that Mariana's position as regent was overdetermined and that she assumed the office with extensive sovereign rights. Furthermore, it demonstrates that both Mariana and her subjects were well aware of her political rights.

The specific legal organization of the regency established in Philip IV's testament completely transformed the structure and the organization of the court during the royal minority. Chapter Two, "A Queen's Court: The Politics of the Royal Household," investigates the exercise and the consequences of Mariana's tutorship rights. For almost a decade, Carlos II lived in his mother's household and was served by her attendants, most of whom were women. For all practical purposes, therefore, the king's royal household was eliminated until Mariana re-established it in April 1675. The conditions of the regency, therefore, transformed the practice of kingship and altered the hierarchical and gendered structure of the court. While certain male members of her court refused to adapt to the new gender structure, others demonstrated greater political acumen and quickly adapted. The chapter reconstructs the way the court responded to having a child-king and a queen "tutor and governor."

Chapter Three, "Ruler and Stateswoman," elucidates how Mariana exercised the office of "governor." Mariana modeled her rule on traditions of rulership developed by her Habsburg predecessors, but she molded them to suit her personality and gender. She created a political persona reminiscent of the type of consultative style of kingship typical of the Spanish Habsburgs. Yet, Mariana introduced significant changes. Her preference for the State Council rather than the Regency Council as the arbiter of her foreign policy on the one hand, and, her refusal to name a favorite on the other, had a deep and long lasting impact. She gradually forged a system that differed from the one Philip IV utilized during his rule and diverged as well from the one he had intended for the regency. This restructuring developed during the first three years of her rule as Mariana faced a French attack (provoked by the minority itself) with the political, military, and diplomatic

legacies she had inherited from Philip IV. By 1668, her ruling style and her policies had redefined the court and Spain's position in Europe.

Chapter Four, "The Political System of Mariana of Austria," analyzes the queen's political partnerships. Based on current scholarship on favoritism as a European-wide phenomenon, it examines in depth the figures that generations of scholars have identified as controlling the court: her confessor, the Jesuit Everard Nithard, and her protégé, the upstart Fernando Valenzuela. A close investigation of their role in Mariana's regime suggests that they were far less significant than previous scholarship maintained. Don Juan of Austria's opposition to Mariana is set in light of the politics of the court and the international context. Even though don Juan succeeded in forcing Mariana to banish Nithard from the court, he did not enjoy the support from the elites, who continued to consider the queen as the legitimate and only person authorized to rule on behalf of her son. The chapter discusses as well the prominent role of the Marquis of Aytona in Mariana's regime and suggests that he was crucial in helping her consolidate her position. The timing, nature, and function of these political partnerships allow me to propose a new periodization for the regency and advance a new interpretation of its factional struggles as well.

Although the ruling elite accepted Mariana's rule as legitimate, she became a political liability after Carlos II reached legal emancipation on his fourteenth birthday on November 6, 1675. That very day, Mariana swiftly aborted a political coup against her regime: she successfully persuaded Carlos II to dismiss don Juan of Austria, Mariana's most determined political opponent, after the king had personally summoned him to the court to take power. Chapter Five, "The Perils of Maternal Power," focuses on the

political crisis that followed the episode and that eventually led to Mariana's exile a year later. Reaching the legal benchmark of majority, his fourteenth birthday, was not enough for Carlos II to achieve adulthood, which in turn was a precondition for assuming his role as king. The political discourse that emerged in a wide variety of texts produced at this crucial moment offers plausible evidence that the crisis of late 1676 was more than anything a crisis of kingship and one largely caused by Mariana's power as mother and Carlos' youthfulness.

Based on the correspondence between mother and son, Chapter Six, "Reconciliation, Vindication, and Triumph," analyzes the relationship between Mariana and Carlos from the personal and the political points of view. It also examines Carlos II's process of developing indisputable signs of masculine adulthood in terms that made sense to the Spanish ruling elite. It argues that Mariana's return to court and her political vindication happened because she ceased to be a threat to her son's ability to exercise the office of king. During her exile, Mariana also carved out a position from where to exercise her power and influence. Rather than acting as the source of power, she found a space to yield influence in her son's regime as royal matriarch by helping Carlos and his ministers solve the delicate issue of his marriage. All these processes contributed to Mariana's return, the final political marginalization of don Juan, and the shape of the regime that followed.

A close analysis of how Mariana maneuvered through the treacherous waters of court and European politics reveals her political influence. As soon as Philip IV died in 1665, Louis XIV took forceful steps to accomplish one of the main goals of his foreign

policy: the conquest of the Spanish Low Countries.<sup>41</sup> Breaking the agreement signed during the Peace of the Pyrenees (1659), he revived an obscure law that purportedly placed his Spanish-born queen consort, Maria Theresa of Austria, above her younger brother, Carlos II, in the line of succession to the Low Countries. Faced with a dangerous situation, Mariana quickly reversed the policies of her husband by rebuilding the military, reinforcing unprotected frontiers, agreeing to peace with Portugal (1668), and spearheading an aggressive diplomatic campaign that included military subsidies and alliances with major Protestant powers. The permanent split of the Spanish and Portuguese Empires marked the loss of European hegemony for Spain and Mariana had to withstand serious criticism for her role in that event. It also allowed her to reap great rewards in the realm of diplomacy.

In sum, Mariana indelibly marked the political culture of the Spanish Habsburg court. Although the elimination of the king's royal household, in many ways, contributed to the creation of political instability, it also gave Mariana and her ministers the freedom to implement a number of reforms in the royal households that had been unsuccessfully attempted earlier in the seventeenth century. She also left a deep imprint on the conciliar system of government that characterized Habsburg rule in Spain. Mariana's style of rule revived the conciliar system of the earlier Habsburgs and shaped the political culture of the court during the rest of her son's reign. Although Mariana navigated the office of queen "tutor and governor" relatively well, once Carlos II reached his majority problems arose. Mariana was now perceived as interfering with Carlos II's political autonomy as she in fact did. This and her inability to surrender power gracefully eventually led to her

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<sup>41</sup> Paul Sonnino, *Louis XIV and the Origins of the Dutch War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).



exile. The mending of Carlos II and Mariana's broken relationship during her exile, however, had profound political implications and proved no less important than her formal authority as regent in the history of Spain and European diplomacy. Carlos II defined his identity as an adult male to a large extent by asserting political and personal independence from his mother. This in turn transformed the practice and perception of kingship: it contributed to bringing stability to the court after the long period of Carlos II's minority.

Carlos II's marriage to Maria Louise had several layers of meaning; it marked a shift in Spanish foreign policy and was one of the most important steps in the king's achievement of adulthood. Carlos II had to withdraw from his engagement to the oldest daughter of Emperor Leopold I, Archduchess Maria Antonia of Austria (1669-1692), in order to conclude the marriage with the French princess. The change in Spanish policy was sufficiently abrupt that an observer commented that even though the Catholic king was "far engaged" with the Imperial princess, "it hindered not that Prince from converting all his thoughts towards France."<sup>42</sup> Mariana, as royal matriarch, became a key figure in the diplomatic negotiations surrounding Carlos II's marriage. Her timely and effective intercession with her Austrian Habsburg relatives allowed Carlos and his ministers to extricate themselves from a delicate diplomatic quandary and do so quite gracefully. By taking the lead in resolving this issue that involved Spain, the Holy Roman Empire, and France, she carved out a new political role for herself and significantly reshaped European diplomatic relations.

The Marquis of Balbasses arrived in Madrid in the summer of 1679 bearing the news that France had accepted Carlos II's proposal for Maria Louisa's hand in marriage.

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<sup>42</sup> Anon., *The History of the Treaty at Nimueguen* (London, 1681), 284-285.

The marriage marked the end to a dangerous and deeply troubled period in Franco-Spanish relations. Mariana of Austria and Louis XIV had been the main contenders during this stage, opposing each other over issues that essentially revolved around Carlos II's inheritance. Thus, in facilitating her son's marriage to the French princess, Mariana helped Spain to establish what appeared at the moment to be a lasting peace with their traditional rivals.<sup>43</sup> All of these considerations explain why French diplomats had so carefully instructed Maria Louise about the queen mother. The marriage initiated a new phase for Carlos II and his monarchy as well. By the end of 1679 and the beginning of 1680, a new regime had emerged: the Duke of Medinaceli rose to the office of Prime Minister and Maria Louise assumed the traditional role given queen consorts. Mariana took a place in the overall political map of the new court as well. Preceding the arrival of her daughter-in-law only by a few months, Mariana entered Madrid on September 27 triumphantly and "received by the hearts of everyone," a gazette reported.<sup>44</sup> The following pages document the complexity of Mariana of Austria's rule over the Spanish monarchy on behalf of her son, offering fresh perspectives on court, dynastic, and international politics in seventeenth-century Europe.

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<sup>43</sup> France and Spain broke the peace again in 1683.

<sup>44</sup> "Al tiempo que el Rey tomaba ya los coches acompañado de los desterrados para ir a Toledo con tal celeridad que mostro bien la violencia y opresion en que estaba, y bolbiendo poco despues a la corte, le siguió la Reyna que hizo su entrada rezibida de los corazones de todos con aclamazion y aplauso tal, que no puede comprehenderse ni esplicarse..." BNM mss. 9399, f. 85r.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE FOUNDATIONS OF MARIANA'S REGENCY

The Austrian Archduchess Mariana of Austria was born in the Wiener Neustadt on December 23, 1634. As the second child and oldest daughter of Empress Maria of Austria (1606-1646), who was herself a Spanish Infanta, and Emperor Ferdinand III (r. 1637-1657), Mariana occupied by birth an important place among the Habsburgs, the most powerful dynasty in Europe for the previous century and a half. She had been chosen from an early age to become queen of Spain, having been promised to the heir of the Spanish throne, Prince Balthasar Carlos (b. 1629). A series of unexpected deaths, including that of the groom, set the stage for a much more central political role. Mariana would be married off to the father of the groom instead, Philip IV (1605, r. 1621-1665), who had recently become a widower when his first wife, Isabel of Bourbon, died in 1644. Mariana thus ended up marrying the king of Spain in 1649 at fifteen years of age; the groom was forty-four. The couple, also in line with dynastic and aristocratic practice of endogamic marriage, was closely related by blood. The groom and the bride's mother were siblings.

The conclusion of Mariana's marriage fulfilled dynastic, diplomatic, and political functions for both parties involved. For the Austrian Habsburgs it provided an opportunity to preserve cordial diplomatic relations with their relatives in Spain, jeopardized after they had signed a separate peace with France at the conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. For the Spanish Habsburgs, the marriage had a more urgent purpose and was intended first and foremost to solve a succession crisis. Mariana fulfilled her immediate duties, giving birth to several children, including a surviving daughter,

Margarita of Austria (b. 1651), and the next Spanish king, Carlos II (b. 1661), the only one of her male children who survived to adulthood. Philip IV's death in 1665 before Carlos II reached his fourth birthday, propelled Mariana to center political stage and inaugurated the first and only royal minority in the history of Habsburg Spain.

This chapter identifies the legal, dynastic, and socio-cultural foundations of Mariana's regency. Mariana of Austria's titles of "tutor, governor, and curator," established by Philip IV in his testament, adhered to dynastic traditions. Habsburg women's actively participated in the government and administration of the dynasty's diverse territorial possessions. These traditions can be traced back to the early sixteenth century but were also rooted in Iberian forms of medieval queenship. Second, Mariana's authority drew strength from Castilian legal codes developed since the late Middle Ages and that protected women's rights to inheritance and autonomy in a variety of ways. Third, her role during Carlos II's minority paralleled social practice among the Iberian nobility and other sectors of society whereby women were usually preferred as guardians for minor children in lieu of males. Finally, Mariana's position as widow reinforced her political authority. In widowhood, early modern Spanish women automatically gained legal emancipation, controlled and managed considerable wealth, and oftentimes assumed the role of matriarch. In sum, legally sanctioned by Philip IV's testament, Mariana's regency rested on well-established Iberian political traditions, aligned with the obvious preference among the aristocracy and the middle sectors of society to choose mothers as guardians of heirs, and was endorsed by a culture that viewed mothers and widows as powerful figures.

## The Office of Regent

In order to understand Mariana's position, we must first define the status of a queen and, in particular the limits, gendering, and specific prerogatives of the office of regent. While the term king almost invariably refers to a male who held sovereign power over a political entity, the term queen, however, possessed multiple juridical meanings. A proprietary or regnant queen was a woman who had inherited sovereignty through her own succession rights. Proprietary queens were perhaps more common in medieval and Renaissance Europe, when queens often exercised sovereignty over particular territories. At that time, marriages among proprietary rulers (kings and queens) formed political alliances that often resulted in the consolidation of kingdoms and principalities into larger political units, giving birth to the so-called Renaissance or composite monarchy.<sup>45</sup> After the sixteenth century and with some notable exceptions, queens usually gained their status through marriage. Queen consorts were the wives of proprietary kings and, whether they exercised formal authority or not, they participated in the political process and ensured the continuation of the dynasty into the next generation.

If the son or daughter of a queen consort inherited the throne while he or she was a minor, the former queen consort could become regent. Usually referred to as queen mother, the queen regent temporarily assumed the guardianship and governorship of a kingdom until her son or daughter was able to assume the throne and govern independently. Once the regency ended, the queen mother took the title of queen dowager as widow of the deceased king. There could be more than one queen in a given monarchy: a reigning queen (consort) and a queen dowager (queen mother), who usually

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<sup>45</sup> J. Russell Major, *From Renaissance Monarchy to Absolute Monarchy: French Kings, Nobles, & Estates* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1994); and John H. Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," *Past & Present* 137 (Nov., 1979): 48-71.

enjoyed a great deal of influence in court politics and over the king, provided that they maintained a reasonably good relationship.

First and foremost a temporary office, regency provided an interim solution when a king was incapable of exercising sovereignty himself, whether due to absence, incapacity, illness, or age. A single person, male or female, or a group, usually called a regency council could assume the office. In the case of a king's absence, the fact that an adult king existed (even if momentarily unavailable) provided a sense of political stability and security. This certainly was not the case during royal minorities. When a queen assumed the regency for a minor king, her position could be challenged. Opposition often came from those who believed they had the right either to the throne or to the regency and their claims could make the job of the queen mother difficult as the history of female regencies in medieval and early modern France eloquently illustrates. In the French monarchy, however, queen mothers enjoyed a strong claim to regency precisely because they were theoretically excluded from the succession. Political theorists believed that the "love" of a mother benefitted the ruler and the monarchy both. These two aspects of female regency—political exclusion and maternal love—gradually rendered the office essentially feminine. In other words, contemporaries considered queen mothers to be less threatening and less likely to usurp power than their male counterparts.<sup>46</sup>

The functions of a regent were split between guardianship and political responsibilities. In France, these two functions were for the most part divided between the queen mother, who usually assumed the tutorship of the minor king, and the princes of the blood or regency council, who took charge of administering the state. Queen regents in France ruled sometimes in conjunction with a regency council, either as voting

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<sup>46</sup> Crawford, *Gender and Regency in Early Modern France*, pp. 11-19.

members or presiding officers. In some cases, they were excluded from administration of the monarchy altogether. In Spain, the same distinction between guardianship and governorship applies. Mariana of Austria, however, assumed a unified regency, combining both responsibilities. Her regency council acted in a strictly consultative, not executive, capacity. Whereas in France, women were preferred as regents precisely because they were excluded from the succession, Mariana, as daughter of a Spanish Infanta herself, had claims to the succession, placing her regency in a very different category from those of her French counterparts.

The model of Mariana of Austria's regency found in Philip IV's testament partly derived from traditions of strong medieval queenship in Castile and Aragon where, as Theresa Earenfight has recently pointed out, queens often assumed "political partnerships" and "exercised considerable legitimate authority more often, more publicly, and more directly than queens elsewhere in Europe."<sup>47</sup> Spanish queenship was part of a monarchical corporate system, comprised of numerous elements that vied for authority and influenced the political process.<sup>48</sup> Like other European monarchies, Spain was an agglomeration of territories, each having particular juridical relationships with the sovereign.<sup>49</sup> Medieval traditions defined the relationship between ruler and subject as a contractual one with rights and obligations binding both. Spanish rulers attempted to unify their territories and centralize power, thus moving away from the medieval models of kingship, which became increasingly inadequate to govern and respond to the needs of

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<sup>47</sup> Earenfight, "Partners in Politics," p. xiii.

<sup>48</sup> Earenfight, "Partners in Politics," p. xiv.

<sup>49</sup> John H. Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans: A Study in the Decline of Spain, 1598-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1963); Nicholas Henshall, *The Myth of Absolutism: Change and Continuity in Early Modern Europe* (London: Longman, 1992); R. J. W. Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy: An Interpretation, 1550-1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).

an emerging modern state. They faced, however, resistance from social groups struggling to preserve their traditional privileges.<sup>50</sup>

In this complex political system, queens found multiple avenues to participate in the decision-making process. Constitutional and institutional limits to the power of kings opened up spaces for queens in the monarchy, who often ruled with specific titles and prerogatives. The office of “lieutenant” for instance is an excellent example of how Aragonese queens ruled alongside male rulers, who were often absent, with specific political prerogatives.<sup>51</sup> Queens and other royal women in Castile played similar roles via the office of “governor.” Queens were not necessarily equal partners: many variables, including personality, personal rapport with the ruler, king’s absences, political contexts, and so forth, determined their ability to yield political influence.<sup>52</sup> These traditions were ingrained in Spain and thrived with the Habsburgs. They shaped the set-up of Mariana’s regency and expectations regarding her rule in multiple ways.

### **Social and Cultural Contexts**

Mariana’s regency took place in a society that sanctioned, even as it resisted, multiple forms of female authority. Understanding the social and cultural aspects of female power, therefore, is crucial in order to evaluate Mariana’s position during her son’s minority. Early modern Spanish women enjoyed a great degree of independence and protection under Iberian law and exercised substantial economic, civic, and political influence. Several scholars of early modern Spain have begun to reassess previous ideas

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<sup>50</sup> Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans*.

<sup>51</sup> See Earenfight, “Partners in Politics,” and *idem*, *The King’s Other Body*.

<sup>52</sup> Earenfight, “Partners in Politics,” p. xxii.



regarding female seclusion, gender boundaries, and patriarchal systems in general.<sup>53</sup> As scholars probe beyond prescriptive literature and focus on women's activities, the so-called enclosure paradigm and notions of patriarchy soon break down.<sup>54</sup> Helen Nader has recently suggested that even within a system that excluded them from specific aspects of public life (such as holding ecclesiastical and political office), Spanish women, nevertheless, "lived in a dual system, one in which patriarchy coexisted with matriarchy."<sup>55</sup>

Female subordination to males may have been typical of Spanish society, but it was never absolute. Gender functioned as one among several means of signifying relationships of power, alongside class and age, which often, if not more forcefully than gender, established hierarchies and allocated authority. For example, both mothers and fathers exercised significant control over all children, including mothers over sons. The power of motherhood rested not only on cultural values, but as we will see, was embedded in the legal, dynastic, political, and socio-cultural structures of early modern Spanish society. Although Mariana assumed the office of regent with substantial

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<sup>53</sup> See for instance, Poska on female peasants in Northern Spain, *Women and Authority in Early Modern Spain*; David Andrew Norton on women's contributions to the economic life of Valladolid: "Women in the City: Women as Economic and Legal Actors in Valladolid, Spain: 1580-1620." Ph.D Diss. University of Minnesota, 2005; Grace Coolidge on the role of noblewomen in family and society; "'Neither Dumb, Deaf, nor Destitute of Understanding': Women as Guardians in Early Modern Spain" *Sixteenth Century Journal* 36:3 (2005): 673-693 and idem, *Guardianship*. Stephanie Louise Fink De Backer on widowhood, "Widows at the Nexus of Family and Community in Early Modern Castile" Ph.D diss. University of Arizona, 2003. For women of the merchant middle class, see Cook, "The Women of Early Modern Triana," and Alexandra Parma Cook and Noble David Cook, *Good Faith and Truthful Ignorance: A Case of Transatlantic Bigamy* (Durham and London: Duke University, 1991). As can be seen all of these works are recent, some of them still in dissertation form. Poska, Norton, Coolidge, Fink De Backer, Cook and Cook, all challenge traditional notions of Spanish women as depicted in Golden Age literature or the seminal prescriptive texts by authors such as Juan Luis Vives and Fray Luis de León.

<sup>54</sup> Fink De Backer, "Widows at the Nexus of Family and Community," p. 13. Fink De Backer and Poska also challenge the "honor-shame" paradigm used by scholars who study Mediterranean societies.

<sup>55</sup> Helen Nader, "Introduction: The World of the Mendozas," p. 3.

prerogatives, her extensive power became a liability when it appeared to interfere with Carlos II's ability to exercise the office of king. As will be argued in a later chapter, Mariana's residual authority after the king came of age eventually led to her exile. As a first step in unraveling gender-based political expectations of Mariana's regency, I would like to point out some social practices common in early modern Spain that colored perceptions about her right to the office.

Even though this was the sole royal minority of Habsburg Spain, members of the ruling elite found nothing out of the ordinary in seeing Mariana occupy this political position during her son's minority, since they adhered to similar practices. In fact, there existed many parallels between the strategies the Habsburgs used to advance their interests and those the nobility followed. Royal and noble families were organized in a similar fashion: they employed territorial, economic, and political strategies to augment their power. They shared similar marriage patterns, often practicing endogamy to safeguard their interests. The nobility, like the Habsburgs, counted on the participation of women at all levels of the family enterprise. Women partnered with their husbands to advance the interests of their families and administer their estates. They often assumed the role of matriarchs. The noble household was as public as the royal household and noblewomen's activities within the family were essentially political. Mariana's tutorship and governorship, thus, were perfectly congruent with the nobility's practice of allowing women to lead their families in cases of absences and minorities.

The parallels between the Habsburgs and the nobility are especially important because Mariana depended on the ruling elite's willingness to cooperate in the business of government. Indeed, the relationship between the crown and the nobility influenced

the acceptance of Mariana as a temporary ruler, as it did with every other ruler in Spain since Isabel I assumed the Castilian throne in 1474.<sup>56</sup> Forming a higher percentage of the population than in the rest of Europe,<sup>57</sup> the Spanish nobility took a crucial part in ministerial, military, and ceremonial positions. The great magnates, or *grandees*, were the group closest to the monarch. By tradition, they possessed substantial political power in their own territories that were to an extent, independent of the titular ruler. Considered cousins of the king, they were allowed to keep their heads covered in his presence: a coveted privilege that singled them out from the rest of the subjects. Their identity was intimately tied to the crown and their place was institutionalized in royal ceremonies. On the one hand, the crown traditionally required the support of the *grandees* and other titled nobles to govern: they ruled far-flung territories and fought wars in the king's name, occupied top government posts, and legitimized royal power by attending the king and queen in royal ceremonies and royal household duties. On the other hand, the nobility needed the crown to advance the interests of its families, to sanction their marriage alliances, and to approve *mayorazgos* (entails). Nobles thus benefitted in all of these ways from royal patronage. Despite the tensions involved, the nobility was fully invested in the power of the monarchy as much as the king depended on them.

These complex mechanisms were the underlying forces that Mariana faced when she assumed the regency. The analysis that follows in this and the rest of the chapters assumes that Mariana's ability to exercise her political authority depended on officials at

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<sup>56</sup> See Peggy Liss, *Isabel the Queen: Life and Times* (New York: Oxford University, 1992), chapters 5 and 6.

<sup>57</sup> Jonathan Dewald calculates that the Spanish nobility (titled and untitled nobles) comprised about 10 percent of the population, a much higher percentage than in other monarchies. See Dewald, *The European Nobility, 1400-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1996).

every level of government to enforce her commands and legitimize her position. At the moment when Mariana assumed the regency, the nobility and all other subjects accepted her position matter-of-factly. This acquiescence reveals that they regarded this particular form of female rule as legitimate and sanctioned by tradition.

### **Women and State Building Processes in Early Modern Spain**

Understanding Spanish women's participation in, and contributions to, state building is crucial to assess accurately court politics during Mariana's regency. The following chapters make clear how factional struggles flared up during the period often as a result of a dramatic feminization of the court. The institutionalization of female authority so conspicuous during the period of the minority, however, had a long pedigree in early modern Spain and grew from three distinct developments: the Reconquista, the colonization of the New World, and the establishment of the court as a political institution. By the time that Mariana became regent, female authority already formed an important part of the political culture at court.

Iberian women were an integral part of the Reconquista, a process by which Castilian rulers expanded the kingdom's frontier inside the Iberian Peninsula and pushed back Muslim rule. Most women did not participate in the military actions, but engaged in the process of colonization as community anchors; they provided stability, encouraged repopulation, and fostered a tradition of female autonomy and independence. Newly-established frontier towns received an initial *fuero* (royal charter), necessary to ensure peace and create civic order. In her study of the period, Heath Dillard argues that officials recognized and appreciated the role of these "Daughters of the Reconquest" to the extent that a large portion of the new laws collected in the *fueros* were intended to protect

women and their property.<sup>58</sup> Parallel to the development of legal systems in the newly created towns, Castilian rulers began codifying laws that together afforded Iberian women substantial rights, particularly regarding property and inheritance.<sup>59</sup> Subsequent rulers continued this tradition: the Catholic monarchs were responsible for several codes, the most important of those being the *Leyes de Toro* (1505), which dealt extensively with property and inheritance.<sup>60</sup>

In the early modern period, Castilian women continued to assume family and community roles usually reserved for men. The military needs of the early Habsburgs and the extension of Castile's frontier outside the peninsula and across the Atlantic took men away to war or the New World, often leaving women as "virtual widows."<sup>61</sup> In her study of Toledan widowhood during the sixteenth century, Louise Fink De Backer has shown that women were engaged in doing everything a male head of household would do except hold ecclesiastical, military, or political office.<sup>62</sup> This freedom was not limited to the city of Toledo, however; a similar trend can be observed in Iberian noble families of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, among the peasantry in Galicia, and the merchant class

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<sup>58</sup> Heath Dillard, *Daughters of the Reconquest: Women in Castilian Town Society, 1100-1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1984). Norton, "Women in the City."

<sup>59</sup> Alfonso X (1252-1284), for instance, commissioned one of the earliest and most important legal codes of the realm: the *Siete Partidas* (1257-63).

<sup>60</sup> Norton's research demonstrates that it was not necessarily the law alone that benefitted women, but the interpretation and application of the law. Norton, "Women in the City"; Poska, *Women and Authority*, p. 43; For a summary of the Castilian legal system see Richard Kagan, *Lawsuits and Litigants in Castile, 1500-1700* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1981), chapter 2.

<sup>61</sup> Fink De Backer, "Widows," p. 17.

<sup>62</sup> Fink De Backer, "Widows," p. 17.

in Seville.<sup>63</sup> Men spent much of their time on military duty or were otherwise absent from their lands, while women (wives, mothers, and female relatives) filled the roles of administrators and estate managers. Mothers administered their children's inheritance during minorities; thus, they often found themselves controlling some of the most powerful seigniorial holdings of the realm. The amount of work could be daunting for anyone and required great skills, stamina, and decisiveness. As was the case during the Reconquest period, economic and social needs of the early modern period fostered a tradition of women quite accustomed to, and capable of, handling the administration of large landed estates.<sup>64</sup>

With the emergence of Philip II's bureaucratic state (r. 1556-1598) and the permanent establishment of the court in Madrid at the mid- sixteenth century, the lifestyle of the nobility began a process of transformation: women, too, began taking on new roles. The nobility still fulfilled its military functions, but also became involved in the administration of the monarchy, occupying important offices in the realm, and taking many positions in the new government councils.<sup>65</sup> Ever more titled nobles moved to Madrid, or at least maintained residences there in order to be close to the king. Queens and royal women provided noble families an important avenue for obtaining royal patronage and participating in court politics through the royal household. Women took their place in the feminine spaces of the court hierarchy and became indispensable in the

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<sup>63</sup> Coolidge, *Guardianship*; Fink De Backer, "Widows;" Norton, "Women in the City;" and Cook, "The Women of Early Modern Triana." Poska paints a similar picture for peasants, *Women and Authority*.

<sup>64</sup> Coolidge, *Guardianship*, chapter 2.

<sup>65</sup> Coolidge, *Guardianship*, pp. 12-13. The conciliar system of Habsburg Spain is discussed at length in chapter 3.

overall political culture. The queen's royal household institutionalized female authority and enfranchised women in the political process.

The role of women at court is crucial to understanding, in concrete and abstract terms, how contemporaries perceived female political authority. The court was a gendered space. Daily and special events revolved around two centers: the king and his male companions and the queen and her female entourage. Some occasions included everyone, but generally female and male spaces were carefully separated and regimented by rules of etiquette, marking out specific political spheres. As the queen's royal household became an important focus of political power, concrete efforts to regularize and control it began about 1570.<sup>66</sup> Magdalena S. Sánchez has shown how feminine spaces, such as the Convent of the Descalzas Reales in Madrid, could provide a nucleus of dissent and even challenge male-led factions.<sup>67</sup> Using these feminine spaces and roles as a base, women worked diligently to advance the interests of their families, promote political careers and matrimonial alliances, and obtain economic rewards. By the seventeenth century, women occupied several offices in the queen's household; some of them bore considerable prestige and authority. The role of women during Mariana's regency became prominent precisely because their places had become institutionalized; they could not be eliminated arbitrarily.

The gendering of the court extended outside the palace and into the city. There exist numerous examples of women's participation in the complex network of diplomatic visits and exchanges of correspondence associated with the ministerial and diplomatic

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<sup>66</sup> Félix Labrador Arroyo "Las casas de las reinas de la monarquía hispana. Formación de las Ordenanzas (1504-1621)" (Unpublished paper).

<sup>67</sup> Sánchez, *The Empress, The Queen, and the Nun*.

offices of the monarchy. These activities paralleled those of the men and had comparable diplomatic, ceremonial, and political purposes. Women's political visibility vastly increased during Mariana's regency, but it was based on long practice. Lady Ann Fanshawe, wife of the English ambassador to Spain, for instance, noted in her diary the many customary visits she received and made to ambassadors, vicereines, and other important women at court.<sup>68</sup> The Imperial ambassador to Madrid, the Count of Pötting recorded punctiliously in his diary the times that his wife visited noblewomen, received them in their house, and participated in court events with the queen.<sup>69</sup> Ambassador Pötting also depended on another woman, the queen's *camarera mayor*, to obtain access to the queen because she coordinated the queen's schedule. Pötting's colleague and successor, the Count of Harrach, (Imperial ambassador from 1673 to 1677), also relied heavily on his wife as an intermediary.<sup>70</sup>

During Mariana's regency, the two women who occupied the highest political offices in her royal household, the Marquise of Baldueza as the *camarera mayor* (the equivalent of the first lady of the queen's chamber) and the Marquise of Los Velez as the *aya* (or governess) of the king, were paradigmatic Spanish matriarchs. Baldueza and Los

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<sup>68</sup> Indeed, Fanshawe makes continuous references to the contacts she had with these noblewomen. John Clyde Loftis, ed. *The Memoirs of Anne, Lady Halkett and Ann, Lady Fanshawe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), p. 155. For similar activities in the royal court, see Alistair Malcolm, "La práctica informal del poder. La política de la Corte y el acceso a la Familia Real durante la segunda mitad del reinado de Felipe IV," *Reales sitios* 147/1er trimestre (2001): 38-48. New studies on the office and the institution of vicereignty, in which women played a political, ceremonial, and administrative role, are quite promising in uncovering the central role of women in government and politics. Manuel Rivero Rodríguez, "Como reinas: El virreinato en femenino (Apuntes sobre la Casa y Corte de las virreinas)" and Alberto Baena Zapatero, "Las virreinas novohispanas y sus cortejos: Vida cortesana y poder indirecto" in *Las relaciones discretas entre las Monarquías Hispana y Portuguesa: Las casas de las reinas (siglos XV-XIX)*. 3 vols. José Martínez Millán, ed. (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2008), II: 789-818 and II:819-839.

<sup>69</sup> Miguel Nieto Nuño, ed. *Diario del Conde de Pötting, Embajador del Sacro Imperio en Madrid (1664-1674)*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Biblioteca Diplomática Española, 1990).

<sup>70</sup> Laura Oliván, "Pinceladas políticas, marcos cortesanos: el diario del conde de Harrach, embajador imperial en la Corte de Madrid (1673-1677)," *Cultura Escrita & Sociedad* 3 (2006): 113-132.



Velez were connected by blood and marriage to some of the most important lineages of the realm; they had been married to important royal officials; and they were widows. Both had also assumed tutorship over their children and heirs. Both possessed strong personalities and were certainly not hesitant to assert their authority when the regency propelled them to the top of the court hierarchy.<sup>71</sup> The participation of women in family and state politics was thus a well-established tradition. Through the feminine spaces of the court, women contributed to building their family's wealth, reputation, and political influence.

### **Regency as Guardianship**

Baldueza and los Velez formed by no means isolated cases of widows assuming the role of matriarchs. In fact, in Spain women held about 80 percent of guardianships from 1400 to 1800.<sup>72</sup> Guardianships were intended, first and foremost, to protect children and their property. The Spanish legal system recognized two types of guardians: those for girls under twelve and boys under fourteen were tutors (*tutores*); those for children older than twelve or fourteen and younger than twenty-five were curators (*curadores*).<sup>73</sup> *Curadores* could also become the guardian of someone incapacitated over the age of twenty-five.<sup>74</sup> Philip IV utilized precisely this legal framework, naming Mariana “tutor and curator” for the three-year-old Carlos. She additionally held the title of “governor” (*governadora*) denoting the political character of her guardianship.

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<sup>71</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>72</sup> Coolidge, *Guardianship*, p. 21.

<sup>73</sup> Coolidge, “Families in Crisis: Women, Guardianship, and the Nobility in Early Modern Spain,” (Ph.D. Diss., Indiana University, 2001), pp. 39-40.

<sup>74</sup> Coolidge, *Guardianship*, p. 22.

By its very definition, guardianship was meant to replace the father: it clearly implied that a woman assumed a male role.<sup>75</sup> Managing a noble estate was an extremely complex operation that required women to master a wide range of activities: collect rents, oversee agricultural operations, administer justice, make legal decisions involving complex matters, conduct commercial transactions, and take part in political affairs that could have a lasting impact on the lineage.<sup>76</sup> While guardians, women had to renounce their special legal status that afforded them special protection under the law.<sup>77</sup> In other words, women exercising a guardianship became “men” with equal rights and responsibilities. During Mariana’s regency, a number of female guardians publicly exercised their authority by joining the Confederation of the *grandees* that engineered the fall of Fernando Valenzuela and thus ensuring the queen’s own exile to Toledo from 1677 to 1679. Of the twenty-four signatories to this document, four were noblewomen, and all were guardians.<sup>78</sup> Clearly, guardians had to be bold, ambitious, and determined in order to take on these difficult tasks.

The great paradox of Spanish society was that although women were considered to be quite capable of assuming masculine roles during guardianships, they did not do so on a permanent basis. Guardianship remained essentially a feminine office, not necessarily because of the skills required, but because of its indirect and temporary nature. Understanding the nobility’s attitudes toward heiresses helps explain the paradox.

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<sup>75</sup> Coolidge, *Guardianship*, pp. 34-37.

<sup>76</sup> Coolidge, *Guardianship*, p. 32.

<sup>77</sup> Widows’ property was protected under the law and could not be alienated to pay for the late husband’s debts. Women who assumed guardianships gave up that protection in order to conduct business under the same legal conditions as if their husbands were alive; Norton, “Women in the City.”

<sup>78</sup> “Confederación del Sr. Don Juan de Austria, y los grandes de España...” BNM Mss. 18211

Castilian property and inheritance laws ensured that all children possessed the right of equal inheritance defined as *bienes libres* (if not part of an entail).<sup>79</sup> Partible inheritance practices, however, coexisted with the principles of primogeniture in Castile. The laws of *mayorazgos* allowed noble families to consolidate their estates and, backed by royal authority, pass them on intact to the next generation. Although Castilian *mayorazgos* resembles English entails, unlike in England, Castilian law codes did not exclude women from the family inheritance.<sup>80</sup> The law gave preference to the eldest son (or daughter if there were no male heirs). But the law also stipulated that the descendants of the first son, even if female, took priority over the younger siblings. This law of direct descent, therefore, meant that the daughter of the heir took priority over a second son.<sup>81</sup> In other words, Spanish women were preferred to males if they were descendants of the first born.

Noblewomen could thus become universal heiresses to very important titles and estates.<sup>82</sup> When they did, however, such powerful dynasties ensured that these women did not become totally independent: Even if women inherited, passed on titles, and administered their children's estates during minorities, an heiress was under strong pressure to marry so that the permanent control of the estate would remain in male hands. Grace E. Coolidge has noted that Castilian inheritance laws encouraged endogamy by

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<sup>79</sup> Families, however, had some flexibility in the apportionment of property and could set aside part of the inheritance to dispose at their preference. In many instances, although not always, families favored the oldest female. Norton, "Women and the City," and Coolidge, *Guardianship*. Poska reports that among peasants, women were usually the preferred heir. Poska, *Women and Authority*.

<sup>80</sup> Coolidge, *Guardianship*.

<sup>81</sup> Grace E. Coolidge, "Families in Crisis," p. 21.

<sup>82</sup> Grace E. Coolidge, "Choosing her Own Buttons: The Guardianship of Magdalena de Bobadilla," in *Power and Gender in Renaissance Spain: Eight Women of the Mendoza Family, 1450-1650*, Helen Nader, ed. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois, 2004), 132-151.

increasing the number of uncle-niece and first cousin marriages.<sup>83</sup> Although heiresses often married the male who was next in line of succession, nobody contested who held the title; in many instances men were referred to as “consorts.”<sup>84</sup> In any case, efforts to limit permanent female authority tempered the overwhelming preference for mothers to assume guardianship of their minor children.

These legal practices and traditions reveal inherent contradictions in Spanish society. Female guardianship, like royal regency, was indirect, temporary, and provisional. Noble families deemed it an acceptable solution to ensure the survival and safety of the lineage. Because there were no royal minorities during Habsburg Spain other than Carlos II's, it is difficult to study minorities and regencies in a comparative terms as can be easily done for early modern France. Nevertheless, the widespread practice of guardianships held by women in early modern Spain provided a parallel situation to that of Mariana's regency; it would not have been difficult for contemporaries to draw the connections. Like so many Spanish noblewomen, Mariana of Austria assumed the guardianship of her son and the administration of his inheritance on a temporary basis and in a perceived moment of crisis. She did so with strong social, legal, political, and cultural traditions behind her.

### **The Life Cycle as Political Cycle**

Motherhood coupled with widowhood opened significant political possibilities for royal and noble women. Noblewomen gained legal emancipation upon becoming

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<sup>83</sup> Coolidge, “Families in Crisis,” pp. 22, 106.

<sup>84</sup> I have also found instances in which noblemen are referred to as consorts.

widows, assumed the management of the family's wealth, and undertook guardianships.<sup>85</sup> Even once their adult children married, these women continued to play an influential role within the family. Widowhood rather than age was the key ingredient that created forms of matriarchy whereby women assumed positions of authority in early modern Spain. If they survived the dangers of early modern childbirth and mortality, women could expect to live a good portion of their lives as widows.<sup>86</sup> In fact, many widowed-women were very young by twenty-first-century standards, often in their twenties or thirties. That so many young widows became heads of household, speaks of a type of female authority that had little or no relation to age. In order to understand how women assumed positions of power, we must understand their life cycles; in the case of a queen the life cycle and political cycle merged.

In a popular treatise on women's education, the Spaniard Juan Luis Vives, one of the most important humanists in sixteenth-century Europe, categorized women's lives according to marital status: "Unmarried Young Women," "Married Women," and "Widows."<sup>87</sup> Clearly, in Vives's scheme, marriage was the central event in a woman's life. (Women entering the religious life were symbolically married: they had become "brides" of Christ.) Once they married, in theory, women lived under the control of the husband (or an abbess). Yet, in fact, married noblewomen contributed actively in the

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<sup>85</sup> In Spain, the dowry and the *arras* (husband's gift to the bride) enjoyed strong legal protection. In addition, Spanish women were entitled to half the earnings of the couple during the marriage. AHNNS Osuna C. 127, exp. 44.

<sup>86</sup> Fink De Backer, "Widows," p. 185.

<sup>87</sup> Juan Luis Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman: A Sixteenth-Century Manual*, Charles Fantazzi, editor and translator (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2000). Queen Catherine of Aragon (1485-1536) commissioned the treatise from Vives as an education manual for her daughter, who became Queen Mary I of England (r. 1553-1558). Originally written in Latin in 1523, *De institutione feminae Christianae* was soon translated into English, Italian, Castilian, French, Dutch, and German, becoming a highly popular text.

administration of estates, possessed and disposed of their wealth even if their husbands were alive, and participated in political affairs either through their husband's offices or by holding posts in the queen's household. Widowhood was, therefore, a crucial stage in the life cycle of noblewomen. Although widows outwardly conformed to the cultural ideal of seclusion, adopting a religious habit in many cases, in practice, they actually gained independence and wealth.<sup>88</sup> Even if they had adult sons or married daughters, they continued to exercise considerable influence over their families and lineages. In many cases, they assumed executive duties in the queen's household, fully participating in the political process, negotiating alliances with other families, and shaping the future of younger generations.

The life cycle of royal women resembled those of nobles. As children, royal women lived under the close watch of their parents and, depending on their birth circumstances, could become an important piece in diplomacy and dynastic strategies from a young age. They usually married very young like their noble counterparts, although in some cases political expediency required otherwise.<sup>89</sup> Once a royal daughter married, if she became queen consort, she gradually gained authority and power. The movements of a young queen at the Spanish court were somewhat restricted. The *camarera mayor*, who was usually a widow or a married woman of the nobility, enforced etiquette and exerted considerable control over the young ruler.<sup>90</sup> Once a queen gave

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<sup>88</sup> Fink De Backer, "Widows," Coolidge, "Families in Crisis."

<sup>89</sup> In Spain, if a royal daughter was the heiress, her marriage was usually postponed until a male heir was available, as was the case with Isabel Clara Eugenia and Maria Theresa of Austria.

<sup>90</sup> María Victoria López-Cordón Cortezo, "La evolución de las damas entre los siglos XVII y XVIII" in *Las relaciones discretas entre las Monarquías Hispana y Portuguesa: Las casas de las reinas (siglos XV-XIX)*. 3 vols. Martínez Millán, ed. (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2008), II: 1357-1398.

birth, however, her prestige, and consequently her authority, increased exponentially. Her royal household grew and her role in the monarchy solidified. She soon gathered a group of supporters around her and often engaged more fully in the political process. If she managed to produce a male heir, her position at court became central. Indeed, for a queen in the early modern period, giving birth was perhaps the most significant political act of her life. In France, motherhood was the only protection a queen had to cement her position, since French kings had, and exercised, the option of divorcing a wife due to infertility, as was the case with Henri IV.<sup>91</sup> It appears that in Spain, infertility was not a reason to annul a royal marriage.<sup>92</sup> Nevertheless, motherhood was especially potent in the Spanish monarchy.

The Habsburgs, who referred to their inheritance (the Spanish monarchy), as a “*mayorazgo*,” depended on women to protect their patrimony. Philip IV, for example, at the end of clause 65 of his will prohibits his successors from alienating any part of the inheritance and orders them to ensure the conservation and protection of “the estates and rights of the House of Austria, whose primogeniture and *mayorazgo* I have, as is known.”<sup>93</sup> Thus, Habsburg women stepped into the necessary political roles to protect the family’s inheritance as did their aristocratic counterparts. Although a queen went through a similar life-cycle to that of her noble counterparts, motherhood politicized her life-cycle

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<sup>91</sup> Fanny Cosandey, “Puissance maternelle.”

<sup>92</sup> Carlos II’s two queen consorts, however, went through serious difficulties as their reigns progressed and they seemed unable to give Spain a successor. This topic needs further scholarly attention.

<sup>93</sup> “Y encargo y mando a mis sucesores... asistan y defiendan los dichos E. s y vasallos dellos pues tanto importa para la exaltación de la Fe Cathólica, conservación y paz de otros mis reynos, E. s y derechos de la Casa de Austria, cuia primogenitura y maioría Yo tengo, como es notorio.” *Testamento de Felipe IV. Edición facsímil*, Antonio Domínguez Ortíz, ed. (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1982), pp. 76-77. The patrimonial conception of the state is, however, only one of the several competing notions.

even more forcefully. Giving birth, particularly if that child became the next ruler,<sup>94</sup> became a great source of prestige and influence. If the ruling monarch died before the next one came of age, a queen in Habsburg Spain gained significant authority because in theory and practice regency formed a type of guardianship, one with large political and international dimensions.

Thus, if she became a widow while her child was still a minor, a queen stepped into the role of regent, as was the case with Mariana of Austria and with many royal women in France. A fully realized life cycle entailed the assumption of formal political power. Even if this was not the case, a queen dowager (the widow of the former king), usually referred to as the “queen mother,” possessed tremendous prestige and exercised great influence in court politics. A queen dowager and a queen consort could co-exist in a court structure, as was the case with Mariana and her daughters-in-law, Maria Luisa of Orleans and Mariana of Neoburg. (The documents referred to all as queens, although the queen consort was known as the “reigning queen” [*reina reinante*] and Mariana as the “queen mother” [*reina madre*] to avoid confusion.)

Mariana of Austria assumed the regency when she was thirty-one. Although several modern scholars have pointed out that she was “young and inexperienced,” to her seventeenth-century subjects, she was neither. At the time, Mariana had been married for sixteen years and had been queen consort for the same length of time. In addition, she had a daughter, who at fourteen was of marriageable age. To put Mariana’s age into perspective, we should note that Emperor Charles V summoned his daughter, Juana of Austria, to take over the government of the Spanish monarchy in 1555, when the princess

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<sup>94</sup> The Habsburg women that share pantheon space in El Escorial, for example, all gave birth to kings or sworn heirs.



was nineteen years old. Juana had recently given birth to the heir to the Portuguese throne and had almost simultaneously become a widow. Many aristocratic women who assumed guardianships were presumably very young: they tended to marry in their teens and death often struck their older husbands in the early modern period. The legal age to assume guardianship was twenty-five, but the law made exceptions for younger noble women, so that they could assume the management of their family's wealth when necessary.<sup>95</sup> It seems unlikely that Mariana's contemporaries would have considered her especially "young." Likewise, having been brought up in the Imperial court and having lived a significant portion of her life in the highly politicized court environment in Madrid, it is very unlikely that anyone deemed her "inexperienced" in political matters. To her seventeenth-century Spanish subjects, Mariana was a mature woman and, as befitted someone of her birth and condition, she possessed considerable experience in life and politics alike.

### **Habsburg Traditions**

Mariana looked back on almost two centuries of dynastic traditions, that together with Iberian political and legal precedents, singled her out as the best and first choice to assume the tutorship of the minor king and the government of the Spanish monarchy. Like their noble counterparts, Habsburg women contributed in multiple ways to the preservation of the dynasty. They provided generational links; helped cement Habsburg rule in their various territories; acted as tutors, guardians, and surrogate mothers; and executed their male relative's testaments. They also administered and governed Habsburg dominions with and for male rulers. Any study of the Habsburg dynasty, or of state building processes in their territories, remains incomplete unless we consider these

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<sup>95</sup> Fink De Backer, "Widows," p. 193.

women. Indeed, as Joseph Patrouch has recently proposed, attention to the female side of this powerful dynasty (or of other dynasties, for that matter) may offer an ideal tool with which to move away from nationally-based histories of early modern Europe.<sup>96</sup>

Female sovereignty was a crucial ingredient in the “birth” of the Spanish Monarchy and the emergence of the Habsburg dynasty as the most powerful in Europe. In Castile, the principal kingdom of the Habsburg dominions, women held sovereignty for almost a century (1474-1555). Isabel I (r. 1474-1505) ruled jointly with her husband Ferdinand, but was actually the proprietary ruler of Castile and Leon and the senior partner in the marriage.<sup>97</sup> After Isabel’s death, sovereignty passed not to Ferdinand II of Aragon, but to their daughter, Juana I of Castile, who inherited from her mother and father a substantially larger and relatively more unified domain, including the kingdoms of Castile and León, Aragon and Sicily, Navarre, and the New World territories. Because Juana, for reasons that are still being disputed, never exercised sovereignty, her son Charles V acted as her co-ruler for almost the entire period of his reign.<sup>98</sup> The Castilian law of direct descent gave Juana, and later Charles, the right of succession that Ferdinand II of Aragon did not possess.<sup>99</sup> This aspect of Charles’s sovereignty was so important that

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<sup>96</sup> Joseph Patrouch, “Dynastic, Imperial, International: Some Directions in Early Modern European Studies” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 40:1 (2009): 217-219.

<sup>97</sup> Isabel I, according to Liss, indisputably asserted her sovereignty over Castile, holding her husband rigidly to the marriage contract that excluded him from her rights over the territory, which was to descend instead to their children. At the same time (and this is one of the ways that the political talent of Isabel was manifested), she played the role of dutiful wife perfectly. See Liss, *Isabel the Queen*, pp. 104-105.

<sup>98</sup> Bethany Aram’s ground breaking study of Juana I has opened important new routes for investigating this important sovereign. One way or another, it is abundantly clear that Juana’s sovereignty remained intact until her death. Bethany Aram, *Juana the Mad: Sovereignty and Dynasty in Renaissance Europe* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

<sup>99</sup> Ferdinand had been forced to renounce his claims to the throne of Castile in the marriage capitulations. See Peggy Liss, *Isabel the Queen*, p. 104. Barbara F. Weissberger affirms that Isabel “fashioned a complex public image of her sovereignty, one that simultaneously affirmed and disguised her will-to-power and

in his testament he ordered each person named in the line of succession “to reign with the queen, my mother, as long as she lived.”<sup>100</sup> Charles V’s adoption of Castilian laws continued unchanged for all his descendants. The formula, “in conformity with the Laws of the Partidas<sup>101</sup> and others of our kingdoms and Lordships,” is stated in the testaments of all Spanish Habsburg rulers.<sup>102</sup> Female succession was strictly observed and only when the Bourbons succeeded to the Spanish throne and adopted Salic Law were females excluded.

The Spanish Habsburgs named their female relatives potential tutors and guardians for heirs, inheritors, and executors, highly political tasks that reveals their prominent role in the overall family enterprise and the consequences of the dynasty’s adoption of Castilian legal traditions. The faithful adherence of the Habsburgs to female rights of inheritance contrasts strikingly with French dynasties, who followed the principles of Salic law. Under this legal principle, women were prohibited from either inheriting the crown or even passing on succession rights to another male. Salic Law, once thought ancient, has been relatively recently shown to be a “gross forgery” and

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absolutist agenda,” “*Tanto Monta: The Catholic Monarchs’ Nuptial Fiction and the Power of Isabel I of Castile*” in *The Rule of Women in Early Modern Europe*, Anne J. Cruz and Mihoko Suzuki, eds. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois, 2009), 43-63, p. 43.

<sup>100</sup> “Y mando al d[ich]o s[ere]n[is]imo Príncipe, mi hijo, que en quanto viviere la s[ere]n[is]ima muy alta y muy ponderosa Reyna, mi señora madre, reine juntamente con ella, según y por la orden que yo lo e hecho y hago al presente por aquella misma manera.” The formula is repeated in all the clauses establishing lines of succession. *Testamento de Carlos V*, Manuel Fernández Álvarez, ed. (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1982), pp. 23-25.

<sup>101</sup> The Castilian legal code known as the *Siete Partidas* (Seven-Part Code) was compiled by Alfonso X of Castile in the thirteen century.

<sup>102</sup> “prefiriéndose siempre el mayor al menor, y el varón a la hembra, en yqual línea y grado, y el nieto o nieta, hijo del primogenitor que murió en vida del padre, al hijo segundogénito que se hallase vivo al tiempo de la muerte del padre, conforme con la dispusi[er]ción de las Leyes de las Partidas y otras de n[uestros] reynos y señoríos.” *Testamento de Carlos V*, p. 29.

“invention.”<sup>103</sup> Humanists discovered and challenged its validity in the mid-sixteenth century. However, the tenets of the Salic Law survived and continued to exclude women from the French throne.

In contrast, the Spanish Habsburgs adopted a system that protected female rights, considered women as crucial elements in the overall family enterprise, and did not deny their equality as heirs and successors. Only twice can we point to instances of female exclusion from the succession in Habsburg Spain, and both had been based strictly on larger political imperatives. Both sought to frustrate French claims to the Spanish throne. Philip III and Philip IV excluded their eldest daughters, Anne of Austria (1601-1666) and Maria Theresa of Austria (1638-1683), because of their marriages to the French kings Louis XIII and Louis XIV respectively.<sup>104</sup> Despite the provisions of Spanish law, Anne of Austria and her descendants could not succeed in or outside Spain in order to ensure “the interests of the public,” as Philip III stated in his will.<sup>105</sup> In excluding Maria Theresa from the succession, Philip IV argued that marriages between infantas of Spain and kings of France were fraught with difficulties, “because these two Crowns being both and each so

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<sup>103</sup> Sarah Hanley calls Salic Law a “gross forgery,” the result of a process that began as a heated political debate between Christine de Pizan and Jean de Montreuil in the early fifteenth century. In 1409, as a result of it, Montreuil claimed (falsely) that the Ancient Frankish Legal Code contained a clause that prohibited female royal succession. The forgery was discovered in the mid-sixteenth century by jurists and scholars trained in historical methods. Nevertheless, by 1600, Salic Law was ingrained into political practice. See Sarah Hanley, “The Family, the State, and the Law in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth- Century France: The Political Ideology of Male Right versus and Early Theory of Natural Rights” *The Journal of Modern History* 78 (June 2006): 289-332. Eliane Viennot calls Salic Law an “invention” and demonstrates that women in Medieval France enjoyed the same types of rights as males in inheritance and succession. The break for her originates in the dynastic crisis of the early fourteenth century, which had fateful consequences for all French women. See Eliane Viennot, *La France, les femmes et le pouvoir: L'invention de la loi salique* (Ve- XVIe siècle (Perrin, 2006).

<sup>104</sup> *Testamento de Felipe III*, Carlos Seco Serrano, ed. (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1982), Clause 38; *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 15.

<sup>105</sup> “Y por lo que importa al E. público y conservación de ellas que no se junten...” *Testamento de Felipe III*, Clause 38, pp. 50-51.

great... their unification would result in a diminishing of their glory, grave inconveniences for their subjects, and the public well-being, not just for their respective kingdoms, but also for all Christianity.”<sup>106</sup> Precisely because of the necessity to keep the two powers separate, the marriage pacts had always prohibited the unification of the two Crowns in a single person. The Habsburg clauses, however, did not express a desire to exclude women from the succession permanently. On the contrary, both Anne and Maria Theresa still would have been able to succeed had they become widows and had they produced no French heirs.<sup>107</sup>

Habsburg women also participated fully in the family’s enterprise by ruling the dynasty’s dispersed territories, often assuming and exercising formal political power alongside men. Charles V’s trajectory as a ruler provides one of the most eloquent examples of female participation in the Habsburg enterprise. He grew up under the tutorship of his aunt Margaret of Austria (1480-1530), who exerted a strong influence on the emperor, intellectually and politically. Charles V relied on Habsburg women to rule his Central European and Iberian dominions. Thus, not only his aunt, but also his sister, Mary of Hungary (1505-1558), and his illegitimate daughter, Margaret of Parma (1522-1586), governed and administered the Low Countries almost uninterruptedly from 1507 to 1567.<sup>108</sup> These effective and successful rulers were no mere puppets of Charles V. On

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<sup>106</sup> “porque siendo ambas y cada una de por sí tan grandes, que han conservado su grandeza con tanta Gloria de sus Reyes Cathólicos y Christianísimos; con la junta de ellas menguaría y descacería su exaltación y se seguirían otros gravísimos inconvenientes a sus súbditos y vasallos y al bien y E. public de ambos reynos y a todos los de la Christiandad...” *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 15, pp. 22-37.

<sup>107</sup> *Testamento de Felipe III*, Clause 38, pp. 48-55; *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 15, pp. 22-37.

<sup>108</sup> Female rule in the Netherlands was interrupted by the governorship of Emmanuel Philibert, Duke of Savoy from 1555 to 1559. Other than that, and the brief interruption of Margaret’s rule, when Charles V assumed his majority, there was uninterrupted female rule for about sixty years. Later, Isabel Clara Eugenia, daughter of Philip II became sovereign ruler from 1598 to 1621 and governor from 1621 to 1633.

the contrary, they developed their own policies, often contradicting and challenging the emperor.<sup>109</sup>

During the difficult early part of his rule in Spain, when he faced open rebellion from his Spanish subjects, Charles V relied on his female relatives to administer his dominions in the Iberian Peninsula too. His subjects urged him to marry his cousin, Isabel of Avis, precisely because she could govern the Iberian kingdoms during his frequent absences. Empress Isabel became the *de facto* ruler of Spain (r. 1526-1539), but also had constitutional rights to exercise authority with the titles “Lieutenant and Governor.”<sup>110</sup> After Isabel’s death, Charles relied not only on his son, the future Philip II, but also on his daughters, Maria of Austria and Juana of Austria, both of whom held governorships during Charles V’s and Philip II’s absences. Because Charles ruled jointly with his mother, Juana of Castile, women were *de jure* and the *de facto* rulers of the monarchy during the first half of the sixteenth century.

Philip II (r. 1556-1598) was greatly influenced by his female relatives, many of whom played a key role in politics. Even at the young age of nineteen, Juana of Austria assumed the government of the monarchy for five consecutive years; she continued to occupy an important political role for the rest of her life until her death at the also young

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Many of these important figures still have not been the subject of full length biographies, although there is a renewed interest in documenting their political impact.

<sup>109</sup> James Tracy argues that the successive governance of these women provided a strong economic and administrative foundation for these territories. James Tracy, *Emperor Charles V, Impresario of War: Campaign Strategy, International Finance, and Domestic Policy* (New York: Cambridge University, 2002), p. 11

<sup>110</sup> These titles derived from Aragonese traditions, denoting the active political partnership of Medieval Aragonese queens; Theresa Earenfight, “Absent Kings: Queens as Political Partners in the Medieval Crown of Aragon,” in *Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*, Theresa Earenfight, ed. (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 33-51; Anne J. Cruz, “Juana of Austria: Patron of the Arts and Regent of Spain” in *The Rule of Women in Early Modern Europe*, Cruz and Suzuki, eds. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois, 2009), 103-122, p. 103.

age of thirty-eight. Juana challenged her brother's policies when she saw fit and provided a base of power for the Portuguese faction at court (*ebolistas*).<sup>111</sup> Juana became the surrogate mother for Philip II's children and even his fourth wife, Ana of Austria, who was also Juana's niece.<sup>112</sup> Philip II's oldest daughter, Isabel Clara Eugenia, became the king's closest companion and right hand until his death and became the sovereign ruler of the Spanish Low Countries thereafter.<sup>113</sup> His younger daughter, Catalina Micaela, also proved an exceptional political partner, as the *de facto* ruler of the Duchy of Savoy.<sup>114</sup>

Women appear to have taken a less prominent role in the dynasty during the seventeenth century and their relative weakness coincided with the rise of the great favorites, the Duke of Lerma during the reign of Philip III (1598-1621) and the Count-Duke of Olivares, during the first half of the reign of Philip IV (r. 1621-1665). Royal women, however, did not totally vanish from the political scene. Women actively engaged in the politics of the monarchy during the reign of Philip III, if perhaps less publicly and formally than before. During the Catalanian rebellion of 1640-1652, after the fall of Olivares, the queen-consort, Isabel of Bourbon, took over the government while the king was at war. Other female figures appear prominently in the Habsburg enterprise during the seventeenth century. As noted, Isabel Clara Eugenia ruled the Low

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<sup>111</sup> Juana was princess consort of Portugal and mother of King Sebastian of Portugal. However, she did not assume the regency during his minority, but went back to Spain after being called by her father to assume the governorship of the realm. See, Cruz, "Juana of Austria," p. 104.

<sup>112</sup> Cruz, "Juana of Austria," p. 111.

<sup>113</sup> *Testamento de Felipe II*, edited by Manuel Fernández Álvarez, (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1982), p. 99.

<sup>114</sup> Blythe Alice Raviola, "La imagen de la infanta Catalina Micaela en la correspondencia de los gobernadores piemonteses," in *Las relaciones discretas entre las Monarquías Hispana y Portuguesa: Las casas de las reinas (siglos XV-XIX)*. 3 vols. Martínez Millán, ed. (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2008), III: 1733-1748.

Countries as co-sovereign and then as governor from 1598 until 1633. (The territories returned to Philip III after Isabel and her husband Albert failed to produce an heir.) Margherita of Savoy (the daughter of Catalina Micaela), the vicereine of Portugal at the time of the revolt in 1640,<sup>115</sup> and Mariana of Austria, tutor and governor from 1665 to 1676, provide additional examples. Carlos II's two wives, Maria Luisa of Orleans and Mariana of Neoburg too, achieved political preeminence, sometimes colluding with, and sometimes directly opposing, the queen mother, Mariana of Austria.

Mariana of Austria's role at such a crucial time for the Spanish monarchy thus gained strength from dynastic and Iberian political traditions. Mariana could also learn from models of guardianship for royal minorities, because her female ancestors had acted often as tutors and guardians for Habsburg children outside Spain.<sup>116</sup> A contemporary example was her aunt, Anne of Austria, mother of Louis XIV, who had been the regent during his minority. In case his grandson don Carlos succeeded to the throne while still a minor, for example, Charles V named his sister, Mary of Hungary, as his "tutor, curator, and governor" (*tutora, curadora y gobernadora*) for the Low Countries, the same titles Philip IV chose for his niece and wife for the minority of Carlos II.<sup>117</sup>

The emperor himself had been under the tutorship of his aunt, Margaret of Austria, who was also the governor of the Low Countries. Indeed, Mariana deployed

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<sup>115</sup> Blythe Alice Raviola, "Il filo di Anna. La Marchesa D'Alençon, Margherita Paleologo e Margherita di Savoia-Gonzaga fra stati italiani ed Europe," in *In Asenza del Re: Le reggenti dal XIV al XVII secolo (Piemonte ed Europa)*, Franca Varallo, ed. (Florence: Leo S. Olschi, 2009), 317-341.

<sup>116</sup> Many of the children of the dynasty had been sent to the courts of Margaret of Austria and Mary of Hungary to be educated there. Juana of Austria assumed the role of surrogate mother to Philip II's children (don Carlos, Isabel Clara Eugenia, and Catalina Micaela, as well as Ana of Austria, as she became a young bride) as their mothers passed away. See Anne J. Cruz, "Juana of Austria," p. 117.

<sup>117</sup> "tutora, curadora, y gobernadora en lo que tocaba a la gobernacion y administracion de los nuestros señorios de Borgoña y de Brabante, Flandes....." *Testamento de Carlos V*, p. 69.



these models at important moments during her rule. In a work Mariana commissioned from Francisco Ramos del Manzano, *Reynados de Menor Edad*, the author drew direct parallels between the minority of Emperor Charles V and his namesake King Carlos II.<sup>118</sup> One engraving depicted Charles V with his tutor and governor, Margaret of Austria, and another, Carlos II with his mother Mariana, as his own tutor and governor (figures 1 and 2).<sup>119</sup> As an invocation of dynastic tradition, the work reinforced Mariana's regency by comparing her son to one of the greatest monarchs of Habsburg Spain and by exalting his mother's role as comparable to that of Margaret. The images and the text drew direct lines between Mariana and her own ties to the Empire, as the daughter and sister of Emperors. The work sanctioned Mariana's position as widow and matriarch by invoking the imposing figure of Margaret of Austria. Both women are dressed in widow's clothing, while Mariana holds a crown, a device she used often to represent her position.

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<sup>118</sup> Francisco Ramos del Manzano, *Reynados de Menor Edad*, Madrid, 1672.

<sup>119</sup> Image on the left depicts Emperor Charles V and his aunt, Margaret of Austria, BNM ER 3887, n/p number. The image on the right was used as the frontispiece of the text, Ramos del Manzano, *Reynados de Menor Edad*.



(figure 1)



(figure 2)

In sum, Mariana could rely on almost two centuries of female participation in building Habsburg power, traditions that were familiar to her and that she was able to deploy to legitimate her position. It is, therefore, natural that the provisions Philip IV inserted in his testament placed Mariana at the center of monarchical government.

### **Mariana of Austria in Philip IV's Testament**

Philip IV's testament legitimized Mariana's rights during the minority and thus the document is crucial to understanding the nature and organization of the regency. But the testament also had broader repercussions for the minority government. Philip IV's death had the potential to put Europe in a "state of emergency," as an Italian chronicler eloquently put it.<sup>120</sup> The clauses that established the lines of succession were of enormous interest everywhere in Europe. Copies were made and sent to European rulers, as well as

<sup>120</sup> "Trascorso politico sopra l'emergence di Stato che puó suscitare in Europa la morte del Ré Catolico Filippo Quarto." BNM 2392, f. 248.

printed and circulated around Madrid.<sup>121</sup> The naming of the three-year old Carlos II as universal heir was unproblematic and widely anticipated. The clauses that had the potential to send Europe careening into another lengthy war, however, were those that designated the Austrian Habsburgs the successors if the child died and that denied Louis XIV's claims to the Spanish crown through his female Habsburg relatives: his mother, Anne of Austria, and wife, Maria Theresa of Austria.

Mariana of Austria figures prominently in Philip IV's testament: in the interim government established for the minority (Clauses 21 to 53), as one of Philip IV's heirs (Clauses 20 and 56),<sup>122</sup> as an executor of the testament (Clauses 77 to 79), and as a potential successor to the throne (Clause 13). Numerous clauses provided as well for alternative forms of government in case of Mariana's death (Clauses 37-50).<sup>123</sup> The way that Philip IV relied on Mariana calls attention to the multiple political and dynastic functions that Habsburg women were expected to carry out as potential heiresses, mothers, wives, administrators, and defenders of monarchical interests.

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<sup>121</sup> Several "copies of clauses" survived and are housed in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid; for instance, see VE 198.14 (a printed version of the succession clauses). The Imperial Ambassador reports in his diary that the testament was published and distributed; Nieto Nuño, ed. *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, I:136. Emperor Leopold I received a copy of the testament a few weeks after Philip's death on September 17, 1665; see Alfred Francis Pribram and Moriz Landwehr von Pragenau, *Privatebriefe Kaiser Leopold I an den Grafen F. E. Pötting, 1662-1673*, 2 vols. (Wien, 1903), I:166-167. The wife of the English ambassador to Madrid from 1664 to 1666, Lady Anne Fanshawe, also reports accurately the lines of succession in her diary, revealing a thorough familiarity with the testament; see John Loftis, ed. *Memoirs*, 176.

<sup>122</sup> In clause 20 Philip gives Mariana several relics and an important jewel. In clause 56 Philip ensures her dowry is restituted, endows her with 300 thousand ducats of yearly rent once the tutorship ends, and gives her jurisdiction and governorship of a city of her choosing in case she decided to "retire." *Testamento de Felipe IV*, pp. 41, 69.

<sup>123</sup> Philip's Testament made provisions for four possible scenarios: first, that both Carlos and his mother survived (the best possible scenario and what actually happened); second, that Carlos died and his mother survived; third, that Carlos survived and his mother died; and fourth, that both died. María del Carmen Sevilla González, "La Junta de Gobierno de la minoridad del Rey Carlos II," in *Los Validos*, José Antonio Escudero, ed. (Madrid: Dykinson, 2005), 583-616, pp. 599-600.

In the clause that names Carlos II the universal heir, for example, Philip IV invoked Mariana's dynastic capital as much as his: "I institute as universal heir don Carlos, my son, whom God in His infinite compassion, was pleased to bestow on me from my marriage to Queen doña Mariana, my niece, my very precious and beloved wife, daughter of Emperor Ferdinand III and Empress doña Maria, my sister."<sup>124</sup> His language choices, consistent with other correspondence, suggest that he placed blood ties above or at least on the same level as matrimonial connections. Mariana was his "niece" first and then his "wife." He also defined Mariana's status through her membership in the dynasty as daughter of the Habsburg Emperor and the Empress, whom he calls "my sister." Clearly, both spouses provided multiple layers of legitimacy for the heirs.

Philip IV secured a central political role for Mariana whether Carlos II succeeded or died. Mariana was also named as the interim governor if her daughter, Margarita of Austria, who was second in the line of succession, inherited.<sup>125</sup> Most importantly, Mariana herself stood in the line of succession. Philip established the third line of inheritance through his younger sister, Empress Maria of Austria (1606-1646), who was also Mariana's mother. Clause 13, therefore, placed Mariana and her brother, Emperor Leopold I, squarely in the line of succession: both of them were the children of Empress Maria. It is clear that Philip's intention was to protect Habsburg rule in Spain.<sup>126</sup> If Carlos

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<sup>124</sup> "Instituío por universal heredero a don Carlos, mi hijo, que Dios por su infinita misericordia fue servido de darme de el matrimonio de la reyna doña Mariana, mi sobrina, mi muy cara y muy amada muger, hija del emperador Ferdinando Tercero y de la emperatriz doña María, my hermana..." *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 10, pp. 15-21.

<sup>125</sup> "Si... faltare el Príncipe, mi hijo, en edad pupilar, o despues de haber cesado la tutela, si la Emperatriz, mi hija, que ha de suceder en estos reynos o el Emperador, su marido, no se hallaren en ellos; en su ausencia... continuará el gobierno de estos reynos la Reyna, si fuera viva, y se mantendrá y conservará la Junta en la forma y con las calidades que quedan dichas..." *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 53, pp. 66-67.

<sup>126</sup> Sevilla González, "La Junta de Gobierno," p. 597.

II died, the succession would fall first to Margarita, then Leopold, and finally Mariana. The links among the three—Margarita was married to Leopold I, Leopold I and Mariana were siblings, and Mariana was Margarita’s mother – were supposed to work in unison. If Margarita inherited the throne, she and Leopold I would have become joint rulers of Spain. This was unlikely, however, as another precondition to the succession was that the ruler must reside in Castile in order to inherit. Philip’s intention in the case that Carlos died before he could inherit the throne, therefore, was to put power into his wife’s hands until Margarita and Leopold produced an heir. In other words, Mariana had been singled out to assume either temporary or permanent rule one way or another: as tutor and governor during Carlos II’s minority, as governor for the absent joint rulers Margarita and Leopold, as regent for a potential successor, or as proprietary ruler through her own succession rights.

Scholars, however, have invariably misinterpreted Philip IV’s intentions towards his niece and wife in the testament. First, Mariana’s preeminent role in the plans Philip IV had devised for the monarchy has been, for the most part, ignored. They have gradually painted an inaccurate picture of the queen and her authority, much of it based on the fact that Philip IV instituted a Regency Council. The traditional historical narrative assumes that the king’s decision was the result of lack of confidence on his wife’s ability to govern. Gabriel Maura has been largely responsible for this.<sup>127</sup> Maura, for instance, assumed that the Regency Council limited Mariana’s sovereignty when the opposite was

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<sup>127</sup> For example in one chapter he described Mariana’s “lack of mental power” [flaqueza mental]. Yet, in another context, he argues that she had a “dominant Machiavellian mind” [ramplón maquiavelismo]. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, pp. I:210 and I:237.

closer to the truth.<sup>128</sup> Subsequent historians have followed suit. In a pivotal study of Spanish favorites, Francisco Tomás y Valiente argued that Philip IV instituted the Regency Council in order to prevent Mariana from assuming full authority, because she was incapable:

[I]t is evident that Philip IV did not want his widow at the head of the monarchy. In order to avoid it, and given that she was a weak and ignorant woman, completely incapable of ruling such a vast and complex monarchy, the only viable solution was to charge the business of government, not to a man, but to an institution, to a well balanced government body of plural composition.<sup>129</sup>

The doyen of seventeenth-century Spanish history, Antonio Domínguez Ortíz, dismissed Mariana's ability to reign with a stroke of a pen: "the same dynastic reasons that required Carlos II to be named as universal heir, also demanded that his mother assumed his guardianship, as tutor and governor during his minority, even though Philip IV knew better than anybody else her incompetence, unpopularity, and outlook, more German than Spanish."<sup>130</sup> Even as he acknowledged that Philip IV and the ruling elite expected Mariana to assume the guardianship, Domínguez Ortíz evidently subscribed to Maura's views. Although both Tomás y Valiente and Domínguez Ortíz recognized that the king invested Mariana with full sovereignty in his will and that he instituted the Regency Council in order to avoid the rise of another favorite, both affirmed that Philip IV did so in order to circumscribe tightly Mariana's political authority because she was

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<sup>128</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*. p. I:119.

<sup>129</sup> Tomás y Valiente, *Los validos*, p. 19.

<sup>130</sup> "las mismas razones dinásticas que imponían el nombramiento de Carlos como sucesor, exigían que la regente y gobernadora hasta su mayoría de edad fuera su madre, aunque Felipe IV sabía mejor que nadie que sus dotes de gobierno eran escasas, su popularidad nula y su espíritu más alemán que español." Antonio Domínguez Ortíz, "Introducción," in *Testamento de Felipe IV*, p. XXXIII.

incompetent.<sup>131</sup> John Lynch took a similar approach, although he provided no analysis or documentation to sustain it: “Thus, although the queen mother was in a sense the chief executive she did not have sovereign power, for she had to act with the advice of the junta, which she was instructed to assemble daily.... The thinking of Philip’s will is clear enough. Mariana was an unstable, ignorant and obstinate woman, unfitted to rule a vast and complex empire.”<sup>132</sup>

These views are hard to justify in light of the new research and careful historical analysis of the relevant documents. As should now be clear, Philip IV was bound culturally and legally to place Mariana in charge of the monarchy during the minority; he had no qualms about doing so. Mariana’s regency had been discussed in the highest political circles at the time of her marriage negotiations, when she was only fourteen years of age. Because of Philip IV’s age at the time of the marriage deliberations (he was forty-two), the king and his ministers openly considered Mariana of Austria’s regency.<sup>133</sup> The charge that Mariana, who had been reared in one of the most sophisticated courts of Europe, was “ignorant” is truly puzzling, especially since she had been singled out as a young child to become a ruler. We have yet to discover the details of her education, but as befitted her station, and as is confirmed by an examination of her own writings, which survive in the form of private correspondence and personally written and signed government and diplomatic papers, she was evidently an intelligent and highly educated

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<sup>131</sup> Domínguez Ortiz, “Introducción,” XXXIV. Tomas y Valiente, *Los validos*, p. 18.

<sup>132</sup> Lynch, *Spain under the Habsburgs*, p. 258.

<sup>133</sup> Laura Oliván Santaliestra, “Mariana of Austria en la encrucijada política del siglo XVII” Ph.D diss. Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2006, p. 43.

woman, fluent in German and Spanish, and thoroughly familiar with legal issues, military matters, Habsburg traditions, and European diplomacy.

In spite of recent attempts to present a more balanced picture, these negative views persist. Henry Kamen, one of the first historians to challenge traditional interpretations of the period, titled the chapter of his book on the political events of the minority “The Regency of Don Juan.”<sup>134</sup> The title overlooks the fact that don Juan occupied the role (not technically a regency in any case) for only two years, while Mariana did so for ten. Kamen closely followed Maura; his account was not based on original research. Even though he refuted the most inflammatory statements about Mariana, he perpetuated the same stereotypes:

Mariana was left alone in Madrid with a sickly son and an entire monarchy in her care. She had never wanted the task and was clearly “unfitted to rule a vast and complex empire”; but it is less than just to describe her as “unstable, ignorant and obstinate”. She had days of depression, when she retreated into the palace; and when she emerged she dressed habitually as a widow or as a nun- her portraits, obviously at her own wish, present her always in this attire.<sup>135</sup>

Kamen’s depiction of Mariana results from a complex historiographic web of bias created by a lack of research, an over-reliance on the seventeenth-century paradigm of decline (even though Kamen otherwise challenged it), and an erroneous interpretation of Mariana’s deployment of images of power.

These positions stem partially from a tendency to project the events of the regency back onto Philip IV’s testament. During her regency, Mariana certainly encountered opposition to her authority: two of her favorites were forced out of office against her will, the monarchy faced potential civil war, and she was compelled into a

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<sup>134</sup> Kamen, *Spain in the Later Seventeenth-Century*, p. 329.

<sup>135</sup> Kamen, *Spain in the Later Seventeenth-Century*, p. 329.



“retirement” in 1677 that was nothing less than exile. We cannot assume, however, that because her political authority was challenged, she had no capacity to rule or that Philip IV lacked confidence in her and thus intended to limit her authority.

### “With the Same Authority as the King”

A careful reading of the testament demonstrates Philip IV’s intentions. In Clause 21, Philip IV defined Mariana’s position in no uncertain terms:

If God decides that I died before the Prince, my son, or any other male that is to succeed me at fourteen years of age, wishing to provide the best possible government for my kingdoms and subjects, I name as governor (governadora) of all the kingdoms, states, and lordships, and as tutor (tutora) of the prince, my son, and of any other son or daughter, who succeeds me, the queen doña Mariana, my very precious and beloved wife, *with all the faculties and power that in conformity to the laws, royal charters, privileges, styles and customs of each of my kingdoms, states, and lordships, I may bequeath her, repealing what I may change or eliminate. In order that with only this appointment, without need of another act, oath, or discernment of the said tutorship, from the same day that I die, she is able to govern in the same manner and with the same authority that I do, because it is my will to communicate and give her [the authority] that I have, and all that is necessary, not withholding anything, so that as the said tutor of the son or daughter that would succeed me, she has the entire government and direction of all my kingdoms in peace and war, until the son or daughter who succeeds me reaches the fourteenth year needed to govern* (my emphasis).<sup>136</sup>

He reaffirmed and expanded those principles in Clause 35:

The papers of government that I often and usually sign, the queen should also sign in the same manner and place. The resolutions that she would take in consultations, whether they are about matters of peace, or of government, grants and justice, as well as the orders that she may give *should be executed in the same*

<sup>136</sup> “Si Dios fuere servido que Yo muera antes que el Príncipe, mi hijo, o otro qualquier varón que me aya de suceder tenga catorce años, deseando como deseo para en este caso proveer a la mejor gobernación de mis reynos y vasallos, nombro por gobernadora de todos mis reynos, E. s y señoríos y tutora de el Príncipe mi hijo o hija, que me huviere de suceder, a la reyna doña Mariana mi muy cara y amada muger, con todas las facultades y poder que conforme a las leyes, fueros, privilegios, estilos y costumbres de cada uno de los dichos mis reynos, E. s y señoríos le puedo dar, derogando lo que Yo pudiere alterar y derogar, para que con solo este nombramiento, sin otro acto ni diligencia ni juramento, ni discernimiento de la dicha tutela, pueda desde el día que Yo fallezca entrar a gobernar, en la misma forma, y con la misma autoridad que Yo lo hago; porque mi voluntad es, comunicarle y darle la que Yo tengo, y toda la que fuere necesaria, sin reservar cosa alguna, para que como tal tutora de el hijo o hija suio y mío que me sucediere, tenga todo el gobierno y regimiento de todos mis reynos en paz y en guerra, asta que el hijo o hija que me sucediere tenga catorce años cumplidos para poder gobernar.” *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 21, pp. 40-43.

*way as when I was the one resolving them. And I do not hold back any of the faculties that I have [as king] and that she assumes as tutor, curator, and governor, even if that entails to make and proclaim new laws or revoke them. In order for this to be so, I give her as much power as it resides in me for everything that is necessary and convenient, so that she is able to use the greatest prerogatives and royal power (regalías) that belong to the Dignity [of kingship], so that she can provide for all the viceroyalties, governorships, and other offices of peace and war, and for her to do her will in everything that may be necessary and convenient, but always with the opinion of the [Regency] Council and not in another manner...(my emphasis).<sup>137</sup>*

Clause 21, therefore, names the queen “governor and tutor.” It stipulates Mariana’s legal jurisdiction over the minor king, as his tutor, and over the king’s inheritance, as the governor. The title of curator appears in Clause 35, although it is only briefly mentioned (“she assumes as tutor, curator, and governor”), its jurisdiction is implied rather than spelled out. The titles of tutor and governor were to be held concurrently, and the title of curator subsequent to the other two. The title of curator, therefore, carried legal weight in the position intended for Mariana in the monarchy after she transferred power to her son (at fourteen) and until he reached his twenty-fifth birthday.

Clauses 21 and 35 clearly established Mariana’s sovereignty and pre-empted any possibility of a legal challenge to her position. In the Spanish monarchy, the transfer of sovereignty occurred automatically upon the death of the ruler. This is why the oath of allegiance to heirs had profound juridical and political weight. (Sworn heirs were buried

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<sup>137</sup> “Los despachos que Yo suelo y acostumbro firmar, ha de firmar la Reyna en el mismo lugar que yo lo hago; y las resoluciones que tomare en las consultas, assí como en materias de paz, como de gobierno, gracia y justicia y órdenes que embiare, se han de executar de la misma manera, que si Yo viviendo las resolviera. Y no reservo de la facultad que como a tutora, curadora y gobernadora le compitiere, nada de lo que a mí me toca, aunque sea hacer y promulgar leyes de nuevo, o revocarlas; porque si para esto fuere menester, le doy quanto poder en mí reside para todo lo necesario y conveniente y para que use de las maiores prerogativas y regalías que tocan a la Dignidad; y para que provea todos los virreynatos, gobiernos, y demás oficios de paz y guerra, y haga y obre su voluntad en quanto conviniere y fuere menester; pero aconsejándose siempre con la dicha Junta y no de otra manera...” *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 35, pp. 51-53.

with the same rituals used for ruling monarchs.) Spain (unlike in France or at the Papal Court, for instance) did not experience an interregnum during royal successions. Philip instituted the same principle for Mariana to assume the government and tutorship: “In order that with only this appointment, without need for another act, oath, or discernment ... she is able to begin governing from the same day that I die.” Clause 35 confirms the automatic transfer of sovereignty and continuity in government: “The state papers that I often and usually sign, the queen should also sign in the same manner and place. The resolutions that she would take in consultations, whether they be in matters of peace, or in those of government, grants and justice, as well as the orders that she may give should be executed in the same way as when I was the one resolving them.” Thus, Clauses 21 and 35 established Mariana’s sovereignty, ensured a smooth transfer of power, kept the machine of government turning, and protected Mariana’s position. Mariana did not need any government body to confirm her appointment; it took place automatically as Philip IV had intended.

Nevertheless, Philip IV’s creation of the Regency Council has been used as evidence that she possessed only limited sovereignty. One source of confusion has been Clause 25 which stated that “it will be best that the queen is in conformity with the opinion of all or the majority of the Council.”<sup>138</sup> According to Maura, the Regency Council had the capacity to control the queen and limit her decisions although, as a legal scholar has recently pointed out, this is legally incorrect, and, in fact, no government body could override the right to exercise “plenitudo potestatis” (complete political

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<sup>138</sup> “...bien será lo mas seguro conformarse la Reyna con el parecer de todos o de la mayor parte...” *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 25, p. 47.

power) that the testator had articulated clearly.<sup>139</sup> When read together, Clauses 21 and 35 leave no doubt that Philip intended his wife to enjoy the same prerogatives of a proprietary ruler; the only exception was that her rule was temporary.

Indeed, the apportionment of full sovereignty to Mariana was done unequivocally and in multiple ways. Philip placed Mariana's sovereignty in a variety of contexts, repeatedly using the following phrases: "with all the faculties and power that ... I can give her," "[she can] begin governing in the same manner and with the same authority that I do;" "because it is my will to communicate and give her [the authority] that I have, and all that is necessary;" "not withholding anything;" "she has the entire government and direction of all my kingdoms in peace and war;" "I do not hold back any of the faculties that I have [as king] and that she assumes as tutor, curator, and governor;" "I give her as much power as it resides in me for everything that is necessary and convenient, so that she is able to use the greatest prerogatives and royal power (regalias) that belong to the Dignity [of kingship];" and "[she can do] her will in everything that may be necessary and convenient."

### **The Regency Council**

According to Maria del Carmen Sevilla González, the juridical and institutional antecedents of the Regency Council may be traced back to the late years of Philip IV's reign. In 1661, after almost forty years of ruling with the advice of a single counselor,<sup>140</sup> Philip begun to govern with a junta composed of three members: Don Ramiro Núñez de

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<sup>139</sup> Sevilla González, "La Junta de Gobierno," p. 601-602.

<sup>140</sup> The Count-Duke of Olivares from 1621 until his fall in 1643 was Philip IV's first favorite-minister. Olivares was succeeded by his nephew, don Luis de Haro, who exercised the position from 1643 until his death in 1661.

Guzmán, Duke of Medina de las Torres (1600-1668); don Baltasar Moscoso y Sandoval, Cardinal and Archbishop of Toledo (1589-1665); and don Garcia de Haro Sotomayor y Guzmán, Count of Castriello (1588-1670). Philip's desire to avoid the rise of another favorite and his wish for Mariana to replicate the style of government he adopted at the end of his reign, led him to form the Regency Council.<sup>141</sup> As we have seen, Tomás y Valiente and Domínguez Ortíz also viewed the formation of the Regency Council as Philip's attempt to abort the rise of a favorite.

I believe that Philip, well aware of the impossibility of ruling such a vast and complex empire individually, placed a group of counselors at Mariana's disposal to ensure the queen had all the tools she needed to make the decisions herself and to avoid the factional struggles that usually took place upon successions. Philip went about instituting this government body quite deliberately: In Clause 22, Philip gave Mariana political advice, a dynastic political tradition going back to Charles V, and not an isolated case owing to the king's purported lack of trust on Mariana's abilities. He charged Mariana with keeping the conciliar system of government in the same way that their ancestors had done so.<sup>142</sup> He recommended that the queen "pay attention to the election of ministers [and] rule paying particular attention to the consultations of the Councils." Finally, he asked her to remit all political matters to "Regency Council that I want and is my volition to form and that is attended by the president of the Council of Castile, the vice-chancellor [or presiding minister] of the Council of Aragon, the Archbishop of

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<sup>141</sup> Sevilla González, "La Junta de Gobierno," p. 590.

<sup>142</sup> "en primer lugar le encargo que conserve los Consejos en la forma que Yo los dexare, y como los tuvieron mi padre y abuelo y demás antecesores." *Testamento de Felipe IV*, clause 22, pp. 42- 43.

Toledo, the Inquisitor General, and a grandee.”<sup>143</sup> An additional and last member was appointed to represent the Council of State (Clause 23).<sup>144</sup>

In this way, Philip left a mechanism in place that ensured a smooth transition to the next regime and attempted to prevent (as we will see unsuccessfully) factional struggles. This is why Philip applied strict institutional criteria to the initial composition of the Junta, which was to include top figures from the ruling elite: representatives from the most important Councils of government (State, Castile, and Aragon), the two highest religious offices of the monarchy (Inquisitor General and Archbishop of Toledo), and a representative of the most powerful social group (a grandee). Philip named the original members by codicil, but clearly gave Mariana the prerogative to designate subsequent members as vacancies became available. All had to swear an oath of loyalty to Mariana, either “from the queen herself or someone whom she designated” (clause 22).

Contemporaries understood the implications of the testament and accepted— with far more ease than modern historians— Mariana’s sovereignty. The minutes of the meetings of the Council of Aragon from September 1665 illustrate how Mariana’s subjects understood her new role. Members noted Philip’s death matter-of-factly: “Philip IV died in Madrid on September 17, 1665.” Immediately underneath is found: “[the king

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<sup>143</sup> “También le encargo que atienda mucho a las consultas de los Consejos, y que éstas y las que hicieren las Juntas y los ministros particulares y las cartas, memoriales y otros qualesquier papeles sobre qualesquier materias, derechos y pretensiones, así las que tocaren a justicia, gracia, y gobierno, tratados de paz y guerra, confederaciones y alianças, como de otros qualesquier negocios y accidentes de qualquier calidad que sean, los remita a la Junta que quiero y es mi voluntad se forme y concurran en ella el que es o fuere al dicho tiempo presidente del Consejo de Castilla, el vicecanchiller o el que presidiere en el Consejo de Aragón, el arçobispo de Toledo, el Inquisidor general, y el grande que Yo dexaré nombrado en un papel que quedará con este mi testamento o en el codiçilio que hiciere...” *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 22, pp. 43-45.

<sup>144</sup> “Y assi mismo es mi voluntad y mando que, demás de los que dexo nombrados concurra y entre en esta Junta un consejero de E. , sin embargo de que alguno de los nombrados son de el mismo Consejo... porque lo tengo por muy conveniente y necesario, por ser el Consejo en quen concurren noticias más universales de mi Monarchia...” *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 23, p. 45-47.

named] the Queen, our Lady, governor with very extensive powers, *with the same authority as the king*, without need to submit anything for referendum, and tutor of the king until he is fourteen years of age” (my emphasis).<sup>145</sup> The commentary by ministers represented in the Regency Council and well versed in reading legal documents eloquently shows that contemporaries fully recognized Mariana of Austria’s political authority.

### **A Queen “Tutor, Curator, and Governor”**

Mariana’s regency was thus strictly defined legally and constitutionally. Mariana’s prerogatives derived from Philip’s testament and were used for the proper functioning of the bureaucratic machine of the court and the monarchy. Her titles, for example, were always included in the papers addressed to or dispatched by her. For expediency, and necessarily given the bulk of the documentation that passed through her hands, a shortened form of address dominated. The Queen Governor (*La Reina Gobernadora*) heads most of the official documents. Sometimes, her royal decrees combined two titles: the “queen tutor and governor” (*la reina tutora y gobernadora*). The most official correspondence, displaying the royal seals, included all three titles (*la reina, como su tutora, curadora, y gobernadora*), even though she did not exercise the title of curator during the minority. Usage was strictly regulated: Cristobal Crespi de Valdaura, member of the Regency Council and presiding officer of the Council of Aragon, listed in his diary which titles pertained when.<sup>146</sup> Considering that Philip IV and the court placed

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<sup>145</sup> “Gobernadora con clausulas amplisimas la Reyna n[uestr]a S[eñor]a dandole la misma autoridad q[ue] tiene el Rey sin referenciar coza alguna y tutora del Rey asta tener 14 cumplidos.” AHN Consejos leg. 7259.

<sup>146</sup> BNM mss 5742 f. 363 r-v.

great emphasis on titles that evidently carried great weight, the following questions seem especially pertinent: What did the titles entail and how did she exercise them? Did her juridical status as queen “tutor and governor” affect the court and the political structure of the monarchy during the minority?

Mariana’s position was accepted without any resistance when Philip IV died. She reigned with the titles of “tutor” and “governor” from September 17, 1665, the day the king died, until November 6, 1675, the day Carlos II’s celebrated his fourteenth birthday and achieved legal emancipation.<sup>147</sup> The transition of power from Mariana to Carlos took place as had been initially planned, although Mariana had attempted a few days before to extend her formal authority as regent. Mariana relinquished her official duties on November 6, 1675 and ordered from that day on all the official documents be addressed and submitted to Carlos.<sup>148</sup> For more than a year afterwards, however, Mariana continued to be the *de facto* ruler of the monarchy, thus accounting for many inconsistencies in how scholars have dated Mariana’s regency. Mariana’s juridical status invariably changed after Carlos’s fourteenth birthday. Even though Philip had named her “curator” of her son, she had to negotiate her subsequent political role.

As governor, Mariana enjoyed executive and administrative responsibilities over the monarchy: She signed documents in the king’s name, dispatched all matters that required the ruler’s decision, and steered Spain’s diplomacy, war efforts, and domestic policy. As the king’s tutor, Mariana possessed rights and responsibilities. Philip’s only requirement in the testament was that the child begin instruction in the art of governing at the age of ten (Clause 34). All other aspects of the king’s schooling were implicitly

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<sup>147</sup> *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 21, 40-43.

<sup>148</sup> See for example, AGS E. España, leg.s 2700 and 2701.



determined by the legal understanding and practice of tutorship in Spain. Mariana took her task seriously: she ordered an investigation on how royal teachers had been chosen in the past, commissioned educational treatises, organized her household in ways conducive to helping Carlos assume his ceremonial role at court, and publicized her program for the king's education with the astute deployment of visual images.

Tutors were also to care for the physical needs of their charges. Indeed, Philip IV stipulated that during his minority, Carlos II could live in Mariana's royal household and thus be "served" by her attendants. The king's testament clearly stipulated her prerogatives:

As to the servants of my Successor, the queen may provide for his House whoever she sees fit, when he reaches the appropriate age, in the event that I have not done so myself. In the meantime he can be served [from the household] of his mother. It is my wish that from those whom I left [in my household] at the time of my death, be chosen the most appropriate ones to serve him, being careful that they possessed the best virtues and habits, particularly those who will serve him inside the chamber (Clause 36).<sup>149</sup>

The legal implications of this clause are straightforward, but nonetheless, quite weighty. Philip IV asked Mariana to appoint the servants of Carlos II's household, but did not set a time limit for the task, stating vaguely that the king's royal household should be created "when the appropriate age required it." Thus, Mariana had a great deal of flexibility to decide not only who would obtain the most coveted posts in the king's royal household, but also when that household would be established. Philip IV's testamentary

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<sup>149</sup> "En quanto a los criados de mi Sucesor, la Reyna podrá proveer para su Casa los que le pareciere, pero, en llegando a edad que se le aya de poner la suya. si Yo no lo hubiera hecho, entre tanto, podrá servirse de la de su madre. Y es mi voluntad, que de los que Yo dexare al tiempo de mi muerte, se escojan los que fueren más a propósito, poniéndose muy particular cuidado en que sean todos de buenas costumbres y virtuosos y aparcularmente los que huvieren de servirle dentro de la Cámara." *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 36, pp. 52-53.

provisions gave the queen complete legal jurisdiction over the minor king, who was to be surrounded by members of her royal household until she gave him an independent house.

The arrangement resulted in a major restructuring of the court with profound and unintended consequences for the regency government. Philip IV's will, precisely because it allowed Mariana a very wide range of prerogatives, created fertile ground for the factional struggles that plagued Carlos II's minority. When Carlos II inherited the throne, the king's royal household remained in abeyance until Mariana formally re-established it again in April 1675.<sup>150</sup> The regency, therefore, propelled not only Mariana to the top of the political hierarchy, but her entire household as well. Likewise, members of the former king's household (which naturally had occupied the top of the political ladder) suddenly became displaced from the political center by members of the queen's household, a large number of whom were women. A new ruling dynamic evolved: everyone had to learn to participate in the political process and the court's activities through Mariana's household, under whose jurisdiction the minor king lived.

Mariana's regency was founded on very strong political, legal, and socio-cultural traditions that sanctioned her position of authority. However, precisely because of the combination of factors that supported her power, the the court went through a substantial restructuring to accommodate her rule as queen "tutor and governor." This new organization intensified and complicated the normal avenues of competition for access to the monarch, royal patronage, and political influence. It changed the practice of kingship, bringing to light (instead of masking) the main problem of a royal minority: the lack of a fully regnant king. It disrupted the traditional gendering of the court. Mariana recognized the danger and attempted to diminish the harmful political consequences thus generated.

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<sup>150</sup> AGP Reinados, c. 92 exp. 3.

The new court structure during the regency, its political consequences, and Mariana's strategies to deal with the situation will be discussed in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER 2

### A QUEEN'S COURT: THE POLITICS OF THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD

The Spanish Habsburgs met the needs of their offspring with a number of court positions allocated through the queen's household, where children spent their formative years until they were given their independent entourage according to the political demands of the moment, their status within the larger family structure, age, and gender.<sup>151</sup> Thus, from the moment of their birth royal children merged into the overall structure of the court, occupying a conspicuous positions even before they took on permanent political roles. In this way, the queen's household acquired a flexible structure, growing as queens gave birth. The presence of children at court had concrete political consequences for noble families: coveted court appointments became available each time a Habsburg child was welcomed into the world and the court. This system seems to have worked very well for the children themselves too; the royal household provided stability and a training ground for the younger generation of royals, who continued to be close to their parents, while they simultaneously became accustomed to being the center of a large entourage and part of the rituals and ceremonials of the court.<sup>152</sup>

No changes to this model were made when Carlos II inherited the throne a little short of his fourth birthday. In line with Habsburg practice, Philip IV's testamentary provisions required Carlos II to live under the jurisdiction of, and to be "served" from, his

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<sup>151</sup> Martha Hoffman, *Raised to Rule: Educating Royalty and the Court of the Spanish Habsburgs, 1601-1634* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2011).

<sup>152</sup> Hoffman, *Raised to Rule*, chapter 2.

mother's royal household.<sup>153</sup> Philip IV did not stipulate a specific date for the formation of Carlos II's own royal household and left this important decision on Mariana's hands, who postponed it until almost the end of the minority.<sup>154</sup> The situation fundamentally altered the court's structure: when Carlos II inherited the throne, he did not immediately inherit his father's royal household. Mariana's household, therefore, took the place formerly occupied by the king's household in the overall political court structure. This new scenario intensified and complicated the normal avenues of competition for access to the monarch, royal patronage, and political influence.<sup>155</sup>

This chapter investigates the impact of the new court structure on the political climate of the court during Mariana's regency. As soon as Philip IV died, the court had to adapt to a dramatic restructuring, one having profound repercussions on Mariana's regime, on everyone who occupied a post in the court, and on the very practice of kingship. Mariana put into place a series of royal household policies to counteract the potential destabilizing elements of the court's reorganization. She collaborated in this important enterprise with the Marquis of Aytona, who thus became one of the most influential political figures of the regency until his death in 1670. This relationship is crucial in understanding the strategies Mariana put into place and the partnership that soon extended to other aspects of her rule. The following sections survey the court's

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<sup>153</sup> *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 36.

<sup>154</sup> See Hoffman, *Raised to Rule*. The households of Philip IV and his siblings, Anne, Maria, Carlos, and Ferdinand, all were established at different times based on the political needs of the moment.

<sup>155</sup> Authority and control over the king during royal minorities was the most important source of power for queen regents in the French monarchy. This was more important if they were excluded from the regency council, or if they presided over it without executive power. The Spanish court presents a very different case to compare how women exercised power during royal minorities. As we will see, it was precisely the role occupied by the queen's household in the structure of the court that defined the practice of kingship during a royal minority, and not the other way around.

organizational shifts, identify Mariana's strategies in dealing with these situations, and discuss conflicts of etiquette that had to be solved during the first few years of the minority. The disputes arose specifically from the existence of the regency, its structure, and Mariana's royal household policies. Conflicts that originated in the structural changes of the court soon translated into personal and political animosities and shaped Mariana's regime in visible and concrete ways.

Because the issues discussed in this chapter are rather complex, a clarification of terms and methodology is needed. I have chosen to translate the word *casa*, when used as in *la casa del rey* or *la casa de la reina* as household, that is, the king's household or the queen's household. In Spain and most early modern courts, a basic division inside the ruler's household, and one that had profound political implications, was between house and chamber.<sup>156</sup> The word house, therefore, is used when *casa* refers to a section within the household, different, for example, than the chamber or *cámara*.<sup>157</sup> The term *casa* in seventeenth century court parlance, translated here as house or household, has very specific connotations and fundamentally differs from what the word may suggest to modern readers. In English and Spanish alike the words house and *casa* are associated with a physical space that is for the most part static and permanent. For members of the court in seventeenth century Spain house or household referred not necessarily to a physical space, although it functioned in a physical space, but to the group of people that composed it and the rules and hierarchy that defined the relationship between all

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<sup>156</sup> Members of the chamber had personal access to the ruler and thus greater political influence. This is true of most early modern courts.

<sup>157</sup> Also, the people composing that household are referred in the documents as the *familia* (i.e. "la familia de la reina"). Thus the term household conflates several meanings, but I believe that it is more convenient, as it is the equivalent English word used by court studies specialists.

members of that house. Thus, the terms queen's household or king's household should be thought of as a system composed of people, with rules regulating behavior and duties, and organized with the purpose of serving the persons of the queen and the king separately. This concept is key to understanding the issues discussed in this chapter. It explains, for example, how the king of Spain possessed at least two households (i.e. the Burgundian and the Castilian) that did not necessitate separate premises but rather converged in the same physical space to serve the sovereign.

The analysis that follows relies on the growing literature of court studies. The court was one of the most important institutions in the early modern period, not only as a producer of culture, but also as a power structure and a political institution.<sup>158</sup> The court is essential for those interested in the study of women and politics because it provided a physical space and a formal configuration for female participation in the political process, allowing them to take on a preeminent role. The relationship between court, government, and household has been one of the staples of court studies literature. In this trilogy, household preceded the other two. We can say that the royal household was the foundation upon which the entire court system rested. This is why the royal household should not be conflated with the notion of court.

The distinction between court and household is, however, not always an easy one to sustain. Some scholars have argued that the household could exist without the ruler, while the court could only have existed when the ruler "holds" court.<sup>159</sup> This is not the

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<sup>158</sup> Ronald G. Asch, "Introduction: Court and Household from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries," in *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age*, Asch and Birke, eds. (London, England: German Historical Institute, 1991).

<sup>159</sup> Asch, "Introduction," p. 9.

case at all with the Spanish court and important developments can be observed already by the mid-sixteenth century. According to M. J. Rodríguez-Salgado, the royal household was part of the court, but also could exist independently from the court. (If the king was absent from the court, for example, he would travel with his household.)<sup>160</sup> Yet, could the court exist without the ruler? This is a sticky point. For many Western European courts the presence of the ruler constituted a court. In Spain, however, rather than the physical presence of the ruler, his “residual authority [was] the prerequisite for the court.”<sup>161</sup> Once Philip II moved the court permanently to Madrid in 1561, the Spanish court became associated with a physical space that could exist even if the ruler was absent (or in Carlos II’s case unable to exercise sovereign power directly), and encompassed all aspects of government: “sovereign power, the organs of central government, and a household structure.”<sup>162</sup>

Although the Spanish court occasionally could and did function without the ruler’s physical presence, the household of the ruler could not exist without him. The only time in the history of the Spanish Habsburg court that this issue could come to the surface was during Carlos II’s minority. Thus, I argue in what follows that the king’s royal household had no juridical standing during most of Mariana’s regency. This is not an easy notion to convey, since there exists an abundant paper trail that may imply

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<sup>160</sup> M. J. Rodríguez-Salgado, “The Court of Philip II of Spain,” in *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age*, Asch and Birke, eds. (London, England: German Historical Institute, 1991), 205-244, p. 207.

<sup>161</sup> Rodríguez-Salgado, “The Court of Philip II of Spain,” p. 207.

<sup>162</sup> As Rodríguez-Salgado rightfully points out, during Philip II’s rule the Spanish court became a permanent place, and thus remained the “court”, whether the ruler was there or not. The king’s “residual authority” kept the machine of government functioning. During Carlos II’s minority, it was much simpler to keep the court functioning, as Mariana easily took over this task, as will be explained in the following chapter. Replacing the royal household, however, was a much more complex issue. Rodríguez-Salgado, “The Court of Philip II of Spain,” p. 207.



exactly the opposite.<sup>163</sup> However, despite the fact that members of Philip IV's household continued to be paid, that portions of his household still functioned, and that many of the disenfranchised members of the court participated in rituals and ceremonials, everyone understood that the king's household had ceased to exist. Without a monarch as the titular head of the royal household, the household became "fragments and relics" of what had been in the past.<sup>164</sup>

The queen's royal household was the only one that retained legal standing from September 17, 1665 until April 15, 1675.<sup>165</sup> The king's royal household, on the other hand, lost its main political and juridical functions: that is to serve the king. A close reading of texts and events reveals that members of the court understood the unusual status of the royal households. Thus, the language used by courtiers, administrators, and ministers of the court proves crucial in analyzing the internal dynamics of power. Some of these written records document private discussions, while others chronicle debates that took place at the highest and most public levels of governments. Either way, these exchanges offer an ideal entry into the culture of the court and a unique view of how Mariana's authority blended into a pre-existing political organization. The idea that the king's household had ceased to exist is consistently confirmed by a variety of people, in a

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<sup>163</sup> The few studies on the court that have actually addressed this topic have basically dismissed this issue. See Maria Victoria López-Cordón Cortezo, "Las mujeres en la vida de Carlos II," and José Rufino Novo, "La Casa real durante la regencia de una reina: Mariana de Austria," in *Las relaciones discretas entre las Monarquías Hispana y Portuguesa: las casas de las reinas, (siglos XV-XIX)*, 3 vols., José Martínez Millán and Paula Marçal Lourenço, editors, (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2008), I: 483-548.

<sup>164</sup> This is the way the Duke of Montalto described Philip IV's royal household soon after Mariana assumed the regency. See below for a detailed discussion. (During the extensive discussion of the households, the reader should keep in mind that all references to the king's household, unless specifically noted otherwise, refer to Philip IV's, not to Carlos II's, who did not have his own royal household until 1675.)

<sup>165</sup> This is the date that Carlos II moved into his own quarters and began to be attended by members of his own royal household. See Chapter 4 for an analysis of the transition, which not coincidentally gave way to the political coup of late 1675.

variety of contexts, and in multiple occasions. As we will see, it formed one of the most important issues for members of the court. Exchanges that took place within and between the royal households functioned as forms of cultural interactions deeply embedded in the social and political system of the court.<sup>166</sup> Consequently, a detailed analysis of conflicts of etiquette, royal household policies, ceremonials, and rituals unravels the underlying order of that system.<sup>167</sup>

The type of gender analysis adopted here calls into question the idea of fixed female subordination to a patriarchal order. Instead of the binary opposition between male and female authority, I juxtapose the competing needs of kingship and childhood, queenship and motherhood. From this point of view, gender formed part of a kaleidoscopic system whereby power was allocated, contested, and negotiated. Motherhood in particular could and did subordinate masculine power when that power was embodied in a child. Nevertheless, it caused substantial conflict when that child became a king. By the time that the child-king reached legal majority, maternal authority clashed with the political needs of kingship almost to the point of civil war (see chapter 5). My interpretation of Mariana's regency fundamentally differs from previous ones, which assume that the disorders of the court were based on petty factional struggles due to political incompetence, personal ambition, or outright resistance to women's rule. Although all of those factors may have played a role, they do not satisfactorily explain the heightened state of factionalism.

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<sup>166</sup> See Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

<sup>167</sup> These cultural interactions can uncover the values that "legitimized" a political order. Sean Wilentz, "Introduction: Teufelsdröckh's Dilemma: On Symbolism, Politics, and History," in *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual, and Politics since the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 1-10, p. 3.

### **The Royal Household on the Eve of Mariana's Regency**

With the elimination of the king's royal household, the regency destabilized the traditional politics of the court by giving women a central position and by partially disenfranchising the male leadership. In order to understand this process, we must understand the organization of the Habsburg court as a political and gendered institution and in particular consider the role of the royal household in the decision-making process and as a metaphor for the political entity called the Spanish monarchy.

The Spanish Habsburg court developed along with the monarchy as the latter grew into the political entity eventually called Spain. Indeed, as José Martínez Millán has recently argued, the court *was* an expression of the monarchy.<sup>168</sup> From the unification of Castile and Aragon in 1469 and with the addition of territories brought together under the rule of the Habsburgs, the court adopted and adapted royal household traditions from its various territories. Charles V, for instance, travelled to the Iberian Peninsula with his Burgundian household and his Flemish courtiers, although he eventually incorporated Castilians into his service in order to defuse political dissent.<sup>169</sup> As the monarchy expanded during the sixteenth century, royal household traditions continue to evolve. Burgundian and Castilian households overlapped, for instance, and debates on the need to choose one form of etiquette over the other continued well into the seventeenth century. In fact, a Burgundian Household (*Casa de Borgoña*) co-existed with a Castilian one (*Casa de Castilla*), and even with small remnants of a Portuguese and Aragonese

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<sup>168</sup> José Martínez Millán, "La corte de la monarquía hispánica," *Studia histórica. Historia Moderna* 28 (2006): 17-61, p. 35.

<sup>169</sup> The history of Burgundian etiquette traditions should be understood as adopted in competition with Castilian etiquette traditions.

households, all of which survived at least in vestigial forms until the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>170</sup>

The Spanish Habsburgs adopted the etiquette and the ceremonial traditions that provided an identity for the dynasty and simultaneously incorporated subjects from the array of kingdoms under their rule.<sup>171</sup> *Libros de Etiquetas* (books of etiquette) formalized the process during the sixteenth century. At first these were relatively simple compilations of the offices in the royal households that delineated their functions, prerogatives, authority, activities, salaries, and emoluments. During the reign of Philip III (1598-1621) the obligations of each court office were meticulously revised. Reform efforts redoubled when Philip IV inherited the crown.<sup>172</sup> The codification process culminated with the so-called *Ordenanzas de Felipe IV* compiled between 1647 and 1650 and revised by a Junta de Etiquetas appointed by the king in 1651.

By the time that Mariana assumed the regency, the Spanish court was one of the most elaborate in Europe. It was spatially segregated according to several principles: (1) sections, which corresponded to specific functions to serve the ruler (house, chamber, stables, and chapel); (2) gendered areas (separate households for the queen and the king with female and male attendants respectively); and (3) bureaucratic areas and living spaces (council chambers and personal quarters).

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<sup>170</sup> They were governed and funded independently. By the seventeenth century, the Castilian household existed, although it was much smaller than the Burgundian, which encompassed the majority of the court. Traces of other households were minimal by the later seventeenth century. It should be noted that these “houses” [casas] did not necessarily have a separate space associated with it.

<sup>171</sup> The history of the royal household in Habsburg Spain is now much better understood thanks to the massive archival research by the group La Corte en Europa directed by J. M. Millán.

<sup>172</sup> Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares*.

The king and queen lived in separate apartments in the west and east wings of the Madrid Alcazar or palace. Their quarters wrapped around two side-by-side courtyards, respectively called the *Patio del Rey* and the *Patio de la Reina*. Their households were independent entities with a parallel structure. Even though it functioned independently, members of the queen's household were fewer than the king's and in theory subordinate to his authority.<sup>173</sup> Bureaucratic and ceremonial activities were spatially divided as well: The royal family lived on the upper floors of the palace, while the government councils were located at ground level.<sup>174</sup> The expression "to bring down a royal decree" (*bajar un decreto*) originated from this spatial division: the king sent royal orders from the upper floors of the palace to the government councils below.

The sections within the households served the specific needs of the ruler and the royal family; a top executive official governed each. The *mayordomo mayor*, for example, governed the house (*casa*) section, which in turn was subdivided into units associated with the feeding and housing of the monarch. This was the highest office in the court hierarchy, although it competed in preeminence with the *sumiller de corps*, the officer in charge of the chamber (*cámara*) section of the household. He oversaw the king's personal service, enjoyed constant access to the monarch, slept in the king's chambers, and supervised the ruler's entourage.<sup>175</sup> In charge of the royal stables, the

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<sup>173</sup> I say in theory because the queen's household enjoyed a degree of independence, although Philip IV controlled the entire court structure.

<sup>174</sup> John H. Elliott, "The Court of the Spanish Habsburgs: A Peculiar Institution?" in *Spain and its World: 1500-1700. Selected Essays* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 142-161, p.145.

<sup>175</sup> An alternative executive office in the king's chamber was that of the *camarero mayor*, who enjoyed similar prerogatives as the *sumiller de corps*, but gained its appointment through the Castilian Household. The *sumiller de corps*, on the other hand, was an office of the Burgundian Household. Although the post of *camarero mayor* had fallen into disuse, Olivares revived it in 1636 for political reasons. See Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares*, p. 283.

*caballerizo mayor* sat next to the king in the royal carriage and accompanied him on all journeys. Favorites often held both the offices of *sumiller de corps* and *caballerizo mayor*. The queen had her own independent household basically organized similarly to that of her husband, although her gender and the children who were gradually incorporated into her household gave it a distinctively different nature. An executive officer governed each section of the queen's household, and they ranked slightly lower in the court hierarchy (see Table I below). These were essentially political appointments consistently monopolized by the upper aristocracy. They provided direct and intimate access to the rulers, offered the most preeminent places in court ceremonial, and included substantial material benefits.

These posts entailed a significant amount of responsibility and work as well, requiring skill in administering hundreds of people and the huge machinery of the court. The *mayordomo mayor*, for example, supervised the *mayordomos de semana*, who took weekly turns in managing the large operations involved in feeding the ruler and maintaining the premises of the palace. The *sumiller* exercised control over the numerous gentlemen of the chamber, a large group of servants who cared for the king's personal belongings and quarters, and the royal pharmacy. The *caballerizo mayor*, assisted by the *primer caballerizo*, administered another substantial operation, including the supervision of the other *caballerizos*, pages, and workers who cared for horses, mules, and carriages.

The court permeated the entire city and its surrounding areas and thus required an elaborate network of bureaucrats, skilled workers, and servants to provide the goods necessary for its daily sustenance. In 1623, there were about 1700 members of the royal

households. The king had at his service 12 *mayordomos*, 18 gentlemen on active duty, plus 25 more with right of entry, 47 gentlemen of the royal table, and 10 valets. The queen had in her entourage 8 *mayordomos*, 10 dames of honor, 18 ladies, 12 *meninas*, and 20 valets. Three hundred men comprised the royal guard, 167 of whom were employed for hunting. The chapel section included an elaborate hierarchy of preachers and royal musicians. A small army of specialty chefs, cooks, tailors, jewelers, upholsterers, shoemakers, glove makers, watch makers, paper providers, stocking makers, treasurers, teachers of dance, music, and Latin, musicians of the chamber, and numerous other bureaucrats served the elaborate needs of the court.<sup>176</sup>

Although the royal kitchen's operation shrank substantially during Mariana's regency, it nonetheless produced twenty-two dishes daily for the queen's and the young king's table. Specialty chefs prepared twenty-seven chickens a day and other types of meat, desserts, breads, wine, fruits, and sauces.<sup>177</sup> The food the rulers actually consumed accounted for only a small part of this abundance, but nothing went to waste. Leftovers were distributed among the court, following a strict hierarchy, from the top executive officers to the rest of the staff.<sup>178</sup> Any change in the basic structure of the court, therefore, profoundly affected the entire apparatus. Not only were the king and the royal family in need of housing, foodstuffs, clean water, wine, wax, ice, clothing, and transportation, but also those serving them. All these people, particularly those at the top of the ladder, had

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<sup>176</sup> These numbers were taken from Elliott, "A Peculiar Institution?" pp. 144-145. The description of the court in this paragraph and section has been complemented by my own research.

<sup>177</sup> "La Bianda del Rey y la Reyna n[uest]ros S[eñore]s se componen de 22 Platos a medio dia y a la noche...." AGP Adm. 928.

<sup>178</sup> María del Carmen Simón Palmer, *La cocina de palacio, 1561-1931* (Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1997), p. 79.

their own families, further expanding the need for more housing, food, goods, servants, and administrators. A book published during Mariana's regency, *Only Madrid is Court*,<sup>179</sup> illustrates the extent to which the city's identity overlapped with that of the court. The title suggests that Madrid not only had the exclusive right to be called the court, but that its main purpose was to be the court.

Although a gender balance seemingly characterized the court's structure, a closer look reveals substantial disparities. Women typified the queen's household, while men dominated the king's. In general, however, men clearly outnumbered and outranked women. Women were employed outside the queen's chamber, often as unskilled or semi-skilled workers (stocking makers, washerwomen, and floor sweepers). Skilled female workers, such as royal musicians (employed for private service in the queen's chambers), existed in lesser numbers.<sup>180</sup> Men also outnumbered women in positions with authority and with preeminence in court rituals. The following table shows the gender distribution of the top executive offices in the royal households:

Table I: Executive Offices of the Court

	<u>King's Household</u>	<u>Queen's Household</u>
<u>House</u>	Mayordomo Mayor Mayordomos de Semana (12)	Mayordomo Mayor Mayordomos de Semana (8)
<u>Chamber</u>	Summiller de corps Camarero Mayor	Camarera Mayor ♀ Aya (Governess) ♀
<u>Stables</u>	Caballerizo Mayor Primer Caballerizo Caballerizos	Caballerizo Mayor Primer Caballerizo Caballerizos

<sup>179</sup> Alonso Nuñez de Castro, *Libro historico politico. Solo Madrid es corte, y el cortesano en Madrid* (Madrid, 1675).

<sup>180</sup> Doña Ysidora de San Martin was listed as musician of the queen's chamber and it was noted that she received the same salary as the women of the retretes (from October 1659 until July 1672, when she left the palace to get married to Don Gil Pardo de Najera). AGP Adm. leg. 5648. In Aytona's report to Mariana discussed below, the personal baker of the monarch, was apparently a woman as well.



Women occupied only two of the top offices in the court hierarchy. Men were in charge of the king's entire household and the house and stable sections of the queen's household. Women's presence and authority were nevertheless significant. The queen's *camarera mayor* was the equivalent office of the king's *sumiller de corps*, but she enjoyed more prerogatives than her masculine counterpart. The *aya* (or royal governess) was also another important female office of the queen's household. Although subordinated to the *camarera mayor*, the woman in this position possessed clear administrative power and enjoyed considerable prestige.<sup>181</sup> The Marquise of Baldueza, Mariana's *camarera mayor*, and the Marquise of los Velez, Carlos's *aya*, were not shy about exercising, asserting, and even flaunting their newfound power, thereby often exacerbating the tensions and factional struggles at court.

In sum, the court on the eve of Mariana's regency was compartmentalized into ceremonial, administrative, and political functions. Although parallel structures existed in the two royal households, they were by no means equal, neither in numbers, gender balance, nor authority. Women in general were subordinated to men, but tradition institutionalized and sanctioned their participation in the political process. The women that were part of Mariana's household became much more powerful and conspicuous during the regency, a situation that provoked ambivalent reactions from the masculine leadership. But this was not the only, or even the most significant, shift brought on by the royal minority. In fact, the practice of kingship changed dramatically as well. While up to that point, the king remained the most important element of the court, its *raison d'être*, that was no longer the case when Carlos II inherited the throne as a minor. Philip IV's

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<sup>181</sup> A coveted and very prestigious office position, the *aya* was usually a member of the aristocracy. Hoffman, *Raised to Rule*, p. 30.

death illustrates the intimate and dynamic relationship between the practice of kingship and the organization of the court and provides a good base to evaluate the changes that followed.

### **A Primer on Spanish Kingship**

Surrounded and assisted by the entire court apparatus as he had during his 44-year reign, Philip IV performed according to protocol and in public his last act of kingship: dying. What took place around the king's chamber from the day he fell ill on 13 September 1665 until his death four days later illustrates the court's segregation into gendered, administrative, and ceremonial spaces, while it highlights the centrality of the king in bridging all these varied elements. Ministers and courtiers who had the privilege of direct access to the monarch actively participated in the ritual, filling a variety of roles assigned by the hierarchy, organization, and etiquette of the court. Philip's death offers an ideal point of departure, therefore, to interpret how Mariana fit into the court's structure and provides the perfect metaphor to understand the political relationship between sovereign and subjects. As a primer on Spanish kingship, Philip's demeanor during his final days helps us put into perspective how the practice of kingship fundamentally changed once a child of Carlos II's age assumed the throne.

Although there are numerous official accounts of Philip IV's death,<sup>182</sup> I have chosen to base the following narrative mainly on the diary kept by Cristobal Crespi de Valdaura (1599-1670), vice-chancellor of the Council of Aragon.<sup>183</sup> As presiding officer of a government council, Crespi played a central role in the rituals that facilitated the

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<sup>182</sup> For a comprehensive list see Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I:133-135, and Steven N. Orso, *Art and Death at the Spanish Habsburg Court: The Royal Exequies for Philip IV* (Columbia: University of Missouri, 1989), 1.

<sup>183</sup> BNM mss 5742.

royal succession and the establishment of Mariana's regime. His recollections, which detailed his whereabouts in the palace during the king's last days, bring to life how someone with access to the court on a daily basis experienced it. Crespi meticulously recorded the ceremonial aspect of events and thus his account is more useful than the official chronicles of the king's death.

Philip's health was visibly declining for at least a year before his death; so when he was unable to get out of bed Sunday, observers immediately foresaw the end.<sup>184</sup> Hope that the king would recover "did not look good."<sup>185</sup> As others who went into the palace Monday morning, either to fulfill their duties or exercise their right to be there, Crespi quickly learned that Philip was ill, and that he just had "a very bad night."<sup>186</sup> The vice-chancellor entered the king's chambers, where he found gathered together a number of attendants, ministers, and grandees for what appeared to be the king's final moments. Crespi tarried for a while, but after realizing that there was nothing for him to do, moved down to the room where his council usually met. After about an hour, he was told that Philip was about to receive the viaticum, or communion given to the terminally ill. Crespi went immediately to the chapel, where he found the Patriarch of Castile dressing to perform the sacrament, and a number of ministers, court officers, and grandees slowly finding a place in the procession that was about to leave from the chapel to go to the king's chambers. The Patriarch and the Marquis of Montealegre, in charge of the king's

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<sup>184</sup> This is abundantly documented in Crespi's diary. BNM mss 5742. Reports of declining health made it into diplomatic circles by October 1664. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I: 107-108.

<sup>185</sup> "con todo enbie p[o]r la tarde a saver como lo pasava y respondieron que no muy bien." BNM mss. 5742 f. 359v.

<sup>186</sup> "Lunes a 14 qu[an]do entre en Pal[aci]o me dijeron que havia pasado S[u] M[agestad] muy mala noche haviendo muchos cursos entre con este cuy[da]do en su quarto vajo donde reside y aunque halle que se tenia por fatigado." BNM mss 5742, f. 359v.

household for that week, led the slow-moving convoy.<sup>187</sup> As usual, the presiding officers of the Councils of Castile and Aragon took an important place at the right side of the *palio*, the canopy that protected the blessed Eucharist. The Presidents of the Council of the Indies, Military Orders, and Finance, as well as numerous *grandees* followed. This thoroughly masculine procession then proceeded to move slowly through the palace, each member carrying a lighted candle in his hands. They reached the king's inner chambers, where Philip lay in the royal bed. Philip had purposely chosen to receive the sacrament publicly. As everyone looked on, he took communion "with much devotion."<sup>188</sup> Once finished, the procession left in the same manner in which it arrived.

The men returned to the king's chambers after accompanying the sacrament back to the chapel. Half an hour later, don Blasco de Loyola, the principal royal secretary, requested the most prominent representatives of the government councils and the highest officers in the king's royal household to witness the delivery of Philip's sealed testament. The presidents of the councils of Castile and Aragon, a representative of the State Council, the king's *sumiller de corps*, his *caballerizo mayor*, the most senior of his *mayordomos*, and one of the king's two confessors lent their signatures as witnesses.<sup>189</sup> Although the king still possessed "great mental understanding," he was unable to sign, and Loyola announced that the president of the Council of Castile had been

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<sup>187</sup> BNM mss 5742, f. 360r. The post of *mayordomo mayor* in Philip's household was left vacant purposely and explains the role of the *mayordomo de semana* on this occasion. This was not a random occurrence, but a calculated strategy, which will be discussed later, when Mariana adopted the same measure.

<sup>188</sup> Crespí kneeled "in front of the bed" next to the altar where the box that contained all the objects of the sacrament were placed. BNM mss 5742, f. 360r.

<sup>189</sup> The witnesses included the Count of Castrillo (President of Council of Castile), Christobal Crespí de Valdaura (presiding officer of the Council of Aragon), the Duke of Alba (as a representative of the State Council), the Duke Medina de las Torres (as the *sumiller de corps*), the Marquis of Velada (replaced the *Caballerizo Mayor*, who was sick), and the Count of Montalvan, (the most senior *mayordomo*, who took the post otherwise reserved for the *mayordomo mayor*).

commissioned to do so in the king's name.<sup>190</sup> Everybody then signed in order of precedence, with Castrillo signing twice, one time for himself and once for the king.<sup>191</sup> The testament and the addendum which contained the names of those who had been appointed to the Regency Council were locked. The key remained in the queen's possession.<sup>192</sup>

Crespi left the palace shortly afterward, although he returned in the early afternoon. Because there were no major changes in the king's condition, he decided to spend the night at home, after the captain of the Royal Guards promised to send a courier to notify him of any news. Ministers, courtiers, and grandees spent the majority of the following day, Tuesday September 15, in the royal chamber, where they witnessed "great comings and goings."<sup>193</sup> Crespi left the palace for a while, but returned promptly in the afternoon. By then, he had been informed that Philip had received Extreme Unction.

While Crespi was absent, Philip had taken a moment to fulfill his familial obligations. His children and wife had been summoned to his presence for a final goodbye. Reportedly, Philip talked to the three-year-old prince soon to be king, Carlos, and wished that "God, may make you happier than He made me." He requested of his fourteen-year-old daughter, already referred to as Empress Margarita, to be "obedient" to

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<sup>190</sup> BNM mss 5742 f. 360r. The choice of Castrillo highlights the preeminent position of Castile in the Spanish Monarchy.

<sup>191</sup> BNM mss 5742 f. 360v.

<sup>192</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I:122.

<sup>193</sup> BNM mss 5742 f. 360v.

her mother, the queen.<sup>194</sup> The royal couple, too, had a rare moment of privacy. This important meeting between the old sovereign and his much younger queen marked the last time husband and wife were together. Mariana was about to take over the government of the realm for her son, steer the future of the Spanish monarchy, and protect the interests of the Habsburgs, her family by birth and marriage. As many of her female ancestors had done in the past, she was prepared to shape the politics of family and state from a public role. Crespi noted that the conversation lasted for an hour, but did not report its content.<sup>195</sup> After the somber farewells, the queen and the royal children retired to their quarters, while the king remained in his chambers surrounded by his male attendants.

For the next two days, Philip and the court awaited the final moments; the rituals progressed as expected. Although he could not do so directly, Philip addressed those present for the last time as their sovereign. His words were spoken by Fray Antonio del Castillo, one of the several religious figures tending to his spiritual needs:

His Majesty has asked me to tell you that he has loved you all very much and that he feels the love and the service that you have given him. If any of you have fallen short of his obligations, His Majesty forgives you. He also requests from all of you to work out any differences or dissension in your midst, and to reconcile with each other, always striving to serve God and the public good. *In particular, he charges all of you to serve and obey the queen, our lady.* He has told me other things, but the tears and emotions of this moment do not let me say them (my emphasis).<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> “al Prin[cip]e dijo Dios os haga mas dichoso q[ue] a v[uest]ro P[adr]e. A la emperatriz que fuese muy ovediente a la Rey[n]a su Madre. con la Rey[n]a quedo a solas y no se save que la dijo...” BNM mss 5742 f. 360v.

<sup>195</sup> BNM mss 5742 f. 360v.

<sup>196</sup> “S[u] M[age]stad que esta pres[en]te me ha mandado diga a V[u]ex[cellentia]s que les ha amado mucho y se da p[or] bien servido de su celo y que si en algo han faltado se los perdona de muy buena gana que por el amor que les tiene les encarga q[ue] si hai entre algunos disensiones o, diferencias las dejen y se reconcilien y traten con conformidad del servi[ci]o de Dios y bien publico y en part[icular] les encarga q[ue] sirvan y ovedescan a la Rey[n]a n[uest]ra S[eñor]a. Otras cosas me ha d[ic]ho que la ternura y

Besides the “tears and emotions,” these were essentially Philip’s final political words and also a preparation for a transition of power. Fittingly, each of those present then kissed Philip’s hands, a political ritual that courtiers and ministers were surely aware they were performing for the last time during this king’s reign. Many of them only kneeled or bowed in order to avoid causing the king physical discomfort.<sup>197</sup> This apparent show of consideration should not obscure the fact that Philip was expected to continue fulfilling his royal tasks to the very end. The Count of Castriello, undeterred by the fact that the king was on his death bed, requested the coveted honor of a grandeanship from Philip. The king refused to consider the petition and told him that he should ask the queen.<sup>198</sup> Philip’s condition continued to deteriorate, although he retained his mental faculties until the end. Doctors were convinced that Philip was going to last through the night, so Crespi went home.<sup>199</sup>

Another significant episode took place the following day. Don Juan of Austria, Philip’s illegitimate son, went to the palace and requested to see his dying father. Castriello informed the king. Yet, to everyone’s surprise, Philip refused him admittance. The Marquis of Aytona reiterated don Juan’s desire and Philip again refused categorically. The king’s confessor conveyed a third and final request. Philip ordered don

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lagrimas con q[ue] estoy no me las deja pronunciar....” BNM mss 5742 f. 361r. The name of the person who spoke for the king was reported in Maura, Crespi did not mention the person by name. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I:112.

<sup>197</sup> “y los demas hicieron una reverencia solame[en]te para no cansarlo y porq[ue] no les tocava tanto la plattica.” BNM mss 5742 f. 361r.

<sup>198</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I:112.

<sup>199</sup> BNM mss 5742 f. 360v.

Juan to return to Consuegra, stating that “this was a time to die.”<sup>200</sup> Philip’s decision has been interpreted as a public show of repentance for his youthful sins.<sup>201</sup> It was, most importantly, a strong political statement, suggesting his commitment to endorse and protect his wife and niece’s regency. Philip thus foreshadowed Mariana’s imminent role in government as he urged his subjects to work in harmony and to “serve and obey the queen.” He also confirmed that he had no intention to include his illegitimate son in the regency government. His behavior indicated a lack of support for don Juan’s potential claim to the throne that was a concrete possibility under Iberian legal traditions.<sup>202</sup>

Don Juan’s visit to the Alcazar was the last major event recorded before Philip’s death. Crespi decided to leave the palace in the evening. He returned the following day, Thursday, September 17 at three in the morning, entered the king’s chamber half hour later, and waited there with the others. Philip breathed his last at 4:15.<sup>203</sup>

Philip’s death was the last in a series of daily and extraordinary ceremonies in which king and ruling elite engaged in a form of “cultural interaction” that helped legitimize the political order of the court.<sup>204</sup> In other words, Philip IV’s ritual of dying was one of the many instances that allowed the ruling elite to claim their place in the body politic and participate in the political process. Everyone gravitated towards the king, who was the central element of the court and who linked all its components. The

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<sup>200</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I: 113. Crespi did not mention this episode, which is otherwise well known.

<sup>201</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*.

<sup>202</sup> Illegitimate children could succeed in certain circumstances, when there were not legitimate heirs. Having said that, I disagree with the many scholars that assumed that don Juan offered an alternative and feasible political option to the succession. For example, see Carrasco Martínez, “Los grandes, el poder y la cultura política.” This important topic will be discussed in more depth in chapter 4.

<sup>203</sup> BNM mss 5742 fs. 361v-362r. Other accounts report the death at 4:30.

<sup>204</sup> Wilentz, “Teufelsdröckh's Dilemma,” p. 3.



hierarchy of the office, function of the post, and purpose of the ritual regulated access to the sovereign. Ministers, administrators, clergy, and aristocrats had different avenues of contact with the ruler; some through their duties in the government councils, others as court officers, and some, an exclusive group, by entitlement. Members of the upper aristocracy, for example, had assigned places in all court formalities and could claim the right to enter the king's chamber.

Philip fulfilled his obligations as king to the very end; even his death took place according to court etiquette. Carlos, Margarita, and Mariana did not share the last moments with their father and husband. He was surrounded by members of his household and government councils; all of them men. This decision corresponded to the function and organization of the court, which allotted the king and queen different spatial spheres and entourages. There was no place for the queen and the royal children, who lived in their mother's household, to be with the king during his final moments.

Spanish kings fulfilled ceremonial and administrative tasks that clearly overlapped in their political function. The entire court apparatus was designed with the purpose of tending to the king's needs, from the moment he awoke until he fell asleep, and from the moment he began to rule until he died. Although Spanish kings did not possess thaumaturgical powers like their French cousins, the purpose and prestige of the posts in the king's household point to the semi-sacred nature of Spanish kingship. These posts were designed to fulfill ceremonial functions that glorified the ruler and gave courtiers concrete opportunities to participate in the political process. Likewise, as Crespi's diary illustrates, those who had access to the king through the government councils engaged in ceremonial acts similar to those associated with the royal household

offices. The king's subjects, nevertheless, were by no means passive onlookers in the spectacle of kingship. Ministers, courtiers, and the ecclesiastical elites were active participants: they made sure the king received the viaticum and Extreme Unction. They kissed the sovereign's hands, accompanied him in his last moments, and were edified by his piety. They witnessed the delivery, receipt, and opening of his testament. As a group, they legalized, affirmed, and accepted the right of the Habsburgs to rule them in a myriad of small but important ways during the last days of Philip's life.

The king, too, played his role well. He allowed his ministers, courtiers, and "cousins" (grandees) to witness his devotion, suffering, and piety. He acted with dignity, ensured the continuity of the political body by drafting a testament, and allowed his hand to be kissed. With these acts he performed and embodied the ideal ruler: a model of Catholic piety, a responsible administrator of the realm, and the focus of court ceremonial. It is clear from the formalities observed during the last days of Philip IV's life that his obligations as king superseded those of father and husband. As a prelude to a transfer of sovereignty, the ritual of dying revealed and enacted the contractual nature of the Spanish Habsburg monarchy. For all practical purposes, Philip performed his last act of kingship successfully, thus setting the stage for the subsequent regime to assume power unopposed.

### **Transitions, Transitions, Transitions**

Philip's death immediately set into motion a series of events. The captains led the royal guards from the king's chambers. They mounted watch in the queen's quarters, where the three-year old Carlos slept, unaware of the event that just made him the object and subject of the court. The Jesuit Everard Nithard, Mariana's confessor, left the death

bed immediately towards the queen's chambers to deliver to her the news of her husband's death. Yet, even before Mariana learned of Philip's death, Nithard said two masses in the chambers of the Marquise of Baldueza, Mariana's *camarera mayor* and the highest officer of the queen's household. This marked another noticeable change in the court's hierarchy. The center of power had visibly shifted from the king's to the queen's household, from the *summiller de corps* of the king's chamber to the *camarera mayor* of the queen's chamber, and from Philip to Mariana.

The queen was supposed to be still sleeping. Nobody entered her room to give her the news, at least not officially. However, she may well have been awakened by the tolling of the bells that began to sound across the city at five in the morning. What she did in the hours until her first audience at nine is not clear. Perhaps she began to transform herself into the iconic figure reproduced in the numerous regency portraits, projecting an austere, majestic, and, at the same time, a sumptuous image.<sup>205</sup> Upon Philip's death, Mariana's hair disappeared under the religious habit she wore for the rest of her life, as was the custom for women of her dynasty and Spanish widows. The diaphanous white silks covering her temple, the voluminous sleeves, and the long apron were enveloped by a falling wave of black fabric, severely framing her figure from head to toe. Her choice of clothing pointed to Mariana's status as royal widow, recalled female religious authority, and alluded to her position as dynastic matriarch. Her bearing

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<sup>205</sup> The significance of the monastic habit for Habsburg women was eloquently discussed by Cordula van Wyhe (University of York) in a paper given at the Renaissance Society of America (Venice, Italy, 8-10 April 2010): "Franciscan Spirituality and Royal Sovereignty: Aspects of Religious Dress at the Spanish Court." According to van Wyhe, Mariana's dress was much more "courtly" than those of other Habsburg women.

conveyed the character traits needed to care for the new king and the monarchy effectively.<sup>206</sup>

There was also much activity in the dead king's chambers. While masses were being said at the head of the royal bed, his body had been moved to a nearby room. His gentlemen and barbers cleaned and prepared it for embalming. Philip's death revived a practice that his ancestors had abandoned. Part of the reason was the need to extend the viewing to three days in order to allow the large numbers who wanted to see the body of the king one last time. Once the autopsy and the embalming had been concluded, the heart and other internal organs were placed in a lead box, which in turn was placed inside a wooden box. The body was then entombed in the Habsburg mausoleum in the palace of El Escorial a few days later. The heart was sent to the Franciscan convent of San Gil.<sup>207</sup>

At the moment, however, the king's "other" body was of equal, or perhaps of more, interest to the court. Many were working at an accelerated pace to ensure the political continuity of the monarchy and successfully establish the new regime. In fact, the political anxiety commonly experienced during royal successions did not occur, and the transition of power took place smoothly.<sup>208</sup> Soon after Philip's death, Crespi went to the ground floor of the palace to await the public opening and reading of the testament.

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<sup>206</sup> van Wyhe, "Franciscan Spirituality and Royal Sovereignty." On Mariana's regency portraits, Llorente, "Imagen y autoridad en una regencia."

<sup>207</sup> Javier Varela, *La muerte del Rey. El ceremonial funerario de la Monarquía española (1500-1885)* (Madrid: Turner Libros, 1990), pp. 17-18, 79.

<sup>208</sup> Varela argues that there was no sense of interregnum in Habsburg Spain in any of the royal successions. Part of the reason is the absence of coronation and consecration ceremonies. Spaniards did not "perform" the reenactment of the king's death and finding of the new one during the royal exequies, although it had a well-established tradition in Burgundian forms of etiquette. His point is supported by my analysis here. Varela, *La muerte del rey*, 59-60. On this point, see also Orso, *Art and Death*; and Bertelli, *The King's Body*. Bertelli's model, however, do not fit the Spanish case very well, but are very useful to think about the issues at stake.

(He napped in his council's chambers while waiting.)<sup>209</sup> At nine in the morning, he sent a message to his ministers ordering them not to go to the palace, since the official mourning rituals had not yet begun. He instructed them to wait for him in his own house.<sup>210</sup> At the same hour, the Count of Castriello (president of the Council of Castile), Duke Medina de las Torres (*sumiller de corps*), and Blasco de Loyola (main royal secretary) were admitted into the queen's presence in order to obtain her consent to initiate the first official act of the regency.

The public reading of Philip's will was the first step taken to ensure political continuity.<sup>211</sup> It occurred after all the legal procedures had been duly observed and less than five hours after the king died. Loyola and the others recorded the king's death and confirmed the authenticity of the document's signatures. The aristocracy, chief officers of the court, and leading ministers of the realm gathered in a room adjacent to the place where the old sovereign had died just five hours before. The men sat according to precedence on benches placed against the wall. In the best lighted part of the room, Loyola proceeded to read the "twenty-five pages [of the testament] with many different clauses," a process that lasted for about two hours.<sup>212</sup> "The two principal clauses of the testament," noted Crespi in his diary, were the institution of Carlos as universal heir of the monarchy and the naming of Mariana as his tutor, governor, and curator. Crespi's accurate and elaborate description of these clauses illustrates that the ruling elite was

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<sup>209</sup> BNM mss 5742 f. 362r.

<sup>210</sup> BNM mss 5742 f. 362r.

<sup>211</sup> "Publico el t[e]stam[ent]o D[o]n Blasco de Loyola haviendose hecho antes la ceremonia de pedir licencia a la Reyna p[ar]a ello y la de recevir la informacion dela muerte y reconocer las firmas de los t[e]stigos." BNM mss. 5742 f. 362r.

<sup>212</sup> BNM mss 5742 f. 362r.

familiar with, and fully cognizant of, the implications of the testament. Crespi left after the public reading to return home, where his council members awaited him. They noted the king's death in the minutes and agreed to reconvene the following day.<sup>213</sup> Philip fulfilled his last duty well and the court apparatus quickly followed suit: The machinery of government continued to function and important initial steps to recognize and establish the new political regime were immediately taken.

On the following day, Friday September 18, Mariana's regime began without any obstacles. The Duke Medina de las Torres, Philip's *summiller the corps*, presented Mariana with the keys to the king's chamber, which had been in the possession of a select group of men. In a carefully crafted memorandum, Medina informed the queen that the keys had all been returned to him and were now at Mariana's disposal.<sup>214</sup> The surrendering of the keys was the first act that denoted the absence of a king's household. It not only explicitly recognized the intimate relationship between king, household, and body politic, but also acknowledged Mariana's central position in the new court structure. Similar steps were taken in the administrative realm. The same day, Crespi and members of the Council of Aragon adopted the new formulas to be used in official documents. Carlos II's name would appear first, but the documents would be addressed to his mother.<sup>215</sup> In the afternoon, courtiers offered the queen condolences on the death of her

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<sup>213</sup> In this entry of his diary, Crespi reiterates that the Regency Council had consultative powers and that Mariana was not bound by their votes. He took the time to explain Philip's dispositions in case Mariana died, noted that the death of Philip inaugurated the sole royal minority of Habsburg Spain, and accurately and in great detail explained the lines of succession, as well as the exclusion clauses. BNM mss 5742 fs. 362v-363r.

<sup>214</sup> Having the keys to the king's chamber was a symbol of honor and a coveted privilege among the gentlemen of the king's chamber, not all of whom had keys. Grandees sometimes were also honored with the privilege, whether they held a post in the king's chamber or not.

<sup>215</sup> BNM mss 5742 f. 363r-v.

husband and recognized Carlos as their new sovereign. Crespi gathered with his ministers in the palace, “the way we used to do during Christmas (*pascuas*).”<sup>216</sup> Immediately following the Council of Castile, “we went up to kiss the hand of the new King, our Lord, who has not yet reached his fourth birthday.”<sup>217</sup> When it was their turn, however, “we had to stop because he began to cry” and they were forced to wait outside the room.<sup>218</sup>

The occasion, therefore, presented the first indication of the practical difficulties a monarchy faced when sovereignty rested on a young child’s shoulders, or more accurately in this case, depended on his stomach. Crespi quickly learned that the ceremony had been interrupted because Carlos was hungry although, as befitted a three-year old sovereign, he resumed his duties as soon as his stomach was full. The Marquise of los Velez, who was Carlos’s *aya*, enjoyed an unprecedented privilege for a woman and a non-royal: she sat in the royal chair with the king in her arms. Crespi treated Carlos II as a full-grown sovereign: he expressed his condolences to the little king and his happiness as having him as his new lord. Carlos did not answer, but his *aya* nonetheless did say some words for him. In order to get through the ceremony without further interruptions, everyone moved faster than usual. “Ministers,” noted Crespi, “were going

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<sup>216</sup> “A la tarde nos juntamos en la pieza del cons[ejo] en Palacio como solemos en las Pasquas de donde subimos a besar la m[ano] al nuevo Rey n[uest]ro S[eñor] que aun no ha cumplido quatro años.” BNM mss 5742 f. 363v.

<sup>217</sup> “subio primero el cons[ejo] de Castilla y entro y B[esaron] L[a] M[anor] con las reverencias y ceremonias hordinarias.” BNM mss 5742 f. 363v.

<sup>218</sup> “y luego llegamos a la puerta donde nos detubimos p[or] que comenco a llorar y le entraron a callarle y tardo harto poco en bolver a salir.” BNM mss 5742 f. 363v.

one by one without waiting for the previous one to leave,” although Velez assured Crespi that Carlos had eaten well; the tears had definitely subsided.<sup>219</sup>

The queen was also working at an accelerated pace. She summoned the Regency Council for their swearing-in ceremony and their first meeting on that same day at five in the afternoon. After kissing Carlos’ hands, Crespi left his presence and gathered with the three other Regency Council members in the queen’s antechambers.<sup>220</sup> They proceeded two by two to render their respects to Mariana, who was seated on the traditional oversized pillow used by royal women, propped at the head of her royal bed, where Crespi, who entered with Castrillo, kneeled and kissed her hand. “The queen” noted Crespi, “spoke with feeling, but with serenity and majesty; her words were brief, but of great substance, revealing talent.”<sup>221</sup>

During the regency period, Mariana utilized an arsenal of symbols to deploy images of her formal authority over the king and the monarchy. In this, her first public ceremony, Mariana had evidently not yet adopted the custom of sitting on a chair, as she later appears in all her royal portraits.<sup>222</sup> The chair, a rare piece of furniture in the palace,

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<sup>219</sup> “Vinieron de uno en uno los ministros sin esperar a q[ue] volviese el primero p[a]ra salir el segundo aunque me dijo la de los Velez que ya havia merendado y que con eso ya se le havian pasado las lagrimas...” BNM mss 5742 f. 363v.

<sup>220</sup> Out of the six members, one had died recently and another was absent in an embassy in Rome. So, the four people present in this first meeting were: Crespi de Valdaura (Vice-chancellor of Council of Aragon), the Count of Castrillo (President of the Council of Castile), the Count of Peñaranda (as representative of State Council), and the Marquis of Aytona (as representative of the Grandees). Mariana had immediate opportunity to shape the composition of the Regency Council by the unexpected vacancy, and she took this opportunity to heart. Her initial maneuvers will be discussed in the following chapter.

<sup>221</sup> “hablo con sentimiento pero con serenidad y mag[esta]d brevem[ent]e y palabras de much substancia q[ue] descubrían talento.” BNM mss 5742 f. 364r.

<sup>222</sup> The evolution of Mariana’s portraits and this type of anecdotal information suggests that her deployment of images of authority was a process that required elaboration. Royal portraiture during the regency is a subject that only recently begun to receive the attention it deserves. See for example, the comprehensive study by Álvaro Pascual Chenel, “El retrato de Estado durante el reinado de Carlos II” Published Ph.D. Diss. (Universidad de Alcalá, 2009).



served as an unmistakable symbol of royal authority. According to Mercedes Llorente, Mariana's decision to be depicted seated rather than standing as was the custom in royal portraiture alluded to her taking an active role in governing and expressed her formal authority during the regency; it became a visual marker of her power. This changed as soon as she passed on the reins of government to her son; all the post-regency portraits still present her in her widow garb but she is standing and no longer sitting.<sup>223</sup> The chair and the other elements present in her portraits, such as the desk, the pen and inkwell, and the ever-present pieces of paper, explicitly pointed out her status as governor.<sup>224</sup> With the help of experts and trusted collaborators, Mariana established an elaborate system of vows that members of the Regency Council were required to perform during formal meetings with the queen. Although as queen consort Mariana had been the subject of rituals, these procedures reminded the court she had moved into a new stage in her life and political cycle: she was no longer the queen consort, but an acting sovereign and regent. Her initial decision to sit on the pillow reveals that her transformation, however, was not automatic: the process required time, elaboration, and creativity.

After members of the Regency Council kissed the queen's hands, they moved into the room she had designated for their daily meetings (*El Cuarto del Rubí*). They swore the oath of loyalty to her, as Philip's testament specified. They immediately proceeded to dispatch government business until eight at night, at which time they decided to meet the following day.<sup>225</sup> Crespi and the others moved immediately to the ground floor of the

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<sup>223</sup> Mercedes Llorente, "Imagen y autoridad."

<sup>224</sup> Mercedes Llorente, "Imagen y Autoridad," and idem., "Mariana de Austria como Gobernadora," in *Las relaciones discretas entre las Monarquías Hispana y Portuguesa: Las casas de las reinas (siglos XV-XIX)*. 3 vols. José Martínez Millán, ed. (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2008), III: 1777-1809.

<sup>225</sup> BNM mss. 5742 f. 364r.

palace in order to fulfill another important task: under the supervision of the royal secretary, they witnessed the destruction of the royal seals used during the previous reign and oversaw the making of new ones.<sup>226</sup>

Barely a day after her husband's death, and even before his burial, Mariana's signature had the legal force proprietary rulers of the realm enjoyed. The king's royal household had been transferred to her authority, and the government bodies, including the newly created Regency Council, formally pledged allegiance and loyalty to her. Outside Madrid, Carlos was recognized as the sovereign without difficulty. The French ambassador pointed out that the country had received the news of Philip's death with "indifference," observing with scorn that Spaniards had "greater love of the State than the Monarch."<sup>227</sup> On Sunday, September 20, Philip's body was taken to El Escorial and buried the following day.<sup>228</sup> Carlos II's proclamation in Madrid took place without incident on 8 October 1665.<sup>229</sup> It seems that it was merely a formality of what had already been his *de facto* institution on the throne. The elaborate Royal Exequies, celebrated on October 30 and 31, were as concerned with proclaiming Philip's greatness as with the "promotion of the new regime."<sup>230</sup> But as the poignant scene of the king crying because he was hungry illustrates, the court faced a difficult reality.

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<sup>226</sup> BNM mss. 5742 f. 364v.

<sup>227</sup> Archbishop of Embrun cited in Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. I:115.

<sup>228</sup> BNM mss. 5742 f. 364v.

<sup>229</sup> Crespí described in his diary that Carlos had been "joyfully received as sovereign by the people," and how happy the population was when he was shown through a balcony. "y se hizo la misma funcion en presencia del Rey (Dios le guarde) que salio a un balcon mostrando el pueblo gran regocijo de verle..." BNM mss. 5742 f. 366r.

<sup>230</sup> Orso, *Art and Death*, p. 81.

### **Mariana's Court as a Political Metaphor for the Regency**

By bringing the queen and king in the same household, the minority and the regency transformed the court in significant ways. Ceremonial now converged on a single household. Once the king's household disappeared with Philip IV's death, members of his household lost their ability to participate in the court activities and were prevented from exercising their offices. Although they were incorporated in the court ceremonial, their presence was superimposed on the hierarchy already in place within the queen's household. These men expected to play the preeminent role they had always enjoyed when there was a regnant king. The blending of the members of the two households during ceremonials had significant political implications. First, the traditional hierarchy of the court with members of the king's overwhelmingly masculine household occupying the most preeminent place changed. Second, the gender balance of the court was dramatically altered too. The feminization of the court became evident in myriad ways, denoted not only by the presence of a female ruler, but also by her female entourage. Other women besides the queen held the king, sent orders to men, sat on the royal chair, and participated in rituals that had been exclusively masculine.

The practice of kingship also changed dramatically. Although Carlos gradually became capable of withstanding the rigors of ceremonial, at the beginning of his minority, his youth forced the court to adapt to what he could handle. Courtiers were ultimately at the mercy of childhood whims. Crespi's recollections about the first Christmas season, three months after Philip's death, eloquently testify how the new structure of the court affected everyone. After some debate on how the ceremonies were going to proceed, Mariana decided to receive all the government councils simultaneously,

while Carlos would do so over the course of several days in “consideration of his age.”<sup>231</sup> When it was time for Crespi and his council to honor the king, he was informed separately by the marquises of Baldueza and Velez that Carlos was sleeping. Then Crespi and the rest of the members walked instead towards the queen’s chambers.<sup>232</sup> She was seated on a platform erected for the occasion, with her daughter next to her, “as in other years,” and surrounded by her ladies. The room was full and Crespi noted that he had been displaced from his usual place:

On the side, next to the wall, the place where I used to stand [in previous years] was taken by the grandees.... They had never been in there [in the queen’s chambers] since they usually accompanied the king in these occasions. However, they were admitted, because *the two representations fall on the queen*. I took a place far from the wall, closer to the stage. *There was very little space* and I ended up next to the grandees, after the last one. Once we got out of there, we went to the king’s antechamber, and we waited there standing [en pie] until he woke up, which was not for about an hour. (my emphasis).<sup>233</sup>

<sup>231</sup> “se dudo si admitiria este año este obsequio resolvió admitirle de todos los cons[ejo]s en un día y que el Rey n[uestro] S[eñor] fuese dividido en días por no cansar sus pocos años en función que durase tanto t[iem]po.” BNM mss. 5742 f. 371v. Her decision to participate in the festivities averted the creation of almost a complete vacuum at the court.

<sup>232</sup> “y aunque la resolución fue también que fuese primero al Rey sino dormía y uno y otro me embiaron a decir la camarera y la Haia pero p[or] estar durmiendo entramos a la pieza de la Reyna primero.....” BNM mss 5742 f. 371v.

<sup>233</sup> “A la tarde fuimos como otros años a la pieza del cons[ejo] como hice que se convocasen los min[istr]os p[a]ra entre dos y tres y en dando subió el cons[ejo] de Cast[illa] y inmediate[m]te el nuestro. fuimos primero a la Rey[n]a que aun que los días pas[a]dos, se dudo si admitiria este año, este obsequio resolvió admitirle de todos los cons[ejos] en un día y que el Rey n[uestro] S[eñor] fuese dividido en días por no cansar sus pocos años en función que durase tanto t[iem]po y aunque la resolución fue también que fuese primero al Rey sino dormía y uno y otro me embiaron a decir la camarera y la Haia pero p[or] estar durmiendo entramos a la pieza de la Reyna primero y esperamos en la forma que otros años en la antecámara hasta q[ue] salió el cons[ejo] de Cast[illa]; entramos y llegué a la Reyna arrodilleme y le dije estas palabras. Señora este año duplicada la oblig[aci]ón de lleg[ar] a los R[eale]s p[ies] de V[uestra] M[agestad] lo uno por que somos sus vasallos y lo otro por q[ue] nos Governa. En este gobierno tenemos fundada sus criados y Vasallos y parti[ularment]e los q[ue] representa el cons[ejo] la esperanza de n[uestra] feliz[ida]d y los afectos de todos los desea a V[uestra] M[agestad] muy colmadas con la vida y gran logro del Rey n[uestro] S[eñor] que haga su divina M[agestad] dueño del mundo[.] [N]o quise mesclar palabra de Pasqua ni alegría p[or] que la tuve por agena este año. Respondió la Rey[n]a estoy cierta de lo que me decis y lo estimo bese la m[an]o y luego a la Emperatriz que estaba como otros años a su lado. Al bajar de la Tarima halle de nuevo q[ue] despues del Mayordomo en la pared del lato estaban arrimados el con[de] de Lemos, el Duque de Villahermosa, y el Duque de Abrantes y aun que solía yo estar en aquel lug[ar] en el qual nunca hubo nadie por que los Grandes q[ue] concurrían estaban con el Rey, pero a e[ste] año fueron admitidos a la cuenta *porque recaen en la Reyna las dos representaciones* puseme algo apartado mas cerca

That the queen and the king received their subjects in different rooms in the palace should not obscure the fact that Carlos lived under the jurisdiction of his mother's household and was attended by members of her household at all times. Because the king's household had ceased to exist, those who usually took part in the festivities of the court through his household now perforce did so through the queen's household. Mariana had issued a royal decree on 25 September 1665 giving "gentlemen of the king's chamber, those who had the right of entry, and the *mayordomos* of the king the same rights to go in my chamber as they had while the king was alive, and to be admitted to the antechambers of the king, my son."<sup>234</sup> This explains Crespi's comment that the grandees were with the queen "even though they usually accompanied the king in these occasions."

Unless we fully understand how the queen's and the king's household each provided a space for courtiers to participate in rituals and the political process, and how that essentially changed during Carlos II's minority, Crespi's comment, "the two representations fall (*recaen*) on the queen," does not make sense. Crespi's observation, however, exposes the crux of the matter. The two representations refer to those of the king and the queen and meant that all court ceremonial now revolved around Mariana's household. Crespi understood why the grandees had been forced to place themselves around the queen with those of lesser status (and evidently they also understood and accepted the situation). Yet, the force of necessity and their apparent compliance did not

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de la tarima que de la pared y despues como havia tan poco lugar tambien vine a estar casi al lado de los Grandes despues del ultimo. Salimos acavada la función y huvimos de quedar en pie en el Antecamara hasta que el Rey despertado y fue casi una hora..." (my emphasis). BNM mss 5742 fs. 371r-372r.

<sup>234</sup> "He resuelto que los gentiles hombres de la camara con ejercicio y los dentrada y los mayordomos que fueron del rey mi s[eñ]or que Santa Gloria aya tengan el mi cuarto la misma entrada que tenian en vida de su m[a]g[esta]d y en el del rey mi hijo en la antecamara voz les advertireis de ello." 25 September 1665. AGP, Reinados, ca. 118, exp. 4.

eliminate the need to redefine the hierarchy of the court. Giving these men access, for example, brought its own set of problems, such as having “very little space.” It continued to be the source of friction between members of the two households in a variety of ways.

The fact that courtiers had to stand while waiting for the king to awaken from his nap “for more than one hour” illustrates the type of inconveniences the court faced when the ruler was a child. The court quickly realized the futility of attempting to adapt the schedule of a four-year-old to conform to elaborate and lengthy court rituals. The Count of Pötting, Imperial Ambassador to Spain (1664-1674), recorded in his diary, for example, that when the court gathered on 25 April 1666 to celebrate the marriage by proxy of the Infanta Margarita to Emperor Leopold I, Carlos (who was then four-and-a-half years old), “did not allow his hand to be kissed,” even though the person about to do so was his older sister.<sup>235</sup> Carlos’s stubbornness is a clear reminder of the uncooperative, individualistic, and spirited nature shared by most four-years-olds to this day. Spaniards in general, and the Habsburgs in particular, appear to have been quite sensitive to the needs of children.<sup>236</sup> Although Carlos was allowed to adapt to his role at his own pace, political rituals were evidently affected by the king’s youth. Words such as *impedimentos* or *embarazos*, which convey the idea of difficulty, appear often in the records.

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<sup>235</sup> “Acabado que fue [el desposorio] se açerco la Magestad Cesarea [Margarita] a la Reyna y en rodillas le beso la mano, la qual la levanto con mejor graçia y ternura que â todos pudo causar. Lo mismo hiço con el Rey, el qual no se deço besar la mano.” Nieto Nuño, ed. *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, pp. 1: 197-198.

<sup>236</sup> My findings here conform to those of Martha Hoffman, who has study the childhood of the children of Philip III and Margarita of Austria. Compared to other early modern courts (the French come immediately to mind), the Spanish Habsburgs provided a great deal of stability and emotional support for their offspring. If they were guilty of anything it was that their system, for instance, was on occasion too lax. See Hoffman, *Raised to Rule*, chapters 2 and 3. We still do not know enough to make more meaningful comparisons, as the topic of royal childhood among the Spanish and even the Austrian Habsburgs is still in its infancy. For the Austrian Habsburgs, see Joseph F. Patrouch, *Queen’s Apprentice: Archduchess Elizabeth, Empress Maria, the Habsburgs, and the Holy Roman Empire, 1554-1569* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), and for the French, see A. Lloyd Moote, *Louis XIII, the Just* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

The ceremonies associated with the prestigious military order of the Golden Fleece at the beginning of the minority present additional examples of the difficulties a child king presented. When Carlos II became the ninth master of the order on 8 November 1665, two days after his fourth birthday, he was unable to preside over the ritual. The Duke of Cardona took over the royal task and knighted the four-year-old sovereign. The peculiarity of the situation was not lost on observers since the girding of the sword was exclusively a royal privilege. In theory, no one could knight the king, and no one but the king could bear the royal arms.<sup>237</sup> “The strangest action,” commented Pötting in his diary, “was to see a gentleman invest his own king into the order, although” he added, “this unparalleled honor will certainly remain perpetual in the annals of the house of Cardona.”<sup>238</sup> The minority also facilitated the participation of women in spheres that were traditionally masculine. During the induction ceremony of the Count of Harrach shortly afterward, the Marquise of los Velez held the child in her lap and placed the pendant of the order around the inductee’s neck. Pötting was shocked, noting in his diary how “indecent” that a lady “intermingled in an affair of an order as gentlemanly as this one.”<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> See Teofilo F. Ruiz, “Unsacred Monarchy: The Kings of Castile in the Late Middle Ages,” in *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual, and Politics since the Middle Ages*, Sean Wilentz, ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1985), 109-144, p. 124.

<sup>238</sup> “A los 8, domingo: Hiçose en Palacio, en la antecammara del Rey la mayor y nunca vista funcion, a las quatro de la tarde, en haverse dado el Tuson al Rey don Carlos el Segundo, no[ve]no soberano de nuestra orden, que Dios guarde. La funcion se hiço capitularmente en presencia de los cavalleros siguientes: del Duque de Cardona, que como mas antiguo de la Orden hiço la funcion; del Principe [de] Astillano, Duque de Montalto, Principe de Abelino, y yo. La Majestad de la Reyna y la Emperatriz asistieron detrás de una gelosia. Lo mas raro de esta acion era de haverse visto que un uasallo armaua â cavallero â su Rey, acion de eterna memoria para la Casa de Cardona.” Nieto Nuño, ed. *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, p. 1:149.

<sup>239</sup> “Diciembre 3, 1665. ...Armole cavallero en nombre del Rey el Duque de Cardona, pero la Marquesa de los Veles teniendo â su Su Majestad en las faldas le puso con el dicho Duque de Cardona el collar sobre el cuello, lo que a mi no me parecio muy decente, que una dama actualmente se entremeta en funcion de una

The presence of women in positions of authority was not the only way in which the court was affected. The presence of a child king greatly increased the number of other children as well. *Meninos* and *meninas*, boys and girls usually under fifteen years old, were a staple presence in the queen's royal household, providing age-appropriate companionship to the royal children (sometimes to the young queens too). *Meninos* should not be confused with pages, who had gradually been segregated to the section of the royal household responsible for the stables. An office title of Portuguese origin, *meninos* (and *meninas*) lived inside the palace; these appointments were usually given to children of higher ranking court officials or to members of the titled nobility.<sup>240</sup> The presence of children of the nobility at the court had multiple benefits. Noble families sent their offspring to be raised at court as a form of education, preparing them for the diplomatic and political functions they would eventually assume. Royal children benefitted from this arrangement too, as they became used to commanding the attention of a group of people at an early age.<sup>241</sup> Mariana took this tradition to a new level during Carlos's minority.

The incorporation of *meninos* began early on and continued until Mariana established Carlos II's royal household. She added two shortly after Philip died in late 1665, one in 1666, six in 1667, one in 1668, seven more in 1669, three in 1671, and one more in 1674.<sup>242</sup> This number was added to the eleven that had been accepted from the

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Orden tan caballerosa como esta, pero en fin es menester que las cosas de este gobierno caminen uniformemente." Nieto Nuño, ed. *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, p. 1:156.

<sup>240</sup> Hoffman, *Raised to Rule*, p. 50.

<sup>241</sup> Hoffman, *Raised to Rule*, chapter 2.

<sup>242</sup> "*Meninos* incorporated into the household of the queen from the moment that Carlos inherited. (Listed as *Gentiles hombres de la cámara y meninos de la reina*)." AGP Adm. leg. 5648 and AGP, Reinados, caja



moment of Carlos's birth.<sup>243</sup> In all, Carlos II had close to forty *meninos* appointed through his mother's household from the moment of his birth until he obtained his own household.<sup>244</sup> To put this number into perspective, Philip III, for example, had only eight *meninos* attending him when he was prince.<sup>245</sup> Isabel of Bourbon had seventeen *meninos* in her royal household in the 1620s.<sup>246</sup>

By creating a male-gendered and age-appropriate entourage for her son, Mariana facilitated Carlos II's transition from prince to king: she set up sort of a hands-on learning environment for the young king and avoided putting him through the rigors of court ceremonial endured by adult kings. We could also argued that in this regard, both Mariana and Carlos were extremely successful, for Carlos II's performance of the ceremonial aspects of kingship were unimpeachable in adulthood. By increasing the male entourage of the king, Mariana also balanced out the preponderant feminine environment in which Carlos grew up. This is particularly important since Mariana made a substantial number of female appointments to her household too, including eight ladies of honor, fifteen ladies, five *meninas*, and an additional sixty-five women to the lower positions within the queen's household.<sup>247</sup> The conspicuous presence of women and children at

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92, exp. 3. (Other than they were younger than 15, there is no way of knowing from these records how old the youngsters were.)

<sup>243</sup> José Rufino Novo, "La Casa real durante la regencia de una reina," p. I: 510.

<sup>244</sup> Rufino Novo, "La Casa real durante la regencia de una reina," p. I: 510-511.

<sup>245</sup> Hoffman, *Raised to Rule*, p. 50.

<sup>246</sup> Rufino Novo, "La Casa real durante la regencia de una reina," p. I: 511.

<sup>247</sup> Rufino Novo, "La Casa real durante la regencia de una reina," p. I: 504-509.

court mirrored the ruling dynamic of the monarchy and became an eloquent political metaphor for this minority regency.

### **Mariana's Royal Household Policies**

The conditions of the regency allowed Mariana to monopolize the power structures of the court: She kept control of the king's environment, regulated access to the sovereign, and forced courtiers to participate in all court activities through her household. Yet, because the situation created difficulties, Mariana had to develop strategies to incite political loyalties, avert disaffection, and foster a positive climate at court. The records in the Palace Archive in Madrid shed light on the status and organization of the two royal households during the regency, revealing the consequences of Philip's death and his testamentary provisions. The bundles (*legajos*) record lists of members, salaries paid, outstanding commitments, expenses, and the modifications of the court referred to as the "1666 reforms."<sup>248</sup> As comprehensive as they are, these records do not immediately reveal the deeper political forces at work, and often the scholar must read between the lines to form a coherent picture of the strategies involved.

The private papers of Guillen Ramon de Moncada (1618-1670), the fourth Marquis of Aytona, permit a more precise description of the development of Mariana's royal household policies. A member of a powerful aristocratic family from Aragon and grandee of Spain, Aytona began his career in the armies of the Low Countries in the 1630s. He was Captain General of the royal army in Catalonia in the 1640s when the principality revolted against the monarchy. He ended his time in Catalonia in jail,

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<sup>248</sup> I have examined the following leg.s: AGP Adm. legs. 928, 5647, 5648; AGP, Reinados, c. 83, exp. 1; and personal files as needed.

however, for executing a royal bureaucrat without a trial.<sup>249</sup> Once released, he moved to Madrid and quickly became part of the political elite. Philip IV appointed him Master of the Queen Stables (*Caballerizo Mayor*) in 1663, and two years later, singled him out to represent the grandees of Spain in the Regency Council, a government body created to act as a consultative board during the minority. During Mariana's regency, Aytona came to enjoy the queen's trust and patronage through demonstrations of his statesmanship. She sought his guidance on a variety of important topics, appointed him *mayordomo mayor* in 1667, and named him Captain of the Queen's Royal Guard in 1669. Although much emphasis has been placed on Nithard's influence on Mariana, Aytona actually played a more pivotal role in the formulation of policy, distribution of royal patronage, and the organization of the monarchy's military. He singlehandedly led the reforms of the royal households. His memoranda to the queen,<sup>250</sup> present clear evidence not only of the partnership between the queen and her trusted councillor, but also of the political motivations at work here.

The papers include two drafts of a memorandum that laid out the ideas Mariana eventually adopted for the royal households. His consultation, appropriately titled "on how the king's household will remain until the king obtains his own household,"<sup>251</sup> reveals the political principles behind the strategies he proposed and demonstrates that

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<sup>249</sup> Aytona composed an important military treatise during his incarceration and dedicated it to the Philip IV. *Guillen Ramon de Moncada, Discurso Militar: Propónense algunos inconvenientes de la Milicia de estos tiempos, y su reparo. Al Rey Nuestro Señor, por el Marqués de Aytona*. Edition by Eduardo Mesa Gallego (Madrid: Ministerio de Defensa, 2008).

<sup>250</sup> To my knowledge, they have received scant attention. Maura evidently saw the papers, as he cites from some of them. He completely ignored, however, the political partnership that evidently developed between Aytona and Mariana.

<sup>251</sup> "Lo que se le ofrezca sobre como ha de quedar la casa del Rey n[uest]ro S[eñ]or (que este en el cielo) hasta que se ponga casa al Rey n[uest]ro S[eñ]or que Dios g[uar]de." ADM Histórica leg. 68, ramo 22.

Mariana's policies were more proactive than the documents in the palace archive suggest. Early in his report, he acknowledged that "it is not convenient that even though there is a king, there is not a king's household." This statement can be identified as his main operating principle. He sought solutions to create at least the fiction that parts of the king's household continued to exist, while still conforming to the terms of Philip IV's testament. Perhaps recognizing that his approach required some manipulation of the system, Aytona insisted that his proposal was "congruent with, not contrary to His Majesty's testament."<sup>252</sup>

Aytona's suggestions first reminded the queen of her legal obligations: "His Majesty [Philip IV] requires that the king be attended by the servants of his mother until he obtains his own household." Further, he added, "according to the testament, the queen is responsible for the servants of her husband and is obligated to employ as many as possible."<sup>253</sup> These responsibilities derived directly from Philip's testamentary provisions. Clause 36 stipulated that the king was to live in his mother's household until he obtained his own. In Clause 64, a copy of which was included in Aytona's report, Philip left specific instructions regarding the fate of his own household: he requested that

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<sup>252</sup>"No parece conveniente que haviendo Rey no aya casa de Rey y mucho mas no aumentandose gasto con que la reformation que se pretende se ha de procurar en el gasto no en la autoridad." Added on the side: "y bien considerado el testam[en]to de su Mag[estad] que este en el cielo, no se opone, antes apoya esto.... En conformidad de lo que se me mando el otro dia e ajustado el papel incluso en que esta la mayor reformation que cabe en la casa del Rey N[uestro] S[eño]r que esta en el cielo, segun su testamento con que queda todo reformado en quanto al gasto y exercicio y solo queda lo preciso para su gobierno en la cortedad que se deja y *para el credito queda alguna apariencia de casa Real queno cabe en lo posible y acostumbrado extinguir del todo.*" (my emphasis). ADM Histórica leg 68, ramo 22.

<sup>253</sup> "Dexa mandado el Rey n[uestro] S[eño]r que este en el cielo que sirvan a su hijo los criados de su Madre hasta que se le ponga casa, se conose es por el embaraço de que en la Antecámara de la Reyna n[uest]ra S[eño]ra se junten los criados de dos casas quando el Rey esta niño y gasta poca vianda y coma con su Madre pero segun el Testa[mento] deve la Reyna n[uest]ra S[eño]ra acomodar a los criados de su Marido en su casa y fuera." Added on the side: "y emplear los que se pudiere en la jornada de la S[eño]ra Emperatriz con que pueda extinguida el gasto que hazen." ADM Historica leg 68, ramo 22.

the entire chapel section be kept intact in the royal service; asked that the queen employ all ministers, officials, and servants of his household; and stated that if she did not want to or could not employ them, they should nevertheless continue to enjoy their salaries and rations.<sup>254</sup>

Mariana went above and beyond Philip's testament and followed a clear political strategy that consisted of protecting members of her late husband's household, whether or not they had a post in her household. Clearly, Mariana followed Aytona's advice on this important issue. Even though "the gentlemen of the chamber cannot exercise their duty due to the king's youth," reasoned Aytona, they should nevertheless retain the honor of their offices until "they are able to resume their duties when the king obtains his household."<sup>255</sup> Mariana, in fact, ensured that members of her husband's household had access to her quarters in a royal decree of 25 September 1665, promulgated just eight days after Philip died. When Medina de las Torres surrendered the keys to the king's chamber following the king's death, she ordered the man "to receive them and to immediately offer them back to the gentlemen, according to their individual merits." "In this way," the queen explained, "each and every one of them can continue to enjoy the

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<sup>254</sup> "Copia de capitulo del Testamento del Rey nuestro S[añ]o Don Phelippe quarto sobre los gajes de sus criados.

Para darlos al Marques de Aitona: Ruego i encargo a mi subcesor y a la Reyna mi mui chara y amada muger que conforme a la buena y loable costumbre que se ha tenido en la Casa Real conserve en su servicio mi Capilla y todos los ministros y oficiales della y que de los otros mis criados se sirva en lo que pareciere a proposito y a aquellos de quien no se sirviere mando que se les conserve en sus gaxes, o, se les situen en renta segura, dela que Vacare al tiempo que io muera, o de la que fuere Vacando prefiriendolos a los demas, la qual renta o paga de gajes aya de cesar y cese, quando los recibiere en su servicio, o diere otro suficiente entretenimiento, o, haga otra qualquiera m[e]r[ce]d equivalente. Y es mi voluntad que los mas necesitados y estrangeros de los Reinos, sean primeros despachados, por si quisieren bolver a sus tierras y encargo mucho al Principe mi hijo, mande hazer buen tratamiento en todo lo que se offriere, a los dichos mis criados como es justo y lo merecen por haverme servido tan bien." Note that the clause transcribed here was found with the Aytona papers. ADM Histórica leg. 68, ramo 22.

<sup>255</sup> "Pareze que los Gentileshombres de la camara por la tierna edad del Rey no pueden tener exercicio y es bien queden con los honores del..." ADM Historica leg 68, ramo 22.

honor of possessing them.”<sup>256</sup> Mariana also ordered her *mayordomo mayor* to treat the chief officials (*criados mayores*) of the king’s household in a preferential manner.

Aytóna’s suggestions rested on practical considerations and demonstrate his familiarity with the workings of the court. He listed all sections of the household that could not be reformed because they provided a specific service for which there existed no substitute. A contextual reading of the term “reform” suggests that it refers to the changes made to the king’s household. The term also meant a reduction of expenses on a permanent basis. In fact, the household records in the palace archive make numerous references to the reforms Philip IV attempted.<sup>257</sup> So the term was clearly associated with broader policy issues.<sup>258</sup> Mariana’s policies are labeled “the 1666 reforms.”<sup>259</sup>

Aytóna offered several recommendations. Because the royal pharmacy served the entire court, it needed to remain intact. The personal baker of the king had to be employed to serve Mariana and Carlos. Mid- to upper-level bureaucratic officers were needed to distribute salaries, negotiate with the court’s provisioners, supervise the receipt of emoluments, and fulfill administrative duties, so they should continue their duties. As a matter of prestige, it was desirable to maintain the king’s royal stables. The king’s *caballerizo mayor* and the *primer caballerizo* would continue to supervise the royal

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<sup>256</sup> “Tengo muy presente el particular merecimiento de los cavalleros que sirvieron al Rey mi S[eño]r en su camara y asi les manifestareis el aprecio que hago de la puntualidad y trabajo con que asistieron a su exercicio de que conservare la memoria pra faborecerlos en las ocasiones proporcionadas de su conveniencia que se ofrecieren y para que a estos y a los que tambien tenian llaves se les continue el onor de traerlas las Recivireis de su mano y consiguientemente bolbereis a entregarselas con la calidad que cada uno la tenga para que gocen los onores segun ellas.” Mariana’s response to Medina de las Torres memorandum written on 18 September 1665. ADM Hist. leg. 68, ramo 22.

<sup>257</sup> Some of these had been written in 1639 and published in 1642, but never effectively implemented. AGP Adm. leg. 928.

<sup>258</sup> AGP Adm. leg. 928.

<sup>259</sup> AGP Adm. leg. 928.

stables, although Aytona pointed out that they should cede their ceremonial prerogatives to the queen's *caballerizo mayor* (a post he occupied) and her *primer caballerizo*. With these measures, Aytona and Mariana successfully prevented the complete obliteration of the king's royal household; they created the fiction that it continued to exist. The chain of authority in the royal households, however, underwent substantial modification (see Chart I below). Given that this was a very delicate issue, involving the *crème de la crème* of the ruling elite, Aytona devised a series of strategies to ameliorate the consequences of such dramatic hierarchical reversal. For example, he proposed the creation of a Junta de Mayordomos to replace the Bureo to administer what remained of the king's household, ensuring that the same people remained in charge. This Junta was to oversee the royal guards, handle disciplinary matters, and administer the Castilian household. The shift from Bureo to Junta denoted a transition from executive to consultative powers. Moreover, it reported directly to the queen.<sup>260</sup>

The most important political consequence of the royal household policies implemented under Aytona's leadership was, without a doubt, the emergence of the office of the *mayordomo mayor* of the queen's household as the most prestigious and powerful court appointment held by a male. The extensive jurisdiction of this office over a great portion of the court system continued until Mariana established Carlos II's royal household; thus, it lasted for most of the regency. This officer had the right and obligation to sleep in the palace and respond to any emergency or business that presented

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<sup>260</sup> “Sino ay Mayordomos las guardas quedan sin quien conozca de las apelaciones de las sentencias de los Capitanes, y la casa queda sin persona de autoridad que la gobierne y assi convendra que los Mayordomos que fueron de S[u] M[agestad] no como Bureo sino como Junta se junten Una vez cada semana para consultar a la Reyna nra Sra. lo que se ofreciere. Y sino se les quiere dar mano para las apelaciones de los soldados se podran Remitir al Cons(o) de Guerra como se hacia antiguamente.” ADM Hist. leg. 68, ramo 22.

itself within the royal premises. He assumed the supervision of the *porteros de cadena*, who were in charge of monitoring who entered and left the palace. Finally, he administered what remained of the king's house and chamber, a function previously fulfilled by the *mayordomo mayor* and *summiller de corps* of the king's household.<sup>261</sup> Thus, the queen's *mayordomo mayor* became the highest authority in the palace premises, taking on duties previously exercised by the king's *mayordomo mayor*.<sup>262</sup>

Chart I: The Royal Households during Mariana's Regency

<b>Queen's Household</b>	
Remnants of King's Household	
<b>Queen's <i>Camarera Mayor</i> Aya of the king</b>	→ <b>Mariana's Chamber [cámara] → Carlos II</b>
<b>Queen's <i>Mayordomo Mayor</i></b>	→ <b>Mariana's House [casa] → Philip IV's chamber [cámara] → Philip IV's house [casa]</b>
<b>Queen's <i>Caballerizo Mayor</i>: Stables (served Mariana and Carlos)</b>	<b>King's <i>Caballerizo Mayor</i>: Stables (administered the stables, but did not fulfill ceremonial functions)</b>

<sup>261</sup> The *mayordomo mayor* had no authority over the chamber section, however, and as was explained above, this important section of the household was governed by the *camarera mayor*, the Marquise of Baldeza.

<sup>262</sup> There are numerous internal court memorandums in which the *mayordomo mayor* of the queen is also recognized as the one "who also governs everything in reference to the office of summiller de corps of the king, our lord [Philip]" For example Aytona: [El ex[cellentisi]mo S[eñor]r Marques de Aytona. Mayordomo M[ayo]r de la Reina N[uestr]a S[eñor]a que juntamente gobierna lo tocante al officio de Sumiller de Corps del Rey N[uest]ro Señor." (This one was dated 26 February 1668 and a similar one was dated 1 April 1669.) AGP Adm. 5647. I have found another one addressed in similar way to Aytona's successor dated 8 May 1670 in the same legajo.



Chart I shows that the queen's household encompassed the entire court once the reforms had been adopted. Carlos II thus lived under the jurisdiction of his mother and was served principally by the *aya* (and the people working under her). Although the king's household had lost its juridical status, its remnants were administered by officers in the queen's household. It follows that the queen's *mayordomo mayor* assumed the function previously exercised by three executive officers. Members of the court understood this situation with crystal clarity. The Duke of Alba articulated the new reality during a debate in the Council of State when he affirmed in 1667 that he exercised three offices simultaneously "the *mayordomos mayores* of both households, and *sumiller de corps* of the king's chamber."<sup>263</sup> His official appointment, however, was as the queen's *mayordomo mayor*.

In sum, Mariana's policies formed part of a well thought-out program. She did not possess complete freedom of action, however, and was obliged to respect the complex structure of the court and the legal requirements of Philip's testament. Her strategies consisted of granting access to members of the king's household, upholding honors, and continuing pensions and salaries. But she went beyond that: the chain of authority, preeminence of offices, and organization of the court had to be restructured to comply with the testament. Thus, she try to find practical solutions to keep the court functional and adopt political strategies to encourage loyalty to her regime. Mariana evidently tried to create a court climate that would offset all potentially destabilizing elements. This included creating a masculine environment for the little king. She adopted specific

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<sup>263</sup> "los tres que exerce el Duque [de Alba] de Maiordomo m[ayo]r de ambas casas y sumiller de corps." AHN E. leg. 674 exp. 18. Alba's assertion took place when the Council of State debated an issue of precedence between the Marquise of Baldueza and the Marquise of los Velez, which will be discussed below.

strategies in consultation with the Marquis of Aytona, who played an important role in this aspect of Mariana's rule; these reforms marked as well the beginning of an important political partnership. Although certainly intelligent and adopted as a means to preempt dissent, Mariana's policies were not foolproof.

### **Early Signs of Trouble**

These reforms encouraged the establishment of political loyalties, but also fomented dangerous animosities. Conflicts that originated from the structural shifts of the court soon translated into personal clashes, having further political ramifications. A very tense situation between Mariana and her *mayordomo mayor*, for example, arose first as a simple matter of etiquette. The man in possession of the office was Luis Guillermo de Moncada Aragón, seventh Duke of Montalto (1614-1672), a member of the high aristocracy who had by then built a long and distinguished political career. He served as Viceroy of Sicily (1635-1639), Viceroy of Cerdeña (1644-1649), and Viceroy of Valencia (1652-1659).<sup>264</sup> During the last years of Philip's reign, Montalto resided in Madrid, where he expected to reap the benefits of his lengthy services to the Crown. His expectations of an appointment to the Council of State, however, were not fulfilled, and records of his grievances directed to the king are abundantly documented.<sup>265</sup> He was offered but rejected political assignments that would have distanced him from the court, because he anticipated a prominent political role upon Carlos's succession. He was well

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<sup>264</sup> Fundación Medinaceli, <http://en.fundacionmedinaceli.org/casaducal/fichaindividuo.aspx?id=2926> accessed 12 March 2011. Mariana appointed him ambassador to Rome, but he refused to accept the appointment. See below.

<sup>265</sup> AGP Personal c. 696, exp. 7.

positioned to expect such a reward because Philip had appointed him, albeit reluctantly, as the queen's *mayordomo mayor* in 1663.<sup>266</sup>

The tenor of Mariana's relationship with Montalto before the regency is hard to determine. He managed to weave a network of influence around Carlos before he became king, and negotiated for his son, for instance, a matrimonial alliance with the daughter of the Marquise of los Velez, the king's *aya*, one of the most prominent members of the court members of the court during Carlos II's minority and also member of an equally powerful family.<sup>267</sup> It is not clear, however, that Montalto made sincere efforts to gain the queen's trust. One way or another, during the first few months of the regency, a series of uncomfortable exchanges occurred between them.<sup>268</sup> One incident in particular created a rift between Mariana and Montalto. It came as a result of Mariana's orders to Montalto to assume the administration of the king's royal household. Besides documenting a personality clash that had concrete and serious repercussions on the political climate of the regency, the written record also throws light on the juridical status of the two households, how it changed during the regency, and the role Montalto's office gained in the new structure of the court.

In a memorandum dated 8 January 1666, Montalto acknowledged that Mariana had instructed him to assume control over the government of "what remained of the

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<sup>266</sup> Rafaella Pilo Gallisai, "Casi todos los hombres del Cardenal Moncada. La conjura de otoño (octubre de 1668-marzo de 1669)," in *La sucesión de la Monarquía Hispánica, 1665-1725*, Bernardo Ares, ed. (Córdoba, Spain: Universidad de Córdoba, 2006), 257-275, p. 262.

<sup>267</sup> Montalto's son, Fernando Moncada, who became the VIII Duke of Montalto, married Maria Teresa Fajardo y Álvarez de Toledo, the daughter of the Marquise of los Velez. Valeriano Sánchez Ramos, "El poder de una mujer en la corte: la V marquesa de los Vélez y los últimos Fajardo (segunda mitad del S. XVII)" *Revista Velezana* 25, (2006) pp. 19-65.

<sup>268</sup> AGP Reinados c. 83 exp. 1.

king's household." He requested clarification on matters of etiquette. Montalto wanted the queen to indicate "how to address the officials who are now under my governance" during his weekly meetings with them. He stated that as the queen's *mayordomo mayor*, he "found it difficult" to address the chief officers (*criados mayores*) of the king's household with the familiar *vos* form. Using the appropriate form of address was an integral part of the court culture, obliging courtiers, ministers, diplomats, and ecclesiastics to observe, assert, and negotiate rank and hierarchy.<sup>269</sup> In the early modern period, the system was more complex than simply using the familiar voice (*vos* or *tú*) or a more polite and formal one (*usted*). Treating someone in a deferential manner (*de merced*) entailed using a variety of terms with different gradations of status (i.e. *Vuestra Señoría*, *Vuestra Excelencia*, *Vuestra Eminencia*, to name a few). This hierarchy of terms had been strictly regulated by a series of royal laws created during the 1570s called the Pragmáticas de Cortesías.<sup>270</sup> Likewise, addressing someone as *vos* implied clear social or political superiority. In presenting the question to the queen, Montalto indicated that the king's *mayordomos mayores* had the right to use the familiar *vos* with the officials under their supervision. But Montalto hesitated. He stated that he was not really their *mayordomo mayor*, but rather "governed them by means of a temporal accident."<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> Those at the top of the social, ecclesiastical, political hierarchy vigorously defended their prerogatives. Examples of how they did so abound in private correspondence, diplomatic exchanges, and even State Council deliberations.

<sup>270</sup> I thank Vanessa de Cruz Medina for clarification on this matter.

<sup>271</sup> "sirviendose V[uestra] M[agestad] que oy corra por mi cuenta el gobierno delos oficios que han quedado en la Real Casa de S[u] M[agestad] debo saver de V[uestra] M[agestad] como tengo de llamar a estos criados mayores, porque siento dificultad en tratarlos de vox, no hallandome su Mayordomo mayor, y gobernandolos solo por un accidente temporal. Por otra parte los criados de V[uestra] M[agesta]d sin embargo desta consideracion, han de sentir, que se haga diferencia con otros, y yo no mandando V[uestra] M[agestad] otra cosa, seria de parecer, que a los oficiales m[ayo]res se les llamase de impersonal." AGP, Reinados, c. 83, exp. 1.

Montalto was not willing to give up the benefits he had accrued in his position, temporary or not. “In spite of this consideration,” he continued, “members of Your Majesty’s household could be offended” if he did not follow protocol. In order to avoid conflicts with either group, Montalto proposed two courses of action: to use the “impersonal voice” (neither asserting power nor showing deference) with the chief officials of the king’s house and to conduct meetings with the leadership of each household separately. His solution would “prevent conflicts of precedence from taking place and ensure that the government [of the two households] did not appear as one, since Your Majesty wanted them separate.”<sup>272</sup> His logic implied that, while he defended the newly acquired preeminence of Mariana’s household, including that of his own office and the rest of her house, he was careful not to go too far. He did not expect to exercise the prerogatives of a king’s *mayordomo mayor* fully. That a man of his stature hesitated to do so is a strong indication that the hierarchy of the court had shifted radically or that Mariana’s household, which he represented, was on shaky ground. The idea that he governed the king’s household as a result of a “temporal accident,” indeed, is quite suggestive. Yet, he obviously expected that Mariana would give him the green light to exercise the preeminence associated with the office of the queen’s *mayordomo mayor*. He was in for a rude awakening.

In line with her royal household policies, Mariana decisively defended the preeminence of the chief officers of the former king’s household. She agreed with

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<sup>272</sup> “Para escusar concurso y precedencias, y que no parezca uno este gobierno que V[uestra] M[agestad] ha querido este separado, me parece conveniente que el Bureo trate aquellas mat[er]ias en dias distintos, pues han de correr por distintos thesoreros (lo mismo es el Maestro dela Camara) contralores, y Grefieres, Juntandose conmigo, y los Mayordomos en la misma forma, que oy se traze para el gobierno de la Casa de V[uestra] M[agestad]d. Supplico a V[uestra] M[agestad] mande declararme en uno y otro punto la Real Volunt[a]d de V[uestra] M[agestad] para que asi se execute desde luego. Palacio 8 de Henero 1666.” Montalto to Mariana. AGP, Reinados, c. 83, exp. 1.

Montalto that the use of the familiar *vos* was a privilege of the office, but added: “I have been informed that some *mayordomos mayores* of the King my Lord did not make use of this prerogative.” “Having put you in charge of what is left of this house,” she wrote: “you will address as *merced* the chief officers of the king’s household.” She concluded: “Because of the particulars in this case, members of my house should not care about the situation as they otherwise would.”<sup>273</sup>

The queen’s resolution offended Montalto and prompted him to write a heated response. Montalto found Mariana’s order “strange and unprecedented,” and proceeded to lecture the queen on the etiquette that regulated royal households. He explained that a king’s *mayordomo mayor* would never address his subjects in a preferential manner (as *merced*), and that such an idea “contradicted the very nature of the office.” Mariana’s decision emanated from misleading “information” given to her (obviously he suspected Aytona). Had there been a similar precedent, Philip IV would not have written the decree “composed after careful deliberations with the Junta de Etiquetas.” (Montalto was referring to the major etiquette reform efforts of the late 1640s that resulted in the so-called *Ordenanzas de Felipe IV*.) Montalto insisted that Philip’s decree implied that both *mayordomos mayores* enjoyed similar prerogatives. The king never intended to place Mariana’s *mayordomo mayor* below the chief officers of the king’s household as treating them *de merced* implied. To reinforce his argument, Montalto reminded Mariana that the king’s household had lost its legal status: “And today the officers of the king’s household

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<sup>273</sup> “Reparais muy bien, en que el tratam[ien]to de vos, corresponde solo al May[ordo]mo m[ay]or y aun se me ha informado que algunos, que lo han sido del Rey mi señor, no han usado desta prerrogativa, y habiendo yo encargado a vuestro cuidado el Gobierno de lo que ha quedado desta Casa, podreis tratar de m[e]r[ce]d a los criados m[ayo]res y Jefes de los oficios de ella con que por causa de la diferencia de las raçon, que concurre, no puede ser de reparo esto a los criados de mi casa.” Mariana’s response to Montalto. AGP, Reinados, c. 83, exp. 1.

do not represent what they once did, because it is not a household anymore, but rather *fragments and relics* of what had been” (my emphasis).<sup>274</sup>

Montalto viewed the queen’s order as an usurpation for two reasons. First, his office was already at the pinnacle of the court hierarchy and was comparable to the office of the king’s *mayordomo mayor*. Second, during the regency, the queen’s *mayordomo mayor* took precedence over the entire court structure because the king’s household was, effectively, “fragments and relics” of what it had been in the past. Montalto’s description of the new court structure, therefore, confirms what this chapter has argued so far: The king’s household had temporarily ceased to exist and remained extinct for almost a whole decade until Mariana reinstated it in 1675. During that time, the queen’s household was the only one with legal standing.

Still, at least some of Mariana’s royal household policies attempted to maintain the fiction that the king’s household continued to exist. Indeed, Mariana did not give in to Montalto’s reasoning. Her rationale is quite significant:

Because all the servants of the King My Lord are my responsibility, I want them to receive everything that would be beneficial to them. Now that you understand

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<sup>274</sup> “Esta resolucion (Señora) emana del informe hecho a V[uestra] M[agestad] cuio supuesto es para mi estraño e inaudito porq[u]e contradice a la misma naturaleza del cargo, que ningun May[ordo]mo M[ayo]r del Rey n[uest]ro Señor aya tratado de m[e]r[ce]d a sus subditos, quando aun al Alcalde de Casa y Corte (cuio grado de Ministro le diferencia tanto) puede tratarle de vos, y no es dudable, que si en esto hubiese havido estilo en contrario, S[u] M[agestad], Dios le tenga en el cielo, no formara el decreto de que he remitido copia a V[uestra] M[agestad] y que se hiço con consulta de la Junta de Etiquetas, pues no se debe creer, que quisiesse dar mayor autoridad en sus subditos al May[ordo]mo M[ayo]r de V[uestra] M[agestad] de la que tenía el suyo, y asi juzgo, que será conveniente mandar V[uestra] M[agestad] se verifique este supuesto, con el registro delas ordenes de todos los Mayordomos m[ayo]res del Rey n[uest]ro S[e]ño[r] que han de estar en los oficios, donde tengo por imposibles se halle tal cosa. Esta disposicion de V[uestra] M[agestad] se estiende tambien â los Jefes de los oficios, y siendolo los sumilleres de Casas, Paneteria, y otros del genero, en ellos sería mas que impracticable semejante tratamiento. No puede hacer exemplar, ni fuerca alguna haver tratado de m[e]r[ce]d a los oficios m[ayo]res el May[ordo]mo particular aq[ui]e[n] aya tocado el Gobierno de la Casa del Rey, pues no tiene equiparacion con el May[ordo]mo m[ayo]r de V[uestra] M[agestad] nilos oficiales oy dela casa que fue del Rey representan lo que entonces, porque ya no es casa, sino fragmentos y reliquias deellas. Por estas consideraciones me parecio el mas templado medio llamarlos de impersonal por no pasar de extremo â extremo.” Montalto to Mariana. AGP, Reinados, c. 83, exp. 1.

this [my] purpose, you will conduct yourself on this matter with the chief officers in writing in the manner in which you have been told, and you will know how to apply your prudence and attention so that everyone will be satisfied.<sup>275</sup>

Even as the terms of the testament and the regency had eliminated the king's royal household, Mariana still felt an obligation to members of that household. Meeting that responsibility entailed keeping under her protection and patronage the disenfranchised members of the court, who happened to be the most powerful group of the ruling elite. Her emphatic response to Montalto suggests that Mariana's royal household policies had been carefully planned and were politically motivated.

Here, too, Mariana's style of ruling comes into sharper focus. She expected immediate obedience from those working under her direct orders. Those who learned this lesson quickly received ample compensation. Montalto, however, miscalculated the consequences of his attitude. The tone he used with the queen seems rather patronizing, even in a political culture where subjects felt entitled to question their rulers. He urged Mariana to reconsider the matter, reassess the information given to her, and take into account the potentially disastrous consequences of her decision. To add insult to injury, he refused to dispatch any pending matters with members of the king's household until the issue was resolved to his satisfaction. He excused himself saying that "I have no way of communicating with these officers."<sup>276</sup> Mariana disregarded his suggestions,

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<sup>275</sup> "A los criados del Rey mi señor por haverme quedado encargados desse todo aquello que les pueda estar bien, y teniendo vos entendido este proposito oz portareis en este punto con los criados mayores usando con ellos por escrito, el temperamento deq[ue] estais advertido y v[uest]ra prudencia y atencion savra aplicar deman[era] que rezibiran satisfazion." Mariana to Montalto. AGP, Reinados, c. 83, exp. 1.

<sup>276</sup> "Suplico a V[uestra] M[agestad] que mandando hacer nuevo reparo sobre la mat[eri]a y examinada la incerteza del informe que han hecho a V[uestra] M[agestad] como la disonancia que tubiera en si esta disformidad se sirva V[uestra] M[agestad] tomar la resolucion mas conveniente. A este mismo tiempo me hallo con villete de Don Blasco de loyola adviertiendome que V[uestra] M[agestad] espera el Mapa de la Casa que ha de ir sirviendo a la señora Emperatriz.... pero no podre



confirmed her original decision, and ordered Montalto to obey her.<sup>277</sup> It is worth noting that Mariana appointed Montalto to the Council of State at about this time, a show of royal favor that he had been waiting for years. Even with this olive branch, the situation opened a clear fissure between the queen and her *mayordomo mayor*. Their shaky relationship escalated to outright hostility, however, thus ending Montalto's political aspirations to play a preeminent role in the regency government. In the end, Mariana gained a formidable enemy too.

### Escalating Tensions

Six months after his initial clash with the queen, Montalto confronted Mariana again, albeit privately. He called to her attention the lack of decorum some young women of her court had exhibited. Montalto also implicated in this lax behavior a good number of young noblemen, including sons of the aristocratic elite. Montalto's preoccupation had more to do with asserting his own authority as the chief officer of the queen's household than anything else. Simply put: who possessed the most authority in the queen's household, he as the *mayordomo mayor* or the Marquise of Baldueza, as the *camarera mayor*? The queen may have viewed the issue differently. Even though no evidence indicates that Montalto's accusations smeared Mariana's reputation, she must have found them utterly insulting. Thus, it is easy to understand why, soon after this episode, she took determined steps to remove Montalto from his post and Madrid.

Montalto labeled his memorandum "of a private nature" (*consulta reserbada*). He was concerned about the excesses caused by the practice of *galanteos* or courtly love, a

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executar las resoluciones... pues no tengo forma de comunicar las materias a los criados... Palacio 24 de Hen[ero] 1666." Montalto to Mariana. AGP, Reinados, c. 83, exp. 1.

<sup>277</sup> She gave Montalto the option of communicating with the officers in writing, which may have allowed the man to save face.

tradition that allowed young males to declare publicly their love for ladies in the queen's entourage. The *galanes* provided a colorful addition to public processions in which ladies participated, with the men following them on foot, horses, or carriages. As targets of these *galanes*' "love," the ladies gained attention, prestige, and gifts. The practice of courtly love formed part of medieval court culture, still practiced during Habsburg rule in the sixteenth century. Its rules of etiquette were formally adopted in the early seventeenth century.<sup>278</sup> In an age of arranged marriages *galanteos* provided an outlet for expressions of emotions, although the practice had evidently become controversial.<sup>279</sup> In 1638, Philip IV restricted the participation of *galanes* in public events to those who owned horses and carriages. Eventually he prohibited married men from taking part at all.<sup>280</sup>

Montalto implied that under Mariana's watch, *galanteos* had transgressed platonic boundaries. "The *galanes*," Montalto argued, "publicly engaged in excesses never seen before." They were a constant presence in the palace, taking advantage of their privilege to enter the queen's antechambers. Some went as far as breaking windows and doors in order to *galantear* with the ladies in the gardens. They could be heard talking all over the palace, Montalto protested, and "even under my windows," at any time during the day. They come to the palace all dressed up, with their hair in a ponytail, and richly attired "as if they were going to places of gossip (*mentidero*)."<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> Alejandro López Álvarez, *Poder, lujo y conflicto en la Corte de los Austrias. Coches, carrozas y sillas de mano, 1550-1700* (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2007), pp. 486-488.

<sup>279</sup> López Álvarez discusses the practice of *galanteos* as part of the social and cultural changes associated with carriages. The practice extended to all sectors of society and ranged from the strictly platonic to physical love. Álvarez, *Poder, lujo y conflicto en la Corte de los Austrias*.

<sup>280</sup> AGP Adm. leg. 698.

<sup>281</sup> "los galanes galantean con maior publicidad y con maiores excesos, que jamas se ha visto, usando de sus entradas los Caballeros mocos en la ante camara solo para galantear no faltando ninguna ora del dia de los

The practice had gotten so out of control, according to Montalto, that in churches “God receives more offenses than devotion.” The Countess of Chinchon, for example, “knows the letter of courtship better than Christian doctrine,” yet her being “so knowledgeable in the practice, to that extent, and so early” Montalto reflected, had no purpose whatsoever, since she was already engaged to be married to her uncle.<sup>282</sup> He reported a clandestine marriage between don Iñigo de Toledo and his lady. Nothing could be done about that, he lamented. The Prince of Abelino was flirting with several ladies at once and had apparently consummated his relationship with one of them. Mariana should, he opined, offer the young couple generous royal grants as incentives to have them marry. The situation had degenerated to the point that one of the servants had given birth in the palace, implying that the lack of decorum among Mariana’s feminine entourage had become public. Montalto urged the queen to enforce the royal decrees against the practice with “knives and fire” (*cuchillo y fuego*). Although he did not attack Mariana’s own morals, he certainly questioned her ability to control the people of her household, her authority, and even her ability to govern:

I should say that the royal decrees of Your Majesty are not respected with the appropriate reverence and are not being obeyed in general. And from this, My Lady, a monarchy could be lost. Particularly during a minority and during such turbulent times.<sup>283</sup>

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Corredores, assi estos como los que no tienen entrada y hablando, y haciendo señas escalando las tapias del parque, rompiendo otras veces puertas y ventanas como lo tengo averiguado para hablar por el mismo Parque y de noche bienen a los corredores en cuerpo de Jubon balona de Camisa, atado el pelo, y con sus broqueles en la cinta como se va a las calles del mentidero, y a las casas de las farsantas, portodas las partes hablan hasta debajo de mis ventanas los caballeros y las damas de su misma galeria de V[uestra] M[agestad] sin excusar ni los unos ni los otros.” AGP Adm. leg. 698.

<sup>282</sup> As was explained in the previous chapter, uncle-niece marriages was a common practice among the Spanish elite.

<sup>283</sup> “Debo decir, que las ordenes y decretos de V[uestra] M[agestad] no se reberencian ni se obedecen generalmente en todo el unibersal gobierno, y desto señora a perderder una monarchia, y mas en una menor hedad, y en la turbulencia de los tiempo.” AGP Adm. leg. 698.

Montalto's major complaint had arisen more than anything from his sense that he lacked authority. The palace guards failed to inform him of the excesses, "either because they think I am so utterly base that I would not care to do anything about them, or because they know that *I do not have the backing of Your Majesty*" (my emphasis).<sup>284</sup> He protested that he had not been consulted when two appointments were made in Mariana's household. Montalto argued that he had been unable to enforce Mariana's royal decrees, encountering resistance everywhere. When he tried to discipline the *galanes*, he had faced opposition in the Council of Italy and was slapped with a formal complaint against him in the Council of State. At the end of his paper, he revealed the real target of his complaints:

The repeated setbacks and humiliations that I have suffered have been the direct result of the *camarera mayor*, who has prevented me from complying with the obligations of my office. My desperate situation, the loyalty and desire to serve Your Majesty, and fear of the Lord have forced me to write this report. From the Palace, 19 August 1666.<sup>285</sup>

Mariana certainly took the charges seriously and dealt with the situation swiftly. She ordered Montalto to talk to each of the *galanes* in question, while she instructed her *camarera mayor* and the *guardamayor* to do the same with the ladies. Montalto was to discipline the young gentlemen "according to their rank," and warn them not to commit any excesses under threat of severe punishment. Mariana ordered a strict watch over her

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<sup>284</sup> "Los guardas, que lo ben, ni aun quenta me dan o porque juzgan que soy tan ruin, que no quiero remediarlo, o porque conocen que no tengo seguro el resguardo de V[uestra] M[agestad]." AGP Adm. leg. 698.

<sup>285</sup> "Estos contratiempos, y sobarbadas, que se me hacen padecer por diligencia dela Camarera me ponen s[eñ]ora no solo en E. de no poder cumplir con el serbicio de V[uestra] M[agestad] y oblig[acio]nes de mi puesto, sino tambien entan congojosa desesperacion que he E. por no hablar en esto y me han forcado a ello la ley de buen Criado de V[uestra] M[agestad] y el temor al tribunal de Dios. Palacio 19 de Agosto 1666." AGP Adm. leg. 698.

quarters in order to control who entered it and when. Servants were prohibited from leaving the palace premises. The queen personally instructed Montalto to keep the male *grandees* and the *meninos* in her son's entourage from having contact with the young ladies of her court.<sup>286</sup> The woman who had given birth in the palace was to be sent to the galleys for two or three years. Two years later in 1668, prohibitions against *galanteos* had not been lifted and the *galanes* were not allowed to take their traditional place in the first public procession of the minority, which Pötting interpreted as a sign of austerity "owing to the queen's widowhood."<sup>287</sup>

Although she obviously accepted many of Montalto's recommendations on the question of *galanteos*, she simultaneously took steps to remove him from his office. In March 1667, Pope Alexander VII confirmed Montalto a newly elected cardinal.<sup>288</sup> This event, the result of Mariana's own influence, changed his position at court dramatically, forcing Montalto to renounce his post as *mayordomo mayor* immediately as incompatible

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<sup>286</sup> Mariana to Montalto: "Os mando cuydeis mucho de que se observen y guarden, exacta y rigurosamente los decretos y ordenes, que sobre estas materias teneis, assi del rey mi señor como mias pues cumpliendose como es... no se necesita de otras nuebas...

...a los galanes que huvieren faltado o faltaren a su observanzia los llamareis y advertiereis deello prohibiendoles a cada uno segun su grado el exceso y que sino se enmendaren se pasara a hacer exemplar y con digno castigo lo mismo mando a la camarera y guardamayor adviertan a las damas y que tendre por poco recatada y no se hara m[e]r[ce] alguna a las que admiteren semejantes Galanteos, y cuydare de que se haga assi... Tambien se embia decreto prohibiendo os las lizenias para salir las criadas y para las entradas de hombres y mugeres en la forma que vereis....

...y he ordenado que la que se llebo a la enfermeria, se ponga en una de las partes que proponeis, por dos, o tres años para que sirva de escarmiento, estando yo contoda atencion, que que se escusen inconvenientes en la entrada de los meninos y grandes y en tomar forma en lo que toca a don Iñigo de Toledo, reconociendo cuan inescusable es." AGP Adm. leg. 698.

<sup>287</sup> "...ni se consintieron galanes â cauallo, por ser la Reyna uiuda..." entry for 2 July 1668. Nieto Nuño, ed. *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, pp. 1:393-394.

<sup>288</sup> AGS E. Roma leg. 3131. The letter by Cardinal Chigi making the announcement was dated 7 March 1667 and arrived at the end of the month.

with his new ecclesiastical position.<sup>289</sup> Less than a month after his appointment, in April 1667, Mariana ordered the duke-cardinal to leave Madrid in order to represent Spanish interests at the papal court. The battle between them intensified as a result of this order. In late 1668, Montalto was still pleading with the queen to allow him to stay due to his “deplorable mental and physical health,” although his tone was much humbler than before.<sup>290</sup> By then too, Montalto had become a public enemy of the regency government and began to direct his discontent on the Jesuit Everard Nithard, the queen’s confessor and ostensible favorite.

Although Mariana had in fact removed Montalto from office, conflicts between the male and female leadership of the court continued. A memo Mariana sent to Aytona, when he was already serving as her *mayordomo mayor*, illustrates the ongoing tensions:

I understand that my treasurer, don Balthasar Molinet, has not obeyed the orders given to him by my *camarera mayor* and the *aya* of the King, my son, which required him to deliver monies needed to buy gifts in my name and my son’s for the Prince of Florence. . . . Because the treasurer is subject of both women [*subdito de ambas*], he must obey them both. You will warn him, and reprimand him for not having done what he was told, and you will ensure that from now on he does not fail to carry out his duties, on any occasion that may present itself in the future.<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> Nithard reported in his memoirs that Montalto became his sworn enemy after the cardinalate. Pilo Gallisai, “Casi todos los hombres del Cardenal Moncada,” p. 261.

<sup>290</sup> AGS E. Roma leg. 3131.

<sup>291</sup> “He entendido que don Balthasar Molinet Thesorero de mi casa, no ha obedecido las ordenes que le han dado mi camarera maior y la Aia del Rey mi hixo, para la entrega de algunas cantidades a los oficiales que hacen el regalo que se ha de dar en nombre de mi hixo y en el mio al Principe de Florencia, mientras se despachan cedula mias de todo lo que montare despues de acabado y de conocido segun se estila; y respecto que siendo Thesorero subdito de ambas en la parte que le toca a los efectos que entraren en su poder a disposicion de cada una deve obedecer las ordenes que acerca de su distribucion le dieren en qualquier forma como se ha hecho por lo pasado se lo advertireis assi, reprehendiendole el no haverlo executado y previniendole que precisamente lo cumpla, sin que en ello aya falta, assi en el caso presente, como en los demas que se ofrecieren en adelante.” Mariana to Aytona, November 20, 1668. ADM Histórica leg. 69.

When Aytona questioned him, the treasurer responded that the *mayordomo mayor* must be the one to authorize those requests. The issue, however, was dropped and either Aytona approved the request without making an issue of it or he ensured that Mariana's orders were executed promptly. Montalto and Aytona, who were related through blood and marriage, reaped substantially different results from their privileged position at the beginning of the minority. Their political personalities could not have differed more from each other: While Montalto tended to speak, it seems, condescendingly to Mariana, Aytona gained the queen's trust by offering her the respect owed to a reigning sovereign.

Tensions between the masculine and feminine leadership of the court continued. Mariana was not willing to let the women in her household be upstaged by the men. She repeatedly defended the prerogatives of the two most important officers of her household, the Marquise of Baldueza and the Marquise of los Velez, when they were confronted by the male administrators. Five days after assuming the regency, for instance, Mariana ordered that all state documents be sent to her through her *camarera mayor*, "so that they arrived in my hands with all the necessary security."<sup>292</sup> She probably dispatched this royal decree as a means to resolve bickering between members of the court. Mariana upheld the rights of the *aya* in several ways as well. She did the same with other women at court throughout her regency. How should we interpret Mariana's evident defense of her ladies? Was it the result of an attitude that should be labeled proto-feminist? Probably not, Mariana simply respected the organizational structure of the court, which sanctioned female authority in a variety of contexts. At the same time, she tried to diminish the negative consequences of excluding a large portion of the masculine leadership of the

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<sup>292</sup> AGS E. leg. 4128. Decree dated September 22, 1665.

court from the role they traditionally occupied. She sought to do so, however, without trampling the privileges of the women in her household.

### **The Power Dynamics at Court during Mariana's Regency**

As the new court structure took shape, three offices emerged with an unprecedented amount of power and prestige: the *camarera mayor*, the *mayordomo mayor*, and the *aya*. Precisely because all three offices acquired more power than in normal circumstances, or periods of non-minority rule, conflicts increased as well.

One major source of conflict, as the previous examples illustrate, was the overlapping spheres of authority shared by the offices of *mayordomo mayor* and the *camarera mayor*. These kinds of problems were not necessarily new. During a good part of Philip II's reign, for instance, there were factional struggles between the *albistas*, followers of the Duke of Alba, and *ebolistas*, followers of the Prince of Eboli.<sup>293</sup> These two men occupied the two most prestigious offices of the court: Alba that of *mayordomo mayor* and Eboli that of his *summiller de corps*. This house versus chamber dichotomy defined factional struggles, and as studies on the Tudor court have shown, this problem was not limited to the Spanish court.<sup>294</sup> The office of the *summiller de corps* became associated with favorites in the seventeenth century and gradually overshadowed the others. Yet, in the rules of etiquette, the *mayordomo mayor* was, at least theoretically, the most important post of the court. Philip III and Philip IV tried to avoid problems by either

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<sup>293</sup> See James Boyden, *The Courtier and the King: Ruy Gómez de Silva, Philip II, and the Court of Spain* (Berkeley: University of California, 1995).

<sup>294</sup> See, for example, David Starkey, "Court, Council, and Nobility in Tudor England," in *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age*, Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke, eds. (London, England: German Historical Institute, 1991), 175-203.



conflating the offices in one person (as Philip III did with his favorite the Duke of Lerma), or by leaving the post of *mayordomo mayor* vacant.<sup>295</sup>

During the regency, however, this specific power dynamic was exacerbated by the nature of the queen's household. The office of *camarera mayor*, for example, was comparable to the *sumiller de corps*. However, the struggle to negotiate overlapping authority between the *mayordomo mayor*, the man in charge of the "house" (*casa*), and the *camarera mayor*, the woman in charge of the "chamber" (*cámara*), was much more complex. On the one hand, the *camarera mayor* possessed more prerogatives than her male counterpart because, at least in court ceremonial, she assumed several positions at once. She governed the ruler's inner chamber as the *sumiller de corps*, but she also had the right to sit next to the queen in the royal carriage as the *caballerizo mayor* and occupied a prominent position in court ceremonial outside the chamber as the *mayordomo mayor*.<sup>296</sup> On the other hand, the office of *mayordomo mayor* of the queen's household had acquired unprecedented power during the regency as a result of Mariana's own household policies. In fact, it remained the most important masculine court position during most of the regency and could certainly not be eliminated until Mariana re-established the king's household. Mariana deliberately left the office vacant after the Duke of Infantado and Pastrana's death in 1675. By then, Carlos had his own household. The next appointment would not be made until Mariana was sent into exile, and then under completely different political circumstances (see Chapter 6).

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<sup>295</sup> See for example, Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism*; Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares*.

<sup>296</sup> "El oficio de Camarera m[ayo]r es entre todos los demas de las casas del Rey n[uest]ro s[eñ]o[r] y de V[uestra] M[agestad] el mas igualmente preheminate porque conserva dentro y fuera de Palacio y en todas la funciones que se ofrecen su lugar y prerrogativas sin interbalo ni competencia con ningun otro puesto lo q[ue] no sucede a otro ninguno." AHN E. leg. 674 exp. 18.

Finally, the conditions of the regency propelled the *aya* to a more powerful position than normal because she served a king rather than a prince. These factors created a heightened sense of competition in an environment that was already cutthroat. The very individuals holding these important offices aggravated the situation. Montalto's attitude at the beginning of the regency was aggressive. The two women who rose to the top of the court hierarchy as *camarera mayor* and *aya* were also strong personalities and had no qualms about asserting their authority.

Doña Elvira Ponce de León, Marquise of Baldueza, who had served as *camarera mayor* since 1654, gained far greater influence under the regency. She handled the queen's correspondence, scheduled the queen's audiences, and was privy to all state matters. As was the case with other Spanish matriarchs, including the queen, she was appointed "tutor and curator" to her daughter, the heir to the family's title and fortune, during her minority. Baldueza negotiated an advantageous marriage with another aristocratic family, forced the couple to support her financially for the rest of her life, and ensured her daughter would be entitled to all the financial gains made during the marriage even if they had been attained in places where "women do not have property rights."<sup>297</sup>

Although Baldueza shown a great deal of discretion and kept clear of major scandals, she was also certainly outspoken. Baldueza asserted her right to give orders and did not hesitate to ask the queen to enforce her authority when those under her supervision did not obey her. Mariana supported Baldueza in a variety of circumstances, as Montalto's complains eloquently illustrate. Baldueza supported the queen even during the latter's political misfortunes. She did not hesitate to admonish the then fifteen-year-

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<sup>297</sup> AHNNS Osuna, c. 127, exp. 44.

old king to behave with respect toward his mother.<sup>298</sup> Baldueza followed the queen into her exile and continued to exercise her office once the queen returned to Madrid. She obtained the distinction of being addressed as “her excellency,” a coveted privilege among members of the court and one perhaps rarely given to women.<sup>299</sup>

The *aya* of the king, who shared the top position in the queen’s household, also headed her family during her son’s minority. Doña Mariana Engracia Álvarez de Toledo, Marquise of los Velez (1621-1686), was said to have ruled her domains with a “masculine hand.”<sup>300</sup> After relinquishing the management of the family’s fortune to her adult son, she entered the queen’s household as lady of honor in 1657. As was often the case in the Spanish court, los Velez moved into the palace with her small daughter. She became a respected figure at court and *aya* of Mariana’s children in 1659.<sup>301</sup> Velez, who gained the distinction of becoming the first and only *aya* of a king in Habsburg Spain, was a shrewd political player, whose influence, according to an imperial envoy, could be felt even “inside the government councils.”<sup>302</sup>

Accustomed to commanding others and not afraid to do so, these two powerful women were perhaps the most visible female figures in Mariana’s court, but certainly not

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<sup>298</sup> Laura Oliván, “La dama, el aya y la camarera. Perfiles políticos de tres mujeres de la Casa de Mariana de Austria,” in *Las Relaciones Discretas entre las Monarquías Hispana y Portuguesa: Las Casas de las Reinas (siglos XV-XIX)*, 3 vols. José Martínez Millán and Maria Paula Marçal Lourenço (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2008), 1301-1355, p. 1338.

<sup>299</sup> AGP Personal, c. 1099, exp. 29.

<sup>300</sup> Sánchez Ramos, “La V marquesa de los Velez,” p. 32.

<sup>301</sup> AGP, Personal, c. 1084, exp. 11.

<sup>302</sup> See, Sánchez Ramos, “La V marquesa de los Velez,” p. 37; Oliván, “La dama, el aya, y la camarera.”

the only ones.<sup>303</sup> As a group, Mariana's ladies often played the political game. As the factional struggles of the court increased, they chose sides and, at one point, divided themselves into *nitardas* (supporters of Nithard) and *austriales* (supporters of Philip's illegitimate son, don Juan).<sup>304</sup> By making the factions not a conflict between Mariana and don Juan, but rather a competition between Nithard and don Juan to obtain Mariana's favor, they affirmed Mariana's position as ruler. The two most powerful women of Mariana's household, however, became enmeshed in a conflict of etiquette. Although they were defending their positions, they unwittingly cast an unflattering light on Mariana's own place in the monarchy.

### **Testing the Limits of Queenship**

On 30 June 1667, the Marquise of Baldueza presented a formal complaint to the queen, alleging that the Marquise of los Velez preceded her during a court ritual with the excuse that as the king's *aya*, she had to take precedence. Baldueza claimed that her office was superior to all others "inside and outside the palace" and affirmed that another *aya* in the past had been reprimanded for a similar faux-pas. In her petition, Baldueza explained that Mariana had caused the conflict when she placed her son "on her right side" during court rituals. This was not a small matter, but one that signaled the fact that Carlos II was the ruling monarch and thus took the most preeminent place in the court ceremonial: on the right side. Nevertheless, Baldueza insisted that Velez did not have the

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<sup>303</sup> For an insightful discussion of the political role of three women in Mariana's household, including Baldueza, los Velez, and Leonor de Velasco, see Oliván, "La dama, el aya, y la camarera."

<sup>304</sup> "Cada cosa de estas ha sido de mas incentivo á la materia, y obligado á dividir la Corte en bandos, de tal suerte, q[u]e hasta los mas principales della lo están, y se dice q[u]e en el mismo Cuarto de S[u] M[agestad] entre las Damas hay sus diferencias, llamandose las unas Austriales, y las otras Gerardas..." *Papeles y cartas tocantes al señor don Juan de Austria*. Yale Collection of Manuscripts, the Spain Collection, Reel 3, Box 4, Folder 80. Other accounts refer to the factions as "nitardas" and "austriacas."

authority to “take away the preeminence of my office.” Velez presented her version to the queen on 2 August 1667. “Her intention was never to precede the *camarera* in the public ceremony,” she stated, “but only to exercise her office serving the person of the King, our Lord.” She confirmed Baldueza’s point, stating that “the dispute had been caused neither by the *aya* nor by the *camarera*,” argued Velez, “but rather by Your Majesty when changing the place [in ceremonials] given to the King Our Lord.”<sup>305</sup> In a cautious answer to Baldueza, Mariana excused Velez’s behavior on the basis that as *aya* of the king, she was obligated to follow him. The queen reasoned that as a result of the circumstances, Baldueza should not feel to have been dispossessed of the preeminence of her office.<sup>306</sup> Not satisfied with the queen’s response, Baldueza insisted on the validity of her claim. Mariana took the unprecedented step of forwarding the case to the Council of State for deliberation.

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<sup>305</sup> “La Marquesa de Baldueça en la cons[sul]ta primera de 30 de Junio [1667] que hizo a V[uestra] M[agestad] en esta racon refiere que los dias del vesamano de la S[eñor]a Emperatriz y del nombre de V[uestra] M[agestad] por haver gustado V[uestra] M[agestad] estubiese en su compania el Rey n[uestro] S[eñor] la precedio su aya con el pretexto de que era necess[aria] su asistencia...siendo esta accion contra lo estilado y devido al puesto de Camarera m[ayo]r que no puede ser preferida dentro ni fuera de Palacio y que quando V[uestra] M[agestad] por la dignidad del Rey n[uestro] S[eñor] quiera darle la mano derecha no se seguia a esto la concurrencia de la aya para quitar a la camarera la preheminiencia de su officio... Viose al mesmo t[iem]po otra cons[sul]ta de la aya [la Marquesa de los Velez] con el motivo de haver entendido que la Camarera havia hecho esta cons[sul]ta en que refiere que su pretension no es de preceder a la camarera sino de estar sirviendo supuesto cerca de la persona del Rey n[uestro] S[eñor]...y despues que heredo S[u] M[agest]d siempre que V[uestra] M[agestad] le ha puesto a su mano izquierda ha E. en aquel lugar inmediato como despues a la derecha conque la disputa no es della ni de la camarera sino del lugar que V[uestra] M[agestad] diese al Rey n[uestro] S[eñor] porque en este caso cada una estara en la parte donde le tocare.” AHN E. leg. 674 exp. 18.

<sup>306</sup> Mariana’s response to Baldueza: “Ocupando el Rey mi hijo, mi mano derecha como es Justo es preciso que su aya se halle muy cercana a su Persona para asistirle y servirle en su exercicio y siendo el lugar que tiene por raçon de officio y de servicio no es competencia de lugares ni de precedencias pues ninguna en mi quarto le puede tener tan preheminiencia como la camarera m[ayo]r; asentado esto como lo esta y todos lo reconocen ni se hace novedad ni puede tomarse otro expidiente, mas que esta declaracion pues si concurredes en el coche Juntas caeys vos en el primer lugar y en todas oçassiones que quepan en lo posible, noseos puede disputar conque os, repondo encargando os, en todo la buena correspondencia que fio devos y de v[uest]ras obligaciones.”

Mariana’s response to Velez: “Quedo adbertida delo que me representais esta vien lo que decis del lugar en que deveis estair inmediato al Rey mi hijo para poderle asistir y servir en el exercicio de v[uest]ro puesto sin que esto perjudique a las prerrogativas de camarera m[ayo]r.” AHN E. leg. 674 exp. 18.

The etiquette conflict between the *camarera mayor* and the *aya* brought to the fore the consequences and implications of the regency: Mariana assumed power with the rights of a proprietary ruler and temporarily exercised sovereignty as such. She was not, however, a proprietary ruler, because sovereignty ultimately rested with Carlos II. This important point could not be ignored during the ceremonials of the court. Mariana had indeed acted accordingly, changing Carlos II's place in court rituals to "the right side," implying that he enjoyed preeminence even above herself. This precipitated a conflict of etiquette because the two women served as members of the queen's household, which had its own rules of hierarchy. The etiquette regulating the queen's royal household did not address what would happen if one of those officers served a king rather than a prince or *infante*. The ministers who were asked to find a solution were thus forced to think about Mariana's role in the monarchy and, more specifically, about the hierarchical relationship between the queen and king during this royal minority.

This case is well known to scholars, many of whom have used it to illustrate the type of factional struggles that plagued the minority, purportedly revealing a court out of control and a ruler unable to rein in disorder. In his discussion of the case, the historian Gabriel Maura concluded that the claims of the two women, Mariana's decisions, and ministers' responses, rested essentially on political loyalties, and subsequent scholars have generally subscribed to this view.<sup>307</sup> Yet, this interpretation cannot. On the one hand, the factional struggles that culminated with Nithard's dismissal from the court in March 1669 were still inchoate in 1667. On the other hand, the arguments presented by the members of the Council of State go well beyond political loyalties and animosities.

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<sup>307</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. 1:289-291.

These elaborate opinions and debates illuminate critical issues: the consequences of the elimination of the king's household, the impact of Philip's testamentary provisions, and the consequences of Mariana's own policies on the political climate of the court.

The deliberation of the State Council on this issue took place on 7 September 1667. Ministers unanimously agreed that the *camarera mayor* held first place in the queen's household and could not be superseded by the office of the *aya* of a prince or infante. The sticky point, therefore, was that in this case, the contest was between the *camarera mayor* against the claim presented by an *aya*, not of a prince, but of a *king*.<sup>308</sup> On the one hand, ministers of the State Council, many of whom held court appointments themselves, were not inclined to deprive anyone of his or her privileges: they sympathized with Baldueza's predicament, and realized that the woman had been put in a difficult position. On the other hand, ignoring Velez's claims meant that the king would be deprived of his central role in the body politic. Upholding Baldueza's preeminence at all times would have subordinated the king to Mariana. Even though he could not exercise his royal duties completely, it was not possible to deny Carlos, as king, his place in court rituals. This particular conflict of etiquette, therefore, forced ministers to affirm the centrality of the king in the polity.

Because there had been no previous royal minorities in Habsburg Spain, the ministers lacked precedents and thus relied on those who had extensive knowledge on matters of etiquette that regulated the royal households. Two figures emerged as the

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<sup>308</sup> "El consejo habiendo visto todo lo referido reconoce que es matheria ya dividida por respuestas de V[uestra] M[agestad] a las consultas de la Camarera M[ayor] mas como noseda por satisf[ec]ha y tambien remite V[uestra] M[agestad] las del aya en que repress[en]ta su racon dira el consejo lo que sele ofrece obedeciendo a V[uestra] M[agestad] yolgara que en las ethiquetas dela casa R[ea]l se hallase reglas o, exemplars que declarasen esta matheria pero es dificil de encontrarse para el caso presente de aya de rey pupilo con camarera ma[yo]r de Reyna Reynante aunque hay muchos y muy modernos y antiguos de ayas de Principes y Infantes, pero aunque estos son favorables a la preheminencia de las camareras maiores no ajustados a la presente question respecto de Rey y Reyna." AHN E. leg. 674 exp. 18.

experts: the Duke of Medina de las Torres and the Duke of Alba. Their responses reflect their extensive service to the Habsburg court, which in Alba's case went back several generations. The opinions of the Count of Peñaranda, the Marquis of Mortara, and the Count of Ayala were variations on the themes Medina and Alba discussed at greater length. The responses of don Juan of Austria and Everard Nithard, over whom political loyalties were divided and both of whom were by this time members of the Council of State, reveal their ignorance and inexperience in matters of etiquette. Both proposed innovative solutions. But these were dismissed by the others as unworkable. Ministers set out to find alternative solutions in three different areas of court ceremonial: public acts, church functions, and outings in the royal carriages.

The Duke of Medina de las Torres, the first one to speak, demonstrated his encyclopedic and practical knowledge of the court, acquired during more than fifty years of service, which had culminated in his appointment as the king's *sumiller de corps*. He offered a lengthy and well-documented explanation on the nature of the two offices, with examples drawn from the early part of the century, to the royal household of Margarita of Austria, Queen consort to Philip III, who was "Your Majesty's [Mariana's] grandmother," he pointed out.<sup>309</sup> The office of *camarera mayor* took precedence over all other offices, he explained. She held precedence in and out of the palace, something that

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<sup>309</sup> Medina de las Torres's opinion: "El duque... hubiera tenido por conbeniente al servi[cio] de V[uestra] M[agestad] se sirviera de remitir al Inquisidor Gen[eral] y al Duque de Alba el ajustamiento de los puntos que se controbierten... no juzga el Duque hubiera sido difiçil el que se combinesen demanera que no saliesen estas diferencias del R[ea]l quarto de V[uestra] M[agestad] ni ocasionasen los embaraços que hoi se experimentan, Pero havien V[uestra] M[agestad] remitidola al conss[e]jo, mandandole diga sobre ella suparecer representare el Duq[ue] a V[uestra] M[agestad] lo que se le ofrece y las noticias que hapodido adquirir en 58 anios que ha que entra a servir a la Rey[n]a n[uest]ra S[eñor]a abuela de V[uestra] M[agestad]." AHN E. leg. 674 exp. 18.



was not true of any other court office.<sup>310</sup> The office of the *aya*, on the other hand, was a temporary one and ended when the charge “was given” his or her own household.<sup>311</sup> This office served the royal princes and *infantes* (both male and females) and undoubtedly belonged to the household of the queen. The clarification Medina de las Torres made regarding the fact that the office of *aya* belonged to the queen’s household clearly shows that he immediately identified the root of the problem: the king was served by members of the queen’s household. This important point emphasizes the significance of the royal household in the political scheme of the monarchy. Being served from his mother’s household had a deep impact on the practice of kingship and on its perception as well: Without a household, the king had no political identity. The structure of the queen’s household complicated the situation because it possessed its own rules and hierarchy of offices. The office of *aya* under regular circumstances came under the jurisdiction of the *camarera mayor* as the rest of the queen’s household. What would happen if the woman in question served a sovereign? Would she be given priority in all occasions? As we will see, this was not an easy issue to resolve.

Medina de las Torres’s final verdict was that the *aya* had to precede the *camarera* when she was tending to the king. When she was not needed, the *camarera* took precedence. Based on this, Medina de las Torres made the following recommendations. For public rituals, the office of the *aya* should have preeminence over the *camarera*. For

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<sup>310</sup> “El oficio de Camarera m[ayo]r es entre todos los demas de las casas del Rey n[uest]ro s[eñ]o[r] y de V[uestra] M[agestad] el mas igualmente prehemimente porque conserva dentro y fuera de Palacio y en todas la funciones que se ofrecen su lugar y prerrogativas sin interbalo ni competencia con ningun otro puesto lo q[ue] no sucede a otro ninguno.” AHN E. leg. 674 exp. 18.

<sup>311</sup> I use of the passive voice here deliberately. The heir was always “given” a household. He then went on to make his own appointments when he became the ruler. In Carlos’s case, Mariana was the one who formed Carlos’s household in lieu of Philip, who simply ordered that Carlos be “served” from his mother’s household until she instituted his house.

church ceremonials, he argued that the *camarera* should keep her prominent place. He reasoned that Mariana could not, as a just ruler, deprive the *camarera mayor* of all the prerogatives her office had enjoyed always.<sup>312</sup> His response, therefore, implied that Baldueza should keep the benefits of her office, not because of what Mariana represented in the monarchy, but because Baldueza was entitled to it. In the royal carriage, no conflict took place since both women were to be seated across from the queen and king respectively.

With the exception of the Duke of Alba, the rest of the council agreed with Medina de las Torres. Nithard and don Juan offered the most creative solutions, which were unanimously discarded by the rest of the ministers, particularly Alba, who protested that they would “confuse the places of the royal persons and of those who had representation.”<sup>313</sup> The Count of Peñaranda raised a few important points that merit a brief discussion. First, he pointed out that these conflicts were not between persons but between offices. He proposed that the public acts such as kissing of the monarchs’ hands should take place in different rooms.<sup>314</sup> The rest of the Council, with the exception of

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<sup>312</sup> “es de Parecer el Duque mande V[uestra] M[agestad] q[ue] a la camarera se le mantenga en la autoridad y prehemencias que siempre ha tenido su oficio y que a la aya se le adbierta, solo puede preferirla en las ocasiones en que estubiere en actual exercicio como son las que quedan referidas.” AHN E. leg. 674 exp. 18.

<sup>313</sup> Alba: “... pues en las iglesias tendra V[uestra] M[agestad] a quedarse fuera del sitial y con este ejemplar, confluidos los lugares de los que tienen alli representacion...” AHN E. leg. 674 exp. 18.

<sup>314</sup> Peñaranda: “El Conde de Peñaranda, dijo q[ue] estas questionnes entre dos sugetos tales nos son de las Perss[on]as sino de los oficios y no deviendo dudar que la R[ea]l atencion de V[uestra] M[agestad] no querra perjudicar lo que a cada uno le toca nide sus muchas obligaciones que dejaran de ajustarse a lo que fuere su R[ea]l Voluntad, Juzga el conde que dentro de Palacio puede tener facil temperamento esta discordia consatisfacion de entrambos quel seria que el Rey n[uest]ro S[eñ]or no concurriese en actos publicos de Besamanos con V[uestra] M[agestad] sino que se empecase con ir a su quarto al Besamano y de alli pasar al de V[uestra] M[agestad] y assi se excusaria la competencia.” AHN E. leg. 674 exp. 18.

Nithard, agreed; in fact, they celebrated the idea.<sup>315</sup> The need to give Carlos his own space during court rituals illustrates the extent to which the court needed to establish a measure of independent political identity for the king, which was almost impossible to do so long as he continued to be served from his mother's household.

The Duke of Alba was the most forceful dissenter here. All the instances presented in the deliberations, Alba pointed out, did not apply to this case, because all were of "princes with a father who was alive and king." Because in this case "his majesty is a reigning king and your majesty a queen governor and tutor," everything completely differed.<sup>316</sup> He argued that the office of the *aya* should precede in all instances the office of the *camarera mayor*. The two offices, he argued, should follow the hierarchy that existed between the queen and the king, in which the "the king's dignity" was clearly established above the queen's. As long as the king did not have his own household, the *aya* was *his* royal household. This situation did not injure the position of the *camarera mayor*, because "in general her preeminence is indisputable."<sup>317</sup> In the end, Alba only

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<sup>315</sup> "El Marques de Mortara y Conde de Ayala van conel consejo en quanto aque no se disputa la preferencia a la camarera m[ayo]r pero que en los ratos en que fuere preciso servir Personal del aya es inexcusable que haia de ocupar el mejor lugar que la camarera como V[uestra] M[agestad] lo tiene rress[uel]to exeto en las iglesias porq[ue] en ellas deve estar la camarera alamano derecha respecto de que alli el aya, no tiene funcion que executar nila toca labor del Rey n[uest]ro S[eño]r sino a V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d, pero si V[uestra] M[agestad] para excusar diferencias se Inclinare a tomar temperamento se remiten, a que escosa el que fuere servida y p[or] el que mira alo de dentro de Palacio se conforman con el que propone el conde de Peñaranda en su Voto de que los Besamanos sean en cada, quarto separado." AHN E. leg. 674 exp. 18.

<sup>316</sup> "...y los exemplares tan repetidos que vienen en algunos botos nomilitan en este caso pues son de Principe con Padre Bibo y Rey; pero hoi siendo Su M[a]g[esta]d Rey Reynante y V[uestra] M[agestad] Reyna Gobernadora y Tutora, es diferentisimo el caso..." AHN E. leg. 674, exp. 18.

<sup>317</sup> "El Duque de Alva que es inseparable el oficio del Aia con la asistencia al Rey n[uest]ro S[eño]r en qualquiera parte que se halle y assi deve concurrir el aya y tomar lugar a espaldas de S[u] M[a]g[esta]d sin limitarla la Juris[dici]on dividiendo en su quarto las funciones de Besamano conque el entender del Duque siempre que se ofrezcan estos actos deve asistir cerca de S[u] M[a]g[esta]d hasta su maior edad al lado derecho de la Camarera m[ay]or el rato que durare el estar Juntos V[uestras] M[a]g[estades], assi como S[u] M[a]g[esta]d prefiere tambien a V[uestra] M[agestad] porla prerrogativa R[ea] de la dignidad de Rey

accepted his colleagues' recommendation to conduct the kissing of the hands in separate rooms. His vote was uncompromising: the *aya* should always take precedence over the *camarera*. Nothing had been taken away from Baldueza and thus she had no basis for her claims. He insisted that his decision was not based on personal loyalties because "I am equally related to both women." But, he said, he was a "better friend of truth" than personal relationships in his response to the queen.<sup>318</sup>

Alba's response as well as the lengthy and careful deliberation by the rest of the ministers reveal that these issues were neither petty considerations nor could they be explained away as mere expressions of political loyalties or factions (whether they existed or not). Although the ministers' discussion revolved around the two offices in the queen's household, they were unwittingly also debating Mariana's role in the monarchy. In these discussions, Mariana's position emerges in an unflattering light. The ambivalence of the queen's position lay in the very definition of her sovereignty and in the way she exercised power. She was not the proprietary ruler, but assumed the role in her son's name. Yet, by trying to give Carlos the ceremonial place that corresponded to him, as king, her own role stood in the way, simply because she exercised power from her own royal household. The great irony here is that the institutionalization of female authority through the queen's royal household was the very reason that these conflicts of

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al qual (en tanto quenosele pone casa) es inmediato el ministerio de aya y no perjudica esto, aque el preferir la camarera m[ay]or en lo general que la toca no es disputable." AHN E. leg. 674 exp. 18.

<sup>318</sup> "...y assi acava su boto conser de Parecer que en quantos actos publicos hubiere en todo genero de sitio y lugar que V[uestra] M[agestad] diere el suio al Rey n[uest]ro S[eñ]or deve preceder el aya pues conesta circunstancia nosele quita nada ala camarera, nidevera quejarse; y el duque tiene igual parestesco con entrambas como tambien la Duquesa su muger que es Prima Hermana delas dos, pero tras esto es mas amigo de la berdad conque representa a V[uestra] M[agestad] su dictamen con toda sinceridad." AHN, E. leg. 674, exp. 18.

etiquette came to light; in doing so, they exposed the problems, especially factional struggles, associated with royal minorities.

### **Etiquette, Ceremonial, and Royal Household Politics in a Queen's Court**

The royal succession from Philip IV to Mariana and Carlos went smoothly. None of the conflicts generally associated with royal successions or with the inauguration of female regencies were present at the Spanish court. This tranquil transition illustrates the strength of royal power in the Spanish monarchy, reveals how invested the ruling elite was in that power, and demonstrates the legitimacy of Mariana's position during her son's minority. Once the transition had taken place, however, difficulties arose. This contradiction needs to be analyzed in order to evaluate Mariana's regency fairly. The struggles for power were not simply the result of a society that resisted female authority. Conflicts began precisely because female authority was deeply institutionalized in the queen's household. Mariana exercised power from her own household. All the conflicts discussed here sprang from the elimination of the king's household specified in Philip's testament, which ironically affirmed Mariana's inherent rights as the queen consort and regent.

Language has profound significance here; without close attention to it we could not possibly understand how could it be that members of the king's household continued to be paid, and that sections of the king's household continued to function when the king's household had been eliminated. Multiple phrases used in different contexts and by different people point to the same issue: "The two representations fall on the queen" (Crespí), "It is not convenient that even though there is a king, there is not a king's household" (Aytona), "The king's household is only fragments and relics of what it was

in the past” (Montalto), “these are the impediments that we have” (Medina de las Torres), and “what is left of that house” (Mariana). All of these phrases convey the same idea: the king’s household had been effectively eliminated during the regency, while Carlos II continued to live in and be “served” from his mother’s household.

This important point explains the symbolism of certain acts, proceedings, and anxieties members of the court expressed. One of the earliest acts after Philip’s death consisted in the surrendering of the keys to his chambers to Mariana. This act, which took place immediately following Philip IV’s death, denoted the diminishing presence of the king (and his household) and the new role Mariana occupied in the court structure. This act was accompanied by numerous others, such as the moving of the royal guards, the breaking of the royal seals, the making of the new ones, and so forth. They all point to the same thing: the conditions of the regency caused a major shift in the structure of the court and had momentous political repercussions. The lack of a king’s household brought to the surface the main problem of a royal minority: the absence of a fully functioning king.

The dignity of kingship was in peril, not because of Carlos’s purported physical weaknesses, but because of his tender age and the structure the court assumed during his minority. The crises at court reflected the problems associated with a diminished presence of kingship. Peñaranda’s insistence on giving Carlos his own space during the kissing of the hand ceremonies reveals that the ruling elite felt the need to accord the king an independent political identity distinct from that of his mother despite his extreme youth. Alba’s protestations that some solutions offered were unacceptable because they would “confuse the places of all those who had representation” highlights the main

concern of the elite: by defending the place of the king they defended their own place in the political structure of the court.

Even though her regency rested on the solid ground of Philip's testament and drew on political traditions that sanctioned her position, Mariana, like other queen regents, had to perform a deft balancing act in order to exercise power and to retain it. In many ways, her dilemma summarizes the predicament of any regency government during a royal minority. How could a queen regent exercise a sovereignty that had been legally, dynastically, and politically sanctioned and yet still exalt the figure of the king? In her case, the extensive prerogatives with which she assumed the office and which in some ways, put her in competition with her own son exacerbated the problem. Her strength was simultaneously her weakness. To navigate this very difficult office, Mariana adopted a series of strategies that reveals her deep awareness of the situation and her political shrewdness. Yet, such strategies required collaboration and a willingness on everyone's part to compromise.

Personality mattered. Structure created the conditions that contributed to heightened tensions, but structure alone does not account for how Mariana's regime evolved. It is clear that personalities and individual decisions had a strong impact on how loyalties and animosities formed. The people discussed in this chapter, including Aytona, Montalto, Medina de las Torres, Alba, Baldueza, and Velez, shaped Mariana's regime in tangible and concrete ways. Mariana, too, set the tone with her behavior. It is very possible, for example, that her clash with Montalto became a didactic moment for other members of her household, as they observed what must have been a dramatic transformation. The former queen consort, who had during sixteen years of marriage

deferred to the king of Spain, became a powerful ruler, who had no qualms about demanding total immediate obedience from her subjects, defending female members of her household, and in some occasions disregarding court etiquette for politically motivated reasons. The first few years of the regency, therefore, required considerable adjustments on everyone's part. Soon, the new court structure, in addition to the test of personalities and will, resulted in the consolidation of a political regime that had its own characteristics and players.

### **Exercising versus Representing Power**

By the time that the first public procession with the king in attendance took place, the conflicts of etiquette discussed here had all been resolved and the new order had been established. On 2 July 1668, *madrileños* of all sorts, from the highest nobility to the common folk, flocked the streets of the city to witness the first time Carlos II went out in public since he had inherited the throne three years earlier.<sup>319</sup> Accompanied by his mother and a large retinue of courtiers, the six-year old sovereign left the Royal Palace at about six in the evening to perform a traditional act of Habsburg devotion: a visit to the Virgin of Atocha, the heavenly guardian of the Spanish monarchy and since 1643 officially her patron.<sup>320</sup> The caravan had been carefully orchestrated: led by their respective captains, the colorful and handsome Spanish and German royal guards headed the procession. They were trailed by an empty royal coach, referred to as the carriage of "respect." The queen's *mayordomo mayor* and *caballerizo mayor* followed, occupying a prominent place in the procession. The royal carriage, the only one drawn by six horses rather than

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<sup>319</sup> I base the following description of the diary of the Imperial Ambassador to Spain, the Count of Potting. Nieto Nuño, ed., *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, p. I: 393-4.

<sup>320</sup> Jeffrey Schrader, *La Virgen de Atocha: Los Austrias y las imágenes milagrosas* (Madrid: Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 2006), p. 17.



the customary two or four, was guarded by gentleman on foot and followed by the rest of the male court officers on horse. The women made up a sizeable portion of the procession: two coaches transported the Ladies of Honor (widows or spinsters), while six more coaches carried those of marriageable age and the young *meninas*. All the women were dressed with black silk and brocades, mimicking the mourning observed by their mistress. The *galanes* or heartthrobs, were conspicuously absent, noted the observer of the event, as a show of respect for the queen's widowhood.

In spite of these unmistakable signs of decorum, a festive atmosphere prevailed. Torch-illuminated streets and splendid tapestries hanging from balconies decorated the city. The warm and dark sound of the church bells filled the air for the entire time that the sovereign remained outside the palace and, although the sound disconcerted all the clocks, "it denoted clear signs of happiness." The music played for the dances greeted the sovereigns as they passed the densely packed streets and the plazas, temporarily drowning the reverberating sound of the bells. On their way back, already dark at ten in the evening, the royal carriage offered a "beautiful sight" surrounded by twelve *meninos* "especially chosen from the highest nobility" carrying lighted torches and seated on well-caparisoned horses. The young king occupied the center and was the one who everyone wanted to see, said this witness. Carlos II was loudly acclaimed as he passed through the densely packed streets and celebrated with fireworks that had been staged on several streets. He was flanked by three feminine figures: "The queen, his mother, as his tutor and governor, was seated at his left, while the *camarera mayor*, the Marquise of Baldueza, and the *aya*, the Marquise of los Velez, sat directly across the queen and king respectively." "And with such an arrangement," commented the keen observer, "there

was the solution of a competition for precedence between these two ladies, both of whom had ponderable reasons to claim the first place.” With that remark, our witness finished his description of this important political ritual that captures with an eloquent economy of words the situation of the court during the minority.<sup>321</sup>

It is clear that the first public procession with the king in attendance emphasized the new, and visibly feminine, structure of the court. There was no way to hide the fact that the king was surrounded by women, not only his mother, but members of her royal

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<sup>321</sup> “El Rey y la Reyna salieron la primera vez en publico despues de la muerte del Rey Phelippe IV, â Nuestra Señora de Atocha, açerca de las seis de la tarde. Hubo un concurso grandioso de la nobleça y del pueblo, con grande estruendo de aclamaciones â su Rey pero no a la Reyna. Fuime con la Condessa y [la] iha en cassa de mi mercader, en la Calle Mayor, para ueer al incognito esta funçion, que se hiço en la forma siguiente: las calles por donde passaron Sus Magestades estauan todas tapiçadas y adornadas a lo mejor y mas rico que cada uno pudo; salieron en primer lugar las dos guardias, española y alemana, con sus capitanes; siguio el coche real uaçio, que llaman de respeto; detras de este los meninos en unos cavallos superbissimamente enjaeçados, sin cappa; despues siguio el coche del Caualleriço Mayor, alli sentados el Mayordomo Mayor en el primer lugar, junto con el Caualleriço Mayor y despues los demas Mayordomos semaneros; siguio el coche con las personas reales; el Rey estuvo sentado en el primer lugar, [y] a su lado ysquierdo la Reyna, su madre tutora y gouernadora; haçia los cauallos iban la Camarera Mayor, Marquesa de Valdueça, y la Aya del Rey, Marquessa de los Vles, cada una en-frente de su amo y ama, temperamento con que se ajusto la competençia de estas dos señoras en quanto a la preçedencia, que cada una pretendia con fundamentos igualmente ponderables; los cocheros andan descubiertos; el coche real [lo] ladearon los escuderos de a pie, en lugar que en otras Cortes de Principes le ciñen las guardias; detras del coche de los Reyes iban todos los offiçiales de la Corte â cauallo; a esto siguian dos coches con señoras de honor, [y] detras de cada uno un guardadamas â cavallo; seguian seis coches con damas de Palaçio, todas uestidas de seda y çintas de negro, ni se consintieron galanes â cauallo, por ser la Reyna uiuda, solo guardadamas detras de cada coche; seguia un coche con guardas; y ultimamente uino un coche real ò de Palaçio, que llaman de reserua, [por] si â-casso le huuiere menester, y se quebrasse uno de los que siruian. Hase de notar que toda la familia y cocheros de la Reyna uistian [de] negro, y el coche, auntque era preuenido nueuo para esta primera salida, fue muy ordinario y de ninguna ostentaçion. Los Reyes y personas reales solamente uan en esta residençia con tiros de â seis, todos los demas con quatro ò dos, y consiste la diferençia de que las personas mas graduadas usan de dos cocheros, y los demas uno. Durante el tiempo de esta real salida repicaron las campanas en todas las iglesias y anduieron desconcertados todos los relojes, todo [en] señal de alegria. Huuo en las plaças y calles diferentes representaçiones de musica y bayles por donde los Reyes passaron. Huuo grande concurso de coches, y un mundo de gente, todos aclamando al Rey y no â su madre, por donde se echaua de ueer la poca approbacion de su gouierno. Boluieron Sus Magestades açerca de las diez de la noche y se hiçieron por las calles y casas por donde passaron diferentes luminarias. Alumbraron el coche del Rey doçe meninos con hachas, y descubiertos, que por ser todos hixos de la primera nobleça no dexa de pareçer funçion muy lucida, la qual huiendola uisto de todo punto acabada me bolui con la Condessa â Cassa...”

“el Rey estuvo sentado en el primer lugar, [y] a su lado ysquierdo la Reyna, su madre tutora y gouernadora; haçia los cauallos iban la Camarera Mayor, Marquesa de Valdueça, y la Aya del Rey, Marquessa de los V[e]lles, cada una en-frente de su amo y ama, temperamento con que se ajusto la competençia de estas dos señoras en quanto a la preçedencia, que cada una pretendia con fundamentos igualmente ponderables.” Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, I: 393-4.

household. Although the problems faced by members of the court had become public knowledge, the procession, it should be noted, was a complete success. Carlos II's subjects flocked to see their sovereign and to celebrate him. The presence of noble children provided a charming and adorable element to the procession, made abundantly clear in Pötting's description.

In fact, the ambassador made an offhanded comment on the reality that the common folk "loudly acclaimed the king, but not his mother." "The reason," he reflected "was the low approval that her government commanded."<sup>322</sup> This comment points to some important distinctions that must be made. First, it is clear that the issues that have been discussed in this chapter did not affect negatively or diminish the perception of the king for the common folk or *pueblo*. In fact, it seems that Carlos, as child king surrounded by his charming youthful entourage inspired the type of admiration and "love" that a fully grown sovereign could expect to command. Second, the apparent disapproval of Mariana's government, clearly pointed out in Pötting's description had nothing to do with Mariana's royal household policies, the court structure, or the conflicts of etiquette. They had to do with her foreign policy, a topic that will be discussed in depth in the following chapter.

Thus, while it is clear that the royal household and the power dynamics that emerged as a result of the conditions of the regency minority shaped Mariana's regime, this is only one aspect in the larger context of how Mariana exercised power and authority. It was certainly important because it involved an important portion of the ruling elite, those who were ultimately in charge of enforcing her commands. But her rule

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<sup>322</sup> "aclamando al Rey y no â su madre, por donde se echaua de uer la poca aprobacion de su gouierno." Nieto Nuño, ed. *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, p. I: 393-4.

also transpired in the broader context of the court and in the much larger European stage as well. In fact, the first public procession was timed at critical point for Mariana's regime, when she had just extricated the monarchy from a dangerous crisis, with a series of strategies that were deeply controversial.

## CHAPTER 3

### RULER AND STATESWOMAN

The Spanish Habsburgs inherited an agglomeration of territories that spanned three continents. Over the course of a century and a half, they gradually devised a court system that provided a central point of contact between rulers and subjects and a physical space to perform the ceremonial and administrative aspects of ruling. A sophisticated royal household structure and an elaborate conciliar system of government, the two main components of the court, formed a microcosm of the Spanish monarchy. The king linked all the elements of government, acting as the center of court ceremony and as its chief administrator. During his long reign, Philip IV left a significant mark on the practice of kingship; he had become the embodiment of the ideal ruler. He dominated the ceremonial center of the court, fulfilling his duties to the end of his life, even in the very act of dying. Adapting the ceremonial and rituals once Carlos II succeeded as a minor was not an easy or straightforward process because these were henceforth performed through the queen's royal household. Thus, the absence of a royal household exclusively serving the king challenged the notion that the king was the most important element of the court, provoking multiple types of conflicts and ultimately compromising the "dignity" of kingship.<sup>323</sup> It also presented great difficulties for Mariana, who had to rule not *as* the king but *on behalf* of the king.

Despite the unquestioned legitimacy of her rule, Mariana's position was hard to define. She was queen and she was governor; yet the sum of these parts did not make her a proprietary ruler. Thus, Mariana's tenure in office cannot be seen as that of a regnant

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<sup>323</sup> The term was used by the Duke of Alba during a debate on a conflict of etiquette caused by the absence of the king's household. See chapter 2 for a discussion of this episode.

queen because her reign fundamentally differed. Decisions involving Spain's territorial integrity, for instance, produced constitutional dilemmas. Agreeing to recognize Portugal's independence as she did in 1668, in fact, raised questions as to whether she had the right to alienate part of her son's inheritance. This is precisely the type of quandary that regents faced.

This chapter investigates how Mariana navigated and accommodated to the inherent contradictions of her office and her position. It examines Mariana's authority by focusing on how she ruled as queen governor or *reina gobernadora*, as she was most often called, analyzes the composition of her regime, identifies the characteristics of her foreign policy, and considers how, why, and with whom she devised it. Early on in her reign, Mariana was forced to resolve the foreign policy adopted by Philip IV during the later period of his reign, while facing an imminent French attack. Louis XIV invaded the Spanish Low Countries in 1667 beginning the so-called War of Devolution. The first round of conflict with France concluded with the signing of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapele in 1668. Not only did Mariana successfully extricate the monarchy from a dangerous position, but she also emerged from this formative period a seasoned stateswoman in possession of principles that guided her afterwards. Her growth came about gradually, as a result of practical considerations and her collaboration with a number of political figures besides her purported favorites.

Besides dealing with matters on the European and global stages, Mariana had to create unity out of a deeply divided court and regulate intense competition for political power. Rivalry among those trying to enter the queen's inner circle was particularly brutal during the initial three years of her rule. Thus, this formative (and highly conflicted

period) offers a good opportunity to observe Mariana's development as both ruler and stateswoman. The strategies Mariana deployed on the European stage and at court must be viewed in tandem because they were inextricably connected. In fact, the political disorders during Mariana's regency resulted as much from external events as internal ones. Louis XIV, Leopold I, and three successive popes (Alexander VII, Clement IX, and Clement X) became integral parts of the factional struggles in Madrid. Likewise, the potential succession crisis fostered a dangerous level of anxiety in Europe and at home as well. Fear of a contested succession encouraged war, diplomatic alliances, and factional struggles. An examination of a variety of state papers demonstrate that Mariana successfully maneuvered the treacherous waters of court and European politics.<sup>324</sup> In so doing, her considerable political skill can be fully appreciated.

### **Mariana as Governor**

Mariana's title of tutor allowed her to monopolize control over the court and the king through her royal household. Although this arrangement certainly gave her an enormous amount of power, it also presented her with the conundrum of having to share the ceremonial center with her son. The title of governor, on the other hand, provided her with a monopoly of authority over the administration of the realm. Until Carlos II came of age on November 6, 1675, Mariana's signature possessed the same weight as a sovereign ruler and it can be found on hundreds of state documents. As queen governor, Mariana legalized, formalized, and completed all tasks of government. She appointed

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<sup>324</sup> The sources used in this chapter include diplomatic correspondence, Council of State deliberations, treaties with foreign powers, Mariana's instructions to her diplomats, the private papers of the Marquis of Aytona, manuscripts, and diaries. Besides a few published sources, most of these documents are housed in the following archival repositories: the Archivo General in Simancas, the Archivo Histórico Nacional, the Biblioteca Nacional, and the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid, and the Archivo of the Fundación Medinaceli in Seville and Toledo. I have also relied on Mariana's portraits as governor.

councilors, secretaries, ambassadors, viceroys, and court, military, and ecclesiastical officers, became the source and manager of royal patronage, and dictated Spain's foreign and domestic policies. In order to fulfill her role effectively, Mariana followed several political traditions and worked closely with the Regency Council that Philip IV had instituted.

Over the course of his long reign, Philip IV had become a consummate administrator, setting a high standard for Mariana who, as queen governor, had to emulate her husband in that regard. In Spain, the association of kingship with administration had a long pedigree and state documents often referred to the sovereign as the "king governor" or *el rey gobernador*. This manner of ruling denoted the essentially consultative practice of Spanish kingship under the Habsburgs; government councils "advised" the king through written *consultas*.<sup>325</sup> The word itself denotes this concept: to advise derives from the word *consejo*, which means counsel. The word can be used as a verb (*aconsejar* or to counsel) or a noun (*consejo*) which also refers to a government body or council.<sup>326</sup> In her role as governor, Mariana faithfully upheld the system adopted by the Habsburgs.

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<sup>325</sup> John H. Elliott has written extensively about the nature of Spanish kingship. My analysis here is deeply indebted to his insights. See bibliography for references.

<sup>326</sup> For a concise history of the consejos, and in particular, the Council of State, see José María Cordero Torres, *El consejo de Estado, su trayectoria y perspectivas en España* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1944); and Feliciano Barrios, *El consejo de Estado de la monarquía española, 1521-1812* (Madrid, 1984). Some of the councils had been established with a territorial jurisdiction (i.e. Castile, Aragón, Portugal, Naples, Italy, Flanders, and Indies), others in a thematic manner (i.e. State, Military Orders, War, Finance, and Inquisition). They had been created at different times, or eliminated accordingly. Some had more prerogatives than others (such as Castile and State), others were dependent on other councils, and many lost prerogatives during the early modern period as other grew and branched out into additional councils.



Mariana assumed her governorship at a time in which the figure of the *valido* or favorite profoundly influenced the conciliar system of government.<sup>327</sup> The Duke of Lerma, who exercised the position of *valido* during most of Philip III's reign, from 1598 until his fall in 1618, and the Count-Duke of Olivares, who did so during the first half of Philip IV's reign, from 1621 until 1643, left a strong mark on the political culture of the court.<sup>328</sup> Particularly important was the changing role of the Council of State during the age of the great favorites. The relationship between the Council of State and the *valido* became the measure of the power each of these controversial figures had managed to concentrate into his own hands. Lerma enjoyed *carte blanche* to preside over the Council of State and, from 1612 to 1618, his signature equaled that of the king.<sup>329</sup> Olivares, who endeavored to present himself as the king's minister rather than his favorite, also controlled the Council of State: his opinions likewise dominated the deliberations. At the same time, he undermined the Council by instituting ad hoc committees or *juntas* that he supervised directly.<sup>330</sup> The practice of ruling by *juntas*, particularly strong during the Olivares era, continued afterwards, adding another dimension to the ways in which the conciliar system of government evolved in the seventeenth century.<sup>331</sup> Don Luis de Haro, who succeeded Olivares in 1643, acted more discreetly, but nonetheless controlled the

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<sup>327</sup> The phenomenon of favoritism achieved its height during the seventeenth century, not only in Spain, but in most European monarchies. See John H. Elliott and L. W. B. Brockliss, eds. *The World of the Favorite* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

<sup>328</sup> See Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism*, and Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares*.

<sup>329</sup> Philip III declared that Lerma's signature could substitute his in royal decree or *cédula* in 1612. He revoked it in 1618, after dismissing Lerma. Tomás y Valiente, *Los validos*, pp. 80-81. The documents are reproduced in appendixes I and II, pp. 157-158.

<sup>330</sup> See Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares*, chapter 4; and Tomás y Valiente, *Los validos*, chapter 2.

<sup>331</sup> Barrios, *El consejo de Estado de la monarquía española*, p. 145. Also see Juan Francisco Baltar Rodríguez, *Las Juntas de Gobierno en la monarquía hispánica. (Siglos XVI-XVII)* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Políticos y Constitucionales, 1998).

Council of State as his predecessors had done.<sup>332</sup> The succession of favorites undercut the role of the Council of State in devising policy with the ruler, but this political body nonetheless retained an important place in court politics.<sup>333</sup> During Lerma's *validimiento*, for example, the fiction that the king made political decisions with the advice of the Council of State continued, even after the famous *cédula* of 1612 gave Lerma's signature the same legal force as that of the king's. In fact, appointment as state councilor was a crucial stepping stone in any person's political career, even a *valido*. In his testament, Philip IV asserted that the Council of State dealt with the most "universal matters of the monarchy" and gave it independent representation in the Regency Council that he instituted for the minority government (Clause 23).

The establishment of the Regency Council, therefore, can be interpreted as Philip IV's attempt to solve the inherent tensions provoked by the demands of a global Empire. A small advisory board or single minister was necessary to deal with the heavy load of governing, yet it was equally important to preserve the political traditions that characterized the relationship between ruler and subject as essentially contractual. In other words, the Regency Council was intended to take on the role in theory reserved for the Council of State, but that a favorite or *valido* had exercised during most of the seventeenth century. Philip IV was also trying to formalize a system that had worked well for him. In fact, the immediate juridical and institutional antecedents of the Regency Council can be traced back to the later part of Philip IV's reign, when the king governed with a *junta* composed of three members that represented the ruling elite: the Duke of

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<sup>332</sup> Barrios, *El consejo de Estado de la monarquía española*, p. 150; Tomas y Valiente, *Los validos*, p. 98-100 .

<sup>333</sup> Tomás y Valiente, *Los validos*, p. 72.

Medina de las Torres (the *summiller de corps*), Cardinal don Balthasar Moscoso y Sandoval (the Archbishop of Toledo), and the Count of Castriello (the President of the Council of Castile).<sup>334</sup> The Regency Council, therefore, had an immediate precursor. Philip intended it to replace the triumvirate that had advised him from 1661 to 1665, prevent the rise of another favorite, and include a representative sample of the ruling elite.

Philip IV thus tried to ensure continuity between his regime and that of his wife.<sup>335</sup> For this reason, the establishment of the Regency Council should not be seen as a vote of no confidence in Mariana's political abilities. Following a dynastic tradition dating back to Charles V, Philip IV requested that Mariana preserve the conciliar system of government in the same way that their ancestors had done (Clause 22).<sup>336</sup> He stated that Mariana should "pay attention to the election of ministers [and] to rule giving particular attention to the consultations of the Councils." He proceeded to institute a "Regency Council that I want and is my volition to form and that is attended by the president of the Council of Castile, the vice-chancellor of the Council of Aragon, the Archbishop of Toledo, the Inquisitor General, and a grandee."<sup>337</sup> Clause 23 added a sixth

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<sup>334</sup> Sevilla González, "La junta de Gobierno," p. 590.

<sup>335</sup> Sevilla González, "La Junta de Gobierno," p. 601-602.

<sup>336</sup> "en primer lugar le encargo que conserve los Consejos en la forma que Yo los dexare, y como los tuvieron mi padre y abuelo y demás antecesores." *Testamento de Felipe IV*, clause 22, p. 43.

<sup>337</sup> "También le encargo que atienda mucho a las consultas de los Consejos, y que éstas y las que hicieren las Juntas y los ministros particulares y las cartas, memoriales y otros quealesquequier papeles sobre quealesquequier materias, derechos y pretensiones, así las que tocaren a justicia, gracia, y gobierno, tratados de paz y guerra, confederaciones y alianças, como de otros quealesquequier negocios y accidentes de queualquequier calidad que sean, los remita a la Junta que queuiero y es mi voluntad se forme y concurren en ella el que es o fuere al dicho tiempo presidente del Consejo de Castilla, el vicecanchiller o el que presidiere en el Consejo de Aragón, el arçobispo de Toledo, el Inqueuisidor general, y el grande que Yo dexaré nombrado en un papel que quedará con este mi testamento o en el codiçilio que hiciere..." *Testamento de Felipe IV*, clause 22, pp. 43-45.

member, chosen from the Council of State, to ensure representation of the highest government body of the monarchy in its own right.<sup>338</sup>

Philip IV had strictly observed political traditions. He applied meticulous institutional criteria to the initial composition of the *Junta de Gobierno* or Regency Council, designating a representative of the most important councils of government (State, Castile, and Aragon), the two highest religious offices of the realm (Inquisitor General and Archbishop of Toledo), and a representative of the upper aristocracy (a grandee) as members. By including a broad sample of the entire group of the ruling elite, Philip hoped to thwart the emergence of dangerous factions. Members had to swear an oath of loyalty to the queen on September 18, 1665, the day after the king's death. Mariana enjoyed the right to appoint members as offices became vacant.

Clause 24 made the Regency Council responsible for sorting out the affairs of government coming from the other councils. Regency Council ministers' purview of action was strictly consultative: after debating the matters, they prepared written opinions for the queen, which were then transmitted via the main royal secretary. The queen met with the secretary and communicated to him her resolutions, which were then sent back to the Regency Council and the other councils to implement the queen's orders. The secretary became the intermediary through whom the queen received information, transmitted orders, delivered signed papers, and requested additional consultations. Although the Regency Council and the secretary seemed to play a dominant role in the decision-making process, this was not necessarily the case. Mariana collaborated with a

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<sup>338</sup> “Y assi mismo es mi voluntad y mando que, demás de los que dexo nombrados concurra y entre en esta Junta un consejero de Estado, sin embargo de que alguno de los nombrados son de el mismo Consejo... porque lo tengo por muy conveniente y necesario, por ser el Consejo en quen concurren noticias más universales de mi Monarchia...” *Testamento de Felipe IV*, clause 23, p. 45.

wider range of political actors. Her hand-written and dictated comments on state papers and the substantial communications she maintained with her various secretaries, diplomats, and ministers reveal a woman intimately and actively involved in the business of governing and one who worked with many figures and government bodies. In light of this evidence, the thesis that the Regency Council and Mariana's purported favorites dominated the politics of the court cannot longer be sustained.

One of the most significant developments under Mariana's leadership was the re-emergence of the Council of State as the political body that decided all major policy issues even if in theory it was subordinate to the Regency Council.<sup>339</sup> Institutional scholars have long ago noticed that after decades of diminishing influence, the Council of State regained a prominent political function during Mariana's regency.<sup>340</sup> Mariana began to send all the matters of government to the Council of State for deliberation and, its councilors soon upstaged members of the Regency Council. In addition, for the first time in decades, the Council of State ceased to be dominated by a single powerful figure, whose opinions prevailed over everyone else's: neither Nithard nor anyone else took on the role previously exercised by Lerma, Olivares, and Haro.

Although we know little about Mariana's education, judging from her comments on state and diplomatic papers, Mariana was well versed in political theory, the workings of the monarchy, dynastic issues, and diplomatic matters. Mariana was greatly influenced by her husband, not only as the one who had determined the conditions of her governorship, but also as her immediate predecessor. The deft brush of Diego Velazquez

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<sup>339</sup> José Antonio Escudero, "Consultas al Consejo de Estado: Trámites irregulares en el reinado de Carlos II," in *Administración y Estado en la España moderna* (Madrid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1999), 109-112.

<sup>340</sup> Cordero Torres, *El consejo de Estado*, p. 52; Barrios, *El consejo de Estado de la Monarquía Española*, p. 152. Manuel Danvila y Collado, *El poder civil en España*, 6 vols. (Madrid: 1885-1886), p. II: 214.

immortalized Philip IV's kingship style. As John H. Elliott, Jonathan Brown, and R. A. Stradling have noted, the absence, rather than the excess, of elements of power is one of the most salient characteristics of the portraits of Philip IV.<sup>341</sup> This frugal deployment of the imagery of ruling often depicted Philip IV as holding a piece of paper in his hand. The image was conspicuous and significant: paper was as important as the sword among the Spanish Habsburgs. Consumed in enormous quantities at court, paper was the tool whereby Philip IV governed the monarchy.<sup>342</sup> Mariana also became a consummate administrator and deployed some of the same imagery that Philip IV had developed, although she adapted them to her gender and position.

Mariana's regency portraits, studied by Mercedes Llorente and Álvaro Pascual Chenel, evolved during her regency to emphasize her active engagement in the government of the realm.<sup>343</sup> The earliest known portrait of Mariana as governor illustrates the peculiarities that had to be observed to represent her authority as one who exercised it temporarily and by default rather than in her own right. Juan Bautista Martínez del Mazo (1611-1667) set the foundation of the typology of Mariana's regency portraits (figure 3).<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> See R. A. Stradling, *Philip IV and the Government of Spain, 1621-1665* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1988); Elliott, "Philip IV of Spain: Prisoner of Ceremony." The portraiture of Louis XIV stands in stark contrast to the austerity of the Habsburgs. See Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven and London: Yale University, 1992).

<sup>342</sup> Elliott gives an extreme, although compelling example of the importance of paper: an investigation in the viceroyalty of Peru conducted from 1590 to 1603 had consumed 49,555 sheets of paper! See John H. Elliott, "Self-Perception and Decline," 1-61, p. 42, fn. 4.

<sup>343</sup> Chenel, "El retrato de Estado," Llorente, "Imagen y autoridad."

<sup>344</sup> Juan Bautista Martínez del Mazo, Mariana of Austria, London, National Gallery.



(figure 3)

Mariana chose to be depicted in the Salón de los Espejos, a central room in the palace where the king normally received state dignitaries and representatives of foreign princes.<sup>345</sup> The setting was based on practice since Mariana also used this room to receive high-ranking diplomats. By doing so, she appropriated an essentially masculine space and, simultaneously, the symbolic elements of rulership.<sup>346</sup> Visitors were led through a series of corridors and rooms in which richness and display grew in a carefully orchestrated crescendo anticipating the presence of the sovereign: the closer to the ruler, the more elaborate the decorations.<sup>347</sup> Other visual elements of this portrait also reference Mariana's role as governor. Her adoption of the Franciscan habit derived from Spanish

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<sup>345</sup> Llorente, "Imagen y autoridad en una regencia," p. 235.

<sup>346</sup> Llorente, "Imagen y autoridad en una regencia," p. 223.

<sup>347</sup> Chenel, "El retrato de Estado," p. 208.

and Habsburg traditions and alluded to the fact that, as the widow of Philip IV, she possessed a legitimate right to rule.<sup>348</sup> The religious habit, highlighting both widowhood and royalty, formed the paradigmatic element of female authority. It did not, as has been erroneously presumed, show that Mariana was uninterested in ruling or lived a reclusive life.<sup>349</sup> Carlos II, who was shown in the background tended by women, provides a concrete justification of her role by reminding the viewer of the main reason why Mariana assumed the reins of power.<sup>350</sup> The piece of paper in her hand suggests her active role as administrator or governor. Mariana chose to be depicted seated, even though kings and queens were usually shown standing in portraits. Portraits of female Habsburg rulers shown seated, including those of Empress Isabel (Charles V's consort), Juana of Austria (Charles V's daughter), and Isabel Clara Eugenia (Philip II's daughter), were closely associated with the formal exercise of authority: all three had assumed governorships for their Habsburg male relatives and, in Isabel Clara Eugenia's case, governed in her own right the Spanish Low Countries from 1598 until 1621.<sup>351</sup> All pre- and post- regency portraits show Mariana standing. Thus, the distinction from standing to seated and back again marked her transition to, and from, the formal aspects of ruling: from queen consort to queen governor and from queen governor to queen dowager.<sup>352</sup>

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<sup>348</sup> There are numerous portraits like this one. See Pilar López Vizcaíno and Ángel Mario Carreño, *Juan Carreño de Miranda: vida y obra* (Madrid: Cajastur, 2007).

<sup>349</sup> See chapter 1. As Llorente rightfully points out, her choice of clothing gave her an enormous amount of authority; Llorente, "Imagen y autoridad en una regencia," p. 218.

<sup>350</sup> Chenel, "El retrato de Estado," p. 211.

<sup>351</sup> Llorente, "Imagen y autoridad en una regencia," p. 217.

<sup>352</sup> Chenel, "El retrato de Estado," and Llorente, "Imagen y autoridad en una regencia."



By mid-regency, Mazo's prototype evolved into a solid iconography under the brush of Juan Carreño de Miranda, who was appointed royal painter in 1669. He created the paradigmatic image of Mariana as governor, seating at her desk, a widely reproduced image of which numerous copies survive (see figure 4).<sup>353</sup>



(figure 4)

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<sup>353</sup> Juan Carreño de Miranda, Mariana of Austria, Madrid, Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando. There are numerous portraits with a similar composition. See López Vizcaino and Carreño, *Juan Carreño de Miranda*.

The strategic use of light draws the viewer's eyes immediately to Mariana's face, leading them as well to the objects resting on the desk: a small writing rest, inkwell, silver bell, and pen. Her careful lifting of a paper that resembled the many consultations that passed through her hands on a daily basis emphasizes the idea that she governed through the written word. This new image represents Mariana caught in the very act of dispatching documents, just momentarily lifting her eyes from the task at hand. The almost monochromatic palette adds to the severity of the image and is also in line with the traditional austerity that characterized the portraits of Spanish Habsburg rulers.<sup>354</sup> The curtains hid the well-known masterpieces that decorated the room, as was a custom followed by widows.<sup>355</sup> This pictorial device allowed the painter to focus attention on the other elements visible in the portrait, all of which are associated with rulership: the lion at the bottom of the picture and the double eagles above the mirrors are symbols closely associated with the Habsburg dynasty. The chair with back and an armrest was the type of seat reserved for kings and high ranking ecclesiastics. For contemporaries the picture conveyed a clear message: Mariana was wholly dedicated to the duties of ruling, shunning earthly concerns other than the task of governor, and completely capable of fulfilling that mission. Her demeanor was flawless.

During the regency, royal portraiture and royal ceremonies faced an identical problem: Mariana needed to present herself as the acting sovereign without usurping Carlos II's position. She solved the dilemma in two ways. Mariana commissioned individual portraits of herself and Carlos II that complemented each other and double portraits that presented them together. The adoption and revival of double portraiture

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<sup>354</sup> Jonathan Brown, *Velazquez: Painter and Courtier* (New Haven and London: Yale University, 1986).

<sup>355</sup> Spanish widows covered furnishings and decorations during the period of mourning.

during the period reinforced the notion that Mariana and Carlos II shared sovereignty. The double portraits are a sharp departure from the visual traditions in Habsburg Spain, in which kings and queens were usually represented separately, and are, as new studies have noted, one of the most significant innovations in Spanish royal portraiture during the seventeenth century.<sup>356</sup> The message Mariana deployed in the double portraits is unmistakable: her dynastic capital as a Habsburg played as much of a role in legitimating Carlos II's right to inherit the Spanish monarchy as that of her husband.<sup>357</sup>

Although the iconography used to represent Mariana's authority became fixed relatively quickly, portraits of Carlos II evolved. The early regency portrait by Mazo discussed above (figure 3), subordinated Carlos II's figure placing him in the background. He was, in short, just one element in his mother's image and she took precedence. Soon after, Carlos II's portraits developed their own iconography based on traditional representations of kingship but nonetheless undergoing some interesting and significant modifications (see figure 5).<sup>358</sup> For one thing, Mariana's presence is always implied in the numerous portraits of the young king in the *Salón de los Espejos*. The double eagles and the lion, for instance, indicated their connections to both branches of the Habsburg dynasty. Carlos was the second king of Spain to bear that name, after Emperor Charles V, who ruled Spain as Carlos I. Nonetheless, these dynastic symbols also allude to Mariana because Carlos II had inherited Habsburg blood through his father as well as his mother. Mariana was a Habsburg in her own right, the daughter of an

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<sup>356</sup> Chenel has found a total of four images representing Carlos and Mariana together: two paintings and two engravings. The two paintings are in private collections, the two engravings are housed in the BNM. Chenel, "El retrato de Estado," chapter 1.

<sup>357</sup> Chenel, "El retrato de Estado," pp. 215-216.

<sup>358</sup> Juan Carreño de Miranda, Carlos II, Oviedo, Museo de Bellas Artes de Asturias.

emperor and a direct descendant of Charles V through her mother. In Carlos II's portrait, the sword, and the fact that he is standing, represent sovereignty, while the piece of paper in his hand indicates that he was being instructed in the business of government. The piece of paper, however, also indicates Mariana's presence because she was in charge of the king's education as his "tutor."<sup>359</sup> Looking at the two paintings side by side (see figure 4 and 5 below), shows that the representation of rulership during the regency minority was split between Carlos II and Mariana, the former as the one who embodied sovereignty and the latter as the one who exercised it. One could not exist without the other.



(figure 5)



(figure 4)

The visual elements of Mariana's regency portraits illustrate how Mariana exercised the office of governor. According to the diary of Crespí de Valdaura, on

<sup>359</sup> According to Philip IV's testament was supposed to begin at the age of ten. *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 34, p. 51.

Sunday, January 10, 1666, Mariana presided over a Regency Council meeting in order to hear an oral report; this was the first of many such occasions. She received them in an area called the Saloncete,<sup>360</sup> not in the Salón the los Espejos, which she used to receive foreign dignitaries. According to Crespí, Mariana received members of the Council while seated on a chair covered with black velvet. On a table in front of her, draped with black velvet, rested a smaller writing desk (as shown in the portrait) made of ebony, and a silver bell. The chair where Mariana was seated and the table stood on top of a black velvet rug. The color and the fabric, both associated with royalty, framed Mariana, making her a grave and imposing figure, while accentuating her fair and delicate complexion. When ministers arrived, Mariana was already seated. Later Regency Council members were asked to arrive early and wait for the queen instead in “the same style in which Philip IV used to meet with the Council of State.”<sup>361</sup> The royal secretary was also present: he took notes while standing at a desk as “tall as a man’s elbow,” a clever way to solve a potential etiquette problem in a system that regulated strictly who had the right to sit. Mariana’s *camarera mayor*, the Marquise of Baldueza, stood in attendance three steps behind the queen and remained there until the moment immediately before the audience began. Two backless benches placed on each side of the queen indicated the social and political distance between ministers and their mistress and at the same time their privileged position. Members of the council entered the room in order of precedence, made three reverences, and remained standing until Mariana ordered: “*sentaos*” (sit) and

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<sup>360</sup> BNM mss. 5742, f. 373r.

<sup>361</sup> BNM mss. 5742, fs. 373r-374r.

then “*cubrios*” (cover yourselves).<sup>362</sup> When a minister was asked to speak, he had to stand, remove his hat, and bow deeply. After the meeting was adjourned, councilors remained standing until the queen left through the principal door and then they exited through the back entrance.<sup>363</sup>

In sum, Mariana performed the task of governor within the prerogatives of the office, her gender, and her position as a Habsburg and a Spanish queen. Political traditions and practice, such as notions as to what constituted an effective governor, the evolution of the political structure of the court during the previous regime, and the establishment of the Regency Council shaped Mariana’s governorship. Although she had to uphold and work within ingrained political traditions and with people appointed by her husband, Mariana’s political appointments, policies in the domestic and international arenas, and style of ruling had a significant impact on Spain and the court.

### **The Political Map of the Court: Mariana’s Men**

Mariana’s strategies and her early decisions deeply affected the court. As soon as she became regent, she made a series of appointments to the government councils, at court, and in the diplomatic corps; developed a close working relationship with the Council of State; and began to identify capable ministers who then became part of her inner circle. There were, therefore, many and many important changes during the first few years of the regency. While she excluded several figures who had been initially well-positioned to take assume prominent roles in her regime, she patronized others, helping

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<sup>362</sup> BNM mss. 5742, fs. 373r-374r. Covering one’s head in the presence of the sovereign was the highest form of social honor in Spain.

<sup>363</sup> The procedure was modified after this first meeting: Crespi and his colleagues were ordered to wait for the queen’s arrival in the same way in which the king used to preside over the Council of State. BNM mss. 5742, fs. 373r-374r.

them rise through the ranks. Identifying the main political players during the regency and the institutional basis from which they operated helps show how Mariana's regime came into being and the shape it took.

Members of the Regency Council who had been appointed by Philip IV immediately took center stage at his death, but Mariana nonetheless had the opportunity to make at least some changes in the initial year of her regency. Only four of the six members of the Regency Council were available to take office when Philip IV died: the representative of the *grandees*, Marquis of Aytona; the Vicechancellor of Aragon, Cristobal Crespi de Valdaura; the President of the Council of Castile, Count of Castrillo; and the Council of State's representative, Count of Peñaranda. Of the other two members, one was dead and the other one was in Naples. The death of the Archbishop of Toledo, Cardinal Balthasar Moscoso y Sandoval, within hours of the monarch's allowed Mariana to fill the first vacancy of the council.<sup>364</sup> She nominated to the archbishopric someone already inside the Regency Council: Cardinal Pascual de Aragón, who had been recently named Inquisitor General, was still serving as Viceroy of Naples when Philip IV died and was thus an absentee member.<sup>365</sup> Mariana, however, forced Cardinal Aragon to choose between the two prestigious posts. Predictably, Aragon picked the archbishopric and thus left the office of Inquisitor General vacant. Mariana's intention all along was obviously to appoint Nithard as Inquisitor, although she postponed her decision for various reasons. Rumors and gossip about the composition of the Regency Council continued until she officially confirmed her intentions a year later. Mariana kept a smaller group than Philip

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<sup>364</sup> Moscoso, who had been member of the triumvirate that advised Philip IV from 1661 to 1665, died within hours of the monarch.

<sup>365</sup> Narciso de Estenaga y Echevarría, *El Cardenal de Aragón (1626-1677). Estudio histórico*, 2 vols. (Paris: Desfossés, 1929).

IV had intended. Instead of the six set by testamentary mandate, the Regency Council was reduced to four until Aragon's arrived at court in May 1666. There were five members until Nithard's appointment as Inquisitor in September. These moves formed part of a larger strategy on Mariana's part to take control of the council, first by reducing its size and second by appointing people who depended exclusively on her patronage.

While these changes were underway, the Regency Council became a battleground: power struggles among those inside it, those aspiring to be part of it, and those outside who wanted it dissolved dominated court politics during the first year of the regency. The Regency Council as a group became involved in these power struggles. In a consultation dated March 27, 1666, for example, its members pointed out the potential problems of appointing Nithard to the group.<sup>366</sup> They were also adamantly opposed to don Juan's participation in the government, counseling Mariana repeatedly on the necessity to keep him away from Madrid.<sup>367</sup> Attempts to eliminate the Regency Council also existed and came from other quarters. Duke Medina de las Torres, for example, the one member of Philip IV's triumvirate that had been excluded from the Regency Council, approached Nithard with the idea of forming a two-person *junta* to advise the queen.<sup>368</sup> While negotiating this project behind the scenes, Medina de las Torres circulated a paper, advancing the position that Mariana had the right and perhaps even the obligation to dissolve the Regency Council on the basis that it limited her sovereignty.<sup>369</sup> Although the

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<sup>366</sup> BNM 8344, f. 170r.

<sup>367</sup> BNM mss. 8344, f. 151.

<sup>368</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. I: 242.

<sup>369</sup> There are several copies of this paper, which even though was written anonymously, Medina's authorship can be clearly identified. See BNM mss. 8344. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. I:243. Laura Oliván Santaliestra, "'Discurso jurídico, histórico, político': Apología de las reinas regentes y defensa del



paper, which presented quite a positive view of female regencies, was published anonymously, everyone knew he was the author. These maneuvers reveal the type of cutthroat competition that plagued the court in the early years of Mariana's regency.

During 1666 the ruling elite competed against each other and at the same time joined forces to prevent others from rising to the top. Don Juan, for example, tried to claim an official role in the regency government based on his blood ties, ironically working through the offices of Nithard.<sup>370</sup> With the full support of the Regency Council, Mariana denied his requests and then prohibited him to reside in Madrid.<sup>371</sup> Mariana's decision triggered a power struggle that was not resolved until Nithard's dismissal two years later. Other figures with solid claims to participation in the regency government fueled the factionalism. Such was the case with the Duke of Montalto, for example, who occupied the most important masculine office of the court, as *mayordomo mayor* of the queen's household. Medina de las Torres and the Count of Peñaranda became the leaders of ideological factions. The former argued for conclusion of peace with Portugal as soon as possible, so that the monarchy could prepare to confront France, Spain's "real enemy." Peñaranda supported a firm pro-French policy, refusing to believe that Louis XIV presented any immediate threat. These debates, which will be discussed in detail below, reveal a deeply divided and factionalized court and greatly complicated the decision-making process. Personal interests and ideological stances played out inside the Regency Council, at the court, and on the European stage. Leopold I, for instance, strongly

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sistema polisindial, una manifestación de la conflictividad política en los inicios de la regencia de Mariana de Austria" *Cuadernos de historia moderna* 28 (2003): 7-34.

<sup>370</sup> BNM mss. 8344, f. 73v.

<sup>371</sup> Mariana's royal decree was dispatched on May 24, 1666. BNM 8344, f. 151.

advocated peace with Portugal, while Louis XIV hoped that Spain's engagement in the war against Portugal would continue. Both of them were deeply enmeshed in the politics in Madrid via supporters who acted on their behalf.

The cutthroat competition for political power and influence at court posed a set of dilemmas for Mariana. She could not afford to eliminate the Regency Council as Medina de las Torres suggested because by so doing she would disregard the king's testament, which was, after all, the main source of her authority. Nevertheless, Mariana kept the Regency Council in check by elevating the Council of State to a preeminent position. She appointed six new councilors of State in January 1666, less than three months after assuming office. Most of these men possessed substantial political experience and ended up with important roles in the regency government. The Marquis de la Fuente, who was the Spanish ambassador at the French court, and don Luis Ponce, who was the governor of Milan and previously ambassador in Rome, were not in Madrid. Nonetheless they influenced Spain's foreign policy profoundly because their reports were read carefully by Mariana and her ministers and influenced her policy. Other appointments to the Council of State were highly political, such as that of the Duke of Montalto, discussed in the previous chapter, and those of members of the upper aristocracy, including the Duke of Pastrana and the Duke of Albuquerque.<sup>372</sup> Mariana evidently tried to gather the most powerful members of the aristocracy under her patronage, although admittedly, she not always succeeded in winning their loyalty. The most contentious appointment was that of Nithard. One way or another, the influx of new councilors altered the internal dynamics of the existing group, neutralizing, for example, Duke Medina de las Torres, whose preeminence, as the senior member of the group, and with his social and political

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<sup>372</sup> Nieto Núñez, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, p. I: 171. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. I: 241.

pedigree, had been indisputable.<sup>373</sup> With this infusion of new blood, Mariana began to remake the Council of State for her own purposes.

Most importantly, because Mariana began to rely on the Council of State to solve the most pressing matters of the monarchy, she diminished the authority and centrality of the Regency Council. Philip's will had intended the Regency Council to act as the intermediary between the queen and the other councils, but in practice the opposite pertained. The Council of State re-emerged as a central place for the making of policy and Mariana brought all important matters before it thus causing resentment from members of the Regency Council, who felt bypassed. The Marquis of Aytona, for example, protested to Mariana in early 1666 that the "Regency Council should have the authority that the King had intended so that it can effectively serve and lighten Your Majesty's burden." "No one else," he argued, "could have firmer purposes or the legitimacy to do so." He attributed all the disorders and discontent of the preceding months to the Regency Council's "lack of authority."<sup>374</sup> It seems that Aytona had ample justifications for his objections: If anyone expected that Mariana would be under the thumb of the Regency Council, they soon learned otherwise. In fact, her decision to appoint Nithard directly contravened majority opinion. On other occasions, Mariana did not hesitate to go against the Regency Council. Her decision to rely on the Council of State thus seems a deliberate strategy on her part intended to assert her own authority.

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<sup>373</sup> As the most senior member of the council, he had the prerogative of speaking first, an honor that allowed him to set the tone of the debates. He had considerable prestige and political weight gained with decades of service. For his view on Spanish policy, see R. A. Stradling, "A Spanish Statesman of Appeasement: Medina de las Torres and Spanish Policy, 1639-1670," *The Historical Journal* 19/1 (March 1976): 1-31.

<sup>374</sup> "y el mas eficaz remedio es el que la junta del gobierno tenga la autoridad debida segun lo ordeno el Rey N[uest]ro S[eñ]or que este en el cielo, para poder serbir y alibiar a V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d siendo cierto en nayde allara mas firmeza verdad y legalidad y de no tenerla en autoridad procede el desconcierto que ay en todo." ADM hist. leg. 70.

The Regency Council and the Council of State were not the only groups that came under her control. Her royal household policies substantially changed the existing structure of the court: she elevated the office of *mayordomo mayor* of the queen's household, for example, to the top of the court hierarchy. Her *mayordomo mayor* became a key political figure, enjoying unfettered access to the queen and first-hand information about everything that went on in the palace. The *mayordomo mayor* had access to the Regency Council meetings as well if the queen presided over them. Even though he could not participate in the deliberations, he was present as part of the queen's entourage.<sup>375</sup> To evaluate Mariana's regime accurately, it is essential to understand her working relationship with her *mayordomos mayores*. The following table identifies those who occupied this important office:

Table II: *Mayordomos Mayores* of the Queen's Household, 1663-1696

Name	Dates of Service	
VII Duke of Montalto (1614-1672)	January 1663-1667	Resigned
VI Duke of Alba (1595-1667)	April-September 1667	Died in office
IV Marquis of Aytona (1615-1670)	October 12 1667- March 1670	Died in office
IV Duke of Pastrana (1614-1675)	March 1670- 1675	Died in office
Post left vacant		
II Marquis of Mancera (1608-1715)	April 1677- May 1696	

Establishing that relationship took time and the process was by no means smooth. As was explained in the previous chapter, conflicts between Mariana and the Duke of Montalto, Philip IV's last appointed *mayordomo mayor*, began soon after she became regent. Montalto had been unwilling to accommodate himself to the new workings of the

<sup>375</sup> I have deduced this from a note in Crespi's diary: "El Mayordomo de la Rey[n]a no asistio porque dicen que no lo supo y havia hoy salido de Madrid." BNM mss. 5742, f. 374r.

court and clashed with Mariana frequently.<sup>376</sup> Already by 1666, it is clear that Mariana could not work with the man. Although she could not dismiss him from an office held for life, Mariana pressured him to give up the office once his appointment as Cardinal became official.<sup>377</sup> Although Aytona had led the initial reforms of the royal households and would have been a logical choice for the post, Mariana overlooked him after Montalto's resignation. Instead, she shrewdly selected the Sixth Duke of Alba, one of the most vocal critics of her regime and an open supporter of her archenemy, don Juan of Austria, as Montalto's successor. This clever political move had mixed results, temporarily bringing Alba into her camp. When Alba died six months later, Mariana followed a very different path thereafter; she appointed Aytona to the office. Aytona proved a good choice: he worked well with the powerful women of Mariana's household and with Mariana herself. Mariana's subsequent appointment, and the last one during the regency, went to the Duke of Pastrana. Like Alba, he, too, was once an opponent. Once Pastrana died in 1675, she left the office open. The vacancy from 1675 to 1677 was also highly significant and can only be understood in terms of the politics of the royal households. The establishment of the king's own royal household in 1675 reduced the office of *mayordomo mayor* of the queen's household to a secondary role. Thus, the vacancy was also a strategy to control the politics of the court.<sup>378</sup> In fact, the Marquis of

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<sup>376</sup> See chapter 2.

<sup>377</sup> Montalto's resignation was discussed in the Regency Council. According to Nithard, Montalto blamed him for losing the important post. It explains (at least partly) why Montalto became Nithard's enemy and supported don Juan's coup against the confessor. BNM mss. 8360, ff. 70r-79r.

<sup>378</sup> In this case, she eliminated the jurisdictional competition between the *mayordomo mayor* and the *camarera mayor*, which had continued to cause serious problems. See chapter 2.

Mancera, who served the queen loyally until her death in 1696,<sup>379</sup> was appointed under dramatically different circumstances, in April 1677, when Mariana had surrendered power. A newly-created royal household served her and shared her exile in Toledo.

No comprehensive discussion of Mariana's men can be complete unless we take into account the political figures working outside Madrid, both in Spanish territories and at foreign courts. Mariana relied heavily on the reports of Don Luis Ponce de León, III Count of Villaverde (Governor of Milan), whom she named councilor of State in 1666. Esteban Gamarra, the ambassador to the United Provinces, also directly communicated with Mariana and became a crucial figure during the negotiations that led to the first Triple Alliance against France in 1668.<sup>380</sup> Mariana appointed the Count of Molina to become the ambassador in London. This was certainly a solid decision, since his diplomatic abilities proved an asset during the dangerous winter of 1667-1668, when he was required to negotiate a multi-power alliance against France.<sup>381</sup> The Marquis of Astorga and the Marquis de la Fuente occupied the critical embassies in Rome and Paris respectively and became close collaborators with Mariana. The governors of the Spanish Low Countries, particularly the Third Marquis of Castel Rodrigo and the Constable of Castile,<sup>382</sup> also played a strategic role during the regency, first outside and later inside the court. Mariana rewarded their work on her and Carlos's behalf with the two most coveted

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<sup>379</sup> Mancera's appointment, as was the case with Aytona's, became a crucial stepping stone to his political and social ascent. Subsequently, Mancera gained a seat in the Council of State, a grandeanship, and a even a spot in the Regency Council establish in 1700 after the death of Carlos II and that temporarily ruled the monarchy, while King Philip V arrived in Madrid.

<sup>380</sup> Mariana appointed Francisco de Lira, to the Hague in 1671. AHN E. leg. 2797.

<sup>381</sup> See below.

<sup>382</sup> He was also councilor of State, appointed during Philip IV's reign. Mariana granted him the post of *Caballerizo Mayor* of the king's household in 1674.

posts of the court, that of the *Caballerizo Mayor* and *Mayordomo Mayor* of the king's household in 1675. Working under Mariana's directives, these talented men bore responsibility for saving the Spanish Low Countries from being lost to France in 1668.

Mariana's patronage of her confessor, the Jesuit Everard Nithard at the beginning of her rule, was divisive and, in hindsight, a blunder on her part. Nithard's rise was spectacular if relatively gradual. Mariana appointed him to the Council of State on January 24, 1666, an appointment that was a crucial stepping stone in anyone's political career. In Nithard's case, it was even more critical because his résumé lacked the sort of office-holding that would have justified an appointment to the Regency Council. Nithard's first official post was only one of several appointments she made in early 1666.<sup>383</sup> However, she did not stop there. Five months later, she appointed Nithard to the three member ad hoc committee in charge of negotiating peace with Portugal.<sup>384</sup> By the summer of 1666, Mariana had moved closer to introducing Nithard into the Regency Council, although she still had to confront two main difficulties: as a foreigner, Nithard was prevented by Philip IV's testamentary mandate from becoming a member of the Regency Council<sup>385</sup> and, as a Jesuit, the rules of his order forbade him political office. Mariana soon cleared the path for his political ascent, however. In August 1666, she ordered the Council of Castile to send a circular letter to the appropriate cities asking them to naturalize Nithard as a Castilian citizen, while she dispatched official letters to Pope Alexander VII requesting permission for the Jesuit to accept the office of

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<sup>383</sup> BNM mss. 8344, f. 99v-100r.

<sup>384</sup> The other two members were the Count of Peñaranda and Duke Medina de las Torres. AHN E. leg. 2797 exp. 24.

<sup>385</sup> *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 33, p. 51.

Inquisitor.<sup>386</sup> Dismissing the protests of members of the Regency Council, Mariana named Nithard Inquisitor General and consequently *ex officio* member of the Regency Council on September 21, 1666.<sup>387</sup>

Mariana's preferential treatment of Nithard frustrated the aspirations of others who sought to rise to the top of the political pyramid. Instead of neutralizing factionalism, his preferment actually intensified it. He was certainly not the only figure to be the target of pasquinades, but it is clear that Nithard's promotion to the post of Inquisitor provoked vigorous public opposition.<sup>388</sup> One reason for the backlash against Nithard had to do with his background that was an affront to the Castilian ruling elite. Born into a German Catholic family from the Tyrol in 1607, his intellectual brilliance and spirituality, as a student at the University of Graz and member of the Society of Jesus, attracted the attention of Emperor Ferdinand III, who appointed him tutor to two of his children, the archduke Leopold and the archduchess Mariana. After several years at the Imperial court, he followed the young Mariana to Spain when she became queen consort. His appointment was based on well-established practice; Austrian archduchesses traditionally brought their Jesuit confessors with them to the Spanish court.<sup>389</sup> Judging from his surviving writings, Nithard was a man of letters, with a solid education in theology,

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<sup>386</sup> Except for three, the majority of the cities quickly complied, including Burgos, Toledo, León, Valladolid, Seville, Jaén, Cuenca, Toro, Soria, Zamora, and Segovia. He does not mention the three cities who refused to grant him citizenship or on what basis. BNM mss. 8344, fs. 159v-168r.

<sup>387</sup> BNM mss. 8344, f. 190r.

<sup>388</sup> A paper called *Dudas Políticas* (Political Doubts) strongly criticized Mariana for appointing her confessor. There are several copies of this paper in various archives in Spain, for example, AHNNS Osuna, c. 571, d. 145. According to Imperial Ambassador, it circulated widely in Madrid and foreign courts. Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, I: 264.

<sup>389</sup> See Sánchez's discussion of the Jesuit confessor that accompanied Margarita of Austria, *The Empress, the Queen and the Nun*.



philosophy, and jurisprudence, and a great teacher.<sup>390</sup> He lacked, nevertheless, the shrewdness and political savvy needed to navigate the internal politics of the court and the vision to lead the monarchy out of the crisis it faced on the international stage, with a war against Portugal and a potential French attack about to materialize. Although it would be unfair to describe him as inept, when compared to figures like Aytona, Peñaranda, Medina de las Torres, Montalto, and others, Nithard appears a cat among lions.

To make matters more difficult for the Jesuit, the other members of the Regency Council substantially outranked Nithard. Aytona's distinguished military and political trajectory—he held generalships, viceroalties, and some of the most prestigious court offices, had authored an important military treatise, and had long enjoyed the king's confidence—was just one case in point.<sup>391</sup> Crespí was a well-known jurist, with a doctorate in civil law and lengthy history of service to the Crown. By the time of the regency, he had been the presiding member of the Council of Aragon for twenty years.<sup>392</sup> The two members with the longest résumés included the Count of Castrillo and the Count of Peñaranda, both younger sons who had risen through the political and social ranks through their education, capacity, and strategic marriages.<sup>393</sup> Castrillo had either been a member or held the presidencies in the most important councils of the monarchy, including those of the Indies, Italy, Finance, and Castile. He served as viceroy of Naples and had even assumed the regency of the monarchy during one of Philip IV's

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<sup>390</sup> My conclusion is based on my own reading of his voluminous “memoirs.” BNM mss. 8344-8354.

<sup>391</sup> For biographical profile see Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. I: 157-161.

<sup>392</sup> He authored a text on civil law entirely in Latin. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. I: 155-156.

<sup>393</sup> They both held the titles of counts as consorts. For Castrillo's biographical profile, see Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. I:146-149, for Peñaranda's see Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. I:150-155.

absences.<sup>394</sup> Peñaranda held offices in the Council of Castile and Chamber and was a senior member of the Councils of State and Italy. His real political and social ascent, however, began in 1645, when he was named plenipotentiary to represent Spain during the negotiations that led to the Peace of Westphalia. Peñaranda was a towering figure at Münster.<sup>395</sup> He also participated in the Imperial Diet that elected Leopold I Holy Roman Emperor in 1657. Cardinal Aragon, the youngest member of the group, had accumulated extensive political and diplomatic experience as Viceroy of Naples, ambassador to Rome, and as cardinal for five years previous to becoming member of the Regency Council. Even if those who were appointed to the Regency Council did not necessarily belong to the *crème de la crème* of the aristocracy, collectively these men had held the most prestigious offices of the monarchy: viceroalties, presidencies in councils, generalships, ambassadorships, and even a regency. Nithard's lack of political experience and social pedigree were just too obvious. The fact that he was German and a Jesuit were additional liabilities.<sup>396</sup>

On the one hand, Mariana severely miscalculated the consequences of her decision to elevate Nithard to positions for which he was unprepared or lacked the merit to take. She paid dearly for her mistake. On the other hand, Nithard fulfilled important functions for the queen. It is important to note, however, that even though she placed a great deal of trust in Nithard, it would be a grave mistake to assume that her confessor dominated her. In fact, Nithard's purported influence on the queen has been overstated. I

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<sup>394</sup> Castrillo did so when Philip IV was in the war front and the monarchy lacked a queen consort.

<sup>395</sup> See Paul Sonino, *Mazarin's Quest: The Congress of Westphalia and the Coming of the Fronde* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2008).

<sup>396</sup> Pötting discussed the public perception of Nithard often in his diary. Nieto Nuño, ed., *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, entries for 1666 in particular.

would like to suggest that his political disgrace resulted to a large extent from his inability to fulfill the role of favorite adequately. Nithard's appointment was congruent with Mariana's personality and strategies: to find people that she could trust unreservedly and used them to keep tabs on everything that was going on inside and outside the palace. If she was going to gain control of the Regency Council and achieve at least the fiction that she ruled with a reasonable measure of consensus, she needed someone completely on her side inside the Council. The Regency Council was essentially a gerontocracy; individual members had the sheer weight of their own record of service that made their opinions count even if juridically, they had no power over Mariana. The oldest members, Castrillo, already in his 80s, and Peñaranda, in his 70s, had played leading roles during the first two years of the regency, not surprisingly considering their prestigious political pedigrees. Their age and extensive experience, however, most likely contributed to their inability to adapt to Mariana's power and personality, exacerbating the divisive internal politics of the group. Mariana at first relied on Peñaranda's opinion, which she respected. However, both of these men ended up at odds with her.<sup>397</sup>

Aside from Nithard who evidently enjoyed Mariana's confidence, the most pliable members of the Regency Council were also the "younger" ones: Aytona, in his mid-fifties, whose talent and ability to work with Mariana contributed to his successes, and Cardinal Aragon, in his early forties, who became a very important figure over the course of the regency.<sup>398</sup> Crespí, in his sixties, had a different style than the rest of the

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<sup>397</sup> Mariana pressured Castrillo to renounce his office and replaced him in 1668. Peñaranda's stance on the Portugal and French issues ended up being utterly wrong. She denied both of their requests for grandeeships.

<sup>398</sup> Mariana swamped both Aytona and Aragon with work and responsibilities. Both succumbed to relatively early deaths, Aytona in 1670 and Aragon in 1677.

council: his training as jurist perhaps allowed him to avoid political controversies.<sup>399</sup> Nevertheless, he took a stand against Nithard eventually, who counted him as an enemy. Mariana's predicament, therefore, becomes clear. Powerful figures like Peñaranda and Castrillo had independent standing at court and Mariana could not manipulate them easily. In this context, Mariana's decision made sense: Nithard helped Mariana balance the power structure inside the council. As the queen's confessor, a relatively "older" figure (he was almost sixty when he became a member of the Regency Council), and a cleric, he possessed a certain level of authority.

With Nithard's appointment, Mariana began her quest to control the Regency Council, although it took her several years to make it completely her own instrument. Mariana did not hesitate to reshuffle offices within the Regency Council and kept close tab on its composition. The following table shows how Mariana's own appointments shaped the Regency Council from its inception until its demise.

Table III: Composition of the Regency Council, September 17, 1665- November 6, 1675

Institutional Representation	1665	1666	1668	1669	1670	1672-1675**
Council of Castile	Count of Castrillo (resigned)		Diego Ruiquelme de Quirós *Diego Sarmiento de Valladares	Count of Villaumbrosa		
Council of Aragon	Crespi de Valdaura					Melchor de Navarra y Rocafull
Inquisitor General	*Cardinal Aragon Left Vacant	Everard Nithard (resigned)		*Diego Sarmiento de Valladares		
Archbishop of Toledo	*Cardinal Aragon					
Council of State	Count of Peñaranda					
Grandee	Marquis of Aytona				Constable of Castile	
Secretary	Blasco de Loyola			Fernández del Campo		

<sup>399</sup> His diary in fact reveals nothing about his political views and how the factional struggles played out inside the council.

	Philip IV's appointment
	Mariana's appointment
	Influenced by Mariana

\* They served in different capacities.

\*\* There were no changes after 1672.

Mariana exerted only a minimal influence on the initial composition of the council. Most members had been part of the old guard: their collective political experience reached back to the early part of the century, predating even Philip IV, who reigned for almost half a century. Although she took advantage of the vacancies due to deaths, and in at least one case orchestrated a resignation, it took her several years to alter the composition of the council significantly. Between 1665 and 1668, Mariana had only been able to appoint two members as well as the secretary. In 1669, she installed an additional two, but by 1670, most members owed their posts to her. The Count of Peñaranda, therefore, was the only one who served from beginning to end. Some of these men had been rising through the ranks for at least a few years and had earned the queen's trust. Mariana's patronage of men like the Count of Villaumbrosa, who proved his abilities at crucial times during the regency, reveals that she possessed a talent for recognizing aptitude.<sup>400</sup> Another example is that of the Constable of Castile, who was appointed as Aytona's successor in 1670. His entrance into the council also resulted from his loyalty and successful service to the Crown: in 1668, he agreed to assume the

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<sup>400</sup> Villaumbrosa's political talent can be seen in the many papers he wrote that have survived. I discuss one of these in chapter 5.

governorship of the Spanish Low Countries after don Juan refused it.<sup>401</sup> This relatively young man (he was his mid-thirties), soon became one of Mariana's most loyal supporters and remained so even during the difficult events of late 1676 and early 1677.

The first three years of the regency proved very difficult for Mariana as she struggled to reshape the regime she had inherited from Philip IV. The history of her dealings with the Regency Council illustrate how she approached this task. Although Nithard became one main cause of trouble, it was not because he had taken control away from Mariana but because of his lack of social prestige and lack of political acumen. Nithard did not take advantage of the queen; Mariana used Nithard to gain control of the court and, in particular, the Regency Council. Although her appointment of Nithard was controversial and, in certain ways, ill-advised, it also produced benefits, giving her a faithful supporter inside the Council. By skillfully managing vacancies and by appointing younger men and men whose position depended on her, she managed to infuse her regime with new vigor.

Persons and personalities, factions and internal power struggles contributed to a disorderly court. More important, however, loomed the potential succession crisis that could have completely altered the delicate balance of power in Europe. It is imperative to take into account the stakes and the anxiety over the succession in order to grasp the complex nature of the tasks Mariana faced.

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<sup>401</sup> Don Íñigo Melchor de Velasco, VII Duke of Frías, was related through his mother's side to the ruling dynasty of Portugal. (He was a cousin of King John IV.) Besides the Governorship in the Spanish Low Countries (usually held by members of the royal family), the Constable, as he was called, was member of the Council of State, the Council of War, and Governor of Galicia. Thanks to Mariana's patronage (which he earned with his loyalty and support), he rose to the top of political hierarchy playing a key role during the rest of Carlos II's reign.

## Ruling During a Succession Crisis

Minority governments raised the specter of a succession crisis and thus often exacerbated internal conflicts and in some cases provoked international unrest.<sup>402</sup> The stakes were particularly high during this particular royal minority because Carlos II had inherited a substantial Empire, with holdings throughout three continents. His death had the potential to transform the political map of Europe extensively, provoke a European-wide war as it eventually did in 1700, and reworked global colonial relations. The implications of the succession were so significant that it would not be exaggerated to describe the history of Spain in the second half of the seventeenth century as a long-term succession crisis that began in 1647 with the death of Prince Balthasar Carlos and culminated in 1700 with the death of Carlos II. This crisis, however, experienced different levels of urgency. The existence of male successors did not eliminate anxiety over the succession altogether, partly due to the youth of the children and their early deaths.<sup>403</sup> The presence of two Infantas ameliorated the danger because in Habsburg Spain women could pass on succession rights to the throne. However, that also meant that choosing grooms for the princesses became matters of state with far more reaching international dimensions. The marriages of Maria Theresa of Austria (1638-1683) and Margarita of Austria (1651-1673), Philip IV's daughters from his two marriages, therefore, had been the subject of prolonged intense negotiations during the 1650s and

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<sup>402</sup> One must remember that not only the political system, but the social position of the aristocracy were dependent on royal authority. Kings, for instance, authorized the rights of *mayorazgo* (primogeniture) and approved royal marriages among the nobility. Also, kingdoms and principalities depended on the king to uphold their traditional rights and privileges. A dynastic transition could mean the end of a lineage or conversely, great gains.

<sup>403</sup> Mariana of Austria gave birth to three male children successively, but anxiety over the succession remained one way or another. Except for Carlos, the children died young. Felipe Próspero (b. 1657), for instance, died a few days before Carlos II was born.

1660s, with France and the Empire vying for the princesses.<sup>404</sup> The final decisions placed the politics of Madrid squarely on the European arena.

A contested succession was a very likely possibility in spite of Philip IV's efforts to ensure Habsburg inheritance in several ways. In 1665, Carlos II's universal heiress was Margarita, who was already fourteen years old, and who had priority over Maria Theresa by testamentary mandate.<sup>405</sup> The existence of an heiress, however, did not diminish anxiety over the succession. The marriage Philip IV had negotiated for her itself created problems. Margarita's marriage to Emperor Leopold I protected the rights of the Habsburgs in multiple ways (see Chapter 1), but created a very difficult realignment of European powers by giving the Empire the succession to the Spanish throne while excluding France. Louis XIV would not have accepted a reunification of the Habsburgs into a single political unit and he had the resources to prevent it. He also began diplomatic negotiations with Leopold as soon as Carlos II succeeded to the throne. Leopold I also felt unable to face France if he succeeded through his wife's and his own rights. Moreover, other, more immediate, threats, such as the Ottoman threat in the Eastern parts of his territories, preoccupied him. These issues were already on the table at the beginning of Mariana's regency: the first Partition Treaty, whereby Leopold I and Louis XIV agreed to "split" dominions if Carlos II died, was signed in 1668, merely three years after Carlos II succeeded to the throne.<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> W. R. de Villa Urrutia, *Relaciones entre España y Austria durante el reinado de la Emperatriz Doña Margarita, Infanta de España, esposa del Emperador Leopoldo I* (Madrid, 1905).

<sup>405</sup> See chapter 1.

<sup>406</sup> Louis XIV and Leopold I agreed to "split" the monarchy in case Carlos II died during his minority. Even though Leopold possessed significant rights to the Spanish Crown, not only through his wife, but through his mother's side (see Chapter 1), he was in not position to assert his right. Leopold did not ratify the treaty,



In retrospect, it may have been more convenient for Mariana to have kept her daughter in Madrid or at least delayed her marriage. Carlos II had, after all, inherited the throne at a very young and vulnerable age. Delaying Margarita's marriage would have been in line with strategies followed in similar situations in the past. Philip II, for example, had postponed the marriage of his eldest daughter, Isabel Clara Eugenia, until his son, who became Philip III, was old enough to succeed. Philip IV did the same with Maria Theresa, who did not marry until 1659, when the birth of two children secured the succession (Felipe Próspero, b. 1657, and Margarita, b. 1651). Mariana's decision to go ahead with her daughter's marriage quickly was controversial and perhaps even reckless. Had Mariana postponed it at least until Carlos II was somewhat older, it is very likely that she would have avoided plunging the monarchy further into factional struggles.<sup>407</sup>

It is certainly difficult to discern what led Mariana to send her daughter to Vienna since she was to a large extent her insurance policy against a succession crisis. Her motivations may have been personal and political or a combination of both, although it is hard to tell which bore more weight. Whatever the reason, she did not hesitate: Margarita's marriage was confirmed on September 18, 1665, the day after Philip IV died, during the first formal meeting of the Regency Council and the same day that members

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but its existence was made public in 1668. See John P. Spielman, *Leopold I of Austria* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1977), p. 56.

<sup>407</sup> Reports that Carlos II was at the verge of dying reflect more than anything anxiety over a succession crisis than historical reality. Although it is beyond the scope of this study to investigate in depth the figure of Carlos II during his childhood, it is clear that he was not at the verge of dying. As a matter of fact, the opposite is rather the case and all of his activities, such as his dance lesson, participation in sports, including playing ball, horse riding, hunting, and ceremonial and rituals suggest that Carlos was growing up as could be expected.

were sworn in their office.<sup>408</sup> To be sure, Mariana had been an early proponent of the marriage, as soon as Maria Theresa's marriage to Louis XIV had been confirmed in 1659.<sup>409</sup> Negotiations began immediately afterwards, when the little princess was only eight years old. Philip IV was also eager to negotiate the marriage to avoid conflicts with his Austrian Habsburg relatives; he had rescinded his promise to marry Maria Theresa to the Emperor.<sup>410</sup> On his part, Leopold I was so adamant about a marriage to a Spanish Infanta that he quickly accepted Philip IV's proposition, even though he had been slighted by his Spanish relatives. When Margarita reached the age of twelve, he accelerated diplomatic negotiations in an attempt to confirm the alliance, sending several representatives to the Spanish court. The ten-year embassy of the Count of Pötting (that lasted for most of Mariana's regency) began precisely with Leopold's efforts on this marriage issue in 1663.<sup>411</sup> The same year, Leopold dispatched an extraordinary ambassador, the Count of Harrach (later an important political ally of Mariana). Leopold also enlisted the Baron of Lisola to push the marriage as well.<sup>412</sup>

Leopold's efforts paid off. The marriage was announced officially in 1663. The capitulations stipulated that Margarita would receive a dowry of 500,000 *escudos de oro*,

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<sup>408</sup> This is one of the rare instances in which Crespi noted the contents of the meeting in his diary. BNM mss. 5742 f. 364r.

<sup>409</sup> Mariana expressed her wish in a letter to María of Agreda dated August 1659. Villa Urrutia, *Relaciones entre España y Austria*, p. 67.

<sup>410</sup> Maria Theresa had been promised to Emperor Leopold I. Philip IV changed his mind for political reasons. He needed to negotiate the peace with France and his daughter became the most important diplomatic tool to seal the deal.

<sup>411</sup> The timing is not coincidental, Margarita was twelve years old in 1663, the legal age of marriage for girls in Spain. Pötting's embassy ended in 1673, after Margarita's death. This marked, as I will discuss in Chapter 4, a new stage in diplomatic relations between Spain and the Empire.

<sup>412</sup> Villa Urrutia, *Relaciones entre España y Austria*, p. 70.

the same amount designated for Maria Theresa. The Spaniards fought for and won a clause stipulating Margarita's right to return to Spain if widowed. Without a doubt, the most important aspect of the agreement was that, as was the case with all the other Spanish Infantas who married emperors, Margarita expressly retained all her succession rights to the Spanish Crown.<sup>413</sup> The marriage was scheduled to take place in October 1665, but Philip IV's death in September postponed it. Nonetheless, the first official act of the Regency Council confirmed the marriage. It took place by proxy seven months later on Easter Sunday, 1666.<sup>414</sup>

Although Mariana acted in accord with her husband's policies and probably with her own inclinations, it is undeniable that the decision had negative political and diplomatic consequences. At an international level, it sent a clear signal to the European community and especially to Louis XIV that she intended to ally Spain with the Empire and exclude France from the succession. At the level of court politics, Margarita's marriage weakened Mariana's authority by creating a high level of anxiety over the succession. Many Spaniards feared that the marriage could lead to a re-unified Habsburg empire, provoke a French invasion, or even result in foreign rule if Margarita inherited the throne while married to Leopold. Mariana's strategy promised great dividends, of course: if Margarita gave birth to several heirs, then Leopold and Mariana would have the luxury of several successors for the Austrian and Spanish Habsburgs alike.<sup>415</sup> News of

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<sup>413</sup> Villa Urrutia, *Relaciones entre España y Austria*, p. 69.

<sup>414</sup> Until the moment of the marriage by proxy, Leopold I's anxiety over whether the marriage would take place or not continued unabated, as is clear in the correspondence he maintained with his ambassador. It took place on April 25, 1666. Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*.

<sup>415</sup> These issues were extensively discussed during the marriage negotiations of Carlos II. See chapters 5 and 6.

Margarita's pregnancies and births deeply influenced politics in Madrid until her death in 1673. Margarita's death and the survival of a single daughter, Maria Antonia of Austria, had other short- and long-term consequences as well, altering diplomatic relations between Spain and the Empire. In 1665-1666, Mariana's decision was fraught. By sending her daughter to Vienna, she jeopardized the stability of the court by compromising the succession in the short run.<sup>416</sup> Had Margarita remained in Madrid and succeeded to the throne, there would be time to negotiate a marriage for her, perhaps one more appropriate for a regnant queen. In other words, Mariana removed a potential successor from the court and set into motion a potential international conflict. It is easy to see how Spaniards could believe that Mariana placed the interests of the Habsburgs above those of Spain. Perhaps they were right, at least in this instance.

Reflecting on the convoluted events of the period, Nithard identified the general anxiety over the succession as one of the main reasons why ministers of the court tolerated don Juan's virtually treasonous behavior:

Spaniards, particularly the nobility and ministers of the court, were scared of what would happen if the king died unexpectedly.... Not wanting to admit [in the succession] the king of France through the rights of his consort due to the natural antipathy between the two kingdoms, or the Emperor, also deeply despised, and even less so, the Duke of Savoy,<sup>417</sup> for being a foreigner and close to France. The truth is that not one wanted to offend don Juan. They reasoned that don Juan would take revenge on those who had previously opposed him if he actually took the scepter."<sup>418</sup>

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<sup>416</sup> Indeed, Margarita was subjected to a dangerous string of pregnancies, stillbirths, and health problems. She died seven years after marriage to Leopold.

<sup>417</sup> *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 14, p. 23.

<sup>418</sup> "La causa, nacida de las antecedentes de mis persecuciones es que estando los españoles y especialmente la nobleza y los ministros con sobresaltos y miedo, de un fatal caso (que Dios no permita) en que faltase el Rey nuestro señor (que Dios guarde) y previniendo los lances, que en tal caso sin duda se ofrecerian, tocantes en que habia de suceder en estos Reynos. De que no queriendo de ninguna manera admitir al Rey de Francia, asi por la renumeración hecha de parte de la Reyna su consorte como por la natural antipatia, y aversion entre estas dos naciones como tambien al Señor Emperador, por la aversión

Nithard's assessment of the situation helps explain why figures like don Juan abounded during female regencies. The succession was clearly a divisive issue, one that furthered the formation of factions, as people sought to avoid ending up on the wrong side if the status quo changed. This is precisely what happened when Carlos II died in 1700.

Struggles like these were nothing new in the history of Spain. During succession crises, individual lineages played hard politics, casting their lot with potential candidates. The studies of Helen Nader and Peggy Liss eloquently illustrate that families either reaped substantial benefits or suffered long-lasting negative consequences.<sup>419</sup>

Although there might be many elements of truth in Nithard's allegations, the idea that Spaniards would accept someone like don Juan as a legitimate king of Spain should not be taken at face value. Certainly illegitimate children were integral parts of aristocratic families, even among the Habsburgs. Don Juan of Austria of the previous century (Charles V's son), the famous victor of the battle of Lepanto, and Margaret of Parma (Charles V's daughter), the governor of the Low Countries, played major roles in European history; both were illegitimate. Under Iberian legal codes, illegitimate children had the right to succeed when legitimate heirs were lacking. The situation in this case, however, was not clear cut. Margarita of Austria and her descendants possessed far

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odio que le han cobrado por los motivos arriba referidos... Y mucho menos al Duque de Savoya (si bien llamado por el real testamento) asi por ser extranjero como por muy emparentados y arrimados con Francia y otras causas, y haviendo puesto sus ojos y mira en la persona del S[eñor] D[on] Juan de Austria. Y viendo, que este Principe esta en esta intelligencia, y no ha querido por esta misma razon salir de Espana a vista de perderse los E. s de Flandes, dissimularon tantos y tan graves excessos, que a cometido contra la autoridad Real, contra la que quietud publica y contra mis puestos y persona, por parecerle es y le seria en tal caso contraria y de estorvo para su intento. Y asi tomendolos los espanoles, nobleca, y Ministros, que llegando el caso que el S[eño]r. D Juan llegase al sceptro, avia de tomar venganza, y mortificar a los, que se le havian opuesto." BNM mss. 8360, f. 248v-249r.

<sup>419</sup> Helen Nader, *The Mendoza Family in the Spanish Renaissance, 1350-1550* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University, 1979); and Liss, *Isabel the Queen*. A similar situation took place when the Bourbons succeeded to the Spanish throne.

greater claims to the throne than don Juan. Maria Theresa had been legally excluded from the succession, but Louis XIV was most reluctant to honor that clause of exclusion. He was ready to claim his wife's rights to the succession in spite of her renunciation, as he actually did in 1667 in attacking the Spanish Low Countries. With this in mind, Louis XIV requested Mariana to become the godmother of his newborn son in 1668, as a clear overture to Mariana to recognize his children as potential successors in Spain.<sup>420</sup>

Nevertheless, don Juan's presence was provocative enough that ministers of the Regency Council repeatedly advised Mariana to keep him away from court. Nonetheless, it is not easy to assess the nobility's feelings about don Juan's potential rights to the throne. Historians have been too quick in assuming that contemporaries would have accepted him without question.<sup>421</sup> Don Juan was undoubtedly a charismatic figure, who embodied all the aspects of masculinity and leadership associated with kingship. His sterling military career recommended him as a virile leader, despite the recent defeat in Portugal.<sup>422</sup> His writings reveal a magnetic personality and display wittiness and literary talent. His intelligence was plain for all to see. The Count of Pötting, for example, recounted with not a small measure of admiration an occasion in which he conversed with don Juan in German for a long time; noting that don Juan spoke the language fluently.<sup>423</sup> Although don Juan would probably have made a good ruler, evidence indicates that the ruling elite was reluctant to support his bid for the Spanish Crown. For

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<sup>420</sup> Miguel Ángel Ochoa Brun, *Historia de la diplomacia Española: La edad barroca, II* (Madrid: Biblioteca Diplomática Española, 2006), p. 97. This child was the second male son of Louis XIV and Maria Theresa of Austria. Named Philippe-Charles of France, Duke of Anjou. The child died in 1671.

<sup>421</sup> For example, Carrasco Martínez, "Los grandes, el poder y la cultura política."

<sup>422</sup> Kamen, *Spain in the Later Seventeenth-Century*.

<sup>423</sup> He was also an accomplished guitar player too. See Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, p. I: 287.

many, the fact that don Juan's mother was an actress trumped his status as the son of a king. Nobles protested, for example, when they had been required to allow don Juan preeminence above themselves when he became an attending member of the Council of State in 1667 and later on, after he seized power in 1677.<sup>424</sup> In light of this opposition it is quite difficult to imagine that don Juan would have found enough support for his royal aspirations.

Nevertheless, the possibility was real even if unlikely.<sup>425</sup> Don Juan presented a great problem for the regency government; he was a magnet for the malcontents, particularly from those who felt mistreated or marginalized by the new regime.<sup>426</sup> In fact, it appears that the group that supported don Juan used him for their purposes more so than the other way around. Male figures like don Juan—illegitimate sons, disgruntled uncles, or other male relatives with even a hint of legitimacy—repeatedly appeared as problems during female regencies precisely because of the insecurities a potential succession crisis provoked. Concerns over the succession cannot be underestimated as a political problem: it formed a black cloud over Mariana's rule and brought figures like Louis XIV, Leopold I, and don Juan into the fray.

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<sup>424</sup> BNM mss. 8345, f. 13r; AGP Reinados Carlos II, Caja 79, exp. 3: "D[on] Juan de Austria: Puesto que habia de ocupar tanto en la capilla, como en los demas actos públicos á que concurrieron con S[u] M[agestad] el Rey. 1677."

<sup>425</sup> This is why, Mariana absolutely refused to call don Juan my "son," preferring instead to call him "cousin," the same term she used with the *grandees*. Leopold I had a similar attitude. Don Juan provided the Emperor a useful platform to oppose Nithard, whom Leopold believed to be against his interests. Even though Leopold ordered his ambassador to keep the lines of communications with don Juan open, he was secretly opposed to don Juan's pretensions to marry an Austrian Archduchess, which would have probably solved his illegitimacy problems. Although don Juan discussed the topic at length with Pötting, we know that Leopold was utterly against such scheme. Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*. See his entries during the year 1666.

<sup>426</sup> BNM mss. 8345.

Mariana's decision to pursue Margarita's marriage to Emperor Leopold I, therefore, proved ill-advised. It destabilized her regime as it deepened the alarm over the future of the monarchy. Whether her decision rested on dynastic interest or geopolitical considerations or both, the alliance cost Mariana a great deal of credibility. Leopold I's behavior only exacerbated the situation. He barely supported Spain in 1667 when Louis XIV declared war, and then far worse, he "betrayed" the monarchy by signing a partition treaty with France in 1668, all while he was married to the heiress to the Spanish throne.<sup>427</sup> Although he did not ratify the agreement, the political damage was done. The treaty delivered one of the worst political and diplomatic blows to Mariana during her rule, certainly contributing to the coup that forced her to dismiss Nithard against her will in 1669.

Besides the internal politics of the court shaped by a potential succession crisis, problems that originated well before the regency began contributed to the breaking point during the winter of 1668-1669. Mariana, in fact, was forced to pick up the pieces left by Philip IV's failed foreign policy as he sought to re-establish the Spanish Empire that his grandfather had bequeathed him.

### **Resolving Philip IV's Legacy**

During roughly the first half of his rule, under the influence of his minister, the Count-Duke of Olivares, Philip IV pursued an aggressive policy aimed at centralizing power through measures that trampled the "traditional rights and liberties of their

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<sup>427</sup> For Leopold I's attitude over the succession in Spain see Linda Frey and Marsha Frey. *A question of empire: Leopold I and the War of Spanish Succession, 1701-1705* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1983).



subjects.”<sup>428</sup> The result was a series of crises in the 1640s that included the revolts of Catalonia, Portugal, Naples, and Sicily. During the second half of his reign, Philip IV dedicated himself to extricating the monarchy from these failed policies.<sup>429</sup> He did so with a significant measure of success. The revolts of Sicily and Naples were resolved in a few years. Leading the army personally, he regained the support of the local population and re-established royal authority in Catalonia within twelve years.<sup>430</sup> The Treaty of Westphalia signed in 1648 ended the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), in which Spain had shed a great deal of blood and lost many resources. Although Spain recognized the Netherland’s independence in this treaty, the end of the conflict freed up assets and opened the door for commercial, diplomatic, and military alliances with the Dutch. Philip IV had also managed to maintain a respectable position for Spain on the European stage, even in the face of clear French ascendancy. In 1635, the war between Spain and France escalated against the backdrop of the Thirty Years War and the Revolt of Catalonia. The Franco-Spanish War lasted close to a quarter of a century, becoming a tremendous source of expenditure for Spain. Nonetheless, the Peace of the Pyrenees signed in 1659 and sealed with the marriage of the Spanish Infanta and Louis XIV, required important concessions on both sides.<sup>431</sup> By 1660, Philip IV had weathered most crises and pulled

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<sup>428</sup> Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans*, p. xi.

<sup>429</sup> These policies had been the brainchild of the Count-Duke of Olivares. See, Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans*, and *The Count-Duke of Olivares*, for a more general view on these policies. Particularly controversial had been Olivares’s so-called Union of Arms, which required each kingdom of the monarchy to contribute to Spain’s military efforts.

<sup>430</sup> Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans*, pp. 536-540.

<sup>431</sup> The terms of the treaty required concessions on both parts. On this issue see, Isabel Yetano Laguna, “Relaciones entre España y Francia desde la Paz de los Pirineos (1659) hasta la Guerra de Devolucion (1667)” Ph.D. Dissertation, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Facultad de Geografía e Historia, Madrid, 2007.

the monarchy back from possible collapse. He was now ready to address the last matter that had lingered since the 1640s: the Revolt of Portugal.

Portugal had rebelled against Habsburg rule on the heels of the Catalanian revolt, declaring the “restoration” of the Braganzas with a bloodless and easily accomplished coup. Philip IV attempted to solve the Portuguese rebellion, but his efforts failed because the monarchy was involved militarily on so many other fronts. He had signed the peace with France in 1659 precisely in order to concentrate all resources on the reconquest of Portugal; the capitulations included a clause that specifically prohibited Louis XIV from aiding the rebellious kingdom against Spain.<sup>432</sup> At first, the enterprise seemed destined for success. Philip IV was able to gather a significant military force and put don Juan in the command of the Portuguese enterprise as the “Captain General of the Conquest of Portugal.” After two years of preparations and minor advances into Portuguese territory, don Juan, leading a 12,000 infantry and 6,000 cavalry force, attacked Portuguese territory with significant success, although a definite victory eluded him.<sup>433</sup>

Threatened by the consequences of a potential Iberian Peninsula reunified under Habsburg rule, foreign powers also intervened. The importance of Portugal for European and global geo-political competition cannot be underestimated: it became a central concern for the English and the French, for example, motivating both powers to seek strategic royal marriages with the Braganza dynasty intended to reinforce military and commercial alliances. Immediately after King Charles II’s restoration, negotiations began

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<sup>432</sup> See the brilliantly crafted “vote” of Duke Medina de las Torres on the Peace with Portugal, written for Mariana on January 1666. There are several copies of the consultation, which suggests that it circulated widely. RAH 9/1835.

<sup>433</sup> Rafael Valladares, *La rebelión de Portugal: Guerra, conflicto y poderes en la monarquía hispánica (1640-1680)* (Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1998), p. 182.

for the marriage of the English king to Catherine of Braganza, the sister of the king of Portugal. The marriage, celebrated in 1662, also included substantial commercial privileges for England in Portuguese India, North Africa, and Brazil as well as a substantial dowry.<sup>434</sup> In return, the Portuguese obtained military and diplomatic support in their bid for independence from Spain. Louis XIV, too, negotiated a marriage between the French princess, Maria Francisca of Savoy, and the King of Portugal, Alfonso VI, which took place in 1666.<sup>435</sup> Louis XIV also sent soldiers and one of his best generals, Frederick, the First Duke of Schomberg (1615-1690), to lead the Portuguese troops against Spain.<sup>436</sup>

Philip IV required substantial contributions from his subjects to bring Portugal under Habsburg rule again and thus keep the Empire of his grandfather intact. In 1662, he raised an infantry of 18,000 men, a cavalry force of 8,000, and outfitted thirty ships, although he did so by defaulting on his creditors and implementing a fifty-percent currency devaluation.<sup>437</sup> The fall of the city of Évora in 1663 to don Juan's forces marked an important victory for Spain, albeit only a temporary one. Spain faced the tactical difficulty of maintaining an army far from its supply lines, while fighting a combined force of Portuguese, English, and French soldiers. Later that year, Spain suffered painful and embarrassing losses: 4000 men died, 2500 were injured, and 3500 imprisoned.<sup>438</sup> The

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<sup>434</sup> Gerald L. Belcher, "Spain and the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance of 1661: A Reassessment of Charles II's Foreign Policy at the Restoration," *Journal of British Studies* 15/1 (1975): 67-88.

<sup>435</sup> These alliances were discussed in Madrid extensively.

<sup>436</sup> Valladares, *La rebelión de Portugal*, p. 187.

<sup>437</sup> Valladares, *La rebelión de Portugal*, p. 187.

<sup>438</sup> Valladares, *La rebelión de Portugal*, p. 189.

Spanish court was in turmoil as a result. Philip IV recalled don Juan to Madrid, subjected him to an investigation, and replaced him with the Marquis of Caracena.<sup>439</sup> Although many now questioned the wisdom of continuing the war, Caracena managed to raise a force of 13,000 infantry and 6500 cavalry. The Spanish army faced a combined Portuguese, English, and French force of 25,000 in what would be the last battle, in the city of Villaviciosa on June 17, 1665. It was a stunning defeat for Spain; 4000 men died and 6000 others were imprisoned by the Portuguese. Philip IV died three months later on September 17.

Mariana, therefore, assumed the regency when the war against Portugal had virtually been lost or at the very least, had suffered serious setbacks. The Portuguese issue triggered a heated debate in the Spanish court: many regarded the idea of negotiating a peace from “king to king” (as the Portuguese demanded) unacceptable, especially among those who tied the issue of Portugal’s independence to Spain’s position in the world.<sup>440</sup> Philip IV’s policies had other serious, if perhaps unintended, consequences. The reconquest of Portugal not only consumed the monarchy’s financial and military resources; by concentrating all the war efforts on the Castilian border with Portugal, Philip IV effectively left other Spanish frontiers unprotected.<sup>441</sup> In order to reconquer Portugal, Philip IV negotiated peace with France and thus agreed to the marriage of his oldest daughter to Louis XIV. Even though he ensured Maria Theresa’s

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<sup>439</sup> Valladares, *La rebelión de Portugal*, pp. 189-190, and footnote 81.

<sup>440</sup> Valladares, *La rebelión de Portugal*, p. 182.

<sup>441</sup> This was a major point emphasized by the Marquis of Aytona in a memorial he wrote to the queen early on in the regency. “Consultation of don Guillen Ramon de Moncada to the Queen Governor, proposing various means and solutions (arbitrios) for the conservation and felicity of the monarchy,” Madrid 2 de Febrero de 1666. ADM Hist. leg 70.

renunciation of her inheritance rights in the marriage capitulations, he nevertheless opened the door for a contested succession in the Spanish Low Countries.<sup>442</sup>

In order to understand Mariana's predicament when she assumed the regency, it is imperative to discuss Louis XIV's designs. He intended to claim Maria Theresa's right to inherit, if not the Spanish Crown, at least other territories, as soon as Philip IV died. The Spanish ambassador to the French court, the Marquis de la Fuente, who served from 1661 to 1667, reported his misgivings in many occasions. He based his information on conversations with the queen mother, Anne of Austria (1601-1666), who acted as the link between the two courts.<sup>443</sup> Anne, who had as much, if not more, political and diplomatic weight than her niece and daughter-in-law, Queen Maria Theresa of Austria, became a strong advocate for peace between the two monarchies.<sup>444</sup> De la Fuente reported frequently and with increasing urgency that the queen mother worried about the "fragility" of the situation. In the summer of 1665, she summoned the Spanish ambassador "to prevent any misunderstanding that could disturb the peace" about which she "thought constantly" because she feared that she "could not live much longer."<sup>445</sup> Through the ambassador's office she warned her Spanish relatives that her son planned to claim territories in the Spanish Low Countries on behalf of Maria Theresa when Philip IV

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<sup>442</sup> Thus, even though the outcomes of these series of crisis were not as disastrous as could have been expected and Spain emerged from this crisis with some lessons learned, some serious structural weaknesses were already deeply ingrained. Spain could have recuperated, except that war continued to play a key role in eating up human and financial resources.

<sup>443</sup> AHN E. libro 129. Gaspar de Teves y Tello de Guzmán, served from 1661 to 1667, the years of peace between the Peace of the Pirenees until the beginning of the War of Devolution.

<sup>444</sup> At one point making it her dying wish during a health scare. (She suffered from breast cancer.) AHN E. libro 129; AGS E. K leg. 1390.

<sup>445</sup> AHN E. libro 129, n. 199.

died.<sup>446</sup> Anne wished that her brother would voluntarily cede the rights to his daughter soon, since it was most likely that Louis XIV would survive him, reasoning that such an arrangement would benefit most the prince (Carlos), whom “she loved as her own.”<sup>447</sup> The ambassador delicately dismissed Anne’s speech as the result of “melancholy caused by illness.” The queen mother responded firmly that she was speaking “not as a queen of France, but as a sister of the king of Spain” and urged him to convey to her brother what she had said. The message to the Spanish court was loud and clear, even if the ambassador did not want to hear it. Indeed, Maria Theresa, who overheard the conversation, intervened, insisting that “you should tell my father what the queen said.” The ambassador ended his report in despair, convinced that Anne of Austria would not survive much longer and that a French attack was imminent. Although evidently embarrassed, he asked for instructions on what to do if he was required by the circumstances (that is, if Philip IV died) to make a statement.<sup>448</sup>

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<sup>446</sup> It is likely that reports on Philip IV’s health were reaching the French court and a succession was expected anytime soon.

<sup>447</sup> AHN E. libro 129, n. 199.

<sup>448</sup> “Y assi un dia destes me llamó para dezirme que si bien se hallava en aquel E. pensava continuadam[en]te en lo que podia fazilitar las durazi3n de la Paz, y que reconoziedo que no podia vivir mucho deseava dejar prevenido todo lo que podria turbar la queuietud; que en lo que su hijo (Louis XIV) la desseava no reconozia otra cosa que pudiesse obligarle a desenbainar la espada que el mantener la justizia que tenia a una parte de los Países Vajos; y que assi deseava infinito que pues naturalm[en]te havia de sobrevenir el Rey a V[uestra] M[agestad] y a ella considerando los pocos años de S[u] Alteza (Carlos II) (Dios le guarde) y que devia ser preferida la Rey[n]a (Maria Theresa of Austria) desearia que V[uestra] M[agestad] con su prudenzia elijiese la forma de ajustar aora el negozio de manera que asegurase la queuietud para si y para su hijo y el dejarle en Paz con un hermano cui a fina amistad le podria ser tan conveniente contra todos los demas embarzos de su monarquía... No bastó para escusarme pues lo esforzó añdiendo que ella savia lo que decia, y que no me hablava como Rey[n]a de franzia sino como hermana de V[uestra] M[agestad] que le queria, ya S[u] A[lteza] como si fuese su hijo, que yo conozia al Rey... Hallavase alli la Rey[n]a (Maria Theresa) y oyendolo añdio hazedla este gusto escribiendoselo a mi Padre, con que fue fuerza ofrezar que daria quenta a V[uestra] M[agestad]... Al otro dia me llamó la Rey[n]a separandose de su Madre y me pregunto en que forma pensava escribir pues todos aseguravan que[ue] le tocava a ella despues de los largos dias de V[uestra] M[agestad] respondile que escribiria refiriendo lo que havia passado sin entrar en mas... solo añadiré que la Rey[n]a está en terminos que el desseo de mi acierto no me permite escusar a V[uestra] M[agestad] el disgusto que le ocasionara suplicarle

Philip IV, indeed, died three weeks after the letter was sent to Madrid and is not clear if he actually read it.<sup>449</sup> (It took about a month after Philip IV's death for the Spanish ambassador to receive official notice of the king's death, and he continued to address the correspondence to Philip IV until late October 1665. However, news of the king's death may have been slow to get to France rather purposely.) It is evident that Mariana had been cautioned by her relatives in the French court to expect an attack on the Spanish territories in the Low Countries. It is also clear that Mariana refused even to entertain the notion of ceding the Spanish Low Countries.<sup>450</sup> What she and her ministers did not know is that Louis XIV would eventually use the message his mother sent to her Spanish relatives as evidence of "fair warning" to justify a sudden attack on Spanish territories, something that was strictly prohibited under the terms of the peace of 1659.<sup>451</sup>

In order to defend Spain effectively against a French attack, Mariana needed to resolve the Portuguese issue as rapidly as possible, either temporarily with a long-term truce or permanently with a peace from "king to king."<sup>452</sup> The dilemma became the most pressing issue Mariana faced and deeply divided her court. Two ministers, Duke Medina de las Torres and the Marquis of Aytona, both advised Mariana to negotiate the peace and

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que mande dezirme si en caso que n[uest]ro s[e]ño[r] la havia conzedido la gloria diré al Rey lo que V[uestra] M[agestad] mandare responder bien que no sede por entendido conmigo de que tiene not[icia] de lo que su Madre me mandó, y como me governare con la Rey[n]a si haviendo faltado S[u] M[agestad] me preguntare la respuesta." AHN E. libro 129, n. 199.

<sup>449</sup> The diplomatic correspondence suggests that the ambassador did not receive official notification of Philip IV's death until October 1665, that is an entire month after it happened. This may have been a deliberate delay, although rumors of the king's death likely reached Paris quickly.

<sup>450</sup> AGS E leg. 3100.

<sup>451</sup> AGS E leg. 3100. By the terms of the 1659 treaty, the two parties had agreed to give at least six month warning in case of declaration of war. See below.

<sup>452</sup> The connection between these two issues is abundantly documented in all the diplomatic orrespondence of the period.

make the looming French threat, the monarchy's first priority. These two capable men, whose political trajectories diverged widely during the rest of the regency, deeply influenced Mariana's approach in this matter and left a long-term mark on her overall approach to devising foreign policy.<sup>453</sup> The peace with Portugal, however, was not a popular solution and Mariana needed to build political consensus to go ahead with it.

The Peace with Portugal was a momentous event in Spain's imperial, diplomatic, and political trajectory. Scholars date Portugal's independence in 1640, and in reality, Spain was unable to exert any control over the kingdom after this date. However, the official recognition of Portugal's independence in 1668 redefined Spain's position in Europe. The Portuguese issue was crucial for Mariana's own political development as well: this important event defined her as governor, shaped her policies, and became the foundation for her accomplishments in the realm of diplomacy.

### **Mariana as Stateswoman**

The timing of Philip IV's death could not have been worse for Mariana. She took over the government of the monarchy with the Portugal issue still unresolved, after a sound military defeat, and under threat of attack from France. Although until very recently, scholars have presented a picture of Spain during the minority as one of apathy and ineffectual government, Mariana's policies began to take form immediately, were felt across the peninsula, at the court level, as well as outside Spain. What she did, how she did it, and what she accomplished testifies to her capabilities as a stateswoman.

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<sup>453</sup> Medina de las Torres was a staunch supporter of the peace and, by his own admission, this was a reverse of his previous policy. His "vote" on the issue of Portugal was intended for Mariana, but circulated widely around the court (RAH mss. 9/1835). see also Stradling, "Medina de las Torres and Spanish Policy," and Valladares, *La rebelión de Portugal*. The Marquis of Aytona's consultation is not that well-known to scholars as far as I know, and perhaps not even to contemporaries. However, it was certainly read by Mariana, who signed and commented on it. ADM Hist. leg 70.



Mariana began to work with the councils as soon as she became regent and evidence suggests that she was privy to state papers before her husband died.<sup>454</sup> First on her agenda was to protect Spain's frontiers and thus she ordered a series of fortifications built in Catalonia, Aragon, and Navarre. Enjoining her officials to proceed "swiftly" (*con celeridad*), she also took measures to shelter Spanish coasts in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic: she relocated the Spanish galleys and instructed the Captain General of the Coasts and the Ocean of Andalucía, the Seventh Duke of Medinaceli, to prepare for a French attack by sea. Mariana's initial commands, sent by courier within days of her assuming office, were implemented quickly. The galleys from Sicily, under the command of the Prince of Palagonia, joined those from Genoa, and served together under the command of the Genoese General Pagan Doria. By October 1665, they were in Cadiz, awaiting Mariana's orders. The Duke of Medinaceli reinforced them with a small infantry force of three hundred soldiers. Simultaneously, she ordered another infantry force of several hundred men levied in the Italian peninsula to be sent to the Spanish Low Countries.<sup>455</sup>

Working with officials across the Iberian Peninsula and at foreign courts, Mariana set up an espionage network with the help of people like the Duke of Saint German, Viceroy of Navarre, who sent agents to spy on French territories. A constant stream of intelligence reached Madrid in November 1665 not only via spies, but also through her officials, including her ambassadors in London and The Hague, the Count of Molina and

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<sup>454</sup> See for example, AGS E. leg. 2683 in which she ordered the Council of State to consult her on a report sent by Vicente Gonzaga on the norther frontiers with France dated August 1665. The report had been already discussed in the Council of Aragon.

<sup>455</sup> AGS E. leg. 2683.

Esteban Gamarra, as well as her Governors in the Spanish Low Countries and Milan, the Marquis of Castel Rodrigo and don Luis Ponce.<sup>456</sup> Mariana and her ministers in Madrid used the information they received to formulate strategy. For example, news that France had sent a force of 5000 infantry and 1000 cavalry to Bayonne, close to the northern frontier of Spain, prompted Mariana to dispatch money and men immediately to Guizpucoa, a province in the Basque area.<sup>457</sup>

Mariana also began intensive efforts to find allies and partners and stepped up diplomatic efforts as soon as she took office. The earliest official treaty of the regency was signed with England in December 1665 and ratified in January 1666.<sup>458</sup> Its two parts addressed commercial and diplomatic issues between the two monarchies, but also contained secret clauses concerning Portugal. In the public clauses Spain gave several advantages to the English in the realm of commerce similar to the rights the United Provinces had obtained in 1648. These clauses essentially stipulated a thirty-year truce between Spain and England; promised to solve differences between subjects of the two monarchies through the court system; and offered a treaty whereby Spain granted English merchants the right to conduct limited trade in the Peninsula and with goods from the East Indies.<sup>459</sup> In secret clauses, Mariana obtained important diplomatic and military advantages: England became the intermediary of the peace negotiations between Spain and Portugal; the English king promised to guarantee the peace; and England would

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<sup>456</sup> Spanish informants had also been sent to Tolouse, Avignon, and Perpignan by Vicente Gonzaga. AGS E. leg. 2683.

<sup>457</sup> AGS E. leg. 2683.

<sup>458</sup> AHN E. leg. 2797 exp. 20.

<sup>459</sup> AHN E. leg. 2797 exp. 20.

cease to offer military and financial support to Portugal.<sup>460</sup> In sum, the treaty of 1666 gave the English access to Spanish markets and merchandise in exchange for England's diplomatic support of Spain, which entailed England's abandonment of Portugal. The English ambassador, Richard Fanshaw, left on a diplomatic mission to Lisbon to broker a long-term truce between Spain and Portugal, with Spain retaining nominal rights over Portugal. At any other time, the Portuguese would have eagerly accepted this proposal as a significant concession on the Spanish part.<sup>461</sup> In 1666, however, Portugal was in a position of strength and unwilling to agree to these terms.

Fanshaw returned to Madrid in April 1666 with little to show for his negotiations except a counteroffer that created consternation in the Spanish court. The Portuguese again demanded that negotiations take place "king to king," a step that amounted to the Habsburg's explicit recognition of the legitimacy of the Braganza regime. Although Mariana had the constitutional right to negotiate the peace and sign it on behalf of her son, such a radical step required political consensus. She requested all the councils of the monarchy to vote on the proposal. Except for some notable exceptions (such as Medina de las Torres), the majority of the Spanish ruling elite opposed accepting these conditions during the king's minority. They believed that it lay outside Mariana's entitlements as governor and tutor. Don Juan, for example, argued that dispossessing the king of his rightful inheritance during his minority was basically unconstitutional.<sup>462</sup> The Dukes of

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<sup>460</sup> Medina de las Torres, who was at this point solely in charge of the negotiations, tried to get the English to return the Island of Jamaica. Although discussions ensued, Spain lost the island permanently with this treaty. AHN E. leg. 2797.

<sup>461</sup> It would have been a gigantic step forward in establishing the foundation of Spain's recognition of their legitimate right to independence. For Spain, the arrangement would have allowed her to save face by retaining at least the rights to the Portuguese kingdom in theory if not in practice.

<sup>462</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. I: 245.

Medinaceli and Montalto, who had supported the peace during Philip IV's reign, rejected it on the same basis. Medina de las Torres, one of the few advocates of a permanent peace, had suggested in his vote that Mariana agree to it without scruples, based on the notion that once Carlos II attained legal majority he would still be able to nullify his mother's decision using the pretext that the peace had been signed on his behalf rather than by him. Others also argued against it on the principle of maintaining Spain's reputation. Mariana, in fact, received negative responses from the Councils of Castile, Aragon, Flanders, Portugal, and the Knighthood.

Although the Portugal issue was evidently controversial, Mariana acted cautiously yet shrewdly. After Fanshaw returned to Madrid, she established a committee called the Junta de Inglaterra to deal with the Portuguese issue and appointed a group that represented both sides, including the leaders of the two ideological factions. She named the strongest advocate of the peace, Medina de las Torres to the Junta, who was already in charge of the negotiations with the English ambassador and possessed plenipotentiary rights to negotiate on behalf of Spain. Although, it is clear that Mariana favored the peace and thus sided with Medina de las Torres, she nevertheless appointed to the Junta the Count of Peñaranda, who represented the opposite side. Peñaranda strongly believed that Spain's interests were better served by allying the monarchy to France and had thus no incentive to advocate for the Peace with Portugal in order to fight the French. He was thus in opposition to the peace.<sup>463</sup> His enmity toward the Empire, which he vocalized

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<sup>463</sup> Louis XIV proposed an alliance between Spain and France against England, a clear stratagem to divide the ruling elite as he admits in his memoirs. It was evidently successful. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. I:320. Pötting also commented in his diary that the majority of the ruling elite were against the Peace and in favor of France.

often and publicly, was another reason he stood against the peace.<sup>464</sup> His position was proven wrong in less than one year when Louis XIV indeed attacked Spain. But, in 1666, Peñaranda's position was not one Mariana could ignore, even though she probably leaned towards the peace with Portugal as the only means to defend Spain from France. Mariana appointed Nithard as the third member of the Junta de Inglaterra. Nithard lacked the ideological convictions of his two colleagues and his principal role appears to have been that of keeping Mariana informed about the developments of the negotiations. All three ministers received plenipotentiary rights.<sup>465</sup> The creation of the Junta de Inglaterra gave voice to the two major views on the topic, but did not resolve the issue permanently. Tensions escalated as members of the court debated whether a French attack would take place. Mariana sustained her efforts to build up the military and strengthen her diplomatic alliances. The Portuguese question, however, continued to divide the court, plunging it into a state of turmoil.

On May 17, 1667, the French Ambassador to Madrid, Archbishop of Ambrun, went to the Alcazar on a diplomatic mission that did much to resolve the situation. Ambrun presented Mariana with two letters, written by Louis XIV and Maria Theresa, and a treatise written in Spanish. In essence, these documents claimed that Maria Theresa was the rightful heiress of the territories in the Spanish Low Countries and that the king

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<sup>464</sup> His views had been formed during the Peace of Westphalia negotiations and the fact the the Austrian Habsburgs signed a separate peace with France in 1648, leaving Spain at war against France without support.

<sup>465</sup> Fanshaw, who died in June of 1666, was replaced by Edward Montagu, the Earl of Sandwich. With two other English diplomats, William Godolphin and Robert Wouthwell, they helped negotiate the peace between Spain and Portugal in 1668. AHN E. leg. 2797.

was prepared to defend her rights.<sup>466</sup> The legal justification was that as the oldest and only child of Philip IV's first marriage, Maria Theresa had succession rights to territories in the Low Countries based on local laws, which gave her precedence over any child (even a male) born of a subsequent marriage. Louis XIV informed Mariana that he was ready to launch a military attack by the end of the month unless she was ready to cede the territories voluntarily to her step-daughter. He justified the timing of his attack, which was much shorter than the legally required six months agreed upon in the Peace of the Pyrenees in 1659, on the basis that he had given the Spanish court "fair warning" through the offices of his mother in the summer of 1665.<sup>467</sup> We can safely assume that Mariana took the news not only as a political provocation, but also a personal insult. In Madrid, for those who had opposed solving the Portuguese issue on the basis that a French attack was unlikely, this was an acutely embarrassing moment.

It had been as well an embarrassing moment for the French Ambassador. Ambrun in fact apologized to the Duke of Alba, one of the councilors of State present in the palace that day, right before he went in to present his formal declaration of war. "You must think," he reportedly said to Alba, "that I am the most despicable clergyman and the most wretched man, since two days ago I zealously defended my king for the accusations against his intentions and today, here I am with a declaration of war."<sup>468</sup> His apology at

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<sup>466</sup> AGS E. leg. 3100.

<sup>467</sup> AGS E. leg. 3100.

<sup>468</sup> "Al mismo tiempo tambien refirio el Duque de Alba que ayer quando el embaxadro de francia iba a la Audiencia de V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d quiso hablarle antes y le empeco diciendo v[u]e[celencia] me tendra por el mas ruin clerigo y el pero hombre del mundo, pues ante ayer yo me sincerava en la antecamara y en publico del agravio que se hacia a mi Rey con las Voces q[ue] se esparcian de q[ue] queria romper la Paz, y oy digo lo contrario por q[ue] habiendo tenido Persona expresa de Paris vengo a presentar a la Reyna estas cartas y este oprobio en que se manifiesta la resolucion que mi Rey ha tomado de marchar con su exercito hacia Flanders para tomar posesion delos derechos que le asisten contra aquellos Estados. A q[ue] el Duque

least diminished the impact of the news, allowing ministers to warn Mariana about the nature of the ambassador's business before she received him.

Mariana immediately convened an extraordinary meeting of the Council of State for the following day early in the morning. Everyone expressed disbelief and avowed their support. The divisions of the previous two years evaporated within twenty-four hours and the main point of debate was not *if* to prepare for a French attack, but *how*. Medina de las Torres, who opened the deliberations, advised "fearless resistance" (*gallarda resistencia*). The Marquis de Caracena argued that Mariana had the right and obligation to "defend the justice of the king, her son." He pledged his person and his wealth to this worthy endeavor: "I would not refuse to serve with a pike in my hand, whenever place would be of the greatest service of your Majesty." Cardinal Aragon also expressed the emotional intensity of the moment, wanting to fulfill "his obligations with the appropriate jealousy and love as he owed to his sovereigns." Montalto pronounced outrage at Louis XIV's actions, denouncing it as a despicable act of ambition without consideration for the king's minority and even worse "the widowhood and saintly endeavor of Your Majesty." "Rather," he added, "this prince has found in both more incentive to implement his grandiose designs."<sup>469</sup> Although a general feeling of desperation prevailed, Louis XIV's actions helped create a strong sense of unity of purpose, something that Mariana alone had not been able to inspire.

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le respondió lo q[ue] el consejo ha tenido por muy propio de su prudencia y le huviese prevenido antes a V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d de lo q[ue] el embaxador la iba ha hablar para que hallandose noticiosa dello no la cogiese de repente y se sirviese responderle en pocas palabras que lo mandaria a Veer." AGS E. leg. 3100.

<sup>469</sup> All the opinions recorded in AGS E. leg. 3100.

Once these ministers agreed that Spain must confront France militarily, conclusion of the peace with Portugal was no longer a contentious issue. The entire ruling elite fell in to line, including those who had been the most vocal opponents of the peace. Montalto, for example, argued that “the time has come to execute [the peace] at all and any costs.” “It is most fitting of great monarchs,” he added “to accommodate to the times.” Peñaranda, who had so strongly defended the French king just a few days before, stated that signing the peace was the “only means to face this challenge” and should be pursued “at any price and in any form.”<sup>470</sup> Everyone wholeheartedly agreed that the peace with Portugal was absolutely necessary to meet the needs of the moment.

The deliberations included a full discussion of strategy in the areas of diplomacy, military, and finance. Ministers debated how to complete the peace negotiations with Portugal. They all agreed that the monarchy should inform all European princes that Louis XIV had declared an “unjust war” against Spain. Some Ministers wanted to ally with Sweden and various northern European princes. Reports from don Luis Ponce in Milan had made it clear that little could be expected from Italian princes, who either feared the French or bowed to their influence. In the realm of military strategy, everyone agreed that persuading the Emperor to declare war on France was the main priority and that sending subsidies and an army to the Spanish Low Countries should top the list of immediate actions. Finally, ministers discussed the issue of raising money. Some wanted to convoke the Cortes to levy taxes. The Marquis of Caracena proposed to “borrow” all the silver owned by church, an expedient that Ferdinand II of Aragon had used. Others proposed spending cuts. Most of the ministers pledged their own wealth to defend their

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<sup>470</sup> AGS E. leg. 3100.



monarchy and their sovereigns.<sup>471</sup> These measures were not new and Mariana had anticipated many of them. What is important to gather from these debates, however, is that Mariana now had everybody behind her. She did not waste the opportunity to exploit this rare moment of consensus.

“In responding to the Most Christian King’s so utterly unjust and untimely action” Mariana said to the Council of State, “I have resorted to call for Divine intervention and ordered fervent prayers as the first and most efficient means.”<sup>472</sup> More practical resolutions, however, followed this pious statement. The peace with Portugal, she announced, was to be negotiated with England as the intermediary, which was “the most expedient way.”<sup>473</sup> She then declared her intention to seek a defensive alliance with the English and the Dutch “with particular application,” and form leagues with as many princes of the Empire, Italy, the Rhine, and especially the Swedes, as possible. She expected her brother to lead armies against France through Alsace, hoping that he would be reinforced by Swedish troops. Mariana empowered don Francisco Ramos del Manzano to refute Louis XIV’s justification of the war. She decided against convoking the Cortes, because they were “expensive, inconvenient, and of little benefit,” requesting instead a detailed report on how each council would contribute to the war efforts. She requested donations from cities, particularly Madrid, and anyone else who had means to

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<sup>471</sup> AGS E. leg. 3100.

<sup>472</sup> “Este accidente es de tal calidad que obliga a que no se omita ningun esfuerzo para el reparo de los graves daños que pueden tenerse de una ressolución tan intespestiva y Injusta como la que ha tomado el Rey xptmo y siendo el primero y mas eficaz medio el acudir implorar el auxilio divino He encargado se solicite con muy fervorosa oraciones y rogativas que n[uestro] S[eñor] asista a la Just[ic]ia de nuestra causa en ocasion tan urgente como lo devemos esperar de su Infinita misericordia.” AGS E. leg. 3100.

<sup>473</sup> “No es bien por ahora tomar el el otro camino sino acabar este tratado (with England) quanto antes y segun lo que resultara del en las materias de Portugal se veria lo que se habra de obrar para salir dellos.” AGS E. leg. 3100.

help, including “grandeess, ministers, and rich vassals,” urging everyone to collect as much money as possible for subsidies to her brother and the governor of the Low Countries.<sup>474</sup>

“The Most Christian King’s resolution” she added, “calls for an official report to all public servants, ministers, and princes that have representatives here in this court, whereby they should be informed of the unjust attack (*atentado*) against this monarchy.”<sup>475</sup> The word *atentado* has a negative connotation in modern Spanish as it did in the seventeenth century; it conveys the idea that Louis XIV’s attack was highly reprehensible. Mariana sought to garner support by marshaling public opinion. She ordered her ministers to draft letters to the Pope, the College of Cardinals, and other European rulers protesting the French king’s actions. Louis XIV certainly enjoyed decisive military advantages, but his sudden attack based as it was on dubious legal claims could barely be justified to the European community. The War of Devolution thus caused him to forfeit many of the diplomatic gains France had acquired since Mazarin had been chief minister.<sup>476</sup> A few years later, France “enjoyed the support of only a few friends while standing against large alliances.”<sup>477</sup> These “large alliances” were to a large

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<sup>474</sup> “Y necesitandose para todo de medios quantiosos y promptos he mandado a los consejos me consulten sin dilacion los que les ocurrieren de que poder valernos. Puese pida donatibo a las ciudades y ala Villa de Madrid, a los grandes, ministros, y vasallos quantiosos y que se hagan los ultimos aprietos para ajustar quanto caudales se pudiera sin convocar las Cortes pues seria de mucho gasto y inconveniente y de poco beneficio; y con lo que se sacase se acudira luego a mi her[ma]no yal Marques de Castel Rodrigo con las mayores sumas que fere posible como tanto importa.” AGS E. leg. 3100.

<sup>475</sup> “Esta resolución del Rey xptmo pide que se participe a los embaxadores y ministros Publicos de Principes que se hallan aqui haziendolos capazes de este *atentado*...” (my emphasis). AGS E. leg. 3100.

<sup>476</sup> John A. Lynn argues that this war cost Louis XIV the League of the Rhine (signed in 1658), as members declined to renew their associations in 1666 and 1667; John A. Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV, 1667-1714* (London and New York: Longman, 1999), p. 13.

<sup>477</sup> Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, p.13

extent negotiated by Mariana through the brilliant work of her diplomats under her orders.

Although diplomacy was to become Mariana's greatest weapon, it was certainly not the only one. Mariana had no qualms about taking decisive military measures: "I have already resolved that the galleys from Naples, Sicily, and Cerdeña will all be placed under the command of the Viceroy of Naples," she announced. "They will be armed and will patrol the coasts of Italy all the way to the presidios in Tuscany." "They will be ready to come to our defense anywhere in the Mediterranean," she explained, "when necessity demands it." She placed the viceroys of Sicily and Cerdeña under the command of the viceroy of Naples and ordered these men to remain in close communication with each other to ensure the effectiveness of their actions and movements. Simultaneously, she ordered all "soldiers and cavalry in this court and those that just arrived in Cadiz to march to Flanders at once."<sup>478</sup> Because Mariana had effectively prepared the ground from the very moment that she assumed power, these measures could be put into action immediately. Mariana, in fact, had already charged the Marquis of Aytona with the levying of troops. He had been her military strategist and the link between Mariana and the Council of War from the very beginning of her rule.<sup>479</sup>

Louis XIV attacked the Spanish Low Countries during the last week of May.

Reports of his easy victories created concern among the Northern European nations, who

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<sup>478</sup> "Y asi he resuelto que las galeras de Napoles, Sicilia, Cerdeña se junten y esten a disposicion del Virrey de Nápoles procurando que se Armen las tres que ay en la esquadra de Cerdeña para que todas guarden las costas hasta los presidios de Toscana y acudan juntas a la parte o partes donde llamase la necesidad, correspondiendose los Virreyes de Nápoles (a cuya order han destar los de Sicilia y Cerdeña...)." AGS E. leg. 3100.

<sup>479</sup> This is abundantly documented in the Aytona papers in the Archivo Ducal de Medinaceli. These important documents remain to be studied. They have detailed information on the recruitment efforts from 1665 until 1670 when Aytona died, including number of conscriptions, the location of where it took place, and how much money was spent.

felt threatened. There was, therefore, fertile ground on which to form an alliance against the French king. The daily copious correspondence Mariana maintained with her diplomats reveals how she seized this golden opportunity. In October 1667, Mariana sent individual instructions to the Count of Molina in London, Pedro de Gamarra in The Hague, and the Marquis of Castel Rodrigo in Brussels ordering them to begin negotiations for a league with the Emperor, Sweden, England and the United Provinces. Molina, Gamarra, and Castel Rodrigo worked intensely on behalf of Spain under Mariana's directives. From late December to February they orchestrated a diplomatic campaign that was nothing short of brilliant. Information between London, The Hague, Brussels, Madrid, and France (via informants) flew between one place and the others within a matter of weeks or even days. In early 1668, Gamarra was close to getting the Dutch to sign a military alliance with Spain, while sending information on his progress to Castel Rodrigo in Brussels and Molina in London. Castel Rodrigo negotiated an alliance with the Elector of Brandenburg, who began raising a 12,000 man force paid with Spanish subsidies.<sup>480</sup> Espionage also played a key role: according to the ambassadors' reports, rumors of an alliance between England and the United Provinces circulated in London, the Hague, and Brussels, which in this case, surely helped the Spanish cause.<sup>481</sup> These talented men, Gamarra, Molina, and Castel Rodrigo, also effectively deployed the

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<sup>480</sup> For example, see AHN E. legs. 2797 and 2804; AGS E. leg. 3100. Also see Henri Lonchay, Joseph Cuvelier, and Joshep Lefevre, *Correspondance de la Cour d'Espagne sur Less Affaires des Pays-Bas au XIIIe siècle* Vol 5. (Brussels, 1935), p. 34.

<sup>481</sup> AHN E. legs. 2797, exps. 47-52 and 2804.

power of public opinion on Spain behalf: Mariana was depicted as a virtuous widow, “obliged to defend the rights of her son.”<sup>482</sup>

While Mariana and her ambassadors worked to construct an anti-French alliance, she simultaneously initiated peace negotiations with France with the Pope acting as the intermediary. Mariana played the role of virtuous widow perfectly at the Papal court, instructing her representative there, the Marquis of Astorga, to emphasize her willingness to submit to the Pope’s directives. Astorga, for instance, had been instructed to point out to the Pope that the French had clear advantages in having the negotiations take place in Rome, much closer to them than to the Spaniards. Even though French representatives would get information quicker, Mariana was still willing to accept this. Mariana also ordered Astorga to emphasize that her only desire was to safeguard her son’s inheritance. Her directives to Astorga reveal Mariana’s style of ruling. She provided clear guidelines, but allowed her agents the flexibility to make decisions as they saw fit, knowing the importance of preserving the free flow of information. She promised Astorga “daily reports on the negotiations with Portugal,” which could have an immediate impact on the peace negotiations with France as in fact they did.<sup>483</sup>

Indeed, Mariana cast her diplomatic net widely across Europe: she concluded peace with Portugal seven months after she had achieved consensus in Madrid and the

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<sup>482</sup> For example, Gamarra reported to the United Provinces that “La Reine se considère comme obligée en conscience à défendre les droits de son fils.” Lonchay, *Correspondance de la Cour d’Espagne*, p. 34.

<sup>483</sup> “Deveis presuponer que de dia en dia se os hira havisando de queuanto se ofreciere en materia que siendo de tanto peso esta muy suget a que las circunstancias del tiempo hagan variar las resoluciones, y mudar los consejos; y supuesto que el primer paso en semejantes tratados es asegurar la comunicacion por medio de correos...” AGS E. leg. 3100.

Treaty of Lisbon was signed on January 13, 1668.<sup>484</sup> Two days later, she signed a treaty with the Elector of Brandenburg that ensured an army of 12,000 men would be placed at Spain's disposal.<sup>485</sup> Also in January, Mariana concluded a new treaty with England, extending the truce of 1666 (with all of the commercial advantages granted to England) from thirty to forty-five years. Immediately thereafter, the English commenced indirect attacks against France in the Mediterranean and in the Bay of Biscay, using the excuse of safeguarding English merchants from French corsairs. Furthermore on January 23, 1668 England and the United Provinces formed a defensive and offensive league to assist Spain. A copy of the agreement reached Mariana in Madrid on February 8, 1668.<sup>486</sup>

Mariana's diplomatic efforts culminated in the formation of a Triple Alliance between England, the United Provinces, and Sweden with the purpose of halting Louis XIV's attacks on the Spanish Low Countries.<sup>487</sup> Even though Spain was not an official member of this alliance, it was a key player in achieving it. On May 9, 1669, in fact, Mariana agreed to its terms. Once the Triple Alliance was ratified on April 25, 1668, everything fell into place. Less than a week later, on May 2, France and Spain concluded peace negotiations in the city of Aix-la-Chapelle. The peace was a victory for Mariana, who had thus extricated Spain from the conflict virtually unscathed. Under pressure from the allies, Louis XIV returned the important province of Franche Comté to Spain and

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<sup>484</sup> The thirteen articles of the peace were ratified on February 13 by the Marquis del Carpio (Medina de las Torres's son), the Earl of Sandwich, and Portuguese representatives. It was loudly celebrated in Lisbon and was a blow to Louis XIV, who expected the continuation of the war. For the terms of the Treaty of Lisbon, see Jesus Maria Usunáriz Garayoa, ed. *España y sus tratados internacionales, 1516-1700* (Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 2006), pp. 416-7.

<sup>485</sup> AHN E. leg. 2797, exp. 52-55.

<sup>486</sup> AHN E. leg. 2797, exp. 52.

<sup>487</sup> AHN E. leg. 2797, exp. 59.

agreed to abide by the terms of the peace of 1659. He retained some cities that had fallen to him during the war, including Lille and other forts in Flanders, although clearly all of these were relatively minor gains.<sup>488</sup>

Mariana, however, was very much aware that she had won only a temporary respite. Louis XIV retreated but only to set his sights on the Dutch, who in his view had betrayed him. The outcome of the War of the Devolution, in fact, set the stage for his invasion of the United Provinces in 1672, leading to the Dutch War of 1672-1678.<sup>489</sup> As she had done before, Mariana once again carefully prepared the ground to take immediate action when the opportunity arose. Following the principles that she had developed during the first three, formative years of her rule, Mariana involved Spain in the conflict. In fact, Louis XIV's invasion of Holland gave her opportunity to ally with the Dutch in a pact confirmed in 1673.<sup>490</sup> In essence, by then Mariana was confident enough in her abilities and the monarchy's position to go on the offense instead of waiting for another unprovoked attack on Spanish territories by an increasingly powerful Louis XIV.

### **Assessing Mariana's Regime and Policies**

Mariana began to shape her regime from the moment she assumed the regency. She made new appointments, dismissed those who opposed her, and limited the influence of those with too much power. The Council of State quickly rose to preeminence under her rule and came to play a key role in the making of foreign policy, becoming as well an

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<sup>488</sup> Usunáriz, *España y sus tratados internacionales*, pp. 428-433.

<sup>489</sup> Sonnino, *Origins of the Dutch War*.

<sup>490</sup> Although the United Provinces, under the leadership of the De Witt brothers, had agreed to pressure France to abide by the terms of the Peace of the Pyrenees (with England and Sweden), they resisted in forming a direct alliance with Spain for fear of French retaliation. Mariana aggressively sought this alliance and took advantage of the United Provinces's predicament when indeed France attacked them in 1672. I will discuss this in the next chapter. My findings are in line with Sonnino's interpretation of Louis XIV's foreign policy, much of it, he argues focused on the conquest of the Spanish Low Countries.

instrument to implement her authority. This government body, which had suffered a gradual loss of authority during the previous two reigns, revived under Mariana because she bolstered its power and added fresh blood in the form of younger and capable men. The court to be sure experienced an intense period of adjustment at the beginning of Mariana's rule. While some members of the male ruling elite quickly adapted to Mariana's style (and reaped substantial benefits in the process), others did not. Mariana, in fact, consistently rewarded those who showed loyalty: the Duke of Medinaceli, the Marquis of Aytona, the Constable of Castile, the Admiral of Castile, the Count of Villahumbrosa are some whose loyalty during the early years of Mariana's rule allowed them to rise to the top. After this initial period, Mariana reaped the fruits of her strategies and by mid-regency, her impact was felt everywhere at court. Nithard was indeed a controversial figure, but not as influential as has been hitherto assumed. Indeed, he may well have functioned mostly as a useful lightning rod.

While she sought to find a group of ministers that she could work with and that she trusted, Mariana weathered a severe international crisis and successfully extricated the monarchy from a dangerous situation. The official split of the Spanish and Portuguese empires had concrete consequences for Spain and Europe. Although it is clear that Spain had ceded its hegemonic status to France and was now dependent on the two emergent commercial empires of the English and the Dutch, Spain remained central to the geopolitics of Europe. In these difficult circumstances, Mariana showed her ability to adapt to the times and take advantage of the situation. With substantial resources at her disposal in the form of markets, imperial territories, and raw materials, Mariana was able to negotiate a series of military, diplomatic, and commercial alliances and thus protect



her son's inheritance. Evidently, she had no qualms about allying herself with nations that her ancestors considered heretical. Spain's treaty with the English was a first step to stabilizing the situation of the monarchy on the European stage. Mariana thereafter spearheaded diplomatic efforts with key figures in London, The Hague, and Brussels with the purpose of forming offensive and defensive alliances with other Protestant powers, including not only the United Provinces, but also Brandenburg and Sweden.

The way she handled the Portuguese problem offers an excellent example of her political acumen because she faced a deeply divided court. Mariana recognized that acknowledging Portugal's independence would provide evidence of Spain's weaknesses and for that very reason it would be very difficult to conclude any peace that allowed Portugal to remain separate from Spain. But she also recognized that peace with Portugal on these terms was an absolute necessity to preserve the strength of the Empire. Therefore, she proceeded cautiously and prudently, but also shrewdly, and sought to achieve consensus. To a large extent, this meant that she had to rework the composition of the inner ruling group. She appointed Peñaranda to the Junta de Inglaterra in order to balance Medina de las Torres's influence, while keeping Nithard as an informant and a neutral presence. The peace with Portugal was controversial and contested. Once she had the support for this generally unpopular measure, she could act swiftly because she had carefully laid the groundwork. Portugal formed part of a larger strategy in which her main goal was to strengthen Spain's position on the continent. Her efforts bore fruit and, by early 1668, she had negotiated enough support from European powers to force Louis XIV to retreat from his plans, at least temporarily. Her effectiveness partly resulted from her style of ruling, which consisted of providing leadership without seeming to interfere

too much (or micromanaging). She gave clear instructions, but also offered her agents considerable freedom of action and always ensured the free flow of information, which she believed crucial for the work of her diplomats to be effective. Her leadership allowed these talented men, whom she trusted, to mount a vigorous, and ultimately successful, diplomatic campaign.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF MARIANA OF AUSTRIA

Mariana's regency wrought fundamental shifts in the structure and politics of the Spanish court. Some were institutional and specifically caused by the minority, as was the case with the hierarchical reversal of the royal households. Other modifications took place at the level of the conciliar system of government and continued those Philip IV introduced during the last five years of his reign. The Regency Council, for example, was the institutional heir to the triumvirate that counseled Philip IV from 1661 to 1665. Although Mariana exercised her office within the specific legal and institutional framework that Philip IV set in the testament, she in turn used the prerogatives of her office for her own purposes and thus further altered the existing system. She elevated the Council of State to a preeminent position, claimed the prerogative to preside over it personally, and ultimately gave it a role equal to, if not greater than that of, the Regency Council. In addition, she took personal charge of Spain's foreign policy and corresponded directly with her diplomats, many of whom she appointed to the Council of State. Mariana shaped her regime from the beginning of her rule.

Mariana's approach to governing reveals her political acumen and capacity. However, her strategies also created difficulties because they affected the power dynamics at court. Mariana's court began to approximate an oligarchy or a monarchical republic, rather than the more centralized political system of Philip IV. Certainly, during the reign of Carlos II (including the minority) the aristocracy asserted a prominent role as arbiters of court politics, even if as a group they failed to cash in on this newly acquired power due to their inability to act in concert. Adolfo Carrasco Martínez, for example, has

suggested that Carlos II's reign should be described as a "*poliarquía*," a system with multiple centers of power.<sup>491</sup> These two tendencies—the increased influence of the aristocracy and lack of consensus—engendered the factionalism and disorder that were particularly virulent during the minority. However, this analysis remains an incomplete picture. Crucial for understanding the full complexity of the politics of the court during the regency is a careful analysis of its main political actor. This chapter, therefore, considers Mariana, her ruling style, and the institutional changes wrought during the regency minority, in order to understand the origins and the nature of the factionalism that marked her court.

At the center of the analysis lie the strategies Mariana deployed as a ruler and that shaped the evolution of the court as a political system. The political relationship Mariana had with her confessor, the Jesuit Everard Nithard, and another protégé, Fernando Valenzuela, are crucial. Nithard and Valenzuela, fulfilled distinct political functions, some of which resembled those of favorite or *valido*—a political figure that dominated court politics and had some sort of monopoly over the ruler's attention. Nonetheless, neither entirely fits the model of favorite. In the seventeenth century the figure of favorite had largely lost that sexual connotation so characteristic of the office. The men who exercised the office became the precursors of the Prime Minister and were essentially statesmen.<sup>492</sup> Nithard and Valenzuela do not fit either model. Even though they were very visible in Mariana's regime, other figures played significant roles as well. They are vital

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<sup>491</sup> Carrasco Martínez, "Los grandes, el poder y la cultura política."

<sup>492</sup> No longer having a sexual connotation, the presence of a favorite became that of a principal minister. Usually, this was a statesman in the likes of Cardinal Richelieu, Cardinal Mazarin, or the Count-Duke of Olivares, who became managers of royal patronage and arbiters of court politics. But most importantly, possessed a grand vision about policy and a program to implement. See Elliott and Brockliss, eds., *The World of the Favorite*.

to any overall assessment of her regency. The Marquis of Aytona, whose career spanned the period of Nithard's tenure in office, for example, exerted a more lasting influence than Nithard himself. His overall impact was great. Aytona, for instance, orchestrated one of the most provocative decisions of Mariana's rule: the establishment of an armed force in order to protect her and enforce her royal will. Reconsidering the roles of people like Aytona, Nithard, and Valenzuela makes clear that Mariana formed her own political partnerships and yet that no one partner monopolized political power. Precisely because of this, competition to become Mariana's favorite persisted. Indeed, don Juan's political aspirations were similar to those of other figures who sought to become Mariana's favorite. His inability to succeed eventually led him to challenge Mariana's authority. Don Juan initially tried to claim a position *in* Mariana's regime, not necessarily to take power *from* her. Only after failing to do so, did he attempt to contest Mariana's authority. By deploying a public campaign against Nithard that almost caused a civil war, don Juan pressured Mariana to dismiss her confessor from court. Don Juan's changing goals and his short-lived successes tell us a great deal about the power dynamics of the court and provide another avenue to investigate the political system that developed under Mariana's watch.

Although the political system during the regency was more decentralized than before, Mariana, working in partnership with several figures, nevertheless managed to control it. She never really surrendered power to a succession of favorites, as previous historians have often suggested. A number of political figures played key roles in her regime, although most scholarly accounts have marginalized them. This chapter also offers a new periodization of the regency, one that more accurately reflects the evolution

of her regime and Spain's position on the European and global stages. By 1669 not only had she subdued factions, she had also implemented her foreign policy. By the time that Carlos II's majority approached, Mariana's power was so entrenched that the end of her regency has been consistently misdated: Mariana's juridical and constitutional powers as queen "tutor and governor" ceased on November 6, 1675, the day of Carlos II's fourteenth birthday and not in late 1676, as it is often asserted.

### **The Personal Rule of Mariana of Austria**

Mariana's style of ruling fundamentally altered the power dynamics of the court. Whereas during most of the seventeenth century, figures like Lerma, Olivares and Haro had dominated the political stage, during the regency, no single figure did. Moreover, traditional institutions of government that had lost substantial power during the reigns of Philip III and Philip IV, regain at least some, and sometimes considerable, authority. This was particularly true for the Council of State. The revival of the conciliar system of government in the style of Philip II in the sixteenth century should have been received positively. Favorites had been highly controversial and many viewed them as monopolizing power that was supposed to be shared in the councils. In practice, however, the revival of the councils brought more, not fewer, conflicts and actually encouraged debate and opposition. Without a strong figure at the center to discourage dissent and with the resurgence of government bodies that provided a platform to exercise influence, Mariana's court became a contested space, one in which a cacophony of voices could be heard. Mariana's strategies present a conundrum. They show her desire and ability to exercise power directly. Yet they also exacerbated a political competition that degenerated into factionalism. Thus, and in distinction to the position of previous

scholarship, it was not the presence of favorites that caused factionalism and disorder, but rather the lack of such figure.

Favorites have historically received a bad press. Scholars have associated them with monarchical weakness and as exerting an essentially negative influence on the state. During the first half of the seventeenth century, the controversial figure of the favorite or “evil counselor,” gave way to a new political type: the minister-favorite. This important figure differed fundamentally from the earlier kind of favorite with statesmanship replacing looks and physical attractiveness as conditions that guaranteed preference. In 1974, the French historian Jean Bérenger argued that the emergence of minister-favorites in the Spanish, English and French courts was a logical consequence of the difficulties rulers encountered in governing emergent modern states.<sup>493</sup> The minister-favorite of the seventeenth century formed an integral part of state-building processes and, in many ways, was a forerunner of the modern prime minister.<sup>494</sup> Controversy still survived around especially strong minister-favorites like Richelieu, Mazarin, and Olivares, but some managed to retain favor for long periods and strongly imprinted individual states and Europe more generally.<sup>495</sup>

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<sup>493</sup> The original article by Jean Bérenger, “Pour une enquête européenne: le problème du ministériat au XVIIe siècle,” *Annales*, V. 29 (1974), pp. 166-92. Bérenger’s article prompted an international colloquium at Magdalen College, Oxford in 1998 on the subject of the favorite/prime minister. The focus of the conference, organized by John Elliott and L. W. B. Brockliss, was to study the subject as a European phenomenon. The results were published as a collection of essays that made a significant contribution to the subject. John H. Elliot, “Introduction,” in *The World of the Favorite*, John Elliott and L. W. B. Brockliss, eds. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 1-10, p. 4.

<sup>494</sup> Tomás y Valiente, *Los validos*.

<sup>495</sup> For the evolution of the perception of the figure of the favorite in Spain from the sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries, see Antonio Feros, “Images of Evil, Images of Kings: The Contrasting Faces of the Royal Favourite and the Prime Minister in Early Modern European Political Literature, c. 1580-c. 1650,” in *The World of the Favorite*, John Elliott and Brockliss, eds. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 205-222. The earliest advocate for the figure of the minister-favorite was Baldassar Castiglione. Translated into Spanish from the original Italian by Juan Boscán in 1534, *Il Cortegiano* or *The*

Understanding the tasks of the minister-favorite or the *valido* is crucial to any understanding of court politics during Mariana's rule. Although Spanish *validos* differed greatly from one another, certain commonalities existed. All three major minister-favorites in Spain, Lerma, Olivares, and Haro,<sup>496</sup> used patronage effectively to lubricate the machinery of government. The solid institutional bases they enjoyed, especially in the king's chamber and the Council of State, and their adroit handling of extra-institutional means, allowed them to establish patronage networks that extended inside and outside the court, reached throughout the peninsula, and extended to the very fringes of Empire.<sup>497</sup> They managed royal patronage in ways that simultaneously protected their own position and bolstered their masters by distancing them from the nitty-gritty aspects of governing. In addition, they strengthened the authority and the image of the ruler by deflecting criticism, although by doing so, they attracted it instead to themselves. In sum, the minister-favorite's position at the pinnacle of power acted as a sort of lightning rod. At the same time, they neutralized the influence of the ruling elite in a myriad of ways and thus helped concentrate power into royal hands.

A series of important studies allows an informed historical assessment of the evolution of great favorites and *validos*. How favoritism transitioned into different forms

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*Book of the Courtier* was very popular during the sixteenth century and underwent several editions until it was put in the index. Also, a Spanish writer, Antonio de Guevara, wrote an important text on the subject, giving advice to the aspiring courtier, *Aviso de Privados o Despertador de Cortesanos [1539]*, ed. A. Alvarez de la Villa (Paris, 1914). This text was also very popular and underwent several editions during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

<sup>496</sup> Both Lerma and Olivares fell from power, while Haro died in office and his position seemed secured nevertheless. All three of them kept power for close to two decades each.

<sup>497</sup> They operated and monopolized power in various areas in the court and councils, but at the same time did not have an official or formal status and thus also operated outside established institutional channels. See, I. A. A. Thompson, "The Institutional Background to the Rise of the Minister-Favorite," in *The World of the Favorite*, John H. Elliott and L. W. B. Brockliss, eds. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 13-25.



of government is still poorly understood and Mariana's rule may provide some crucial insights. In Spain, rule by favorite waned shortly before Mariana assumed the regency. When Luis de Haro died in 1661, Philip IV replaced him with a triumvirate thus eliminating the position of principal-minister. The continuities between Philip IV's style of ruling during the last years of his reign and the establishment of the Regency Council have already been discussed. The Regency Council was supposed to take on the role of the triumvirate and to ensure that a *valido* would not re-emerge. Mariana affirmed the principles established by her husband but she pushed them further than he intended her to do; and she did so deliberately. Soon after taking office, Mariana dispatched a royal decree ordering the Council of State "to place in my hands all their consultations." Most importantly, these exchanges were to take place directly from her to the Council and vice versa, a procedure that she ordered "must be observed with inviolability."<sup>498</sup> The consequences of her approach were significant: by establishing direct communication with the Council of State, Mariana eliminated the Regency Council as a mediator. During the regency, all the businesses of the monarchy passed through *her* hands.<sup>499</sup> Thus, very early in her regency, Mariana made clear her intention to do away with having an intermediary figure between her and the most important political body of the monarchy: neither the Regency Council nor a *valido* were to act for her.

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<sup>498</sup> "Sera bien (como lo ordeno al consejo de Estado) que en conformidad de lo que ultimamente mando el Rey mi S[efior]... por principio del año pasado de seiscientos y sesenta y dos, se embien amis manos con todas las consultas membretes y que asi mismo de las resoluciones que yo tomare sobre ellas que se huvieren de executar por otra parte se haga por papeles de aviso de los secretarios de los tribunales como se estilaba antiguamente sin ynovacion alguna observandose esta regla ynvioablemente como lo encargo y es mi voluntad." AGS E. leg. 4128.

<sup>499</sup> It is clear that Mariana signed and read most petitions and state papers herself and she rarely resorted to the royal seals.

Several reasons conditioned these decisions. Mariana's preference was in line with her personality; she was not inclined to surrender control and liked to keep close tabs on everything going on in the court. We should not discount, however, that as a female ruler she may have felt it particularly dangerous to alienate power. As Paul E. J. Hammer has pointed out in his insightful evaluation of Elizabeth I's political relationship with the men at her court, "a king might delegate power to a single favorite and still retain his authority, [yet] this option seemed neither attractive nor safe to Elizabeth."<sup>500</sup> Mariana faced a similar predicament. The elevation of someone to assume the role previously occupied by Lerma, Olivares, and Haro would have been extremely dangerous for her. First, the existence of such figure would have possibly marginalized her, effectively cutting her off from power. Second, she could have been accused of not abiding by her husband's testament. Last but not least, Mariana acted in perfect alignment with the prevailing political beliefs. Although scholars now acknowledge many positive aspects to the phenomenon of favoritism or *valimiento*, contemporaries often hated and despised the minister-favorite, who were regarded as usurping royal power and compromising the position of the ruler. If his policies were ineffective, the favorite became even more unpopular. Many rulers, almost simultaneously, decided to eliminate them: Louis XIV, Leopold I, and Philip IV all began their personal rule in the 1660s by eschewing the figure of a principal minister or favorite/*valido*.

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<sup>500</sup> I am making this observation based on the lucid argument presented by Paul E. J. Hammer on Elizabeth I's dealings with favorites. For as he rightfully points out, "a king might delegate power to a single favourite and still retain his authority, this option seemed neither attractive nor safe to Elizabeth." Paul E. J. Hammer, "'Absolute and Sovereign Mistress of her Grace'? Queen Elizabeth I and her Favourites, 1581-1592," in *The World of the Favorite*, John H. Elliott and L. W. B. Brockliss, eds. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 38-53, p. 41.

Like her male counterparts, Mariana rejected the idea of choosing a single principal advisor and arbiter of court politics. She actively set out to govern personally. She presided over the Regency Council and supervised her diplomats at foreign courts. Her preference for the Council of State strongly affirmed her right to rule and her desire to do so personally: she, for example, asserted as hers the king's prerogative to receive the advice of State councilors directly. These circumstances demonstrate that Mariana, like other rulers of the day, remained wary of appointing favorites or principal ministers. Yet, scholars have labeled Nithard and Valenzuela, her "favorites." The question is why. Moreover, if Nithard and others were not really "favorites," what position did they fill and how did Mariana use them?

### **The Queen's Confessor**

Mariana's patronage of Nithard, who rose through the ranks gradually to attain eventually a spectacular success was divisive and controversial. First, his entry onto the political stage was received with incredulity and consternation; it curtailed the ambitions of those who aspired to a coveted spot on the Regency Council. His appointment as Inquisitor General also outraged those who felt more deserving of that prestigious office and those who resented that it went to a foreigner. Nithard became the *bête noire* in criticisms don Juan launched against Mariana's regime and that peaked in summer 1668. In spite of this, Nithard's influence on Mariana was actually quite limited and his role in devising policy negligible. The great irony of Nithard's political trajectory is that although he did not assume the role of *valido*, he nevertheless received the brunt of attacks associated with *validos*.

Although Nithard participated in the politics of the court, he never became the principal political actor. Tomás y Valiente has noted this, calling Nithard a “*valido frustrado*.”<sup>501</sup> For example, Nithard never presided over the Council of State personally or took a leadership position as a statesman. Although he had contributed with much success to the debates in favor of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception,<sup>502</sup> his intervention in other policy issues remained extremely limited even during the Regency. His recorded votes in the deliberations of the Council of State, for example, are strikingly unexceptional and it is abundantly clear that his opinions did not carry much weight. Men like the Count of Peñaranda, the Count of Castrillo, the Duke Medina de las Torres, and don Juan set the tone of political debates, not Nithard, who remained distant from public discussions of the very important issues the monarchy faced.<sup>503</sup> Nithard’s political writings likewise did not develop a clear program for solving the monarchy’s problems; most merely rebutted criticisms launched at him and Mariana’s regime more generally. Moreover, Nithard did not manage royal patronage in ways typical of favorites or *validos*.<sup>504</sup> Nithard was unusual in yet another regard: he did not accumulate significant

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<sup>501</sup> Tomás y Valiente, *Los validos*, p. 71.

<sup>502</sup> Julián J. Lozano Navarro, *La compañía de Jesús y el poder en la España de los Austrias* (Madrid: Cátedra, 2005), p. 299. Nithard’s contribution to the defense of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was a deeply contested issue between the Jesuits and the Dominicans, and thus helps explain why the latter group persecuted Nithard so viciously.

<sup>503</sup> Stradling and Valladares have noted the role played by Medina de las Torres. Both suggest that Medina de las Torres had become a sort of *valido* behind the scenes. Stradling, “Medina de las Torres and Spanish Policy,” and Valladares, *La rebelión de Portugal*. See below for a discussion of the role played by the Marquis of Aytona in forging Spanish policy.

<sup>504</sup> Nithard’s scope of influence in this important issue was certainly modest, perhaps even minimal. It is very likely that it played a role in his inability to gather significant support for his cause.

personal wealth under Mariana's patronage.<sup>505</sup> Mariana considered Nithard a collaborator rather than a political strategist. Nonetheless, he fulfilled several important functions in Mariana's regime. Among other things, he provided the queen with reliable information, balanced the power dynamics inside the Regency Council, and curbed the partisanship of leading figures in other government bodies.<sup>506</sup> Nithard was a good soldier for Mariana, but certainly not her preferred general.

If no paper trail exist to indicate that Nithard became a dominant figure during the regency, should we assume that he manipulated Mariana behind closed doors? Such a notion goes against everything we know about Nithard and Mariana. Contemporaries often described the Jesuit as an "honest" man and one essentially lacking the strength and personality to take command of the court. In fact, political figures like the Count of Peñaranda, the Count of Pötting, and Duke Medina de las Torres criticized him for just those failings.<sup>507</sup> Nithard's diplomatic and political abilities were questioned many times and factional politics cannot be the sole explanation, since the evidence corroborates this assessment.<sup>508</sup> Peñaranda, for example, opposed Nithard's candidacy to replace the

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<sup>505</sup> This can be seen clearly in Nithard's testament. He had certainly not accumulated substantial wealth; the only major object he received from Mariana was a "golden crucifix decorated with numerous and valuable diamonds." (He bequeathed it to the Jesuits.) In this regard, he avoided many of the scandals usually associated with *validos*. AHN Clero-Jesuits leg. 263.

<sup>506</sup> See Chapter 3 for a discussion of Nithard's role in Mariana's regime inside the Regency Council, the Council of State, and the Junta de Inglaterra.

<sup>507</sup> Nithard was the subject of multiple and lengthy conversations between the Imperial ambassador and Medina de las Torres. See Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, volume I. Peñaranda reached a similar conclusion, see AGS E. Italy, 3113. Also see, Lozano Navarro, *La compañía de Jesús*, p. 320.

<sup>508</sup> Pötting often reported in his diary the "lectures" Medina de las Torres used to give to Nithard, exhorting him to action. Leopold I had no faith in Nithard's abilities either. Leopold also did not think Nithard capable of taking command of the court due to lack of resolve, see Maria del Carmen Sáenz Berceo, "Juan Everardo Nithard, un valido extranjero" in *Los Validos*, p. 342, Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I: 210, and Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, volume I.

Spanish ambassador in Rome in 1671,<sup>509</sup> arguing that the Jesuit would be no match for those who had “dedicated their lives to the quintessential study of people, politics, and diplomacy.” Peñaranda too, mentioned Nithard’s integrity and felt that his preference for studying theology and philosophy would impede his ability to deal with “the most astute and skillful individuals.”<sup>510</sup> Although Nithard was perhaps more of a political animal than Peñaranda credited, it seems he lacked the skills to take center stage and succeed in cutthroat environments like the Papal and Spanish courts. Besides the personal animosity Nithard’s accumulation of important offices caused, it is clear that he failed to gain supporters for his cause. Those who opposed his dismissal in 1669 did so as a way to exercise loyalty to the queen. He was unable to deploy patronage to create a group of followers and to ensure his continuing participation in the regency government. This, perhaps more than anything else, is the greatest evidence of his political failures.

Nithard thus did not occupy the traditional position of favorite or *valido* for several reasons. He lacked the capacity, the inclination, and perhaps the drive, for such a leadership role. Moreover, Mariana was never really inclined to follow the advice of a single figure. The Marquis of Aytona’s role as a strategist, a reformer, and an administrator indicates that, at the very least, Mariana did not work exclusively with Nithard. Yet and in spite of considerable evidence to the contrary, historians continue to give Nithard credit for the formulation of policy. Nithard’s purported role in Mariana’s

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<sup>509</sup> The appointment was only a temporary one. Nithard was already in Italy serving with the title of extraordinary ambassador. AGS E. Italy, leg. 3113.

<sup>510</sup> “Esta consideracion obliga al conde, a entender que el Padre Juan Everardo, el qual sobre su natural sincero, ha hecho, todo su Vida profesion de vida retirada y austera, dado a los estudios de la Sagrada Teologia y Philosophia y a los mas Importantes de la Contemplacion y meditacion se allara muy mucho para manejar las sutilezas con que se negocia en Roma, y muy mal prevenido para defenderse de las astucias con que alli se procura engañar al embajador mas despierto y mas vigilante.” AGS E. Italy leg. 3113.

regime reproduces a classic trope of female regency, that of a female ruler willingly surrendering power to a powerful male figure because of a lack of experience, personality, or capacity or all of these combined. The trope is so ingrained and such a convenient way to explain the events that led to the crises of 1669 and 1676, that it continues to persist in spite of substantial evidence to the contrary.<sup>511</sup>

We should not blame historiography alone, however. Nithard's centrality in the historical narrative of Mariana's regency also resulted from don Juan's effective public campaign which he began in the summer of 1668. Don Juan made the Jesuit the central point of his attacks and eventually demanded that Mariana dismiss him, claiming among other things that he was the cause of all the ills of the monarchy. In doing so, don Juan gave Nithard much more credit in shaping Mariana's regime than he actually deserves.

### **The Contours of Royal Authority**

The controversy that erupted over Nithard in 1669 had its roots in tensions between Mariana and don Juan that had begun as soon as Carlos II succeeded to the throne. Initially, the conflict revolved over what role, if any, don Juan would play in the regency government. Philip IV had excluded don Juan from the succession and the government during the minority,<sup>512</sup> but he still wanted to ensure his illegitimate son's future: he asked Mariana to "protect and favor [don Juan], employ his services, and assist

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<sup>511</sup> Two recent examples are the otherwise excellent studies by Lozano, *La compañía de Jesús*, and Pablo Fernández Albadalejo, *Historia de España: La crisis de la Monarquía*, vol. 4 (Madrid: Crítica, Marcial Pons, 2009).

<sup>512</sup> See Chapter 1 for a discussion of the lines of succession in Philip IV's Testament. Don Juan was excluded by limiting the succession to legitimate children. The words "*legítimo* and *legítima*" appear in all the clauses addressing the lines of succession.

him financially” so that he could live “according to the quality of his person.”<sup>513</sup> Mariana, therefore, had been left in charge of deciding don Juan’s fate by testamentary mandate. Philip IV’s vague guidelines left Mariana with a problem rather than a solution. What would it take to “protect and favor” don Juan and what kind of “employment” should she offer him? Don Juan, who was refused entry to his father’s chambers during the king’s final illness, was quite worried about his future; many close associates reported his state of melancholy during the months following Philip IV’s demise.<sup>514</sup> Soon after his father’s death, don Juan began a campaign on his own behalf to claim a permanent and official role in the monarchy and among the Habsburgs. For example, he asked for recognition as an infante, sought a marriage to an Austrian archduchess, asked for support to claim the Crown of Poland, and requested a seat on the Regency Council.<sup>515</sup> Although most of his plans failed, he nonetheless imposed his presence on Mariana’s regime. In 1667, the queen made don Juan an attending member of Council of State. This was no small concession considering that Mariana had repeatedly forbidden him to enter Madrid.<sup>516</sup> Although Mariana tried to conciliate don Juan, he nevertheless presented a concrete threat to her authority, a problem that his impertinent behavior exacerbated. Mariana needed to act and do so quickly to counter his influence. The crisis that led to Nithard’s

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<sup>513</sup> “Por quanto tengo declarado por mi hijo, a don Joan Joseph of Austria, que le huve siendo casado y le reconozco por tal; ruego y encargo a mi sucesor y a la Magestad de la Reyna mi muy cara y amada muger, le amparen y favorezcan, y se sirvan de él como de cosa mía, procurando acomodarle de hazienda, de manera que pueda vivir conforme a su calidad, sino se la huviere dado Yo al tiempo de mi fin y muerte.” *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 57, pp 69-71.

<sup>514</sup> Nieto Nuño, ed. *Diario del Conde de Pötting*.

<sup>515</sup> These are extensively documented in Nithard’s memoirs and Pötting’s diary. The latter is not surprising because many of don Juan’s schemes involved the Emperor. See Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, vol 1 as well.

<sup>516</sup> Philip IV had appointed don Juan councilor of State, but his was an honorific position and he had never been allowed to attend the meetings.



exile began as a direct result of Mariana's attempt to assert supremacy over don Juan and retain control over the court.

On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1668, an Aragonese man named Joseph Malladas, a captain and tax collector working for the Crown, was apprehended in his temporary residence in Madrid, taken to the palace prison, and after a summary judgment garroted in a corner of his cell before daylight on the following day.<sup>517</sup> Only the queen could have arranged such a hasty execution. News of what had transpired in the palace during the night became known in the streets of Madrid immediately. Within twenty-four hours the Regency Council debated and condemned the incident. The Malladas incident sparked a heated public debate on the nature of royal authority, fueled a popular campaign against Nithard, and inaugurated an official showdown between the queen and don Juan. It therefore offers a useful way to assess the state of Mariana's regime after three years of rule, the nature of don Juan's challenge, Mariana's responses to it, and the events that led to Nithard's dismissal less than a year later.

The execution crushed a plot to murder Nithard by eliminating Malladas as the assassin. It also sent a loud and stern message to don Juan who had supposedly masterminded the scheme.<sup>518</sup> Mariana, however, did not just respond to an isolated incident; she also addressed don Juan's ongoing disobedience. Don Juan had repeatedly ignored her instructions to remain outside Madrid and appeared in the city with impunity. His meetings with members of the nobility, the Imperial ambassador, and other important

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<sup>517</sup> The incident is discussed in Nithard's memoirs, see BNM mss. 8345, f. 136v-168r. Also see Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, vol. I, Chapter 11. I based my analysis partly on Maura's account, although what follows is my own interpretation.

<sup>518</sup> BNM mss. 8345, f. 137v.

people at court were public knowledge.<sup>519</sup> Although Mariana temporarily adopted a policy of appeasement, the need to neutralize don Juan remained. The war with France offered an ideal way to solve her predicament. On January 16, 1668, she named don Juan governor of the Low Countries and ordered him to take his post. Although this was undoubtedly a good decision because don Juan's presence as a member of the royal family was expected to be very beneficial in the war efforts,<sup>520</sup> it was also very convenient: the appointment allowed Mariana to banish don Juan's troubling presence from Madrid and do so quite gracefully. Yet, a new round of tense episodes soon followed. Don Juan used various delaying tactics to avoid leaving the court: he demanded, and obtained, considerably more money, more men, and more political prerogatives than he had been offered initially. Nonetheless, he still rejected the prestigious governorship.<sup>521</sup> After months of tolerating don Juan's disconcerting demands, Mariana named a replacement. Don Juan then backed down and withdrew his resignation. He asked Cardinal Aragon to intercede with Mariana on his behalf and she reinstated him. He left Madrid to take his post in late April. This was a mere feint on his part, however. Rumors circulated at court that don Juan was awaiting for the right moment to return to Madrid.<sup>522</sup>

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<sup>519</sup> Don Juan's whereabouts from 1665 to 1667 have been abundantly documented in Nithard's memoirs (BNM mss. 8344 and 8345). Also, they are discussed in Maura's work, *Carlos II y su corte*, vol. 1.

<sup>520</sup> Mariana's decision to appoint don Juan to the governorship should not be seen entirely as a self-serving strategy. The Habsburgs had a lengthy tradition of appointing members of the family to the prestigious governorship, including illegitimate children, women, and junior members of the dynasty. There is plenty of evidence in all state papers that I have examined that everyone expected that don Juan's presence in the Low Countries would be extremely beneficial for the war efforts and to rally the local population to stand behind the Spanish Crown.

<sup>521</sup> He had been given same prerogatives as those enjoyed by the Cardinal Infante Ferdinand of Austria and the Archduke Leopold William. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I: 323.

<sup>522</sup> BNM, mss. 8345, f. 136v-138v.

Although clearly Mariana wanted to deal with don Juan more expediently and definitely, she was simply unable to do so. Ministers of the court were unwilling to enforce Mariana's decrees banning don Juan from court and many of them actually opened the door for don Juan's disobedience by meeting with him. The timing of the discovery and crushing of don Juan's conspiracy against Nithard, in fact, reveals that Mariana understood perfectly well that she needed more comprehensive control over court power structures in order to assert her authority effectively. It is not a coincidence that Malladas's execution took place shortly after Mariana had made a major change in her regime. Amid rumors and gossip, the Count of Castriello resigned from his post as President of the Council of Castile in late April 1668.<sup>523</sup> This office was strategically important because its incumbent had automatic membership in the Regency Council and because it was in charge of the judicial administration. Mariana filled the vacancy immediately. She appointed two utterly loyal and competent men within the span of one month, men ready to act on her behalf and to carry out unpopular measures if necessary.<sup>524</sup> Diego Riquelme de Quirós came into the office ready and willing to clean house and eliminate corruption, although his unexpected death required Mariana to

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<sup>523</sup> Castriello's resignation prompted many rumors and much gossip at court. It was common knowledge that Castriello had been very slow in dispatching justice and there was a backlog of cases as a result of his spotty attendance. This, however, may have been his way to exert pressure on Mariana to grant him a *grandeeship*. Mariana did not give in to his demands. She did not fire him, but offended him enough to prompt his resignation. Her expediency in replacing Castriello eloquently illustrates how eager Mariana was for his resignation. The events that led to Castriello's resignation are complex and beyond the goals of this Chapter. See Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I: 324-5. It is important to point out however, that Mariana wanted to replace him, that she eventually succeeded, and that his resignation was key for her to get a hold on the power structures of the court.

<sup>524</sup> As we can see, her appointments were quite deliberate. She was capable of both acting quickly or delaying her decisions based on what suited her interests best.

appoint another very quickly.<sup>525</sup> Mariana appointed Diego Valladares Sarmiento on May 28.<sup>526</sup> Valladares quickly became an important, albeit quite controversial, figure inside the Regency Council and proved to be the catalyst for the execution of Malladas. Within days of taking office, Valladares was already moving against don Juan. After he made Mariana aware of the plot to assassinate Nithard,<sup>527</sup> he prepared and had executed the warrant for the arrest of Malladas.<sup>528</sup>

Mariana's ability to have someone apprehended, tried, and executed all within the span of twenty-four hours demonstrated not only that she had the will to exercise her power; she also possessed the means. Don Juan took the hint and directly after the controversial execution, made final arrangements for his actual departure for the Low Countries.<sup>529</sup> Mariana's victory, however, was only temporary. Elites at court perceived such executions to be an abuse of royal power and members of the Regency Council

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<sup>525</sup> Riquelme began to sweep the streets of Madrid of vagabonds, cracked down on crime, and began to clean up corruption in the government. Although short, his tenure in office was effective. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I: 328.

<sup>526</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I: 328-9.

<sup>527</sup> According to Nithard, the information came from intercepted letters. Castrillo knew of the plot but chose to keep quiet and Valladares was the one who reported it to Mariana. BNM mss. 8345, fs. 138r-140r.

<sup>528</sup> Valladares sent the Mayor of the Palace, a lawyer named don Pedro González de Salcedo, to execute the warrant for Malladas's arrest. Salcedo became closely associated with Mariana's regime. He wrote during the regency two important texts: one a rebuttal to Louis XIV's claims to the Low Countries and an important educational treatise, published in 1671, and dedicated to Mariana, whom he called the "Supreme Royal maternity." This text is briefly discussed in Chapter 5. Appearances of due process were observed; Mariana purportedly selected three judges to conduct the trial; the officials obtained a confession, and gave the man a few moments to prepare for death before executing him. Nithard revealed the identity of only one of the judges (because he had passed away at the time of his writings), but felt he had to protect the other two and refused to release their names. BNM mss. 8345, f. 138v.

<sup>529</sup> BNM, mss. 8345 f. 138v.

protested vigorously. Even the normally loyal and supportive Aytona was appalled.<sup>530</sup>  
Don Juan took advantage of the situation.<sup>531</sup>

Tensions escalated: the peace with Portugal, the war with France, but especially Malladas's execution, weakened the regency government and gave an opening to don Juan, who launched a verbal campaign against Mariana's regime. In a series of letters originally sent to important members of the court, don Juan accused Nithard of tyranny and Mariana of supporting him in rupturing the traditional boundaries of Spanish royal power. These letters then circulated in manuscript and print throughout Spain and even at foreign courts amounting to a virtual pamphlet campaign.<sup>532</sup>

Mariana quickly recouped, however, and in the midst of this public scandal turned to her most powerful weapon: the king. Orders to clean up, decorate, and ready the streets of the city to welcome the young sovereign in the first of a series of public processions provided a convenient distraction. On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, exactly a month after the controversial execution, *madrileños* of all sorts, from the highest nobility to the common folk, congregated in the streets of the city to witness Carlos II's first official appearance in

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<sup>530</sup> BNM mss. 8345, f. 141r.

<sup>531</sup> A debate ensued over whether or not Mariana had the right to execute someone the way she had Malladas. Nithard discussed the issue at length in his memoirs, offering an extensive exposition of the constitutionality of her act in a point-by-point refutation on the objections of his colleagues. BNM, mss. 8345 fs. 138v-140.

<sup>532</sup> Leopold I, for instance, asked his ambassador repeatedly about the cause of such scandalous execution, although Pötting was unable to give his employer a definite response. Rumors had been nipped in the bud because they compromised Mariana's decorum. Nobody dared talk about it. The English ambassador, for instance, reported that Mariana had ordered Malladas to poison the Duke of Alba, who during his tenure in office as *mayordomo mayor* had purportedly severely reprehended Nithard for entering Mariana's chambers while the queen was still in bed. There were rumors that Malladas had sent Louis XIV a copy of the secret instructions Mariana had given her diplomats regarding the peace with Portugal and thus had been punished as a result. There were more conjectures, see Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I: 340-341. Most of these stories sound far fetched, but illustrate that the execution had a great impact in political circles. There are a large number of manuscripts in the Biblioteca Nacional, the Real Academia de la Historia, the Archivo Histórico Nacional, and in the papers of the nobility in the Archivo Histórico Nacional, Nobleza Section (in Toledo) that document the controversy between Nithard and don Juan.

public since he had inherited the throne three years earlier.<sup>533</sup> A large number of courtiers, including children of the nobility mounted on exquisitely caparisoned horses, followed the six-year-old sovereign to the Convent of Our Lady of Atocha.<sup>534</sup> These processions, which were accompanied by fireworks, dances, and all sorts of entertainments lasted for the rest of the summer and extended well into autumn.<sup>535</sup>

The excitement of seeing the king in public for the first time was not sufficient to stop don Juan, who continued to discredit Mariana's regime whenever and however he could. He officially renounced his commitment to assume the governorship of the Low Countries, excusing himself on health concerns; naturally such a pretext fooled no one. Mariana and her Regency Council considered don Juan's act a direct challenge to royal authority. However, not much was done and tensions rose.<sup>536</sup> Not long after this scandal, Mariana learned that don Juan was involved in another plot against Nithard.<sup>537</sup> This time the conspiracy was to be carried out by a man named Bernardo Patiño, the brother of don Juan's secretary and thus closely associated with him. The plan was to ambush Nithard on a Friday evening after the customary weekly meeting of the Regency Council with a cavalry force of sixty. While the kidnapers would drive Nithard to the northern frontiers,

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<sup>533</sup> RAH mss. 9-3746.

<sup>534</sup> RAH mss. 9-3746. For the importance of the Virgin of Atocha for the Habsburgs, see Schrader, *La Virgen de Atocha*.

<sup>535</sup> The second outing took place on June 7 to the Convent of the Descalzas Reales. They continued until October at least, the young sovereign always accompanied by his mother visited numerous convents. RAH mss. 9-3746.

<sup>536</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I: 355.

<sup>537</sup> Mariana received a mysterious visitor right before leaving to one of the processions discussed here, a captain named Pedro Pinilla. It is quite significant that he obtained access to the queen almost immediately, which clearly means that the story was deemed trustworthy. Mariana received the man briefly before leaving the palace. I base my account on the following manuscript: *Papeles y cartas tocantes al S[eñor]r. D[on]. Juan de Austria*. Yale Collection of Manuscripts, Spain, unfoliated.

don Juan planned to take control of the royal palace. (Other rumors suggested that don Juan's intention was to assassinate Nithard.) The Shakespearean-style plot may very well have been an invention to discredit don Juan; nevertheless important members of the court gave it considerable credence.<sup>538</sup> Soon after, Valladares ordered the immediate imprisonment of Patiño and summoned the Regency Council to discuss the matter. Once news got out the following day that Patiño and two other men had awakened in the palace jail, "everyone was bewildered" and the court swiftly plunged into "a deep state of turmoil."<sup>539</sup> The previous experience with the Malladas incident seemed to have been on everyone's mind. Mariana and her ministers exercised restraint on this occasion, not daring to go any further than imprisonment. Patiño, too, had learned from the previous incident: he confessed without much probing and openly implicated don Juan.<sup>540</sup>

Mariana was eager to make don Juan accountable and, at least in this occasion, she had some significant support. With the backing of most Regency Council members, except Peñaranda, who refused to sign the order for don Juan's arrest, she assembled and

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<sup>538</sup> According to the report, the Marquis of Aytona and Mariana's main secretary, Blasco de Loyola, were the two people who handled the issue. *Papeles y cartas*.

<sup>539</sup> "el dia 13 de Octubre, estando p[ar]a salir S[us] M[ajestades] en continuacion destas visitas p[ar]a ir á la Concepcion Francisca donde estaba destinado pasar la tarde con las Religiosas, y ellas apercebidas p[ar]a el festejo y agasajo q[u]e les habian de hacer, llegó un Cap[itán] cuyo nombre es D[on] Pedro Pinilla, al cuarto de S[u] M[ajestad] diciendo q[u]e tenia necesidad de hablar a la Reyna N[uestra] S[eñora] á q[u]e se le respondió p[or] q[u]e alli estaban era imposible respecto de estar p[ar]a salir S[us] M[ajestades] q[u]e aguardase á que volviesen, y lo podria hacer con facilidad. A esta proposicion aceptó; pero pidió se le pusiese en una parte secreta donde no fuese visto de nadie hasta q[u]e volviese, insinuando no estaba seguro, y q[u]e convenia no ser descubierto. Estas razones fueron causa de q[u]e el Marqués de Aytona, Mayordomo mayor de S[u] M[ajestad] la diese cuenta de lo q[u]e pasaba con dicho Cap[itán], y S[u] M[ajestad] mandó entrase, y habiendose puesto á sus pies, la pidió audiencia mas secreta, y retirandose á otra pieza le llamó: estubieron en la conferencia mas de media hora, y luego salió S[u] M[ajestad] á hacer su visita á la Concepcion dejando al Cap[itán] Pinilla con D[on] Blasco de Loyola, Secretario del Despacho Universal, y habiendole alojado aquella noche en la Covachuela, amaneció Domingo p[or] la mañana 14 del d[ic]ho mes preso en la Carcel de Corte D[on] Bernardo Patiño, hermano del Secretario del S[eñor] D[on] Juan de Austria, y otros dos criados suyos: esta novedad con la del dia anted[en]te inquietó toda la Corte de tal calidad q[u]e andaban aturridos todos." *Papeles y cartas*.

<sup>540</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I: 364.

dispatched a fifty-man cavalry force to capture don Juan and bring him to the royal palace of Segovia, traditionally used as a prison for prominent captives.<sup>541</sup> Having been warned in advance, don Juan fled before they arrived. His behavior suggests that he acted out of panic, clearly fearing for his life. He, however, left behind a letter that was nothing short of a political manifesto, ensuring as well that it was copied and distributed widely. Once he made this decision, there was no looking back: the coup against the regency government had been put into motion.

The letter was addressed to the queen, but appealed “to all those who read it.”

Don Juan justified his flight, advanced a scathing critique of Mariana’s regime couched as an attack on Nithard, and demanded that Mariana banish her confessor:<sup>542</sup>

The tyranny of Father Everard and his execrable malice, which he focused against me when he imprisoned the brother of my secretary and with other actions, such as attacking my honor with abominable voices, have led me to flee in order to secure my person. Although this action may seem at first a recognition of guilt, it is nothing more than the act of a loyal subject of the King, my Lord, for whom I always will give all the blood of my veins. And I declare today to Your Majesty and *to all who read this letter* that the actual reason that prevented my departure to the Low Countries was my intention to separate from Your Majesty’s side that beast so unworthy of occupying such sacred place. God has inspired me to seek this goal as I see such horrific tyranny displayed, especially when I witnessed how that innocent man was executed in such violence. . . . I have long been meditating and had the intention of executing my plans without scandal or violence. . . . It was because of this, and not because I am afraid of staying in Consuegra [and be arrested], that I have decided to leave. And then only in order to protect myself from the perfidious designs of this vile man while your majesty reconsiders my humble representations. In short, my only desires are the expulsion [of Nithard], the reparations to my honor, and the liberation of these kingdoms of the calamities and the oppression of these poor subjects. . . . I beseech Your Majesty on my knees and with tears of the heart to not lend ears to the perverse counsels of this

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<sup>541</sup> Peñaranda tried to avoid voting on the controversial measure, excusing himself from the meeting. Don Blasco de Loyola, obviously on Mariana’s orders, went to Peñaranda’s house to collect his vote. He refused to sign. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I: 365; *Papeles y cartas*; BNM, mss. 8345.

<sup>542</sup> Because it was copied and recopied, there are numerous copies that survived to this day. For a comparative study of the extant copies of the “famous” letter, see Anna Vermeulen, *A quantos leyeren esta carta: estudio histórico-crítico de la famosa carta de don Juan José de Austria, fechada en Consuegra el 21 de octubre de 1668* (Louvain, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2003).



poisonous individual. I protest in front of God, the King my Lord, Your Majesty, and the entire world that *I will not be responsible for the potential consequences that may result in the absence of public peace...* 21 of October 1668. The most humble subject and servant of Your Majesty, don Juan. (My emphasis)<sup>543</sup>

Although usually level headed, Mariana was shocked by don Juan's letter, reportedly falling ill for several days with a severe migraine headache after receiving it.

The court went into a high state of alert too. “[Don Juan's] refusal to go to Flanders, his

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<sup>543</sup> “La tirania del P[adre] Everardo, y la execrable maldad q[u]e ha estendido y ha forjado contra mi, habiendo preso á un hermano de mi secretario, y hecho otras diligencias con animo de perderme, y esparcir en mi deshonor abominables voces, me obliga á poner en seguridad mi persona, y aunq[u]e esta accion parezca á primera vista de culpado, no es sino de finisimo vasallo del Rey mi Señor p[ar]a quien daré siempre toda la sangre de mis venas; como siendo Dios servido conocerá V[uestra] M[agestad] y el mundo mas fundamentalm[en]te de la parte donde me encamino, y en prueba de esto declaro desde luego á V[uestra] M[agestad] y á cuantos leyeren esta carta q[u]e el unico motivo verdadero q[u]e me detuvo de pasar á Flandes, fué el de apartar del lado de V[uestra] M[agestad] esta fiera tan indigna por todas razones de lugar tan sagrado habiendome inspirado Dios á ello p[or] una fuerza mas q[u]e natural desde el punto q[u]e os la horrible tirania de dar garrote á aquel inocente hombre con tan nefarias circunstancias, hasta cuyo accidente es cierto estaba tambien en deliberado animo de pasar á aquellos E. s, no obstante el conocim[en]to con q[u]e iba de lo q[u]e dejaba á las espaldas. Esta accion medité, dispuse y pensaba ejecutar sin escandalo ni violencia mientras no fuese necesaria q[u]e la precisa p[ar]a conseguir el intento, y no su muerte (como su mala conciencia le ha hecho temer p[or] q[u]e aunque seg[un] la mia y toda razon podia y debia quitarle la vida p[or] las causas comunes del bien de esta Corona, y particulares mios, y p[ar]a ello se ha tenido, no solo repetidas opiniones, sino instancias de gravisimos teologos, no he querido aventurar la perdicion de una alma q[u]e tan probablen[en]te habia de ser arrebatada en mal E. , anteponiendo los riesgos y trabajo de mi persona al deseo de hacer á Dios este sacrificio, q[u]e espero de su infinita misericordia me pagará en dar feliz logro á mi justa intencion, q[u]e es y será la ultima hasta perder el ultimo aliento de mi vida, por hacer á mi Rey y á mi patria este gran servicio. A este fin Señora, y no p[or] aprehension de los peligros q[u]e podia correr en Consuegra voy á ponerme en parage y postura donde asegurado del traidor animo de este vil hombre, puedan ser mas entendidas de S. M. mis humildes representaciones q[u]e siempre serán encaminadas á la espulsion desta parte sin mas interes mio, despues de las reparacion de mi honra, q[u]e el de librar estos Reynos della, y de las calamidades y trabajos q[u]e p[or] su causa padecen los pobres y oprimidos vasallos. No he querido encaminarse á esta córte aunq[u]e he podido hacerlo con sobrada seguridad p[or] q[u]e en la ligereza con q[u]e los pueblos se mueren, aprehenden las cosas no sucediese algun escandalo irreparable inconveniente al servicio de V[uestra] M[agestad] suplico a V[uestra] M[agestad] de Rodillas, con lagrimas del corazon q[u]e no oiga V[uestra] M[agestad] ni se deje llevar de los perversos consejos de este emponzoñado basilico, por si pelagra la vida del hermano de mi secretario ó la de otra cualq[ui]er persona que me toque hacia mi, ó á mis amigos, ó los q[u]e en adelante se declaren p[or] mios (que es lo mismo q[u]e por buenos españoles fieles vasallos del Rey) se intentare con escritos, ordenes ó acciones hacer la menor violencia ó sin razon: protesto á Dios, al Rey mi Señor, a V[uestra] M[agestad] y al mundo entero, q[u]e no correrán por mi cuenta los daños q[u]e pudieren resultar á la quietud publica; de la satisfacc[i]o[n] q[u]e me será preciso tomar en semejantes casos, poniendo en ejecucion lo q[u]e sin algunos de estos motivos no pensara jamas conmovier: y al contrario si V[uestra] M[agestad] (como fio de la Divina misericordia) la inspirare, y suspendiere su juicio, y sus deliberaciones, hasta recibir segundas noticias mias, es cierto q[u]e todo se dispondrá á entera satisfaccion de V[uestra] M[agestad] y se hará con quietud y sosiego el mayor servicio de Dios, del Rey N[uestro] S[eñor] y bien de sus Vasallos, cuya mira es la unica de todas mis resoluciones, y la hora q[u]e el mas fiel amigo viere en mi la mas leve muestra q[u]e desdiga desta obligacion le exorto q[u]e sea el primero á quitarle la vida. Dios quiera y prospere la de V[uestra] M[agestad] para bien destos Reynos. Consuegra 21 de Oct[ubr]e de 1668. Su mas humilde criado y Vasallo de V[uestra] M[agestad] Don Juan.” *Papeles y cartas*.

intention towards the Father Confessor of Her Majesty, and the letter of Consuegra” members of the Regency Council regarded as “enormously irreverent act” that “lacked any explanation.” “Don Juan’s behavior,” they argued, “must have been the result of the extreme grief of his sentiments that had the effect of alienating him, making him forget his usual decorum, temperance, and good manners.”<sup>544</sup> Ministers were evidently appalled; still, fearful of the potential for civil war, they unanimously pleaded for clemency on his behalf: “Your Majesty should act as an angel of peace that with her presence calms this tempest, and reduces to tranquility these nebulous times, while bringing consensus among desires.”<sup>545</sup> A potential uprising was a real possibility and don Juan was intelligent enough to see it as an effective shield against the queen’s wrath.

Don Juan drew on latent dissatisfaction with the current regime by taking his cause to the public. While running from the authorities, don Juan sent a flurry of letters around the peninsula, to ministers of the court, viceroys, and government bodies.<sup>546</sup> His campaign was ultimately effective, creating a good deal of sympathy for his predicament and garnering support for Nithard’s dismissal. Nithard’s point-by-point rebuttal of don Juan’s “famous letter” came out on October 25.<sup>547</sup> This and other responses, reproduced in Nithard’s lengthy memoirs, partly explain why don Juan was so successful in manipulating public opinion. Based on solid legal arguments that reveal his extensive

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<sup>544</sup> “Pues la retirada del viage de Flandes, la intencion q[u]e ha mostrado con el P. Confesor de V[uestra] M[agestad] y la carta de Consuegra de 21 deste, es tan inorme é irreverente, q[u]e faltan razones p[ar]a ponderarla, y se conoce q[u]e el sumo escocor de su sentimiento le enagenó de si, y le hizo olvidar su acostumbrada templanza, urbanidad y decoro.” *Papeles y cartas*.

<sup>545</sup> “Angel de paz que serena esta tempestad, y reduzca á tranquilidad estos nublados, y ponga en acuerdo estas voluntades.” *Papeles y cartas*.

<sup>546</sup> Copies of don Juan’s letters can be found for example in BNM mss. 18433, fs. 25r-28v and mss. 18655 números 17, 20, 21, and 24. Many of don Juan’s letters are reproduced in Nithard’s memoirs.

<sup>547</sup> Vermeulen, *A cuantos leyeren esta carta*.

scholarly training, Nithard demonstrated that don Juan's behavior was treasonous. Yet, his academic style, sprinkled with Latin phrases, learned language, and written in a heavily didactic tone, was no match for don Juan's sparkling, punchy, and persuasive prose.<sup>548</sup> It could be argued that Nithard lost the battle against don Juan to a large extent to the power of the pen, as much as he did to the power of the sword.

This is not to say that don Juan enjoyed widespread backing; he did not. He was able to escape from royal authorities because many areas in Catalonia offered him asylum. Yet, many places responded to his requests cautiously. Cities in Castile, Aragon, and Valencia forwarded don Juan's letters to Madrid as a clear show of loyalty to Mariana; sometimes still sealed. A great sense of anxiety prevailed for a variety of reasons, however. Rumors that Louis XIV would support don Juan militarily and financially in order to incite a civil war created havoc at court. Deeply alarmed, the Council of State sent instructions to the viceroys of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia on how to proceed if faced with a military attack.<sup>549</sup> Don Juan's behavior became the source of embarrassment in foreign courts, too. When Pope Clement IX offered Mariana support and mediation, she declined, playing down the extent of the problem.<sup>550</sup> The court became a circus. Mariana's ladies, for instance, divided themselves into two factions—the *austriales* (followers of don Juan) and the *gerardas* (supporters of Nithard)—and

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<sup>548</sup> For examples, see Nithard's lengthy defense of the execution of Malladas and don Juan's letter. BNM mss. 8345, fs. 141r-169v.

<sup>549</sup> AGS E. K leg. 1395.

<sup>550</sup> AGS E. Italy leg. 3043.

took a central role in the ongoing debate, loudly expressing their advocacy for each candidate.<sup>551</sup> These factors combined to nurture a general state of confusion and disorder.

As don Juan marched towards the capital with a small cavalry force, the prospect of a popular uprising became a reality. While everyone generally agreed that don Juan's behavior was unacceptable, the majority of the ruling elite was unwilling to take the necessary measures to stop him. It became increasingly clear that eliminating Nithard from Madrid would be the best and most practical solution to extract the monarchy from its predicament.<sup>552</sup> Discussions ceased to revolve around the issue of how to defend royal authority, becoming a debate on how to avoid civil war. While the Councils of Castile and Aragon were decidedly in favor of Nithard's exile, the Regency and State Councils were still divided. The idea of creating an armed force to confront don Juan was introduced at this time in the Regency Council and deliberated in the Councils of War and Castile, but stalled in the bureaucratic machine of the court.<sup>553</sup> Although Nithard's expulsion remained a matter of dispute for several months, don Juan's advanced on Madrid tilted the balance against the Jesuit and, for that matter, Mariana. When push came to shove, avoiding civil war trumped defending royal authority.

Without the means to defend the court, Mariana had no choice but to give in to don Juan's demands. She dispatched the royal decree discharging Nithard in the afternoon of Sunday February 24, 1669, even prohibiting her life-long teacher and confessor from

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<sup>551</sup> "Cada cosa de estas ha sido de mas incentivo á la materia, y obligado á dividir la Corte en bandos, de tal suerte, q[u]e hasta los mas principales della lo están, y se dice q[u]e en el mismo Cuarto de S[u] M[agestad] entre las Damas hay sus diferencias, llamandose las unas Austriales, y las otras Gerardas." *Papeles y cartas*.

<sup>552</sup> The number was small, to be sure, but don Juan's arrival was expected to provoke riots and uprisings to which the court was unable to respond.

<sup>553</sup> ADM Histórica leg. 68.

coming to the palace to bid farewell. She cast the decree in the best possible light to safeguard Nithard's honor, although everyone knew that Mariana's "license to retire" was tantamount to exile:

Juan Everard Nithard, of the Company of Jesus, my Confessor, member of the Council of State and Inquisitor General, has requested permission to retire from these kingdoms. Even though I am fully satisfied with his service, due to his virtue, many other good qualities that converge in his person, and his dedication and faithfulness employed in the royal service, I will concede license so that he can retire where he wishes attending to his supplications and other just considerations. His retirement will take place according to the most appropriate decorum and decency of his rank and personal merits. I have thus resolved to name him extraordinary ambassador to either Germany or Rome, whichever place he chooses. He will remain in full custody of his posts and the privileges that they entail...<sup>554</sup>

Mariana made this resolution against her wishes and by doing so implicitly admitted that she had no means to protect her confessor and safeguard her power. Although hers was a prudent decision and likely saved many lives, perhaps even that of Nithard, it must have been a serious blow to Mariana's sense of her royal prerogatives. In the short term, however, the die had been cast: Nithard left the court that same day. Cardinal Aragon and the Count of Peñaranda delivered the difficult news and escorted the fallen minister out of Madrid.

What happened next is nothing short of remarkable. Two days after Nithard's departure, don Juan wrote to Mariana, putting himself at "her feet," and informed her that

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<sup>554</sup> "En Madrid a 25 de febrero de 1669. Juan Everardo Nithardo, de la Compañía de Jesús, mi Confesor, del Consejo de E. , y Inquisidor General, me ha suplicado le permita retirarse destes Reinos; y aunque me hallo con toda la satisfacción devida de su mucha virtud y otras buenas prendas que concurren en su persona, y del zelo y atención con que se ha empleado en el Real servicio; atendiendo a sus instancias y por otras justas consideraciones, he venido en concederle la licencia que pide para poderse ir a la parte que le pareciere; y deseando sea con la decencia y decoro que es justo y solicitan su grado y particulares méritos; he resuelto se le dé Título de Embaxador extraordinario en Alemania o Roma, donde eligiere, con retención de todos sus puestos y de lo que goza con ellos..." Decree written by the queen regent, addressed to the Secretary of State, don Pedro Fernández del Campo. Reprinted in Tomás y Valiente, *Los validos*, appendix XI, pp. 176-177.

he had already abandoned the court, and was on his way to the city of Guadalajara.<sup>555</sup> His subsequent correspondence reiterated some of the demands he had raised during the previous months, including the expectation that the government implement reforms that would alleviate the plight of Spanish subjects. One way or another, his leaving the court was an unmistakable sign that the coup against the regency government had been forestalled. Don Juan's withdrawal, in fact, turned out to be longer lasting than his previous actions seemed to promise: he remained out of the political spotlight until Mariana's tenure in office ended in late 1675. He resurfaced again only when Carlos II's majority approached. Then, however, the king himself opened the door for his half-brother to re-enter political life.

How can we explain the fact that don Juan chose to leave Madrid after such a resounding victory? Why did he fall into oblivion afterwards? Even though members of the ruling elite had turned a blind eye to his treasonous behavior, don Juan never enjoyed their unconditional support for a take-over of the government. The Count of Peñaranda, for example, who had been the only member of the Regency Council that refused to sign the warrant for his arrest, was unwilling to tolerate a direct challenge to Mariana's authority. Peñaranda cautioned don Juan to moderate his behavior, otherwise, he said, the government would be forced to "condemn his actions with whatever imaginable means."<sup>556</sup> The warning obviously implied that a charge of treason (a crime that carried the death sentence) was on the table. Coming from the Regency Council and high minister of the court and, in fact, one of his supporters, don Juan could neither dismiss

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<sup>555</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II:8-9; AHN Consejos, leg. 7179.

<sup>556</sup> Peñaranda's letter to don Juan quoted in Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, I: 386. I have drawn my own conclusions.

the reprimand nor take it lightly. He evidently knew that he was walking a dangerous line and was intelligent enough to grasp the gravity of the situation. He therefore limited his demands to asking for Nithard's removal from his post. Once he achieved his goal, no reason or justification existed to request more. This is the key to understanding what happened *after* don Juan successfully orchestrated Nithard's exile. Don Juan challenged Mariana's politics, but he was ultimately unable to do the same with her position as the king's tutor and the monarchy's governor. Without a lack of consensus to depose Mariana or imposed his will on her, he had no choice but to exit the political stage.

The days following Nithard's dismissal, however, were tense for everyone, including the queen, who had to consider her moves very carefully. She went through the motions of taking don Juan's demands seriously, but was already devising a plan to reassert her power. About ten days after Nithard's dismissal, Mariana requested her ministers "to consider the present situation and recommend the best measures that should be taken to maintain peace."<sup>557</sup> In consultation with her advisors, Mariana duly appointed don Juan as Viceroy and Captain General of the Kingdom of Aragon.<sup>558</sup> She also agreed to institute an ad hoc committee called the Junta de Alivios, charging it with the task of

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<sup>557</sup> "al estado de las materias destes reynos y alo que pueden influir en la quietud y sosiego dellos las nuevas instancias de Don Juan; se me consulte luego con toda distincion lo que pareciere se deve executar en ello; a fin de que yo pueda tomar luego determinacion en negocio de tal gravedad y importancia; y antes de Veerse este negocio se hara Juran(do) p[o]r los que concurrieren en el con[sejo] f[rent]e a los S[anto]s evangelios, de guardar inviolablemente el secreto delo que se tratare. En Madrid a 7 de Marco 1669." AHN Consejos leg. 7179.

<sup>558</sup> "Haviendose continuado las representaciones de Don Juan de Austria mi Primo, sobre diferentes puntos, que se originaron de los lances, que precedieron, y despues se han ido interponiendo, resolvi hacer repetidas expresiones de mi gratitud con su persona, atendiendo a la memoria del Rey mi señor, y a lo que deseo, que las experimente en credito del aprecio en que la tengo, y delo que fio de su celo, y grandes obligaciones, para remover qualquiera otra contraria inteligencia por los accidentes passados. A cuyo fin le he nombrado por Virrey y Capitan General de Aragon con titulo de vicario en los Reynos dependientes de aquella Corona, en la forma, que ha parecido conveniente, para que estando en esta cercania se halle con mas oportuna disposicion en los casos en que puedan ser utiles al servicio del Rey mi hijo sus muchas experiencias. Participolo al Consejo, para que se tenga entendido en el. En Madrid a 8 de Junio de 1669. Al Presidente del Consejo." AHN Consejos leg. 7179.

devising fiscal and social reforms.<sup>559</sup> Although these concessions could be interpreted as another set of humiliations, Mariana turned them to her advantage. The viceroyalty gracefully eliminated her enemy from Madrid. But this was only the beginning: she appointed her most loyal supporters to the committee instituted at don Juan's request and gave the presidency to Valladares, the minister who had discovered and punished don Juan's conspiracies and his accomplices. After Nithard's resignation, Valladares also obtained the post of Inquisitor General. Mariana was evidently making a statement here and the appointment sent a clear message, not just to don Juan, but to the rest of the court as well.<sup>560</sup> This was an early indication of the realignments that soon resulted from the Nithard debacle. Less than a month later, she gave orders to raise an armed-guard to defend her authority. Her decision sent don Juan an unequivocal warning that she was preparing herself for battle if necessary. Leaving no doubt where she stood, Mariana appointed the Marquis of Aytona, one of don Juan's most outspoken enemies, as the commander-in-chief of her personal guard. Although in the short term the court was outraged over these changes, Mariana's resolute steps changed the course of the regency.

After the crisis of 1669, Mariana swiftly regained her position and to outsiders, it appeared that she had done without much resistance: "After the quarrel," reported a gazette, "the court calmed down and the government returned to normal."<sup>561</sup> Less than a year after Nithard's dismissal, Mariana had achieved complete control over the power

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<sup>559</sup> The first meeting of this Junta took place relatively quickly, on March 26, 1669. See Juan Sánchez Belén, "La junta de alivios de 1669 y las primeras reformas de la regencia," *Revista de la Facultad de Geografía e Historia* 4 (1989): 639-668, p. 644.

<sup>560</sup> Mariana also obtained a Cardinalate for Nithard in 1672. It was a hard-fought battle. AGS E. Italy 3133.

<sup>561</sup> "Vencido este lance se aquieto la corte, y el gobierno volvió a su ser." RAH mss. 9/3746.



structures of the court. Although she relied on the support of several figures, the Marquis of Aytona stands out.

### **The Queen's Trusted Counselor**

Although the Marquis of Aytona played a major role in the regency government, studies of the period have generally neglected him.<sup>562</sup> Contemporaries too, tended to ignore him at first. After Nithard's fall, however, no one in Madrid doubted that Aytona had emerged as the most powerful man at court. Although Aytona came close to occupying the position of *valido*, perhaps closer than anybody else during Mariana's regency, a more accurate description of Aytona's role is that of the queen's trusted counselor. Mariana's political partnership with Aytona sheds additional light on Mariana's style of ruling, the evolution of her regime, and her politics.

Aytona, an intelligent man and a consummate politician, rose through the ranks gradually, achieving his place in the court hierarchy by working with, and within, that system. During the first two years of the regency, he moved mostly behind the scenes, while engineering the reforms of the royal households as well as devising and executing Spain's military strategy.<sup>563</sup> During the royal household reforms, for instance, two other men occupied one after the other the important post of *mayordomo mayor* of the queen's household. Significantly enough, Mariana overlooked Aytona when the Duke of Montalto resigned in 1667 as *mayordomo mayor*, appointing the Duke of Alba as Montalto's replacement instead. Only after Alba's untimely death six months later did

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<sup>562</sup> Aytona's contributions are beginning to be noted, but his centrality in Mariana's regime has not been established until now. See for example, the important study of Aytona's military treatise recently transcribed and edited with a preliminary biographical study of this important political figure. Mesa Gallego, *Marqués de Aytona. Discurso militar*.

<sup>563</sup> See Chapter 2.

Mariana name Aytona *mayordomo mayor*. In the military realm, Aytona's intervention was also significant from the very beginning: he handled the levying of troops, acted as Mariana's link with the Council of War, and advised the queen on issues of fortification, defense, and distribution of arms and soldiers.<sup>564</sup> Yet, he also remained in the background in military matters until Mariana granted him the command of her regiment in 1669.

Aytona had a tangible impact on Mariana's foreign policy; he certainly had more influence than Nithard. Examples of Aytona's substantial collaboration with Mariana can be found among Aytona's personal papers, which include an extensive memorandum he presented to the queen in February 1666 that she personally signed and annotated.<sup>565</sup> These papers reveal the correlation between Aytona's ideas, Mariana's policies implemented while he was alive, and even those that she followed after his death.

It is clear that from 1665 to 1668, Aytona had gradually increased his role within Mariana's government, although Nithard continued to attract all the negative attention. Mariana, who recognized Aytona's abilities, inundated him with work, putting him in charge of multiple projects in the areas of engineering, education, commerce, and finance.<sup>566</sup> Aytona had a clear hand in the king's education. He made recommendations to Mariana regarding Carlos II's courtly training as well as hiring and paying for dance teachers and musicians.<sup>567</sup> His role increased as time went on. His research on previous royal tutors probably served as the basis on which Mariana decided to appoint Francisco

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<sup>564</sup> ADM Histórica, leg. 70.

<sup>565</sup> ADM Histórica, leg 70.

<sup>566</sup> ADM Histórica, legs. 68, 69, and 70.

<sup>567</sup> ADM Histórica, leg. 69.

Ramos del Manzano as the king's teacher.<sup>568</sup> Evidence suggests that Aytona took charge of the king's military training, too. He oversaw the building of a miniature fortress in the Casa del Campo, designed as a playground, but that had the concrete purpose of arousing a love of martial activities in Carlos.<sup>569</sup> He also conceived of the King's Regiment as a didactic tool and marshaled it in the palace for the seven-year old king to review.

Aytona's versatility allowed him to deal with the administrative and ceremonial aspects of the court, military and diplomatic strategies, social matters, economic reforms, and the king's education. His ability to adapt to the queen's style of rule; his willingness to acquiesce to Mariana's authority proved equally critical. Personality mattered in Mariana's court. Many men who had been well positioned failed to advance into Mariana's inner circle due to their inability to accommodate themselves to the queen's temperament. Aytona's feat is even more remarkable considering that he, too, possessed a formidable personality.<sup>570</sup> Aytona apparently relied on the counsel and intercession of his sister, Magdalena de Moncada, who enjoyed Mariana's confidence from the first moment the queen had arrived at court.<sup>571</sup> Aytona deftly avoided the fate of his brother-in-law, the Duke of Montalto, who in spite of his auspicious position, as *mayordomo mayor* of the queen's household, failed to consolidate his power. Like Montalto, Aytona stood on a solid institutional and patronage base: he was the *caballerizo mayor* of the queen's household and member of the Regency Council. He also possessed a solid

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<sup>568</sup> ADM Histórica, leg. 69. Ramos del Manzano was appointed on June 5, 1667; AGP Personal c. 867, exp. 33.

<sup>569</sup> ADM Histórica, leg. 68.

<sup>570</sup> Mesa Gallego, *Marqués de Aytona. Discurso militar*.

<sup>571</sup> Alistair Malcolm, "La práctica informal del poder. La política de la Corte y el acceso a la Familia Real durante la segunda mitad del reinado de Felipe IV" *Reales sitios* 147/1er trimestre (2001): 38-48.

network of relatives around the queen. If Aytona gained an important place in Mariana's regime, he did so by proving his abilities, while demonstrating deference to Mariana and those close to her, including the women in her household. More than anything, however, counted his unshakeable loyalty.

The winter of 1668-1669 became a test of loyalty for Aytona and everyone else for that matter. These difficult months put in motion a re-configuration of the court, one in which those committed to the queen's cause reaped substantial benefits, while those who did not, ended up marginalized. Aytona was deeply troubled by the events that led to Nithard's exile: "Had I not been so sick," he assured the queen, "I would have prevented [Nithard's exile] or I would have been killed in the process."<sup>572</sup> His later actions proved his dedication to the queen's cause. Most valuable was his cogent justification for the establishment of an armed force permanently housed at court. Mariana needed a strategist to help her circumvent the political, logistical, and financial obstacles that had prevented the establishment of a royal guard during the previous months. Aytona filled that role.

### **The Queen's "Regiment of the King's Guard"**

Discussions about the establishment of an armed royal guard began during August 1668 as the conflict between Mariana and don Juan over Nithard escalated.<sup>573</sup> Although certain traditions supported the creation of such a guard, the Councils of War, Castile, and Regency abandoned the scheme when it was first proposed. Aytona denounced his colleagues, protesting that "those who were supposed to defend Your Majesty" had instead acted "contrary to Your Majesty's interests" and even reproached the queen for

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<sup>572</sup> ADM Histórica, leg. 68. Aytona's health problems were well-known. Reports suggest that he was completely overworked and suffered from the consequences of obesity. Mesa Gallego, *Marqués de Aytona. Discurso militar*.

<sup>573</sup> I am following here Aytona's report to Mariana. ADM Histórica, leg. 68.

not acting: “If Your Majesty would have ignored the objections of the Village of Madrid in quartering the Toledan Cavalry, as I begged Your Majesty to do on various occasions,” he lamented, “the court would not have been on the verge of being seized by force and what happened could have been avoided.”<sup>574</sup> Mariana and Aytona began to discuss the project immediately after Nithard’s dismissal. By April 2, she had already ordered him to begin levying of troops and had appointed him Colonel.<sup>575</sup>

In their scheme to establish an armed force, Mariana and Aytona drew on older political traditions and more recent examples. The Spanish Habsburgs had inherited a number of royal guards from their Castilian and German ancestors and these were incorporated into the royal households.<sup>576</sup> Some guards had been formed during periods of political upheaval for the purpose of protecting the person of the king. Both King Ferdinand II of Aragon and King Carlos I (before becoming Emperor Charles V), for example, had done so.<sup>577</sup> By the time of Mariana’s regency, these guards had become

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<sup>574</sup> “23 de Agosto 1669. Señora. Por Agosto del Año pasado de 1668 voto el consejo de Guerra se formase reximiento de guardia por muchas raones y con uniformidad de votos tardose mucho en la resolucion porque anduvieron las consultas por E. que lo voto y por la junta que tambien lo voto, diciendo el Conde de Peñaranda que si estuviera echo el Reximiento en un escritorio quese pudiese sacar luego se conformara le ubiese pero que temia la dilacion de levantarse, y oy lo contradice con los demas sin acordarse de lo pasado, y algunos del consejo de Guerra lo contradicen, por lisonjear. Si ubiera Reximiento no sucediera el descredito contra la autoridad Real que se vio el mes de febrero en que si yo no estuviera tan enfermo, o me mataran o no sucediera, y los que debieran defender a V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d la oprimieron, pues no pidiendo D[on] Juan saliese el con[fe]sor sino asta el Escorial ellos lo echaron del todo finxiendo motin que no ubo, y disponiendo (algunos [note added on the margin]) antes pidiese la villa no se aloxase la cavalleriza en Madrid, con que se allo V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d indefensa, y la corte apique de ser saqueada por 200 caballos, que si estuviera aqui la cava(Ileriza) de Toledo yxetase como repetidas vezes suplique a V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d la yciese benir, no ubiera sucedido lo que sucedio y si estuviera formado el Reximiento tampoco sucediera.” ADM Histórica, leg. 68.

<sup>575</sup> ADM Histórica, leg. 68.

<sup>576</sup> Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio Alvariño, “Las guardias reales en la corte de los Austrias y la salvaguarda de la autoridad regia” in *La Monarquía de Felipe II: La casa del rey*, 2 vols. José Martínez Millán and Santiago Fernández Conti, eds. (Madrid: Fundación Mapfre, 2005), I: 430-452, p. 442.

<sup>577</sup> For example, King Ferdinand of Aragon ended up combining two guards, the “Monteros de Espinoza” with a new body of infantry and cavalry with the purpose of protecting his person, after the death of Isabel

mainly decorative and ceremonial. Nonetheless, despite their military impotence, they still provided a model and a political justification for her own guard, which she was careful to call “The Regiment of the King’s Guard.”<sup>578</sup>

More recent precedents also informed Aytona’s conception. In 1634, Philip IV had given orders to form a “*coronelia*” of 2500 to 3000 infantry also designated as the “King’s Guard.”<sup>579</sup> Unlike the guards of Ferdinand II of Aragon and Charles V, however, Philip IV’s guard had an overt military purpose and was supposed to become part of Spain’s standing army. It was closely associated with Olivares, who was appointed commander-in-chief.<sup>580</sup> Carlos II’s Guard, like its most recent predecessor, was also called a “*coronelia*.” Aytona used the previous ordinances to set the salary, rules, training, and organization of the 1669 Regiment.<sup>581</sup> Following on Olivares’s footsteps, Aytona also wanted the guard to become a military school to produce the best trained soldiers and officers. In a policy reminiscent of Olivares’s “Union of Arms” scheme,

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of Castile, when his position was weakened. When he became King Carlos I of Spain, Emperor Charles V also arrived in Castile with his own Burgundian royal guard. He faced opposition from his brother Ferdinand, who had grown up in Castile and had considerable support from the Castilians and Aragonese aristocracy. A few years into his reign, he faced rebellion. Thus, his entrance into Valladolid with a well armed guard had a concrete political message. See Álvarez-Ossorio, “Las guardias reales,” I:446.

<sup>578</sup> ADM Histórica, leg. 68. Aytona’s rationale had a solid theoretical justification and was based on the notion that kings should be instructed in the art of war with a permanent army housed in the capital. This idea was based on Juan de Mariana’s tract, *De Rege et Regis Institutione*, published in 1599. See Álvarez-Ossorio, “Las guardias reales,” I: 439.

<sup>579</sup> Álvarez-Ossorio, “Las guardias reales,” I:449.

<sup>580</sup> It was not a popular measure, but Philip IV went ahead with the idea in spite of objections presented by the Council of War. After Olivares’s fall, don Luis de Haro succeeded his uncle as commander. Álvarez-Ossorio, “Las guardias reales,” I:450.

<sup>581</sup> Mesa Gallego, *Marqués de Aytona. Discurso militar*, p. 74.

Aytona recruited soldiers from across the Peninsula, including the two Castiles, Galicia, Navarre, and Vizcaya.<sup>582</sup>

Like her husband, Mariana faced strong resistance to this idea. The Council of Castile and the City of Madrid strongly opposed the establishment of the Regiment. City officials expressed their “anguish” (*desconsuelo*) at the prospect of seeing “a *tercio* raised in Madrid.”<sup>583</sup> They believed that the formation of the Regiment trampled the city’s traditional liberties and had, in their view, no historical precedent.<sup>584</sup> A Regiment, city councillors protested, would create confusion, endanger the roads, burden the tribunals, interrupt commerce, threaten the population with crimes, and compromise the city’s ability to care for its own inhabitants. Many of these concerns proved well justified, even prophetic. In spite of these objections, Mariana went ahead with her initial plans. The Regiment, lavishly dressed in red uniforms and heavily armed, mounted guard at the doors of the palace for the first time on July 19, 1669.<sup>585</sup> Ten days later, the entire Guard assembled in the Madrid Alcázar for Carlos II’s review.<sup>586</sup> From then on, soldiers and captains of the Regiment became a visible presence in the city, a graphic reminder of the queen’s monopoly on legitimate violence.

Mariana’s army acquired the nickname “La Chamberga,” a term inspired by the uniform resembled those used by the French army under the command of General of the

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<sup>582</sup> Mesa Gallego, *Marqués de Aytona. Discurso militar*, p. 74.

<sup>583</sup> I have used the copy of the consultation of the Council of Castile found in the Archivo Ducal de Medinaceli, which contain Aytona’s point by point rebuttal written for Mariana. ADM Histórica, leg. 68.

<sup>584</sup> ADM Histórica, leg. 68.

<sup>585</sup> RAH mss. 9-3746.

<sup>586</sup> Mesa Gallego, *Marqués de Aytona. Discurso militar*, p. 75.

Portuguese Army, the Duke of Schomberg.<sup>587</sup> Quartered in the San Francisco neighborhood, the unit was divided into eight captaincies, whose captains in turn reported to the Captain General and the Colonel. Like Philip IV's guard, Mariana's was composed of at least 2000 soldiers.<sup>588</sup> The group was housed, fed, clothed, and paid *on time*, thus becoming an important source of work for soldiers, officers, but also for non-military personnel, including chaplains, instructors of Latin, bureaucrats, and even a teacher of mathematics.<sup>589</sup> Captains were usually drawn from the nobility, providing an important source of employment nobles as well as another source of royal patronage.<sup>590</sup> Although as city officials had predicted, crime and discipline problems abounded, Mariana brought crime under control within two years.<sup>591</sup> She did so by imposing stiff penalties to perpetrators, which included banishment to the galleys, prison, and even execution. By 1671, offenses associated with the Regiment had largely disappeared;<sup>592</sup> the guard had become a fixture in Madrid and a preferred form of employment.<sup>593</sup>

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<sup>587</sup> Rosa Isabel Sánchez Gómez, "Formación, desarrollo y actividades delictivas de 'la Chamberga' en Madrid durante la minoría de Carlos II" *Torre de los Lujanes* 17 (1991): 80-96, p. 82.

<sup>588</sup> A *tercio*, the elite force of Spanish military, could have between 1,000 to 3000 men. A *squadrón* was a large body of soldiers part of a *tercio*. Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567-1659*, second ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2004), pp. 10-11. A *coronella*, was likewise composed of 12 to 16 captaincies of an average of 172 men, which would put the number between 2064 to 2752. According to Mesa Gallego, the Regiment of 1669 had about 2,000 men; Mesa Gallego, *Marqués de Aytona. Discurso militar*, p. 75.

<sup>589</sup> Mathematical training was considered an essential aspect of military training and apparently in short supply in Spain. The mathematics teacher had been brought from the Low Countries by the Marquis of Caracena, the commander in chief of the Spanish army that fought in Portugal. The man asked for permission to return to his native lands, but Mariana denied him the request. ADM Histórica, leg. 68.

<sup>590</sup> Numerous requests for employment can be found among Aytona's papers too.

<sup>591</sup> Sánchez Gómez, "Actividades Delictivas de 'la Chamberga'," p. 83.

<sup>592</sup> Sánchez Gómez, "Actividades Delictivas de 'la Chamberga'," p. 94.

<sup>593</sup> Mesa Gallego, *Marqués de Aytona. Discurso militar*, p. 75.



The Regiment may have been called the “King’s Guard” but its association with Mariana and the fact that one of its main purposes was to keep don Juan at bay were common knowledge.<sup>594</sup> Don Juan protested to the queen personally once the Regiment had been established and mounted a campaign against its existence; all to no avail.<sup>595</sup> Mariana’s decision, controversial as it was, proved a stroke of political genius. Members of the aristocracy were soon competing for commissions as officers, thus giving the queen opportunities to dispense royal patronage. Aytona became the living proof of how advantageous the queen’s favor could be. If the events of the previous year had taught any lesson, it was that defying royal authority was perilous and defending it profitable.

### **The Reconfiguration of Mariana’s Regime**

By the second half of 1669, a recognizable shift in Mariana’s regime had occurred. Aytona monopolized the most important offices of the court, the government, and the military: he was the *mayordomo mayor* of the queen’s household, member of the Regency council, and Colonel of the King’s Guard. To members of the court, it appeared that a new *valido* had emerged. Aytona’s position provoked a great deal of resentment and the court was soon flooded with pasquinades against him.<sup>596</sup> Even Aytona, who was not easily intimidated, felt compelled to defend himself and requested Mariana’s open support to do so.<sup>597</sup> Aytona’s position at the pinnacle of power was quite controversial

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<sup>594</sup> It is not surprising that the first measure don Juan took when he succeeded in taking over the government was to dismiss the regiment.

<sup>595</sup> Mesa Gallego, *Marqués de Aytona. Discurso militar*, p. 74.

<sup>596</sup> Mesa Gallego, *Marqués de Aytona. Discurso militar*, p. 76.

<sup>597</sup> “Pero a la verdad el odio naze de que allandome Mayordomo Mayor, nombrame V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d Coronel, les parece es darme mucha mano en el gobierno, y que teniendola no les estara bien a los malos y sus malas consciencias les haze temer, y su ambicion les haze, desear salga yo, para apoderarse ellos del gobierno, y obligar a V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d no salga en nada de su parezer, y aunque sera bueno, bien sabe

but short-lived. Aytona's health problems were serious and possibly the enormous burden of work and responsibility contributed to his early demise. He passed away on March 17, 1670. He was fifty-five years old.

Aytona's death robbed Mariana of a very important political partner. She did not, however, replace him with a single figure, but instead distributed his offices among several people, taking this opportunity to display royal magnanimity, while maintaining her principle of ruling without a minister-favorite. Mariana rewarded first and foremost those who had shown loyalty over the past five years. The noble who had replaced don Juan as Governor of the Low Countries in 1668, don Iñigo Melchor de Velazco, Duke of Frías and Constable of Castile (1635-1696), assumed Aytona's seat in the Regency Council. He also received the presidencies of the Councils of Military Orders and Flanders. Like Aytona, he became an important collaborator of Mariana.<sup>598</sup> The Duke of Pastrana and Infantado succeeded Aytona as *mayordomo mayor* of the queen's household, a post that he exercised until his death in 1675.<sup>599</sup> Perhaps the most intriguing decision was the appointment of Cardinal Aragon as Colonel of the "King's Guard."<sup>600</sup> It is not clear why Mariana chose a man of the Church instead of someone with military experience. Aragon's position, in fact, was mainly honorific and administrative, for the

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V[uestra] M[a]g[esta]d no lo suele ser siempre y por eso sienten el que no se conforme con los mas y la persuaden a que no se cumple con el Testamento no haziendo lo que quieren." ADM Histórica, leg. 68.

<sup>598</sup> See Chapter 5.

<sup>599</sup> See the Nieto Núñez, *The Diary of Pötting*, entry of 17 January 1665, p. I: 171. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. I: 241.

<sup>600</sup> Estenaga y Echevarría, *El Cardenal de Aragón*. The executive command of the *coronelía* remained intact until it was reduced to the condition of an ordinary *tercio* in 1677.

Regiment remained under the effective command of the Count of Aguilar.<sup>601</sup> Perhaps Mariana thus intended to recognize his help in escorting Nithard safely out of the peninsula.

Thus, after the spectacular, yet short-lived, leadership of Aytona, Mariana worked with multiple figures and government councils much as she had done during the first few years of her regency. No one achieved the type of political partnership that Mariana had been willing to forge with Aytona. Mariana decisively consolidated her position and gained complete control of the power structures of the court. By 1669, the patronage networks that bound her system together extended across the ruling classes (nobles, *letrados*, and ecclesiastic elites), institutions (court and councils), and personal connections (often through the women in her household). Having solidified her power, Mariana turned her full attention to the monarchy's external problems.

### **Second Phase of Mariana's Foreign Policy, 1669-1676**

Mariana concluded the first phase of her foreign policy in 1668 with a number of key diplomatic alliances that allowed her to withstand Louis XIV's aggression, at least temporarily. Louis XIV's efforts at dismantling the Triple Alliance began immediately after he signed the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle with Spain.<sup>602</sup> First on his agenda was to "punish" the Dutch, who in his view had betrayed him. He began with an aggressive policy of isolation, signing neutrality agreements with England, Sweden, and Princes of the North, while beginning preparations to invade the United Provinces. Playing on the commercial rivalry between the English and the Dutch, he negotiated with Charles II to

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<sup>601</sup> Mesa Gallego, *Marqués de Aytona. Discurso militar*, p. 75.

<sup>602</sup> Sonino, *Origins of the Dutch War*.

mount a joint attack on the United Provinces.<sup>603</sup> This scheme which finally materialized in 1672, inaugurated the conflict known as the Anglo-Dutch War (1672-1674) and the Franco-Dutch, or simply the Dutch War (1672-1678). Mariana, who had no illusions about Louis XIV's objectives, realized that she needed to confront the situation head-on in order to avoid losing more territories in the contested Low Countries to the French king.

To this purpose, Mariana signed treaties with England, Sweden, and the United Provinces in 1669 and 1670.<sup>604</sup> In spite of these agreements, Mariana was unable to preserve the Triple Alliance of 1668. Nonetheless, her diplomatic efforts succeeded in restraining Louis XIV's aggressive designs against Spain. The Anglo-Spanish treaty ratified in March 1670, for example, confirmed all the commercial advantages Spain have given to England in 1666 and 1667 and England agreed to defend Spain in the case of a French attack.<sup>605</sup> A few months later, Spain and England ceased hostilities in the New World, giving the English even more incentive to maintain good relations with Spain.<sup>606</sup> As a result, Charles II, who had no intention of losing all the advantages he had gained from Spain, demanded restraint from France during the planning stages of their combined

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<sup>603</sup> The Treaty of Dover was signed June 1, 1670. Sonino, *Origins of the Dutch War*, p. 113; Manuel Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés (1648-1678)* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones, 2000), p. 187.

<sup>604</sup> AHN E. leg. 2804, exps. 6, 7, 8.

<sup>605</sup> "Copia autentica en Frances y en Latin de la ratificacion hecha por parte del Rey de Inglaterra del acto de las fuerzas con que provisionalmente han de asistir los de la triple alianza su f[ec]ha en Westminster a 7 de marzo de 1670." AHN E. leg. 2804, exp. Exp. 9.

<sup>606</sup> AHN E. leg. 2804, exp. 16.

attack on the United Provinces.<sup>607</sup> Louis XIV's alliance with England, indeed, was the main reason why he avoided Spanish territories at the beginning of hostilities.<sup>608</sup>

Besides trying to maintain and extend the commercial and military alliance with England, Mariana also sought to get the United Provinces on Spain's side as well. Mariana had been able to induce the Dutch to enter the Triple Alliance with England and Sweden to stop France's conquest of the Spanish Low Countries. But they had resisted a direct military alliance with Spain.<sup>609</sup> She took advantage of the threat France posed to the United Provinces to conclude a strong coalition with the Dutch, a strategy Aytona had devised and discussed with Mariana during the early part of the regency.<sup>610</sup> As Louis XIV's invasion became more a matter of time than a distant possibility, the door opened for negotiations.<sup>611</sup>

Obstacles emerged, however, in Madrid and The Hague alike.<sup>612</sup> Louis XIV's ambassador, the Marquis de Villars, had been given instructions to impede at whatever cost an alliance between Spain and the United Provinces and, as had happened during

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<sup>607</sup> The privileges gained by England in the treaties with Spain allowed them to compete with the United Provinces more effectively. See Chapter 3.

<sup>608</sup> Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, pp. 188, 191.

<sup>609</sup> The United Provinces decided to become part of the Triple Alliance because France's potential conquest of the Spanish Low Countries posed a threat to their own security. Aytona had made a good argument to Mariana on the necessity to form a more lasting and direct alliance with the Dutch. She instructed her diplomats to do so, something that is abundantly clear in the diplomatic correspondence between 1667 and 1668, discussed in detail in Chapter 3. AHN E. leg. 2797, exps. 47-52, and 2804.

<sup>610</sup> ADM Histórica, leg. 70.

<sup>611</sup> Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, p. 189-192.

<sup>612</sup> The United Provinces had been following "a policy of peace" devised by the De Witt brothers, and were thus reluctant to enter a military conflict. See Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, p. 192; Wout Troost, *William III, the Stadholder-King*. J. C. Grayson, trans. (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005). p. 71.

1667, efforts to gain supporters for a pro-French policy in Madrid partially succeeded.<sup>613</sup> The Council of State, indeed, was divided on the issue of whether or not to commit Spain to defending the United Provinces: pockets of opposition came from those who wanted to preserve the peace with France at all costs.<sup>614</sup> These views were opposed to those who viewed an alliance with the Dutch as the only way to preserve Spanish interests by facing its true enemy: France.<sup>615</sup> The Spanish ambassador in The Hague, Manuel de Lira, and the governor of the Low Countries, the Count of Monterrey, urged Mariana and the Council of State to take advantage of the weakened position of the Dutch to negotiate a treaty on Madrid's terms.<sup>616</sup>

The events suggest that Mariana was able to circumvent opposition quite effectively: by January 1672, Spain had already signed an initial agreement of reciprocal protection with the United Provinces.<sup>617</sup> During late April, 1672, England and France declared war on the United Provinces, launching simultaneous attacks by sea and land.<sup>618</sup> Although Louis XIV warned Mariana that support that Spain gave the Dutch would be considered a declaration of war, she responded decisively.<sup>619</sup> The Count of Monterrey,

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<sup>613</sup> Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, p. 190.

<sup>614</sup> The matter was discussed in the Council of State late December 1671. Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, p. 191.

<sup>615</sup> This was precisely Mariana's position, which she had developed during the first years of her regency with the Marquis of Aytona acting as her counselor. ADM Histórica leg. 70.

<sup>616</sup> Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, p. 190-191. At first, the negotiations did not go too far; an initial treaty between Spain and the Dutch allowed reciprocal assistance in case of a French attack.

<sup>617</sup> "Minuta de ratificación del Acto de Asistencias y socorros recíprocos ajustado con la Holanda, 20 de enero de 1672 en Madrid." AHN E. leg. 2804, exp. 21.

<sup>618</sup> Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, p. 191-192.

<sup>619</sup> Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, p. 192; Troost, *William III*, p. 71.

stationed in the area as the Governor of the Low Countries, came to the defense of the United Provinces with a substantial force, mounted a spirited defense on behalf of the Dutch, and thus prevented a major victory of French armies.<sup>620</sup>

The invasion coincided with a major overhaul of the regime of the De Witt's brothers, who were brutally assassinated in August.<sup>621</sup> Their elimination and the rise of William of Orange as Stadholder opened the door for renewal of negotiations between Spain and the United Provinces. Even before a major league was confirmed, military cooperation began to bear fruit. In March of 1673, for instance, a combined fleet of Dutch and Spanish ships defeated a French squadron in the Strait of Gibraltar. Thanks to this victory, Spain secured the commercial routes to the West and East Indies via the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.<sup>622</sup> The events and the treaties, when viewed in light of her previous strategies, strongly suggest that Mariana's policies were in line with her general principles in terms of foreign policy, but also that she had been able to implement them thanks to her strong hold on the government councils in Madrid.

At about the same time, it is clear that Mariana had not abandoned her efforts to forge an alliance with the Empire. Mariana had been repeatedly disappointed with Leopold I's policies. In spite of having married the heiress to the Spanish throne, the Emperor continued to listen to Louis XIV's blandishments. The Partition Treaty of 1668, whereby Louis XIV and Leopold I agreed to divide the Spanish monarchy if Carlos II died without a successor, had deeply embarrassed Mariana and Margarita as well, who

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<sup>620</sup> Monterrey was also able to mobilize German princes, who were furious to see Louis XIV's large armies go through their territories, maneuvers that had been motivated by his avoidance of Spanish lands during his military march. Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, p. 192.

<sup>621</sup> Troost, *William III*, p. 71-93; Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, p. 177-180.

<sup>622</sup> Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, p. 192.

appeared to lack all influence on her husband. Mariana, however, had not given up on her goal of forming a strong alliance with her brother and had been generous in sending subsidies to the Emperor during the late 1660s and early 1670s. There were some results: Leopold, for instance, negotiated a series of alliances with princes of the Empire to create a united front against the French.<sup>623</sup> These successes were few and transient, however, and relations between the Habsburgs remained lukewarm. In 1671, unknown to Mariana, Leopold again betrayed Spanish interests: he agreed to remain neutral in the case of Louis XIV's invasion of Holland. Mariana's discovery of the agreement between France and the Empire in early 1673 threatened a complete breach between the siblings.<sup>624</sup>

A few months after this scandal, however, a family tragedy shifted policy: Margarita of Austria, Holy Roman Empress and Infante of Spain, died on March 12, 1673, from the complications of childbirth. The news reached the Imperial ambassador in Madrid a few weeks later, sending him into a state of despair.<sup>625</sup> Despite this inauspicious event, some positive changes suddenly appeared possible. Leopold had lost Margarita, who had given him a strong claim on the Spanish Crown if Carlos II died without a

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<sup>623</sup> A league with the Elector of Brandenburg was confirmed on June 23, 1672, for example. Mariana quickly negotiated Carlos II's inclusion in that agreement. "Liga entre el Emperador y el Elector de Brandemburg 23 de Junio 1672." AHN E. leg. 2804, Exp. 22. Plenipotentiary rights given to the Marquis de los Balbasses to negotiate a league with Emperor Leopold I dated October 26, 1672. AHN E. leg. 2804, exp. 23.

<sup>624</sup> W. R. Villa Urrutia, *Relaciones entre España y Austria*, pp. 120-122. She also expressed deep dissatisfaction with her brother to the Count of Pötting, who felt was put in an untenable position. Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, p. II: 329.

<sup>625</sup> Pötting explains in detail all his whereabouts after receiving such shocking news. He went to the palace immediately to confer with Mariana's *camarera mayor*. Pötting and Baldueza decided to wait until the following day in the morning to speak with Mariana; the task would be carried out by Mariana's confessor. Pötting and everyone else would be at hand afterwards. Yet, Mariana's confessor, Juan Martínez, was "so old" and was "so disturbed himself" with the news, that he was unable to handle the situation appropriately, thus the ungrateful task fell on Mariana's *camarera mayor*. Mariana, although reportedly devastated, took the news with "perfect resignation." Carlos II, who was also told the sad news shortly after, consoled his mother "like an Angel." Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, p. II: 338-339.



successor. As a result, the Emperor needed to rebuild good relations with his sister if he wanted to retain support for his claims to the Spanish inheritance. Margarita's death also prompted a change of diplomatic corps at both courts. The Marquis of Balbasses and Pedro Ronquillo, the new Spanish ambassadors in Vienna, turned out to be very capable men and succeeded in building consensus between the siblings. Their presence was a welcome change from the controversial diplomats who had preceded them.<sup>626</sup> The new figures played a significant role in bringing the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs together. The barely four-year old daughter of Leopold I and Margarita, Maria Antonia of Austria (1669-1692), now became a crucial figure for the dynasty. She was the universal and joint heiress to the Habsburg's hereditary lands (until 1678) and the Spanish Crown (until her death in 1692).<sup>627</sup> Although Leopold I's change of policy probably resulted from a combination of factors, the great irony is his staunch pro-Spanish policy developed after Margarita of Austria died.

Although the Emperor had been pressed by his own problems with the Turks which had prevented him from aiding his Spanish relatives against France, by 1673, it was impossible to ignore the threat that Louis XIV posed to the Habsburgs any longer. Louis XIV was creating a strong diplomatic-military coalition that would allow him to pursue his expansionist policies at will. Ambassador Pötting noted in his diary the shock

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<sup>626</sup> Villa-Urrutia, *Relaciones entre España y Austria*; Laura Oliván Santaliestra, "Giovane d'anni ma vecchia di giudizio": La emperatriz Margarita en la corte de Viena," in *La dinastía de los Austria: Las relaciones entre la Monarquía Católica y el Imperio*, 3 vols., José Martínez Millán and Rubén González Cuervo, eds. (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2011), II: 837-908; Bianca M. Lindorfer, "Las redes familiares de la aristocracia austriaca y los procesos de transferencia cultural entre Madrid y Viena, 1550-1700," in *Las redes del Imperio: Élités sociales en la articulación de la Monarquía Hispánica, 1492-1714*, Bartolomé Yun Casalilla, ed. (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2009), 261-288.

<sup>627</sup> See Chapter 6 for an in-depth discussion of Maria Antonia of Austria's (1669-1692) juridical rights to the successions to both sides.

Mariana and Leopold experienced when they found out that the Elector of Brandenburg had switched sides and allied himself with Louis XIV.<sup>628</sup> They were equally alarmed at the reports that French troops were bivouacking close to Brussels during the summer of 1673. Even more disturbing were rumors that the United Provinces had opened peace talks with France. If the Dutch signed a peace with France, Spanish territories in the Low Countries would be immediately endangered, thus jeopardizing the position of the Empire as well. It became increasingly obvious to Mariana and Leopold that the only way to preserve Habsburg interests was to form a major alliance against France. During 1673, Spanish, Dutch, and Imperial agents intensified efforts to come to an agreement. A series of offensive and defensive leagues soon followed. Mariana and the Emperor signed individual treaties with the United Provinces in The Hague in July 1673. They were soon joined by the Duke of Lorraine, who had just been dispossessed of his territories by Louis XIV.<sup>629</sup> A Confederation between the Empire, Spain, the United Provinces, and the Duke of Lorraine was confirmed on August 25, 1673.<sup>630</sup> This Quadruple Alliance allowed Mariana and Spain to limit Louis XIV's advances.<sup>631</sup> Mariana successfully mediated a peace treaty between England and the United Provinces that ended of the Anglo-Dutch

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<sup>628</sup> By mid-April, it was obvious that Brandenburg had abandoned the Habsburg cause. Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, p. II:343.

<sup>629</sup> “Copia autentica del tratado de Alianza ajustado entre el Emperador y el Duque de Lorena y los E. s generales en la Haya, 1 de Julio 1673.” “Minuta de su ratificacion por el rey nuestro senor en Madrid a 1 de Agosto 1673 y copia del articulo separado secreto concerniente a los 15 [mil] talleres ajustados entre los S[eño]res Heusquerque y Brunink en Viena a 1 de Agosto 1673.” AHN E. leg 2804 exp. 24.

<sup>630</sup> “Copia del proyecto de nueva confederacion entre S[u] M[agestad] Ces[area] y los E. s generales y dentro copia de los articulos secretos.” AHN E. leg. 2804, exp. 25; Herrera Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, p. 195.

<sup>631</sup> AHN E. leg. 2804, exp. 25.

War in 1674.<sup>632</sup> These two victories delivered another blow to Louis XIV, who found himself increasingly isolated in light of the recent shifts in alliances. Mariana did not stop there, however, and proceeded to cement the alliance with the Empire with a controversial move that could, potentially, re-establish the Habsburg Empire of Charles V.

By 1674, Mariana and Leopold had pulled their military resources together in the war against France. Good relations between the Habsburgs benefitted tremendously from an infusion of new diplomats that had been appointed to their respective courts. Besides the changes in the Viennese court, Margarita's death brought the embassy of the Count of Pötting to an end. Pötting had not necessarily been a divisive presence in Madrid, but neither had he been a consensus builder. His inability to get along with Nithard and his support of people who had been on Mariana's wrong side, did not help bridge the distance between Mariana and her brother. His replacement, however, would prove himself to be a brilliant diplomat. Ferdinand Bonaventure I, Count of Harrach, arrived in Madrid in late October 1673.<sup>633</sup> His wife, Johanna Theresia Lamberg (1639-1716), Countess of Harrach, played a crucial role as well. She knew the queen well, having served in her household from 1653 to 1660. Under the Harrachs, relations between Spain and the Empire flourished.

Less than a year after his embassy began, Harrach initiated marriage negotiations between the two branches of the monarchy, proposing the Archduchess Maria Antonia of Austria, then close to her sixth birthday, as Carlos II's bride. On the one hand, the

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<sup>632</sup> Mariana agreed for Spain to act as mediator in the secret clauses of the alliance negotiated with the Dutch and a separate treaty with England. AHN E. leg. 2804; Herrera Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés*, p. 196.

<sup>633</sup> Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, p. II: 388.

marriage was well-timed; the king had just celebrated his thirteenth birthday and was entering the last year of his minority.<sup>634</sup> A marriage would send a clear message to Louis XIV and the rest of Europe about the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs' joint commitment to the war. On the other hand, the Austro-Spanish marriage provoked controversy from the very beginning. While the politico-diplomatic implications were not unimportant, issues of the succession were more crucial. Although the Spanish ruling elite evidently recognized Maria Antonia's rights as the universal heiress to the Spanish Monarchy, they were unwilling to see Carlos II marry her. The reasons why were extensively debated in the Council of State.

As the eldest and only child of Leopold I and Margarita, Maria Antonia would have become the only case of a queen consort with succession rights to the throne immediately after her husband.<sup>635</sup> The Duke of Osuna summarized the situation eloquently, arguing that with Maria Antonia Carlos would gain "a wife, a daughter, and a sister." Although it is clear that Spanish Ministers were eager to have Maria Antonia reside in Madrid as a potential successor, they did not unanimously welcome the marriage, and in fact, many rejected it. The reasons why some opposed it and others supported it, however, are worth noting. Surely, Carlos's marriage to Maria Antonia favored war efforts against France. The Admiral of Castile, for instance, argued that on it "depended all the interests of this monarchy, and especially the rise or the ruin of

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<sup>634</sup> The marriage was proposed on 25 November 1674. The discussions began on 30 December 1674. A copy of the marriage proposal can be found in AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>635</sup> This topic was not only fully and extensively discussed by the State Council, See for example the opinions of Duke of Osuna, the Admiral of Castile, the Duke of Albuquerque, and the Constable of Castile during the State Council meetings of 1674 and 1676. Maria Antonia's right to the succession had been clearly established in the capitulations of the marriage as well. AHN E. 2799.

France.”<sup>636</sup> Yet, the issue of ensuring the succession for the next generation raised considerable debates. Maria Antonia’s age became an insurmountable obstacle because it meant that Carlos would have to postpone the consummation of his marriage for several years longer than necessary. This topic, in fact, provoked such a heated debate about the wisdom of confirming the marriage with the archduchess that the ministers engaged in an elaborate discussion about the fertility cycle of women. They concluded that although it was possible for a girl to begin childbearing at the age of thirteen or fourteen, as was the case with “Italian women,” the majority of the ministers argued that Maria Antonia would not be able to begin childbearing until she was fifteen or sixteen years old, as was the case, they noted, with most “Spanish women.”<sup>637</sup> Considering the age of the bride, if Carlos married Maria Antonia, the monarchy would have had to wait for the birth of a successor a minimum of six to seven years, perhaps as long as eight to nine years. In spite of her willingness to allow the Council of State to debate the matter, Mariana’s position was uncompromising. She was strongly in favor of Carlos II’s marriage to Maria Antonia, pushing her son and the monarchy to commit to a matrimonial alliance that was neither desirable nor practical.

The political solution the majority of the council embraced suggests the importance of Maria Antonia’s inheritance rights and the extent to which insecurity about the succession shaped internal politics and international events. Several ministers suggested that the Emperor should be persuaded to send his daughter to Madrid “to be

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<sup>636</sup> AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>637</sup> See opinion of the Duke of Osuna, confirmed by the others. AHN E. leg. 2799.

reared under the protection of the Queen, Our Lady.”<sup>638</sup> The ministers, however, were equally appalled at the prospect of postponing Carlos’s marriage to a fully mature bride longer than necessary. They urged Mariana to keep the marriage plans secret in order to allow for an alternative alliance if necessary.<sup>639</sup> The issue of Carlos II’s marriage became extremely controversial and took five years to resolve: the court would see two prospective brides, a major war flare up, the queen mother exiled, don Juan at the helm of government, and a major peace treaty with France before their sovereign would marry.

In late 1674, the question of Carlos II’s marriage and whether or not his engagement with a princess that was barely six years old was acceptable highlights what was on everyone’s mind: Carlos was growing up and approaching the age of legal emancipation. He was expected to begin ruling the monarchy if not completely on his own, at least with a measure of freedom from his mother. Carlos, indeed, began to show signs of independence and the court was bubbling with expectations as a change of regime appeared in the foreseeable future. To manage this difficult transition, it was no longer enough for Mariana to keep doing what she had been doing so far. Mariana had to begin preparing for the transition and the end of her regency according to testamentary mandate. Mariana strategies as Carlos II’s majority approached and the end of her regency neared sought to protect her political position.

### **Bread and Circuses**

From 1674 on, the court went through a visible transformation with the preparations for Carlos II’s coming of age. All kind of entertainments for the king began,

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<sup>638</sup> AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>639</sup> Ministers also debated the precedence of a father’s love to that of a grandmother, arguing that perhaps the Emperor could be persuaded to send his daughter to Mariana, since she was “twice mother.” AHN E. leg. 2799.

including masques, dances, plays, games, and hunting expeditions. Underneath the newfound brilliance of court life, however, an undercurrent of uneasiness prevailed. Transitions from royal minorities to royal emancipations were dangerous periods for queen regents, who were required to redefine their position in court politics to make room for the young king. The French monarchy, for example, held majority *lits* at the end of royal minorities that in many cases, affirmed the right of the queen mothers to continue to participate in the Council of State meetings.<sup>640</sup> However, the position of the queen mother depended thereafter on her son and once the minority legally ended anything could happen, including violence. In many, if not most, cases of royal minorities, mothers and sons were involved in a tug of war over their role in the monarchy, as these powerful women continued to exert influence on sons barely out of their childhoods. A good case in point, although perhaps extreme, was the transition Louis XIII made from his minority to his personal rule. Marie de Medicis witnessed the assassination of her favorite, Concino Concini and went through her own exile shortly after her son's coming of age.<sup>641</sup>

The Spanish monarchy had no rituals comparable to the *lits*, but Mariana nonetheless was no without protection. She enjoyed influence on the king based on her personal relationship with Carlos and cultural and dynastic traditions that viewed mothers as powerful figures. She claimed a considerable amount of prestige based on her own diplomatic accomplishments and her dynastic capital as wife of one and the mother of another king. She commanded a solid network of patronage, which she had painstakingly

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<sup>640</sup> See for example, Harriet Lightman, *Sons and Mothers: Queens and Minor Kings in French Constitutional Law* (Bryn Mawr College, 1981); and more recently, Crawford, *Gender and Regency in Early Modern France*.

<sup>641</sup> This transition culminated with the assassination of Concino Concini and Marie d'Medicis's own exile. Although it took three years from the moment of Louis XIII's coming of age on his thirteenth birthday, this situation (although perhaps extreme) illustrates the difficulties of reconfiguring the court after a royal minority. See Moote, *Louis XIII*, pp. 86-96.

built during a decade of rule. Finally, she possessed legal authority to shape the regime that was to follow hers and a solid claim to exercise influence thereafter.<sup>642</sup>

Mariana, however, also faced daunting prospects as her regency came to an end. Carlos II was showing signs of independence and thus she needed to keep a close tab on those who had access to him. She had to deal with this issue precisely at the time when she could no longer postpone establishing Carlos II's own royal household, an event that she knew would open a Pandora's box of political competition between herself and those who would enjoy direct access to the king. Mariana also had to vacate the central political position that she successfully claimed and exercised during the previous ten years and find avenues to exercise influence obliquely once her son reached his majority. Under the circumstances, she needed to develop strategies to keep the king, the ruling elite, and the population occupied, entertained, content, and loyal to her interests. It is no coincidence that Madrid witnessed a whirlwind of elaborate entertainments, a major building program that began in the palace and soon extended into public spaces, and extravagant journeys that created yet more spectacles. It appears that Mariana had adopted a policy reminiscent of bread and circuses to achieve her political goals. It is precisely within these cultural, political, and institutional contexts that her patronage of Fernando Valenzuela developed.

The formation of the king's royal household was the main institutional change scheduled before Carlos II's majority. Without a household, the king lacked a political identity separate from that of his mother. Thus, Carlos II needed to have a fully functioning household established before his coming of age. The significance of this event cannot be underestimated. Even during periods of non-minority rule, the formation of a new household usually resulted in a reshuffling the political centers of power,

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<sup>642</sup> *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clauses 35 and 36.



especially if that household served an heir.<sup>643</sup> In the case of royal princesses or *infantas*, the formation of households possessed an additional international political dimension. When a marriage alliance was made, for example, the household that the queen or empress took to her adopted kingdom was a matter of high diplomacy. Usually the number of members traveling and their precedence in the court ceremonial of the host nation formed the subject of intense prenuptial negotiations. In Carlos's case, the stakes were much greater as the household in question belonged to a proprietary king.

Philip IV's testament explicitly stated that Mariana had the power to decide the composition of Carlos II's household and the timing of its establishment.<sup>644</sup> By doing so, he confirmed Mariana's central role in her son's reign both during his minority and afterwards. Philip IV had also tried to protect Mariana's position after the regency by naming her "curator," an office that implied a form of guardianship, albeit not as binding as a tutorship, to last until Carlos II's twenty-fifth birthday.<sup>645</sup> Mariana's prerogative over the king's royal household, however, was a double-edged sword. Royal appointments would certainly increase loyalty to her, but they could equally foment resentment.<sup>646</sup> Mariana's most immediate and serious problem, however, was the concomitant loss of control over the king's whereabouts. She recognized the potential consequences of

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<sup>643</sup> As happened during the reigns of Philip II, Philip III and Philip IV. See for instance, Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism*, and Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares*.

<sup>644</sup> "Regarding the servants of my successor, the Queen may provide for his household those that she considered appropriate, but in approaching the age in which he was to be given the household, if I had not done so myself. In the meantime, he can be served from the household of his mother...[En quanto a los criados de mi Sucesor, la Reyna podrá proveer para su Casa los que le pareciere, pero, en llegando a edad que se le aya de poner la suya, si Yo no lo huviere hecho, entre tanto podrá servirse de la de su madre...]" *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 36, pp. 52-53.

<sup>645</sup> *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 35. The curatorship is discussed in Chapter 5.

<sup>646</sup> Mariana announced the appointments on November 26, 1674. AGP Reinados, caja 92, exp. 2. CODOIN vol. 67, p. 7.

establishing Carlos II's royal household and deliberately postponed it to the last possible moment.<sup>647</sup> Predictably, once Carlos II moved into his own chambers in April 14, 1675, the court began to swarm with intrigues.<sup>648</sup>

The establishment of the king's independent royal household infused the court with excitement. Mariana, who was almost 40 in 1674, knew perfectly well that royal display confirmed the central position of a ruler at court and ensured the prestige of the monarchy in foreign circles. She had been the center of court entertainments when she arrived in Madrid in 1649 and had been deeply embedded in court culture her entire life.<sup>649</sup> Her position as regent of a minor king and as a widow, however, required that Mariana project an image of austerity. Mariana declared at the beginning of her regency that theater would be suspended until her son was able to enjoy entertainments. Even though the decree was never fully implemented, fewer plays were staged.<sup>650</sup> Theater productions in Madrid resumed by mid-regency and, by 1670, a tangible change could be felt. Spectacular theater productions on the royal premises took a little longer to resurface, but they increased after 1673. By 1674 they multiplied exponentially and past splendors returned.<sup>651</sup> All kinds of spectacles began to accompany the royal vacations or

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<sup>647</sup> Pötting indeed made a cryptic comment to that effect after a conversation with the Marquise of Baldueza on May 9, 1673. Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, p. II: 349.

<sup>648</sup> AGP Reinados, caja 92, exp. 3.

<sup>649</sup> Lavish entertainments were mounted in her honor there as soon as she became queen. The court also recovered a momentary loss of luster caused by the death of Isabel of Bourbon, followed by that of Prince Balthasar Carlos. Jonathan Brown and John H. Elliott, *A Palace for a King: The Buen Retiro and the Court of Philip IV*, Revised and Expanded Edition, (New Haven and London: Yale University, 2003), p. 229.

<sup>650</sup> Jodi Campbell, *Monarchy, Political Culture, and Drama in Seventeenth-Century Madrid: Theater of Negotiation* (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), p. 60; Carmen Sanz Ayán, *Pedagogía de reyes: el teatro palaciego en el reinado de Carlos II* (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2006), p. 24. Mariana may have been trying to present an image of decorum appropriate to her widowhood.

<sup>651</sup> Campbell, *Drama in Seventeenth-Century Madrid*, p. 146.

*jornadas*. The first such journey to the palace in Aranjuez (which became Carlos II's favorite destination) took place from April 21 to May 21, 1674, after close to a ten-year hiatus.<sup>652</sup> These extravagant operations required the movement of a substantial entourage to serve the king and queen. Additional entertainments suitable for the countryside, including hunting expeditions, an activity that Carlos II loved, also needed to be organized. Clearly, the court was experiencing a substantial transformation in the run-up to long anticipated moment of Carlos II's majority.

The new activities of the court required a manager, someone able to organize and plan as well as someone with a keen sense of the politics of representation. Perhaps more importantly, he needed to be able to generate the requisite money to pay for such extravagances. Fernando Valenzuela was surely the right man for the job. Valenzuela had already sojourned in the orbit of royal patronage for more than a decade. An *hidalgo* without income, occupation, or education, he was one of those *galanes* or heartthrobs who paid court to the ladies of the queen's household. He succeeded in gaining the attention of doña Maria Ambrosia de Ucedo y Prada, who entered Mariana's service in 1655 in the lower ranks of the queen's chamber, as an *azafata*, or a cleaning lady.<sup>653</sup> Thanks to Mariana's patronage the couple was able to marry with a royal grant that consisted of a life pension to the bride equivalent to her salary and a post of *caballerizo* in the queen's stables for the groom.<sup>654</sup>

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<sup>652</sup> AGP Jornadas Administrativa, legs. 779 and 780.

<sup>653</sup> From a position that required cleaning and washing she rose to the queen's chamber in 1658. AGP Personal c. 1049 exp. 6.

<sup>654</sup> The marriage took place on July 24, in 1661, Mariana's saint day, in honor of their benefactor. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 176; AGP. Personal c. 1049 exp. 6. CODOIN, vol. 67.

Building on this solid connection to the queen, Valenzuela became an ambassador escort in 1671, a position that could have opened up the possibility of a distinguished career as a diplomat.<sup>655</sup> Mariana appointed him *primer caballero* of the queen's stables in 1673, an advancement that marked an important step in his career. By 1674, he had obtained an administrative position in the Council of Italy.<sup>656</sup> Although this position gave him an income and benefits, it was not per se a political platform.<sup>657</sup> In fact, Valenzuela had no influence whatsoever in the making of policy during Mariana's regency and lacked the knowledge, experience, or an institutional basis for such a role. Nevertheless, Valenzuela had become the recipient of substantial royal patronage, probably as a reward for being Mariana's trusted informant, a function that earned him the sobriquet of *duende del palacio*, or the palace ghost.<sup>658</sup> He also possessed an agreeable personality; Mariana evidently considered him good company for the king and her.

Valenzuela's main role, however, was to choreograph the court's spectacles, a job for which he was ideally suited as a man of the theater. Reports abundantly document his extensive experience in all aspects of theater production, including the hiring of acting companies, selection of plays, management of stage machinery, distribution of roles, and the organization of the entertainments during intermission.<sup>659</sup> Nobles in general had

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<sup>655</sup> He replaced Manuel de Lira, a diplomat working in The Hague and the one largely responsible for the important alliances with the Dutch discussed above.

<sup>656</sup> Valenzuela referred to this office as Juez Conservador of the Council of Italy. AHNNS Osuna c. 2026. d. 24 (1). It carried administrative responsibilities, probably related to financial matters. He did not participate in the political debates. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II:191.

<sup>657</sup> Valenzuela received the same salary of a councilman and a house allowance; Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II:191.

<sup>658</sup> It is clear that Mariana had a network of informants and Valenzuela was probably one among many. BNM mss. 2043.

<sup>659</sup> Sanz Ayán, *Pedagogía de reyes*, p. 52.

experience managing these kinds of activities, a function that usually fell on those who occupied the post of mayors (*alcaldes*) of the various royal palaces. The Prince of Astillano, for example, who was the mayor of the Palace of the Buen Retiro, managed its coliseum as part of his duties and organized a number of shows for the royal family.<sup>660</sup> Mariana's decision in 1674 to appoint Valenzuela mayor of the Royal Palace of El Pardo, therefore, was quite significant.<sup>661</sup> From this institutional base, Valenzuela became a visible figure, gaining access to the royal persons, and assuming more administrative positions, even if he had no influence in matters of policy. Mariana had clearly established another political partnership to suit her purposes. The post, explained a chronicler, gave him "many occasions to merit the pleasure of the monarchs for the frequent celebrations." "Through his hands," the observer remarked, "run the disposition of the plays, amenities, hunting, and ultimately, everything that had to do with sportsmanship and the break needed from the burden of governing."<sup>662</sup> In January 1675, Mariana appointed Valenzuela Superintendent of the renovations of the Madrid Alcazar. Although the post of Alcalde cannot be compared in prestige and power to the offices of the royal households such as that of as *mayordomo mayor* or *sumiller de corps*, it gave Valenzuela a solid base from which to work on Mariana's behalf and thus eliciting more support from her. Valenzuela was crucial for Mariana, who needed someone completely

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<sup>660</sup> Sanz Ayán, *Pedagogía de reyes*, p. 41.

<sup>661</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II:207; AHNNS Osuna c. 2026. d. 24 (1).

<sup>662</sup> "Empleo en que se le ofrecian ocasiones de merecer el agrado de los reyes por la comunicacion y festejos que frequentemente se les hace: corrio por su mano la disposicion y regalos de los sitios donde son las cazas, y la prevencion y direccion de las comedias, y en fin, cuantas cosas en Palacio tocaban a deporte y descargo de las fatigas del Gobierno." CODOIN, vol. 67, p. 8.

under her patronage to manage the court during this most dangerous and difficult political transition.

In a short time, Mariana and Valenzuela changed the face of the court with a flurry of entertainments, royal trips (*jornadas*), and a series of measures intended to keep the price of basic commodities in check. They also undertook some key renovation projects, not only in the royal palace but in public spaces as well.<sup>663</sup> One major venture consisted in remodeling the so-called Queen's Gallery, which surrounded the internal plazas of the Alcazar and connected them with the royal stables. This large project required the importation of at least two-hundred marble sculptures.<sup>664</sup> The other major renovation involved the façade of the palace. Although this project only concluded a plan initiated during Philip IV's reign, it became a deeply symbolic act for Mariana as her regency was ending.

Even more significant perhaps was the transfer of an enormous equestrian statue of Philip IV to be placed above the principal door of the palace.<sup>665</sup> Philip IV, therefore, became—literally—a towering and vigilant figure at the very seat of the court and the government, serving as a visible and constant reminder of Mariana's right to assume an important role in her son's reign as sanctioned by the late king's testament.<sup>666</sup> No one could miss the connection because the statue was moved to its location at about the same

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<sup>663</sup> José Manuel Barbeito, *El Alcázar de Madrid* (Madrid: Comisión de Cultura, Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Madrid, 1992), pp. 176-177.

<sup>664</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II:207-209; Barbeito, *El Alcázar de Madrid*, p. 183.

<sup>665</sup> Barbeito, *El Alcázar de Madrid*, 177-179.

<sup>666</sup> The effectiveness of Mariana's message is more than confirmed by the fact that one of don Juan's earliest measures when he took on the reins of government consisted in removing the statue from the Alcazar. See Chapter 6.

time that Carlos II moved into his own chambers. With the Queen's Gallery and Philip IV's equestrian monument, Mariana announced her intention to be involved in the politics of the court and proclaimed as well that she had the right to do so. Public works in the main square of the city, a multiplication of all kinds of entertainments for the masses, and price control of basic commodities were accompanied by the remodeling projects. Reports praising the urban renovations and testifying to widespread contentment of residents abound.<sup>667</sup>

Still, at this time, Valenzuela played no role, let alone a dominant one, in the government councils, nor did he participate in policy making or received any posts in the king's household. Mariana continued to reward loyalty and distribute appointments evenhandedly, naming the Duke of Medinaceli, the Duke of Albuquerque, and the Admiral of Castile respectively *sumiller de corps*, *mayordomo mayor*, and *caballerizo mayor* of the king's royal household.<sup>668</sup> She honored those who had been part of her husband's household and re-appointed them. Finally, she made additional appointments to the king's chamber, distributing rewards for loyalty while recognizing lineages as well.<sup>669</sup> Nevertheless, Valenzuela's centrality at court was undeniable and became increasingly controversial. Valenzuela was a man with theatrical flair and reports suggest that he may have upstaged aristocrats who possessed prerogatives of birth and office. On the occasion of Carlos II's fourteenth birthday, Valenzuela made a spectacular entrance during the celebrations following the Dukes of Medinaceli and Albuquerque, and on the

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<sup>667</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II:212-213.

<sup>668</sup> The court offices of Carlos II's royal household were officially announced during November 26, 1674. AGP Reinados, caja 92, exps. 2 and 3.

<sup>669</sup> Many of them had served her either in military, diplomatic, or governorships outside Madrid.

right hand side of the Duke of Infantado's oldest son.<sup>670</sup> The proud members of the upper aristocracy very likely viewed Valenzuela's gesture as utterly insulting.

Certainly, Mariana benefitted from Valenzuela's administrative and managerial skills: the population was content, the court sparkled, and Carlos thrived as its indisputable center. Mariana may have been relatively careful in her patronage of Valenzuela, but controversy nevertheless ensued and had reached worrisome levels by the next year. Part of the problem was Valenzuela's demeanor. He was not the sort of person to be self-effacing and rumors escalated as his social ascent was considered incongruous with relatively low birth. A few days before Carlos II's majority, and as one of her last acts as governor, Mariana granted Valenzuela the marquisate of Villasierra, raising him to titled noble status.<sup>671</sup> Evidently, she wanted to push her protégé forward in Carlos II's regime. But this was as far as she was able to go before the official end of the regency. In short, Valenzuela played an important role as one of Mariana's political partners, but his role cannot be compared to that of Aytona in the making of policy or that of Nithard in infiltrating the government councils. However, Valenzuela was the first political figure who gained the title of Prime Minister of the monarchy, a role that he was supposed to exercise in Carlos II's regime. Indeed, the appointment took place in late 1676, about a year after the regency had officially ended and the court was already engulfed in a new political crisis. The timing of the event and Mariana's own strategies

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<sup>670</sup> "Dispuso don Fernando [Valenzuela] que hubiese toros en la Priora y comedias de novedad y aparato, dando principio a esta fiesta la noche del dia 5 con una mascara, que guiada de los duques de Medinaceli y Albuquerque, la remataba D. Fernando llevando la mano derecha del conde de Saldaña, primogénito del duque del Infantado" CODOIN vol. 67, pp. 8-9.

<sup>671</sup> The offices he received before the end of the minority were: Conservador del Consejo de Italia, Marques de Villasierra, Alcalde del Pardo, Superintendente de la Obras Reales de Palacio and Caballerizo Mayor of the Queen's Household. AHNNS Osuna c. 2026 d. 24 (1).



suggest that her intention was to use Valenzuela to vest her own intervention in her son's regime. He was propelled to the top in order to perpetuate *her* political role in the monarchy during her son's regime.

In fact, on November 4, 1675, two days before Carlos II's legal emancipation, Mariana, with the backing of her Regency Council, submitted a formal request to Carlos to extend his minority for an additional two years. This provocative request amounted to keeping Mariana in control of the government as if nothing had changed and would have perpetuated the king's minority.<sup>672</sup> Carlos, to Mariana's utter surprise, refused to sign the document, and informed his mother that he had been in communication with don Juan and that he had invited him to court to assume the role of principal advisor.<sup>673</sup> Mariana and Carlos argued bitterly although they quickly compromised. Carlos extended the Regency Council for another two years and allowed his mother to become its presiding member, but without, however, prolonging his minority. Mariana relinquished her official duties on November 6 and ordered that all official documents henceforth be addressed and submitted to Carlos.<sup>674</sup> Mariana's position, therefore, shifted from that of a ruler with full sovereign rights to that of an advisor with vaguely defined prerogatives. She was not entirely defeated, however. Mariana persuaded Carlos to order don Juan to leave Madrid almost immediately after his arrival on November 6. These concessions, however, set

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<sup>672</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 236-242.

<sup>673</sup> "On the sixth [of November], I come into the government of my states," Carlos wrote to don Juan, "I need your services to assist me in my duties, since I plan to say farewell to my mother." He instructed his older brother to report to his chambers on Carlos's birthday and keep the whole matter secret. "Dia seis Juro y entro al gobierno de mis Estados, necesito de vuestra persona a mi lado para esta funcion, y despedirme de la Reyna mi s[eñor]a y mi Madre, y assi Miercoles a las diez y tres quartos os hallareis en mi antecamara, y os encargo el secreto. Dios os g[uar]de. Yo el Rey." Carlos to don Juan, 30 October 1675. BNM mss. 12961.21.

<sup>674</sup> See for example, AGS E. España, leg.s 2700 and 2701.

into motion a series of events that would eventually lead to a formal political coup in late 1676, and a few months later, her exile.

### **Re-Thinking Favoritism during Mariana's Rule**

Mariana of Austria ruled directly. Although she solicited the opinions of various political figures, she was not controlled by favorites. Mariana forged important political partnerships, but surrender power to none of them. Neither Nithard nor Valenzuela were favorites in the traditional sense of the word (those who gained influence by the force of their personality or physical traits such as the Duke of Buckingham or Louis XIII's *mignons*), or in the more political sense (statesmen with a program of reform, such as Richelieu, Mazarin, or Olivares). Mariana's patronage of Nithard rested on the principle of expediency. Nithard was an informant and foot soldier, rather than the *éminence grise* who manipulated Mariana behind the scenes. Instead, the Marquis of Aytona, a contemporary of Nithard, took the role of strategist. Aytona came closer than anyone else to the type of minister-favorite in the style of an Olivares: he belonged to the upper aristocracy; he possessed a distinguished record of service to the crown; and he was a consummate statesman. We can only wonder if Mariana would have made Aytona a *valido* had he survived long enough. Valenzuela's rise, however, had little to do with the political system that Mariana had painstakingly built and everything to do with the substantial transformation underway from late 1674 onwards as Carlos II's emancipation grew ever nearer. His political role differed from that of advisor, although he became no less controversial than Nithard. Finally, other figures besides Nithard, Aytona, and Valenzuela worked closely with Mariana and in turn enjoyed different levels of

influence. Diego Sarmiento de Valladares, the Count of Villaumbrosa, the Constable of Castile, and the Admiral of Castile to name just a few were essential to Mariana as well.

Mariana worked closely with the Regency Council and the Council of State, two governments councils that she painstakingly shaped. She was involved directly in diplomatic and administrative matters as well. Mariana's political system and strategies remained consistent from beginning to end. Even as the court experienced crises and transformations, Mariana remained committed to rule personally. Her strategies were based on the older political traditions developed by the Habsburgs who had instituted an elaborate conciliar system of government.<sup>675</sup> Thus, it also represented a break with the system of favoritism that dominated the Spanish Habsburg court during most of the seventeenth century.<sup>676</sup> Mariana's system, however, was in line with broader developments in Spain and Europe, in which personal rule coming to dominate as the Age of the Great Favorites waned. Mariana left a strong imprint on the political culture of the court and that new culture would continue to influence the monarchy until Carlos II's death in 1700.

As a result of her strategies, power at court became more decentralized; that permitted participation of more people in the political process and allowed greater levels of dissent. The nature of factional struggles changed during her rule. During the first three years, an ideological debate over the peace with Portugal and the war with France dominated the political scene; by 1668 those issues largely disappeared. Don Juan emerged soon after as a major political opponent who campaigned against Mariana's

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<sup>675</sup> The conciliar system of government in Habsburg Spain achieved its height during the rule of Philip II. See Chapter 3.

<sup>676</sup> Elliott and Brockliss, *The World of the Favorite*.

regime. Although his opposition seemed to lack clear goals, other than deposing Nithard, he became the voice of those discontent with Mariana's policies or with her distribution of patronage. Many figures that had become disaffected to Mariana took advantage of the situation. Yet, and despite the significant threat don Juan presented, he never served as the leader of a clearly defined faction or opposition group. The aristocracy neither fully supported nor fully condemned his obviously treasonous behavior and yet by not reacting more decisively, they failed to defend Mariana's royal authority. No one, however, openly challenged Mariana's position as "tutor and governor": theirs, therefore, was a sin of omission rather than commission.

The establishment of the Regiment of the King's Guard in 1669 marked a turning point in the course of the regency. Immediately thereafter Mariana emerged as the indisputable center of the court and she began to reap the rewards of her earlier strategies. The strength of relative dynastic stability bolstered her position: Carlos II began to participate in public ceremonies more frequently and Margarita had given birth to several children, at least one of whom survived. The succession seemed, if not secure, at least not as dubious as earlier. With her army, her children, and her councils behind her Mariana's regency experienced a period of stability that lasted from 1669 to 1674. As Carlos II's majority neared, Mariana sought to implement policies designed to keep herself well positioned to exercise political power. Indeed, her actions indicate that she had no intention of surrendering power. To protect her position, she implemented a program of renovations, public works, entertainments, and economic measures to control the price of basic commodities.

Don Juan had been utterly unable to challenge Mariana on two separate occasions. His *coup d'état* of 1669 fizzled and had little lasting effect. Mariana easily defeated his attempt to replace her as Carlos II's advisor in 1675. Mariana, drawing on the force of her authority as the king's mother, expected and demanded full obedience from Carlos. What she did not count on was the king's strength of purpose and even more so, the negative political implications of her behavior. The incident of November 6, 1675 indeed, unleashed a political crisis that would not be solved until Mariana was at least temporarily removed from the court and her son's life.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE PERILS OF MATERNAL POWER

Carlos II's first act of political independence took place on November 6, 1675, the day of his fourteenth birthday and legal emancipation.<sup>677</sup> Without informing his mother, the young king summoned to court his older half-brother, inviting him to assume the office of Prime Minister. Don Juan, who had opposed the regency government from its inception, anticipated a smooth change of regime. He made a very public entry into Madrid on November 6, met with the king privately, and by noon was on his way to the Palace of the Buen Retiro on the outskirts of the city as a first step in assuming his new role in the monarchy. Mariana, however, who was evidently not willing to surrender her authority, aborted what she saw as a coup by meeting privately for two hours with her son. Carlos reportedly came out of his mother's chambers giving signs that he had been crying. He quickly lost his nerve and acquiesced to her demands that don Juan be told to leave immediately.

Although Carlos II was beginning to try his wings, the episode sent a clear signal that he remained unmistakably under his mother's influence. Carlos II had begun to sign documents and confer with the secretaries as was stipulated in his father's testament, but his political involvement was undoubtedly timid and Mariana continued to direct Spain's foreign policy and rule over court politics as if nothing had changed. At first, she exiled, dismissed, and replaced those involved in the attempted coup. During the following year, thanks to her patronage, the relatively low-born courtier, Fernando Valenzuela, obtained the most coveted political and social recognitions of the realm, becoming prime minister of the monarchy and grandee of Spain. During 1676, the court remained in a volatile state

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<sup>677</sup> *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 21.

with conspiracies against Mariana multiplying. Power struggles culminated in December, when twenty-four grandees formed a Confederation to demand the mother's permanent separation from the son, the dismissal of Valenzuela, and the installation of don Juan as the king's main advisor.<sup>678</sup> Don Juan and the nobles of the Confederation backed up their intentions with military force, bringing the monarchy to the brink of civil war. Carlos, who was counseled even by supporters of the queen to distance himself from his mother to avert violence, left the palace in secret on January 14. A month later, he ordered his mother to "retire" to the city of Toledo. Although the diplomatic correspondence presented her move to Toledo as self-elected, for all practical purposes she was sent into exile.

This chapter analyzes the personal and political circumstances leading up to Mariana's exile. Although Mariana took on the office of regent with undisputed legitimacy and extensive authority, that same authority worked to her detriment when Carlos II came of age. The conspiracies against Mariana during 1676 were not only designed to remove Fernando Valenzuela as scholars have presumed. The most important issue was the king's autonomy. Mariana's power as mother emerged at this particular juncture as a prevailing topic in the political discourses that circulated in private, official, and public circles; it was directly identified as the source of political upheaval at the court. Mother and monarchy became incompatible and Carlos II was forced to choose. Although several years later Mariana's political capital stemming from her role as mother of the king, widow of another, former ruler, and Habsburg matriarch triumphed, her position became untenable as long as she appeared to prevent Carlos II's from becoming an adult king.

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<sup>678</sup> *Confederación del S[eñor]r Don Juan de Austria, y los grandes de España*, BNM mss. 18211.

The analytic framework in this chapter challenges interpretations that focus on court factions or incompetence to explain the convoluted events of the period. It has been assumed, for example, that Carlos II's purported mental and physical weakness allowed his mother to dominate him. This assumption fits well with the narrative of a dynasty and monarchy in decline. Yet these interpretations do not explain the power struggles that erupted when Carlos turned fourteen and culminated with Mariana's exile, nor do they stand up to a close and rigorous examination of the sources.

A careful reading of the many texts produced during this period reveals that the influence Mariana exerted over Carlos was very much congruent with cultural and social norms. The Spanish ruling elite, and in particular the male ruling elite, understood Carlos's initial inability to limit his mother's authority. In fact, the letters, memoranda given to the king, chronicles, gazettes, and other texts show that many people at court shared these values and that they considered Carlos's "reverential fear"<sup>679</sup> of his mother a normal aspect of a young person's development. This is precisely why Mariana's presence at court continued to provoke controversy; the ruling elite understood perfectly well how improbable it was that Carlos would be able to resist his mother's authority. The political crisis that led to Mariana's exile was ultimately a crisis of kingship in conflict with the power of motherhood.

This is precisely why Carlos II was not the only that struggled with Mariana's authority. Although it appeared that don Juan and the rebellious nobles had won the decisive factional battle, it proved extremely difficult to challenge Mariana's position

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<sup>679</sup> This phrase comes out repeatedly as will be clear in the rest of the chapter. It has been used by historians to argue that Carlos II has serious problems, but once it is put in social and cultural contexts, this notion cannot be sustained.



permanently. They fought through the process, as they attempted to eliminate all vestiges of her political authority and still observe the appropriate “reverence and respect” due a royal matriarch. In fact, don Juan and his supporters were unable to exclude Mariana completely from her son’s life and the diplomatic business of the monarchy, even while she was away from the court.

Perhaps more than his fourteenth birthday, the separation from his mother marked a political and personal milestone in Carlos’s life. Ultimately, it was a precondition to his becoming an adult king. Mariana’s power and authority interfered with Carlos’s ability to fulfill his duties as king and thus this critical moment in Mariana’s political trajectory demonstrates the extent as well as the perils of female authority in early modern Spain. Furthermore, the transition from royal minority to royal emancipation provides a distinct window on the political culture of the Habsburg court and the nature of Spanish kingship.

### **A Queen Mother**

One of the key elements of female regencies was the bond that united mothers and sons who were also queens and kings. This link permitted the reconstruction of a royal couple that symbolized dynastic continuity and political stability.<sup>680</sup> The survival of a royal unit and the love of the mother for her offspring—which, political theorists argued, made queens less prone to usurp power permanently—sanctioned her rights to political authority. This couple, however, constituted an inverse relationship of subordination, with the female partner assuming the position of power.<sup>681</sup> Female regency, therefore, solved the problem of a royal minority in practical and symbolic ways, but also cast the

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<sup>680</sup> Cosandey, “La régence des reines mères,” pp. 7-9.

<sup>681</sup> Cosandey, “La régence des reines mères,” pp. 7-9.

figure of the king in an unflattering light: It exposed the incongruity between the idea that the king was the father of the people with the reality of a king subordinate to his mother due to his youth.<sup>682</sup>

Mariana's regency during Carlos's minority presented several distinct problems as well. The Spanish court went through a substantial reorganization when Carlos inherited the monarchy as a child. By stipulating that Carlos was to live in his mother's royal household and "be served" by her retainers until she decided to institute his own entourage, Philip IV's testament effectively eliminated the king's royal household for an entire decade. Besides creating a dramatic shift in the political centers of power, the arrangement brought to light the main problem of a royal minority: the lack of a king in exercise of his office. After the king obtained his own royal household in April 1675 and even after he reached legal majority later that year, the image of an infantilized king that needed to be liberated from his mother persisted and formed the basis for the formal challenges to Mariana. Mariana's role in perpetuating the perception of a king unable to act of his own volition was the main reason behind her temporary downfall.

The transition from royal minority to royal emancipation marked, without a doubt, a pivotal moment for a regent and the gracefulness or resistance with which she surrendered power had the potential to define the politics of the court for years to come. The queen mother had up to that point a strong grip on the king and the power structures of the court. But as the king obtained a measure of independence when he came of age, the queen regent and emerging factions competed for influence over the sovereign. These power dynamics are so common to many female regencies that we can discern a narrative thread or an easily identifiable plot that repeats itself: the threat of violence or full-

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<sup>682</sup> Crawford, *Gender and Regency in Early Modern France*, p. 6.

fledged civil war, controversial favorites, usurpation of power by male relations, and more often than not, a period of exile for the queen mother. At the end of a royal minority, the personal and political relationship between mother and son, who were also queen and king, had to make a difficult transition; the king would assume personal and political authority over his subjects, including his own mother. This shift proved so perilous that few came through it unscathed.<sup>683</sup>

The office of regent, therefore, went through a continuous state of flux. From the moment she assumed power until she relinquished it, the queen mother shifted her position from that of ruler to advisor, from being the source of power to being the mediator of power, and from the center of power to its margins. A political riddle that circulated in Madrid during Mariana's tenure in office asked: "What is the similarity between the queen, our lady, and an egg?" The surprising answer was: "In that she is neither fish nor fowl."<sup>684</sup> The clever riddle illustrates the difficulty in defining Mariana's position in the monarchy. Was she ruler or advisor, queen or king, the source or broker of patronage? Indeed, at the beginning of the regency, competition among courtiers to become Mariana's favorite ran rampant. Nevertheless, even though Mariana as queen tutor and governor temporarily assumed the functions of the king, she could not replace

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<sup>683</sup> See Crawford for an intelligent discussion of the ritual ending of the minority in France, which illustrates the process quite eloquently. Each of the queen regents chose highly symbolic ways to represent their new role in the monarchy, once their king-sons came of age and assumed the government of the monarchy. Crawford, *Gender and Regency in Early Modern France*. Cosandey points out that the rituals of accession upon the king's majority were emblematic of the residual power of the queen mother. Cosandey, "La régence des reines mères," p. 10.

<sup>684</sup> "en qué se parece la Reina Nuestra Señora al huevo? en que ni es carne ni pescado." cited in Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. II: appendix 2.

him. By the time the king's legal majority was approaching, the court was at a boiling point.<sup>685</sup>

One of the most difficult issues to resolve at the end of a regency, therefore, was what place and role should the former regent assume in the new court structure and the new regime? This is precisely the dilemma Mariana faced upon her son's majority. In order to answer this question, we must understand the process of how Carlos matured, from its legal, socio-cultural, and personal perspectives, as well as the political consequences of that transition.

### **A King Son**

The court prepared for the transition from Carlos II's royal minority to royal emancipation with an act that had profound repercussions: seven months before Carlos's fourteenth birthday, on April 15, 1675, Mariana established a king's household "served exclusively by men," a step that foreshadowed her son's assumption of an independent political identity.<sup>686</sup> As was typical of the Spanish Habsburg court, the new living arrangements opened the door to intrigues and shifts of loyalties.<sup>687</sup> Efforts to monopolize the king's attention and direct it away from his mother and her supporters began immediately. The king greeted his coming emancipation with plans of his own: "On the sixth [of November], I come into the government of my states," Carlos wrote to don Juan,

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<sup>685</sup> This ambivalence has little to do with the formal political authority Mariana possessed during the minority. As was discussed in chapter 1, her sovereignty was sanctioned by legal, cultural, and dynastic traditions and unequivocally established in multiple ways in the late king's testament. This is one of the main differences of my interpretation of Mariana's regency from previous scholars. My point here is that the office of regent in itself is unstable.

<sup>686</sup> AGP Reinados, caja 92, expediente 3.

<sup>687</sup> See Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism*, and Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares*.

“I need your services to assist me in my duties, since I plan to say farewell to my mother.”<sup>688</sup>

It is not clear to what extent Mariana knew about her son’s plans to exclude her from the new government.<sup>689</sup> She anticipated potential challenges, however, with a move that precipitated a showdown between mother and son: on November 4, the queen and her Regency Council submitted a formal request to Carlos to extend his minority for an additional two years. Carlos refused to sign the document and appeared resolute in his decision to install don Juan at the helm of government. Don Juan arrived in Madrid the day of Carlos II’s emancipation. By the afternoon on that same day, the king issued a royal decree ordering don Juan to leave Madrid immediately. To add insult to injury, Carlos instructed his brother to proceed to the kingdom of Sicily as his mother had initially ordered.<sup>690</sup>

In her position as a royal matriarch and acting ruler, Mariana certainly felt entitled to demand don Juan’s immediate dismissal. He had been, after all, a sworn enemy of her regime. The episode, however, had political implications that went well beyond factional and familial struggles. In forcing the king, as young as he may have been, to reverse a decision that he had made publicly only a few hours earlier, she committed a grave tactical error. Mariana’s handling of the don Juan situation unleashed the power of the

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<sup>688</sup> “Día seis Juro y entro al gobierno de mis Estados, necesito de vuestra persona a mi lado para esta funcion, y despedirme de la Reyna mi s[eñor]a y mi Madre, y assi Miercoles a las diez y tres quartos os hallareis en mi antecamara, y os encargo el secreto. Dios os g[uar]de. Yo el Rey.” Carlos to don Juan, 30 October 1675. BNM mss. 12961<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>689</sup> I primarily follow Gabriel Maura’s account of the events here and the next paragraph. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 236-242. Laura Oliván has clarified some important aspects of what transpired on November 6, with the discovery of new documents, “Mariana de Austria en la encrucijada política.” I have drawn my own conclusions.

<sup>690</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 236-242.

opposition.<sup>691</sup> If conspiracies had proliferated in secret the year before, in 1676, factionalism now burst out into the open. The level of opposition during the rest of the year reveals that Mariana's influence over Carlos had become a political issue of significant proportions. The ruling elite needed to see the king demonstrate a measure of autonomy and independence. This was not an easy task for Carlos, since the process of maturation was not clear cut for men in early modern societies, even for sovereigns.

Legal, physical, cultural, and political definitions of adulthood in early modern Spain did not necessarily go hand-in-hand. Several subtleties complicated the task of demarcating childhood from maturity.<sup>692</sup> In Carlos's case, his coming of age unfolded to a large extent vis-à-vis the relationship he had with his mother. Manuscripts, gazettes, an educational treatise, letters, and State Council documents reveal the range of expectations about a ruler of Carlos's age. Those close to the king were as troubled as the king himself with Mariana's authority as mother, and everybody struggled between the obligation to honor that authority and the necessity to limit it.

### **Coming of Age in Seventeenth-Century Spain**

In Spain, males could come of age at twenty-five, when they married or, if their fathers died, at the age of fourteen. These two points allowed for a wide range of age

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<sup>691</sup> See for example, AGS E. España, leg.s 2700 and 2701.

<sup>692</sup> For an important study of the men's life cycle in early modern Italy see Guido Ruggiero, *The Boundaries of Eros: Sex, Crime, and Sexuality in Renaissance Venice* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985). Ruggiero argues that men went through an extended period of youth, from the age of puberty until their mid-thirties and in some cases a little later. Although he is interested in the sexual identity and practice of Venetian males, his findings are informed and contributed to a deeper understanding of socio-economic and political practices of Venetian society. As will become clear, notions of masculine adulthood were by no means clear in early modern Spain either. Understanding the male life cycles is extremely important in order to fully evaluate the role of women. In this case, it was a matter of high politics.

difference in the attainment of adult status.<sup>693</sup> The two types of guardians in the Spanish legal system illustrate this ambivalence further: tutors were guardians for children fourteen and younger (or twelve for girls) and curators were guardians of youngsters from fourteen to twenty-five. Young people under the surveillance of a curator, according to Grace E. Coolidge, had a measure of independence, but not necessarily total autonomy. They could reject the appointment of a curator, or could have a say in the appointment; for example, they were able to nominate their own candidate.<sup>694</sup> Curatorship implied a transitional period, illustrating the ambivalent position of a male-heir, who could inherit and even choose his own guardian and yet still be under the partial surveillance of another adult.

Philip IV appointed Mariana the king's tutor and governor until his fourteenth birthday, and his curator thereafter. This latter title was mentioned in Clause 35 and was included in the official documents dispatched during the minority.<sup>695</sup> Philip made detailed provisions for Mariana's tutorship and governorship, but vaguely defined her political involvement once the king came of age. In Clause 34, the testament simply mentioned that "once [the king] reaches his fourteenth birthday, [he] will begin governing completely, utilizing the advice and assistance of his mother and the majority opinion of the Regency Council."<sup>696</sup> The fact that Mariana was separated from her son during her

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<sup>693</sup> Coolidge, *Guardianship*.

<sup>694</sup> Coolidge, *Guardianship*, p. 22.

<sup>695</sup> Royal privileges for instance would be headed as follows: "Carolus Dei gratia Rex Castello Aragonum, etc, et Mariana cuius mater tutrix et curatrix et omnium Regnorum et Provinciarum allius dominy Gubernatrix ..." BNM mss. 5742 f. 363r.

<sup>696</sup> "Y en llegando a catorce años, entrara a gobernar enteramente, valiendose de los Consejos y asistencia de su Madre, con el parecer de la maior parte de la Junta." *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 34, pp. 50-51.

exile, however, suggests that her rights were at least temporarily disregarded. Nevertheless, other evidence suggest otherwise. Two royal inventories from 1666 and 1686 coincided with the beginning of Carlos II's minority and his twenty-fifth birthday, the ending point of a curatorship.<sup>697</sup> Based on a contextual analysis of these two inventories and Mariana's post-regency portraits, Mercedes Llorente has suggested that Carlos II was under the curatorship of his mother until his twenty-fifth birthday as the law allowed.<sup>698</sup> These issues require further investigation. However, one way or another, Mariana's juridical status changed considerably after Carlos's initial emancipation on his fourteenth birthday. On the one hand, heirs under a curatorship could appoint their own curators if they chose to do so. On the other, curatorship implies that the king's status was ambivalent. To what extent was he expected to act alone in the government of his states? What did it mean to "govern completely with the advice and assistance of his mother?" All these issues had to be resolved at the end of the minority and they occasioned considerable difficulties.

Ambivalence extended to other aspects of the king's process of coming of age, including his physical maturity. Observations about Carlos by people close to him, for instance, reveal that seventeenth-century Spaniards were well aware that the king was a young man who had much growing up to do, even if he had already legally assumed the government of the monarchy. "The king's height is in proportion to his age, his body

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<sup>697</sup> See Mercedes Llorente, "Mariana de Austria como gobernadora," p. 1808. Inventories were one of the legal responsibilities of tutors and curators and had to be conducted at the beginning and the end of the guardianship period. Coolidge, *Guardianship*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>698</sup> Llorente, "Mariana de Austria como gobernadora," p. 1809.



slim, and his constitution robust and agile” reported a contemporary.<sup>699</sup> “The king is enjoying himself [hunting] very much; soon we should see him very grown up, since the countryside suits him a lot, just like his father” reported one court officer to another in a private note.<sup>700</sup> At the time of these comments, Carlos was almost thirteen and a half, very close to achieving legal emancipation. The nuns at the Royal Convent, known as the Descalzas Reales, reported that Carlos was becoming a “man” and that he looked just like his father (he was fifteen and a half at the time).<sup>701</sup>

The plans regarding Carlos’s future marriage offer an ideal opportunity to observe the complex process of maturation at work, its political implications, and most importantly, Mariana’s role in the arrangements.<sup>702</sup> The Imperial ambassador to Spain, the Count of Harrach, proposed Archduchess Maria Antonia of Austria as Carlos’s bride when the king turned thirteen.<sup>703</sup> Carlos was not considered to be old enough to make the decision for himself; his mother had the authority to do so. Cardinal Aragon, however,

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<sup>699</sup> “El Rey aunque en estatura de proporción con la edad, flaquito en bulto, robusto y agil en salud.” BNM mss. 9399, f. 48v.

<sup>700</sup> “Nuestros Amos estan buenos (a Dios gracias) y el Rey n[uest]ro S[eñor] tan gustoso que pienso le hemos de bolber ya Muy crecido porque el Campo le ace estar tan divertido, q[ue] sigue el aliento de su Padre que goce de Dios, ayer tubieron Comedia de los de la legua, salieron luego al Campo, y mato S[u]m[agestad] Jabali. No hay nobedad alguna de que avisar a v[uestra] m[erced] mas que bolber a repetir me tiene asu obediencia. Cuya vida g[uar]de Dios mi S[eñor]. Aranjuez 27 de Abril de 1674. ...su m[ayo]r ser[vido]r, don Pedro de VillaReal.” AGP Adm. leg. 780.

<sup>701</sup> The comments were intended for Carlos’s sister and Queen of France, Maria Theresa of Austria, who wrote “I am happy that my brother is enjoying good health and that he is such a man as you tell me he is, and nothing would be better for him than to be and look like his father.” [...me guelgo infinito que mi hermano este bueno y tan hombre como me dizes que esta, nada le estara mejor que parecerse a su padre...]. Maria Theresa to the Descalzas Reales, 3 August 1677. AGP Descalzas Reales, c. 7, exp. 1.

<sup>702</sup> These included the deliberations on 30 December 1674, 4 June 1676, 16 and 18 June, 8 July, 2 and 15 August, 26 November 1677, and 7, 11, 19, 21 January, and 3 and 13 April 1679. See AHN E. legs. 2799 and 2796.

<sup>703</sup> The marriage was proposed on 25 November 1674. The discussions began on 30 December 1674. A copy of the marriage proposal can be found in AHN E. leg. 2799.

urged Mariana to wait until Carlos was old enough to decide for himself.<sup>704</sup> The State Council in consultation with physicians determined that Carlos had not developed sufficiently and concluded that the consummation of any marriage would have to wait at least another two or three years.<sup>705</sup> In 1674, given the concerns that Carlos did not have a younger sibling and was too young to procreate, the marriage was considered a provisional solution to the succession: Maria Antonia would become a queen consort with succession rights to the throne, a topic that received full and extensive discussion in the State Council.<sup>706</sup>

Everything changed, however, when Carlos matured physically. In the summer of 1676 the Council hesitated to confirm the matrimonial alliance with the Empire for two reasons: the archduchess herself was only six years old and Carlos was showing signs of reaching puberty.<sup>707</sup> The following year, concurring unanimously that the king was at that point completely capable of cohabitating with a wife, the Council considered marriage options.<sup>708</sup> By late 1677, Carlos's "strength" [robustez] and "good health" [buena salud]

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<sup>704</sup> Pascual de Aragon (1626-1677), archbishop of Toledo, played a prominent role during the regency, as member of the Regency and the State Councils. This opinion was recorded on the 30 December 1674. The point was repeated in the meeting that took place in March 1676. AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>705</sup> 30 December 1674. AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>706</sup> As the daughter of Margarita of Austria (1651-1673), Maria Antonia was Mariana's granddaughter and next in the line of succession. Ensuring the succession was so important that several ministers suggested to Mariana that she should persuade the Emperor to send his daughter to Spain in order to be raised under her tutelage and to "Castilianize" her in case she inherited the monarchy. See for example the opinions of Duke of Osuna, the Admiral of Castile, the Duke of Albuquerque, and the Constable of Castile during the State Council meetings of 1674 and 1676. AHN E. 2799.

<sup>707</sup> State Council deliberation of 4 June 1676. AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>708</sup> For example, Aragon argued that there should be another vote on the marriage simply because of Carlos's good health: "...el empeño pudo ser con la mira de no ser la complexion entonzes de V[uestra] Mag[esta]d tan robusta como se deseaba y que el dilatar el casarse V[uestra] Mag[esta]d...pero aora que n[uest]ro s[eñ]or. nos ha prevenido el mayor bien con adelantarse tanto en V[uestra] Mag[esta]d la naturaleza..." Recorded in the meeting of 8 July 1677. AHN E. 2799.

at sixteen convinced the ministers that he should no longer delay his marriage to an adult bride.<sup>709</sup>

Ignoring the State Council's opinion, Mariana announced Carlos's marriage to the little archduchess in September 1676 in official letters to all the princes of Europe.<sup>710</sup>

This was a clear political strategy on her part designed to cement a politico-military alliance with her brother, Emperor Leopold I, and coincided with a change of policy at the Viennese court.<sup>711</sup> Dynastic considerations and the queen's own personal feelings worked in the archduchess's favor; Maria Antonia was Mariana's granddaughter.

Mariana's decision became extremely controversial more than anything because it prolonged the birth of a successor more than necessary. Although in theory the consummation of the marriage would have to be postponed until Carlos was eighteen years old, the timeline was much longer due to the age of the bride. While the law allowed girls to marry at twelve years of age, State Council ministers mentioned that Maria Antonia would not be able to assume her marital duties until she was fifteen or sixteen years of age as "was the custom in Spain."<sup>712</sup> Mariana, therefore, demonstrated that she planned to continue directing Spain's foreign policy by arranging a marriage alliance with the Austrian Habsburgs. Perhaps more problematic for the ruling elite was

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<sup>709</sup> During the debates, Cardinal Aragon contributed a landmark opinion, often invoked for the rest of the deliberations. He urged Carlos to consider marrying a subject [vasalla] if she would be able to give birth in nine months. "...aconsejara primero a V[uestra] Mag[esta]d casar con una vasalla que tuviera las circunstancias que represente a V[uestra] Mag[esta]d pues estoi infalible en mi dictamen, que cometiera un grave delito contra V[uestra] Mag[esta]d si me apartara un punto de lo que pongo en la real consideracion..." Aragon's opinion recorded on the 4 April 1676 deliberation, AHN E. Leg. 2799.

<sup>710</sup> AHN E. Leg. 2799.

<sup>711</sup> Spielman, *Leopold I*, 76-82.

<sup>712</sup> See deliberation of 25 November 1674. AHN E. leg. 2799.

the fact that by selecting a bride who was merely six years old, she further extended Carlos's childhood longer than many deemed necessary and pushed the arrival of an heir into the indefinite future.

Obeisance to fathers and mothers formed an integral part of the culture and, not surprisingly, one of the concepts Mariana emphasized in her program for Carlos's education. In the educational treatise *Nudrición Real* that Mariana commissioned in 1671, Pedro González de Salcedo placed "reverence to parents" high in the hierarchy of moral concepts to be inculcated in the young king; it was second only to "fear of God," and above "love of subjects."<sup>713</sup> An entire chapter explained how "Royal Parents should teach their children the natural dictum of loving and fearing them." Children should venerate their parents "as if they were gods on earth."<sup>714</sup> Violating this important precept was a "horrendous crime" that evoked divine and earthly judgments: "divine indignation" from the heavenly court and "loathing and contempt" from men.<sup>715</sup> As a mother, a widow, and an older woman, a queen mother was a powerful figure, and Salcedo often referred to Mariana as "the Supreme Royal Maternity."<sup>716</sup>

Notions of powerful motherhood had evidently influenced people's expectations about Carlos's demeanor towards his mother. In describing the two-hour meeting in

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<sup>713</sup> Don Pedro González de Salcedo, *Nudrición Real (Texto impreso). Reglas o preceptos de como se ha de educar a los Reyes Mozos, desde los siete a los catorce años.... A la Reyna Nuestra Señora* (Madrid, 1671). BNM R5175.

<sup>714</sup> "Que deven los Padres Reyes enseñar a sus hijos en el Precepto natural de amarlos, y temerlos Salcedo." *Nudricion Real*, 54.

<sup>715</sup> "...que los que no aman, y temen a sus Padres, están condenados en dos juizios, en el Consejo sumo de Dios, y en el Tribunal de los hombres, padeciendo en aquel justos castigos de la indignacion Divina; y entre los hombres, aborrecimiento, y menosprecio." Salcedo, *Nudrición Real*, 54-5.

<sup>716</sup> "Suprema Maternidad Real." Salcedo, *Nudricion Real*, no page number.

which Mariana convinced Carlos to ask don Juan to leave Madrid, a gazetteer explained that Mariana “triumphed with tears and persuasions over the young king, barely fourteen years of age.”<sup>717</sup> In a private memorandum, the president of the Council of Castile wrote persuasively to Carlos that “because Your Majesty is under the influence of the *reverential fear* of your mother, it is clear that Your Majesty is overwhelmed and cannot govern by himself” (my emphasis).<sup>718</sup> The very moral precept basic to a king’s education also impeded the king’s exercise of sovereignty.

As a young king, Carlos found himself in a very difficult position. How was he to observe the expected reverential fear of his mother and at the same time emancipate himself from her power? Those close to him understood Carlos’s predicament. Shortly after he took over the office of Prime Minister, don Juan commissioned a text that offers some answers. It recorded a supposed encounter between him, Carlos, and a Franciscan friar: “The true relation of a colloquy that for the space of one hour took place between don Carlos II, of sixteen years of age, ... don Juan of Austria, of forty-eight years of age, and a friar and theologian, of sixty-seven years of age...in the royal palace on 4 April 1677.”<sup>719</sup> Written by the friar, who spoke with the compounded moral authority of age and religion, the text captures Carlos’s dilemma.

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<sup>717</sup> “...acavada la fiesta de la capilla volvió S[u] M[agestad] a ver a su madre cuias persuaciones y lágrimas triunfaron de 14 años escassamente cumplidos.” BNM mss. 10129.

<sup>718</sup> “y que trascendiendo a V[uestra] M[agestad] esta influencia con el miedo reverencial con que atiende a su Madre, se saca la consequencia, de que V[uestra] M[agestad] está violentado, y no gobierna por sí.” ADM hist. leg. 159. See below for an in-depth discussion of this text.

<sup>719</sup> “Historia Verdadera del coloquio que por espatio de una hora se hizo entre el serniss. señor Don Carlos 2º, Monarca de las españas, de edad de deciseis Años y El S[eño]r Don Juan de Autria de edad de 48 y un Relig[ios]o saderdote Teologo, y su, Vasallo, De hedad de 67; de religioso 57, de la orden de N.P. S. Franc[isc]o Estando Todos tres enpie en Un triangulo a 4 de Abril en el año 1677, en su Real Palacio luego escrita del mesmo Religioso para memoria delos Venideros y consuelo de sus Vasallos, y para dar muchas gracias a Dios de averles dado tal y tan Gran Rey y señor detanta, Real Capacidad. Y para esperar de Dios por su Medio muchos favores, y la restuaracion de su Catholica Monarchia.” RAH mss. 9/5135. If the date

The author, for example, praised Carlos's potential, but also indicated that the king was still too young: "Sir, I cannot ignore my duty to inform you that even though your royal talent is in conformity with your sovereign greatness, you have no experience; Your Majesty is still a child."<sup>720</sup> Yet, Carlos's recent decision to separate from his mother demonstrated that the king was exhibiting clear signs of maturity:

It is true what God said, that in getting married, the man leaves his father and mother to be with his wife for the rest of his life. And your Majesty is now married to the Monarchy. How could one otherwise explain the impetus and strength Your Majesty received to wean yourself from your mother's breast, and separate from your Saintly Mother, the Queen, who gave you life, bore you, nourished you, and educated you, so that Your Majesty is better able to assist, govern, and defend your wife, the monarchy[?]<sup>721</sup>

Mother and monarchy emerge as two female figures competing against each other for Carlos's love. The king appears torn between the hold each have on him: one dominates, the other submits. The language used to describe Mariana brings to light powerful cultural, social, and political images of motherhood in general, and queen mothers in particular. It was obviously terribly difficult for him to separate himself from the queen, "Your Saintly Mother, who gave you life, bore you, nourished you, and educated you."<sup>722</sup>

The passage, therefore, conforms to cultural values that emphasized respect and reverence for mothers, but strongly suggests that Carlos's separation from his mother was

of the text is correct, Carlos was 15 years old. He had entered however, the 16<sup>th</sup> year of his life, another way to denote chronological age during the period.

<sup>720</sup> "Señor, no puedo dejar de dezirle, que aun que su Real talento es conforme al solio tan soberano; No por esto tiene lo experimental en ello, siendo V[uestra] Ma[g]esta[d] niño..." RAH mss. 9/5135.

<sup>721</sup> "Es cierto lo que Dios dixo, que en casandose el hombre, dexara a su Padre y Madre; y se estara siempre con su muxer ya V[uestra] Mag[esta]d sea casado con su Monarchia; pues digamos señor quien dio a V[uestra] Mag[esta]d tanto balor en destetarse, y apartarse de su santa Madre la Reyna, que le dio el ser con la xenitura, parto, Crianza, y educacion, para asistir, gobernar, y defender a su Mujer la Monarchia de mexor." RAH mss. 9/5135.

<sup>722</sup> RAH mss. 9/5135.

also a real precondition to his becoming a husband to his “wife,” the Spanish monarchy. In this text, marriage embodied social and political concepts. First, as one of the benchmarks used to determine legal emancipation, it presented the king as an adult male. But also, Carlos’s marriage to the monarchy described an essential aspect of Spain’s political culture: the submission of the wife to the husband paralleled that of subject to ruler. The duty of the husband to the wife referred to the ruler’s obligation to “assist, govern, and defend” his subjects.<sup>723</sup> This responsibility was powerful enough to help Carlos take the huge step of separating from his mother. The author suggested that nothing less than the strength of an entire monarchy provided the young king the “impetus” to *destetarse*.

The ability of a son to “wean himself from his mother’s breast” was crucial to the assertion of maturity and even masculinity, essential qualities in a ruler. Sebastian de Cobarrubias, author of the popular seventeenth-century dictionary, *Tesoro de la lengua española o castellana*, refers to a proverb in his definition of *niño* (male child): “There are youths that are such mama’s boys that although they are old enough, they do not know how to free themselves from their mother’s lap; these turn out to be either great fools or vicious rogues.”<sup>724</sup> Being a “mama’s boy,” indeed, provoked scorn. It was thought to be the root of character flaws and to prevent a youth from attaining adulthood. For Carlos, the stakes were even higher.

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<sup>723</sup> For the strength of medieval political theory of a contractual relationship between the king and his subjects in Habsburg Spain, see Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans*.

<sup>724</sup> “hay algunos muchachos tan regalones que con ser grandes no saben desasirse del regazo de sus madres; salen éstos grandes tontos o grandes bellacos viciosos.” Sebastián de Covarrubias Oroasco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*, 2nd. edition, Felipe C. R. Maldonado, ed. (Madrid: Castalia, 1995).

As soon as Mariana forced the young king to reverse a decision that he had made publicly only a few hours earlier, the court descended into a political crisis that was to a large extent a crisis of kingship. Having his own royal household and signing government papers was not enough for Carlos to assume his place as king. A crucial aspect of his coming of age had to be made manifest in his relationship with his mother, who appeared to exert too much control over him, seemingly even to infantilize and emasculate him. Thus, the process of negotiating Carlos's independence necessitated sending in an army, carrying out a politico-military coup, and exiling a queen mother, all perceived as quintessentially masculine actions.

### **Mother versus Monarchy**

In a missive he wrote to Cardinal Aragon as the conspiracies against Mariana escalated during 1676, the Duke of Alba, one of the leading rebellious nobles, identified the crux of the situation: "As long as the queen mother continues to be close to the king, we will not obey in anything, because it will not be the king who orders us, but his mother."<sup>725</sup> In December, twenty-four members of the upper nobility formed a Confederation and demanded not only Valenzuela's resignation and his replacement by don Juan, but most importantly, Carlos's permanent separation from Mariana.<sup>726</sup> The text of the Confederation bluntly identifies the king's mother as the "root of all troubles." Her "bad influence" on the king has "produced all the malaise, loss, ruin, and disorder that we have experienced of late, particularly, the execrable elevation [of Valenzuela]." The best

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<sup>725</sup> "...mientras estubiere la Reyna madre al lado de su hijo, no obedeceremos nada que nos mande: porque no sera el Rey quien nos mande, sino su madre..." Duke of Alba to Cardinal Aragon, n/d. BNM mss. 18655<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>726</sup> Twenty-four members of the higher aristocracy signed this important document, including don Juan. It should be also noted that five were women, at least four of whom were heads of their respective lineages. BNM mss. 18211.



service they could render to the king was to “separate the mother completely and permanently from the son.”<sup>727</sup> These strong words reflect the perceived total control Mariana exercised over her son and the monarchy and the equally strong conviction that her maternal power endangered the body politic.

Mariana, however, refused to surrender power and evidently had no intentions of leaving the court anytime soon. Her insistence can be interpreted from a personal perspective: Mariana was a woman of strong character who would not surrender without a fight. But we cannot ignore the fact that her attitude was also very much in line with the culture of early modern Spain as well as dynastic traditions; both supported her ongoing political involvement, even after her son came of age.<sup>728</sup> The two competing forces—the *grandees*, who wanted the king liberated from his mother and Mariana’s entitlement to political power—brought Spain to the brink of civil war.

Events unfolded quickly. When the rebellious nobles made their intentions public, Mariana and Carlos were forced to respond. First, they ensured the safe removal of Valenzuela to the Palace of El Escorial; Carlos personally asked the friars to protect him. Acting on the counsel of Cardinal Aragon, Carlos and Mariana called don Juan to court. The decision had undoubtedly been taken under duress, but it at least gave the impression that authority still rested in royal hands. Unlike when Carlos had summoned don Juan to

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<sup>727</sup> “Por causa de las malas influencias y asistencias al lado de S[u] M[agestad] dela Reyna su Madre, dela qual como primera raiz se han producido, y producen quantos males, perdidas, ruinas, y desordenes experimentamos, y la mayor parte de todas, la execrable elevación [de Fernando Valenzuela]... evidencia que el mayor serbicio que se puede hacer a S[u] M[agestad] ... es separar totalmente, y para siempre, cercanía de S[u] M[agestad] a la Reyna su Madre...” BNM mss. 18211, f. 19r.

<sup>728</sup> Coolidge points out that many of the aristocratic matriarchs of her study did not hesitate to challenge their adult male children in court if they did not agree with their decisions. She convincingly argues that the women in question felt entitle to share in the decision-making process over family and lineage, even after they relinquished their guardianships. Coolidge, *Guardianship*. Habsburg traditions of this nature abound as well. See for instance, Tracy, *Emperor Charles V*.

court behind his mother's back, on this occasion, the king wrote to his half-brother with Mariana's consent, who also sent don Juan a note of acknowledgment and approval.<sup>729</sup> The king's and the queen's two missives went out on December 27, 1676. Don Juan answered their request in a note dated January 1, 1677 pledging his service to the king and the monarchy. Violence lurked behind all this apparent civility, however, since nothing had been said about Carlos's separation from Mariana.

The nobles of the Confederation resolved first and foremost to "swear obedience [to the king] before anything else."<sup>730</sup> If the events of November 6, 1675 had taught don Juan and his supporters a lesson, it was that they needed to combat Mariana with an army if they intended to prevail. In early January, reports that don Juan was marching on Madrid with a sizeable force constantly streamed into the city. By January 2, he had under his command about 7000 men on foot and horse. By January 11, these numbers had grown considerably from about 12,000 to 16,000.<sup>731</sup> But Mariana was also prepared and ready to respond to a potential attack with her own regiment under the command of its Lieutenant Colonel, the Count of Aguilar. Valenzuela had also mobilized the support of the construction workers' guild (*albañiles*), so the queen was ready to use violence against violence. The threat of a civil war and the possibility of popular revolt loomed over the city.<sup>732</sup>

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<sup>729</sup> BNM mss. 2043 fs. 540r-540v.

<sup>730</sup> "...anteponer la obediencia a qualquier otra consideración..." BNM mss. 9399.

<sup>731</sup> It is not clear how Maura got these numbers and they need to be confirmed. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 327-328. In any case, the danger of civil war was a major factor in determining the subsequent events.

<sup>732</sup> This was abundantly reported in the gazettes and manuscripts that circulated at this time. See for example BNM mss. 9399, f. 62r.

During the dangerous weeks of early January, Carlos discussed his options with some of his ministers and asked one of them to write down the points that had been made to him orally (*a boca*). Carlos's request produced a seminal text, written by don Pedro Nuñez de Guzmán, Count of Villaumbrosa.<sup>733</sup> This talented minister, who would be crucial in the events of early 1677, had already taken an important role in Mariana's regime when she appointed him president of the Council of Castile and member of the Regency Council. Villaumbrosa's text was intended for the king, but circulated widely.<sup>734</sup> Although the text is not unknown to scholars, who have often cited it as proof that the king was terrified of his mother, it offers much more than that. Villaumbrosa wrote it the day before Carlos took positive steps to separate himself from his mother, providing a step-by-step guide for the king and his closest advisors which they followed religiously. A close reading of this important text reveals why it was so persuasive: Villaumbrosa offered Carlos a solution to his dilemma of being caught between his political and familial obligations.

The sense of urgency could be felt clearly; the potential for violence grew by the hour. Villaumbrosa acknowledged that no counsel was "devoid of danger and great inconveniences," and urged the king to act with moderation.<sup>735</sup> "Histories of kings," he wrote, "show that those with the most courage and wisdom in the art of governing are those who have complied with the ministry of kingship and have been able to yield to the

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<sup>733</sup> Copies can be found in several archives. I am using the one found with the Medinaceli papers. ADM Histórica Leg. 159.

<sup>734</sup> It was mentioned in several gazettes.

<sup>735</sup> "Haviendo representado a V[uestra] M[agestad] estando a sus r[eal]es pies lo que se me ofrecia cerca de la jornada del Señor D[o]n Juan a esta Corte.... lo executo.... aunque puedo sentir con esta ocasión el dar mi parecer tan tarde, y en tal E. , que apenas queda arbitrio que no sea peligroso, y de sumos inconvenientes..." ADM hist. leg. 159.

times and to reason, have tolerated the most, and have not let human affection dominate.”<sup>736</sup> Villaumbrosa urged the king to avoid the use of force at all cost. To do otherwise would result in a most unfortunate situation, creating “a battle between loyalists, between relatives, and between subjects of the same king.”<sup>737</sup>

Villaumbrosa proposed the following strategies to overcome the political crisis. First, the king should not punish the nobles who had signed the Confederation, but instead proclaim his appreciation of them as representatives of the most illustrious houses of the monarchy. Carlos should also conform to their desire to see don Juan installed as his Prime Minister. To appease the nobility, Carlos should remove Valenzuela from El Escorial, where the fallen minister was still in hiding. The king should follow up with the immediate revocation of the royal grants given to Valenzuela, in particular the grandeeship, the most contentious of the many privileges he had accumulated during his spectacular rise to power. Then, Villaumbrosa addressed the crux of Carlos’s dilemma: his mother.

Don Juan’s major effort was, according to Villaumbrosa, quite simple: to separate the king from his mother and demand that she relinquish the reins of government.<sup>738</sup> “It is

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<sup>736</sup> “no puedo excusarme de representar a V[uestra] M[agestad] lo que hè observado en las Historias de los Reyes mas valerosos, y mas sabios en el arte de Reynar, y es que han sido siempre los que mas han cedido al tiempo, y a la razon, los que mas han tolerado, y los que menos se han dejado llebar delos afectos de hombres, por cumplir con el Ministerio de Reyes.” ADM hist. leg. 159.

<sup>737</sup> “No dudo que llegando V[uestra] M[agestad] a la extremidad de usar de su soberania, refrenara qualesquiera progresos, pero si hubiera de ser con la fuerza de las Armas, no pudiera haver mas desdichado successo que el de una Batalla entre leales, entre parientes, y entre Vasallos de un mismo Rey...” ADM hist. leg. 159.

<sup>738</sup> “Pero faltava yo ala confianza que V[uestra] M[agestad] hace de mi, y a tantos vinculos como me obligan de conveniencias, y de lealtad, si omitiera el punto mas arduo de esta materia, y mediera por descontento de el, siendo el que Juzgo es el principal que trae el Señor D[o]n Juan en su empeño: Este es, el que se aparte de V[uestra] M[agestad] la Reyna nuestra Señora, y que deje el gobierno.” ADM hist. leg. 159. A gazetter expressed a similar idea: “entrose despues en el dificil punto de sacar a la Reyna Madre de la Corte, que era lo que don Juan mas esforzava.” BNM mss. 9399, f. 64r.

understood,” Villaumbrosa eloquently said, “that so long as the queen is in the government, Valenzuela will continue playing the part he has played thus far; and because your majesty is under the influence of the reverential fear of your mother, it is clear that Your Majesty is disempowered (*violentado*) and unable to govern by Yourself.”<sup>739</sup> Villaumbrosa’s text eloquently expressed the political consensus at the court: Mariana’s power as mother (more evident than before since she no longer possessed authority as regent) could not coexist with the full and free exercise of kingship. Furthermore, the fact that these words had been written by someone who was not necessarily opposed to the queen or in don Juan’s camp reveals that the issues at stake were more extensive than factional struggles can explain.<sup>740</sup> Mariana’s closeness to Carlos continued to threaten the position of kingship in the polity. Villaumbrosa spelled out Carlos II’s dilemma quite clearly; the king needed to choose the monarchy over his mother.

Villaumbrosa then proceeded to outline a plan to allow the king to separate himself from his mother without violating his filial obligations entirely: “If the queen has resolved to leave the government, as I understand it,” he wrote, “Your Majesty should publish it with royal decrees sent to the councils, with the most affectionate words and *with the esteem appropriate to that of a son for his mother*” (my emphasis).<sup>741</sup> Then, the

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<sup>739</sup> “Que practicamente se entiende que estando la Reyna nuestra Señora en el gobierno ha de tener el Marques la parte que ha tenido hasta ahora, y que transcendiendo a V[uestra] M[agestad] esta influencia con la fuerza del miedo reverencial con que atiende a su Madre, se saca la consecuencia, de que V[uestra] M[agestad] esta violentado, y no gobierna por si....” ADM hist. leg. 159.

<sup>740</sup> Villaumbrosa was still considered a supporter of the queen even though his paper counseling the king to separate from his mother, was well known to everyone. Don Juan ended up exiling the man, although he agreed to his restitution reluctantly later in 1677.

<sup>741</sup> “y quedaba solo la causa de la Reyna nuestra Señora, que el Señor D[o]n Juan, y todos han de atender con toda veneracion, y respeto..... y es que si la Reyna nuestra Señora esta resuelta a apartarse del gobierno

king should move to another residence. If Carlos lived for a time in the Palace of the Buen Retiro, Villaumbrosa suggested, the queen could stay in the Alcazar. This temporary solution would give her the chance to move out of the palace at her leisure. In Villaumbrosa's scheme, the separation of mother and son was to take place peacefully and harmoniously. While Carlos began to assume the government of the monarchy, assisted by don Juan, and "the queen would be able to live in the quiet and peacefulness of her state, taking a rest from the amount of work and difficulties that she suffered while at the head of the government, *venerated and assisted by your majesty with all the appropriate decency, convenience, and affection* (my emphasis)."<sup>742</sup>

Villaumbrosa's suggestion was based on long-standing traditions that encouraged women to observe a secluded life once they became widows.<sup>743</sup> The Habsburg dynasty also subscribed to the idea of retirement, an example set by Emperor Charles V when he abdicated in 1556.<sup>744</sup> Cultural expectations at times directly opposed the practical realities of early modern life, however. Spanish widows often played an active role in the economic, social, and cultural lives of their communities.<sup>745</sup> Many Habsburg women continued to participate in dynastic and political matters in their widowhood.<sup>746</sup>

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(como lo tengo entendido) V[uestra] M[agestad] lo publique con Decretos a los Consejos con las palabras de mas cariño, y estimacion que sean propias de tal hijo a tal madre." ADM hist. leg. 159.

<sup>742</sup> "... La Reyna nuestra Señora vivirá en la quietud de su E. , respirando del trabajo, y contratiempos que ha padecido en su gobierno, venerada, y asistida de V[uestra] M[agestad] en todo quanto tocare a su decencia, conveniencia, y cariño...." ADM hist. leg. 159.

<sup>743</sup> Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman*.

<sup>744</sup> Many women of the dynasty followed this tradition, either professing in a religious institution or adopting the Franciscan monastic habit.

<sup>745</sup> Coolidge, *Guardianship*; De Backer, *Widowhood, Autonomy, and Power*.

<sup>746</sup> For an example, see the political role played by Empress Maria of Austria (1528-1603) in the court of Philip III: Sánchez, *The Empress, the Queen and the Nun*.

Aristocratic and Habsburg women, however, frequently adopted the monastic habit once they became widows, suggesting that they accepted the idea of seclusion. By invoking these traditions, Villaumbrosa justified Mariana's exile, masking it as a retirement, and paved the way for the queen to exit the political stage in a dignified manner. Yet Mariana, as we will see, had no intention of following this script. Instead, she pushed those limits at first with little effect, but later far more successfully.

Carlos, therefore, was forced to subordinate the loyalty he owed to his mother if he wanted to avoid civil war. The most courageous kings, Villaumbrosa wrote, were those who did not "let human affection prevent them from complying with the ministry of kingship." By "human affection" Villaumbrosa evidently meant the love and "reverential fear" Carlos had towards his mother. His ministers and subjects expected Carlos to put his obligations as king above those of a son, even as they understood how difficult this was. In the end, Carlos showed political maturity: a gazetteer commented that thanks to the counsels of Villaumbrosa and Cardinal Aragon, Carlos was more "obedient to necessity than to the mother."<sup>747</sup>

### **A Difficult Separation**

In the midst of these very complex legal, social, cultural, and political processes of coming of age, the relationship between Mariana and Carlos also changed. Once Mariana's control impeded the exercise of kingship, tensions between the two grew exponentially. A short note that Carlos wrote to the Duke of Medinaceli allows a glimpse of what they went through before they actually separated:

My mother said that I should be aware that she wanted to get out of this story [cuento], but I can see that she did not really want to do so. She told me that if I

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<sup>747</sup> BNM mss. 9399, f. 62v.

thought it was appropriate to force her out of there, that I should do what I thought best. I told her that I was going to consider [the situation] and I was going to give her an answer tomorrow; so I order you to see what we can do about all of this, so that we can get out of this mess [enredo] as soon as possible.<sup>748</sup>

The note illustrates Mariana's expectations and Carlos's dilemma as both sought to find common ground to resolve the political crisis. Mariana probably knew at this point that she had become a liability; yet, as the content of the letter indicates, she expected her son to protect her interests at all costs. Her outlook was a combination of her strong personality and social and cultural norms that invested Spanish matriarchs with a great deal of authority.

Carlos followed Villaumbrosa's plan faithfully, leaving the palace on January 14 with the utmost secrecy. Although for the modern observer, the way Carlos took the big step is reminiscent of a comedy, perhaps even a farce, it was no laughing matter for those involved.<sup>749</sup> Carlos and Mariana spent that afternoon attending a play in honor of Archduchess Maria Antonia's birthday and later dined together. Carlos left to go to his chambers escorted by the Duke of Medinaceli, his *sumiller de corps*,<sup>750</sup> as etiquette required. After everyone had retired for the night, about ten in the evening, they acted. Carlos got up and dressed again, helped by Medinaceli. "With great demonstration of cleverness," reported a gazetteer, the king and his companions locked up attending

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<sup>748</sup> "Estube con mi madre y me dijo que bien podia creer que ella deseaba salir de este cuento y yo bi que tenia gran gana de no salir de alli pero me dijo que no obstante yo biera si era bien hechalla de alli pero que no obstante todo esto yo yciera lo que tubiera por bien yo con estos la dije que lo beria y la rresponderia mañana y asi te mando que beas lo que te parece que agamos en esto para salir quanto antes de este enredo." Holograph note by Carlos to the Duke of Medinaceli, n/d. ADM Sección Histórica, leg. 160, n. 73.

<sup>749</sup> The descriptions of these events have been taken from Maura, Carlos II y su corte, II:334 and BNM mss. 10129.

<sup>750</sup> This was the presiding office of the king's chambers, usually associated with favorites.



servants in a room in the Alcazar so that they would not report the king's flight. Carlos and Medinaceli went through the palace, crossed the gardens, and finally reached the palace's entrance, where the royal carriage was waiting to transport them to the Palace of the Buen Retiro. The Prince of Astillano, as mayor of the palace, had been warned merely two hours earlier about the king's arrival, expected at midnight. Carlos, accompanied by four nobles (Medinaceli, the Count of Talara, Cardinal Aragon, and the Prince of Astillano), was served by only two valets and one attendant. These were the only people aware that Carlos had left the Alcazar and his mother.<sup>751</sup> The surreptitious, arguably cowardly, manner in which Carlos—the sovereign ruler of the largest empire in the Western world—acted to separate himself from his mother is startling. Mariana's authority in familial, cultural, dynastic, and political terms cannot be underestimated, since the grown men helping the king seemed to have been as afraid of the queen mother as the young king. Could she have blocked their plans with a mere look at them and Carlos?

Mariana was not expected to accept the separation easily. The day after Carlos moved out, great care was taken to break the news to the queen; the unpleasant task was given to Villaumbrosa.<sup>752</sup> We have evidence of her initial reaction from a short letter she wrote to her relative and friend Sor Mariana de la Cruz,<sup>753</sup> in the royal convent, known as the Descalzas Reales:

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<sup>751</sup>*Novedades Sucedidas desde el dia 6 de noviembre del año 1675*, BNM mss. 10129, fs. 7v-8r. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 334.

<sup>752</sup> BNM mss. 10129, f. 8r. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 334.

<sup>753</sup> Sor Mariana de la Cruz was the illegitimate daughter of the Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand of Austria. Oliván, "Mariana de Austria en la encrucijada política," p. 408.

I do not doubt what you suggest in your note, that it was God's will to take for himself my son whom I loved with so much affection; and because of the great need that he may be suffering, I assure you that this blow has pierced my heart and that it will be necessary to believe that God's assistance will help me find resignation in his Divine Will, as I desire to do with all of my ability. But my feelings of sadness are great nevertheless. God has me here facing so much work! I ask you, although I know you always do, to entrust me [to God] so that I can tolerate this blow, since the tenderness I have for my son is so great that those feelings cannot just disappear. [Entrust] my son [to God] as well, although I hope he will not need his mercy. I wish I could come there as soon as possible so that I can console myself with you, something that I need to do very much so, I assure you. God protect you, from the Palace, today Thursday, 1677.<sup>754</sup>

The note exposes her initial shock at what had happened and her pain at being separated from her son. Portraying herself as more sorrowful than angry, Mariana did not allocate blame in this letter, as she did later. It is likely that people close to her suggested that the separation was inevitable and offered the best way to avoid civil war. Mariana's mild reaction and hurt tone could also be the result of a measure of ignorance regarding the extent of Carlos's participation in all these events. Judging in her subsequent letters and actions, she quickly recovered her will to fight, preserved her regal demeanor, and defied her enemies.

Widespread approval greeted Carlos's seemingly decisive actions. He evidently enjoyed the attention and his newfound freedom. A few days after he moved to the Buen

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<sup>754</sup> "Nunca pudiera dudar yo a lo que .... insinuais en buestro papel con la ocasion de haver[se] serbido Dios de llevarse para si a mi hijo a quien yo con tanto cariño amava, y por la grant falta que puede hacer a su persona, os aseguro que este golpe me tiene traspasado el corazon y que ha menester fiarse en las asistencias de Dios, para conformarme con su divina boluntad como lo deseo hacer con toda mi posibilidad, pero el sentimiento no puede dejar de ser muy grande, bendito sea Dios por todo, pues me tiene aqui para ber tantos trabajos, y os pido, aunque se el cuidado que teneis de hacerlo, me encomendeis para que me de tolerancia que la ternura no es facil que falte, y a mi hijo tambien aunque espero su misericordia no lo necesitara y os que estara guarde de el.. [D]eseo ir por alla quanto antes para consolarme con bos, que bien le necesito os aseguro, Dios os guarde de Palacio, oy jueves 1677." Mariana to sor Mariana de la Cruz. AGP Descalzas Reales, c. 6, exp. 31, f. 90.

Retiro, the king visited the Virgin of Atocha escorted by the bulk of the nobility.<sup>755</sup> The demonstrations of joy continued unabated, in public ceremonies and inside the palace. The nobility lavished exquisite gifts and attentions on the young king. Pedro of Aragon, for instance, presented Carlos with splendid tapestries and jewels valued at 300,000 ducats; the duchess of Bejar sent him a sumptuous outfit, adorned with diamond buttons, and embroidered with emeralds and rubies; the duke of Osuna offered the young king twenty-five horses with exquisite hangings.<sup>756</sup> Separating himself visibly and publicly from his mother was a strong statement; it meant he was finally assuming the office of king and would act in the future without interference from her. A chronicle described Carlos as “rejoicing in the sweetness of reigning.” “His face” reported the same chronicle, was “a house of pleasure,” and for those witnessing it, an “Aranjuez in its delights.”<sup>757</sup>

### **A Change of Regime**

Carlos’s separation from his mother on January 14 was the first step toward a change of regime, but, as we will see, one that could not be fully accomplished until Mariana actually left the court. Her political authority rested on so many layers of legitimacy that her mere presence in Madrid made it impossible for don Juan to

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<sup>755</sup> “el Rey n[uest]ro S[eño]r duia R[ea]l persona salio el día siguiente Sabado 16 a caballo a n[uest]ra S[eño]ra la R[ea]l de Atocha, con gran comitiva de Señores q[ue] lo han continuado assiendiendo...” BNM mss. 10129, f. 8v.

<sup>756</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II:334-5.

<sup>757</sup> “...y lo esta su magestad (regocijado) tanto de ver comencado a gustar las dulçuras del Reynar, que su rostro es un pensil florido, y casa de placer portatil, que donde quiera que la ven se alegran los coracones aun de los mas profundos, y adultos hipocondrios, sin que aya tenido el Pueblo en muchos días otro Aranjuez para sus delicias, que el de procurar ver la cara de su Amado Monarcha, Adonis hermoso, Ioben gallardo, y de todos el mas caro Alexandro, hijo de Filipe el Grande, siendolo tanto y tan ardiente desseo de verle con su Alteza al lado, que en las dilatadas salas y galerias del Regio Alcazar faltava capacidad par ael numeroso concurso de Embaxadores, Porceres, Ministros, y Cavalleros de todas fuertes, y E. s que las ocupavan a fin de lograr cada uno esta dicha.” BNM mss. 10129, fs. 11v-12r.

consolidate his power. Mariana's removal from the court and seat of government, therefore, had profound political meanings for Carlos and the monarchy.

As soon as Carlos moved out, leaving the Alcazar and making the Palace of the Buen Retiro his residence, preparations for don Juan's arrival were quickly set in motion. Following Villaumbrosa's suggestion, the king sent Cardinal Aragon to act as an intermediary. Aragon reached Hita on January 19 where don Juan was waiting to meet with him privately. In the following days, don Juan was given unequivocal evidence that the king really meant to support his bid for power. On January 21, Carlos issued a public statement, announcing that he had separated from his mother, transferred his residency to the Palace of the Buen Retiro, and declared that the queen would remain in the Alcazar with all "the decency appropriate to her royal person." He also proclaimed that he was waiting for don Juan's arrival, "whom I have called to this place, as you all know."<sup>758</sup> The following day, Carlos dismissed Mariana's guard, La Chamberga, from the city.<sup>759</sup> This was final blow. Mariana had been effectively dispossessed of the most important symbols of political authority: her son and her army. These two acts gave more weight to the act of separation, as she ceased from then on to be the machine that kept the government going, even as appearances of respect to her were duly observed.

Once don Juan could see that the king was safely isolated from his mother, he entered Madrid with a small following on January 23. By the end of January, Carlos and

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<sup>758</sup> "Habiendo juzgado conveniente a mi real servicio y mayor bien y consuelo a mis Reynos y de mis vasallos separarme de la Reyna mi s[eño]ra y mi Madre, quedando S[u] M[agesta]d por aora en Palacio con toda la decencia devida a su Real persona: He pasado a este sitio donde me hallo atendiendo con toda aplicacion al expediente de los negocios unibersales dela Monarquia, y para que me ayude ala mexor direccion de ellos que tanto conviene, aguardo tambien muy en breve a Don Juan de Austria mi hermano, a quien he llamado a este sitio (como os lo he participado) de que he querido advertiros para que os halleis con esta noticia." 21 Jan. 1677. AHN E. leg. 2661, exp. 154. This date differs from the one given by Maura.

<sup>759</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 337-8.

don Juan were both residing at the Palace of the Buen Retiro, while the queen continue to occupy the Alcazar. She continued to have some support but was in a much weakened political position. At this point, don Juan and his supporters became the mediators between mother and son in order to safeguard the king's political role. They directed all their efforts at keeping Mariana away from Carlos, because they feared a repetition of the incident that took place the day on his fourteenth birthday. The procession of San Blas, scheduled for February 3 and customarily attended by Mariana and Carlos, for example, was suspended to prevent an encounter between mother and son.<sup>760</sup>

Don Juan tried to capitalize on Mariana's loss of power. As soon as he reached Madrid, he extracted political revenge. He dismissed key political figures loyal to the queen from government bodies.<sup>761</sup> On January 24, he removed a powerful grandee, the Admiral of Castile from office and exiled him to his estates in Rioseco.<sup>762</sup> The Count of Aguilar, Lieutenant Colonel of the royal guard, also lost his offices and went into exile.<sup>763</sup> Other key people, including the presiding officer of the Council of Aragon, the secretary of the chamber, an ambassador escort, and even a buffoon named Alvarado, were

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<sup>760</sup> *Diario de Noticias*, p. 79.

<sup>761</sup> Some of his actions were quite controversial, detrimental to the institutional working of the monarchy, and unjustified. Specific examples are given in Maura, *Carlos II y su corte* and BNM Mss. 9399, folios, 65r-v. Don Juan continued to juggle the key offices in the councils, and this earned him a good deal of enemies as well, as reported in the gazettes and relations.

<sup>762</sup> *Diario de Noticias*, p. 72. The Admiral was the acting First Master of the Horse, after Valenzuela's fall, and as such had significant authority over an important section of the queen's royal household. Don Juan threatened those who followed his orders with severe punishment, furthering weakening the queen's position.

<sup>763</sup> He was also accused of having participated in a conspiracy to assassinate don Juan in 1675. *Diario de Noticias*, p. 76.

banished as well.<sup>764</sup> Don Juan reinstated those who had supported his 1675 bid for power and who had in turn been disgraced by the queen. Father Montenegro, the king's confessor, and Ramos del Manzano, the king's teacher, returned to their posts. Although eventually don Juan went too far and his actions alienated many, even among his supporters, he had *carte blanche* in early 1677.

Valenzuela bore the brunt of don Juan's revenge. Before Carlos had time to send his former Prime Minister to another location, the Duke of Medina Sidonia and the heir to the Duke of Alba, Antonio de Toledo, took matters into their own hands. They captured Valenzuela in the palace of El Escorial on January 22. The act, which violated ecclesiastical jurisdiction, provoked a diplomatic conflict with the pope, who protested to the king directly, arguing that because Valenzuela had taken refuge at the Escorial, he was effectively under ecclesiastical jurisdiction. He proceeded to demand Valenzuela's release and excommunicated the two nobles in question. Although the papal nuncio was called in to intervene, the situation was not resolved until much later. Political expediency overshadowed diplomatic concerns at this point and, without Mariana's support, Valenzuela fell into utter disgrace. He was taken in chains to Consuegra on January 26, while his wife, Maria of Ucedo, was forced to enter the Convent of Santa Ursula in Toledo.<sup>765</sup> On January 27, Carlos issued an amnesty to all those who had supported don Juan. He invalidated the royal grants given to Valenzuela, including the

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<sup>764</sup> For a list of all of those who were exiled, see BNM mss. 9399, f. 64v-65r and mss. 12,961<sup>(34)</sup>. Alvarado's property (valued at more than 200,000 ducats) was also seized. *Diario de Noticias*, p. 73 and 76.

<sup>765</sup> Ucedo's property was confiscated, and she was obligated to leave Madrid with absolutely nothing other than what she had on, pregnant and with small children. It is important to note as an illustration of male attitudes towards women that the Duke of Alba intervened on Ucedo's behalf. This powerful patriarch ensured that the woman received her personal belongings and an annual rent of 4,000 ducados to support herself and her children. *Diario de Noticias*, 73-74, 76-77.

grandeeship he had given him only a few months earlier. The rationale he used to justify such an unprecedented act was that he had given the royal grants “not from his own volition and freedom.”<sup>766</sup> That statement clearly indicted Mariana for having manipulated her son.

Mariana, who later referred to all the events leading to her exile as “demonstrations,” remained serene and even defiant. When rumors that the queen would be forced to move to the city of Alcalá spread around the court, a gazette reported that her ladies began to lament and cry, while the queen “continued reading when she received the news,” as if nothing had been said.<sup>767</sup> Reports of conspiracies against don Juan’s life were rampant and virtually all of them were associated with Mariana and her supporters.<sup>768</sup> One gazette, for instance, stated that the queen had actually fomented the plots against him.<sup>769</sup> Another suggested that the queen was directly involved in a plot to assassinate don Juan. Her plan was to hide a pistol in her sleeve and fire it the moment don Juan kissed her hand. Don Juan, allegedly warned by one of Mariana’s ladies, Leonor de Velasco, excused himself and did not attend the audience that was to take place on January 24.<sup>770</sup> This was not the only, if probably apocryphal, rumor of an assassination scheme. He reportedly said that so long as the queen remained in Madrid, his life was in

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<sup>766</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II:344.

<sup>767</sup> *Diario de Noticias*, p. 80.

<sup>768</sup> *Diario de Noticias*, p. 79, 89.

<sup>769</sup> “El P[adre] Montezón dijo á S[u] A[lteza] se guardase, porque le amenazaban grandes riesgos y asechanzas á su vida.... recelos que duran todo lo que tardase en salir la Reina, que es quien los alienta.” *Diario de Noticias*, 92.

<sup>770</sup> The episode sounds a little farfetched, although it was reported in several manuscripts. For example, see *Diario de Noticias*, p. 73, BNM mss. 2289, f. 38v-39r.

peril.<sup>771</sup> Don Juan took the rumors seriously.<sup>772</sup> The *Diario de Noticias* indicated that don Juan spent a substantial amount of money on a personal guard for protection.<sup>773</sup>

The court was in an unstable state, and clearly, Mariana's presence exacerbated the potential for disorder.<sup>774</sup> The queen gave no indication that she was willing to go quietly. Discussions about her fate took place in the highest political and diplomatic circles, although purportedly with "great difficulty," reported a gazetteer, since "the one condemned to exile was to be the mother, and the judge the son."<sup>775</sup> Several locations were considered, including some outside Spain. While don Juan wanted to banish the queen as far away as possible, diplomatic considerations and the intercession of key figures, including the Imperial Ambassador to Spain, the Count of Harrach, prevented such a move.<sup>776</sup> After lengthy discussions, the place chosen for Mariana's residence was the Alcazar of Toledo.

### **A Self-Elected Retirement**

Carlos and don Juan tried to preserve appearances, making it look as if Mariana was taking all the initiatives regarding her future. Carlos wrote to the Toledan officials on February 14, announcing to the civic authorities that his mother had decided to move

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<sup>771</sup> "Todo el tiempo que se detiene la Reina en salir de la corte hace muy mala obra á S[u] A[lteza], porque tiene mucha costa en detener la gente de su escolta, por no estar asegurado." *Diario de Noticias*, p. 80.

<sup>772</sup> *Diario de Noticias*, p. 84.

<sup>773</sup> *Diario de Noticias*, p. 80.

<sup>774</sup> *Diario de Noticias*, p. 82.

<sup>775</sup> "Entrose despues en el difencil punto de sacar la Reyna Madre de la Corte, que era lo que Don Juan mas esforzava, asistido de aquella os que con maior conato avian movido estas mudanzas; pero como la condenada a destierro havia de ser la Madre, y el Juez el Hijo, no se hacia facil la concecucion: mas fuese politica advertida en la suma de las cosas presentes, o docilidad no impropria en la edad, se resolvio, que saliese, y solo detubo la execucion la duda del lugar...." BNM mss. 9399, f. 64r.

<sup>776</sup> Laura Olivan, "Mariana de Austria en la encrucijada política."



there.<sup>777</sup> The officials responded to Carlos and Mariana on February 17 expressing feelings of honor. The same day, Carlos made the decision public. The royal decree required Mariana to “retire,” as was supposedly stipulated in his father’s testament, giving her less than two weeks to get her household ready in order to leave.<sup>778</sup> Mariana maintained a stoic demeanor and sent a courteous letter to the officials in Toledo.<sup>779</sup> Between mother and son, however, the fiction of a self-elected retirement could not be sustained. On February 18, Mariana sent Carlos a letter, reproaching him for the decision that had been forced upon her:

My son: I’m not sure why it is considered charity to do to a grief-stricken woman what is being done to me, without attending to the quality of my person and other circumstances, which should not escape your attention. Even though you tell me that the testament of the king, my lord and husband and your father (who enjoys a better crown now), ordered that I leave to Toledo, that it is not the case. And if he would have ordered such a thing (which he could have), he would have never agreed that [my departure] would be so sudden and under the threat of such violence, basically putting me in the position and clothing of a prisoner, a posture utterly indecorous and even insolent to my person; therefore, it would be more appropriate to give me enough time to put together my family (royal household), as befits a woman like myself. It is that hypocrite, who causes all of these problems, and he is nothing short of manipulating and deceiving you with his lies, as time will show you, for your detriment and that of my feelings, since I love you more than he does. I the Queen.<sup>780</sup>

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<sup>777</sup> Diego Suárez Quevedo, “Fiesta barroca y política en el reinado de Carlos II. Sobre el triunfal destierro a Toledo de Mariana de Austria (1677)” *Madrid. Revista de arte, geografía e historia* 3 (2000): 57-100, p. 66.

<sup>778</sup> She received a paper listing the potential members of the household that was to follow her to Toledo on 25 February, a week after Carlos’s decree. Evidently, everything was moving at an accelerated pace. AGP Reynados, Carlos II, c. 117, exp. 2.

<sup>779</sup> Suárez Quevedo, “Fiesta barroca y política.”

<sup>780</sup> “Hijo mío: No sé que á una afligida mujer sea caridad hacer lo que se hace conmigo, sin atender á la calidad de mi persona ni á otras circunstancias, que no deberán separarse de tu atención; pues aunque dices que el testamento del Rey, mi señor y marido, padre tuyo (que goza mejor corona), ordena que me vaya á Toledo, no es así. Y cuando lo mandara (que pudo), no dijera fuera tan rápidamente ni con la violencia que me aseguran se quiere intentar, poniéndome en representación y traje de presa, postura tan indecorosa cuanto atrevida á mi persona; y así, bueno será darme tiempo para la disposición de la familia de una mujer como yo, ya que tanto lo embaraza ese hipócrita, que está embelesándote y engañándote, como el tiempo te lo declarará, bien á costa tuya y de mi sentimiento, que te quiero más que él. Yo la Reina.” Mariana to Carlos, 18 February 1677, transcribed in Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II:355.

The anger and outrage of the queen are palpable; understandably because don Juan blatantly distorted the king's testament. Philip had given Mariana the option of retiring if she so desired. He had certainly not intended her retirement to be mandatory. In addition, Philip stipulated in his testament that she could choose any place as her permanent residence in the case she decided to move away from Madrid after her regency. He arranged for the queen to receive the splendid annual sum of 300,000 ducats for the rest of her widowhood and granted her political jurisdiction over the chosen city.<sup>781</sup> The queen's outrage, therefore, was fully justified. Mariana's letter clearly blamed don Juan, the "hypocrite," as the cause of all her problems, and the one who had "deceived" and "manipulated" Carlos. Mariana claimed to love the king more than don Juan did, a theme she continued to play on until her reconciliation with Carlos took place. Mariana's letter reveals a strong sense of self as a member of a powerful dynasty and as one who enjoyed a very special position within it. She clearly resented the indignities that had been forced upon her and continued to pressure her son to observe the proper respect for her person. Her signature in the style of formal official correspondence "I the queen" also affirmed her position, although she chose a different approach in her later missives to Carlos.

At this point, however, don Juan was received with widespread positive expectations, while Mariana had run out of options. For political expediency, Mariana's exile went forward, even at the risk of some serious diplomatic problems. Once her departure from Madrid was scheduled for March 2, communications with her son were

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<sup>781</sup> *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 56, p. 69.

largely broken off. From the following letter, which would be the last before her departure, it seems that Mariana accepted her momentary personal and political losses:

Son of my life: on the occasion of my departure and because of my affection, I cannot leave without telling you with how much pain and despair I leave without seeing you; and I assure you that even though I do not have this relief, I will never lose the obligations that I have as mother, because of the great love that I have for you. And I bless you, asking God to give you everything that I desire. I expect from you, because of the love you have for me, that you will always take into consideration what would be best for my consolation; I ask you to keep in mind all of my servants, whether those that come with me, attending me, or those that will stay inside and outside the Palace [in Madrid], and to favor them as much as you desire, something that I would appreciate very much because of their service to me. And do not hesitate to give me news about yourself often, something I desire so much and in order to have that consolation, seeing myself far from you; I would like to have news of your health, which is what matters so much. God be with you as I desire and will be. Your mother who loves you the most. Mariana<sup>782</sup>

This letter shows a significant change of tone. Gone are the accusations and defiant attitude; only the pain of the separation is left. The persuasive language of a mother's love begins to dominate her communication, a language that Mariana mastered completely in her subsequent personal correspondence with her son.

Mariana's tone of resignation was also echoed in her actions, an attitude that eventually and effectively turned public opinion to her benefit. A gazette reported that the queen, "denied of the consolation [of seeing her son], went down to enter the carriage, full of majesty, serenity, and equanimity; her dignified increased by the venerable veils

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<sup>782</sup> "Hijo mío de mi vida: Como llega la ocasión de mi partida, no me permite mi cariño por este medio me despida de ti sin representarte con cuánto dolor y desconsuelo me aparto sin verte, asegurándote, aunque me falte este alivio, que en mí nunca puede faltar la obligación de madre, por el amor tan grande que te tengo. Y te echo mi bendición, pidiendo a Dios te dé todo lo que yo te deseo, y esperando de ti, por el amor que me tienes, atenderás siempre á lo que condujere á mi mayor consuelo, y pidiendote tengas en la memoria á todos mis criados y criadas, así los que me van sirviendo como los que quedan dentro y fuera de Palacio, para que los favorezcas en todo lo que se ofreciere, que será para mí de mucha estimación, por lo que me han servido. Y no me dejes de dar muy á menudo noticias tuyas, por lo deseadas que serán de mí y para tener este consuelo, al verme más lejos de ti, de no carecer saber de tu salud, que tanto me importa. Dios te guarde, como deseo y he menester. De Palacio, 1º de Marzo de 1677. Tu madre que más te quiere, Mariana." Transcribed in Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 357.

that she wore.”<sup>783</sup> Already a change of perception had occurred: the person thus far seen as controlling the king’s will became the devoted mother, denied most basic consolation of her son’s presence. In fact, Don Juan began to feel the power of a mother’s love almost immediately. He was criticized for denying Mariana her wish to see her son before her departure: “[N]ot being possible that the king would not want to see her,” a gazetteer commented, and, “given his age and affection, only violence could have impeded such a thing.”<sup>784</sup>

As rumors of the events in Madrid circulated in foreign courts, Carlos and don Juan became the targets of criticism. The Queen of France, Maria Theresa of Austria (1638-1683), Mariana’s cousin, step-daughter, and friend, complained to her relatives in the Descalzas Reales about Carlos’s behavior.<sup>785</sup> “I cannot approve that they have forced the queen to leave Madrid,” she wrote to her cousin, “and more so that her son did not go to bid farewell to his mother.” She expressed her frustration openly: “I cannot suffer what they are doing with the queen mother.” “After all,” she protested, “[Mariana] is his mother and his father’s wife, and even if this was not enough, she was also a great princess.”<sup>786</sup> Maria Theresa told her cousin that Louis XIV strongly disapproved of

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<sup>783</sup> “...poseida de este desconuelo... vaxo a tomar el coche... llena de magestad, entereza, e igualdad, a que ayudaban las venerables tocas que llevaba...” BNM mss. 9399, f. 66r.

<sup>784</sup> “no siendo posible...que en la edad y cariño del Rey pudiese impedirlo otra cosa que la violencia.” BNM mss. 9399, f. 66.

<sup>785</sup> Only three years apart in age, they have been close friends until the Infanta left Madrid to marry Louis XIV in 1659. Their friendship was abundantly documented and mentioned in Philip IV’s correspondence to the Condesa de Paredes. Pilar Vilela Gallego, *Felipe IV y la Condesa de Paredes: Una Colección epistolar del Rey en el Archivo General de Andalucía* (Sevilla: Junta de Andalucía, 2005). I thank Dr. Laura Oliván for the reference.

<sup>786</sup> “...Dios quiera que todo lo de por alla este ya bien y de acierto en el gobierno que no puedo aprobar el que ayan obligado a la Reyna de salir de Madrid y luego su hijo no hirse a despedir de ella que cierto no puedo sufrirlo lo que hazen con ella, y el pariente que tu no entiendes es mi marido que como es assido siempre buen hijo desapueba lo que mi hermano haze...” Maria Theresa to the Descalzas Reales, 14 April 1677. AGP Descalzas Reales, c. 7, exp. 1.

Carlos's behavior, and even made her husband an example for Carlos, affirming that he had always been "an obedient and a good son of his mother."<sup>787</sup> Emperor Leopold I voiced his concerns about his sister directly to the king, at one point asking his nephew to protect Mariana's "decorum." Don Juan eventually paid a high political price for meddling with the king's mother, the former king's widow, and a "great princess."

### **The Hand without the Scepter**

In fact, it was not easy to settle Mariana in her "retirement." Don Juan and Carlos had to find an appropriate residence, organize a royal household to accompany her, and design the proper rituals of entry into the city. In fulfilling these highly symbolic tasks, they faced the same dilemma: they needed to preserve the queen mother's "decorum," while trying to eliminate all the vestiges of her political authority. They needed Mariana to cooperate in the fiction of a self-elected retirement. Mariana complied to an extent, although she continued to defend her royal status in every possible way. All sides were forced to negotiate and compromise in order to achieve Mariana's move without failing to heed the appropriate familial, dynastic, and political hierarchies.

Negotiating the location and the place of Mariana's residency turned out to be a thorny political issue. Mariana fought to retain as many symbols of her royal authority as she could, demanding, for instance, to live in a royal palace. First, she rejected the offer of moving into a private palace, justifying her refusal by affirming that she was not a

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<sup>787</sup> "...yo no puedo dejar de dezirte que no apruebo lo que mi hermano a echo de hirse sin dezir nada a la Reyna que en efecto es su madre y por mas razones que tubiesse para ello no son bastantes para vasalla.... y cierto no esta aconsejado y en esto no soy sola yo quien lo dize que ay otra perssona que es mi pariente que lo desaprueba pues assido siempre obediente y buen hijo de su madre..." Maria Theresa to the Descalzas Reales, 2 March 1677. She repeated the idea in her letter of 14 April 1677. AGP Descalzas Reales, c. 7, exp. 1.

“subject of the king.”<sup>788</sup> She declined the offer to reside even temporarily in the archbishop’s palace in Toledo. She purportedly said that she was not a “housekeeper of a priest” (*ama de cura*) to go live in such a place.<sup>789</sup> The *Diario de Noticias* also reported that Mariana had considered her brother’s suggestion that she retire permanently at the royal convent of the Descalzas Reales, but rejected the idea.<sup>790</sup> She chose instead to live in a royal palace with a full, albeit modest, household. In the end, all agreed that Mariana would reside temporarily in the Royal Palace in Aranjuez, until the renovations of the royal residence in Toledo were completed. Her attitude can certainly be interpreted as an affirmation of her royal identity and construed as a statement that she had no intention of abandoning her public and political life completely.

The formation of Mariana’s household in Toledo required a good deal of negotiation and compromise, partly because there were no previous models in the history of Habsburg Spain.<sup>791</sup> The resulting arrangements provide the first indication of how mother and son began to smooth over their differences. A week after Carlos’s decree of expulsion, Mariana was given a list of potential members of her royal household. This list included almost two hundred attendants and servants, without counting members of her private chamber and the guards, another hundred people and perhaps more.<sup>792</sup> Mariana

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<sup>788</sup> “De la Reina se dice, que ha de estar en Palacio con su hijo aunque pese a d[on] Juan, ó se ha de ir á Alemania: que ella no es vasalla del Rey; que á lo que vino á España fué á dar sucesión, que ya la hay.” *Diario de Noticias*, p. 79.

<sup>789</sup> *Diario de Noticias*, p. 93.

<sup>790</sup> *Diario de Noticias*, p. 97.

<sup>791</sup> The organization of Mariana’s household in Toledo, provided a model for Mariana of Neoburg’s exile in same city, when the Bourbons assumed the Spanish throne in 1700. AGP Reynados Carlos II, c. 117, exp. 2.

<sup>792</sup> The preliminary list was given to Mariana on 25 February 1677. AGP Reynados Carlos II c. 117, exp 2.

ended up with a much lower number than originally proposed: about ninety-eight attendants were listed in the court's "payroll," including the ladies of her chamber, thirty men to serve as her guard, and others hired locally in various positions. Composed approximately of 150 people, this was a significant reduction from the number that had been originally planned.<sup>793</sup>

The size of her household, especially when compared to the one she had in Madrid during the minority, undeniably marked her loss of political power. The composition of the household in Toledo, however, faithfully resembled the one in Madrid and provided the illusion that she was being treated in a properly decorous manner. The traditional German and Spanish royal guards, albeit in reduced numbers, were maintained in Toledo as part of her permanent escort, even though the custom was followed only with reigning sovereigns. They had an important symbolic function, as a permanent and visual reminder of her regal presence in the city.<sup>794</sup> Every time Mariana left the Palace, at least twenty-four guardsmen attended her.<sup>795</sup> These two guard units were nevertheless a far cry from Mariana's personal army, which had been banished to the Aragonese front.

Mariana's entry into the Imperial city took place with great pomp and ceremony. The celebrations contained multiple symbols associated with the Habsburgs and ruling monarchs, calling attention away from the events in Madrid. The queen arrived on April 1, 1677<sup>t</sup> in the late afternoon, to the city that had become a "Babylon of confusion due to

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<sup>793</sup> Many ended up doubling up in more than one position. AGP Reynados Carlos II, c. 117, exp. 2.

<sup>794</sup> "soldados de la guarda: dos escuadras de soldados de la guarda, una de españoles y otra de Alemanes, de a veinte y cinco soldados cada una incluso el Cavo." AGP Reynados Carlos II, c. 117, exp. 2.

<sup>795</sup> The guards could not be absent, whether they had asked for permission to return to Madrid, were dead, or otherwise missing, "in which case they need to be replaced." "Etiqueta de la servidumbre en Toledo de la Reina madre de Carlos II." AGP Reynados Carlos II, c. 118, exp. 1.

the large number of people that had arrived from all over.”<sup>796</sup> Surrounded by her ladies and escorted by the pages of Cardinal Aragon, she entered the Toledan gates through the Puerta de Bisagra. This was not a random choice: the gates had been built in 1556 and prominently displayed the coat of arms of Emperor Charles V, Mariana’s great-great-grandfather.<sup>797</sup> Under this arch, she was treated to a simulacrum of a battle (a so-called *Suiza*) enacted by more than three hundred men representing harquebusiers and pikemen.<sup>798</sup> The noisy spectacle, punctuated by the continuous explosion of gunpowder and the sound of trumpets, took place among the elaborate decorations designed specifically for the occasion.<sup>799</sup> The city also displayed a military tent that had been used by Emperor Charles V himself, displayed for the first time in more than one hundred years.<sup>800</sup> After attending a religious service in the imposing Cathedral of Toledo, Mariana was honored with masques, luminaries, fireworks, processions, equestrian shows, civic rituals, and dances (including a so-called dance of hermaphrodites). The procession culminated in the Alcazar amidst “the tolling of the bells [that] could be heard all over the city.”<sup>801</sup> The entire ritual pointed out to Mariana’s position as ruler and, in particular, to her military enterprises during the last ten years.

The main theme of the festivities in Toledo was a celebration of the past and of a political authority that was now ending. The text recounting the queen’s triumphal entry

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<sup>796</sup> The trip had been postponed by the Easter celebrations and the weather. See Suárez Quevedo, “Fiesta barroca y política.”

<sup>797</sup> Suárez Quevedo, “Fiesta barroca y política,” p. 67.

<sup>798</sup> Suárez Quevedo, “Fiesta barroca y política,” p. 89, app. 20.

<sup>799</sup> Suárez Quevedo, “Fiesta barroca y política,” p. 89, app. 20.

<sup>800</sup> Suárez Quevedo, “Fiesta barroca y política,” pp. 67 and 71.

<sup>801</sup> Suárez Quevedo, “Fiesta barroca y política,” 66.



into the city, published a few months after the event, emphasized this idea. In a concrete effort to avoid the perception that she had been exiled, the author cleverly justified Mariana's relocation. He suggested that as had other great rulers, including Charles V, Mariana had chosen to retire from public view and specifically left the seat of government "In order to not let the hand be seen without the Scepter, in the same place where the Scepter was seen in the hand."<sup>802</sup> Mariana had been forced to leave Madrid. However, the author, and everyone else involved in this delicate matter, presented the entire episode as her personal decision and one well grounded in venerable political traditions.

### **Settling into Retirement**

Everyone at court recognized Mariana's position in the political and dynastic hierarchies and those close to the king were most threatened by her ascendancy over him. During the first several months of her exile, therefore, their main goal was to keep the queen mother away from her son. Thus, Mariana's political and personal isolation was quite marked at first. Her difficulties during the early months of her exile were compounded by a variety of factors, including positive expectations at the court about the new regime, lack of regular communication with her son, and the management of her household by a supporter of don Juan. This was probably the most difficult period of her exile, not only for the political losses that she suffered, but also at a personal level. Cardinal Aragon, who escorted Mariana to Aranjuez and Toledo and thus had the opportunity to observe her closely, commented to his brother that the queen "loved her

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<sup>802</sup> "En determinandose a dejar el Trono, no han querido que se vea la mano sin el cetro en el mismo lugar donde se vio el Cetro en la mano." Suárez Quevedo, "Fiesta barroca y política," p. 62.

son excessively (*desatinadamente*) without thinking about anything else.”<sup>803</sup> Mariana complained about suffering from recurrent migraine headaches (*jaquecas*), a lifetime ailment that seems to have worsened during this period.<sup>804</sup>

A brief note Mariana wrote to the nuns at the Descalzas Reales reveals her state of mind:

I am very certain of what you represent to me in the letter of the 9<sup>th</sup> and I appreciate the gift basket<sup>805</sup> and the care that all of you put in entrusting me to God, since I have so much affection for that community. *I have never needed these [prayers] more than I do at this moment, although I try to accept God's Will at all times*; I was sorry that I did not have time to say goodbye to the Abbess personally, who I always remember as is fitting and as I do all the other religious women there; send them all my regards. God be with you; from Aranjuez on 19 March 1677. I the Queen (my emphasis).<sup>806</sup>

Composed a little more than two weeks after her departure from Madrid, this short missive reveals how hard she had taken all the events of the last few months.<sup>807</sup> Her communications with her relatives in the Descalzas, however, simultaneously demonstrated that she was very much abreast of the situation in Madrid. The women in

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<sup>803</sup> “... Me parece que la Reina le quiere a su hijo desatinadamente, sin acordarse de otra cosa...” Pascual de Aragon to his brother, Pedro” 15 March 1677; cited in Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 364.

<sup>804</sup> Mariana complained of frequent migraine headaches in a brief note she wrote to the Abess of the Descalzas Reales, “las jaquecas no dejan de molestarte” Mariana to the Abess in 1678 (month is unclear). AGP Descalzas C. 6 exp. 31. Her migraine headaches were a constant theme in her correspondence with Carlos as well.

<sup>805</sup> The nuns at the Descalzas sent gifts to the Royal family often, many of the letters they wrote to the Convent, acknowledge the “basquets” the nuns sent which contain fruits, flowers, and foodstuffs.

<sup>806</sup> “Estoy muy cierta de lo que me representais en vuestra carta de 9, estimandoos el regalo de las cestilla y el cuidado de encomendarme a Dios en essa comunidad que tanto cariño tengo pues nunca mas necesito desto que aora, aunque siempre dejando conformara con la boluntad divina en todos tiempos quanto senti no poderme despedirme antes de la abadessa cosas pues en mi siempre tendra la memoria della como tan propia a todas las relijiosas poneis mis recados. Dios os guarde de Aranjuez a 19 de Marzo 1677. Yo la Reyna.” AGP Descalzas Reales, c. 6, exp. 31, folio 46r.

<sup>807</sup> Her friendships with religious women, whom she visited in many convents, continued throughout her life. We have evidence of some of these friendships not only from the letters that survived from the Convent of the Descalzas, but also from her testament, since she left small items to some of the nuns and Abesses of different religious institutions. BNM mss. 18,735.13. Copy of Mariana of Austria's testament. Mariana was reported to have intensified her spiritual devotions during her exile. BNM mss. 9399, f. 77v.

that important royal institution formed a communication network that extended to her relatives in foreign courts.<sup>808</sup>

Even though she evidently had a hard time adapting to the new situation, she was not content to wait for things to change. Mariana began to work actively to reconcile with her son and thus regain what she saw as her rightful position at court. The letters to Carlos from the early part of her exile do not survive, but evidently she continued sending them, because manuscripts and gazettes frequently mention them. She probably received intermittent responses or none at all. It is not unreasonable to reach such conclusion, because in her correspondence with the Count of Harrach during the first six months of her exile, the queen's frustration at being left out of the life of her son and the monarchy is quite evident.<sup>809</sup> Mariana wrote frequently to the ambassador, who was a trusted confidant and an important link with the court. She often lamented the lack of information about the situation in Madrid and expressed to Harrach her desire to have her own courier, although it was very unlikely that she would be given one at that point.

Mariana's isolation was to a great extent the result of specific strategies followed by don Juan, who wished to erase the queen mother's presence from the court's political networks, from private spaces, and from the king's mind. The exile of Mariana's supporters, which began even before the queen left the court, continued throughout the entire period of don Juan's tenure in office. Don Juan attempted to lessen Mariana's

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<sup>808</sup> The Convent of the Descalzas Reales has been long recognized as an important center of diplomacy and power. See, for example, Sánchez, *The Empress, the Queen and the Nun*.

<sup>809</sup> According to Laura Oliván, Mariana kept an active communication with the Imperial Ambassador to Madrid, the Count of Harrach, from the moment of her exile until at least late summer 1677. Oliván, "Mariana de Austria en la encrucijada política," p. 410-416. There are about 25 letters between Mariana and Harrach, from 9 March to 10 August 1677. I thank Dr. Laura Oliván for providing this information, e-mail communication 29 April, 2010.

presence as well in the royal convent of the Descalzas Reales that had shown and continued to show absolute support for the queen, but also because Carlos visited it frequently.<sup>810</sup> In addition, don Juan rescheduled the traditional royal vacation to Aranjuez because it was too close to Toledo, planning instead a trip to Aragon so that Carlos could swear the *fueros*. Don Juan's motives fit his political aims, but it is also undeniable that the trip offered him a chance to keep the king as far from his mother as possible.<sup>811</sup> The journey to Aragon began on April 21, relatively soon after Mariana left Madrid, and ended on June 12. Harrach requested on behalf of the queen that she be allowed to see her son before his departure. Mariana found the request humiliating, but agreed to it.<sup>812</sup> In any case, it was denied.

Don Juan tried to control the queen through the organization and management of her royal household. At first, Mariana's household in Toledo lacked a *mayordomo mayor*, a post eventually assumed by the Marquis of Mancera, who became an important source of support for Mariana. In the meantime, Mariana was under the careful watch of Cardinal Aragon, who had escorted the queen out of Madrid, stayed with her in Aranjuez, and later guided her to Toledo. The relationship between Mariana and Cardinal Aragon had been tense throughout the regency, although it is undeniable that Mariana had relied on the Cardinal's mediation at crucial moments during her rule. It is clear that Aragon, as

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<sup>810</sup> Eleanor Goodman, "Conspicuous in her Absence: Mariana of Austria, Juan José of Austria, and the Representation of her Power," in *Queenship in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*, 163-184. Don Juan had his own connections with the Convent; his natural daughter, Sor Margarita of Austria, was a professed nun at the Descalzas Reales and is mentioned often in the Maria Theresa's correspondence. In spite of this, he could never compete with the extent of support Mariana commanded in that important Royal institution.

<sup>811</sup> The *Diario de Noticias* reported that when the king asked a coach driver in how many hours could he take him to Toledo from Aranjuez, don Juan decided at once to set the date of trip to Aragon for 21 April. See entry for Friday, 19 March, p. 101.

<sup>812</sup> Oliván, "Mariana de Austria en la encrucijada política," p. 412.

Archbishop of Toledo, member of the Regency Council, the State Council, and holder of other important political offices possessed much moral and political authority. Clearly both Mariana and don Juan accepted his involvement. He was an important figure during the minority and had been instrumental in thwarting don Juan's two attempted coups in 1669 and 1675.<sup>813</sup> His timely intervention in early 1677 successfully avoided a full-fledged civil war. Aragon, at this point, however, was not inclined to support Mariana's restitution and he thus became her enemy. Aragon exercised a measure of control over Mariana in Toledo. She had to suffer, for example, the further humiliation of a reduction of her household expenses, which was to be implemented by the Archbishop. She saved face by requesting them before they were imposed on her.<sup>814</sup>

Don Juan's strategy had its own logic. Mariana's political authority rested on so many layers of legitimacy that he felt compelled to eliminate any and all symbols that called attention to her inherent rights. Changing the location of the equestrian statue of Philip IV provides the best case in point. During the regency, Mariana ordered the imposing bronze moved from its original location in the queen's gardens in the Palace of the Buen Retiro to a much more symbolic and public space.<sup>815</sup> She placed it in the most conspicuous location she could find. Philip IV's statue towered over the principal door of the Alcazar, greeting court officers, visitors, and representatives of foreign powers. Placing such a powerful visual reminder of Mariana's legitimate right to rule in the building that served as the royal family's residence and the central seat of government

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<sup>813</sup> Aragon died on 28 September 1677, Estenaga y Echevarría, *El Cardenal de Aragón*, p. II: 246.

<sup>814</sup> Oliván, "Mariana de Austria en la encrucijada política."

<sup>815</sup> The bronze monument had been cast in Florence by Pietro Tacca, arriving in Madrid during the summer of 1642. Barbeito, *El Alcázar de Madrid*, p. 117.

had an obvious political aim. Don Juan evidently found the location of the monument annoying enough to undertake the equally monumental task of removing it from its symbolic position. Don Juan wanted the statute returned to its original location before Carlos's expected arrival in Madrid on June 12. After toiling with the project for more than a month and holding at least one hundred masses for its successful completion, the task was completed by late May 1677.<sup>816</sup> The enterprise became the talk of the city, giving plenty of ammunition to satirists, who mocked don Juan with another clever riddle:

For what purpose did don Juan come to Madrid?  
To lower the horse and to raise the price of bread

[A que vino el Señor don Juan?  
A bajar el caballo y subir el pan.]<sup>817</sup>

As early as 1677, at the very pinnacle of his power, don Juan had already become the target of vicious political attacks in print.<sup>818</sup> Don Juan evidently had gathered enough support to ensure Mariana's exile, but the difficulties he faced to obliterate her from the entire court structure were almost insurmountable.

### **The International, Diplomatic, and Dynastic Politics of Motherhood**

When Carlos returned from his journey to the kingdom of Aragon on June 12, he may have found one of the many symbolic reminders of his mother's political authority

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<sup>816</sup> See Barbeito for a detailed explanation of the complicated process of bringing a monument of such proportions down from its location. Barbeito, *El Alcázar de Madrid*, pp. 178-180.

<sup>817</sup> *Diario de Noticias*, p. 106. This is only one of the many verses composed on the subject of the equestrian monument. See Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, appendixes.

<sup>818</sup> One of don Juan's most sardonic and fierce opponents, the Jesuit Juan Cortes Osorio, wrote several texts against him. See, for example, BNM mss. 18211 "Vision de Visiones que tuvo una Beata de la Legua." This text, written as early as 1677, shows that opposition to don Juan's regime began shortly after his rise to power. This and other texts by Osorio have been transcribed by Mercedes Etreros, ed. *Juan Cortés Osorio. Invectiva Política contra don Juan José de Austria* (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1984).

gone as he entered the Alcazar, but a diplomatic event soon drew Mariana back into his life and that of the monarchy. On June 17, the Count of Harrach publicly announced the Emperor's ratification of his daughter's marriage to Carlos and he expected the king to do the same.<sup>819</sup> The marriage to Archduchess Maria Antonia had been negotiated by Mariana and was supposed to have taken place by proxy on 9 December 1676 in the city of Passau. The new political realities, however, brought proceedings to a sudden halt. The correspondence between Harrach and Mariana indicates that the queen had been actively working behind the scenes to push for the marriage.<sup>820</sup> She was in direct communication with the ambassador, who was her staunch supporter and personal friend. In fact, Harrach had written and distributed a scathing attack on don Juan in early January of 1677, as Mariana's exile was about to become a reality. Like Villaumbrosa's paper, Harrach's text was copied in manuscript form, circulated in Madrid, and probably also outside Spain.<sup>821</sup> Harrach's official petition on behalf of Leopold I made as soon as Carlos returned from his journey was a calculated political blow to the new regime and an attempt to aid the queen mother's cause. As such, it provoked strong criticism in the State Council.<sup>822</sup>

Carlos's marriage to Maria Antonia would have had significant political consequences for Mariana. The little archduchess was still a minor (she was eight years old), yet, she would have become queen-consort of Spain with succession rights to the

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<sup>819</sup> AHN E. leg. 2799. 16 June 1677.

<sup>820</sup> Mariana's letters to Harrach confirm that Mariana wrote to Carlos and don Juan, urging them to confirm the marriage, and informed the Emperor about the developments on the topic. Oliván, "Mariana de Austria en la encrucijada política," p. 414.

<sup>821</sup> "Al Señor don Juan de Austria el Embajador de Alemania." ADM Histórica leg. 159.

<sup>822</sup> Consultation of 18 June 1677. AHN E. leg. 2799.

throne.<sup>823</sup> Mariana had strong claims to a guardianship if the archduchess moved to Spain, as Philip IV's testament established.<sup>824</sup> Carlos's marriage to Maria Antonia would, therefore, have required Mariana's presence at court. Harrach's public announcement had the clear purpose of forcing a response from Carlos and his ministers.<sup>825</sup> Don Juan and the new regime had therefore very good reasons to wish to void the marriage alliance.

Breaking the engagement officially, however, could have caused a diplomatic disaster. Spain and the Holy Roman Empire were military and political allies in the middle of a war against a very powerful France. While Leopold fought against Louis XIV's forces in the Spanish Low Countries, Spain provided the Empire with subsidies to carry on the military efforts.<sup>826</sup> Peace negotiations in Nijmegen were already underway and the Confederates were in a much weakened position with respect to France and its allies.<sup>827</sup> To make matters worse, when Mariana negotiated the marriage to the archduchess, all European rulers were officially notified in September and October 1676 in order to publicize Spain's alliance with the Empire.<sup>828</sup> Mariana's decision in 1676 was not simply based on familial and dynastic considerations, but formed an essential part of her foreign policy. Carlos's marriage, therefore, became an important diplomatic and

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<sup>823</sup> The fact that Maria Antonia could have been the first queen consort with succession rights to the throne in her own right was extensively discussed in the State Council deliberations, and is clearly established in the capitulations of the marriage. AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>824</sup> AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>825</sup> This can be gathered from the consultation of the State Council of 18 June and 2 July 1677. AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>826</sup> This topic was also extensively debated by the Council of State during 1677. See consultations in AHN E. Leg. 2799 and the consultation of 15 August 1677 in AHN E. leg. 2796.

<sup>827</sup> Anon. *The History of the Treaty of Nimueguen with Remarks on the Interest of Europe In relation to that Affair. Translated out of French* (London, 1681).

<sup>828</sup> Copies of the letters can be found in AHN E. leg. 2799.



political matter for the new regime to resolve, and the decision to confirm or reject it would provide a public statement about where the monarchy was going.<sup>829</sup>

Carlos and his ministers could ill afford to slight the Emperor and dissolve the marriage in the midst of a joint military campaign and peace negotiations. Carlos needed at least a temporary solution and summoned his State Council to debate the matter. The deliberations, which continued throughout 1677, reveal the significance of the marriage for the future of the monarchy and the impossibility of acting on the matter without Mariana's intervention. During the deliberations of July 8, 1677, the Spanish ministers concluded that the marriage should neither be confirmed nor rejected, but left pending, as the campaigns for the year were about to begin and the peace negotiations were underway.<sup>830</sup> Clearly, they wanted to preserve the alliance with the Empire, but were already aiming to establish a long-lasting peace with France and seal it with a matrimonial deal. In a consultation of August 2, the ministers decided that the best course of action was to leave the door open for a matrimonial alliance with France in order to secure the peace.<sup>831</sup>

In the summer of 1677, for both political and practical reasons, Carlos and his ministers chose Maria Louisa of Orleans as the future queen of Spain. Unlike Maria Antonia, who was still a child, Maria Louisa was old enough to give birth. Thus, the French princess could be used to ensure the peace with France and to secure the

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<sup>829</sup> Don Juan's regime could not avoid rumors that Spain was ready to cede the Low Countries to France, a point of great concern for the Emperor. Also discussed during the deliberation of 8 July 1677. AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>830</sup> AHN E. leg. 2799, AHN E. leg. 2799 and the consultation of 15 August 1677 in AHN E. leg. 2796.

<sup>831</sup> Consultation of 2 August 1677. AHN E. leg. 2799.

succession both.<sup>832</sup> Ministers decided that the best course of action was to keep the choice of the bride carefully hidden from the Emperor and Mariana, who did not find out about Carlos's choice until 1679.<sup>833</sup> The Council also agreed neither to confirm nor reject Carlos's marriage to the little archduchess, so that Leopold would remain willing to continue with the military campaigns in the Low Countries. In keeping the little archduchess tied to Carlos, Spanish ministers not only protected an important alliance between Spain and the Empire but, most importantly, they prevented the Emperor from making a matrimonial alliance with the French. Maria Antonia was still the heiress to the Spanish Crown and much too valuable to be left up for grabs.<sup>834</sup>

The diplomatic strategy, therefore, consisted in appeasing the Emperor while resisting his demands. To accomplish this delicate task, the ministers concluded that Carlos should ask his mother to mediate. Cardinal Aragon, for instance, argued that because she had originally negotiated the marriage, Mariana was best placed to mediate between her brother and her son. Aragon mentioned that Leopold's evident love for his sister might help smooth things over. He suggested that Carlos appeal to the queen as a son and openly ask her to intervene on his behalf. The Cardinal believed that Mariana's "tender love" for the king would prevail above her own personal feelings and that her ties with the Emperor would allow her to solve Carlos's predicament.<sup>835</sup>

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<sup>832</sup> AHN E. leg. 2799. I will return to this topic in the following chapter.

<sup>833</sup> This is confirmed by the correspondence Mariana kept with Harrach. See Oliván, "Mariana de Austria en la encrucijada política," p. 414-415. See chapter 6 for the resolution of Carlos' marriage.

<sup>834</sup> The State Council deliberated this point at length. They feared that a public announcement that Carlos did not intend to marry his niece would push Leopold to marry his daughter to the French dauphin. AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>835</sup> "Lo mismo Juzga el Cardenal se devia executar con la Reyna n[uest]ra S[eño]ra en los terminos de hixo a Su Mag[esta]d de que tan tiernamente ama a V[uestra] Mag[esta]d y que reconosca proviene este

Following the suggestions of the State Council, Carlos wrote to his uncle, explaining that his conscience and responsibility forced him to consider the central concern of his subjects: to secure the succession. His ministers had unanimously demanded that he marry a bride closer to his age, Carlos explained to Leopold. Thus, he could not ratify the marriage with the archduchess. His decision should not affect the peace negotiations in Nijmegen, he argued, and their common enemies should not suspect that anything had changed between them. He duly notified Leopold that he was sending a copy of the letter to his mother, “because it is in conformity with my interests that she be informed of its contents.”<sup>836</sup>

Leopold responded to Carlos that the ratification of the marriage was essential to guarantee an advantageous peace and preserve the future of their dynasty. He thanked Carlos for assurances that the rumors that Spain was prepared to cede the Low Countries to France were false. He also asked for prompt payment of the subsidies, essential for continuing with the war effort.<sup>837</sup> The Emperor ended his letter with a rebuke to his nephew regarding Mariana’s situation: he asked Carlos to ensure that the queen was treated with the proper respect and to then follow with a public demonstration of

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dictamen y deliveracion de V[uestra] Mag[esta]d assi ponderandose lo con mas llaneza que al S[eñor] Emp[erador]... y pidiendola pase los officios con el S[eñor] Emperador que deve esperar de una Madre que oy mas necesita lo sea para lo que lleba expressado, por que este puesto lo Juzga por preciso y mas quando podia creer Su Mag[esta]d lo que se viene a la cons[ideraci]on si se executase el matrimonio ajustado y que en esto estando la Reyna n[uest]ra S[eñora] en el empeño de haverlo hecho y juzgado por lo conveniente, es muy probable pueda influir en su herma[n]o sino lo tomase como debe...” Cardinal Aragon’s opinion recorded during the deliberations of 8 July 1677; AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>836</sup> Copies of the letter Carlos wrote to the Emperor on July 30, 1677. AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>837</sup> See consultation of 8 July 1677 for a summary of Leopold’s response. AHN E. Leg. 2799.

whatever measures Carlos took in this regard.<sup>838</sup> As Carlos had done, Leopold also sent copies of his letter to his sister.<sup>839</sup> By the end of 1677, Carlos and Leopold had reached an agreement. Carlos promised he would not make any final decision on the issue of his marriage until there was “common agreement.”<sup>840</sup> It should be noted that Carlos and the Emperor penned their own letters, stressing the familial nature of this major political event. Most importantly, Mariana’s position as royal matriarch called for her direct participation in this crucial political, diplomatic, and dynastic affair, and at least for the moment lessened the harsh conditions of her exile.

### **Encouraging Signs**

Already by the end of 1677, Mariana’s situation had perceptibly improved. The first change had taken place by the end of her first summer of exile. Carlos’s trip to Aragon ended in June, shortly followed by Harrach’s public request to the king to ratify the marriage to Maria Antonia. Harrach’s petition brought Mariana back into the center of politics and into her son’s life, if only discreetly at first. The matrimonial alliance with the Empire also restricted don Juan’s ability to isolate the queen from her son. Leopold’s request to Carlos to observe the queen’s decorum must have had some weight, suggesting that the king’s behavior toward his mother could be construed as inappropriate. When

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<sup>838</sup> “...pide atienda V[uestra] Mag[est]ad al mayor decoro de la Reyna n[uest]ra S[eñor]a y que esto sea con tales demostraciones publicas que el Mundo las conozca assi quedando con particular estimación a lo que V[uestra] Mag[esta]d ha proveido a este fin...” Copy of the letter of 30 September 1679. AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>839</sup> “...haviendo participado a la Reyna nra Señora el contenido en esta carta en consecuencia de haver V[uestra] Mag[esta]d executado lo mismo con la suya.” This is a summary of the letter by the secretary in the consultation, probably quoted almost verbatim as was the custom. See consultation of 19 November 1677. AHN E. leg. 2799.

<sup>840</sup> “asegurando a V[uestra] M[agestad] que no se inovara cosa alguna en esta materia sin sabiduria de V[uestra] M[agestad] y de comun acuerdo...” Carlos to the Emperor, 16 December 1677 (copy). Underlined text in the original. AHN E. leg. 2796.

Harrach's embassy in Spain ended in August,<sup>841</sup> Mariana lost an important source of support, but her situation had at least partially improved. Queen Maria Theresa wrote to the Descalzas Reales in August and expressed her happiness at knowing that "the queen was settling into her retirement." She also hoped that "God will get Mariana through this ordeal since she is kind and innocent of everything that has been said about her."<sup>842</sup>

Don Juan had settled into his role of Prime Minister as well, although discontent with his regime was already smoldering. Some writings that circulated at court presented him as fearful of Mariana. A gazette, for example, reported that don Juan's preoccupation with Carlos's natural love for his mother contributed to his sudden signs of aging.<sup>843</sup> "Don Juan," wrote another gazetteer, "is more preoccupied with conserving the king than the kingdom and continues to register the letters that go back and forth to and from Toledo."<sup>844</sup> The void left by Mariana as a maternal figure prompted at least two gazettes to see don Juan scrambling to act as a mother-substitute: he "began to comb and to cut the king's hair, as if a comb or anything else could be more caring, affectionate, or natural than the love of his mother."<sup>845</sup>

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<sup>841</sup> Harrach left Madrid on September 1677 with portraits of the queen and king, a significant show of deference on Mariana's part, who was the one who made the gifts to the ambassador and confidant. Oliván, "Mariana de Austria en la encrucijada política," p. 416.

<sup>842</sup> "...la Reyna se alla muy bien en su retiro dios la sacara vien de todo que es buena y inoncente de todo lo que an dicho de ella..." Maria Theresa to the Descalzas Reales, 3 August 1677. AGP Descalzas Reales, c. 7, exp. 1.

<sup>843</sup> BNM mss. 9399.

<sup>844</sup> "[don Juan] Martir de la desconfianza...ocupado mas de conservar el Rey, que el Reyno... registrando las frequentes cartas que iban, y venian a Toledo." BNM mss. 9399, f. 68 v.

<sup>845</sup> "como si pudiera aver peyne, ni cuidado mas cariñoso ni natural, que el de su Madre." BNM mss. 9399, 69r. Another Relación reports similarly "Asimismo se ocupaba de peinar al Rey, y en pasar á cortarle el pelo, como si pudiera haber peine ni cuidado más cariñoso que su madre..." *Menor edad de Carlos II*, p. 29.

These comments, and many others, reveal the extent to which different aspects of motherhood permeated the political discourse during this critical time. At first the power of motherhood provoked a political crisis that led the monarchy on a straight path to civil war. The love *of* a mother and that *for* a mother played a major role and translated into concrete and often competing political obligations, as Carlos made the transition from his royal minority to his royal emancipation. Carlos had to place his love for his subjects above his obligations as son. Mariana had to prioritize her love for her son above her own inclinations and obligations to her birth family and even her own policies. Yet, once the crisis subsided, the love of a mother emerged again bearing different political ramifications. The idea of a mother's love would continue to permeate the political discourse until the end of Mariana's exile.

Mariana's position in the political, diplomatic, and dynastic hierarchies continued to place her at the center of the king's life and the monarchy. She was evidently too important to be left on the margins, as the Spanish ministers, Carlos, and even don Juan recognized; they needed her to sustain cordial diplomatic relations with the Empire. As the king's tutor and governor, for example, Mariana had negotiated Carlos's original matrimonial alliance. As the king's mother and the Emperor's sister, Mariana was to intervene through her familial ties in the dissolution of the marriage agreement as well. When Spain was ready to formalize Carlos's marriage with the French candidate, Mariana once again would play a central role. This crucial diplomatic affair had the potential to define Spain's military alliances, the future succession of the monarchy, and the relationship between the two branches of the Habsburg dynasty.

While don Juan and his supporters continued to keep Carlos away from his mother, Mariana maintained and even increased her efforts to communicate with Carlos and remain a presence in her son's mind. For Carlos's sixteenth birthday on November 6, 1677, the first time she was not there to celebrate with him, she sent several presents, among them a portrait of herself set in a splendid frame decorated with eight large diamonds.<sup>846</sup> The significance of this gift cannot be underestimated, considering the affective and symbolic function of portraits in early modern society. This was not the only act by which Mariana perpetuated her presence with her son and the court. Indeed, by 1678, Mariana reappears in the documents in a strengthened position, maintaining an active oral and written network between Toledo and Madrid. Mariana successfully deployed the full range of her political, dynastic, and affective capital as the king's mother in order to stage her comeback.

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<sup>846</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 403.

## CHAPTER 6

### RECONCILIATION, VINDICATION, AND TRIUMPH

The authority that Mariana exercised as mother provoked a political fiasco that erupted when Carlos II reached legal emancipation on his fourteenth birthday on November 6, 1675 and that developed into a full-fledged crisis of kingship during the following year. Mariana's influence on her son may have been the result of her personality traits, but it also reflected the values of a society and culture that endowed mothers and widows with significant authority. Carlos, who was literally forced to choose between his mother and the monarchy, faced a political dilemma. His decision to move out of the Royal Palace on 14 January 1677 marked a political milestone as important, if not more so, than his fourteenth birthday: it aborted an imminent civil war and confirmed the young king's willingness to establish his own political identity as sovereign. He followed up with an order to his mother to "retire" to the city of Toledo and, having run out of recourses to win this political battle, Mariana left the court on March 2. Merely months after her exile began, however, there were indications that Mariana could not be marginalized altogether. By the end of the year, she gradually began to participate once again in the diplomatic and political affairs of the monarchy.

Mariana's position continued to strengthen the following year, even as her relationship with Carlos went through several ups and downs. Mariana and don Juan found themselves in a situation similar to that of early 1677, but playing opposite roles. At first weakly, but then with increasing strength, support in Madrid for the queen mother grew. By 1679, the political climate had visibly shifted and those who had publicly cast their lot with don Juan began to voice their discontent and to rally behind the queen



mother. Mariana's crucial intervention in the delicate diplomatic issue of Carlos's marriage gained her a great deal of prestige in Madrid and at foreign courts. By the time that the king's marriage to Maria Louisa of Orleans was publicly announced in the summer, Mariana's return to court appeared imminent; in fact, it was being negotiated behind the scenes.

This chapter offers an in-depth analysis of Mariana's exile; it evaluates its political outcomes and identifies the underlying reasons behind the queen's political vindication. Attention has traditionally focused on don Juan's tenure in office and interpreted Mariana's triumphal return to court as a result of discontent with don Juan's regime or his untimely death on 17 September 1679. Mariana's exile, however, deserves an independent analysis not only in order to shed light on the figure of the queen and her political importance, but also because her reemergence had a palpable effect on Carlos II's later reign. Mariana's return coincided with a change of regime at court further defined by Carlos II's marriage to his first wife, Maria Louisa of Orleans, and by the rise of the Duke of Medinaceli to the office of Prime Minister. A variety of state documents, diplomatic and personal correspondence, and manuscripts reveal that Mariana played a crucial role in each of these important events that re-defined the court of Carlos II and exerted a major influence on the course of Spanish history in the late seventeenth century.

### **Unlikely Political Outcomes**

Although Mariana's exile was certainly the low point of her political life, ultimately, she reaped substantial benefits from it, as it led to her political vindication. Her absence from the court's formal structures of power offered a new perspective on the regency to members of the court. Don Juan's ministry provided a different lens through

which Mariana's tenure in office could be evaluated: if there had been dissatisfaction during Mariana's rule, there was even more disappointment during don Juan's. Thus, she emerged from the inevitable comparison between the two regimes unscathed; her policies viewed in a far more positive light.<sup>847</sup> Under don Juan's regime, Spain lost more territories to France than it had during Mariana's rule. Further, discontent over don Juan's government grew as well about his distribution of royal patronage. His appointments were consistently criticized by those who felt they had been bypassed. His dismissals and exiles alienated many and his parsimony to distribute grants and pensions drove more into the opposition. All these factors benefitted and helped restore Mariana's image to that of an effective and fair ruler. These "malcontents," as they were referred to in manuscripts and letters, began to desert don Juan. Cautiously at first and later openly, they rallied behind the queen mother. She became a platform for the opposition against don Juan regime.

None of this would have been possible had the queen remained in Madrid. Because the political crisis had begun when the king reached legal emancipation and in opposition to the maternal power she exerted over him, Mariana's exile provided a healthy political distance between the queen-mother and the king-son. Mariana and Carlos's separation, indeed, allowed two distinct processes to develop. First, as Carlos grew into adulthood, Mariana's presence at court became less threatening to the ruling elite. The temporary physical distance between mother and son contributed therefore to

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<sup>847</sup> Don Juan's tenure in office was not technically a "regency", as Kamen designates it. Legal technicalities aside however, Kamen may not have been so off in his description, since it would be certainly difficult to characterize don Juan's ministry as the rule of either a favorite or a Prime Minister. As was discussed in the previous chapter, Carlos's age and marital status left the door open for the less restrictive form of guardianship provided by the office of curator (to which Mariana had supposedly legitimate claims). This is certainly an important topic that deserves further consideration.

Mariana's political vindication and her emergence from exile with renewed strength. Already in 1677, Carlos, don Juan, and Spanish ministers realized that she could not be ignored on the issue of the king's marriage. As the king's mother, the bride's grandmother, the Emperor's sister, this Habsburg matriarch could greatly influence the outcome of the alliance. Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs' relatives sought her mediation as Carlos wavered in his decision to marry the little archduchess. Carlos acknowledged her successful intervention, which cleared the way for the French marriage alliance that consolidated the Peace Treaty of Nijmegen (1679). During the months leading up to her return, Mariana's maternal politics offered more positive and wide ranging possibilities than at any other time during her reign, setting the stage for her subsequent intervention in the political and diplomatic affairs of the Spanish monarchy.

The process that led to Mariana's triumphal return to court, however, was neither smooth nor progressed in an orderly fashion. On the contrary, the road to her political vindication was a rocky one. Mariana's new role at court had to be renegotiated with the entire ruling elite and particularly with her son. In other words, Mariana's behavior had to be such as to leave no doubt that if she were to return to court and live close to her son, she would not compromise Carlos's political autonomy. Indeed, the most important process that took place during Mariana's exile was a modification of the political relationship between mother and son. Carlos's separation from his mother had marked an important step in his coming of age. Nonetheless, the king's ability to limit her authority was still questionable even after Mariana's exile. Don Juan and his supporters believed that the only way to safeguard Carlos II's newly gained independence (and therefore ensure their political survival) was to keep the mother physically distant from her son.

Mariana's exile, therefore, became a transitional period in their relationship and forced mother and son to readjust their roles. By the end of the process, Carlos overcame the "reverential fear"<sup>848</sup> of his mother and demonstrated, without a sliver of doubt, that his role as sovereign superseded his filial obligations. The separation gave the young king the opportunity and space to restrain Mariana's influence over him and allowed him to delineate her subsequent political role.

On her part, Mariana gradually adapted to the new situation. As a woman with a strong personality, used to exercising authority, and conscious of her dynastic and political importance, she did not easily accept the change. The process, while it affected both Carlos and Mariana personally, was essentially a political affair; it took place within the institutional framework of the court and was mediated by members of their royal households and the ruling elite. By the end of her exile, Mariana and Carlos had largely resolved the perceived problems of her earlier regency. Carlos was almost eighteen years old and about to be married. He had matured into his kingship and his mother no longer presented a threat to his political autonomy. Mariana had learned to defer to her son and to exercise power obliquely, making her political transition to queen dowager quite successful. Upon her return to Madrid, she established her own royal household in a magnificent palace a block from the Alcazar that became an important locus of political and diplomatic power until her death in 1696.

In sum, Mariana's return to court was not simply the result of don Juan's death. A change of regime was about to take place one way or another. Carlos's ability to limit his mother's authority was the main reason why Mariana's presence at court was no longer a

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<sup>848</sup> See text by Villaumbrosa and others discussed in the previous chapter. ADM hist. leg. 159.

problem. In fact, once Carlos demonstrated unmistakable signs of autonomy, her presence at court became necessary to restore integrity to the body politic.

### **In Their Own Voice**

Mariana and Carlos modified their personal relationship as mother and son, and their political relationship as queen and king. Numerous documents reveal the steps in this complicated process. Especially valuable are the personal correspondence between Carlos and Mariana, with other members of the dynasty,<sup>849</sup> the State Council deliberations on Carlos's marriage,<sup>850</sup> and other manuscripts, gazettes, and memoirs.<sup>851</sup> The correspondence between Mariana and Carlos is the most important first-person account of what transpired between them. It is, however, difficult to use for several reasons, most notably Mariana's challenging handwriting, the fragmented nature of Carlos's letters, and the apparently mundane character of the correspondence. These factors perhaps account best for the fact that no one has studied the extant letters since Gabriel Maura published his study of Carlos II in the early twentieth century.

My reading of the letters essentially differs from Maura's. I interpret differently Carlos and Mariana's agency in shaping their relationship and the circumstances of their reconciliation. I disagree with Maura, for example, that Carlos's letters were dictated by don Juan. It is possible to identify the young king's own voice in these communications

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<sup>849</sup> The correspondence between Mariana and Carlos, as well as the parts of the correspondence exchanged with the Bourbons and the Emperor is housed in AHN E. leg. 2729. Unless otherwise noted, all references to the letters are from AHN E. leg. 2729.

<sup>850</sup> The marriage negotiations are archived in two different sets of documents: one "bundle" [leg.] contains the negotiations of Carlos's marriage to Maria Antonia of Austria, discussed in the previous chapter, while the other set contains the negotiations of Carlos's marriage to Maria Louisa of Orleans. AHN E. leg. 2796 and 2799. Additional documents are cited in the appropriate section.

<sup>851</sup> Some of these were printed at the time; others copied and circulated, as was commonly done in Madrid. There is a good deal of overlapping and "borrowing," also showing how rumors and information circulated around the court. I have also occasionally used a memoir and diplomatic accounts. They are cited in the appropriate sections.

and to distinguish them from those that he wrote with his brother's help and under his influence. The letters following don Juan's death confirm that the king actively participated in the events that led to Mariana's return. Although Carlos's relationship was mediated by the court, the people inside that court, and their political roles, one cannot (and should not) dismiss Carlos's agency completely. Further, these letters reveal how Carlos's relationship with his mother evolved. One must also take into account how the letters circulated, paying particular attention to how they fit within the communication network that Mariana created to make her presence felt in Carlos's life even while in exile.

Although Carlos wrote to Mariana often, only fifty eight letters survive, dating from 8 April 1678 to 20 September 1679. Carlos's letters are usually heavily re-written with many crossed-out passages, comments added and removed. They give us a glimpse of his personality, his insecurities, and his youth. However, they also convey a sense of respect for his mother, sufficient so as to put considerable effort into writing to her. At the very least, he devoted some thought as to what to include or what to withhold from the letters. Mariana's voice can be heard clearly in Carlos's own letters, as he reacts to his mother's comments. They provide, therefore, an important source of information on Mariana's personality. This is particularly important since only ten of Mariana's letters survive from the period of exile. All of them are undisputed holographs and none was composed with the assistance of a secretary. Written in a steady and confident hand, her letters are devoid of re-writings, revealing a person quite accustomed to communicating in writing. Her thoughts progress in an orderly fashion, although the lack of punctuation, typical of the time, makes reading them sometimes tricky.

## Communication Networks

The personal correspondence between Mariana and Carlos shows that by April 1678, they were already engaged in a constant stream of written and oral communications. Weekly, and often daily, messages, letters, gifts, portraits, and documents went back and forth between Toledo and Madrid, carried by various people working for the queen and king in a wide range of functions, from the top political officers in their respective royal households to lower-ranked administrative officials. All of them conveyed information of a personal, political, and administrative nature. Mariana often asked for and received news about Carlos's health and wellbeing. Her concern reinforced her maternal role and at the same time reminded the king of his mother, whom he reportedly missed a great deal.

A division of labor in the way information was transmitted highlights the multiple aspects of Mariana and Carlos's relationship and how these were mediated by others. Mariana's beloved court dwarf, Nicolas Pertusato, for example, brought news of Carlos's activities to Mariana and updated him on her health and wellbeing.<sup>852</sup> The Duke of Medinaceli, the king's *sumiller de corps*, who was often mentioned in these letters, carried intimate and personal information. He reported to mother and son about each other's health and assumed the role of intermediary at a critical moment when Mariana and Carlos quarreled. The Marquis of Mancera, Mariana's *mayordomo mayor*, also played a central role in the communications network, acting as the queen's special envoy; she trusted him to carry her personal letters and messages to Carlos. Others conveyed

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<sup>852</sup> Nicolás Pertusato, one of the dwarfs portrayed by Velázquez in *Las Meninas*, maintained a close relationship with Mariana throughout his life. See Paloma Sánchez Portillo, "En torno a las Meninas: Algunas noticias de Nicolás Pertusato" *Anales de historia del Arte* 12 (2002): 149-166. I thank Dr. Laura Oliván for this reference.

documents of an administrative and political nature, such as the secretaries Jerónimo de Eguía and Isidro de Angulo, who brought Mariana the copy of the peace treaty of Nijmegen and the articles of Carlos's marriage agreement. Other court officers were often dispatched when needed.<sup>853</sup> Pedro de Porras, for example, regularly traveled back and forth between Toledo and the court with letters and messages.<sup>854</sup> Pedro de Leiba's name appears as a bearer of Carlos's gifts and letters to his mother on several occasions.<sup>855</sup> Giuseppe de Cardona, an envoy to the Emperor, often picked up Mariana's letters to take to Vienna.<sup>856</sup> The religious women at the Royal Convent formed another link, keeping the queen well informed on the events in Madrid, and on Carlos's health, reporting Mariana's state of mind to relatives at foreign courts.<sup>857</sup>

The letters allude to political matters that were kept secret. There was evidently a constant need for information to travel quickly and effectively between Madrid and Toledo. The household records indicate that Mariana designated a small amount of money monthly to have a young officer (*mozo*) sleep in the palace, ready for "any kind of errand that may be needed to be run in the middle of the night."<sup>858</sup> In several letters, Carlos explained to his mother that he had used a different courier, depending on the

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<sup>853</sup> Carlos to Mariana 8, 13, 14, and 19 April 1678 (from Aranjuez), 21 May, 23 and 25 July, and 20 December 1678, and 21 July 1679.

<sup>854</sup> Pedro de Porras y Toledo is listed as one of Mariana's *mayordomos* in the household records. AGP Reinados Carlos II, c. 117, exp. 2.

<sup>855</sup> Leiba carried gifts Carlos sent to Mariana for her saint's day on 25 July 1678, and her birthday on 20 December 1678, and evidently carried many of the letters as well.

<sup>856</sup> On 24 October 1678, for example, Carlos told his mother that Cardona was in Barcelona on his way to "Germany" and that he was going to tell her "in time" when she could write to his uncle.

<sup>857</sup> This is evident in the correspondence between Mariana and Maria Theresa and the Convent. AGP Descalzas Reales, c. 6, exp. 1 and c. 7, exp. 1.

<sup>858</sup> AGP Reinados CII, c. 118, exp. 1.



expediency of the moment: “I send you this news via courier, which will be faster than Leiba, and for this reason I do not respond to your letter,” he wrote on 20 August 1678.<sup>859</sup> Or he would say, “I have received from the hand of Talara your letters and I am surprised that the one I sent, did not get to you before.”<sup>860</sup>

An example of the multiple levels at which this communication network functioned is the letter Carlos wrote to his mother on 14 April 1678. He excused himself for not having responded fully to her letters when he wrote the day before because he was in a hurry (Carlos had sent Mariana a short note informing her that the ports occupied by the French in Sicily had been finally restored “to my control.”<sup>861</sup>) He related his plans to celebrate the occasion: from Aranjuez he would go to Madrid on Friday, and to Atocha on Saturday by horse, then he planned to return to Aranjuez on Sunday.<sup>862</sup> Carlos relied on other people to help him say everything he needed to his mother. “Porras,” he wrote, “will tell you how thankful I am for your gift.” The same letter also informed his mother that the king’s secretary, Jerónimo de Eguía, had already forwarded to the queen’s secretary, Isidro de Angulo, “copies of the letters of what I responded to my uncle.”<sup>863</sup>

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<sup>859</sup> “...y porq[ue] no se te dilate el [gusto] q[ue] tendras con esta buena nueva te la participo con correo q[ue] hara mayor diligencia q[ue] Leiba y por lo mismo no respondo aora a tus cartas. Dios te g[uard]e. M[adri]d a 20 de Agosto 1678.” Carlos to Mariana

<sup>860</sup> “He recibido por mano de Talara (crossed out, although he is named at the end of the letter) tu carta y extraño no llegase antes a tus manos la que te escribi...” Carlos to Mariana, 1 October 1678, from El Escorial.

<sup>861</sup> “Poco despues de aver llegado a este sitio y hallado en el a P[ed]ro de Porras recibi abiso que Mezina, y Augusta y los demas puestos q[ue] franceses ocupaban en Sicilia quedaban a mi obediencia....” Carlos to Mariana, Aranjuez 13 April 1678.

<sup>862</sup> This short public visit to Atocha had been scheduled suddenly so that Carlos could give thanks to the Virgin for the end of the Revolt in Mesina, Sicily, which Carlos had reported to his mother the day before.

<sup>863</sup> This casual comment referred to the ongoing correspondence on the subject of the king’s marriage to the emperor’s daughter, Maria Antonia of Austria.

Finally, he commented casually that Nicolás had already given him “frequent news” about her.<sup>864</sup> His mention of all these people in one letter highlights the dynamic, dense, and frequent exchange of information between mother and son. Carlos felt at times that there was no need to write so frequently, since “I know that Medinaceli keeps you well informed regarding my health.”<sup>865</sup>

The structure of Mariana’s communications network reveals that the political situation of the court was gradually changing. As don Juan’s regime became unpopular, more people at all levels in the court hierarchy contributed to lubricating the flow of information between Mariana and Carlos. The Duke of Medinaceli’s involvement is worth singling out and his strategies during this period may explain his rise to the position of prime minister in 1680. Medinaceli’s political trajectory can be summarized as follows: in 1675, he obtained from Mariana the most important post in the king’s household and one usually associated with favorites; that of *summiller de corps* of the king’s chamber. Medinaceli made the intelligent decision not to sign the Confederation against Mariana with the other grandees. This did not prevent him from participating in the events that led to her exile, however; he was the one who assisted Carlos in moving out of the Alcazar on January 14, 1677. The few personal notes that Carlos wrote to Medinaceli in his own hand suggest that they were friends as well as political partners, a relationship that continued until the end of his ministry in 1685.

The fact that both Carlos and Mariana named Medinaceli in the correspondence often and already in 1678 is quite significant; it reveals that not only the political loyalties

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<sup>864</sup> “y he holgado de tener repetidas noticias tuyas de ti por Nicolas...” Carlos to Mariana, 8 July 1678.

<sup>865</sup> “...y por considerar que Medina te tiene informada de mi salud.” Carlos to Mariana, 11 June 1678. Medinaceli is referred to as Medina, although for clarity, I use Medinaceli. Carlos called him Medina in his private communications housed in the Ducal Archive.

at court were shifting but that the shape of the regime that would follow was already developing. In fact, Carlos had already offered Medinaceli, albeit secretly, the post of prime minister of the monarchy, during don Juan's ministry and at least two years before his actual promotion to the office. A holograph note written, signed, and dated by Carlos on 21 February 1678, granted Medinaceli the highest political office of the court and was worded exactly the same as the official title with the royal stamps of 1680.<sup>866</sup> Medinaceli became Carlos's prime minister and stayed in power from 1680 to 1685.

This piece of documentation provides an important clue in understanding Medinaceli's rise to power, although much more research on this subject is needed to fully understand how he managed to accomplish such a difficult feat.<sup>867</sup> However, the most relevant issue here is the question of Mariana's role. To what extent was Medinaceli's contribution to communication between the king and his mother during her exile responsible for his later political rise? Medinaceli owed his post in the royal household to Mariana's patronage. Although he evidently supported don Juan's coup, he did not take a public stand against Mariana and refused to sign the Confederation of the nobles that demanded the queen's separation from her son.<sup>868</sup> Furthermore, during Mariana's exile, Medinaceli took great care not to offend the queen: indeed evidence suggests that he may have sought her support and approval in political matters. Recorded votes during the State Council deliberations on Carlos's marriage indicate that the duke

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<sup>866</sup> ADM Histórica, c. 1 n. 74. The official decree was dated 21 February 1680. ADM Histórica, leg. 45, r. 21, n. 1. Although Antonio Paz y Meliá transcribed and reproduced Carlos's holograph note in the early twentieth century, interestingly enough, it did not raise questions from scholars on how such a thing could have taken place at this point. Antonio Paz y Meliá, *Serie de los más importantes documentos del Archivo y Biblioteca del ex[elentísimo] Señor Duque de Medinaceli* (Madrid: 1915-1922), p. 195.

<sup>867</sup> For a brief study, see Maria Dolores Álamo Martell, "El VIII Duque de Medinaceli: Primer Ministro de Carlos II," in *Los Validos*, J. A. Escudero, ed. (Madrid: Dykinson, 2006): 547-571.

<sup>868</sup> BNM mss. 18211.

already predicted that Mariana was soon to become once again an important arbiter of court politics, without whose support no important political position could be either obtained or retained. Medinaceli, however, was not the only one who saw the queen mother as the ticket to political success in the near future. The Count of Talara, one of the three who helped Carlos escape the palace and separate from his mother, participated in their communication network as early as 1 October 1678. Talara and Medinaceli were not the only ones who saw the writing on the wall.

### **The Limits of Maternal Authority**

A steady stream of correspondence and communications, however, was not enough to bring Mariana and Carlos towards a personal and political reconciliation. The rift caused by the events of early 1677 had by no means mended. Tensions and a struggle for power between mother and son could still be felt palpable in 1678. Mariana let her son know that she was still offended by the way she had been treated; she resented her exile and exclusion from her son's life. She experienced difficulty in accepting a subordinate role in political matters. Carlos, for his part, limited his mother's attempts to control him. He relied on his new-found position, and, at least to a degree, on don Juan's assistance in restricting his mother's power. The bad blood between his mother and his half-brother was such that Carlos apparently mediated between the two, although he was eventually forced to take sides. Yet, in working through these conflicts, Carlos and Mariana had the opportunity to negotiate new political and personal roles.

One of the few exchanges that can be reconstructed in its entirety, thanks to at least four extant consecutive letters that Mariana and Carlos sent to each other, illustrates the process of reconciliation and negotiation as well as revealing the tone both

correspondents took. The letter Mariana wrote to her son on 10 June 1678 begins innocently enough. “Son of my life, I was delighted with the news from Medinaceli that you are well and, that even though you may have been tired from yesterday’s functions, the cloudy day perhaps gave you respite during the procession.” She reported having visited the Archbishop’s palace in order to see a beautiful Virgin housed there and witnessed how they dressed her. She informed her son that she had just suffered one of her recurrent migraine headaches; this one was “quite severe.” She did not expect it, she explained, and thought that she “must have gotten it in the middle of the night, since during the day, the weather was rather cool and not hot at all.” Then, she abruptly shifted the issue, bringing up something that evidently she had discussed with him but to which she had not received a satisfactory answer: “I cannot help but always remind you of that subject, which in not responding to it, the only thing you can expect is that I will keep repeating it. Because you do not give me a response, I have no choice but to keep asking.” She ended her letter with a plea for her doctor, who was requesting permission to return to Madrid. She explained his dismal economic situation and almost ordered her son to do everything possible to aid him, particularly since the doctor found himself in such difficulty because of his willingness to serve her “loyally.” She ended her letter with the formulaic good byes and with her characteristic, “your mother who loves you the most.”<sup>869</sup>

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<sup>869</sup> “Hijo mio demi vida, muy gustosa he quedado con la noticia por [M]edina de que estes bueno y te hubiesses cansado mucho en las funciones de ayer, que el dia havia hecho un poco nublado con que andarias con mas descanso la procesion[.] [Y]o estoy buena a Dios gracias y ayer tambien fui aberle a casa del Arcobispo; se acabo todo a buena hora[;] es muy buena, no ban los religiosos sino solo la clereria y algunos cofadrias, y la custodia es muy linda esta ya la havia bisto de cerca en la sacristia donde la tienen[.] A la noche tube mui grande jaqueca que me devio de dar de la madrugada porque por el dia no seria que fue fresco y no se sintio nada de calor[.] No puedo dejar de hacerte siempre un recuerdo sobre aquella materia que esperandote has de contar en que te la repita tantas beces pues no me das respuesta a ella es preciso el continuarlas[.] Esta memoria es del doctor Astorga, haras en ello todo lo posible que el pobre

Carlos responded the next day, reassuring his mother that he did not “doubt her affection,” that he understood that she was delighted to receive his letters, and that when he did not write, it was only because “of all the interruptions that come up here and because I know that Medinaceli has kept you well informed of my health.” Then, he politely reported how happy he was that she was in good health and commented on his various activities, his enjoyment of the countryside, the Corpus Christi celebrations, and the *autos*. He briefly notified her that he had her petition for a man named Moles “very present” in his thoughts. After these moderate comments, Carlos hit back with a forceful statement:

I resent it that you imagine that I do not read your letters, and that you surmise such a thing because I did not respond to the secret business, about which I have already clearly told you that it would be impossible to change what has been already resolved. Since you hinted that you will not speak about it anymore, I judged that a new response was not needed. Now I am forced to tell you the same once more and ask you to believe that not obeying you in this matter is for your own decorum, respect, and service. God be with you. Madrid, 11 June 1678.<sup>870</sup>

Mariana wrote to Carlos on June 15, excusing herself for not having done so before:

“because I had a migraine, I could not respond to your letter of the eleventh.” She went on to emphasize her motherly love, expressing how happy she was to hear about his good

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esta muy desacomodado porque aqui no ganan nada en su oficio que no lo llama nadie y parece que no ha de perder por estarme sirviendo con tan buena ley y haver dejado por esto todas las comodidades que tenia alla para que hagas la merced que pide. Dios te guarde hijo mio como deseo y hemenester. de Toledo a 10 de Junio 1678. Tu Madre que mas te quiere.”

<sup>870</sup> “M[adr]e, No puedo dudar de tu cariño lo q[ue] me dices en tus cartas, y el gusto con q[ue] recibiras las mias y puedes estar bien cierta que cuando te las dilato es solo por los embaraços q[ue] se ofrecen y por considerar q[ue] las de Medina te tienen informada de mi salud, que a Dios gracias es buena y holgandome mucho de q[ue] la tuya lo sea tambien[.] Yo é salido al campo dos o tres veces por q[ue] como es menester guardarme del sol, no lo e podido repetir mas. Anse empezado las funcion es del Corpus, los autos fueron buenos y tambien los sainetes. En la pretension de Moles tengo muy presente tu intercesion [.] No puedo dejar de sentir mucho q[ue] imagines no leo tus cartas, y q[ue] lo infieras de no averte respondido al neg[oci]o secreto en q[ue] te declare la imposibilidad de alterar lo resuelto y tu me diste a entender no me ablarías mas en el, conq[ue] juzgué no era necesaria nueva respuesta aora es preciso decirte lo mismo y pedirte creas q[ue] al no obedecerte con este particular es por tu mayor decoro respeto y serbicio. Dios te g[uard]e M[adr]id a 11 de Junio 1678.”

health but, most of all, how important it was for her to receive his letters, “since I have no other relief from the moment that I separated from you than having them.” She approved the measures Carlos had adopted to protect himself from the sun,<sup>871</sup> cheered his activities, and hoped that he would not tire himself too much during the frequent processions in which he took part. After preparing the ground with her motherly affection, she took on the delicate task of answering his sharp response to her original request:

My son, what you respond about that matter that I have requested of you so many times, I have plenty of reasons to insist that these public demonstrations conducted [against me], were done so in utter disregard for my decorum, to which you should attend to very much; but I see that it is futile to insist because you are so set (*empeñado*). Someday, I am sure, you will recognize the reasons that led me to confer the royal grants to him. Now, I ask you to ensure that his poor wife be left alone and given something to survive, since she has had enough with her own misfortunes, and as a defenseless woman, it seems more appropriate to exercise moderation with her. Yesterday’s migraine was really bad, but I am free of it now and well, thank the Lord, and I did not want to postpone writing to you and send my letters with the daily mail, since I could not do it yesterday. God be with you my son, as I desire and will be. Toledo, 15 June 1678. Your mother who loves you the most.<sup>872</sup>

Carlos responded four days later, letting his mother know that he received her letters gladly, although he was very sorry that she had suffered migraines during those days. He was well, he reported, and the weather was appropriate for the processions, although it rained during the one to the Convent of the Encarnación. He then addressed the business

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<sup>871</sup> Carlos had informed his mother that he took precautions to not be exposed for too long on the sun during the Corpus Christi processions, which took place during the hot month of June. It should be noted that Carlos was blond and very fair skin.

<sup>872</sup> “hijo mio lo que me respondes [de] aquella materia que te tengo pedida tan repetidas veces no me faltaran racones para conbencerte que qualquiera destas desmostraciones tan publicas que se han hecho mas por mi que es a lo contrario de mi respeto, al qual debes atender tanto pero beo que todo es inutil por lo empeñado que estas aunque pudieras considerarlo con piedad, que algun dia quiza conoceras las racones que me asisten para haverse las hecho y aora te pido que a su pobre mujer no la hagan molestias y darle algo conque pasar que harto se tiene con sus desdichas y [con] ella parece es aun mas propio usar de la piedad por mujer y desamparada, la jaqueca de ayer fue bien grande ya oy estoy libre della y buena a Dios gracias y no he querido dejar de escribirte con este correo que despacho para embiar mis cartas para el ordinario pues ayer no lo pude hacer[.] Dios te guarde hijo mio como deseo y he menester de Toledo a 15 de Junio 1678. Tu Madre que mas te quiere.”

they had been discussing for the last two weeks, elegantly economizing his words:

“Nothing of harm has been done to the woman you name, either in word or deed, and I will attend to her assistance as well as to Dr. Astorga’s petition. I do not write more because it is time to go to chapel.”<sup>873</sup>

As was common in their relationship, the immediate context of their exchange was first and foremost of a political nature. Mariana was actively trying to reverse Carlos’s decree expelling Valenzuela (signed on 28 February 1678) and interceded for his wife.<sup>874</sup> Her efforts demonstrate the extent to which Mariana was convinced that what had happened to her in late 1676 and early 1677 (and to her favorite and his wife by default) was an injustice. Valenzuela had been a trusted confidant during 1676, the year of rampant conspiracies against the regency and he had assumed the role of spy for the queen, earning him the nickname “the palace ghost.”<sup>875</sup> In insisting to Carlos that she had at that time very good reasons to place her favorite in such a prominent position, Mariana was defending herself as well as Valenzuela. The demanding tone in the first letter, therefore, allude to a strong sense of self righteousness. Mariana also implicitly reproached Carlos for not understanding what she had gone through, hoping, however, that one day he would better understand “her reasons.” The request about a certain Moles also refer to the matter of Valenzuela. Moles had been imprisoned and was still being

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<sup>873</sup> “M[adr]e mia. Tus cartas me an sido de sumo mucho gusto, aunq[ue] el ver por ellas as padecido estos dias jaquecas, me a causado mucho sentimiento, yo estoi bueno a Dios gracias, y el tiempo fue muy aproposito para las procesiones, si bien la de la Encarnazion no se paso sin alguna agua. A la mujer q[ue] nombras no se la echo molestia ninguna de obra ni de palabra y atenderé a q[ue] tenga se la asista, y tambien a la pretension del Doctor Astorga y no te escribo mas largo porq[ue] es ora de ir a la capilla. a 19 de Junio 1678.”

<sup>874</sup> At the time of the letter the former Prime Minister was in Cádiz awaiting his extradition to the Philippines, via Mexico. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 395-396.

<sup>875</sup> Indeed, one of his main functions, to be Mariana’s eyes and ears, earned him the nickname, the “ghost of the palace.”



held incommunicado for having been a confidant of Valenzuela.<sup>876</sup> Thus, Mariana's intercession for him, was also a political statement, implying that her previous decisions were fully justified and ultimately correct. Mariana's defense of Valenzuela, however, was also consistent. She showed loyalty to her protégés sometimes in spite of the political consequences. Interestingly, she defended Valenzuela's wife by appealing to Carlos's sense of chivalry, arguing that Maria of Ucedo was a "defenseless woman" and should be left in peace.

The entire exchange brings to light Mariana's concern about her image and decorum. Evidently, she found all the public demonstrations against Valenzuela and his wife demeaning and an affront to herself. Mariana's demands, therefore, implied that she expected to be treated as befitting a queen, a Habsburg, a mother, and a king's widow. It was also important to her that Astorga "should not be losing" the comforts he enjoyed in Madrid merely "for serving me loyally." This rationale usually lay behind the many requests she sent to Carlos asking favors for people in her household: it forms one of the most frequent subjects in the correspondence. Although the queen could no longer fulfill the needs of her former clients with the stroke of a pen as she had done for over a decade, she felt, nevertheless, entitled to demand that her son meet them. She bombarded the king with petitions on behalf of people formerly or currently in her service, including many of her ladies, her doctor, and other members of her household in Toledo and Madrid. These requests ranged from a pair of shoes for the daughter of her secretary to the highest social recognition in the realm, a grandeanship, for her *mayordomo mayor*.<sup>877</sup>

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<sup>876</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II.

<sup>877</sup> "...la hija de Angulo a recibido par de zapatos por avermelo tu pedido..." Carlos to Mariana, 15 May 1679. For Mariana's requests on behalf of Mancera see below.

The reversal of their roles was most evident in Carlos's new control of patronage. Mariana had a hard time surrendering power. When she dispatched a decree in favor of Valenzuela's wife, that apparently was carried by her *mayordomo mayor*, the Marquis of Mancera, Carlos rebuked Mancera for obeying Mariana.<sup>878</sup> It was a test of strength over who held ultimate authority and, this time, Mariana lost. During her exile, Mariana's relentless pleas for Mancera and "la Manrique," one of her ladies, caused considerable friction with her son.<sup>879</sup> Precisely because of the nature of the requests, they brought to the surface all the underlying personal and political conflicts between mother and son.

Mancera had taken his post in Mariana's household at a time when supposedly nobody wanted it. In exchange, he had been promised a position in the State Council and other royal grants. His calculated gamble paid great dividends in the end. Mariana began to campaign actively to procure Mancera nothing less than a grandeeship as a reward for serving her, a request that would reflect her own prestige as much as benefit her loyal officer. Influenced by don Juan and following the new policies of exercising restraint in the distribution of royal patronage, Carlos refused, telling his mother that he was indeed about to make a royal grant to Mancera but one that was in "proportion to his merits." He argued that since such royal grants "are the major ones, they have to be closely regulated and must be made to those subjects whose contributions are lengthy, important, and of great and relevant service." A similar type of exchange took place regarding "La Manrique." He told his mother that the types of "*encomiendas*" she requested for her lady-in-waiting were reserved for those providing military service and that to make such

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<sup>878</sup> The Marquis of Mancera to Jerónimo de Eguía, 2 February 1679. I will discuss this letter in detail below.

<sup>879</sup> Doña Francisca Manrique is listed as one of Mariana's ladies in her household in Toledo. AGP Reinados Carlos II, c. 117, exp. 2.

a grant would unduly strain his royal coffers.<sup>880</sup> In refusing such concessions, Carlos made strong political and personal statements, limiting the supposed excesses of his mother's regime and asserting his independence.

Mariana continued to insist that Carlos make good on her requests for royal grants. Carlos complied with some of her demands and refused others. On 4 September 1678, the king requested a written consultation on the subject from his confessor, sending Mariana a copy of the paper. Carlos explained to his mother that, according to his confessor, he had to make those grants based on "his conscience, faith, and as a recognition of the personal merits of the interested parties."<sup>881</sup> We do not have Mariana's response, but from Carlos's letter we learn that she objected to the confessor's position. Carlos apologized in a letter written on September 27, saying that he did not mean to "close the door on the royal grants to the ladies."<sup>882</sup> During the rest of 1678 Mariana and Carlos continued their tense exchange about royal grants: his acceptance or resistance to his mother's appeals serves to gauge the political climate of the court. Carlos informed his mother that he was inclined to favor Mancera and promised to keep "la Manrique" in mind, but did not give in to his mother in 1678. Carlos granted most of the smaller

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<sup>880</sup> "A Mancera esto en hacer m[er]c[e]d proporcionada a sus meritos y del que esta haciendo en serbirte pero (no escuso decirte q[ue] la q[ue] te a insinuado de la grandeza y la q[ue] aca represento del consejo de E. tienen reparo por aora debiendo regularse estas dignidades q[ue] son las mayores y se hacen a los vasallos con una continuacion larga y singular de grandes y relebantes meritos. Las que pretende la Manrique tienen grabe reparo por q[ue] consisten en cargar mi hacienda quando esta tan destituida y aniquilada (crossed out)..." Carlos to Mariana, 19 August 1678.

<sup>881</sup> "veras por la consulta original de mi confesor lo que entiende debo hacer en conziencia, fe y segun ello reconocer de que las mas a que podre alargarme por aora en estas materias es tener singularmente presentes de los meritos de los interesados..." Carlos to Mariana, 4 September 1678.

<sup>882</sup> "...y no es mi intencion dejar de acer merced en las damas..." Carlos to Mariana, 27 September 1678.

requests, which were numerous as well.<sup>883</sup> In all, Mariana's requests for patronage and Carlos's response to them were laded with deeper political meanings, illuminating their conflicting needs and how, in negotiating them, they were forced to find new ground for their relationship.

It is evident from these letters on the subject of Valenzuela, Mancera, and "la Manrique" that Carlos could hold his own with his mother, was capable of setting limits and of asserting his authority, and could be blunt with her. From the queen's point of view, the exchange reveals her new situation. She had lost political power and was dependent on Carlos. She was resentful at what she perceived as her unfair treatment and that of the people under her patronage. She was preoccupied with the lack of respect she was being shown. Most importantly, she evidently realized the futility of trying to control her son's decisions. We see that the queen's tone could and did change in response to Carlos's assertions and, at least partially, she accepted his refusals, choosing to use persuasion and backing down if necessary. Nevertheless, Mariana retained one important core: she was the king's mother.

#### **"Your Mother Who Loves You the Most"**

Mariana deployed all the elements of motherly love and authority in her communications with her son. Her tone ranged from the benign and warm to the stern and demanding, but she consistently emphasized her maternal affection, always beginning and ending her letters with demonstrations of her love. It is important to note that the language of love was commonly used in political discourses, as a way, for instance, to describe the relationship between ruler and subjects. Motherly love, too, embodied an

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<sup>883</sup> "A Mancera tengo muy presente para favorecerle y el estarte sirviendo es para mui de toda recomendazion y de la Manrique no me olvidare cuando se offrescan ocasiones, Pedro de Porras me a dicho tiene una pretension estimare le favoreces...." Carlos to Mariana, 9 de Octubre 1678.

array of political meanings: political theorists, for instance, justified female regency on the basis that the love of a mother would impel her to look out for her son's interests and, concomitantly, those of the monarchy. The same theorists believed that male regents were more prone to usurp political power.<sup>884</sup> Mariana's deployment of maternal affection should neither be taken literally nor merely viewed as political calculation on her part. It was rather part of a complex system of values, internalized by the historical actors and embedded in the culture. One way or another, Mariana relied on her maternal love and it, in turn, had a profound effect on Carlos.

Expressions of maternal affection can be found in all their correspondence. She warmly demonstrates her interest in Carlos's activities, which he often, although at times reluctantly, reported to his mother. Whether he shared his improvement in horsemanship or news of his other activities, such as attending plays, hunting, and participating in celebrations and public functions, she responded in positive ways, praising and encouraging her son's accomplishments and pastimes. She also expressed a typical protective attitude, approving of Carlos, for example, if he sheltered himself from the sun during his frequent hunting trips, since "your health is what matters the most."<sup>885</sup> She reproached him for failing to write, a constant theme in the correspondence, as, according to her, his letters were her only consolation. News of her son, however, was welcome from any source and often Mariana proclaimed her relief at receiving information about him and his health via others. She insisted on keeping the lines of communications with

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<sup>884</sup> Crawford, *Gender and Regency in Early Modern France*, p. 3; also see chapter 5 on the difficulties faced by Philippe d'Orleans as a male regent.

<sup>885</sup> "...bien haces de guarnecerte del sol para ir al campo por lo que importa tu salud.." Mariana to Carlos, 15 June 1678.

her son open and active; Carlos usually acknowledged having received two or three missives from his mother for every one that he wrote.

Mariana's expressions of affection exerted great pressure on Carlos. This is why the king's responses were mixed, vacillating between appeasement and assertion, and perhaps a reason why Carlos's letters are often crossed out and written over. For example, on one occasion, he told his mother how well he was doing in his riding exercises, only to cross out the remark and re-write a more impersonal note about his health: "Nicolas will confirm the news about my good health."<sup>886</sup> He apologized for not writing more often "because of the impediments that I have and since I also know that Medinaceli keeps you well informed."<sup>887</sup> Carlos evidently felt the need to assure his mother of his affection constantly: "you have to believe that my affection (*cariño*) of everything that corresponds to you is in line to my obligations," he wrote on 19 May 1678.<sup>888</sup> A few days later, he insisted "and I repeat the assurance of my affection."<sup>889</sup> He protested that even when he did not write, it was not "due to a lack of affection."<sup>890</sup> Expressions of love between them took place constantly, whether on receiving accounts of health, birthdays, saint days, or news of a political nature. Special and mundane

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<sup>886</sup> "Nicolas te dira como me exercito en andar a cavallo (crossed out) confirmara las noticias de mi buena salud." Carlos to Mariana, 8 July 1678.

<sup>887</sup> "... y puedes estar bien cierta que cuando te las dilatos es solo por los embaraços q[ue] se ofrecen y por considerar q[ue] las de Medina[celi] te tienen informada..." Carlos to Mariana, 11 June 1678.

<sup>888</sup> "Y debes creer q[ue] mi cariño de quanto te tocare es y sera siempre muy conforme a mi obligacion." Carlos to Mariana, 19 May 1678.

<sup>889</sup> "Y te repito siempre la seguridad de mi cariño" Carlos to Mariana, 21 May 1678.

<sup>890</sup> "...aunque debes creer que quando lo dejo de hacr no es por falta de Cariño "Carlos to Mariana, 8 July 1678.

occasions were couched in affectionate terms. The day before Mariana's saint's day, for instance, Carlos wrote:

The joy with which I celebrate the day tomorrow and the wish that you have a wonderful day, obligate me to send Leiba with this letter, so that he can bring me news about you, which I await with impatience. I hope that what he gives you will be to your liking, which is a sign of my affection, which will always be equal to my obligations and how much I owe you.<sup>891</sup>

In September 1678, Carlos thanked Mariana for her demonstrations of affection on the occasion of having seen his portrait, although for some reason he crossed out the comment.<sup>892</sup>

In her letters, Mariana did not use either her name or the official "I the queen." Rather she signed all of her letters: "Your mother who loves you the most" (*Tu Madre que mas te quiere*), a statement loaded with meaning. Mariana used the phrase for the first time on 18 January 1677, the day after Carlos had dispatched the decree of her expulsion. In that bitter letter, she employed the expression to distinguish herself from don Juan, "that hypocrite," who was deceiving and manipulating Carlos: "Time will show you, even to your detriment and that of my feelings, that I love you more than he" she wrote.<sup>893</sup> The fact that Mariana very quickly adopted a different signature style in her correspondence shows how swiftly and directly she began to deliver her message to Carlos: every time he read one of her letters, he was instantly reminded that his mother

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<sup>891</sup> "Señora. Madre Mia. El Alborozo con q[ue] celebro el dia de mañana, y el deseo de saber q[ue] le ayas tenido muy bueno y alegre, me obliga a embiar a P[edro] de Leiba con esta carta para q[u]e me traiga estas noticias q[ue] aguardo con mucha impaciencia, y holgare sea de tu gusto lo q[ue] lleba en señal de mi cariño q[ue] sera siempre muy igual a mi obligacion y a lo q[ue] te debo. Dios te guarde, De Madrid a 25 de Julio 1678." Carlos to Mariana.

<sup>892</sup> Carlos to Mariana 27 September 1678.

<sup>893</sup> "...como el tiempo te lo declarará, bien a costa tuya y de mi sentimiento, que te quiero mas que el." Mariana to Carlos, 18 February 1677, quoted in Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. II:355.

“loved him more than don Juan” and that she had his best interests at heart. Without having to say anything else, the phrase insinuated that she was entitled to participate in the political life of her son and the monarchy and, in this context, gave her unquestioned priority over the one who had usurped her position. This motherly love was not innocuous; it was powerful.

### **The Queen Mother’s Diplomacy**

After more than a year of negotiations, Carlos finally agreed to ratify the Treaty of Nijmegen on 5 January 1679.<sup>894</sup> The signing of the treaty was the first step towards Mariana’s rehabilitation and reconciliation with her son. On 7 January, merely two days after confirming the terms of the peace with France, Carlos summoned his State Council and ordered them to resume the marriage deliberations, shelved since late 1677.<sup>895</sup> In 1674, Mariana had negotiated a marriage alliance with her brother, Leopold I, promising Carlos to Archduchess Maria Antonia of Austria (1669-1692). The marriage was not only based on dynastic interests, but the result of Mariana’s foreign policy and cemented a military agreement between Spain and the Empire to fight the French in the Low Countries during the Dutch War (1672-1678). Although Carlos, urged by his ministers, suspended the ceremony, the king did not break the engagement.<sup>896</sup> In early 1679, the monarchy was in a very different position than in 1677. Once the peace treaty with France had been signed, Spain did not need Leopold I’s military support to fight the French in the Spanish Low Countries. In fact, using a marriage alliance to secure a lasting

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<sup>894</sup> My dating of the Peace of Nijmegen is based on Carlos’s correspondence. On his letter of 24 October 1678, Carlos said that he refused to ratify the peace. On 5 January 1679 he informed his mother that he had received the documents and was ready to sign the peace.

<sup>895</sup> AHN E. leg. 2796.

<sup>896</sup> The wedding, which was to have taken place by proxy in the city of Passau in December 1676, was put off during political coup that led to Mariana’s exile.



peace with France seemed more urgent. The child archduchess remained a very important dynastic piece in European diplomacy, yet less so than before. She was still the heir to the Spanish monarchy (a situation that was expected to change with Carlos's marriage), but she was no longer heir to the Habsburg's hereditary lands. A few months earlier, Leopold had had a son from his third marriage. Carlos celebrated the birth and reported it to his mother as soon as he received the good news.<sup>897</sup> Carlos and his ministers still faced the difficult task of informing the emperor without delay and without any ambivalence that the king had decided against marrying the little archduchess.

The State Council and Carlos, as well, favored the French princess for all kinds of reasons. She was French, but also was preceded by encouraging reports of her beauty and personality, making her an attractive as well as eligible bride.<sup>898</sup> Ministers unanimously declared Louis XIV's niece the most desirable candidate and urged Carlos not to wait "an hour" to marry. The real topic for debate was not who the bride would be, however, since Marie Louise had been chosen in the summer of 1677. The debate was instead on how to break Carlos's engagement with the emperor's daughter officially. This diplomatic problem, opened the door for Mariana's intervention.

Several ministers suggested that Mariana should be called to act as the intermediary. The Marquis of Astorga, Pedro de Aragon, the Constable of Castile, and the Duke of Medinaceli all agreed that the queen was the only one who could

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<sup>897</sup> Carlos wrote two letters to his mother of congratulations (20 and 21 August 1678). He was evidently very happy about it. The news were also discussed in the State Council.

<sup>898</sup> Marie Louise of Orleans had already come out at the top of the list during the debate of 2 August 1677. Consultation of 2 August 1677 in AHN E. leg. 2799. On the one hand, Spanish ministers hoped that the marriage would cement the peace with France. Her potential fertility, however, also played a big role in the decision. Marie Louise's physical constitution and her beauty were seen as the ticket to the resolution of the succession crisis. All of these issues were abundantly discussed in the State Council. AHN E. leg. 2796.

successfully avoid a falling out between the two branches of the dynasty.<sup>899</sup> The Duke of Medinaceli regarded Mariana's influence as virtually indispensable and his discourse on the subject foreshadowed her political rehabilitation.

The great love the Queen, our lady, has towards your Majesty, and that which she has always shown for this monarchy will not only always prevail in her judgment, but also will be the most natural and most convenient way to make the Emperor understand that ultimately, she was the only one who has the right to force your majesty to alter what has been already decided.<sup>900</sup>

In the State Council Medinaceli praised Mariana's consistent love for her son and for the monarchy, the power of this love, and his confidence that this love was going to guide her at this critical juncture. Once again, maternal love bore deep political meanings. By invoking it, Medinaceli clearly suggested that Mariana had always acted with the best interests of the king and of Spain in mind, implicitly vindicating her role as regent. This was no small concession given the events of the previous two years, coming from one of the most important members of the ruling elite, and proclaimed in such a prestigious forum. Was Medinaceli's public statement a calculated political move designed to win the queen mother's sympathies? Medinaceli probably knew that Mariana was going to read the debates and that his discourse was politically motivated and likely self-serving. (Carlos sent Mariana copies of the State Council's deliberations on the marriage on 4 May 1679.) If this was the case, it also suggests that a change of regime, with the queen mother playing an important role in it, was already foreseen as a real possibility.

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<sup>899</sup> AHN E. leg. 2796.

<sup>900</sup> "que V[uestra] Mag[esta]d participe a sus magestades todos los pasos que se dieren en la materia creiendo el que vota, que en el sumo amor de la Reyna nra Sra a V[uestra] Mag[esta]d y el con que a mirado siempre a esta Monarchia prevalecera en su alta cons[ideraci]on la precision de V[uestra] Mag[esta]d de consolar a sus Vasallos y tambien el veer desde luego afianzada de V[uestra] Mag[esta]d la sucesion siendo el medio mas natural y mas conven[ien]te Su Magd (Mariana) para dar a entender al S[e]ñor Emperador que solo ella puede obligar a V[uestra] Mag[esta]d a alterar lo que tenia deliverado." Medinaceli's opinion recorded during the deliberation of 11 January 1679. AHN E. leg. 2796.

The State Council's opinion on the question of his marriage was sent to the king on January 14. Three days later, Carlos issued a decree announcing his decision to marry Marie Louise, although he requested secrecy from his ministers. Carlos composed the letters for Mariana and Leopold that he duly remitted to the State Council for their consideration. They received, debated, and returned the letters on January 19, unanimously praising the king's "high understanding and the appropriateness of the letters' content."<sup>901</sup> Once the question of who the chosen bride was to be had been settled, Carlos faced an important political, diplomatic, dynastic, and personal decision: how to inform his mother and withdraw from his previous engagement.

Carlos began by telling Mariana how difficult it had been for him to make up his mind, torn, as he was, between reasons of state and personal preference. He had rejected the idea of marrying Maria Antonia of Austria with great difficulty, he said, but was forced by the "unanimous counsels" (*uniformes consejos*) of his ministers. In spite of "his inclination and affection," there had been no "space left for my own wishes," he assured her. After expressing the right feelings to his mother, Carlos reflected briefly on the necessity of marrying a bride that could give him and his subjects an heir without delay. Carlos asked his mother for her assistance. The post was only waiting for her letter to leave for Vienna at once and

I trust that with your affection, you will express in it to my uncle whatever I may not have gotten right regarding the mortification and tenderness of my decision and how secure he should always feel of my friendship and the unity of our house. All of this, I trust to your great prudence, and I am certain that all the continuous

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<sup>901</sup> "venerando la alta comprension de V[uestra] Mag[esta]d y expression de su contenido, deseando el mas prompto efecto del fin a que se encaminan." AHN E. leg. 2796.

and fervent prayers offered will result in the best resolution of this business and whatever will be best for our house.<sup>902</sup>

Later correspondence strongly suggests that she dispatched a letter to Vienna that fully supported her son's decision and intervened on his behalf successfully, a decision that also helped her own cause.

Carlos worded his letter to Leopold very carefully, not surprisingly since he walked a delicate line here: he could not be seen as belittling the archduchess and the alliance with the Empire. He cited the oft-repeated age difference and reiterated his difficulty in rejecting Maria Antonia because of the familial ties that they shared. Carlos announced that the chosen candidate was Marie Louise, suggesting that the main reason for his choice had been the fact that she was old enough to provide a successor. Carlos insisted that the decision had been made in spite of personal preferences and that political considerations had not played a role. The king explained to the Emperor that he was communicating directly with him, without the intercession of his ambassador, and that he had also sent copies of the letters to his mother, whose prudence, he was sure, would prevail above her personal inclinations.<sup>903</sup> Notwithstanding Carlos's caution, the news provoked conflict in the Viennese court.

In his response, written on March 4, but only received in Madrid on April 1, Leopold expressed some reservations about Carlos's decision. The Emperor did not think that the age difference was a real impediment and cited his own marriage to Carlos's

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<sup>902</sup> “confio de tu cariño expresarás en ella a mi tío lo que yo no huviere acertado a decirle en orden a la mortificación y ternura que me cuesta esta mat[er]ia y a la seguridad con que deve estar de mi inalterable confianza, amistad y union. Todo lo fio de tu much prudencia, y quedo con gran certeza de que las oraciones continuas y fervorosas que se han hecho por el acierto deste negocio, han de lograr de N[uest]ro S[eñ]or se consiga en el lo que mexor estuviere a toda n[uest]ra cassa.” AHN E. leg. 2796.

<sup>903</sup> Copy of the letter of Carlos to Leopold as it was discussed in the State Council, Madrid, 22 January 1679. AHN E. leg. 2796.

sister as an example. He voiced concern about Spain's alliance with their traditional enemy and asked Carlos to consider other princesses. The daughters of the Duke of Neuburg and the Duke of Bavaria were suitable brides for their ages and dynastic ties, he suggested. Leopold sent copies of this letter to his sister and a separate one as well to request her support, "not doubting" wrote the emperor, "that she will always agree to what would be best for the prosperity of our house."<sup>904</sup> Although Leopold did not mention it, Carlos's refusal to honor the promise of marriage caused an uproar in Vienna.<sup>905</sup> Rumors quickly reached the Spanish court; the State Council met to discuss how to respond to Leopold's letter and deal with reports of anti-Spanish sentiment.<sup>906</sup> They suggested several responses and unanimously agreed that Mariana should be called on to intercede with the Emperor. Acting on the State Council's advice, the king responded to his uncle that he had already considered the two princesses Leopold suggested. He had rejected one due to her age and the other due to her health. Carlos explained that Marie Louise was the best candidate, not so much because she was French, but because she could give him an heir without delay. Carlos insisted that their enemies would never suspect that any kind of animosity existed between the two branches of their house.

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<sup>904</sup> "Postdata: Va con esta Una carta para mi her[ma]na en resp[ues]ta de la que V[uestra] M[agestad] me ha embiado y no dudo que ella siempre concurrira a lo que pueda ser de mayor acierto para el bien de nra casa." AHN E. leg. 2796.

<sup>905</sup> Although Carlos had purposely chosen to communicate with Leopold directly, the Spanish ambassador, the Marquis of Falces, had been provided copies of the letter Carlos sent to the Emperor in cipher. He was instructed not to discuss the matter. Falces, however, was rebuked for failing to inform the king and his ministers the outcry over the matter in the Imperial court. See discussions during 3 and 13 April, 1679. AHN E. leg. 2796.

<sup>906</sup> See consultation of 13 April 1679. AHN E. leg. 2796.

At this point Mariana's intervention proved crucial. The documents and private correspondence flying back and forth between Madrid, Vienna, and Toledo reveal Mariana's involvement.<sup>907</sup> Carlos sent Mariana copies of all the letters he wrote to Leopold. He dispatched to his mother copies of the State Council's deliberations. In the end, Mariana was able to intercede successfully with her brother on behalf of her son. After several weeks of correspondence, Carlos acknowledged Mariana's cooperation and admitted that her intervention had been key to solving the diplomatic crisis. "I recognize how much I owe you and the pains to which you too look out for my interests," he told her on April 2.<sup>908</sup> On April 17, Carlos expressed to her "how grateful I am for your finesse, and I assure you that I will always respond with the trust and attention that is appropriate to it."<sup>909</sup> On May 4, he was "very certain that it was mainly due to you for the way that my uncle has taken this business, and that he finally recognizes how necessary and convenient it is that I get marry at once."<sup>910</sup>

Mariana made a conscious decision to support her son's marriage to the French candidate, offering to write to Paris as soon as she knew of Carlos's choice.<sup>911</sup> Carlos declined the offer at first. On May 27, however, he asked Mariana to write to Queen Maria Theresa of Austria in order to ensure the success of the Marquis of Balbasses's

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<sup>907</sup> For example, see the letters Carlos wrote to Mariana dated 23 January, 2 April, 17 April, and 4 May 1679.

<sup>908</sup> "reconozco lo mucho que te debo y el cariño con q[ue] miras mis intereses..." Carlos to Mariana, 2 April 1679.

<sup>909</sup> "tambien el agradecim[ie]nto con que quedo de tu fineza asegurandote de la confianza y atencion con que correspondere siempre a ella." Carlos to Mariana 17 April 1679.

<sup>910</sup> "...y estoi bien cierto q[ue] abras tenido la principal parte en q[ue] la buena forma en q[ue] mi tio a tomado este neg[goci]o y en q[ue] reconozca lo preciso y conben[ien]te q[ue] es para todo el no perder ora de tiempo q[ue] yo tome E. ..." Carlos to Mariana, 4 May 1679.

<sup>911</sup> We can infer this from Carlos's letter to Mariana of 28 January 1679.

mission: he had been chosen to request Maria Louisa's hand.<sup>912</sup> Suspicions about her motives and concern about her feelings remained. Many thought that Mariana would be unhappy at the missed opportunity of being close to her granddaughter, even if she did not disapprove of Maria Louise. Mariana made an effort to be seen as a supporter of the French marriage. In a letter written on June 12 she asked Carlos to keep her personal views about the topic confidential. Carlos praised her prudence in handling the situation and agreed with his mother that it was better not to hint at the "natural mortification" the new marriage alliance might cause.<sup>913</sup> Mariana certainly made a wise political decision, although we should not discount that her unflinching and decisive support for Maria Louisa may also have been based on personal reasons. It could certainly be interpreted as a loyal response to the one person of her dynasty who had shown unwavering, heartfelt, and sincere support for her predicament during her exile: Maria Theresa.<sup>914</sup> Indeed, the ties between the queen mother and the queen of France were common knowledge, actually a "liaison" as the Marquis of Villars, the French ambassador to Spain in 1679, described it in his memoirs.<sup>915</sup>

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<sup>912</sup> "y parece bastaria q[ue] tu escribieses a la Rey- (crossed out) mi hermana ynsinuandola el gusto q[ue] as tenido de entender de mi el neg[oci]o que se encarga a Valbases y quanto esperas contribuirase su mejor logro..." Carlos to Mariana, 27 May 1679.

<sup>913</sup> "no dudando de tu atencion lo que dices tocante a no dar a entender si ubiese la mortificazion o sentim[ien]to natural q[ue] puede averte causado el q[ue] Dios aya dispuesto diferentem[en]te esta materia... pues este sentimiento es tan natural como de tu prudencia el no manifestarle..." Carlos to Mariana, 12 June 1679.

<sup>914</sup> Maria Theresa of Austria (1638-1683) was the eldest daughter of Philip IV, and thus Mariana's step-daughter. They were reportedly close until Maria Theresa left to become Queen of France in 1659. During Mariana's exile, Maria Theresa repeatedly expressed her disbelief at the events in Madrid that led to Mariana's disgrace, as can be read in her correspondence with her Habsburg female relatives in Spain (AGP Descalzas Reales c. 7).

<sup>915</sup> Marquis de Villars, *Mémoires de la cour d'Espagne sous le regne de Charles II, 1678-1682* (London, 1861), p. 28.

Previous historical scholarship has credited don Juan with forging the French matrimonial alliance. Don Juan certainly played an important role in this momentous decision, but his direct participation is doubtful. He never wrote an opinion for the State Council deliberations, for example. Carlos was actively engaged in all aspects of his marriage, consistently answering the State Council's deliberations personally, often without the assistance of a secretary. (Indeed, this may be the first set of holograph documents that we have from Carlos II communicating with the Council of State.) He took the lead consulting personally with his ministers in handling the situation with his mother and uncle. Don Juan also did not communicate directly with the Bourbons at any time during the negotiations.<sup>916</sup> Indeed, Maria Theresa criticized her Spanish relatives in relying on "rumors" and "gossip" before opening formal marriage negotiations. This approach had displeased Louis XIV.<sup>917</sup> Whatever role don Juan played, he miscalculated. He could not have predicted that Mariana was to become such an important contributor in making the French marriage possible and that her intervention would facilitate her return to court. The marriage was a huge step forward in bringing Mariana closer to Carlos and back to Madrid. It allowed the queen to intensify her communications with Carlos, giving her a felicitous opportunity to help him. Even as it looked as though Mariana and Carlos were close to a final reconciliation, however, a serious setback occurred.

### **The Mancera Incident**

By early 1679, Mariana's situation looked promising. Not only had she been invited to participate in a central event in her son's life, his engagement, but evidence suggests that she had even established more cordial relations with don Juan. In November

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<sup>916</sup> This point was mentioned by Carlos in the State Council meeting of 29 July 1679. AHN E. leg. 2796.

<sup>917</sup> See Balbasses's diplomatic report. AHN E. leg. 2653.



1678, Mariana wrote to don Juan directly, asking for a favor on behalf of the Countess of Trautson, the wife of the Imperial Ambassador to Madrid. Mariana wanted the woman to receive financial assistance for her return to German lands. (She had lost her husband in November 1678.) In December 1678, Carlos told Mariana that he knew about the petition she had made to don Juan and that the latter “was prepared to obey you.”<sup>918</sup>

Perhaps the improved situation with her son emboldened the queen to try to stage a personal encounter with him. In late January 1679, Mariana sent the Marquis of Mancera to Aranjuez, where Carlos was enjoying one of his frequent hunting expeditions. Mancera later stated that he had been sent with orders to see Carlos personally in order to deliver a letter from the queen. He had been asked “to convey through words the ardent and affectionate motherly desires to see him and hug him even if for only an hour,” something that could have been easily accomplished given the closeness of Aranjuez to Toledo.<sup>919</sup> Mancera said that the queen gave him permission to discuss her wish openly with don Juan if necessary. Don Juan, according to Mancera, accepted the letter, but did not allow him to address the king personally, kept him waiting for hours, and successfully prevented Mancera from delivering the queen’s message to her son. The incident escalated into a public showdown that was ultimately detrimental to everyone. Indeed, the incident caused Mancera’s exile, delivered a political blow to don Juan, and delayed Mariana and Carlos’s reconciliation.

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<sup>918</sup> “Don Juan me ha participado lo que le escribes sobre el particular de la Trautson y le é mandado (crossed out), se dispusose luego a obedecerte y yo lo e mandado tambien...” Carlos to Mariana 4 December 1678.

<sup>919</sup> “...mandandome la Reyna n[uest]ra s[eñor]a con esta ocasion llevase una carta y quede palabra significase a S[u] M[agestad] sus ardientes cariñosos Maternales ansias de Verle y abrazarle aunque no fuese por mas tiempo que de una ora...” Mancera’s letter to the king’s secretary (Jerónimo de Eguia) can be found in BNM mss. 2409, f. 557. Maura, who mentions the conflict as well, cites only a portion of this letter, copied in a different manuscript than the one I am using (Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 457), suggesting that Carlos was correct in his assumption that Mancera “published” and “distributed” the paper.

Mancera, who felt utterly offended by don Juan's actions in Aranjuez, launched a public attack on the regime. Several days after this episode, Mancera wrote a letter to the king's secretary, Jerónimo de Eguía, in which he resigned his post and listed one by one the many grievances he bore against don Juan. Mancera pointed out numerous instances in which don Juan apparently treated him in a high-handed manner, ignored his requests, and disregarded all previous agreements. Mancera complained that the promised appointment to the State Council had been granted to the Marquis of Cerralbo, while he had been passed over. He felt "aggrieved and slighted" and could not understand how a *caballerizo mayor* in don Juan's household (a post held by Cerralbo) could be placed above that of the *mayordomo mayor* of the queen's household, which has "more antiquity and is higher in the hierarchy of royal household posts." Mancera also claimed that he was still waiting for the post in the king's chamber and a reward for his secretary. All these grants were supposed to have been effective within fifteen to twenty days after his arrival in Toledo. At the time of this letter more than two years had passed and nothing had been done: Mancera was furious.<sup>920</sup>

The letter's tone and crescendo strongly suggest that it was intended as a public criticism of the current political regime. Mancera protested that he had been despoiled of the authority of his office as *mayordomo mayor*, implying that such behavior insulted the queen herself. The king disciplined him personally when he executed a decree dispatched by Mariana in favor of Valenzuela's wife. On another occasion, an administrative decision he made in Mariana's household had been reversed without his knowledge. Even worse, the orders had been given directly to the queen's secretary, thus bypassing

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<sup>920</sup> Mancera had been appointed on 14 April 1678.

him and insulting him and his office. He finished his letter by accusing don Juan of forcing him to obey orders that were “opposed to *natural maternal and filial affection*, and ultimately against the consolation and edification of these kingdoms and the entire Christian Republic” (my emphasis).<sup>921</sup>

The chronology of events is worth noting. Mancera’s confrontation with don Juan took place in late January; the letter was written on February 2. The issue, however, did not come up between mother and son until early May. Carlos did not mention Mancera’s letter to Mariana, although his subsequent correspondence reveals that he was aware of its existence. In late January and early February, Carlos could not afford a falling out with his mother while he needed her intercession with the Emperor to solve his marriage issue and thus downplayed the situation. He later said that he actually concealed it in order to avoid a scandal.<sup>922</sup> On January 28, Carlos mentioned to Mariana that Mancera had made “strange representations about wanting to leave your service,” but did not elaborate. At that time, he simply told his mother that he would not accept Mancera’s resignation, unless the man was willing to “retire” to his estates: a choice tantamount to banishment.<sup>923</sup> The chronology of events suggests that Mancera may have written the letter after an informal protest to the king’s secretary. Mariana interceded for Mancera

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<sup>921</sup> “Lo que unicamente me obliga a la representazion dicha y a ynsistir en ella con todo rendimiento es el honor de mi sangre que repugna toda accion yndigna, y mas la de ser ruin criado de la Reyna n[uest]ra s[eño]ra por obedecer tan dificiles mandatos de S[u] A[lteza] y tan opuestos a la Ternura materna y filial y al consuelo y edificazion de estos Reynos y de toda la Republica Christiana.” BNM mss. 2409, f. 557.

<sup>922</sup> Mancera’s letter to Eguía is specifically mentioned by Carlos in his letter to Mariana dated 13 May 1679. “y el aver escrito a Eguia un papel tan falto de verdad, y de buena intencion se lo sufrí y disimule como veras por la respuesta q[ue] le mande dar...”

<sup>923</sup> “Mancera me pidio licencia para dejar tu serbicio con tan estrañas representaz[i]one]s y motibos sin sustancia q[ue] le e di[c]ho mandarle fuese luego a servirte o a un lugar suyo y el a echo la mala eleccion de esto ultimo de q[ue] me a parecido darte noticia...” Carlos to Mariana, Madrid 28 January 1679.

and Carlos granted him permission to resume his post if he so desired. Mancera apparently refused.<sup>924</sup> The king's subsequent letters ignored the issue. Mariana also let it go unmentioned. Mariana's relationship with Carlos was now on much better terms. He clearly had appreciated his mother's help with the Emperor and the marriage situation. At first, the Mancera incident seemed trivial.

Everything changed, however, in early May. Carlos recognized Mariana's role in preventing a diplomatic break with the Emperor and expressly thanked his mother for her intercession. It appears that Mariana felt that this opened the door to exert more pressure on her son. Indeed, merely a week later, the Mancera incident had escalated to a point of no return. At first, Mariana simply insisted that Carlos pardon Mancera. On May 6, Carlos politely, but firmly, refused and informed her that he had given orders to Mancera to remain in Ilescas until further notice.<sup>925</sup> Mariana's reply to Carlos does not survive, but from the king's subsequent letter it is possible to reconstruct her reaction. Mariana responded aggressively. She demanded Mancera's restitution to his post. Furthermore, it is obvious that she urged her son to stop stalling and accept that their reconciliation was inevitable. Mariana's tone must have been infuriating because it prompted the longest letter written by Carlos that we have and one in which he employed quite harsh language, perhaps the strongest he ever used with his mother.

Dated May 11, the tone and style of the letter differ from all the others, suggesting that the king was not acting alone. Carlos candidly confronted his mother. He admitted

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<sup>924</sup> "M[adr]e y S[eñor]a. Por lo q[ue] te escriví antiayer abras visto como no solo no concedi a Mancera la licencia q[ue] supone para q[ue] te dejase de serbir sino q[ue] por averse escusado de ello le ordené se fuese a un lugar suyo de cuya demostrazion, (atendiendo a lo q[ue] me dices) he mandado se le escriba queda absuelto continuando tu serv[icio] y con esto sea excusado por mi parte quanto permite lo q[ue] a pasado en la materia y tu mismo decoro que es alo q[ue] yo defendere mas siempre. Pesame q[ue] ayas tenido jaqueca yo estoy bueno a Dios gracias, el te g[uard]e." Carlos to Mariana, n/d February 1679.

<sup>925</sup> Carlos to Mariana, Madrid, 6 May 1679.

having had knowledge of Mancera's letter to Eguía written more than three months earlier. He then refuted Mancera's accusations against don Juan one by one. A large portion of this long letter describes the events of the Aranjuez incident from don Juan's point of view. Carlos tried to persuade Mariana that Mancera had twisted what had actually happened. He adamantly defended don Juan and condemned Mancera, describing the man as demanding and difficult from the moment he had assumed the post in her household.

Carlos not only defended his brother; he also turned the tables on Mariana and bluntly accused her of fomenting political disorder. Mancera wrote a paper against the government, Carlos claimed, and he dared to distribute it in the court and even outside Spain.<sup>926</sup> If Mariana supported her *mayordomo mayor* after his attempt to disseminate a pamphlet so full of "falsehoods and seditious statements," it implied that she wished "to diminish my authority and disturb my government." Carlos told his mother as well that he was very upset that she would give credence to the "false and malicious reports that come to your ears."<sup>927</sup> These were strong accusations and put Mariana in a very delicate position: if she supported Mancera, Carlos could interpret her act as a direct challenge to his authority. If she did not, don Juan got the upper hand.

Mariana tried to force Carlos to agree to a personal meeting, although she evidently did so too soon and pushed too forcefully. Carlos responded to his mother in no uncertain terms:

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<sup>926</sup> Carlos to Mariana, 15 May 1679. I suspect that Mancera's paper was the actual letter he wrote to Eguía. There are several copies in the archives, and is mentioned in the manuscripts and gazettes. In a later letter, Carlos said that Mancera produced at least twenty copies, and that he was planning to print more

<sup>927</sup> "...enflaquezer mi autoridad y turbar mi gobierno..." "...otra queja grande debia tener de ti y es q[ue] des credito a informes tan falsos y maliciosos como los q[ue] veo llegan a tus oidos..." Carlos to Mariana 11 May 1679.

The rest of what you said, that this is no longer time to conceal and that you will go out to get me to the end of the world if necessary has surprised me quite a bit, and I am sorry that I have to listen to such things. You force me to respond with clarity, not having given you ever any reason to conceal (*disimular*), a term quite inappropriate for you to use. And in any time, case, or circumstance you should never even think of moving from where you are to find me, without my express wish (crossed out).<sup>928</sup>

Leaving no doubt where he stood, Carlos went on to proclaim his royal authority, telling his mother that he would not compromise it for her sake. God had placed him in his position. He would never fail to fulfill the obligations he bore as king. Carlos would consent to see her “only when I judge it convenient.” She should not, however, consider this refusal as an indication that his filial love had been lessened, he added.

Carlos then proceeded to mediate between his mother and don Juan: “If what you insinuate about influences, you said because of don Juan,” wrote Carlos, “you have no reason to believe it.” Don Juan was at her feet and only desired to serve her with affection, Carlos assured Mariana, and argued that he had experienced this for himself. “He has no intention other than my service,” Carlos added, “if you wouldn’t have doubted that, perhaps things would not be now in the Monarchy [crossed out] as you say they are.” He also assured his mother that “I am working diligently and doing everything in my power to improve the current situation.”<sup>929</sup>

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<sup>928</sup> “Lo demas q[ue] me dices de q[ue] ya no es tiempo de disimular, y q[ue] saldrias a buscarme al cabo del mundo es preciso confesarte me a causado suma extrañeza y sentimiento asi por aber oido de ti cosas semejantes, como porq[ue] me ayas obligado a responderte con la claridad q[ue] debo, q[ue] no abiendote dado nunca motibo justo para q[ue] tengas q[ue] disimular es mui impropio de tu atencion este termino, y q[ue] en ningun tiempo caso, ni accidente puedes pensar en moberte de donde estas sin expresa volun[tad] (crossed out) en busca mia sin tan expresa voluntad...” Carlos to Mariana 11 May 1679.

<sup>929</sup> “y quica si tu no lo ubieses dudado nunca no estarian las cossas de la Monarquia (crossed out) como tu dices y yo veo con mucho dolor, y sentim[ien]to reconoxiando q[ue] lo reduj[eron] con todo a tal detrimento y peligro q[ue] no bastando el cuidado y justificacion con q[ue] me aplico a su mejora para q[ue] se logre enteramente...” Carlos to Mariana, 11 May 1679.

As he was finishing writing the letter, Carlos received a missive from his mother. After reading it, Carlos decided to write another letter and sent both of them off together. He was not punishing Mancera for obeying her, Carlos told his mother, but for *not* obeying her. Ultimately, he argued, “you and I should believe [don Juan] more than Mancera.”<sup>930</sup> He tried to appease Mariana by telling her that he decided to grant the request for “la Manrique” and that he was going to fill the post left vacant by Mancera with the Marquis of Mondejar. Carlos ended the second letter by explaining to Mariana that his orders on Mancera’s exile “could not be revoked in this case.” Thus Carlos clearly asserted his authority over his mother, who had to accept her son’s decision.

Mariana did not give up easily, although she changed her methods, shifting to a more conciliatory tone. She diplomatically asked her son not to publish the appointment of the new *mayordomo mayor* in her household for the time being. Carlos agreed. She continued to defend Mancera and evidently tried to obtain his restitution at court, although she avoided the confrontational tone she had used in her previous letters. Carlos continued to accuse Mancera of seditious acts and firmly rejected his mother’s pleas. Although they did not resolve the issue completely at this point, tensions subsided. On May 15, Carlos stated that he would like to pardon Mancera simply because she was asking him to do so. But he also said that he needed to protect his own authority. On May 19, Carlos curtly refused to discuss the issue further: “Regarding Mancera, I repeat that it

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<sup>930</sup> “...intentando descomponerle sin razon contigo en tanto deservicio y disgusto mio pues es cierto q[ue] el mesmo Mancera D[on] J[ua]n (a quien tu y yo debemos creer mas q[ue] a Mancera) me a asegurado que cuando por averle yo llamado aquella mañana para vajar a los jardines no le pudo acabar de responder a la noticia q[ue] le dio de q[ue] traia recado tuyo p[ar]a mi...” Carlos to Mariana 13 May 1679.

is inconvenient for me and for you that he return to your service.”<sup>931</sup> Mariana did not bring up the subject again until her return to court had been decided.<sup>932</sup>

The Mancera incident indicates where Mariana and Carlos’s relationship and the political situation of the court stood during the months before their final reconciliation and Mariana’s return to Madrid. Carlos had been forced to mediate between Mariana and don Juan. The king in many ways spoke on his brother’s behalf. In the two letters cited above, he was at some pains to justify don Juan’s actions to Mariana: about what happened that day in Aranjuez, about don Juan’s intentions towards both of them, and about the regime’s policies. Carlos went so far as to say that if forced to make a choice (between Mancera and don Juan), both of them (Mariana and Carlos) should believe don Juan above Mancera, implying that familial ties should be placed above other forms of loyalty.

Carlos’s comment about the state of the monarchy and his assertions that he was working diligently to improve it explicitly acknowledged what was beginning to be more and more evident to the court: the failure of don Juan’s regime. In spite of the great expectations (or perhaps because of them), his government had disappointed virtually everyone. By 1679, don Juan’s regime was breathing its last. Much literature attacking don don Juan and his ministry circulated during his tenure in office.<sup>933</sup> At the same time,

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<sup>931</sup> “En lo de Mancera te repito que no mas conviene de ti ni a mi que vuelba a serbirte...” Carlos to Mariana, Palace of the Buen Retiro, 19 May 1679.

<sup>932</sup> Mariana to Carlos, 13 September 1679.

<sup>933</sup> For examples of political literature against don Juan, see Mercedes Etreros, ed. *Invectiva Política contra don Juan José de Austria*; and Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, vol. 2, appendixes. Albrecht Graf von Kalnein has provided a much needed challenge to Maura’s views of don Juan’s tenure in office, evaluating his policies under a much more positive light. See idem., *Juan José of Austria en la España de Carlos II: Historia de una regencia*, M. J. Poyato, trans. (Lleida: Editorial Milenio, 2001). Don Juan’s fall, however, was imminent in 1679.



the gazettes had begun to present Mariana's regime in a more positive light.<sup>934</sup> Carlos was evidently self-conscious about the subject and felt the need to justify himself to Mariana. On January 14, 1679, for instance, he excused his failure to send her a copy of the Treaty of Nijmegen, commenting that she would not be interested in seeing "articles of so little advantage to my interest."<sup>935</sup>

Although she evidently criticized the state of the monarchy, Mariana also reaped substantial benefits from don Juan's failure to improve it. It seems highly likely that Mariana's perception that the situation had become favorable to her was the main reason behind her decision to pressure her son so strongly. Carlos's reaction, however, showed that she had miscalculated and the moment had not yet come for her restitution. One way or another, when viewed through the prism of don Juan's tenure in office, Mariana's regency gained a great deal of prestige. Quickly, opposition to don Juan began to transformed into concrete support for the queen's return.

Ultimately, the conflict gave Mariana and Carlos the opportunity to redefine their roles and also allowed Carlos to stand his ground. Indeed, much still needed to be worked out between Mariana and Carlos before she could return to court. Don Juan may have been behind the accusations that Mariana and Mancera were fomenting political disorder, but the situation also allowed Carlos to limit his mother's political challenges, to delineate her future role in the monarchy, and to assert his rightful place in the court's structure. He had no qualms about asserting his sovereignty and did not hesitate to

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<sup>934</sup> For instance, Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, vol. 2, appendixes and BNM mss. 9399.

<sup>935</sup> "y el no aberte embiado el tratado de (crossed out) noticias mas indibiduales de la paz no fue falta de... ni de memoria sino juzgar no echarias menos el ver articulos tan poco bentajosos a mis intereses pero con lo q[ue] me dices en esto e mandado orden p[ara] q[ue] se remita luego a tu secretario (crossed out) una copia del tratado a tu secretario..." Carlos to Mariana, Madrid 15 January 1679. See for example, BNM mss. 9399.

disagree with her face-to-face. When the final reconciliation between mother and son actually took place, it did so on Carlos's terms, not Mariana's. The young king set the conditions for their reunion and Mariana had to accept them. This was an indication that she accepted as well her new position and that she was willing to use her influence and moral authority without interfering with her son's political role too obviously or too intrusively. As difficult and strained as the negotiation process was, it was absolutely necessary to set them on the right path if Mariana was to live at court and close to her son.

Mancera's overt challenge to don Juan, described in one of the gazettes as "insolent and harsh," formed part of a larger political trend. By 1679, the nobility was beginning to challenge don Juan openly.<sup>936</sup> There were too many exiles and "malcontents," and their voices were becoming louder. The Count of Medellín, one of the most vocal supporters of don Juan at the time of the Confederation, died in early 1679, reportedly "in opposition and discontent."<sup>937</sup> Medinaceli had been granted the Presidency of Italy (certainly an important post), but in order to receive it he had to give up the title of General of the Andalucian Coasts. He had, therefore, also become lukewarm (*desabrido*) towards don Juan, not understanding, the same gazette reported, "why it was considered a prize to gain a post in his person and lose one for his house"<sup>938</sup> In late January, don Juan began distributing the offices in the royal household of the future queen, several months before Carlos's marriage had been announced publicly. The

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<sup>936</sup> "tan libre y destemplada, que probocando el enojo de d[o]n Juan, le desterró." BNM mss. 9399, f. 81v.

<sup>937</sup> "...opuesto y quexoso..." BNM mss. 9399, f. 81v.

<sup>938</sup> "...sin que pudiera el Duque comprender que era premio dar un puesto a su Persona, quitandole otro a su Cassa." BNM mss. 9399, f. 82r.

appointments became an additional source of discontent.<sup>939</sup> The selection of the Italian-born Duchess of Terranova as the *camarera mayor* of the new queen's household, for instance, meant that the *crème-de-la-crème* of the Castilian aristocracy had been overlooked for this prestigious post. A gazetteer reported that Terranova's appointment was "abhorred by those who expected to obtain it themselves." The appointments in the rest of the queen's household also great discontent, increasing the ranks of the "malcontents."<sup>940</sup>

The Marquis of Villars, the French ambassador to Madrid (who arrived in late June), noted in his memoirs that don Juan had very few people he could trust and was becoming increasingly isolated while the party of the queen mother swelled.<sup>941</sup> Manuscript accounts and gazettes also confirm that don Juan's position was showing many signs of instability, while Mariana had emerged as the ideal person to oppose him. Indeed, Carlos confronted her directly regarding reports of visits and gatherings in Toledo. "Rumors that there are voices against my government are said to be coming from your palace," Carlos wrote on June 22, "and they greatly damage the interests of my monarchy, since there are expectations that when I get married, there will be a change of direction in my government."<sup>942</sup> Carlos urged his mother to discourage open criticisms

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<sup>939</sup> BNM mss. 9399, f. 82v.

<sup>940</sup> "poco aplaudida y bituperada por los interesados en los que la pretendian." BNM mss. 9399, f. 83r.

<sup>941</sup> Villars, *Mémoires*, pp. 28-9.

<sup>942</sup> "En ese lugar se esparcieron voces q[ue] se murmuran salen de tu Palacio y son de grave daño a la caussa y a los intereses de mi Monarquia pues se encaminan a superar q[ue] cuando yo me case e de mudarse encaminar y de direccion en mi gobierno, y q[ue] a este intento se prometen influencias y medios, y si bien e mandado averiguar los que anden en estos chismes para que con una gran demonstracion de castigo queden ellos corregidos y todos desengañados, no pudiendo yo dudar de lo que me quieres y te debes a ti misma cuanto sentiras y desaprobabas todo lo que fuese en deserbicio mio. Te pido q[ue] correspondiendo desto mismo para q[ue] tengas mucho cuidado no solo en que tu presencia ni por persona que se lo que se traten platicas tan sediciosas, sino que des a entender lo que te disgustas en ello y que sabes

and gossip and told her that he was prepared to punish severely those who were engaged in “seditious” acts. Don Juan was probably behind these charges, but Carlos evidently continued to assert his own authority with his mother. This, however, was the last documented confrontation recorded in their personal correspondence.

Mariana began to assume a very different attitude from her earlier one. She became compliant and restrained, characteristics that, as should be by now clear, were certainly not in her nature. A gazette reported that the queen was looking at the shipwreck of the court, “from the balcony of tranquility.” She refused to foment activities that “could divide and disturb the king’s service, something that was also observed in the constancy and loyalty of the exiled ones.”<sup>943</sup> A manuscript compared her attitude to the true mother discovered by Salomon, revealed when the life of her child was threatened.<sup>944</sup> It is doubtful, however, that she was passively waiting for things to change. During these months Mariana became the center of the opposition to don Juan’s regime. The ruling elite, who were the ultimate arbiters of the politics of the court, certainly rallied behind her (just as they previously did behind don Juan in order to oppose her). Increasingly isolated, don Juan could not compete with Mariana’s dynastic capital, her political prestige, and the support she had now regained in Madrid.

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de mi se executara un severo escarmiento en qualquiera que las mobiere pues en esta propia conformidad me e aplicado yo y aca con algunos y me lo oiran muchos mas para q[ue] te desbanezcas enteramente esta esperanca fundada en la ambicion y poco celo de los q[ue] la fomentan...” Carlos to Mariana, 22 June 1679.

<sup>943</sup> “Estas dos elecciones y las demas de Señoras de onor, Damas, Meninas, y Mayordomos produjeron grandisima cantidad de malcontentos y aumentaron notablemente el partido de los quexosos que ia con publicas y turbadas diligencias recurrían a la Reyna, que desde el balcon de la tranquilidad miraba los naufragios de la Corte sin querer abrigar nobedad que pudiera turbar con la divicion el serbicio del Rey, atencion que asismismo resplandeció en la constancia y buena ley delos desterrados.” BNM mss. 9399. f. 83r.

<sup>944</sup> “despreció cuantos aparatos de iniquidad la propusieron que pudieran turbar la paz pública y el servicio de su hijo, atencion que en las dos parcialidades que habia nos daba á entender Salomon: ‘sola nuestra verdadera madre es aquella que no permitió nuestra desunion’.” CODOIN, vol. 67, p. 54.

## The Power of French Diplomacy

Late in June, the situation remained unclear. Carlos had not yet set a date to see his mother. His marriage was still being negotiated with the French court. Don Juan, notwithstanding his problems, still controlled the government. The confirmation of the marriage on July 13, however, put Mariana's return to court into motion. Her restitution "in all and with all"<sup>945</sup> was supported by her son, the entire court, and at the highest international, diplomatic, and dynastic circles.

Carlos wrote to his mother as soon as he was notified by his ambassador that his marriage to Maria Louisa had been confirmed. "I did not want to delay giving you such good news because I know the great affection that you have for me," he told her.<sup>946</sup> The next day, July 14, Carlos acknowledged receiving several letters from her. He himself had sent two letters to his mother on the same day. Mariana had been asked for her opinion regarding a piece of jewelry being made for the bride and about Carlos's portrait, both of which were to be sent to Paris.<sup>947</sup> Carlos was happy that his mother liked the jewelry piece (the portrait was not yet finished), and told her that orders had been given to the jeweler to begin working on the one Mariana was going to present to the young queen as her own personal gift.<sup>948</sup> In the same letter, Carlos asked Mariana to respond to

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<sup>945</sup> Mariana to Carlos 18 September 1679.

<sup>946</sup> "M[adr]e y S[e]ñora mia de mi vida. Estando para responder a tus cartas acaba de llegar el sec[reata]rio del Marques de los Balbasses con aviso suio de haver venido el Rey xpmo [Christianisimo] y su her[ma]no en mi casamiento con su hija y assi no he querido dilatar el darte esta noticia con correo para anticiparte el gusto que te ha de ocasionar por el gran cariño que me tienes..." Carlos to Mariana, Madrid 13 July 1679.

<sup>947</sup> The portrait was commissioned to Juan Carreño de Miranda (1614-1685). On the portrait, see letters of 29 June, 9 and 29 July, when Carlos told his mother he was about to send the portrait for her to see once Carreño finished it. She had seen and approved the jewel sometime before 14 July.

<sup>948</sup> Carlos to Mariana, 14 July 1679.

the official correspondence with the French royal family, as protocol required. He advised her that the Marquis of Balbasses was carrying the letters to Toledo personally.<sup>949</sup> Just a few days later, Carlos told his mother that Balbasses had forgotten to present him with another letter the queen of France had written to him. Carlos duly informed his mother of the letter, so that “you know,” telling her as well that Balbasses was on his way to give it to her.<sup>950</sup> The observance of customary demonstrations of respect toward the queen mother should not be discounted as a trivial aspect of royal etiquette. On the contrary, they point to Mariana’s centrality in this significant event and foreshadow her reinstatement into the court.

The Peace Treaty of Nijmegen and Carlos’s marriage to the French princess facilitated the renewal of diplomatic relations between the two monarchies. Mariana played a key role in the negotiations that went on behind the scenes with the Empire and her intercession prevented a falling out between the two branches of the Habsburg dynasty. Thus, she was seen as largely responsible for clearing the way to the matrimonial alliance with the French. Her blood ties with the French royal family augmented her prestige even further. This important diplomatic and political event, however, exposed don Juan’s much weakened position. Indeed, his illegitimacy and loss of prestige surfaced in the context of royal etiquette.<sup>951</sup> Don Juan expected the French ambassador to Madrid, the Marquis of Villars, to award him the same privileges enjoyed by the papal nuncio. Villars, however, had specific instructions not to give special honors

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<sup>949</sup> Carlos to Mariana, 14 July 1679.

<sup>950</sup> Carlos to Mariana, 19 July 1679.

<sup>951</sup> BNM Mss. 9399, 84r.

to don Juan unless Spain was ready to change the entire protocol of their representatives at the French court. If don Juan did not agree, Villars had been instructed to deal with the king directly. For this reason, Villars' official entry was delayed until August, even though he had arrived in Madrid in late June.<sup>952</sup> On July 29, Carlos requested the State Council to set guidelines of etiquette for don Juan in the exchange of official correspondence with the Bourbons.<sup>953</sup> The State Council concluded that in order to avoid a diplomatic blunder, don Juan should not write to the French royal family until Balbasses confirmed that Spanish privileges would not be jeopardized.<sup>954</sup> Neither conflict was resolved in don Juan's favor and he had to suffer the further humiliation of not being able to communicate directly with the relatives of the new queen. These issues of etiquette contributed to don Juan's loss of prestige and the previously powerful prime minister appeared to be ever more dispensable.

Mariana, however, was at the center of the entire business, venerated as a matriarch by members of the French royal family, including Queen Maria Theresa, who referred to her as "my mother."<sup>955</sup> The Duke of Orleans, father of the bride and brother of Louis XIV, assured Mariana that he had instructed his daughter to "show your majesty the respect and affection that she should have to a Mother and to a Queen like you, in

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<sup>952</sup> See Maura for a detailed explanation of the episode: Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 473.

<sup>953</sup> AHN E. leg. 2796.

<sup>954</sup> They agreed as well that don Juan could write to his half-sister, queen Maria Theresa, privately, not officially. AHN E. leg. 2796.

<sup>955</sup> Forms of address among rulers of different monarchies were carefully thought out, strictly observed, and modified accordingly, reflecting political and dynastic connections. Maria Louisa of Orleans, for example, became Maria Theresa's "sister" upon her marriage to Carlos, ceasing to be her niece. Mariana and Maria Theresa had been cousins, but the former became the other's mother when she married Philip IV, even though she was only four years older.

whom such great circumstances come together.”<sup>956</sup> Louis XIV gave specific instructions to his ambassador to visit the queen mother in Toledo as soon as he arrived at the Spanish court, even at the risk of being perceived as a political interference. He told Villars that he could not fail to send a representative to pay respects to Mariana.<sup>957</sup> In spite of Louis XIV’s purported intentions, Villars’ very public presence in Toledo made a strong political statement, and was widely commented on at court.<sup>958</sup>

By August, the court was again at a crossroads. Support for don Juan was waning rapidly, while the queen mother’s prestige waxed. The “exiled ones” (*desterrados*) pressured the king to pardon them through the intercession of his confessor, Fray Francisco Reluz.<sup>959</sup> The confessor was important in smoothing the way for Carlos and Mariana’s reunion. By this point, the topic of when the king would be reunited with his mother was being discussed publicly. A gazetteer reported that Father Reluz advised the king that he could not continue “without great scruple” to be separated from direct communication with his mother to whom he owed filial reverence. The author reported that the confessor expressed his views with such “religious liberty” that he was “showing

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<sup>956</sup> “...y puedo asegurar a V[uestra] M[agestad] que he encargado a mi hija sobre todo que tenga a V[uestra] M[agestad] el respeto y cariño que deve tener a Una Madre, y a Una Reina, en quien concurren tan grandes circunstancias como en V[uestra] M[agestad].” The Duke of Orleans to Mariana, 4 August 1679.

<sup>957</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 475.

<sup>958</sup> BNM mss. 9399, f. 84r.

<sup>959</sup> According to Maura, the Duke of Osuna, the Prince of Astillano, the Count of Aguilar, the Admiral of Castile, the Count of Monterrey, and others asked Reluz to intercede with the king on their behalf. Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, II: 472. On September 13, 1679, Mariana thanked Carlos for having pardoned the other “exiled ones” (*desterrados*). She named only Mancera, the Admiral of Castile, and the Count of Aguilar, three men who had been loyal supporters and important figures during her regency and exile. See below.



the key to his cell.”<sup>960</sup> Don Juan’s iron rule was still feared, but not enough to quite the opposition completely.

### **At Last King and Good Son**

The importance of the personal and political shift in Mariana and Carlos’s relationship cannot be underestimated. The elaborate procedures that were strictly observed before Carlos would go to see his mother in person gave graphic proof of this sea-change. This meeting was yet another one of the many political moments that bore great symbolic meaning for the monarchy and Spain. Philip IV’s death embodied essential aspects of Spanish kingship. Mariana’s assumption of the regency revealed specific features of female authority in early modern Spain. The first public procession of the regency emphasized the new, and visibly feminine, structure of the court. The reinstatement of the king’s royal household marked the beginnings of Carlos’s independent political identity. Carlos’s separation from his mother denoted a crucial step in his coming of age. The processions that took place when Mariana moved to Toledo masked the fact that it was an exile and instead indicated her legitimate rights to political authority, presenting it, however, as a thing of the past.

Mariana and Carlos’s reconciliation marked yet another important political milestone for the monarchy, revealing overlapping aspects of their personal and political relationship informed as it was by cultural values, social practice, juridical issues, and dynastic and diplomatic considerations. Carlos’s first step was to ask his confessor if a reunion with his mother would be in line with his obligations as king. He had avoided seeing her until that point “for different government considerations,” he explained. In

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<sup>960</sup> “que no podia S[u] M[ages]tad sin gran escrupulo tener apartada a su Madre... y esplicandolo con tan religiosa libertad que iba mostrando la llabe de su zelda...” BNM mss. 9399, f. 83v.

light of his mother's frequent requests and in order to give her this "consolation," he was willing to meet her. Carlos stated that "my own consolation would not be small."<sup>961</sup> Reluz assured the king that a reunion with his mother was required.

After the king's confessor removed the first barrier, Carlos enlisted the assistance of Cardinal Portocarrero, the Archbishop of Toledo. Thus, he brought two of the most important religious figures of the monarchy into the reconciliation process. Carlos asked Cardinal Portocarrero to deliver a letter of credence—an official document usually exchanged between heads of state—to his mother and to vouch for his intentions with the authority of his office. In it, he stated that he intended to give Mariana the longed consolation of seeing him and assured her that his resolution was "in conformity with the representations of my confessor." He requested that his mother, however, maintain secrecy "since it is important not to publish the reunion before it is appropriate." The king hoped "to comply with my obligations as son, without abandoning those of my conscience and dignity [as king], the limits of which I cannot override, nor could I ever imagine that Her Majesty would propose or solicit such thing."<sup>962</sup> This significant statement verbalized the crux of Carlos and Mariana's dilemma; Carlos had to assure his subjects that his obligations as king superseded those he had as son.

Philip IV's manner of dying had embodied specific aspects of Spanish kingship. Carlos's father demonstrated in his last days as sovereign that his obligations as king superseded those as husband and father. Carlos had been expected to demonstrate a

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<sup>961</sup> These quotes, details of Carlos's conversation with his confessor, and the confessor's paper were taken from the letters Carlos wrote to Cardinal Portocarrero (10 and 13 August) and to his mother (13 August). There is no extant copy of Reluz's consultation. AHN E. leg. 2729.

<sup>962</sup> "cumpliendo con la obligación de hijo, sin faltar a las de mi conciencia y dignidad de cujos limites ni yo puedo pasar, ni imaginare Jamas que su Mag[esta]d lo proponga ni solicite." Carlos to Cardinal Portocarrero, August 10, 1679. AHN E. leg. 2729.

similar commitment to his office. In the early stages of his coming of age, Carlos's filial reverence, however, evidently obstructed his ability to exercise sovereignty. It was the main reason the Count of Villaumbrosa, one of Carlos's advisors, used to persuade the king that he had to separate from his mother. The same idea had been forcefully expressed in the text of the Confederation and had become the rallying cry for the rebellious nobles who demanded the queen mother's separation from her son on a permanent basis. Carlos felt pressured to demonstrate that he was willing to put his obligations as sovereign before those he had as son. Thus he took multiple precautions before seeing his mother and in arranging that first meeting.

Armed with Carlos's letter of credence, the confessor's paper, and clear instructions from the king, Portocarrero requested an audience with the queen to discuss Carlos's intention to meet with her. The audience took place sometime between August 13 and 15. Portocarrero followed the king's instructions faithfully and explained to Mariana "clearly and distinctly" all the points the king had expressed as "prudent safeguards." Carlos was confident that Mariana was going to be able to adjust and he wanted a response as soon as possible. "Her Majesty expressed her delight and consolation at the prospect of seeing Your Majesty," Portocarrero wrote, "this was clearly her principal desire." Carlos had given Portocarrero instructions to discuss the confessor's paper with Mariana freely. The queen, reported the Archbishop, expressed a "strong desire" to read it for herself and asked for a copy of it. Portocarrero agreed to leave a copy for the queen.<sup>963</sup>

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<sup>963</sup> "...pedi audiencia a su Mag[esta]d y haviendomela dado luego le entregue la carta de creencia y represente a su Mag[esta]d muy clara y distintamente quantos puntos V[uestra] M[agestad] me mandava referirla como prudentes resguardos para verla, y Su Mag[esta]d pondero el gusto y consuelo que tanto havia desseado de ver a V[uestra] M[agestad] y ha condescendido a todos, diciendo en cada uno que su

Mariana and Carlos's reconciliation was by no means a simple matter taking place between close family members but rather a crucial political event. Carlos took the prospect of seeing his mother again very seriously and planned to put in place "prudent safeguards." Their reconciliation also required political consensus. Strict juridical procedures were followed to bring the queen mother back to court, similar to those that had been observed before don Juan set foot in Madrid in early 1677. These elaborate procedures underline the political implications of the reunion.

Carlos, as we have seen, participated actively in the entire process. Maura and subsequent scholars have emphasized don Juan's death as the turning point that facilitated Mariana and Carlos's reunion. The extent to which the king was acting with don Juan or because of him is not as clear, however.<sup>964</sup> The king had already begun to show signs of independence from his brother's control, something that Villars reported in his *Memoirs* and which the gazettes, and even Maura himself, remarked. Mariana and Carlos hinted in some of their letters that this was not the first time that Carlos had secretly promised her a reunion. Most importantly, the exchanges between Carlos, Portocarrero, and Mariana took place in August 1679. At this point, don Juan's political fortunes had greatly declined and the real arbiters of the mother and son relationship were the *grandees* not don Juan. Carlos enjoyed the support of his confessor and the majority

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principal desseo no era otro que el de ver a V[uestra] M[agestad] y mandome (puedo decir con encarecim[ien]to) que le diesse copia dela consulta del confessor, y diciendole la llevaba alli, y que se la podria leer (esto en Virtud dela permission de V[uestra] M[agesta]) continuo en que se la diesse y me parecio no seria desagrado de V[uestra] M[agestad] en complacerla en esto, pues V[uestra] M[agestad] no me lo prohibia, ni aun me mandava reserva de la dicha consulta la qual original va adjunta con la respuesta dela carta que Su Mag[esta]d me mando bolbiesse a recibir oi para V[uestra] M[agestad] que me dice es conforme a quanto me ha asegurado para decirlo a V[uestra] M[agestad], sin tener que añadir mas que el preguntarme Su Mag[esta]d quando y en que forma podría tener este consuelo. Toledo 15 de Ag[ost]o de 1679." Cardinal Portocarrero to Carlos, August 15, 1679. AHN E. Leg. 2729.

<sup>964</sup> See Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, vol. II: chapter 15.

of the nobility, which made his decision that much easier. He probably felt some sort of familial pressure to bring his mother back to court particularly from Vienna and Paris as well.

### **A Change of Regime**

We are left to speculate why more than a month elapsed before Mariana and Carlos's reunion took place, how the king and those in his confidence were planning to handle Carlos's separation from don Juan, and if don Juan's fall was a precondition for Mariana's return to court. Mariana and Carlos continued to communicate frequently, but not many letters survive from August 13, when Carlos promised his mother a reunion, to September 21, the day of their actual encounter. On August 17, Carlos wrote a brief letter to his mother: he acknowledged that she agreed to observe the "prudent safeguards" explained by Portocarrero: "I received two of your letters, one of them is a response to my letter that I sent with the Cardinal and I never doubted what you assure me in it, and you should not doubt my affection."<sup>965</sup> He also informed his mother that the Duchess of Terranova was going to stop in Toledo, on her way to receive Queen Maria Louisa, additional signs that the marriage continued to bring Mariana and Carlos together.

A week later, on August 24, don Juan fell sick, and even though it seemed he might recover, he did not. The nature of don Juan's illness and eventual death were not very clear at first and the post-mortem diagnosis associated his illness with bladder and liver problems.<sup>966</sup> A change of regime at court was now imminent. Villars wrote in his memoirs that there was a plot in the making to separate the king from don Juan in a

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<sup>965</sup> "e recibido dos cartas tuyas la una en respuesta de lo que te escribi por el Cardenal y nunca dude de lo que en ella me aseguras ni tu debes dudar de mi cariño." Carlos to Mariana, 17 August 1679.

<sup>966</sup> See Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. 481, for a more detailed account of don Juan's death and malady.

similar manner to the way that the king had been separated from his mother, although this appears to be the only report of such a plot.<sup>967</sup> Carlos and his close companions were probably waiting for the opportunity to act but, at this point, don Juan's illness was an obstacle not a benefit.

During the first weeks of September, things moved fast. Carlos pardoned Mancera and the "exiled ones" and Mariana duly thanked him in her missive of September 13. This public political statement on Carlos's part marked the advent of a regime change. The return of the exiled figures before don Juan's death also suggests that changes were inevitable and that it was not don Juan's disappearance from the stage that caused them. At this point it was still not clear, however, how the situation would be resolved. In her letter dated September 13, Mariana explained to Carlos that she had not written to don Juan, knowing that he was "indisposed," and did not want "to disturb him" (*embarazarle*). She mentioned that she was going to write later, when he was better, and that for the moment "I am satisfied and appreciate his part in pardoning Mancera."<sup>968</sup> Mariana's letter indicates that everybody was participating in the fiction of working together in the same way that Mariana had been forced to do during the early months of 1677. Don Juan likely knew what was going on in the court even from his sick bed. In Mariana's letters, too, the tension is palpable.

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<sup>967</sup> Villars, *Mémoires*, p. 31.

<sup>968</sup> "Tambien te estimo infinito que hayas perdonado a [M]ancera y que vuelba a servirme en su puesto y con tu permiso se lo dije luego a su mujer para que le despachara propio con el abiso[;] tambien ha sido muy de tu grandeca el perdonar a los demas desterrados como el Almirante[,] Astillano y Aguilar que la ocasion ha sido muy a proposito para ello[.] Como don Juan se halla indispuesto aunque me holgare pase adelante la mejoria que me dices tenia, no le escribo aora por no embaracarle[,] dandome por serbida y estimandole lo que ha hecho de su parte por Mancera y estando mejor lo hare ya..." Mariana to Carlos 13 September 1679.

Mariana continued to pressure her son. Now, however, the persuasive language of motherly love completely eclipsed the authoritarian voice of the mother. The letter of September 13 documents the shift in her tone, a result of her conviction that perhaps the end of her ordeal was near.

My son, I expect from you and because of your affection that you will make sure that I will be able to see you as soon as possible; you should not doubt the anticipation with which I expect this consolation, which has been taken from me for so long. I know you will try to console me in all that I desire; my maternal love and affection have always been present in all occasions, and I trust in God you will recognize this more and more every day, not doubting that you will believe it so.<sup>969</sup>

Don Juan died four days after this letter was written. Carlos wrote a quick note to his mother on September 18 to convey the news: “My Lady and Mother. I could not write to you yesterday due to the death of don Juan. God took him at 12. I am only writing this note [now], and later will respond to your letters.”<sup>970</sup> The timing of his death is certainly suspicious. Maura cites only one reference about rumors that don Juan had been poisoned, reported by an Italian author who wrote his biography.<sup>971</sup> Rumors of poisoning plots, however, had been common during the regency, contributing to the distrust that existed between Mariana and don Juan. By the time of his death, don Juan lacked any sizeable measure of political support. The lack of widespread rumors of assassination or complaints that his death may have been intentional is thus fairly understandable.

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<sup>969</sup> “Hijo mio[,] bien espero de ti y lo que debo a tu cariño que has de disponer nos beamos quanto antes, pues no podras dudar con quanto anhelo espero esse consuelo que ha tantos dias que careco del, que atenderas tambien a consolarme en todo, pues mi maternal amor y cariño solo ha deseado merecer en todas ocasiones como espero en Dios que cada dia lo has de ir reconociendo mas y no dudo de ti, que lo has de creer assi.” Mariana to Carlos, 13 September 1679 (this was a different letter written on the same day).

<sup>970</sup> “Madre y Señora. Ayer no pude escribirte por la muerte de D[o]n Juan q[ue] se le llevo dios a las doze y aora te despacho con este aviso y despues te respondere a tus cartas.” Carlos to Mariana, 18 September 1679.

<sup>971</sup> Maura, *Carlos II y su corte*, p. 481.

### “My Restitution in All and with All”

Mariana interpreted don Juan’s death as divine intervention. She wrote to her son the same day she received the news, eloquently expressing her feelings about her ordeal during the preceding two years and her expectations of things to come:

Son of my life. I did not want to delay responding to your letter that you sent me, which I received a little while ago with the post, and where you tell me about don Juan’s death. God may keep him in heaven, nothing better could be wished for him. Tell me if you are planning any public demonstrations for his death, so that I can do the same, since I don’t want to err on anything. I am in good health, thank the Lord, and the weather has been cooler lately[.] My son, with the affection that I have for you as mother, I am compelled to tell you that since God has allowed the death of Don Juan and you can begin to understand everything for yourself, I completely trust that you will recognize the extent to which [his] bad counsels and intentions made me suffer so intensely after I was separated from you, and I have great confidence that you will allow *my restitution in all and with all*. I put myself in your hands so that you can dispose of my return according to your greatest pleasure and service, which will be mine always, as you would admit has always been, now that you have complete capacity and knowledge of everything. God will assist you with clarity to get everything right. Your mother who loves you the most (my emphasis).<sup>972</sup>

Mariana chose her words very carefully and gently continued to pressure her son for their reunion. Her tone confirms that the reunion was not necessarily dependent on the elimination of don Juan from the court but rather on her son’s initiative from whom she was requesting her “restitution in all and with all.” In other words, don Juan’s death removed one more obstacle to Mariana and Carlos’s encounter, but only Carlos could

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<sup>972</sup> “Hijo mio de mi vida. No he querido dilatar el responder a tu carta que recibí poco ha con el correo que me despachastes avisandome de la muerte de don Juan, Dios le haya dado el cielo y que nada se le había desear mejor[.] Me abisaras si haces alguna demostracion por su muerte, para que haga lo mismo porque no quisiera errar en nada, yo estoy buena a Dios gracias y el tiempo ha buelo a fresco mucho[.] Hijo mio con el cariño de madre que te tengo no puedo dejar de decirte que ya que Dios ha permitido la muerte de Don Juan y tu por ti mismo puedes ya entrar en conocimiento de todo estoy con grande confianca que has de reconocer lo que por malos consejos y intencion me han hecho padecer tan sensiblemente despues que me aparte de tu compañía, que estoy con tan segura confianza de que te he de deber mi restauracion en todo y con todo que me pongo en tu boluntad para que dispongas lo que fuese de tu mayor gusto y serbicio en ese sera el mio siempre, como has podido reconocer siempre, y obrando de ti, pues tienes tanta capacidad y conocimiento en todo, Dios te asistira con su claridad para tus aciertos....Tu madre que mas te quiere.” Mariana to Carlos 18 September 1679.



determine their reconciliation and its timing. Mariana's return depended on their ability to shift the terms of their relationship. Together, they had to find an acceptable balance between cultural expectations and political needs. The tone of deference and subordination to her son and his wishes marked the end of the process that had begun the day of his fourteenth birthday. When Carlos saw his mother in September 1679, he was very close to his eighteenth birthday, about to get married, and cognizant that his obligations as king superseded those he had as son.

Mariana did not have to wait much longer. As don Juan's funeral cortege moved towards the Palace of El Escorial, Carlos took a carriage to see his mother accompanied by the "exiled ones."<sup>973</sup> Indeed, Carlos made arrangements at once to see his mother, a decision that had already become public knowledge. The Duchess of Bejar, for example, congratulated Mariana on her imminent encounter with her son, in a brief note dated September 18.<sup>974</sup> Carlos confirmed their meeting on September 20: "I will arrive in that city tomorrow at 11, God willing," he wrote to his mother, "and you do not have to leave your house, only wait for me there." But just in case, he advised her that "if you need to send me a response to this letter, do so to Aranjuez, where I will sleep tonight." He assured her that the "joy of seeing each other so soon would be no less for me than for you."<sup>975</sup>

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<sup>973</sup> BNM mss. 9399, fo 84v-85r.

<sup>974</sup> The note was delivered by the duchess' brother and son, the Marquis of Valero, illustrating that Toledo had become a center of the political activities of the court. AHNNS Osuna, c. 3620, n. 51. There are two letters Mariana wrote to the Duchess, one thanking her for her well wishes on Mariana's reunion with Carlos (on 18 September) and the other for Mariana's restitution to Carlos's "company" (on 31 October).

<sup>975</sup> "M[adr]e y S[eñor]a mia de mi vida; he recibido tu carta de ayer y no dudando del gusto (crossed out) q[ue] te abra causado todo el gusto que dices la noticia de habernos de Veer tan presto, puedo asegurarte que no es menor el mio. Yo llegare a esa ciudad queriendo Dios mañana a las onze y no tienes q[ue] salir

Mariana appears in her letters to have been quite happy at the prospect of seeing her son. The quick notes that she wrote to Carlos from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> allows us to glimpse her state of mind. “I do not know how to begin this letter of joy with the prospect of having the consolation of seeing you so soon,” she wrote on September 19. She explained that his letter had arrived the night before, but that she received it the next morning since she had already gone to bed and her attendants did not want to wake her up. Her happiness was such that the events of the last years had been erased from her memory: “I don’t remember anything of what had happened and I only have the great consolation that I will see you so soon.” Mariana felt an additional source of comfort in the fact that Carlos did not prohibit her from announcing the event publicly, further confirmation that this time it was finally going to happen.<sup>976</sup>

On September 21, Mariana got what she had fought so hard to obtain. Carlos arrived as promised in Toledo and spent many hours with his mother. He returned to Aranjuez in the evening where he spent the night on his way back to Madrid. Mariana went to her desk as soon as her son departed and recorded her happiness: “I never had a better day in my life,” she wrote that evening.<sup>977</sup> The feelings of gratitude were as overwhelming as those of happiness and she repeated them several times:

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de casa sino aguardarme en ella; y si huvieras de responder a esta carta (crossed out) me envaras la respuesta a Aranjuez, donde yre a dormir esta noche.” Carlos to Mariana 20 September 1679.

<sup>976</sup> “No se como empezar esta carta de alborozo de tener el consuelo de berte tan pronto... ya no me acuerdo nada de quanto ha pasado solo con el consuelo de berte como no me has prohibido que no lo diga como la otra vez que me lo abisaste.” Mariana to Carlos 19 September 1679.

<sup>977</sup> “Hijo mio de mi bida no dudarás con quanto gusto y consuelo he quedado de haber logrado tan buen dia... de todas maneras que te puedo asegurar hijo no he tenido mejor dia en mi bida...” Mariana to Carlos 21 September 1679.

I do not know how I will pay you in my entire life so many attentions as I owe you, and you can be sure that I will ever be grateful to you. I have no doubt that God will reward you for this very beautiful action that you have taken.<sup>978</sup>

Yet, even as she expressed her joy and gratitude to her son for granting her the consolation of his presence, she was also thinking about her political restitution at court. The way in which Mariana asked about the arrangements for her return, however, indicates that she was completely ready to assume a new role in her son's life. "Let me know when and how you would like to arrange for my return" she told Carlos, insisting that he made all the decisions because "I only want to execute everything to your liking and not move away from it in any way."<sup>979</sup>

Mariana left Toledo on September 27. Retracing her difficult and painful journey into exile, she stopped in Aranjuez, spent the night in the palace there, and continued on to Madrid the following day. She asked her son if perhaps it would be a good idea to eat publicly revealing that she was eager to resume her role in court rituals. She entered Madrid to public acclaim, surrounded by those who had been her supporters and those who had been on don Juan's side as well. A gazetteer reported that "the queen made her entry received by the hearts of everyone with such acclamations and general applause

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<sup>978</sup> "... como podre pagarte en mi vida tantas atenciones como te debo que bien puedes estar con la seguridad de que estare toda mi vida muy reconocida... y que Dios te ha de premiar esta acción tan hermosa que has hecho." Mariana to Carlos, 21 September 1679.

<sup>979</sup> "Si se ofrece algo de mi vuelta, y quando gustaras que sea y por donde, avisamelo que yo no deseo mas que ejecutar en todo tu gusto y no salir del de ninguna manera..." Mariana to Carlos, 21 September 1679.

that it is hard to comprehend or explain.”<sup>980</sup> The Venetian ambassador described Mariana’s return to court as “a triumph and a very rare lesson in Divine Justice.”<sup>981</sup>

As much as it was necessary for Mariana to become the subject of the king and show due deference to him, it was also imperative that the king, albeit without compromising his sovereignty, express “filial reverence” to his mother. As soon as Carlos demonstrated that he had been able to put his obligations as king above anything else, his subjects, his family, diplomats, and “the entire Christian republic” expected that he would also fulfill his obligations as a son: “My brother” Maria Theresa wrote to Carlos, “my affection for Your Majesty prompts me to signify with these lines my joy to see the queen, my lady and my mother, restored to your presence. I congratulate Your Majesty, assuring Your Majesty of my pleasure to see this happening. Due to the love I have for my mother I am so pleased to see her with this consolation and I assure you she is extremely happy (*contentissima*). But this does not really surprise me, especially seeing what a good son Your Majesty has shown yourself to be on this occasion.”<sup>982</sup>

As members of a political and cultural system where numerous forms of female authority were embedded and institutionalized in the legal, dynastic, political, and socio-cultural structures of society, women like Mariana possessed and could mobilize great

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<sup>980</sup> “Al tiempo que el Rey tomaba ya los coches acompañado de los desterrados para ir a Toledo con tal celeridad que mostro bien la violencia y opresion en que estaba, y bolbiendo poco despues a la corte, le siguió la Reyna que hizo su entrada rezibida de los corazones de todos con aclamazion y aplauso tal, que no puede comprehenderse ni esplicarse...” BNM mss. 9399, f. 85r.

<sup>981</sup> “...il ritorno fu trionfo ed un ammaestramento ben raro della giustizia divina.” Federico Cornaro, Venetian ambassador to Madrid (1678-1681), in Barozzi and Berchet, *Relazioni*, p. 446.

<sup>982</sup> “Hermano mio. No me permite mi cariño el dejar de significar a V[uestra] Ma[gesta]d por estos renglones mi alborozo de ver a la Reyna mi señora y mi madre queda a la presencia de V[uestra] Ma[gesta]d de que doy a V[uestra] Ma[gesta]d mi enorabuena asegurandole la contenta que estoy pues en lo que quiero a mi madre me guelgo en el alma de berla con este consuelo y ella esta contentissima y no me espanto pues esta de tan buen hijo como V[uestra] Ma[gesta]d ase y muestra en esta ocassion de lo que no puedo mostrar bastantemente mi gusto que es grandissimo[.]” Maria Theresa to Carlos, 28 October 1679. AHN E. leg. 2729.

authority. In Mariana's case, the power she commanded during the regency and beyond was so wide-ranging that it actually became the cause of her removal from her son's life and consequently from the monarchy. It provoked a military coup and an unprecedented Confederation against her on the part of a sizeable number of the ruling elite. Yet, as a Habsburg matriarch, queen mother, and former sovereign, Mariana's presence could not be eliminated from the political equation. Over the course of her two-and-a-half years in exile, she applied all of her familial, dynastic, political, and diplomatic capital to accomplish her "consolation." By the time she saw her son again, she had also achieved a vindication of her political role during the regency and her restitution to the business of monarchy. Her strategies were successful not only because of the expert ways in which she deployed them, but also because female authority, including the power of motherhood, formed an integral part of Spanish culture.

After her return to court, Mariana's political involvement took on different characteristics even as it gained new strength. For the remainder of her life, Mariana played an important political and diplomatic role alongside Carlos II and her two daughters-in-law, Maria Louisa of Orleans (r. 1679-1689) and Mariana of Neoburg (r. 1689-1700, d. 1740). She advocated for the rights of her great-grandson, Joseph Ferdinand of Bavaria (1692-1699), to inherit the Spanish Crown, and headed the faction in Madrid that supported his candidacy. Although the prince died before his candidacy took effect, Mariana successfully upheld his rights until her own death in 1696.<sup>983</sup> Her

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<sup>983</sup> The prince was the son of Maria Antonia of Austria (Mariana's granddaughter), who had become Electress of Bavaria upon her marriage to Max Emanuel II of Bavaria (1662-1726) in 1685. According to Philip IV's testament, Maria Antonia had indisputable rights to the succession through both of her parents, (Margarita of Austria and Leopold I), a topic discussed at length when Carlos considered marrying Maria Antonia. Max Emanuel II bitterly lamented having lost Mariana's political support in Madrid when she died. See his correspondence with the nuns at the Descalzas Reales in AGP Patronato de las Descalzas Reales, c. 6.

political standing certainly contributed to the creation of a legend and immediately after she died of breast cancer, several “miracles” associated with her were reported in Madrid and diplomatic circles.<sup>984</sup> Her path towards sainthood and the eulogies recited all over the Spanish Empire, which compared her to Queen Esther, were as politicized as had been her role as regent of the monarchy and mother of the last Habsburg king of Spain.<sup>985</sup>

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<sup>984</sup> BNM VE 119-16. Her body was reported “uncorrupted” three years after her death. For miracles reported as soon as Mariana died See Adalberto de Baviera and Gabriel Maura Gamazo, *Documentos inéditos referentes a las postrimerías de la Casa de Austria en España*, vol. 1 (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2004), 550-551. The report of the “uncorruptibility” of Mariana’s body can be found in AGP Reinados Carlos II, c. 144. Miguel Gómez Vozmediano, “El Olor de la Santidad. La fallida beatificación de la Reina Mariana de Austria” in Maria Victoria López Cordón and Gloria Franco Rubio, *La Reina Isabel y las reinas de España: Realidad, modelos e imagen historiográfica. Actas de la VIII Reunión Científica de la Fundación Española de Historia Moderna (Madrid, 2-4 de Junio de 2004)* (Madrid: Fundación Española de Historia Moderna, 2005), 556-573.

<sup>985</sup> The Bourbons abandoned the beatification proceedings in 1702. Gómez Vozmediano, “El Olor de la Santidad,” p. 572.

## CONCLUSION

Mariana of Austria's political role from the moment that her son inherited the throne in 1665 until his marriage in 1679 reveals the extent to which court, dynastic, and international politics depended on women. Mariana ruled during the sole royal minority in the long history of Habsburg Spain. Her position, however, came as a logical consequence in a system that sanctioned female authority in multiple ways. The adaptation of the court to Mariana's authority is the most obvious example: the impact of Mariana's tutorship rights on Spanish kingship and the structure of the court—the two main components comprising the political system of monarchy—clearly shows that female authority was institutionalized in the queen's royal household. Political traditions that required female participation were rooted in social practice as well. Spanish society and the Spanish ruling elite were accustomed to see women take on leadership roles analogous to the one that Mariana assumed during her son's minority. Third, a similar situation applied to the Habsburgs. Other Habsburg women besides Mariana, including Anne of Austria, Maria Theresa of Austria, Margarita of Austria, and Maria Antonia of Austria, for example, were integral to the politics of dynasty and state. They shaped the political and diplomatic history of seventeenth-century Europe in significant ways. Female rule, however, was not devoid of difficulties. Precisely because female authority possessed such strength in Spain, it eventually clashed with competing, equally potent notions about masculine political power.

This study has analyzed the underlying conditions that determined the manner in which Mariana exercised power as a female ruler. Equal attention has been paid to greater policy issues. An effective analysis of Mariana's rule cannot be divorced from the

wider European political context. Anxiety about the succession to the extensive Spanish Empire, for instance, played as much of a role in shaping the politics of the court as the fact that a woman headed the monarchy. The international situation was extremely tense because of the intense rivalry between Louis XIV and Leopold I, who competed for hegemony and potential claims to the Spanish Empire. The fact that both were married to Spanish infantas, Maria Theresa of Austria and Margarita of Austria, became in many ways the engine of European war and diplomacy during the early years of Carlos II's minority. Mariana navigated the critical situation successfully. Under her leadership, Spain adopted a number of strategies that allowed the monarchy to maintain a respectable position on the larger European stage; these strategies included astute diplomacy and well-chosen military alliances. Generally positive, the results of these initiatives emphasize the importance of this period to the history of Imperial Spain and the later seventeenth century. Previous interpretations of the period of Carlos II's minority have focused too much on internal court politics. As a result earlier historians have often obscured the importance and accomplishments of Mariana's regency.

In spite of her successes, Mariana's regency presents a conundrum. She had assumed the office of regent with extensive prerogatives based on legal, political, dynastic, and cultural traditions that legitimized her position in ways that women in other monarchies often lacked. Nonetheless, Mariana's regency had much in common with other female regencies: a high level of factionalism, which brought the monarchy to the brink of civil war on several occasions and eventually caused her exile. Traditional interpretations have suggested these problems were rooted on Mariana's lack of experience, or even incompetence. These analyses have not satisfactorily explained the



sometimes difficult events of the period. They have not taken into account the structural problems and the historical contingencies that contributed to the disorders of the court, including first and foremost the elimination of the king's royal household and the new international situation caused by the succession of a minor to the Spanish Crown.

From September 17, 1665, the day that Philip IV died, until April 15, 1675, the day that Carlos II moved into his own royal household, the king's household lost its juridical status. Although parts of the king's household survived, Mariana's household assumed the place usually reserved for that of the proprietary ruler. The curious situation of these two households during Carlos II's minority reveals the multiple functions that queens fulfilled in the court system. Just as a queen held the body of the king during gestation, so the queen's royal household held the body of the king during a minority. The new organization of the court, however, also revealed an important political dilemma. Because the king's royal household was a material expression of the political body of the king, without a household, the king lacked a political identity. Even though Mariana exercised sovereignty on behalf of her son, the court apparatus needed the king, as young as he was, to participate in the rituals and ceremonies of the court. Because all these rituals and ceremonies were based on the hierarchy of the offices of the royal household, the elimination of the king's royal household brought the main problem of a royal minority to the surface: the absence of a fully functioning king. This situation created concrete difficulties and forced everyone to participate in the rituals of the court through Mariana's royal household, thus, reversing the hierarchy of the court in ways that also affected the larger political situation.

In this atmosphere, conflicts of etiquette and constant bickering among officers of the court were not petty factional struggles. On the contrary, they reveal serious anxiety among members of the court; namely, that the “dignity of kingship” was imperiled as long as the king was served through the queen’s household. The formation of the king’s household six months before Carlos II reached the age of legal emancipation, therefore, marked a major milestone for the king and the court. It foreshadowed the normalization of the body politic and likewise presaged the end of Mariana’s juridical rights as regent. The re-establishment of the king’s royal household, however, did not make the transition from the minority any less difficult for either Carlos II or Mariana. Usually the formation of a new royal household resulted in a re-ordering of alliances. In this case, however, the power shifts of the court were much more dramatic because Carlos II’s youth made him much more susceptible to manipulation. Mariana’s position became extremely difficult to navigate at this critical transitional moment, just as it had been at the beginning of the regency. Finding a new place from which to exercise influence turned out to be the biggest challenge she faced. It took the two-and-a-half years she spent in exile for Mariana to re-negotiate her position and carve out a niche where she could exert her influence, obliquely this time, on her son’s regime.

Besides helping to explain how politics during Mariana’s regency took shape, the re-organization of the court during the regency minority sheds light on other historical issues. The ruler’s household, the foundation of the court system, served as an expression of sovereignty in the political system of monarchy. The household of the titular ruler acted as a unifying concept of what was often an agglomeration of territories, each having a distinct and individual political and juridical relationship with the ruler. Thus,

the fact that Mariana was able to rule the monarchy from her own royal household even though she was not a proprietary ruler is indeed a remarkable situation that underscores the strength of female authority in Habsburg Spain. For close to a decade, the queen's household became an acceptable substitute to the king's royal household, the foundation of the entire court system. This unique political moment in the history of the Spanish Habsburg court reveals the extent to which female authority had been institutionalized through the queen's royal household. Although Spain had not had a proprietary female ruler since Isabel I inherited the Castilian throne in 1472, queens nevertheless formed an integral part of the corporate system of monarchy.

Mariana's rule illuminates the role of queens in the Spanish Habsburg court and at the same time deepens current the understandings of regency, a female political office *par excellence*. The configuration of regency among the Habsburgs gave Mariana extensive prerogatives. If we count the medieval Iberian traditions on which her titles rested, Mariana stood firmly on more than two centuries of political practices that sanctioned her position. Nonetheless, exercising political authority on behalf of another proved a very risky business as other early modern female regents learned often to their grief. In her case, however, the difficulties arose from an excess of power rather than the absence of power. First, her legal prerogatives as tutor sanctioned the elimination of the king's royal household giving her complete control of the court. That control, however, simultaneously provoked conflict as everyone struggled to adapt to the new political configuration. Second, due to the temporary status of a regency government, the end of Mariana's rule could be predicted to the exact date. Not surprisingly, disorders at court began as Carlos II's legal emancipation neared and were also triggered by the re-

establishment of the king's royal household. It was no coincidence that a coup against Mariana took place precisely on the day of the king's fourteenth birthday. Third, Spanish culture viewed mothers and widows as powerful figures. Mariana's authority also derived from her position within the Habsburg dynasty by birth, as daughter and sister of two emperors, and by marriage, as the wife of one and the mother of another Spanish monarch. She was very conscious of her position and expected obedience and deference not only from her subjects, but from her son as well. Her figure cast a long shadow over the fourteen-year old king as he took his first tentative steps as ruler. Perhaps unwittingly, Mariana emasculated Carlos II and thus compromised the office of king. In short, Mariana was not exiled because Spaniards rejected female authority; the reason was precisely the opposite. Mariana's strong presence jeopardized the dignity and authority of kingship.

Even though she possessed the prerogatives of a proprietary ruler, Mariana's position ultimately remained subordinate to the office of king. As queen tutor and as governor she faced a dilemma: how to substitute for the figure of the king without being perceived as usurping his prerogatives. The problem was never successfully resolved and the office and the practice of kingship inevitably suffered during the minority. The incompatibility of kingship and childhood can be observed with clarity at the moment when Carlos II came of age. Although this study has not focused on the king, nonetheless it challenges many of the ideas commonly held about Carlos II. The king certainly failed to make the transition from childhood to adulthood at the prescribed moment, that is, when he reached his fourteenth birthday. But we cannot facilely assume this failure was because of any individual physical, mental, or psychological deficiencies on his part.

Carlos II does not appear to have differed much from other males of his age growing up in seventeenth-century Spain. Although the boundaries between childhood and adulthood were ambivalent for early modern Spanish males, Carlos II, as king of Spain, had less room to maneuver the transitional period of youth that demarcated childhood from adulthood. The king's inability to assert his independence from his mother underlay the disorders of the court that almost plunged the monarchy into civil war in late 1676. Carlos II's initial separation from Mariana was a crucial political moment for the king and, manifestly, a crucial political milestone for the monarchy as well. Mariana's exile formed a critical period in Carlos II's political and personal development. Once he untangled himself from the dominant presence of his mother, Carlos II gradually became a fully mature male and demonstrated that his obligations as king took priority over his obligations as a son. By the end of Mariana's exile, he had emerged as an individual who had proven himself able to limit his mother's authority. Mariana's return to court, therefore, delineated a new stage in Carlos II's life and political cycles.

As important as Mariana's regency was for court affairs, and the Spanish monarchy more generally, just as critical was her role on the bigger stages of European and international politics and diplomacy. The external problems Mariana faced can be traced to the situation created by the succession of a minor to the Spanish crown; here, too, the fact that the monarchy was headed by a woman was not the real issue. A succession crisis in Spain threatened to upset the European status quo. The aggressive policies of France towards Spain and the political tactics the Holy Roman Empire adopted as a result generated serious problems for the regency. Moreover, during Carlos II's early childhood, a volatile state of affairs persisted based on fears that he would die at

any moment. The main problem was the dependence of Europe's balance of power schemes on dynastic succession for stability. Although the Austrian Habsburgs possessed indisputable rights to the succession in Spain, it remained to be seen if Emperor Leopold I would have been able to enforce his rights. It also remained to be seen how the Spanish ruling elite would align itself in the case of a contested succession.

These were tricky matters and Mariana did not always choose the best alternatives. Mariana's insistence on the marriage of her daughter, the Infanta Margarita of Austria, to her brother, Leopold I, exacerbated an already difficult situation. As the next person in the line of succession, the Infanta's presence in Madrid could have offered Mariana a measure of political stability, at least until Carlos II became a little older. Were Margarita to remain in Spain, it would have assured Spaniards that a prompt and safe succession could take place without the intervention of foreign powers. Spaniards were more than willing to accept a proprietary female ruler. Mariana, by confirming her daughter's marriage immediately after becoming regent, appeared to have placed her dynastic interests above those of her and her son's subjects. Not only did she upset the internal politics of the monarchy, she made those very politics part of international politics and diplomacy. The marriage elevated Leopold I above Louis XIV in the succession and provoked France's wrath, thus bringing these two powerful leaders into the fray.

Although it may be tempting to attribute Mariana's decision to incompetence or lack of experience, it is clear that that was not the case; she certainly demonstrated political acumen in many other instances. It was precisely the succession of a minor to the Spanish throne and neither Mariana's regency nor her seemingly unwise decision to

wed her daughter to her brother, that led Louis XIV to press more aggressively his attempts to consolidate his frontiers in order to reverse Habsburg encirclement. His intention to claim territories in the Spanish Low Countries on behalf of his wife once Philip IV died had been made known to Mariana well in advance by her Habsburg relatives in the French court. From this point of view, her decision to go ahead with the marriage was carefully calculated; she apparently felt that she could withstand the French threat best by marrying her daughter to her brother. In that case, Emperor Leopold I would have had strong incentives to preserve Habsburg's interest in the area. This strategy obviously did not work and Mariana was left to her own devices in facing down Louis XIV.

These considerations suggest that the root of the problems at home and abroad, especially during the first three years of Mariana's regency, can be traced back to the minority itself. Domestically, the minority caused a deep restructuring of the court; internationally the minority triggered war. The re-organization of the court changed the ways in which political negotiations occurred: it exacerbated competition for influence by redefining the hierarchy of the court and setting the stage for a difficult transition of power once the regency ended. Second, the succession of a minor altered the international status quo and motivated Louis XIV to abandon the previous treaty he had signed with his Spanish Habsburg relatives just six years previously. These circumstances suggest that in order to explain the so-called problem of regency, we need to include all aspects of rule during a royal minority and not only politics based on binary definitions of gender. Women could be and were powerful figures. Their marriages, inheritance rights, interventions, households, and formal authority were absolutely essential in determining

the course of international and internal politics. Mariana, or other women who ruled like her, were not exceptions; they formed integral pieces in these complex political, dynastic, and diplomatic systems. The argument that disorders during female regencies resulted from women's inexperience or even incompetence is ultimately an unsatisfactory explanation for interpreting the common problems facing female regents. Although we know still little about what kinds of formal training these women received, they evidently were prepared to assume power.

The results of this investigation also demonstrate that unless women are fully incorporated in the history of international politics in early modern Europe our understanding of those matters remains lamentably incomplete. There exists considerable information on just the actions in which these women were central. Their activities can be retrieved from the most traditional of historical sources, including diplomatic correspondence and other state papers. Royal women fully participated in the politics of family and state in ways that had pan-European ramifications. The inheritance rights of a little girl like Maria Antonia of Austria became a major reason for Spanish and Imperial ministers to continue a military alliance and simultaneously dissuaded Carlos II and his ministers from approaching the French for a diplomatic and matrimonial alliance. Likewise, a French princess with no prospect of any major territorial inheritance could shape diplomatic outcomes with her fertility potential, as was the case with Marie Louise of Orleans. Although in these instances, royal women appeared to have been pawns of the politics of dynasty and state, in many other cases, they exercised considerable power. Mariana of Austria, Anne of Austria, and Maria Theresa of Austria exerted tremendous influence over a younger generation of royals, including a younger generation of males.



Mariana essentially imposed Carlos II's engagement to the Austrian archduchess on her son and the monarchy. When it was finally decided that Carlos II would marry a French princess instead, Mariana was instrumental in dissolving the original marriage plan and helped avert a major falling out between the Spanish and the Austrian Habsburgs. Louis XIV relied on the offices of his mother, Anne of Austria, to advance his foreign policy. Maria Theresa of Austria intervened at a crucial moment to assist her Spanish relatives in concluding a French matrimonial alliance, which also crowned a major peace treaty. These examples explain why masculine members at courts observed the outmost respect and reverence for royal matriarchs as they realized how forceful and influential these women could be.

Although Mariana ruled during a transitional and insecure period, she left a significant positive legacy. Mariana's rule marked a shift in Spain's foreign policy. She also introduced changes that affected the functioning of the court. The style of ruling that Mariana adopted facilitated the emergence of a distinctly new political culture and should be taken into consideration when studying the rest of Carlos II's reign. Mariana's preference for governing personally with the councils of government, for example, opened up space for the aristocracy to take a more active and central role in the decision-making process. Institutional scholars writing in the 1950s pointed out that the Council of State re-emerged as the most important government institution during the 1660s; Mariana was responsible for this significant politico-institutional development that deeply transformed the court. Besides infusing the conciliar system of government with new vigor, Mariana also changed its nature with her appointments. Mariana frequently appointed younger and more dynamic ministers and, in the process, discovered and

advanced several men of considerable talent. The entry of new men and new ideas can be seen in the reforming spirit of the regency, another topic that deserves further investigation. It remains to be seen how these innovations were linked to the reforms implemented in Spain in the 1680s under Carlos II's reign and then to what extent the Bourbons built on them in the eighteenth century. Scholars are slowly coming to recognize Habsburg's contributions to the Bourbon initiatives of the early eighteenth century. Mariana's regency during Carlos II's minority should be part of this conversation.

Besides encouraging a more active role for the councils, the aristocracy, and women, Mariana played an important, perhaps even a fundamental, role in the institutional establishment of the office of prime minister. She discovered and promoted the first person to receive the title, Fernando Valenzuela, and may have been at least partially responsible for the appointment of the Duke of Medinaceli, the first person to exercise the office with the actual title of prime minister. This study offers significant evidence that Mariana played a much more central role in defining the regime that followed don Juan's than previously thought. The rise of Medinaceli is one case in point, although hardly the only one.

Finally, Spain's foreign policy followed a distinctly new direction under Mariana's leadership. One of Mariana's most controversial and, at the same time, most politically astute, decisions was to accept the independence of Portugal in 1668. In order to understand why, it is imperative to review the policies of Philip IV after he signed the Peace of the Pyrenees with France in 1659. Philip IV fully intended to re-unify the Spanish and Portuguese Empires. During the 1660s, that enterprise appeared feasible.

Philip IV's successes in the early years of the initiative, however, threatened the interests of both France and England. The diplomatic maneuvers of both monarchies, which included royal marriages with the Portuguese ruling house and military subsidies for the Portuguese to fight Spain, reveal that European states continued to regard Habsburg Spain as a major power, although the current scholarship has seldom acknowledged this fact. Nonetheless, and despite Philip's efforts, by the time Mariana assumed the regency, the Portuguese cause seemed lost. Many at court, however, resisted giving in. In recognizing Portugal's independence, Mariana gave up Spain's claim to hegemony in the European system and, in consequence, on the global stage as well. Although this decision may be seen as an act of weakness (and certainly many Spaniards perceived it that way), Mariana's decisiveness greatly contributed to what Christopher Storrs rightly calls the resilience of the Spanish monarchy.

Under Mariana's leadership, Spain reaped substantial benefits in the realm of diplomacy. Spain's ability to form alliances proved decisive in keeping Louis XIV's dangerous expansionist policies in check. Spain retained vast markets, territories, and financial resources which made alliances with the Spanish Habsburgs extremely attractive to other European powers. The English and the Dutch are two excellent examples. By offering the English commercial advantages similar to the ones the Dutch gained in 1648 and by allowing Portugal to slip away, Mariana was able to negotiate advantageous military alliances that allowed her to keep France's rising power at bay. She negotiated the peace between England and the Dutch in 1674 and thus also robbed France of an ally during the Dutch War. The work of the Spanish diplomatic corps during Mariana's regency should not be underestimated nor should we ignore Spain's central

role in reshaping the military and diplomatic alliances in Europe during a period of otherwise indisputable French ascendancy.

Even during her exile, Mariana involved herself actively and decisively in foreign policy, although she had to exploit more traditional avenues based on familial links and centered on marital strategies. Mariana mediated between her son and her brother, as Carlos II dissolved his engagement with the Emperor's daughter, Maria Antonia of Austria. She was instrumental as well in cementing the Franco-Spanish marriage, validating it with her support. This was not, however, a small matter. Once it was clear that Carlos II was going to survive his childhood, the politics of the succession became centered on the question of the king's marriage. It was a matter of high politics and diplomacy not only for Spain but just as much for France and the Empire, while the rest of Europe looked on with keen interest. Mariana's intervention and the roles of other royal women in the issue of Carlos II's marriage reveal that Europe still looked both forward and backward. The system utterly depended on a patrimonial conception of state based on dynastic inheritance, but was also governed by geopolitical considerations. Precisely because older notions of the state as the patrimony of a family persisted, women were instrumental in ensuring the survival and the success of both. No one demonstrated this better than Mariana of Austria.

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