

# WOMEN, DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS SINCE 1500

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ROUTLEDGE

WOMEN'S AND GENDER HISTORY



# 5

## MARRIAGE PLOTS

### Royal women, marriage diplomacy and international politics at the Spanish, French and Imperial Courts, 1665–1679

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No sooner had the King of Spain ratified the Peace with France, but that he thought upon confirming it by a new Alliance with the French king; so that though the Court of Spain were far engaged with the Emperor for the Marriage of the Imperial Princess with his Catholick majesty, yet it hindered not that Prince from converting all his thoughts towards France. The Picture of Mademoiselle de Valois, and the Royal qualities of that Princess, made him resolve that last Spring to cause the Marquess de los Balbases to go from Nimueguen to the French Court, in quality of Ambassador extraordinary, to demand her in Marriage.<sup>1</sup>

This short passage, extracted from a lengthy historical account of the Peace of Nijmegen (1678–1679), succinctly describes the sudden change of heart that ostensibly prompted the king of Spain, Carlos II (b. 1661, r. 1665–1700), to seek the hand of the French princess, Marie Louise of Orleans (1662–1689). Spain and France were main contenders in the devastating pan-European conflict variously referred to as the *Guerre de Hollande*, the Dutch War or the Franco-Dutch War (1672–1678), and thus the marriage alliance that united these two former foes marked a significant diplomatic event for both monarchies.<sup>2</sup> As the author also noted, Carlos II's decision came as a shocking surprise; he had been officially engaged for several years to the eldest daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor, Leopold I (b. 1640, r. 1658–1705), the Habsburg archduchess, Maria Antonia of Austria (1669–1692). That match, concluded as part of a military alliance between the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs, proclaimed the house's commitment to oppose Louis XIV's (b. 1638, r. 1643–1715) invasion of the United Provinces, which had posed a direct threat to Habsburg interests and territories in the Low Countries.<sup>3</sup> The bride-switching incident, therefore, did not result solely from some elective affinity as suggested in the passage. On the contrary, the preference for a French bride evidenced a decisive

shift in Spanish foreign policy. The marriages had been negotiated in the midst of changing political alliances during the war and within the context of convoluted internal politics in Spain that brought the monarchy to the brink of civil war and that eventually led to a dramatic change of regime.

This intricate case of marriage diplomacy brings attention to one of the most important ways in which royal women shaped European geopolitics during the early modern age. The indispensable function royal marriages played in forging alliances and devising strategies was axiomatic to early modern rulers and diplomats. It was not happenstance that the anonymous author of the opening passage finished his elaborate history of the treaty with a lengthy list of the marriages concluded as a result of the negotiations, explaining that after such 'bloody tragedy,' the marriages would create not only 'sacred ties' among warring parties, but, most importantly, 'render the Peace indissolvable.'<sup>4</sup> Although royal marriages often, if not always, crowned major peace treaties, they have yet to be fully incorporated in the diplomatic history of Europe.<sup>5</sup> To be sure, some of them have received excellent treatment as cultural events significant in their own right.<sup>6</sup> Scholars who study individual royal women have been attentive to the diplomatic and dynastic implications of royal marriages, an essential topic for understanding how these women navigated their offices.<sup>7</sup> In his investigations, Joseph Patrouch located the marriages of no fewer than 66 daughters of Austrian and Spanish Habsburg rulers between 1291 and 1740, who as 'empresses, queens, electresses, grand-duchesses, duchesses, margravines, countesses, and baronesses' represented their dynasty across Europe.<sup>8</sup> In spite of this important and growing body of scholarship, royal marriages and their international implications are still reduced in importance, or ignored altogether, in studies that deal mainly with diplomacy.<sup>9</sup> The persistent idea that women were mere pawns or innocent participants in the politics of family and state has likewise resulted in an incomplete understanding of their influence in European diplomacy and politics.<sup>10</sup> Paula Sutter Fichtner's pioneering article in the *American Historical Review* in 1976, for example, focused on the diplomatic significance of Habsburg matrimonial alliances; her analysis, however, revolved exclusively on the actions of the male rulers.<sup>11</sup>

Yet, royal marriages are an ideal way to incorporate women into current understandings of early modern diplomacy, a field that, in spite of major advances, still overwhelmingly produces masculinized narratives.<sup>12</sup> In order to break this cycle, it is thus critical to establish female agency and examine how women actually exercised influence in the complex world of international politics. As Carolyn James (Chapter 1) and Laura Oliván Santaliestra (Chapter 4) convincingly argue in their essays in this volume, diplomacy depended largely on women's brokerage, patronage and adjudication. Although working from two very different contexts; that of the small Italian principalities in Renaissance Italy and the Spanish Habsburg court in the seventeenth century, James and Oliván Santaliestra identify the sites in which royal and aristocratic women exercised considerable influence. Likewise, the extensive documentary trail generated as a result of the complex manoeuvres regarding Carlos II's marriage, including lengthy state council deliberations, ambassadors'



reports, diplomatic memoranda and personal correspondence, all identify women as powerful participants in this significant diplomatic event.<sup>13</sup>

This essay analyses the process that culminated in the 1679 agreement between Spain and France as a series of complex diplomatic episodes orchestrated *for* and *by* royal women. Skilfully using their political and dynastic positions, two queens shaped the course of events.<sup>14</sup> Acting in her capacity as regent and mother of the king, Queen Mariana of Austria (1634–1696) had originally negotiated Carlos II's engagement to the Austrian archduchess as an integral part of her foreign policy.<sup>15</sup> From exile, she mediated between the Habsburgs when Carlos II wavered, and, reversing her own policy, provided critical support for the Franco–Spanish match. From her position as queen consort, Maria Theresa of Austria (1638–1683), too, played a decisive role with her Spanish and French relatives at a critical point in the negotiations.<sup>16</sup> Operating from their respective bases of power in their adoptive courts and relying on a sophisticated family network that spanned Europe, these two women successfully resolved a delicate diplomatic situation that had major stakes for all involved.<sup>17</sup> Although the voices and actions of these two royal matriarchs are heard loud and clear in the documents, those of the two brides (one of whom was still a child) remained conspicuously silent. Extensive and elaborate discussions about the younger generation of royal women, however, illustrate the extent to which their dynastic connections, inheritance rights and fertility potential fashioned early modern European diplomacy as well.

### A queen mother's diplomacy

The marriage of Carlos II and Marie Louise of Orleans concluded a phase in Franco–Spanish relations that began when Philip IV of Spain died in 1665, leaving the monarchy on the shoulders of the three-year old Carlos II and his mother, Mariana of Austria. Scholars of Louis XIV's foreign policy have long identified his quest to break the so-called Habsburg encirclement as one of its driving principles.<sup>18</sup> Thus, even though his celebrated marriage to the Spanish Infanta, Maria Theresa of Austria, ended the Franco–Spanish War in 1659 after a quarter century of hostilities, it did not prevent him from pursuing his main objective.<sup>19</sup> Upon the assumption of his personal rule in 1661, he took indirect actions against the Spanish Habsburgs by providing financial and military aid to the Portuguese in their quest to gain independence from Spain.<sup>20</sup> Philip IV's death, however, opened the door for more overt action on the French monarch's part. Based on an obscure, albeit clever, legal argument, Louis XIV claimed that his Spanish-born wife was the rightful heiress to her father's, Philip IV, dominions in the Low Countries.<sup>21</sup> The claim asserted that since Carlos II was the son of Philip IV's *second* marriage and Maria Theresa was the oldest surviving child of the king's *first* marriage, inheritance rights thus 'devolved' on her. Although short and not particularly devastating, the War of Devolution (1667–1668), the first of the two wars Spain and France fought as enemies during Mariana's regency, renewed the historic rivalry between the Bourbons and the Habsburgs.<sup>22</sup> It ultimately contributed to a realignment of



the military and diplomatic blocs in Europe. When Mariana became regent for her son, she expected an imminent French attack. Indeed, the two Spanish-born queens of France, Louis XIV's mother, Anne of Austria (1606–1666), and his wife, Maria Theresa, had repeatedly warned their relatives that he planned to press claims to the Spanish Low Countries as soon as Philip IV died; he eventually did so in 1667.<sup>23</sup>

Although Mariana's regency thus began under diplomatic circumstances that would have made it difficult for anyone to navigate, histories of the period have consistently failed to evaluate her rule taking into account the prevalent international conjunctures.<sup>24</sup> The rule of women during royal minorities in the medieval and early modern periods was generally accompanied by great disorder and violence, leading scholars to refer to this type of political conflict as the 'problem' of regency.<sup>25</sup> During her tenure in office, Mariana also dealt with her share of conflicts and disorders, including the threat of civil war on at least two occasions and her temporary exile from court. These troubles have certainly contributed to the fashioning of a distorted image of Mariana. Scholars have traditionally portrayed her as someone who surrendered power to her favourites and who was uninterested in, or incapable of, ruling with a strong hand.<sup>26</sup> Overemphasis on court politics, however, has obscured Mariana's considerable statesmanship and extensive authority. Research on Mariana herself is still relatively undeveloped, but a new generation of scholars is slowly undermining older interpretations that have largely denied Mariana any role as a central political figure.<sup>27</sup> An abundance of state papers on which the queen personally commented and annotated clearly reveal the importance of, and her personal intervention in, policy matters during her regency.<sup>28</sup> She patronized new and younger men, whom she placed strategically in various offices, effectively transforming the political configuration of the Spanish court within the first three years of her rule.<sup>29</sup> Working with many men, rather than a single figure, she devised a coherent foreign policy. As will be subsequently argued, her decision to negotiate the marriage of her son, Carlos II, to the little archduchess, Maria Antonia, formed an integral part of her diplomatic policies; it was neither a dynastic nor a personal decision, although she certainly possessed close ties to the child.<sup>30</sup>

Mariana stepped into the office of regent with the backing of her husband's testament; the ruling elite raised no objections.<sup>31</sup> At the international level, however, she faced a dire and dangerous situation. Mariana took the reins of power shortly after a major defeat on the Portuguese front and under threat of an imminent French attack.<sup>32</sup> She could either continue the policies of her husband and prolong the war against Portugal or change course in order to preserve her son's patrimony in the Low Countries.<sup>33</sup> Resolving the Portuguese matter was imperative, but granting independence to a rebellious kingdom was a deeply controversial move. This dilemma became the most pressing political issue in the early years of her regency and one that, not surprisingly given the stakes involved, deeply divided her court.<sup>34</sup> Working closely with the Marquis of Aytona, who took on the role of military advisor and tactician, Mariana began to lay the foundation of her foreign policy.<sup>35</sup> The guiding principle behind her strategy was to resist French aggression. Within days of assuming office, she began the process of reinforcing the Franco-Spanish



frontiers (in Catalonia, Aragon and Navarre), ordered her commanders to prepare for a French attack, and initiated negotiations with many European powers; the last yielded crucial military, commercial and diplomatic alliances.<sup>36</sup> She immediately began negotiations with Portugal, with the English acting as intermediaries. She thus also hoped to deprive France of an important ally.<sup>37</sup> In spite of opposition at home, her strategies proved their worth, particularly after Louis XIV declared war on Spain on 17 May 1667.<sup>38</sup>

Thus by the time that France opened hostilities, Mariana was swiftly able to steer the monarchy out of danger. In less than eight months, she ended the war with Portugal permanently. Signed on 13 January 1668, the Treaty of Lisbon recognized the kingdom's independence and the Braganzas as the new ruling dynasty.<sup>39</sup> Mariana withstood serious criticism for accepting the permanent split of the Spanish and Portuguese empires.<sup>40</sup> The political price she paid was worth it, however. The peace with Portugal became the foundation of her accomplishments in the realm of diplomacy. Now that a reunification of the Spanish and Portuguese empires was no longer a possibility, Spain appeared much less threatening than France to the rest of Europe. Mariana seized the opportunity. Spanish diplomats in Brussels, London, and The Hague orchestrated a brilliant diplomatic campaign on her behalf that culminated in the formation of a Triple Alliance between England, the United Provinces and Sweden. The Alliance had the exclusive purpose of halting Louis XIV's attacks on the Spanish Low Countries.<sup>41</sup> Less than a week later, on 2 May, Mariana's representatives concluded peace negotiations in the city of Aix-la-Chapelle, ending the war that Louis XIV had started a year before; Spain suffered no major losses.<sup>42</sup>

In spite of the hiatus in hostilities and the re-establishment of embassies at both courts, tensions between Spain and France escalated during the following years. The French monarch began to recoup some diplomatic losses he suffered during the War of Devolution.<sup>43</sup> He immediately began plans for an invasion of the United Provinces to punish them for their support of Spain. Eventually, he enticed the English to launch a simultaneous attack on Dutch territories by sea and by land, which took place late April 1672.<sup>44</sup> Mariana redoubled her diplomatic efforts against France as well. In January 1672, Spain signed an agreement of reciprocal protection with the Dutch.<sup>45</sup> A political coup in the Republic that ended up in the brutal assassination of the De Witt brothers and the rise of William III of Orange to a leadership position as Stadtholder facilitated a more substantial military commitment binding together Spain and the United Provinces against France.<sup>46</sup> By 1673, their interests converged in ways that no one could have imagined before 1648, when Spain agreed to grant its rebellious provinces independence after 80 years of war.<sup>47</sup>

Almost simultaneously, Mariana obtained a major diplomatic victory with the Austrian Habsburgs, one that had proven embarrassingly elusive. From the beginning of her rule, in the face of France's aggression, she had counted on the support of her brother, Emperor Leopold I. As part of her pro-Habsburg and anti-French foreign policy, she had confirmed the marriage of her daughter, Margarita of Austria (1651–1673), to the emperor, on 18 September 1665, the day after Philip IV



died and during the first meeting of the regency council.<sup>48</sup> Yet, in spite of being married to the heiress to the Spanish throne, Emperor Leopold I remained conspicuously neutral when Louis XIV declared war on Spain in 1667. Not only had he failed to intervene, he negotiated a treaty with Louis XIV whereby he agreed to 'partition' the Spanish empire if Carlos II died without descendants, a move that caused uproar in Madrid when it became public in 1668.<sup>49</sup> Thereafter, relations between the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs remained lukewarm until a series of dynastic and geopolitical shifts precipitated major changes. Leopold I's succession rights in Spain diminished substantially after Empress Margarita died on 12 March 1673. The loss was a personal blow, but also politically devastating for the emperor, forcing him to reach out to his relatives in order to defend his now more tenuous claims to the Spanish inheritance.<sup>50</sup> Leopold I could no longer ignore the threat posed by Louis XIV either. French troops stationed close to Brussels caused grave concern that was exacerbated by the news that the Elector of Brandenburg had switched sides and pledged his army to Louis XIV.<sup>51</sup> There were also rumours that the United Provinces had opened negotiations with France. This situation presented additional threats to Spanish territories in the Low Countries and jeopardized the position of the empire as well.<sup>52</sup>

In the wake of these developments, Spanish, Dutch and Imperial agents intensified diplomatic talks that resulted in the formation of a series of offensive and defensive leagues. Mariana and the Emperor signed individual treaties with the United Provinces in The Hague; they were soon joined by the Duke of Lorraine.<sup>53</sup> A Quadruple Alliance between the empire, Spain the United Provinces, and Lorraine was confirmed on 25 August 1673.<sup>54</sup> The following year, Mariana successfully mediated a peace treaty between England and the United Provinces that helped end the Third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-1674) launched two years earlier by the king of England, Charles II, in league with France.<sup>55</sup> These manoeuvres transformed the Dutch War into a pan-European conflict mainly fought against France.<sup>56</sup> Mariana was not satisfied with the signing of the Quadruple Alliance or the ending of the Anglo-Dutch War; she sought to cement the alliance with the Holy Roman Empire with a controversial move that could, potentially, re-establish the Habsburg Empire of Charles V: a marriage alliance.

### 'A wife, a daughter and a sister'

Diplomatic relations between Spain and the Empire benefitted tremendously from an infusion of new blood. The next imperial ambassador to the court of Spain, Ferdinand Bonaventure I, Count of Harrach, arrived in Madrid in late October 1673. His wife, Johanna Theresia Lamberg (1639-1716), Countess of Harrach, knew Queen Mariana well since childhood and had served in her household from 1653 to 1660; she, too, played a crucial diplomatic role.<sup>57</sup> Less than a year after presenting his credentials, Harrach initiated marriage negotiations. As the bride of Carlos II, he proposed Archduchess Maria Antonia of Austria, Leopold I's and Margarita's only child.<sup>58</sup> The marriage was designed to strengthen joint Habsburg war efforts against



France. Upon its success 'depended all of the interests of this monarchy, not only its augmentation, but also the ruin of France,' as the Admiral of Castile indicated in a state council deliberation.<sup>59</sup> Dynastic considerations also emerged in these debates with particular force. After her mother's death, the archduchess had become the next heir-apparent to the Spanish Crown.<sup>60</sup> She was now considered to be the Habsburgs' insurance policy to protect their rule in Spain and, from the point of view of Spanish subjects, the only person who could safeguard the dissolution of the monarchy.<sup>61</sup> Her succession rights were not only fully and extensively discussed in the state council, but also clearly established in the marriage capitulations.<sup>62</sup> The Duke of Osuna opined that with Maria Antonia, Carlos II would have gained at once 'a wife, a daughter and a sister.'<sup>63</sup>

Because Maria Antonia was so important for the future of Spain, several ministers wanted the six-year-old girl to be brought to Madrid and reared under Mariana's tutorship, in Carlos II's company, and under the watchful eye of her future Spanish subjects.<sup>64</sup> The idea of bringing Maria Antonia to Spain, however, was not what it might first appear – that is, a commitment to the match. On the contrary, it was a stratagem to avoid Carlos II's engagement to a child. The marriage had been extremely controversial from the very beginning in Spain. The degree of consanguinity did not pose that much of a problem to Spanish ministers; at least the topic was not raised in the debates. The papal dispensation for the marriage, which was needed on the double count of close blood relation and the tender age of the archduchess, was expected to be given by the newly elected Pope Innocent XI (r. 1676–1689).<sup>65</sup> Rather than Maria Antonia's pure Habsburg blood, her age proved the insurmountable obstacle to the match. Her youth provoked a frank and lengthy discussion in the state council about the fertility cycle of women in order to determine how long Carlos II would have to wait to consummate the marriage. The ministers concluded that even if a girl could begin to give birth at 13 or 14 years old, as was the case with Italian women, realistically, childbearing was generally postponed until 15 or 16 years of age, as was the case, they noted, with most Spanish women.<sup>66</sup> Maria Antonia's dynastic position presents a fascinating paradox. Although she was unanimously recognized as a perfectly suitable candidate to become queen of Spain based on her own succession rights, she was not seen as an appropriate bride for the king. Ministers pleaded with Mariana to delay confirming the marriage and keep it secret.<sup>67</sup> Although Mariana abided by the wishes of her ministers for a time, the uncertain course of the war led her to take a drastic step, one that became a major contributor factor to the political crisis that followed. In September 1676, Mariana scheduled the ceremony to take place later that year and sent official announcement of the engagement to all princes of Europe.<sup>68</sup>

This method of building alliances through the marriages of close family members was hardly unique in Europe, and not just among royalty.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless, this intermarriage strategy was especially pronounced among the Habsburgs and in few places were the territorial and political gains to be reaped so large. Mariana's short-term diplomatic goals, however, cannot be discounted. Her sudden decision was also intimately related to the progress of the war, which had reached an impasse.

Louis XIV had captured the important Spanish province of Franche-Comté and, on this occasion, the loss was to be permanent. On the Mediterranean front, Spain suffered a major setback when the brilliant Dutch admiral and commander of the combined Spanish and Dutch fleet, Michel de Ruyter, died of his wounds on 29 April 1676.<sup>70</sup> Mariana's determination had a clear diplomatic advantage, but it was, nevertheless, in political terms, ill advised. It would have postponed the birth of an heir for years longer than was necessary and that possibility occasioned great consternation among Carlos II's ministers. Furthermore, state councillors began to doubt the wisdom of using Carlos II's marriage to sustain the war effort against France. 'Marriages,' argued the Count of Peñaranda, 'are typically the most effective mean to conclude a peace.'<sup>71</sup> The comment, coming from one of the greatest diplomats of the seventeenth century, a man with extensive experience and capacity, can be read as tactful warning to Mariana.<sup>72</sup> Peñaranda, to be sure, conceded that Maria Antonia was the 'greatest princess of the entire Christendom.'<sup>73</sup> Nevertheless, if the marriage of Carlos II to the archduchess had been viewed with apprehension when negotiations began, it was seen with horror once Carlos II had reached all the physical milestones of puberty. His readiness to begin 'cohabitation' with a wife was a topic openly discussed in the state council. The Spanish court thus reached a crossroads. Carlos II's marriage was fiercely opposed on account of the succession. Further exacerbating the situation was that several months earlier, on 6 November 1675, Carlos II had reached his legal majority. Yet he remained clearly under his mother's control and she continued to rule as if nothing had changed. While Mariana had been able to rule with an iron hand for the past years, the transition out of the formal spheres of power turned out to be extremely problematic. Her inability to surrender power gracefully proved her undoing. In late 1676, a sizeable confederation of members of the upper nobility demanded the 'permanent separation of the mother from the son' and the appointment of the king's older, illegitimate half-brother, Don Juan of Austria (1629–1679), as the king's main adviser.<sup>74</sup> The marriage, scheduled to take place in the City of Passau on 9 December 1676, came to nothing as a result of a coup against Mariana's regime. After a few months during which the young king considered his options, he ordered his mother to 'retire' to the city of Toledo, an order tantamount to exile.<sup>75</sup>

### Inheritance rights versus fertility potential

Several months after Mariana had left the court for her retirement *qua* exile and Don Juan had been installed in office, the marriage issue again came to the fore. The count of Harrach, still serving in his capacity of imperial ambassador in Madrid, announced the ratification of the marriage and stated that Leopold I expected his nephew, Carlos II, to do the same.<sup>76</sup> This move was clearly a way of indicating support for the queen mother. Tensions escalated. Carlos II's marriage to Maria Antonia would have had significant and, from the point of view of the new regime, deeply negative political consequences. The little archduchess was still a minor and Mariana possessed strong claims to be her guardian; Maria Antonia's



arrival, therefore, would have required Mariana's presence at court. For that reason alone, Don Juan stalled. The correspondence between Harrach and Mariana shows that the queen had been actively working behind the scenes to push for the marriage; indeed, she may have been the motivating force behind Leopold I's decision to pressure the king to ratify the marriage contract.<sup>77</sup> While Mariana's previous interest in the marriage was mainly political, at this point, it had become a matter of self-preservation. State council ministers saw through Harrach's manoeuvre and criticized him.<sup>78</sup> His embassy ended three months later.

For the Spanish government, matters had reached a very difficult point. There seemed to be no way of achieving a suitable marriage for the young king without offending a powerful ruler. In time-honoured fashion, the Spaniards remained non-committal while actively discussing their options. The political situation at court, diplomatic considerations and the need to ensure the succession as rapidly as possible propelled the French princess, Marie Louise of Orleans, to the top of the list as early as the summer of 1677. The preference for a French princess signalled a clear shift; no longer guided by Mariana, the monarchy was ready to negotiate with France, seeking not just peace, but a 'lasting peace.'<sup>79</sup> But the implications of the marriage for foreign affairs were only one aspect; the internal matter of the succession was just as critical. Only a year younger than Carlos II, Marie Louise's age became an important consideration because it promised to ensure the succession through the production of an heir within a foreseeable future.<sup>80</sup> It is hard to establish which aspect weighed more heavily with Spanish ministers. Although they repeatedly expressed hopes that the marriage would cement the peace, her fertility potential played an equally important role. Marie Louise's physical constitution and her beauty, topics extensively discussed in the state council, were seen as the solution to the succession crisis. Although she quickly became the preferred candidate, the Spaniards were unable to disentangle themselves from the other engagement, precisely because of Maria Antonia's inheritance rights.<sup>81</sup>

Carlos II, who now began to participate in the marriage negotiations personally, and his ministers were unable simply to dissolve the Habsburg marriage contract.<sup>82</sup> Leopold I was still in charge of the military operations in the Spanish Low Countries. Most importantly, there could be serious consequences – diplomatic and dynastic – if the marriage pact was officially broken. At this point, the state council discussed Maria Antonia's succession rights to the Habsburg hereditary lands in central Europe as extensively as her rights to the Spanish Crown had been debated in the previous set of deliberations.<sup>83</sup> With her dynastic position as a double Habsburg heiress intact, she gave the emperor significant leverage to negotiate a matrimonial alliance (and an advantageous treaty) with France if the Spanish marriage plans were officially abandoned.<sup>84</sup> Fears that Leopold I would marry his daughter to the French dauphin also arose as another major consideration. The Spaniards waited patiently, if also perhaps a bit nervously, until the archduchess's inheritance rights were superseded by the birth of a male heir. Only after news reached Madrid that Leopold I had a son from his third marriage, the future Joseph I, did Carlos II and his ministers begin to consider breaking the engagement officially.<sup>85</sup> Now,

it was only a matter of waiting for the peace negotiations, ongoing since 1678, to conclude. Two days after the king ratified the Peace Treaty of Nijmegen on 5 January 1679, he reopened marriage talks in the state council. Within a matter of days, Spanish ministers made official a decision that had been taken two years before: they declared Louis XIV's niece the most desirable candidate and urged Carlos II not to wait 'another hour' to get married.<sup>86</sup>

### A family, state and international affair

Despite the unanimous decision in the council and the king's immediate declaration of his marital intentions the Spaniards still had to break Carlos II's engagement with Maria Antonia. As ministers considered how to handle the delicate task, the queen mother emerged as the best and perhaps the only alternative to solve the problem.<sup>87</sup> In a carefully considered letter to his mother, who was still in exile, Carlos II explained his decision and asked her to intervene on his behalf with the emperor:

I hope that with your affection, you will be able to convey to my uncle the mortification and tenderness caused by my decision, that he should feel secure about my friendship, and that he should not doubt the unity of our house. I put all my trust on your great prudence; I am certain that all the continuous and fervent prayers offered will result in the best resolution of this business and whatever is best for our house.<sup>88</sup>

In his communications with his mother and uncle, Carlos II couched the situation as a family affair, although clearly it was also a state matter of the very highest importance. The state council, in fact, extensively discussed the king's letters to Mariana and Leopold I, praising the young sovereign's delicacy in handling the matter.<sup>89</sup> These machinations placed the Marquis of Falces, the Spanish ambassador to Vienna, in an extremely uncomfortable position. He had been informed of the situation and had even been given ciphered copies of Carlos II's letters to his uncle, the emperor. Falces had also been instructed to fake ignorance of the entire marriage business. Yet he was also severely reprimanded when he failed to report how violent the wave of anti-Spanish sentiment was in the Imperial court once the broken engagement became known.<sup>90</sup> The aftermath of the failed Habsburg match goes to show that these marriage alliances were key diplomatic events for dynasties and monarchies and, most importantly, that the men, as much as the women, utilized soft or informal diplomatic channels when dealing with situations like this, in which family matters affected international politics.

Although news of the broken engagement clearly concerned Leopold I deeply, he maintained a conciliatory tone. He politely insisted that the age difference should not be an impediment to the marriage of his daughter and the king, using his own marriage to Margarita as an example. The possibility of Spain's alliance with France bothered him considerably more and he asked Carlos II to consider other princesses, including the daughters of the dukes of Neuburg and Bavaria.<sup>91</sup> Even though



the tone of these communications remained civil, the potential consequences of the shift deeply concerned all the members of the Spanish court. Mariana's intercession with her brother was again sought. Carlos II acknowledged Mariana's role in resolving the diplomatic crisis: 'I recognize how much I owe you and the affection with which you look out for my interests,' he told her on 2 April 1679.<sup>92</sup> On 17 April, the king gave repeated indications of his gratitude: 'I am grateful for your finesse, and I assure you that I will always respond with the trust and attention that is appropriate to it.'<sup>93</sup> On 4 May, he wrote: 'I am very certain that you had the main part in the way that my uncle has taken this business, and that he finally recognizes how necessary and convenient it is that I get married at once.'<sup>94</sup>

### A liaison of queen mothers

Once Mariana cleared the way with her Austrian relatives, Carlos II was ready to approach the French. He sent Pablo Spínola Doria, Marquis de los Balbases, to request Marie Louise's hand in marriage.<sup>95</sup> Balbases's first stop in the capital was at the Carmelite Convent near the Palace of the Louvre, which Queen Maria Theresa visited often.<sup>96</sup> Balbases reportedly wanted to merely pay his respects, although this first encounter proved to be much more than that. The queen had been conveniently accompanied by Marie Louise. This 'chance encounter' was actually a well-thought out plan on Maria Theresa's part and one that had a concrete purpose. Based on this initial contact with the princess in an intimate setting, Balbases wrote a detailed and extremely positive report that was joyfully received in Madrid.<sup>97</sup> Besides providing him with access to the princess, Maria Theresa instructed Balbases on the customs of the French court and thus prevented the man from making avoidable mistakes. During the entire time of his embassy in Paris, she kept him well informed regarding the course of the negotiations, often through the offices of the ambassador's wife, who enjoyed unfettered access to the queen. The role of the wife of the Spanish ambassador parallels the women discussed by Oliván Santaliestra in Chapter 4, although, unfortunately in this case, we do not know the name of the woman in question. Her ability to gain more ready access to the queen than her husband was a logical consequence of the gendered nature of courts, in which male and female spaces were carefully segregated, thus allowing her to participate in activities to which her husband had no access. Using the ambassadorial couple, Maria Theresa advised relatives in Spain that their previous reliance on 'rumours' and 'gossip' to expedite the marriage was not the right approach in her husband's court; her counsel, duly considered in Madrid and apparently followed, prevented any further difficulties from developing.<sup>98</sup> Finally, she convinced her Spanish relatives to lower their demands and abandon any hopes that the peace treaty signed a few months before could be modified to their advantage.<sup>99</sup> Maria Theresa had, however, declined to open formal negotiations with her husband, telling Balbases that it would be inappropriate for her to take such initiative.

While this was quite a different role than that played by Queen Mariana, who had led the course of the negotiations in the first marriage and was asked to

intervene directly in the second one, Maria Theresa's intercession was no less effective, as Balbases's report clearly indicates. Although both Mariana and Maria Theresa had significant influence on the younger generation of royals (including the males), they adopted strategies in line with the opportunities or restrictions associated with their different capacities: one was a widow and, as mother of the titular ruler of the realm, had been at the head of the monarchy, the other was queen consort and thus had to be seen to acknowledge her husband's authority. Of course, their approaches were determined as well by the political cultures of their respective courts.

Maria Theresa's mediation in the marriage negotiations appears to have come out of nowhere, but she was well informed about everything that had happened in the Spanish court during the convoluted years that followed Carlos II's legal majority. In her frequent correspondence with the royal women at the convent of the Descalzas Reales, Maria Theresa had expressed dismay at Carlos II's behaviour towards his mother, Queen Mariana, considering it unacceptable. Maria Theresa criticized her younger half-brother, Carlos II, in no uncertain terms: 'I cannot approve that they have forced the queen to leave Madrid,' she wrote to one of her relatives in the royal convent, 'and more so that her son did not bid her farewell.' 'After all,' she protested, '[Mariana] is his mother and his father's wife, and even if this is not enough, she is also a great princess.'<sup>100</sup> On another occasion, she used Louis XIV as the example of 'an obedient and a good son of his mother,' implying that Carlos II should follow suit.<sup>101</sup> Maria Theresa was defending a woman who was connected to her in a multiplicity of ways: as Philip IV's second wife, Mariana had become Maria Theresa's step-mother; as daughter of her father's younger sister, Empress Maria, Mariana was also Maria Theresa's first cousin. They both belonged to the same generation of Habsburg women. Close in age, they had, in many ways, come of age together in the Spanish court: Mariana as a young queen consort, Maria Theresa as a princess, who was the heir-apparent for several years.<sup>102</sup>

Although dynastic and political circumstances had transformed them into rivals, personal and emotional ties remained very much alive thanks, to a large extent, to the royal nuns. The convent of the Descalzas Reales, founded by Princess Juana of Austria, the youngest daughter of Emperor Charles V, had become the traditional residence for many Habsburg women: royal widows, unmarried daughters, illegitimate children and distant cousins. The political role of the convent has been amply documented by scholars, having become, at one point, an unofficial embassy of the Austrian Habsburgs in Spain.<sup>103</sup> In this particular case, the convent played an equally important role. The resident nuns had kept in constant communication with Mariana during her exile, in turn informing Maria Theresa, who often inquired and received news about her old friend.<sup>104</sup> It is no coincidence that the Marquis of Villars, the French ambassador in Madrid, later described Mariana and Maria Theresa's ties as a 'liaison.'<sup>105</sup>

Thanks to Maria Theresa's discreet but effective manoeuvres, Balbases accomplished his mission in remarkably short time. Within months of his arrival in Paris, he was on his way to Madrid to deliver the welcome news that the French had accepted the proposal. Although the young French princess now became the



subject of elaborate celebrations, neither queen mother retreated into obscurity. As the arrival of the new Spanish queen was imminent, Mariana's presence at court was required, particularly considering the major role she had played in making the Franco-Spanish match possible. The Spanish court was at a crossroads again and the private correspondence between Carlos II and his mother shows that they had been planning their reconciliation and her return to court since early 1679.<sup>106</sup> A change of regime was imminent although Don Juan's timely death on 17 September facilitated the process. Mariana's triumphal entry into the capital on 27 September, after a personal meeting with her son in Toledo, ended their two and a half years of separation. She was warmly received in the Spanish court according to the Venetian ambassador.<sup>107</sup> News of the queen mother's return travelled quickly across the Pyrenees, reaching the French court at about the same time that Marie Louise had begun her journey to the Spanish frontier. Maria Theresa sent a congratulatory note to the king of Spain, not on the marriage, but on the return of his mother to court. 'My brother,' she wrote to Carlos II, 'I am so pleased to see the queen, my lady and my mother, restored to your presence.' 'My pleasure is great,' she continued, 'especially seeing what a good son Your Majesty has shown yourself to be on this occasion.'<sup>108</sup> In this subtle, but firm manner, Maria Theresa chastised her brother for his previous behaviour; the male and female members of the dynasty clearly recognized her right to do so. The French, too, went out of their way to show deference to Mariana. Louis XIV, for example, ordered his ambassador to make a special trip to pay respects to the queen mother, whose exile was about to end. 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 whom such great circumstances come together.'<sup>109</sup>

Acting within the range of their political and dynastic prerogatives, the two older women had taken an active role in shaping this diplomatic event that was as much personal as political. The marriage of the French princess, now Queen Maria Luisa, and Carlos II signalled the beginning of a peaceful time in Franco-Spanish relations, bringing 14 years of conflict to an end.

### **Conclusion: Women, dynasty and European international politics**

This dynastic, political and diplomatic event offers scholars an ideal opportunity to explore the themes considered in this book. Even though they operated under significantly different political circumstances, as royal matriarchs, Mariana and Maria Theresa were able to facilitate the conclusion of the marriage and thus profoundly influence the diplomatic and dynastic fates of the two monarchies. While mothers and widows could, and did, exercise significant power, if sometimes only indirectly, unmarried young women often had to subordinate their lives to the wishes and the interests of their families. Nevertheless, they, too, had a role in shaping diplomacy through their significant dynastic capital and fertility potential. From this

perspective, rather than thinking of them as pawns of male rulers, we should also consider these women as agents of diplomatic change.

Scholars of international politics have often remarked on the development of balance-of-power diplomacy in the post-Westphalian period, which marked the emergence of a more modern or rational state system. Yet within the interstices of that shift, we must acknowledge that the maintenance of the European state system was still utterly dependent on dynastic succession. Dynastic politics and marriage diplomacy are, therefore, absolutely essential components of any study of international politics in this period. The centrality of royal marriages is evident in the voluminous documentary trail they left behind and the meaning attached to them. In spite of the archival evidence that exists in such abundance, the women that were part of these marriages have been, until very recently and with some notable exceptions, excluded from historical accounts, or marginalized in them under the still prevailing assumption that men dominated the system. The exclusion of women is, therefore, not a historical but rather a historiographical problem. Unless we consider these women as integral parts of the system, the history of Europe will remain lamentably incomplete.

Finally, royal marriages were based on the practice of exchanging women. This exchange formed the basis for a series of transnational female networks that criss-crossed Europe. European international politics must take into account these feminine networks that functioned alongside of, intersected with, or as alternatives to, masculine spheres of power. As well, royal convents and queens' royal households formed hubs of diplomatic negotiations and were particularly influential in the early modern age when the boundaries between state and dynastic politics were often blurred. These spaces actually institutionalized female authority, connecting, facilitating and challenging the agenda of diplomats and politicians. They were not always subordinate to men or male authority; sometimes, depending on the circumstances, they actually took precedence. Although in this essay the discussion has centred on four individuals, they operated in a much larger milieu of female political agency. The effective roles of the Convent of the Descalzas Reales in Madrid, the Carmelite Descalzas in France, and the three royal courts in Vienna, Paris and Madrid in shaping the outcome of major international political issues are indicative of the strength, extent and geographical scope of female spaces. By exploiting the substantial documentary basis that exists and by looking to *all* sites of power, not only the masculine ones, we can build a new diplomatic history of Europe.

## Notes

- 1 Anon., *The History of the Treaty at Nimueguen*, London, 1681, pp284–285.
- 2 For the political background that led to the war see, Paul Sonnino, *Louis XIV and the Origins of the Dutch War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- 3 For the political background to the war from the Habsburgs point of view, see Manuel Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano-Neerlandés (1648–1678)*, Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2000.
- 4 *Treaty at Nimueguen*, p284.



- 5 Marriage strategy proved so important in facilitating the rise of the Habsburgs that the dynasty's motto stated: 'let others fight, you Happy Austria, marry!' Joseph F. Patrouch, 'Bella geranti alii. Laodamia's Sisters, Habsburg Brides: Leaving Home for the Sake of the House,' in *Early Modern Habsburg Women: Transnational Contexts, Cultural Conflicts, Dynastic Continuities*, Anne J. Cruz and Maria Galli Stampino, eds., Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013, pp25–38, 25.
- 6 See, for example, Abby E. Zanger, *Scenes from the Marriage of Louis XIV: Nuptial Fictions and the Making of Absolutist Power*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997, and Margaret M. McGowan, ed., *Dynastic Marriages, 1612–1615: A Celebration of the Habsburgs and Bourbon Unions*, Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013.
- 7 See, for example, Judith M. Richards, *Mary Tudor*, London: Routledge, 2008; Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power*, Second Edition, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013; Peggy Liss, *Isabel the Queen: Life and Times*, second edition, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013; Clarissa Campbell Orr, 'Introduction: Queenship, Gender, and Court Studies,' in *Queenship in Europe, 1660–1815: The Role of the Consort*, Clarissa Campbell Orr, ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp1–15.
- 8 Patrouch, 'Habsburg Brides,' pp25–26.
- 9 A great example is the otherwise masterful study by Paul Sonnino, *Mazarin's Quest: The Congress of Westphalia and the Coming of the Fronde*, Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 2008.
- 10 On this point, see Maria Galli Stampino, 'Maria Maddalena, Archduchess of Austria and Grand Duchess of Florence: Negotiating Performance, Traditions, and Taste,' in Anne J. Cruz and Maria Galli Stampino, eds., *Early Modern Habsburg Women: Transnational Contexts, Cultural Conflicts, Dynastic Continuities*, Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013, pp41–56.
- 11 Paula Sutter Fichtner, 'Dynastic Marriage in Sixteenth-Century Habsburg Diplomacy and Statecraft: An Interdisciplinary Approach,' *The American Historical Review*, vol. 81 (2) (April, 1976), pp243–265.
- 12 For some important critiques to the field of diplomatic history see John Watkins, 'Toward a New Diplomatic History of Medieval and Early Modern Europe,' *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, vol. 38 (1) (Winter, 2008), pp1–14. See Carolyn James in Chapter 1 of this volume for another type of critique. Even though current understandings of diplomatic practice among the small Italian Renaissance states have evolved significantly, women are still excluded from the historical narrative.
- 13 In spite of the richness of the material, historians of the period have either ignored the episode or diminished the role of women in it altogether. See, for example, Gabriel Maura, *Carlos II y su corte. Ensayo de Reconstrucción biográfica*, 2 vols, Madrid: Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos, 1911 and 1915.
- 14 The literature on queens and royal women is too extensive to provide a comprehensive bibliography here. Works that are particularly relevant to my understanding of the issues discussed in this essay are: Magdalena S. Sánchez, *The Empress, the Queen and the Nun: Women and Power at the Court of Philip III of Spain*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998; Clarissa Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Europe, 1660–1815: The Role of the Consort*, Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2004; Katherine Crawford, *Perilous Performances: Gender and Regency in Early Modern France*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004; Theresa Earenfight, *The King's Other Body: María of Castile and the Crown of Aragon*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010; Regina Schulte, *The Body of the Queen: Gender and Rule in the Courtly World, 1500–2000*, New York; Oxford: Bergham Books, 2006; Dena Goodman, ed., *Marie-Antoinette: Writings*

on the *Body of a Queen*, New York, and London: Routledge, 2003. Recent studies on female rulers point to an increase interest on these women's statesmanship; see Earenfight (above) and Tryntje Helfferich, *The Iron Princess: Amalia Elisabeth and the Thirty Years War*, Cambridge, MA; and London: Harvard University Press, 2013. To appreciate the integral role women played in the early modern age, acting within formal spaces of the court (such as the queen's royal household and royal convents), as crucial members of sophisticated epistolary networks across Europe, and as partners in dynastic politics, see Giulia Calvi, ed., *Women Rulers in Europe: Agency, Practice and the Representation of Political Powers (XII–XVIII)*, Florence: European University Institute, 2008; Giulia Calvi and Isabelle Chabot, eds., *Moving Elites: Women and Cultural Transfers in the European Court System. Proceedings of an International Workshop (Florence, 12–13 December 2008)*, Florence: European University Institute, 2010; Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben, eds., *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-In-Waiting Across Early Modern Europe*, Leiden: Brill, 2013; and Anne J. Cruz and Maria Galli Stampino, eds., *Early Modern Habsburg Women: Transnational Contexts, Cultural Conflicts, Dynastic Continuities*, Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013.

- 15 For the office of regent see insightful discussions by Crawford, *Perilous Performances*, and Fanny Cosandey, 'Puissance maternelle et pouvoir politique. La régence des reines mères,' *Clio. Histoire, femmes et sociétés*, vol. 21 (2005), <http://clio.revues.org/1447>, accessed 2 December 2012.
- 16 For a lucid discussion of consortship, see Orr, 'Introduction.'
- 17 For a discussion of these kinds of female networks, see Giulia Calvi, 'Introduction,' in *Moving Elites: Women and Cultural Transfers in the European Court System. Proceedings of an International Workshop (Florence, 12–13 December 2008)*, Giulia Calvi and Isabelle Chabot, eds., Florence: European University Institute, 2010, pp1–5.
- 18 Sonnino, *Origins of the Dutch War*; and John A. Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV, 1667–1714*, London; New York: Longman, 1999.
- 19 The marriage was a major outcome of the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659).
- 20 Rafael Valladares, *La rebelión de Portugal: Guerra, conflicto y poderes en la monarquía hispánica (1640–1680)*, Valladolid: Junta de Castilla y León, 1998, pp186–187. French and English support became the decisive factors in Portugal's ability to gain independence.
- 21 All of these issues, including Louis XIV's war declaration on 17 May 1665 are extensively discussed in the State Council meeting Mariana convened to debate the situation. The debates and her elaborate response, which includes all her military and diplomatic strategies, can be found in Archivo General de Simancas (hereafter AGS) E. leg. 3100.
- 22 The rivalry between the Spanish and French monarchies is abundantly documented. For a lucid overview in the context of royal marriages, see John H. Elliott, 'The Political Context of the 1612–1615 Franco–Spanish Treaty' in *Dynastic Marriages 1612/1615: A Celebration of the Habsburg and Bourbon Unions*, Margaret M. McGowan, ed., Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013, pp5–18.
- 23 Archivo Histórico Nacional, Estado (hereafter AHN E.) libro 129.
- 24 Francisco Tomás y Valiente, *Los validos en la monarquía española del siglo XVII: Estudio institucional*, Mexico: Siglo Veintiuno, 1982; Antonio Domínguez Ortíz, 'Introducción,' in *Testamento de Felipe IV. Edición facsímil*, Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1982, I–LIV.
- 25 For this issue, see Crawford, *Perilous Performances*, and Jonathan Dewald's review of Crawford (<http://www.h-france.net/vol5reviews/vol5no65dewald.pdf>, accessed 15 June 2014).
- 26 Most notably, see Henry Kamen, *Spain in the Later Seventeenth-Century, 1665–1700*, London; New York: Longman, 1980.
- 27 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,' PhD thesis, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2006; Mercedes Llorente, 'Imagen y autoridad en una regencia: Los retratos de Mariana de Austria y los límites del poder,' *Studia histórica. Historia moderna*, vol. 28 (2006), pp211–238.
- 28 My assessment here is based on research conducted in six different archival repositories and two major libraries: the Archivo Histórico Nacional, the Biblioteca Nacional, the Archivo del Palacio Real, and the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid; the Archivo General, in Simancas; the Archivo Histórico Nacional Sección Nobleza in Toledo; the Fundación Medinaceli in Seville and Toledo, and the Newberry Library in Chicago.
- 29 Her most important appointments were to the Council of State (she appointed six new member within the first months of her rule), the Regency Council and court offices. Some, although certainly not all, of these strategies can be seen in Biblioteca Nacional de España (hereafter BNE) ms. 8344; BNE ms. 8360, ff. 70r–79r.; AHN E. leg. 2797 exp. 24; AGS E. leg. 4128.
- 30 The daughter of Emperor Leopold I and Empress Margaret of Austria (Mariana's daughter), Maria Antonia, in one of the most intricate twists of Habsburg matrimonial alliances, was Mariana's granddaughter as well.
- 31 Clauses 21 and 35 established her rule as regent, giving her tutorship and governorship rights. *Testamento de Felipe IV. Edición facsímil*, Antonio Domínguez Ortíz, ed., Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1982, pp40–43, 50–53.
- 32 In concentrating all the war efforts on the Castilian border with Portugal, Philip IV effectively left other Spanish frontiers unprotected. The Marquis of Aytona summarized the dire situation in a private memorandum to the queen early on the regency. Archivo Ducal Medinaceli (hereafter ADM) Hist. leg. 70.
- 33 The connection between these two issues is abundantly documented in state council deliberations.
- 34 There were two camps in her court, those who supported the peace with Portugal in order to prepare for a French attack and those who rejected the idea of recognizing their independence. These debates took place in the open with a myriad of papers circulating in Madrid – for example, Real Academia de la Historia (hereafter RHA) ms. 9/1835.
- 35 Guillén Ramón de Moncada, the fourth Marquis of Aytona (1615–1670). My conclusions are based on my examination of the Aytona papers at the ADM. Mariana worked closely with several other important figures who acted through the councils of government, many of whom she had appointed herself. Space does not allow me to discuss them in detail.
- 36 Mariana's initial commands, sent by courier within days of her assuming office, were implemented quickly; AGS E. leg. 2683. Mariana signed different types of agreement with England (1666 and 1667), the United Provinces (1667), and Brandenburg (1667). AHN E. legs. 2797 and 2804.
- 37 The imperial ambassador to Spain, the Count of Pötting, commented often on the strong reactions over the peace negotiations with Portugal. Miguel Nieto Nuño, ed. *Diario del Conde de Pötting, Embajador del Sacro Imperio en Madrid (1664–1674)*, 2 vols., Madrid: Biblioteca Diplomática Española, 1990; Valladares, *La rebelión de Portugal*, pp182–190.
- 38 AGS E. leg. 3100.
- 39 The 13 articles of the peace were ratified on 13 February. AHN E. leg. 2797.
- 40 Rafael Valladares has eloquently demonstrated that although scholars date Portugal's independence in 1640, and even if, in reality, Spain was unable to exert any control over the kingdom after this date, the process leading to the 1668 agreement redefined Spain's position in Europe. My own research on Mariana of Austria's political and diplomatic strategies suggests that the Portuguese issue was a defining moment for the queen as well.

- 41 The diplomats in question were the Count of Molina, Spanish ambassador in London, Pedro de Gamarra, the ambassador in The Hague, and the Marquis of Castel Rodrigo, Governor of the Spanish Low Countries. AHN E. leg. 2804.
- 42 The Triple Alliance was ratified on 25 April 1668. AHN E. leg. 2797, exp. 59; AGS E. leg. 3100. Under pressure from the allies, Louis XIV agreed to abide by the terms of the Peace of the Pyrenees (1659) and return the important province of Franche-Comté (County of Burgundy) to Spain, which had fallen to his army only a few months earlier. Henri Lonchay, Joseph Cuvelier, and Joshep Lefevre, *Correspondance de la Cour d'Espagne sur Less Affaires des Pays-Bas au XIIe siècle*, vol. 5, Brussels, 1935, p34.
- 43 Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, p13.
- 44 For Louis XIV's reasoning behind the invasion of The Netherlands, see Sonnino, *Origins of the Dutch War*, Paul Sonnino, 'Plus royaliste que le pape: Louis XIV's Religious Policy and his Guerre de Hollande,' in *War and Religion After Westphalia, 1648–1713*, p21; and Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, Chapter 4.
- 45 AHN E. leg. 2804, exp. 21. Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano–Neerlandés*, p192.
- 46 Wout Troost, *William III, The Stadholder-King: A Political Biography* J.C. Grayson, trans. Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005, p71; Johnathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477–1806*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp796–806.
- 47 Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano–Neerlandés*.
- 48 BNE ms. 5742 f. 364r. The marriage had been arranged during Philip IV's reign; yet its confirmation after Philip IV's death had additional ramifications. It put Leopold I directly on the line of succession. The marriage certainly helped to escalate the conflict with Louis XIV, who evidently viewed the marriage of the emperor to the heiress to the Spanish throne (and the explicit exclusion of France from the Spanish succession) with suspicion.
- 49 Leopold I did not ratify the treaty, but the damage had been done. See John P. Spielman, *Leopold I of Austria*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1977, p56.
- 50 Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, II, pp338–339; Spielman, *Leopold I*. Leopold I still had a claim to the Spanish inheritance through his mother, Empress Maria of Austria (1606–1646), named as the third line of succession by Philip IV in his testament. *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clauses 13, pp22–23.
- 51 Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, II, p343.
- 52 Herrero Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano–Neerlandés*; AHN E. legs. 2797 and 2804.
- 53 AHN E. leg. 2804 exp. 24.
- 54 AHN E. leg. 2804, exp. 25; Herrera Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano–Neerlandés*, p195.
- 55 AHN E. leg. 2804; Herrera Sánchez, *El acercamiento Hispano–Neerlandés*, p196.
- 56 AHN E. leg. 2804, exp. p25.
- 57 Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, II, p388. Laura Oliván, 'Pinceladas políticas, marcos cortesanos: el diario del conde de Harrach, embajador imperial en la Corte de Madrid (1673–1677),' *Cultura Escrita & Sociedad*, vol. 3 (2006), pp113–132.
- 58 AHN E. leg. 2799.
- 59 'que de ella penden todos los intereses de esta Monarchia, el aumento de ella y la ruina de francia,' AHN E. leg. 2799. All translations are mine.
- 60 *Testamento de Felipe IV*, Clause 12, pp20–23; AHN E. leg. 2799.
- 61 This issue came to the forefront later as well at the end of Carlos II's life. See Luis Ribot, *Orígenes políticos del testamento de Carlos II. La gestión del cambio dinástico en España. Discurso leído el día 17 de octubre de 2010*, Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2010.
- 62 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.



- 63 'a un mismo tiempo se hallara V[uestra] M[agestad] con Muger, con Hija, y con Hermana.' The Duke of Osuna, AHN E. leg. 2799.
- 64 Opinions of Villaumbrosa, Alburquerque, Osuna, the Constable of Castile, the Admiral of Castile, and Peñaranda. AHN E. leg. 2799.
- 65 The dispensation is noted in the capitulations right after the introduction in the document: 'que se haya de desposar y casar el Ser[enisi]mo Se[ñ]or Rey Catholico con la ser[enisi]ma S[e]ño[ra] Archiduq[ua] d[os]a d[os]a María Antonia en la forma que la santa madre yglesia lo ordena, concurriendo el Veneplazito del Muy santo Padre Inocencio Undecimo, y precediendo la dispensacion suya q[ue] fuere necesaria y se ha de pedir así del Parentesco que ay entre ambos contrayentes como de la hedad q[ue] le falta a la ser[enisi]ma Archiduquesa para poderse desposar desde luego.' AHN E. leg. 2799. Although the documents that I examined for this essay do not hint that the Spanish or Austrian Habsburgs expected opposition from Rome, the issue certainly deserves further investigation.
- 66 The Duke of Osuna led the debate with an elaborate (and well-informed) disquisition on this topic. AHN E. leg. 2799
- 67 AHN E. leg. 2799.
- 68 AHN E. leg. 2799.
- 69 The Spanish nobility followed a similar pattern in their marriage practices as the Habsburgs. In some cases, Castilian inheritance laws gave women precedence over men. The daughter of a first son, for example, possessed the right to inherit titles and properties before a second son. To avoid disputes, families married heiresses to males who were next in the line of inheritance. The result was a prevalence of uncle-niece and first-cousins marriages. See Grace E. Coolidge, *Families in Crisis: Women, Guardianship, and the Nobility in Early Modern Spain*, PhD thesis, Indiana University, 2001, pp22, 106.
- 70 The French used an internal revolt in Messina, Sicily (1674–1678) against the Habsburgs. Dutch and Spanish fleets fought the rebels aided by French troops.
- 71 'y los casamientos han sido frequentemente el medio mas eficaz para ajustar una paz,' AHN E. leg. 2799.
- 72 Peñaranda's performance in the peace negotiations in Westphalia receives extensive treatment in Sonnino, *Mazarin's Quest*.
- 73 'la mas esclarecida que oy se halla en todo el Orbe Christiano,' AHN E. leg. 2799.
- 74 BNE ms. 18211.
- 75 For an analysis of the coup that resulted in Mariana's exile, see Silvia Z. Mitchell, 'Habsburg Motherhood: The Power of Queen Mariana of Austria, Mother and Regent for Carlos II of Spain,' in *Early Modern Habsburg Women: Transnational Contexts, Cultural Conflicts, Dynastic Continuities*, eds., Anne J. Cruz and Maria Galli Stampino, Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013.
- 76 16 June 1677. AHN E. leg. 2799.
- 77 Laura Oliván Santaliestra, 'Mariana de Austria en la encrucijada política del siglo XVII,' PhD thesis (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2006), p414.
- 78 Deliberation of 16 June 1677, AHN E. leg. 2799.
- 79 State council deliberations of 2 and 15 August 1677. AHN E. leg. 2796.
- 80 AHN E. leg. 2796.
- 81 AHN E. leg. 2796.
- 82 These may be the earliest holograph comments that we have of Carlos II in state papers.
- 83 AHN E. legs. 2796, 2799, 2729.
- 84 The Duke of Osuna and the Marquis of Astorga, for instance, were convinced that if Carlos II renounced his engagement, Leopold I would immediately negotiate a double marriage with the French (potentially marrying his daughter to the dauphin, and himself marrying Marie Louise). AHN E. leg. 2799.

- 85 Carlos II wrote two letters to his mother reporting the birth (20 and 21 August 1678). AHN E. leg. 2729.
- 86 AHN E. leg. 2796.
- 87 For example, 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 successfully avoid the expected diplomatic blunder. AHN E. leg. 2796.
- 88 'confio de tu cariño expresaras 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[e]ria y a la seguridad con que deve estar de mi inalterable confianza, amistad y union. Todo lo fio de tu mucha 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[e]ño[r] se consiga en el lo que mexor estuviere a toda n[uest]ra cassa.' AHN E. leg. 2796.
- 89 AHN E. leg. 2796.
- 90 State council meetings of 3 and 13 April 1679. AHN E. leg. 2796.
- 91 AHN E. leg. 2796.
- 92 'reconozco lo mucho que te debo y el cariño con q[ue] miras mis intereses.' AHN E. leg. 2729.
- 93 'tambien el agradecim[ie]nto con que quedo de tu fineza asegurandote de la confianza y atencion con que correspondere siempre a ella.' AHN E. leg. 2729.
- 94 'y estoy bien cierto q[ue] abras tenido la principal parte en que la buena forma en q[ue] mi tío a tomado este neg[oci]o y en q[ue] reconozca lo preciso y conben[ien]tee s para todo el no perder ora de tiempo q[ue] yo tome e[stado].' AHN E. leg. 2729.
- 95 This paragraph is based on Balbases's report, dated 14 May 1679. AHN E. leg. 2653 exp. 1–11. The report is also discussed in AHN E. leg. 2796.
- 96 Dr. Laura Oliván Santaliestra clarified the location of the convent. Email communication, 21 October 2013.
- 97 AHN E. leg. 2653 and 2796.
- 98 AHN E. leg. 2653.
- 99 AHN E. leg. 2796.
- 100 '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 el assido siempre buen hijo desaprueba lo que mi hermano haze.' Maria Theresa to the Descalzas Reales, 14 April 1677. AGP Descalzas Reales, c. 7, exp. 1.
- 101 '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.
- 102 Mariana was the daughter of the Spanish-born Empress Maria of Austria, Philip IV's younger sister. She arrived at the Spanish court as queen consort at 15 years old when Maria Theresa was only 11. They had time to develop a close relationship during the ten years that they spent together in Madrid, until Maria Theresa left to marry Louis XIV. 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 epistolary del Rey en el Archivo General de Andalucía*, Sevilla: Junta de Andalucía, 2005.



- 103 See, for example, the classic work by Sánchez, *The Empress, the Queen, and the Nun*.
- 104 '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.
- 105 Marquis de Villars, *Mémoires de la cour d'Espagne sous le regne de Charles II, 1678–1682*, London, 1861, 28.
- 106 AHN E. leg. 2729.
- 107 'il ritorno fu trionfo ed un ammaestramento ben raro della giustizia divina.' Federico Cornaro, Venetian ambassador to Madrid (1678–1681), *Relazioni degli Stati Europei lette al Senato dagli Ambasciatori Veneti nel secolo decimosettimo. Raccolte ed annotate. Serie I; Spain*, vol. II. Nicolò Barozzi and Guglielmo Berchet, eds., Venice: Pietro Naratovich, 1860, p446.
- 108 'Hermano mio. No me permite mi cariño el dejar de significar a V[uestra] Ma[gesta]d por estos renglones mi alborozo de ber 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 ocasion de lo que no puedo mostrar bastantemente mi gusto que es grandissimo[.]' Maria Theresa to Carlos, 28 October 1679. AHN E. leg. 2729.
- 109 '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.