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Silvia Z. Mitchell

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Women and Children First: Court Ceremonial during Carlos II's Minority, 1665–1675

BY SILVIA Z. MITCHELL

The Spanish Habsburg court underwent a substantial restructuring when Carlos II (b. 1661, r. 1665–1700) became king of Spain just before his fourth birthday (17 September 1665). In his testament, Philip IV (r. 1621–1665) required that the child-king remain under the jurisdiction of his mother, Queen Mariana of Austria (1634–1696), during his minority. This well-established tradition in Habsburg child-rearing practices had never been applied to a child who was already king; it meant that for nearly a decade, there was no king's household in the court. This article investigates the impact of Philip IV's testamentary mandate on court ceremonial and the strategies that Mariana, queen regent and king's mother, implemented. The unprecedented situation marks an important moment in the history of the queen's household; it is crucial to understand how Carlos II exercised the office of king during his minority, and critical to reinterpret the early years of his rule as an emancipated king.

The composition of the queen's household in the Spanish court and all the practices devoted to the care of the royal children evolved gradually throughout the sixteenth century as the Habsburgs blended etiquette traditions from their various territories, settled the court permanently in Madrid in 1561, and issued the first set of ordinances that regulated the queen's royal household in 1570.¹ The child-rearing traditions that applied to Carlos II when he became king as a child had been firmly in place since the early seventeenth century.²

Children of the Spanish Habsburg family were incorporated into the court from the moment of their birth, becoming part of the queen's household, which was specifically equipped for the task of raising them.³ Until they were given their independent entourage — a milestone that was not set by age, but rather by political considerations as well as the children's status within the larger family structure and their gender — royal children were cared for by a number of court officers appointed in the queen's household.⁴ The highest-ranking officer in the queen's household was the *camarera mayor* (Chief Lady-in-Waiting); she supervised the

1 The blending of etiquette traditions gave way to the system of multiple royal houses in the Spanish court; see José Eloy Hortal Muñoz and Félix Labrador Arroyo, 'Introducción', in José Eloy Hortal Muñoz and Félix Labrador Arroyo (eds), *La Casa de Borgoña: La Casa del Rey de España* (Leuven, 2014), pp. 15–19, p. 16. On Spanish-Burgundian ceremonial and structure, see John H. Elliott, 'The Court of the Spanish Habsburgs: A Peculiar Institution?' reprinted in John H. Elliott, *Spain and its World: 1500–1700. Selected Essays* (New Haven and London, 1989), pp. 142–61, p. 142 and below. The first ordinances for the queen's household were adopted for Queen Anna of Austria in 1570, see Félix Labrador Arroyo, 'From Castile to Burgundy: The Evolution of the Queens' Households during the Sixteenth Century', in Anne J. Cruz and Maria Galli Stampino (eds), *Early Modern Habsburg Women: Transnational Contexts, Cultural Conflicts, Dynastic Continuities* (Farnham, 2013), pp. 119–48, pp. 137–38.

2 Martha Hoffman, *Raised to Rule: Educating Royalty and the Court of the Spanish Habsburgs, 1601–1634* (Baton Rouge, 2011).

3 Hoffman, *Raised to Rule*, pp. 1–2.

4 On the queen's household, Dálmiro de Válgoma, *Norma y ceremonia de las reinas de la Casa de Austria* (Madrid, 1954); José Martínez Millán and Maria Paula Marçal Lourenço (eds), *Las relaciones discretas entre las Monarquías Hispana y Portuguesa: Las casas de las reinas (siglos XV–XIX)*, 3 vols (Madrid, 2008); Magdalena S. Sánchez, *The Empress, the Queen and the Nun: Women and Power at the Court of Philip III of Spain* (Baltimore, 1998), particularly chapter 2, pp. 36–60.

elaborate array of female officers who served the queen in her chambers.⁵ The *aya* or governess — the other top executive position in the queen's household, albeit subordinate to the *camarera mayor* — was in charge of the upbringing and care of the royal children. This was a political appointment given to women of the upper nobility, usually married or widows, from the most powerful lineages of the realm. While the French court had a double hierarchy of offices (i.e. a formal governor versus an actual governess, with the designation of *honoraire* versus *oneraire*), that was not the case with the Spanish court. The various tasks needed to care for children, such as dressing and washing as well as educating and supervising them, were divided among several female offices, under the authority of the *aya*, who fulfilled almost a parental task.⁶ The queen's household, therefore, included men (in the outer offices), women (in the inner offices of the chamber), but also children: aristocratic boys and girls were incorporated into the court as *meninos* and *meninas*, companions of the royal children.⁷

No changes to this model were made when Carlos II inherited the Spanish throne on 17 September 1665. Although Carlos II became king immediately upon his father's death, in his testament, Philip IV treated him like any other royal child. He specified that Carlos would reside under the jurisdiction of and in the household of his mother, Queen Mariana of Austria (1634–1696), whom he also named tutor of the minor king and governor of the monarchy.⁸ The tutorship, as much as the governorship, had major political implication during a royal minority and the task went well above the caretaker and educational function the word implies in modern English.⁹ For the Spanish court, Mariana's tutorship of Carlos had major consequences. Though as king, he would normally have had his own entourage, the young Carlos was served during this transitional period 'by the servants of his mother'.¹⁰ There were no set norms as to when Habsburg children obtained their own households and Philip did not set a time limit for Mariana to complete the task.¹¹ Mariana established Carlos II's household on November 1674, and Carlos moved into his own quarters a few months later in anticipation of his emancipation on his fourteenth birthday.¹² From 17 September 1665, the day Philip died, until 14 April 1675, when Carlos II moved into his own quarters, the Spanish court lacked a king's household.

The court went through an administrative overhaul in order to comply with the terms of the testament, resulting in the so-called 'reforms of 1666'.¹³ While the reforms resolved many practical issues provoked by the absence of a king's household (i.e. palace security and cleaning of premises, caring for furniture and art, and fulfilment of a myriad of administrative tasks), the

5 On the prestige of the office of *camarera mayor* and a perspective on the political role of the queen's household for the women that were part of it, María Victoria López-Cordón Cortezo, 'Entre damas anda el juego: las camareras mayores de Palacio en la edad moderna', *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna. Anejos: Monarquía y corte en la España moderna* 2 (2003), pp. 123-152.

6 On the queen's household role in Habsburg children's education, Hoffman *Raised to Rule*, pp. 29-38. For an example of the type of influence an *aya* of a prince could have (in this case Inés de Zúñiga, countess of Olivares), see Alejandra Franganillo, 'The Education of an Heir to the Throne: Isabel of Borbón and Her Influence on Prince Baltasar Carlos', in Grace E. Coolidge (ed.), *The Formation of the Child in Early Modern Spain* (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT, 2014), 143-63, p. 147.

7 Hoffman, *Raised to Rule*, p. 49-51.

8 Antonio Domínguez Ortiz (ed.), *Testamento de Felipe IV. Edición facsímil* (Madrid, 1982), pp. 40-67.

9 Tutorship or guardianship of the king was the main source of power for queen regents; see Katherine Crawford, *Perilous Performances: Gender and Regency in Early Modern France* (Cambridge, MA and London, 2004), p. 3.

10 Domínguez Ortiz, *Testamento de Felipe IV*, pp. 52-3.

11 Philip IV vaguely stated, 'when the appropriate age requires it', Domínguez Ortiz, *Testamento de Felipe IV*, pp. 52-3.

12 Archivo del Palacio Real, Reinados, Carlos II (*hereafter* APR, RCH), caja (*hereafter* c.) 92, expediente (*hereafter* exp.) 3.

13 'Reformas desde 1665 a 1575', APR, Sección Administrativa (*hereafter* Adm.) legajo (*hereafter* leg.) 5647.

ceremonial realm presented a completely different set of difficulties.¹⁴ The Spanish ceremonial — based mainly on the Burgundian model — emphasized the sacredness of the prince by regulating access and making daily activities — sleeping, dressing, eating and recreation — and special occasions — baptisms, Corpus Christi processions, royal entries, royal outings and funerals — highly ritualized events.¹⁵ The nobility played a key role in the Spanish-Burgundian model and, as it was two centuries earlier for the Burgundian dukes, was mutually beneficial: it enticed loyalty to the ruler and gave the office holders informal power by means of access and a substantial degree of prestige.¹⁶

Queens and royal children (as their age allowed) were at the centre of similar observances. Nevertheless, the elimination of the king's household, the fact that the King was served by the servants of the Queen's household, and the King's age meant that access and function in royal ceremonial was completely altered during Carlos II's minority. In spite of a growing body of work on the reign of Carlos II, the peculiar situation of the households during his minority has received almost no attention.¹⁷ This article investigates the impact of Philip IV's testamentary clauses on Carlos II's court during his minority and identifies the strategies that Mariana adopted to find solutions to the new rules that regulated ceremonial. Although on the one hand this unprecedented moment in the history of the Habsburg court reveals the strength of the queen's household — allowing women to dominate court ceremonial for nearly a decade — it also affected the representation of kingship during Carlos II's minority. We must consider the political and symbolic consequences of the situation during the difficult transition to Carlos II's rule as an adult king.

The King without a Household

On 18 September 1665, a day after Philip IV died, don Ramiro Núñez de Guzmán, duke of Medina de las Torres, presented the keys to the King's Chamber to the Queen, informing her that they were at her disposal.¹⁸ As *sumiller de corps* (Chief Gentleman of the King's Chamber) of the now late King's Chamber, the Duke had collected all of the keys (including his own set) from the small group of *gentiles hombres de la cámara* (gentlemen of the King's

14 Guillén Ramón de Moncada, the 4th marquis of Aytona (1615–1670), devised the reforms as his papers in the Archivo Ducal de Medinaceli (discussed below) indicate.

15 In his seminal essay on Burgundian ceremonial, Werner Paravicini has challenged the notion that it became the model for Europe. Werner Paravicini, 'The Court of the Dukes of Burgundy: A Model for Europe?', in Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke (eds), *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age, c.1450–1650* (London, 1991), pp. 69–102, pp. 69, 99. Yet, the introduction of Burgundian etiquette in Spain, which began with the advent of the Habsburgs in 1517, was made official when Charles V instituted the household of his heir, Philip II, following the Burgundian etiquette in 1548. John H. Elliott, 'Philip IV of Spain: Prisoner of Ceremony', in A. G. Dickens (ed.), *The Courts of Europe: Politics, Patronage, and Royalty, 1400–1800* (New York, 1977), pp. 169–89, p. 174.

16 Although the Spanish Habsburg court was characterized by a system of multiple royal houses, the Burgundian ceremonial dominated, Hortal Muñoz and Labrador Arroyo, 'Introducción', p. 16. However, so strong was the association of this ceremonial with the Spanish Habsburgs that when re-introduced in Brussels by the Archdukes Albert and Isabela, it was considered foreign; see, Dries Raeymaekers, *One Foot in the Palace: The Habsburg Court of Brussels and the Politics of Access in the Reign of Albert and Isabella, 1598–1621* (Leuven, 2013), p. 46; and Paravicini, 'Court of the Dukes of Burgundy', p. 72.

17 Revisionist studies on many aspects of his reign have been growing substantially since the publication of the special journal issue in anticipation of the three-hundredth anniversary of Carlos II's death in the prestigious Spanish journal, *Studia histórica. Historia Moderna* (1999), and the seminal essay by Luis Ribot, 'Carlos II: El centenario olvidado', *Studia histórica. Historia moderna* 20 (1999), pp. 19–44. The court has generally received less attention, with the notable exception of Luis Ribot (ed.), *Carlos II: El rey y su entorno cortesano* (Madrid, 2009).

18 Duke of Medina de las Torres to Mariana of Austria, 18 September 1665, copy in 'Consultas, memoriales e informes del IV marques de Aytona, Caballerizo mayor de la Reyna, a S[u] M[agestad] Mariana de Austria', Archivo Ducal Medinaceli (*hereafter* ADM), Sección Histórica (*hereafter* Hist.), leg. 68, ramo 22.

Chamber) who had the coveted access.¹⁹ Mariana instructed him to thank the gentlemen who ‘served the King My Lord, for their dedication and service’, and return the keys to them, as they ‘could keep them for the time being as a sign of honour’.²⁰ Since it indicated a change of regime, the surrendering of the keys was always a highly symbolic act, but this time it had additional meaning because it marked the temporary dissolution of the king’s household.²¹

Many members of the king’s household remained on the court payroll. Also, many low servants and high administrative officials continued to provide services because these could not be replicated or assumed by the Queen’s household. While this may suggest that the king’s household existed, it is helpful to make a distinction between ceremonial and non-ceremonial functions associated with the offices in the king’s household.²² Making a bed, sweeping floors, and cleaning premises and linens, as well as accounting and administrative tasks, were non-ceremonial functions, and many of these continued. Giving the king his nightcap, giving him his shirt in the morning, or handing him a drink were ceremonial functions, and these stopped on 17 September 1665, even for those that received salaries and emoluments. So long as Carlos II remained in the household of his mother, members of the king’s household had neither access to the King, nor ceremonial duties to perform. High officials referred to the king’s household in terms that indicated its loss of juridical status. Luis Guillermo de Moncada Aragón, 7th duke of Montalto, and *mayordomo mayor* (Grand Master of the Household) of the Queen’s household (he served until 1667), for example, referred to the king’s household in January 1666 as ‘only fragments and relics of what it was in the past’.²³ Mariana called it ‘what is left of that house’.²⁴ Medina de las Torres alluded to the absence of the king’s household as the source of ‘the impediments (or problems) that we have’ even though, of course, there was nothing that could be done to change that fact.²⁵

The absence of the king’s household was felt most acutely at the highest levels of the court. The *grandees*, the great magnates of the realm who were considered cousins of the royal family and addressed by them as *primo* or *prima*, had pre-assigned places in all court ceremonies.²⁶

19 Medina de las Torres to Mariana, and Mariana to Medina de las Torres, 18 September 1665, in ‘Consultas, memoriales e informes del IV marques de Aytona’, ADM, Hist., leg. 68, ramo 22.

20 Medina de las Torres to Mariana, and Mariana to Medina de las Torres, 18 September 1665, in ‘Consultas, memoriales e informes del IV marques de Aytona’, ADM Hist. leg. 68, ramo 22. Mariana’s measure was taken on the marquis of Aytona’s recommendation, who was at the time the *caballerizo mayor*; he acquired the additional post of Queen’s *mayordomo mayor* in October 1667. His role is discussed below.

21 Surrendering of the keys marked changes of regime whether the king had died or not, as the 1618 episode known as the ‘revolution of the keys’ and the transition from Philip III to Philip IV’s reigns illustrate; see John H. Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares: The Statesman in an Age of Decline* (New Haven, 1986), pp. 36-40. The retired nature of Spanish kingship increased the significance of possessing keys to the King’s Chamber. On the significance of access, see Raeymaekers, *One Foot in the Palace*, pp. 47-8; on specific significance of the keys in the court of Brussels, see Dries Raeymaekers and Sebastiaan Derks, ‘Introduction: Repertoires of Access in Princely Courts’, in Dries Raeymaekers and Sebastiaan Derks (eds), *The Key to Power?: The Culture of Access in Princely Courts, 1400-1750* (Leiden and London, 2016), pp. 1-15, pp. 1-2. For the French court, Jonathan Spangler, ‘Holders of the Keys: The Grand Chamberlain, the Grand Equerry and Monopolies of Access at the Early Modern French Court’, in *The Key to Power?*, pp. 155-77. In the Spanish court, the *sumiller de corps* always had the privilege of possessing keys; some but not all gentlemen of the chamber did as well.

22 Paravicini mentions the gap between office and function, noting that many servants performed tasks for which nobles had the title. Paravicini, ‘Court of the Dukes of Burgundy’, p. 73.

23 Montalto to Mariana, 8 January 1666, APR, RCII, c. 83, exp. 1.

24 Mariana to Montalto, response to his memo of 8 January 1666, APR, RCII, c. 83, exp. 1.

25 Medina de las Torres, Council of State deliberation 15 September 1667, Archivo Histórico Nacional (*hereafter* AHN), Estado (*hereafter* E.), leg. 674, exp. 18.

26 There were approximately thirty-six dukes, sixteen marquises, fifteen counts, and five Italian princes with the privilege of *grandeza* or grandeanship during Carlos II’s reign, APR, Hist., c.73, exp. 1. There were twelve councils of government, with the Council of State and the Council of Castile the most prestigious. The upper aristocracy usually

Many, along with other members of the nobility, held offices in the households and in the councils of government, the system whereby the Habsburgs ruled their global empire.²⁷ The offices of the king's household — particularly the highest such as *sumiller de corps*, *mayordomo mayor* or *caballerizo mayor* (Master of the Horse) — were highly coveted appointments.²⁸ Holders of these positions often rose to the position of *valido*, or minister-favourite, the early modern precursor of prime minister, which is just one reason the elite competed so nakedly for these posts.²⁹ The court's reorganization meant that the executive offices in the king's household were eliminated, while those in the Queen's household rose to the top.³⁰ The Queen's household was composed mainly of women, but there were still two masculine offices at the top of the court hierarchy — the *mayordomo mayor* and the *caballerizo mayor* of the Queen's household. Overall, however, the number of men in top executive offices was reduced from five to two.³¹

The fact that women dominated service positions in the Chamber section of the Queen's household further reinforced the gender realignment, as these women had intimate and regular access to the Queen and the child-king, her son. Men in the Queen's household were relegated to a secondary position; as a matter of decorum, the *caballerizo mayor* and the *mayordomo mayor* were prohibited from assisting the Queen in any capacity that required them to touch her, even giving her a hand to mount the royal carriage or assist her in arranging her wardrobe. Thus while these two male officers played a public role in ceremonials attended by the Queen, women, with the *camarera mayor* at the top, always occupied the most pre-eminent positions.³² There were no such restrictions with the King, who was attended by numerous male figures; but so long as Carlos II was part of Mariana's household, members of her household could assist and thus be near the King in ceremonies.³³ Although women, particularly the *camarera mayor* and, to a lesser extent, the *aya*, were technically lower than the

served in the Council of State and as viceroys, generals, and ambassadors; they held the top positions in the court hierarchy such as the King's Chamber as well as executive offices in both households.

27 Feliciano Barrios, *La gobernación de la Monarquía de España: Consejos, juntas y secretarios de la administración de la corte (1556–1700)* (Madrid, 2015).

28 Aside from possessing substantial political power in their own territories, they were considered cousins of the king and the queen, addressed by them as such in correspondence. They were allowed to keep their heads covered in the presence of the monarch, a coveted privilege that singled them out from the rest of the subjects.

29 On the importance of these court offices for *validos*/ministers, see James M. Boyden, *The Courtier and the King: Ruy Gomez de Silva, Philip II, and the Court of Spain* (Berkeley, 1995); Antonio Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism in the Spain of Philip III of Spain, 1598–1621* (Cambridge, 2000); John H. Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares: The Statesman in an Age of Decline* (New Haven and London, 1986); and John H. Elliott and L. W. B. Brockliss (eds), *The World of the Favourite* (New Haven and London, 1999).

30 Perhaps in anticipation of this situation, titled nobles from the kingdom of Aragon presented several requests to be given access to the Queen's household beginning in 1664, APR, Hist., c. 55, exp. 7. I have not come across similar requests from other kingdoms. It is significant perhaps that besides Castile (the recognized principal kingdom of the Spanish composite monarchy), the Kingdom of Aragon was the only one other to have representation in the Junta de Gobierno or Regency Council formed for the regency; Domínguez Ortiz, *Testamento de Felipe IV*, pp. 43–5.

31 Aytona's recommendations included allocating to the *mayordomo mayor* of the Queen's household administrative responsibility over what remained of the king's household, except the stables. Thus the office now combined the administrative responsibilities of the *mayordomo mayor* of the two households and the *sumiller de corps*; it was the highest masculine office in court ceremonial; Aytona to Mariana, n/d September 1665, ADM, Histórica, leg. 68, ramo 22. This point is confirmed by Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, 6th duke of Alba in the Council of State deliberation discussed below. At the time he was the *mayordomo mayor* of the Queen's household, but because of his premature death, he served for only six months. He was succeeded in the post by Aytona, 'La Reyna N[uest]ra S[e]ñ[or]a Dios la guarde, fue serbida en 8 de octubre de este año [1667] hazer me merced del puesto de Mayordomo Mayor suyo que Vacó por muerte del Sr. Duque de Alba', ADM, Hist., leg. 69, ramo 1.

32 Válgoma, *Norma y ceremonia*, p. 33.

33 *Azafatas*, or ladies of the wardrobe, were the women in charge of assisting the royal children in intimate tasks such as bathing and dressing; Hoffman, *Raised to Rule*, pp. 35–6.

mayordomo mayor in terms of authority, their proximity to the Queen gave them an edge.³⁴ Rules had to be observed precisely because the pre-eminence and place granted by the rules of etiquette were considered inalienable rights for the possessors of the court positions.³⁵

The women who held the highest posts in the Queen's household — doña Elvira Ponce de León, marquise of Balduenza, the *camarera mayor* (served 1654–91), and doña Mariana Engracia Álvarez de Toledo, marquise of Los Vélez, the King's *aya* (served 1657–75) — immediately took a conspicuous leadership role.³⁶ They had authority over women in a variety of positions that served both Queen and King, women who ranged from young, unmarried ladies and *meninas* to older spinsters and widows, and who took centre stage in all court ceremonies.³⁷ The *camarera mayor* had the right to be next to the Queen at all times, including audiences with ambassadors and representatives of foreign dignitaries. This privilege of proximity was coveted by everyone in the royal households, which explains why both members of court and visitors remarked on it when speaking of their court experiences. Cristóbal Crespi de Valdaura, vice-chancellor (presiding officer) of the Council of Aragon and member of the Regency Council, recorded in his diary, for example, that Balduenza stood behind the Queen when she received members of the Regency Council, and she left the room only moments before the meeting began.³⁸ A painting recreating an audience the Dutch ambassador, Hieronymus van Beverningk, had with Mariana shows a female figure who must be the *camarera mayor* right behind the Queen's royal chair. Although a great many people were at that meeting, the painter depicted only a few, which reveals the importance of the *camarera mayor*.³⁹ A narrative description by the grand duke of Florence, Cosimo III (r. 1670–1723), whom Mariana received in November 1668, confirms the *camarera mayor*'s pre-eminence in Mariana's audiences; he describes her as standing behind the royal chair just as she is shown in the painting depicting the Dutch ambassador.⁴⁰

The King's *aya* was also a high-status figure in all court ceremonies involving the King; she gained the unprecedented privilege of sitting in the royal chair with the child-king in her lap, and even stood in for him when his youth prevented him from performing duties of his office. During an induction ceremony for the Order of the Golden Fleece, for instance, it was she, not

34 Even before the regency, the duke of Montalto lodged several complaints in 1664 to the King, complaining about the women of Queen Mariana's household giving 'oral orders for purchases, which were supposed to be approved by him as the *mayordomo mayor*'. Montalto to Philip IV, 28 February, 13 and 16 June, and 7 August 1664, APR, Hist., c. 55, exp. 1. During the regency, Mariana disciplined a treasurer for not complying with the orders of these women in 1668; Mariana to Aytona, 20 November 1668, ADM, Hist., leg. 69.

35 Although change was not impossible, it was very difficult; see John H. Elliott, 'Philip IV: Prisoner of Ceremony', p. 175.

36 Balduenza's file in APR, Personal, c. 1099, exp. 29; Los Vélez's file, Personal, c. 1084, exp. 11.

37 On Balduenza and Los Vélez and their political role in Mariana's court, see Laura Oliván Santaliestra, 'La dama, el aya y la camarera. Perfiles políticos de tres mujeres de la Casa de Mariana de Austria', in *Las Relaciones Discretas*, vol. 2, pp. 1301-55, pp. 1310-1, 1318-19; on the post of *camarera mayor* in a longitudinal perspective, López-Cordón Cortezo, 'Entre damas anda el juego', pp. 127-8.

38 Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid (*hereafter* BNE), ms. 5742, fols 373r-4r. The Regency Council or Junta de Gobierno was the special ad hoc committee established as a consultative organ of government at Mariana's disposal during her governorship; see Cristina Hermosa Espeso, 'El Testamento de Felipe IV y la Junta de Gobierno de la minoridad de Carlos II. Apuntes para su interpretación', *Erasmus: Revista de Historia Bajo-Medieval y Moderna* 1 (2014), pp. 102-20; and María del Carmen Sevilla González, 'La junta de Gobierno de la minoridad del rey Carlos II', in José Antonio Escudero (ed.), *Los validos* (Madrid, 2006), pp. 583-616.

39 Caspar Netscher's painting depicting the 'Reception of the Dutch ambassador Hieronymus van Beverningk by the Spanish queen-regent Maria-Anna of Austria on 2 March 1671,' Rijksmuseum, SK-A-4128. <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.4716>.

40 Ángel Sánchez Rivero, *Viaje de Cosme III por España (1668–1669)*. Madrid y su provincia (Madrid, 1927), pp. 31-2.

Carlos, who placed the Order's pendant on the inductee's neck.⁴¹ Other women began taking a pre-eminent role in many other court functions. The instructions prepared for the visit of the Russian ambassador to Madrid clearly stated that 'so long as the Queen is presiding, the ladies must be in attendance' and 'the *mayordomo mayor* cedes them his place'.⁴² Cosimo III confirmed that these rules were adopted for other diplomatic visits. He mentioned the *camarera mayor* behind the Queen as well as the *aya* behind the King, two *dueñas* (widows and older ladies) and fifteen other ladies in the room. The marquis of Aytona, the current *mayordomo mayor*, don Blasco de Loyola, the principal royal secretary and eight *mayordomos* (stewards) as well as musicians and dwarfs were also present.⁴³

During the first months of the regency, Mariana worked closely with Guillén Ramon de Moncada, 4th marquis of Aytona, who was the *caballerizo mayor* of her household and a member of the Regency Council, to make the necessary adjustments.⁴⁴ The memoranda he wrote to Mariana give us an insider's view of how the changes were conceived and implemented.⁴⁵ 'It is not convenient that although there is a king, there is not a king's household', Aytona began his first memorandum to the Queen on the subject.⁴⁶ A significantly reduced access to the King for male grandees was one of the inconveniences Aytona was referring to (above), which was why Mariana addressed it only five days into Carlos II's minority. Her royal decree granted '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 to my chamber as they had while the king was alive, and to be admitted to the antechambers of the king, my son'.⁴⁷ Mariana and Aytona also adopted practical measures to deal with the unavoidable interruptions that arose from the little King needing to eat, nap, and take frequent breaks during hours-long ceremonies as any child would need. The first Christmas season, for example, Mariana received all the councils and members of the court at once, while Carlos II did his receiving over several days, 'in consideration for his age'.⁴⁸

Such measures helped, but there were still difficulties. Crespí de Valdaura recorded in his diary how he had been told by the *camarera mayor* and the *aya* to proceed to the Queen's chambers, because Carlos II was taking a nap. He and the members of his council arrived at the packed room, and he soon realized he had been displaced from his usual position and pushed into a corner because 'the place where I used to stand [in previous years] was taken by the grandees'.⁴⁹ 'There was very little space', he said, as the grandees (he was not one), 'usually with the king in occasions like this one', were present, because the '*the two*

41 This was noted by the Imperial ambassador in Madrid, Franz Eusebius, count of Pötting, see Miguel Nieto Nuño (ed.), *Diario del Conde de Pötting, Embajador del Sacro Imperio en Madrid (1664-1674)*, 2 vols (Madrid, 1990), vol. 1, p. 156. On the importance of knighting ceremonies for Spanish kingship, Teófilo F. Ruíz, 'Unsacred Monarchy: The Kings of Castile in the Late Middle Ages', in Sean Wilentz (ed.), *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual, and Politics since the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 1985), pp. 109-44, p. 124.

42 The report was produced by the marquis of Aytona in consultation with other officials, 'Puntos para la entrada del embajador de Moscovia (Pyotr Ivanovich Potemkin)', 1667, ADM, leg. 69, ramo 7. On the Russian embassy to Madrid in 1668 and its novelty, see Francisco Fernández Izquierdo, 'Las embajadas Rusas a la corte de Carlos II', *Studia Histórica. Historia Moderna* 22 (2000), pp. 75-107, pp. 78-91.

43 Sánchez Rivero, *Viaje de Cosme III por España*, pp. 31-2.

44 Aytona became *mayordomo mayor* in October 1667, after designing and implementing the 'reforms of 1666', ADM, Hist., leg. 68, ramo 22.

45 Aytona to Mariana, n/d September, 16 October 1665, and 2 February 1666, ADM, Hist., leg. 68 and 70.

46 Aytona to Mariana, n/d September, ADM, Hist., leg. 68, ramo 22.

47 Mariana's royal decree, 25 September 1665, APR, RCH, c. 118, exp. 4.

48 BNE, ms. 5742, fol. 371v.

49 BNE, ms. 5742, fol. 371v.

representations fall on the queen' (emphasis mine).⁵⁰ Crespi and his men then went to pay their respects to the King, where they 'waited there standing [*en pie*] until he woke up, which was not for about an hour'.⁵¹ Although for the modern observer these seem like minor disruptions, in the context of the Spanish court they were major. As John H. Elliott points out in his classic study of court ceremonials during Philip IV's reign, the Spanish Habsburg court was a markedly hierarchical system shaped by 'function and rank'. Rules of etiquette gave those privileged to be part of the king's entourage the 'supreme object of all social aspiration, proximity to the king'.⁵² It was not solely a question of rank and access. A conflict of etiquette that emerged from the Queen's household also suggests that the lustre of ceremonies of kingship had diminished somewhat.

The *Camarrera Mayor* of a Reigning Queen versus the *Aya* of a Minor King

About a year-and-a-half into the minority, Baldueza, the *camarrera mayor*, presented a formal complaint to Mariana against Los Vélez, the *aya*, saying that the *aya* had preceded her in various occasions during court ceremonial. Baldueza stated that her office of *camarrera mayor* was superior to all others 'inside and outside the palace' and that a past *aya* had been reprimanded for a similar *faux pas*. Instead of blaming personal dislike or competition, Baldueza explained that Mariana had caused the conflict by placing the King 'on her right side' during court ceremonials, which had caused the *aya* to shift sides as well. Mariana had indeed changed Carlos's place after he became king. Although she was following the traditional placement of kings and queens, this violated the protocol of the queen's household in which royal children, even future kings, were subordinate to their mothers in ceremonial etiquette. And once Mariana and Carlos switched, everyone else did, too.⁵³

Mariana could not ignore the fact that Carlos was the king; she excused Los Vélez's behaviour on the basis that as *aya* of the king, the Marquise was obligated to follow him. This had nothing to do with 'competency for the place [office] or precedence', she said, since 'no one in my chamber can have as much pre-eminence as the *camarrera mayor*'.⁵⁴ Los Vélez, meanwhile, defended her position, stating that 'her intention was never to precede the *camarrera mayor* in the public ceremony, but only to exercise her office serving the person of the King, our Lord'. She agreed with Baldueza that Mariana had created the conflict, insisting that 'the dispute had neither been caused by the *aya* nor by the *camarrera* but Your Majesty'.⁵⁵ The *camarrera mayor* asked that when the King did not need personal assistance, the *aya* refrain from taking the pre-eminent place in ceremonies.⁵⁶ After this request from Baldueza, Mariana forwarded the case to the Council of State for deliberation.

50 BNE, ms. 5742, fols 371r-2r.

51 BNE, ms. 5742, fols 371r-2r.

52 John H. Elliott, 'Philip IV', pp. 174-5.

53 These exchanges were recorded in the Council of State deliberations that took place on 7 and 15 September 1667, AHN, E., leg. 674; for the placements of kings and queens respectively on the left and right; the spatial arrangement was based on scripture and the concept that 'Christ sat on the right of his father', see David Davis, 'The Body Politic of Spanish Habsburg Queens', in *Las Relaciones Discretas*, vol. 3, pp. 1469-536, p.1471.

54 Mariana to Baldueza, Mariana to Los Vélez, summer 1667, AHN, E. leg. 674, exp. 18. We do not have all the original communications between the Queen and the two women, but the memoranda exchanged between the parties were partially transcribed and summarized by the secretary and it formed part of the consultation by the Council of State. This was standard procedure for all deliberations of Councils of Government and allowed members of the councils and the King to keep track of all pertinent information of each matter under discussion.

55 Baldueza to Mariana, 30 June 1667; Los Vélez to Mariana, 2 August 1667; Council of State deliberation, 15 September 1667, AHN, E., leg. 674, exp. 18.

56 Baldueza to Mariana, 7 September 1667, AHN, E., leg. 674 exp. 18.

This case is well known to scholars. Gabriel Maura, for example, has concluded that the claims of the two women, Mariana's decisions, and the ministers' responses reflected political loyalties and factional struggles.⁵⁷ Although a large number of revisionist histories has superseded his work on the period, the belief about the nature of the conflict between Baldueza and Los Vélez, however, has not changed. In spite of his solid archival research, the case's true significance has been missed because it has not been analysed within the framework of the new statuses of the royal households.

When Carlos II succeeded to the throne, the etiquette regulating the queen's and the king's household had evolved considerably. Previously, *Libros de Etiquetas* had been compilations of offices in the royal households that delineated their functions, prerogatives, authority, activities, salaries, and emoluments. During Philip IV's reign, however, concerted efforts to codify ceremonies culminated with the so-called *Ordenanzas de Felipe IV*, which were compiled between 1647 and 1650 and revised by a Junta de Etiquetas appointed by the King in 1651.⁵⁸ This effort resulted in the adoption of the 'General etiquette to be observed by the servants of His Majesty in the use and exercise of their offices in the various functions in which they assist the royal persons'.⁵⁹ The concept of 'better place' or *mejor lugar* comes up frequently in the manuscript's 300-plus folio pages, indicating how critical these matters were for all participants.⁶⁰

The book not only describes a myriad of ceremonies, it contains seven charts that the royal architect, Juan Gómez de Mora (1586–1648), made to clarify the complex arrangements for the most significant events, including funeral processions, royal entries, baptisms, swearing-in ceremonies, and occasions when both households were present.⁶¹ Gómez de Mora's standing as a royal architect has been amply recognized by architectural and urban historians, which makes his participation in the creation of the charts or *planos* for court ceremonial all the more significant.⁶²

But neither the descriptions nor the charts in the *Libro de Etiqueta* spoke to the court's current predicament. Lacking precedents, the Council of State set up discussions about three different areas of court ceremonial that presented distinct and, as they made clear, potential sources of 'impediments' (*embarazos*): occasions that required the Queen and the King to be in the same room such as audiences of ambassadors and foreign dignitaries in which a limited number of courtiers were allowed; church functions such as daily Mass and other special religious services attended by members of the court; and royal outings.⁶³ Two figures emerged as experts. The duke of Medina de las Torres had started his career as a *menino* in the household of Queen Margarita of Austria (r. 1598–1611) and reached the topmost pinnacle

57 Gabriel Maura, *Carlos II y su corte. Ensayo de Reconstrucción biográfica*, 2 vols (Madrid, 1911 and 1915), vol. 1, pp. 289–91.

58 José Martínez Millán, 'La corte de la monarquía hispánica', *Studia histórica. Historia Moderna* 28 (2006), pp.17–61, p. 50; Félix Labrador Arroyo, 'La formación de las Etiquetas Generales de Palacio en tiempos de Felipe IV: La Junta de Etiquetas, reformas y cambios en la Casa Real', in *La Casa de Borgoña*, pp. 99–128, pp. 102–16.

59 'Copia de las etiquetas generales que habian de observar los Criados de Su Magestad en el uso y ejercicio de sus oficios, y en las diversas funciones á que asisten a las Personas Reales', APR, Hist., c. 51, exp. 1. These were recorded in the books on 11 February 1651 after a royal decree from 22 May 1647; they were republished 31 August 1676 (during Carlos II's rule as an adult).

60 'Mejor lugar' in APR, Hist., c. 51, exp. 1, f. 3r.

61 José Manuel Barbeito, *El Alcázar de Madrid* (Madrid, 1992), pp. 127–74; Virginia Tovar Martín, 'Contribución a la obra de Juan Gómez de Mora', *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños* 15 (1978), 59–72.

62 See for example, 'Planta del acompañamiento de sus magestades saliendo el Rey n[uest]ro S[eñor] a cavallo y la Reyna n[uest]ra S[eñor]a En coche', APR, Hist., c. 51, exp. 1, folio 246r.

63 Council of State deliberation, 15 September 1667, AHN, E., leg. 674, exp. 18.

— accumulating more than five decades of experience along the way — as the King’s *sumiller de corps*. He was also the most senior member of the Council of State, which meant he had the right to speak first.⁶⁴ Fernando Álvarez de Toledo y Mendoza, 6th duke of Alba, belonged to one of the oldest and most prestigious Castilian lineages; his family had long been associated with the development of court ceremonial and service, and he was then serving as the Queen’s *mayordomo mayor*.⁶⁵

The Council of State deliberation, an oral discussion recorded by the royal secretary, took place on 15 September 1667. Medina de las Torres noted that the matter should have been kept private to avoid the ‘differences in the royal chamber from coming into public view’ and thus revealing ‘the impediments experienced today’ (i.e. the absence of the king’s household). He opened the discussion with a long disquisition about the nature and history of the offices of *camarera mayor* and *aya*. His key point was that, unlike any other court office, the *camarera mayor* enjoyed precedence inside and outside the palace. The office of the *aya*, in contrast, was a temporary one that ended when the charge received his or her own household. The *aya* served the royal children, including future kings and *infantes* (Habsburg offspring of both sexes), and undoubtedly belonged to the household of the queen, as royal children were reared there. What follows, he added, is that ‘as long as the King does not have his own house and continues to be served from the household of Your Majesty [Mariana], the *aya* has to continue in the exercise of her office’. Medina de las Torres pointed out that there was no real controversy about precedence, as the *camarera* clearly had it. Normally, the *camarera mayor* was the highest serving member in the queen’s household; she was above the *aya*, even if the *aya* served a future king. But since Carlos was *already* king, this was a completely different situation.⁶⁶

Medina de las Torres then discussed the question of when the *aya* should precede the *camarera*. He distinguished between the need to ‘speak’ for the king (*ser la voz* or to be his voice), and to ‘care’ for him (*tenerle* or hold him). The first function belonged to Mariana as ‘as mother, as tutor, and as governor’, while the second pertained to the *aya* who needed to monitor the movements of the five-year-old king, and be close enough to the Queen to heed her orders. Aside from these practical considerations, the question of precedence was ultimately based on service, and more specifically, whom the women served: the Queen and the King. Yet, even though Mariana had ample prerogatives to rule on behalf of the King during his minority, she was not the sovereign ruler: Carlos was. As Medina de las Torres pointed out, ‘the main offices of the household of the King, our Lord [Philip] have always preceded those of Your Majesty [Mariana]’. The King’s *aya* was part of the Queen’s household and was normally below in hierarchy to that of the *camarera mayor*. But as Medina de las Torres made clear, this principle did not work in the present situation because the *aya* served not a prince or an *infante*, but the King. Providing a service to the sovereign ruler altered the hierarchy between the offices, giving Los Vélez precedence over Balduenza.⁶⁷

In the end, Medina de las Torres proposed a compromise, recommending that the *aya* precede the *camarera mayor* only when she was tending to the King. When the *aya* was not needed, the *camarera mayor* should take first place. He reasoned that, as a just ruler,

64 He self-identified as a former *menino* in the Council of State deliberation, AHN, E., leg. 674, exp. 18.

65 On previous dukes of Alba serving as *mayordomos mayores* for Philip II, Philip III, and Philip IV, see Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares*, p. 396.

66 Medina de las Torres’s opinion, Council of State deliberation, 15 September 1667, AHN, E., leg. 674, exp. 18.

67 AHN, E., leg. 674, exp. 18.

Mariana could not deprive the *camarera mayor* of all the prerogatives her office had historically enjoyed. And he pointed out that when traveling in the royal carriage, there would be no conflict because Carlos and Mariana would be seated facing each other, with the women at either side.⁶⁸ Clearly, he was trying to find a conciliatory approach that would preserve the centrality of the King in court ceremonial, while not completely dispossessing Baldueza of the prerogatives of her office.

The majority of the ministers accepted Medina de las Torres's recommendations, with the Duke of Alba an uncompromising, albeit singular, voice in arguing that Los Vélez should have pre-eminence at all times, saying that, while the *camarera mayor*'s 'pre-eminence is indisputable, she had no claim'. 'As long as the king did not have his own household', he said, 'the *aya* was his royal household'. He added that he was related to both women — both were his cousins — but that 'he was a better friend of the truth'.⁶⁹ Alba did not prevail: Medina de las Torres's recommendations, which essentially required the *aya* and the *camarera mayor* to take turns in having 'the better place', were adopted.⁷⁰ Although no further discussions or conflicts emerged after the conflict between the *camarera* and the *aya*, the case illustrates the 'impediments' the court experienced as long as Carlos was served by the servants of the Queen's household.

Some of these issues were at least partly diminished when Carlos began to perform some of the tasks of his office; he learned to order grandees to cover their heads, began receiving diplomats, and gradually learned to issue commands; these changes were noticeable by the time he was seven.⁷¹ The grand duke of Tuscany, Cosimo III, for example, recorded his encounter with seven-year-old Carlos, who greeted him, asked him questions and looked at him with great curiosity during the fifteen-minute audience.⁷² Carlos performed his first knighting ceremony in 1669, at the age of seven.⁷³ While his growing abilities diminished the *aya*'s role, both the *camarera mayor* and the *aya* remained key protagonists at court, as did other women officers.⁷⁴

The situation was accepted as fact by members of the court, familiar as they were with the rules of etiquette governing the households. Nevertheless, it affected the perception of kingship. Spanish kingship was in many ways incompatible with childhood, and Carlos II's life during his minority emphasized the absence of adult men surrounding the king. The king of Spain had always been accompanied by aristocratic men.⁷⁵ The king had the exclusive privilege of performing knighting ceremonies and was the only one permitted to wield the Sword of the State.⁷⁶ According to normal protocols, when a queen of Spain went out in her carriage, an

68 Medina de las Torres's opinion, Council of State deliberation, 15 September 1667, AHN, E., leg. 674, exp. 18.

69 Duke of Alba's opinion, after his colleagues had spoken, 15 September 1667, AHN, E., leg. 674, exp. 18.

70 APR, Hist., c. 51, exp. 1, f. 3r.

71 Grantees were permitted to cover their heads in the presence of the king by right but how and when they did so was highly regulated. For example, some could keep their hats on without waiting for the king to give them permission (and some, such as the marquis of Aytona, did not exercise this prerogative as a show of respect); others, however, had to wait for the king to give them permission. Other distinctions between the group included the timing: some could cover their heads before speaking to the king, others once they started speaking, a third group after they addressed the king and returned to their place. On the three groups of grandees, see Elliott, 'Philip IV', p. 174. Philip IV also gave permission to the grandees to cover their heads, uttering the traditional order '*cubrios*'. Mariana and Carlos did so as well. On Carlos II's performance of the rituals associated with kingship as a child and a young adolescent, see Silvia Z. Mitchell, 'Growing Up Carlos II: Political Childhood in the Court of the Spanish Habsburgs', in *The Formation of the Child*, pp. 189-206, p. 195.

72 Sánchez Rivero, *Viaje de Cosme III por España*, pp. 31-2.

73 The first knighting ceremony took place on 7 July 1669, Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, vol. 2, p. 46.

74 Sánchez Rivero, *Viaje de Cosme III por España*, pp. 31-2.

75 Elliott, 'Philip IV', 174-5.

76 Ruiz, 'Unsacred Monarchy', p. 124.

adult king followed her on horseback, flanked by his *mayordomo mayor*, *caballerizo mayor*, *primer caballerizo*, and the captain of the archery guard. Other groups of men — grandees, gentlemen of the chamber, gentlemen of the table, the various royal guards, members of the Council of State, and others — took a preeminent position in this formation, while the women were less visible inside the royal carriage and the additional carriages transporting the ladies and *dueñas*.⁷⁷ But when the king was a child, things were different, the child-king was ‘governed by women’ or ‘surrounded by them day and night’.⁷⁸ This in turn affected his main kingly functions: when Carlos became the ninth Master of the Order of the Golden Fleece, he was himself knighted by one of his subjects.⁷⁹ When he travelled, it was not on horseback and surrounded by men, but in the royal carriage, seated next to the Queen and flanked by the two principal offices of the Queen’s household, who were also women. And until he had his own royal household, this situation would not change.

Most importantly, it was up to Mariana to decide when this milestone would take place. She waited until the last possible moment, establishing the King’s household on 30 November 1674, the day that an official announcement of the appointments was made.⁸⁰ Carlos moved into his own quarters on 14 April 1675, just seven months before his official emancipation at age fourteen.⁸¹ In this, Mariana did not depart significantly from Spanish Habsburg court traditions. Prince Baltasar Carlos, for example, had been given his own household in June 1643, near his fourteenth birthday.⁸² Nevertheless, Carlos was already king. Mariana’s decision was surely motivated by political reasons, which are not hard to understand. Much of a queen regent’s power depended on her control of and/or influence over the king; as Fanny Cosandey has eloquently argued, for a queen regent, ‘to have control of the king was to have control of the State [*tenir le roi, c’est tenir l’État*]’.⁸³ As tutor and governor, supported by the late King’s testament and the dynastic and political traditions that further sanctioned her right to the office, Mariana had extensive authority.⁸⁴ Nonetheless, she ruled not as the king but on his behalf. The establishment of his household meant that power would shift away from her and her household, and not surprisingly, Mariana postponed the momentous political decision to the very end of Carlos II’s minority. The strategies Mariana adopted before she established Carlos II’s royal household suggest that she was aware that the preponderant feminine environment of her son was less than ideal in the proper representation of the king of Spain. She incorporated a large number of boys in her household, in effect changing the nature of her son’s entourage, but retained full control of the king by keeping him within her household.

Los Meninos

Mariana tried to counteract the overwhelming presence of women by incorporating boys, called *meninos*, into her household. *Meninos* and *meninas* alike lived inside the palace and

77 ‘Planta del acompañamiento de sus magestades saliendo el Rey n[uest]ro S[e]ñor a cavallo y la Reyna n[uest]ra S[e]ñora Ja En coche’, APR, Hist., c. 51, exp. 1, folio 246r.

78 Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, vol. 2, pp. 234, 304.

79 Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, vol. 1, p. 149.

80 APR, RCII, c. 92, exp. 1.

81 APR, RCII, c. 92, exp. 3.

82 Franganillo, ‘Education of an Heir’, p. 148.

83 Fanny Cosandey, ‘Puissance maternelle et pouvoir politique. La régence des reines mères’, *Clio. Histoire, femmes et sociétés* 21 (2005) <http://clio.revues.org/1447>, paragraph 27.

84 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*, pp. 175-96, pp. 175-80.

should not be confused with pages, who had gradually been pushed into the section of the royal household responsible for the stables. The office of *menino/a* was usually given to children of higher-ranking court officials and/or the titled nobility, ranging in age from four or five years old to teenagers, and they were always part of the queen's household — the king's household had no such office.⁸⁵ In exchange for providing age-appropriate companionship to the royal children, *meninos* received the courtly and political education that would help them advance later on. Medina de las Torres's trajectory from *menino* of Queen Margarita of Austria in the first decade of the seventeenth century to *sumiller de corps* of Philip IV exemplifies a highly successful court career, one that all high-level nobles aspired to. Royal children benefitted as well; having *meninos* helped them get used to commanding the attention of a group of people at an early age.

Mariana began appointing *meninos* early and did not stop until the establishment of Carlos II's royal household. She added two in late 1665 just after Philip died, one in 1666, six in 1667, one in 1668, seven more in 1669, three in 1671 and one more in 1674.⁸⁶ All these were in addition to the eleven who had been in place already since Carlos's birth.⁸⁷ Ultimately, Carlos II had nearly forty *meninos*.⁸⁸ To put this number in perspective, when Philip IV was crown prince, eight *meninos* attended him.⁸⁹ Queen Isabel of Bourbon had seventeen *meninos* in her household in the 1620s. The largest number on record, thirty-two, held by Prince Baltasar Carlos in the 1630s, was still less than Carlos had.⁹⁰ The *meninos* became Carlos II's constant companions, sharing music and dance lessons, games, and recreation with the king.⁹¹ Mariana clearly wanted to balance Carlos's preponderantly female environment by appointing male attendants who were around his age; the large number also reflected the growth of the Queen's household during the regency. From the moment she took over the government of the monarchy, she had appointed eight *señoras de honor* (Ladies of Honour, older noblewomen either widows or spinsters), fifteen *damas* (Ladies, younger and unmarried noblewomen), and five *meninas* to her household, as well as an additional sixty-five women who served in the lower ranks.⁹²

The conspicuous presence of women and children at court mirrored the ruling dynamic of the monarchy — a queen regent and a child-king — thus becoming an eloquent political metaphor for the regency. Although adult men were now in the background, Carlos's entourage was not devoid of its charms, and from the descriptions, we can see the same type of admiration for the King as his adult predecessors. *Meninos* played a conspicuous role in ceremonial, making a spectacular appearance in the first procession of the reign in which the King participated on 2 July 1668, which drew flocks of *madrileños* on to the city streets. Accompanied by his mother and a large retinue of courtiers, the six-year-old sovereign left the Royal Palace in the evening to perform a traditional act of Habsburg devotion: a visit to the Virgin of Atocha, the traditional guardian of the Spanish Monarchy, and since 1643, its official patron.⁹³ Women made up much of the procession: two coaches transported the Ladies of Honour and six more carried *meninas*

85 Hoffman, *Raised to Rule*, p. 50.

86 'Meninos incorporated into the household of the queen from the moment that Carlos inherited. [*Gentiles hombres de la cámara y meninos de la reina*].' APR, Adm. leg. 5648.

87 José Rufino Novo, 'La Casa real durante la regencia de una reina: Mariana de Austria', in *Las relaciones discretas*, vol. 1, pp. 483-547, p. 510.

88 APR, Adm., leg. 5648; Rufino Novo, 'La Casa real durante la regencia', pp. 510-1.

89 Hoffman, *Raised to Rule*, p. 50.

90 APR, Adm., leg. 5648; Rufino Novo, 'La Casa real durante la regencia', p. 511.

91 On the dance and the hiring of musicians, ADM, Hist., leg. 69; Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, vol. 2, p. 164.

92 APR, Adm., leg. 5648; Rufino Novo, 'La Casa real durante la regencia', pp. 504-9.

93 Jeffrey Schrader, *La Virgen de Atocha: Los Austrias y las imágenes milagrosas* (Madrid, 2006), p. 17.

and those of marriageable age. But the *meninos* stole the show. On the way back to the palace — as music greeted the sovereigns while they passed through densely packed streets and plazas — the royal carriage, flanked by ‘twelve *meninos* carrying lighted torches while seated on well-caparisoned horses’, offered a ‘beautiful sight’. ‘It was a particularly splendid event’ because ‘children of the noblest lineages had been chosen especially for the occasion’. Surrounded by women and children, Carlos II elicited tremendous affection from his subjects, who shouted with approval and love.⁹⁴

From the participants’ viewpoint, the situation, though not ideal, was acceptable. To an extent, this was because members of the court were familiar with the rules and terms of Philip IV’s testament and could not protest. This is why Baldueza’s prerogatives were partly preserved. But Mariana’s solutions also helped the court adapt. After all, children were just as significant for the aristocracy as for the Habsburgs; both had to secure their patrimony into the next generation. Members of the court understood the predicament over staffing the royal households.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, Carlos II’s image as King suffered.

The Representation of Kingship during Carlos II’s Minority

The spatial and administrative separation between the king’s and queen’s households in the Madrid Alcázar is one of the most salient characteristics of the Spanish Habsburg court, and it has important implications for understanding the role of queens and women at court more generally.⁹⁶ At the most basic level, and across all monarchical regimes, the queen’s household institutionalized female authority.⁹⁷ In Spain, the queen’s household was a concrete power centre and patronage source: the ruling elite competed for positions there, whether at entry level or as the culmination of a successful court career.⁹⁸ A substantial body of scholarship has shown the role of the queen’s household in opening a space for soft power and state-building processes. Magdalena S. Sánchez’s classic study on the Habsburg women in the court of Philip III, for example, has demonstrated how the queen’s household, together with the royal convent of the Descalzas Reales — another paradigmatic royal space populated and dominated by women — provided an effective platform to challenge the duke of Lerma’s monopoly of influence over Philip III as the King’s *valido*.⁹⁹

In the Spanish court, the queen’s household had a particularly prominent and powerful institutional role. The Spanish Habsburg court — with its unique system of multiple royal households (i.e. Burgundian, Castilian, Portuguese, Aragonese, etc.) — mirrored the composite state, the agglomeration of territories that made up the Monarquía Hispánica or Spanish Monarchy.¹⁰⁰ The status of the royal households varied, with the Burgundian and Castilian households long competing for primacy.¹⁰¹ The queen’s household was an integral part of

94 Nieto Nuño, *Diario del Conde de Pötting*, vol. 1, pp. 393-4.

95 The importance of children for the lineage’s survival included girls as well as boys. Truly, the Habsburgs and their aristocratic subjects had much in common. Grace E. Coolidge, ‘Investing in the Lineage: Children in the Early Modern Spanish Nobility, 1350–1750’, in *The Formation of the Child*, pp. 223-47, p. 223.

96 On the spatial and institutional organization of the Spanish Habsburg court, Elliott, ‘The Court of the Spanish Habsburgs’, p. 145.

97 Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (eds), *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting across Early Modern Europe* (Leiden, 2013).

98 María Victoria López-Cordón Cortezo, ‘La evolución de las damas entre los siglos XVII y XVIII’, in *Las relaciones discretas*, vol. 2, pp. 1357-97, pp. 1358-9.

99 Sánchez, *The Empress, the Queen and the Nun*.

100 Mitchell, ‘Growing Up’, p. 204.

101 José Eloy Hortal Muñoz and Félix Labrador Arroyo, ‘Introducción’, p. 16.

this system — it preserved Castilian etiquette traditions while the king's household used the Burgundian etiquette Emperor Charles V had introduced in 1517 and formally adopted in 1548.¹⁰² This difference was significant: since Castile was the principal kingdom of the Habsburg conglomerate, the Castilian household could not be eliminated, even when the Burgundian etiquette acquired pre-eminence, a fact that lent the queen's household a quasi-independent institutional status. The queen's household in Spain, therefore, did more than give women a political space. It was an integral component of the monarchy and associated with the two proprietary queens — Isabel of Castile (r. 1472–1504) and Juana of Castile and Aragon (r. 1504–, 1516–1555) — from whom the Habsburgs had inherited a global empire.¹⁰³ The queen's household had always been powerful, but its political and institutional significance increased even further during Carlos II's minority.

The unprecedented situation that the Spanish court found itself in during this period reveals both the strength of the queen's household in the Habsburg court system and its implications for Spanish queenship. In the political system of monarchy, the ruler's household, the foundation of the court system, was an expression of sovereignty. The household of the titular ruler was the glue that connected the composite monarchy — the conglomerate of territories, each with a distinct and individual political and juridical relationship with the ruler — that was the Habsburg state.¹⁰⁴ The fact that for close to a decade, the Queen's household was an acceptable substitute for the King's royal household, the foundation of the entire court system, suggests the major role Spanish queens played in a sovereignty that rested mainly on kings. In spite of several heiresses who came close to inheriting the throne, Habsburg Spain did not put a woman on the throne through her own succession rights.¹⁰⁵ Yet queens had an important role in embodying sovereignty, one that the absence of an adult king makes more visible.¹⁰⁶

Just as a queen held the body of the king during gestation, so her royal household held his body during a minority. As we have seen, there were remnants of the king's household in place during the minority, with servants and officers fulfilling tasks necessary for the proper functioning of the administrative apparatus of the court. But for all intents and purposes, particularly from the point of view of adult noblemen, who played a critical and central role in the ceremonial apparatus of kingship — the king's household had lost its juridical status. This referred to the fact that the men had lost their place in ceremonies. Mariana had found temporary solutions, such as giving grandees access and gathering the court around her and her household for special ceremonial occasions. Nevertheless, Spanish kingship — shaped in its symbolic representation by the Burgundian ceremonial, which emphasized distance, participation of the

102 Elliott, 'Philip IV', p. 174. Although the queen's household preserved Castilian traditions, over time there was a blending of the two etiquette traditions; see, Labrador Arroyo, 'From Castile to Burgundy', p. 119-20.

103 Labrador Arroyo, 'From Castile to Burgundy', pp. 123-5.

104 John H. Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans: A Study in the Decline of Spain, 1598–1640* (Cambridge, 1963), p. 10 and *Idem*, 'A Europe of Composite Monarchies', *Past & Present* 137 (1992), pp. 48-71, pp. 59-60, 64-65, 66-67.

105 Isabel Clara Eugenia (1566–1633) was heiress from 1568 to 1571; she became the titular ruler of the Spanish Netherlands; Anne of Austria (1601–1666) was heiress from birth until 1605; Maria Theresa of Austria (1638–1683) was the heiress to the Spanish throne from 1647 to 1657; Margaret of Austria (1651–1673), was the heiress from 1665 until her death in 1673; she passed on her succession rights to her daughter, Maria Antonia of Austria, who was the heiress to the Spanish throne from 1673 until her death in 1692. These women's contested succession rights of course led to the War of Spanish Succession.

106 Theresa Earenfight has made a similar point for the medieval Crown of Aragon, when discussing the long lieutenantcies (a form of regency or a governorship) of Maria of Castile (1401–1458) from 1420–3 and again 1432–58. See, Theresa Earenfight, 'Absent Kings: Queens as Political Partners in the Medieval Crown of Aragon', in Theresa Earenfight (ed.), *Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Aldershot, UK; Burlington, VT, 2005), pp. 33-51.

nobility, and splendid pageantry and sacralisation of the person of the ruler — was deeply affected during Carlos II's minority.¹⁰⁷ Carlos was present in court activities, more so as he grew up and became able to perform some of the tasks of his office and withstood the long events. But as long as he did not have his own royal household, he was unable to express a political identity independent of his mother.

In fact, during Carlos II's minority, the strength of the Queen and her household actually cast a shadow on the office of king. King or not, children were subordinate to their parents, including their mothers, and this principle clashed with the tenets of kingship, a political office that in its ideal form was exercised by adult males.¹⁰⁸ Usually this critical issue has been looked upon to understand the predicament of queen regents; Katherine Crawford has perceptibly shown how Anne of Austria benefitted from the example of her predecessor, Marie de Medici, by conscientiously 'evacuating the [political] centre' to avoid overshadowing the office of king.¹⁰⁹ Mariana, like Marie de Medici, although less violently and dramatically, paid dearly for not effectively handling the transition away from the formal aspect of power, and so did Carlos. Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio has rightfully pointed out how much Carlos II's image was eclipsed during the first fifteen years of his reign,¹¹⁰ both by Mariana's high visibility and his own failed effort, at age fourteen, to stand up to her and take control of his court. This led to a political crisis that lasted for nearly four years and led to his mother's exile, events that have been seen almost exclusively in terms of the ambition of the late King's illegitimate son, don Juan José of Austria (1629–1679), as well as opposition to Mariana and her protégé, don Fernando Valenzuela (1630–1692), the upstart she promoted as Carlos II's main advisor.¹¹¹

But losing sight of the symbolic aspects of Carlos II's kingship is a missed opportunity. Indeed, it is important to note that in 1680 the image of the King began to change from the negative myth of the *rey niño* — the basis for the more pervasive and negative notion of the *rex inutilis* — to that of an adult king fully in charge of his own court. This was a process helped by Carlos II's separation from his mother and his marriage (in 1679), a milestone of adulthood and masculinity for early modern men and kings.¹¹² I would like to suggest that the absence of the King's household during his minority played a key role in the formation of the image of an infantilized and emasculated king. There was no way to mask that the King was subordinate to his mother in ceremonies of kingship during his minority.

107 For the notion of what is Burgundian about the Burgundian ceremonial, see Paravicini, 'Court of the Dukes of Burgundy', pp. 86–9; for the Spanish-Burgundian ceremonial associated with kingship, Elliott, 'Philip IV', p. 173, particularly the famous episode when the count-duke of Olivares kissed the royal chamber-pot after the King scolded him one afternoon. Also see the lucid discussion of the Spanish-Burgundian ceremonial by Raeymaekers, *One Foot in the Palace*, pp. 41–51.

108 Mitchell, 'Habsburg Motherhood', p. 181.

109 Crawford, *Perilous Performances*, pp. 60, 79, 81, 103–4.

110 Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio Alvaríño, 'El favor real. Liberalidad del Príncipe y jerarquía de la república (1665–1700)', in Cesare Mozzarelli (ed.), *Repubblica e virtù: pensiero politico e Monarchia Cattolica fra XVI e XVII secolo* (Rome, 1995), pp. 393–453 pp. 409–10.

111 Despite the excellent revisionist histories on Carlos II's reign, the figures of don Juan José and Valenzuela, or Nithard, for that matter, continue to take center stage. See, for example, Albrecht Graf von Kalnein, *Juan José de Austria en la España de Carlos II: historia de una regencia*, translated by Carlos Potayo (Lleida, 2001); Henry Kamen, *Spain in the Later Seventeenth Century, 1665–1700* (London, 1980). In the last decade there has been a renewed interest in understanding these events from alternative perspectives, Laura Oliván Santaliestra, 'Mariana de Austria en la encrucijada política del siglo XVII', Ph.D. diss., Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2006. The recent International Seminar (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 27–28 February 2018) exclusively dedicated to Mariana, as well as the future volume based on the papers, indicates that the revisionist wave of studies continues unabated.

112 Álvarez-Ossorio Alvaríño, 'El favor real', pp. 410–12; *Idem*, 'Virtud coronada: Carlos II y la piedad de la Casa de Austria', in P. Fernández Albaladejo, José Martínez Millán and V. Pinto Crespo (eds), *Política, religión e inquisición en la España moderna. Homenaje a Joaquín Pérez Villanueva* (Madrid, 1996), pp. 29–57, p. 31.

We should consider that for seventeenth-century Spaniards, particularly those closest to the monarch, ‘Majesty was sacrosanct and must remain inviolate’.¹¹³ The organisation of the court during Carlos II’s minority upheld the position of the Queen and the women in her household, but failed to project the majesty expected of the king of Spain. For early modern monarchs, the representation of power was just as important as actual power; from this point of view the new court’s organization emphasized, rather than masked (which might have been more pragmatic) the main problem of a royal minority: the absence of a fully functioning king. The formation of the King’s household became a major milestone for the King and his court; it marked the normalisation of the body politic and brought men back to their rightful place near the King. Nevertheless, the notion of the King surrounded by women and dominated by them — particularly his mother — reverberated in the first few years of Carlos II’s rule as an emancipated king and contributed to Mariana’s exile.¹¹⁴ An analysis of the royal households during Carlos II’s minority reveals the contradictions of a political system that valued women but also maintained a sacrosanct belief in the majesty of kingship as a masculine and adult office.

Silvia Z. Mitchell

Silvia Z. Mitchell received her Ph.D. in History in 2013 from the University of Miami, where she held the McKnight Doctoral Fellowship. She is currently Assistant Professor of early modern European history at Purdue University, where she teaches courses on early modern Spain, women and gender, queens, and the military and diplomatic history of Europe. Her monograph on the regency of Queen Mariana of Austria, *Queen, Mother, and Stateswoman: Mariana of Austria and the Government of Spain*, is forthcoming with Penn State University Press in 2019.

¹¹³ Elliott, ‘Philip IV’, p. 175.

¹¹⁴ Mitchell, ‘Habsburg Motherhood’, pp. 184-6.