Women's Fashions and Politics in Seventeenth-Century Spain: The Rise and Fall of the *Guardainfante*

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Women's clothes were at the center of political debate in the Spain of Philip IV (r. 1621–65), and no garment inspired more controversy than the wide-hipped farthingale, or hoopskirt, known as the guardainfante. *Considered scandalous with its reputation for hiding illicit pregnancies, the* guardainfante *was banned in 1639. Nonetheless, the* guardainfante *became more popular than ever and turned into an enduring icon of Golden Age Spain during the reign of Philip's second queen, Mariana of Austria (1649–65). Despite the* guardainfante*'s high level of visibility, most notably in court portraits by Diego Velázquez, very little is known about the historical experiences of the women who wore it. This article demonstrates that real women really did wear the* guardainfante *in a variety of contexts outside of portraiture and the theater. In Madrid and in cities throughout the Spanish empire, women of different stations and convictions participated in the political culture of their times by making, disseminating, and debating this controversial garment.*

INTRODUCTION

IN JULY OF 1639, a remarkable sight greeted the multitude who passed through the bustling little plaza fronting the Cárcel de Corte (Court Jail), just steps away from the Plaza Mayor, in the heart of Madrid: women's hoopskirts were dangling from the balconies of the jail's dignified redbrick façade.[1]

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[1]The former Court Jail on the Plaza de la Provincia today serves as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: see Escobar, 56–60.

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In April of that year, King Philip IV (b. 1605; r. 1621–65) had issued a proclamation banning the wide hoopskirt that was known as the *guardainfante*. The garment first had appeared in the Spanish capital about five years earlier and caused a great deal of scandal and disruption, with critics of the fashion claiming that women were using the *guardainfante* to hide illicit pregnancies.[2] The 1639 ban outlawed the *guardainfante* for all women except for prostitutes in an effort to discredit the fashionable garment.[3] That summer, according to the noble court chronicler José Pellicer de Tovar's news notice for 26 July, Madrid's residents were amused "to see more than a hundred *guardainfantes* that have been taken from women and hung in shame on the balconies of the Court Jail."[4] But the crackdown on the *guardainfante* proved to be short lived. Instead of enforcing its own law, the Crown promoted and encouraged the fashion, which was worn by the king's own wives and daughters. In the decades following the ban, the *guardainfante* only grew larger in size and popularity. An anonymous *View of the Court Jail* (ca. 1670) is a testament to the ineffectiveness of the law: women wearing extremely wide hoopskirts promenade past the jail upon which *guardainfantes* once had hung (fig. 1). During the decades that it remained in fashion, from the 1630s to the 1670s, the *guardainfante* took up an enormous amount of space, literally and figuratively, in the Spanish capital and in far-flung cities from Genoa to Mexico City. From the *guardainfantes* that dangled ignominiously from the balconies of the Court Jail to the portraits of royal women that hung exalted in halls of state, this controversial fashion was at the center of politics in the Spanish empire for much of the seventeenth century.

It is impossible to know exactly what the *guardainfante* looked like — much less what it felt like to wear one — since none are known to have survived the centuries.[5] Despite the lack of material evidence, textual

[2]Carranza, fol. 22^{r}; Jiménez Patón, fols. 44^{v}–45^{r}.

[3]*Pregon en qve sv magestad manda, que ninguna muger de qualquier estado y calidad que sea pueda traer, ni traiga guardainfante, ò otro instrumẽto, ò trage semejante, excepto las mugeres que con licencia de las justicias publicamente son malas de sus personas* (Proclamation in which his majesty orders that no woman of any rank or class may wear the guardainfante, or another device, or similar costume, except for those women with a license from the authorities who openly make ill use of their bodies) (Madrid, 1639).

[4]Pellicer de Tovar, 1:35: "ver colgados más de cien Guarda-Infantes que han quitado á mugeres y puestos á la vergüenza en los balcones de la cárcel de Corte." This and all of the following translations are my own, unless otherwise noted.

[5]While there are no extant sixteenth- or seventeenth-century farthingales from Spain, there are surviving examples of the panniers that were worn across Europe in the eighteenth century, including the spectacular example measuring over 13.5 feet (4.12 meters) wide that is in the

Figure 1. Anonymous (Spanish). *The Court Jail*, ca. 1670 (detail). Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Madrid. The Bridgeman Art Library.

sources reveal some details about the *guardainfante*'s construction, while paintings demonstrate the evolving shape of the garment.[6] A *guardainfante* was a free-hanging structure (that is, it was not sewn into a skirt) that tied around the waist to extend the hip.[7] Hoops attached to each other by straps hung from the waist down to the ground; the hoops gave the skirts worn over them a stiff appearance and created a large cavity beneath the cage-like structure. This armature could be made out of any number of rigid materials, including whalebone, iron, wicker, or wood.[8] The playwright Pedro Calderón de la Barca used the hardware of the

collection of the Royal Armoury (Livrustkammaren) in Stockholm: see Descalzo Lorenzo, 2009, 77, fig. 48. I am grateful to Lena Rangström for calling the Royal Armoury pannier to my attention and for sharing her research on it with me.

[6]The eminent Spanish costume historian Carmen Bernis published a detailed description of the *guardainfante* based on the available evidence: Bernis, 1991, 54.

[7]For drawings reconstructing the appearance of the *guardainfante,* see Bandrés Oto, 46, 317.

[8]In Quiñones de Benavente's 1634 skit *El guarda-infante*, a woman corrects a fisherman who accuses her of using whalebone for her hoopskirt and informs him that ladies were using hoops of iron instead: Quiñones de Benavente, 1991, 150 (lines 88–99).

guardainfante to comic effect in his play *Guárdate de la agua mansa* (Beware of still waters, 1649), in which an unsophisticated suitor mistakes his beloved's *guardainfante* for a ladder "with lots of iron steps, and many knots to fasten it, and wires and hooks."[9] Layers of petticoats worn underneath the *guardainfante* protected a woman's body from the hoopskirt's harsh materials. Multiple layers of overskirts covered the *guardainfante*, and women used stuffing in their garments to create a rounder, softer silhouette.[10]

The English word *farthingale* is an umbrella term that can be used to describe any of the hoopskirts that were popular in early modern Spain.[11] Queen Isabella of Bourbon (b. 1602; r. 1621–44) — born Princess Elizabeth of France — wore many different kinds of farthingales over the course of her life, and her portraits illustrate the progression of styles that led to the invention of the *guardainfante*.[12] As a young princess in France, she dressed in the style popular at the court of Marie de' Medici with a wheel-shaped farthingale that tied around the waist to extend the hip, as seen in a 1611 portrait by Frans Pourbus the Younger (fig. 2).[13] The skirts covering the French farthingale were pleated and gathered at the top and fell softly to the ground. After her 1615 marriage to Prince Philip of Spain, Isabella of Bourbon adopted the traditional Spanish farthingale known as the *verdugado* (fig. 3). In contrast to the French farthingale, which created a drum shape, the *verdugado* looked like a cone with a narrow waist and wide base, thanks to a series of circular hoops of increasing size that were sewn into the skirt. The hoops gave the overskirt the appearance of a stiff, smooth surface.

The *verdugado* first had appeared at the Spanish court in the 1470s, and it remained popular in Spain well into the seventeenth century, long after women

[9]Calderón de la Barca, 167.

[10]The layers of expensive skirts and padding that women wore with the *guardainfante* are detailed in Jiménez Patón, fols. 41^{v}–42^{v}.

[11]The English word *farthingale* (which had many variant spellings in the early modern period) is derived from the Spanish *verdugado* via the French *verdugale* or *vertugalle*: *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "farthingale." For descriptions of the three styles of farthingale that were worn in early modern Spain, see the glossary in Puerta Escribano: "guardainfante," 175–76; "tontillo," 245–46; "verdugado," 287.

[12]I am immensely grateful to Iraida Rodríguez-Negrón for answering many queries about Isabella of Bourbon and for sharing photographs of unpublished portraits of the queen with me.

[13]The most recent catalogue raisonné identifies Pourbus's Uffizi portrait of a woman in a wheel farthingale as Princess Elizabeth of France: see Ducos, 237. The sitter has been on occasion identified as Elizabeth's sister-in-law, the Spanish infanta Anne of Austria (1601–66); on the confusion surrounding portraits of the two sisters-in-law, see Gaehtgens, 213, 240.

Figure 2. The French wheel farthingale, as worn by the future Queen Isabella of Bourbon. Frans Pourbus the Younger. *Princess Elizabeth of France*, 1611. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence. The Bridgeman Art Library.

in Paris and London abandoned their wheel-shaped farthingales. In the mid-1630s in Spain, the *verdugado* began to evolve into a new kind of hoopskirt that combined the hip-extending framework of the French farthingale with the hoops of the Spanish *verdugado*. This was the *guardainfante*. A rarely seen

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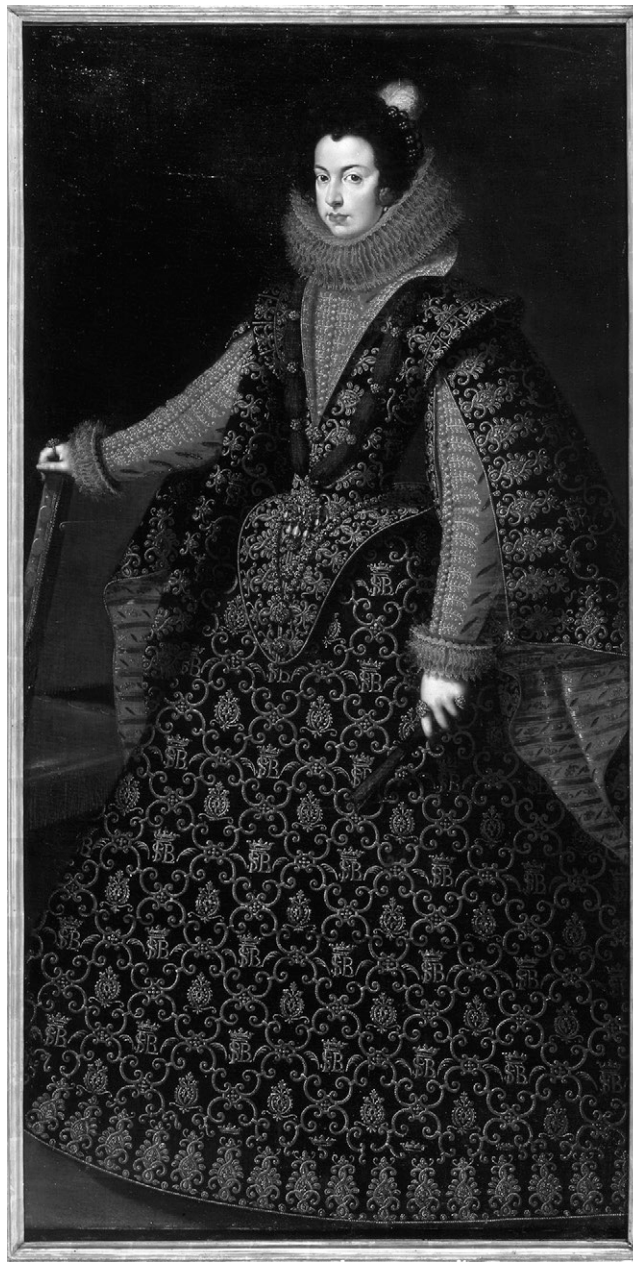

Figure 3. The Spanish *verdugado*, as worn by Queen Isabella of Bourbon, first wife of Philip IV. Anonymous (Spanish). *Queen Isabella of Bourbon*, 1621. Musée Fesch, Ajaccio, Corsica. © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY.

portrait in the collection of the Prado Museum depicts Queen Isabella of Bourbon in ca. 1641–42 wearing an early version of the *guardainfante* (fig. 4).[14] According to costume historian Carmen Bernis, "what Spanish women did was to convert the French farthingale into something much more complicated and uncomfortable, incorporating typically Spanish elements like the hoops."[15] The earliest *guardainfantes* closely resembled the *verdugado*, with a slightly expanded and more rounded hip subtly altering its conical shape. Indeed, the differences are so subtle that it is very difficult to discern the distinction between a *verdugado* and a *guardainfante* in portraits depicting Isabella of Bourbon between the late 1630s and 1644, the year of her premature death.

The differences between traditional *verdugados* and the first *guardainfantes* might appear minor today, but in the 1630s the change in style inspired an outpouring of vitriolic criticism that stemmed in part from its association with French fashion. The jurist Alonso Carranza published an extended screed against the *guardainfante* in 1636, in which he claimed that the word "guardainfante" (which roughly translates to "baby keeper") derived from the French and referred to upper-class French women's common practice of using their farthingales to hide illicit pregnancies.[16] It was typical for seventeenth-century Spanish critics to describe the *guardainfante* as a French invasion, although in reality it was a Spanish invention that never was worn in France.[17]

The *guardainfante* has been mocked and reviled by critics both Spanish and foreign ever since its invention in the 1630s up until the present day. In the seventeenth century, critics denounced the *guardainfante* as a scandalous and indecent garment that ruined the reputations of women who wore it and corrupted society at large. Golden Age fiction writers used the *guardainfante* for sight gags (women stuck in doorframes) and as the inspiration for devious plots (women hiding guilty secrets beneath their skirts) in countless short stories, skits, plays, and poems.[18] To early modern English and French

[14]The date of ca. 1641–42 comes from Bernis, 2004, 280–81. Prado portrait inventory no. P.1281, previously inventoried as an unidentified woman in black (P.2903), currently is identified as an anonymous portrait of Isabella of Bourbon by a student of Velázquez: see Espinós et al., 55, cat. 1281; cf. *Museo del Prado: Inventario general de pinturas*, 1:759, cat. 2903.

[15]Bernis, 1991, 52, 54: "Lo que hicieron las españolas fue convertir el guardainfante francés en algo mucho más complicado y más incómodo, incorporándole elementos típicamente españoles como los aros."

[16]Carranza, fol. 22[r].

[17]It has been hypothesized that the French wheel farthingale was brought to Spain by actresses in traveling French troops who wore the out-of-date style on stage: see Bernis, 2004, 277–78.

[18]For bibliographies on Golden Age literature featuring the *guardainfante*, see Suárez Miramón, 453–54n3; González Cañal, 79–85.

Figure 4. An early example of a *guardainfante*. Anonymous (Spanish). *Queen Isabella of Bourbon*, ca. 1641–42. © Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.

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observers of the style, the "monstrous" *guardainfante* was a Spanish peculiarity that shored up stereotypes of Spain as a retrograde and very foreign country.[19]

The *guardainfante*'s negative reputation proved remarkably durable over the centuries. Some 300 years after the style had reached its height, the Spanish historian José Deleito y Piñuela called the *guardainfante* a "ridiculous and pernicious fashion," while French historian Marcelin Defourneaux described the farthingale's silhouette as "grotesque."[20] While the language used to describe the *guardainfante* has become less inflammatory in recent decades (in a 1999 exhibition catalogue, Jonathan Brown evenhandedly defined the "ample *guardainfante*" as being "a spectacular costume which was in fashion at the Spanish court during the 1630s to the 1660s"[21]), many scholars today continue to repeat unquestioningly the seventeenth-century charge that women used their *guardainfantes* to hide shameful pregnancies.[22] While early modern critics of the Spanish farthingale feared that women were using it to subvert male authority, scholars in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have been more likely to see it as a misogynistic tool that men used to confine women's bodies and control their sexuality. In the grand narrative of costume history, the *guardainfante* typically is characterized as a repressive garment, like the corset, that women cast off with the so-called democratization of fashion in the twentieth century.[23]

Conventional accounts of the *guardainfante* have relied upon a small, well-known group of sources produced by male elites at the court: moralizing polemics, sumptuary laws, royal portraits, and literary fiction (including theatrical works). Such sources reveal very little about women's actual experiences with the *guardainfante*; indeed, they do not even prove that women really wore the fashion except when sitting for portraits or performing on the stage. But a more diverse body of evidence does exist that makes it

[19]"Monstrous" was a word used to describe the *guardainfante* by Frenchwoman Madame de Motteville in 1660 and by Englishman John Evelyn in 1662: see Motteville quoted in Zanger, 51; Evelyn, 2:145.

[20]Deleito y Piñuela, 154: "la ridícula y perniciosa moda"; Defourneaux, 157.

[21]Brown is describing the costume worn by Mariana of Austria in Diego Velázquez's portrait of ca. 1652 at the Prado Museum. Brown, 1999, 143; translated in Brown, 2008, 263.

[22]Cruz de Amenábar, 49, writes that complaints against the *guardainfante* were justified, since the garment permitted women to conceal illegitimate pregnancies beneath them; see also Martín, 104n9: "We should also remember that the early modern *guardainfante* (farthingale), as its name indicates, was a clothing apparatus that could conceal pregnancy."

[23]For example, the permanent exhibit at the Barcelona Costume Museum (Museu Tèxtil i d'Indumentaria) presents costume history as a linear movement toward the liberation of the body and the rise of "democratic" body-hugging fashions in the late twentieth century. See Bastardes and Ventosa, n.p.

possible to investigate the *guardainfante* beyond the realm of image and representation. Other controversial Baroque fashions were inherently ephemeral and thus left behind little evidence of their existence; such is the case with *tapadas* (women covering their faces with their mantles) and the men's hairstyles known as *copetes* and *guedejas* (tufts and curled locks), two trends that were outlawed, like the *guardainfante*, in the spring of 1639.[24] But the *guardainfante* was a concrete material object that has left traceable footprints in the historical record. These sources include Inquisition trials, letters and poems written by women, artisan account records, and lesser-known portraits that are not of sufficient quality to hang on museum walls but that are of historical interest nonetheless. This expanded body of evidence reinserts women's voices and experiences into the historical narrative about the *guardainfante* and forces a reevaluation of long-standing assumptions. The history of the *guardainfante* proves to have striking parallels to polemical women's fashions from other times and places, most notably the corset in Europe and foot-binding in China. In their important revisionist histories of corsets and foot-binding, Valerie Steele and Dorothy Ko found that women played a significant role in creating and perpetuating the fashions that confined them, and that they did not have universally negative experiences with them.[25] The same can be said of the Spanish *guardainfante*.

This article seeks to offer a new history of the *guardainfante* that accounts for the variety of experiences that real women had with it. The focus here is on the Spanish court and capital of Madrid, with brief excursions to other European and Latin American cities. This investigation proceeds chronologically, beginning in the 1630s with the invention of the *guardainfante* and the initial outburst of hostile reactions that it engendered. The ban of 1639 was followed by a debate about its enforcement, in which women voiced strong opinions. The outlawed style rose to the pinnacle of its popularity during the reign of Queen Mariana of Austria (1649–65), and declined only after Philip IV's death in 1665. But the story does not end there, for the *guardainfante* proved to be stubbornly persistent and reappeared in the later eighteenth century when the pannier — known as the *tontillo* in Spain — came into style at the courts of Europe and remained in fashion until the French

[24]The sumptuary laws seeking to control women's use of their veils and men's hairstyles were published respectively as the *Prematica en qve . . . ninguna muger ande tapada*, and the *Pregon en qve . . . ningun hombre pueda traer guedejas ni copete*. On *tapadas*, see Bass and Wunder; on *copetes* and *guedejas*, see González Cañal, 86–93.

[25]See Steele; Ko.

Revolution.[26] While every effort is made here to emphasize women's contributions to the fashion, it is important to acknowledge the impossibility of determining how much choice women actually had in wearing the *guardainfante*. In many ways it is most difficult of all to know what role was played by the royal women who are the best-known models of the style, since the private, personal experiences of these individuals were so thoroughly subsumed to the public, political exigencies of the state. While the sources indicate that at least some seventeenth-century Spanish women were making strategic decisions about their clothing, presumably their male relatives were involved in purchasing and permitting what they wore. What is certain is that women played a crucial role in making, disseminating, and debating the *guardainfante*, which inspired such passionate political debate in seventeenth-century Spain.

HOSTILE REACTIONS AGAINST THE NEW FASHION, 1634–39

The origins of the *guardainfante* are obscure, but the backlash against it is well documented: the new fashion evoked a hostile, even violent, response in print, on stage, in the pulpits, and in the streets of Madrid in the 1630s.[27] There was probably some political motivation behind this negative reaction, for the new style, which was considered to be French in origin, first appeared at a time when Spain was at war with France.[28] But even more relevant was the war between the sexes, for critics of the *guardainfante* saw it as a weapon that women were using to subvert male authority. The shape and size of the *guardainfante* contributed to this perception: its circumference took up a great deal of space, gave women control over a wide perimeter around their own bodies, and kept men at arm's length. The cavernous space beneath its stiff hoops provoked suspicions that women were using their hoopskirts to hide things from men. One male critic

[26]Costume historians differ in their accounts of how the pannier emerged in France, although they agree that the eighteenth-century French pannier was separate and distinct from the *guardainfante* and did not evolve directly out of the seventeenth-century Spanish style. According to Diana De Marly, the French pannier derived from a very wide British farthingale style that first appeared around 1708: see De Marly, 111. In contrast, Madeleine Delpierre writes that the eighteenth-century French hoopskirt first appeared in ca. 1718 when a hoop sewn into the bottom of a skirt gave it a subtle flare at the hem, and that this hoopskirt grew over the decades, acquired an oval shape, and eventually divided into the two separate cages of the wide, flat pannier style around 1750: see Delpierre, 7–16.

[27]For an overview of polemical writings against early modern Spanish women's fashions in general, see Vigil, 172–94.

[28]Oliván Santaliestra, 2012, 26–27.

called the *guardainfante* a "fools-trap," something that women used to trick men and make them look foolish.[29] Another critic compared women wearing *guardainfantes* to sirens or harpies — woman on top, monster on bottom — with the power to seduce men and destroy them.[30]

The critics' gravest concern was that women were using their *guardainfantes* to conceal pregnancies resulting from sexual liaisons out of wedlock. This is an accusation that has been levied against all kinds of hoopskirts in different times and places, from the Spanish *verdugado* in the late 1400s to the English hoop petticoat in the eighteenth century.[31] The association between the *guardainfante* and pregnancy has been especially pervasive and enduring, even though there is no historical evidence to support this claim, and despite portraiture revealing that the *guardainfante* was worn with a corseted bodice with a very narrow waist that was extremely ill suited to conceal a belly swollen with child. The myth of the *guardainfante* as a device that women used to hide pregnancies has its origins in seventeenth-century polemical literature and works of fiction. This commonplace first appeared in a 1635 treatise against "abuses" in cosmetics, shoes, hairpieces, *guardainfantes*, and other sundry items by the Dominican author Tomás Ramón (1569–1640). The author claimed that any woman wearing a *guardainfante* would fall under suspicion and have her reputation tarnished by the garment, since even children knew that the skirt was used to hide shameful pregnancies.[32]

The following year, Alonso Carranza published his "discourse against evil dresses and lascivious adornments," in which he explained that the *guardainfante* could hide pregnancies because "the girth of this inflated dress, which begins with great proportion from the waist, gives them the opportunity to go out nine and ten months pregnant without it being noticeable."[33] Alonso de Castillo Solórzano used the *guardainfante*'s reputation for hiding pregnancies as a plot

[29]Ramón, unpaginated index, "Gvardainfantes, llamanse engaña bobos."

[30]Jiménez Patón, fol. 52[r].

[31]In his 1477 *Tratado sobre la demasía en vestir y calzar, comer y beber* (Treatise on excess in dress and footwear, food and drink), Fray Hernando de Talavera claimed that the *verdugado* was used to hide pregnancies: quoted in Jiménez Patón, fol. 46[r]. The *verdugado* also was denounced by sixteenth-century authors in France and England who claimed that this Spanish farthingale, whose popularity extended throughout Europe, was being used as an instrument for hiding pregnancies: see, for example, *Le Blason des Basquines et Vertugalles* (Lyons, 1563), cited in Hughes, 150, and in Ribeiro, 70–71; and Stephen Gosson's *Quips for Vpstart, Newfangled Gentlewomen* (London, 1595), quoted in Vincent, 167. On criticisms levied against the eighteenth-century English hoopskirt, see Chrisman, 21.

[32]Ramón, 269.

[33]Carranza, unpaginated front matter: "Discvrso contra malos trages y adornos lascivos"; ibid., fol. 22[r]: "lo ancho y pomposo del trage, que comiença con grã desproporcion desde la cintura, les presta comodidad para andar embaraçadas nueue y diez meses, sin q̃ desto puedã ser notadas."

point in his short story "El disfrazado" ("The Disguised," 1649), in which Doña Clara, seduced with false promises of marriage, becomes pregnant and is able to hide her shameful condition from her older brother thanks to the new fashion. As the unfortunate young woman explains, "this new use of the *guardainfante* taken from France allowed me to conceal my error."[34]

Critics who accused women of using their *guardainfantes* to incubate bastard children also made the seemingly contradictory claim that the farthingale impeded women from becoming pregnant (by their husbands) and caused miscarriages (of legitimate pregnancies).[35] Carranza argued that *guardainfantes* "are detrimental to reproduction" for many reasons. First of all, women wearing the garment missed out on physical exercise, which would lead to constipation and sterility. In addition, the wide opening at the bottom of the hoopskirt admitted too much cold air into the reproductive organs, while the hot and heavy layers of skirts worn over it led to a dry, overheated uterus. Should conception occur under such inhospitable conditions, the weight of a woman's skirts would put so much pressure on the hips and kidneys that they would cause spontaneous abortions.[36] In *Reforma de trages* (The reform of dress, 1638), the learned Bartolomé Jiménez Patón likewise claimed that *guardainfantes* covered up illicit pregnancies (and thus encouraged sexual activity out of wedlock) and caused miscarriages of legitimate ones.[37] Arias Gonzalo published the sole treatise speaking out in defense of the *guardainfante* in the 1630s, the *Memorial en defensa de las mvgeres de España, y de los vestidos, y adornos de que vsan* (Memorial in defense of the women of Spain and of the dresses and adornments that they use, 1636), but he excused himself from the debate over reproduction by writing that it was inappropriate for jurists to get involved in issues that rightfully belonged to fathers in consultation with medical doctors.[38]

The confusing and contradictory discourse about the *guardainfante* and reproduction reflects an anxiety that women who wore the garment were not fulfilling their primary duty, which was to provide legitimate heirs of unquestionable parentage. This was only one of the many ways that the *guardainfante* seemed to subvert traditional values. In the 1630s, the expectations for female comportment

[34]Castillo de Solórzano, 251: "este nuevo uso de guarda infante, tomado de Francia, me fué propicio para encubrir mi defecto."

[35]Fray Hernando de Talavera had made similar claims against the *verdugado* and went so far as to write that pregnant women who wore those conical skirts and miscarried were guilty of voluntary homicide: Jiménez Patón, fol. 41^{v}.

[36]Carranza, fols. 20^{r}–21^{r}: "Son perivdiciales a la generacion." On the discourse of reproduction and miscarriage, see Velasco, 72–76.

[37]Jiménez Patón, fols. 6^{r}, 45^{r}.

[38]Gonzalo, fol. 42^{v}.

had changed little from the ideals that had been outlined in Juan Luis Vives's *De Institutione Feminae Christianae* (Education of a christian woman, 1523) and Luis de León's *La perfecta casada* (The perfect wife, 1583), conduct manuals for women that were often cited by critics of the *guardainfante*. According to those sixteenth-century authors, the ideal woman was silent and agreeable. She worked hard inside the home to fulfill her domestic chores, and she avoided going out in public whenever possible. She dressed cleanly but modestly and shunned cosmetics and opulent attire, although a married woman might have to make up her face and dress more lavishly if this was what her husband wanted.[39] A woman who wore a *guardainfante* — which required skirts made of many yards of expensive fabric to cover it — was guilty of paying too much attention to her appearance and indulging in what Vives called "competition in adornment," which had grave repercussions.[40] According to this train of thought, a woman who dressed so competitively would want to leave the home and be seen in public, which would compromise her reputation and bring shame upon her household.

The impact that the *guardainfante* had on a woman's ability to move about freely was a major point of discussion among the garment's critics and defenders. All agreed that the *guardainfante* restricted women's movements, although they disagreed on whether this was a good or a bad thing. Alonso Carranza, author of the *Discourse against Evil Dresses and Lascivious Adornments*, was concerned that upper-class women who wore *guardainfantes* would not fulfill their domestic duties because they could not fit into the smaller rooms of the house (closets and servants' quarters) and thus were restricted to living lives of leisure in the grand rooms of their homes (bedrooms and the women's quarters known as the *estrado*). The sedentary lifestyle imposed upon them by the large hoopskirt was dangerous to these women's health, Carranza argued.[41] In his rebuttal of Carranza, Arias Gonzalo agreed that, yes, the *guardainfante* restricted women's movements, but he argued that this was actually a benefit of the garment. "No nation, much less Spain, has allowed . . . for women to be taught to jump, run, and fight like men, which was only permitted to the infamous gladiatrices," Gonzalo explained. "And thus it is better for them to wear such a heavy and cumbersome garment, so that they can walk less and run not at all," he concluded.[42] The Englishman Richard Lassels (ca. 1603–68), a Catholic priest who observed the *guardainfante* fashion in Genoa,

[39]Vives, 94–109; León, 302–28.

[40]Vives, 103.

[41]Carranza, fols. 15^{r}–20^{r}.

[42]Gonzalo, fol. 50^{r}: "porq̃ ninguna de las naciones, y menos España, ha admitido . . . de que se enseñassen las mugeres a saltar, correr, y pelear como los hombres: q̃ esto solo se les permitio a las infames gladiatoras . . . y assi es mejor que traigan habito tan pesado, y embaraçoso, que puedan andar menos, y correr nada."

poked fun at the spectacle of women struggling to fit into carriages and navigate the city's narrow streets in their wide farthingales. In his assessment, the attention-getting garment was to the husbands' benefit, for "if all this Bulk of Clothes, which make the women here look like *Haycocks* with *armes* and *heads*, be allowed them by their wise husbands, to render them more visible, and less able to go privately into any suspected houses, it's good policy: otherwise, most certain it is, that the *wives gownes* cheat horribly the *Husbands breeches* of almost all the stuff."[43]

While critics debated the pros and cons of the *guardainfante*'s incommodiousness, playwrights appropriated the new hoopskirt as a comedic prop. An *entremés* (intermission piece) by Luis Quiñones de Benavente called *El guarda-infante* reflects the strong hostility and Carnivalesque violence that characterized male responses to the *guardainfante* in the mid-1630s.[44] This skit, first performed in Madrid in the fall of 1634, starred the actress Josefa Román playing a character of the same name who was a hoopskirted harpy, a quarrelsome and sharp-tongued woman wearing an exaggeratedly large *guardainfante*.[45] The slapstick skit also featured the popular comic actor Juan Rana in the role of a country-bumpkin mayor. In the opening scene, Juan Rana has just returned from a trip out of town to discover that a woman named Beatricilla has stolen his mayoral office (symbolized by a phallic staff, or *vara*) during his absence. Juan Rana vows to take revenge on all women "walking around so wide" in their *guardainfantes*.[46] "Now women do not fit in the world," the mayor sings in unison with

[43]Lassels, 97 (all italics in quotations from this source are found in the original). Elsewhere in his *Voyage of Italy*, Lassels expressed his support for garments that restricted women's movement; of the high-soled cork shoes (*chopines*) that he saw women wearing in Venice, Lassels wrote: "I perceived that it was good policy, and a pretty ingenious way either to clog women absolutly at home (as the Egyptians kept their wives at home by allowing them no shooes at all) by such heavy shooes, or at least to make them not able to go either farre, or alone, or invisibly": Lassels quoted in Chaney, 37.

[44]Peter E. Thompson has offered a very different interpretation of Quiñones de Benavente's skit, which he argues promoted a "pro-woman message" by criticizing the moralists who attacked female fashions: see Thompson, 2010, 338, 348.

[45]On the date of the first performance of Quiñones de Benavente's *entremés* about the *guardainfante*, see Bergman, 49. This was the first of two skits by the author; the second one mirrors the first, but instead of focusing on the woman's farthingale it is a send up of contemporary male fashions in which Josefa Román abandons her *guardainfante* for male clothing, cross-dressing in order to impersonate Juan Rana; he, in turn, plays the role of the effeminate fashionable gallant dressed in an enormous felt hat and ridiculous *guedejas* (hairpieces, which were banned along with the *guardainfante* in April of 1639). Both parts are available in side-by-side Spanish-English translations in Thompson, 2009, 21–61.

[46]Quiñones de Benavente, 1991, 145 (line 20): "andando todas tan anchas."

a policeman, the two men expressing their fear that women wearing *guardainfantes* are encroaching on public space and usurping their authority.[47]

The men in Quiñones de Benavente's skit enact their revenge upon Josefa Román, who is arrested for blocking traffic in the public plaza with her enormous *guardainfante*. Josefa first appears before the audience as a prisoner when she is dragged on stage by a thick rope tied around her waist. Then she is manhandled and mocked by a series of men who take turns stripping away the elements of her costume, including her hoops, straw padding, and layers of skirts. Josefa Román remains defiant throughout her humiliation: "When you undress the women, mayor," she taunts Juan Rana, "your purse will pay when you have to dress them again."[48] In her *guardainfante*, Josefa Román caused a public commotion and threatened to undermine men's authority. But in the end she is stripped and shamed and left on stage in her undergarments; social order is restored as the men prove that they still wear the pants.

According to an anonymous court chronicler, actual women in the streets of Madrid suffered harassment similar to that inflicted upon the actress Josefa Román on the stage: "Young men go running after women who wear the *guardainfantes*, whistling at them like cows, and subjecting them to insufferable jeers and taunts," the chronicler reported.[49] This harassment of women wearing *guardainfantes* is reminiscent of the charivari, or *cencerrada* as it was known in Spain, which was the ritual humiliation — typically carried out by young unmarried men — of adulterous wives, cuckolded spouses, and other individuals who violated gender norms in early modern Europe.[50] According to the chronicler, the attacks on women wearing *guardainfantes* escalated and led to bloodshed in October of 1636, when pages and husbands defending *guardainfante*-wearing women killed two of

[47]Ibid., 148 (line 60): "ya no caben las hembras dentro del mundo."

[48]Ibid., 153 (lines 152–53): "Pues desnuda a las hembras, alcalde, / volviendo a vestirlas su bolsa lo pague."

[49]Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE), MSS/18447, Anon., *Noticias de Madrid*, fol. 23^{r}: "van los muchachos corriendo à las Mugeres que llevan Guardainfantes, como à Bacas, silvandolas, y haciendo befas, y burlas mui pesadas." These anonymous manuscript *noticias* have been published in Rodríguez Villa, 51.

[50]See Natalie Zemon Davis's classic article, "The Reasons of Misrule," which pays particular attention to the role that young men played in the French charivari. On the charivari in Spain, see Caro Baroja, 191–226; on the context of ritual violence in Madrid, see Río Barredo, esp. 128–29 on the *cencerrada*. The Spanish term *cencerrada* is derived from the clanging *cencerro* (cowbell) used in its noisy processions, as explained by Caro Baroja, 191–95. Cows and cowbells are a recurring motif in descriptions of attacks on women in *guardainfantes*: Josefa Román is obliquely called a cow in Quiñones de Benavente's *El guarda-infante* skit (Quiñones de Benavente, 1991, 147 [line 42]), and, as previously noted, the anonymous court chronicler reported that women in Madrid were chased and whistled at "like cows" ("como à Bacas").

their molesters. The Crown responded to the incident by posting mounted guards in the streets to contain the violence.[51]

There was a great deal of public pressure on King Philip IV to outlaw the *guardainfante*, which was causing so much trouble. According to the Jesuit Sebastián González, a royal proclamation against the garment was issued on 12 October 1636,[52] but the law was not enforced until the publication of a new sumptuary law on 13 April 1639. In the interim, critics — including the king's own preacher, the Jesuit Francisco Aguado — continued to issue harsh criticisms against the *guardainfante*, and women continued to wear it.[53]

THE *GUARDAINFANTE* ON TRIAL: THE INQUISITION CASE OF MARÍA DE LA ENCARNACIÓN, SPRING OF 1639

A woman who publicly wore a *guardainfante* in Madrid attracted attention and exposed herself to suspicion and criticism. One such woman was María de Legarda, the wife of one of the king's mounted guards. María claimed to be a holy woman, or *beata*, and she went by the name María de la Encarnación (Mary of the Incarnation).[54] Unlike cloistered nuns, *beatas* like María de la Encarnación lived in the outside world and could be married. María had religious visions and went into raptures whenever she heard Mass, took communion, or saw an image of Christ, and she acquired a popular following in Madrid. In the spring of 1639, she went on trial before the Spanish Inquisition for "false revelations and other frauds."[55] She also was accused of having an inappropriate relationship with her confessor, who frequently ate dinner at her house. Twenty-eight years old at the time, María was a striking raven-haired woman "of attractive appearance and dishonest dress," in the words

[51]BNE, MSS/18447, Anon., *Noticias de Madrid*, fol. 23^{r}.

[52]Sebastián González to Father Rafael Pereyra (Madrid, 13 October 1636), in Gayangos, 13:514.

[53]Sebastián González to Father Rafael Pereyra (Madrid, 23 May 1637), in Gayangos, 14:127–28.

[54]I am very grateful to Katrina Olds for bringing the case of María de la Encarnación to my attention and for sharing her archival notes, which led me to the original trial records at the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid. Andrew Keitt, who has published on the case of María de la Encarnación among other *beatas* (Keitt, 87–113), very helpfully responded to queries from the archive, while Jodi Bilinkoff generously shared her research on holy women, which helped to contextualize this case.

[55]Archivo Histórico Nacional (AHN), Toledo Inquisition, Inq. leg. 104, exp. 2, unfoliated front matter: "por fingir revelaciones y otros embustes."

of Inquisitor Juan Adán de la Parra, who prosecuted her case.[56] María's "dishonest dress" included a *guardainfante*, which featured prominently in her Inquisition files. When María de la Encarnación went on trial, her *guardainfante* was used against her. The extensive documentation gathered by the Inquisition in the course of her two trials (1639–41 and 1648–49) offers valuable insights into the experience of a woman who wore the *guardainfante* and reveals how the garment shaped her neighbors' and the ecclesiastical authorities' perceptions of her.

María de la Encarnación's appearance had attracted attention and criticism from Church authorities even before her first Inquisition trial. According to a thirty-four-year-old priest named Juan de la Fuente, other priests were gossiping about her, "saying that it cannot be good to wear such finery and *guardainfantes* with such sanctitude and to take communion every single day."[57] Another priest testified that María was refused communion at the church of the Hospital del Buen Suceso until she stopped causing scenes and changed her language, behavior, and clothing — specifically her *guardainfante*.[58] A Jesuit named Juan de Eusebio testified that he had spoken with María's confessor about the need for her to give up the hoopskirt.[59] To these men of the church, the *guardainfante* called into question María's claims to be a *beata*, for such a religious woman was expected to dress with exceptional modesty. Back in 1509, another *beata* named María de Santo Domingo (ca. 1485–ca. 1524) had come under scrutiny for wearing colorful skirts, a coral necklace, and a French hat.[60] A *guardainfante* brought suspicion upon any woman who wore it, but a *beata* — who always ran the risk of being accused of fakery or sorcery — was especially vulnerable to public scrutiny of her appearance.

Inquisitors asked witnesses "what kind of clothes María Legarda wears both in and outside of the home," and in response they delivered detailed descriptions of her dress and grooming.[61] According to this testimony, María had a reputation

[56]AHN, Toledo Inquisition, Inq. leg. 104, exp. 2, unfoliated front matter: "de buen pareçer [y] traje deshonesto."

[57]Ibid., Witness #29 (6 April 1639), n.p.: "diciendo q[ue] no podia ser bueno traer galas y guardainfantes con tanta santidad y comulg[a]r cada día."

[58]Ibid., Witness #3 (17 Feb. 1639), n.p.

[59]Ibid., Witness #25 (30 March 1639), n.p.

[60]The case of María de Santo Domingo, who was investigated by the Dominican order for charges of false revelations and being overly familiar with her confessor, is strikingly similar to that of María de la Encarnación. María de Santo Domingo was found not guilty despite her fancy dress. See Bilinkoff, 26.

[61]AHN, Toledo Inquisition, Inq. leg. 103, exp. 5, 2^{v}: "Preg[unta]da q[ue] forms de traje trae la d[ic]ha M[ará]a legarda assi en casa como fuera de ella."

Figure 5. Diego Velázquez. *Lady with a Fan*, ca. 1640. Wallace Collection, London. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

for being quite preoccupied with her appearance, always carefully made up and dressed very fancily, whether she was going out or staying at home. Her signature style was the large *guardainfante* that she wore everywhere. Witnesses emphasized the size of María's hoopskirt: "She goes out in a *guardainfante* that is not small," a seventy-five-year-old Madrid native named Antonio de Alcocer reported.[62] María wore all of the latest fashions along with her *guardainfante*, much like the unidentified woman whom Diego Velázquez depicted in his famous portrait known as *Lady with a Fan*, which is usually dated to around 1640 (fig. 5). While some scholars have claimed that the *Lady with*

[62]AHN, Toledo Inquisition, Inq. leg. 104, exp. 2, Witness #8 (4 March 1639), n.p.: "anda con guardainfante que no es pequeño."

a Fan, with her lowered neckline and farthingale, is dressed in French costume, Amalia Descalzo Lorenzo has argued convincingly that Velázquez's anonymous subject is in fact dressed in the Spanish style.[63] The *Lady with a Fan* wears an early version of the *guardainfante*, with a gold crucifix resting on her padded hip. Like Velázquez's seductive subject, María de la Encarnación wore her *guardainfante* with the low-cut, tightly fitted bodice that was known as an *escotado*. The bodice and skirt worn by the *Lady with a Fan* are dark brown; María de la Encarnación's were black. María wore a fine silk mantle over her hair but left much of it uncovered to reveal a forelock styled on her temple. She wore choker necklaces made of pearls and coral, and jet rings that set off her white hands. Her outermost skirts were richly trimmed with decorations; beneath them she wore layers of colorful petticoats, flashes of which could be seen when she walked. On her feet, high-soled black platform shoes called *chapines* (known as *chopines* in Italy) were decorated with silver studs.

The witnesses who testified about María's appearance characterized her as a woman who was proud and profane, and they described her *guardainfante* as an example of her immodesty and indulgence (along with her tendency to drink too much wine). "She seemed very bad to me," a woman named Doña Ángela de Llote y Ribera testified during María's second trial, "for being arrogant and immodest."[64] But there was one witness who came to María's defense. María de Ogeda, the forty-year-old wife of a barber surgeon, testified that the accused seemed to her to be a very spiritual person free of scandal or vice. As proof of this, she offered that she had seen María de la Encarnación wearing a cilice — the spiked metal band that devout Catholics wore as an instrument of self-mortification — beneath her *guardainfante*.[65] This witness saw no contradiction in wearing the penitential cilice with the fashionable hoopskirt, an opinion that directly contradicted the churchmen who claimed that the *guardainfante* was incompatible with religion.[66]

[63]Bandrés Oto, 282, describes the *Lady with a Fan*'s farthingale as French; Veliz, 80–84, claims that the anonymous sitter's décolleté helps identify her as French. Descalzo Lorenzo, 2007, 438, identifies the sitter's costume as Spanish and suggests that the picture likely dates to 1645–52 based on the appearance of the *guardainfante*.

[64]AHN, Toledo Inquisition, Inq. leg. 103, exp. 5, fol. 13r: "pareçio a esta mui mala por ser la d[ich]a beata mug[e]r soberuia y de poca humildad."

[65]AHN, Toledo Inquisition, Inq. leg. 104, exp. 2, Witness #7 (5 March 1639), n.p.

[66]My conclusion that María de Ogeda and María de la Encarnación likely held values that differed from and even contradicted those of ecclesiastical authorities and moralists follows Scott Taylor's arguments about working-class women's complex codes of honor: see Taylor, 157–93.

When asked by the Inquisitors why she dressed in a *guardainfante* with party clothes, *chapines*, and her hair uncovered, María de la Encarnación "responded that it was to the liking of her husband, because he liked his wife to be very elegant."[67] This was a strong argument, for Church authorities generally agreed with Saint Thomas Aquinas that married women should dress to please their husbands in order to keep their men faithful.[68] In 1635, the Jesuit Bernardo de Villegas wrote somewhat peevishly that a married woman could indeed dress up and wear makeup if her husband was one of those "men so stupid that they like such tricks and enjoy being fooled by false beauty." "But a woman devoted to Christ had no excuse," he insisted, "because her Husband is only content with the beauty of her soul, and desires that she forget that of her body."[69] As a married *beata*, María de la Encarnación was in an impossible position: she could not dress to please both her husband and the Church. In any case, the profile of María de la Encarnación that emerges from her thick Inquisition files suggests that she was probably dressing, at least to some degree, to please herself. María evidently craved attention, and she courted public scandal with her confessor, which made her husband look like a cuckold. If María de la Encarnación wanted to be seen and heard, then the *guardainfante* was a means to those ends, for by wearing a large hoopskirt this small-framed woman attracted a great deal of attention in the bustling court city of Madrid.

The timing of María's trial raises the possibility that her notorious hoopskirt may have played a role in bringing her to the attention of the Inquisition. Witness testimony was gathered in February, March, and April of 1639, which was precisely when tensions over the *guardainfante* had reached a crescendo in Madrid. While witnesses were delivering their testimony about María de la Encarnación's ostentatious appearance, rumors were swirling around the court capital that the king finally was about to issue a ban on the hoopskirt. On 29 March a Jesuit court observer wrote: "Every day the arrival is awaited of some royal decrees that already have been resolved, which among other things include the reform of clothing, especially of women, who will have their *guardainfantes*

[67]María de Legarda's response as repeated in the testimony of witness Doña Isabel Correa, AHN, Toledo Inquisition, Inq. leg. 103, exp. 5, Witness #3 (26 Oct. 1648), fol. 7^{v}: "auia Respondido era gusto de su esposo porq[ue] queria q[ue] sus esposas fuesen mui aseada."

[68]See Kovesi Killerby, 258. Citing Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas, Arias Gonzalo argued that a woman sinned more by paying too little than too much attention to her appearance, for this would cause her husband to stray: see Gonzalo, fol. 55^{r}.

[69]Villegas, 424: "hombres tan necios, que se pagan de semejantes embustes, y gustan de ser engañados con la fingida hermosura. . . . Pero vna esposa de Christo no tiene escusa; porque su Esposo contento con sola la hermosura del alma, desea que se oluide de la del cuerpo."

taken away."[70] María de la Encarnación's Inquisition trial was caught up in the controversy over the *guardainfante*, and the garment helped build the Holy Office's case against her. She was found guilty and sentenced to exile from Madrid for four years.[71] After her first trial and sentence to exile by the Spanish Inquisition, María returned to Madrid where she was once again tried and convicted by the Spanish Inquisition in 1648, now approaching forty years old and still wearing her *guardainfante*.[72]

MAKING AND BREAKING THE LAW: THE *GUARDAINFANTE* BAN AND ITS AFTERMATH, 1639–49

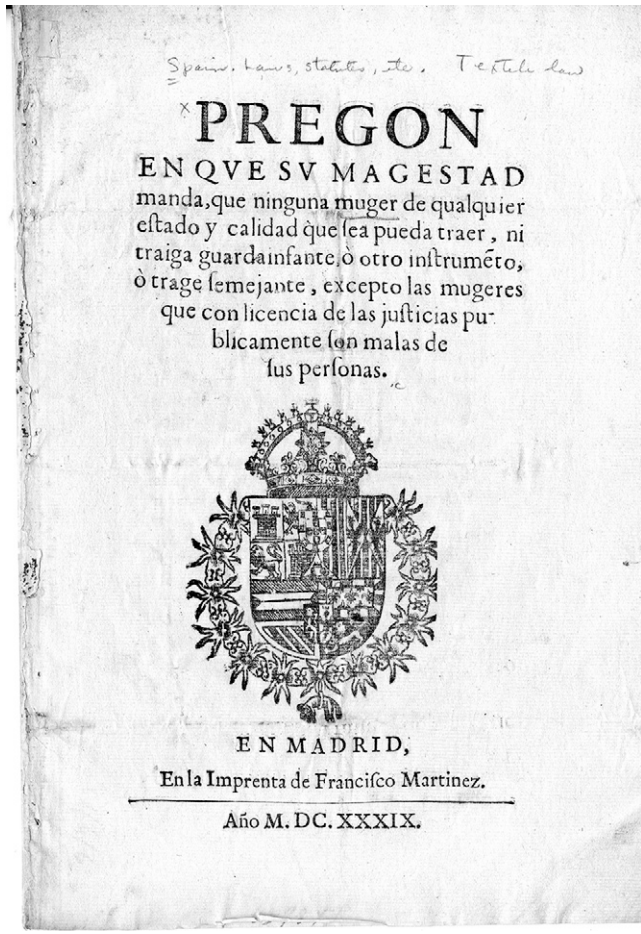
At three o'clock on the afternoon of 13 April 1639, King Philip IV's much-anticipated law forbidding the *guardainfante* to all but prostitutes was announced in Madrid to the accompaniment of trumpets and drums: "The King our Lord orders that no woman of any rank or class may wear the *guardainfante*, or another device, or similar costume, except for those women with a license from the authorities who openly make ill use of their bodies" (fig. 6).[73] The ban on the *guardainfante* forbade any skirt measuring over eight *varas* (6.68 meters, or 7.3 yards) in diameter in an effort to stop women from subverting the law by using some other kind of invention to widen their skirts. The decree also banned the low-cut bodice known as the *escotado*, which was typically worn with the *guardainfante*. A woman caught violating the new law would be charged a fine and would have her offending garments confiscated; a second offense would result in double the fine plus exile from the court. The tailors who made the garments were treated more harshly: their fines were twice

[70]Sebastián González to Father Rafael Pereyra (Madrid, 29 March 1639), in Gayangos, 15:205: "Cada dia se aguarda salgan unas prematicas que están ya determinadas, y entre otras hay reformacion en los trajes, especialmente de las mujeres, á quien quitan los guarda-infantes."

[71]Keitt, 111–12.

[72]Ibid., 112. María de la Encarnación's second trial took place in 1648–49 and included extensive witness testimony about her clothes, especially her *guardainfante*: AHN, Toledo Inquisition, Inq. leg. 103, exp. 5.

[73]On the public announcement of the new sumptuary laws, see AHN, Consejos, Sala de Alcaldes, Libros de gobierno, libro 1224, fol. 65^{r}. *Pregon en qve . . . ninguna muger . . . traiga guardainfante*: "Manda el Rey nvestro señor, Que ninguna muger de qualquier estado y calidad que sea, pueda traer, ni traiga guardainfante, ò otro instrumento, ò trage semejante, excepto las mugeres que con licencia de las justicias publicamente son malas de sus personas." I sincerely thank Jodi Bilinkoff, Alison Weber, and Elizabeth Rhodes for their help in translating the euphemistic language of this decree.


Spain. Laws, statutes, etc. Textile laws

PREGON

EN QVE SV MAGESTAD manda, que ninguna muger de qualquier eſtado y calidad que ſea pueda traer, ni traiga guardainfante, ò otro inſtrumẽto, ò trage ſemejante, excepto las mugeres que con licencia de las juſticias publicamente ſon malas de ſus perſonas. &c.

EN MADRID,

En la Imprenta de Franciſco Martinez.

Año M. DC. XXXIX.

Figure 6. King Philip IV. Sumptuary law banning the *guardainfante* for all women except for prostitutes. Madrid, 1639. Historical and Special Collections, Harvard Law School Library.

as heavy, and they were threatened with exile for a first offense and imprisonment for a repeat violation.

The Crown may have had concerns that the police would not be willing or able to enforce the ban, and *alguaciles* (court bailiffs) were threatened with suspension if they failed to execute the new law rigorously.[74] An anachronistic legend claims that three noble sisters known as las Gilimonas sassily flouted the king's proclamation the day after it was issued by "swaggering and jingling up

[74]AHN, Consejos, Sala de Alcaldes, Libros de gobierno, libro 1224, fols. 69[r]–69[v].

and down the Prado in the widest *guardainfantes*," in the words of the nineteenth-century English historian Martin Andrew Sharp Hume.[75] But all indications are that the king's officials successfully enforced the ban on the *guardainfante* in the summer of 1639, thus restoring public order and demonstrating royal authority.[76] The following year, a collection of poetry published in Zaragoza, *Romances varios de diversos autores* (Various ballads by diverse authors, 1640) included four poems inspired by the recent sumptuary laws; in one of them, a woman proclaims that the defeat of *guardainfante* is Philip IV's triumph:

> It is a must to obey
> the word of the Fourth King,
> because the great sovereign
> defeats our excesses.[77]

Another poem written in the voice of a personified *guardainfante* laments how the ban transformed the fashion that had been perceived as such a menace into a laughingstock:

> I was a *guardainfante* and I am now
> so different from how I saw myself
> . . . . . .
> today I am the people's laughing stock,
> when yesterday I was all its vice.[78]

In the aftermath of the ban, the *guardainfante* was in fact treated more like a joke than a threat. Three days after the proclamation was announced, a Jesuit observer at court wrote that the ban on the hoopskirt was being laughed at by the idle,[79]

[75]Hume, 252–53. The so-called Gilimonas (a moniker that is sometimes cited as the inspiration for the Spanish insult *gilipollas*) were the daughters of a government official, Baltasar Gil Imón de la Mota, who reportedly punished his wayward daughters by forcing them to dress like nuns. Hume's version of the story closely follows the account published in 1888 by Sepúlveda, 217–28.

[76]On the king's judicial authority and the discourse of public order in sumptuary legislation, see Martínez Bermejo, 100.

[77]In Mortenson, 311 (Romance 49): "'Obedecer es forzoso / del Cuarto rey su palabra, / porque nuestras demasías / las rinde el grande monarca.'" I would like to thank Lía Schwartz Lerner for her help translating these and the following verses.

[78]In Mortenson, 305 (Romance 48): "Guardainfante era y ya estoy / tan otro del que me vi, / . . . / hoy risa del pueblo soy / ayer fui todo su vicio."

[79]Anon. Jesuit letter (16 April 1639), in Gayangos, 15:220.

while the court chronicler José Pellicer de Tovar described the sight of confiscated *guardainfantes* hanging from the Court Jail as a humorous distraction in an otherwise cheerless summer when Madrid was besieged by bad news from abroad about the war with France.[80]

As part of the fun, Luis Quiñones de Benavente wrote a humorous *jácara* (intermission song) in which a lady mourns the death of her *guardainfante* and complains that bailiffs are measuring women's petticoats and taking away all of their hoops (except for their earrings).[81] But the ban on the *guardainfante* did not sound the death knell of the controversial style. Efforts to enforce the law slackened after the initial dragnet in the summer of 1639, and women resumed wearing *guardainfantes* within the year. The court observer León Pinelo explained that the outlawed trends (including *escotados* and *guedejas* as well as *guardainfantes*) returned organically without malice or intention. He compared these garments' "secret augmentation, that grows without sensing, that spreads out without thinking" to the leaves of a tree that grow daily, unnoticed, and transform a tree that "not long before was bare" into one that is "leafy and dense with foliage."[82]

In the fall of 1640, the newly appointed president of the Council of Castile, Diego de Castejón y Fonseca, tried to reinforce the ban on the *guardainfante*. "Madrid is all stirred up because the new Mister President has wished to carry forward the law of the *guardainfantes*," Pellicer de Tovar recorded on 11 September, and he reported that this was a new source of amusement at the court: "Yesterday was a day of great laughter in Madrid when they began to execute it. And this is the greatest novelty."[83] The ban on the *guardainfante* quelled the public unrest that the fashion had caused, but the question of whether or not to enforce the law inspired a new debate. Spanish women contributed to the controversy, voicing different opinions much in the same way as outspoken early modern Italian women like Nicolosa Sanuti (fl. 1453), Laura Cereta (1469–99), and Lucrezia Marinella (1571–1653) responded to sumptuary legislation that affected

[80]Pellicer de Tovar, 1:33–35.

[81]In Quiñones de Benavente's song, "Xacara nveva de la plematica," the sumptuary laws of 1639 escalate the war between the sexes: three women bemoaning the loss of their farthingales, low-cut bodices, and veils fall into an argument with a man whose long locks have been cut off, leaving him a "plucked hen" ("gallina pelada"). Quiñones de Benavente, 1668, fols. 109^{v}–111^{v}. The poem has been published in Cotarelo y Mori, 2:841–42.

[82]León Pinelo, fols. 102^{v}–103^{r}: "un aumento oculto, que crece sin sentir i se estiende sin pensar . . . se halla frondoso, i copado, el que no muchos antes estava desnudo."

[83]Pellicer de Tovar, 1:144: "Queda Madrid alborotado, porque el Señor Pressidente nuevo ha querido llevar adelante la Pragmática de los Guarda Infantes. Fue Ayer día de gran risa en Madrid que se començó a Executar. Y esta es la Mayor Novedad."

them.[84] While male court observers unfailingly treated the ban on the *guardainfante* as a joke, the few women who left written records of their reactions took the issue much more seriously.

A noblewoman named Francisca Páez de Colindres (fl. ca. 1640) interpreted the movement to enforce the law against the *guardainfante* as a genuine threat, and she responded with a furious satirical poem addressed to the president.[85] The author, who at one point adopts the voice of a male member of the council, boldly presents herself as an expert advisor, as someone to whom the president must listen and with whom he must reckon.[86] She opens with an ad hominem attack on President Castejón y Fonseca and goes on to denounce his efforts to curb women's dress: "in fact my friend / this new order has been an act of madness."[87] Countering the critics of the *guardainfante*, she insists that women's hoopskirts cannot be blamed for the problems plaguing Castile:

> The *guardainfantes*
> do not cause so much damage;
> it is caused by wickedness
> and the failure to administer good justice.[88]

[84]Sanuti's defense of noblewomen like herself against a Bolognese sumptuary law of 1453 circulated in a Latin manuscript: see Kovesi Killerby, 272–82, which includes a translation of Sanuti's treatise. Marinella was a Venetian who defended the rights of all women (including the working class) to dress richly: see Labalme on Marinella and two other seventeenth-century Venetian women, Modesta da Pozzo and Arcangela Tarabotti, who defended women's luxurious dress. In contrast, the learned humanist Cereta supported bans on the luxurious clothes that she considered to be frivolous and demeaning to women.

[85]I am very grateful to Lía Schwartz Lerner for helping me to translate and interpret this *ovillejo* (metrical composition of ten-line verses). Doña Francisca Páez de Colindres's "Sátira en ovillejo en tiempo de Felipe 4º, en ocasión de querer quitar el uso de los guardainfantes, año 1651" ("Satire in *ovillejo* in the age of Philip IV, on the occasion of attempting to suppress the use of *guardainfantes*, in the year 1651") is included in a manuscript collection of satirical papers from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries at the BNE, MSS/17525, fols. 228^{r}–230^{v}. The manuscript poem is dated 1651, probably the date that this particular copy was made, whereas the original poem most likely was written late in the year 1640, and certainly before Castejón's term as president ended in March 1643. The poem is partially transcribed in Serrano y Sanz, 121. For contextualization of Páez de Colindres among seventeenth-century Spanish women satirists, see Schwartz Lerner.

[86]Schwartz Lerner, 389.

[87]BNE, MSS/17525, Páez de Colindres, fol. 255^{r}: "por cierto amigo mio / que á sido este horden nuebo desbario."

[88]Ibid., fols. 256^{v}–257^{r}: "days en los guarda ynfantes / no causan ellos daños semejantes / causalos la malizia / y que no se administra bien justizia."

The poet describes Castile as a dissolute and debauched world-turned-upside-down where murder and thievery go unpunished, usury and sodomy flourish, simony and flattery rule, and gambling and pimping are celebrated. This is the fault of the lawyers, judges, and noblemen who run the country, she explains, not the blameless women who wear *guardainfantes* to plump their slim hips. In the final lines of the poem, Páez de Colindres reminds the president of his humble origins and warns him to set aside worldly things and focus on the fate of his own soul — and to leave women alone.

The president of Castile's efforts to enforce the ban on the *guardainfante* came to naught. Far from being eliminated by the 1639 ban, the *guardainfante* was becoming even more widely disseminated, including outside of Madrid: there are accounts of *guardainfantes* as far afield as Mexico City and Genoa by the early 1640s.[89] A letter written by a Jesuit observer in Madrid in April of 1644 illustrates just how impotent the ban on the *guardainfante* had become: according to this rather fantastic account, a woman wearing a *guardainfante* visited a Portuguese spy being held at the Court Jail and used the cavity of her hoopskirt to smuggle in jail-breaking supplies, including crowbars, files, and two ladders. After the spy was caught with the tools in his cell, visitation rules were changed so that guards would monitor all visits, and female visitors would be separated from prisoners by a thick grille.[90] The new rules suggest that it was impossible to stop women from wearing the *guardainfante*, even at the Court Jail where confiscated hoopskirts had hung from the façade only a few years earlier. This supposedly true tale is one of numerous accounts of women using their *guardainfantes* to hide lawbreakers or sneak contraband into or out of prisons with impunity, thus subverting the male authorities even in the most authoritarian of institutions.[91]

If the king truly had wanted to get rid of the *guardainfante*, then Philip IV would have begun with the women in his own household. The most effective way to enforce a sumptuary law was for the royal family to set an example, which

[89]For evidence of the *guardainfante* in Mexico City in 1640, see Estrada Medinilla, 126; for Genoa by 1643, see Frugoni.

[90]Sebastián González to Father Rafael Pereyra (Madrid, 12 April 1644), in Gayangos, 17:460–61.

[91]In an anonymous poem published in 1640, a woman recalls the time she had used her *guardainfante* to hide a murderer right under the nose of a policeman: see Romance 49 in Mortenson, 310. In his travel account of Genoa, the Englishman Richard Lassels recounted approvingly a story about a Genoese noblewoman who used her *guardainfante* to smuggle her son out of prison, concluding: "Was not this a true *Guardinfanta*, which preserved thus the life of a Child?" See Lassels, 97–98.

is precisely what Philip IV did when he successfully outlawed the large ruffed collar that had been popular in his father's time and personally modeled the *golilla* (small starched collar) that took its place in 1623.[92] But Philip IV's own wives and daughters all wore the forbidden hoopskirt. That royal women wore the *guardainfante* after it had been outlawed indicates that the garment somehow served the Crown's agenda. The most likely explanation lies in the *guardainfante*'s scandalous reputation: the hoopskirt was associated with pregnancy, and a royal woman's primary function was to bear heirs. Thus, when worn by a princess or a queen, the controversial garment promised fertility and the political stability that came with an uncontested succession. When Isabella of Bourbon, the first queen of Spain to wear the *guardainfante*, adopted the style, it may have reinforced her public image as a successful queen who had borne a son, Prince Baltasar Carlos (1629–46), who lived long enough to be declared heir to the throne.

Queen Isabella of Bourbon died unexpectedly on 6 October 1644, leaving Philip IV devastated. "I find myself in the most miserable state of grief that can possibly exist, for I lost in only one person everything that you can lose in this life," he wrote in a grief-soaked letter addressed to a cloistered Franciscan nun named Sister María de Ágreda (1602–65).[93] The king and the nun had met for the first time at her Castilian convent in July of 1643 and had initiated what would become a lifelong correspondence.[94] In her role as his spiritual advisor, Sister María de Ágreda tried to convince the king to pursue "the correction of the customs and general vices that have contaminated Spain, and change the clothes, which are those that ignite the flames of this fire" in order to better protect and defend the monarchy by winning divine favor.[95] The nun, who herself dressed in a brown habit of coarse wool worn against her skin and eschewed shoes for wooden planks tied to her feet, believed that the king needed to rein in the decadent fashions of their times.[96] With the death of Queen Isabella of Bourbon,

[92]See Anderson on the *golilla*.

[93]King Philip IV to Sister María de Ágreda (15 November 1644), in Ágreda, 68–69: "Yo me veo en el estado más apretado de dolor que puede ser, pues perdí en solo un sujeto cuanto se puede perder en esta vida."

[94]I would like to thank Luis Corteguera for drawing my attention to María de Ágreda's involvement in the *guardainfante* controversy. On the relationship between Philip IV and Sister María de Ágreda and the nature of their correspondence, see Corteguera and Velasco.

[95]Sister María de Ágreda to King Philip IV (14 September 1643), in Ágreda, 54: "la enmienda de las costumbres y vicios generales que tienen contaminada a España, y la mudanza de los trajes, que son los que fomentan el fuego de este incendio."

[96]Inquisitor Alonso de Benavides (ca. 1578–1635) described Sister María de Ágreda's dress in detail: see Benavides, 3.

the nun saw an opportunity to press her agenda and convince the king to enforce his inert ban on the *guardainfante*.

Sister María de Ágreda wrote to the king describing a series of visions in which the dead queen appeared to her from purgatory: "She appeared to me dressed with the courtly finery and *guardainfantes* that ladies wear, but all of it was a flame of fire. . . . She then said to me: 'Mother . . . tell the King, when you see him, to try with all his power to halt the use of these terribly profane clothes that are used in the world, because God is very offended and angered by them and they are the cause of the condemnation of many souls; I am suffering great punishments on account of them and for the courtly finery that I wore.'"[97] Isabella of Bourbon's sufferings would be much alleviated, Sister María recounted, if the king were to follow these instructions. Sister María de Ágreda reported that she continued to have these visions until the queen's soul was released from purgatory after thirteen months, a long sentence despite all the masses that were said on her behalf.[98]

No letter survives that conveys the king's response to Sister María de Ágreda's disturbing visions,[99] but his subsequent action — or inaction — reveals that he did not heed the nun's advice, for he did nothing to reinvigorate or reinforce the law against the *guardainfante*. In 1649, five years after Isabella of Bourbon's death, the king married his fourteen-year-old niece Mariana of Austria (1634–96), who famously modeled the outlawed fashion. During her reign from 1649 to 1665, the *guardainfante* grew bigger than ever in physical size, global dissemination, and political importance. In the last fifteen years of his reign, the garment that Philip IV had banned from all but prostitutes was worn in public by his wife and daughters, and it became an important tool of international diplomacy and a symbol of Spain that was recognized around the globe.

THE ZENITH OF THE *GUARDAINFANTE*, 1649–65

Early in Mariana of Austria's reign, the *guardainfante* evolved into the iconic shape and style that is well known thanks to Diego Velázquez's celebrated court portraits. Among them is a full-length portrait of the eighteen-year-old queen that was made at the request of her father, the Holy Roman emperor, the year after she had left the

[97]Ágreda, 92–93: "se me apareció vestida con las galas y guardainfantes que traen las damas, pero todo era de una llama de fuego . . . Díjome entonces: 'Madre . . . dirás al Rey, cuando le vieres, que procure con toda su potestad impedir el uso de estos trajes tan profanos que en el mundo se usan, porque Dios está muy ofendido e indignado por ellos y son causa de condenación de muchas almas; yo padezco grandes penas por ellos y por las galas de que usaba.'"

[98]Ibid., 93–95.

[99]Ibid., 89n52.

Figure 7. The iconic *guardainfante*, as worn by Queen Mariana of Austria, second wife of Philip IV. Diego Velázquez. *Queen Mariana of Austria*, ca. 1652. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Austrian court for Madrid (fig. 7).[100] A comparison between this picture and an anonymous portrait of Mariana's predecessor, Queen Isabella of Bourbon (fig. 4), which had been painted about ten years earlier, reveals how the *guardainfante* and

[100]For a description of the costume in Velázquez's portrait of Queen Mariana of Austria (ca. 1652), see Bandrés Oto, 311–21; on the production of the picture, its circulation, and copies made after it, see Brown, 2008, 259–64.

the garments and accessories that were worn with it had evolved over the course of a decade. First and foremost, the hoopskirt has grown larger and wider at the hip, creating a bell shape that no longer bears any resemblance to the conical *verdugado*. The peplum — an overskirt attached to the bodice — has grown proportionally larger. Isabella of Bourbon's relatively small peplum, long at the front and short on the sides, has a vertical orientation; in contrast, Mariana's large gored overskirt, heavily outlined with thick braid, emphasizes the width of her farthingale and draws the eye to her lower half. Upper-body garments and accessories also developed in relation to the expanded *guardainfante*, whose bell shape is echoed in Mariana of Austria's chin-length wig made out of plaits of hair, jewels, bows, and feathers attached to a wire framework. While Isabella of Bourbon's high lace collar covers her neck, Mariana of Austria's low, wide collar leaves her neck exposed. Even the jewelry has grown in scale: Mariana's bodice is dominated by a large broach placed front and center on her chest.

While few if any of her subjects could afford the queen's crown jewels, many could emulate her style by wearing a *guardainfante*. Whatever her natural shape, a woman who wore such a hoopskirt could transform her figure to achieve this regal silhouette. In this way, an artificial garment like the *guardainfante*, which can change any body type into the fashionable shape of the day, arguably is a more equalizing fashion than body-skimming clothes that are worn without structured undergarments.[101] Mariana's style was widely imitated in Spain and abroad by women representing a surprisingly broad swath of society, and the *guardainfante* was worn on unexpectedly diverse occasions that extended far beyond posing for a portrait.

Archival documents from the Hospital de Santiago in Toledo reveal that the *guardainfante* was worn by women of various ages and stages of life in the 1650s. A notary recorded in detail the clothes that patients were wearing when they checked into this specialized hospital devoted to the treatment of syphilis.[102]

[101]As Harold Koda has written of twentieth-century fashions after the 1960s, with the obsolescence of foundation garments "the greater tyranny emerged of an ideal of beauty with the impossibility of recourse to artifice. In no other century has the ideal form of the body been in such flux. And at no other time since the fourteenth century have the fashionably dressed had to transform their bodies to the rigorous standards of the nude without apparel's assist": Koda, 10.

[102]Cristian Berco found these *guardainfantes* listed among patients' possessions in the *Libro de enfermos del Hospital de Santiago* at the Archivo de la Diputación de Toledo, libro H-55; I am extremely grateful to him for sharing his archival notes and expertise on syphilis treatment in early modern Spain with me. All of the evidence in this paragraph comes from Berco's transcriptions of documents for the patients Margarita de Contreras, Catalina Bautista, Petronila de Palacios, Doña María de Peralta, and María de Zúñiga, who entered the hospital between the spring of 1654 and the spring of 1661.

Between 1654 and 1661, five female patients entered the Hospital de Santiago wearing *guardainfantes*. Among the five, three were from Toledo, and the other two were from the smaller neighboring towns of Ajofrín and Yébenes. Three were single, one was married, and one was widowed. One of the women was identified as a doña, an honorific title indicating her elevated social status; the ranks of the other four women went unremarked. They wore their *guardainfantes* with a uniform of sorts: a black mantle of silk or wool; a woolen bodice in black, silver, or gray-brown; a white shirt; and an overskirt of brown or silver wool. Beneath their sober outer garments they wore layers of red, green, and blue underskirts. All of the women were wearing at least one garment identified as old, such as an old red flannel cape, old shoes and stockings, or an old silk mantle. They also wore luxury items including gilded silk stockings and skirts decorated with silver fringe. Historian Cristian Berco has suggested that these women were dressing in their very finest clothing while embarking upon the humiliating public action of entering the syphilis hospital in the city center.[103] If their illness was treated early on, these women were very likely to reemerge from the hospital in just a few weeks' time, and thus they had good reason to salvage their reputations by choosing their clothes carefully.

The *guardainfante* also was worn by women outside of peninsular Spain, most notably in Portugal, Latin America, and in Italian cities under Spanish influence, such as Genoa and Milan. In Mexico City, the *guardainfante* was considered splendid dress for a gala occasion, according to a 1640 poem written by María de Estrada Medinilla. The poem describing the public celebration of the Spanish viceroy's ceremonial entry into Mexico City was written for the author's cousin, a cloistered nun who could not see the festivities herself. María de Estrada Medinilla explains that she chose not to wear her *guardainfante* because she was unable to use her coach during the processions, and the large hoopskirt would have made it too difficult for her to travel on foot.[104]

Visual and material evidence shows that women in Mexico wore their *guardainfantes* with dresses decorated in a distinctively Mexican fashion with sequins imported across the Pacific by the Manila galleon. There is a dark-green velvet dress covered with silver sequins, which is believed to have been made to be worn over a *guardainfante*, in the collection of the Museo Nacional de Historia del Castillo de Chapultepec; the dress reportedly belonged to Doña Leonor Carreto (d. 1674), wife of the Spanish viceroy in Mexico, who would have worn *guardainfantes* at court in Madrid before leaving for

[103]Berco, 787.

[104]Estrada Medinilla, 126. The poem originally was published in Gutiérrez de Medina.

Mexico in 1664.[105] The *guardainfantes* worn in Latin America were made of materials as international as the Spanish empire itself: *listonería* (belting) for *guardainfantes* was imported from Spanish Naples and sold at shops in Santiago de Chile. Historian Isabel Cruz de Amenábar has concluded that the *guardainfante* was not in general use in Chile, as it seems to have been in Spain, although she has found archival evidence that it was owned by elite women, such as Ana Ternero y Arrieta, whose 1659 inventory included a *guardainfante* amid her sumptuous wardrobe.[106]

Historian Paola Venturelli found a *guardainfante* listed in the 1654 inventory of a noble family in Milan, where women dressed "alla spagnola" with the Spanish hoopskirt.[107] In Italian cities, Spanish styles competed with French fashions as the two nations fought for supremacy in Italian territory in the seventeenth century.[108] Spanish fashions were especially strong in Genoa, where the *guardainfante* was popular in the 1640s.[109] Francesco Fulvio Frugoni was inspired to write a 179-page "poema giocoso" ("jocular poem") called *La gvard'infanteide* (1643), which he dedicated to the "beautiful women of Genoa."[110] The Englishman Richard Lassels, who visited Italy five times between 1637 and 1668, described seeing women in Genoa wearing *guardainfantes* in his posthumously published *Description of Italy* (1670): "I found all the great Ladies here to go like the *Donnas* of Spain in *Guardinfantas*, that is, in horrible overgrown *Fartingals* of whalebone, which being put about in the waste of the Lady, and full as broad on both sides as she can reach with her hands, bear out her Coats in such a huffing manner, that she appears to be as broad as long."[111] Lassels explained that the Genoese dressed in the Spanish style

[105]The dress is described and photographed in Armella de Aspe, Castelló Yturbide, and Borja Martínez, 63–65. An anonymous seventeenth-century portrait of a lady with a glove (collection of Joaquín and Marita Redo) depicts a woman wearing a large *guardainfante* with a brown dress adorned with sequins on the bodice: see Martínez del Río de Redo, 56.

[106]Cruz de Amenábar, 49.

[107]Venturelli, 34–35, notes that it is rare to find farthingales listed in Italian inventories; this is also true in France, according to Roche, 141. The rarity of *guardainfantes* or any other kind of farthingale in inventories can be attributed to the fact that they were made out of base materials and thus were not typically counted among luxury possessions. I am very grateful to Caterina Pizzigoni and Giuseppe Pizzigoni for their assistance with interpreting the primary sources quoted in Venturelli.

[108]Guarino, 119–20; Venturelli, 34.

[109]See Cataldi Gallo, 154–56, on the Spanish influence in Genoa; her article reproduces three fascinating portraits of Genoese women wearing very round *guardainfantes* between the 1640s and 1660s.

[110]Frugoni, unpaginated front matter: "Alle bellissime dame di Genova."

[111]Lassels, 96.

in repudiation of the French, whom they despised: "the *Genuesi* lean much to the *Spanish Faction*, and *Fashions* following *Faction*, they lean also much to the *Spanish Fashion* both in humor and apparel."[112] The *guardainfante* marked a clear distinction between French and Spanish supporters, especially since farthingales of any kind were *passé de mode* in France.

Since fashion followed faction, as Richard Lassels so aptly put it, clothing publicly broadcast the loyalties of a royal woman who occupied a liminal position between the courts and countries of her father and husband.[113] Before, during, and after her marriage, a princess's clothing was a symbol of state, and a change of clothes was a sign of subjugation. Loaded with political meaning, clothing had to be selected with great care when a marriage was taking place between enemy nations. As a distinctive and unmistakable symbol of Spain, the *guardainfante* came to play an important role in international relations. This was especially true when it came to the negotiation of royal marriages, when clothing was carefully choreographed and sartorial mistakes could have lasting political repercussions. The *guardainfante* was front and center in the marriages of three Iberian princesses in the 1660s: the infanta María Teresa's 1660 marriage to Louis XIV of France, the wedding of the Portuguese princess Catherine of Braganza to Charles II of England in 1662, and the infanta Margarita's union with the Holy Roman emperor Leopold I in 1666.

As part of the Peace of the Pyrenees that ended war between France and Spain in 1659, King Louis XIV of France was engaged to the infanta María Teresa (1638–83), daughter of Philip IV and Isabella of Bourbon. French observers fixated upon the Spanish infanta's *guardainfante* in the events leading up to the wedding. When the French diplomat Antoine de Grammont went to Madrid to arrange the marriage, he reported back home that María Teresa's large *guardainfante* had made it impossible for him to assess her actual physique.[114] María Teresa wore the *guardainfante* beneath an embroidered white satin gown for her first meeting with her future husband on the Isle of Pheasants. The event was commemorated in a tapestry designed by the French artist Charles le Brun, which depicts the infanta, standing behind her father, wearing a very large *guardainfante*, seen here in a print made after Le Brun's design (fig. 8).[115] The French lady-in-waiting Françoise Bertaut de Motteville (ca. 1621–89), who was

[112]Lassels, 95.

[113]On the crucial role that clothing played in shaping a woman's identity, see Hughes, 140; on the specific cases of the Spanish infantas Anne of Austria and María Teresa, who married into the French royal family, see Oliván Santaliestra, 2006b, 158–59.

[114]Zanger, 39.

[115]I am grateful to the staff of the residence of the French ambassador in Madrid for granting access to the original Le Brun tapestries at the residence.

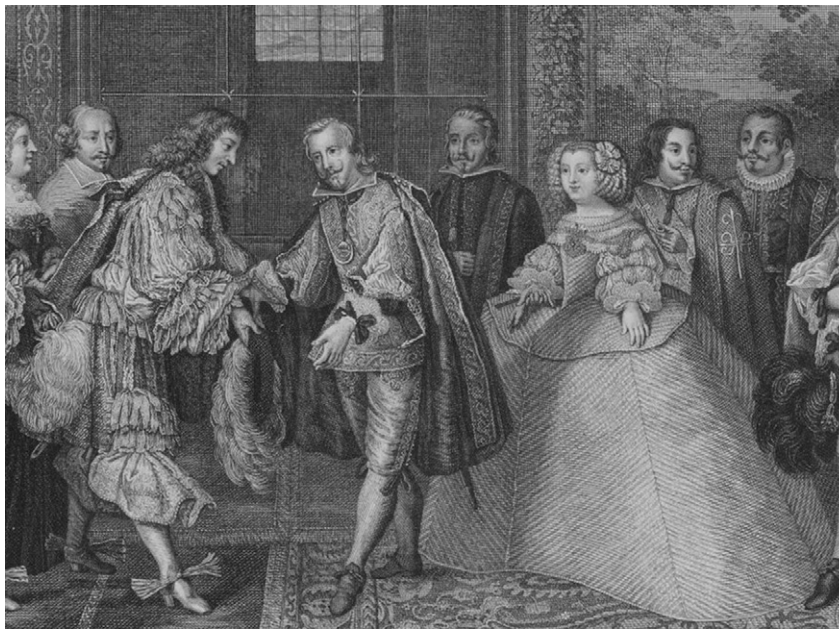


Figure 8. The infanta María Teresa wears a *guardainfante* to meet her future husband, Louis XIV of France (1660). Detail from *Meeting of Louis XIV and Philip IV on the Isle of Pheasants*. Etching and engraving by Edmé Jeaurat, 1728, after a tapestry designed by Charles Le Brun. British Museum, London. © Trustees of the British Museum.

half Spanish herself, had most unflattering things to say about María Teresa's attire. Madame de Motteville described the infanta's *guardainfante* as a "machine half round and monstrous" that was "flattened a bit in the front and the back, and swelled out on the sides." When Spanish women walked in their *guardainfantes*, she continued, "this machine moved up and down, and made for a very ugly appearance."[116] María Teresa wore the *guardainfante* en route to France and "she took up the whole front" of the carriage "because of her *gard'Infant* that she did not wish to remove," according to a French pamphlet.[117] Up until the last minute, the infanta's Spanish hoopskirt kept her French audience on edge. She finally quitted her *guardainfante* for the marriage Mass (depicted in another Le Brun tapestry), to which she wore a hoopless dress and a cape decorated with the French *fleur-de-lis*.[118] After such

[116]Motteville quoted in Zanger, 51.

[117]*Le Pompe et Magnificence faite au mariage du Roy et de L'Infante D'Espagne* (Toulouse, 1660), translated and analyzed in Zanger, 49.

[118]Zanger, 56–57.

a tense buildup, the removal of the *guardainfante* for the marriage Mass was all the more potent as a symbol of French dominance over Spain, represented by the body of María Teresa.[119] After the wedding on 9 June 1660, María Teresa dutifully continued to wear French-style dress as queen of France until her death in 1683.

When the Portuguese princess Catherine of Braganza (1638–1705) married England's Charles II in 1662, her insensitive use of the *guardainfante* set the stage for a fraught relationship with her subjects that would last throughout her reign as queen of England (r. 1662–85). In her native Portugal, Catherine of Braganza had been accustomed to wearing a *guardainfante*, as she was depicted by Dirk Stoop, a Dutch artist at the Lisbon court, on the eve of her marriage. In the portrait at the National Gallery, London (ca. 1660–61), the Portuguese princess wears a very wide *guardainfante* and rests her left elbow on the shelf of her hoopskirt; a black lace-trimmed overskirt is pushed back to reveal a silvery satin underskirt with a slit pocket. Stoop's painted portrait was reproduced and disseminated in a 1662 print by William Faithorne (fig. 9). This is how Catherine was dressed when she left Lisbon for Portsmouth, where she wedded Charles II on 21 May 1662. A series of prints representing Catherine's progress to Hampton Court clearly shows her embarking in Lisbon and disembarking in Portsmouth still wearing her wide, flat hoopskirt and flanked by a phalanx of ladies-in-waiting dressed in the same fashion.[120] In England, the French wheel-shaped farthingale had been fashionable in the later sixteenth century but had declined after the death of Elizabeth I (r. 1558–1603), and hoopskirts of any kind had been out of fashion for forty-five years by the time of Catherine's arrival. Catherine's Spanish-style dress thus appeared dated and absurd to an English audience.[121]

[119]The point about María Teresa's body representing Spain in her marriage to Louis XIV is made by Oliván Santaliestra, 2006b, 158–59.

[120]A series of seven etchings by Dirk Stoop depicts Catherine of Braganza's progress from Lisbon to Hampton Court (Lisbon, 1662): British Museum, Department of Prints & Drawings, S.3090–96. Catherine of Braganza is clearly depicted wearing the *guardainfante* in three of the prints: "The publique proceeding of the Queenes Matie. of Greate Britaine through ye Citty of Lisbone ye 20th day of Aprill 1662" (S.3091); "The manner hon her Matie. Dona Catherina jmbarketh from Lisbon for England" (S.3092); and "The Maner of the Queenes Maties. Landing at Portsmouth" (S.3094). The final print, "The Comming of ye King's Matie. and ye Queenes from Portsmouth to Hampton Court" (S.3096), shows Catherine in English dress with a low-cut bodice and without a forelock draped across her forehead; the coach in which she sits obscures her lower half, but presumably she has gotten rid of the *guardainfante*.

[121]On the farthingale in England, see Vincent, 35–37.

Figure 9. *Catherine of Braganza* (ca. 1660–61). Engraving by William Faithorne, 1662, after a painting by Dirk Stoop. British Museum, London. © Trustees of the British Museum.

One of Catherine's new subjects, the diarist John Evelyn, recorded his negative impression of the queen and her olive-skinned ladies-in-waiting in his diary entry for 30 May 1662: "the Queen arriv'd with a train of Portuguese ladies in their monstrous fardingals or guardinfantas, their complexions olivader and sufficiently unagreeable."[122] Those who did not witness the queen's arrival with their own eyes became familiar with her shockingly foreign appearance thanks to the printed images. To her English subjects, Catherine of Braganza's

[122]Evelyn, 2:145.

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Figure 10. The infanta Margarita, daughter of Philip IV, and a maid of honor. Detail from Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas*, 1656. Museo Nacional del Prado. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

guardainfante marked her as foreign, Catholic, and an ally of their Spanish enemy. As queen of England, Catherine of Braganza ultimately did abandon her hoopskirts and change into English-style dress with free-flowing skirts, as she is seen in Peter Lely's well-known painted portraits of her. But the unpopular queen never managed to erase the negative first impression that she had made arriving in England wearing her *guardainfante*.

The hoopskirt that seemed so "monstrous" in Paris and London was viewed much more favorably in Vienna, a Spanish ally with a common Habsburg bond, which was the destination of the infanta Margarita (1651–73). The daughter of Philip IV and Mariana of Austria, Margarita is best known as the little girl at the center of Velázquez's *Las Meninas* (1656) (fig. 10), which features the five-year-old infanta wearing a *guardainfante* almost as wide as she is tall. Ever since she was about three years old, Margarita was represented in court portraits wearing *guardainfantes* (although this was not necessarily her daily

attire).[123] The extended hoopskirts gave her child's body a woman's proportions with a slim waist and exaggerated hips, which suggested future fertility and fecundity. On the eve of her engagement to Holy Roman emperor Leopold I of Austria (b. 1640; r. 1658–1705), a thirteen-year-old Margarita was portrayed wearing a *guardainfante* beneath an orange skirt and pointing toward her belly in a gesture that promises the princess's potential for bearing future emperors.[124]

Margarita consistently wore the *guardainfante* and only appeared in public without it during periods of significant transition: her father's death, her marriage and move to a foreign court, and the announcement of her first pregnancy.[125] When she left Madrid for Vienna, Margarita removed her *guardainfante* as a sign of respect to her new husband and home, and she won praise from the Spanish ambassador for dressing "more like a daughter of Vienna than a foreigner."[126] From that point forward, Margarita resumed wearing *guardainfantes* at the Viennese court, where the empress's Spanish dress was a welcome symbol of her Spanish origins. During her reign as Holy Roman empress (r. 1666–73), Margarita often was portrayed wearing theatrical costumes of flowing skirts without hoops, but textual sources reveal that her habitual dress remained the *guardainfante*. An engraving from 1668 depicts Margarita wearing a *guardainfante* while seated in the audience at the opera *Il Pomo d'Oro* (The golden apple), which was performed in celebration of her seventeenth birthday (fig. 11).[127] Margarita is seated front and center on a dais next to her husband; the wide, flat *guardainfantes* worn by the empress and her Spanish ladies-in-waiting clearly distinguish them from the slim-hipped

[123]At the Spanish court, boys and girls were dressed in skirts and knickers until the age of eight, when they began to wear miniature versions of male or female adult clothing. Young royal girls typically dressed in skirts with a starched petticoat beneath, not in the more uncomfortable and restrictive *guardainfante*. See Bandrés Oto, 210–11, on children's clothing, and on the infanta Margarita's attire in *Las Meninas*, 358–59.

[124]The portrait of the infanta Margarita (ca. 1665) in an orange dress and *guardainfante*, attributed to Ignacio Ruiz de la Iglesia, is in the collection of the Fundación Yannick and Ben Jakober (Mallorca); see *Principiños*, 126–27. Laura Oliván Santaliestra provides an extensive analysis of the picture, which she convincingly argues depicts the infanta in the moment before the documents were signed committing her to marry Holy Roman emperor Leopold I: Oliván Santaliestra, 2011, 843–45.

[125]Court artist Juan Bautista Martínez painted a portrait of Margarita in 1665 in a mourning dress of black, without her *guardainfante* (Museo del Prado, Madrid). On Margarita's notable appearances without the *guardainfante*, see Oliván Santaliestra, 2011, 852, 865, 869.

[126]The Count of Castelar, Spanish ambassador to Vienna, quoted in Oliván Santaliestra, 2011, 865: "que parecía más hija de Viena que forastera."

[127]The opera was composed by Antonio Cesti with a libretto by Francesco Sbarra, which was translated into Spanish as *La manzana de oro* (1668).

Figure 11. Holy Roman empress Margarita (front and center) attending the opera *Il Pomo d'Oro* at the Viennese court. Detail from *Sacra Cesarea Maesta*, engraving by Frans Geffels after Lodovico Ottavio Burnacini. In Francesco Sbarra, *La Manzana de oro* (Vienna, 1668). Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid.

local women in the audience. Margarita died in 1673 at the age of twenty-one, having lived almost all of her brief life in the public eye wearing the *guardainfante*.

THE DECLINE OF THE *GUARDAINFANTE* AND THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE FASHION, 1665–1789

When Philip IV died on 17 September 1665, his widow Mariana of Austria retired her *guardainfante* and exchanged her embellished court dresses and wigs for an austere black-and-white habit worn with a veil that completely covered her hair.[128] As Philip's queen, Mariana had exerted her influence as a fashion plate, but it was wearing her widow's weeds that she came to wield true political power. Mariana ruled for ten years as queen regent in place of her son Charles II

[128]Mariana of Austria was depicted in her widow's weeds during her regency in portraits by court artists Juan Bautista Martínez del Mazo and Juan Carreño de Miranda: see Llorente, 2006.

(b. 1661; r. 1665–1700), who was not yet four years old when he was named king.[129] Mariana no longer wore the *guardainfante* that she had popularized, but the style continued to flourish at the Spanish court and beyond. The hoopskirt grew larger and the neckline lowered to off the shoulder, as seen in a portrait of an unidentified lady by the court artist Juan Carreño de Miranda (fig. 12). Carreño de Miranda, who ascended to the position of head court painter thanks to Mariana's favor in the late 1660s and early 1670s, painted portraits of high-ranking women wearing *guardainfantes* of varying sizes and shapes, some of them exceptionally large.[130] The variety of styles that can be found in portraits from 1665 through the 1670s suggests that there was a lack of cohesion in women's fashion trends in the absence of a royal role model between Mariana's widowhood and the ascension of a new queen from France, Charles II's first wife, Marie Louise of Orléans (b. 1662; r. 1679–89).[131]

The *guardainfante* seems to have fallen out of general use by 1679, when the French noblewoman Marie Catherine D'Aulnoy (1650/51–1705) visited the court in Madrid. She reported that "till of late, women wore farthingales of a prodigious bigness. This fashion was very troublesome to

[129]For a concise history of Mariana's rise to power and challenges to it, see Goodman, 163–65. Mariana's regency and rule have experienced a renaissance of revisionist scholarship as the subject of several recent dissertations by historians and art historians, including Oliván Santaliestra, 2006a; Llorente, 2012; and Mitchell. I am grateful to Silvia Mitchell for sharing her unpublished dissertation with me.

[130]The most-exaggerated examples of *guardainfantes* appear in Carreño de Miranda's portraits of women who are usually identified as the Condesa de Monterrey, Doña Inés de Zúñiga (Madrid, Museo Lázaro Galdiano), and the Marquesa de Santa Cruz, Doña Francisca de Velasco (Madrid, Collection of the Marqueses of Santa Cruz). Carreño de Miranda's approximately half-dozen portraits of women wearing *guardainfantes* do not have firm dates, and experts differ on their dating and identification: cf. Pérez Sánchez, 1985, 146–53; Pérez Sánchez, 1986, 212–16; López Vizcaíno and Carreño, 358–63 and 396–99.

[131]An anonymous painting at the Hispanic Society of America (A1902) provides an interesting example of mixed trends: the unidentified sitter, a dark-haired young woman, wears a *guardainfante* of the same size and shape as those worn by Queen Mariana in the early 1650s, but she wears it with the exposed shoulders and long, loose hairstyle that did not become popular until the later 1660s. Ruth Anderson tentatively dated this portrait ca. 1665 in her manuscript notes: Hispanic Society of America, Department of Prints and Photographs, Ruth Anderson Notebooks, *Spain — Costume — 17th Century — Women: 1661–1700*, unpag. At the Hispanic Society of America, I am grateful to Patrick Lenaghan and Noemí Espinosa Fernández for granting me access to the Anderson notebooks, to Marcus Burke for sharing important insights about this anonymous portrait and the problematic nature of later seventeenth-century portraiture, and to Daniel Silva for graciously accommodating requests to see materials in storage and providing photographs for study.

Figure 12. Juan Carreño de Miranda. *Lady with a Handkerchief*, ca. 1665–70. Madrid, Banco Exterior de España. Album / Art Resource, NY.

themselves as well as others: there were hardly any doors wide enough for them to go through. But they have left them off now, and only wear them when they go to appear before the Queen's or the King's presence."[132] According to Madame D'Aulnoy, Spanish women did not abandon farthingales altogether; rather, the *guardainfante* was replaced by

[132]Aulnoy, 199 (letter 8). It must be noted that the veracity of Madame D'Aulnoy's account of her travels to Spain — including whether or not she even went to Spain — has been questioned.

a smaller farthingale that was made out of five or six rounds of thick copper wire that hung from one another with ribbons from the girdle to the ground.[133] Portraits from the reign of Marie Louise of Orléans show Spanish women wearing skirts that are full but not stiff, pleated at a waistline that is defined by a stomacher extending from the bodice into a low, narrow point.

Nonetheless, the unfashionable *guardainfante* remained obligatory at the court, where Mariana of Austria continued to exert a strong influence well after Charles II had reached the age of majority. Madame D'Aulnoy complained mightily about how uncomfortable she was when she had to wear a *guardainfante* for an audience with the queen mother: "I had on a farthingale of dreadful bigness (for one must wear that in the Queen's presence). I knew not what to do with myself with this strange invention; there's no sitting down in it, and I believe if I should wear it all my life I should never be reconciled to it."[134] This requirement to wear the *guardainfante* at court extended to and included Queen Marie Louise of Orléans, whose distaste for Spanish fashions was well known, according to court gossip recorded by a Venetian ambassador.[135] Between 1680 and 1683, a court *guardainfantera* (maker of *guardainfantes*) named María de la O handmade thirty-nine *guardainfantes* for the queen out of iron and *bramante* (twine); the documents do not specify what those *guardainfantes* looked like nor how large they were.[136] The court *guardainfantera* had to petition for payments in arrears after paying the expenses of the materials herself: "on account of this labor I ask to be given a hundred *ducados*, for I find myself to be in extreme need."[137] Another *guardainfantera*, Dominga Leal, was on the

[133]Ibid.

[134]Ibid., 352 (letter 8).

[135]Venetian Ambassador Federico Cornaro quoted in López del Prado Nistal, 18–19.

[136]Archivo General del Palacio (AGP), Cuentas de Bordadores, Administración General leg. 5215, exp. 2, unnumbered document beginning, "Raçon de lo que importan los guardainfantes, que yo Maria de la O tengo hechos para la Reyna nuestra Señora, desde que su Magestad entro en esta corte, hasta el fin del año de mill seiscientos y ochenta y tres, que es como se sigue" ("Accounting of the cost of the *guardainfantes* that I, María de la O, have made for the Queen our Lady, from the time that her Majesty joined this court until the end of the year of 1683, which is as follows"); this document was found misfiled in a *legajo* on embroiderers. There are seven documents related to *guardainfanteras* (five of them dealing with María de la O) in AGP, Cuentas de Guardainfantes, Administración General leg. 5236, exp. 9.

[137]AGP, Cuentas de Bordadores, Administración General leg. 5215, exp. 2: "A quenta de esta labor pido se me libren çien ducados por hallarme en extrema necesidad."

payroll during the reign of Charles II's second wife, the German María Ana of Neuburg (1667–1740; r. 1689–1700).[138] Worn by Charles II's two foreign, childless queens, these last *guardainfantes* projected an image of Spanishness and fertility that was as hollow as their iron hoops.

After Charles II died without an heir in 1700, the new French Bourbon dynasty that took over the Spanish throne retained the *guardainfante* during its transition to power as a show of respect to Spanish tradition. Spain's new queen, the Italian-born María Luisa of Savoy (b. 1688; r. 1701–14), wore a *guardainfante* for her wedding to King Philip V (b. 1683; r. 1700–46), but shortly thereafter she discarded this relic of Spanish court etiquette. The Madrid court was given over fully to the French fashions that would continue to dominate Spanish trends for the rest of the eighteenth century.

The *guardainfante*'s exile was short-lived. The wide farthingale made a comeback at the end of the eighteenth century in a new form and with a new name: the *tontillo*. In Goya's famous portrait of 1789 (fig. 13), Queen María Luisa of Parma (1751–1819; r. 1788–1808) wears a *tontillo* that closely resembles the *guardainfantes* worn by the Empress Margarita in the late 1660s and early 1670s (fig. 11). In a 1789 history of sumptuary legislation in Spain, the Spanish economist and historian Juan Sempere y Guariños complained that Philip IV's 1639 ban had failed to eliminate the *guardainfante*, which was popular at court in his own time: "Far from having been corrected by that law, it emerged much more triumphant, surviving to this day, after more than a hundred and fifty years, in the ceremonial visits of the most honored ladies."[139] Sempere y Guariños gives the impression that the *guardainfante* was worn continuously from Philip IV's era to his own, but in fact the hoopskirts worn at the Spanish court in the later eighteenth century had been introduced to Spain from France, and the Spanish *tontillo* was modeled after the French pannier.[140] Queen María Luisa of Parma and the rest of the ladies at the Spanish court may have been following French fashion, but their *tontillos* resonated with all the history and tradition of the seventeenth-century Spanish court.[141]

[138]There are two documents related to *guardainfantera* Dominga Leal in AGP, Cuentas de Guardainfantes, Administración General leg. 5236, exp. 9.

[139]Sempere y Guariños, 307: "Pues lejos de haberse corregido por medio de aquel arbitrio, salió mucho más triunfante, conservándose todavía, después de más de ciento y cincuenta años, en las visitas de ceremonia de las Señoras más condecoradas."

[140]Descalzo Lorenzo, 2009, 75.

[141]I would like to thank Tara Zanardi for sharing with me her expertise on eighteenth-century Spanish fashion and observations on the ways that Bourbon high fashion appropriated traditional styles.

Figure 13. The eighteenth-century *tontillo*. Francisco de Goya. *Queen María Luisa of Parma*, 1789. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

CONCLUSION

The *guardainfante*'s meaning in Spanish society changed radically over the seventeenth century, but this item of women's clothing was always a politically charged object that the Crown manipulated to further its agenda in domestic and international politics. In the 1630s, when the style first appeared, the wide-hipped farthingale triggered a hostile reaction in the streets, in the theaters, and on the printed page, among men who feared that women wearing *guardainfantes* were escaping male control and failing to fulfill their traditional gender roles. Those

fears were expressed most often in the accusation that women were using the fashion to conceal scandalous pregnancies beneath their expanded skirts. When he issued a sumptuary law banning the *guardainfante* in 1639, King Philip IV quelled the disturbances and demonstrated his power to control women (by controlling their clothes). The *guardainfante*'s associations with pregnancy made it a useful tool for the Crown, which had a vested interest in displaying a fertile queen to its subjects and presenting princesses who promised to produce royal progeny to potential spouses abroad. Worn by royal women and girls performing official duties of state, this garment that technically was outlawed for all but prostitutes turned into an international symbol of Spain and Spanishness.

The *guardainfante* was much more than a prop for royal portraiture and ceremonies at the courts of Europe. At the height of its popularity in the 1650s–60s, the *guardainfante* was a widespread fashion worn by women in cities around the globe for everyday activities. Archival, literary, and visual evidence reveals that real women really did wear the *guardainfante* along with less luxurious versions of the clothes and accessories that were popular at court. A woman who wore a *guardainfante* had to be of some means, but she was not necessarily noble or affiliated with the court — "she is not a queen, but she is not a washerwoman either," as Amalia Descalzo Lorenzo described Velázquez's anonymous *Lady with a Fan* (fig. 5).[142] Nonroyal women of all ages and stages of life — unmarried, married, widowed; noble and not; from cities large and small — wore their *guardainfantes* while performing a diverse range of activities, from attending church to entering a syphilis hospital. Large numbers of women wearing *guardainfantes* contributed to the overall ostentation and splendor of a city, especially during festive occasions, and contributed to the spectacle of urban life.[143] In a foreign city like Genoa, a woman wearing a *guardainfante* demonstrated her city's allegiance to Spain (for the moment) by wearing this distinctively Spanish style.

Women wore the *guardainfante* despite the restrictions that it imposed on their bodily movements, and they suffered the harsh criticisms that were launched against their moral characters. The evidence suggests that women weighed the pros and cons of the *guardainfante* and made personal choices to wear it or not depending on the occasion. The critics exaggerated their claims about the ways that the *guardainfante* limited women's movements, but the stiff hoops certainly could be an inconvenience; this is why María de Estrada Medinilla chose to leave

[142]Descalzo Lorenzo, 2007, 439: "no es una reina, pero tampoco una lavandera."

[143]Women wearing *guardainfantes* populate seventeenth-century painted city views of Madrid, Zaragoza, and Seville; see for example the view of Zaragoza (private collection) in Ribot, 298; views of Seville's Alameda de Hércules and of Madrid's Manzanares River on the feast day of Saint John the Baptist in the Collection of Juan Abelló (Madrid); and a view of Seville's Arenal in the Fundación Focus Abengoa (Seville).

her farthingale at home during the festivities celebrating the viceroy's entry to Mexico City in 1640.[144] The seventeenth century was not an age of comfort in fashion, but there were limits to the inconveniences that a woman would tolerate, even if she was accustomed to a certain degree of discomfort in her daily dress.[145]

There were many reasons, personal and political, why a nonroyal woman might choose to wear the *guardainfante*. By wearing this stiff armature, a woman could transform her figure — whatever its natural shape — into the regal silhouette of the queen of Spain. In foreign cities like Genoa, a woman wearing a *guardainfante* visibly manifested her city's allegiance to Spain. A woman might wear the *guardainfante* to please her husband, as María de la Encarnación claimed to do, or she might have worn it to attract attention to herself, as María de la Encarnación seems to have done. Her Inquisition trial highlights the social tensions that the *guardainfante* caused in the early years of the fashion and reveals the serious consequences that could come from wearing it; yet despite all the troubles that it caused her with her local clergy, neighbors, and the Inquisition, María de la Encarnación continued to wear her large *guardainfante*. While there were many different reasons why a woman might have worn a *guardainfante*, hiding a belly swollen with child does not appear to have been among them: there is no historical evidence to corroborate the long-standing assertion that women used *guardainfantes* to conceal illegitimate pregnancies. Claims that they did are pure fiction and polemic.

Writing in 1453 in Bologna, almost 200 years before the *guardainfante* fashion emerged in Madrid, the noblewoman Nicolosa Sanuti had argued that fashion was the only way that women were able to participate in public life. She thus defended women against sumptuary laws that would restrict them from dressing opulently: "Let not the rights of the humbler sex be snatched away by the injustice of the more powerful. State offices are not allowed to women, nor do they strive for priesthoods, triumphs, and the spoils of war, for these are the customary prizes of men. But ornaments and decorations, the tokens of our virtues — these, while the power is left us, we shall not allow to be stolen from us."[146] In seventeenth-century Spain, women still could not participate actively in the secular or ecclesiastical institutions of power. But they could and did participate in the politics of the Spanish empire through their contribution to the *guardainfante* fashion and the controversy that it engendered. Francisca Páez de Colindres and María de Ágreda boldly entered the debate over the *guardainfante* by writing strongly worded opinions addressed to the most powerful men of their times. Many more women left

[144]Estrada Medinilla, 126.

[145]On the historical concept of comfort, see DeJean.

[146]Sanusti translated in Kovesi Killerby, 282.

no written record of their opinions but nonetheless played a crucial role in making and disseminating the controversial *guardainfante*. By doing so, these women contributed to the political culture of seventeenth-century Spain in one of the only spheres of influence that was open to them, and that was in the realm of fashion.

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Prematica en qve sv magestad manda, que ninguna muger ande tapada, sino descubierta el rostro, demanera que pueda ser vista, y conocida, so las penas en ella contenidas, y de las demas que tratan de lo susodicho. Madrid, 1639.

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