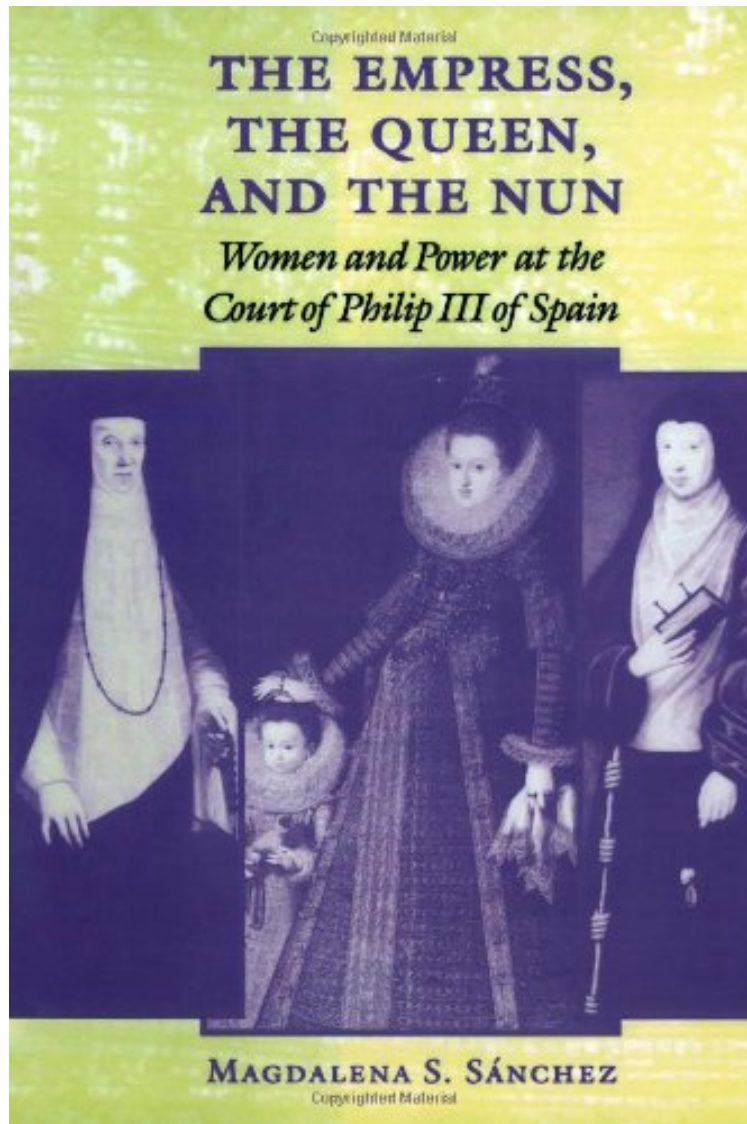


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The Empress, the Queen, and the Nun: Women and Power at the Court of Philip III of Spain (The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science)

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Women and Power at the Court of Philip III of Spain (The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science):

In the early seventeenth-century, when Spanish interests often competed with those of the House of Austria, three women in the court of Philip III of Spain -- Empress Mara, Philip's grandmother; Margaret of Austria, Philip's wife; and Margaret of the Cross, Philip's aunt -- worked behind the scenes to win favor for the causes of the Austrian Habsburgs. In *The Empress, the Queen, and the Nun*, historian Magdalena Sanchez offers an intriguing examination of the political power wielded by these three women. Sanchez examines the ways that women used religious piety, childbearing, illnesses such as melancholy, and marriage arrangements to sway political decisions. They employed distinct strategies and languages at informal occasions such as meals, masquerade celebrations, and religious ceremonies to influence the political scene. By incorporating women into informal political networks, this work breaks new ground in the study of early modern European politics.

"Sanchez has provided us with an illuminating study of the place of women in the court politics of Philip III's reign. Her fresh readings of how these women exercised their considerable political power should prompt historians of early-modern Spain to re-examine their understanding both of early-modern Spanish women and the court of Philip III." -- Elizabeth Leffeldt, *Bulletin of the Society of Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies* "Sanchez's portrayal of court politics is convincing and solidly documented, and it broadens our understanding of not only a little-studied and often-derided reign but also the hidden logics of a crucial political institution, the court, in a period of transition toward government by royal favorites." -- James S. Amelang, *Journal of Modern History* "This study represents a fresh and innovative approach to diplomatic history, as well as women's history. It is an impressive achievement." -- Jodi Bilinkoff, University of North Carolina, Greensboro
About the Author Magdalena Sanchez is an associate professor of history at Gettysburg College.