The careers of the seven nieces of Cardinal Jules Mazarin, the dominant figure in French power politics from the early 1640s until his death in 1661, have been marginalised to the peripheral world of popular history. Conveniently divided into opposing categories of the »nièces sages« and the »nièces folles«\(^1\), Mazarin’s nieces have drawn the attention of writers primarily concerned with their scandalous lives after their uncle’s death: three broken marriages, implication in the »Affaire des Poisons«, strings of liaisons with princely lovers, and the inevitable moral to be drawn from vagrant existences in whatever city would tolerate their meddling and embarrassing presences in jaded old age\(^2\). The treatment of the marriages of the

\(^1\) Hortense Mancini and Marie Mancini, Mémoires, ed. Gérard Doscot, Paris 1965. This is the most recent edition of these two controversial mémoires, and it appears as volume V of the »Mercure de France: le temps retrouvé« series. Doscot introduces the comparison of the »nièces sages« and the »nièces folles« in his introduction (p. 19).

\(^2\) The most recent examples of this genre are Yvonne Singer-Lecocq, La tribu Mazarin, Paris 1989, and François Noukissier, Les Mazarinettes, in: Mazarin, ed. Georges Mongrédiën, Paris 1959, pp. 83–111. The most reliable amongst a generally indifferent lot of individual biographies are: Édouard...
neces by Mazarin’s most recent biographer is marred by factual error and is so cursory and disorganised\(^3\) that it is difficult to gauge what importance he attaches to the cardinal’s attempts to establish his family.

The neglect of the marriages of Mazarin’s nieces presents a paradox. During the past fifteen years, historians have analysed the creation of Mazarin’s fortune\(^4\), and this work has been encouraged by and run parallel to the research of Joseph Bergin on the wealth of Mazarin’s patron and mentor, Cardinal de Richelieu\(^5\). Despite the emphasis Bergin places on the role of family strategies in Richelieu’s ascension\(^6\), few historians have analysed seriously the cardinal’s establishment of his extended clan in the upper layers of the French hierarchy, a pursuit which was complemented by and was dependent upon his activities as a fortune-builder\(^7\). The model which stresses the means of acquisition and the administration of the fortune rather than the use to which it was put, accumulation without expenditure, appears to have been followed by those concerned with Mazarin’s wealth, including Bergin himself\(^8\). There are frequently good reasons for this, usually the absence of detailed records for the outgoings. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that the colossal fortune amassed by Mazarin had to fuel a highly complex international machine of high politics and patronage, while, at the same time, securing the safe establishment of his father, his brother, his four sisters, his three nephews and his seven nieces, the aggregate casata. Within this structure the negotiations for the individual marriage of each niece assume an importance which has not been sufficiently appreciated.

Such parallels with the methods of studying Richelieu’s life continue, for Georges Dethan’s work\(^9\) is equally concerned to underscore the importance of familial ties in the early stages of Mazarin’s career. Although Bergin and Dethan have made convincing cases for the importance of family strategies and blood links in initiating

---

\(^{110}\) Robert Oresko

---

\(^3\) Pierre Goubert, Mazarin, Paris 1990.


\(^7\) David Parrott is currently preparing an article on Richelieu’s matrimonial use of a group of female relations, generally and imprecisely referred to as his «nieces», which will shed light on the role played by the cardinal’s extended family in elaborating a system of patronage.


\(^9\) Georges Dethan, Mazarin et ses amis, Paris 1968, formed the basis for the opening chapters of an expanded synthesis: id., Mazarin. Un homme de paix à l’âge baroque, Paris 1981. All references in this article are to the 1981 publication.
The marriages of the nieces of Cardinal Mazarin

111

the public lives of, respectively, Richelieu and Mazarin, other historians of the two great seventeenth-century cardinal-ministers have avoided extending this system into the periods during which they were «the first servant of the state», a dubious notion at best. Once Richelieu and Mazarin have secured power, they are frequently presented as detached from the family structures which had provided their initial springboard, and we can be assured that «Au niveau où opérait Mazarin, la destinée familiale importe assez peu (à l'exception de la fâcheuse Marie Mancini), même si la tribu l'occupa beaucoup – trop, sans doute...»10. A careful analysis of the documentation surrounding the negotiations for the marriages of the seven nieces, popularly referred to as the Mazarinettes, presents a very different picture.

Dethan's researches reveal quite clearly that Mazarin had, at an early stage of his career, assumed the management of his family’s future, including the marriages of its members. In 1634 Mazarin was named by Pope Urbano VIII Barberini as Vice-legate of Avignon, the papal enclave bordered by the French provinces of Languedoc and Provence. Before leaving Rome, he wrote to his friend Abel Servien: «J'ai marié deux de mes sœurs, avec à chacune une dot d'en tout 40,000 livres. L'une [Margherita Mazzarini] je l'ai donnée au fils unique [Geronimo] de M. Vincenzo Martinozzi, très à son aise quant aux bien de fortune, bien né, de beaucoup d'esprit et en première place dans les bonnes grâces de M. le cardinal Antoine [Barberini] ... J'ai donné l'autre [Girolama Mazzarini] à M. Lorenzo Mancini, très à son aise, de famille très estimé et connue dans cette ville, sa maison étant très ancienne»11.

These were the two marriages which, between them, produced the ten nephews and nieces eventually sent to France. The Martinozzi and the Mancini were two of the many noble families which supplied the staffage of the papal clientèle system, and they were closely attached to the Barberini family and, by extension, to the Colonna, the earliest patrons of the Mazzarini12. On the verge of his departure for Avignon,

10 Goubert (see n. 3) p. 452. Goubert provides a particularly vivid example of an historian immune to arguments other than those which view Mazarin as a great French statesman, a not uncommon tendency in the series of biographies published by Fayard to which his volume belongs. While praising their researches, he is careful to cantonise the works of Bergin and Dessert into a bibliographical category of «ouvrages novateurs» (p. 538) and to point out, in his text, that these two colleagues are also friends (p. 474). Indeed, Goubert seems strangely eager to alert his readers to the backgrounds of his colleagues who have previously written on Mazarin, referring to «notre triade de chartistes», Dethan, Dulong and Madeleine Laurain-Portemer (p. 533). Dethan’s Mazarin, un homme de paix à l’âge baroque is described rather dismissively, as «d’une bonne qualité, mais qui concerne surtout l’homme privé» (p. 530) and «une élégante étude de l’homme, mais non du ministre» (p. 451), as if the two were separable, which he sees as characteristic of the «chartiste» approach. Goubert’s own «maladresse» in evaluating evidence from primary documents, scarcely a habitual «chartiste» failing, and his inability to grasp the interplay of the «public» and the «private» in the lives of seventeenth-century figures damage a disappointing debut in his »vocation tardive« as a popular biographer and are entirely of a piece with a nineteenth-century vision of French state-building which much recent research has helped to discredit.

11 Cited in Dethan (see n. 9) p. 19.

12 Mazarin’s own mother, Ortensia Bufalini, was the god-daughter of Filippo Colonna, principe di Paliano, and the young Mazarin himself had accompanied the prince’s son, Girolamo, also a future cardinal, to Spain. The Colonna were attached to the Barberini by the marriage in 1627 of Urbano VIII’s nephew, Taddeo Barberini, the brother of Cardinals Antonio and Francesco Barberini, to Anna Colonna, the daughter of the duca di Paliano, which forged a link between the most recent papal family and the oldest, with the Orsini, of the Roman princely Houses. On the Martinozzi see
therefore, Mazarin had linked his own family to two other families within the upper service hierarchy in Rome, and, thus, by 1634, a full decade before he emerged as the eventual successor in France to Richelieu, two of the elements which would become important factors in his thinking in the 1650s about his own familial matrimonial strategy – knowledge of France’s southern border provinces and service ties to the Roman dynastic network – were already moving into place.

Mazarin’s next involvement in family marriage came in 1640 with a sequence of negotiations to establish his youngest sister, Cleria Mazzarini. An early attempt to arrange a marriage with a member of the Caffarelli family ended without result, as did the more serious proposal, sponsored by the Barberini in 1641, to marry Cleria to Lorenzo Machiavelli. It was only in April 1643, one month before Louis XIII’s death and subsequent to Mazarin’s elevation to the cardinalate, that the benjamine of the family became the wife of Pietro Antonio Muti. With the death of Mazarin’s mother in 1644, another occasion for matrimonial negotiation arose. Only three male Mazzarini remained. Mazarin’s younger brother, Michele, was in Holy Orders, and, while the cardinal himself was not a priest, the likelihood of Mazarin detaching himself from his ecclesiastical incomes, of resigning from the Sacred College and of disentangling himself from whatever emotional relationship he was in the process of forming with Anne of Austria, Queen-regent of France, in order to perpetuate the House of Mazzarini, were minimal. The remaining option was the re-marriage of the recently widowed Pietro Mazzarini, Mazarin’s father.

Jules and Michele applied themselves with considerable vigour to the question of their father’s marriage, and by August 1644 Pietro had accepted in principle the idea of a second marriage, as he informed his elder son, »pour l’établissement de la casa«. On 1 January 1645, the sixty-eight-year-old Pietro accordingly married the seventeen-year-old Porzia Orsini, the daughter of the duca di Bomarzo, and this couple, unequal in both age and social standing, received the good wishes of the bridegroom’s daughters for »une nombreuse descendance qui permet de perpetuer la casa«. There are a number of points to be made about this marriage. It is striking that, given the problems of negotiating Cleria’s marriage into the Muti, marriage into one of the cadet branches of the Orsini seems to have been relatively straightforward once Mazarin’s own position in France appeared to be secure. Moreover, this rather desperate attempt to perpetuate the casata underscores the extent to which both Mazarin and his brother were looking to the future, to the establishment of a Mazarin dynasty which would inherit the fruits of their labours and consolidate the position of the family within the European aristocratic hierarchy. The failure of Pietro and Porzia to produce issue spelt the extinction of the House of Mazzarini and forced Mazarin back to the offspring of Margherita and Girolama as the only instruments from which to create his own dynasty, advanced by his political position and buttressed by his growing fortune.

In these calculations, Mazarin’s younger brother, Michele, was not a negligible

Selvelli (see n. 2) and on the Mancini see Armando Schiavo, Palazzo Mancini, Palermo 1969, pp. 43–52. Dethan (see n. 9) pp. 43–79 has analysed Mazarin’s relations with his Roman padroni.

13 Dethan (see n. 9) pp. 29–30. The marriage of Cleria Mazzarini and Pietro Antonio Muti was childless.

14 Ibid., pp. 34–35.

15 Pompeo Litta, Famiglie celebri italiane, Milano 1819–1899. Orsini di Roma fascicule, table XIV.
factor. Although Michele has been frequently dismissed as an unworthy and irresponsible cadet, Jules was determined to promote his brother's ecclesiastical career, maintaining a steady diplomatic pressure after 1644 upon the new Pamphilj Pope Innocenzo X to obtain his elevation to the Sacred College. As the French nomination had already been promised to the prince de Conti, Anne of Austria had intervened with Władysław IV, King of Poland, to acquire the Polish crown nomination for Michele, but it was only in 1647 that the cardinal's biretta was reluctantly bestowed on him. The elevation to the Purple of a second Mazzarini helped to consolidate the family's position in Rome, a constant factor in Jules Mazarin's family strategy, while the fact that the distinction of having two brothers in the Sacred College at the same time was generally reserved to younger sons of sovereign Italian Houses or to papal nephews, reinforced awareness of the ascendancy of the family.

While awaiting the cardinalate for his brother, Jules Mazarin succeeded in procuring for him the archbishopric of Aix-en-Provence, and by his untimely death in 1648 Cardinal Michele Mazzarini had also been made Viceroy of Cataluña. Whatever Michele's failings may have been, the appointment of his brother to the aixois archdiocese underscores Jules Mazarin's concern about Provence and southwestern France in general, a legacy from his own time as papal Vice-legate in Avignon, and, along with the Catalan nomination, it signals an early determination to place his closest confidants, linked by blood ties, in control of these key border provinces, vulnerable both to invasion from outside and to internal upheaval spawned from strong traditions of separatism and independent identity. These factors appear regularly in the 1650s as Mazarin sought to marry his nieces to men who could, through their matrimonial attachment to his family, guarantee stability in, the potentially volatile frontier provinces of a hexagon the evolution of which was far from straightforward.

The first arrivage in France of the children of Mazarin's sisters took place in Aix-en-Provence, where the children were installed in June 1647. The initial shipment

16 Gabriel de Mun, Un frère de Mazarin, le Cardinal de Saint-Cécile, 1607-1648, Revue d'histoire diplomatique 14 (1904), pp. 497-530. Bearing in mind the tendency of French historians to pair the careers of Richelieu and Mazarin, it is interesting to note that de Mun also contributed an article on Cardinal Alphonse de Richelieu, the brother of le Grand Armand, to the same volume of the Revue d'histoire diplomatique. De Mun's article should be supplemented by José Sanabre, La acción de Francia en Cataluña a pugna por la hegemonía de Europa, Barcelona 1956, pp. 393-408. Strikingly, two recent works, both written in Catalan, virtually ignore Michele Mazzarini, perhaps reflecting separatist nervousness over collaboration with the French adventure in Cataluña in general: Joan Reglà, Els virreis de Catalunya, Barcelona 1987 and Núria Sales, Els segles de la decadència (segles XVI-XVIII), Barcelona 1991, the fourth volume of the Història de Catalunya edited by Pierre Vilar.

17 The generally unfavourable judgement passed on Michele's behaviour by historians eager to emphasize Jules Mazarin's achievements must be balanced by the younger cardinal's role as a patron of seventeenth-century urbanism in Aix-en-Provence. Lettres patentes of January 1646 authorised Michele to incorporate a new quartier, still called the >Quartier Mazarin<, into Aix (André Bouyala d'Arnaud, Évocation du Viel Aix-en-Provence, Paris 1964, p. 217) while Marcel Bernos, Aix au Grand Siècle, in: Histoire d'Aix-en-Provence, Aix-en-Provence 1978, p. 170, grudgingly concedes that >Il est vrai que le bilan de son œuvre civile, ne serait-ce que la promotion du quartier >Mazarin<, paraît bien plus positif que celui de son action ecclésiastique.« In whatever light Michele's tenure at Aix is viewed, it represented a consolidation of Jules Mazarin's own interest in Provence and paved the way for a continuing Mazarin presence in Aix itself.
consisted of one nephew, Paul Mancini, and three nieces, Anne-Marie Martinozzi and her two cousins, Laure-Victoire and Olympe Mancini. Mazarin’s young relations had already been the subject of matrimonial speculation in Rome, and Mazarin had previously launched a project to marry Anne-Marie’s sister, Laura Martinozzi, to a son of Taddeo Barberini and Anna Colonna. In September the children were transferred to Paris, where the nieces and their future establishment attracted considerable speculation, the possibility of French marriages for the cardinal’s closest female relations coexisting from this point with his Italian matrimonial strategy. Projects for marriages with the young duc de Richelieu and with the Lorraine duc de Joyeuse, the Guise heir, came to nothing, in the latter case thanks to the intervention of Condé. Indeed, as the forces opposing Mazarin coalesced into the Frondes of the late 1640s and early 1650s, the potential of the nieces as a dynastic means to attract support for the cardinal was fully grasped by those who strove to circumscribe his power and freedom of action. It was demanded that the nieces ne se marieraient point sans consentement de M. le Prince [de Condé], and Mazarin’s matrimonial aspirations for his nieces figured in the pamphlet attacks on his régime, the well-known Mazarinades. The nieces were caught up in the drama of the Frondes and joined their uncle in his exile at Brühl in the electorate of Köln. Mazarin himself observed that il y aurait longtemps que je serois sur le Rhin, si j’eusse esté seul coupable; mais mes niepces s’estant trouvées enveloppées dans mes crimes et condamnées à sortir du royaume, il m’a esté impossible, les devant traisner avec moi, de faire grande diligence et de me hasarder des pays remplis de troupes ennemies, sans passeports. Whatever spur the presence of an extended female household may have applied to Mazarin’s resolve to return to France, the first two marriages of his nieces certainly played an important role in attaching vital members of les grands to his cause and in facilitating his re-establishment.

The very notion of establishment is critical, for in marrying his nieces Mazarin not only established their positions but also created gradually a larger familial machine, of which they were the component parts, which supported his own activities and ensured his own security. Mme de Motteville attributed the coherence of Mazarin’s matrimonial policy to the upheavals of the Frondes: Il trouva que des places et des alliances le rendroient plus considérable, et le mettroient en état de se

18 Donata Chiomenti Vassalli, Donna Olimpia o del nepotismo nel Seicento, Milano 1979–80, p. 83. The Barberini prince in question seems to have been Carlo, the eldest son of Taddeo Barberini and Anna Colonna, who eventually resigned his rights to the primogenitura to his younger brother, Maffeo, and became a cardinal. For the Barberini see their entries in the Dizionario biografico degli Italiani, vol. VI, pp. 164–182; and Giuseppina Magnanini, Palazzo Barberini, Roma 1983.


The marriages of the nieces of Cardinal Mazarin

pouvoir défendre par lui-même, sans mendier continuellement la protection du duc d'Orléans et du prince de Condé. En changeant de conduite, il devint plus intéressé qu'il n'avait été jusques alors, et le mauvais tours de ses ennemis lui firent désirer de se faire redouter de ceux qui lui avoient fait beaucoup de peur. Mme de Motteville may have been fausse-naive in presenting the cardinal's interestedness as an innovative change of policy, but she perceptively identified the goal of creating a personal network of family ties as the primary motive behind the first marriage of the nieces, that of Laure-Victoire Mancini to Louis de Bourbon, duc de Mercure.

The duc de Mercœur was the elder son of César de Bourbon, duc de Vendôme, the legitimised son of King Henri IV and Gabrielle d'Estrées. The Mercœur duchy had been transmitted to the Vendôme line by Mercœur's mother, the duchesse de Vendôme, Françoise de Lorraine, another member of this sprawling dynasty. As legitimised princes the Bourbon-Vendôme had no right of succession to the crown, but they were recognised as members of the House of France, and, although their position in the court hierarchy was disputed, they claimed precedence immediately after the princes du sang and before such princes étrangers established at the French court as the various branches of the House of Lorraine, the Savoy-Nemours and the Gonzaga-Nevers. On the most obvious level, therefore, the proposed marriage of Madamigella Mancini to a Bourbon prince would mark a dramatically ambitious advance for Mazarin's casata, but both parties had much to gain from the project. As Vendôme observed to Mazarin, il devoit considérer que c'était son avantage autant que le sien.

The maréchal d'Estrées attributed the very first initiative for the marriage to his great-nephew. Le duc de Mercœur, qui voyoit son père bours de France et avec aussi peu d'espérance d'y retourner comme son frère en avoit d'échapper de la prison cherche de se rapprocher de la cour et d'empêcher l'entièr e ruine de sa maison, et comme il n'y avoit pas eu entre les deux frères jamais trop de grande union et conformité d'humeur, et que, si tant est que M. le duc de Beaufort eut eu le dessein sur lequel il avoit été arrêté, son frère n'en avoit jamais eu de communication et le Cardinal ne l'en avoit point soupçonné, ainsi il lui fut assez facile d'introduire cette négociation par le moyen du seigneur Ondedei. Both the duc de Vendôme and his younger son, the duc de Beaufort, were embroiled in the cabale des Important s of

26 The social advancement for the Mazarin clan is noted in Mme de Motteville's terse observation que le prince de Condé ... ne pouvoit raisonnablement demander à son ministre [i.e. the minister of the queen, meaning Mazarin] de ne pas donner sa nièce au duc de Mercœur. (MOTTEVILLE [see n. 23] vol. III, p. 50).
1643, one of which was the acquisition for Vendôme of the key gouvernement of Bretagne. Following its collapse, Vendôme discreetly withdrew from court, but Beaufort, who enjoyed immense popularity within Paris, was imprisoned in Vincennes, from where he escaped only in 1648. For the Bourbon-Vendôme, therefore, the Mancini marriage promised a return to court and, possibly, to favour and power: *M. de Véodosme ... s'y employaist ouvertement et avec passion à cause des grands avantages qu'il espéroyt de cette alliance pour toute sa maison, qui en avait besoin ...*29 In 1649 both the duc et la duchesse de Vendôme, qui vouloient l'alliance du ministre, firent ce qu'ils purent pour obliger le duc de Beaufort à consentir au mariage de *M. de Mercœur avec l’ainée Mancini; mais il ne voulut pas l’agréer*30.

Beaufort’s opposition to his elder brother’s marriage was a set-back for Mazarin, for he hoped to extract a good deal more immediate political profit from the match than the considerable contribution it would make to the elevation of his own family. *Monsieur le Cardinal songea par là avec dessein de se gagner toute la maison, et nommément M. de Beaufort, que l’on croyoit avoir créance et crédit parmi le menu peuple de Paris*31, and, indeed, Nicolas Goulas, gentilhomme ordinaire de la chambre of Gaston d’Orléans, described Beaufort rejetant cette alliance qu’il crut un piège pour le perdre, ou une pièce pour le décrediter à Paris32. Moreover, by attempting to attract *toute la maison* of Vendôme, Mazarin hoped as well for the alliance of those connected to it, Charles-Amédée de Savoie, duc de Nemours, the husband of Mercœur and Beaufort’s sister, Élisabeth de Vendôme33, and the Lorraine network: s’il eût fait cette alliance, toute la maison de Lorraine se fût jointe à celle de Vendôme; et y joignant la personne de *M. le duc d’Orléans*34. The return of the Bourbon-Vendôme family to the court, especially if allied to Mazarin, promised to introduce an important new element into the power equations during the disturbed periods of the Frondes. For Condé and his sister, Mme de Longueville, the proposed Vendôme-Mancini marriage was *une marque indubitable qu’il [Mazarin] ne voulloit plus le [Condé] considérer pour son principal appui, puis qu’il entroit dans d’autres intérêts, et prenoit dans la cour une autre protection que la sienne; et qu’il étoit à craindre que le duc de Vendôme, devenant parent du ministre, seroit plus considéré que personne après du Roi et de la Reine*35. For those opposed to Mazarin, worries about an increasingly independent cardinal-minister merged with disquiet over the renewal of the fortunes of the House of Bourbon-Vendôme.

Beaufort was, therefore, not the only grand to oppose the marriage of Louis de

---

30 Motteville (see n. 23) vol. II, p. 426.
31 D’Estreés (see n. 28) p. 271.
33 On 13 June 1651 Mazarin wrote, from Brühl, to Lionne that *Mme de Nemours aussy a tesmoigné que son mary se donneroit entièrement à la Reyne et seroit de mes meilleurs amis, si on voulloit* (Chéruel, vol. IV, p. 266).
35 Motteville (see n. 23) vol. II, p. 423.
Mercœur to Laure-Victoire Mancini, and Condé succeeded in blocking, at least temporarily, its solemnisation in 1649. In 1651, however, the marriage was publicly celebrated at Brühl, and Mercœur returned to Paris and déclara un jour en plein parlement son mariage avec mademoiselle de Mancini. In the interim, Vendôme support for the Mercœur-Mancini marriage became uncertain. Contradicting Mme de Motteville but perhaps reflecting the rapid shifts of alliance in a politically uncertain world where Mazarin’s fortunes swayed vertiginously, Goulas reported that Durant que Mr. de Vendosme et Mr. de Mercœur, son fils, s’empressoit plus chez Mr. le cardinal Mme de Vendosme qui ne voulait point Mlle Mancini pour belle-fille, et Mme de Nemours, qui abhorroit cette belle-sœur, entreprirent de renouer le mariage de Mr. de Mercœur avec Mlle de Guise dont l’on avoit beaucoup parlé autrefois. Antagonism to the House of Lorraine remained as strong a Leitmotif in Mazarin’s policies as did his support for the Houses of Savoy and Este, while the tenor of Goulas’s lines hints at the stain of mésalliance which, apart from the mazarinades, rarely found direct expression but which certainly haunted the negotiations for the marriages of all the cardinal’s nieces. The duc de Vendôme himself seems to have wavered. Writing to Lionne in March 1651, before the declaration of the Mercœur marriage, Mazarin suggested that il faudroit ... examiner si on en pourroit parler au père [the duc de Vendôme] car il est engagé d’une telle façon avec la Reine et avec moi en cette affaire qu’assurément il ne se pourroit pas défendre d’en donner la permission à son fils, d’autant plus que la Reine lui pourroit faire espérer que ce mariage étant achevé elle lui ferait un traitement aussi favorable que je lui aurais procurer si j’étois demeuré dans le poste que j’occupoïs auprès de S.M.

36 In writing of the Mercœur marriage, Mme de Motteville observed that La Reine voyoit clairement que son ministre étoit étrangement hai, puisqu’elle jugeoit elle-même que ce qu’on croyoit lui être un bien étoit estimé un grand mal par tous ceux qui composoient la cour (Ibid., vol. III, p. 50).

37 Anne-Marie-Louise d’Orléans, Duchesse de Montpensier, Mémoires, Paris 1985, vol. I, p. 159. The actual date of the marriage is problematic, the ceremony at Brühl being best understood as its public celebration, and, according to a letter from Mazarin to Henri d’Estampes-Valançey dated 12 August 1651 J’ecrivois de ce mariage par ordinaire passé à mon père (AAE, MDF, vol. 267, fo. 183). This is not inconsistent with Goulas’s report that the Mercœur marriage had actually been performed secretly and, most importantly, had been consumed before Mazarin’s departure from France: Ce n’était pas néanmoins pour s’aller marier qu’il [Mercœur] étoit party de Paris, car ils l’avoient été, avant que le Cardinal délogeast, dans l’oratoire de Mme de Beauvais, au Palais-Royal, après quoy le mariage fut consommé dans la chambre de Mme de Navaille (GOULAS [see n. 32] vol. III, p. 373). A consummated marriage was, of course, much more difficult to annul than a simple contracted marriage, and the haste to consummation may well indicate an early awareness on Mazarin’s part of the possibility of the marriages of his nieces being repudiated, a worry equally reflected by the cardinal’s determination for paternal consent. Mme de Motteville’s careful phrasing in depicting Mercœur returning from Brühl, où il avoit épousé publiquement mademoiselle de Mancini, certainly leaves open the possibility of an earlier secret marriage ceremony: Motteville (see n. 23) vol. III, p. 361.

38 GOULAS (see n. 32) vol. III, p. 115.

39 AAE, MDF, vol. 267, fo. 337: Mazarin to Lionne, 21 March 1651. This passage is only paraphrased in Chéruel’s mighty edition of Mazarin’s letters, thus, illustrating a methodological problem. While Chéruel’s edition undoubtedly remains the essential starting point for all Mazarin studies, the selection of documents for transcription reflects the judgements of an established nineteenth-century historian, concerned to present Mazarin as a French state-builder. Mazarin’s activities as the creator of a colossal fortune or as a family strategist, as well as the persistence of his Italian interests, sit uncomfortably in an historical framework determined to see the cardinal as the link between the equally idealised images of Richelieu and Louis XIV in the trinity of centralising «étatistes» devoted to the gloire of a greater
Attention is clearly drawn to Mazarin's agitation over Vendôme's hesitations about his son's marriage to a niece of a minister then in exile, perhaps reflecting the cardinal's fears that a union contracted without parental approval might subsequently be repudiated. The importance of Anne of Austria's cooperation in advancing Mazarin's family, already clear from her assistance in obtaining the cardinalate for Michele Mazzarini, is also evident. In addition, this passage points clearly to the additional benefits of the marriage for the House of Vendôme, for it was in the interests of both Mazarin and the Vendôme that the corbeille de mariage should be filled with more than the monetary dot.

The duc de Vendôme expected that in receiving Laure-Victoire into the family he and his sons would not only return to court but would acquire the material manifestations of favour, posts and pensions, befitting a prince of the House of France linked by marriage to the minister who, even while in exile, remained the close epistolary collaborator of Anne of Austria. It was, in Mazarin's own interest, as well, to consolidate the position of the Vendôme, as newly acquired allies and kinsmen, to enable them, or, at least the ducs de Vendôme and de Mercœur, to act effectively in implementing the cardinal's policy and in counterbalancing the weight of his opponents. From this very first marriage in 1651 the questions of office, of gouvernements and of charges to be bestowed on Mazarin's new nephew-by-marriage and his family, played a central role, and they continued to do so in the subsequent matrimonial negotiations for the remaining six nieces.

Although the province of Bretagne, adjacent to the Longueville stronghold of Normandie and endowed with a vigorous tradition of independence, remained an idée fixe of the Vendôme, Mazarin had other plans. In 1649, still hoping to attach Mercœur's younger brother to his party, he wrote to Michel Le Tellier that La proposition de donner à M. de Beaufort la survivance de l'amirauté et ce qu'on a parlé de donner en eschange à M. de Mercœur [Cataluña] est fort belle et je m'asseure que la Reyne l'aura fort goustée; while Goulas recorded that Mr. le cardinal proposoit de donner l'amirauté à Mr. de Vendasme et la survivance à Mr. de Mercœur avec force argent et l'employ de Catalogne, moyennant qu'il éposast sa niece. The viceroyalty of Cataluña played a critical role in French military thinking and had previously been entrusted to Mazarin's own brother, while the admiralty, or, more

France. The passage touching on the declaration of the Mercœur-Mancini marriage (see n. 37) in a later letter is similarly paraphrased rather than transcribed. Those historians interested in Mazarin as someone other than one of 'les grands hommes qui ont fait la France' will have to supplement Chéruel's volumes with the original documents.

40 Anne of Austria's cooperation is also emphasized in a Mémoire touchant le mariage de M. le Duc de Mercœur, dated 12 May 1651: Il n'y a rien à ajouter à la manière généreuse et obligeante avec laquelle M. le duc de Mercœur a toujours traitté avec moi et continue de le faire dans le temps le plus fort de ma persecution, dont il doit estre assuré que je ne perdray pas le souvenir, et j'espère de la bonté de la Reyne qu'elle supplerait à l'impuissance où je suis de le servir et qu'elle le considérera et lui desparterà, dans les occasions, des marques de son estime et de son bienveillance, d'autant plus que S. M. nous fait l'honneur à tous de tesmoigner avoir agréable et mesme de souhaiter l'entier accomplissement du mariage... (Chéruel, vol. IV, pp. 181-182).

41 M. de Vendôme avoit de grandes prétentions pour le gouvernement de Bretagne (Talon [see n. 34] vol. VI, p. 364).


43 Goulas (see n. 32) vol. III, p. 53.
correctly, the *grande maîtrise et surintendance générale des mers, navigation et commerce*, had, in Mazarin’s eyes, acquired a major negative importance. Held since 1646 by Anne of Austria, the *grande maîtrise* was claimed by Condé in *survivance* to his brother-in-law, Maillé-Brezé, whom the queen had succeeded in this strategic post. Acquisition of the *grande maîtrise* for the Vendôme would both strengthen the cardinal’s new allies and act as a break on Condé’s aspirations. Accordingly, in 1650, after the marriage contract had been settled but before the wedding itself had been celebrated, Anne of Austria resigned the *grande maîtrise* to Vendôme, with its *survivance* reserved to Beaufort. As Mazarin fretted over Vendôme’s slowness in granting paternal consent for the Mancini marriage, he warned the duke that ce mariage estant desja fait ... ou ne se pouvant plus empescher, ce seroit causer peut-estre quelque prejudice considerable à sa maison, s’exposant par son refus à la disgrace de la Reyne, qui, aprez s’estre despouillée elle-mesme pour faire des graces si considerables à lui et à M. de Beaufort, ne perdroit pas aysement le souvenir ni le ressentissement de le voir manquer à sa parole... The Mancini marriage and the procurement of the *grande maîtrise* were, therefore, intimately linked.

There remained, however, the question of provision for the bridegroom, whom Mazarin consistently recommended in early 1651 as one of the grands who ont, à mon avis, les qualitez requises pour servir la Reyne en tout ce qu’elle leur commanderá. One of the other trusted grands was the duc de Candale, Épernon’s son, with whom Mazarin was also negotiating over a marriage to Anne-Marie Martinozzi. Lionne had initially suggested the *gouvernement* of Auvergne for Mercœur, another province with a strong separatist tradition and one which, at the beginning of the century, had been implicated in the rebellions of its *gouverneur*, Charles de Valois, duc d’Angoulême, the illegitimate son of King Charles IX. Auvergne was also a focus of attention for the ambitions of the La Tour d’Auvergne family, Dukes of Bouillon. Clearly, it was an area which required close observation, and Mazarin gave a warm welcome to Lionne’s proposal. On reflection, however, he altered his views somewhat. La pensée de M. de Lionne est fort bon touchant l’Auvergne, afin qu’il serve de dot. Il faut bien ajuster ce point ... je vous prie de luy dire, de ma part, que peut-estre, s’il y avoir jour à pouvoir faire le mariage de la seconde [Anne-Marie Martinozzi], dont on a parlé, avec le duc de Candale, en ce cas il faudroit fluij laisser le gouvernement d’Auvergne; car on pourrait faire quelque chose de plus considerable encore pour M. de Mercœur.

This quelque chose de plus considerable encore emerged as the *gouvernement* of Provence. Mazarin’s persistent interest in Provence, a frontier province with a long coastline, close to such enclaved sovereignties as Avignon, the Comtat and Orange, with a strong Parlement at Aix, has already been indicated, but he had no personal representative there since the death of Michele Mazzarini, archbishop of Aix, in

---

44 Talon (see n. 34) vol. VI, p. 364 described Condé as having desseins sur l’amirauté, laquelle ayant autrefois appartenu au duc de Brezé, son beaufrère.


46 Ibid, vol. IV, p. 10: Mazarin to Le Tellier, 8 February 1651. The other two were Harcourt and Schomberg. Mazarin also mentioned Mercœur and Harcourt as personnes affidées in a letter to Lionne of 21 March 1651 (Chéruel, vol. IV, p. 72).

47 Ibid., vol. IV, p. 185: Mazarin to the abbé Basile Fouquet, 16 May 1651.
1648. The Frondes had highlighted the volatility of power groupings in Provence with dramatic clarity, and Mazarin was forced to balance precariously between une alliance possible entre le Parlement de Paris et celui d’Aix and le gouverneur suspect d’adhésion au parti des Princes. The problem was complicated and aggravated by the identity of the gouverneur, Charles de Valois, comte d’Alais, son of the duc d’Angoulême. Alais had married his only daughter and heiress to Louis de Lorraine, duc de Joyeuse, to whom Mazarin himself had earlier hoped to wed one of the nieces. As the son-in-law of one gouverneur of Provence and the son of the duc de Guise, a previous incumbent of that office, Joyeuse could be expected to have his own claims on the survivance, especially given the special relationship which had existed since the end of the fifteenth century between Provence and the House of Lorraine, as the heirs of King René. Just as with the question of the maîtrise, Mazarin pursued a double goal in promoting Mercœur’s candidacy for Provence, to establish the power of the Vendôme in a troubled province requiring a loyal gouverneur who was also a fidèle, while blocking the advance of a senior member of a House which the cardinal viewed with distrust. Such decisions reflect Mazarin’s desire to retrieve and preserve his own political position as much as his skill in attempting to implement specific policies. Notions of loyalty to the cardinal mixed freely with those of loyalty to the king. Mazarin revealed his consciousness of this blend in assessing, for Le Tellier, the question of the Provence gouvernement: Je desire fort d’estre un mauvais prophète, et vous verrez la difference de M. d’Angoulesme [Alais had succeeded his father in 1650] arresté et lorsqu’il sera à la cour, conseillé de ses parens et ses amis, dont la plus grande partie n’a pas grande passion pour le bien de l’Estat, et beaucoup d’aversion contre moy et ce qui m’appartient.

Even while still in exile, at Bouillon, Mazarin maintained pressure to dislodge Angoulême from his gouvernement and to acquire it for Mercœur: si Leurs Majestez prennent résolution de donner une marque de leur bienveillance à M. de Mercœur en lui envoyant les provisions de gouverneur [de Provence], comme toute la province désire ... je crois qu’on peut [le] faire sans aucun inconvenient ... comme leur intention est de faire donner rescompense à M. d’Angoulesme, on en pourrait mettre une clause dans les [articles], ou si ce n’est pas la forme, on peut accompagner les provisions d’une lettre de cachet, par laquelle on ferait sçavoir à M. de Mercœur que le Roy les lui a accordées, mais que c’est à condition qu’il rescompense M. d’Angoulesme. Such determined application was necessary as it was only one year later that Mazarin, now returned to France, was able to assure Laure-Victoire that Il negozio della dimissione del governo di Provenza è finito per quello riguarda il duca d’Angolemme ... come io desidero infinitamente, acciò il sig. duca di Mercurio sia una volta quieto e fuori d’apprensione, e non habbia più pretesto di dire che, senza la dimissione, non può governare con credito, benché la qualita sua propria e quella d’esser mio nipote dovrebbero autorizarlo assai.

The recognition of Mercœur as mio nipote underscores the emphatically public

51 Ibid., vol. VI, p. 56: Mazarin to Laure-Victoire Mancini, duchesse de Mercœur, 8 October 1653.
and official link between the cardinal and those men seeking to marry into his family. This was a clear signal that Mercœur and those who followed him as husbands of the nieces would be viewed and, indeed, used by the cardinal himself as part of the new political machine which he created after he resumed his role alongside Anne of Austria and Louis XIV following the collapse of the Frondes. Even while still in exile, Mazarin emphasized the coincidence of interests mutually binding the cardinal and Mercœur together: Voi dovete concertare tutte le cose col sig.r Duca di Mercurio, che hà più interesse, che io medesimo, nel cambiamento della mia fortuna; while the consciously public nature of these alliances emerges from the cardinal's admonition to the next nephew-by-marriage, the prince de Conti, over complaints about the conduct of his army, that comme, vous estant ce que j'ay l'honneur d'estre, il semble que cela rejaillisse en quelque façon sur moy. Historians who, therefore, view these marriages exclusively as having been of advantage to the grands who contracted them overlook the cardinal's need for a casata which could provide a supply of politically active men identified openly with his policies. With his only brother dead, his promising nephew, Paul Mancini, killed in 1652, an ageing father and two nephews who were minors in Rome, Mazarin had no alternative but to create a system based upon the nieces and the men who married them.

The purpose of this machine, however, was more than the implementation of policies. The defensive element was very strong and a prime goal was security, security for the king and the queen-mother in the exposed and independent-minded frontier provinces, private security for the cardinal to protect his retrieved personal position. Returning from exile, Mazarin addressed himself to the nieces, and in 1653 another shipment of the cardinal's relations left Rome, Laura Martinozzi, Marie, Philippe and Hortense Mancini, shepherded by their mothers, Mazarin's two widowed sisters. An anonymous biography of the cardinal, probably dating from 1657, depicts Mazarin as devoting himself a stabilire la sua posterità nel Regno pensando di collocare le sue nipoti in soggetti eminenti e in questo vi haveva gra. applicatione e così con il loro appoggio fortificare la sua sorgente grandezza. As Mazarin's position was perceived as being more secure, candidates for the nieces's hands proliferated amongst those eager to ally themselves to the cardinal, even though there seems to have been some doubt about how many nieces or, indeed, female relations Mazarin had at his disposal. In an attempt to discourage Francesco I d'Este, Duke of Modena, from marrying Lucrezia Barberini as his third wife, the duke was told, for instance, of a fictitious sorella di S. Em.a ch'è più bella delle nipoti e ch'è la diletta. The duc de Candale and Armand-Charles de La Porte, marquis de

52 Ibid., vol. IV, p. 419: Mazarin to Zongo Ondedei, 5 September 1651.
53 Ibid., vol. VI, p. 189: Mazarin to Armand de Bourbon, prince de Conti, 24 June 1654.
54 ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/133: Relazione della nascita, costumi e vivere del Sig.r Cardinale Giulio Mazzarini, dal di de' suoi natali sino al 1657, unpaginated. There are three manuscript versions, with relatively minor variants, of this early biography written during the cardinal's lifetime. David Parrott and I plan to publish an edition of this text.
55 ASMo, CDE, AF 115: the Abbate Ercole Manzieri to Francesco I d'Este, Duke of Modena, 16 January 1654. The Barberini family, prominent among Mazarin's Italian patrons, was politically divided at this point between the pro-Spanish Cardinal Francesco and his brother, Cardinal Antonio, living in France as Bishop of Poitiers and, from 1657, Archbishop of Reims. As Francesco was conducting the negotiations for his niece's marriage, the entire project was viewed with suspicion at the French court.
La Meilleraye were early and persistent contenders among the upper ranks of the French nobility for a Martinozzi or a Mancini niece, and the former paroissoit destiné à épouser mademoiselle [Anne-Marie] de Martinozzi. The stakes, however, rose dramatically as Il Sig. Card. Mazzarino [è] in tanto e tutto applicato allo stabilimento della sua casa, medianti i matrimonii delle sig.e sue nipote col S.r Pr.pe Conty, con duca di Candale e con altri...

The candidacy of Armand de Bourbon, prince de Conti, marked a new phase in the ascension of the Mazarin casata. Conti was a prince du sang, albeit the most junior one, and in 1653 he stood fifth in the succession to the unmarried Louis XIV, following the king’s only brother, the adolescent Philippe d’Anjou, Gaston d’Orléans, who had only daughters, and his own elder brother and nephew, the exiled and disgraced prince de Condé and d’Enghien. Although heirs were fully expected from the king and his brother, Conti’s proximity to the throne in the circumstances of the 1650s gave him a very special position. Deeply implicated in the Fronde with his brother and their sister, the duchesse de Longueville, Conti had detached himself from Condé and was eager to negotiate his return to court. As a younger son, Conti had been destined for an ecclesiastical career, endowed with benefices and promised the French nomination to the Sacred College, but inspired by the example of feu M. le Prince [Henri de Condé], son père, qui, pour établir sa maison, fit prudemment marier, M. le Prince [Louis de Condé], son frère, avec la nièce d’un favori [Claire-Clémente de Maillé-Brezé, the niece of Cardinal Richelieu], qui n’avait pas plus de mérite ni tant de bien que celui-ci, et ce qui étoit le principal, qui avoit beaucoup moins de pouvoir; que par là ce prince [Conti], dont les affaires étoient fort dérangés, s’étoit rendu le plus riche sujet de l’Europe, by requesting the hand of one of Mazarin’s nieces. This marriage, therefore, aimed not only at reconciling the repentant frondeur Conti to Louis XIV and Anne of Austria, but also at reintegrating him into the power structure in such a way as would be greatly to his profit and more than compensate for the ecclesiastical revenues he would have to renounce on his wedding.

Conti entered the negotiations with high expectations, including his nomination as connétable, and Cosncac’s too frequently repeated description of Conti’s indifference to quelle nièce on lui donnât, qu’il épousoit le Cardinal, et point de tout une femme underscores the price Conti was hoping to extract by entering what some

56 Armand-Charles de La Porte’s grandfather was the younger half-brother of Cardinal de Richelieu’s mother, Suzanne de La Porte.
57 Motteville (see n.23) vol.IV, p. 49.
58 ASMo, CDE, AF115: Manzieri to Francesco I d’Este, 2 January 1654.
59 See above, p. 113.
62 Ibid., vol. I, p. 131. There is some reason to doubt Cosncac’s assertion of Conti’s total lack of interest in the identity of his bride, ancorché io sappia di certo esser nata qualche differenza circa la persona, poichè Conty s’è dichiarato adessò di voler la si.ra Martinozzi che è qui [Anne-Marie] e non la sorella [Laura] di là che viene di Provenza (ASMo, CDE, AF115: Manzieri to Francesco I d’Este, 9 January 1654). Mazarin’s sisters and the four children had been installed in Aix-en-Provence, the capital of Mercœur’s gouvernement of Provence, under the supervision of Laure-Victoire Mancini, duchesse de Mercœur, before their presentation to the king and to the queen-mother, another indication of the importance the cardinal attached to Aix-en-Provence.
contemporaries viewed as a mésalliance. Cosnac himself remonstrated that the match was contre l'honneur de mon maître. Épouser la nièce du persécuteur de sa maison, une fille inconnue; un prince du sang quitter cent mille écus de rente en bénéfices pour s'attacher à la fortune d'un étranger qui pourrait encore être chassé honteusement du royaume, et peut-être sans espoir de retour ... c'est bien vouloir avancer sa mort, troubler et déshonorer sa vie. Mme de Motteville's cooler and more measured prose reflected similar sentiments: Cette alliance ne parut pas d'abord convenir à la grandeur et à la naissance de ce prince; mais l'éclat de la fortune du cardinal Mazarin étoit si grand, qu'il pouvoit, en effaçant la bassesse de sa race, élever sa famille à la participation des plus suprêmes dignités. Such misgivings may well have influenced the wording of Anne-Marie Martinozzi's lettres de naturalité in which Louis XIV firmly described her as native de Rome, épouse de notre très cher et aimé cousin le prince de Conti, nous sommes portées à la juger digne de l'alliance de notre sang, nous avons agréée avec joie son mariage. Certainly, the king and his mother made every effort to demonstrate publicly their support and approval for the match.

Obviously, the marriage of the prince de Conti to Anne-Marie Martinozzi was a major dynastic achievement for Mazarin, and when the princess gave birth to her first child Mme de Motteville observed the cardinal's joy that sa nièce ... venoit d'accoucher d'un prince du sang, qui mettoit un de ses neveux dans le nombre des héritiers de la couronne. Two nieces had entered the House of France, and it is significant that at this time the cardinal both employed un padre Gesuitica siciliano che travaglia alla genealogia della casa Mazzarini, pretendo di tirrarla da quella di Sassonia d'Alemagna and initiated negotiations with Carlo II Gonzaga, Duke of Mantova, for the purchase of his possessions in France, notably the duchés of

63 Ibid., vol. I, p. 116. Although Cosnac's account of the marriage of the prince de Conti to Anne-Marie Martinozzi has been accepted as the standard version, some caution should be exercised. His blatant opposition to the match must be viewed in terms of the subsequent antagonism between him and the Conti couple and, like Molière, his departure from their establishment for that of Philippe de France. He remained, however, on warm terms with the new princesse de Conti's cousin, the duchesse de Mercœur, and was ultimately named Archbishop of Aix-en-Provence.

64 Motteville (see n. 23) vol. IV, p. 40.

65 AN, K 570/55, dated simply May 1654. The previous document, no. 54, in K 570 are the lettres de naturalité for Margherita Martinozzi and her daughter, Laura, dated to 1654 with the day and month left blank. Anne-Marie Martinozzi's name was originally included in these, but was struck out, presumably so that she would have her own lettres as a princesse du sang, and this change required the consistent alteration of ses filles to sa fille. It is striking that Laure-Victoire Mancini, married three years earlier to the duc de Mercœur, did not receive her lettres de naturalité until 29 December 1654 (Saint-Simon, see n. 25, vol. XIII, p. 104, n. 6) nearly six months after the birth of her first son, Louis-Joseph de Bourbon. I am grateful to James Inglis-Jones for drawing my attention to the fact that although the Mercœur marriage was celebrated and consummated in 1651, the contract itself was not actually signed until 29 May 1654 (BN, Factum 32232), when the young duchesse was heavily pregnant, an arresting case of a princely marriage being performed before the contract was finalised, perhaps indicating a rift over the issue between Mercœur and his father, the duc de Vendôme.

66 La Regina e il Re diedono al Sr. Cardinale ogni maggior segno dell' affetto e stimano loro, honoreando ciascuna fuzione con la loro assistenza e dando sino la camiscia la Regina alla sposa e il Re al P. npe con le loro proprie mani, all' uso qui di Francia, cosa non mai più udita oltre al regalo, che fece la Regina med.a all' istessa sposa d'un collo di perle di cento milla franchi (ASMo, CDE, AF 115: Manzieri to Francesco I d'Este, 27 February 1654).

67 Motteville (see n. 23) vol. IV, p. 116.

68 ASMo, CDE, AF 115: Manzieri to Francesco I d'Este, 23 January 1654.
Mayenne and Nevers. Important as this matrimonial advance was, Mazarin also had to consider, as he had done with Mercœur, how best to establish and to use this second nephew-by-marriage. Conti did not receive the dormant charge of Connétable de France, nor did the cardinal bestow upon him the goods of his exiled brother, Condé, despite rumours that such a grant would be part of Anne-Marie’s dowry. Nevertheless, there was an impressive matrimonial settlement, for in addition to the dowry of 600,000 livres from the cardinal, the king had, by lettres patentes of 17 November 1653, increased Conti’s annual pension by 50% to 150,000 livres, desirant que notredit cousin jouisse de ladite augmentation de pension pour lui ayeur à supporter les grandes despenses, qu’il est obligees de faire pour maintenir le rang que sa naissance luy donne. This confirmation is post-dated, however, to 20 July 1654, that is after the wedding. Moreover, there was an outright royal gift of an extra 150,000 livres en faveur de son mariage. Mazarin also acquired and had completely reconstructed the Hôtel de Brienne, on the quai Malaquais, henceforth known at the Hôtel de Conti as the Paris residence for the new couple.

Provided with this establishment, Conti, as had the duc de Mercœur before him, entered the active service of the court, commanding the French forces in Cataluna, of which both Michele Mazarin and Mercœur had been viceroys, and, eventually, serving in the Italian campaigns of the second half of the 1650s. The gouvernements entrusted to Conti reflected Mazarin’s habitual concern with frontier provinces. In 1655, Conti assumed the gouvernement of Guyenne, which had been previously held by Condé, and, after resigning this post in 1659, succeeded to that of Languedoc on Gaston d’Orléans’s death in 1660. Mazarin’s views about the strategic importance of Guyenne were unequivocal: je vous dis seulement que les deux provinces les plus jalouses en France, et par le moyen desquelles on peut, avec moins d’obstacle, mettre la monarchie au point de renverser, sont la Guyenne et la Provence, qui peuvent recevoir avec une tres-grande facilite de puissants secours de tous les royaumes d’Espagne et de tous les Estats que ce roy possede en Italie, et dont les habitans sont naturellement enclins à la revolte. Although these words were written during the perilous year of 1651, Mazarin continued to view the southern provinces with...
marked concern even after the upheavals of the Frondes had been settled and he had been restored to power. It is surely very striking that the two provinces singled out by the cardinal as particularly unreliable were also those whose *gouvernements* were entrusted to the first two princes to marry into the cardinal’s family. The *gouvernement* of Languedoc had been requested on Gaston’s death by Louis’s younger brother, Philippe, for whom Gaston’s duché of Orléans had been re-erected,76 and the selection of Conti over Philippe clearly indicated that a *prince du sang* married to one of the nieces was deemed more trustworthy than a potentially factious cadet. It is possible, as well, that in choosing Conti for Languedoc, Mazarin hoped to profit from the surviving elements of the clientèle structure established there by the family of the prince’s mother, Charlotte de Montmorency.77 Conti’s installation in Languedoc, contiguous to Provence and sharing its traditions of turbulence and independence, aimed at consolidating the cardinal’s position and by, 1660, therefore, much of south-eastern France had come under the authority of Mazarin’s relations.78 The Conti-Martinozzi marriage had an important additional benefit for the cardinal, who absorbed the prince’s «small but outstanding collection» of ecclesiastical benefices, including Saint-Denis and Cluny, into his own already impressive holdings.79

76 Mazarin was quoted that *Monsieur* [Philippe] *a été fort en colère de n’avoir point ce gouvernement:* Cosnac (see n. 60) vol. I, p. 281. Political questions of *gouvernements* inevitably entwined with those of income derived from holding such posts, and Gaston had been reported as deriving 500000 livres annually from Languedoc. (Nancy Nichols Barker, Brother to the Sun King: Philippe, Duke of Orléans, Baltimore 1989, p. 70).

77 «Les Montmorency se succèdent au gouvernemenr de cette province [Languedoc] depuis le règne de François Ier; aussi y disposent-ils d’une abondante clientèle et s’y comportent en véritable vice-rois.» (Jean-François Dubost, Reine, Régente, Reine-mère, in: Marie de Médicis et le Palais du Luxembourg, ed. Marie-Noëlle Baudouin-Matiszek, Paris 1991, p. 128) Although Richelieu’s attempts to eradicate Montmorency power in Languedoc included the demolition of their *place-forte* at Les Baux, an action which had both practical and symbolic significance, a system of clientèle established over one century by the Montmorency may have proved much more difficult to dismantle. Either of the sons, Condé or Conti, of the ultimate heiress of her House, Charlotte de Montmorency, could have expected to call upon support from those nobles whose families had traditionally been attached to his maternal ancestors. William Beik, Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-century France: State Power and Provincial Aristocracy in Languedoc, Cambridge 1985, pp. 234–244, has detected «five consecutive but overlapping client systems» in Languedoc, including one of Mazarin and one of Montmorency, observing of the latter: «The governor did not own extensive property in Languedoc, but his alliances were based on close marriage ties with most of the prominent local families, and were reinforced by common battlefield experience... The bonds of Montmorency’s system were therefore personal, military ones...» Beik does not discuss Conti’s role within this structure, but Conti does appear on the chart (figure 8, p. 235) as the eventual heir, thanks to «certain connections», of the Montmorency machine in Languedoc.

78 There was a positive military advantage as well, for if the frontier provinces were the most vulnerable to invasion they were, logically, the obvious areas from which to launch French military interventions. Mercœur and Conti served in both Catalan and Italian campaigns and they were able to group their armies in their own *gouvernements* and march them directly to the nearby theatres of war. Mazarin reported Mercœur, for instance, as *ayant eu ordre de s’en aller en Catalogne et de faire marcher ses troupes qui estoient en Provence of which he was gouverneur* (ASMo, CDE, CP, 1393 A/132: Mazarin to Francesco I d’Este, 15 July 1658).

79 Bergin, Cardinal Mazarin and his Benefices (see n. 8) p. 8. One entry in the *Registre des délibérations du Conseil de Son Eminence le Cardinal Mazarin, 1654–1655* (BL, Eg. 1902, entry for 7 September 1654, fo. 14) actually refers to the *benefices dont son E. est titulaire par le mariage de M. le Prince de Conty.*
The first two marriages, therefore, emerged from the disorders of the Frondes, reflecting changing alliances among the *grands*, and Mazarin used Mercœur and Conti as his representatives in exposed provinces and in the army. With the next two marriages the cardinal elaborated his matrimonial strategy by deploying his nieces as elements in French diplomatic policy, specifically in the arena of international relations which he knew best, the Italian states. The lack of scholarly interest in Mazarin's Italian policies has, rightly, been lamented, and this is the more deplorable as the importance the cardinal attached to these questions, both from his own intimate knowledge of many of the Italian courts and from his own interpretation of French interests in the area, can be demonstrated from the ample documentation. By the mid-1650s, both the king and the cardinal were aware of the fragility of the French position among the Italian sovereignties, and, in 1654, Louis XIV wrote to Cardinal Rinaldo d'Este, the French Protector at the Holy See, observing that *la grande quantité de maisons d'Italie ... sont par interests ou par naissance ouvertement tous sous main attachées à la Maison d'Autriche*. Relations with the Papacy were, at times, poisonous. Mazarin's background as a Barberini protégé ensured unhappy relations with Urbano VIII's successors, and he had even attempted to employ the French veto to block the election of the Pamphilj Pope Innocenzo X in 1644. The elevation of Alessandro VII Chigi in 1655 was scarcely more welcome in Paris. The Medici Grand Dukes of Tuscany were Habsburg allies, Mazarin noted that *continuano gli avvisi di Roma della partialità del Duca di Parma per gli Spagnuoli* and the Gonzaga Duke of Mantova was viewed as deeply unreliable, a prince from whom the best that could be hoped was neutrality. So restricted were French options that Mazarin was reduced to looking for support from even the smallest courts: *j'ay fait remettre en mains du Sr Abbé Manzieri trente mil livres pour faire tenir à M. le Duc de la Mirandole ... Quant à M. le Prince de Masseran, il semble qu'il n'est ny en pouvoir ny en poste de faire grande chose pour le service du Roy ... Neantmoins, sa bonne volonté merite qu'on luy en sache gré, et si V.A. après avoir examiné les considerations cy-dessus juge qu'on ne doive pas laisser de la

---

80 Georges DETHAN, *La politiqu e italienn e de Mazarin*, in: *La Franc e et l'Itali e a u temp s de Mazarin*, éd. Jean SERROY, Grenoble 1986, pp. 27–32. The strong cultural ties between Mazarin and the Italian courts have fared somewhat better and are represented both in this volume of proceedings of a conference held in Grenoble in 1985 and, most magisterially, in Madeleine LAURAIN-PORTEMER, *Études Mazarines*, Paris 1981.

81 ASMo, CDE, CP 1562 A/6: Louis XIV to Cardinal Rinaldo d'Este, 26 February 1654.

82 ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/132: Mazarin to Francesco I d'Este, 18 August 1658.

83 On 19 October 1652, commenting to Le Tellier on the Duke of Mantova's defection from the French cause, Mazarin wrote *C'est une estrange resolution que celle que le Duc de Mantone a prise. Il la faut considerer comme un effet de la jeunesse et de l'inexperience de ce prince et de la passion que sa mere [Maria Gonzaga, duchesse de Réthel] a tousjours en contre la France*. (CHÉRUEL, vol. V, p. 414). The orientation of Mantova towards the House of Austria had been confirmed with Duke Carlo II Gonzaga's marriage in 1649 to the Habsburg Archduchess Isabella Klara of the Tyrol. Towards the end of the decade, little had change to improve French faith in the Gonzaga and on 29 June 1658 Mazarin wrote to Francesco I d'Este that *j'ay esté bien aisé que M. le Duc de Mantone aye accepté la neutralité que le Roy luy a accordée, mais j'esseyseuhaité que c'est esté sans la permission des Espagnols* (ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/132). In the next month, on 18 August 1658, Mazarin concluded that *l'esprit dudit Duc [of Mantova] nous doit toujours obligez en avoir de la mefiance* (ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/132: Mazarin to Francesco I d'Este, 18 August 1658).
The marriages of the nieces of Cardinal Mazarin

Gratifier de quelque pension, l’on fera icy... Only two Houses of substance on the Italian peninsula supported France, the Este of Modena and the Savoy, and it was into these two dynasties that Mazarin married his next two nieces, Laura Martinozzi and Olympe Mancini.

Again, it must be stressed that such diplomatic marriages for French interests were also family alliances of the greatest prestige for Mazarin, and the extent to which the cardinal made a distinction between these two strands may well be questioned. It should as well be pointed out that Mazarin did not have a great choice of potential brides for matrimonial diplomacy given the demographic poverty of the House of France. The only French princesses at this period were Gaston’s daughters, and of these, the eldest, Anne-Marie-Louise, la Grande Mademoiselle, remained in disgrace until 1657 for her role in the Frondes, while her three younger half-sisters had not yet obtained an age at which they could be married. Mazarin’s nieces, therefore, offered an obvious, albeit highly unorthodox, solution to the absence of a suitable bride for what was viewed in early-modern Europe as a central element of diplomatic practice, the dynastic marriage. The marriages of Laura Martinozzi and Olympe Mancini were matters of French foreign policy, and the unanimous view was that alliance with Mazarin and alliance with France had merged into one and the same union. In writing in 1659 of the Este marriage, Domenico Gamberti recorded that the Duke of Modena diè al Prencipe suo Primogenito per isposa una nipote del Sig. Card. Mazzarini ... venendo in questa maniera ad appoggiarsi egli meglio allo Scettro Reale della Francia, di quell’Emmenetiss.a è la primaria intelligenza.

Laura Martinozzi, the niece who spent the least time during her formative years in France, seemed to have been marked out for an Italian marriage. With no little sharpness, Mazarin replied in 1653 to a letter from his sister, Margherita Martinozzi, following the collapse of yet another Barberini marriage project: Fra tanto si andaranno continuando le diligenze per maritarla in Italia ... e sia certa, che, in quasivoglia luogo ella si mariti, sarà sempre meglio accommodata che in casa Barberini. In the following year, the princesse de Conti was able to inform her husband, absent in Cataluña but enquiring about the identity of his future relations, that Pour tous les mariages qu’on a proposés pour ma sœur, je crois que celui du fils du duc de Modène se fera, n’y ayant point d’autre difficulté que celle que le duc veut que M. le Cardinal lui donne outre ce qu’il donne en mariage à sa nièce 150,000 écus que le Roi lui doit depuis la guerre de Crémone. For their part, the Este, Duke Francesco I and his son, Alfonso, had focused on Laura Martinozzi as the niece the hereditary prince should marry, la più propria per lo stesso P.npe, massime perché verrebbe S.A. ad essere cognato di Conty, a clear indication that in addition to the

84 ASMo, CDE, CP1393 A/132: Mazarin to Francesco I d’Este, 17 March 1657. Mirandola was of particular interest to the Duke of Modena as his sister, Anna Beatrice d’Este, had married Alessandro II Pico, Duke of Mirandola in 1656.
85 Domenico Gamberti, L’idea di un prencipe et eroe Christiano in Francesco I d’Este di Modona e Reggio Duca VIII, Modena 1659, p. 463. I am grateful to Professor Irving Lavin and Professor Marilyn Aronberg Lavin for having drawn my attention to this source.
86 CHÉRUEL, vol. VI, pp. 54-55: Mazarin to Margherita Martinozzi, 8 October 1653.
87 Cited in BARTHÉLÉMY (see n. 2) p. 31.
88 ASMo, CDE, AF 115: Manzieri to Francesco I d’Este, 20 February 1654. In contrary fashion, Candale, yet again a potential husband for one of the nieces, seemed indifferent quanto alla persona e piglierà la
profits of public alliance with Mazarin, potential candidates for the hands of the Mazarinettes were attempting to gauge the benefits to be extracted from family ties to those other men attached by marriage to the cardinal’s _casata_.

Francesco I d’Este, Duke of Modena, had had, in common with many other north Italian sovereigns, a complex career of shifting alliances during the Thirty Years War and during the period following 1648 when the continuation of the Franco-Spanish aspect of the conflict made a deep impact on Italian political arrangements. A fervent partisan of the Habsburg cause in the late 1630s, when he made a celebrated visit to the court of Madrid, Francesco gradually shifted to a French alliance in the subsequent decade, becoming the generalissimo of Louis XIV’s Italian army in 1647 and, despite Spanish pressure, confirming his adherence to France. Throughout the 1650s he was Mazarin’s most reliable prop among the Italian states, far more dependable than the cardinal’s other leading supporter in the region, Marie-Christine of France, dowager Duchess of Savoy, but by the mid-1650s Francesco d’Este was very hard-pressed indeed. The constant menace of Spanish invasion of the Este patrimony materialised in 1655, the same year as the marriage of his heir to Laura Martinuzzi, with the siege of Reggio by Caraçena. Francesco’s ambitious foreign policy had entailed great expenditure over many years, and the shortage of money had become so acute that the duke embarked upon an endeavour to marry a third duchess, searching among such wealthy _dame private_ as Virginia Spinola and Anna Carafa. The choice ultimately fell upon Lucrezia Barberini, whom Francesco wed in 1654, when negotiations were already under way for the marriage of the hereditary prince Alfonso d’Este, the son of his first duchess, Maria Farnese of Parma, to a niece of Mazarin. From this match Francesco hoped to obtain permanent French protection, a major financial infusion, including the repayment of the loan to the French crown referred to by the princesse de Conti, and, possibly, the consent of the cardinal and the queen-mother to the marriage of one of his daughters to Louis XIV.

_Mancini che è qui anche per non farsi cognato di Conty affin di non haver a seguitare il suo partitio_ (ASMo, CDE, AF115: Manzieri to Francesco I d’Este, 23 January 1654). The nephews-by-marriage had to consider relations among themselves in the evolving Mazarin machine as well as their ties to the cardinal as head of his family.


91 LITTA (see n. 15) _D’Este_ fascicule, table XVI.

92 See above, note 55.

93 During a two-hour-long meeting with Loménie de Brienne, the Modenese envoy Manzieri was told of the _buona disposizione che si ha qui per la casa di V.A., ma egli ha preteso di averirmi confidentemente del disegno del Sig. Card. Mazzarini di dar una nipote al Sr. Prencipe [Alfonso] in caso che il Re prenda una delle principesse figlie di V.A._ (ASMo, CDE, AF115: Manzieri to Francesco I d’Este, 2 January 1654). References to a possible Este bride for the king, including those to the temporary presence of Pierre Mignard, sent by Mazarin in 1653 to paint portraits of prospective brides for Louis XIV: (Janet Southorn, Power and Display in the Seventeenth Century: the Arts and their Patrons in Modena and Ferrara, Cambridge 1988, p. 40), appear throughout Manzieri’s correspondence, and it is more than
Money played the most prominent part in the marriage negotiations, and to
Mazarin's direct questioning of Francesco's terms, Manzieri replied that V.A.
haveva havuto centoventi mila doble ciascuna delle due volte che s'era maritata con
principesse della sua condizione [Francesco had married consecutively two sisters,
Maria and Vittoria Farnese; his third marriage had not yet taken place], che per la
stima che faceva di S.Em.a e della sua vera amicitia e parentela si saria finalmente
contentata di centomila doble di dote per il Sig. P.npe, in conto di dote supposto il
pagamento pronto del suo credito a parte, thus affirming the claims of the Este on the
French crown for the outstanding debt. Secrecy over the terms was necessary so that
it did not appear that che dasse in dote al Sig. P.npe di piu che a Conty, perchè
offenderebbe forse adesso la Casa Reale e tutta la Francia. Mazarin refused to
satisfy all of the Este financial claims, using the notion of exact parity with the Conti
settlement as a means to restrict the dowry: Per la dote poi le risoluzioni ultime del S.
Card. sono di trattase il Sig. Principe nel medesimo modo che fa Conty, scusandosi di
non poter far differenza senza offendere la casa reale, onde mi ha fatto dire che darà a
V.A. duecentocinquantamila scudi come dà all' istesso Conty e che in oltre farà pagare
a V.A. il suo credito col Re, overo Le darà trecentomila scudi di dote lasciando il
credito di V.A. nello stato presente per andarLa soddisfacendo quando si potrà.
Manzieri went on to convert the global sum, which was meant to include the debt,
into monete verria a render e adesso la Casa Reale e tutta la Francia. Manzieri went on to
convert the global sum, which was meant to include the debt, into monete verria a rendere
a V.A. centotrentamila doble effettive, considerably less than Francesco had hoped the combined dowry and repayment would have been.

Manzieri protested that Mazarin should trattar meglio il Sig. P.npe di quello che fa
Conty, perchè quello essendo qui può ricevere mille altri vantaggi che il Sig. P.npe
non può pretendere, and Mazarin's subsequent effusiveness to the Este may have
reflected an attempt to compensate through patronage what both father and son
could have viewed as a shortfall in the financial arrangements. Mazarin's letter to
Alfonso is strikingly warm: L'affetto e [la] stima che ho sempre per la persona di V.A.
si aggiunge bora un vincolo così stretto di affinità per il matrimonio ch' Ella ha
contratto con mia nipote, che non mi pare di dover usare seco di complimenti ordinari
in simili occasioni, ma piuost d'une espressione sincera e cordiale di quell' amore con
quale q.to legame mi stringe a V.A. e mi obbliga di riguardare la sua casa e suoi
interessi come miei propri, di modo che dopo il Sig. Duca suo Padre Ella mi dovrà
dare in giustizio il primo luogo nell' amarLa e servirLa. Writing to the father, the
cardinal stressed the strengthening of the political unity between the two men which
the marriage would ensure: Io non voglio entrare nelle esagerationi de' miei
affettuosissimi sentimenti e in avere nuove sicurezze dell' amicizia e servitù mia che
allianza seguita, si renderà sempre più ferma e inalterabile, perchè q.te maniere sono
superflue a chi ha tanta sicurezza l'uno dell' altro, come noi abbiamo.

possible that Mazarin used this prospect as a bait to encourage the marriage of his own niece to
Francesco's heir.

94 ASMo, CDE, AF115: Manzieri to Francesco I d'Este, 13 February 1654.
95 ASMo, CDE, AF115: Manzieri to Francesco I d'Este, 20 February 1654.
96 Ibid.
97 ASMo, CDE, CP1393 A/133: Mazarin to the Hereditary Prince Alfonso d'Este [afterwards Alfon-
so IV, Duke of Modena].
98 ASMo, CDE, CP1393 A/132: Mazarin to Francesco I d'Este, 31 May 1655.
Mazarin was no stranger to heightened rhetoric to express the intensity of his emotional attachments\textsuperscript{99}, but in the case of the Este, he provided consistent political, if not financial, aid. \textit{Les bruits de l'accommodement de V.A. [Francesco] avec les Espagnols} were dismissed as \textit{bagatelles}\textsuperscript{100}; French support was promised for Este claims on Comacchio\textsuperscript{101}; \textit{Le Roy a volontiers accordé la charge de lieutenant general à M. le Prince Almeric}\textsuperscript{102}, a younger son of Francesco, and Prince Almerico d'Este was suggested as the French candidate for the Polish throne\textsuperscript{103}; the French court seconded Este claims for the Imperial investiture of Correggio\textsuperscript{104}. This fountain of favour, flowing over many years, may have provided no little consolation for the restricted dowry and the problems of the French indebtedness to the Este, but, following the established pattern, Mazarin gained much as well.

Marriage of a niece into a sovereign Italian House had particular importance for the cardinal as he assembled his familial machine, and he took care to protect the


\textsuperscript{100} ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/132: Mazarin to Francesco I d'Este, 21 April 1656.

\textsuperscript{101} \textit{La part que je prends à tous les interests de V.A. m'oblige de luy dire que j'estime qu'elle devroit presser pour avoir la satisfaction qu'on luy fait esperer pour Comacchio}... (ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/132: Mazarin to Francesco I d'Este, 23 March 1657). Comacchio, attached to the duchy of Ferrara, had eschewed to the papacy in 1597 on the extinction of the senior line of the House of Este, the cadet cousins of which transferred the Este court to Modena, an Imperial rather than a papal fief. Pressure to recover the Comacchio reflected the \textit{mai sopite aspirazioni estensi su Ferrara e Comacchio: CHIAPPINI} (see n. 90 p. 411), and papal reinvestment of those lands lost to Rome remained a goal of the Dukes of Modena in the seventeenth century.

\textsuperscript{102} ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/133: Mazarin to Francesco I d'Este, 18 August 1658.

\textsuperscript{103} \textit{V.A. [Alfonso d'Este] deve già sapere che da molto tempo in quà si tratta di far eleggere un successore al Re di Polonia e si va cercando un soggetto proprio e che habbia la qualità che si ricercano della chieza de natali, della capacità di commandare le armi e che possa accassarsi con una figlia della Principessa Palatina [Anne de Gonzague], sorella della Regina di Polonia [Louise-Marie de Gonzague], dal cui credito è autorità in quel regno... ho preferito a tutti il Sig. Prencipe suo fratello [Almerico d'Este] per la causa che prendo in argomento e grandezza di coetsa Ser.ma Casa e persuadendomi che ciò non possa essere che di gran contento a V.A. per la gloria, che gli ne risulterebbe e per le coseguenze che ne portrebbero derivarsi alla sua famiglia} (ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/133: Mazarin to Alfonso IV d'Este, Duke of Modena, 15 February 1660). Francesco I d'Este died in 1658 and was succeeded by his son Alfonso IV, thus making Laura Martinozzi, his consort, Duchess of Modena. Almerico d'Este's unexpected death later in 1660 unknotted this ambitious scheme for the Polish throne.

\textsuperscript{104} In the \textit{Article de Modène} for the peace treaty of 1659, Mazarin provided for the withdrawal of Spanish troops from Correggio \textit{et mesme pour la plus grande seureté et avantage ded Sr. Duc, S.M. Catholique promet de faire des offices tres puissants auprès de l'Empereur à ce qu'il ait agréable d'accorder aus. Sr. Duc à sa satisfaction, l'investiture ded. estats de Correggio, comme l'avoient les princes dudit Correggio}... (ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/133: \textit{Article de Modène}) Mazarin's efforts on behalf of the Este during the negotiations of the Peace of the Pyrénées were extensive, for in addition to extracting, in article XCVII, Spanish consent \textit{de ne plus envoyer dans la place de Correggio la garnison qu'Elle [Sa Majesté Catholique] avoit accoutumé par le passé d'y tenir}, article XCVI stipulated the Duke of Modena's \textit{belle et libre neutralité avec les deux couronnes de France & d'Espagne}, while article XCIX promised Spain's and France's good offices in Rome \textit{de faire terminer sans delay... le different que ledit Sieur Duc a depuis longtemps avec la Chambre Apostolique, touching la propriété & possession des Vallées de Comachio} (Jean Dumont, baron de Carlscroon, Corps universel des droits de gens, Amsterdam and The Hague 1726–1731, vol. VI, parts II and III, p. 277).
position of the first niece he had actually placed on a direct path to a sovereign throne. In what need have been no more than a simple *lettre de compliment*, Louis XIV instead read a lesson to the new Duchess of Modena, Lucrezia Barberini: *L’estime que j’ay pour ma cousine la Princesse de Modène votre belle-fille ne me permet pas de la laisser partir sans vous tesmoigner la joye estreme que j’ay ressentie que mon cousin le Duc de Modène, votre mary, ayant cognu son merite, l’ait choisit pour compagne de mon cousin, le Prince de Modène, son fils, et comme les grandes et signales services que mon cousin, le Cardinal de Mazarin, son oncle, me rend tous les jours et à mon estat sont cognuz par le chef de la Maison en laquelle vous estez entrée, je m’asseure que vous demeureiez persuadée de la tendresse et parfaite amitié que j’ay pour sa niepce, à qui l’inclination que mond. Cousin votre mary a du pour elle m’a autant plus obligé à redoubler mes forces pour luy de partir avantageusement, de laquelle je feray toujours ressentir des effects à sa maison*.

Only death ended the animosity between Lucrezia Barberini and Laura Martinozzi, consecutive Duchesses of Modena and both mothers of consecutive reigning Dukes of Modena, but clearly the King of France acted positively at the early stages of Laura’s marriage in order to protect her position in a potentially hostile court.

Muratori was fully aware of the mixture of benefits which Mazarin hoped to obtain, both for himself and for France, from the Este marriage. The cardinal *che sapeva ben’ accordare il proprio interesse con quello della Corona, si prevalse della congiuntura per ingradire la propria Casa sotto pretesto del buon servigio del Re. Propose dunque come cosa utile o necessario a tener fermo nella divozione verso la Maestà sua il Duca di Modena, da cui gli Spagnuoli avrebbono tentato senza dubbio di staccarlo, l’accasamento di D. Laura, sua Nipote … col Principe Alfonso primogenito del Duca; e gli fu facile l’impegnare il Re in questo trattato*. Firmly attached to the French crown by the marriage, Francesco and Alfonso d’Este were also integrated into the Mazarin family system of military commands in the northern Italian theatre of war. Command of the Italian army was shared between the Duke of Modena and, consecutively, Mercœur and Conti, all now related to Mazarin, and the cardinal was eager to ensure that the potential dangers of a necessarily divided command should be avoided by evoking family harmony, even if such good will had to be imposed from Paris. In the 1656 campaign Mazarin believed that he had fait ce qui estoit necessaire pour maintenir l’union entre Messieurs les ducs de Modene et de Mercœur et empescher que celuy-ci ne pretend le titre de generalissime, which had been attributed to Francesco d’Este as a sovereign prince.

Inevitably there were tensions, despite the family bond. The lifting of the siege of Palamos, which Conti was directing, supported from sea by Vendôme, triggered mutual recriminations, Conti *se plaignant fort de M. de Vendôme, qui, de son côté, se plaignoit de lui*. Indeed, in 1657, despite Mercœur’s record of military success and the fact that il était également le neveu du Cardinal, Conti insisted on replacing his

105 ASMo, CDE, CP 1562 A/6: Louis XIV to Lucrezia Barberini, Duchess of Modena, 1 June 1655.
106 Laura Martinozzi’s son, Duke Francesco II d’Este, died without issue in 1694 and was succeeded by Lucrezia Barberini’s son, Cardinal Rinaldo d’Este.
108 AAE, CPS, vol. 51, fo. 41: Mazarin to Brachel, 1 September 1656.
109 COSNAC (see n. 60) vol. I, p. 218.
Robert Oresko

Bourbon cousin in the joint Italian command, brushing aside Cosnac’s protestations que M. de Modène et lui ne s’accommoderoient jamais pour le commandement, et que le Cardinal qui avoit une considération infinie pour ce duc, qu’il regardoit comme le principal agent des conquêts d’Italie, ne voudroit pas diminuer son autorité, de peur de faire un ennemi d’une personne si nécessaire.110 Having in the 1656 campaign assured that Mercœur anderà a comandare in cotesto esercito insieme con V.A. [Francesco d’Este] in quel modo però che conviene per conservare a Lei quella prerogativa del comando111, the cardinal asserted himself again in 1657, and the family ties seem to have brought about considerably more cooperation between Francesco and Conti than Cosnac expected. Brachet was able to report back to the cardinal on the, at least, initial level d’accord et d’intelligence que ces deux princes ont faict et [qui] sont si contents l’un de l’autre que V.E. ne peut le souhaitter davantage112, and Conti himself assured Mazarin that he and the Duke of Modena had spoken à cœur ouvert et prisms ensemble toutes les mesures nécessaires, tant pour le service de S.M.té que pour notre conduite particulière l’un avec l’autre113. While the gradual acquisition of such parentadi … accrebbero a dimisura il credito e lo splendore di quel famoso Poporato114, their organisation into a family machine directed by Mazarin worked at one and the same time for the implementation of high state policy.115

One element, essential for French military and diplomatic success on the Italian peninsula, was missing from the cardinal’s dynastic network. Mazarin had long had a specially close relationship with the House of Savoy and, in particular, with the dowager Duchess Marie-Christine, known as >Madama Reale< or >Madame Royale<, a daughter of Henri IV and Marie de’ Medici, dating from his employment by her husband, Duke Vittorio Amedeo I, in the early 1630s116. The duchy of Modena itself was too small and too distant to solve the problems of winter quarterings for French troops, and the unreliability of the Duke of Mantova, with his more suitable possessions in the Monferrato, specifically the fortress of Casale, emphasized the importance of Savoy-Piedmont for purely practical considerations of military administration. In November 1656, these problems were particularly acute, and Mazarin reassured himself that à l’esgard de Mad. Royale … Elle [V.A. = Francesco I d’Este]  

110 Ibid., vol. I, pp. 248–249. Mazarin’s observation that il étoit juste que M. le prince de Conti eût cette préférence sur M. de Mercoeur (p. 250) probably reflects the system of bienséance in the distribution of military commands which were accorded in terms of hierarchical rank, in this case, a prince du sang taking precedence over a prince légitimé. See David PARROTT, Richelieu, the grands and the French Army, in: The Age of Richelieu, eds. Joseph BERGIN and Laurence BROCKLISS, Oxford 1992, pp. 147–148.
111 ASMo, CDE, CP1393 A/132: Mazarin to Francesco I d’Este, 10 March 1656.
112 AAE, CPS, vol. 52, fo. 435: Brachet to Mazarin, 14 September 1657.
113 AAE, CPS, vol. 52, fo. 227: Conti to Mazarin, 1 June 1657.
114 Muratori (see n. 107) vol. II, p. 564.
115 GOUBERT (see n. 3) p. 407 so misunderstands Mazarin’s Italian policy and the role played in it by the Este-Martinozzi marriage that he presents the Este Duke of Modena and the Gonzaga Duke of Mantova as brothers, both sons of the duc de Nevers. Such fundamental factual errors are characteristic of a failing shared by many French historians to give adequate weight and seriousness to the persistence of the role played by Italian questions in Mazarin’s thinking.
116 DETHAN, Mazarin un homme de paix à l’âge baroque (see n. 9) pp. 148–161.
sçaura bien user de le dextérité covenable,

referring in a subsequent letter to les moyens que j’ay proposé [à] gagner Madame Royale au point d’obtenir un quartier en Piemont au moins pour la partie de l’infanterie qui ne pourra demeurer en Monferrat et dans la Vallée.

Although Duke Carlo Emanuel II of Savoy had attained his majority, his mother had conserved her control over the direction of policy, and one of the means of drawing Marie-Christine into an even more cooperative and obliging relationship with France was the marriage of Olympe Mancini to a member of the House of Savoy living at the French court, Eugène-Maurice de Savoie, comte de Soissons. Eugène-Maurice was a younger son of Tommaso of Savoy, principe di Carignano, and his wife, Marie de Bourbon, co-heiress to the Soissons fortune and title, which she transmitted to the cadet branch of the Savoy dynasty into which she had married. Mazarin had counted the Carignano couple as among his supporters during the Frondes. As a younger son, Eugène-Maurice, had been destined for the Church, and the Carignano had made clear in 1654 their speranze di aver Card.le il Pren.pe Eugenio loro figlio. Within the next two years, however, the young prince emerged as a suitable candidate for one of the nieces. This fourth marriage, although negotiated between the cardinal and the Carignano in France, also became part of a complex exchange of concessions on the part of the courts of both Paris and Torino, for the House of Savoy had a number of requests to make to their French cousins before agreeing to winter quartering and before accepting Olympe into one of the most august and prestigious dynasties of early-modern Europe.

Mazarin seems long to have harboured the private ambition to place one member of his family in the House upon which so much of the implementation of his Italian policies rested, another example of the imbrication of personal and state goals in his political thinking, and as early as 1654 Rénauld, chevalier de Sévigné wrote to Marie-Christine de l’insolence de cet homme, qui fait courre le bruit que Son Altesse Royale votre fils [Carl o Emanuel II] lui faisait demander une de ses nièces ... il n’en viendra jamais à bout; car l’on traite la chose du dernier ridicule. Sévigné’s caustic fulminations capture one strain in the corporate mentalité of dynastic Europe which viewed marriages to the nieces as mésalliances aimed at fuelling the ascension of the cardinal and his casata. Such misgivings could be assuaged, however, if sufficient progress could be made in obtaining important objectives. Since 1632, the House of Savoy had consistently pressed to acquire the trattamento reale, recognition of the dynasty as a royal House, with the style of >Royal Highness< rather than >Serene Highness< and precedence for its ambassadors with those of kings rather than dukes.

117 ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/132: Mazarin to Francesco I d’Este, 2 November 1656.
118 ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/132: Mazarin to Francesco I d’Este, 25 November 1656.
119 Mme de Carignan tesmoigne grande chaleur pour mes interests et parle hardiment à la Reyne, Mazarin wrote to Milet from Brühl on 19 April 1651 (CHÉRUEL, vol. IV, p. 133).
120 ASMo, CDE, AF 115: Manzieri to Francesco I d’Este, 2 January 1564.
121 Renaud, chevalier de Sévigné, Correspondance du Chevalier de Sévigné et de Christine de France, eds. Jean LEMOINE and Frédéric SAULNIER, Paris 1911, p. 250: Sévigné to Marie-Christine, 12 June 1654.
and princes, on the basis of their rights to the phantom kingdom of Cyprus. This pretention poisoned diplomatic relations among the states of northern Italy, as Venice also claimed Cyprus as the heir to its last resident sovereign, Queen Caterina Cornaro. As early as 1653, shortly after Mazarin’s return from exile, Marie-Christine was pressing the cardinal pour obtenir de Sa Majesté une lettre adressante à son ambassadeur à Rome, afin qu’il traite le nostre comme celuy de Venise. Marie-Christine, like Francesco d’Este, had a daughter to marry and looked upon Louis XIV as the ideal son-in-law. Il y avait longtemps que la duchesse de Savoie pressoit le ministre de se déclarer sur le mariage du Roi et de la princesse Marguerite, sa fille, and a Mancini-Savoy marriage could be seen in Torino as a necessary prelude to the more important goal of, through Mazarin’s support, placing Marguerite-Yolande on the French throne.

As Louis XIV grew older, his marriage became a pressing matter at the French court and at all those courts with princesses of marriageable age. For the court of Torino, however, a second important practical consideration became the engine for the marriage of Mazarin’s fourth niece, the attempt to eliminate the permanent military presence of France in Piedmont, notably the possession of Pinerolo and occupation of the very citadel of Torino itself. In the autumn of 1656 Mazarin wrote to Marie-Christine assuring her that Je ne dirai point à V.A.R. combien le Roy a de reconnaissance des nouvelles marques qu’Elle a donnés pendant cette campagne de son affection pour les interests de cette couronne. On 14 November he raised the issue of the citadel of Torino and announced that he was sending Brachet to Torino to discuss the issue à vive voix. Yet on the sixteenth, Madama Reale wrote to the Savoyard envoy in France about the Mancini-Soissons marriage negotiations, and, without linking them directly, raised in the same letter una restituzione della citadella di Torino. On 25 November Mazarin was able to inform Marie-Christine that the arrangements had been concluded for the marriage entre M. Prince Eugène et

123 Carlo CONTESSA, Per la storia della decadenza della diplomazia italiana nel secolo XVII: aneddoti di relazioni veneto-sabaude, Torino 1906 (also published as an article in the Miscellanea della storia italiana of 1906).
124 AST, RMR, m.59, p.671: Duchess Marie-Christine of Savoy to Mazarin, 19 April 1653.
125 MOTTEVILLE (see n.23) vol.IV, p.119. This is certainly the implication of Mme de Motteville’s statement that, Mazarin, trop sage pour entreprendre d’en mettre une [nièce] sur le trône, il ne pouvoit s’en approcher davantage qu’en y plaçant la princesse Marguerite, son alliée; et ce pouvoit être la raison pour laquelle il paroissit se laisser plutôt arracher un consentement en sa faveur qu’en faveur de toutes les autres qui pouvoient y prétendre. James Inglis-Jones is currently preparing a new interpretation of the negotiations leading to Louis XIV’s marriage, emphasizing the enthusiasm of Mazarin, contrasted to the position of Anne of Austria, for the Savoy match and analysing the reciprocal and parallel advantages he and Marie-Christine hoped to extract from placing Marguerite-Yolande on the French throne.
126 Pignerol ... pese si fort à cette cour, qu’il échappe quelquefois de dire qu’ils renonceroient à toutes les terres de Montferrat pour [la] ravoir (AAE, CPS, vol. 52, fo. 44: Abel Servien to Mazarin).
127 AAE, CPS, vol. 51: Mazarin to Marie-Christine, 13 October (?) 1656.
128 AST, LMF, m. 64: Mazarin to Marie-Christine, 14 November 1656. A copy of this letter is in AAE, CPS, vol. 51, fo. 100.
129 AST, LMF, m. 66: Marie-Christine to the abbate Geronimo della Rovere, 16 November 1656.
The marriages of the nieces of Cardinal Mazarin

ma nièce Mancini. Et ce n’est pas seulement par respect que je luy rends ce très humble devoir. Je ne me sens pas moins obligé d’y faire par reconnaissance de la bonté que VV.AA.RR. ont eu de favoriser cette affaire au point que je sçais qu’elles ont fait. S’il faudroit besoin de nouveaux motifs pour embrasser avec chaleur les interests de la Maison royale de Savoie, asseurement celuy c’y achieveroit de m’engager, mais je puis dire avec verité qu’il est fort superflu. Marie-Christine had clearly support the match, and it must be remembered that, as head of the House, Carlo Emanuele’s permission was required for the marriage of his Soissons cousin. Writing to Madama Reale’s brother-in-law, Maurizio of Savoy, it would seem a few days later, Mazarin evoked the past patronage networks:

godo in estremo di vedere con questa nuova allianza più fortamente stretti [?] quei legami di servitù, che m’ hanno sempre unito all’ A.V. e a tutti i suoi interessi.

The marriage of Eugène-Maurice and Olympe may have been settled, but the wedding had not yet taken place and, before it did, another event was awaited. Again, the precise sequence of dates is important. Early in the new year, 13 January 1657, following the abbate Amoretti’s discussions in Paris with Mazarin, Marie-Christine expressed qualche speranza che gli uffizi che egli [Mazarin] ha promessi di fare per la restituzione della citadella habbiano da produrre felice esito. On 30 January, the cardinal announced la joye que le Roy a eu de donner ses ordres sans aucune condition pour la remise de la citadelle de Turin, puisque V.A.R. n’estime pas qu’il soit necessaire pour le bien du service de M. son fils qu’il la retienne davantage. Sa Majesté est ravie que cette action acheve de justifier au publique la sage et glorieuse regence de Votre Altesse Royale, en sorte que la malice mesme sera contrainte à la louer, while Louis, writing directly to his cousin, underscored the point: il faut avouer que la conduite qu’a tenue ma tante, la Duchesse de Savoie, votre mere et les conseils qu’elle vous a donnés n’ont pas esté accompagné de moins de prudence que de tendresse pour vous et de zele pour votre bien et celuy de vos estats, dont j’ay d’autant plus de joye, qu’il est vray qu’il n’y a personne pour qui j’ay une plus grande estime que pour ma tante. Writing to this esteemed aunt, Louis acknowledged how that other grand prop of Mazarin in the Italian campaigns, the Duke of Modena, m’a fait bien particulierement connoistre ... combien vous avez à cœur que cette place soit remise au plutost and expressed the hope that the young Duke of Savoy would bien observer comme votre conduite luy est utile ... et quels avantages il se doit promettre de vos bons et sages conseils et de votre assistance en ses affaires à l’avenir.

130 AST, LMF, m. 64: Mazarin to Marie-Christine, 25 November 1656. It is striking to witness Mazarin evoking the notion of the ‘superfluity’ of any additional tie to Marie-Christine’s interests, precisely as he had done to Francesco I d’Este at the time of the Martinozzi-Este marriage.

131 The anonymous biography actually stipulates that the marriage was agreed con il consenso del duca e di Madama Reale sua madre (ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/133: Relazione..., see n. 54).

132 AST, LMF, m. 64: Mazarin to Prince Maurizio of Savoy, undated.

133 AST, LMF, m. 66: Marie-Christine to the abbate della Rovere, 13 January 1657.

134 AST, LMF, m. 64: Mazarin to Marie-Christine, 30 January 1657. A copy of this letter is in AAE, CPS, vol. 51, fos. 161-162.


... citadella [è] fatto dal duca di Modena al maresciallo di Pianezza che l'ha ricevuta a nome mio\textsuperscript{137}, and the abbate Valeriano Castiglione celebrated the transfer by comparing Louis XIV's action to the generosity of his great-grandfather, Felipe II of Spain, in returning the citadel of Piacenza to the Farnese\textsuperscript{138}. The marriage contract of Eugène-Maurice and Olympy is dated nine days later, 19 February, and stipulates a dowry of 600,000 livres from Mazarin and 100,000 from Louis\textsuperscript{139}. It is impossible not to appreciate the political weight of the Soissons-Mancini marriage which the great biographer of the most celebrated fruit of this union perceived: »Voll Gegenstüeung teilte Mazarin die vollzogene Verbindung der Madama Reale mit, wobei und zugleich als Dank für die von Turin geleistete Hilfe Förderung der savoyischen Interessen durch Frankreich zusagte\textsuperscript{140}.

Marie-Christine was overjoyed, and, although ill, added a postcript in her own handwriting to a formal message of congratulations on the marriage to express la reconnaissance et l'obligation which she felt for the restitution of the citadel: Je ne perdrai jamais la memoire\textsuperscript{141}. In retrieving the citadel of her son’s capital she had propelled the policy of reversing French gains made during the 1630s in Piedmont one stage further, and, this, along with the emphatic statements of support from Mazarin and Louis XIV, had, in turn, strengthened her own position against the demands of Carlo Emanuele II, not quite twenty-three, for a greater role in governing his state and the attacks of those court groupings at Torino opposed to what had been viewed as her excessively Francophile policies. Mazarin extracted profit in the accustomed blend of public and private interest. By strengthening Madama Reale’s position and despite abandoning the citadel of Torino, Savoy was knitted more securely into a triangular system with Modena and France to sustain the cardinal’s Italian policies, and the aid that Francesco I d’Este had given to the Mancini-Soissons marriage negotiations demonstrated the efficiency of the Mazarin family machine. The delight he had in l’alliance que j’ay l’honneur d’avoir maintenant avec la Maison de Savoie\textsuperscript{142} reflected yet another advance for his casata of Roman origin, one which established it securely with two marriages on each side of the Alps, and the cardinal was rumoured to have joined, as a visual manifestation of the prestige of this new union, the arms of the House of Savoy to those of his own family on the doors of his

\textsuperscript{137} AST, LMF, m.66: Marie-Christine to the abbat de la Rovere, 10 February 1657.

\textsuperscript{138} Che se Filippo II la citadella di Piacenza al Farnese Eroe riconsegno; Luigi XIII con la remissione di questa [di Torino], per Capi considerabili molto più qualificata, non men Giusto del suo gran Genitore, ha canonizata la rettitudine de’ suoi pensieri al Mondo, ed attestato l’affetto verso il Collegato Cugino Carlo Emanuele (Valeriano CASTIGLIONE, All’ Eminentissimo Signore, il Signor Cardinale Giulio Mazzarini per la cittadella di Torino riconsegna dalla Maestà Christianissima di Luigi XIII all’ Altezza Reale Carlo Emanuele II, Duca di Savoia, Re di Cipro, Torino, n.d., but presumably 1657).

\textsuperscript{139} AST, PC-S, m.1: Compendio del contratto di matrimonio tra il Principe Eugenio Maurizio di Savoja-Cargnano e la damigella Olympia Mancini, 19 February 1657.


\textsuperscript{141} AAE, CPS, vol.52, fo.63: Marie-Christine to Mazarin, 17 February 1657.

\textsuperscript{142} AAE, CPS, vol.52, fo.190: Mazarin to Du Plessis-Besançon, 5 May 1657, presumably in response to a lettre de compliment on the marriage of Olympy to the comte de Soissons.
The marriages of the nieces of Cardinal Mazarin

coaches. The comte de Soissons, moreover, was, in 1657, very close to the Savoyard throne. The young Duke Carlo Emanuele II was, of course, fully expected to marry, but the selection of his bride was unresolved, most likely, in the hope that it would form part of a broader arrangement involving Louis XIV’s marriage. This cautiousness ran the risk, however, of the reigning duke dying prematurely without an heir, a danger of which contemporaries were fully aware. Carlo Emanuele’s own desire to serve with the French army in 1657 was discouraged as Madama Reale n’a point d’autre fils que luy et toute sa bonne fortune reste en sa conservation, and Marie-Christine was reported to have a contingency plan of marrying her pliable daughter to the principe di Carignano pour continuer à gouverner par son moyen s’il mésarrivoit de M. de Savoye. The deaf-mute Emanuele Filiberto, principe di Carignano, was next in line to the Savoyard throne, and, although educated with remarkable success, he was not expected to have heirs, so that his younger brother, the comte de Soissons, now the husband of one of Mazarin’s nieces, ranked high in the Savoyard succession for as long as Carlo Emanuele remained without a legitimate male heir. Indeed, as late as 1680, when Olympe was embroiled in the affaire des poisons, her rank as première princesse de Savoie earned her special consideration.

By 1657 the familial system created by Mazarin had acquired a life of its own. Marriage to one of the remaining nieces brought with it not only attachment to the fifty-five-year-old cardinal and his huge resources but strong bonds as well to the families of the four princes who already had Mancini or Martinozzi brides. Future candidates for the nieces were aware that their children would have as close cousins members of the Houses of France, Savoy and Este, while the interest shown by those already married into the system in subsequent marriage negotiations indicates an appreciation of the extension of a political machine to which they belonged. The remaining and the youngest members of the family, Alphonse and Marianna Mancini, had arrived in France in 1655, and following Olympe’s marriage in 1657, therefore, three nieces, Marie, Hortense and the eight-year-old Marianne, remained to establish. Giovanni Battista Nani, the Venetian ambassador, reported in his relazione that parlandosi di accasarle con principi sovrani ed in case reali, la loro minor fortuna sarà di esser accompagnate a principali del regno. The number of candidates grew to include a Longueville prince, Prince Charles of Lorraine, an Orsini and the tenacious La Meilleraye, while there was also an attempt to arrange

143 Mazarin fu gongolante di gioia per un matrimonio che faceva contrarre alla sua famiglia alleanza con quella di Savoia... [e] faceva tosto allestire dovizioso carrozzù, su cui spiccava lo stemma Mazzarino accostato a quello della casa di Savoia (CLARETTA, see n.140) vol. I, p. 213.
144 AAE, CPS, vol. 52, fo. 44: Servien to Mazarin, 3 February 1657.
145 AAE, CPS, vol. 52, fo. 505: Servien to Mazarin, 6 October 1657.
147 Anne-Marie Martinozzi’s reply to her husband, the prince the Conti, on 1 September 1654, Vous me demandez des nouvelles du mariage de Mlle de Mancini cited in BARTHÉLÉMY (see n. 2) p. 30, is one instance of such clear interest.
149 ASMo, CDE, CP 1393, A/133: Relazione... (see n. 54).
a marriage with Condé's heir, the duc d'Enghien, as part of a reconciliation of his father to the French court. The three marriages arranged for the youngest nieces group themselves together as they were resolved only as the cardinal was clearly dying and as they reflect two of his preoccupations during his last years, the structure of his heritage, literally the Mazarin estate, and what John Wolf has called the Mancini crisis, Louis XIV's passionate infatuation with Marie Mancini and his fruitless attempts to extract the permission of Anne of Austria and Mazarin to their marriage, a project which threatened the peace negotiations with Spain, a central part of which was the king's marriage to his (twice-over) first cousin, the Infanta Doña Maria Teresa, the daughter of Felipe IV.

Paul Mancini had been killed in 1652, and three years later Mazarin still referred feelingly to la morta immatura d'un mio nipote di molta espettatione. For Philippe Mancini, the cardinal evinced a positive dislike, writing dismissively of him in 1657 that il n'y a rien à faire ou je suis bien trompé, and, following Philippe's participation in a debauch at Roissy in 1659, the cardinal had his least favourite nephew imprisoned at Breisach, from which incarceration he was not released until Louis XIV's wedding journey in 1660. Alphonse Mancini, qui promet beaucoup according to Jean-Baptiste Colbert, seems to have renewed the hopes which his uncle had placed upon the dead Paul, and it seems likely that it is of Alphonse that Mazarin's anonymous biographer referred: a fanciullogli [che] ... si erede per certo, un giorno vederlo un gran principazzio nel regno di Francia e che sia per ritenere il cognome e casato (sic) de' Mazarini. Alphonse's accidental death in 1658 eliminated this possibility, and Mazarin's refusal to name Philippe as heir to his entire fortune dictated a compromise, in the form of a division, once specific bequests were made, between Philippe and Hortense. Philippe was to receive les duchés et pairies de Nivernois et Donzou, leurs appartennances, dépendances et annexes, par son Éminence acquis de Monseigneur le Duc de Mantoue as duc de Nevers in 1659, 600000 livres, les deux-tiers des aides de Mortagne, trois sols à prendre en onze sols de droit sur le ... sel de Brouage, all ses biens de Rome, along with half of the Hôtel Mazarin in

150 Henri Malo, Le grand Condé, Paris 1980, p. 382. As early as 10 July 1654, Bartet reported, to an unidentified correspondent, that Madame de Longueville prie M. de Viole de ne pas perdre temps à donner aduis à Mgr le Prince que si il veut escouter à l'accommodement [avec la cour], Madame de Longueville y veut disposition sur tout M. le Prince voulant bien donner son fils à une des nieces moyennant quoi on fera à M. le Prince tous les avantages possibles (AAE, MDF, vol. 1393, A/132: Mazarin to Francesco I d'Este, no day specified) April 1655. My warm thanks go to James Inglis-Jones for providing me with this citation. Rumours of such plans received an international circulation, and an anonymous manuscript newsletter from Paris, dated 8 July 1655 and sent to Britain, reported that On croit pour certain que M. le Prince s'accomoderà avec le Cardinal et que M. le Duc d'Anguien epossera une niepce qu'on garde ici pour cela (PRO, SP 78/113, fo. 52).


152 ASMo, CDE, CP 1393 A/132: Mazarin to Francesco I d'Este, (no day specified) April 1655.


155 ASMo, CDE, CP 1393, A/133: Relatione ... (see n. 54).


Paris and its collection. In a letter written on the day of his death, 9 March 1661, Mazarin correctly informed Cardinal Francesco Maria Mancini, that he had riservato un assai grande e nobile portione della mia heredità per Filippo, nostro nipote, while, three days earlier, he had assured his sister, Margherita Martinozzi, that Philippe would be sotto [la protezione] del Re, che havrà la bonta di accasarlo secondo la condizione in chi lo lasciò, che sarà assai considerabile in questo Regno.

As the Nevers duchy retained strong associations with sovereign status, Philippe's hierarchical position became roughly comparable to those of his sisters and cousins. The other half of the Hôtel Mazarin and its collection, the duché de Mayenne, also acquired from the Gonzaga and to be re-erected as the duché de Mazarin, and all the rest of Mazarin's possessions in France were bequeathed to Hortense and her new husband, Armand de La Porte, marquis de La Meilleraye, fondata nella sua persona e in questa di suo marito col titolo di duca la conservazione del nome, delle armi e della casa mia. If not the universal heiress she is so frequently depicted, Hortense nevertheless received what Pierre Goubert has racy termed «la dot record».

Hortense had been progressively perceived, during the last years of her uncle's life, as potentially the wealthiest heiress in France, and as such her marriage to La Meilleraye was anything but the foregone conclusion depicted by French historians resolved to view the union as a pious tribute to the memory of Richelieu. With such a mighty fortune at stake, many possibilities were considered. Carlo Emanuele II of Savoy and Charles II of England, both of whom remained sentimentally attached to

158 BE, MI 743: X.V.8.8.: Mazarin to Cardinal Francesco Maria Mancini, 9 March 1661. As this is a copy, the exact date of the letter must be questioned. Pierre Goubert (see n. 3) p. 478 correctly draws attention to the lack of convincing studies on the extent of Mazarin's Roman fortune.

159 BE, MI 743: X.V.8.8.: Mazarin to Margherita Martinozzi, 6 March 1661.

160 The duché de Nevers had previously been in the possession of cadet branches of the sovereign Houses of Kleve and, then, of Gonzaga, and dukes of both these lines ranked as princes étrangers at the French court. Following Lucien Perey, Un petit-neveu de Mazarin: Louis Mancini-Mazarini, duc de Nivernais, Paris 1890, p. 2, n. 1, the duché de Nevers was the «dernier duché féodal: le duc était nommé par le roi gouverneur du Nivernais pour concilier l'autorité royale avec ses droits seigneuriaux». The association to some form of sovereign rank for the duchy accorded to his sole surviving nephew accords well with Mazarin's strategy to marry his nieces into sovereign Houses. I am most grateful to Dr John Register for a discussion of his views on this subject and for this bibliographical reference. For a thorough discussion of the juridical structure of this territory see L. Despois, Histoire de l'autorité royal dans le comté de Nivernais, Paris 1912, especially p. 372, where it is observed of Mazarin's purchase that «Pas plus qu'auparavant, le Nivernais ne tombait dans le domaine de la Couronne, et il gardait sa situation exceptionelle de dernier représentant des grand fiefs médiévaux.»


162 BE, MI 743: X.V.8.8.: Mazarin to Cardinal Mancini, 9 March 1661.

163 Goubert (see n. 3) p. 476.
Robert Oresko

Hortense in later years, evinced interest. The House of Savoy most likely demanded too much in return for the installation of Hortense as Duchess-consort. During a flurry of speculation in 1654 about a marriage between Carlo Emanuele and one of the nieces, the Este envoy listed Torino's terms: Mazarin's aid in securing Louis's marriage to Marguerite-Yolande followed by *non solo la ristituzione di Pignerolo, la liberazione della cittadella di Torino dal presidio francese, a cioè [gli] Spagnuoli potessero restituire Vercelli e prodursi pace in Italia, ma sicurezzo insieme per la rieperazione di Ginevra*. By the late 1650s some of these demands were no longer pertinent, but recovery of Pinerolo remained a prime goal of Savoyard policy, and, however improbable the persistence of interest in Geneva may seem to some historians, Hortense herself attributed the failure of her Savoy match to *le refus où M.le Cardinal s'obstina d'abandonner Genève en considération de ce mariage*.

While Charles Stuart was in exile and Mazarin allied to Cromwell, there was no question of a Stuart-Manzini marriage, but, propelled by Queen Henriette-Marie, such a project was discussed, after the British restoration, as late as December 1660, when the cardinal finally resolved *que les mortifications que je recevois de tous les bruits qui courent là-dessus ne profiteroient de rien ny aux interests ny à la personne de Sudicte M.té*. Mazarin had considered a range of possibilities for Hortense, and, according to the abbé Choisy, *Il avait balancé quelque temps entre le grand-maître [La Meilleraye] et le prince de Courtenay, qu'il eût fait reconnaître prince du sang*. Indeed, Louis XIV granted a pension of 2000 livres to Jean-Armand de Courtenay in 1658. The Courtenay were descended directly in the male line from the twelfth-century King Louis VI of France and in the thirteenth century three Courtenay princes had been Emperors of Constantinople. By the seventeenth century, however, their fortunes had declined vertiginously, for the Courtenay were not only impoverished but were also without the rank to which they, and others at court, felt they were due. A book attributed to Mlle de Montpensier described *Cette maison quoy qu'ilustre et veritablement sorties des Roys de France, est aujourd'hui fort abbatue et à moins que le Roy par sa bonté ne se plaise à la relever, elle est en danger de ..., se contenter du simple titre de noblesse*. Mazarin's proposal was to re-integrate officially Courtenay into the French succession, after the prince de Conti, *en lui donnant une de ses*...
nièces en mariage et le faisant déclarer prince du sang, but the project collapsed when
the chosen Louis-Charles de Courtenay, accompanying Mazarin to the peace
conference at Saint-Jean-de-Luz, passa tout le voyage avec les pages du cardinal and
hence perdit la fortune que le cardinal ... avait résolu de lui faire. This bizarre
episode is best understood within the structure of the careers of the other princes
allied to Mazarin by marriage, all of whom were expected to play a prominent
governmental or military role in the implementation of Mazarin’s policies, a responsi-
bility, it would seem, to have been deemed beyond the capacities of Courtenay.

The La Meilleraye had been a constant factor in Mazarin’s matrimonial strategy,
an option always available should the cardinal care or need to use it. The enormous
wealth of the family, the link to Richelieu and loyalty to Mazarin during the Fronde
all counted in favour of such a match, but, having married four nieces into sovereign
Houses, Mazarin was obviously attracted by proposals which would establish
Hortense, selected to inherit such a large portion of his wealth, at a level at least equal
to those on which he had placed her sisters and cousins. Mazarin could afford to
keep the La Meilleraye proposal in reserve as a second choice while other possibilities
were discussed, but Hortense’s wedding to Armand-Charles de La Porte on
28 February 1661, just over a week before the cardinal’s death, most likely reflected
the realisation of how little time was left to resolve the question of the inheritance
and the marriage of the fifth niece. Something of this haste is suggested in Mazarin’s
death-bed letter to Cardinal Mancini sending l’avviso di Ortensia nostra nipote
maritata e il matrimonio non solo concluso ma consumato con Gran Mastro dell’
Artigliaria, figliuolo del Sig. Maresciallo della Migliarel, gentiluomo di ottimi costumi
... delle prime richezze del Regno. The sense of pressure is also indicated by the
fact that the cardinal’s testamentary arrangements were finalised in a notably
concentrated period of time, from 3 to 7 March.

Hortense was the only one of Mazarin’s nieces whose husband neither had nor
claimed princely status, but the cardinal, nevertheless, provided for the new
addition to the family in ways strikingly similar to those which had effectively
>enfeoffed< Mercœur and Conti in the south by marking out Alsace, another key
frontier province, for La Meilleraye. The Landgrafschaften of Haute- and Basse-
Alsace, bordering on the Rheinland principalities of the Holy Roman Empire, along
with the fortress of Breisach, had been attached to the French crown only at the
Treaties of Westphalia in 1648, and, as Georges Livet, the doyen of Alsatian studies,
has observed, constituted >une province si exposée<. Exactly how exposed they

170 SAINT-SIMON (see n. 25) vol. XXIX, p. 113 and vol. XLI, p. 147.
171 Mazarin clearly expected a high level of administrative competence from the men who married his
nieces and remonstrated with them when they fell short of his requirements, pointedly writing to
Mercœur, on 14 November 1656, j’estime, Monsieur, que vous ne deuez pas perdre un moment de
temps à vous rendre en Provence. (AAE, CPS, vol. 51, fo. 114). Of Conti, it has been noted that >Until
his death in 1666 he played an active role< as gouverneur of Languedoc (William BEIK (see n. 77)
p. 113).
172 BE, BI743: X.V.8.8.: Mazarin to Cardinal Mancini, 9 March 1661.
173 The author of Les pourtraicts de la cour (see n. 169) p. 103 praised Armand-Charles pour sa
moderation, ayant refusé le titre d’Altesse, qu’on vouloit lui donner à cause de la principauté d’Elsass.
174 Georges Livet, Le duc Mazarin (1661–1713), Strasbourg 1954, p. 13. The richness of Livet’s
documentation is partially due to his extensive use of the Mazarin papers preserved in the Archives.
were had been demonstrated in the summer of 1652 with brutal clarity when their gouverneur, the comte d’Harcourt, another member of the House of Lorraine, seized the fortress of Breisach in an attempt to establish a sovereign principality. Harcourt’s attempt to carve out a second Lorraine sovereignty in close proximity to the patrimonial duchy at the same time that negotiations were taking place for the restoration of Duke Charles IV to Lorraine focussed Mazarin’s thinking on the strategic importance of Alsace. Je finiray en vous disant que, comme les affaires sont en un estat où l’on ne scawoit faire la paix sans restablir M. de Lorraine, il n’y a rien que le Roy ne doive pratiquer pour empescher que cet etablisement [Breisach] ne demeure entre les mains d’un prince de la maison de Lorraine, estant aysé de prevoire le prejudice irreparable que la France en souffrirroit avec le temps.175. Once accommodation had been reached with Harcourt, Mazarin assumed the gouvernement of Alsace for himself, ceding it to La Meilleraye as part of Hortense’s marriage contract. This contract stipulated a grant of the duché of Mayenne, 1200000 livres pour acquérir une terre de dignité, the transferral of the charges, en survivance to Mazarin, of gouverneur of Breisach, of Philipsbourg, of Haute- and Basse-Alsace, along with those de Grand Bailli du Landfogtey de Hagenau, with la substitution des choses ci-dessus cédées à l’aïne des mâles et au défaut de postérité dudit mariage, tout appartiendra au haut et puissant seigneur Messire Philippe, marquis de Mancini176, soon to be duc de Nevers.177. The dying Mazarin followed the pattern of the Merceur and Conti marriages by establishing his new kinsman in a critically important and exposed frontier province with strong traditions of separatism, over which, in this instance, he seemed to hope to exercise some posthumous control. The geographic focus, moreover, had shifted from the south and from the Italian states, for Mazarin’s interest in the north-east corner of France evinced by the arrangements surrounding Hortense’s marriage had been foreshadowed slightly earlier by the nomination in 1660 of another nephew-by-marriage, the comte de Soissons, as gouverneur of Champagne and Brie, the critical northern provinces with direct access to both Lorraine and the Southern Netherlands.178.

In such manner, Mazarin acted to preserve the integrity of the French border by princiers de Monaco at Monte-Carlo, the Grimaldi-Matignon Princes of Monaco being the eventual heirs of Hortense and Armand-Charles after the extinction of their male descent in 1738 and the transmission of the inheritance via the Dufort-Duras (see note 215) and, then, the Aumont to the sovereigns of Monaco. Livet’s study of Armand-Charles should be supplemented by Georges Livet, L’intendance d’Alsace, Strasbourg 1991.

176 LIVET, Mazarin (see n. 175) pp. 15–16.
177 La Meilleraye also claimed the gouvernement of Bretagne, of which he had the lieutenance-générale, but this was blocked by the obstinacy of the incumbent, the Queen-mother, Anne of Austria. CHOISY (see n. 167) pp. 58–59.
178 The gouvernement of Champagne and Brie in the seventeenth century awaits proper archival study and demands further research. Following secondary sources, it is stated by Maurice POINSIGNON, Histoire générale de la Champagne et de la Brie, Châlons-sur-Marne and Paris 1885–1886, vol. III, p.141, that the prince de Conti, who had been named gouverneur in 1647, was re-established in this charge in 1654, but »fut pendant ses absences supplée par l’Hôpital«, François de l’Hôpital, comte de Rosnay. Clearly, given his gouvernement of Guyenne and his military obligations, Conti was frequently absent from Champagne, but the possibility that l’Hôpital was rather more than a substitute is suggested by Charles LORIQUET, Un gouverneur de province au XVIIe siècle: le Comte
using members of his own family. At the same time, the cardinal always kept the interests of the casata itself firmly in mind, and the marriage of Marie Mancini to Lorenzo Onofrio Colonna demonstrates his determination to protect and extend his family's position among the Italian states as well as in France. The Mancini-Colonna marriage should not be seen solely as an act of panic engineered by the dying cardinal in order to remove Marie from a court in which her position had become untenable. There can be no doubt that both Queens of France, Anne of Austria, and her new daughter-in-law, gallicised as Marie-Thérèse, also her niece, were eager to have Marie removed from court, and that Mazarin was under considerable pressure to find a solution at a time when his health collapsed so rapidly that attention had to be paid to his own succession as well. One serious candidate, Prince Charles of Lorraine, the nephew and heir of Duke Charles IV, was viewed as a possible means of resolving the differences between France and Lorraine, which had been occupied by the French for over twenty-five years. Prince Charles’s father, François of Lorraine, encouraged the match as un moyen sûr de rétablir sa Maison et de s’assurer à son fils la possession du Barrois et la succession du duché de Lorraine. Such a proposal implied the use of Marie, following the examples of her sister Olympe and of Laura Martinozzi, as an instrument of French foreign policy, their de facto, if not de jure, adoption as virtual French princesses, the very consummation of whose marriages with foreign princes served as the gauge for accords reached between different dynasties. Early in September 1659, Duke Charles IV sent an emissary to Saint-Jean-de-Luz to see Mazarin and to assure him of the duke’s determination not to re-marry and to leave all to his nephew. A marriage seems to have been proposed, as Charles IV’s envoy requested that Mazarin le restablist plainement en tous ses biens … et que j’y devoit prendre interest à cause de l’alliance qu’il me proposoit. Enfin il me parla de rendre tout à Monsieur de Lorraine comme s’il s’agissoit que d’une paire de gands. Despite Mazarin’s rebuff, the proposal for a Lorraine marriage for Marie was not abandoned. Marie and Prince Charles spent time in each other’s company and, following the king’s marriage, an affinity grew between them, leaving traces in Marie’s mémoires, which recorded l’estime particulière que j’avais pour lui. Progress was sufficiently advanced for Prince Charles both to make his declaration and to submit to the cardinal the concomitant demands of his House. Mazarin’s rhetorically lofty rebuff, offended and offensive, killed all further speculation about a Mancini-Lorraine marriage. J’ay esté un peu surpris de voir le commencement de la
lettre que j’ay receu de la part de V. Alt., n’ayant pas remarqué jusqu’icy que ma niece eust des qualitez si belles et si charmantes qu’elles puissent gagner si viste le cœur d’un prince comme vous, et de plus obliger V. Alt. à luy declarer son affection, sans avoir, au préalable, pris la peine de m’en escrire; mais ayant veu, dans la suite, la proposition qu’Elle [i.e. V.A.] me fait de m’employer auprez du Roy pour vous remettre le duché de Bar, il m’a esté fort aysé de demesler le véritable charme qui portoit V. Alt. à cette recherche, et je vous advoue que j’ay esté en quelque façon mortifié de voir qu’on m’ayt creu capable de songer seulement à procurer le moindre advantage à mes nieces aux despens du Roy et de l’Estat. Cette explosion of elevated moral grandeur marked the final chapter in the history of Mazarin’s always troubled relationship with the House of Lorraine.

If a means of removing Marie from the French court in a manner which was both honourable and definitive could not be found within the structure of high power politics, the Colonna proposal provided considerable allure for Mazarin in realising his own personal family strategy. Although two nieces had been married already to Italian princes, Mazarin, involved in the complications of his testamentary provisions, was clearly determined to preserve the position of the casata in, specifically, Rome. Mazarin’s interests in Rome had been overseen by his father, Pietro Mazzarini, until his death in 1654, following which the cardinal’s presence in the papal capital was maintained by his two sisters, Anna Maria, from 1657 the prioress of Santa Maria di Campo Marzo, and Margherita Martinuzzi, who had settled in Rome after escorting her daughter to Modena, and by a brother of Lorenzo Mancini, Francesco Maria Mancini. It was Francesco Maria who, in effect, had succeeded Pietro Mazzarini as the effective director of the Mazarin machine in Rome, and in 1660 the cardinal obtained for him the French crown’s nomination to the Sacred College. Mazarin had reinforced this role by bequeathing the recently-elevated Cardinal Mancini quattro abbadie colle quali potra V.E. sostenere altamente il suo grado and nominated him as the administrator of his goods in Rome. Cardinal Mancini lived until 1672, leaving Philippe Mancini, duc de Nevers as his heir, and Margherita Martinuzzi died as late as 1685, so that at his own death in 1661 Mazarin


184 It is difficult to follow the rosy picture of the House of Lorraine as »un auxiliaire interessé de Mazarin« presented by Adolphe CHÉRUEL, Histoire de France sous le ministère de Mazarin, Paris 1882, vol. II, p. 43.

185 It would seem that the Este would have preferred the formidable Margherita Martinuzzi to have remained on the far side of the Alps rather than to have returned to Rome, comparatively close to her daughter in Modena. Manzieri wrote to Francesco I d’Este on 23 October 1654 that lo mi sono scordato di dire a V.A. che Madama Martinuzzi, sorella di S.Card.e Mazzarini, pretende di tornarsene a Roma a quante ho conosciuta, ma se sarà possibile di ritenerla qui io ci farò le miei parti (ASMo, AF 115).

186 BN, DB 422, p. 13: Jean-Baptise l’Hermite («dit Tristan»), Discours historique et genealogique sur l’illustre et ancienne maison de Mancini, Paris 1661, noted that Mancini had been made a cardinal on 5 April 1660 en faveur de la couronne de France, as does a Mémoire genealogique de la Maison Mancini in BN, PO 1824 (22).

187 BE, MI 743: X.V.8.8.: Mazarin to Cardinal Mancini, 9 March 1661.

188 BN, PO 1824 (11): Sommaire pour Messire Jacques-Hippolyte, marquis de Mancini… (see n. 157).

189 Ibid.
had established the necessary infrastructure to sustain his nephew’s position in Rome. Help could also reasonably have been expected in the future from consecutive Este cardinals.

Mazarin had carefully planned the family structure as well. At Mazarin’s death Philippe was unmarried, but the cardinal, in assigning his Roman property to his nephew, stipulated a *charge de substitution en faveur de son second fils mâle...* [voulant] *que le substitut soutiendra à Rome avec dignité le nom de Mancini qui y est illustre depuis plusieurs siècles*. Mazarin envisaged or, at least, had made testamentary provision for three branches of his family, the ducs de Mazarin descended from Hortense, the ducs de Nevers from Philippe’s first son and a line established in Rome coming from Nevers’s second son. The system was, moreover, designed to be interlocking, for in the same way that Philippe was to inherit from Hortense and Armand-Charles should their marriage be childless, the duc de Mazarin was named as Philippe’s heir should he fail to leave issue. In this meticulously elaborated programme to maintain his family in Rome, one element was missing, a strong bond to one of the great princely, as distinct from papal, families of Rome. Marie’s marriage to Prince Lorenzo Onofrio Colonna, the *Connestabile* of Naples, placed her at the centre of a network of Colonna dukes, cardinals and other clans, such as the (Roman) Conti and the Barberini, who were attached to it by marriage. Her children would provide Colonna first cousins for the offspring of Nevers, and although Marie’s marriage may have been dictated by the desire to distance her from Louis XIV and his new queen and may have been facilitated by Mazarin’s old ties of *clientèle* to the Colonna, alliance with Lorenzo Onofrio, nevertheless, fitted logically into the cardinal’s own personal family strategy.

Although the Colonna-Mancini marriage had been concluded by the time of Mazarin’s death on 9 March 1661, the wedding itself was not celebrated until the next month, on 11 April. Marie departed for Rome promptly afterwards, leaving only one niece unmarried, the benjamine de la tribu, Marianne, who *resta ... sotto la casa e la protezione della Regina*, Anne of Austria. Marianne Mancini’s marriage to Godefroy-Maurice de La Tour d’Auvergne, sovereign Duke of Bouillon took place in 1662, and there are reasons to doubt Choisy’s report of Mazarin’s opposition to this project, *le cardinal, presque agonisant, n’avait voulu écouter aucune proposition* on his death-bed, having been annoyed by the *Peu d’empressement M. de Turenne* [Bouillon’s uncle] *avait montré pour ce mariage*. As with his arrangements for the establishment of a branch of the family in Rome, there is more than a hint of Mazarin’s desire to control d’outre-tome the workings of the dynastic machine he had set in place in the provisions made for Marianne, not yet thirteen years old at her uncle’s death.

The possibility of a Bouillon marriage to one of Mazarin’s nieces appeared as early as 1650 when Michele Morosini, the Venetian ambassador, reported that it was *fermamente nell’ animo di signor Cardinale ... di maritare una delle nipoti con il*

190 I shall address myself elsewhere to the career of Philippe Mancini and to the Mazarin system in Rome.

191 BN, PO 1906 (4): *Extrait du Testament...* (see n. 156).

192 BE, MI 743: X.V.8.8.: Mazarin to Margherita Martinozzi, 6 March 1661.

193 CHOISY (see n. 167) pp. 60–61.
while, in the subsequent year, Mazarin informed Lionne que M. le Duc de Bouillon et son frère [Turenne]... ont disposition de me servir; qu'avec un mariage on les y engageroit tout-à-fait. This first suggestion of a Bouillon matrimonial alliance coincided, therefore, with the negotiations for the cession to France by the La Tour d'Auvergne of one of their two sovereignties, Sedan, in return for des lettres patentes pour conserver à M. de Bouillon & à toute sa maison & posterité le rang de Prince, another indication of Mazarin's concern with the exposed frontiers of the kingdom. The La Tour d'Auvergne retained the sovereign duchy of Bouillon but received further compensation for Sedan in the form of the duchés-pairies of Albreit and Château-Thierry and a collection of comtés, including Évreux and, most significantly, Auvergne. Auvergne was the cradle of the dynasty, and throughout the seventeenth century the La Tour d'Auvergne pursued a two-pronged policy of preserving outside of France their status as sovereign Dukes of Bouillon, which had been acquired through marriage in 1591, while building up within France a powerbase centered on their province of origin, where they already possessed significant holdings. As late as 1694, Cardinal de Bouillon attempted to purchase from the duc d'Orléans, Louis XIV's younger brother, the dauphiné of Auvergne in an attempt to combine it with the comté which the family acquired in 1651, and, following the king's disapproving speculation, faire appeler un de ses neveux prince-dauphin. In this strategy acquisition of the gouvernement of Auvergne was a prime goal.

Mazarin was cautious about such a project, conscient du risque il y avait à constituer une vaste principauté au profit des Bouillon, qui se piquaient de descendre des anciens comtes d'Auvergne. He was, nevertheless, also careful to keep the gouvernement of Auvergne safely in his own hands so that he could dispose of it as necessary. When the Duke of Modena requested this gouvernement in 1658 the cardinal expressed surprise. It n'est pas vacant. Le duc de Candale ne l'avait eu qu'en dépôt au moment où l'on enleva de son père le duché de Guyenne. Il appartient à Mazarin, qui a refusé de le céder même au comte de Soissons. As the 1650s

...
The marriages of the nieces of Cardinal Mazarin unfolded, the advance of the La Tour d'Auvergne gathered momentum. Originally a Calvinist dynasty, the members of which gradually converted to Catholicism, descent from one of the many daughters of William I of Orange made them cousins of a number of important princely Houses in the Empire, and Turenne, effective head of the House after his brother's death, continued an ambitious matrimonial policy for his nieces and nephews throughout the 1650s and 1660s. Turenne, himself a central support of the French military effort, added additional weight to his family's position, as did his close personal relationship with Mazarin. In 1659 the cardinal reported to Turenne that during the discussions surrounding Condé's return to France, Don Luis de Haro had evoked Mazarin's clemency to the fondeurs, celle du bon traittement que j'avois procuré à M. le Prince de Conty et à vous, dont l'un estoit mon neveu avec grande establissement et l'autre un de mes meilleurs amis. The documents surrounding Marianne Mancini's marriage suggest that, whatever Mazarin's views may have been on his death-bed, discussions leading to the Mancini-Bouillon marriage were too far advanced to be reversed. The marriage contract stipulated that in addition to the dowry of 600,000 livres, les biens de ladite demoiselle future épouse consistant du gouvernement d'Auvergne dont il a plu à Sa Majesté [à] accorder en faveur de la demoiselle future épouse et par la consideration de la memoire de feu mondit Seigneur Cardinal Mazarin, son oncle. Les lettres de provisions en blanc... seroient remplies du nom dudit seigneur futur époux que Sa Majesté a agréee par ces presentes pour estre pouru dudit gouvernement d'Auvergne au moyen du present mariage. Mazarin had, in effect, bequeathed to Marianne blank letters of provision for the gouvernement of Auvergne, to be filled in with the name of her husband only on her marriage. Louis XIV's letters of provision shed more light on the mechanism for this transfer: Feu notre Cousin le Cardinal Mazarini nous ayant quelque temps avant son decez fait instance de conserver dans sa maison la charge de Gouverneur & nostre Lieutenant general dans nostre pays du bas & haut Auvergne, dont il estoit pourvenu, nous luy en aurions accordé la survivance pour en disposer ainsi bon luy sembleroit. The thoroughness with which Mazarin had attached Auvergne to Marianne made it virtually impossible to award her to anyone other than the La Tour d'Auvergne family, who had consistently pressed for the marriage and for the gouvernement. In agreeing to the marriage, Louis XIV not only gratified the powerful House of Bouillon, he also helped bring into creation an extensive dynastic network which criss-crossed confessional lines and linked the La Tour d'Auvergne's relations based primarily in the Empire, the Nassau-Orange, the Hessen-Kassel, the Sachsen-Weimar, the Hohenzollern, the Lorraine and, after d'inventer pour elle la charge, jusqu'alors inconnue, de surintendante de la maison de la Reine [Marie-Thérèse]. Saint-Simon (see n. 25) vol. XI, p. 292. Mazarin, similarly, reserved the surintendance de la Maison de la Reine-mère for another niece, the princesse de Conti.

203 M. de Turenne, dont les services et la capacité militaire et politique avoient porté la considération et le crédit au comble ... acheva le mariage, projeté dès le vivant du cardinal Mazarin, d'une des Mancini ... avec le duc de Bouillon (Saint-Simon (see n. 25) vol. XIV, p. 218.
204 BL, Add. MSS 28,845: Mazarin to Henri de La Tour d'Auvergne, vicomte de Turenne, 26 August 1659 (copy).
205 BN, MS Baluze 198, no. 146.
1667, the Wittelsbach, to the more southern dynasties which were the component parts of the Mazarin matrimonial machine, the Este, the Savoy, the Colonna and the House of France itself. Marianne’s marriage to a prince whose sovereignty was enclaved between France and the duchy of Luxembourg, strengthened, moreover, the ‘Mazarin presence’ along the exposed north-eastern borders of the realm, a process which had begun with the appointments of Soissons and La Meilleraye to the gouvernements of, respectively, Champagne and Alsace.

In analysing this sequence of seven marriages stretching from 1651 to 1662 it is necessary to be aware of the drawbacks of a remorselessly linear approach and to bear in mind that each negotiation was accompanied by setbacks and reverses and, very frequently, multiple candidates. The matches which did not succeed, of which Candale, Courtenay and Charles of Lorraine are but three examples, can shed as much light upon the ambitions, aspirations and hidden assumptions of the dynastic system as those which did result in a marriage. It is extremely doubtful whether Mazarin began with a grand matrimonial scheme, other than establishing his nieces well. One important marriage led to another and the family machine evolved gradually. As it is now accepted that the only fortune in the seventeenth century to outshine that of Richelieu was that of his protégé Mazarin, it is worth observing that while of all the marriages for his female relations arranged by Richelieu only two were to men of undisputed princely rank, the Condé and Harcourt matches, only one of Mazarin’s nieces, Hortense, did not marry a prince. It should be pointed out as well that Mazarin had had a greater social distance to travel than had Richelieu in his rise and in engineering that of his family. Mazarin, again unlike his patron, also succeeded in deploying some of the nieces as instruments of foreign policy, in addition to using others to protect his own position within France.

Thanks to the researches of Bergin and Dessert it has also become a commonplace to view Mazarin’s financial dealings as a mixture of the public and the private, concepts which may have had limited meaning for the cardinal himself, who, from his exile in Brühl in 1651, listed the expenditures from his own purse soit pour assister des ambassadeurs, pour payer des pensions secretes ... soit pour en payer de publicques ... trois cent mille livres, si je me souviens bien, au duc de Modène, et, dans ces dernières années, vingt-quatre mille escus à M. le Cardinal son frère, protecteur de France, ayant pour cet effect fait vendre des rentes que j’avois à Rome. Such a view of Mazarin’s conduct of policy in general receives support from patterns established by the nieces marriages, a blurring, as Muratori perceived, of the cardinal’s own interests to advance his family with those needs he viewed as essential for the security and prosperity of the French crown. The nieces both advanced his state policy and established his casata.

In addition, the casata proved remarkably durable and long outlived its creator. As the children of the nieces grew to adulthood there were, obviously, rivalries and

207 It should be noted that two other husbands of Richelieu’s female relations, the comte de Guiche from the Grammont family and the duc de La Valette from the Épernon clan, had pretensions to either sovereign or princely status, and I am grateful to David Parrott for helping to clarify these questions. His article on Richelieu’s use of his kinswomen, too frequently assumed to have been exclusively his nieces, will be published in the future.

political differences: the first cousins Vendôme and Prinz Eugen, both with Mancini mothers, were consistent opponents on the battlefield. Nevertheless, a family mechanism had been set in place, even after the cardinal was no longer there to direct it, which facilitated cooperation between the various branches of the casata when coinciding interests so dictated. The comtesse de Soissons recommended to the Earl of Sunderland Laura Martinozzi's daughter, Maria Beatrice d'Este, as a suitable bride for the widowed James Stuart, Duke of York, and, once established in Britain, the new Duchess of York, promoted the career of Hortense Mancini at the English court in the 1670s in order to counter the influence of Louise de Kéroualle over King Charles II. Following Olympe's disgrace in 1680, she sent her son, Philippe de Soissons, to London to plead her case. There he dined with his aunt, the duchesse de Mazarin, was presented to his kinswoman, the Duchess of York, and was eventually joined by his cousin, Laure-Victoire's son, the Grand Prieur de Vendôme, for the races at Newmarket. When another of Olympe's sons, the future Prinz Eugen, secretly left the French court for the Hungarian campaigns in 1683 he was accompanied by his close friend and cousin, the young prince de Conti, Anne-Marie Martinozzi's son. During the War of the Spanish Succession, Marianne Mancini's son, the comte d'Evreux s'attache de plus en plus to the duc de Vendôme, Laure-Victoire's son, et il compa, par son secours, sur une rapide fortune, while, at the same time, other members of the House of La Tour d'Auvergne were looking for support from Prinz Eugen on the opposite side of the battlelines. When Cardinal Émmanuel-Théodose de Bouillon, the brother-in-law of Marianne Mancini, fled from Arras in 1700 he was greeted on the Imperial side of the trenches by Eugen, and, in an attempt to win the support of Queen Anne to guarantee Bouillon sovereignty at the peace negotiations, he evoked his familial attachment to her, perhaps rather naively, through her step-mother, the exiled Queen Maria Beatrice, daughter of Laura Martinozzi: Votre Majesté n'ignore pas non plus que le Duc de Bouillon d'aujourd'hui ait l'honneur d'être oncle, à la mode de Bretagne, du feu Roy son père à cause de la Reyne son épouse. As late as 1767, the acquisition by the then duchesse de Mazarin of the Hôtel de Conti, a gift from the cardinal on Anne-Marie Martinozzi's marriage, possibly reflects clanish arrangements in an area of Paris closely associated with Mazarin. In addition to such instances of practical coopera-

210 Ronald HUTTON, Charles the Second, Oxford 1989, p.337.
211 AST, Lettere Ministri Inghilterra, m. 7: Magliano to Duchess Maria Giovanna Battista of Savoy, 25 March and 1 April 1680: Pertegno to Maria Giovanna Battista, 10 March 1681.
212 BRAUBACH (see n.140) vol. I, p. 80.
213 SAINT-SIMON (see n. 25) vol. XVI, p. 236.
214 AN, 273 AP 194 (unpaginated and undated).
215 Mary L. MYERS, French Architectural and Ornamental Drawings of the Eighteenth Century: the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York 1991, p. 13, p. 14, n. 4. Louise-Jeanne de Durfort-Duras, duchesse de Mazarin in her own right, was Hortense Mancini's great-granddaughter, while Louis-François de Bourbon, prince de Conti was the great-grandson of Anne-Marie Martinozzi. The history of this site is deeply complicated. In 1670, the widowed Anne-Marie Martinozzi, princesse de Conti, exchanged the Hôtel de Conti on the quai Malacquais against the nearby Hôtel Guénégaud, but in 1733 the original Hôtel de Conti was purchased back for the family.
tion, there were, as well, formal statements of the kinship ties. Ceremonial observan-
ces, such as Vendôme standing as godfather to Nevers's first son in 1688\(^{216}\) and
Prince James Edward Stuart, at the age of two, to his second son in 1690\(^{217}\), or Prinz
Eugen's letter of congratulation in 1723, noted in the Mercure de France, on the
marriage of his Bouillon kinsman, Frédéric-Maurice de La Tour d'Auvergne to
Princess Maria Charlotte Sobieska\(^{218}\), drew public attention to the blood links which
continued to unite the offspring of Mazarin's nieces several decades after the
cardinal's own death.

Within the past fifteen years some historians have signalled a new awareness of the
importance of the dynastic system in understanding international relations in early-
modern Europe\(^{219}\). Inspired by exposure to social historians and economic historians
the lessons of whose pioneering work on family strategies and the creation of
fortunes could be applied to princely Houses of sovereign status, the new dynastic
historians, sharply defined from the antiquarian tradition, have analysed the work-
ings of family networks, princely councils and family councils, marriage policies
and manipulation of ecclesiastical benefits, at the highest levels of society in ways
which modify the more determinist methods of traditional political and diplomatic
historians wedded to notions of nation-state building and raison d'état. There is a
danger, however, that this new dynastic history will identify itself exclusively with
Hausgeschichte. Hausmentalität, identification with a single dynasty, the regulatory
role of the head of the House, long-term goals stretching over centuries for the
advance of the House, was critically important in the political thinking of European
sovereigns in the late-medieval and early-modern periods, and, indeed, perhaps
afterwards, but it co-existed with and was influenced by other systems of kinship.

Hausmentalität is predicated upon the notion of attachment to a social unit by
means of male descent. Yet the study of the marriages of Mazarin's nieces reveals a
machine based upon relationships established through female members of the same
family. Nor is it the only example of such a network. The five daughters of Philipp
Wilhelm of Pfalz-Neuburg, eventually the Elector Palatine, by contracting marriages
in the late seventeenth century with the Emperor, the Kings of Spain and Portugal,
the Duke of Parma and the Sobieski heir created a system which played an important
part in the campaign against Louis XIV during the last two wars of his reign. The
Sobieski family itself established another network with two successive generations of

The character of this fluvial quartier as Mazarin territory was strengthened in 1681 when Marianne
Mancini and her husband, the Duke of Bouillon, purchased the nearly adjacent Hôtel de Bazinière,
henceforce called the Hôtel de Bouillon, and by the construction, further along the quai, of the great
monument to the cardinal's patronage, the Collège des Quatre Nations. Such property arrangements
effectively established two »Mazarin« enclaves at the heart of Paris, one, centered upon the Hôtel
Mazarin and the new Hôtel de Nevers, immediately behind the Orléans powerbase at the Palais-
Royal, the other, directly across the Seine focussed on the Hôtel de Bouillon, the two Hôtels de
Conti and the monument to the cardinal's beneficence, the Collège des Quatre Nations. These two
clusters of possessions must be seen, at least in part, as belonging to an early-modern architectural
and urbanistic iconography of power.

\(^{216}\) BN, MS fr. n.a. 9691 (263).
\(^{217}\) BN, MS fr. n.a. 9691 (264).
\(^{218}\) Mercure de France, July 1723, p. 174.
\(^{219}\) One example is Der dynastische Fürstenstaat: zur Bedeutung von Sukzessionsordnungen für die
The marriages of the nieces of Cardinal Mazarin

princesses by assimilating into vestiges of the Mazarin network and protecting common interests throughout Europe well into the eighteenth century, while following the marriage of the future Carlo Emanuele III of Sardinia in 1724 to the relatively obscure Polyxena Christina of Hessen-Rheinfels-Rottenburg, her numerous family, again over two generations, used the link with the royal court of Torino to negotiate a series of prestigious marriages for their princesses, whose husbands, in turn, helped to promote the military careers of the Hessen-Rheinfels-Rottenburg princes, a classic instance of dynastic advancement. In writing of the familial structure of the La Tour d'Auvergne, Henri Benoît-Guyod observed that »Pour exprimer le lien de l'individu avec les personnes du même sang, la langue française est pauvre« 220 and dexterously deployed the concepts of agnates and cognates to distinguish between bonds establish by male and female family attachments respectively. The marriages of the nieces of Cardinal Mazarin, analysed together, warn both dynastic historians against undervaluing the importance of cognate links and the more traditional political historians against ignoring the strong tug of family policies and strategies on the formulation and implementation of high power politics.

NOTE

It has proved impossible to find a consistent system of orthography for the names of the members of Mazarin's »casata«, and I have chosen the gallicised forms for those of the family whose careers were primarily French and the original Italian for those based primarily in Rome and Modena, thus, for example, »Jules Mazarin« but »Michele Mazzarini«, »Anne-Marie Martinozzi« but »Laura Martinozzi«, »Laure-Victoire Mancini« but »Francesco Maria Mancini«. The following abbreviations are used in the footnotes:

AAE: Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris
MDF: Mémoires et documents français
CPS: Correspondance politique, Sardaigne
AN: Archives Nationales, Paris
AP: Archives privées
ASMo: Archivio di Stato di Modena
CDE: Cancelleria Ducale Estense
AF: Ambasciatoi Franchia
CP: Carteggio di Principi
AST: Archivio di Stato di Torino
LMF: Lettere Ministri Francia
PC-S: Principi di Carignano-Soissons
RMR: Registro lettere scritte da Madama Reale

BE: Biblioteca Estense, Modena
MI: Miscellanea Italia
BL: British Library, London
Add. MSS: Additional Manuscripts
Eg.: Egerton Manuscripts
BN: Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
DB: Dossiers bleus
fr. n.a.: Fonds français, nouvelles acquisitions
PO: Pièces originales
PRO: Public Record Office, London
SP: State Papers