

**Noblewomen and Family Fortunes in Seventeenth-Century
France and England. A Study of the Lives of the Duchesse de
La Trémoille and her Sister-in-Law, the Countess of Derby.**

Sonja Kmec

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations	6
Introduction	8
Chapter I. Landed Fortunes	14
A.) The Formation of the La Trémoille Powerbasis	15
1.) The Disintegration of the 'Territorial Bloc'	
2.) Sales and Acquisitions	
B.) The Composition of the La Trémoille's Revenues	27
1.) Land and Development	
2.) Loans and Patronage	
C.) Matrimonial Arrangements	39
1.) Marriage Portions (Dowries)	
2.) Widow Jointures (Dowers)	
Chapter II. Female Authority in Noble Households	53
A.) Staff Management	56
1.) The La Trémoille Household	
2.) Master-Servant Relations	
B.) Authority by Proxy: the Concept of Interposition	77
1.) Noblewomen as Estate Managers	
2.) Absenteeism	
3.) The Duchess as Procuratrice Générale	
Chapter III. Material Display of Status and Wealth	93
A.) Architectural Projects	93
1.) Residential Patterns	
2.) Paris: the Hôtel de La Trémoille	
3.) The Castles of Thouars and Vitré	
B.) Private Taste and Public Display of Wealth	111
1.) Display of Grandeur	
2.) Artistic Patronage	
C.) Dynastic Promotion	125
1.) Display of Alliances	
2.) Religious Patronage	
Chapter IV. Family Piety and Religious Politics	137
A.) Religious Education and Moral Rigorism	138

1.) Transmitting the Faith	
2.) 'French' Education and its Critics	
3.) 'Court Calvinism'	
B.) Attitudes towards Mortality and Death	149
1.) Divine Punishment	
2.) The Exemplary Death of Elisabeth de La Trémoille	
C.) Female Involvement in Religious Politics	162
1.) The Amyraut Controversy	
2.) Church Government	
3.) The Morus Affair	
Chapter V. Female Involvement in Politics	188
A.) Participation in the Fronde	189
1.) The Parisian Fronde	
2.) The Breton Estates of 1651	
3.) The 'Guerre Condéenne'	
B.) Cooperation based on Political Pragmatism	201
1.) Marie de La Tour and Mazarin	
2.) Charlotte de La Trémoille and the Interregnum authorities	
C.) Striving for Recognition: the Claim to the Status of <i>Prince Étranger</i>	220
1.) The Title to the Kingdom of Naples	
2.) International Support	
3.) Pamphlet Campaign	
Chapter VI: Networks of Power and Influence	229
A.) Honours at Court: Power through Status	230
1.) The Status of <i>Prince Étranger</i> at the Court of France	
2.) Official Posts at the Court of England	
3.) Court Masques	
B.) Honours through Culture: the Salon Network	247
C.) Trans-national Networks of Kinship	254
1.) Sovereign status par alliance	
2.) Nonalliances	
3.) Misalliances	
Conclusion	270
Appendices:	
Genealogies:	
a-1.) The La Trémoille	
a-2.) The Laval Inheritance	

- a-3.) Marie de La Tour
- a-4.) The Stanleys
- a-5.) Charlotte de La Trémoille

Maps:

- b-1.) *Carte du duché et pairie de Thouars* (Paris,1660) – AN 1AP 2207
- b-2.) 'Southern' La Trémoille Estates
- b-3.) 'Northern' La Trémoille Estates
- b-4.) Stanley Estates
- b-5.) Stanley Estates, close-up

Iconography:

- c-1.) *Noms des chambres du château de Thouars* – AN 1AP 397/85
- c-2.) B. Montcornet, 'Marie de La Tour', BNF Estampes, N2 D184345-7
- c-3.) G. van Honthorst, 'Charlotte de La Trémoille as Minerva', C 26.10.1984 (31)
- c-4.) G. van Honthorst, 'Amalia von Solms and Charlotte de La Trémoille as Ceres and Diana', C 8.7.1998 (91).
- c-5.) A. van Dyck, 'Derby family', A927, Frick Collection, New York
- c-6.) *Recueil de devises*, ARS MS 5217, pl. 13
- c-7.) I. Jones, 'A Nymph', *Designs*, ed. Simpson and Bell, pl. XVII/99, XVIII/100
- c.-8.) Philippe Godet, 'L'Album de Marie de La Tour', *Revue de Champagne et Brie* 5 (1893), 151-8.

Bibliography

Abstracts

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Archives

AC	Archives Condé (Chantilly, F)
AD	Archives Départementales (F)
AN	Archives Nationales de France (Paris, F)
ARS	Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal (Paris, F)
BL	British Library (London, GB)
BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Paris, F)
C	Christie's Auctionhouse
GAA	Gelders Archief Arnhem (NL)
LRO	Lancashire Record Office (Preston, GB)
MML	Manx Museum Library (Douglas, Isle of Man, GB)
NPG	National Portrait Gallery (London, GB)
PRO	Public Record Office (Kew, GB)
S	Sotheby's Auctionhouse
UBL	Universiteitsbibliotheek Leiden (NL)
ThHStAW	Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar (D)

Publications

<i>APW</i>	<i>Acta Pacis Westphalicae</i>
<i>BSHPF</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français</i>
<i>CCAM</i>	<i>Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Advance of Money</i>
<i>CCC</i>	<i>Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding</i>
<i>CS</i>	<i>Chetham Society</i>

<i>CSP Dom</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers, Domestic</i>
<i>CSP Ven</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers, Venetian</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>EHR</i>	<i>Economic History Review</i>
<i>HMC</i>	Historical Manuscript Commission
<i>JC</i>	<i>Journal of the House of Commons</i>
<i>JL</i>	<i>Journal of the House of Lords</i>
<i>LT5s</i>	Louis de La Trémoille (ed.), <i>Les La Trémoille pendant cinq siècles</i> , 5 vols. (Nantes, 1890-95)
<i>RHMC</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine</i>
<i>THSLC</i>	<i>Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire</i>

INTRODUCTION

Despite extremely rich sources - the *Chartrier de Thouars* holds over 2,200 folders covering six centuries of La Trémoïlle history - there are only two major studies of the House of La Trémoïlle. William Weary's thesis deals with the La Trémoïlle in the Renaissance, and Jean-François Labourdette wrote a doctoral thesis on the dynasty's economic situation in the eighteenth century.¹ In general, noble economic power in the seventeenth century seems to have attracted less attention than the 'resilience' of noble fortunes during the Wars of Religion,² and has either been studied with regard to the very top of the noble hierarchy,³ or in terms of narrow 'provincial' interactions between the nobility and their tenants and farmers.⁴ The La Trémoïlle, ducs de Thouars from 1563 and registered *pairs de France* from 1599, had developed strong provincial connections in Poitou and Brittany, and were aiming for high status at court. Their case suggests that historians have overstressed the importance of binary models such as the opposition between court and country, absolute monarchy and domesticated nobility, public and private, and male and female spheres. This analysis of the lives of Marie de La Tour, duchesse de La Trémoïlle (1601-1665), and her sister-in-law, Charlotte de La Trémoïlle (1599-1664), who married James Stanley, Lord Strange and later earl of

¹ William Weary, 'Royal Policy and Patronage in Renaissance France: The Monarchy and the House of La Trémoïlle', Ph.D. Thesis (Yale University, 1972); Jean-François Labourdette, 'La fortune et l'administration des biens de La Trémoïlle au XVIIIe siècle', doctoral thesis, 3 vols. (Université de Nantes, 1974). The lack of detailed research for the seventeenth century is only highlighted by Weary's article, 'The House of La Trémoïlle Fifteenth through Eighteenth Centuries: Change and Adaptations in a French Noble Family', *Journal of Modern History*, 40 (1977) (on demand supplement).

² John Russell Major, 'Noble Income, Inflation and the Wars of Religion in France', *American Historical Review* 86 (1981), 21-48; David Potter, 'The Luxembourg Inheritance: the House of Bourbon and its Lands in Northern France during the Sixteenth Century', *French History* 6/1 (1992), 24-62. The most recent exponent is Malcolm Walsby, 'The Comtes de Laval 1429-1605: Land, Lineage and Patronage in Late Medieval and Renaissance France', Ph.D. thesis (University of Kent, 2001).

³ Nancy Nichols Barker: *Brother to the Sun King* (Baltimore, 1989); Daniel Roche, 'Aperçus de la fortune et les revenus des princes de Condé à l'aube du XVIIIe siècle', *RHMC* 14 (1967), 216-243; François-Charles Mougel, 'La fortune des princes de Bourbon-Conty: revenus et gestion, 1655-1791', *RHMC* 18 (1971), 30-49; Joseph Bergin, *Cardinal Richelieu. Power and Pursuit of Wealth* (New Haven and London, 1985).

⁴ Jean-Marie Constant, *Nobles et paysans en Beauce aux XVIème et XVIIème siècles* (Lille, 1981); Jonathan Dewald, *Pont-St-Pierre 1398-1789* (Berkeley, 1987).

Derby, draws attention to modes of reconciliation and cooperation, and investigates overlapping spheres of action. Studies of noblewomen automatically challenge the rigidity of gender and class patterns, because they investigate the role of members of the unprivileged sex and, at the same time, the most privileged class. The present study examines husband-wife and mistress-servant relations in order to determine how noblewomen reconciled such contradictory social identities in practice. The interactions Marie and Charlotte had with their children and wider family networks are examined in the context of marriage strategies and the promotion of dynastic interests.

Marriage is seen as the foundation of a system of kinship which entailed a range of reciprocal relationships. A 'successful' marriage (hypergamy) increased the prestige of the La Trémoille in the provinces and at court. This study assesses the importance of the promotion of family fortunes in landed administration, architectural and artistic patronage, as well as political and legal negotiations. It investigates whether dynastic motivations sometimes clashed with religious convictions, or whether they were mutually supportive. The aim is not a generalisation or a systematic comparison between French and English noblewomen, as the sample is too limited. The purpose of this case-study is to put one family, the La Trémoille, under the microscope in order to gain a better understanding of their social category, the Huguenot nobility. As a group, the French Protestant nobility has been understudied. The general assumption is that a mass conversion set in after the military defeat of 1621, and that, while these converts flocked to the court, Huguenot congregations turned from the nobility to the clergy for inspiration and protection. This view is qualified here through an analysis of Duchess Marie's active involvement in church politics, her adamant refusal to convert and her role in transmitting the Reformed faith to her children, including the heir to the duchy.

This study also sheds light on the religious motivations and political pragmatism of English Royalists, as it examines Charlotte's opposition to the new regime as well as her continuing co-operation with Parliament and its committees. An analysis of Lady Derby's networking and petitioning, her protection of landed assets through portion and jointure lands, as well as her own 'delinquency', helps to explain why the family fortunes of the Stanley family emerged from the Civil War period relatively unscathed.⁵

This study seeks to bring kinship more systematically into the conceptual framework of the political, and to clarify women's political and managerial practices by extricating female activity from the theoretical straitjacket of the 'private' realm. The analysis of practices of household management that go far beyond the supervision of the domestic economy reveals how Marie came to represent ducal authority in commercial, legal and political contexts. The promotion of family interests naturally had major political significance; this emerges from an investigation of the La Trémoille's pursuit of the title of *prince étranger*, based on their claim to the kingdom of Naples. In order to understand its ramifications at the royal courts of England and France, and at the Westphalian peace conferences, one has to go beyond the national perspective of a purely 'English' or 'French' noble family. By privileging the female point of view of the La Trémoille family history, this study reveals an international network built on the inter-alliance of the Derby and La Trémoille families, and marriage alliances with Scottish aristocrats, as well as German and Dutch princely families. It explores the use Marie and Charlotte made of these connections when they were negotiating preferential treatment at court and secret deals with the English Parliament.

⁵ Barry Coward's thesis on the Stanley fortunes was among the first to challenge Lawrence Stone's sweeping study on the *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, Coward, 'The Stanley Family c. 1385-1651: A Study of the Origins, Power and Wealth of a Landowning Family', Ph.D. thesis (University of Sheffield, 1968).

The realities and limitations of female initiative are at the core of this study, which opts for an analysis of the multiple contexts within which Marie and Charlotte acted, instead of a traditional biographical method, characterised by narrative linearity and factual overload.⁶ The scope of the biography is, nonetheless, ideally suited 'to ascertain the interstitial – yet important – role of personal freedom ... in order to observe the way in which normative systems work in concrete terms and with all its contradictions', as Giovanni Levi has observed.⁷ This is particularly important for historical biographies of women, because of the strong discrepancies between theory and practice.⁸ Detailed analyses of contemporary legal treatises, political thought and theology have provided us with a relatively clear picture of dominant patriarchal ideologies, but it is harder to grasp the realities of female lives at the time. Neither the Huguenot duchesse de La Trémoille, nor the Royalist and French-born countess of Derby can be considered a typical example of either French or English noblewomen. Their very idiosyncracies, however, make it clear to what extent they were products of their time. Moreover, there was no such thing as a 'typical' aristocratic woman, and it is important for any future general study to be aware of all existing models of behaviour.

Subjectivity and sense of self were beginning to emerge in the seventeenth century, as the literary self-portraits emanating from Mademoiselle de Montpensier's circle attest. Duchess Marie was one of the first to contribute her own portrait to this collection, and appears in her letters to have been *self* conscious (not merely aware of herself in the context of a familial group identity) and possessed of strong personal convictions.

⁶ The advantages of this approach have been highlighted by Christian Jouhaud, 'Quand l'historien se fait biographe - La galerie des hommes illustres', *Esprit* (Aug. 1992), 31-7. See also: Jacques Le Goff, *Saint Louis* (Paris, 1996), 16.

⁷ Quoted by Le Goff, *Saint Louis*, 19.

⁸ See, for instance, Danielle Haase-Dubosc, 'De la "nature des femmes" et de sa compatibilité avec l'exercice du pouvoir au XVII^e siècle', *La démocratie 'à la française' ou les femmes indésirables*, ed. E. Viennot (Paris, 1996), 119-125.

Marie's correspondence with her mother, Elisabeth of Nassau, duchesse de Bouillon, her mother-in-law, Charlotte-Brabantine of Nassau, dowager duchesse de La Trémoille, her husband, Henri de La Trémoille, and various ducal agents constitute – together with the letters she received from Countess Charlotte – the main source for this study. These sets of correspondence are held by the Archives Privées division of the Archives Nationales de France.⁹ The exchange of letters should not be conceptualised as a mere private transaction, as it played a major role in developing and maintaining a network of kin, clients and servants. Other important sources for this study are the memoirs of Marie's son, Henri-Charles, prince de Talmont, later known as the prince de Tarente, and the memoirs of her grand-daughter, Charlotte-Amélie, countess of Aldenburg. Non-epistolary sources, such as financial accounts, political tracts, and external reports, will be introduced at the beginning of each chapter, or where appropriate.

The first part of this study deals with the La Trémoille household. Chapter I looks at the framework of the economic unit that constitutes the ducal family, and assesses its landed fortunes, drawing particular attention to female contributions in terms of dowry and widow lands, and to female interventions in sales and acquisitions, as well as estate development, such as mining and foresting. Chapter II analyses household management, and relationships between servants and women of socially higher position. It investigates the nature of the 'division of labour' between noble men and women, and considers whether the distinction of private and public realms reflects this division accurately. Chapter III examines the physical reality of the household – the living space of the La Trémoille family. It analyses Duchess Marie's involvement in architectural

⁹ In subsequent footnotes the classification mark LAP refers to this set of documents, known as the *Chartrier de Thouars*. A selection of documents have been published by Louis, duc de La Trémoille, *Chartrier de Thouars. Documents historiques et généalogiques* (Paris, 1877); id., *Les La Trémoille pendant cinq siècles*, 5 vols. (Nantes, 1890-95) [subsequently referred to as *LT5s*].

projects at Thouars and Vitré, both secular and sacral, and compares these to Charlotte de La Trémoille's patronage of the arts in order to define the strategies both women used to promote their lineage. This reflection leads to the second part of the study, which examines different aspects of dynastic promotion. Religious motivations and possible tensions between moral rigorism and the pursuit of grandeur are investigated in Chapter IV. Strategies deployed to advance the family's position during the Fronde, or – in Charlotte's case – to prevent the financial ruin of her family during the English Civil War and its Republican aftermath – are investigated in Chapter V. Subjects discussed here include the limits of their political pragmatism and possible alternatives to the co-operation with a detested regime. The important role played by their international network of support is elucidated in Chapter VI. This final chapter examines why the rank of *prince étranger* mattered to the La Trémoille and what advantages Charlotte hoped to gain at the English court. Court culture is contrasted with the salon circles in which Marie de La Tour moved, allowing her to cultivate a new sense of subjectivity.

CHAPTER I. LANDED FORTUNES

Studies of early modern aristocracy have shown that wealth and status were primarily conceived of in relation to land, and that land was used as a basis of personal power, either through regional concentrations of landed estates, or through extensive land-owning rights in different regions and countries.¹⁰ This chapter assesses the territorial strategies developed by the La Trémoïlle, and examines how profitable their lands were, and what use was made of alternative sources of income. It discusses whether matrimonial arrangements contributed to territorial expansion, or whether they resulted in the diminishment of a family's landed assets. Apart from private letters which form the spine of each chapter, this section relies on financial accounts, various legal documents (marriage contracts, wills, partition documents), petitions, and, most importantly, a domestic *Mémoire* written by Marie de La Tour in 1661 in order to defend and justify her decisions as estate purchaser and seller.¹¹ These family sources are complemented by external reports from the provinces made by Colbert de Croissy and royal *intendants*. Charles Colbert (1629-1696) toured France in the 1660s, accompanied by local *grandeues*, and produced detailed accounts for the royal administration.¹² The second series of reports was commissioned some thirty years later to serve as 'instruction' for the young duc de Bourgogne.¹³

¹⁰ Joseph Bergin, *Pursuit of Wealth*, 120; Jonathan Spangler, 'The House of Lorraine in France: "Princes Étrangers" and the Continuity of Power and Wealth in the Later Seventeenth Century', D.Phil. thesis (University of Oxford, 2002), 220-59.

¹¹ Hugues Imbert (ed.), 'Mémoire de Marie de La Tour-d'Auvergne, duchesse de La Trémoïlle', *Mémoires de la Société des antiquaires de l'Ouest* 1^{ère} série 32 (1867), 89-129; *Chartrier de Thouars*, ed. La Trémoïlle, 154-6. The edition used here, subsequently referred to as '1661 Mémoire', is Jean-Luc Tulot's, comprised in *La Correspondance de Marie de La Tour, duchesse de La Trémoïlle* (unpublished), 201-215.

¹² Jean Kerhervé, François Roudaut and Jean Tanguy (eds.), *La Bretagne en 1665 d'après le rapport de Colbert de Croissy* (Brest, 1978); Charles Colbert de Croissy, 'Rapport au roi et mémoire sur le clergé, la noblesse, la justice et les finances', *Etat du Poitou sous Louis XIV*, ed. C. Dugast-Matifeux (Poitiers, 1976), 1-204.

¹³ Maupéon d'Ableiges, 'Mémoire concernant la province de Poitou', *Etat du Poitou*, ed. Dugast, 393. Jean Béranger and Jean Meyer, *La Bretagne de la fin du XVII^e siècle d'après le mémorial de Béchameil de Nointel* (Paris, 1976). Both reports are printed by Henri de Boulainvilliers, *Etat de France ... Extrait des*

A.) The formation of the La Trémoille estates

1.) The Disintegration of the 'Territorial Block'

Remains of the Past

The erection of the duchy of Thouars in 1563,¹⁴ followed by its promotion to *duché-pairie* by Henri IV in 1595,¹⁵ has traditionally been seen as the result of the steady political rise of the La Trémoille, linked to a territorial expansion spanning two hundred years. Up to the year 1542, the usual strategies of enhancing family status seem to have been at work: landed strength and social status were derived from alliances with older, wealthier families and from royal patronage. According to William Weary, the La Trémoille increased the number of their seigneuries, from thirteen in 1486 to almost fifty by 1542,¹⁶ and transformed their scattered possessions into a large 'territorial block' in the shape of a hexagon.¹⁷

This might have been an impressive achievement, but 1542 was a turning point in various respects. Soon after François de La Trémoille's death, the vast lands held by the family were shared out between his three sons. Large parts of the south-western territories, including most of the military strongholds in the La Rochelle region, went to Louis III's younger brothers, who founded the *cadet* branches of Royan and Noirmoutier.¹⁸ Louis III broke with the tradition of marrying heiresses and contracted instead a highly political alliance with Jeanne de Montmorency, daughter of the Connétable Anne. This prefigured the matrimonial pattern of the seventeenth century as

mémoires des intendants du royaume, 3 vols. (London, 1727-28), i. 53-79 (Brittany) and i. 80-111 (Poitou).

¹⁴ Guibours Anselme de Sainte-Marie, *Histoire généalogique et chronologique*, 9 vols. (Paris, 1726-1733), v. 152-4.

¹⁵ *LT5s*, iii. 192-6; iv. 21-5.

¹⁶ William Weary, 'La Maison de La Trémoille pendant la Renaissance: une seigneurie agrandie', *La France de la fin du XVe siècle: renouveau et apogée*, ed. B. Chevalier and Contamine (Paris, 1985), 200; Anselme, *Histoire généalogique*, iv. 160-172.

¹⁷ Weary, 'Royal policy', 45-6.

¹⁸ Anselme, *Histoire généalogique*, iv. 174, 176.

neither Charlotte-Brabantine of Nassau, nor Marie de La Tour, nor indeed Amalia of Hesse-Cassel contributed any landed inheritance to the La Trémoille patrimony. Instead they provided much needed liquid assets and a prestigious set of alliances with foreign sovereigns or princes.

By 1600 most outlying estates had been sold off, with the exception of the family 'cradle', a small fief which kept the medieval spelling of 'La Trimouille'. The remaining La Trémoille estates lay in the western part of Poitou and in Aunis-Saintonge, and the family seat was firmly based in Thouars. A contemporary map of the duchy-peerage of Thouars, printed in 1660 for Henri-Charles de La Trémoille, depicts the duke's overlordship, rather than the estates yielding landed income.¹⁹ According to Colbert de Croissy, of all seigneurs in Poitou, the duc de Thouars had 'le plus grand nombre de vassaux, à cause de ses grandes alliances'.²⁰ Lists of feudal *aveux* give us some indication of the *mouvance* of Thouars, which comprised at least 260 seigneuries between 1400 and 1800.²¹ In the seventeenth century, vassals of the La Trémoille included the duc de La Meilleraye for his fief of La Flocelière, the duc de Retz, the duc de Vendôme, and the marquise de Fiesque, whose fief was temporarily confiscated because she had forgotten to pay homage in 1644.²² In Saintonge, the La Trémoille continued to control the right bank of the Gironde, although their military hold of the region was weakened after the fortress of Talmont was dismantled in 1628. Revenues from Didonne and Talmont continued to feed ducal coffers, and Louis-Maurice de La

¹⁹ 1AP 2207, see Appendix b-1.

²⁰ 'Rapport au roi', ed. Dugast, 94.

²¹ 1AP 701,713-4, 726-8, 1067-1353; Louis de La Trémoille and Henri Clouzot, *Les fiefs de la vicomté de Thouars, d'après l'inventaire inédit de Jean-Frédéric Poisson, en 1753* (Niort, 1893).

²² Jacques Péret, 'Seigneurs et seigneuries en Gâtine poitevine: Le duché de La Meilleraye, XVIIe-XVIIIe siècle', *Mémoire de la Société des antiquaires de l'Ouest* 4^e série 13 (1976), 84; 1AP 1234, 1340; 1AP 1136; 1AP 1101 and 1AP 394/14; on Madame de Fiesque, see Charles Livet, 'Les femmes de la Fronde', *Revue européenne* 3 (1859), 533, 538. On the remains of feudalism, see J. Russell Major, 'Bastard feudalism and the Kiss: Changing Social Mores in Late Medieval and Early Modern France', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17/3 (1987), 509-536.

Trémoille started to rebuild the castle of Talmont after his nomination as abbot of Sainte-Croix.²³ Further north, the fortress of Taillebourg overlooking the river Charente was considered virtually impregnable. During the Fronde, it became a centre of resistance and the queen ordered it to be razed.²⁴ Although the senior branch of La Trémoille no longer controlled the islands of Oléron and Ré, it held Benon, neighbouring the Protestant stronghold of La Rochelle, which played an important role in the early seventeenth-century dealings between the Crown and the Huguenots.

This cluster of lands in Poitou and Saintonge-Aunis can therefore no longer be described as a 'block', but rather a sphere of influence comprising some - but not all – of the lands between the river Loire in the north, the Atlantic coast in the west and the newly created *duchés-pairies* of Richelieu and La Meilleraye in the east and south. The La Trémoille lands in Poitou and Aunis-Saintonge had a capital value of *circa* 750,000 *livres*, overshadowed by the 1.75 million value of the duchy of Richelieu and 1.863 million Richelieu owned in Aunis-Saintonge.²⁵ The loss of Isle-Bouchard to Richelieu seems to indicate that, rather than expanding, the La Trémoille lands were increasingly falling into the hands of their Poitou rivals.²⁶ Nonetheless, by 1649, the duchy of Thouars was still considered to form 'plus de la moitié de la province [de Poitou]'.²⁷ The acquisition of Loudun, purchased from Mme d'Aiguillon after Richelieu's death,²⁸ was a

²³ The principality of Talmont covered about 9,000 ha, but most of the revenues, estimated by Colbert at about 8,000 *livres*, went to the abbey of Sainte-Croix, Christian Masson, 'La principauté des La Trémoille en Bas-Poitou au XVIIIe siècle. Etude sociale et démographique', maîtrise (Université de Nantes, 1972), 15, 24-5.

²⁴ Henri Courteault, *Un témoin de la Fronde parisienne, Annibal de La Trémoille, vicomte de Marcilly* (Paris, 1922), 50; Henri-Charles de La Trémoille, prince de Tarente, *Mémoires* (Liège, 1767), 71, 81, 96, 104, 106.

²⁵ Bergin, *Pursuit of Wealth*, 134.

²⁶ Bergin, *Pursuit of Wealth*, 125-7, 193; Péret, 'Le duché de La Meilleraye', 45.

²⁷ 'Lettre des Peuples de la Province de Poitou envoyée à Messieurs du Parlement sur le sujet des partisans et des maltôtiers', *Etat du Poitou*, ed. Dugast, 201.

²⁸ Loudun was purchased in 1654 for 130,520 *livres*, including the right to nominate officers, '1661 Mémoire', 208.

small addition in terms of landed wealth, but it had an important Protestant community and hosted the last national synod in 1659. It also had a symbolic value emphasised by the fact that the land was considered a *duché*, although the title 'duc de Loudun' had become extinct in 1596.²⁹ Colbert de Croissy's report written in 1664 considered the duc de La Trémoïlle

chef de la noblesse de Poitou de sa qualité de grand sénéchal de la province, [il] est aussi de la plus illustre maison qu'elle ait, (...) à cause des grandes terres qu'il y possède, dont le duché de Thouars est la principale et passe pour une des plus étendues du royaume.³⁰

Colbert's editor refers to a sixteenth-century book that declared that the La Trémoïlle 'se sont tellement accommodés en ces pays, qu'autrefois, pour le mérite de leurs vertus et longue étendue de terre, [ils] ont été nommés *les petits rois de Poitou*'.³¹ When the queen of England visited Poitou in 1644, she was received by the duc de La Trémoïlle and the maréchal de Brézé.³² In 1649 a pamphleteer complained that the duchy of Thouars was being treated 'comme ennemie du reste de la France et comme si c'étoit un royaume étranger', because of the duke's involvement in the Fronde.³³ The fact that the duke and his son headed Colbert's list reflects their social standing in Poitou, enhanced by their prominent position north of the Loire.³⁴

The Laval Inheritance

The unexpected death of Guy XX de Laval, killed in the Hungarian plains on 3 December 1605, had far-reaching consequences for his next male kinsman, the duc de

²⁹ Jean-Pierre Labatut, *Les ducs et pairs de France au XVIIe siècle: étude sociale* (Paris, 1972), 267; Anselme, *Histoire généalogique*, v. 627; iii. 513.

³⁰ 'Rapport au roi', ed. Dugast, 94

³¹ La Popelinière, *L'Histoire de France au XVIe siècle* (1582), quoted by Dugast, *Etat du Poitou*, 94.

³² Elie Brackenhoffer, *Voyage en France, 1643-1644* (Nancy, 1925), 215-6.

³³ 'Lettre des Peuples de la Province de Poitou', ed. Dugast, 201.

³⁴ 'Rapport au roi', ed. Dugast, 131, 89-90.

La Trémoille.³⁵ In February 1606, the dowager duchesse de La Trémoille, acting as proxy for her six-year-old son, paid *foy et hommage* to the king in his court at Rennes for the counties of Montfort and Quintin, the viscounty of Rennes, baronies of La Roche-Bernard, La Roche-en-Nort and Vitré, and the *châtellenie* of Bécherel.³⁶ The county of Laval itself lay outside of Brittany and homage had to be paid first to the duc de Mayenne and, after 1644, to the king in Paris.³⁷ The Laval legacy profoundly altered the geographical pattern of the La Trémoille land holdings, which doubled in size and now formed two distinctly separate territorial entities: the original 'southern' La Trémoille estates and the 'northern' Laval branch. This dicephalism was reflected by two separate sets of accounts, held by the *trésorier général* and by the *receveur général de Bretagne* and by two separate administrative headquarters set up in the towns of Thouars and Vitré. It is, however, questionable whether the Laval inheritance was entirely beneficial for the La Trémoille.

According to Malcolm Walsby's recent study, the landed wealth of the counts of Laval had suffered severely as a result of the divisive, destructive Wars of Religion, repeated confiscations for treason, high military spending and consecutive minorities linked to absenteeism, and a general deterioration of the count's authority.³⁸ The La Trémoille later depicted the Laval inheritance as a poisoned chalice and claimed that they had hesitated to accept it.³⁹ It represented a financial drain in that rival claims to the inheritance led to costly litigation, and even amicable agreements implied large financial sacrifices. As early as January 1606, the princesse de Condé née La Trémoille

³⁵ Abbé Guillotin de Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries de Haute Bretagne*, 3 vols. (Rennes, 1897-98), ii. 391; Malcolm Walsby, 'The Comtes de Laval 1429-1605: Land, Lineage and Patronage in Late Medieval and Renaissance France', Ph.D. thesis (University of Kent, 2001). See Appendix a-2 for genealogical details.

³⁶ AD, Loire Atlantique, B67 [I would like to thank Mr Tulot for this reference].

³⁷ 1AP 390/129.

³⁸ Walsby, 'The Comtes de Laval', 174-182.

³⁹ Walsby, 'The Comtes de Laval', 181.

was believed to want some form of compensation for her son.⁴⁰ Guy XX's aunt, the marquise de Mirebeau, was granted eleven years revenue of Didonne.⁴¹ His mother, Madame de Fervaques, received half of La Roche-Bernard in 1612, and later bought the other half for 188,000 *livres*.⁴² The most costly settlement involved the dowager duchesse d'Elbeuf, who claimed one quarter of the total inheritance in recognition of the rights of her late husband's mother, Louise de Rieux. This claim was settled in 1615 for 120,000 *livres*, a sum Charlotte-Brabantine had to borrow from the duc de Bouillon.⁴³ Although the redemption of this debt, and the 65,000 *livres* in interest charges that had been accumulated, made up half of Marie de La Tour's dowry in 1619,⁴⁴ Madame d'Elbeuf was not paid off until 1659.⁴⁵ These legal disputes provide an interesting set of examples of female involvement in litigation, as all the main protagonists (La Trémoille, Condé, Fervaques, Elbeuf) were dowagers.⁴⁶

2.) Sales and Acquisitions

Once the main rival claims had been settled, the La Trémoille continued to wrestle with the financial burden represented by the Laval debts. The actual amount is difficult to determine, but Guy XX appears to have left debts of 500,000 *livres* and the partition document of 1619 still mentions total liabilities of 300,000 *livres* originating from the Laval inheritance. The La Trémoille chose to tackle indebtedness by selling off lands. Despite the official discourse extolling 'land' alongside 'ancient blood' and military

⁴⁰ 1AP 644.

⁴¹ Estimated at 5,500 *livres* per year, 1AP 409/2.

⁴² AD, Loire Atlantique, B67. In the ensuing court case the *Chambre de l'Edit* ruled twice in favour of the La Trémoille, '1661 Mémoire', 210, 213.

⁴³ Negotiations in 1612 (AN, T*1559-1, cote XXXII, no. 1, and cote IV, no. 20) and settlement in 1615 (*Transaction homologuée au Parlement de Paris en la Chambre de l'Edit* 26 May 1615) [I would like to thank Mr Tulot and Dr Spangler for these references].

⁴⁴ 1AP 398/9.

⁴⁵ AN, T 199-19 [reference provided by Dr Spangler].

⁴⁶ On Duplessis-Mornay's mediation between the three dowagers, see: David Licques, *Histoire de la vie de Messire Philippe de Mornay* (Leyden, 1647), 330.

'valour' as quintessential noble values, in practice, the main concern was to preserve the family seat, not the retention of all outlying estates. This explains why remote estates such as La Roche-Bernard and Quintin were sold off, while the barony of Vitré lost only one of seven *châtellenies*.⁴⁷

Figure 1: The Laval inheritance and its sales⁴⁸

Estate:	Year	Sold for:	Sold to:
Barony of La Roche-Bernard	1612 1613	donation 188,000 ⁴⁹	Mme de Fervaques
Barony of Quintin 1.) <i>métairie</i> L'Hermitage; 160 j. of woodlands 2.) Avaugour (mills) 3.) 260 j. of wood 4.) Le Breuil (60 j. of wood) 5.) Beauregard, Rieux, Quintin-en-Guémené 6.) the rest of Quintin Total:	1624 1626 1630 1631 1631 1635/38	44,500 5,230 26,000 2,600 18,500 478,000 574,830	Le Coniac, Sieur de Toulmen Marquis de Liscoët Sieur de la Morinière M. Villemorhan Marquis de La Moussaye Marquis de La Moussaye
Barony of Bécherel ⁵⁰	1626	160,000	Jean Glé, seigneur de la Costardaye, François Glé, seigneur du Pan and the seigneur de Bienassis
Barony of Gaël ⁵¹	1626	160,000	Mathurin de Rosmadec, seigneur de Saint-Jouan de l'Isle and his wife, Jeanne de Trogoff
<i>Châtellenies</i> Plélan [-le-Grand], Bréal , and Comblessac ⁵²	1626	51,730	Louise de Maure, marquis de Mortemart
Barony of La Roche-en-Nort ⁵³	1626	40,000	Louis de Rohan, prince de Guémené and his wife Anne de Rohan
County of Montfort ⁵⁴ 1.) <i>châtellenie</i> Saint-Malon-sur-Mel ⁵⁵ 2.) some fiefs, including the fief and	1626	10,600	François d'Andigné, seigneur de la Chasse et de Kermagaro

⁴⁷ See: Appendix b-3.

⁴⁸ j. stand of for *journaux* of land. All prices are derived from the '1661 Mémoire', except where stated otherwise.

⁴⁹ Since it was half-donated, half-sold, the total value can be estimated at 378,000. But the Cambout family acquired it in 1636 by judicial sale for only 165,000 *livres*, James B. Collins, *Classes, Estates and Order in Early Modern Brittany* (Cambridge, 1994), 117.

⁵⁰ Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, ii. 36-7.

⁵¹ Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, ii. 202.

⁵² Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, i. 89,199, 343.

⁵³ '1661 Mémoire', 202, 212. The La Trémoille tried to undo this sale and give the land to Yves Tanouarn, sieur de Bourblanc, *président des enquêtes* at the Breton Parlement, Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, iii. 344-5; Frédéric Saulnier, *Le Parlement de Bretagne 1554-1790*, 2 vols. (Rennes, 1909), ii. 819.

⁵⁴ Montfort comprised twenty-seven parishes, three *prévôtés*, and the foundation rights of the abbeys of Montfort and Paimpont, Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, ii. 281-7; Grimaudet to Marie, 3 June 1627, 1AP 657: 'nombre de compétiteurs car plusieurs personnes puissantes en bien voysinent ladicté terre et y aura de l'envie à qui demeureront les premiers honneurs du païs'.

⁵⁵ Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, i. 423.

bailiwick of Talensac (prévôté de la Rigadelaye)	1642	125,000 ⁵⁹	Gilles Huchet, vicomte de Plehedel
3.) <i>châtellenie</i> Brécilien ⁵⁶			
3-1.) du Perray (54 j.)	1629		François d'Andigné
3-2.) Follepensée (140 j.)	1629		Benjamin de Laage
3-3.) manor and estate of Beauvais, lake and mill of Chastenay	1630		Jacques Poluche, sieur de la Motte
3-4.) Coganne, Thélouët, le Canet (84 j.) and two lakes (Près de la Ruice)	1630		Jacques Saulnier, sieur de la Villaubry
3-5.) Pas-au-Chèvres, Trudo, Tréal	1631		François d'Avaugour, seigneur de la Lohière
3-6.) 200 j., close to his castle of Comper and fief de Gaillarde	1631		Mathurin de Rosmadec, baron de Gaël
3-7.) lake and two mills (Carray), wood (Relaissés), fief Saint-Péran	1632		Guillaume Rabinard
3-8.) 50-60 j. of forest	1642	220,000	Gilles Huchet
3-9.) the remainder and the title to Brécilien ⁵⁷	1653		Jean-Baptiste d'Andigné, seigneur de la Chasse and the brothers Farcy
4.) the rest of Montfort ⁵⁸	1715		
County of Laval (24 parishes) ⁶⁰	/		
Barony of Vitré : ⁶¹			
<i>châtellenie</i> Aubigné (10 parishes, numerous seigneurial rights, high justice, 'droit de guet') ⁶²	1632		Marquis de Coëtquen
Viscounty of Rennes (<i>garde du château</i> and the office of <i>lieutenant</i>), high justice over 500 'bourgeois', patronage of several churches ⁶³	1715		
Total Sales (before 1715)		1,432,160	

The massive 'onslaught' deplored by later historians began in the 1620s; and by 1650 half of the Laval inheritance had disappeared.⁶⁴ Marie de La Tour was accused of

⁵⁶ Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, i. 99-101.

⁵⁷ '1661 Mémoire', 204; Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, i. 101: 'avec le droit d'y faire bâtir des forges'.

⁵⁸ Kerhervé, *La Bretagne en 1665*, 104; Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, ii. 281-7.

⁵⁹ 1AP 429

⁶⁰ *LT5s*, iv. 87-8.

⁶¹ The barony of Vitré comprised 7 *châtellenies* (Vitré, Chevré, Châtillon-en-Vendelais, Marcillé-Robert, Le Pertre, Mezières and Aubigné), and had jurisdiction over 120 parishes, 60 of them with high justice, according to the 1681 'Déclaration et dénombrement de Vitré', *Journal historique de Vitré ou documents et notes pour servir à l'histoire de cette ville*, ed. Abbé Paul Paris-Jallobert (Mayenne, 1995, first edition 1880), 194-204.

⁶² Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, ii. 20-1.

⁶³ Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, ii. 339.

⁶⁴ Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, ii. 281-7.

having alienated family estates, and seems indeed to have actively promoted faster sales in order to avoid an accumulation of interest charges. Marie's own assessment is highly revealing, as it shows that contemporaries did not necessarily consider the sale of patrimony as economically damaging:

Il est vray que nous pouvions estre quittes [de nos dettes] à meilleur marché, sy ce que j'ay souvent représenté eust esté suivy, à savoir de vendre en une seule année une partie de ce qui a esté vendu, parce que l'intervalle que l'on mettoit d'une vente à l'autre (...) estoit sy grand que, faute de pouvoir payer ce qui restoit d'intérêts, il se trouvoit que nous estions engagez d'autant que ce qui avoit esté aliéné. Mais quelques raisons que j'allegesse pour cela, elles n'estoient point escoutées, tant on incline aisément à se conserver l'héritage de ses pères.⁶⁵

Although the duchess complained that her advice fell on deaf ears, because 'one feels so inclined towards protecting family heirlooms',⁶⁶ the very fact that she had to expound on her motives suggests that she had in fact been listened to.

More importantly, the sales were not counter-balanced by any significant acquisitions of lands. The duchess admitted that 'le prix des choses aliennées excède celui des acquetz ... de la somme de 781,140 livres',⁶⁷ but this figure is a gross understatement. In fact, the sales from the Laval inheritance alone generated at least 1,432,160 *livres* and there was very little investment in land, although there appears to have been some interest in rationalising the geographical layout of their estates. The acquisition of Riblères, Missé and Le Chastelier were thought to improve the coherence of the domain of Thouars,⁶⁸ and many smaller plots of lands were bought to round off the gardens and parks.⁶⁹ The only major acquisition was the marquisate of Espinay, bought in 1633 from the duc de

⁶⁵ '1661 Mémoire', 206. Her agent Rozemont expressed the same opinion: 'Je loue dieu de voir tant de bons effects du travail de Vostre Excellence par les ventes que vous avez faictes pour faire la part au feu et desbrouiller vostre maison. Je ne vous scaurois dire combien les personnes sages louent la resolution que vous avez prise', Rozemont to Marie, 1 Mar. 1626, 1AP 355-6.

⁶⁶ According to the Duke 'il faut plustost engager pierreries, vaisselle d'argent et meubles, que de souffrir la perte honteuse d'une terre', Henri to Tarente, 1 Jan. 1666, 1AP396/449-451.

⁶⁷ '1661 Mémoire', 215.

⁶⁸ Bought for 66,000 *livres* in 1648, '1661 Mémoire', 207; 1AP 1301.

⁶⁹ 1AP 657/93, 96.

Schomberg for 303,000 *livres* 'pour aider à arrondir la terre de Vitré à cause de leur proximité et de leurs enclaves'.⁷⁰ The underlying motivation for the acquisition of Espinay was not territorial aggrandisement, but the resolution of an unremitting conflict between the overlapping jurisdictions of Espinay and Vitré, which had compromised good relations with the Schomberg family.⁷¹

Although the rapid sequence of sales in the 1620s and 1630s suggests problems of cash-flow, this does not automatically preclude a careful and balanced approach towards the selling of land. As the example of Quintin illustrates, the 'dismantling' of the Laval inheritance was not undertaken in an irrational or frantic manner, but was part of a deliberate attempt to strengthen local alliances. On 13 January 1638, the transaction of Quintin was officially concluded for '470 000 livres et un tour de perles qui valloient alors 8 ou 9,000 livres'.⁷² With the additional 25,000 *livres* for his usufruct of Quintin since 1635, the marquis de La Moussaye paid thus about half a million *livres*, a price Tallemant des Réaux scoffed at:

La Moussaye, son beau frère, a tiré de la forest de Quintin, qu'il luy vendit avec la terre de Quintin les cinq cens mille francs qu'a cousté le tout. Il a donné une forest avec le fonds pour moins que le bois le vaut.⁷³

It may have been sold below its value,⁷⁴ but the landed value of Quintin had been severely diminished by the fact that it was at the centre of a lawsuit between the La

⁷⁰ '1661 Mémoire', 207; Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, ii. 168, 438-444.

⁷¹ Most of Espinay was rapidly sold off: 1.) Sérigné (in 1635) for 15,000; 2.) the manor of Champeaux (in 1635); 3.) the seigneurie of Escures (in 1636) for 40,000 *livres*; 4.) ch. Sérigné (in 1654) for 55,500 *livres*, '1661 Mémoire', 202, 205; Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, i. 445.

⁷² '1661 Mémoire', 203. Notarial act (13 Jan. 1638), AD, Ille-et-Vilaine, 1 F 1238. See: Monique Langlois, 'Etude historique, administrative et économique de la seigneurie de Quintin jusqu'en 1682', doctoral thesis, 3 vols. (Ecole de Chartres, 1944).

⁷³ Gédéon Tallemant des Réaux, *Historiettes*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1960-1961), i. 251.

⁷⁴ Quintin was worth 9,000 *livres* per year in the mid-sixteenth century and selling it for the equivalent of 16,000 *livres* (*denier* 30) was indeed a low price, considering the level of inflation [information provided by Dr Walsby]. After the deduction of debts (113,500 *livres*) and Charlotte de La Trémoille's share (120,000 *livres*), only about half of the purchase price went to the La Trémoille, Jean Luc Tulot (ed.), *Correspondance du marquis et de la marquise de La Moussaye (1619-1663)* (Paris, 1999), 9.

Trémoille and Claude de Bretagne, comte de Vertus, an ally of the Rohan faction.⁷⁵ Moreover, Henri de La Trémoille was less interested in immediate material gains than in forging closer ties with Amaury III Gouyon de La Moussaye. The connection dated from the 1620s,⁷⁶ and had been rekindled by the marquis' marriage in 1629 to Henriette de La Tour, a younger sister of the duchesse de La Trémoille. Shortly after the private agreement had been signed in August 1635, the marquis de La Moussaye served as *lieutenant* in La Trémoille's *compagnie des gendarmes*.⁷⁷ The sale of Quintin was important to both La Moussaye and La Trémoille, not because of the inherent landed value it represented but because Quintin was one of the nine ancient baronies of the duchy of Brittany and its holder was entitled to share the presidency of the second order at the Estates of Brittany. Consequently, the marquis de La Moussaye proved a valuable ally, especially during the 1645, 1651 and 1657 sessions of the Estates.⁷⁸

For a period spanning from 1624 to 1655, the La Trémoille were selling parts of their lands in a continual manner that can be referred to as *grignotage*. Historians have used this term to describe a particular method of land acquisition, based on the purchase of small plots from neighbouring landowners and the expansion of their own territorial basis in an almost surreptitious manner.⁷⁹ The inverted *modus operandi*, leading to a gradual erosion of their landed assets, was used by or forced upon the La Trémoille, and

⁷⁵ Vertus claimed that the tenure of Quintin belonged to his barony of Avaugour, and had been usurped by the barons of Vitré since 1579. His eldest daughter, the duchesse de Montbazou, 'avoit intéressé pour elle la plus grande partie de la cour et ceux mesmes de qui nous devons espérer le plus d'assistance'. With the help of the Condés, however, the *Grande Chambre* ruled in favour of the La Trémoille and the sale of Quintin went ahead, '1661 Mémoire', 210-1, Marie to Henriette de La Tour, 25 Apr. 1637, *La Moussaye*, ed. Tulot, 101.

⁷⁶ Amaury II Gouyon (1577-1624) represented Brittany at the Loudun assembly in 1620 and 'se montr[ait] très affectionné' towards La Trémoille interests, Henri to Charlotte-Brabantine, 4 Mar. 1620, 1AP 394/49.

⁷⁷ Tulot, *La Moussaye*, 95, 91.

⁷⁸ Tulot, *La Moussaye*, 23.

⁷⁹ Bergin, *Pursuit of Wealth*, 131.

it was not limited to their Breton estates.⁸⁰ Richelieu had professed an interest in the lands of Isle-Bouchard since 1627, but Charlotte-Brabantine opposed the sale, because it belonged to her dower lands and because she was concerned about the privileges enjoyed by the local Huguenots.⁸¹ But in 1628, her youngest son, Frédéric, became involved in Soubise's rebellion and joined the English troops under Lord Lindsey in their attempt to rescue La Rochelle. His eventual pardon, granted on 6 November 1629, has to be linked to the sale of Isle Bouchard which was signed over to Richelieu on 18 December 1629 for 180,000 *livres*.⁸² The same year Bournezeau was sold to a Monsieur Bardin for 80,000 *livres*, possibly in order to pay for Charlotte de La Trémoille's dowry.⁸³ The La Trémoille lost further strongholds in Poitou and in the Vendée in 1633, with the sale of Montaigu to the Huguenot marquis de Vieilleville,⁸⁴ and the sale of Mareuil, Concise and Cerisay in 1644.⁸⁵

Despite the unfavourable impression given by this continuous gnawing away at La Trémoille estates, sales and acquisitions were monitored in order to consolidate holdings and to eliminate administrative weaknesses. The best example is Espinay, the purchase of which provided a crucial territorial and administrative link between the barony of Vitré and the viscounty of Rennes.⁸⁶ The funds to buy Espinay were taken from the sale of Montaigu,⁸⁷ but the latter maintained feudal ties with symbolic as well

⁸⁰ See Appendix b-2.

⁸¹ Bergin, *Pursuit of Wealth*, 142; Charlotte-Brabantine to Elisabeth of Nassau, 13 Oct. 1627, AN, 273AP 180.

⁸² *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 270; Chamdor to Henri, 11 Dec. 1629, 1AP 648; Tallemant, *Historiettes*, i. 251.

⁸³ '1661 Mémoire', 202.

⁸⁴ '1661 Mémoire', 202; 'Raport du roi', ed. Dugast, 105.

⁸⁵ 1AP 429/1-3.

⁸⁶ An advantage lessened by the sale of Escures, Grimaudet to Chamdor, 4 Aug. 1635, 1AP 657/113 (see footnote 62).

⁸⁷ Grimaudet to Marie, 9 Sept. 1633 and 7 Jan. 1634, 1AP 657/82, 93.

as financial rewards.⁸⁸ Seigniorial jurisdictions and economic monopolies (*banalités*) continued to play an important role in the seventeenth century, especially in Brittany.⁸⁹ The La Trémoille were relatively successful in protecting their *sénéchaussées* and *bailliages* not only from appeals made to the *présidiaux*,⁹⁰ but also from financial district officers and municipal jurisdictions. In 1636 the *Grand Conseil* ruled that precedence should be given to the ducal officers over the officers of the *élection* of Thouars, and by 1640 the duchess had managed 'avec tant de peines et de traverses' to keep the mayoralty of that city attached to the post of the *sénéchal*.⁹¹

Alienation of patrimony went thus hand in hand with legal strategies to consolidate the La Trémoille's sphere of influence. There was a conscious decision to sell landed estates to political allies, such as the La Moussaye, and to uphold honorific seigneurial control. Were these strategies successful in sustaining the growth and resilience of the fortunes Weary showed the La Trémoille possessed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries?

B.) The Composition of the La Trémoille's Revenues

1.) Land and Development

According to William Weary, the La Trémoille's nominal income rose by 161 per cent (99 per cent for the real income) between 1486 and 1542, and continued to grow by a staggering 175 per cent between 1619 and 1709, comparable to an average growth in

⁸⁸ 1AP 1183. The La Trémoille could and often did claim the *droit de rachat* when one of their fiefs changed ownership, although this was increasingly challenged in the courts of law, '1661 Mémoire', 214. See: Marie to Chamdor, 3 Dec 1644, 7 Jan. 1645, 1AP 429/3, 5; Henri to Chamdor, 8 Apr. 1643, 1AP 394/1.

⁸⁹ Michael L. Bush, *Noble Privilege* (Manchester, 1983), 157-63; Collins, *Classes*, 21, 112; Bérenger and Meyer, *op. cit.*, 102; André Giffard, *Les justices seigneuriales en Bretagne aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles (1661-1791)* (Paris, 1903).

⁹⁰ Marie de La Tour obtained two rulings from the *Chambre de l'Edit* favouring seigneurial jurisdictions over *présidiaux*, '1661 Mémoire', 211 (12 Aug. 1644) and 212 (3 Oct. 1644). See: 1AP 385/129; 1AP 390/129.

⁹¹ '1661 Mémoire', 210, 211; see: Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 117-120.

noble income of only 25 per cent.⁹² The problem with this conclusion is that the 1619 total (42,670 *livres*) is based on a *partage* of Claude de La Trémoille's succession,⁹³ and takes into account neither the Laval inheritance nor any reversionary interests such as dower lands or provisions for younger children.⁹⁴ As far as one can reconstruct the revenues of the 'southern' La Trémoille estates from the surviving financial accounts, no real growth can be observed:

Figure 2: Revenues from the 'southern' La Trémoille estates⁹⁵

Source:	1AP 398/10-12	1AP 98	1AP 99	1AP 106	LT5s, IV, 171-3	LT5s, IV, 187-8
Estate:	1619	1642-4	1644/5	1652-4	1653	1679
Thouars	20,000	18,517	19,382	22,554	/	12,277
Talmont	3,200	1,816	2,962	/	3,650	200
Benon	4,000	311	1,200	/	3,400	500
Montaigu	(2,270)	(sold)	(sold)	(sold)	(sold)	(sold)
Taillebourg	7,300	2,948	4,173	2,561	8,800 ⁹⁶	5,796
Didonne	(5,500)	(1,138)	/	(5,500)	/	(1,150)
La Trimouille	400	360	660	572	/	396
Berrie	/	(3,170)	(2,705)	(3,000)	/	/
Isle-Bouchard	(7,200) ⁹⁷	(sold)	(sold)	(sold)	(sold)	(sold)
Bournezeau	(3,200) ⁹⁸	(sold)	(sold)	(sold)	(sold)	(sold)
Mauléon	/	/	/	(1,543)	/	/
Annual Total:	(53,070) 34,900	(28,289) 23,981	(29,247) 26,542	(51,580) 41, 537	(20,319) 19,169	

Apart from the perennial problem of measuring price movements,⁹⁹ financial accounts are neither objective nor incorruptible. In the early modern period, assets and liabilities

⁹² Inflation no longer seems to play a role in the seventeenth century, William Weary, 'The House of La Trémoille Fifteenth through Eighteenth Centuries: Change and Adaptations in a French Noble Family', *Journal of Modern History*, 40 (1977) (on demand supplement), p. D1008. This calculation is based on figures taken from Labatut, *Ducs et pairs*, 263, 267.

⁹³ The provisional *partage*, dated 2 Aug. 1619 (1AP 398/10; 1AP 398/11; 1AP 409/2), was confirmed on 18 Mar. 1625 (1AP 398/12; 1AP 409/3).

⁹⁴ It omits the lands of Isle Bouchard and Bournezeau, though only sold in 1629, and the estates of Berrie and Mauléon, although they reverted to Henri after his brother's death in 1642.

⁹⁵ The revenues that are not available for every year have been bracketed, so that annual totals can be compared.

⁹⁶ According to the marriage contract of the prince of Tarente, Taillebourg was to yield 12,000 *livres* for the use of his widow, 1AP 2244.

⁹⁷ Based on the selling price of 180,000 *livres*, which equals 7,200 *livres* revenue at 25 years purchase, Bergin, *Pursuit of Wealth*, 193.

⁹⁸ Based on the selling price of 80,000 *livres*, which equals 3,200 *livres* revenue at 25 years purchase, '1661 Mémoire', 202.

were not set against each other to underscore the resulting profit or loss, but to keep a check on the administrative staff.¹⁰⁰ Each administrative section had its own *receveur* who collected taxes and rents and forwarded them to the general treasurer. Before handing his collected funds over, however, internal transfers could have occurred, rendering the final amount that was dispatched to the general treasurer inconclusive. For instance, in 1644/5 the *receveur* of Benon handed only 1,200 *livres* over, out of a supposed revenue of 3,400, having transferred parts of the missing funds to 'Madame à Paris'.¹⁰¹ Marie de La Tour frequently put money aside for her own needs, which went unaccounted for in the total revenue. In 1652-4, she appropriated 12,000 *livres* of exceptional seigneurial rights that were made on the *rachat* of the lands of la Garnache and Beauvoir-sur-Mer, which should have been part of the *casuel noble* of Thouars.¹⁰² Similarly, in 1647-1649, a payment of 4,000 *livres* to the countess of Derby was not made out of the general treasury, but taken directly out of the income of Taillebourg and Didonne.¹⁰³ Detailed accounts are available for the duchy of Thouars and show that there were huge annual variations due to delayed payments of tax offices, which

⁹⁹ Lawrence Stone resorted to the Phelps Brown-Hopkins index, based on building wages, which has been criticised as unsuitable for the computation of over-regional aristocratic spending, involving manufactured goods and wages of labour to a larger extent than agricultural products, Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641* (Oxford, 1965), 137-44; John Russell Major, 'Noble Income, Inflation and the Wars of Religion in France', *American Historical Review* 86 (1981), 35-7; R. B. Outhwaite, *Inflation in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (London, 1982), 42; Barry Coward, *The Stanleys, Lords Stanley and Earls of Derby, 1385-1672. The Origins, Wealth and Power of a Landowning Family* (Manchester, 1983), 188. Stone's argument for a 'crisis of the aristocracy' has been practically inverted, as aristocratic landed wealth appears to have been increasing about three times as fast as the price of consumables was rising, G. E. Aylmer, 'Review Article. The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641', *Past and Present* 32 (1965), 121; D. C. Coleman, 'The "Gentry" Controversy and the Aristocracy in Crisis', *History* 51 (1966), 177-8. In France, the seventeenth century is likewise considered to be 'the heyday of the *rente foncière*' and grain prices appear to have fallen slightly, Pierre Goubert, *Clio parmi les hommes: recueil d'articles* (La Haye, 1976), 257-61; Jean-Marie Constant, 'Terre et pouvoir: la noblesse et le sol', *Association des historiens modernistes des universités* 7 (1983), 11; Robin Briggs, *Early Modern France 1560-1715* (Oxford, 1977), 41.

¹⁰⁰ Stuart Woolf, 'The Aristocracy in Transition: a Continental Comparison', *EHR* 2nd series 23 (1970), 522; see: S. Amanda Eurich, *The Economics of Power: the Private Finances of the House of Foix-Navarre-Albret during the Religious Wars* (Kirkville, Mo., 1994), p. xvii.

¹⁰¹ 1AP 99.

¹⁰² 1AP 106.

¹⁰³ *LT5s*, iv. 151-2.

arbitrarily inflated the income of other years.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, the accounts obliterate any non-monetary revenues, rents and taxes paid in kind (mostly grain and poultry) or in labour (*corvées*).¹⁰⁵ All we can do is work out how much the 'southern estates' yielded on average, and compare it to the income generated by the 'northern estates', referred to as 'Brittany', although the comté de Laval was in fact part of neighbouring Maine. Based on the accounts of Jean Dumonceau, sieur de Chamdor, and his son-in-law, Ismaël de Boullenois, landed income south of the Loire averaged 30,000 *livres* per year.¹⁰⁶

The accounts of the Breton treasurer, Daniel Ravenel, which run from 1654 to 1666, record an average annual revenue of 41,856 *livres*,¹⁰⁷ but in order to compare them to the 'southern' revenues, we have to include Marie de La Tour's personal accounts, which run from 1638 to 1648.¹⁰⁸ This *livre de comptes* appears to have been written in her own hand, and is not limited to pin-money and domestic spending, but accounts for large amounts of money, on average 92,610 per year, ranging from 54,909 to 182,791. Only a proportion of these receipts came from Brittany – an average of 29,769 per year.¹⁰⁹ The duchess collected some of the revenues of the *receveurs* of Laval and Vitré, but presumably not all they amassed, since Laval alone was considered to yield

20 mil livres de bail à ferme sans les forges, le bois, les reliefs et autres casuels, et la pollette des offices y sujets et qui payent aus coffres du comte [de Laval]. Le tout va ... presque à 25 ou 30 mille livres par an.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ Accounts of the *receveurs* of Thouars for 1630-33 (Daniel Guérineau, 1AP 1071) and 1635-42 (Jean Brosseau, 1AP 1018-21), followed by a section in the general accounts kept by Chamdor and Boullenois.

¹⁰⁵ In his first years as general treasurer Ismaël Boullenois scrupulously added to the monetary balance another balance based on agricultural products, 1AP 104-6.

¹⁰⁶ 1AP 98-119: average of 1642-1652: 30,227 *livres* p.a.; average of 1652-1662: 29,939 *livres* p.a.; average of 1665-1668: 27,592 *livres* p.a.; average of 1642-1668: 29,185 *livres* p.a.

¹⁰⁷ 1AP 2154-66.

¹⁰⁸ 1AP 432.

¹⁰⁹ The percentage of her total revenue coming from Brittany varied from around ten per cent in 1644 and 1648 to over sixty per cent in 1638, 1645 and 1646, presumably related to her residential pattern.

¹¹⁰ Dubuisson, *Itinéraire de Bretagne*, quoted by *LT5s*, iv. 87-8. The 1679 survey gives the figure of 41,970 *livres* for the whole of Brittany, *LT5s*, iv. 187-8.

Although Marie de La Tour's accounts do not provide absolute figures on La Trémoille income, they give valuable information on the redistribution and administration of that income. Her 'Breton' income derived mostly from landed revenues, but also related to the sale of offices and to the development of ironworks. Mining became a profitable enterprise in the seventeenth century and expanded so considerably that by the 1770s it provided the bulk of the Laval income.¹¹¹ Port-Brillet, situated halfway between Vitré and Laval, was leased in 1619 to the ironmaster Michel de Guerne, sieur de la Curée.¹¹² Four years later the ironworks were sold to Nicolas le Maçon, sieur de La Poulardière, and his wife Jeanne Bellière for 150,000 *livres*, a very important sum for a forge at the time. They agreed to pay the principal sum over a period of five years and then pay a rent of 6,360 *livres* per year. This was increased to 12,000 *livres* in 1643, then fixed in court at 10,000.¹¹³ A second ironwork was established in the forest of Brécilien, today known as Paimpont. The historian Michel Denis vividly contrasts the traditionalistic views of Duke Henry with the new breed of capitalistic entrepreneurship exemplified by the Farcy brothers, who bought parts of Brécilien from the La Trémoille in 1653 and successfully exploited the forest's potential.¹¹⁴ There is no denying that the forges yielded great profits, but the duchesse de La Trémoille had been considering the possibility of mineral development herself. She bought a site ('[un] fonds de terre sans quoy ils ne pouvoient rien faire'), but recognised that forges needed capital investment ('un fonds de plus de 200,000 livres, tant pour les faire construire que pour acheter l'emplacement'), manpower ('gens capables et fidelles pour en conduire le travail et prendre le soin desdites forges') and supervision ('des officiers pour la garde des bois

¹¹¹ François Dornic, *Le fer contre la forêt* (Ouest France, 1984), 25, 48; Jean-François Labourdette, 'La fortune et l'administration des biens de La Trémoille au XVIIIe siècle', doctoral thesis, 3 vols. (Université de Nantes, 1974), iii. 864-882, 886, 896.

¹¹² Notary contract, dated Paris, 16 Aug. 1619, quoted by Dornic, *Le fer*, 23.

¹¹³ 1AP 432 (1643); '1661 Mémoire', 211.

¹¹⁴ Michel Denis, 'Grandeur et décadence d'une forêt. Paimpont du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle', *Annales de Bretagne* 64/3 (1957), 261.

qui s'en acquittassent mieux que tous ceux que jusques alors nous avons commis').¹¹⁵

Moreover, the La Trémoille had committed themselves, by their contract with the La Poulardière, not to use any other forests for the purpose of mineral development.¹¹⁶

Those difficulties were not to be overcome and her husband eventually sent her orders from Vitré to accept the offer of 220,000 *livres* put forward by the Farcy brothers.¹¹⁷

'Southern' and 'northern' estates combined provided an annual revenue of 60,000 *livres*. Was this revenue bolstered by royal patronage, or by so-called 'self-destructive' income, such as money provided by sales of lands and by high interest loans?

2.) Loans and Patronage

A breakdown of Marie de La Tour's *livre de comptes* reveals the following sources of alternative revenues:

Figure 3: Alternative revenues and percentages relating to the total income of the duchess¹¹⁸

Year	Sales	Loans	Subsidies	Sales in %	Loans in %	Subsidies in %
1638	2,530	1,300	3,000	4%	2%	4%
1642	16,814	3,200	0	28%	5%	0
1643	1,000	18,000	9,000	1%	21%	10%
1644	5,050	73,500	3,000	4%	65%	3%
1645	1,000	6,000	18,000 ¹¹⁹	1%	7%	22%
1646	700	0	9,000	1%	0%	16%
1647	0	33,000	3,000	0	35%	3%
1648	0	145,000	3,000	0	79%	2%
Average:	3,387	35,000	6,000	5%	27%	7.5%

¹¹⁵ '1661 Mémoire', 205.

¹¹⁶ '1661 Mémoire', 206.

¹¹⁷ Contract dated 29 August 1653. AD, Ille-et-Vilaine I F749 and 750; Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, i. 99. René Farcy, seigneur de la Daguerie, and his brother Jacques, seigneur de Paisnel, appear in Marie's accounts as collectors of ducal funds, 1AP 432.

¹¹⁸ 1AP 432.

¹¹⁹ This figure includes 12,000 *livres* provided by the Estates of Brittany.

A surprisingly small part of the total income comes from the sale of lands. Although the duchess was accused, as we have seen, of selling off La Trémoille patrimony, she does not seem to have benefited directly from the sales, at least during this decade. Less than five per cent of her annual revenues emanate from land sales, except in the year 1642, when the transaction regarding some dependencies of Montfort and twenty *journaux* of woodland bring the total to twenty-eight per cent.

The amount of borrowing, on the other hand, increased from a mere two per cent of her revenue in 1638 to seventy-nine per cent ten years later. In that decade the duchess borrowed a total of 280,000 *livres*; 72.5 per cent of which came from eight long-term loans.¹²⁰ Although Marie was not expected to reimburse the original capital, long-term payments of annuities devoured a large proportion of the family's disposable income. In Paris, 'les frequens emprunts que nous avons faits depuis deux ans, ont en quelque sorte diminué nostre crédit',¹²¹ but it was important not to let the monetary credit line affect the family's social credit. There was a chasm between the outward display of grandeur and the actual financial situation of the La Trémoille, which appears to have been far from healthy. This state of affairs had to be concealed from any potential creditors in Poitou and Brittany, and from the extended family circle.¹²² Cutting down on conspicuous consumption was therefore the only option the La Trémoille did *not* have.

¹²⁰ Including 56,000 *livres* from Mr de Chateaufieux, 36,000 *livres* from Mr. Justel (a member of Tarente's household) and 22,500 *livres* from Marie's youngest sister, Charlotte de La Tour, 1AP 432; C.-E. Engel, 'Henri Justel', *XVIIe siècle* 61 (1963), 19.

¹²¹ Marie to Chamdor, 3 Dec. 1644, 1AP 429/3. But Grimaudet considered it to be easier to raise money in Paris than in Brittany: 'ce qui estoit par de ça du tout impossible quelque diligence et recherche qu'on eust faicte à Angiers, Laval. Vitre et Rennes', Grimaudet to Marie, 25 Mar. 1634, 1AP 657.

¹²² Henri to Tarente, 1 Jan. 1666, 1AP 396/449-451.

Even for early modern standards, where indebtedness was considered 'in the normal run of things',¹²³ the La Trémoille's liabilities appear to have been spiralling out of control. In the late sixteenth century, the family's debts already amounted to 234,000 *livres*, five or six times their annual revenue.¹²⁴ The Laval inheritance exacerbated these debts, and in 1617 the ducal council recorded a total debt of 587,300 *livres*; producing 35,543 *livres* per year in interest charges.¹²⁵

Although Henri's father-in-law, the duc de Bouillon, promised to pay some of the most pressing debts,¹²⁶ the La Trémoille had run up a debt of 1.5 million *livres* by 1626:

en l'année 1626, M. mon mary (...) se voyoit endesté de près de 500,000 escus, ainsi qu'on le peut voir dans les anciens estats de nos destes et par les comptes de nos trésoriers, dont les intérêts consumoient plus que nostre revenue.¹²⁷

If and how the debt reached such an astronomical figure remains to be established.¹²⁸

The duchess had no reason to exaggerate it and she insists that the figures can be checked: 'Il se peut vérifier que nous ne devons [maintenant] guère moins de 600,000 écus' she claims, as debts reached 1.8 million *livres* in 1661. 'By that time', she writes, 'interest charges exceeded our annual revenue to such a degree that instead of paying them, we were forced to litigate and all our money was spend in quibbles and legal fees'.¹²⁹ Even if interest rates were as low as 5 percent,¹³⁰ a 1.8 million debt would have generated interest charges of around 90,000 *livres* per year, which would indeed have outstripped their annual revenue. It is possible that the La Trémoille annual income, as

¹²³ Coward, *The Stanleys*, 28, 192.

¹²⁴ Weary, 'The House of La Trémoille', p. D1008; *LT5s*, iii. 110-111.

¹²⁵ 345,800 (long-term) + 241,500 (short-term) = 587,300 *livres*. The short-term debts include 144,400 from the Laval inheritance and 70,000 from the 'southern' La Trémoille estates, 1AP 139/170-176.

¹²⁶ Marriage contract, 1AP398/9, f° 3.

¹²⁷ '1661 Mémoire', 201.

¹²⁸ According to Labourdette, the indebtedness eased off in the eighteenth century, but was still 1 million *livres* at the eve of the Revolution, J.-F. Labourdette, 'Fortune et administration des biens des La Trémoille au XVIIIe siècle', *Annales de Bretagne* 82 (1975), 167.

¹²⁹ '1661 Mémoire', 206.

¹³⁰ Weary: 'The House of La Trémoille', p. D1008, D1028; The 1617 *Estat* (1AP 139) calculated debts at *denier* 16 or 17 (eigh per cent interest rate).

assessed by manorial and personal accounts, has been severely undervalued. It is also possible that the high level of indebtedness conceals large-scale investments. But if their financial situation was any better than the duchess's *Mémoire* makes it appear, what was her interest in blackening the picture? She had no motive to do so; on the contrary, she tried to embellish the situation by asserting that by selling off more land than they acquired, their receipts exceeded their expenditure by 781,140 *livres*. But she was forced to add that this figure omits building expenses and debts.¹³¹

The traditional answer to countering indebtedness was royal patronage. Here, the Crown may have failed the La Trémoille, as Marie asserted:

il y avoit lieu de croire que nous serions assez heureux pour tirer quelques avantages de la cour qui nous délivreroit de cette peine, mais y ayans esté trompez, il a fallu prendre sur nous de quoy nous tirer de cet embarras.¹³²

Royal pensions were awarded as political rewards or enticements. The treaty of Loudun in 1616 raised Henri de La Trémoille's pension from 9,000 to 24,000 *livres*, and promised an additional cash donation of 60,000 *livres*. Charlotte-Brabantine, who had been instrumental in the peace negotiations, tried to prevent her son from joining either the queen mother's party or Protestant militants fighting under Henri de Rohan.¹³³ When opposition to the king grew, Henri raised his demands and asked for

ung augmentation de sa pention jusques a la somme de 40,000 livres ou autre ... avec le paiement de ce qui est deub du passé depuis l'année 1616. Comme aussi ... que ce qui est deub a Mme de La Trémoille de ses pentions luy soient païées. Et de procurer a Monsieur le comte de Laval quelque pention, pour luy donner moyen de rendre au Roy, et a luy les services quil doit.¹³⁴

Since Louis XIII showed no inclination to reward past services and seemed only to respond to direct threats, the duc de La Trémoille planned to defy the king directly by

¹³¹ '1661 Mémoire', 215.

¹³² '1661 Mémoire', 206.

¹³³ Louis XIII to Henri, 20 Mar. 1617, *Lettres, instructions diplomatiques et papiers d'Etat du cardinal de Richelieu*, ed. D. L. M. Avenel, 8 vols. (Paris, 1853-77), i. 467.

¹³⁴ *Mémoire relatif a la pension que le duc de La Trémoille reçoit du Roi* (1620), 1AP414/2.

raising two regiments and a company of gendarmes for Marie de' Medici, who was based at Angers.¹³⁵ This time, however, loyalty paid off better than sabre-rattling. Châtillon, who abandoned Marie de' Medici's party, and actively opposed Rohan, was rewarded with the *bâton* of marshal in June 1620.¹³⁶ The queen mother's defeat at Pont-de-Cé put an end to Henri's military opposition; he refused the offer of the La Rochelle assembly in 1621 and did not take part in any armed rebellion until the Fronde.¹³⁷ From 1633 onwards, the duke received an additional pension of 3,000 *livres* per year as a member of the royal Order of the Holy Ghost.¹³⁸ His wife was given a pension of 6,000 *livres* in her own right for the 'despences qu'elle est obligée de faire po[ur] s'entretenir en nostre Cour et suite convenablement a sa cond[iti]on et naissance'.¹³⁹ By the mid-seventeenth century, the family's annual royal pensions amounted to a total of 31,000 *livres*, which brings their total annual income to approximately 90,000 *livres*.

Henri's conversion to Catholicism in 1628 had diminished his bargaining power, as it effectively failed to establish him as a major court player, military commander, or provincial governor. This was partly linked to his impulsive, cranky nature. Unlike his wife, he was no accomplished courtier and preferred to reside in the provinces.¹⁴⁰ His military career began in 1625, when he was given the charge of *maréchal de camp de la cavalerie légère* under the duc d'Angoulême.¹⁴¹ This appointment was thus not, as

¹³⁵ Licques, *Philippe de Mornay*, 535.

¹³⁶ Eugène and Emile Haag, *La France protestante, ou vies des protestants français qui se sont fait un nom d'histoire*, 9 vols. (Paris, 1846-1859), s.v. 'Châtillon'.

¹³⁷ In 1623 the royal *surintendant des finances* promised to help Charlotte-Brabantine 'en ce qui regarde vos pentions et le payement des 20,000 livres faisant partie du don fait par le Roy à Monseigneur vostre filz', Chamdor to Charlotte-Brabantine, 23 Aug. 1623, 1AP 648.

¹³⁸ Anselme, *Histoire généalogique*, IX, 160; *Dictionnaire du Grand Siècle*, ed. F. Bluche (Paris, 1990), 1386.

¹³⁹ 1AP 403.

¹⁴⁰ See Chapter III on residential patterns, and Chapter VI on court life.

¹⁴¹ Rozemont to Marie, 11 July 1625, 1AP 365-6; commission dated 17 Mar. 1625, *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 138-9; *LT5s*, iv. 82-4.

Saint-Simon alleged, the reward for Henri's conversion to Catholicism.¹⁴² The charge was sold in 1633,¹⁴³ and further military service was only provided by Henri after the Crown accorded appropriate compensation.¹⁴⁴ A provincial governorship was far more lucrative than military command, but the governorship of Brittany was off limits, since it was held by Richelieu and later Anne of Austria herself. For their mediating role between the Crown and the Breton Estates, the La Trémoille received sporadic subsidies from the Estates,¹⁴⁵ which were mostly spent on lavish dinner parties for their Breton clients.¹⁴⁶ Richelieu was prepared to sell the governorship of Poitou to the La Trémoille in exchange for their support in Brittany.¹⁴⁷ This was a unique opportunity to build up their power base in Poitou and to affirm their social standing, but the fact that the La Trémoille had to refuse because they could not gather the necessary funds speaks volumes about their financial situation. After Richelieu's death rumours circulated that the duke was offering to buy the governorship directly from the comte de Parabère for 360,000 *livres*.¹⁴⁸ The new cardinal-minister, however, thwarted any attempts in that direction,¹⁴⁹ and suggested the governorship of Maine instead.¹⁵⁰ It was not for want of

¹⁴² Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, ed. Coirault, iii. 50. As Turenne's and La Force's examples demonstrate, one could achieve great military distinctions even as a Huguenot. Pineau exclaimed when Turenne was promoted to maréchal de France: 'c'est un témoignage que les personnes de mérite et valeur de nôtre Religion sont encore en considération à la Cour', Pineau to Rivet, 21 Nov. 1643, UBL, BPL286/I/66.

¹⁴³ Roger de Rabutin, comte de Bussy, *Mémoires*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1696), ii. 151.

¹⁴⁴ 1AP 390/8 (1636). Letters patentes to levy a tax on wine passing through the bridges of Taillebourg and Laval were confirmed by an *arrêt de vérification* at the *cour des aydes* on 17 June 1637, renewed on 3 August 1646, this time *à titre de rachat perpétuel*, with a donation of 40,000 *livres* from the queen to the duchess, '1661 Mémoire', 207, 210.

¹⁴⁵ 30,000 in 1643, 1AP 432. A further 30,000 in 1624, 13,000 in 1634 and 20,000 in 1638, Collins, *Classes*, 195.

¹⁴⁶ 'Les dernières nouvelles que j'ay eu de Monsieur vostre fils ne me disent rien de nouveau sinon force bals, festion et colation qui s'y font et je mende plaindre la dépence qu'il luy a falu y faire. Je croy que toute celle durant son séjour là montera furieusement haut, y ayant une grande cherté', Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 27 Jan. 1624, 1AP 430/51; Collins, *Classes*, 197.

¹⁴⁷ Richelieu to Condé, 24 Apr. 1632, *Lettres*, ed. Avenel, iv. 286-8.

¹⁴⁸ Pineau to Rivet, 20 Feb. 1644, UBL, BPL286/I/88.

¹⁴⁹ On Mazarin's dealings with the La Trémoille, see: Chapter V.

¹⁵⁰ It was offered for 400,000 *livres*, an offer Marie de La Tour judged 'le plus grand marché du monde, [car] il n'est pas croyable combien la pièce est belle et le nombre de gentilhomme vasseaux que nous acquérerions et le tout au voisinage de la Bretagne', Marie to Tarente, 19 Dec. 1650, 1AP 430/98; Henri to Tarente, 11 Jan. 1651, 1AP 394/37. The La Trémoille had also cast an eye on the governorship of Anjou, Sharon Kettering, 'Patronage and Politics during the Fronde', *French Historical Studies* 14 (1986), 419.

trying that royal patronage continued to elude the La Trémoille, but by comparison with other dukes and peers they remained 'underfunded'.¹⁵¹

Using a multiplier of twenty-five years purchase for land and ten years for pensions, the La Trémoille's active capital value amounted to 1.8 million *livres*,¹⁵² a figure that happens to equal their total debts, as calculated by the duchess.¹⁵³ Although this compares favourably to the average *duc et pair* patrimony of 846,000 *livres* (*gentilhommes*) or 1,351,000 *livres* (*princes étrangers*) 'at the beginning of their career' as indicated by their marriage contracts,¹⁵⁴ it does not hold up to a comparison of their wealth 'at the end of their career' as given by probate records. Even without its counterweight in debts, a patrimony of 1.8 million *livres* did not allow the La Trémoille to play in the same league as the *princes étrangers* of Lorraine,¹⁵⁵ Gonzaga,¹⁵⁶ or Bouillon.¹⁵⁷ The La Trémoille fit more easily into the top category of Breton noblemen: only three other families had an income of more than 100,000 *livres* per year: Rohan (200,000), Rieux (160,000) and Assérac (100,000). Their Breton cousin, the marquis de La Moussaye, only received about 40,000 *livres* per year.¹⁵⁸ The La Trémoille seem thus to have been caught between their actual financial capacity, that of a provincial noble family, and their ambition to figure amid the *princes étrangers* and to play a role both on the national and international scene. Their extraordinarily heavy indebtedness

¹⁵¹ Only one third of their 90,000 *livres* revenue stemmed from royal offices and pensions, compared to an average of half or two thirds of a duke and peer's income, Labatut, *Ducs et pairs*, 274.

¹⁵² $(30,000 + 30,000) * 25 + 30,000 * 10 = 1,800,000$.

¹⁵³ '1661 Mémoire', 206.

¹⁵⁴ Labatut, *Ducs et pairs*, 248.

¹⁵⁵ The patrimony of the duc de Guise has been estimated at 14 million *livres* in 1688; that of the duc d'Elbeuf at 6.4 million, Harcourt at 3 million, Lillebonne at 7 million and Armagnac at 2 million *livres*; Spangler, 'House of Lorraine', Appendix.

¹⁵⁶ In 1637 Charles I of Gonzaga left 8 million *livres*, including 2.5 million debts; Labatut, *Ducs et pairs*, 261.

¹⁵⁷ Their landed wealth alone amounted to 7 million *livres*, after Sedan had been exchanged for Château-Thierry, Albret and Evreux in 1651; Labatut, *Ducs et pairs*, 262.

¹⁵⁸ Collins, *Classes*, table 289-90, based on Colbert de Croissy's report.

can be seen as a direct consequence of this dilemma, which is further illustrated by their matrimonial strategies.

C.) Matrimonial Arrangements

From the late sixteenth century onwards the La Trémoille preferred prestigious international alliances over marriages to wealthy heiresses. What impact did this policy have on their financial situation and what consequences did it have for the married women involved?

1.) Marriage Portions (Dowries)

The marriage contract of Marie de La Tour and Henri de La Trémoille delineates that the 'futurs conjoints seront uns et communs en tous meubles, acquetz et conquetz, immeubles au jour de la bénédiction nuptiale', but that the bride has the right to withdraw from the *communauté* (joint-ownership) at any time. The same option was given to Amalia of Hesse-Cassel, who married Henri-Charles de La Trémoille, prince de Tarente, in 1648.¹⁵⁹ The possibility for the wife to change provisions of the marriage contract was also given in the agreement signed by Charlotte de La Trémoille and the English nobleman James Lord Strange. If she were to die first, leaving no issue, half of her dowry would revert to the La Trémoille, provided that she 'doe not otherwise dispose of during her life'.¹⁶⁰ How can one square this freedom of action with the traditional view of wives sought for their wealth and incapacitated subsequently by their status as 'feme covert' until released by widowhood? A re-evaluation of the importance of married women and their crucial function in the direct transfer of monetary power has to start with an analysis of the capital represented by their dowry.

¹⁵⁹ 1AP 398/9 (1619); 1AP 2244 (1648).

¹⁶⁰ 1AP 2243 (1626).

The £24,000 (240,000 *livres*) which Charlotte de La Trémoille brought into her marriage constituted an exceptionally high portion, being almost five times the dowry Anne Stanley received from her father, the sixth earl of Derby.¹⁶¹ It was, however, a fairly average portion for the daughter of a French duke and peer.¹⁶² Marie de La Tour had a dowry of 300,000 *livres* and Amalia of Hesse-Cassel brought 150,000 *livres* into her marriage. One has to go beyond these abstract figures to determine how successful the La Trémoille were in negotiating incoming and outgoing dowries. More than fifty per cent of Marie's dowry was used to pay off her new family debts; the rest (115,000 *livres*) was said to be 'plus que suffisants pour fournir à ce qu[']elle] pourra attendre de la succession de sa mère'. She had to renounce any inheritance 'au profit seulement de ses Freres et de leurs masles ou masles descendants de leurs masles en ligne masculine', but her dowry constituted a *de facto* pre-payment of her mother's inheritance.¹⁶³ Similarly, Amalia relinquished any 'male' inheritance to her brother, William VI of Hesse-Cassel, and his male descendants,¹⁶⁴ but later shared in her mother's inheritance.¹⁶⁵ Charlotte's dowry was even more intrinsically linked to inheritance. If one looks at the origins of the £24,000 promised in Charlotte's marriage contract, it appears that they represented landed estates, bequeathed to her by her father in accordance with the *partage* of 1619.¹⁶⁶ She had sold them to her brother in April 1625 for 240,000 *livres* 'payable en douze ans' with an annual interest charge of five per cent 'à prendre sur le compté de

¹⁶¹ The average aristocratic portion in the early seventeenth century was £4,000 and in 1625-1640 it ranged between £5,000 and £10,000. Only Mary Villiers, daughter of the Duke of Buckingham, received a similarly high dowry (£25,000); Stone, *Crisis*, 637-9; Coward, *The Stanleys*, 57.

¹⁶² Under Henri IV and Louis XIII they ranged between 90,000 and 600,000 *livres* and in the second half of the seventeenth century they were comprised between 200,000 and 400,000 *livres*, Labatut, *Ducs et pairs*, 147.

¹⁶³ 1AP 398/9.

¹⁶⁴ 1AP 2244.

¹⁶⁵ Receipt for a payment out of the inheritance of her mother, 8 May 1654, GAA, 0613/692e.

¹⁶⁶ 1AP 409/2; 1AP 398/10-1.

Quintin'.¹⁶⁷ Charlotte's 'dowry' was thus personal property, which she was to keep after her marriage, either as a 'separate estate' or in joint ownership with her husband. In case the groom's family insisted on a dowry, her brother was prepared to offer further 60,000 *livres* on the condition that Charlotte gave up her right to the equivalent in interest charges.¹⁶⁸ After some negotiations, it was agreed to redefine the £24,000 as dowry (*dot*) to be paid within a year.¹⁶⁹ Henri vouched to pay half of it 'pour l'affection fraternelle qu'il porte a mademoiselle sa seur et le desir qu'il a que le present mariage s'accomplisse', and Charlotte-Brabantine, for the same reasons, promised to pay the other half, pawning

solidairement tous et chascun ses biens, avecq ceux de mondit seigneur son fils, et mesme (...) outre l'hypoteque generale de tous lesditz biens [et] a specialement affecté rentes annuelles de la somme de 4,500 florins, monnaye de brabant, a elle constitués (...) lesquels 4,500 florins [M et Mme Strange] a faulte du payement des £12,000 pourront aliener, vendre et engager et en disposer comme de leur propre.¹⁷⁰

Despite those sureties, the war that broke out between England and France and the deterioration of the land market made it very difficult for the La Trémoille to raise the necessary funds.¹⁷¹ When Charlotte's 'dowry' had been fully transferred, financial quarreling continued over her inheritances. In 1630, her husband obtained letters of naturalisation for himself and the children 'born and to be born from this marriage' in

¹⁶⁷ This transaction is referred to in the *Procuracion pour negocier le mariage de Charlotte de La Trémoille* (1AP 400) and in Charlotte's marriage contract (1AP 387/3). There is evidence that the *fermier* of Quintin was making payments to Charlotte before her marriage, Chamdor to Guérineau, 25 May 1626, 1AP 648.

¹⁶⁸ *Procuracion*, 14 Dec 1625, 1AP 400.

¹⁶⁹ Chamdor to La Mazure, 22 June 1626, 1AP 648; 1AP 387/3.

¹⁷⁰ 1AP 387/3.

¹⁷¹ Charlotte to Marie, 20 Nov. 1627, 1AP 384/39: 'J'apprends, mon coeur, que vous n'avancez que peu aux ventes que vous faictes en Bretagne, à cause de ces guerres, ce qui m'aute l'espérance d'avoir mon argent, mais je soueterois fort la vente, afin que l'on conneust que le malheur du tamp empaiche le surplus'. The failure of material expectations weakened Charlotte's position as female head of the household, 1AP 384/35-8, 48, 50.

order to facilitate future inheritances in France.¹⁷² After Charlotte-Brabantine's death in 1631, Charlotte claimed one third of her succession,¹⁷³ and threatened the duc de La Trémoille with litigation if he failed to comply.¹⁷⁴ When Charlotte's younger brother, the comte de Laval, died in 1642, the outbreak of the English Civil War, and Derby's self-imposed exile in the Isle of Man made it difficult for Charlotte to enforce her claim to 50,000 escus (£15,000) from her brother's inheritance.¹⁷⁵ Nonetheless, presumably due to the support of her sister-in-law,¹⁷⁶ Charlotte managed to obtain a total of £14,000 'by the death of her mother and brother'.¹⁷⁷

Charlotte's portion was used to buy lands in England, according to an 'indenture tripartite', dated 25 March 1629, concluded between the dowager duchesse de La Trémoille, Lord and Lady Strange, and appointed commissioners, namely the earl of Pembroke, the earl of Montgomery, Sir Ranulphe Crewe and Sir Thomas Hoby.¹⁷⁸ Investments were made in Lancashire (£10,000), Flintshire (£2,000) and Oxfordshire (£6,000).¹⁷⁹ It is not clear where the rest of the 'portion' and Charlotte's inheritance went to, but the commissioners promised to use it 'wholly for the benefitt and use of my Lord and Lady Strange during their lives and the life of the longest liver of them', and afterwards for the benefit of their children.¹⁸⁰ During the Civil War, Charlotte's portion

¹⁷² 1AP 387/5-6. Charlotte was likewise awarded English letters of indenisation to make her 'capable of her Joynture dowry and livelyhood and all other goods and rights which belonged unto her or may hereafter befall her', 1AP 2243; HMC, 45 Buccleuch iii. 331-2.

¹⁷³ 'Le tiers qui est ma legitime et point disputable', Charlotte to Marie, 30 May 1632, 1AP 384/60.

¹⁷⁴ Charlotte hoped that her sister-in-law would succeed in mediating between them, Charlotte to Marie, 22 Mar. 1632, 1AP 384/58.

¹⁷⁵ 1AP 384/80, 82, 86-7.

¹⁷⁶ 1AP 384/86, 88.

¹⁷⁷ Petition by Charlotte de La Trémoille to the Council of State, May 1653, *CCAM*, 1295-8.

¹⁷⁸ 1AP 2243.

¹⁷⁹ Listed in Charlotte's petition received on 27 Jan. 1652, PRO, SP23/79/422, and in a report for the Committee for Compounding, dated 23 Mar. 1651/2, which omits Eynsham in Oxfordshire, PRO, SP23/79/427-435. See: Coward, *The Stanleys*, 57.

¹⁸⁰ 1AP 2243.

lands were burdened with debts, but the real cost for many families was the quality of their marriages.¹⁸¹

Despite Charlotte's financial difficulties, her daughters were not forced to marry 'beneath themselves'. Their father had left them substantial portions in his will,¹⁸² but since the main clause (disinheriting their brother Charles) had not been implemented, there is no reason to believe other arrangements were respected.¹⁸³ Moreover, the bitter quarrel that opposed the new earl of Derby and his mother, who acted as guardian to the other children, ruled out any provisions carved out of the main Stanley estates. Nonetheless, all three girls made what their mother considered to be advantageous matches. In September 1652, a wealthy widower and friend of their deceased father, Henry Pierrepont, Marquess of Dorchester, asked for Catherine Stanley's hand. The dowager countess judged him to be 'sensible, clever, accomplished and rich, having £14,000 a year'.¹⁸⁴ Moreover - according to a contemporary observer - 'he asks no portion, but takes her for love'.¹⁸⁵ Charlotte's initial rejoicing over the rich jewellery Dorchester offered his wife soon gave way to disappointment over the unhappiness of the marriage, as the Marquess turned out to be a violent and jealous husband.¹⁸⁶ By contrast, Charlotte's letters tend to stress the 'good character' rather than the financial standing of the second suitor, who married her eldest daughter, Mary, in February 1655. William Viscount Wentworth professed 'une amitié infinie pour sa femme, jointe avec

¹⁸¹ H. J. Habakkuk, 'Landowners and the Civil War', *EHR* 2nd series 18 (1965), 138.

¹⁸² The eldest daughter (Henrietta-)Mary was bequeathed £12,000. Catherine and Amalia were to receive £10,000 each, LRO, DDK 12/1.

¹⁸³ The will was to be implemented by 'my noble friends Earle of Arundell and Francis Lord Cottington', two prominent Royalists who were presumably rather powerless during the Interregnum. LRO, DDK 12/1.

¹⁸⁴ Charlotte to Marie, 6 Aug. 1652, 1AP 384/103; Henriette Witt-Guizot, *The Lady of Latham; being the Life and Original Letters of Charlotte de la Trémoille, Countess of Derby* (London, 1869), 210-11.

¹⁸⁵ Rachel Newport to Sir R. Leveson, 20 July 1652, quoted by G.E.C., *Complete Peerage*, 13 vols. (Gloucester, 1910-1959), s.v. 'Pierrepont'.

¹⁸⁶ Charlotte to Marie, 4 Dec. 1652, 1AP 384/104. According to the *DNB*, the Marquess was known for his rash temper, bad language and outbursts of violence, which he had displayed since the 1630s.

une grande estime qu'il a pour elle';¹⁸⁷ and did not insist on a dowry either, although Charlotte agreed to contribute towards the couple's living costs.¹⁸⁸ A union with the eldest son of the earl of Strafford, who recovered his title after the reversion of his father's attainder in 1662, might have matched the first marriage in material benefits and definitely exceeded it in social prestige after the Straffords had established themselves at the Restoration court. The third marriage, contracted in May 1659 between John Murray, earl of Atholl, and Charlotte's youngest daughter Amalia, was the most beneficial in the long term.¹⁸⁹ The dowager countess approvingly noted that Atholl's rent-roll was £30,000 *per annum*, but this time she wanted to make sure that the groom not only met her requirements, but also pleased her daughter.¹⁹⁰ Unlike Dorchester and Strafford, Atholl was still considered an active Royalist and was excepted from Cromwell's Act of Indemnity in 1654.¹⁹¹ One suspects that it was not the insecurity of his political situation, but the resilience of his wealth and bargaining power that made Charlotte decide to grant Amalia as high a dowry as she could afford: £5,000 or five years of revenues from the Isle of Man.¹⁹²

2.) Widow Jointures (Dowers)

The financial counterpart of the dowry or portion, provided by the family of the bride, was the dower or jointure, an annual allowance provided by the family of the groom in order to support the bride after her husband's death.¹⁹³ Amy Erickson has explained how

¹⁸⁷ Charlotte to Marie, 12 Mar. 1655 and 17 July 1657, 1AP 385/4, 19.

¹⁸⁸ 'Je n'e point peu donner le mariage a vostre niesse strafforde, mais je la entretiens et leur train. Cela se peut faire plus aysement. J'ay eu tout a bon marché', Charlotte to Marie, 17 July 1657, 1AP 385/19.

¹⁸⁹ Amalia's son John was created first duke of Atholl by Queen Anne. Neither Mary nor Catherine Stanley had any male heirs.

¹⁹⁰ '[Amalia] is so obedient and gentle that I know she will do what I wish; but I desire nothing that she disliked', quoted by Witt, *Lady of Latham*, 228-9.

¹⁹¹ G.E.C., *Peerage*, s.v. 'Dorchester', 'Strafford', 'Atholl'.

¹⁹² MML, DDK 1716/17.

¹⁹³ Stone, *Crisis*, 632; Amy Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London and New York, 1993), 119.

marriage negotiations reflected the clash of interests between the groom's family, whose interests lay in agglomerating wealth (maximising control over the bride's portion and minimising any claims by the widow), and the bride's family, who was most concerned with the economic security of their female members and a possible reversion of the dowry.¹⁹⁴ In Marie de La Tour's case, the negotiations were marked by the good relations between the two families, and a balanced financial outcome. Charlotte de La Trémoille, on the other hand, had been difficult to marry off because of the limited number of French marriage candidates of a suitable rank and religion.¹⁹⁵ Charlotte-Brabantine did everything to facilitate the union with the Stanleys, as she sensed an opportunity to advance her daughter's prospects at the English court, as will be discussed in detail in Chapter VI. This explains why the La Trémoille accepted that half of the 'dowry' was irremediably lost to them if Charlotte predeceased her husband leaving no issue, and that the entire dowry would go - *materna maternis* - to Charlotte's daughters, if there was no son, 'provided that such daughter or daughters do not marrie or match against their father's will'.¹⁹⁶

This arrangement appears very disadvantageous for the family of the bride, especially when set against the marriage contracted between Amalia of Hesse-Cassel and Henri-Charles of La Trémoille in 1648. The following pattern seems to emerge: the La Trémoille appear to have been more interested in the social prestige and connections that came with a foreign, preferably sovereign, marriage, rather than in immediate financial benefits.¹⁹⁷ Only seventeen per cent of Amalia's dowry (25,000 *livres*) was to be held in joint-ownership. If she predeceased her husband, the dowry in its entirety was

¹⁹⁴ Erickson, *Women and Property*, 150.

¹⁹⁵ See Chapter VI on matrimonial alliances and 'nonalliances'.

¹⁹⁶ 1AP 2243.

¹⁹⁷ Marie de La Trémoille's marriage to Bernard of Saxony-Weimar was also financially disadvantageous for the La Trémoille, ThHStAW, Urkunden 1662 Juni 9, Bl.1r-9r.

to revert to her family of birth, and if she became a widow, she was entitled to have her dowry returned within four years at a five per cent interest rate.¹⁹⁸ Moreover, she was to receive an annual allowance of 12,000 *livres*, taken from the revenues of Taillebourg, with immediate effect ('dès à présent').¹⁹⁹ A dower of 12,000 *livres* was standard for La Trémoille widows, whereas women marrying into the Stanley family were traditionally given £1,000 (10,000 *livres*).²⁰⁰

Charlotte's dower lands were not specified in the marriage contract, but given to her as part of a large-scale property settlement in fee tail. On 1 June 1628 she received, 'for her life for her joynture', the revenues of landed estates in Lancashire, Cheshire and Yorkshire.²⁰¹ The Isle of Man was a particular case. Strictly speaking, the Isle of Man was not part of Charlotte's dower lands, although it had been used as such by previous dowager countesses.²⁰² Lady Derby held an ordinary lease of twenty-one years, according to an indenture signed on 5 August 1651. As we have seen, Charlotte gave her daughter Amalia, upon her marriage to the earl of Atholl, five years of revenues from the Isle of Man.²⁰³ Her son, the eighth earl of Derby, contested the validity of Charlotte's lease, and thus of Amalia's dowry.²⁰⁴ Thanks to the intercession of the

¹⁹⁸ The same conditions were set out in Marie de La Tour's marriage contract, 1AP 398/9.

¹⁹⁹ 1AP 2244.

²⁰⁰ 1AP 2243. The same amount had been promised to Elizabeth de Vere in 1595, B.M. Ward, *The Seventeenth Earl of Oxford, 1550-1604* (London, 1928), 319.

²⁰¹ In Lancashire: the family home of Knowsley and the manors of Bury (including the advowson), Pilkington, Breightmet, Holland (tithes), Halewood, Sowerby magna and Sowerby parva, Walmersley, Reddivalles, Elton, Shuttleworth, Heape, Haworke, Heslombey, Unsworth, Outwood, Whitfield, Cheetham, Cheetwood, Salford, certain lands in Manchester and Sawrebies. In Cheshire: the manors of Bidston, Macclesfield, Wieldboreclough and Wirrall. In Yorkshire: the manors of Thirsk, Kirkby Malzeard, Burton in Londesdale and Mewith, PRO, SP23/79/427-8. See: Appendices b-4, b-5.

²⁰² In 1607, the Isle of Man was deemed to be 'noe parcell of the Realme of England', and – following the 1523 precedent – had been allocated as dower, Coward, *The Stanleys*, 48.

²⁰³ MML, DDK 1716/17.

²⁰⁴ 'L'isle de Man a esté rendue a mon fils de Derby ausy tost apres l'arivee du roy. Feu Monsieur son pere me l'avoit tennu pour 21 an[s] et mon fils, sens m'en rien dire, me fit ce tret la. Nos amis me conseillerent d'en venir a un accord [où] j'en dois avoir la moitié du revenu, mais je croy que je m'en n'aure rien du tout que par force, sa femme estent une personne qui n'a nulle bonne[s] calites, une de celle[s] qui me choque', Charlotte to Marie, 14 Mar. 1661, 1AP 385/52; *JL*, xi. 34 (23 May 1660).

Committee for Petitions, an agreement was reached stipulating that the revenues were to be split in two.²⁰⁵ The earl of Atholl was, however, unable to legally enforce the payment of his wife's portion, as the Isle of Man was 'out of the power of any sheriff', and the expected revenue was definitely lost after the earl of Derby's death in 1672, since the Isle of Man had been entailed to his son.²⁰⁶

Sequestration of Family Estates

When the seventh earl of Derby was declared a 'delinquent' for his support of the king, his estates were sequestered, in accordance with the legal tradition whereby a traitor forfeited 'all his manors, landes, tenements, and hereditaments in fee simple or fee-tail of whomsoever they be holden'.²⁰⁷ The difference was that sequestration could be lifted after payment of a 'composition' fine. The only people who actually forfeited their estates were those who refused to compound,²⁰⁸ and those who were not allowed to compound: Catholics and militant Royalists, such as the earl of Derby.²⁰⁹ Generally, widow jointures were excluded from sequestration, or at least capitalised at a smaller number of years purchase.²¹⁰ When Charlotte petitioned the parliamentary Committee for Compounding after her husband's death to free her jointure from sequestration, she estimated her lands at £1,468, apologising in advance

for any Estate omitted, or any Lands undervalued, or other mistakes or defects in this Particular (if there be any), she being ignorant of her Estates, and the

²⁰⁵ MML, DDK12/21 (6 June 1660), DDK 12/11 (3 Sept. 1661); *JL* xi. 54 (6 June 1660), 57 (8 June 1660).

²⁰⁶ MML, DDK 1716/17.

²⁰⁷ According to Coke's legal handbook, quoted by Vernon F. Snow, *Essex, the Rebel. The Life of Robert Devereux, the Third Earl of Essex 1591-1646* (Lincoln, 1970), 16-7.

²⁰⁸ Such as Lord Craven, the earls of Arundel and Newcastle and the Duke of Buckingham, Joan Thirsk, 'The Sales of Royalist Land during the Interregnum', *EHR* 2nd series 5 (1952-3), 190; *CCC*, vol. v, p. xii.

²⁰⁹ Barry Coward, 'The Social and Political Position of the earls of Derby in later Seventeenth-Century Lancashire', *THSLC* 132 (1982), 133, 135-7. In the propositions of Uxbridge and Newcastle the earl of Derby ranged third on the list of people to 'expect no pardon', preceded only by Rupert and Maurice, counts Palatine of the Rhine, who happened to be his wife's cousins. Samuel Rawson Gardiner (ed.), *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution, 1625-1660* (Oxford, 1906), 279 (24 Jan. 1643/4: Uxbridge, §5) and 298 (13 July 1646: Newcastle, §16).

²¹⁰ Habakkuk, 'Landowners', 132. Methods described by Green in *CCC*, introductions to volumes i and iv.

same falling into her but lately, by the death of her husband, since w[hi]ch tyme she hath scarce had any possession thereof.²¹¹

In fact, Lady Derby was anything but 'ignorant of her Estates'. She had been lobbying Members of Parliament since 1647 to allow her husband to compound for his 'delinquency'.²¹² Her portion lands had been excluded from the list of Stanley estates submitted for composition on 22 January 1649, which declared a total income of £4,481.²¹³ Derby was allowed to pay a composition fee of £15,573, but as the political situation worsened, he refused to do so, and was court-martialled in October 1651. Charlotte had to surrender the Isle of Man, but the capitulation she signed on 31 October 1651 did not grant her earlier request for full rents and jointure from England.²¹⁴ She regained her portion lands in February 1652,²¹⁵ and petitioned the Committee for Compounding with Delinquents to restore her jointure lands as well.²¹⁶ She might have succeeded in retrieving these family estates had it not been for a parallel parliamentary inquiry launched by the Committee for Advance of Money.²¹⁷ This investigation into her *own* delinquency was based on accusations of counter-intelligence and arms smuggling, based on her trip to 'the Scots King' in 1650, as well as her support of buccaneering at the Isle of Man and refusal to surrender the island to the Parliament.²¹⁸ Charlotte sent again a petition, remarking that she was

a stranger, born in France, before she was married at the Hague, [and that] it was agreed, according to the laws of those countries, that no action of her husband's

²¹¹ J. H. Stanning, 'The Royalist Composition Papers', *Record Society for Lancashire and Cheshire* 26 (1892), 183-9.

²¹² See: Chapter V.

²¹³ PRO, SP 23/215/03-5; Stanning, 'Composition Papers', 112; Coward, *The Stanleys*, 207-8.

²¹⁴ PRO, SP19/146/32.

²¹⁵ PRO, SP23/79/432-3.

²¹⁶ Their report was generally favourable to the countess, PRO, SP23/79/435, 23 Mar. 1652.

²¹⁷ PRO, SP 19/11/422, 28 May 1652. There were two distinct inquiries although, in theory, the two committees had merged in 1650, or were at least residing in the same house at Haberdasher's, *CCAM*, p. vi.

²¹⁸ See: Chapter V.

or her own should deprive her children of the estate purchased with her jointure.²¹⁹

Eventually, the countess was allowed to compound for any estate 'forefeited or sequestrated for or in respect of *her* delinquency'.²²⁰ Although Charlotte had been forced to contract important debts to pay off her composition fine,²²¹ there is no evidence of her having to sell lands. She managed to free her portion lands from sequestration and was, after 1654, able to collect income from her jointure lands to pay off the rest of the composition fine. Had it not been for her own alleged treason, the dower lands settled on Charlotte would have played the same role in protecting family estates as the dower lands given to the princesse de Tarente.

Protecting Family Estates from Confiscation

When Henri-Charles de La Trémoille followed the prince de Condé into exile, he was declared guilty of *lèse majesté* and his lands were confiscated.²²² The estates in question were the counties of Taillebourg and Benon and the principality of Talmont, which he had received from his father for his marriage four years earlier. His wife petitioned the *Garde des Sceaux*, Abel Servien, in October 1652, asking him to remind the queen that she had always been loyal to the monarchy.²²³ The princesse de Tarente also directly petitioned the royal magistrates of Fontenay-le-Comte and Saintes, who proceeded nonetheless with the confiscation. Eventually, however, her request was granted by the *Conseil d'Etat* on 14 January 1653 on the grounds that her husband's defection made her – legally speaking – a widow ('princesse douairière'), and entitled her to an allowance of 12,000 *livres* from the revenues of Taillebourg and the restitution of her dowry from

²¹⁹ The Committee for Advance of Money considered that this petition had a good hope of passing, PRO, SP 19/147/44.

²²⁰ PRO, SP 23/79/395 [my italics]; *JC*, vii. 331 (8 Oct. 1653).

²²¹ Charlotte to Marie, 16 Nov. 1655 and 17 July 1657, 1AP386/9, 1AP 385/19.

²²² Pardon granted in June 1654, *LT5s*, iv. 173-5.

²²³ *LT5s*, iv. 170.

Benon and Talmont.²²⁴ In fact, neither Benon nor Talmont are mentioned in her marriage contract, but the legal fiction of making them dower lands prevented them from being confiscated.²²⁵ Officially the queen regent's leniency towards the princess of Tarente was explained on account of her mother's wartime alliance with France:

mettant en considération la constante affection que la dame de Hessen, sa mère, a fait paroistre, en toutes occasions qu'elle portoit à Sa Majesté et l'inviolable attachement qu'elle a eu à son service et ses interetz.²²⁶

Despite the positive record of the landgravine of Hesse-Cassel as a French ally, she was also known to have given refuge to her nephew Turenne in 1649, after his participation in the early Fronde.²²⁷ The dowager landgravine had died in August 1651, and the *Conseil d'Etat's* decision in 1653 was presumably based less on this old alliance than a certain tradition of restoring confiscated lands to the rebel's family via his female relatives in order to prevent long-term resentment of the Crown. Montmorency's lands reverted after his execution in 1632 to his sisters, and the duc de Guise's lands were entrusted to his mother, Henriette de Joyeuse.²²⁸ Similar tactics were used during the Fronde. The dowager comtesse de Fiesque went as far as to disinherit her son, a supporter of Condé, to prevent a fragmentation of the family estates. At the same time, the young comtesse de Fiesque obtained a legal separation of ownership and used an earlier *procurator* to sell what she could prior to confiscation.²²⁹ The duchesse d'Elbeuf followed the same line of reasoning when she renounced her marital *communauté* in

²²⁴ *LT5s*, iv. 171-3.

²²⁵ Didonne was the estate mentioned in the marriage contract, but since it was not threatened by confiscation, it was omitted from the ruling of the *Conseil d'Etat*, 1AP 2244.

²²⁶ *LT5s*, iv. 171-3. Saint-Simon considered the 'guerrière illustre' as 'attachée inébranlablement à la France', *Mémoires*, ed. Coirault, ii. 704; id., 'Notes sur tous les duchés-pairies, comtés-pairies et duchés vérifiés depuis 1500 jusqu'en 1730. Thouars', *Ecrits inédits de Saint-Simon* ed. Faugère, 8 vols. (Paris, 1880-1893), viii. 166-215 [subsequently referred to as 'Thouars'], at 205-6.

²²⁷ Jean Béranger, *Turenne* (Paris, 1987), 282.

²²⁸ Katia Béguin, *Les princes de Condé. Rebelles, courtisans et mécènes dans la France du Grand Siècle* (Seyssel, 1999), 34; Spangler, 'House of Lorraine', 100-1; Spangler, 'Benefit or Burden. The Balancing Act of Widows in French Princely Houses', presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History, Oct. 2004 (forthcoming).

²²⁹ Livet, 'Les femmes de la Fronde', 742-3.

1632 to avoid confiscation for her husband's rebellion.²³⁰ Similar tactics were employed by indebted landowners, who prevented appropriation by their creditors by terminating joint-ownership and signing their lands over to their wives, or by declaring them dower lands, and thus free of mortgages and debts.²³¹

Marriage contracts reveal that women could hold considerable capital and that the custom of joint-ownership and 'coverture' could easily be set aside by marriage settlements, jointures and trusts, so that wives maintained substantial property interests of their own during their marriage. Female financial contributions were not limited to dowries or inheritances, which could be substantial even if there was a legitimate male line. If family estates were sequestrated or threatened with confiscation, dower lands – reversionary in nature – could be used to secure family interests. In this case, individual actions often had far-reaching consequences. The countess of Derby's own 'delinquency' prevented her from reclaiming her dower lands unscathed. The princesse de Tarente, on the other hand, manipulated the legal fiction of her widowhood to her own advantage, and to the benefit of the La Trémoille family.

Land remained the only long-term investment in the early modern period, but when faced with problems of cash flow, many landowners preferred to sell their estates rather than take up high interest credits and mortgages.²³² The La Trémoille sold off more land than they acquired, while – and because – they were contracting exorbitant debts. On the whole, the study of the La Trémoille landholding is, to some extent, a study in

²³⁰ Spangler, 'House of Lorraine', 106.

²³¹ Daniel Dessert, *Argent, pouvoir et société au Grand Siècle* (Paris, 1984), 120; Julie Hardwick, *The Practice of Patriarchy. Gender and the Politics of Household Authority in Early Modern France* (University Park, Pa., 1998), 114; Ralph E. Giesey, 'Rules of Inheritance and Strategies of Mobility in Prerevolutionary France', *American Historical Review*, 82 (1977), 275.

²³² J. H. Hexter, 'The English Aristocracy, its Crisis and the English Revolution, 1558-1660', *Journal of British Studies* 8 (1968), 47.

failure: failure to defend their Poitevin possessions against Richelieu's encroachments, failure to maintain the Laval inheritance intact, and failure to expand their lands by contracting financially advantageous marriages. To understand their line of conduct, one has to look beyond the monetary and purely economic interests that were at stake and consider the social implications of landed sales, alternative revenues and marriage arrangements. The La Trémoille were not hapless victims watching the slow deterioration of their landed estates. They took pro-active decisions to sell land in Brittany in order to cement their alliances with the local aristocracy, and they were determined to keep seigneurial ties even after the lands had been sold. Their strategy worked to a certain extent, in that they managed to strengthen their Breton clientele to the detriment of their Rohan rivals, but they failed to secure royal patronage. In the long term, local support and 'feudal' ties did not provide them with sufficient political leverage in their dealings with the Crown. Moreover, they turned their back on marriage alliances with the high aristocracy of France (not to mention the cardinal's nieces and the daughters of financiers) and preferred to contract international marriages. The purpose of these matrimonial strategies was definitely not a quest for wealth. Marie de La Tour's dowry hardly compensated for the continual losses imposed by Charlotte de La Trémoille's marriage contract. Rather the aim was to play a major role in foreign Protestant countries and, possibly, to re-enter the French court by the back door. The priority they gave to these international ambitions over immediate financial advantages forced the La Trémoille to a continual display of magnificence and stateliness, as will be analysed in detail in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER II. FEMALE AUTHORITY IN NOBLE HOUSEHOLDS

The term 'household' (*ménage*) has multiple meanings, which coexist and draw upon each other. It designates a physical unit, either a group of people sharing the same residence (kin plus servants) or the material belongings of that group. Secondly, it refers to the distribution of labour involved in the creation of a particular way of life, the ideal of the *bon mesnagement* being defined as hard work, good company and financial astuteness.²³³ The role of widows ruling the family economy as mighty matriarchs has been explored in recent years, but the role of married women in what James Collins calls a 'two-adult household' has not yet been the subject of detailed analysis.²³⁴ According to Julie Hardwick, wives of 'middling families' were very actively involved in the day-to-day management of domestic servants, a situation she contrasts with 'elite' patriarchal rhetoric and practice.²³⁵ This chapter will briefly look at the discourse of prescriptive literature, which was at this time still largely aimed at the upper echelons of society, in order to determine what role it assigned to the 'housewife'. The main investigation, however, will centre on aristocratic practice and the reality of female authority over the domestic economy.

Because of the patriarchal nature of early modern society, historians have often described female self-consciousness as intrinsically linked to the image of the 'weaker sex'. But while gender certainly played a significant role in women's self-perception, one should not underestimate the importance of status.²³⁶ Although Hegel's dialectic of

²³³ Hardwick, *Patriarchy*, 78, 91.

²³⁴ James B. Collins, 'The Economic Role of Women in Seventeenth-Century France', *French Historical Studies* 16/2 (1989), 436-70.

²³⁵ Hardwick, *Patriarchy*, 88.

²³⁶ Antonia Fraser, *The Weaker Vessel. Woman's Lot in Seventeenth-Century England* (London, 1993, first ed. in 1984); Sara Heller Mendelson, 'Stuart Women's Diaries and Occasional Memoirs', *Women in English Society 1500-1800*, ed. M. Prior (London and New York, 1985), 181-210; Patricia Crawford, 'Women's Published Writings 1600-1700', *ibid.* 211-282.

master and servant has been defined as a post-Enlightenment concept based on a contractual relation between servant and master, it can be applied to seventeenth-century society, because 'it expresses the meeting of two subjectivities and the process through which the relationship between the two individuals is elevated to the moment of recognition and until the moment in which the transformation of an individual into an independent consciousness is achieved'.²³⁷ The philosopher G.W.F. Hegel claimed, firstly, that self-consciousness is only possible by acknowledging an 'other' (thesis); secondly, that it is based on the asymmetry of domination and submission (antithesis); and, thirdly, that the 'master' himself can only exist if recognised as such by the 'servant' (synthesis).²³⁸ Without wanting to take the Hegelian model of master-servant relations too far, one could argue that noblewomen defined themselves in relation to their husband (the head of household) on one hand and their servants on the other hand. We will try to assess firstly the relations between female mistresses and male subordinates, which have not come under the same historical scrutiny as the opposite constellation of male masters and female servants.²³⁹ Secondly, we will examine the ways the duchesse de La Trémoille derived her authority from her husband. This might help us to elucidate whether their relationship was based on hierarchical concerns or on practical partnership. Since it has often been acknowledged that women did have some influence and autonomy in the traditional female 'indoor' sphere, we will focus on the more

²³⁷ J. Peter Burgess, 'In the Service of the Narrative: Master and Servant in the Philosophy of Hegel', *Narratives of the Servant*, ed. R. Schulte and Hantzaroula (Florence, 2001), 37.

²³⁸ G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of the Mind* (1807), Chapter IV/A: 'Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness: Lordship and Bondage', <<http://www.class.uidaho.edu/mickelsen/texts/Hegel%20Phen/hegel%20phen%20ch%204%htm>>, accessed June 2003.

²³⁹ Sarah Maza, *Servants and Masters in Eighteenth Century France: the Uses of Loyalty* (Princeton, 1983), 9-13; Cissie Fairchilds, *Domestic Enemies: Servants and Their Masters in Old Regime France* (Baltimore, 1984), 137-50; and Bridget Hill, *Servants. English Domesticity in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1996). These works are interested in examining patriarchal stereotypes. They identify the 'master' as the male head of household and deal with the sexual overtones in his use and abuse of authority.

complex 'outdoor' activities of women, notably estate management (raising loans, selling and purchasing lands, chairing council meetings).

The epistolary sources at our disposal are particularly well suited for this kind of analysis since they emanate from ducal agents directly involved in the administration of landed estates and address the duchess as well as the duke. The main sources used here are sets of active correspondence of two members of staff, Jean Dumonceau, sieur de Chamdor, and Jean Grimaudet, sieur des Landes. Chamdor was private secretary to Charlotte-Brabantine and, after her death in 1631, to Marie de La Tour, before he was promoted general treasurer of the duchy of Thouars in 1642.²⁴⁰ Grimaudet was one of the main La Trémoille officials in Brittany from 1625 and he served as governor of Vitré from 1644 to his death in December 1653.²⁴¹ These sources are complemented by the correspondence of the duke and duchess themselves,²⁴² the *maître d'hôtel* Adam de Brusse,²⁴³ the Parisian agent Jacques Rozemont, sieur de Boncoeur,²⁴⁴ and the concierge of Thouars, Jean Boullenois.²⁴⁵ Unfortunately such an epistolary set does not exist for the Derby family. The letters of Countess Charlotte, preserved in the La Trémoille archives, offer nonetheless some clues about her self-perception as a figure of authority.²⁴⁶ On the basis of these letters we shall thus examine how noblewomen defined themselves in relation to their husbands and their servants. We will also take into account the servants' point of view and their perception of female authority.

²⁴⁰ Chamdor's active correspondence contains thirty-one letters (ten of which written to Charlotte-Brabantine and nine to Marie de La Tour's secretary Guérineau) dating from 1622 to 1642, 1AP 648. There are also seventeen letters (including one lengthy *mémoire*) written to him by Duchess Marie in the years 1643 to 1645, 1AP 429/1-8 and 1AP 430/82-95.

²⁴¹ Grimaudet's active correspondence contains 130 letters, almost exclusively directed towards Duchess Marie and her private secretaries Guérineau and Chamdor, 1AP 657.

²⁴² 1AP 429-431 for the duchess and 1AP 394-7 for the duke.

²⁴³ 1AP 353.

²⁴⁴ 1AP 355-356.

²⁴⁵ Jean Boullenois was the father of the treasurer Ismaël Boullenois, he was in the La Trémoille service from 1595 up to ca. 1638. His letters (1AP 646) are mainly written to Chamdor.

²⁴⁶ 1AP 384-5.

A.) Staff Management

Before examining master-servant relations more closely, one has to define the composition of the La Trémoille household. Modelled on the royal household, it comprised gentle servants (hunting companions and ladies-in-waiting) as well as domestic staff. This section will examine whether the duchess had her own separate household, and what kind of control she exercised over the household as a whole, including ducal councillors and agents.

1.) The La Trémoille Household

Information on the composition of the La Trémoille household can be gathered from a variety of sources: straightforward lists of people said to be 'ordinairement' with the duke or duchess at Thouars, lists of travel companions, of people (and horses) to be fed, of recipients of ducal legacies and, most importantly, financial accounts detailing the amounts spent on salaries and pensions. These lists are far from identical, since the notion of household was very fluid, but they overlap sufficiently to give us an idea of the size of the household. The following numbers include ducal councillors and companions (who may have received retainers, but were not full-time staff), and their valets, whose wages had to be defrayed.

Figure 4: Number of people belonging to the La Trémoille household

Source	Year	Total household	Male servants			Female servants	
			Total:	Gentlemen:	G. in %:	Total:	Gentlewomen:
Girouard ²⁴⁷	1534	91	72	25	35%	19	4
1AP 298/115	1590s	89	76	20	26%	13	5
16th c. average:		90	74				
1AP 428/1	1616	37	37	5	14%	0	/
1AP 139/168	1617	32	31	9	29%	1	/
1AP 394/159	1619	52	51	29	57%	1	/

²⁴⁷ Mark Girouard, *Life in the French Country House* (London, 2000), 242-63: a valuable account of the working of a noble household, based partly on Louis de La Trémoille, *Inventaire de François de La Trémoille et Comptes d'Anne de Laval* (Nantes, 1887).

1AP 409/13	1655	46	43	11	26%	3	/
early 17th c. average:		42	40.5				

It is generally assumed that the noble household shrank considerably in number during the seventeenth century because noblemen were increasingly sojourning at court or in the capital.²⁴⁸ Despite the fact that the above chart only provides a synchronic record, they seem to bear out the hypothesis of a general decrease in size. Staff expenditures amounted to an average of 5,000 *livres* per year in the 1640s, half of which was spent on domestic wages, forty per cent on pensions and alms, and ten per cent on legal wages.²⁴⁹ As a comparison, the household of the duc de Longueville comprised 122 people in 1663 and his staff expenditures reached 10,000 *livres* per year. An additional twenty-four people served in the household of the duchesse de Longueville and were paid more than 3,000 *livres* per year.²⁵⁰

Our chart indicates that there was a female household in the sixteenth century, but that there was no female presence at Thouars in the late 1610s (before Duke Henri's marriage) and only three female servants in 1655. The 1652 inventory of the castle of Thouars mentions a 'sallette ou mangent les filles de Mademoiselle' containing twelve wooden stools (*escabeaux*), and several old mattresses in the 'chambre des filles de Madame', in the 'chambre des filles de Madame la princesse' (the so-called chambre de Louzy), and in its garde-robe.²⁵¹ But there was hardly any mention of female servants under the main financial accounts heading *Chapitres de gages*. Some former personnel

²⁴⁸ See for instance Girouard, *Life in the French Country House*, 250; J. T. Cliffe, *The World of the Country House in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven and London, 1999), 93.

²⁴⁹ 1AP 98-99.

²⁵⁰ Bibliothèque Mazarine MS 3163, f°212v-218r and f°241v-242r [I would like to thank Philip Grover for sharing this information]

²⁵¹ 1AP 1063

such as wet-nurses were listed in the *Chapitre de pensions viagères*,²⁵² but most women on the list were either widows or daughters of male servants. This absence of female servants, however, does not preclude the existence of a female household. Audiger's *La maison réglée* for instance declared that a noblewoman should have her own retinue of fourteen servants, but only three of them should be female.²⁵³

As for a distinct *maître d'hôtel*, there is some evidence that Monsieur de Mortagne was 'maître d'hôtel de Madame' in the early 1650s,²⁵⁴ presumably when the duchess was residing in Paris. *Maîtres d'hôtel* were highly paid, earning between three and five hundred *livres* a year, and were in charge of supervising the train of the family member they were attached to. In the 1620s, for instance, Adam Brusse served Duke Henri as *maître d'hôtel* in Sedan, Paris, Vitré, La Rochelle and Thouars.²⁵⁵ Henri's brother Frédéric, comte de Laval, had his own personal *maître d'hôtel*, an Englishman by the name of Charles Lister,²⁵⁶ and the prince of Talmont was attended by Hector de Boyers, sieur de Montes, when he resided in Holland in 1646.²⁵⁷ But when the ducal family was reunited at Thouars there was no need for separate households, as Henri de La Trémoille made it clear in 1647:

que la paix s'y faisant, ce jeune seigneur [the prince of Talmont] reviendra en France où il ne prendra point maison à part & ainsi n'aura que faire de maître d'hostel.²⁵⁸

²⁵² In 1644/5 Jeanne Coullon, *nourrice* of the late Comte de Laval, and Nicolle Bruneau, wet-nurse of the late Elizabeth de La Trémoille, received 50 and 30 *livres* p.a. respectively, 1AP 98. This could indicate that wetnurses were better paid if the child they looked after was male.

²⁵³ Audiger, 'La maison réglée' (1692), *La vie de Paris sous Louis XIV. Tenue de maison et domesticité*, ed. A. Franklin (Paris, 1898), 11-2, 68-9. The household of the duchesse de Longueville had a similar male/female ratio of 19 men and 5 women, Bibliothèque Mazarine MS 3163, f°241v-242r.

²⁵⁴ 1AP105 (1650-52), 81v.

²⁵⁵ 1AP 353, Correspondence of Adam Brusse, 1619-1632. His widow, Eve de Grande Maison, received a pension of 500 *livres* per year, 1AP106 (1654).

²⁵⁶ Lister was recruited in 1628, when the Comte de Laval resided in England. Twelve years after Laval's death he still received a *pension viagère* of 300 *livres* p.a., 1AP 106 (1654).

²⁵⁷ Pineau to Rivet, 29 July 1645, 19 Aug. 1645, and 16 Dec. 1645, UBL, BPL286/II/50, 54, 86.

²⁵⁸ Pineau to Rivet, 12 Apr. 1647, UBL, BPL286/III/120.

It therefore appears likely that the duchess had her own train of domestics while she was residing in a different place than her husband, be that Thouars, Paris or Vitré. Her way of life was essentially peripatetic and her household always travelled with her. Disregarding the duchess's whereabouts, there was always a nucleus of the ducal household that remained at Thouars. Those high-ranking officials included the governor of Thouars (with a salary of seven hundred *livres* per year), the treasurer general (five hundred *livres*), the concierge (about two hundred and fifty *livres*), and members of the council (who received between twenty and one hundred *livres* in retainers).²⁵⁹ Some of them had started their career in the ducal service as secretary to the duchess and had thus established close working relationships with her.²⁶⁰

In 1644, the duchess asked Chamdor for a detailed statement of all 'gages et apointment des cappitaines de nos terres et gens employez en nos affaires'. Dismayed that the duke had not checked the annual *estat* himself before leaving Thouars, she pressed Chamdor to send her a detailed account of the intended purpose of each revenue. She made some suggestions, for instance that the revenue of Taillebourg should be spent on her children's pensions, and promised that she 'tiendray la main à ce qu'il soit observé'.²⁶¹ The annual financial accounts were normally checked and signed by the ducal councillors and countersigned by the duke and – sometimes – by his half-brother, his eldest son or his wife as well.²⁶² Only once did the duchess countersign the accounts alone, in her capacity as 'espouse et procuratrice generale de Monseigneur'.

That was in the transitional period of 1650, when Ismaël Boullenois replaced Chamdor

²⁵⁹ 1AP 98-99.

²⁶⁰ Daniel Guérineau, sieur Descars, was Marie de La Tour's first secretary (his letters are kept in 1AP 658). He became receiver general of Thouars in 1631. Both Chamdor and Ismaël Boullenois were secretaries to Marie de La Tour before they were made general treasurers.

²⁶¹ Marie to Chamdor, 17 Dec. 1644, 1AP 429/4.

²⁶² Marie de La Tour signed the accounts in 1646, 1647, 1648, 1694, 1652 together with Duke Henri; in 1656 with Henri and Hanibal de La Trémoille and, for the last time, in 1657 with Henri, Hanibal and Henri-Charles de La Trémoille, 1AP 100-108.

as treasurer.²⁶³ In general, Duchess Marie's instructions to Chamdor were concerned with the reconstruction of the castle of Thouars and the redrawing of the grounds (involving such activities as piercing walls, draining marshes, and planting gardens). She frequently asked him to forward her money and provisions to Paris, and occasionally entrusted him with a special mission. In 1646 the treasurer was ordered, for instance, to go to La Trimouille, some seventy miles southeast of Thouars, and help the local *procureur fiscal* to defend their jurisdiction against the seigneur of Bour d'Archambaut. At the same time Chamdor was told to renew the lease of La Trimouille 'a telles personnes et a tel prix qu'il verra bon estre'.²⁶⁴ The same level of autonomy was given to Grimaudet in 1630, when he tried to sell parts of the forest of Brécilien: he was 'libre et autorisé de pouvoir de V[otre] Exc[ellence] pour traicter avec celui qui donneroit le plus'.²⁶⁵

Most of the time servants did not receive direct orders from the duchess, but had to deal with her through her private secretaries. The concierge and park keeper of Thouars, for instance, were key positions at a time when the ducal household was peripatetic and the castle was frequently empty and risked falling into desuetude. But concierge Boullenois, whose correspondence has survived,²⁶⁶ rarely dealt with the duchess in person; he only communicated with Chamdor, then secretary, who regularly transmitted orders to repair specific furniture and tapestries, establish inventories, and send particular items to the ducal family when needed. After 1635, in the first phase of the re-building of the castle of Thouars, Boullenois was put in charge of supervising the demolition of the old *donjon* and the re-planting of the clearing.

²⁶³ 1AP 104.

²⁶⁴ Marie to Chamdor, 3 Nov. 1646, 1AP429/8, f° 6.

²⁶⁵ Grimaudet to Marie, 16 Mar. 1630, 1AP 657.

²⁶⁶ 1AP 646, correspondence of Jean Boullenois, 1605-1638.

Private secretaries acted thus as a screen between the duchess and the rest of the domestic staff. According to Labourdette, a similar role was incumbent upon the *intendant* in the eighteenth century, acting as an intermediary between the duke and the council. In the seventeenth century, however, the *intendant* Jean Rogier, sieur d'Iray, was certainly a key administrator, but did not act as the council's spokesman.²⁶⁷

The Ducal Council

The council of Thouars was a multivocal institution, which comprised a treasurer and a group of legal advisers from the *bailliage* of Thouars (*sénéchal*, *lieutenant*, *procureur* and *avocat*) as well as *procureurs* from the royal courts of justice of Poitiers and Saumur.²⁶⁸ In the mid-fifteenth century a ducal council had been set up in Paris,²⁶⁹ but sessions continued to be held at Thouars as well. The surviving series of seventeenth-century council deliberations reflect this duality. Up to 1625, the sessions were held at Thouars, either at the *Palais*, where Charlotte-Brabantine stayed, or in the house (*logis*) of M Galand or another councillor.²⁷⁰ The records of the 1644 to 1648 sessions emanate from Paris, and the 1654-1656 reports present the minutes of the Parisian meetings together with the duke's comments from his place of residence (Thouars, Vitré, Olivet or Paris) in the margin.²⁷¹ These sources deserve much more thorough investigation; it can only be pointed out here that Charlotte-Brabantine often presided over the council meetings, but that her presence was felt less between 1619 and 1625.²⁷² In 1623,

²⁶⁷ D'Iray's massive correspondence (1AP 357 and 358) still awaits full investigation.

²⁶⁸ In the financial accounts, they were regrouped under the heading *Chapitre des gages des Officiers du Duché*, 1AP 98-106.

²⁶⁹ William Weary, 'La Maison de La Trémoille', 201, 205; Weary, 'Royal Policy', 52-8, 88-116.

²⁷⁰ 1AP 139-142 (1619-1625), only the first pages of 1AP 142 seem to record sessions held at Paris.

²⁷¹ 1AP 143 (1644-1648); 1AP 395 (1654-56). The large gaps in this series may be explained by the fact that some councillors treated the minutes as private property and their heirs were reluctant to hand them over to the council, see 1AP 140/81-9 on Falut's case.

²⁷² There was nothing unusual about the duke's mother chairing council meetings. David Potter has shown that Marie de Luxembourg, dowager comtesse de Vendôme, frequently presided over the auditing of the accounts in her *Chambre des Comptes* ('madame y estant') and signed all surviving patents concerning

Charlotte-Brabantine tried to reconcile two of the councillors, Galand and Heraut, who had '[une] grande entipatie en leurs humeurs', which affected the whole administration.²⁷³ Rozemont was dispatched to Paris to help the dowager duchess and, though not an official member of the ducal council, he took on more and more responsibilities.²⁷⁴ There were no regular meetings, unlike in the eighteenth century when the council met each Tuesday;²⁷⁵ sometimes there was only one in a month, at other times the council would convene up to twice per week. They dealt mainly with financial and legal transactions and advised the duchess on measures to take; her reply, however, is not revealed by the minutes. On the contrary, mid-seventeenth century sources give us an insight into the duke's attitude towards his councillors. Duke Henri rarely presided himself over council meetings, and he did not seem to pronounce *arrêts* in the manner of his successors in the eighteenth century. He told his councillors explicitly: 'Messieurs, mon but étoit de vous consulter et non de vous conseiller'.²⁷⁶ He seemed equally averse to making decisions. Instead, he deferred back to individual councillors or to his wife, the duchess. Only one in about seven decisions was deferred to Marie de La Tour, but her name appears more often than any other, save that of Councillor Pelleus. Recurring comments dictated by Duke Henri are:

Monseigneur se remet de cette affaire a l'avis du Conseil de Paris et du surplus a la conduite de Madame/ a l'avis de son conseil et aux ordres de Madame/ aux soins et a la prudence de Madame/a Madame et a son conseil' and 'Monseigneur ne doute point que Madame [prendra] toutes les précautions possibles'.²⁷⁷

leases on her estates, David Potter, 'The Luxembourg Inheritance: The House of Bourbon and its Lands in Northern France during the sixteenth century', *French History* 6/1 (1992), 33. Labourdette also insists that Marie-Victoire-Hortense de La Tour d'Auvergne, mother of Duke Jean-Bretagne de La Trémoille, played a very active role within the council and built up a safe network of reliable personnel, Labourdette, 'Fortune', *Annales*, 172.

²⁷³ Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 17 Nov. 1623, 1AP 430/36; see Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 30 Oct. 1623 and 4 Nov. 1623, 1AP431/65-6 on the 'mésintelligence qui est entre ceux du conseil'.

²⁷⁴ Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 2 Dec. 1623, 1AP 430/48: 'Je suis d'opinion conforme à la vostre, Madame, que Rozemont en peu faire les affayres dont le procureur a eu la charge'.

²⁷⁵ Labourdette, 'Fortune', *Annales*, 167-8.

²⁷⁶ *Mémoire*, 9 Sept. 1656, 1AP 395/128.

²⁷⁷ 1AP 395.

These remarks highlight not only the degree to which Henri relied on the active commitment of the duchess, but also the necessary interaction between the duchess and ducal councillors.

Both Weary and Labourdette stress that the ducal household centred on families that had served the La Trémoille for generations and defined themselves through their loyalty to the ducal family. But Weary also perceived an evolution in recruitment patterns and thought that the upper echelons of the administrative hierarchy comprised an increasing number of men noteworthy for their managerial skills, rather than their family connections.

When Duke Henri chose Monsieur de Berlaudière in 1620 to act as *lieutenant* of Thouars, he consciously picked him

pour ce qu'aïant servi feu mon père, il me sera plus utile qu'un estranger et estant riche, en fort bonne estime dans la province, il aura plus de moyen de faire dépense et sera moins à charge.²⁷⁸

Berlaudière had experience, but more important was his 'estime' (reputation based on authority) in the province. The local reputation of some ducal councillors was based on them holding seigneuries in the immediate neighbourhood of Thouars: Boncoeur was held by Jacques Rozemont, *sénéchal* Uriel Delaville was sieur de Baugé, and Gilles de Cordouan, the governor of Thouars, owned Saint-Cyr. Jean Rogier was known as sieur d'Iray (Irais) before his ennoblement in 1635, which enhanced his social position and gave him additional 'local credit'. Moreover, the duke was not only looking for a person of authority, but also for someone with independent means of living. As we shall see, his councillors were frequently asked to advance money out of their own purse.

²⁷⁸ Henri to Charlotte-Brabantine, 14 Mar. 1620, 1AP 393/61.

The council as a collegiate body has attracted historians' attention as a source of patronage and support for ducal authority.²⁷⁹ According to David Potter, a nobleman's *conseil* was moulded after the royal government and developed a strong sense of collective identity based on a high degree of organisation and an interrelated group of families.²⁸⁰ Practices of endogamy and religious affiliations did not only connect members of the council, but members of the household at large, spanning bridges between servants living in Thouars and Vitré and eagerly incorporating so-called *homines novi*.

The Household Community

Although the ducal household at Thouars seemed to form a rather close-knit community that had been intermarrying for generations, it was in fact very permeable to outsiders, as long as they were also employed in the duke's service.²⁸¹ Daniel Guérineau, private secretary to the duchess and later receiver of Thouars (1616-1633), married Marie Trioche from Vitré, who became the duchess's lady-in-waiting. Marie's sister Esther Trioche wedded Maurice Neveu, ducal apothecary at Thouars, in 1646. The Guérineau family was deeply rooted at Thouars. Daniel's brother René Guérineau was also a ducal officer, and their sister Esther married Pierre Pelleus, *procureur fiscal* at Thouars, in 1630. Daniel Guérineau's daughter Marie married a Breton, Daniel Ravenel, sieur de Cohigné, who became ducal treasurer of Brittany. There were thus marital links between the ducal servants at Thouars and Vitré, and outsiders, such as Jean Grimaudet, who was born in Angers, were not excluded from this marriage market. After the death

²⁷⁹ Kristen Neuschel, 'The Prince of Condé and the Nobility of Picardy', Ph. D. thesis (Brown University, 1982). Two workshops in *French Historical Studies* prepared the ground: 'Forum: Fidelity and Clientage' 14/3 (1986) and 'Forum: Patronage, Language and Political Culture' 17/4 (1992). Sharon Kettering, who participated in both forums, had her articles recently re-published under the title *Patronage in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France* (Aldershot, 2002).

²⁸⁰ Potter, 'The Luxembourg Inheritance', 45-6.

²⁸¹ The following genealogical information is drawn from Haag, *La France protestante*, supplemented by Mr Tulot, who conducted a thorough investigation of the parish registers of Vitré and Thouars.

of his first wife, Grimaudet married Marguerite Conseil, daughter of the receiver of Château-Gontier and widow of Gilbert de Gennes, sieur du Heuslet. His third marriage was to Marie Lasnon, widow of Jean-Godefroy Ingel, receiver of Vitré, in August 1650. Grimaudet's daughters were married into the influential Farcy family: Charlotte²⁸² was betrothed in 1649 to Philippe de Farcy, son of the *procureur fiscal* Annibal de Farcy, and her sister Elisabeth married Isaac Farcy, son of the *lieutenant particulier au comté de Laval* Gilles Farcy in 1651. Jean Boullenois, who was also a complete outsider,²⁸³ but enjoyed – like Grimaudet – ducal favour, managed to secure the friendship and support of Chamdor, then private secretary to the duchess. His eldest son Ismaël married Chamdor's daughter Susanne, and rapidly climbed the career ladder to succeed his father-in-law as treasurer general in 1650.²⁸⁴ His wife was appointed governess of Marie de La Tour's grand-daughter Henriette, and Boullenois bought the *métairie* of La Sablonnière, close to the ducal castle of Loucy, although he never enjoyed the status of seigneur.²⁸⁵ *Homines novi* were on the rise, but nepotism as the main drive behind recruitments showed no signs of abating. As other historians have pointed out, ducal (or royal) officers were primarily attracted to the position of 'broker' of favours their employment conferred. Patronage and clientelism were deeply embedded in the system, and those who enjoyed direct access to a source of authority were least interested in uprooting the self-perpetuating nature of that system.

²⁸² She was the widow of René Maullevault, sieur de la Garenne (d. 1637), son of Jean Maullevault, governor of Isle-Bouchard and later Taillebourg.

²⁸³ Boullenois to Chamdor, 7 Dec. 1633, 1AP 646: 'Je n'es pas entré en cest maison par procuration de personne, mais defuncq Monseigneur [qui] a prié, par plusieurs fois, ma feux tante concierge à Fontainebleau en la maison de L'Aminoy'.

²⁸⁴ Boullenois asked Chamdor to act as surrogate father to his son Ismaël (1AP 646/34) and to introduce him to the duchess. A first employment as assistant secretary was, according to Jean Boullenois, the best way to get noticed for one's loyalty and to gain an insight into the duke's affairs, Boullenois to Chamdor, 12 Apr. 1634, 1AP 646/29.

²⁸⁵ Charlotte-Amélie de La Trémoille, *Mémoires*, ed. E. de Barthélemy (Paris, 1876), 44.

Although exogamy was uncommon, it was not unheard of: in December 1645 the *sénéchal* of Thouars, Ignace Delaville, sieur de Lardiller, married *ad secundas nuptias* the daughter of Le Meilleraie's *intendant*. This did not happen contrary to La Trémoille's wishes, since 'Monseigneur le duc a honoré de sa présence la compagnie et le festin nuptial de M de Lardiller son *sénéchal*'.²⁸⁶ High-ranking officials asked for ducal assent before contracting marriage, as indicated by the duchess granting Saint-Cyr's wish to wed Louise de Farou, the daughter of a Huguenot nobleman from Loudun.²⁸⁷ Ducal participation in servants' celebrations obviously strengthened bonds of loyalty. Another example of this is the presence of the princesse de Tarente and maréchal Turenne as godparents of Rozemont's daughter Emilie, at her baptism at Charenton in 1649.²⁸⁸

According to Labourdette, the extraordinary loyalty of eighteenth-century ducal agents was founded on their common religious outlook: Jansenism.²⁸⁹ It has to be examined whether Protestantism likewise acted as a social adhesive for the La Trémoille and their staff. The problem was, of course, that the ducal family itself was not united, since Duke Henri had abjured in 1628. As far as we can see, this conversion did not affect the Huguenot community of Thouars, which continued to benefit from the support of the duchess and from the indifference of the duke. All major officeholders at Thouars (Chamdor, Boullenois, Iray, Pelleus) were Protestants and Pelleus, for instance, was an active member of the *consistoire* and represented the Church of Thouars at the National Synod of Charenton in 1644. The only office that remained consistently in Catholic

²⁸⁶ Pineau to Rivet, 16 Dec. 1645 and 20 Jan. 1646, UBL, BPL286/II/86, 286/III/5.

²⁸⁷ Marie to Chamdor, 15 Oct. 1644, 1AP 430/85: 'Le Sieur de Saint-Cyr m'a escrit sur le sujet de son mariage et par ma response je luy en tesmoigne mon agreation, estant très ayse qu'il ait rencontré du bien et une personne bien faite'.

²⁸⁸ Pineau to Rivet, 8 Oct. 1649, UBL, BPL286/IV/90; The duc de la Force told Pineau in 1647 that he had just been made god-father for the one hundred and second time, Pineau to Rivet 5 Apr 1647, UBL, BPL286/III/118.

²⁸⁹ Labourdette, 'Fortune et administration', 572-3.

hands was the post of *sénéchal*.²⁹⁰ The situation was more complicated in Vitré, where the Protestant and Catholic communities seemed much more antagonistic.²⁹¹ When the La Trémoille inherited the barony in 1605, all major offices were held by Catholics, despite the fact that the counts of Laval had been Protestants themselves.²⁹² As in Thouars, the La Trémoille continued to grant the office of *sénéchal* to Catholics,²⁹³ and Charlotte-Brabantine also provided a Catholic by the name of Gilles Chesneau with the charge of *procureur fiscal* in 1614. Chesneau, however, was accused of mismanagement, sacked by Henri and Marie in 1623 and replaced by Grimaudet, a member of the Reformed Church. Meanwhile Annibal de Farcy, sieur de Saint-Laurent, rose in power and obtained increasingly important charges for his sons. Protestant influence did not wane with Duke Henri's conversion, but only some forty years later, when his son, the prince de Tarente, abjured in 1670. It was only fully overcome with the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. During Marie de La Tour's lifetime, however, offices tended to remain in Protestant families, notably because of the high degree of endogamy among ducal councillors.

André Pineau, sieur de la Trosnière, though not himself a servant of the La Trémoille, was a regular visitor of the Hôtel de La Trémoille in Paris and exemplifies the figure of the Protestant courtier expecting support and patronage from Duchess Marie.²⁹⁴ As a

²⁹⁰ René II Gaschignard, sieur de la Guillerie, was *sénéchal* of Thouars until 1626, when he was replaced by Antoine Clabat, sieur de Maisonneuve. Their letters are kept in 1AP 656 and 649. Both were Catholics, like their successor Uriel Delaville, sieur de Baugé, who served as *sénéchal* from the 1640s to approximately 1680, Jean-Luc Tulot, *Les Agents des La Trémoille en Bretagne et dans le Comté de Laval* (unpublished).

²⁹¹ Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 78-84.

²⁹² The *sénéchal* Jean de Couesnon, sieur de Trélan, and the *procureur fiscal* of Vitré, Germain Le Lymonnier, sieur de La Marche, as well as the main magistrate of Laval, Daniel Hay, sieur de La Motte, were all Catholics.

²⁹³ After Mathurin Duverger, sieur de Boislebaut (1619-1626), René Nouail, sieur de Nuillé (1626-1661) was *sénéchal* of Vitré, followed by Maurice Le Ribault, sieur des Perrières (1661-1695), Tulot, *Les Agents des La Trémoille*; Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 133.

²⁹⁴ The duchess supported Pineau in seeking employment in the service of the Prince of Orange, Rivet to Huygens, 28 Apr. 1648, *Briefwisseling van Constantijn Huygens*, ed. J. A. Worp, 6 vols. ('s-Gravenhage,

member of the Dutch ambassador's entourage, Pineau observed that a son of M de Steelandt, 'neveu à la façon de Bretagne de nostre cher M d'Aerssan', who arrived in the *train* of M de Strade, became first page to the duchess and was later promoted to *escuyer* serving the princesse de Tarente.²⁹⁵ Pineau also had the satisfaction of seeing his mother's friend, the 'belle et sage veuve' Mme de Bellefonds, Jeanne de Maulays, and her daughter being chosen as *dame* and *fille d'honneur* for the princesse de Tarente.²⁹⁶ But he was less fortunate in finding placements for his own family. At first it seemed that his brother was as highly appreciated by the duke²⁹⁷ as he himself was by the duchess: 'Ainsi nous sommes bien dans les esprits du Seigneur et de la Dame ce qui ne peust estre desavantageux'.²⁹⁸ But within a year Pineau complained that 'nous avons tous ce malheur de n'estre pas estimés capables de rendre aucun service à la Maison de La Trémoille'.²⁹⁹ His brother had repeatedly been overlooked for promotions, and his sister had not been given the position of governess to Marie de La Tour's daughter, as promised. In 1649, Pineau recommended Louis Favereau to the post of *pasteur* of Vitré without great conviction, 'car la bonne Dame n'a jamais témoigné beaucoup d'affection à l'avancement des personnes de Thouars'.³⁰⁰ The reasons for curbing her patronage of the Pineau family may have been related to growing difficulties in supporting Protestants, as the duchess came increasingly under pressure from the Catholic Court and her youngest son, a zealous Oratorian. Nonetheless, these pressures did not manifest

1911-7), iv. 476. Pineau's letters to his uncle, André Rivet, constitute an important source, and have been recently been discovered by Mr. Tulot, who generously provided me with his transcripts.

²⁹⁵ Pineau to Rivet, 16 Dec. 1645, 13 Jan. 1646 and 25 Oct. 1649, UBL, BPL286/II/86, 286/III/3, 286/IV/94.

²⁹⁶ Pineau to Rivet, 7 Feb. 1648, UBL, BPL286/IV/13. Previously, the duchess had helped Mme de Bellefonds with legal proceedings: 'Mme de Bellefonds est dans un acheminement d'accord avec son adverse partie. Mme nôtre duchesse a entrepris cette bonne oeuvre et leur veut faire sentir des effets de sa généreuse charité', Pineau to Rivet, 10 Sept. 1644, UBL, BPL286/I/146.

²⁹⁷ 'Mons[ieur] le duc luy continue ses faveurs le faisant manger à sa table et le menant promener à Louzy', Pineau to Rivet, 3 Mar. 1646, UBL, BPL286/III/15.

²⁹⁸ Pineau to Rivet, 17 Feb. 1646, UBL, BPL286/III/11.

²⁹⁹ Pineau to Rivet, 1 Mar. 1647, UBL, BPL286/III/110. This may have to do with the quarrel that opposed André Rivet and Moïse Amyraut. Pineau himself helped Daniel Jurieu to print pamphlets against Amyraut, who was being supported by the church of Charenton and by the duchesse de La Trémoille.

³⁰⁰ Pineau to Rivet, 3 Sept. 1649, UBL, BPL286/IV/86.

themselves before the late 1650s, and even then the duchess refused to give up her patronage of prominent Protestants, such as the minister Alexander Morus.³⁰¹ It is clear, however, that the composition of the La Trémoille council rapidly changed after Marie's death in 1665 and her eldest son's conversion to Catholicism in 1670.

2.) Master-Servant Relations

Prescriptive Literature

In January 1635, a messenger dispatched by Rozemont delivered two pine boxes to Marie de La Tour. They contained, among other things, a bound copy of *Theatre d'agriculteur et mesnage des champs*.³⁰² Written by the Protestant agronomist Olivier de Serres and first published in 1600, this textbook sought to teach the male head of household how to become a *bon mesnager*. A key passage asserted that it was likewise a woman's 'greatest glory' to be considered a *bonne mesnagère*:

Depuis la grande dame iusques a la plus petite femmelette, à toutes, la vertu de mesnager reluit, par dessus tout autre, comme instrument de nous conserver la vie. Une femme mesnagere rentrant en une pauvre maison, l'enrichit; une despensiere ou faineante destruit le riche.³⁰³

Serres tied his argument to the Scriptures by referring to Solomon for whom 'la femme vaillante est la couronne de son mari, qu'elle bastit la maison, qu'elle plante la vigne'. He was paraphrasing Chapter 31 of Salomon's *Proverbs*, used by other early modern authors who wanted to make a case for a strong female conduct of household.³⁰⁴ Although the *mulier fortis* of Jerome's *Vulgate* had been replaced by 'tugendsame Hausfrau' in the Zurich Bible, by 'tugendsames Weib' in Luther's translation and by

³⁰¹ See Chapter IV.

³⁰² Rozemont to Marie, 23 Jan.1635, 1AP 355-6.

³⁰³ Olivier de Serres, *Theatre d'agriculture et mesnage des champs* (Paris, 2001), 1203.

³⁰⁴ Johan Steinbach, *Der Weiber Haushaltung* (1561) and Jeronimus Emser, *Von der Haushaltung zweyer Eheleuth* (1565). See Irmintraut Richarz, 'Oeconomia: Lehren vom Haushalt und Geschlechterperspektiven', *Geschlechterperspektiven. Forschungen zur Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. H. Wunder and G. Engel (Königstein, 1998), 316-36.

'virtuous woman' in the King James Bible, it remained a powerful argument for letting women supervise and organise the domestic economy:

Who can find a *mulier fortis*? For her price is far above rubies
(...)
She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard
She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms
(...)
Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.³⁰⁵

Domestic conduct books drawing on this eulogy of the housewife were outnumbered by household books referring to Aristotle and St. Paul's Epistles, asserting the inferior position of women and the need for men to supervise them.³⁰⁶ Prescriptive literature should generally not be taken at face value, but it did tend to reflect the usual perceptions and normative standards of the time. Female idleness was generally condemned by all from the most inveterate misogynist to the most strident 'feminist',³⁰⁷ and contemporaries agreed that women should be working for and within the household.³⁰⁸ But opinions varied widely on the degree of autonomy that housewives should have and on whether they should be involved, let alone in charge of, dealings with the outside world, such as estate management, financial negotiations and legal activities implied. The fact that the duchesse de La Trémoille ordered a copy of Serres' treatise seems to indicate that she perceived herself as a 'strong' housewife, in charge of the domestic economy. This section will determine whether this image can be

³⁰⁵ Proverbs 31: 10,16,17,31.

³⁰⁶ Richarz, 'Oeconomia', 324.

³⁰⁷ Bathsua Matkin threw in that 'We cannot be so stupid as to imagine that God gives ladies great estates, merely that they may eat, drink, sleep and rise up to play', quoted by Erickson, *Women and Property*, 13.

³⁰⁸ Grimaudet, main representative of the La Trémoille in Brittany, described his second wife as follows: 'on me la dépeint très entendue au maniement de l'argent et à tenir un bon ordre de comptes, fort économe et ne prenant plaisir qu'à son mesnage en ville et aux champs. Cela me donneroit plus de contentement qu'une jeune beauté dont j'ay a présent peu besoin', Grimaudet to Chamdor, 20 Oct. 1635, IAP 657. Pineau agreed that a middle-aged man 'n'a plus besoin de femme *propter optus* mais bien *ad opes and ad opem*', Pineau to Rivet, 11 Sept. 1648, UBL, BPL286/IV/59.

corroborated by an analysis of the realities of the La Trémoille household by assessing the degree of initiative and responsibility Marie de La Tour had.

According to these prescriptive books, a master's obligations were to be taken as seriously as a servant's duties. Based on the Christian principle that all men were created equal, the stress was put on the servant's 'instruction' rather than 'correction'.³⁰⁹ The perfect master had to be charitable, yet strict: 'opportunément sera aigre et doux'.³¹⁰ To what extent was the duchesse de La Trémoille following this paternalistic ideal?

Bonds of loyalty

There is no evidence of any formal education in basic literacy and piety in the La Trémoille household,³¹¹ but there was some concern about the present and future needs of their servants. At their marriage, servants were given generous 'gratifications',³¹² and there is at least one example of a page whose apprenticeship was paid, when he decided to leave the ducal service in order to learn a trade.³¹³ Servants were routinely left substantial amounts of money by ducal wills,³¹⁴ and when they died themselves, their widows often continued to receive life-long pensions.³¹⁵ Both Charlotte-Brabantine and Duchess Marie were asked to help their servants through sickness and old-age, requests

³⁰⁹ Serres, *Theatre*, 121: 'puis qu'envers Dieu n'y a acception de personnes estans tous enfans d'un mesme père, ce n'est pas les traicter en frères, qu'user ces violences'. Claude Fleury, 'Les devoirs des maîtres et des domestiques' (1688), *La vie de Paris sous Louis XIV. Tenue de maison et domesticité*, ed. A. Franklin (Paris, 1898), 208-13, 219.

³¹⁰ Serres, *Theatre*, 109: 'Meslera la rigueur avec la douceur, les rudoyant à propos et non continuellement'.

³¹¹ On such practices see Noémie Hepp, 'Etre femme au XVIIe siècle', *Le XVIIe siècle* ed. J. Truchet (Paris, 1992), 171.

³¹² The duke's first *valet de chambre* received 1000 *livres*; Claude Perrot, a *femme de chambre* serving the duchess, received 600 *livres*; and the treasurer Ismaël Boullenois was given 1,800 *livres* 'pour recompense de services et en faveur de mariage', 1AP 106.

³¹³ Marie to Chamdor, 3 Dec.1644, 1AP 429/3.

³¹⁴ Charlotte-Brabantine left Chamdor and Rozemont 800 *livres* each, *Liste des legs de Charlotte-Brabantine, duchesse de La Trémoille*, 1AP 321.

³¹⁵ 1AP 98-106. The duc de Longueville's accounts attest to the same practice of widowers' pensions, Bibliothèque Mazarine, MS 3163.

mostly transmitted by their private secretaries, who held, as we have seen, considerable positions as 'brokers'.³¹⁶ It was rather rare for the duchess to visit a dying servant on his sickbed or attend his funeral, an honour Marie de La Tour paid in 1646 to Chamdor's wife.³¹⁷

Were all employees (servants and agents) satisfied with their positions in the La Trémoille household? The sets of correspondence show a complex picture of ambivalent feelings towards the ducal family. When writing to the duchess (or her secretary), each one tended to portray himself as the very model of loyalty and depict other servants, by contrast, as full of 'malice', feelings that were not necessarily insincere. Jean Boullenois, for instance, convincingly presented himself as a 'très humble et très obéissant, et très fidell serviteur', proclaiming 'Madame, c'est mon tout, comme je suis sa très fidell créature'.³¹⁸ He urged his friend Chamdor to act as a substitute father to his son Ismaël and to teach him the 'méthode de vivre' consisting in '[une] entière affection au servisse de Madame avec toute fidellité et affection et prudence et discrétion'.³¹⁹ Loyalty (*fidélité* and *affection*) was also considered by Grimaudet to be at least as important as professional efficiency (*soin* and *utilité*).³²⁰ But as Boullenois understood it, it was the combination of obedience and proficiency that resulted in the kind of devotion the duchess looked for:

³¹⁶ Jean Boullenois repeatedly asked Chamdor to 'keep him in Madame's memory' as one of her faithful servants (most explicitly in 1AP 646/15). The secretary was best positioned to approach Marie de La Tour, because of his 'prudence' and his day-to-day closeness to the duchess: 'vous savés mieux que moy prendre les tamps en la bonne humeur de Son Exc.', 1AP 646/29, 38.

³¹⁷ Pineau to Rivet, 24 Aug. 1646, UBL, BPL286/III/62: 'Mme l'a visitée en sa maladie et a eu la charité d'assister à son enterrement'.

³¹⁸ Boullenois to Chamdor, Sept. 1623, 1AP 646/15.

³¹⁹ Boullenois to Chamdor, 14 Dec. 1634, 1AP 646/34: 'A cet fin que par cet méthode de vivre qu'il puisse avoir l'honneur d'avoir le bien vouloir de S. Exc. et de tous ceux de la maison'.

³²⁰ Grimaudet to Marie, 5 Jan. 1630 and 19 Mar. 1630, 1AP 657; Grimaudet to Chamdor, 24 Dec. 1633, 1AP 657.

Je ne me plainçnerés jamais de quelque ordonnance qu'il plaira à Son Exc. de faire à mon ésgart. C'est pourquoy je ne dye mot et qu'il plaist à Sa Grandeur. Je le tien faicts.³²¹

Sources of Discontent

Some people, however, appeared rather more resentful of what Pineau called the 'mortifications of bondage'.³²² We have only indirect testimony of servant dissatisfaction, as reported by people complaining to the duchess about their insolence. Gardeners were notoriously difficult to handle. Grimaudet reported that the gardener at Vitré was playing *boules* in the ducal garden, but refused to allow the governor and concierge to use it for their private functions. Grimaudet told him that 'V[otre] Exc[ellence] ne supporteroit ceste insolence si elle en recepvroit plainte et que son debvoir estoit d'obéir à ceux qui estoient ordonnés de par vous pour luy commander'.³²³ In the 1630s, when major construction was undertaken at the castles of Vitré and Thouars, gardeners in both places felt that they could not do their job without the promised *corvayeurs* or day-labourers.³²⁴ Their anger, however, was not directed towards the duchess, but towards the local overseers. Boullenois reported the 'parolles fort ostensible' of the gardener at Thouars,³²⁵ who refused to obey a direct order of the duchess, as follows: 'Que par mordieu qu'il ne se soucioit ponct de moy, ni de pappes que j'étois un jan foutre, connart et que par la jernidieu qu'il n'en feroit rien'.³²⁶ Grimaudet also insisted on the need for more manual labourers, 'autrement [le jardinier]

³²¹ Boullenois to Chamdor, 6 Fe. 1648, 1AP 646/38.

³²² Pineau to Rivet, 2 Apr. 1644, UBL, BPL286/I/100.

³²³ Grimaudet to Marie, 11 Aug. 1629, 1AP 657. At this point Grimaudet still considered him 'un peu capricieux, mais au reste assés adroit au travail'.

³²⁴ Boullenois to Chamdor, 14 May 1635, 1AP 646/40.

³²⁵ Possibly M. Belleva, gardener at Thouars and Louzy, whose letters have survived and are kept at 1AP 644.

³²⁶ Boullenois to Chamdor, 16 Feb. 1635, 1AP 646/40.

mengeroit vostre pain inutilement et tous les jours nous ne verrions que fureurs de sa part jusques à se vouloir précipiter, ainsi qu'il dict'.³²⁷

As far as we know, there is no list of domestic regulations comparable to the *Règlement de Monseigneur le prince de Conti, gouverneur de Languedoc* for the La Trémoille household.³²⁸ The various sets of correspondence do not reveal a specifically 'Protestant' mind-set of the duchess or her staff. Although Marie considered it 'merveilleusement bien fait d'autter [=ôter] d'une maison des gens ainsy adonnez au vice', she did not rail against drunkenness and other vices, but seemed rather tolerant of subordinates' faults.³²⁹ She defended for instance Susanne Ogle, who had committed adultery and had been expelled from the service of the countess of Derby.³³⁰ The countess appeared to have been more offended by the servant's haughtiness (*esprit hautain*) than by her improper behaviour, for she had tried to be 'charitable' (sending the girl to a *lieu honneste* and granting her a small livelihood), but had been rebuffed:

Elle a pris le bien que je luy voulois faire en mepris et elle pensoit gagner qch. sur l'argent que sa mère avoit presté à mon fils (...) Il est vray que j'estois resoluë en charité de payer(...), mais ce gouvernement de saite façon jamais elle n'en aura rien.³³¹

For Lady Derby, the worst vice of all was lying, an attitude with which Marie agreed.³³²

The duchess identified other problems with servants to be *ignorance*, *passion* and *malice*.³³³ But the only one she frequently referred to in her letters is *malice*, and that is

³²⁷ Grimaudet to Marie, 5 July 1633, 1AP 657.

³²⁸ This document, written after 1660, is reprinted in Fleury, 'Devoirs', 244-252.

³²⁹ Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 18 Dec. 1621, 1AP 431/21: 'Il y en a icy [à Sedan] un qui s'y pousse de plus en plus, au lieu de s'en coriger. Les scandalles qu'il y fait font estonner tout le monde de le voir en une place dont il est si indigne. *Mais il faut que toute choze ait son cours*' [my italics].

³³⁰ Charlotte to Marie, 3 June 1661, 1AP 385/57

³³¹ Charlotte to Marie, 3 June 1661, 1AP 385/57. This was in keeping with Fleury's recommendation 'réprimez fortement les naturels fiers et impérieux', Fleury, 'Devoirs', 236.

³³² Charlotte to Marie, 9 Sept. 1661, 1AP 385/68. Marie wrote: 'Je hais la menterie comme un vice bas et de valet', 'Portrait de Mme la Duchesse de La Trémoille', *Portraits littéraires*, ed. C. Bouyer (Paris, 2000), 112-8, at 115.

³³³ Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 25 Oct. 1622, 1AP 430/17.

always directed at ducal agents, not domestic staff. The *sénéchal* of Thouars, for instance, is described as 'un des plus mauvais hommes', whom she would find 'grand plaisir' in removing from office.³³⁴ Another example is Gilles Chesneau, sieur de la Motte, *procureur fiscal* at Vitré. He had been dismissed in 1623 and tried to appeal to the *présidial* of Rennes. According to Chamdor, the young duchess 'se propose, estant en Bretagne, de le bien ranger en son devoir'.³³⁵ There is also a cursory mention of the duchess's 'juste colère' with the *procureur syndic* André de Gennes,³³⁶ but despite the authoritarian tone used in most of her directives, there is no evidence of any harsh treatment of staff.

The only constant complaint made by La Trémoille officials was that they had to advance often substantial amounts of money out of their own purse to pay ducal bills, without receiving any guarantees of reimbursement. Grimaudet aired his own objections to this practice, as well as remonstrances he had received from other agents.³³⁷ On several occasions he suggested that the only way out of indebtedness was to raise money by selling off estates.³³⁸ The advice of this experienced administrator might have shaped the duchess's opinion on selling estates rather than accumulating interest rates, as expressed in her 1661 *Mémoire*. The duke was less taken by this advice and accused him of impertinence:

Monseigneur est encores fort résolu de faire un nouveau emprunt de 50 ou 60,000 livres ... et quoy que j'aye tasché par mes raysons de persuader qu'il voudroit mieux commencer par vendre et acquiter les debtes de la maison, je n'ay rien obtenu et au contraire ay descouvert l'impertinence de mes advis en

³³⁴ Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 12 Aug. 1623, 1AP 430/47.

³³⁵ Chamdor to Charlotte-Brabantine, 3 June 1625, 1AP 648; Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 28 June 1622, 1AP 430/34.

³³⁶ Grimaudet to Marie, 14 Nov. 1625, 1AP 657.

³³⁷ Grimaudet to Guérineau, 13 Feb. 1627, 19 Mar. 1627, 1AP 657 and Grimaudet to Rozemont, 4 Sept. 1627, 1AP 657. Officers were routinely asked to advance money, see Henri to Chamdor, 8 Apr. 1643, 1AP 394/1.

³³⁸ Grimaudet to Marie, Nov. 1628, 1AP 657 and Grimaudet to Chamdor, 4 Feb. 1634, 1AP 657.

cela, qui pourtant n'ont autre but que le service fidelle que je doibts et voudrois rendre.³³⁹

Grimaudet had overstepped the fine line between advice and disrespect, a boundary all servants were conscious of when they referred to their *hardiesse* or *liberté* in saying something, which they invariably based on their profound *affection* and *devotion*.³⁴⁰ In order to ingratiate himself again with the duke, Grimaudet relied on two of Henri's closest advisers: Hanibal de La Trémoille, vicomte de Marcilly, and Duchess Marie herself.³⁴¹ Early in 1634, the governor thanked Marie for 'l'assuransse que j'ay que V[otre] Exc[ellence] par sa prudence et bons advis à Monseigneur remédiera à tout'.³⁴²

After Grimaudet's death, the financial situation of the La Trémoille deteriorated further and Duke Henri contemplated in 1666 the pawning of 'pierries, vaisselle d'argent et meubles'. Using extremely violent language, he cursed earlier prodigality and notably the 'bienfaits' bestowed upon their ungrateful servants:

les bien faits execifs n'ont servy qu'à faire des ingrats et des ennemis, comme Le Doyen de Laval, les d'Anché, Farcis, Boisgefroy, Grimaudet et beaucoup d'autres, il n'y a point d'autre espédient pour empescher l'ingratitude que de leur faire et à leurs semblables jamais aucun bien, et de ne perdre d'occasion de faire dégorger ces sansues enflées de notre substance et de nostre sang ... J'ay remarqué qu'outre nos larrons domestiques, les conseillers qu'on a rendus voisins, vassaux et riches des biens de la maison n'ont tâché, que d'usurper ses fiefs, diminuer son revenu, et payer du bien de la maison leurs espions, leurs larrons et leurs traîtres, ausquels je ne puis penser qu'en leur souhaitant ce qu'ils méritent.³⁴³

³³⁹ Grimaudet to Marie, 12 Oct. 1633, 1AP 657.

³⁴⁰ Rozemont retracted a piece of advice based on his 'affection simple pour ne pas dire folle que j'ay tousiours eue en tout ce qui regarde vos interests', adding 'puisque V.E. a bien agreable que cela demeure, je n'ay plus qu'a me taire et a regretter d'en avoir parlé', Rozemont to Marie, 25 Apr. 1626, 1AP 355-6.

³⁴¹ Grimaudet to Marie, 12 Oct. 1633, 1AP 657: 'Je vous supplie de contribuer toujours ce qui sera de vous pour me maintenir en la continuation des bonnes volontés de Madame qui feroit bien besoin auprès de Monsieur'.

³⁴² Grimaudet to Marie, 11 Feb. 1634, 1AP 657.

³⁴³ Henri to Tarente, 1 Jan. 1666, 1AP 396/449-451.

There is no indication that the duchess's relationship with ducal servants and councillors was marred by such resentments. It is perhaps no coincidence that the duke's remarks were made shortly after the death of his wife, when she was no longer there to mediate.

B.) Authority by Proxy: the Concept of Interposition

Staff management was considered a traditionally female task, set as it was within the boundaries of the home. Staff members included, as we have seen, administrators, lawyers, and financiers, who were in close contact with the duchess. An analysis of her role in estate management further undermines the stereotypical opposition between private-female and public-male realms.

1.) Noblewomen as Estate Managers

Historians continue to assert that women interfered in the administration of family lands only if they were forced to take up 'male roles' by extraordinary circumstances, such as economic hardship, widowhood and guardianship of minors, and male absence due to war or court attendance.³⁴⁴ In fact, none of these circumstances were 'exceptional': more than two thirds of the population were poor, widows formed a large part of society, and men were frequently at court or at war. Moreover, noblewomen often displayed their administrative skills when their husbands were neither dead nor incapacitated. The point has been made that widows, who had managed family estates during their son's minority, were reluctant to relinquish their authority once their son had reached his

³⁴⁴ Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (New Haven and London, 1995), 178-180; Mendelson: 'Stuart women's diaries', 200; Crawford, 'Women's published writings', 213-4, Mendelson and Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720* (Oxford, 1998), 310.

majority.³⁴⁵ Henri de La Trémoille also continued to rely on his mother's guidance and expertise:

Vous me ferés cet honneur: prendre la peine de mettre ordre au désordre qui sont en mes affaires. Je crois que *vostre* absence m'a fort nui pour ce que je croi que ceus a qui elles sont fiées se sont donné licence de mal faire. Il est fort fâcheux de païer bien cher de gens inutiles, si vous plaist y changer quelques et y metre d'autres, je crois qu'elles iroient mieux.³⁴⁶

James Stanley likewise learned a great deal from his mother, Lady Elizabeth de Vere, notably in relation to the administration of the Isle of Man, after his father, the sixth earl of Derby, had retreated to a life of leisure and literature.³⁴⁷ Shortly after James married Charlotte de La Trémoille, seven years his senior, his mother died and one might have expected Charlotte to become involved in running the household, maybe even following in her mother-in-law's footsteps. Indeed, since Charlotte had turned twenty, she had been considered able to run her own affairs: 'la jugeant assez cappable d'administrer son bien et jouir du benefice d'icelles ayant a present l'aage de 20 ans ou environ'.³⁴⁸ Although she was kept under Charlotte-Brabantine's guardianship,³⁴⁹ her brother had to promise to give her 'telz (...) droictz a elle apparten[ant] en meubles, bagues, joyaux, vaisselles, habicts et argent comptant qu'elle peust avoir pardevant elle de son espargne'.³⁵⁰ Moreover, as we have seen, her father's inheritance had left her with landed property, which she sold for 24,000 *livres* to her brother Henri, a sum converted into lands in England by trustees chosen by her husband and herself in equal number.³⁵¹

³⁴⁵ Henri de Montmorency's mother, Madeleine de Savoie, for instance, managed the family estates until her death in 1586, Joan Davies, 'The Politics of the Marriage Bed: Matrimony and the Montmorency Family, 1527-1612', *French History* 6/1 (1992), 72.

³⁴⁶ Henri to Charlotte-Brabantine, 19 Feb. 1620, 1AP 393/112.

³⁴⁷ Coward, *The Stanleys*, 37, 58, 60-1, 63, 87, 104.

³⁴⁸ 1AP 387/1.

³⁴⁹ 1AP 387/1. Charlotte-Brabantine agreed to act as guardian for her daughter 'envers laquelle elle ne vouloit manquer jamais d'affection et bonne volonté et accepter volontairement ladite charge si par la cour elle estoit confirmée'.

³⁵⁰ *Procuration pour négocier le mariage de Charlotte de La Trémoille*, 14 Dec. 1625, 1AP 400. A later *procuration*, dated 27 July 1626, made Henri swear 'd'accepter toutes les décisions [de sa mère] et de n'en revoquer aucune, sur tout son bien présent et avenir quelconque', 1AP 387/3, f° 8.

³⁵¹ *Indenture Tripartite*, 1AP 2243, l. 67-82.

Charlotte did not lack in willpower, as her political initiatives during the Civil War well proved, but she had to overcome a series of handicaps.

The early death of the countess of Derby denied Charlotte the possibility of undergoing a practical 'apprenticeship', such as Marie de La Tour offered her own daughter and daughter-in-law.³⁵² But Lady Strange's first and foremost problem was the language barrier,³⁵³ and her absolute ignorance of the customs and legal system of her adopted country. These truly exceptional circumstances prevented Charlotte from being more pro-active in domestic and social matters. On the other hand, the English Civil War presented an exceptional situation, which unlocked Charlotte's sense of initiative. As we have seen, she went to London in 1647 to petition Parliament and she managed to defend her dower lands after her husband's execution in 1651, while contracting three advantageous marriages for her daughters. The only reference to Charlotte's intervention in landed affairs before the Civil War period concerns the forest of Delamere in Cheshire, which Charles I was planning to deforest with the intention of enclosing and re-letting it. In January 1628, Lord Strange enlisted the duke of Buckingham's help, encouraged by 'your graces former favours to my wife and me'.³⁵⁴ By August, no decision had yet been taken and Charlotte took the opportunity of Dudley Carleton's marriage to congratulate him, adding:

My husband desires to assure you of his very humble service and wishes you all happiness. We both hope that you will honour us by your support in the Council in a matter respecting Delamere forest, for which we are very humbly your suitors. He feels equally with myself the obligation I am under for the

³⁵² '1661 Mémoire', 204. The duchesse de Liancourt also parted with advice on how to run the family estates, Jeanne de Schomberg, *Règlement donné par une dame de haute qualité à M*** sa petite-fille, pour sa conduite, et pour celle de sa maison*, ed. C. Win (Paris, 1997), 153-172.

³⁵³ A hand-written English-French Dictionary attributed to Charlotte de La Trémoille is kept at Worcester College, Oxford, MS 35.

³⁵⁴ Coward, *The Stanleys*, 59 (erratum: the 'Countess of Derby' should be 'Lady Strange'); PRO, SP 16/91/99; SP 19/113/12; James Lord Strange to Buckingham, Jan. 1628, SP 16/91/141, *CSP Dom* (1627-8), 538.

great favour which you have shown to my brother De Laval, who, I am sure, will never be unmindful of you.³⁵⁵

These informal dealings – here with courtiers Charlotte had met in The Hague – were crucial to early modern business transactions and they constituted a domain noblewomen could easily enter, if they circulated in court circles. The duchesse de La Trémoille managed to strike a similar deal with Claude Bullion, *surintendant des finances* from 1632 to 1640, when she met him at the thermal station of Pougues-les-Eaux. She told him that she had not yet received the 50,000 *livres* promised in 1628 as compensation for the dismantling of Talmont, and made Bullion promise 'sa faveur quand il seroit en estat de me donner des preuves'. Shortly afterwards, on 8 April 1634, she received the money by *arrest du conseil*.³⁵⁶

An analysis of the residential pattern of the La Trémoille reveals that neither the duke nor the duchess spent more than a couple of months in one place. Their paths might cross once or twice a year, but Duke Henri was mainly travelling between Vitré and Thouars, whereas his wife also maintained a foothold in Paris.³⁵⁷ In order to understand the nature of power-sharing as practiced by the duc and duchesse de La Trémoille, it is necessary to place it in the context of the lack of authority in the newly inherited Breton lands and the power vacuum created by absenteeism. Grimaudet provides a remarkable analysis of the threat of absenteeism. Consciously or not, some of the remedies he suggested were taken up. Continual residence in Vitré was not an option, since ducal presence was also required in Paris and Thouars, but the duke and duchess addressed the problem by living separately and alternating residences and by developing a system of *procurations*.

³⁵⁵ Charlotte to Dudley Carleton, 17 Aug 1628, *CSP Dom* (1628-9), 91-9; F.R. Raines, *The Stanley Papers* III/1, (CS 66, 1867), p. xxxii-xxxiii.

³⁵⁶ '1661 Mémoire', 210.

³⁵⁷ See Chapter III.

2.) Absenteeism

Before Grimaudet's successive marriages into local Breton elites, he was an outsider who derived his authority solely from his position as ducal representative. His early letters repeatedly beg the duchess to take up quarters in Vitré, for 'la présence de V[otre] Exc[ellence] rendroit tous ceux qui se sont esloignés de leur devoir ployables sous vostre autorité'.³⁵⁸ According to Grimaudet the power vacuum created by ducal absenteeism led to seigniorial rights, such as the *droit de guet*, being challenged by peasants, and to noble revenue being held back with impunity. But he acknowledged that the tenants also felt disadvantaged by the landlord's absence. They accused him of exploiting the country in the name of the duke and duchess, but without their assent:

Il ne faut plus espérer ledict droit [de guet], [c]eux qui le contestent ... nous dépeignent ... comme des exacteurs et volleurs et supposent que nous agissons sans charge et que si V[otre] Exc[ellence] en avoient cognoissance elles ne souffriroient de telles pilleries.³⁵⁹

Sometimes, however, the mere threat of the duke's or duchess's arrival seemed to strike people with fear and keep them obedient. For instance, when the *juge des exempts* was looking for support among the Catholic community of Laval, Grimaudet spread the rumour that Monsieur was approaching in order to intimidate 'ceux qui avoient envie de sortir des bornes du devoir'.³⁶⁰ But if overused, this trick (*artifice*) lost its effect and Grimaudet had to resort to negotiations when demonstrations of force failed. The La Trémoille blatantly did not have a 'well-oiled administrative machine' at their disposal which allowed Condé, for instance, to be an efficient governor of Burgundy despite rarely setting a foot in his province.³⁶¹ Their clientele was underdeveloped and their representatives either poorly connected or independently powerful.

³⁵⁸ Grimaudet to Marie, 14 Nov. 1625, 1AP 657.

³⁵⁹ Grimaudet to Marie, 19 Mar. 1630, 1AP 657.

³⁶⁰ Grimaudet to Maisonneuve (the duke's secretary), 1 July 1632, 1AP 657.

³⁶¹ Beth Nachinson, 'Absentee Government and Provincial Governors in Early Modern France: The Princes of Condé and Burgundy 1660-1720', *French Historical Studies* 21/2 (1998), 268.

Ducal absenteeism was considered especially harmful in the case of the county of Quintin and the forest of Brécilien. As we have seen, the lease of Quintin was partly intended for Charlotte de La Trémoille. The *fermier general*, Jean Le Coniac, sieur de Ville-au-Pilon, was less than helpful in forwarding the money, insisting on a written *procuration* by Lady Strange.³⁶² Duke Henri rarely made the journey to the estate, possibly because the income did not benefit him directly.³⁶³ Moreover, there was no control over the neighbouring elites, who 's'enrichissoient par les continuelles volleries qu'ils y exerçoient; en telle sorte qu'en dix ans le tiers de la dite forest avoit esté ruiné'.³⁶⁴ The case was different for Brécilien, where neighbouring families were interested in buying the land and thus resented 'les grand abus qui se commettent en icelle par les officiers et autres'.³⁶⁵ However, when the duchess gave them the opportunity in March 1630 to buy Brécilien 'aveq tout ferme droict au denier quarante, à la charge de desdommager les officiers de la chastelenie', they declared that they were only interested in the jurisdiction, not in the forest itself. Grimaudet suspected an agreement between Mathurin de Rosmadec, who had bought the barony of Gaël in 1626, Jacques Saulnier, sieur de la Villaubry, and a sieur de la Fleuriaye in order to force the duchess 'ou à ne vendre point ou à leur faire bon marché'.³⁶⁶ Grimaudet tried to play another potential buyer, the sieur de la Chasse, against Villaubry, but the former pulled out and Villaubry became increasingly difficult to negotiate with: 'si on ne trouve expédiant de luy donner de la craincte il deviendra très insolent et préjudiciera fort aux ventes qui restent à faire'.³⁶⁷ In the end, faced with Villaubry's 'incroyable froideur',

³⁶² Grimaudet to Charlotte-Brabantine, 16 Jan. 1627 and 15 May 1627, 1AP 657; Grimaudet to Rozemont, 4 Sept. 1627, 1AP 657. Le Coniac's refusal to co-operate was chronic, Henri to Charlotte-Brabantine, 7 Nov. 1622, 1AP 393/118.

³⁶³ Grimaudet to Marie, 23 Sept. 1633 and 12 Oct. 1633, 1AP 657.

³⁶⁴ '1661 Mémoire', 204: 'n'y ayant que la présence du maistre qui fust capable d'y remédier, et c'est ce qui fait que M. de La Moussaye a trouvé à gagner où nous eussions perdu'.

³⁶⁵ Grimaudet to Marie, 19 Mar. 1627, 1AP 657.

³⁶⁶ Grimaudet to Marie, 16 Mar. 1630, 1AP 657.

³⁶⁷ Grimaudet to Guérineau, 8 June 1630, 1AP 657.

Grimaudet had to tell him to go to Thouars and treat with the *intendant*, Monsieur d'Iray, in person.³⁶⁸ Before the year was over, Villaubry had bought several plots of land, and Rosmadec followed his example soon afterwards.³⁶⁹ Marie herself had similar difficulties in selling further parts of Brécilien in 1653. She was certain that 'caballes' had been formed and that the comte du Bois-de-la-Roche had intimidated his neighbours, who

faisant assez connoistre qu'ils avoient esté intimidez par luy et que ses menaces faisoient plus d'effet que toutte que pouvoient dire nos gens, par la raison que luy faisant son séjour ordinaire sur les lieux et M. mon mary ny moy n'y ayans jamais fait huit jours de demeure, s'ils s'arrestoient plus à ce qui leur venoit de sa part que de la nostre.

Again, the disadvantage of being an absentee landlord is evident. As Marie later discovered, even her own agents ('mes gens et nos officiers') were 'plus à sa dévotion qu'à nous, tant l'infidellité reigné partout'.³⁷⁰

The solution to this problem was evident to Grimaudet from the very beginning:

Plus je m'instruis en vos affaires, plus je remarque l'utilité que la présence de V.Exc. y peut apporter. Beaucoup de procès s'intentent et se perdent au préjudice de vos droits lesquels comme je croy se pouroient terminer par *l'interposition* de vostre autorité à vostre contentement.³⁷¹

Although the agent's authority emanated in theory from the duke himself, in practice Duke Henri never gave him a direct *procuration*. Instead he held his power from the duchess, who in turn held it by 'procuration' from the duke. Grimaudet, for instance, had to get any sales he contracted ratified by the duchess, who had to get them ratified by the duke.³⁷² He was thus subject to a process of 'double interposition', while the duke remained unequivocally at the peak of the hierarchical structure.

³⁶⁸ Grimaudet to Marie, 19 Oct. 1630 and 2 Nov. 1630, 1AP 657.

³⁶⁹ Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, i. 99-101.

³⁷⁰ '1661 Mémoire', 205.

³⁷¹ Grimaudet to Marie, Nov. 1625, 1AP 657 [my italics].

³⁷² Grimaudet to Marie, 8 June 1630, 1AP 657; Grimaudet to Chamdor, 10 July 1635, 1AP 657.

3.) The Duchess as 'Procuratrice Générale'

Marie de La Tour's *Mémoire*, written in 1661 to justify her decisions as estate manager, takes as fact that the duchess enjoyed certain powers, since she had been accused of abusing them:

chascun me sera tesmoin que j'ay agy dans toutes [les affaires], et grandes et petites, avec tout le soin et la sincérité possible, n'ayant jamais eu autre but que le bien et l'avantage de cette maison, et j'y ay si peu considéré mon intérêt particulier que je puis protester qu'en toutes les ventes dont j'ay fait les traitez je n'ay jamais ny stipulé ny receu aucun présent ny pot de vin (...) n'ayant jamais rien manié en particulier et qui ne soit entré en la despense générale de la maison.³⁷³

Although Marie never portrayed herself as a member of a 'weaker sex', as many female authors did in order to plead for indulgence, she did justify some of her acts by her youth and ignorance.³⁷⁴ In 1629 she signed the transaction of Bournezeau,

[sans avoir] jamais veu ceste terre ny eu aucune connoissance de sa valeur ny de son revenu, et ainsi je ne faisoit que prester ma main à ceux qui avoient la charge entière du ménage.³⁷⁵

Bournezeau was an outlying estate sold off quickly to pay for Charlotte de La Trémoille's 'dowry'; the duchess was, however, much better informed when the Breton estates were up for sale. Marie was introduced to the world of estate affairs when she arrived in Laval in August 1623.³⁷⁶ In July 1625, she composed a long *Mémoire* for the *intendant* of Thouars, where she expressed satisfaction of having been obeyed so promptly.³⁷⁷ One has to distinguish here between the origin of her commands (her will) and the reason they were obeyed (her authority). The duchess claimed that her will was identical to that of her husband, one of her key expressions being 'selon ma volonté conforme à celle de Monsieur'. It was vital for her to maintain the unison of their wills

³⁷³ '1661 Mémoire', 215. On the practice of backhanders, see Labourdette, 'Fortune', *Annales*, 174.

³⁷⁴ '1661 Mémoire', 201-2.

³⁷⁵ '1661 Mémoire', 202.

³⁷⁶ 'Hier je vis, ce que je n'avois jamais veu, et qui est que je fus en l'audience où se plaiday une très belle cause par cinq jeunes advocats qui certes firent merveilles et cela fut très beau à voir', Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 12 Aug. 1623, 1AP 430/47.

³⁷⁷ Marie to d'Iray, 8 July 1625, 1AP 430/54.

because it was the foundation of her authority, which remained subordinated to that of the duke. Like any other councillor or ducal officer, Marie used the duke's authority 'par interposition'.³⁷⁸

The concept of 'interposition' is crucial for the understanding of authority in the early modern period. In English, 'interposition' connotes the idea of an intervention on another person's behalf, whereas in French it has the legal connotation of a 'fraudulent representation of one's identity by use of a third party's identity'.³⁷⁹ The duchess used her husband's identity, and his authority, to assert her own. This is reflected in the expression 'procuratrice generale', a title Marie de La Tour used on several occasions. A notarial contract, dated 30 March 1632, conferred to the duchess an impressive range of powers:

pouvoir et puissance de pour et en leurs noms regir gouverner et administrer tous et chacuns leurs biens et revenuz poursuivre pourchaser faire vente et recevoir toutes et chascunes les sommes de deniers arerages de rentes loyers et services de leurs terres et dommaynes debtes advies pentions et toutes autres sortes et nature de deniers et choses generalmente quelsconques qui leur sont et seront cy apres deues par quelques personnes pour quelques causes et occasions que ce soit ou puisse estre tant par contratz promesses obligations sentences arests que autrement.³⁸⁰

The document gave the duchess full legal and financial powers, and full access to all property held in joint ownership.³⁸¹ When Marie concluded a deal with Gilles Huchet in March 1642, the transaction papers acknowledged the duchess as 'procuratrice generale et speciale', but specified that the contract was only valid if 'a valid proof of the

³⁷⁸ For instance, in a letter recommending the new governor, the sieur de Saint-Cyr, Henri declared 'Je luy ay ordonné de prendre vos conseils sur son établissement, et sa conduite et de maintenir l'autorité de vos charges par *l'interposition* de la mienne, lorsqu'il en sera besoin', Henri to his officers, 13 June 1643, 1AP 394/6.

³⁷⁹ *Le Robert & Collins. Super Senior. Grand Dictionnaire Français-Anglais*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1998), s.v. 'interposition'.

³⁸⁰ 1AP 400.

³⁸¹ 'Ledit seigneur constituant avecq Madite dame lun pour lautre Solidairement soubz les renonsiations requises avec tous & chascune Leurs Biens, meubles et Immeubles presentz et advenant & sy avant que le cas le requerra Vandre cedder quitter bailler a rente reschanger ou feager ou autrement', 1AP 400.

ratification by her husband the duke' was submitted to the other party within fifteen days of the signature.³⁸² It is not clear whether this was a standard restriction or an additional precautionary measure imposed by Huchet. In December 1644, Marie asked Chamdor to find out whether she could use her authority as 'procuratrice generale' to pay homage for some La Trémoille possessions, since the duke had been indisposed and was later busy attending the Estates in Brittany.³⁸³ Chamdor's answer has not survived, but it seems unlikely that she did indeed pay homage. In fact, the 'procuration' only gave her full legal powers when used internally. In 1650, for instance, she used her 'procuration' to audit the annual accounts of the duchy of Thouars, and her signature was accepted as valid, although neither her husband nor her eldest son countersigned the document.³⁸⁴ In practice, Duchess Marie was always considered to act *on behalf* of her husband, but at the same time *independently* of him. This can be illustrated by her involvement in litigation on one hand, and in business transactions on the other.

Litigation

Marie de La Tour's *Mémoire* lists, under the heading *Affaires de Pallais*, a total of thirty-five lawsuits 'desquelles mon mari m'a laissé le soin et la sollicitation'.³⁸⁵ The language of the *Mémoire* underlines that the duchess considered herself to be the main party involved: she consistently used the impersonal pronoun 'on' and, even more frequently, the singular pronoun 'je' rather than the plural pronoun 'nous'. Accused of mismanagement by some 'esprits assez malicieux', the duchess assumed full responsibility for her acts, although she could have deflected blame by denying her liability as a mere 'procuratrice'. Instead, she clarified her motivations, highlighted

³⁸² 1AP 429 (Rennes, 23 Mar. 1642)

³⁸³ Marie to Chamdor, 3 Dec. 1644, 1AP 429/3.

³⁸⁴ 1AP 104 (1650).

³⁸⁵ '1661 Mémoire', 210.

positive outcomes and played failures down, as any male administrator would have done.

Marie's legal proceedings deserve further investigation. She mentions thirty-one verdicts in her favour and four to her prejudice, ruled at eight different courts of law. One has to bear in mind that some of the rulings are not linked to any particular court, and that several cases were tried at different courts consecutively, according to a complicated system of appeals.³⁸⁶

Figure 5: Courts of law used by Marie de La Tour

Court of law:	Number of cases:
Chambre de l'Edit	13
Grande Chambre	9
Conseil	4
Conseil d'Etat ³⁸⁷	2
Cour des Aides ³⁸⁸	2
Chambre des Comptes ³⁸⁹	2
Grand Conseil ³⁹⁰	1
5e Chambre des Enquêtes ³⁹¹	1

³⁸⁶ 'Le gain d'un procès dépendait non du bon droit mais du tribunal qui en connaissait', *Dictionnaire des institutions de France*, ed. M. Marion (Paris, 1923), s.v. 'Grand Conseil'.

³⁸⁷ The *Conseil d'Etat* was conceived to be the king in his Court, initially a court of law composed by noblemen. Marie de La Tour only cites it twice, both times in connection with the 'Villefranche' case, '1661 Mémoire', 212 (1647) and 214 (1659).

³⁸⁸ The *Cour des aides* was in charge of judging both civil and criminal matters regarding the levy of taxes. It was also a court of appeal for contested 'jugements des élections, greniers à sel, juges des traites'. The La Trémoille probably used the *Cour des aides* at Rennes, which was joined to the Breton Parlement. The two rulings which Marie obtained there were 'arrests de vérification', one for the 'impot de dix sols sur chaque pipe de vin passant sous les ponts de Taillebourg et Laval' in 1636, after it had already been granted by the *Conseil*, and one for the 'droit de nomination aux offices royaux de Laval' on 28 June 1650, which still had to be confirmed by the *Chambre des comptes*, '1661 Mémoire', 210, 213.

³⁸⁹ The *Chambre des comptes* was derived from the *Cour du roi*, like the Parlement and the *Conseil d'Etat*. It mainly registered all kinds of edicts and declarations, naturalisations, legitimisations and gratifications. Marie obtained two 'arrests de vérification', one on 24 August 1650 registering 'des brevets pour l'augmentation de la pension de M. mon mary jusqu'à 15 000 livres, de l'octroy d'une pension pour moy de 6 000 livres, et d'une à mon fils de 10 000' and one on 15 september 1653 confirming the 'droit de nomination aux offices royaux de Laval', '1661 Mémoire', 213.

³⁹⁰ The *Grand Conseil* was in charge of cases the Parlements were deemed to be too biased to be able to render an impartial judgment. Marie only had one such case: on 18 August 1636 'j'obtins arrest au grand conseil, par lequel la préséance fust adjudgée aux officiers du duché de Thoars contre ceux de l'élection dudit lieu', '1661 Mémoire', 210.

³⁹¹ The Parlement of Paris had five *chambres d'enquêtes*. Marie used the fifth in an affair concerning one of her vassals, M. Palluau, 'par lequel a esté adjudgé que le vassal dit l'adveu de sa terre par le menu a ses frais et non de son seigneur', '1661 Mémoire', 212.

Although the duc de La Trémoille had converted to Catholicism, the duchess made extensive use of the *Chambre de l'Edit*, set up after the Edict of Nantes to ensure Protestants a fair trial when dealing with tenants. She seems to have resorted to the *Grande Chambre* - the usual court for dukes and peers – when dealing with bigger claimants, such as the comte de Vertus, or the illegitimate wives of her brother-in-law, the comte de Laval.³⁹² In order to secure favourable verdicts, the duchess had to sway the judges, and keep them 'obliged' to the House of La Trémoille. In 1632, the duchess went to Rennes

pour aller remercier MM de la grande chambre au Parlement du gain d'une affaire qui nous estoit assez importante, pour laquelle ils se portèrent pour nostre avantage au delà mesme de nos espérances.³⁹³

Marie relied on Grimaudet to provide her with a list of influential people at the Parlement of Rennes to write to, thanking them for past favours and reminding them of present bonds.³⁹⁴ The activity of the duchess was not limited to writing letters; her physical presence was required when dealing with the *Grande Chambre*. A legal defeat concerning Villefranche in 1659 is ascribed to her indisposition 'qui m'osta tout moyen de solliciter comme il eust esté à désirer', though she mentions her son's political disgrace as another reason for that setback.³⁹⁵

Business Affairs

According to Grimaudet, the duchess's bad health ('incommodité') prevented her from concluding any transactions in the summer of 1628.³⁹⁶ Marie had been involved in the sale of estates from as early as 1627, when she had been sent to Montfort 'pour y faire

³⁹² Maria Mussi's claim to Laval's fortune was rejected by both chambers: by the *Grande Chambre* in 1657 and by the *Chambre de l'Edit* in 1658, '1661 Mémoire', 213, 214.

³⁹³ Marie to Elisabeth of Nassau, 8 May 1632, AN, 273AP 180.

³⁹⁴ Grimaudet to Marie, 27 Dec. 1632, 1AP 657.

³⁹⁵ '1661 Mémoire', 214.

³⁹⁶ Grimaudet to Marie, Nov. 1628, 1AP 657.

quelques ventes', although d'Iray's illness left her without the necessary expertise to clinch the deals.³⁹⁷ With the assistance of Grimaudet and La Motte, however, she managed to sell several plots of land, including Bécherel, Gaël and Saint-Malon-sur-Mel.³⁹⁸ In 1633, d'Iray was there to assist her in selling Montaigu, and in 1642, when the duke dispatched her again to Rennes 'pour y travailler à l'alliégation d'une partie de ce qui restoit des fiefs et des tenues au comté de Montfort', there was no mention of any ducal agent assisting her. Over the years her expertise developed, and was increasingly relied upon. Even if her husband always had the final word and could easily retract deals she had concluded, the duchess enjoyed some independence of action. In 1653 she sold the forest of Brécilien for 220,000 *livres*,

après que M. mon mary eust à diverses fois envoyé sur les lieux les Srs. de Marsilly, de Grimaudet et de La Boulonnière et Renard, qui tous n'avoient rapporté d'offres excédans 50 000 écus [150 000 *livres*].³⁹⁹

Although few business transactions were made under Marie's name, she was very active behind the scenes; the acquisition of Loudun in 1654, for instance, was made 'under the name of my son', but the negotiations with the duchesse d'Aiguillon had been conducted by Marie herself.⁴⁰⁰

The duchess was not only involved in landed sales, but also in negotiations over the nomination of officers. As early as March 1624, she confided in Charlotte-Brabantine that she considered the new judges of Laval, the sieurs of Vautorte and de la Manourière, far too young. But, despite the fact that 'y a, me semble[-t-il], bien des

³⁹⁷ 'Touchant mon séjour icy... j'en suis encore incertaine y ayant plusieurs affaires laquelle je n'ay presque encore rien fait en l'attente du Sr d'Irais qui je croy continue d'estre toujours malade', Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 13 Aug. 1627, 1AP 430/57. Notwithstanding d'Iray's indisposition, Marie attended to 'trois ou quatre affaire fort pressante [qui, comme] vous le aurez peu voir par le mémoire que j'ay envoyé à Monsieur vostre fils, me contraignent à y aller pour mettre l'ordre', Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 27 Sept. 1627, 1AP 430/59.

³⁹⁸ '1661 Mémoire', 201.

³⁹⁹ '1661 Mémoire', 204.

⁴⁰⁰ '1661 Mémoire', 208.

chozes à dire la dessus', she conceded that it was a decision to be made by the duke.⁴⁰¹ Corresponding with Grimaudet, she forbade him to appoint the local *receveur des tailles* without her being present: 'Je croy qu'il [les] faudra remettre à la presence de Monsieur, ou de moy'.⁴⁰² From November 1625 onwards, Grimaudet regularly sent her extensive memoirs 'pour informer Madame de ce j'ay faict en exécution de l'honneur de ses commandemens', concerning not only the renovation of the castle and the layout of the gardens, but also the nomination of a new *sénéchal*.⁴⁰³ At this early stage, the duchess seemed to have perceived her role as merely advisory. She declared in 1627: 'Je feray scavoir mon advis à Monsieur, duquel vous attendré le commandement'.⁴⁰⁴ Grimaudet, however, considered her orders to prevail over the duke's:

J'attendray les commandemens de Monseigneur ... et *s'ils sont conformes à ceux de V[otre] Exc[ellence]* je ne manqueray de travailler à l'exécution d'iceux le plus soigneusement et fidellement qu'il me sera possible.⁴⁰⁵

Despite Grimaudet's flattering turn of phrase, the duke's commands always retained primacy, but it was thought that the duchess could influence his decisions. As she grew in experience, Marie became more self-confident and asserted that, if some negotiations failed, 'il ne faut pas juger [les] par les événements, mais par l'impossibilité qu'il y avoit de faire mieux' and her *Mémoire* criticised her husband for not discussing the sale of Quintin with her before finalising the deal.⁴⁰⁶ She also disapproved of the duke's councillors, who persuaded their master to break a deal Marie had concluded with Abel Servien, the royal *surintendant des finances*, concerning the forest of Boyère: 'mon mary ayant escousté certaines gens qui avoient pour buts de diminuer les avantages

⁴⁰¹ Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 1 Mar. 1624, 1AP 431/28.

⁴⁰² Marie to d'Iray, 8 June 1625, 1AP 430/54 [my italics].

⁴⁰³ Grimaudet to Marie, 15 Nov. 1625, 1AP 657.

⁴⁰⁴ Marie to Grimaudet, 13 Feb. 1627, 1AP 430/56.

⁴⁰⁵ Grimaudet to Marie, 20 Feb. 1627, 1AP 657 [my italics].

⁴⁰⁶ '1661 Mémoire', 204, 203.

que j'avois de procurez à la maison en considération du traisté de ladite forest'.⁴⁰⁷ Any revision of the deal was thus for Marie a diminution of the favours she had negotiated 'en vertu de la procuration de M. mon mary'. The duke did not aim to redraw the entire arrangement; he approved of some of the privileges she had obtained, such as a tax on cloth to be levied at Laval, worth 4,000 *livres* per year, and a tax on wine and salt 'passing under the bridges of Taillebourg'. The only thing Duke Henri objected to was Servien's offer of a wine retail tax to be levied at the *cabarets* of Laval. He managed to get the 50,000 *livres* Marie had promised the *surintendant* for this tax transferred to the privilege of nominating officers at Loudun, in order to collect outstanding taxes, worth 27,000 *livres*.⁴⁰⁸ In her *Mémoire*, Marie de La Tour takes thus full responsibility for her actions, although her husband had the right to – and sometimes did – reverse her decisions.

As Julie Hardwick has pointed out, in terms of authority, management of property was as important as legal access to it.⁴⁰⁹ While the countess of Derby enjoyed legal access to her property even before her widowhood, her ignorance of the English language and customs for a long time prevented her from being involved in estate management. This stands in remarkable contrast to the duchesse de La Trémoille, who shared her husband's power *de facto*, but remained *de jure* incapacitated if acting outside or against her husband's will. I would agree with Judith Bennett that, to his wife, a husband's power remained merely suspended, not fully yielded, and that ultimately female submission continued to be seen as normative and required.⁴¹⁰ The duchess managed to reconcile this self-image as a wife, subordinate to her husband's authority, with her self-

⁴⁰⁷ '1661 Mémoire', 206.

⁴⁰⁸ '1661 Mémoire', 206.

⁴⁰⁹ Hardwick, *Patriarchy*, 108

⁴¹⁰ Judith M. Bennett, 'Medieval Women, Modern Women: Across the Great Divide', *Culture and History 1350-1600: Essays in English Communities, Identities and Writing*, ed. D. Aers (London, 1992), 154

perception as a household-mistress, in charge of servants and officers, without compensating her legal incapacity by displaying particular arrogance toward her inferiors, a behaviour Pineau considered common among women:

c'est un effet de la foiblesse de la plus part des femmes d'estre d'une humeur impérieuse comme elles le sont et qu'il leur semble qu'en usurpant cette autorité qu'elles prennent sur les hommes, elles réparent en quelque façon le défaut naturel de leur peu de force.⁴¹¹

For Marie de La Tour, the structure of hierarchy may have been fixed and immutable, but the reality of authority was much more supple. Authority could be held by proxy, by 'interposition', and the duchess was willing to leave her officials as much freedom of action as she had received from her husband. That freedom of action was not without boundaries; a 'procuration' could rapidly be revoked and even a 'procuration générale' failed to convince all business partners that one had indeed the right to conclude a transaction. But the vastness of the La Trémoille estates made it impossible for the duke to be omnipresent, and the danger of absenteeism as well as his own personal reluctance to carry the responsibility alone, led him to rely as much as possible on the dowager duchess at first, and later on his wife and their councillors. The basic practice was one of communication, consultation and co-operation.

⁴¹¹ This remark was made in the context of the princess of Tarente vexing the maréchal de Turenne by taking the right hand side at the occasion of Emilie Rozemont's christening, Pineau to Rivet, 8 Oct. 1649, UBL, BPL286/IV/90.

CHAPTER III. MATERIAL DISPLAY OF STATUS AND WEALTH

While Chapter II addressed issues of female self-definition (in relation to husbands on one hand, and servants on the other), this chapter will look at the projection of self-image. It will investigate the rationale which lay behind ambitious building programmes, artistic patronage and sumptuous living styles, as revealed by the inventories of Thouars and Castle Rushen on the Isle of Man. Marie de La Tour's *Mémoire* admits that financial difficulties 'n'[ont] pas néanmoins empêché que nous n'ayons fait quelques acquests, améliorations et décorations assez considérables'.⁴¹² In order to determine the impact of budget shortages on her building projects and the role of the duchess as an architectural patroness, we will examine not only the reconstruction works at Thouars, but also the construction of new *châteaux de plaisance* at Vitré, Olivet and Louzy, the important renovation works at the old castle of Vitré and the building of new Protestant temples in both Thouars and Vitré. The contribution of secular and sacral architecture and other forms of art to the promotion of the House of La Trémoille will be discussed; and it will be explained how the countess of Derby's usage of artistic and religious patronage celebrated the House of Derby and upheld her own position within it.

A.) Architectural Projects

According to Lawrence Stone, 'building was a young man's fancy' often linked to the recent purchase or inheritance of an estate and seat at a median age of thirty-seven to forty-five years.⁴¹³ Stone's work does not refer to any female architectural patrons, but it has recently become evident that dynastic promotion, which lay at the heart of most

⁴¹² '1661 Mémoire', 206.

⁴¹³ Lawrence Stone and Jeanne C. Fawtier Stone, *An Open Elite? England, 1540-1880* (Oxford, 1984), 388.

lavish architectural projects, was an agenda as important to women as it was to men. Under the mistaken assumption that women lacked financial resources or the legal autonomy to express themselves, historians have, until recently, neglected issues of female patronage. An increasing number of case-studies from England, as well as France, Spain and Italy, show that widows and unmarried heiresses often played very substantial roles in commissioning art and architecture.⁴¹⁴ Married women, however, still tend to be under-represented. There is no study, for example, of the castle of Liancourt, built after Jeanne de Schomberg's own plans. The duchesse de Liancourt allegedly tried to keep her husband from attending court, a milieu she considered prone to decadence.⁴¹⁵ Was this aversion to court-life the underlying motive for the reconstruction of Thouars? Unlike her husband, the duchesse de La Trémoille did not spurn Parisian court-life; did the initiative to rebuilt Thouars thus come from the duke himself? Traditionally, the duchess has been credited with the ambitious remodelling of the family castle, which is currently accommodating the *Collège Marie de La Tour d'Auvergne*. Recent studies by art historians Grégory Vouhé and Alexandre Gady tend to question this attribution.⁴¹⁶

Before delving into that question, however, we need to establish why the La Trémoille felt the need to rebuild their country castle, at a time when the French royal court is thought to have gradually abandoned its peripatetic way of life, settling eventually at

⁴¹⁴ Alice Friedman, 'Wife in the English Country House', *Women and Art in Early Modern Europe. Patrons, Collectors and Connoisseurs*, ed. C. Lawrence (University Park, Pa., 1997), 111-125; Denise Mayer, 'Mademoiselle de Montpensier et l'architecture d'après ses *Mémoires*', *XVIIe siècle* 118 (1978), 57-72; Madeleine Lazard, 'Jacquette de Montbron, une bâtisseuse humaniste', *Royaume de féminie. Pouvoirs, contraintes, espaces de liberté des femmes de la Renaissance à la Fronde*, ed. K. Wilson-Chevalier and E. Viennot (Paris, 1999), 17-26.

⁴¹⁵ Liancourt, *Règlement*, 9, 52.

⁴¹⁶ Grégory Vouhé wrote his *maîtrise* on the subject, and is currently working on a doctoral thesis, 'Les architectes parisiens au service des ducs et pairs, les grands châteaux bâtis sous le ministère de Richelieu (1624-1642)', under the supervision of Claude Mignot (Paris IV-Sorbonne); Alexandre Gady, 'Jacques Lemercier (avant 1586-1654). Architecte et ingénieur du Roi', doctoral thesis, 4 vols. (Université de Tours, 2001).

Versailles. Aristocratic families are said to have shifted their main residence from the periphery (their country estate) to the centre (a mansion in the Parisian outskirts, a townhouse in the capital or an apartment at court), in order to remain in the king's favour. This development has been contrasted with the so-called 'country' ideology of the English aristocracy.⁴¹⁷

Unfortunately a systematic comparison of the La Trémoille's residential behaviour with that of the Derby family is not feasible, because the latter's retreat to Lancashire and the Isle of Man was influenced by the exceptional circumstances of the English Civil War. Nonetheless, a close analysis of the residential pattern of the duc and duchesse de La Trémoille should give us a better understanding of the French side of the process of noble urbanization. Their vast sets of correspondence allow us to follow not only their movements and sojourns, but also help to explain their motivations for gaining a foothold in Paris and simultaneously reconstructing the castle of Thouars on a grand scale.

1.) Residential Patterns

The need to travel shaped the lives of the duc and duchesse de La Trémoille until they both retired to Thouars due to their declining physical health. Whether this retreat was the result of political failure and indifference to courtly honours remains open to question. Apart from the first decade and the last years (1663-65) of their marriage, which they spent together, the ducal couple rarely shared the same residence. They lived and travelled separately, although their paths frequently crossed. Was this separation the

⁴¹⁷ Jonathan Dewald, *Aristocratic Experience and the Origins of Modern Culture : France, 1570-1715* (Berkeley, 1993), 20-1, 162-3. On centre and periphery, see Jeroen Duindam, *Myths of Power. Norbert Elias and the Early Modern European Court* (Amsterdam, n.d.), 43-8.

result of conjugal estrangement or an arrangement based on administrative considerations?

Their ways first parted when Duke Henri was given military command in 1625. With the help of experienced ducal agents, the duchess managed their Breton and Poitevin estates, while her husband fought against the Huguenots at La Rochelle and was then sent to Italy. His public abjuration of Protestantism might have alienated his wife, but when Henri was shot and wounded, she went to Lyon to look after him, and her subsequent letters never allude to their religious disagreement. The reason for their separate living arrangement may rather be linked to the problem of ducal absenteeism as examined in Chapter II. The dowager duchess's death in 1631 exacerbated the problem of a power vacuum, perceived by their agents as extremely harmful to the La Trémoille landed interests. From January 1633 onwards, therefore, the duke and duchess tried to assert their presence in all their territories by alternating their stays on various estates.⁴¹⁸ This arrangement allowed Henri, who frequently complained about the decorum of court life and the insalubrity of Paris, to stay in the provinces after 1644.⁴¹⁹ Marie de La Tour, on the other hand, prolonged her stays at court and lived for most of the 1640s in the capital, attending legal and financial business in Paris up to 1662. There are too many variables in the duchess's choice of residence to allow us to empirically define some kind of residential pattern. Although she wrote that Vitré was 'un vrai lieu à passer son hiver' and frequently complained about the bad state of Breton country roads in the

⁴¹⁸ The duchess was not the only member of the family to be employed to that end. The duke's sons and his half-brother, Marcilly, also acted as representatives of ducal power on various La Trémoille estates. Even small children could be seen as symbols of the duke's authority and were sometimes left in Vitré or Thouars on their own as a token of their father's presence. This was the case for Elisabeth de La Trémoille, left in Vitré until 1634, Boullenois to Chamdor, 30 Oct. and 28 Nov. 1634, 1AP 646.

⁴¹⁹ Pineau to Rivet, 6 Aug. 1644 and 27 Aug. 1644, UBL, BPL286/I/136,142.

winter,⁴²⁰ the acquisition of a litter and mules allowed her to travel regardless of the weather, and of her state of pregnancy. She was not content to visit Vitré and Thouars, but was keen to see all of the La Trémoille estates. During her stay in Paris she frequently attended court at Saint-Germain-en-Laye and Fontainebleau. The royal court was, to a large extent, still itinerant and its movements had an impact on the duchess's journeys. In July 1650, having just returned to Brittany, she hastened back to Thouars 'sur l'avis qu'elle avoit reçu que la Cour y pourroit passer' and attended the king in Poitiers later that month.⁴²¹ Court and country were thus not mutually exclusive concepts.

The meeting of the Breton estates required the duke's presence when he was presiding over the second estate, but had no immediate influence on his wife's choice of residence. Because of her role as *protectrice* of the Reformed Church, Marie de La Tour's decision was, however, influenced by the location of provincial and national synods. Thus she went to Vitré in November 1646 because of the Breton synod, and in 1659 she hosted the last national synod at Loudun.⁴²² The La Trémoille's residential behaviour calls into question the categorical opposition between French and English nobility, the former lured to the court and the latter staunchly attached to its local constituencies (as members of parliament, lords-lieutenant or justices of the peace). French governors might have been famous for their absenteeism, but the La Trémoille, who never held a governorship in this period, were deeply involved in local political and religious affairs. These concerns, not to mention their landed interests, required prolonged sojourns in the provinces. On the other hand, there is no denying that the

⁴²⁰ Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 30 Sept. 1623, 1AP431/58.

⁴²¹ Pineau to Rivet, 29 July 1650, UBL, BPL286/IV/118.

⁴²² Pineau to Rivet, 9 Nov. 1646, UBL, BPL286/III/81.

development of Paris as the administrative, legal and political centre of the kingdom called for an increased presence.

2.) Paris: the Hôtel de La Trémoille

When Marie de La Tour first came to Paris in 1623, she was asked to attend the ducal council there. At the time, she was 'not too keen on business affairs',⁴²³ but she quickly recognised the need for a permanent ducal residence in the capital.⁴²⁴ The first place the La Trémoille rented was the *petit* Hôtel d'Elbène, owned by their co-religionist Gaspard de Coligny-Châtillon.⁴²⁵ According to notary contracts signed in the years 1625 and 1626, the La Trémoille resided temporarily in the rue Dauphine (parish of Sainte-Anne-des-Arts),⁴²⁶ where they rented from Mmes de Gordes and de Crécy. In 1629, the La Trémoille moved to the Hôtel de Chappes, in the quarter of the Louvre, a choice made by Duke Henri, who refused to return to the Hôtel d'Elbène because it had temporarily accommodated sick people,⁴²⁷ although his mother would have preferred to stay with her friends, the Châtillons.⁴²⁸ The Hôtel de Chappes was a prestigious address, because of its proximity to the royal palace, and the rent was accordingly high: 12,000 *livres* per year.⁴²⁹

⁴²³ Charlotte-Brabantine to Henri, 9 July 1623, 1AP 331/89: 'Vostre femme ... voire une assemblée de vostre conseil [à Paris] si elle me croit ... Mais elle n'est pas tant afamée d'affaires'.

⁴²⁴ Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 4 Nov. 1623, 1AP 431/66.

⁴²⁵ Rozemont to Marie, 8 Jan. 1624, 1AP 355-6. This may correspond to the later Hôtel de Châtillon, located at number 2, rue de Tournon, in the quartier Saint-Germain, Jacques Pannier, *L'Eglise Réformée sous Louis XIII, 1621-1629*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1932), i. 326.

⁴²⁶ 1AP 400 (14 Dec. 1625); 1AP 402 (27 Mar. 1626).

⁴²⁷ Rozemont to Marie, 12 Apr. 1629 and 24 Apr. 1629, 1AP 355-6.

⁴²⁸ Anne de Polignac, duchesse de Châtillon, stayed with Charlotte-Brabantine until her death in 1631, *LT5s*, iv. 47.

⁴²⁹ Rozemont to Marie, 25 Apr. 1630, 1AP 355-6. The agent believed that most neighbouring residences were even more expensive to rent; 15,000 *livres* were asked for the Hôtel de Longueville (rue Saint-Thomas-du Louvre) and the same amount for the Hôtel de Castille, next to the church of Saint Eustache, Rozemont to Marie, 17 June 1630, 1AP 355-6.

This continual strain on their finances proved ruinous, and the La Trémoille were soon looking for another place to rent or purchase. Rozemont promised to enquire whether the Hôtel de Sillery 'qui est tout vis à vis de celui de Monsieur le Cardinal au coing de la rue St. Thomas du Louvre' was available. The fact that Noël Brulart de Sillery had built his *hôtel* on the fourteenth-century foundation of Guy de Laval's residence might have made this option particularly attractive for the La Trémoille.⁴³⁰ The agent suspected, however, that it would be impossible to find anything cheaper in that area:

combien qu'il y aye quantite d'hostels et belles maisons dans le quartier du louvre et es environs diceluy que cependant ie ny en voyois ny trouvois aucun qui se peut prendre en la place de celui de Chappes qui ne fust d'ung prix bien excessif et le plus souvant moins logeable pource que les grandes maisons et hostels sont apresent merueilleusement recherchez chascun voulant parestre en cela.⁴³¹

Rumours that the king planned to cut noble pensions caused an influx of worried courtiers, which made rents in the quarter of the Louvre soar.⁴³² According to Rozemont, there were two options: either purchase the Hôtel de Chappes for 60,000 *livres* and sell it later with a profit,⁴³³ or find a place in the Marais du Temple or some other 'quartiers esloignez ou se trouvent des logements bastis a la moderne pour personnes de qualitte'.⁴³⁴ Once again the Hôtel d'Elbène proved a temporary solution, praiseworthy, this time, for 'son bon air et scituation et comodité', not to mention the low rent of only 2,400 *livres* per year.⁴³⁵

⁴³⁰ Rozemont to Marie, 17 June 1630, 1AP 355-6; Geneviève Bresc-Bautier (ed.), *Le quartier du Louvre au XVII^e siècle. Exposition-dossier du département des sculptures (Histoire du Louvre 59, 2001)*, 36.

⁴³¹ Rozemont to Marie, 30 Aug. 1630, 1AP 355-6.

⁴³² 'Je continue a luy chercher et faire preparer ung loyer au quartier du Louvre. [Mais] ils sont rares et difficiles a rencontrer tels qu'il les fault parce que tout le monde est ... revenu et s'en est pourvu. Je ne scay qui leur a fait sy grand apprehension de passer [de l'autre côté du] pont neuf', Rozemont to Charlotte-Brabantine, 19 Nov. 1630 and 26 Nov. 1630, 1AP 355-6.

⁴³³ Rozemont to Marie, 30 Aug. 1630, 1AP 355-6. Many noblemen chose to construct a new house rather than rent, because rents were rising so quickly, Jean-Pierre Babelon, *Demeures parisiennes sous Henri IV et Louis XIII* (Paris, 1965), 49.

⁴³⁴ Rozemont to Marie, 17 June 1630 and 30 Aug. 1630, 1AP 355-6. Turenne recognised the disadvantages of living in a 'quartier fort escarté' such as Saint-Germain, Turenne to Elisabeth of Nassau, 21 Jan. 1631, *Lettres de Turenne extraites des Archives Rohan-Bouillon*, ed. S. Huart (Paris, 1971), 151.

⁴³⁵ Rozemont to Marie, 23 Oct. 1633 and 23 Jan. 1635, 1AP 355-6. After Charlotte-Brabantine's death in 1631, all her belongings at the Hôtel d'Elbène were itemised, 1AP 1485.

In 1643, the La Trémoille finally bought their own town residence, situated approximately at number 9, rue Vaugirard, in the *quartier* Saint-Germain-des-Prés.⁴³⁶ According to Marie's *Mémoire*, the new Hôtel de La Trémoille absorbed 56,000 *livres* in total, but could easily fetch 80,000 *livres* if they had to sell it.⁴³⁷ The Hôtel de La Trémoille was located in an affluent neighbourhood, directly adjacent to the Jardin du Luxembourg, one of the favourite places of the Parisian *beau monde*.⁴³⁸ Henri La Trémoille had, with the duc d'Orléans' permission, built a door joining the two gardens.⁴³⁹ His granddaughter Charlotte-Amélie used this back door to meet up with Orléans' daughters.⁴⁴⁰ During the Fronde, contact with Gaston d'Orléans and his eldest daughter, the duchesse of Montpensier, was presumably facilitated through this physical proximity. At a later date Marie de La Tour called on another occupant of the Palais du Luxembourg, the duchesse d'Aiguillon, with whom she concluded several business deals. The Hôtel de La Trémoille did not become a focal point for Parisian social or literary life, as did the salon of the nearby Hôtel de Condé or the Jansenist circle of the Hôtel de Liancourt in the rue de Seine. Most of the visitors were ducal agents, clients or members of the extended family. André Pineau, a nephew of the Protestant scholar André Rivet and frequent guest at the Hôtel de La Trémoille, noted the presence of the maréchal de Turenne, Charlotte de Bouillon, Charles Stanley (who fled England in

⁴³⁶ I would like to thank Mr Alfred Fierro from the Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris for helping me to locate the Hôtel de La Trémoille for the mid-seventeenth century. The exact location can be found on the map drawn by A. Berty and A. Legrand, *Topographie historique du Vieux Paris, Plan archéologique depuis l'époque romaine jusqu'au XVIIe siècle*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1866-1897), iii. feuille xiii. The location is confirmed by Dechuyes, *La guide de Paris contenant le nom et l'adresse de toutes les ruës de ladite ville et fauxbourgs* (Paris, 1658), 190. [G. Vouhé has found further confirmation in the 'procès-verbal d'estimation des biens immeubles de la succession de la feue Reyne Marie de Médicis': 'ladite basse court qui est estre la gallerie imparfaite dudit palais et les bastimens du jardin de Monsr. de La Trémoille, ayant entrée en la rue [de Vaugirard]', personal communication, 3 Feb. 2004]

⁴³⁷ '1661 Mémoire', 215.

⁴³⁸ A. Faugère (ed.), *Journal d'un voyage à Paris en 1657-1658* (Paris, 1862), 69, 86, 104, 251, 434 and 448-9.

⁴³⁹ Pineau to Rivet, 16 July 1644, UBL, BPL286/I/132.

⁴⁴⁰ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 38.

1646), and Landgrave William VI of Hesse-Cassel.⁴⁴¹ Through Pineau, who moved in high diplomatic circles, the duke and duchess kept themselves informed of international politics, and notably of events in Protestant Europe.⁴⁴² Although the La Trémoille were no longer living in the quarter of the Louvre, the political nerve centre of the capital, they were certainly not cut off from the political scene.

As Protestant places of worship were prohibited within the city walls of Paris, the duchess had to go to Charenton to attend services.⁴⁴³ The quarter of Saint-Germain itself had, however, a large Protestant population, including prominent figures such as Charles Drelincourt, pastor at Charenton, and Claude Sarrau, a *conseiller du parlement*. Moreover, young Protestant noblemen from all over Europe attended the nearby Academy of Monsieur de Vaux.⁴⁴⁴ Although noble academies generally offered lessons in horsemanship and polite conversation rather than stimulating intellectual debates, the proximity of the Latin Quarter, famous for its high concentration of bookbinders and sellers, provided the La Trémoille with easy access to newly printed theological and political treatises, which they collected avidly. Other luxury commodities were purchased on behalf of the duchess at the annual *foire Saint-Germain-des Prés*.⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴¹ Pineau to Rivet, 27 Nov. 1648, 3 Sept. 1649 and 10 Oct. 1650, UBL, BPL286/ IV/74, 86, 126; Pineau to Rivet 14 Dec. 1646 and 13 Sept. 1647, UBL, BPL286/III, 89, 155.

⁴⁴² Since November 1644, Pineau was private tutor to the children of the Dutch ambassador Willem van Liere, heer van Oosterwijk, who lived in the rue de Seine, Pineau to Rivet, 26 Nov. 1644, UBL, BPL286/I/159.

⁴⁴³ The duchess paid 300 *livres* towards the reconstruction of the Temple of Charenton on 12 Feb. 1624, *LT5s*, iv. 7-8.

⁴⁴⁴ At the Academny, the boarder 'est obligé de converser tous les jours avec une vingtaine de jeunes Seigneurs et Gentilshommes bien nés, qui sont tous de la Religion. Monsieur de Rohan m'a dit que cette maison là est une petite Eglise & je le sçay par expérience', Pineau to Rivet, 2 Nov. 1646, UBL, BPL286/III/77.

⁴⁴⁵ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 31; Rozemont to Marie, 8 Jan. 1624 and 12 Feb. 1633, 1AP 355-6. See Paul Fromageot, *La foire Saint-Germain-des-Prés* (Paris, 1900).

The La Trémoille settled thus at the commercial and intellectual heart of Paris, in a neighbourhood of high diplomats and prominent fellow Protestants. The *quartier* Saint-Germain retained its attractiveness in the eighteenth century, and the ducal family still lived in the rue Vaugirard by 1735, albeit on the opposite side of the road.⁴⁴⁶ While one should not underestimate the importance of their new urban footholds, their country seats did not automatically become obsolete. The very fact that the La Trémoille maintained their old castles in style and even built new ones, indicates that they were still of use.

3.) The Castles of Thouars and Vitré

In her '1661 Mémoire', Marie de La Tour takes sole responsibility for all major construction programmes, but it is difficult to distinguish between her contribution and that of her husband. Some light can be shed on the question by closely examining the duke's and the duchess's correspondence with their agent Chamdor, their financial accounts, and notarised evidence.

Construction Works

Both Thouars and Vitré were austere medieval castles, which Marie de La Tour found most uninviting. 'J'estois logée assez incommodément', she complained about Thouars; 'j'avois proche de ma chambre trois ou quatre petits lieux qui estoient inutiles et une petite cour qui ne servoit qu'à donner du froid et du vent'.⁴⁴⁷ She had a *cabinet* and *garderobe* installed in 1628, but soon realised that the whole castle needed renovating.⁴⁴⁸ The first major building phase started in 1635 with a new south wing, for

⁴⁴⁶ *Dictionnaire historique des rues de Paris*, ed. J. Hillairet, 2 vols. (Paris, 1963), i. 520 and ii. 603.

⁴⁴⁷ '1661 Mémoire', 209.

⁴⁴⁸ '1661 Mémoire', 209. This led to first repair works undertaken in 1628, Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 22 May 1628, 1AP 431/39.

which the old *donjon* had to be dismantled. At this stage there was no architect involved; concierge Boullenois was supervising the building site, and was reporting to Marie de La Tour's private secretary, Chamdor.⁴⁴⁹ He made some suggestions as to which rooms should be renovated first, and concluded 'Madame en ordonnera comme elle vera estre bon à faire'.⁴⁵⁰ In 1636, the duchess ordered some Laval marble, possibly for a chimney, and four-hundred-and-eighty diamond-shaped earthenware tiles from Nevers for the Grand Cabinet.⁴⁵¹

The main construction phase started in 1638, apparently under the influence of the royal architect Jacques Lemercier. Lemercier had been employed by Marie de' Medici at the Louvre and the Palais de Luxembourg, and later by Richelieu for the chapel of the Sorbonne, the town and castle of Richelieu, and the Palais-Cardinal.⁴⁵² In connection with Thouars, Lemercier's name is mentioned in a *mémoire* written by the duke to Chamdor in 1642:

Fera voir ausdicts [entrepreneurs] Lamoureux et Cornesse le dessin de Monsieur Lemercier pour la closture de la cour ..., et parce que ledit dessin n'est que trassé légèrement et sans mesure, leur en fera faire un plan ... pour l'apporter ou l'envoyer à Leurs Excellences.⁴⁵³

This vague sketch seems hardly enough proof to accredit Lemercier with the architectural design of the new castle of Thouars, but Vouhé and Gady both rely on this

⁴⁴⁹ Boullenois to Chamdor, 14 Dec. 1634, 1AP 646.

⁴⁵⁰ Boullenois to Chamdor, 4 July 1635, 1AP 646.

⁴⁵¹ The contracts, dated 21 July 1636 and 2 Oct. 1636, are reproduced in: Grégory Vouhé, 'Découverte: Jacques Lemercier, architecte d'un édifice majeur et inédit de l'architecture française, le château de Thouars en Poitou', *Bulletin de la Société des antiquaires de l'Ouest* 2e semestre 2002 (forthcoming), Appendix I.

⁴⁵² Grégory Vouhé, 'Le grand dessein de Jacques Lemercier pour le château de Thouars', *Actes du 159e congrès archéologique de France* (forthcoming); Gady, 'Lemercier', ii. 533-4. Lemercier received a royal pension of 3,000 livres in 1645, Claude Mignot, 'Un architecte artiste', *François Mansart. Le génie de l'architecture*, ed. J.-Babelon and C. Mignot (Paris, 1998), 31.

⁴⁵³ Henri to Chamdor, 6 Mar. 1642, 1AP 398/21. 'Les Sieurs Mercier et Durand, architectes de Richelieu', paid by Chamdor on 22 Apr. 1642 for their inspection of the construction site, have been identified by Gady as Nicolas Lemercier, Jacques's half-brother, and Nicolas Durand, Gady, 'Lemercier', ii. 533.

piece of evidence.⁴⁵⁴ The absence of any written contract made with Lemercier does not invalidate their thesis, since architects never signed as contracting parties.⁴⁵⁵ Their argument is bolstered by a detailed analysis of stylistic similarities between Thouars and Lemercier's work (notably at Richelieu and at the Louvre), and by the fact that the building contractors and most of the artisans had been recruited from the nearby site of Richelieu in 1638.⁴⁵⁶ The La Trémoille resided at Thouars until the 1720s, when their headquarters were moved to Paris and Versailles, and the Maison de Gennevillières in the outskirts of Paris became the favourite country residence.⁴⁵⁷

In Brittany, the La Trémoille maintained several houses. It was not immediately clear in which town their main seat would be established, but the duchess declared in 1623, 'Je donne pour le logement et le lieu bien plus ma voix a Vittré qu'a Laval'.⁴⁵⁸ Her vote was carried; Vittré became headquarters of the ducal administration, while Laval mainly functioned as a prison, and Olivet became a weekend retreat. The renovation of the old medieval fortress of Vittré began with roofing work, then plumbing, and finally tiling, whitewashing and the installation of windows.⁴⁵⁹ In January 1627, Grimaudet proudly wrote to his mistress: 'les [premiers] départements du château qu'il vous a pleu les ordonner seront tous bientôt prests et meublés'.⁴⁶⁰ Most of the furniture was portable, but some old tapestries needed to be replaced.⁴⁶¹ The garden works progressed only

⁴⁵⁴ Vouhé argues that other architectural attributions, notably Mansart's Petit Bourg, have been based on similar slim written evidence, and that no other architect could have designed Thouars [personal communication, 6 Sept. 2003].

⁴⁵⁵ Pierre-Yves Louis, 'Maîtres de l'ouvrage, architecte et entrepreneurs', *Mansart*, ed. Babelon and Mignot, 267.

⁴⁵⁶ Gady, 'Lemercier', ii. 533; The contract with Cornesse and Lamoureux was concluded at the *cour royale* at Richelieu on 11 May 1638 (1AP 1062), and the basic stonework was to be done 'selon ... qu'il se pratique aux bastiments de Richelieu', Henri to Chamdor, 6 Mar. 1642, 1AP 398/21. See Vouhé, 'Découverte', Appendix III.

⁴⁵⁷ Girouard, *French Country House*, 168-9; Labourdette, 'Fortune', *Annales*, 172.

⁴⁵⁸ Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 26 Aug. 1623, 1AP430/44.

⁴⁵⁹ Grimaudet to Marie, 15 Nov. 1625, 1 Dec. 1625, 8 June 1626, and 3 June 1627, 1AP 657.

⁴⁶⁰ Grimaudet to Marie, 21 Jan. 1627, 1AP 657.

⁴⁶¹ '1661 Mémoire', 210; Grimaudet to Marie, 11 Sept. 1628, 1AP 657.

very slowly,⁴⁶² because all resources were devoted to the reconstruction of the *basse-cour* and stables under the supervision of Maître Anthoine.⁴⁶³ In the early 1630s further rooms were completed, including a little *cabinet* with fireplace, the Salle de la Magdelaine, and two galleries leading to a chapel on one side and to the council room on the other side.⁴⁶⁴ The castle was used for residential purposes up to about 1660 when it was handed over to the *sénéchaussée*.

Building Expenses

When Elie Brackenhoffer visited Thouars in 1644, he noted that 'hardly half' of the castle was finished. The beautiful large rooms had not been decorated, let alone furnished, and the wooden reliefs were still being gilded.⁴⁶⁵ This information points towards a distinct lack of funds, which did in fact interrupt the construction works in February 1644.⁴⁶⁶ From Paris, Marie de La Tour wrote to Chamdor:

après avoir bien [réflèchi] à l'estat présent de nos affaires, à un beso[in que] nous avons d'argent pour soutenir la despe[nse que] nous faisons en cette ville, nous avons [décidé de] faire entièrement cesser nos bastiments et acquisitions pour cette année tant à Thouars qu'autres [parts].⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶² Grimaudet overheard the gardener muttering: 'C'est l'ouvrage de Pénélope, plus on y faict plus il se trouve à faire!', Grimaudet to Marie, 27 Mar. 1627, 1AP 657, see also: Grimaudet to Marie, 2 Dec. 1626, 18 Jan. 1627 and 19 Mar. 1627, 1AP 657.

⁴⁶³ Grimaudet to Marie, 19 Mar. 1630 and 8 June 1630, 1AP 657. For a detailed description of the *basse-cour*, dated 1681, see Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 195.

⁴⁶⁴ Grimaudet to Marie, 19 Dec. 1632, 9 Sept. 1633 and 21 Jan. 1634, 1AP 657.

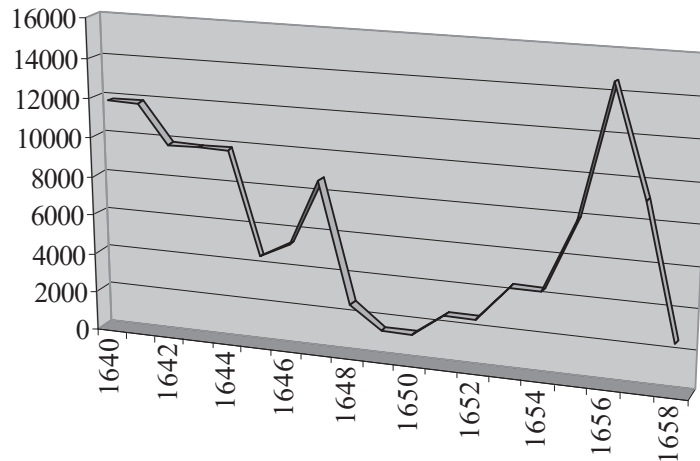
⁴⁶⁵ Brackenhoffer, *Voyage*, 239-41.

⁴⁶⁶ A mere temporary cash flow problem, according to Vouhé, who links the slowing down of the Thouars site to the acquisition of the Parisian *hôtel* in 1643, Vouhé, 'Découverte', Appendix VII.

⁴⁶⁷ Marie to Chamdor, 13 Feb. 1644, 1AP 430/87; Henri to Chamdor, 23 Dec. 1643, 1AP 394/12. There was not much work for Cornesse in 1645, as Marie told Chamdor on 17 Dec. 1644: 'Je ne vois pas que nous puissions l'année prochaine faire travailler a nostre bastiment, et ainsi Maistre Jacques ne doit refuser l'employ qui luy est offert pour M l'Evesque d'Alby', 1AP 429/4.

The suspension of building work is confirmed by ducal accounts, which record a total of 91,453 *livres* spent on the castle of Thouars between 1639 and 1646, followed by several years of mere maintenance expenses.⁴⁶⁸

Figure 6: Expenditure on the castle of Thouars
(in *livres tournois*)



Attempts to save money included the removal of all windowpanes from the staff dining quarters and from the duchess's private quarters (*chambre de l'alcôve* and *cabinet aux antiques*) in order to install them in the new pavilion.⁴⁶⁹ Work recommenced in 1653; new terraces, extensive gardens, and an orangery were added, absorbing a further 20,000 *livres*. Jacques Cornesse, the building contractor, appears to have been the real 'architect' of Thouars, in the sense that he was responsible for most adjustments and extensions, and was much more involved than Lemer cier in the actual building process.⁴⁷⁰ Interest on earlier contracts with Cornesse had to be paid until the late 1660s, and outdoor and indoor finishing works continued well after the duchess's death in

⁴⁶⁸ The accounts for the duchy of Thouars (1642-46) record a total of 11,050 *livres* spent on the castle, 1AP 98-100. There is also a separate account for the castle covering the years 1639 to 1644, the expenses of which amount to 85,403 *livres*, 1AP 1062. The following chart is based on these accounts.

⁴⁶⁹ Marie to Chamdor, 3 Nov. 1646, 1AP 429/8.

⁴⁷⁰ Cornesse received 20,935 *livres* between 1653 and 1659, 1AP 106-110.

1665.⁴⁷¹ According to Marie de La Tour's *Mémoire*, the total costs of reconstructing Thouars amounted to 154,000 *livres*.⁴⁷² This sum may be slightly understated, since the duchess tried to downplay and justify the expenses. Berthre de Bourniseaux's unwarranted claim that the duchess 'fit bâtir le magnifique château de Thouars pour 1,200,000 livres' has been repeated by Hugues Imbert, Adrien Morin and William Weary.⁴⁷³ The caption of a water-colour painting of the castle, dated 1699, estimates the costs at 1.4 million *livres*, but this sum is as fictitious as the rest of the title which reads *Veüe du dedans du Chasteau de THOVARs. en poictou, bastie par Henry duc de la Treymoille et de Thouars lan 1594*.⁴⁷⁴ While later additions and decorations certainly increased the costs, the original mid-seventeenth-century expenditures could hardly have exceeded 200,000 *livres*. It was relatively cheap to renovate the castle of Thouars because the family possessed 'commodities few people have', namely wood provided by their own park, free stone from the demolishing of the old castle, and cheap labour in the form of *corvées*:

les corvées que nous doivent les laboureurs et celles qui nous sont deües par les hommes à bras ont fait tout l'ouvrage qui paraist le moins mais qui en effect est le plus long et le plus difficile, qui est le transport des terres, sans quoy nous eussions fait un grand bastiment sans aucune issue.⁴⁷⁵

Berthre de Bourniseaux, who violently despised the duchess, claimed that 'cette terrible Marie de La Tour, devant laquelle tremblèrent si long-temps les vassaux de la duché pairie' overburdened people with work during the construction of her castle and that her

⁴⁷¹ 1AP 106-119. The 1672 inventory mentions a series of new buildings including stables, a *mesnagerie* and a *grotte*, 1AP 1063.

⁴⁷² From the alleged total cost of the *bâtiments* (300,000 *livres*) have been deduced the amounts spent on the *hôtel* (56,000), on the old castle of Vitré (50,000) and on the château Marie at Vitré (40,000), '1661 *Mémoire*', 207, 209, 215.

⁴⁷³ P.-V.-J. Berthre de Bourniseaux, *Histoire de la ville de Thouars depuis l'an 759 jusqu'en 1815* (Niort, 1824), 192; Hugues Imbert, *Histoire de Thouars* (Niort, 1871), 273; Adrien Morin, *Le château de Thouars et ses possesseurs* (Thouars, 1936), 14; Weary, 'The House of La Trémoille', p. D1008.

⁴⁷⁴ BNF Estampes, Collection Gaignières, Va 427.

⁴⁷⁵ '1661 *Mémoire*', 209; see *Alphabet de 30 paroisses de la chastelanye de Thouars pour les noms des laboureurs seulement subjectz aux biens et corvées de Monseigneur*, 1AP 789.

name would be cursed for a long time to come by husbandmen and artisans.⁴⁷⁶ In Vitré, the duchess tried to force local *gentilhommes vassaux* such as the sieurs de Monmartin and des Neutumières to contribute labour to the building of the stables.⁴⁷⁷ There is, however, no contemporary evidence for any discontent, and it is feasible that, in a non-monetary economy, the imposition of *corvées* was more consensual than historians tend to think, especially if it was combined with the provision of food and drink to the workers. The duchess herself appeared less concerned with any potential or actual displeasure of the local population than with the accusation of having brought financial ruin upon the family by overbuilding. As we have seen, there was an acute financial dilemma in the 1640s when Breton lands had to be sold off and the construction works had to be suspended. The ambitious building programme, and the simultaneous purchase of a *pied à terre* in Paris, might have exacerbated the problem, but were not the cause of the money drainage. As demonstrated in Chapter I, high interest rates and the resulting vicious circle of indebtedness were at the bottom of the problem.

Although the castle of Thouars was by far the largest construction site, other building projects absorbed ducal funds as well. In her *Mémoires*, Charlotte-Amélie reports that 'Madame ma grand-mère se divertissoit à faire des enjolivements à Loussy, qui est une petite maison de plaisance à une lieue du Château'. Duke Henri continued to pump money into the construction of the manor of Louzy after the death of his wife.⁴⁷⁸ The renovations of the old castle of Vitré were calculated by the duchess to amount to 50,000 *livres*. This sum did not include the money spent on a *château de plaisance* in

⁴⁷⁶ Berthre de Bourniseaux, *Histoire de la ville de Thouars*, 195.

⁴⁷⁷ Grimaudet to Marie, 19 Mar. 1630 and 8 June 1630, 1AP 657.

⁴⁷⁸ In 1666 1,861 *livres* were paid for works at Louzy, 1AP 117. Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 44

the outskirts of Vitré. The Pavillon de la Hodayère, later known as Château Marie or Château du Parc, was built between 1632 and 1657 for an estimated 40,000 *livres*.⁴⁷⁹

Architectural Patronage

Although the duchess wanted to take all the blame (and glory) for constructing the castle of Thouars upon herself,⁴⁸⁰ she actually shared the responsibility with her husband. Chamdor, who was in charge of the construction works from 1642 onwards, received missives with instructions from the duke as well as from the duchess.⁴⁸¹ The reason why the duchess's *mémoires* outnumber those written by her husband can be explained by the fact that Henri resided in Thouars more frequently during the 1640s, and was thus able to give his instructions in person.⁴⁸² Even from afar, Marie intervened to check on designs and choice of materials:

Pource qu'est la balustrade du coridor, je suis absolument d'avis qu'elle soit entièrement de pierre dure, et croy que personne ne conseillera de le parachever de pierre de Tourtenay, m'estonnant que Maistre Jacque l'aye proposé.⁴⁸³

The duchess developed a close relationship with Jean Grimaudet, who supervised the construction works in Brittany, whereas her husband did not inspect the sites before 1631 or 1632. Marie conceived the plan to build an ornamental garden in the park of Vitré in 1623,⁴⁸⁴ and took full responsibility for the deal concluded two years later with the sieurs of Nentillère and La Bouxière:

⁴⁷⁹ '1661 Mémoire', 209.

⁴⁸⁰ 'Si cette entreprise mérite du blâme, j'advoue que je le dois aussi porter', '1661 Mémoire', 209.

⁴⁸¹ Henri to Chamdor, 6 Mar. 1642 (1AP 398/21), 8 Apr. 1643 (1AP 394/1), and *circa* 1645 (LT5s, IV, 73-6); Marie to Chamdor, 13 Feb. 1644 (1AP 430/87), 12 Aug. 1642 (1AP 431/100), 15 Oct. 1644 (1AP 430/85), and 3 Nov. 1646 (1AP 429/8).

⁴⁸² Marie de La Tour returned to Thouars on 15 June 1646 after four years of absence, Pineau to Rivet, 22 June 1646, UBL, BPL286/III/45. See Vouhé, 'Découverte', Appendix X.

⁴⁸³ Marie to Chamdor, 7 Jan. 1645, 1AP 429/5.

⁴⁸⁴ Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 14 Mar. 1623, 1AP 431/31: 'Je m'en vay m'employer, avant mon partement [de Vitré], à jardiner, y ayant une très belle et grande place au parc à faire un jardin... Ceux de la ville en murmure[nt] fort, [n']estant pas là leur plaisir'.

J'advoue ingénument que, s'il y a à redire audit acquest j'en dois porter le blâme, car j'achetay la maison de la Hodéyère et les terres qui en dépendent en l'absence de M. mon mary.⁴⁸⁵

The original plans were for a park with sumptuous alleys and a kind of precursory golf course called *jeu de mail*,⁴⁸⁶ but Marie de La Tour decided in 1632 to 'faire ogmenter quelque choze au bastiment qui y est'.⁴⁸⁷ Resembling a suburban villa more than a castle, the Château Marie became the favourite residence of the duchess, although she did not have the leisure to stay there for prolonged periods of time. The duke himself used it in the 1650s before it was given as dower to the princesse de Tarente, who resided there until the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.⁴⁸⁸

The reconstruction of the castles of Thouars and Vitré reflects a general trend in the seventeenth century – the transformation of defensible fortresses into monumental palaces. This trend was also visible in England, but was interrupted by the outbreak of the civil war. On the Isle of Man, the seventh earl of Derby had to modernise the fortifications of his thirteenth-century stronghold Castle Rushen, while bringing the living quarters up to seventeenth-century standards.⁴⁸⁹ In Lancashire, the Stanley family had two main residences, Lathom castle and Knowsley Hall. Lathom, famously defended by the countess of Derby in 1644, was destroyed by Parliamentary forces, then reconstructed after the Restoration. Archaeological evidence suggests that it was

⁴⁸⁵ '1661 Mémoire', 209; Marie to d'Iray, 8 July 1625, 1AP 431/54; Grimaudet to Marie, 11 Feb. 1634, 1AP 657.

⁴⁸⁶ Grimaudet to Marie, 15 Nov. 1625 and 20 Nov. 1625, 1AP 657.

⁴⁸⁷ Marie to Elisabeth of Nassau, 8 May 1632, AN, 273AP 180. For a good description of Château Marie, see Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 198.

⁴⁸⁸ Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 205; Corson, *Les grandes seigneuries*, ii. 399. Both authors are under the mistaken assumption that the princesse de Tarente was responsible for the construction of the *maison de plaisance*.

⁴⁸⁹ Some architectural elements were copied from Knowsley, Joseph E. Douglas, *Castle Rushen* (Douglas, 1935), 10. For engravings of the new buildings, see Daniel King, 'The Prospective of Castle Rushen as it appears on the South east side' and 'The Landskip of Castle Rushen as it appears on the South east neere Derby Fort', in James Chaloner, *A Short Treatise of the Isle of Man* (London, 1656).

only torn down in 1725.⁴⁹⁰ Having surrendered Castle Rushen in 1651, the countess tried to settle in Chelsea, London, but financial dire straits forced her to retire to Knowsley. Surrounded by vast hunting grounds (seventy-two heaths in 1667), Knowsley Hall was a mere country house in the first half of the seventeenth century, boasting, nonetheless, a King's Apartment, in memory of a presumed visit by Henry VII. There is no evidence for any renovation works undertaken by the dowager countess of Derby.⁴⁹¹

Marie de La Tour, however, has rightly been described as an architectural patron in her own right. She was the instigator and driving force behind the reconstruction of the castles of Thouars and Vitré, as well as the new construction of Château Marie, although her husband unquestionably shared and supported her ambitions.

B.) Private Taste and Public Display of Wealth

1.) Display of Grandeur

Interior Decoration

The largest construction site in seventeenth-century Poitou was Richelieu's remodelling of his family estate into a monumental castle and a newly designed town glorifying his origins and achievements. It was the measuring stone by which any other castle in the area was judged. The castle of the Gouffiers at Oiron was described by a contemporary as 'un château qui dépasse en splendeur celui de Richelieu',⁴⁹² and the castle of Thouars was thought by Mademoiselle de Montpensier to have

⁴⁹⁰ J. M. Steane and A.F. Kelsall, 'The Park, Moat and House at New Park, Lathom, near Ormskirk', *THSLC* 114 (1962), 77.

⁴⁹¹ John Martin Robinson, 'Knowsley Hall', *Country Life* 193/15 (1999), 70-75. According to Ms Eileen Hume, archive librarian at Knowsley Hall, no architectural drawings survive for earlier periods.

⁴⁹² Brackenholfer, *Voyage*, 232.

une dignité qui paroît bien que les maîtres du logis l'ont possédée de longue main; ce qui n'est pas à Richelieu.⁴⁹³

Contemporary visitors such as Brackenhoffer commented on its charm rather than its grandeur, and noted that the castle of Thouars

fut pourvu de passages et de galeries qui en faisaient le tour et donnaient sur la rivière et il surpassait beaucoup de châteaux en agrément et en plaisance.⁴⁹⁴

La Grande Mademoiselle also appreciated its beauty: 'la maison est riante en entrant, la cour étant tout entourée de terrasses', but she also acknowledged the 'prodigious length' of the building (117 meters), which gave it '[un] air magnifique'. Despite the fact that, even in 1657, the apartments were not yet fully painted and decorated,

Les dedans sont beaux et somptueux ... On y voit partout une grande noblesse: car les tapisseries, et les autres meubles sont tous pleins des plus illustres alliances du royaume, et beaucoup de la maison royale; et c'est avec quelque raison qu'ils veulent être princes, quand d'autres s'avisent, de l'être, qui en ont moins de droit qu'eux.⁴⁹⁵

The relative sobriety of style was thus compensated for by an open demonstration of status and prestigious family alliances. Lemercier's former patrons, Marie de Médicis and Richelieu, made much use of galleries to celebrate their political achievement.⁴⁹⁶ Richelieu included a portrait of Louis II de La Trémoille by Philippe de Champaigne in his *Galerie des Hommes Illustres* at the Palais-Cardinal.⁴⁹⁷ According to Caldicott, it was a mere 'placatory homage to the great noble families of France who formed the military caste' because the 'chevalier sans reproche' exemplified piety and loyalty to the

⁴⁹³ Anne-Marie-Louise d'Orléans, duchesse de Montpensier, *Mémoires*, ed. A. Chéruel, 3 vols. (Paris, 1859), i. chapitre 29 (Sept. to Dec. 1657),
<<http://www.penelope.uchicago.edu/mlle/chapitre29/chap29.html>>, accessed Jan. 2003.

⁴⁹⁴ Brackenhoffer, *Voyage*, 241.

⁴⁹⁵ Montpensier, *Mémoires*, I, chapitre 29.

⁴⁹⁶ Edric Caldicott, 'Richelieu and the Arts', *Richelieu and His Age*, ed. J. Bergin and L. Brockliss (Oxford, 1992), 206-7, 224-5; Geraldine Johnson, 'Marie de Médicis: mariée, mère, méduse', *Royaume de féminie*, 103-120.

⁴⁹⁷ BNF Estampes, N2-D184334, *Ludovicus De La Trimouille*; Bernard Dorival, *Philippe de Champaigne, 1602-1674: la vie, l'œuvre, et le catalogue raisonné de l'œuvre*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1976-2002), ii. planche 353; Dorival, 'Art et politique en France au XVIIe siècle: La Galerie des Hommes Illustres du Palais-Cardinal', *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de l'art français* (1973), 43-60.

Crown.⁴⁹⁸ In fact the portrait was surrounded by tablets celebrating military exploits that were central to the La Trémoille's political agenda in the seventeenth century. They referred to Brittany ('Deffaicte du duc de Bretagne') and Naples ('Il chasse de Milan le viceroy de Naples et s'en saisit'), topics Richelieu might have chosen intentionally to demonstrate his support for the La Trémoille against the Rohan in Brittany and, possibly, to hint at his promise to support their claim to the throne of Naples if he was to negotiate a peace treaty with Spain.⁴⁹⁹

One would expect the La Trémoille to have designed their new gallery to serve allegorical representations of power and of princely status, but severe financial restrictions prevented them from using the gallery in the usual ostentatious manner.⁵⁰⁰ In the early eighteenth century, Robert de Cotte submitted plans for the decoration of the gallery, including portraits of all dukes and duchesses from Louis I and Marguerite d'Amboise to Charles-Bretagne and Madeleine de La Fayette.⁵⁰¹ Perhaps surprisingly, the La Trémoille never sought to include portraits of the royal family, owned by practically every nobleman in France from Philippe du Plessis-Mornay to Bussy-Rabutin.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁸ Caldicott, 'Richelieu', 213. For a contemporary biographical note on Louis II, see Marc de Vulson de la Colombière, *Les portraits des hommes illustres français qui sont peints dans la gallerie du Palais Cardinal de Richelieu* (Paris, 1650).

⁴⁹⁹ See Chapter V.

⁵⁰⁰ In her letter to her agent, the duchess confessed that she originally desired a parquet floor, decorated walls and paintings, but decided that a tiled floor was all they could afford at the time, Marie to Chamdor, 15 Oct. 1644, IAP 430/85.

⁵⁰¹ Imbert, *Histoire de Thouars*, 273; Morin, *Château de Thouars*, 17.

⁵⁰² Antoine Schnapper, *Le géant, la licorne et la tulipe: collections et collectionneurs dans la France du XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1988), 127-8.

The impressive staircase at Thouars could have equally been used as a show room for wealth and status. It resembled the principal staircase at Richelieu,⁵⁰³ and was made out of twenty-six balusters of the finest marble from the quarry of Saint-Berthevin (Laval).⁵⁰⁴ According to Girouard, early modern staircases were invested with the symbolic content *donjons* had possessed in medieval times. They represented power and old blood, and were thus often lavishly decorated with appropriate iconography or the family coat of arms.⁵⁰⁵ At Thouars, the material used to build the staircase was certainly ostentatiously expensive, but the walls were never decorated and the niches remained empty. While both staircase and portico niches may have been pure *niches de fantaisie* with cavities too flat to receive sculptures, the absence of ornamentation might have had less to do with the architect's aesthetic preferences, than a concrete lack of funds.⁵⁰⁶ Marie de La Tour's interest in even the most minute architectural details suggests that the architect would not have been able to impose stylistic purification had this not been endorsed by the duchess and her husband. The influence of court culture, as examined in Chapter IV and VI, suggests that financial considerations, rather than artistic taste, were the main motivation for restraint. Marie's approach to life was quite distinct from the asceticism displayed by the Jansenist duchesse de Liancourt for instance, who refused 'tous les ornemens qui demandent une dépense ou excessive comme les statues, ou continuelle comme les arbres exquis et les fleurs' on moral grounds.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰³ Brackenhoffer, *Voyage*, 240: 'L'escalier... est tout semblable à celui de Richelieu; la rampe et les balustres sont aussi en marbre jaspé, comme à l'autre'.

⁵⁰⁴ *Grand escalier du palais*, 1AP 99; Vouhé, 'Découverte', Appendix IX.

⁵⁰⁵ Girouard, *French Country House*, 21, 80-4.

⁵⁰⁶ There is an engraving of a statue of Henri de La Trémoille, which could have represented a model for an actual statue, BNF Estampes N2-D184307. Vouhé, however, considers this technically impossible and points to Lemercier's similarly puristic design of the hall of the Louvre [personal communication, 6 Sept. 2003]. There may have been an evolution in Lemercier's style towards greater stylistic sobriety, but his greatest oeuvre remained the ostentatious castle of Richelieu.

⁵⁰⁷ Liancourt, *Règlement*, 71. The gardens of Thouars, on the other hand, were lined with cypresses, hornbeams, filarias, elms, caper bushes, fig and orange trees, Vouhé, 'Lemercier, Le Nôtre, Hardouin-Mansart, Gabriel de Cotte et les jardins du château de Thouars', (forthcoming).

Social status was expressed by other – less expensive – symbols, such as canopies ('dais') in most bedrooms, and a 'balustre', which was usually seen as a sign of princely rank, in the duchess's main apartment.⁵⁰⁸

Tapestries

Apart from a plethora of smaller carpets, the castle of Thouars held forty-one extremely valuable tapestries regrouped into several large sets ('tentes de tapisseries') representing biblical and mythological scenes. Some of them were quite old, such as two tapestries showing the history of the Maccabees, the Jewish warriors whose successful revolt against their Seleucid rulers resulted in the re-consecration of the Temple of Jerusalem in 165 B.C. These had apparently been brought from Isle-Bouchard on the occasion of the visit of the queen of Navarre.⁵⁰⁹ The antechamber of Bourbon was decorated with eight oddly matched tapestries, a scene of pastoral love, another scene featuring Jacob, father of the twelve tribes of Israel, and six tapestries recounting the story of his son Joseph. One set of tapestries in the 'Chambre d'Amboise' showed the arraignment of Paris and other stories out of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; in the 'Chambre de Bourbon' the history of Alexander the Great was represented; and classical antiquity was equally prominent in the duchess's suite:

Dans la chambre de Madame: une tente de tapisserie de haute lisse rehaussée d'or representant en une grande piece et deux petites les hommes illustres de l'antiquité... Dans l'antichambre de Madame: une tenture de tapisserie de soye rehaussée d'or contenant 4 pieces, les trois plus grandes desquels sont a personnage habilles a l'antique.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁸ 1AP 1063. *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (1694), *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (Paris, 1694) <<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/efts/ARTFL/projects/dicos/ACADEMIE/PREMIERE>>, accessed Apr. 2003, s.v. 'dais': 'espèce de poêle fait en forme de ciel-de-lit, avec un dossier pendant, que l'on tend dans l'appartement des princes, des ducs, des ambassadeurs, &c'; article 'balustre': 'un assemblage de plusieurs balustres servant de closture dans une Eglise, ou dans une chambre. Balustre d'autel, le balustre de la chambre d'un prince.'

⁵⁰⁹ It had already been listed in the 1542 inventory of Thouars, and was so valuable that the *grande chambre* was kept locked, Girouard, *French Country House*, 105. In 1652 it was in the more accessible *grande salle*, 1AP 1063.

⁵¹⁰ 1AP 1063.

Tapestries were extremely valuable objects, but they indicated more than mere affluence. By choosing tapestries with classical themes for her apartments, the duchess tried to present herself as well educated and sophisticated. This self-image is confirmed by her collection of 'douze medailles de bronze sur du marbre representans les douze Cesars', as well as her professed interest in natural sciences.

Books and maps

Books, maps and globes were objects of prestige, representing knowledge unavailable to most. In Marie de La Tour's *cabinet des portraits*, pride of place went to a painting 'representant une femme s'apuyant sur une croix ayant autour d'elle les sciences'.⁵¹¹ Tallemant des Réaux recorded that Marie de la Tour visited the mathematician Paul Yvon, who dabbled in occultism and alchemy, out of *curiosité*.⁵¹² The duchess displayed her interest in science, and notably in cartography, by exhibiting in her *cabinets*

un Escran representant des deux costés les quatre parties du monde avec un pied de fer,... deux petits glaubes [=globes] et une sphère, ... la Carte Universelle enluminée garnie de deux bois noircis, quatre autres cartes representans la France, l'Almage, l'Italie, et l'Angleterre aussi enluminees et garnis de leurs bois noircis.⁵¹³

According to Brackenhoffer, Marie de La Tour's *cabinet* was 'well-supplied in books, mostly historical',⁵¹⁴ and Rozemont's correspondence makes it clear that her interest in history and geography was genuine. Rozemont was asked to buy her copies in French of Henrion's *Cosmographie ou traité général des choses tant celestes qu'élémentaires* and

⁵¹¹ 1AP 1063.

⁵¹² Tallemant, *Historiettes*, ii. 555.

⁵¹³ Several maps were transferred to the duke's apartment after the duchess's death, 1AP 1063. The duchess had ordered Rozemont to buy a 'sphere du monde coust que faire ce pourra', 1AP 431/101.

⁵¹⁴ Brackenhoffen, *Voyage*, 240.

Le Traicté de l'usage des Globes.⁵¹⁵ The duchess also ordered Serres' *Theatre d'Agriculture*, and several religious works, including *L'Histoire du Concille de Trente* by Fra Paolo Sarpi, and Antoine Godeau's *Oeuvres chrestiennes*.⁵¹⁶ Unfortunately, the intellectual interests of her sister-in-law cannot be traced, since the inventory of Castle Rushen only mentions unnamed '265 bookes of great vollome, whereof guilded 54, besides smale bookes'.⁵¹⁷

Collection of glassware

There was no proper *cabinet des curiosités* at Thouars, only a *cabinet des portraits*, but a separate inventory details the 'bijoux, porcelaines et autres pieces rares' that were arranged on top of the 'armoire aux livres' and on the mantelpiece. The collection reflected a 'southern' interest in archaeology and classical antiquity, rather than a typically 'northern' fascination with bizarre or spurious natural phenomena such as fluorescent insects and unicorns.⁵¹⁸ It was an idiosyncratic compilation of empty flasks, vases, goblets and jugs, miniature caskets and small decorative boxes, some made of crystal or porcelain, others delicately gilded, silvered, enamelled, made nacreous or covered in Chinese varnish. Two items that stood out were 'un petit cheval d'argent doré' and 'un petit homme sur un pied d'Estal d'argent doré avec des perles'.⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁵ Rozemont to Marie, 20 Feb. 1635, 1AP 355-6. This ostentatious interest in science and learning may explain Berthre de Bourniseaux's derisive comment that the duchess reminded him of the protagonist in Molière's *Femmes Savantes* (1672), and that the duke was 'aussi faible que le Chrisalde [Chrysale] de Molière, au lieu de dompter et de maîtriser sa Philaminte il chercha constamment, mais en vain, à l'adoucir et à l'appriivoiser', *Histoire de la ville de Thouars*, 200.

⁵¹⁶ Rozemont to Marie, 13 May 1630, 23 Jan. 1635 and 14 Oct. 1634, 1AP 355-6. Sarpi's book had been put on the Catholic *Index*, yet influenced both Turenne and the earl of Derby to regard Catholicism with a more favourable eye, Turenne to Charlotte Caumont, 2 Oct. 1659, *Lettres*, ed. Huart, 578-9; Raines, 'Memoirs', *Stanley Papers* III/1 (CS 66, 1867), p. cccxi.

⁵¹⁷ 1AP 355-6, Rozemont to Marie, 14 Oct 1634.

⁵¹⁸ PRO, SP19/147/35-8.

⁵¹⁹ Schnapper, *Le géant*, 187-194.

⁵¹⁹ 1AP 1063.

Luxury items

The intense correspondence between Rozemont and the duchess illustrates perfectly Marie de La Tour's desire to imitate the spending habits of the highest aristocracy or profile herself against them. Rozemont suggested the purchase of the same eight-armed candelabrum Mademoiselle de Montpensier and the comtesse de Soissons had acquired.⁵²⁰ He advised the duchess on the latest fashion, a beaver hat as worn by the Madame de Chevreuse, and a mirror 'tel que l'on les porte et que vous le desirez c'est a dire des mieux faicts et plus jolies moddes qui y soient'.⁵²¹

As personal shopping assistant *avant la lettre*, Rozemont acted as middleman between the duchess and Parisian artisans and merchants. He had watches repaired, diamonds polished and ratine embroidered; he purchased perfume bottles, ring boxes, tablatures for the guitar, sets of table linen and cutlery, cashmere and taffetas to make garments, brocatelle and wool to weave tapestries. Despite the fact that these were luxury goods, in the sense that they were not necessary to the survival of the family, the duchess was not a spendthrift: every single item was carefully chosen and its price was negotiated at length.⁵²² On occasion, however, appropriative competition motivated the duchess to discard the 'extresme chereté' of some items. Rozemont had to procure her the same mirror Montpensier and Soissons had bought, or she would have been displeased

de n'en avoir des plus beaux et riches comme les autres dames de v[ost]re
qualité...Il vaudra mieux qu'il couste davantage et qu'il vous agree et face
l'honneur seul a v[ost]re naissance et qualité.⁵²³

⁵²⁰ Rozemont to Marie, 1 Mar. 1626, 1AP 355-6.

⁵²¹ Rozemont to Marie, 12 Feb. 1633, 1AP 355-6.

⁵²² *Mémoire de ce que je désire mettre achate a Paris par le Sr de Rozemont*, 1AP 431/101. The duchess rebuked her daughter-in-law for her 'insatiable' desire for cloths and dresses, Marie to Tarente, *circa* 1651, 1AP 430/90; Amalia to Tarente, 30 May 1651, 1AP 439/53.

⁵²³ Rozemont to Marie, 12 Feb. 1633, 1AP 355-6.

Jewels represented liquid capital that could be transformed into cash much more quickly than land.⁵²⁴ Other luxury articles could also be removed and sold easily. Several items from the 1652 inventory of the duchess's inventory were missing in 1672: the billiard table, an ebony table with several board games ('jeux de dames, trictrac, poulle et merelle'), and an oval table made of black marble.⁵²⁵

2.) Artistic Patronage

The inventories of Thouars and of Castle Rushen on the Isle of Man show that both the La Trémoille and the Stanleys were enthusiastic collectors of paintings. The *cabinet des portraits* at Thouars included forty-nine, and the *cabinet des médailles* a further twenty-nine portraits; according to Brackenhoﬀer they represented

tous les princes alliés aux seigneurs de La Trémoille et de Thouars, parmi lesquels le comte palatin Frédéric, roi de Bohême, et ses enfants; un margrave de Brandebourg.⁵²⁶

Individually listed portraits were those of Turenne, the duc de Bouillon, William of Orange, and Maurice of Orange,⁵²⁷ eminently suited to the propagandistic purpose of highlighting the La Trémoille's princely connections. Marie de La Tour's own portraits only survive in the form of engravings. To what extent she saw them as mere commodities is illustrated by her ordering the original, and

une copie en petit comme on les fait a cet heure avec une couronne de diamant sur la teste et le reste de l'abit suivant cela il saura chez Madame la princesse combien luy a couste le sien et en paye aultant s'il n'en peust avoir meilleur marché.⁵²⁸

⁵²⁴ Rozemont to Marie, 14 Oct. 1634, 1AP 355-6. Major, 'Noble Income', 39; Kristen B. Neuschel, 'Noble Households in the Sixteenth Century. Material Settings and Human Communities', *French Historical Studies* 15/4 (1988), 611-2.

⁵²⁵ 1AP 1063.

⁵²⁶ Brackenhoﬀer, *Voyage*, 240. An inventory of the *cabinet de la bibliothèque* (1702) included 'cinquante portrets sur leurs cadres dorés qui sont des représentations de la maison et des alliances, [et] une estampe de M de Bouillon sur casdre doré', *LT5s*, iv. 229-213.

⁵²⁷ 1AP 1063. Marie de La Tour had asked her brother Turenne for his portrait 'fait par Ferdinand' in 1626, Turenne to Elisabeth of Nassau, 10 Nov. 1626, *Lettres* ed. Huart, 44-5.

⁵²⁸ Marie to Rozemont, n.d., 1AP431/101. Presumably the engraving by Balthazar Montcornet, BNF Estampes Ne 63 Coll. Laruelle 107/4; N2-D184346-7; see Appendix c-2. Another engraving, printed 'a

At Castle Rushen a total of seventy-six pictures were counted, fifty-six of which were described as 'pictures in oyle in ffrance, most of them large, some delivered to the lady'.⁵²⁹ These pictures were later distributed between Knowsley, Wentworth and Blair Atholl, and are difficult to trace.⁵³⁰ Some portraits of Charlotte and her family are nonetheless well documented, because they were painted by the most famous artists of the day: Gerrit van Honthorst, Anthony van Dyck and Peter Lely.⁵³¹

Gerrit van Honthorst

Charlotte was sent to The Hague in 1625 to find a suitable marriage partner. She was related to the exiled 'Winter King' Frederick V and to Frederick-Henry, the new prince of Orange, and moved freely between the two courts. During her stay, Charlotte might have caught a glimpse of the artistic rivalry that had begun to develop between the queen of Bohemia and her former lady-in-waiting, Amalia von Solms, now princess of Orange. Honthorst (1592-1656), a Catholic from Utrecht, worked for both of them from about 1626 onwards, blending Mierevelt's courtly poses with pastoral motifs and attributes borrowed from classical antiquity or mythology.⁵³² Historicising portraits became highly fashionable from around 1630, and were often made in connection with

Paris chez Pierre Mariette, rue S. Jacques a l'Esperance' shows her at a slightly younger age, BNF Estampes N2-D184345.

⁵²⁹ PRO, SP19/147/35-8.

⁵³⁰ George Scharf (ed.), *Catalogue of the Collection of Pictures at Knowsley Hall* (London, 1875) [subsequently: *Knowsley*, 1875]; the Wentworth collection was put up for auction, C 8.7.1998; Blair Atholl still holds the portraits of Charlotte-Brabantine and Claude de La Trémoille, 'que Vostre Excellence m'avoyt commande d'envoyer par voye seure en Angleterre', Rozemont to Marie, 14 Oct. 1634, 1AP 355-6.

⁵³¹ An unfinished portrait of a young girl by Peter Paul Rubens is said to represent Charlotte de La Trémoille, *Catalogue of the First Special Exhibition of National Portraits ending with the Reign of King James the Second, on Loan to the South Kensington Museum* (London, 1866) [subsequently referred to as *Kensington*, 1866], 554. It remains unproven that Rubens already frequented the Stadhouder's court, when Charlotte was staying with Louise de Coligny in 1608-10, 1AP 385/9-11.

⁵³² Hermann Braun, 'Gerard und Willem van Honthorst', doctoral thesis (Universität Göttingen, 1966), 39. Charlotte de La Trémoille is absent from Braun's thesis and from his 'Katalog'.

court performances, such as masques or ballets.⁵³³ Honthorst painted two portraits of Charlotte de La Trémoille, one of her as Minerva, the other one as Diana, the virgin goddesses of wisdom and of the hunt.⁵³⁴ In the first likeness Charlotte is wearing the same costume as Elisabeth von Solms, Amalia's eldest sister, in a similar portrait as Minerva.⁵³⁵ Both portraits are dated 1632, which suggests that Charlotte sat for the artist during his stay in England between 1628 and 1630.⁵³⁶ Originally conceived for the gallery of Princess Amalia,⁵³⁷ the portrait later circulated as an engraving in England, presumably owing its popularity to the symbolic association of Charlotte as defender of Lathom with Minerva, goddess of war, wisdom and strength. The second likeness, a large-scale double portrait of Amalia and Charlotte as Ceres and Diana, was made in 1633, according to the date on the copy given to Amalia.⁵³⁸ The figure of Diana was most fashionable at the time. Princess Amalia herself, and her younger sister Louisa Christina, were painted by Honthorst as Diana.⁵³⁹ The same artist did a life-size portrait of Louise Hollandine of the Palatinate as Diana,⁵⁴⁰ and the style was equally popular in England, where Charlotte's sister-in-law, Anne Stanley, countess of Ancram, had her portrait done 'with bow' by an anonymous painter.⁵⁴¹

⁵³³ Marieke Tiethoff-Spliethoff, 'Role-play and Representation. Portrait Painting at the Court of Frederik Hendrik and Amalia', *Princely Display. The Court of Frederik Hendrik of Orange and Amalia van Solms*, ed. M. Keblusek and J. Zijlmans (The Hague, 1997), 161, 171.

⁵³⁴ See Appendices c-3, c-4.

⁵³⁵ C 4.6.1984 (471) and C 26.10.1984 (31) for Charlotte de La Trémoille's portrait; S 27.11.1968 (52) for Elisabeth von Solms's portrait.

⁵³⁶ Braun, 'Honthorst', 43-50.

⁵³⁷ The 1632 inventory of the Stadhouder's Quarters lists 'a composition showing Madame Strange in the fashion of Pallas Athena, or Minerva', quoted by Tiethoff-Spliethoff, 'Role-play and Representation', 171.

⁵³⁸ C 18.5.1951 (130). Charlotte's copy is undated: C 8.7.1998 (91).

⁵³⁹ P 18.12.1984 (41); S 27.11.1968 (53).

⁵⁴⁰ 1643, Centraal Museum Utrecht, cat. no. 156; Braun, 'Honthorst', Katalognr. W24. Both catalogues mistake the sitter for Louise-Henriette of Orange, Tiethoff-Spliethoff, 'Role-play and Representation', 171.

⁵⁴¹ *Kensington*, 1866, 529; *Knowsley*, 1875, 145.

Anthony Van Dyck

Van Dyck (1599-1641) came to England after Honthorst, and was received even more favourably, being knighted shortly after his arrival in 1632.⁵⁴² Van Dyck effected what Millar has called a 'revolution' in the development of painting in England.⁵⁴³ His magnificently refined, yet tender and introspective portraits were soon commissioned *en masse* by courtiers. The Stanleys themselves commissioned no less than four portraits from Van Dyck's studio, a sure indication that they had not retired altogether to a private life in the countryside.⁵⁴⁴ The best-known painting is a group portrait of Lord and Lady Strange and their daughter Henrietta-Maria, aged about five.⁵⁴⁵ A second painting depicts Henrietta-Maria on her own, slightly older than in the previous picture, though the resemblance is unmistakable.⁵⁴⁶ Since she was born in November 1630, the paintings can be dated *circa* 1635 and *circa* 1637. The third painting by Van Dyck is a portrait of a ten-year old boy, recently identified as Charles Stanley and thus painted around 1638.⁵⁴⁷ The fourth Van Dyck picture, representing Lady Charlotte in a black dress, is now held in a private collection.⁵⁴⁸

The family portrait deserves particular attention, because it is the only one that makes an allusion to the status and descent of Lady Strange: the orange of the girl's dress symbolises her descent from the House of Orange-Nassau. The reference may be subtle, but it is certainly no coincidence, since Van Dyck's portrait of William II as a child was

⁵⁴² Honthorst had been patronised by the duke of Buckingham, whom he had included in an allegory with the king and the queen in the guise of Apollo, Diana and Mercury, Braun, 'Honthorst', Katalognr. W81.

⁵⁴³ Oliver Millar, *The Age of Charles I. Painting in England* (London, 1972), 66.

⁵⁴⁴ Peter Draper, *The House of Stanley* (Ormskirk, 1864), 77

⁵⁴⁵ C 13.1.1949; *The Frick Collection. An Illustrated Catalogue*, 9 vols. (New York, 1968-2003), i. 186-190 <<http://www.frick.org/html/pntg33f.htm>>, accessed Mar. 2003; see Appendix c-5.

⁵⁴⁶ 'Half-length, in a white dress, holding a bunch of roses on a stone ledge in front of her', one copy at Blair Castle (R.A. 1953-4, no.149), one copy sold S 11.05.1960 (102).

⁵⁴⁷ *Kensington*, 1866, 687; C 3.10.2001 (3662).

⁵⁴⁸ C 8.10.1954 (71).

made only a few years earlier, and is virtually drenched in orange.⁵⁴⁹ The second point of interest of the Stanley family portrait lies in the unusual composition and atmosphere. Van Dyck's family portraits were famous for the sense of intimacy they conveyed. In his 'Great Piece', the portrait of the royal family, a rapport is established between the sitters by Queen Henrietta-Maria's glance at her husband and by his hand on his son's shoulder.⁵⁵⁰ This type of intimate family portrait was widely copied,⁵⁵¹ but the Stanley portrait is strikingly different: all three figures are self-contained, they are averting each other's eyes, nor even looking in the same direction. Charlotte, on the left of her daughter, is holding some roses in her right hand, but keeping them to herself, and holding her own dress with her left hand. The daughter, Henrietta-Maria, is at the centre of the composition, gazing straightahead, hands folded, sheltered yet ignored by her parents. Her father, on the right side of the picture, points to a land in the distance, thought to represent the Isle of Man. The composed looks and the static composition are very unusual for Van Dyck; only his last work, a portrait of the newly-wed William II and Mary Stuart, possesses the same rigidity, ascribed to the artist's failing health.⁵⁵² If it was atypical for Van Dyck, the reason for the emotional coldness of the family portrait must lay with the Stanleys. In fact, although they consciously imitated other courtiers, they were no connoisseurs, and were less interested in Van Dyck's art than in using the portrait to demonstrate status (the colour orange, the Isle of Man in the background) and to have their physiognomic likenesses made by the most

⁵⁴⁹ Inv. no. 13, Museum Schloss Mosigkau, Dessau-Mosigkau; Tiethoff-Spliethoff, 'Role-play and Representation', 176; Peter van der Ploeg and Carola Vermeeren, *Princely Patrons* (The Hague, 1997), 124-7.

⁵⁵⁰ Royal Collection; Oliver Millar, *Van Dyck in England* (London, 1982), 46-7.

⁵⁵¹ For instance by Honthorst, 'Amalia as Flora' with her two children (Kulturstiftung Dessau-Wörlitz); the Palatine family as 'Seladon and Astrea' (Braun, 'Honthorst', Katalognr. W83), and Buckingham's family (NPG, 711). See Millar, *The Age of Charles I*, 34-5.

⁵⁵² Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, Inv. n° 102; Tiethoff-Spliethoff, 'Role-play and Representation', 182.

accomplished painter in order to use them for innumerable copies in every imaginable context.⁵⁵³

Peter Lely and Mary Beale

In 1658, Peter Lely (1618-1680) portrayed the dowager countess

in a widow's dress, sitting on a plain stone wall, her right hand resting on a stone vase, having an angel's head sculptured on it, which may be regarded as containing the ashes of her deceased husband, the background in a grove of cypresses against a dark grey sky.⁵⁵⁴

The conception and attitude of this picture were modelled on Van Dyck's painting of Archduchess Isabella, Governess of the Netherlands, in mourning for her husband.⁵⁵⁵

Lely's painting is stark and understated, very similar to another portrait of Charlotte dated 1658, showing her in a widow's headdress with an open book in her right hand.⁵⁵⁶

These pictures did not extol the memory of the deceased husband; nor did they aim at building her reputation upon his, as was the case for many aristocratic widow portraits.⁵⁵⁷ Under the Commonwealth it would have been politically unwise for the countess to exhibit her grief and her admiration for the seventh earl. At the Restoration, Charlotte's daughter Catherine, Marchioness of Dorchester, and her son Charles, eighth earl of Derby, followed the court fashion and commissioned bust pictures from Lely's workshop.⁵⁵⁸ Their sister Amalia, countess of Atholl, was portrayed by Mary Beale

⁵⁵³ Charlotte's bust: *Kensington*, 1866, 696; *Knowsley*, 1875, 43, 144. James's bust: *Kensington*, 1866, 689; *Knowsley*, 1875, 142, 154; NPG, D01634; NPG, 90. There are two other portraits of Lord and Lady Strange from the 1630s, Cornelius Johnson van Ceulen's likeness of Lord Strange in a melancholic and reflective posture (Tabley House 83; Courtauld Institute B88/941) and Gilbert Jackson's life-size portrait of Charlotte, posing in a richly decorated room, C. H. Collins Baker, *Lely and the Stuart Portrait Painters*, 2 vols. (London, n.d.), i. 54; id., 'Notes on Various Works of Art', *Burlington Magazine* 21 (1912), 168.

⁵⁵⁴ *Knowsley*, 1875, 152; NPG, 4296; C 4.6.1984 (480).

⁵⁵⁵ *Knowsley*, 1875, 152.

⁵⁵⁶ *Kensington*, 1866, 694.

⁵⁵⁷ For instance, Honthorst's portrait of princess Amalia holding a oval framed portrait of Frederick-Henry (1650, Gemäldegalerie Staatliche Museen zu Berlin), and Govert Flick's *Allegory on the Memory of Frederick-Henry, Prince of Orange, with a Portrait of his Widow Amalia of Solms* (1654, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. no. A869).

⁵⁵⁸ Catherine Stanley: C 8.7.1998 (28). Charles Stanley: *Knowsley*, 1875, 151; *Kensington*, 1866, 870.

(1633-1699), the most talented of Lely's followers. Amalia's blue scarf is fastened by a cameo brooch containing a helmeted profile of Minerva, a possible reference to her mother's earlier portrait as Minerva by Honthorst.⁵⁵⁹

C.) Dynastic promotion

1.) Display of alliances

As we have seen, Richelieu included the most famous ancestor of the La Trémoille in his *Galerie des Hommes Illustres*. At Thouars, however, Louis II was only remembered by his gravestone in the chapel he had built.⁵⁶⁰ The La Trémoille declined to use the figure of Louis II for political propaganda, and focused on their female line of descent instead. According to Tarente's funeral orison, it was a 'lustre emprunté mais qui ne laisse pas d'estre fort glorieux', which allowed them to stress alliances with sovereign rulers, rather than their loyalty and submission to them.⁵⁶¹ All rooms were named after family territories and alliances, the *chambre de parade* of the duchess being significantly called 'Chambre de Naples'.⁵⁶² The heraldic bearings of Naples (or rather of Aragon-Sicily) were increasingly incorporated in the La Trémoille coat of arms, as the family was bolstering their claim to the throne of Naples after 1647.⁵⁶³ The coat of arms made for Marie de La Tour in 1640 did not include the arms of Aragon.⁵⁶⁴ Several years later the duchess ordered a new set, which she had drawn up in a sketchy manner, with the caption:

⁵⁵⁹ *Knowsley*, 1875, 155. Beale also did portraits of the earl of Atholl, Dorothea-Helena, countess of Derby, and her husband Charles in the years 1676-77, Collins Baker, *Lely*, ii. 165.

⁵⁶⁰ BNF Estampes, N2-D184337; Imbert, *Histoire de Thouars*, 232; Brackenhoffer, *Voyage*, 238-9. There is only one seventeenth century engraving of Louis II, BNF Estampes, N2-D184339. Henri de La Trémoille's *Les vies de quelques hommes illustres* does not refer to Louis II, *Documents inédits sur Thouars et ses environs*, ed. H. Imbert, 3 vols. (Thouars, 1879-81), ii. 1-2.

⁵⁶¹ BNF MS Clairambault 1137/228-39.

⁵⁶² See Appendix c-1.

⁵⁶³ See Chapter V.

⁵⁶⁴ 1AP 2207, on the left-hand side: La Trémoille, Bourbon, Luxembourg, Orléans, Milan, Laval and Isle-Bouchard; on the right-hand side: La Tour, Auvergne, Turenne, Bouillon and Boulogne.

Ce modèle estant extrêmement mal fait servira seulement po[ur] faire voir comme Madame desire que les armes soient escartelées, le sculpteur quy les taillera verra les mesmes armes mieux faites dans le Trésor et la salle au commun mais autrement escartelées.

This drawing includes the arms of France, Laval, Aragon and Bourbon for the La Trémoille, and the arms of La Tour, Boulogne, Bouillon and Bourbon, with an escutcheon overall representing Auvergne, Nassau and Orange, for the La Tour d'Auvergne.⁵⁶⁵ In 1652, Duke Henri's coat of arms was made up of two quarters Aragon, one quarter France, one quarter Bourbon, and an escutcheon of Laval and Savoy below.⁵⁶⁶ Heraldics, as well as chamber toponymy, underlined the La Trémoille's descent from the House of France.⁵⁶⁷ This seems to confirm Guy Antonetti's hypothesis, whereby the title of *prince étranger* was granted because of a family's proximity to royal blood, rather than their claim to foreign sovereignty.⁵⁶⁸ On the other hand, as Chapter V and VI will show, written tracts mention royal French descent but once (in an ironical context), and concentrate on the descent from the last king of Naples. Heraldics were certainly a powerful discourse; coats of arms were designed for traditional places such as entrances, staircases, keystones of arched ceilings, and chimneypieces; they were also stamped on books, coins and furnishings. Descent from royal blood was, however, not the only element they emphasised. In the antechamber of Madame, we find a canopy ('un grand dais a queue'), which symbolised in itself princely status,

tout couvert des escussons, des armes et alliances de la maison, dequels sont d'estoille d'or argent et satin de diverses couleurs, ledit dais garny d'une cresoine d'or et d'argent avec des cordons de fleurs et rouge blanc jaulne et bleus.

⁵⁶⁵ LAP 431/103.

⁵⁶⁶ Hugues Imbert, *Registre de correspondance et biographie du duc Henry de La Trémoille, 1649-1667* (Poitiers, 1867), appendix.

⁵⁶⁷ The 'Chambre d'Amboise', for instance, refers to Marguerite d'Amboise, who brought with her the viscounty of Thouars, the principality of Talmont, and the claim to descend from royal blood, as her great-grand-mother Jeanne, comtesse de Dreux, was a member of the House of France (Dreux-Bretagne), Anselme, *Histoire généalogique*, iv. 145-52; vii.119.

⁵⁶⁸ Guy Antonetti, 'Les princes étrangers', *Etat et société en France au XVIIe et XVIIIe siècle*, ed. Y. Durand (Paris, 2000), 33-5, 49.

The lion, Nassau's heraldic emblem, was on two *tapis de Turquie* in the apartments of the duke and duchess. More mysteriously, there were two rugs at Thouars framed with escutcheons 'de fleurs de Lis sans nombre Timbrez d'un Chapeau de Cardinal'.⁵⁶⁹ The heraldic animal of the La Trémoille, an eagle, was painted on the wooden ceiling of the Château Marie at Vitré,⁵⁷⁰ and - carrying their coat of arms around its neck - on three old taffeta carpets in the duke's *garderobe* at Thouars.⁵⁷¹ The most recurrent emblem, however, was not the eagle but the tower. *Mihi nomen et omen* was the caption of one of the many paintings representing a single tower surrounded by stormy seas. It symbolised steadfastness in the face of adversity, obviously appealing to a Protestant facing an increasingly hostile environment. Marie de La Tour's emblem in her *Recueil de devises* depicts a bastion protecting a set of buildings including a parish church, and a hexagonal construction, possibly representing a temple.⁵⁷² In the same collection of emblems, the military strength of the tower is represented most forcefully by Turenne's emblem, a solid tower surrounded by weapons and flags, surrendered by the enemy.⁵⁷³ The tower is also an integral part of the monumental tomb of the duc and duchesse de Bouillon planned by their son Emmanuel-Théodose, cardinal de Bouillon, at the Abbey of Cluny.⁵⁷⁴ In Christian symbolism the tower represents either a fortress protecting the faithful against the fury of hell, or a lighthouse, guiding them through dangerous waters.⁵⁷⁵ Despite adhering to different confessions, the duc and duchesse de La Trémoille used the same motto – *Auxilio Firmata Dei* (Secured with the help of God) –

⁵⁶⁹ 1AP 1063. Possibly the arms of Jean, cardinal de La Trémoille, Louis II's brother.

⁵⁷⁰ This ceiling still exists, inside an office space occupied today by the *Ponts-et-Chaussées* administration of Vitré.

⁵⁷¹ 1AP 1063.

⁵⁷² ARS, MS 5217, planche 13; see Appendix c-6. The same device adorns the first page of her *Recueil de passages de l'Escriture Ste sur l'estat et la condition des fidelles en cette vie*, ARS, MS 2230.

⁵⁷³ ARS, MS 5217, planche 40, motto: 'Ingens tutela decusque'.

⁵⁷⁴ Mary Jackson Harvey, 'Death and Dynasty in the Bouillon Tomb Commissions', *The Art Bulletin* 74 (1992), 284, 287, 291.

⁵⁷⁵ *Encyclopédie des Symboles*, ed. H. Biedermann and M. Cazenave, (Paris, 1996), s.v. 'tour'.

and the same symbol of the tower surrounded by a stormy sea.⁵⁷⁶ In 1659 they even issued a coin with Duke Henri's name and family arms on one side, and Duchess Marie's name on the other side with the tower and the motto *Numine Freta* (In God she trusts).⁵⁷⁷ It was in the duke's apartment, that Brackenhoffer saw

ces emblèmes: *Nulloque movetur*, une tour, dressée dans l'eau, et battue de tous côtés par les vents. *Sua stans mole refulget*, une tour dans la mer, avec des torches allumées. *Mihi nomen et omen*, une tour dressée dans une campagne; au-dessus une couronne avec l'inscription: *atavi meruere*.⁵⁷⁸

The emblem of the La Tour family was not only displayed on paintings, but also on the diamond-shaped tiles of the Grand Cabinet.⁵⁷⁹ The ceiling of the duchess's *cabinet*, currently under restoration, was adorned with a skilful adaptation of the tower motif – a series of medallions representing two towers with joint flames, complete with the motto *Sic Unica Flamma duobus*.⁵⁸⁰ The interlaced initials H and M, a further symbol of the union between Henri de La Trémoille and Marie de La Tour, were displayed on the ceiling of Château Marie, and were used on the front page of the duchess's *Recueil des passages de l'Ecriture Sainte* heading the motto 'Qui craint Dieu sort de tout'.⁵⁸¹

2.) Religious Patronage

Traditionally, women could not be faulted for commissioning sacral architecture, since it expressed the ideology of ideal femininity, defined by charity, piety and familial

⁵⁷⁶ Pierre Corre, *Corpus de jetons armoiries de personnages français*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1980), ii. nr. 4496, 4513.

⁵⁷⁷ Corre, *Corpus de jetons*, ii. nr. 4484. Charlotte de La Tour, even more unyielding a Protestant than her sister, used the same symbol with the motto 'Dieu bat et n'abbat', Corre, *Corpus de jetons*, ii. nr. 4477.

⁵⁷⁸ Brackenhoffer, *Voyage*, 240. According to the inventories, *Mihi Nomen et Omen* (It is my name as well as a sign) - *Atavi Meruere* (My ancestors have deserved it) was still in the duke's apartment in 1652, whereas *Nulloque Movetur* (And nothing can change that) was listed in the 'Chambre de Vitré', and *Sua Stans Mole Refulget* (She [the tower] shines again, standing up by itself) in the *cabinet aux médailles*, where it was later replaced by a painting of the castle of Thouars, 1AP 1063. *Sua Stans Mole Refulget* was also used on a 1655 coin featuring the arms of the duc de Bouillon, Corre, *Corpus de jetons*, ii. nr. 4480.

⁵⁷⁹ Collection Musée Henri Barré, Thouars, nr. 1613.

⁵⁸⁰ *Sic Unica Flamma duobus* (Hence a single flame out of two) was the inscription on a coin with Henri de La Trémoille's name and arms, dated 1639, Corre, *Corpus de jetons*, ii. nr. 4511. It was also used as letter heading depicting two ancient altars with joining flames, Chartrier, ed. La Trémoille, 136.

⁵⁸¹ GAA, 0613/692f.

devotion. However, Marie de La Tour's patronage of Huguenot churches could be viewed as a political statement of faith, and therefore an act of defiance against her husband who had abjured Protestantism in 1628.⁵⁸² This section examines how the duchess and her husband reconciled the patronage of divergent religious creeds in order to work together towards the same goal, the promotion of the House of La Trémoille.

The Temple at Thouars

The old temple at Thouars was closed down because it encroached on land belonging to the Catholic church, but a new site was given to the Huguenots 'en l'emplacement du cimetière', a location chosen by the royal commissioners and by the 'général des habitants catholiques de la ville de Thouars'.⁵⁸³ The duke authorised the construction of a new temple 'pour empescher tous diferens qui pourraient intervenir entre nosditz habittans Catholiques et ceux de la R.P.R. et les maintenir dans l'observation des edits de pacification'.⁵⁸⁴ When the royal *procureur* contested the location of this new temple, Marie de La Tour reassured the Huguenot community that the duke would not tolerate this 'commencement de désordre et de division'.⁵⁸⁵ On 28 September 1643, Chamdor and Pelleus signed, in their function as Elders of Thouars, a deal with Jacques Pousset, a carpenter from Loudun, to have the new temple roofed.⁵⁸⁶ Five months later, Pineau wrote to his uncle, André Rivet:

J'ay appris que Mme nôtre duchesse fait achever le bâtiment du temple de Thouars, nonobstant oppositions ou appellation quelconques. On espère que la dédicace s'en fera le jour de sa prochaine feste de Pasques.⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸² Andrew Spicer, "'Qui est de Dieu oit la parole de Dieu': the Huguenots and their Temples", *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World, 1559-1685* ed. R. A. Mentzer and A. Spicer (Cambridge, 2002), 191.

⁵⁸³ 1AP 1480; 1AP 428/8; Spicer, 'Huguenots and their Temples', 181.

⁵⁸⁴ 1AP 428/8.

⁵⁸⁵ The missive was signed 'vostre très affectionnée amye', Marie de La Tour to 'Mess. les Pasteurs, anciens et chefs de famille de l'Eglise réformée de Thouars', 3 June 1643, 1AP 430/82.

⁵⁸⁶ 1AP 1480.

⁵⁸⁷ Pineau to Rivet, 20 Feb. 1644, UBL, BPL286/I/88.

The duchess did indeed obtain a ruling from the *chambre de l'édit*, officially sanctioning the building works.⁵⁸⁸ She heavily subsidised the Protestant community using the ducal treasury. At first this was done surreptitiously; in January 1643 she gave 200 *livres* to the minister of Thouars, asking Chamdor to advance the money and to account for it as if it were for her private expenses 'afin que cela ne paroisse point en vos comptes'.⁵⁸⁹ Two years later, however, Marie reassured Chamdor that he would be repaid by the ducal treasury 'sans aucune difficulté'.⁵⁹⁰ In the 1660s ducal accounts even stated openly that minister Chabrol received his annual pension from the duchess, 'sous le bon plaisir de Monseigneur comme appert par son acquet'.⁵⁹¹ The duchess had acquired financial control over the building works and over the clergy, and could thus impose her own architectural choices. She examined the plans for a gallery carefully, decided where the entrance should be, which windowpanes to use, what type of floor tiling and how the bancs should be installed.⁵⁹² Most importantly, she ordered Chamdor

de faire tailler et poser nos armes sur le frontispice de la porte et entrée principale du Temple nouvellement édifié et basti en nostre ville de Thouars.⁵⁹³

The duchess thus extended the traditional privilege of landlords to have their coat of arms displayed in the parish church to Protestant places of worship. At the same time, her husband contributed to the foundation of the Capuchin and Ursuline convents of Thouars, and imposed his coat of arms as 'marque perpétuelle de fondation'.⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁸⁸ *Arrest* dated 16 Mar. 1644, '1661 Mémoire', 211; *Extrait des registres du Parlement*, 1AP 1056/14; Pineau to Rivet, 19 Mar. 1644, UBL, BPL286/I/96.

⁵⁸⁹ Marie to Chamdor, 15 Jan. 1643, 1AP 430/95.

⁵⁹⁰ 1AP 1056/13. General building expenses concerning the Temple had always been included in the ducal books, 1AP 98-99.

⁵⁹¹ 1AP 112 (1661) and 1AP 113 (1662).

⁵⁹² Marie to Chamdor, 13 Feb. 1644, 15 Oct. 1644, and 4 Feb. 1645, 1AP 430/85, 87, 89.

⁵⁹³ 1AP 1056/13, 14 Jan. 1645.

⁵⁹⁴ The Ursulines had their church built in 1655-58 by Jacques Cornesse, and had to promise to 'faire apposer ses armes à l'endroit le plus apparent de la principale voute de l'église qu'elles feront construire et dans tous les autres endroits qu'il lui plairoit d'ordonner', Imbert, *Histoire de Thouars*, 292.

Religious Patronage at Vitré

While the Protestant community of Thouars had prospered under the protection of the La Trémoille, Huguenots at Vitré had faced persecution during the Wars of Religion. In 1622, Vitré was occupied by the duc de Vendôme, who issued a series of decrees forbidding people to take religion as a pretext to carry out massacres, a measure which points towards serious religious strife.⁵⁹⁵ When Henri de La Trémoille took over the city in January 1623, he stressed the importance of living together 'sans difference de religion'.⁵⁹⁶ How much did the La Trémoille patronage (the duke's indifference as well as the duchess's protection) contribute to the development of Vitré's Protestant population, which Philip Benedict found to be declining less than elsewhere?⁵⁹⁷

As baron de Vitré, the duc de La Trémoille headed the collegiate 'comme estant patron fondateur et dotateur de laditte esglize et chapittre', even though he was then a Protestant. An old gallery linked the castle with the collegiate, and the baronial family had their own chapel inside the church.⁵⁹⁸ Marie de La Tour had a severe row with the chaplains over the retracing of the *basse-cour* and the destruction of a chapel inside the castle to make space for two new apartments. She had the altar removed and gave the relics discovered underneath to Marie de Sévigné, dame d'Ollivet and des Rochers.⁵⁹⁹ The clergy of Vitré protested vehemently and two relics had to be restored.⁶⁰⁰ The same year, local craftsmen were threatened with excommunication if they continued to work

⁵⁹⁵ Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 78-82.

⁵⁹⁶ Henri to 'Mess. les nobles bourgeois et habitants de Vitré', 23 Feb. 1623, quoted by Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 87.

⁵⁹⁷ Philip Benedict, *Faith and Fortunes of France's Huguenots, 1600-85* (Aldershot, 2001), 48-9, 67.

⁵⁹⁸ 'Déclaration et dénombrement de la baronnie de Vitré, 14 Jan. 1681', *Journal historique*, ed. Paris-Jallobert, 194-204, at 195-6.

⁵⁹⁹ Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 69.

⁶⁰⁰ The relics had patriotic as well as religious value, since they had been hidden in the altar by Jeanne, comtesse de Laval, in 1432 when the city was besieged by English troops. The collegiate received 'le petit vaisseau d'argent où il y avoit des ossements des saints', the Eglise Nôtre-Dame received 'la fiolle de voire ou etoit l'huile de la Vierge', and Mme de Sévigné kept 'la fiolle de l'huile du sepulchre de Sainte Catherine', Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 94.

for the duchess. Only the bishop of Rennes's intervention prevented an interruption of the building works.⁶⁰¹ When Protestant youngsters disturbed Christmas festivities in 1640, allegedly desecrating the Host,⁶⁰² a pretext had been found to demand the relocation of the Huguenot temple, which was considered to be situated too close to the Eglise Nôtre-Dame. A ruling by the *conseil du Roi*, dated January 1642, granted Catholics the right to choose the new site for the Protestant house of prayers, if they were willing to pay for the building. An assembly led by the bishop of Rennes agreed to levy a new tax worth 9,692 *livres* to build a temple 'audessus de la maison dependante de l'hospital [Saint Nichollas] dans le hault du forbourg du Rachapt'.⁶⁰³ This location, however, did not please the Huguenots. Construction works were interrupted and both sides blamed each other,⁶⁰⁴ until the *Conseil d'Etat* ruled on 12 February 1644 that the Protestants could choose the location of their temple, and would receive 10,500 *livres* 'pour leur desintéressment du bastiment dudit temple ancien, à rendre sur les deniers communs et d'octroy de ladite ville'.⁶⁰⁵ The very next day, the duchess wrote a letter to Chamdor asking him to cease all building activity in Thouars, and to make Cornesse the offer to work at the temple of Vitré.⁶⁰⁶ In August 1644, the municipal council accepted the location of the new temple 'au jardin des Levrot, rue de la Follye, proche le forbourg de la Hellerye', and renegotiated the funding with the duchess, who represented *Messieurs de la RPR* in this matter. The duchess signed an agreement with the Elders of Vitré, agreeing to advance the 10,500 *livres* out of 'piété et affection' and to renounce any rights to the temple. 'En faveur de madicte Dame', Duke Henri signed as well,

⁶⁰¹ Grimaudet to Guérineau, 8 June 1626, 1AP 657.

⁶⁰² Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 121.

⁶⁰³ Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 128-9.

⁶⁰⁴ According to the duchess, 'cette affaire pris des traverses incroyables par M. l'évesque de Rennes, appuyé de M. le cardinal de Richelieu son parent', '1661 Mémoire', 211. Henri de la Motte-Houdancourt, bishop from 1640 to 1664, was indeed a *créature* of the cardinal, Joseph Bergin, *The Making of the French Episcopate, 1589-1661* (New Haven and London, 1996), 649.

⁶⁰⁵ Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 136; '1661 Mémoire', 211.

⁶⁰⁶ Marie to Chamdor, 13 Feb. 1644, 1AP 430/87.

granting them indemnity from all rents and feudal dues.⁶⁰⁷ The former temple was given to the municipality, and subsequently used as court of justice and as a church consecrated to Saint-Louis and Saint-Henri, in honour of the king and of the baron de Vitré, who had obtained financial help from the Breton Estates to convert the building. Moreover, to offset his liberality towards the Protestants, Henri donated 100 *livres* to hold three masses per week, on the days when the court was in session.⁶⁰⁸

The religious patronage of the duchess can thus only be understood in relation to the duke's attitude towards religion, which could be described as ecumenism were it not for the blatant anachronism. Henri de La Trémoille's conversion to Catholicism allowed him to better control his Catholic subjects, without losing influence over Protestant subjects who turned to his wife for support. Together, the duke and duchess thus covered the religious spectrum. The duke's coat of arms was placed in chapterhouses, convents and parish churches, while the duchess had the heraldic bearings of the La Trémoille installed inside the temple.⁶⁰⁹ Seigniorial and ecclesiastical power were in this way strongly interconnected. While Huguenots have mostly been studied as subjects rather than landlords, there is no reason why Protestant seigneurs should not have used the same strategies as Catholic noblemen to promote their dynastic interests. Subsidising one's community of faith was seen as a duty, a public expression of piety and charity that at the same time served larger dynastic interests.

Religious Patronage at Ormskirk, Lancashire

Strong political messages could be conveyed by such an apparently innocent donation as a baptismal font, given in 1661 by the dowager countess of Derby to the parish

⁶⁰⁷ Notarial contract signed 24 Nov. 1646, quoted by Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 136-7.

⁶⁰⁸ Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 125.

⁶⁰⁹ 1AP 1056/13.

church of Ormskirk to mark the Restoration of the Stuart dynasty. The earls of Derby had been patrons of Ormskirk since 1549, with the right to present clergy to the living.⁶¹⁰ It functioned as their family burial chapel and had their insignia (Eagle and Child) as weather vane on the Steeple. The dowager Countess Charlotte had a particular interest in Ormskirk, since the rectory had been bought with her portion.⁶¹¹ The carved panels of the font represent:

- * the Eagle and Child (emblem of the Derby family);
- * a crown with a lion and the letters C R (*Carolus Rex*);
- * 1661 (year of Charles II's coronation, and tenth anniversary of the death of the seventh earl of Derby);
- * three steps leading up to a cross (representing the crucifixion, and alluding to the martyr death of both Charles I and the earl of Derby);
- * a *crux decussata* (symbolising St. Andrew's martyrdom, and thus referring again to the martyrdoms of the king and Derby); and
- * an hourglass (symbolising the flow of time, frequently used as *memento mori*).⁶¹²

On a parish level, the countess aimed to reinforce the perceived link between the monarchy and the Derby family, so that the Restoration of the former would re-establish the authority of the latter. The choice of a baptismal font furthermore reveals her hopes that Charles II would agree to be the godfather to her grandson: 'je croy the le roy sera paren [=parrain] de mon petit-fils, cela ma donne beaucoup d'affaire', she wrote to her sister-in-law in March 1661.⁶¹³

By highlighting the shared destinies of the late king and her husband, and by giving them a deeply religious content, the countess wanted to secure the earl of Derby a place in the official martyrology,⁶¹⁴ and to avenge his death. In 1660, Charlotte petitioned the

⁶¹⁰ Michael Ockenden, *Tower and Steeple. The Story of Ormskirk Parish Church* (Ashby de la Zouch, 2002), 12-4.

⁶¹¹ 'Composition Papers', ed. Stanning, 184-9.

⁶¹² The font is still at the Ormskirk parish church.

⁶¹³ Charlotte to Marie, 14 Mar. 1660/61, 1AP385/52. Charles I and Henrietta-Maria had been godparents to Charlotte's eldest son and daughter in 1628 and 1630.

⁶¹⁴ A likeness of the earl of Derby, copied from Van Dyck's family portrait, can be found in Winstanley's *Royal Martyrology* (1665), NPG, D10634.

House of Lords to exempt the judges who had sentenced her husband to death from the Act of Indemnity:⁶¹⁵

I am engaged, dear sister, in pursuing the pretended judges of Monsieur, my late husband, and I hope to have justice on them, which I do not desire so much for my own satisfaction as to draw God's blessing on the King and his people, by the punishment of those that spilt that dear and innocent blood with so much cruelty. I have already made some progress in the matter, and I hope tomorrow to have the issue as I desire it. I leave all to God, and I shall at least have the consolation of having done my duty. Many who have undergone similar losses have followed my example.⁶¹⁶

On 7 August 1660, the Lords decided that only four people should be punished for the executions of Hamilton, Holland, Derby and Capel, and that each family should give one name they wanted exempted from the Act of Indemnity. The eighth earl of Derby named Colonel Thomas Croxton, and 'the whole House immediately consented'.⁶¹⁷ It seems, however, that the House of Lords came under pressure from the Crown or the Commons to grant mercy, since Croxton was only arrested in 1663 for 'plotting a general rebellion' and died that year in Chester Castle.⁶¹⁸ Moreover, the worst enemies of the countess escaped punishment: Colonel Duckinfield was rapidly released from prison and Henry Bradshaw, brother of the notorious regicide 'President Bradshaw', was pardoned early in 1661 and died in March of that year.⁶¹⁹ In 1661, the countess was therefore already feeling disillusioned with the rule of Charles II, and the baptismal font endeavoured to summon up old and forge new bonds with the monarchy. Her hope that the king would become godfather to her grandson was in vain, but the font remained as a visual reminder of the earl's sacrifice for the Royalist cause. Placed in the same church

⁶¹⁵ *JL*, ix. 58 (9 June 1660). The countess was not indiscriminately revengeful. She forgave and tried to help James Chaloner, Cromwell's governor of the Isle of Man, HMC, 7th Report, 147.

⁶¹⁶ Charlotte to Marie, 16 July 1660, 1AP 385/32; Witt, *Lady of Latham*, 246-7.

⁶¹⁷ HMC, 5th Report, 155; HMC, 3rd Report, 90-1.

⁶¹⁸ *DNB*, s.v. 'Croxton'.

⁶¹⁹ Draper, *House of Stanley*, 244; *DNB*, s.v. 'Bradshaw'.

where the headless body of the seventh earl had been lain to rest, the font functioned as a substitute *monumentum sepulchrale*.⁶²⁰

Financial restraints prevented Charlotte from commissioning a proper monument or even mausoleum to her late husband's glory; she therefore resorted to a less conventional, but highly symbolic, means of remembrance in the form of a baptismal font placed in the Derby's burial chapel. The La Trémoille had to find equally innovative ways to display grandeur and status, while dealing with increasingly encumbering debts. Marie's self-image as fashionable and *savante*, her aspirations to be an accomplished courtier, a protector of Protestant interests, as well as a powerful architectural patron in her own right, were conveyed through carefully calculated conspicuous consumption, and prominent architectural projects. In the mid-seventeenth-century, both English and French aristocrats maintained strong provincial power bases, and demonstrated their retention of authority outside the capital through dynastic symbols and visual magificence. The La Trémoille did not shun court life, but their persistence in maintaining country seats in Brittany and Poitou prove that centralised bureaucracy, as promoted by the cardinals, had not yet supplanted the traditional way of running the kingdom.

⁶²⁰ Catherine Stanley, Marchioness of Dorchester, tried to ensure the posthumous glory of both her parents by having 'some particulars of [her] father's death and the first siege of Lathom, where [her] mother was in person' included in Dugdale's forthcoming book, *Dorchester to Lucy, countess Huntington*, 26 May 1673, HMC, 78 Hastings, ii. 163.

CHAPTER IV. FAMILY PIETY AND RELIGIOUS POLITICS

Although it is notoriously difficult for historians to grasp the religious convictions underlying an individual's course of actions, the richness of the La Trémoille sources and the private nature of their correspondence shed significant light on the religious background and drive of the duchesse de La Trémoille and the countess of Derby. Marie de La Tour's practice of piety was rooted in her own strict Calvinist upbringing and her reaction against it. Here, a comparison of the educational methods practised by the La Trémoille family with those of the Jansenist duchesse de Liancourt will determine the practical impact of this 'surenchère rigoriste'.⁶²¹ By remaining 'firm in her religion' after her husband's conversion to Catholicism in 1628, Marie de La Tour built up her own reputation as a pillar of the Huguenot community, an image reinforced by the way she dealt with the death of her daughter Elisabeth in 1640. Calvinist eschatology dictated a simple ceremony and saw no use for funeral sermons; but death remained a social construct and, as anthropologists have shown, it was used to represent or reconstruct social order through ritual.⁶²² The final part of this chapter will look at Marie's role in the controversy between André Rivet and Moïse Amyraut of Saumur, and her intervention in favour of Alexandre Morus. It will assess to what extent Marie's religious understanding was shaped by her sister-in-law's experience of the English Civil War, and what motivated her to arbitrate between opposing religious factions.

⁶²¹ The term has been coined by Jacques Solé, *Le débat entre Protestants et Catholiques français de 1598 à 1685*, 4 vols. (Lille, 1985), iii. 1407-36.

⁶²² Craig M. Koslofsky, *The Reformation of the Dead. Death and Ritual in Early Modern Germany, 1450-1700* (Basingstoke, 2000), 7. See Peter Metcalf and Richard Huntington, *Celebration of Death: the Anthropology of Mortuary Ritual* (Cambridge, 1991).

A.) Religious Education and Moral Rigorism

1.) Transmitting the Faith

The duc de La Trémoille's conversion in 1628 threw into question the whole family's commitment to the Protestant cause. All hope rested on Duchess Marie, a feeling expressed by the Calvinist scholar André Rivet when he prayed for God to preserve her 'en cette illustre maison pour y maintenir en vous sa principale bénédiction, & la faire par vous repasser en vos héritiers'.⁶²³ Marie de La Tour was thus expected to fulfil the traditional female role of conveying religious traditions from one generation to the next, despite the fact that, in a mixed marriage, children were generally supposed to adopt the confession of their father.⁶²⁴ The La Trémoille seemed to have followed a model of mixed confessions that was relatively rare in France, but customary in some German principalities, where sons followed the religion of their father and daughters were brought up in the confession of their mother.⁶²⁵ Elisabeth de La Trémoille was baptised in the Protestant temple of Vitré the very same week her father's conversion was announced in that city, and was greeted with a *Te Deum*, processions and bonfires.⁶²⁶ The haste with which this baptism took place – Elisabeth being but six days old – points to the political nature of the ceremony. It functioned as a sign to the population of Vitré that violence against the Protestant community would not be condoned. When Marie left Vitré in October 1628, she abandoned Elisabeth there, as a living symbol of the

⁶²³ Rivet to Marie, 25 Apr. 1634, 1AP 353/212.

⁶²⁴ Elisabeth Labrousse, *Conscience et conviction. Etudes sur le XVIIe siècle* (Paris and Oxford, 1996), 103.

⁶²⁵ Gregory Hanlon, *Confession and Community in Seventeenth-Century France: Catholic and Protestant Coexistence in Aquitaine* (Philadelphia, 1993), 218; Dagmar Freist, 'Religious Difference and the Experience of Widowhood in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Germany', *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. S. Cavallo and L. Warner (Harlow, 1999), 174. Henri-Charles and Louis-Maurice de La Trémoille were given a Catholic tutor, Monsieur Allard, whose letters, mostly addressed to the duchess, are kept in 1AP 642.

⁶²⁶ Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 97; Marie to Elisabeth of Nassau, 12 Aug. 1628, AN, 273AP 180. Although Catholics and Protestants recognised the other baptism as valid, the confession of the godparents (in this case the dowager duchesse de Bouillon and Turenne) was very important, Labrousse, *Conscience*, 110.

family's unbroken commitment to Protestantism. The duchess was also responsible for her eldest son's decision to reconvert once he was of age, nursing his anti-catholic feelings throughout his childhood and supporting his departure to Holland and later to England, where André Rivet and Lady Strange encouraged him to renounce his father's religion.⁶²⁷ The duchess arranged Henri-Charles' marriage to a Protestant princess, Amalia of Hesse-Cassel, and raised their children at Thouars. According to Colbert de Croissy, the duke tolerated

que ses petits enfants soient instruits chez lui en ladite R.P.R. par des ministres domestiques ... par une trop grande complaisance qu'il a pour madame sa femme.⁶²⁸

Charlotte-Amélie de La Trémoille explained that her grandmother took 'much care to instruct me, and above all in the religion'.⁶²⁹ In her self-portrait, the five-year-old wrote: 'Taime fort à lire, & principalement la parole de Dieu... Je suis fort craignant Dieu; j'aime fort à faire sa volonté, & j'espère qu'il me benira'.⁶³⁰ All attempts to convert her failed, and Charlotte-Amélie was the only of Tarente's children who was allowed to remain Protestant after her father's final conversion in 1670.⁶³¹

2.) 'French' Education and its Critics

Growing up in Sedan

Marie de la Tour herself grew up in Sedan, an independent principality known since the 1570s as 'little Geneva'. Social discipline was applied by the *consistoire*, and consisted, for instance, in the imposition of a sober black and grey dress code for all inhabitants

⁶²⁷ Marie to Elisabeth of Nassau, 26 May 1630, AN, 273AP 180.

⁶²⁸ 'Rapport au roi', ed. Dugast, 94-5.

⁶²⁹ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 44.

⁶³⁰ 'Portrait de la fille de Mme la princesse de Tarente, âgée de cinq ans et demy, escrit par elle-mesme à Paris', written June 1658, *Divers portraits*, ed. Montpensier (n.p., 1659), 64-5.

⁶³¹ After Tarente's death in 1672 the king appointed her uncle Laval (member of the Oratoire) and the cardinal de Bouillon guardians of her siblings (Charles, Frédéric-Guillaume and Marie-Sylvie) who were to be raised in the Catholic faith, 1AP 439/75, reproduced in *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 165-7.

and the prohibition of gold or silver adornments for aristocrats.⁶³² Prominent scholars such as Daniel Tilenus and Pierre Du Moulin taught at the Academy of Sedan and gave private tuitions to Marie's brothers. Since Tilenus held a respected position in the Bouillon household from 1600 to 1619, it is feasible that Marie herself was influenced by his ideas.⁶³³ At Sedan, the rules of the *consistoire* were observed strictly: theatre was proscribed, as was music and dancing (except as a physical exercise for the members of the Academy).⁶³⁴ When Marie's mother, Elizabeth of Nassau, arrived in Sedan in 1595, she was proud to prove wrong those who had expected her to be *toute courtisane* and spend six hours in getting dressed.⁶³⁵ Marie de La Tour was, as her shopping lists for Rozemont illustrate, much interested in fashion and finery, yet affected later a disregard for such vanity:

J'ai pris peu soin à m'ajuster, et en mes habillements j'ai toujours également plaint le temps et la dépense, et je ne me suis jamais regardée en mon miroir qu'avec cette pensée que dans peu d'heures je déferais tout ce que je faisais. Je me contentais que mes habits fussent propres et modestes, et j'étais bien aise qu'ils devançassent mon temps plutôt que d'en être devancés.⁶³⁶

When Henri de La Trémoille first met Marie in 1619, he thought her 'abillée en bourgeoise', an apparent insult, since noble culture considered working for one's living a social stigma.⁶³⁷ Yet, since Protestant ethics valorised work and rejected idleness as sinful, 'bourgeois' might not have only negative connotations.

⁶³² P. Congar, J. Lecaillon and J. Rousseau (eds.), *Sedan et le pays sedanais. Vingt siècles d'histoire* (Marseille, 1978), 199, 214-5.

⁶³³ Tilenus was later blamed for having inculcated young Turenne with Arminian and pro-Catholic ideas, Huart, *Lettres de Turenne*, 35; Susan Rosa, "'Il était aussi possible que cette conversion fût sincère": Turenne's Conversion in Context', *French Historical Studies* 18/3 (1994), 653.

⁶³⁴ Congar, *Sedan*, 216, 290-1.

⁶³⁵ Elisabeth of Nassau to Charlotte-Brabantine, 1 Sept. 1595, 1AP333/4.

⁶³⁶ 'Portrait de Mme la Duchesse de La Trémoille', *Portraits littéraires*, ed. C. de Bouyer, 113. Her daughter went one step further and professed 'beaucoup d'aversion pour la parure', admitting 'Il est vrai que la négligence que j'ai pour cela est excessive', 'Portrait de Mlle de La Trémoille', *id.*, 119-121, at 121.

⁶³⁷ '... Il me recognust incontinent: grand maison. Je pens avoir pris le pied en ce habit là', Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 21 Feb. 1619, 1AP 430/9. Marc Fumaroli, *La diplomatie de l'esprit. De Montaigne à La Fontaine* (Paris, 1994), 322-3.

'French' Educational Methods

Charlotte de La Trémoille grew up in a considerably more liberal religious environment than Marie. Her religious education, based on readings of Pibrac's and Zamariel's works as well as the Psalms, had not been neglected,⁶³⁸ but she was showered with gifts from an early age, and never taught to live austere.⁶³⁹ Her step-grandmother, Louise de Coligny, believed that

Elle seroit aussi sage que vous le désirez, si son petit esprit se pouvoit arrêter; mais il faut que ce soit l'âge qui lui apporte cet arrêt: car il lui faut bien tenir la bride haute, mais ne la trop tenir courte, car cela la rend mélancolique et malade.⁶⁴⁰

This educational maxim corresponded to Marie de La Tour's view that as long as her granddaughter did not disrespect God, nor female modesty, 'le reste se corrigeoit avec l'âge, & outre ces deux points, il falloit laisser liberté entière aux enfants'.⁶⁴¹ This education 'à la manière de France en toute liberté', subscribed to by the *éminence grise* of Protestantism, Duplessis-Mornay,⁶⁴² was severely criticised by Charlotte-Amélie's mother, the princesse de Tarente:

[Ma mère] vouloit ses enfants dans une grande contrainte, elle ne me voyoit jamais sans me dire des duretés sur ma saleté et sur mon libertinage, de sorte que je ne l'aimois guère aussi & que je la craignois comme du feu.⁶⁴³

Mademoiselle de Bouillon and Madame de Turenne also considered the girl utterly spoiled, and tried to raise her in the Hôtel de Turenne.⁶⁴⁴ We shall see later that the

⁶³⁸ Charlotte to Charlotte-Brabantine, n.d., 1AP 386/2.

⁶³⁹ Charlotte to Charlotte-Brabantine, 3 Feb. 1609, 1AP 386/9.

⁶⁴⁰ Quoted by Léon Marlet, *Charlotte de La Trémoille, comtesse de Derby, 1599-1664* (Paris, 1895), 14; Raoul Gout, *Le miroir des dames chrétiennes*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1935-7), ii. 100. The earl of Derby held similar views on education: 'Bring your children up with learning and obedience, yet without austerity; praise them openly and reprehend them secretly', 'Second Letter to his Son', *Stanley Papers* III/3, CS 70 (1867), 42-7, at 44.

⁶⁴¹ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 29.

⁶⁴² Duplessis-Mornay asserted that 'nothing is more essential than to give children freedom and privacy, for in this way they uncover their true nature, including any bad inclinations, and one can then correct them very gently', quoted by Mark Motley, *Becoming a French Aristocrat. The Education of the Court Nobility, 1580-1715* (Princeton, 1990), 65.

⁶⁴³ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 39-40; Amalia to Hanibal, 23 Jan. 1663, 1AP 439/56.

⁶⁴⁴ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 38-9.

opposition between Marie de La Tour and the Hôtel de Turenne did not limit itself to educational matters.

Moral rigorism was by no means the sole preserve of Protestants.⁶⁴⁵ The Jansenist duchesse de Liancourt composed a *Règlement* advocating the use of the whip for children over the age of three, 'jusqu'à ce qu'ils ayent la raison forte pour craindre autre chose'. In order to curb their 'instinct' and 'passions', one had to break their wills at an early age by breaking their small designs.⁶⁴⁶ The greatest moral danger, and that which posed a real threat to one's spiritual salvation, was the shallow, pleasure-seeking, corrupt world of the court. Novels and plays were considered particularly dangerous.⁶⁴⁷ Duchess Marie did not share these concerns, although her personal readings were of a devotional and preceptive nature:

les livres qui sont plus selon mon goût, après ceux de dévotion, ce sont ceux qui règlent les moeurs par les exemples et par les préceptes. La lecture des romans m'a toujours été insupportable, parce que ils n'apprennent que ce que je voulois ignorer.⁶⁴⁸

Reading novels was not a pastime all Protestant women disapproved of; nor did it appear to dilute piety and theological awareness. The marquise de Castelnau ordered in 1617 a copy of the New Testament and 'tous les petits livres qu'a faits nouvellement M. du Moulin, tant contre le jésuite Arnoux, que *De la Juste Providence de Dieu*'. In the same letter, she declared that her mother-in-law, Charlotte de Gontaut-Biron, eagerly awaited the third part of *L'Astrée* and wished to read the first two parts to her grandchildren.⁶⁴⁹ An anonymous educational tract of which Marie conserved a

⁶⁴⁵ See Jean-Louis Quantin, *Le rigorisme chrétien* (Paris, 2001).

⁶⁴⁶ Liancourt, *Règlement*, 131-3.

⁶⁴⁷ Liancourt, *Règlement*, 100: 'Le demon vous presentera aussi des Romans qui auront de la vogue, ... et alors on se sent si froid pour la prière et pour la lecture spirituelle, et si fort en goust pour les folies du monde, que si Dieu ne fait une grace très particuliere, on demeure avec un coeur tout changé'.

⁶⁴⁸ 'Portrait de Mme la Duchesse de La Trémoille', 113.

⁶⁴⁹ Quoted by Gout, *Le miroir*, ii. 133-4. On the controversy between Du Moulin and Arnoux, see Jacques Pannier, *L'Eglise Réformée de Paris sous Louis XIII, 1610-1621* (Paris, 1922), 387-400.

manuscript copy entitled *Sur l'éducation d'une princesse* declared that novels were an important part of a girl's education, and should be given to her after she had acquired a certain degree of 'modestie'.⁶⁵⁰ Dances and balls were authorised, if attended moderately and in accordance with 'modestie, dignité et bonne intention'. Likewise, it was emphasised

Que la Magnificence en habits peut fort bien compatir avec la modestie.
Que la Gayeté s'accommode fort bien avec la Modestie.
Que la Modestie n'est point opposée à l'amour.⁶⁵¹

Marie de La Tour agreed with the author that courtly accomplishments and piety/modesty were not mutually exclusive. This contradicts Liancourt's rigoristic teaching, which asserted that 'il n'est pas question qu[e les filles] ayent des graces affectées pour attirer les yeux dans les bals et les assemblées, puis qu'elles n'y doivent même jamais aller'.⁶⁵² *Sur l'éducation d'une princesse* promoted female education in all domains, physics as well as history and religion, in order to further a girl's moral instruction.⁶⁵³ In contrast to the views professed by Protestant scholar André Rivet, who claimed that women did not need to be educated since they had no place in the public sphere,⁶⁵⁴ the anonymous author stated that

L'usage des lettres est infini, tant pour les affaires publiques, que pour les particulières, mais sur tout elles sont utiles pour entretenir l'amitié.⁶⁵⁵

⁶⁵⁰ GAA, 0613/589, *Sur l'éducation d'une princesse*, ii. chapter 18. Research into the authorship of this tract has so far proved fruitless, but certainly merits further investigation.

⁶⁵¹ *Sur l'éducation d'une princesse*, ii. chapters 9, 10, 11. This attitude can be compared to the Salesian conception of wordly devotion, Fumaroli, *Diplomatie*, 327.

⁶⁵² Liancourt, *Règlement*, 132.

⁶⁵³ *Sur l'éducation d'une princesse*, i. chapters 12, 15, 17.

⁶⁵⁴ Rivet debated this question with the learned Anna-Maria van Schurman in *Question célèbre, s'il est nécessaire ou non que les filles soient sçavantes, agitée de part et d'autre par Melle Anne Marie de Schurman, holandoise, et le sieur André Rivet, poitevin* (Paris, 1646).

⁶⁵⁵ *Sur l'éducation d'une princesse*, i. chapitre 11. This insistence on 'amitié' points towards a *précieux* author, as do other statements on marriage and celibacy made by this tract. Marie de La Tour's relation to the *Précieuses* will be analysed in detail in Chapter VI.

Human and Divine Love

Female education was thus considered important in order to maintain links with the 'outside world', a world condemned not only by orthodox Calvinists such as Rivet, but also by Jansenists and Oratorians, so-called 'Catholic Puritans'.⁶⁵⁶ Marie de La Tour's second son Louis-Maurice entered the Oratory at the age of nineteen, much to the dismay of his parents.⁶⁵⁷ The Oratory, founded by Pierre Bérulle in 1611, was a community of priests engaged in pastoral work and the education of parish priests. Bérulle's Augustinianism and his admiration for the Primitive Church influenced the abbé de Saint-Cyran, founder of the Jansenist movement in France. Saint-Cyran held an extreme version of the Bérullian position on the means to individual salvation, regarding retreat from the world as an ideal, that even those who remained in the world should approach as much as possible.⁶⁵⁸ Although Jansenism did not take the issue of justification as far as to claim that salvation could be obtained through faith only (*sola fide*), it shared with Calvinism the belief in the universal truth of the Bible (resulting in a general recommendation to read the Scriptures), and the doctrine of irresistible grace and natural depravity (resulting in a strict distinction between the material world and the world of grace).⁶⁵⁹ Both Jansenists and Oratorians engaged in theological debates with Huguenots in order to proselytise,⁶⁶⁰ and the comte de Laval developed his own blend of missionary zeal. Not content with reforming the Catholic population of Thouars by

⁶⁵⁶ The expression has been coined by Robin Briggs, *Communities of Belief. Cultural and Social Tensions in Early Modern France* (Oxford, 1989), 339-63.

⁶⁵⁷ 'On m'a mandé que le matin VI febv., Mr le Conte de Laval, filz puisné de La Trémoïlle, s'est jetté dans le college des Peres de l'Oratoire, avec une extreme fascherie de ses parens', Rivet to Saumaise, 18 Feb. 1644, *Claude Saumaise et André Rivet. Correspondance échangée entre 1632 et 1648*, ed. Leroy and H. Bots (Amsterdam and Maarssen, 1987), 338.

⁶⁵⁸ Briggs, *Communities*, 347.

⁶⁵⁹ Leszek Kolakowski, *Chrétiens sans Eglise. La conscience religieuse et le lien confessionnel au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1987), 730; Pierre Chaunu, 'Le XVIIe siècle religieux', *Annales ESC* 22/2 (1967), 286-7.

⁶⁶⁰ On the literary joust between Antoine Arnauld and pastor Jean Claude, see Nicolas Schapira, *Un professionnel des lettres au XVIIe siècle. Valentin Conrart: une histoire sociale* (Seyssel, 2003), 311-2. On the Oratory, see L.-J. Méteyer, *L'Académie Protestante de Saumur* (Carrières-sous-Poissy, n.d.), 104-5; François Laplanche, *Orthodoxie et prédication. L'oeuvre d'Aymraut et la querelle de la grâce universelle* (Paris, 1965), 43-4.

holding a forty-hour-long sermon in expiation for the 'desbauches du carnaval',⁶⁶¹ Laval tried to convert Tarente's children years before their father converted.⁶⁶² Laval caused grief to his own father when he attempted to convert his mother,⁶⁶³ and enraged him by denouncing the 'tyrannical' bonds that tied him to his parents:

Tu apelle tiranie le service de l'obéissance que je requiers et q[u]e tu me dois, et non pas un crime le mépris et l'injure qu'un fils dénaturé rend à ceux de qui il tient la vie, l'honneur et les biens ... Tu demeures plusieurs années sans me visiter et requis de vostre mère par un excès de bonté de venir la voir après deux ans 4 mois d'absence, tu luy refuses ta veue, avec quelque raison toutesfois pour ce qu'elle auroit horreur de voir un fils le plus desnaturé que la terre ait jamais porté ny supporté.⁶⁶⁴

The Oratoire's rejection of family life was based on the concept that divine love, not human love, is man's only fulfilment. St. Augustine's rule, 'one cannot love any creature without sin', was also the foundation of Jansenist and strict Calvinist conceptions of Christian morality, but the duchess was unable to abide by that rule.⁶⁶⁵ Her attachment to her daughter Elisabeth outlasted the girl's death in 1640, and the duchess showed the same affection for her granddaughter Charlotte-Amélie, '[l]'aimant éperdûment comme elle [l]'aimoit'.⁶⁶⁶

3.) 'Court Calvinism'

Moral rigorism was more important to the counter-reformist movements than to French Protestants, because it was seen as essential to the spiritual 'conversion' their members

⁶⁶¹ Imbert, *Histoire de Thouars*, 301.

⁶⁶² Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 50.

⁶⁶³ 'Je m'estonne que vous voulés donner des leçons et aprendre à une de qui vous devez dépendre puisqu'après le service de Dieu, le nostre et celui de la famille doit estre vostre principal object... Je souhaite que des sérieuses réflexions sur cela vous fassent changer de conduite et nous donnent plus de satisfaction que nous n'en avons reçu et toute la famille jusques à présent', Henri to Louis-Maurice, 12 Dec. 1662, 1AP 396/308.

⁶⁶⁴ Henri to Louis-Maurice, 23 Dec. 1662, 1AP 396/314-5.

⁶⁶⁵ 'Pour les Jansénistes... toute affection sensible (et non pas seulement la passion amoureuse) est par sa nature même entachée de concupiscence, "on ne peut sans péché aimer aucune créature"...', Mme de Sévigné to Mme de Grignan, 26 June 1675, *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné, de sa famille et de ses amis*, ed. Monmerqué, 12 vols. (Paris, 1862), iii. 493. See Quantin, *Le rigorisme*, 40-4, 86.

⁶⁶⁶ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 47.

underwent. For certain Jansenist aristocrats such as the duchesse de Liancourt or the duc de Luynes austerity of lifestyle became a means to differentiate themselves from their fellow Catholics. Protestant grandees, on the contrary, stood out by their religious practices, and often aspired to blend in with the rest of court society. This led to some conflict with the moral authority of the consistory. Turenne reported that Duchess Marie had been rebuked by the ministers of Charenton for her participation in royal festivities:

M. d'Ailly ... censura ceux qui alloint au bal pour danser ou voir danser les autres et dit cela comme pour elle, car il estoit allé à Charenton dans le carosse de Madame vostre soeur où elle estoit.⁶⁶⁷

The consistory could threaten its members with excommunication,⁶⁶⁸ yet in practice the sentence was used only in extreme cases, and mostly against members of the clergy rather than lay people.⁶⁶⁹ Since there were many material advantages in abjuration, pastors were careful not to antagonise powerful members of their congregation.⁶⁷⁰ Moreover, some pastors, notably at Charenton, were themselves drawn to a worldly life. Jean Daillé's son and biographer declared that 'sa piété n'estoit ni severe ni sauvage, & il ne croyoit pas qu'il fust defendu de rire'.⁶⁷¹ He passed for 'the most elegant preacher in France',⁶⁷² and had no qualms about using the La Trémoille coach to Charenton. Having grown accustomed to the slick performances of the Charenton ministers, the duchesse de La Trémoille was disappointed by the provincialism of the preachers at Thouars:

Mme a trouvé le nouveau temple fort beau et bien rempli le jour de la Sainte Cène. Mais on dit qu'elle fait un peu la dégoûtée des ministres de campagne et regrette toujours les presches de Charenton.⁶⁷³

⁶⁶⁷ Turenne to Elisabeth of Nassau, 2 Feb. 1627, *Lettres*, ed. Huart, 58.

⁶⁶⁸ As was Mme Duplessis-Mornay in 1584 for her extravagant hairstyle, Gout, *Le miroir*, ii. 83-90. See Raymond A. Mentzer, 'La place et le rôle des femmes dans les églises réformées', *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 113 (2001), 124.

⁶⁶⁹ For instance Théophile Brachet de La Milletière, excommunicated in 1645, R. J. M. van de Schoor, *The Irenical Theology of Théophile Brachet de La Milletière (1588-1665)* (Studies in the History of Christian Thought 59, Leiden, 1995), 3.

⁶⁷⁰ Labrousse, *Conscience*, 105; Quantin, *Le rigorisme*, 114, 139-40.

⁶⁷¹ Quoted by Schapira, *Conrart*, 308.

⁶⁷² Pineau to Rivet, 20 May 1645, UBL, BPL286/II/30.

⁶⁷³ Pineau to Rivet, 6 Jul. 1644, UBL, BPL286/III/49.

When the duchess was looking for a new pastor for Vitré, Pineau recommended Louis Faverau, assuring her that he was not 'un ministre de campagne',⁶⁷⁴ but a graduate from the academy of Saumur, which ranked highly in the duchess's favour. Another student from Saumur, Laurent Drelincourt, son of the influential pastor Charles Drelincourt, was well received at the Hôtel de La Trémoille, where he held a *proposition* 'qui mérita l'applaudissement de toute la compagnie'.⁶⁷⁵ Huguenot ministers became increasingly imbued with court culture, as the national synod's prohibition of the wearing of 'manches ouvertes, manchettes flottantes, glands, grands collets, cheveux longs' among pastors indicates.⁶⁷⁶ Marie de La Tour and her sister-in-law were drawn more to liberal 'court Calvinism' than to the strict moral discipline which characterised the 'civic Calvinism' of the urban elites.⁶⁷⁷ At The Hague, Charlotte danced in a courtly ballet in the presence of the king and queen of Bohemia. She reported that the Persian ambassador 'croyoit que toutes les femmes ne valaient rien qui dansent, mais l'on l'ôta de cette opinion'.⁶⁷⁸ Marie de La Tour continued to enjoy courtly entertainment, such as the first performance of Luigi Rossi's tragi-comedy *Orpheus* at the Palais-Royal in 1647.⁶⁷⁹ Whereas her own mother had issued a set of rules prohibiting the usage of tobacco and *jeux de paumes*,⁶⁸⁰ Marie had a billiard table and *jeu de dames* in her apartments at Thouars, and asked her gardeners to construct vast *jeux de mail* at Vitré and Ollivet.⁶⁸¹ At Sedan, music was not allowed, with the exception of psalmodies, because it was considered to drown out Christ's voice and distract from his teaching.⁶⁸²

⁶⁷⁴ Pineau to Rivet, 3 Sept. 1649, UBL, BPL286/IV/86.

⁶⁷⁵ Pineau to Rivet, 17 Sept. 1649, UBL, BPL286/IV/88.

⁶⁷⁶ Couët du Viviers to Ferry, 28 Jan. 1660, 'Lettres de Jacques Couët du Viviers à Paul Ferry', ed. R. Mazauric, *BSHPF* 104 (1958), 235.

⁶⁷⁷ Quantin, *Le rigorisme*, 108.

⁶⁷⁸ Charlotte to Marie, 30 Mar. 1626, 1AP 386/33.

⁶⁷⁹ Pineau to Rivet, 10 May 1647, UBL, BPL286/III/124

⁶⁸⁰ Congar, *Sedan*, 216-7.

⁶⁸¹ Inventory 1652, 1AP 1063; Grimaudet to Marie, 15 Nov. 1625 and 20 Nov. 1625, 1AP 657.

⁶⁸² Congar, *Sedan*, 290; Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, *circa* 1619, 1AP 431/88; Françoise Chevalier, *Prêcher sous l'Edit de Nantes. La prédication réformée au XVIIe siècle en France* (Geneva, 1994), 146.

Marie, on the other hand, appears to have had musicians playing 'profane' lullabies for her in a little gallery connected to her chamber at Thouars.⁶⁸³ She attended, *incognito*, a Catholic service held by Père André, an Augustinian famous for his preaching against luxury. The priest recognised her and described Christ's coming to earth with

six beaux chevaux gris pommelées, un beau carrosse de velours rouge avec des passemens d'or, une belle housse dessus, bien des armoiries, bien des pages, bien des laquais vestus de jaune passémenté de noir et de blanc.

This was an exact description of the duchess's carriage, used by the priest to illustrate the gap between ducal extravagancy and Christian modesty.⁶⁸⁴ The baptism of Marie's grandson Charles-Henri-Belgique, the future duc de La Trémoille, in July 1655 provided an occasion for great splendour. A chronicler describes the infant's silver robe, set with precious stones, and gives a detailed account of the magnificent supper served from seven in the evening until four in the morning. Wine 'à la discrétion de chacun' was served not only to the high dignitaries that had been invited, but also to the local *bourgeois* who gathered to light fireworks in support of the prince.⁶⁸⁵ The princesse de Tarente enjoyed such festivities; she freely admitted that

les grandes fêtes ne m'embarassent point; et si je ne suis pas faite pour elles, elle le sont pour moi, puisqu'elles me divertissent. La cour, le grand monde, et surtout la comédie, me plaisent fort.⁶⁸⁶

Yet the harsh treatment she inflicted on her daughter Charlotte-Amélie might point towards some repressed feeling of guilt. In her self-portrait, she confessed to her lack of devoutness, and begged God 'qu'il me fasse la grâce de mieux vivre, afin de bien mourir'.⁶⁸⁷ In Calvinist doctrine, a 'good death', resulting in the salvation of one's soul, was not causally linked to having led a 'good life'. Yet a life of piety and charity were

⁶⁸³ Brackenhoffer, *Voyage*, 240.

⁶⁸⁴ Tallemant, *Historiettes*, ii. 163.

⁶⁸⁵ BNF, MS Clairambault 806/76: *Les solennitez du Baptême du Duc de Thouars, fils du Prince de Tarente* (Paris, 1655); Tarente, *Mémoires*, 172.

⁶⁸⁶ 'Portrait de Mme la Princesse de Tarente', *Portraits littéraires*, ed. C. de Bouyer, 107-11, at 110.

⁶⁸⁷ 'Portrait de la fille de Madame la Princesse de Tarente', *Divers portraits*, ed. Montpensier, 65.

seen as a sign that one belonged to the elect. Calvin himself considered earthly life as 'justly classed among divine blessings which are not to be despised', but recommended that the faithful be 'stimulated to aspire to the future life' by rejecting the 'present life'.⁶⁸⁸ The following section will examine to what extent this duality informed the piety of the duchesse de La Trémoille, and her grieving over her daughter. It will also determine whether Marie and Charlotte stoically accepted ordeals of that nature as divine providence.

B.) Attitudes towards Mortality and Death

1.) Divine Punishment

The Language of Vanity

The traditional dichotomy between worldly pleasures and spiritual fulfilment was rooted as deeply in French Protestant culture as it was in Jansenist literature. A piece of devotional writing, attributed to the duchess herself by nineteenth-century archivists, expounds on that theme. 'Saintes inspirations et divine vocations' are compared to human conversations – as sweet and agreeable, yet infinitely greater: 'c'est un dieu qui parle et non pas un homme [sic], un createur et non une creature'. But listening to God's voice is not enough, one has to obey it, and leave behind – as Saint Paul did – one's parents, friends and 'affections du monde'. A stark opposition is drawn between the language of God and the Holy Ghost ('discours de charité, piété et religieux') and the worldly language of vanity.⁶⁸⁹ Since it is the only devotional work ascribed to Marie de La Tour that survives, it is impossible to assert its authenticity, but its main theme, the Holy Spirit and the fiery tongues of divine inspiration, suggest that it was rather a

⁶⁸⁸ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols. (London, 1962), ii. 25, 27; Donald K. McKim, 'Some Aspects of Death and Dying in Puritanism', *Calviniana*, ed. R.V. Schnucker (Kirksville, Mo., 1988), 174-5.

⁶⁸⁹ 1AP 429/72.

Pentecostal sermon, copied by or given to the duchess. Sermons were avidly collected by Protestant noblewomen: some circulated as manuscripts, others were printed on behalf of an aristocratic patroness.⁶⁹⁰ André Rivet's sermons and letters were regularly sent to Marie *via* his nephew Pineau, who reported that she read them out loud to her family and friends.⁶⁹¹ Marie de La Tour had two religious mottos, which she used repeatedly as an *ex libris*. The first motto, 'Qui craint Dieu sort de tout' (Who fears God stands above everything), adorns the front page of a manuscript copy of the duc de Bouillon's memoirs, the first page of a collection of Bible quotations,⁶⁹² and the first page of each of the four volumes of her *Recueil des synodes nationaux tenus en France depuis l'année 1559 jusqu'en l'an 1660*.⁶⁹³ The second motto, 'Terrae contagia nescit' (S/he does not know the contagion of the earth), can be found in combination with her emblem, depicting a phoenix, on the front page of her *Recueil de passages de l'Ecriture Sainte*, and is also included in her 'worldly' collection of emblems, known as the *Recueil de devises*.⁶⁹⁴ The phoenix symbolises the soul's immortality and Christ's resurrection,⁶⁹⁵ and the Latin motto opposes the duchess's purity and innocence to the pollution and infectiousness of the earth and earthly life. The language of vanity, reflecting on the transience of earthly glories, was used most effectively in relation to death and sickness. Having witnessed Condé's funeral, Pineau commented:

Sic transit gloria mundi. C'est bientost fait des Princes de mesme que des petits clers qu'il plaît à Dieu. Si nous leur sommes inférieurs en la condition de vivre, ils sont nos égaux en la nécessité de mourir.⁶⁹⁶

⁶⁹⁰ Chevalier, *Prêcher*, 10; Pierre Du Moulin to Charlotte-Brabantine, *circa* 1609, 'Trois lettres olographes de Pierre de Moulin', *BSHPF* 8 (1859), 136.

⁶⁹¹ Pineau to Rivet, 20 Sept. 1647, UBL, BPL286/III/157.

⁶⁹² GAA, 0613/692f.

⁶⁹³ Antonin Bourrel, 'Un Recueil manuscrit', *BSHPF* 11 (1862), 107-8.

⁶⁹⁴ ARS, MS 2230, MS 5217, planche 13; Appendix c-6.

⁶⁹⁵ Hans Biedermann and Michel Cazenave, *Encyclopédie des symboles*, s.v. 'phénix'; *Devises et emblemes d'amour, moralisez* (Paris, 1658), 45.

⁶⁹⁶ Pineau to Rivet, 18 Jan. 1647, UBL, BPL286/III/101.

The countess of Derby expressed similar feelings when the duke of Argyll, once the most powerful man in Scotland, was taken to trial,⁶⁹⁷ and when the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton and Bradshaw were disinterred at the Restoration: 'Nothing makes me recognise so clearly the vanity of the world, and that we have no hope but in the fear of God'.⁶⁹⁸ André Rivet preached that 'le monde trompe, qu'il passe & sa convoitise, & qu'il faut penser ailleurs',⁶⁹⁹ and urged the La Trémoille to take Duke Henri's injury as a warning from God not to kneel in front of the Idol.⁷⁰⁰ Some years later, mourning the death of Elisabeth de La Trémoille, Drelincourt wrote a consolation letter expressing his hope

que cet exemple pourra servir a Monseigneur vostre mary, et que cela luy donnera un degoust du monde, et de la vanité de cette vie périssable et un désir ardent de la gloire immortelle, et du vray et unique chemin qui y conduit.⁷⁰¹

Divine Providence

For Protestants and Catholics alike, disease and healing were part of the divine plan or providence. The topos of a life-altering disease, resulting in spiritual conversion and commitment to a more godly life, was so commonplace in seventeenth-century literature that people were surprised when the duc de Liancourt did *not* change his libertine lifestyle after falling severely ill.⁷⁰² In 1640, Marie de La Tour's sickness contributed to Tarente's conversion. According to his own memoirs, she wrote him 'que j'étois sur le point de la perdre elle-même, si je ne lui donnois la consolation d'embrasser la Religion qu'elle avoit toujours professée'.⁷⁰³ Some years later, the duchess fell

⁶⁹⁷ Charlotte to Marie, 16 July 1660, 1AP 385/32.

⁶⁹⁸ Charlotte to Marie 31 Jan. 1661, possibly in 1AP 385/47 (unfortunately destroyed); Witt, *Lady of Latham*, 263-4. Her husband wrote in his 'Private Devotions': 'Lord, when I look on Vanitie (all that is on Earth is vanitie), make me value nothing in comparison of Thee, but make me esteeme all things loss and dross in comparison of Thee', *Stanley Papers* III/3, CS 70 (1867), 5-112, at 60.

⁶⁹⁹ Rivet to Marie, 25 Apr. 1634, 1AP 353/212.

⁷⁰⁰ Rivet to Charlotte-Brabantine, 3 Dec. 1630, 1AP 353/210.

⁷⁰¹ 1AP 433, ltr. 85 (Drelincourt).

⁷⁰² Liancourt, *Règlement*, 51. On the conversion of Mme de Duplessis-Mornay, see Licques, *Philippe de Mornay*, 7-9.

⁷⁰³ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 305.

seriously ill after having agreed, out of worldly considerations, to marry her daughter to the eldest son of the Catholic duc de La Meilleraye. Marie considered her illness 'une juste punition de Dieu', and swore to prevent the marriage at all costs.⁷⁰⁴ The abjurations of the duc de La Trémoille and the duc de Bouillon were regarded by their relatives as punishment ('châtiment') that could only be lifted by God himself.⁷⁰⁵ Marie's providentialism was moderated by her hope to influence God's will through ardent prayer or by preferring 'les intérêts de son service à toutes sortes d'avantages',⁷⁰⁶ while Charlotte de La Trémoille's pessimistic providentialism had been moulded by the experience of the Civil War. During the first siege of Lathom, she ordered a public thanksgiving for the capture of the enemy mortar. Yet five years later she took the opposite stance, asserting that 'c[est]es par tribulations et misères qu'il nous faut parvenir aux cieux', and that temporal benefits could not be viewed as a sign of God's grace.⁷⁰⁷ She accepted the death of her new-born ('s'il plaist à Dieu nos malheurs sont innévitables'), and turned to God for solace ('sans l'assistance de Dieu je ne sais ce que je ferois').⁷⁰⁸ The argument was made even more forcefully after her husband's execution in October 1651. Charlotte had lost the will to live, but

j'ay senti des merveillesse assistance de mon Dieu et de ne m'estre point désespéré comme humainement des sages esprits plus fort que le mien s'y pussent portés, mais sait saite Providence que m'a conduite et qui, dans ma misère, me donne suget d'admirer sa bonté envers moy.⁷⁰⁹

Divine providence was understood to determine the causality of death, but the interpretation of God's will varied. It could be a sign of God's wrath, or, on the contrary, a sign of his favour. According to the duchess, God took her youngest son's life because

⁷⁰⁴ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 41-2.

⁷⁰⁵ Charlotte to Charlotte-Brabantine, 2/12 Sept. 1628, 1AP 384/50; Marie to Elisabeth of Nassau, 12 Aug. 1628, AN, 273AP 180.

⁷⁰⁶ Marie to Elisabeth of Nassau, 8 May 1632 and 9 Nov. 1635, AN, 273AP 180; Marie to Tarente, 2 Mar. 1651, 1AP 430/103.

⁷⁰⁷ Draper, *House of Stanley*, 132; Charlotte to Marie, 27 Sept./7 Oct. 1649, 1AP 384/88.

⁷⁰⁸ Charlotte to Marie, *circa* 1629, 1AP 384/53.

⁷⁰⁹ Charlotte to Marie, 25 Mar. 1652, 1AP 384/102.

he wanted to prevent his *tonsure*.⁷¹⁰ Three years earlier, the death of her daughter Elisabeth had equally been treated as a divine favour, and the edifying circumstances of her death as a sign of His grace.

2.) The Exemplary Death of Elisabeth de La Trémoille

Elisabeth de La Trémoille's death is related in a *récit des dernières heures*, a literary genre in itself, analysed by Marianne Carbonnier-Burkard, who places them in the context of *ars moriendi* textbooks.⁷¹¹ Carbonnier-Burkard asserts that the *récit* replaced the funeral sermon, which had been rejected by Calvinists.⁷¹² Beyond moral edification and spiritual consolation, *La Mort et les dernières paroles de Mademoiselle Elizabeth de La Trémoille, aagée de douze ans* also replaced a funeral sermon in that it was used for mnemonic and dynastic purposes. Eighty-eight *lettres de consolation* written to her mother, the duchess, were copied by hand into a black morocco leather volume, which contained the *récit*. The cover of the booklet reflected the mourning of the family, its pattern alternating tiny silver teardrops and the symbols ●● (two interlaced lambdas) for La Trémoille and La Tour.⁷¹³ Although the *récit* had not been printed, it must have circulated in manuscript form, as most letters of condolence refer to it explicitly.⁷¹⁴ It is constructed as an eyewitness account, and includes a good deal of direct speech. The reason the *récit* was so highly valued by the duchess and her Protestant friends was not

⁷¹⁰ 'Mme de La Trémoille m'a bien consolé d'ailleurs, m'advoüant que Dieu avoit frapé de maladie son troisieme fils la nuit dont le matin il devoit estre mené chez l'Arch[evêque] de Paris, pour recevoir la tonsure. Elle tesmoigne recognoistre en cela une grande faveur de Dieu, comme je luy avoy touché', Rivet to Sarrau, 21 Dec. 1643, *Correspondance intégrale (1641-1650) d'André Rivet et de Claude Saurrau*, ed. P. Leroy and H. Bots, 3 vols. (Amsterdam and Maarssen, 1978-1982), ii. 158.

⁷¹¹ Marianne Carbonnier-Burkard, 'L'art de mourir réformé. Les récits des "dernières heures" chez les réformés français', *Homo religiosus autour de Jean Delumeau* (Paris, 1997), 99-107; Eadem, 'Les manuels réformés de préparation à la mort', *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 217 (2000), 363-80. Mainstream Catholic attitudes towards death have been analysed by Roger Chartier, 'Les arts de mourir' and Daniel Roche, 'La mémoire de la mort', *Annales ESC* 31 (1976), 51-119.

⁷¹² Carbonnier, 'L'art de mourir', 101

⁷¹³ IAP 433. The narrative and the first sixty-five letters of condolence have been published by J.

Andrieux, 'Lettres de consolation a Madame de La Trémouille', *BHSPF* 10 (1861), 259-69, 356-85.

⁷¹⁴ The 'divines paroles qu'elle a dites' are alluded to by the letters of the pastors, IAP 433, ltr. 81-88. See ltr. 28 (Lady Strange), ltr. 52 (marquise de Duras), and ltr. 26 (princess of Orange).

limited to its edificatory qualities, but resided in the fact that Elisabeth had obtained a significant promise from her father: her sister Marie, then aged eight, should be brought up in the Reformed faith.⁷¹⁵ The letters of consolation attached to *La Mort et les dernieres parolles de Mademoiselle Elizabeth* emanate from Catholic as well as Protestant mourners. Raymond Baustert's analysis of consolation letters published in the first half of the seventeenth century finds that there were surprisingly few variations between the language and topoi used by Catholic and Huguenot writers.⁷¹⁶ All published letters written on the death of a daughter were addressed to the mother, not the father. Similarly, all eighty-eight letters on Elisabeth's death are addressed to the duchess; only three urge her to pass their condolence to the duke.⁷¹⁷ The majority of the letters were written by women,⁷¹⁸ which contrasts strikingly with the absence of women from the publishing world, as only one out of the forty-eight authors listed by Baustert was female.⁷¹⁹ No Catholic clergyman – apart from Cardinal Richelieu – wrote to the duchess, although there are four letters by nuns.⁷²⁰ The clerics offering consolation are Abraham Rambour and Pierre Du Moulin from Sedan; Jean Mestrezat, Charles

⁷¹⁵ [To her father:] 'je ne vous demande qu'une chose, que vous laissiez ma sœur et ma bonne maman en ma place', adding 'Mon Dieu que je serois heureuse que ma mort soit cause du salut de ma sœur', 1AP 433.

⁷¹⁶ Raymond Baustert, *La consolation érudite. Huit études sur les sources des lettres de consolation de 1600 à 1650* Biblio 17-141 (Tübingen, 2003), 219. There were some differences in *ars moriendi* books, where Protestant writers stressed the importance of prayers emanating from the dying person him/herself over last rites, Carbonnier, 'Les manuels réformés', 376-9. On the shared aspects of Protestant and Catholic attitudes towards death, see Jean Delumeau, *Sin and Fear. The Emergence of a Western Guilt Culture 13th-18th Centuries* (New York, 1990), 505-22.

⁷¹⁷ 1AP 433, ltr. 11 (Mme d'Aiguillon), ltr. 17 (Mlle de Bouillon), and ltr. 26 (princess of Orange).

⁷¹⁸ Fifty-four letters were written by women, including two by Mademoiselle de Bouillon, and thirty-four letters were written by men, including eight by pastors, 1AP 433. The same is true for earlier 'private' collections of consolation letters: five women and four men wrote to Mme de Soubise on the occasion of her husband's death in 1566, Aimé Champollion-Figeac, 'Lettres consolatoires des chefs du parti protestant à Mme de Soubise', *BSHPF* 2 (1853), 425-9. Four women and two men wrote to Jeanne d'Albret when her husband died in 1562, 'Six lettres consolatoires à la Reine de Navarre sur la mort du Roy son mari', *Mémoires de Condé, ou recueil pour servir à l'histoire de France*, ed. D. F. Secousse, 6 vols. (London and Paris, 1743), iv. 123-132.

⁷¹⁹ The exception is Suzanne de Nervèze, a *précieuse* and author of pro-Marazins pamphlets, Baustert, *La consolation*, 294-6.

⁷²⁰ 1AP 433, ltr. 30 (Flandrine de Nassau, abbess of Sainte-Croix, Marie de La Tour's aunt), ltr. 31 (Sœur Marie de Jésus, abbess of Jouars), ltr. 32 (Catherine de La Trémoille, coadjutress of Sainte-Croix), and ltr. 74 (Mme Rochefort, prioress of Sainte-Croix).

Drelincourt, and Jean Daillé from Charenton; Jacques Cottiby, pastor at Poitiers; André Rivet, professor at Leyden, and his brother Guillaume Rivet, pastor at Taillebourg. Most of them belonged to the group of pastors that co-published a volume of consolation letters addressed to Anne de Mornay and her first husband, Jacques de Noues, for the death of their son.⁷²¹ Two of the ministers published hugely popular manuals on the art of dying: Du Moulin's *Familière instruction pour consoler les malades*, first published in 1613, was running into twelve editions by 1666; Drelincourt's *Les consolations de l'âme fidèle contre les frayeurs de la mort* (1651) went through twenty editions in the seventeenth century and a further eighteen in the following century. They were aimed at a large public, unlike Aymraut's *Discours sur l'état des fidèles après la mort* (1646), a rather complex theological treatise written to comfort his wife over the death of their daughter. Rivet remarked that 'il faut que sa femme soit bien versée en philosophie pour en tirer consolation'.⁷²²

All Biblical examples cited in the letters were drawn from the Old Testament: David's lamentations were used by Du Moulin, Rambour, Drelincourt, and Cottiby; Job, who lost seven sons in one day, was mentioned by Du Moulin and by the dowager duchesse de Bouillon, Elisabeth's god-mother, who seemed particularly stricken with grief; Rambour pointed out that Abraham and Sarah were ready to sacrifice their long-awaited child to God; and Drelincourt concluded that pain (as Samson felt when Delilah betrayed his secret) revealed strong emotional attachment. In stark contrast to the clerical letters was Monsieur de Chaudbonne's advice to leave Thouars, and to find some distractions to get away from the pain and sorrow:

⁷²¹ *Lettres de consolation faites par Messieurs Du Moulin, Mestrezat, Drelincourt, Daillé & plusieurs autres pasteurs des Eglises Reformées de France, & autres lieux* (Charenton, 1632), see Baustert, *La consolation*, 327-8.

⁷²² Laplanche, *Orthodoxie*, 193.

Je sçay bien par la connoissance qu'il vous a pleu me donner des plus intimes sentimens de vostre ame, que c'est de Dieu seul que vous attendes vostre parfaite consolation ..., mais ... de grande blessures ... ne se peuvent guerir qu'avec beaucoup de temps.⁷²³

Chaudebbonne was a member of the Rambouillet circle, like Vincent Voiture and Julie d'Angennes,⁷²⁴ and represented the world of the literary salons. It was presumably from this milieu that four poems found on loose sheets in the bound volume of the consolation letters originated. In flowery baroque language, De Lardillier's *Epitaphe* compared the deceased to a bright star, and extolled her as 'un exemple de vertu, de grandeur et de courage [qui] avoit surpassé tout son sexe et son aage'. Not the Bible, but muses and ancient gods were evoked to praise Elisabeth, yet the difference in language did not tone down the underlying message that one had to accept one's fate: 'c'est avec quelque insolence / qu'on accuse de violence / les destin des arrests des cieux'. The concept of *vanitas* pervaded polite society as much as it shaped the discourse of the Reformed clergy:

Jamais l'inconstance du sort/ n'eut une si riche despouille / Que Quand le sang
de La Tremouille / fit rougir les mortels de redouter la mort.⁷²⁵

Elisabeth's Death as a Reflection of her Mother's Piety

All consolation letters, including the most sternly religious ones, were celebrating the House of La Trémoille. By choosing to circulate the *récit des dernières heures* and to collect the replies it called for, the duchess was using the edifying tale of Elisabeth's death in order to promote her family in general, and herself as Elisabeth's mother in particular. Significantly, this aim was best understood by two women engaged in similar enterprises of dynastic promotion. Elisabeth Stuart, queen of Bohemia, declared:

⁷²³ 1AP 433, ltr. 61 (Chaudebbonne).

⁷²⁴ 1AP 433, ltr. 13 (Mlle de Rambouillet), ltr. 62 (Voiture). See Chapter VI.

⁷²⁵ Anonymous, *A Madame. Madame la Duchesse de La Trémoille sur la mort de feue Mademoiselle sa fille. Stances*, 1AP 433.

[vostre fille] estoit d'un sang et d'une tige où les plus grandes maisons de ce royaume ont part, et fille de la vertu mesme; c'est ceste mesme vertu, Madame, qui doit aujourd'huy modérer vostre douleur.⁷²⁶

Amalia von Solms, princess of Orange, added in the same vein:

Il n'y a point de doute qu'elle ne soit heureuse, et aussi que ce ne vous soit un grand bonheur d'avoir mis au monde une petite créature qui y a laissé un si rare exemple, et fait parestre les fruits de la bonne éducation qu'elle a receue de vous, Madame, qui ne luy auriés pu donner telle, si vous-mesme n'eussiez esté pourveue des qualités que vous aviés imprimées en elle par la grâce de Dieu.⁷²⁷

Marie de La Tour's piety was also recognised by the divines. Rivet highly praised her efforts: 'Vous aviés nourrie [votre fille] sur tout pour la vraye vie, et la fin si heureuse en une si rare résolution nous a fait voire que vous aviés ataint le but principal'. His colleague Du Moulin even went as far as to regard his own role as superfluous: 'Je sais qu'estant une dame vertueuse et douée abondamment de connoissance et de crainte de Dieu, vous n'avés point besoin de mes conseils et consolations'.⁷²⁸

Personal piety was not always linked to its public celebration. The most remarkable illustration of Marie's faithfulness, her obstinate refusal to yield to the queen mother's insistence on converting her on her sickbed, did not reverberate in the Protestant community.⁷²⁹ In a private exchange of letter, Anne of Austria wrote to Marie to warn her about the risks she incurred if she were to persist 'dans une religion si pernicieuse à vostre âme et à vostre repos éternel'.⁷³⁰ The duke, whom the queen had asked for help, replied that he was most honoured that a 'personne sacrée' took an interest in his wife's salvation and conceded:

⁷²⁶ 1AP 433, ltr 25 (queen of Bohemia).

⁷²⁷ 1AP 433, ltr 26 (princess of Orange).

⁷²⁸ 1AP 433, ltr. 83 (Rivet), ltr. 81 (Du Moulin).

⁷²⁹ *A récit des dernières heures* was composed by her granddaughter, but was not intended for publication, Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 45-51.

⁷³⁰ Anne of Austria to Marie, 2 Oct. 1663, 1AP 396/328-9.

Je souhaiterois passionnément que les sentiments de ma femme touchant la Religion se puissent convertir en ceux que Vostre Majesté luy souhaite pour son salut.⁷³¹

He accepted the queen's envoy, the abbé de Moissy, and assured her that his wife 'ne respire que [pour] le service et la satisfaction de Vostre Majesté'.⁷³² The abbot stayed in Thouars over the winter, and was seconded by 'plusieurs bons et sçavants religieux et prédicateurs', but in February 1664, the duke had to inform Anne of Austria that

les meilleurs moyens qu'elle a proposés pour cette conversion tant désirée de tous les gens de bien, n'ont pas eu tout le succès que méritoient les soins extraordinaires et très pieux de Vostre Majesté.⁷³³

His letter to the abbé de Moissy was more direct: Marie's illness 'does not allow her to be entertained nor converted', and one should accept that as God's will and submit to his eternal providence.⁷³⁴

Funerals without Ceremony

When Marie died in May 1665, her body was 'taken to the chapel without ceremony'.⁷³⁵ According to Imbert, Marie's last will asked for her remains to be taken to the family chapel, and to be transferred and buried in secret the same night in the basement of the south wing, next to the coffins of Claude and Elisabeth de La Trémoïlle.⁷³⁶ Imbert explains that this secrecy arose from a fear of vandalism, and compares it to Tarente's burial which took place 'nuitamment et sans clergé, à raison que la basse-église seroit encore profanée'.⁷³⁷ Nocturnal burials were traditionally associated with dishonour,⁷³⁸ which is why the *Conseil d'Etat* issued a series of regulations imposing burials late at

⁷³¹ Henri to Anne of Austria, 22 Oct. 1663, 1AP 396/330-1.

⁷³² Anne of Austria to Henri, 20 Nov. 1663, 1AP 396/332; Henri to Anne of Austria, n.d., 1AP 396/334.

⁷³³ Henri to Anne of Austria, 5 Feb. 1664, 1AP 396/338.

⁷³⁴ Henri to Moissy, 4 Feb. 1664, 1AP 396/336.

⁷³⁵ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 52.

⁷³⁶ Hugues Imbert, 'Découverte des sépultures de Claude de La Trémoïlle, Marie de La Tour-D'Auvergne et Isabelle de La Trémoïlle', *Bulletin de la Société de statistique des Deux-Sèvres* (1872), 427-433.

⁷³⁷ Parish register dated 15 Sept. 1672, quoted by Imbert, 'Découverte', 431-2.

⁷³⁸ This applied also to Lutheran Church law, compiled in Benedict Carpzov's *Jurisprudentia ecclesiastica seu consistorialis* (1649), Koslofsky, *Reformation of the Dead*, 135.

night or before dawn for French Huguenots.⁷³⁹ These measures did not, however, apply to the private chapels of the nobility. It was Marie's choice to be buried without ceremony, a choice that has to be examined in the light of cultural practices and religious attitudes towards mortality.

Elisabeth de La Trémoille had equally wished her funeral to be simple and devoid of ceremony.⁷⁴⁰ Her coffin, much better preserved than Marie's, has also been excavated in the south wing of the castle. Imbert suggests that Elisabeth had been buried there immediately after her death, and that Marie had used the basement chamber as a private prayer room.⁷⁴¹ Apart from the well-preserved condition of Elisabeth's coffin, which suggests that it had been removed from the family vault years after Marie's interment, Imbert's explanation conflicts with the increasing emphasis on the physical separation of the dead from the world of the living, a consequence of the conception of death as permanent spiritual separation.⁷⁴² For Catholics, death was the beginning of the soul's journey to salvation or damnation via Purgatory; for Protestants, on the other hand, death was the culmination of the promise of the soul's union with Christ made during the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The invitation to disassociate body and soul was fulfilled by death, when the body became an empty shell, while the soul entered eternal life.⁷⁴³ This eschatology determined the lack of ceremony in Huguenot funerals, as stipulated, for instance, by Isaac Huisseau's *Discipline* (1666):

Il ne se fera aucune prière, ou prédication, ni aumônes publiques aux enterrements, pour obvier à toutes superstitions: et seront exhortés ceux qui

⁷³⁹ Michel Vovelle, *La mort et l'occident de 1300 à nos jours* (Paris, 1983), 342; Isabelle Bonnot, *Hérétique ou Saint? Henry Arnauld évêque janséniste d'Angers au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1984), 436.

⁷⁴⁰ 'Regardant Monsieur, elle luy dit "Je ne veux point de prestre à mon enterrement", et ensuite "qu'on ne fasse point de cérémonie"', *La Mort et les dernières parolles de Mademoiselle Elizabeth*, 1AP 433.

⁷⁴¹ Imbert, 'Découverte', 431-2.

⁷⁴² Koslofsky, *Reformation of the Dead*, 2-3, 34-9.

⁷⁴³ Bernard Roussel, '"Ensevelir honnestement les corps": Funeral Corteges and Huguenot Culture', *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World, 1559-1685*, ed. R. A. Mentzer and A. Spicer (Cambridge, 2002), 201-5.

accompagnent les corps de les comporter avec modestie durant le convoi, méditant selon l'objet qui se présente, tant les misères et brièveté de cette vie, que l'espérance de la vie bien-heureuse.⁷⁴⁴

The theological distinction made between 'this life' and the 'afterlife' explains the double burial of Marie de La Tour. Since the publication of Robert Hertz's pioneering study on mortuary ritual, anthropologists have discussed death in terms of binomial concepts such as body-soul, individual-community, and living-dead.⁷⁴⁵ Maurice Bloch concluded from his work on the Malagasy people, that all 'traditional' societies have double burials, based on ideologies that 'feed on the horror of death by first emphasising it then replacing it by itself'.⁷⁴⁶ In Christian society, the negative force of death and bodily decay, is replaced by the positive message of resurrection and eternal life. This is, as we have seen, embodied in the language of vanity; it also underlies the cult of melancholy that influenced the cultural representation of death in England, and informs the 'inner devotion' of early Pietism, the backdrop of some German aristocratic death rituals.

By abolishing Catholic imagery (Purgatory) and practices (praying for the dead), the Reformation effectively eliminated the theological basis of the Christian funeral. As the individual's death remained, nonetheless, a challenge to the social order, Reformed Churches were seeking new ways to maintain the continuity of that order and overcome the individuality of a particular corpse.⁷⁴⁷ Koslofsky has shown that Lutherans reaffirmed the value of the funeral and created a unique ritual centring on the funeral sermon, and defined by the participation of the clergy and the community in the funeral

⁷⁴⁴ Quoted by Roussel, 'Funeral Corteges', 198.

⁷⁴⁵ Robert Hertz, 'Contribution à une étude sur la représentation collective de la mort', *Année sociologique* 10 (1907), 48-137; Metcalf and Huntington, *Celebration of Death*, 1-6.

⁷⁴⁶ Maurice Bloch, 'Death, women and power', *Death and the Regeneration of Life*, ed. M. Bloch and J. Parry (Cambridge, 1982), 218, 233.

⁷⁴⁷ Bloch, 'Death, women and power', 224.

procession.⁷⁴⁸ French Calvinists stripped funerals of all ceremony, thus creating a new kind of ritual based on *absence*.⁷⁴⁹ It was later exported to England, where extravagant public funerals gave way to more private interments, frequently at night.⁷⁵⁰ The humbleness of nocturnal funerals and the pursuit of personal salvation did not preclude considerations of social pre-eminence, dynastic promotion and family honour. The *absence* of ritual was compensated by *Leichenpredigten* in Lutheran societies, by funerary monuments which conferred honour upon the descendants of the lineage, or – in the case of Elisabeth de La Trémoille – by a *récit des dernières heures* and a collection of consolation letters from the highest social dignitaries.

Calvinism remained the social and doctrinal framework within which Marie de La Tour operated. It was a flexible frame that accommodated orthodox positions held at Sedan, defended by André Rivet and taken up by the Hôtel de Turenne, as well as the more liberal attitude displayed by Duchess Marie. In a reaction against the moral rigorism that characterised her own upbringing, Marie's piety embraced the world. Her educational aim was to prepare for 'this life' rather than teach fear of the afterlife. Marie was confident that one could better one's condition on earth and achieve salvation through faith in God. This optimistic providentialism explains why she accepted her husband's conversion, hoping to bring him back to the 'true faith' eventually. Sickness and death served as powerful reminders of mortality; they were used to influence or explain Tarente's re-conversion to Protestantism, and the rejection of La Meilleraye's marriage proposal. The skilfully orchestrated celebration of Elisabeth's death managed to reconcile spiritual beliefs based on a rejection of material life with earthly concerns

⁷⁴⁸ Koslofsky, *Reformation of the Dead*, 10.

⁷⁴⁹ Roussel, 'Funeral Corteges', 195.

⁷⁵⁰ Clare Gittings, 'Expressions of Loss in Early Seventeenth-Century England', *The Changing Face of Death*, ed. C. Jupp and G. Howarth (Basingstoke, 1997), 25; Stone, *Crisis*, 577.

such as dynastic promotion. On the other hand Marie's consistent refusal to convert despite heavy social pressures, and the unceremonious nature of her funeral, eschewing the traditional opportunity to display family status and alliances, prove that her piety was far from superficial.

C.) Female Involvement in Religious Politics

Although less visible than 'first generation' Huguenot noblewomen, aristocratic women continued to play an important role in the Huguenot churches in the seventeenth century. If one accepts Nancy Roelker's explanation that there was less scope for feminine action when the religious struggle became military,⁷⁵¹ it logically follows that the field for female actions expanded again after 1629, when the Huguenot movement had effectively been demilitarised. In the late 1640s, Marie's involvement in religious affairs was so well known that courtiers gave her the sobriquet 'Reine des Huguenots de France', and referred to her daughter as the 'petite reine des filles huguenotes de France'.⁷⁵² The duchess's dealings with the orthodox critics of Moïse Amyraut and the rigoristic opponents of Alexander Morus have to be examined within the context of the female condition and its redefinition by the Reformation. According to Calvin, woman had been created as the 'image of the image of God'. Eve's sin had not been forgotten, and women were thus generally considered inferior to men and more exposed to vaingloriousness and vice.⁷⁵³ On the other hand, the Reformer encouraged women to read and understand the Bible in order to transmit their faith to their children, which

⁷⁵¹ Nancy L. Roelker, 'The Appeal of Calvinism to French Noblewomen in the Sixteenth Century', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 2/4 (1972), 404.

⁷⁵² Pineau to Rivet, 14 Dec. 1646 and 19 July 1647, UBL, BPL286/III/89, 144.

⁷⁵³ Roger Stauffenberg, 'La Femme en Religion Protestante', *La Femme à l'époque moderne XVIe-XVIIIe siècles*. Bulletin de l'Association des historiens modernistes des universités 9 (1985), 29-44; Danièle Fischer, 'L'apport de la Réforme à l'évolution de la condition féminine', *Etudes théologiques et religieuses* 57/1 (1982), 25.

opened the path 'from intellectual emancipation to social emancipation'.⁷⁵⁴ Having been given the responsibility for their own salvation, women found in religion the sphere of action they could move most freely in. There was, however, a fine line between leading an active spiritual life, and becoming visible in a way that was not socially acceptable. For the countess of Derby, female preachers were an abnormality as shocking as denial of the Holy Spirit or abnegation of God's commandments.⁷⁵⁵ An analysis of Marie's correspondence with leading Huguenot scholars will show how she voiced her religious and political concerns, and how she managed to influence opinion without entering the public sphere.

1.) The Amyraut Controversy

The School of Saumur

Moïse Amyraut (1596-1664), minister at Saumur since 1626 and professor at the Academy since 1633, re-opened the controversy over predestination, which the synod of Dordt had claimed to settle, with his *Brief traité de la predestination et de ses principales dependances* (1634). Amyraut maintained that, in theory, grace could be bestowed upon everyone, a doctrine that became known as hypothetical universalism. His formulation 'Christ died for everybody equally' smacked of Pelagianism and Arminianism, but Amyraut specified that it was only Christ's *intention* to save the human species as a whole, and that in the absolute salvation only concerned the elect.⁷⁵⁶ Amyraut's refutation of Arminianism, *Fidei Mosis Amyraldi circa errores Arminianorum declaratio*, published in 1646, failed to convince his critics and did not

⁷⁵⁴ Fischer, 'L'apport de la Réforme', 34-6; Roelker, 'The Appeal of Calvinism', 406; Janine Garrisson-Estèbe, *L'Homme Protestant* (Paris, 1980), 147. A synthesis of the argument is given by Mentzer, 'La place et le rôle des femmes'.

⁷⁵⁵ Charlotte to Marie, 14 Mar. 1648, 1AP 384/85.

⁷⁵⁶ Laplanche, *Orthodoxie*, 202-3; Daniel Ligou, 'La peau de chagrin (1598-1686)', *Histoire des protestants de France*, ed. R. Mandrou (Toulouse, 1977), 138.

bring to a close what Pierre Bayle has termed the 'guerre civile de la grace universelle'.⁷⁵⁷ His main opponents were Rivet and Du Moulin, whose links with the La Trémoille family played a significant role in bringing about the 1649 settlement, known as the Act of Thouars. What was the duchess's stance on this debate, and how did she intervene to resolve it?

Marie's interest in doctrinal issues is indicated by her possession of an untitled manuscript that regroups extracts from the Scriptures under twenty-six headings denouncing both the Catholic Church and extreme Calvinist views.⁷⁵⁸ It presents the usual accusations against Rome regarding the authority of tradition, the primacy of the 'bishop of Rome', transubstantiation, the merit of good works, the invocation of saints and the Virgin Mary, the veneration of images, Purgatory, worship in an 'unknown language', miracles, and feasts.⁷⁵⁹ It also attacks 'superstitious austerities and hypocrisy' and challenges strict predestinarian views in the chapters 'De l'efficace de l'Esprit de Dieu en nos coeurs', 'De la certitude du Salut', and 'Du franc arbitre et de la predestination'.⁷⁶⁰ Links between the school of Saumur and the La Trémoille family can be traced back to the founder of the academy, Duplessis-Mornay, who was a close friend and adviser of Duchess Charlotte-Brabantine, and the tutor of her son Henri de La Trémoille.⁷⁶¹ Louis Cappel, a controversial Bible scholar from Saumur, dedicated his *Critica sacra* to the prince de Tarente.⁷⁶² Amyraut himself dedicated his *Six livres de la*

⁷⁵⁷ Pierre Bayle, *Choix d'articles tirées du Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*, 2 vols. (Hildesheim and New York), i. 184.

⁷⁵⁸ GAA, 0613/692f.

⁷⁵⁹ Ibid. chapters 4, 6, 10-2, 14-8, 21.

⁷⁶⁰ Ibid. chapters 2, 3, 13.

⁷⁶¹ Didier Poton, 'Duplessis-Mornay à Saumur', *D'un rivage à l'autre, villes et protestantisme dans l'aire atlantique*, ed. G. Martinière (Paris, 1999), 63-72.

⁷⁶² François Laplanche, *L'Écriture, le sacré et l'histoire. Erudits et politiques protestants devant la Bible en France au XVII^e siècle* (Amsterdam and Maarssen, 1986), 320-1.

vocation des pasteurs to Marie's eldest son.⁷⁶³ His following book, *De secessione ab Ecclesia Romana, deque ratione pacis* (1647) promoted an irenicism that appealed to the duc de La Trémoille.⁷⁶⁴ While the duchess subscribed to Amyraut's efforts to bridge the gulf between Calvinists and Lutherans, her husband proposed to go beyond the reconciliation of Protestant confessions and to overcome the schism between Protestants and Catholics.⁷⁶⁵

André Rivet and the La Trémoille family

André Rivet (1572-1651), one of Amyraut's most outspoken critics, was linked to the La Trémoille by multiple ties. He was their chaplain from 1595 to 1620, and remained attached to the family after his call to the University of Leyden.⁷⁶⁶ His eldest son Samuel failed to obtain employment at Thouars,⁷⁶⁷ but his second son Claude, sieur de Mondévis, was secretary to the duke and converted shortly after him.⁷⁶⁸ André Rivet's brother-in-law, Mathurin Pineau, was the La Trémoille's physician, and his nephew, Henri Pineau, a member of Tarente's household. We have seen that his other nephew, André Pineau, conveyed Rivet's letters to the Hôtel de La Trémoille and passed news about the ducal family to his uncle.⁷⁶⁹ In 1603, Charlotte-Brabantine had chosen Rivet's

⁷⁶³ Helmut Kretzer, *Calvinismus und französische Monarchie im 17. Jahrhundert. Die politische Lehre der Akademien Sedan und Saumur, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung von Pierre Du Moulin, Moïse Amyraut und Pierre Jurieu* (Berlin, 1975), 312. Amyraut sent the *Six livres* to Tarente's brother-in-law, William VI of Hesse-Cassel, who replied on 7 Feb. 1650: 'Je le prens pour une marque de l'affection particuliere que vous avez pour moy aussy bien que pour celluy à qui vous l'avez voulu dedier', Hessisches Staatsarchiv Marburg, Best. 4a 49, Nr. 3.

⁷⁶⁴ Richard Stauffer, *Moïse Amyraut. Un précurseur français de l'œcuménisme* (Paris, 1962).

⁷⁶⁵ Henri to Amyraut, 10 May 1663, *Registre*, ed. Imbert, 202-3. See Henri to Mess. de Vitré, 2 Sept. 1641, 1AP 397/II/114; *Discours du duc Henry de La Trémoille en faveur de la religion protestante, discours sur le sujet des commissions données pour le rasement des temples de ceux de la R.R.*, *Registre*, ed. Imbert, 248-52.

⁷⁶⁶ Theodor Mahlmann, 'Rivet', *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon*, <http://www.bautz.de/bbkl/r/rivet_a.shtml>, accessed Aug. 2003.

⁷⁶⁷ Elders of Thouars to Henri, 26 May 1622, 1AP 328.

⁷⁶⁸ Rivet to Charlotte-Brabantine, 12 Nov. 1622, 1AP 353/189.

⁷⁶⁹ André Pineau was also involved, on behalf of the La Trémoille family, in some financial dealings with Pavillon and Lorme, *Délibérations du conseil*, 4 Aug. 1655, 1AP395/65.

brother Guillaume, sieur de Champvernon (1581-1651), as minister of Taillebourg.⁷⁷⁰ Champvernon's son, a physician at Saint-Denis, received Marie de La Tour's support in the late 1640s when he tried to establish himself at Montmorency against the vehement opposition of the dowager princesse de Condé.⁷⁷¹ After Henri de La Trémoille's conversion, Rivet offered spiritual guidance to Duchess Marie, and remained in correspondence with her, mostly through the intermediary of her agent Rozemont.⁷⁷² In 1638, Rozemont asked Rivet to show his devotion to the 'bien général et particulier [de] ceste tant illustre maison' by bestowing good advice upon the prince de Talmont (future Tarente).⁷⁷³ Two years later Talmont reconverted to Protestantism,⁷⁷⁴ and the duchess felt most obliged to Rivet.⁷⁷⁵ What motivated her to take position against Rivet in his quarrel with Amyraut?

The Controversy

Rivet was a staunch supporter of the Canons of Dordt, which he endorsed at the synod of Alès in 1620. He was closely associated with the strict predestinarian Pierre Du Moulin, whose half-sister Marie he wedded in 1621.⁷⁷⁶ Rivet was outraged when Amyraut made unauthorised use of one of his letters in the introduction to his *Dissertationes theologicæ quatuor*, a vehement attack on Rivet's colleague from Leyden, Friedrich Spanheim. To re-state his opposition to Amyraut, Rivet sent his *Synopsis doctrinae de natura et gratia excerpta ex Mosis Amyraldi*, first published in

⁷⁷⁰ Guillaume Rivet's letters to his brother are held by the UBL, and are currently being transcribed by Mr. Tulot.

⁷⁷¹ Pineau to Rivet, 5 Apr. 1647 and 7 June 1647, UBL, BPL286/III/118, 130.

⁷⁷² Rivet to Charlotte-Brabantine, 21 Oct. 1628, 1AP 353/207; Rivet to Marie, 25 Apr. 1634, 1AP 353/212; André Rivet, *Lettres écrites à Mmes les duchesses de La Trémoille sur le changement de religion de M le duc de La Trémoille* (Geneva, 1629).

⁷⁷³ Rozemont to Rivet, 30 Oct. 1638 and 7 Nov. 1638, UBL, BPL2211a/221, 223. Rivet appeared to have agreed to give private lessons to the prince, Rozemont to Rivet, 13 Nov 1638, UBL, BPL2211a/225.

⁷⁷⁴ Rivet to Saumaise, 25 Jun. 1640, *Saumaise*, ed. Leroy and Bots, 211.

⁷⁷⁵ Rozemont to Rivet, 7 Dec. 1640, UBL, BPL2211a/236

⁷⁷⁶ Pierre Du Moulin, *Anatome Arminianismi* (Leyden, 1619).

1636, to the Westminster Assembly. By taking the controversy from a purely academic to an international and highly political level, Rivet raised the stakes.⁷⁷⁷ The theologians in session at Westminster, who were openly defying their king, endorsed Spanheim's reply, which systematically refuted Amyraut's *Dissertationes*.⁷⁷⁸ Rivet himself disproved Amyraut's teaching in several 'testimonies' published in 1646.⁷⁷⁹ This academic quarrel created a rift between the churches, as Charenton supported Saumur, and the southwest synods pronounced themselves in favour of a strict observance of the Canons of Dordt.⁷⁸⁰ At this point Duchess Marie stepped in. She invited Amyraut to Thouars for the inauguration of the new temple and announced her

grand déplaisir de la mésintelligence de Monsieur Rivet et de luy [Amyraut]. Elle a dessein de luy en parler fortement ... Ce seroit une oeuvre digne de son bonté et de son affection à la paix de l'Eglise.⁷⁸¹

Rivet was apprehensive to see his rival's version of the debate prevail at Thouars, and riposted by sending letters to the duchess, to her agent Pelleus, and to the duke.⁷⁸² The duchess's reply has unfortunately been lost, but is mentioned in Rivet's letter to Claude Sarrau, dated 27 August 1646:

J'ay reçu une longue et très honneste lettre de Madame la duchesse de La Trémoille sur les discours que luy a faicts Monsieur Amyraut à mon égard. Je luy ai faict une ample réponse sur cela, et représenté que ce n'est pas moy qui trouble Israël, et que les paroles de deference pour moy qui desquelles on a esté large envers elle, ne sont pas conformes aux lettres patentes, qui ont couru dans Paris.⁷⁸³

⁷⁷⁷ Laplanche, *Orthodoxie*, 189-93.

⁷⁷⁸ Friedrich Spanheim, *Exercitationes de gratia universalis* (Leyden, 1646), published with an (authorised) introductory letter by Rivet, dated 18 Dec. 1645.

⁷⁷⁹ André Rivet, *Operum theologicorum*, 3 vols. (Rotterdam, 1651-1660), iii. 798-827; Laplanche, *Orthodoxie*, 197.

⁷⁸⁰ Brian Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy. Protestant Scholasticism and Humanism in Seventeenth-Century France* (Milwaukee, 1969).

⁷⁸¹ Pineau to Rivet, 6 July 1646, UBL, BPL286/III/51.

⁷⁸² Pineau to Rivet, 13 July 1646 and 27 July 1646, UBL, BPL286/III/52, 56.

⁷⁸³ Rivet to Sarrau, 27 Aug 1646, *Sarrau*, ed. Leroy and Bots, iii. 483. In their explanatory note, the editors underline the mediatory role of the La Trémoille family, but fail to differentiate between Marie de La Tour, duchesse de La Trémoille, and her sister Charlotte de La Tour, Mademoiselle de Bouillon.

Rivet's response to the duchess, also dated 27 August, is a skilful exercise in attempting to please her without compromising his resolute opposition to Amyraut. Presenting himself as the victim of Amyraut's invectives, Rivet tries to make the duchess understand why he is distrustful of the 'belles paroles de déférence en mon endroit que Monsieur Amyraut voulu que vous prissiés la peine de me représenter de sa part'. His critique aims less at Amyraut's doctrine than at his spiteful behaviour and the proselytising zeal of the school of Saumur. The letter presupposes that the duchess was well informed about the debate, and suggests that she had the moral integrity and personal authority to mediate between the two controversialists. Rivet acknowledges that she 'prend cette matière à coeur, désire la paix de Sion'. He admits that he would have kept his silence, had the duchess not made an opening gesture ('encore m'en fusse je teu, sy vostre Excellence ne m'en eust parlé'). But since she had lectured him, the author considers that it was for the duchess to find a way to settle the dispute. His suggestion that Amyraut and his colleagues should simply obey the canons of Dordt indicates that Rivet was not prepared to budge. He announces that he will send his brother to Thouars in order to present further evidence to the duchess, and submits the case to her judgment.⁷⁸⁴

Amyraut's faction also tried to influence the duchess by sending the *conseiller du Parlement* Claude Sarrau to the 'court of Thouars', 'sans doubte pour appuyer le voisinage'.⁷⁸⁵ Initial attempts at a reconciliation were foiled by Amyraut's renewed attack on Spanheim,⁷⁸⁶ which led to 'letters of justification' by André and Guillaume

⁷⁸⁴ Rivet to Marie, 27 Aug. 1646, UBL, BPL290/41-43.

⁷⁸⁵ Rivet to Saumaise, 22 Oct. 1646, *Saumaise*, ed. Leroy and Bots, 500, n. 7. Rivet's friendship with Sarrau ended in 1646 because of the Amyraut controversy, *Sarrau*, ed. Leroy and Bots, vol. i, p. ix, xii.

⁷⁸⁶ Moïse Amyraut, *Specimen animaduersionum in exercitationes de gratia uniuersali* (Saumur, 1648).

Rivet, and to the latter's attack on Amyraut and his mentor Cameron.⁷⁸⁷ André Rivet defended Spanheim, who had died in March 1649, in his *Friderici Spanhemii Vindiciarum pro exercitationibus suis, de gratia universali*, and re-edited his 1636 *Synopsis*, prefaced by new expert opinions from the University of Utrecht. Pierre Du Moulin re-entered the debate with his *Judicium P.M. de Mosis Amiral di libro adv. F. Spanhemium*, disparaging Amyraut's hypocrisy and boastfulness.

At the same time, Amyraut's *Apologie pour ceux de la religion* offended the Protestant community of La Rochelle, for it considered that no cause, not even 'the defence of the true religion', could justify taking up arms against one's sovereign.⁷⁸⁸ Philippe Vincent, pastor of La Rochelle, retorted with his *Epistola historica et apologetica*, published in 1648.

The Act of Thouars

Paradoxically, the widening of the debate made it easier to impose a settlement, for it allowed the La Trémoille family to circumvent the scholars André Rivet and Pierre Du Moulin, and focus on the pastors Philippe Vincent and Guillaume Rivet, who were both clients of the ducal family. Jean Chabrol, minister of Thouars, had been the driving force behind the duchess's first attempt at a reconciliation in 1646, and convinced the prince de Tarente to continue his mother's endeavour

⁷⁸⁷ Guillaume Rivet, *Vindiciae evangelicae de justificatione et annexis ei capitibus, quibus praeter pontificiorum errores et Philippi Codurci sophismata, Joh. Cameronis et Mosis Amyraldi placita varia examinantur* (Amsterdam, 1648).

⁷⁸⁸ Moïse Amyraut, *Apologie pour ceux de la religion, sur les sujets d'aversion que plusieurs pensent avoir contre leurs personnes et leur créance* (Saumur, 1647), 51-2; Guillaume to André Rivet, 7 Oct. 1647, UBL, BPL287/II/136: '[Vincent] est du tout hors d'avec cet homme orgueilleux [Amyraut] qui s'est rendu fort odieux aux Rochelois par son audace imprudente et m'estonne bien fort qu'il ait pour barricadeur de ses vanités M. Sarrau'.

luy représentant combien cela luy seroit glorieux, et qu'il luy estoit possible veu l'auctorité qu'il avoit sur Monsieur Vincent qui se disoit serviteur de la maison, et moy qui mange de leur pain, et suis au pied de sa maison.⁷⁸⁹

Guillaume Rivet risked incurring 'l'indignation de ce prince et de toute sa maison, si je ne pliois ou me lier la langue et les mains', and Vincent, ex-minister of Isle-Bouchard, was even 'plu civil et pliant'.⁷⁹⁰ They signed the Act of Thouars on 14 October 1649, promising not to lodge complaints against Amyraut at any future synod, not to write or speak out against him.⁷⁹¹ Amyraut willingly promised to abstain from the debate, having come under increasing pressure and facing serious censorship in many provincial synods, especially south of the Loire. According to Laplanche, it was only thanks to Sarrau and the ministers of Charenton putting their weight behind him that Amyraut managed to vindicate his position.⁷⁹² The way the Act of Thouars was handled proves, moreover, that the Huguenot nobility had retained a certain amount of power, and could, through networks of patronage and clientage, exercise considerable pressure on Protestant ministers. The Act of Thouars was accordingly denounced by Guillaume Rivet as

une invention artificieuse de ceux qui ont troublé l'Eglise pour se procurer paix après avoir tiré leurs coups & empescher nos résistances.⁷⁹³

His son Etienne had equally no doubt that 'par artifice on se vouloit servir de l'autorité'. He expressed his confidence that his uncle would continue Spanheim's work, and hoped that a national synod would eventually 'remédier à ce mal'.⁷⁹⁴

⁷⁸⁹ Guillaume Rivet to André Rivet, 1 Nov. 1649, UBL, BPL287/II/160. Guillaume Rivet received a pension of 100 *livres* per year, but had to fight for it since the church of Taillebourg was not as important to the ducal family as the churches of Thouars and Vitré, Guillaume to André Rivet, 29 May 1633 and 1 Jan. 1634, UBL, BPL287/I/46, 51.

⁷⁹⁰ Guillaume to André Rivet, 1 Nov. 1649, UBL, BPL287/II/160.

⁷⁹¹ Laplanche, *Orthodoxie*, 227-8.

⁷⁹² Laplanche, *Ecriture*, 6-7.

⁷⁹³ Guillaume to André Rivet, 1 Nov. 1649, UBL, BPL287/II/160.

⁷⁹⁴ Etienne to André Rivet, 5 Jan. 1650, UBL, BPL282/230.

André Rivet himself, however, had a financial interest in maintaining good relations with the duchesse de La Trémoille, as her sister, the marquise de La Moussaye, owed him several years of arrears for his *rente*.⁷⁹⁵ On Rozemont's advice Rivet wrote to Duchess Marie to intervene.⁷⁹⁶ In the end, the Act of Thouars did not change the situation, for the money had still not been paid by September 1650; Mme de La Moussaye only promised that she would discuss it with her sister: 'qu'elles s'en parleroyent ensemble et resoudreoyent de ce qui se debvroit faire sur cela'.⁷⁹⁷ André Rivet had been repeatedly asked to let his dispute with Amyraut rest, and his death in January 1651 – followed shortly afterwards by that of this brother – resolved the issue. Pierre Du Moulin wrote to Tarente and to the duchess with the intention of re-opening the debate, but no action followed.⁷⁹⁸ Charenton managed to muffle any dissenting voices, and published their own version of the dispute in 1655.⁷⁹⁹ At the synod of Uzès in 1653, Jean de Croï challenged Amyraut, but the prince de Tarente and the marquis de Ruvigny, *Député général de l'Eglise*, rapidly silenced him. International criticism, voiced by Louis du Moulin and Ezechiel Spanheim, did not have an impact on the national synod of Loudun in 1659, as it was tightly controlled by Ruvigny and the *modérateur* Jean Daillé.⁸⁰⁰

The reason Amyraut's thought appealed to the nobility, Huguenot as well as Catholic,⁸⁰¹ was not only the anthropocentricity of his hypothetical universalism, but also his political thought, which centred on the notion of gallicanism.

⁷⁹⁵ Rozemont to Rivet, 22 Apr. 1645, UBL, BPL2211a/246

⁷⁹⁶ Rozemont to Rivet, 3 June 1645 and 24 June 1645, UBL, BPL2211a/248, 249.

⁷⁹⁷ *Mémoire de nouvelles d'affaires pour Mme et Monsg. de Paris*, Rozemont, 14 Sept. 1650, 1AP 355-6.

⁷⁹⁸ Conrart to Rivet, 21 Jan. 1650, *Valentin Conrart, premier secrétaire perpétuel de l'Académie française, sa vie et correspondance*, ed. R. de Kerviler and E. de Barthélemy (Paris, 1881), 528-9.

⁷⁹⁹ Pineau was rebuked for printing Daniel Jurieu's sermon against Amyraut, Pineau to Rivet, 10 Dec. 1649, UBL, BPL286/IV/96; Laplanche, *Ecriture*, 7.

⁸⁰⁰ Laplanche, *Orthodoxie*, 230-47; Laplanche, *Ecriture*, 6.

⁸⁰¹ Laplanche, *Orthodoxie*, 69. Amyraut was friends with the Maréchal de Brézé, the Comte de Comminges and the Maréchal de La Meilleraye, Bayle, *Choix*, i. 185-6.

2.) Church Government

Defusing Protestant Radicalism

Amyraut's support of the French monarchy and his absolute rejection of rebellion on religious grounds was a reaction to the political radicalism that developed in the aftermath of the English Civil War. At first, Amyraut had tried to defend his Presbyterian brethren,⁸⁰² but the execution of the king had led him to believe that original sin had deprived man of political judgement. In his *Discours sur la souveraineté des rois* (1650), he argued that humans need paternal guidance, best expressed by monarchical government.⁸⁰³ Amyraut neutralised potentially subversive readings of the Scriptures by offering alternative interpretations. English Independents had used Psalm 105 to justify their cause:

He suffered no man to do [his people] wrong: yea, he reprov'd kings for their sake; Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm (Pss. 105:14-5).

For Amyraut, the people could not be the 'anointed'; only kings, even bad kings, were 'anointed' by God, as kingship was a supreme gift and a sovereign power that emanated directly from God.⁸⁰⁴ The aim was to dissociate French Protestants from the new English regime, and to represent his co-religionists as ultimately better subjects than Catholics, and more specifically Jesuits, whose prime allegiance was to Rome instead of the monarch.⁸⁰⁵ At the same time, Amyraut's doctrine of divine right reinforced the passivity of the Huguenots as a 'persecuted minority'. Since the Edict of Nantes, French

⁸⁰² Amyraut, *Apologie*. The fact that 'very many of their Preachers and Ministers had publicly and industriously justified the Rebellion, and pray'd for the good success of it' dissuaded Charles II from attending sermons at Charenton, White Kennett, *A Complete History of England, with the Lives of all the Kings and Queens Thereof*, 3 vols. (London, 1719), iii. 205-6.

⁸⁰³ On Amyraut's notion of the 'politische Unmündigkeit des einzelnen Christens', see Kretzer, *Akademien*, 320, 323, 342; A. Galland, 'Les pasteurs français et la royauté de droit divin', *BSHPP* 77 (1928), 230.

⁸⁰⁴ Moïse Aymraut, *Discours sur la Souveraineté des Rois* (n. p., 1650).

⁸⁰⁵ Ligou, 'La peau de chagrin', 142; Helmut Kretzer, 'Calvinismus und französische Monarchie im 17. Jahrhundert. Zur politischen Lehre der Huguenotten im siècle classique', *Pietismus und Neuzeit* 6 (1980), 123, 125.

Protestants had not suffered real persecution, but had endured enough social disadvantages to convince them that their refusal to give in to Catholic pressures was an act of faith that ensured their salvation.

Marie de la Tour owned two manuscript collections of hand-written biblical quotations entitled *Recueil de passages de l'Ecriture Sainte*, one bound in red morocco leather and currently held by the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal,⁸⁰⁶ the other bound in brown calf leather and held by the Geldersarchief at Arnhem.⁸⁰⁷ They are two distinct sets of quotations; yet both relate to the righteousness of being persecuted for following the 'true religion'.

The first page of the Arsenal *Recueil* reads:

Ayez souvenance de la parole que ie vous ay
ditte, que le serviteur n'est point plus grand
que son maistre. S'ils m'ont persecuté
aussy vous persécuteront-ils
Ev. S. Jean ch.xv, v.xx.

Sy le monde vous a en haine sachez qu'il
m'a eu en haine premier que vous
Ev. S. Jean xv, v.xviii.

The Arnhem collection starts in a similar vein:

Bienheureux sont ceux
quy sont persecutez pour justice car
le Royaume des cieux Esta Eux, vous
Serez bienheureux quand on vous
Aura Iniuriez et persecutez et on
aura dit Touttes mauvaises parolles
Contre vous acause de moy en Men-
tant. S.Math. ch.5, v.10 et 11.

The importance of Matthew 5:10-11 has been highlighted by Labrousse, who claims that Huguenot self-perception as persecuted in the name of God shaped their attitude towards salvation.⁸⁰⁸ Duchess Marie felt 'persecution' to present a way to salvation, yet

⁸⁰⁶ ARS, MS 2230.

⁸⁰⁷ GAA, 0613/692f.

⁸⁰⁸ Labrousse, *Conscience*, 78-9.

did not consider it enough of a burden to challenge the monarchy on the issue. She supported Amyraut's views on divine kingship, which ensured her, and the Salmurian scholar, good relations with Mazarin. In March 1652, the court resided at Saumur. The duchesse de La Trémoille was told, in the presence of the queen, that Mazarin held prolonged conversations with Amyraut:

Son Eminence est chez le Ministre Amyraut: ce sont deux Ecclésiastiques ensemble; mais je suis sûr qu'ils ne parlent point de Religion, son Eminence n'y trouveroit pas son compte.⁸⁰⁹

According to Pierre Bayle, Amyraut promised the cardinal to exhort the ministers of Saintonge to preach loyalty to the king, and in return Mazarin conceded that the Edict of Nantes was no longer a mere royal favour, but had become a political necessity: 'quod initio fuit voluntatis, ex post facto fit necessitatis'.⁸¹⁰ A mere confirmation of the Edict of Nantes, as granted by the Declaration of Saint-Germain on 21 May 1652, did not resolve the paradox of the Huguenot situation. Their ecclesiastical organisation was in theory democratic: no consistory was supposed to prevail over any other, and all decisions were to be taken by a council of ministers and elders. This system clashed with the hierarchical order and absolutist ambitions of the monarchical state.⁸¹¹ Proto-democratic ideas and individualism fostered by strict predestination theories were undermined by the concept of universalism developed by the school of Saumur.⁸¹² Amyraut proposed a reform of church government to counter the perceived social anarchy and religious 'confusion' which had, in his opinion, destabilised English society:

⁸⁰⁹ Bayle, *Choix*, i. 186.

⁸¹⁰ Bayle, *Choix*, i. 186; Galland, 'Les pasteurs français', 38-9; 227-8; Laplanche, *Ecriture*, 430-1; Solange Deyon, *Du loyalisme au refus. Les protestants français et leur député général entre la Fronde et la Révocation* (Lille, 1976), 37-44.

⁸¹¹ Labrousse, *Conscience*, 89.

⁸¹² Emile G. Léonard, *Histoire générale du protestantisme*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1988) ii. 276; Laplanche, *Ecriture*, 25.

en Angleterre les gens de bien ont beaucoup de douleur de voir la bigarrure qui y est, et la diverse façon de laquelle chacun administre ou n'administre pas les sacrements, bénit ou ne bénit pas les mariages, reigle ou ne reigle pas les assemblées dans le temple.⁸¹³

The same fear pervaded most of Lady Derby's letters to her sister-in-law. It would be wrong, however, to assume that Marie de La Tour supported Amyraut in the late 1640s because she understood that his doctrines defused the social radicalism inherent in Calvinist thought.⁸¹⁴ As we have seen, Amyraut himself only developed his particular brand of royalist absolutism after 1649; and the duchess was more curious about than frightened by the English experience. Although Charlotte tried her best to convince Marie that Parliament was everything but the true defender of religion, the duchess remained unmoved, at least until the execution of the earl of Derby in October 1651.⁸¹⁵ As late as January 1650 Lady Derby exclaimed: 'Nothing has ever touched my heart more than seeing you having such a false view of what is happening in England and other places where these monsters are in power'.⁸¹⁶ The countess appears to have adhered to the so-called 'golden mean of Anglicanism', and expressed a strong opposition to Scottish Presbyterians, who wielded 'more authority than the Pope would ever have':

[The sermons] I have heard here are horrible. There is nothing devout or religious in them, they offer absolutely nothing but sedition, call people by their first names, and all is presented with such ignorance and such a lack of respect or reverence that I feel so scandalised that I don't think I could live with a quiet conscience amongst these atheists.⁸¹⁷

⁸¹³ Moïse Amyraut, *Du gouvernement de l'Eglise contre ceux qui veulent abolir l'usage et l'autorité des synodes* (Saumur, 1653), cited by Galland, 'Les pasteurs français', 234; Laplanche, *Ecriture*, 434-6. See also: Rivet to Sarrau, 11 May 1643, *Sarrau*, ed. Leroy and Bots, i. 463.

⁸¹⁴ Calvin's chapter on *Civil Government* suggested that popular magistrates had to curb the tyranny of kings, Calvin, *Institutes*, ii. 674-5. On long-term consequences, see Dale Van Kley, *Religious Origins of the French Revolution: From Calvin to the Civil Constitution, 1560-1791* (New Haven, 1996).

⁸¹⁵ Charlotte to Marie, 14 Mar. 1648 and 27 Sept./7 Oct. 1649, 1AP 384/85,88; Witt, *Lady of Latham*, 131-4, 142.

⁸¹⁶ Charlotte to Marie 30 Dec./9 Jan. 1650, 1AP 384/90; Witt, *Lady of Latham*, 144-6.

⁸¹⁷ Charlotte to Marie 8/18 Aug. 1650, 1AP 384/96; Witt, *Lady of Latham*, 154-5.

The Anglican model appealed to the upper levels of the French Protestant hierarchy, because it gave them more control over the presbyterian-synodal system.⁸¹⁸ The following section will examine Marie de La Tour's stance on a stronger cooperation with the Crown to assess whether she resented royal encroachments, such as the *Député général de l'Eglise*, or whether she considered stronger supervision of the synods to benefit both the monarchy and the nobility.

The Last National Synod, 1659

The 'overweening, sometimes disgusting, deference paid to the nobles by the majority of the Protestants' has been explained by Brian Armstrong in terms of their opposition to the monarchy, which could only be countenanced under the aegis of the nobility.⁸¹⁹ Noble discontent continued in the seventeenth century, culminating in the Fronde, but the opposition between noble rebellion and clerical support of absolutism has been overstated.⁸²⁰ Theories of divine right monarchy appealed to the nobility, because they articulated the belief that all social hierarchy was part of a divine plan. As David Parker has shown, the nobility remained the biggest, if not the only, threat to the monarchy, even though it could only exist in symbiosis with the monarchy.⁸²¹ The cooperation between Crown and aristocracy on a practical level is exemplified by the management of the last national synod by the *Député général de l'Eglise*, Henri de Massue, marquis de Ruvoigny (1602-1689). The Crown had used *commissaires du roy* to monitor

⁸¹⁸ Turenne and La Force employed exiled Anglican chaplains in the 1650s, Rosa, 'Turenne's Conversion', 654. Jean Daillé also supported the introduction of an episcopalian system, Galland, 'Les pasteurs français', 236-7.

⁸¹⁹ Brian Armstrong, 'The Changing Face of French Protestantism: The Influence of Pierre Du Moulin', *Calviniana. Ideas and Influence of Jean Calvin*. ed. R.V. Schnucker (Kirkville, Mo., 1988), 132.

⁸²⁰ For examples of clerical royalism, see Du Moulin, *Lettre du ministre Du Moulin écrite à Monsieur de Soubize. Sur le sujet de sa retraicte dans la ville de La Rochelle* (Paris, 1622); Du Moulin, *Lettre et exhortation de Mr. Du Moulin, ministre à Sedan, écrite à Monsieur le Mareschal de Turenne à Stenay* (Sedan, 1650).

⁸²¹ David Parker, 'The Social Foundation of French Absolutism, 1610-1630', *Past and Present* 53 (1971), 76, 78; Sharon Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers and Clients in Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1986), 10, 145-7.

Huguenot meetings since 1623. Auguste Galland, who was *commissaire* at the national synods of 1623, 1626 and 1631, was closely connected with the La Trémoille family, being a member of their council.⁸²² Galland used the synods as a platform to promote the La Trémoille's affairs, but also acted as Richelieu's agent. His mission was to reconcile Protestants and Catholics, and his exaltation of royal power, expressed in his 1628 *Discours au roi sur la naissance, ancien état, progrès et accroissement de la ville de La Rochelle*, might have influenced Henri de La Trémoille's conversion to Catholicism.

Duchess Marie professed a great interest both in provincial and national synods. Pineau reported that she left Paris on 4 November 1646 for Brittany, 'où la tenue du synode de la province l'a obligée d'aller'.⁸²³ She held copies of the proceedings of all national synods since 1559, made by one Absalon Renard, 'avocat à Loudun et ancien de l'Eglise dudit lieu'. The twenty-eight folders, dated 1646-50, were bound in four volumes entitled *Recueil des synodes nationaux tenus en France depuis d'année 1559 jusqu'en l'an 1660*.⁸²⁴ The La Trémoille archives also contain a list of 'ceux qui composent le synode national' as well as extracts from the minutes of the 1659 synod,⁸²⁵ which the duchess presumably intended for her *Recueil*. The national synod of Loudun, held on La Trémoille territory from 11 November to 10 January 1660, consecrated Marie de La Tour as *protectrice* of the Reformed Churches of France. The duchess 'fust ... receue et complimentée des corps de ville et du Sinode, comme dame de Loudun',

⁸²² 1AP 142; Haag, *La France protestante*, s.v. 'Galland'. He was a close collaborator of Rozemont, 1AP 355-6.

⁸²³ Pineau to Rivet, 9 Nov. 1646, UBL, BPL286/III/81. Pineau also noted that the duke delayed his trip to Thouars, in order to avoid the synod of Poitou, 'où il seroit obligé par bien séance à souffrir et recevoir beaucoup de cérémonies et de complimens', Pineau to Rivet, 10 June 1645, UBL, BPL286/II/36.

⁸²⁴ Bourrel, 'Un Recueil manuscrit...', 107-8. I would like to thank Ms Claudine Belayche for perusing the libraries of Angers in the search of the lost manuscript.

⁸²⁵ 1AP 399/8-10. The complete minutes of the 1659 synod, composed by the royal *commissaire* Jacques Callas La Madelène, are reproduced in *BSHPF* 8 (1859), 145-219.

and was – along with the duke, and the prince and princesse de Tarente – lauded by the public prayers that opened the synod.⁸²⁶ The synod confirmed Ruvigny in his function as *Député général de l'Eglise*, which he had been given by Mazarin in 1653.⁸²⁷ Although some voiced concern that he was 'dévoué à la cour, et avait plus soin de sa fortune et de sa conservation, que de l'intérêt des Eglises',⁸²⁸ the duchess considered Ruvigny's courtly manners and high connections of advantage.⁸²⁹ Maria's interest in the proceedings of the synod is further illustrated by the hospitality she accorded to Jacques Couët du Viviers, whose letters constitute a major source for this event. Couët was invited to the castle, and reported to have had a one-hour-long conversation with the duchess in the evening, and to have spent the following day 'in visitations of the sick and in conversations with Monsieur, Madame and Mademoiselle de La Trémoille'.⁸³⁰ One likely topic of their conversations was the Morus affair, which took up eight days of the deliberations of the synod. Early in 1659, Alexandre Morus (1616-1666) had been nominated to the ministry of Charenton, a decision against which two elders of that consistory, Papillion and Beauchamp, appealed at the national synod. The duchess's interest in Morus's case is evident from a series of letters she wrote to François de La Place, vicomte Machaut, in preparation for the national synod.⁸³¹ She begged Machaut to use his influence over the Walloon Churches in order to 'assoupir une affaire qui ne pourroit tourner qu'à la honte de nos Eglises', and to avoid internal divisions that would play into the hands of the Catholics.⁸³² This argument, combined with Marie's insistence

⁸²⁶ Couët to Ferry, 20 Nov. 1659, *BSHPF* 122 (1976), 76.

⁸²⁷ Deyon, *Du loyalisme au refus*, 7-11.

⁸²⁸ Dumont de Bostaquet, quoted by Michel-Edmond Richard, *La vie des protestants français de l'Edit de Nantes à la Révolution, 1598-1789* (Paris, 1994), 63-5.

⁸²⁹ On Ruvigny's role in advancing the countess of Derby's position at the Restoration court, see Chapter VI.

⁸³⁰ Couët to Ferry, 16 Dec. 1659, *BSHPF* 122 (1976), 257-8.

⁸³¹ Machaut figured among the writers of letters of condolence at the occasion of Elisabeth de La Trémoille's death, 1AP 433, ltr. 56. In 1651 he had been employed (in vain) to break Charles Stanley's marriage to Dorothea de Rupa, Trioche to Tarente, 18 Jan. 1651, 1AP 679.

⁸³² Marie to Machaut, 31 July 1659 and 22 Aug. 1659, 1AP 429/9,10.

on Morus's innocence and talent, seemed to have convinced Machaut, for in September 1659, the duchess thanked him for his efforts in re-establishing 'peace between us for many years to come'.⁸³³ Three months later, Morus, ably defended by the *modérateur*, Jean Daillé, was re-habilitated by the synod of Loudun.⁸³⁴ The decision was a clear victory for the duchesse de La Trémoïlle, who continued to support Morus unflaggingly. It was also a success for Ruvigny and the monarchy, whose aim was to isolate Huguenot decision-makers from the international Calvinist community.⁸³⁵

3.) The Morus Affair

Despite his success at the national synod, Morus was reported to have a

humeur fantasque, chagrine et mélancolique ... depuis qu'il a sceu l'arrest du synode, il est dans un trouble si grand et si espouvantable, qu'à peine est-il capable de raisonnement.⁸³⁶

To recover from his nervous breakdown the pastor was invited to Thouars.⁸³⁷ Daillé congratulated Morus on having attracted the 'friendship and esteem' of Duchess Marie:

Monsieur, rien ne pouvoit m'estre plus agréable que ce que vous m'avez appris, que la fameuse héroïne de Thouars vous donne toujours des marques de son amitié et de son estime, et que mesme son illustre espoux vous honnore de sa bienveillance. Dieu veuille bénir les bontés de l'un et de l'autre à qui nous sommes vous et moy infiniment redevables, ... Certes je ne suis point estonné ... qu'un aymant sy doux et sy fort vous ayt attiré jusques à Thouars, je suis seulement surpris que ... vous en profités sy peu ... Nous sommes quatre pasteurs qui nouy aymons avecq tendresse et qui souffrirons de tout nostre coeur ce retardement pourveu que vous songiés à vous guérir.⁸³⁸

⁸³³ Marie to Machaut, 19 Sept. 1659, 1AP 429/11.

⁸³⁴ Françoise Chevalier, 'Le synode national de Loudun', *BSHPF* 142 (1996), 239, 251.

⁸³⁵ 'Comme le Roi n'entendant point que ses sujets de la R.R. par le moïen des assemblées qui leur permet de traiter de leur doctrine et discipline ecclésiastique receue en France eussent communication avec les estrangers en aucune sorte et manière que ce soit', Callas La Madelène, 'Le dernier synode national', 173-174; Chevalier, 'Le synode national', 257-8; Galland, 'Les pasteurs français', 241.

⁸³⁶ Couët to Ferry, 23 Dec. 1659, *BSHPF* 122 (1976), 280.

⁸³⁷ Morus to Marie, 3 Feb. 1660, 8 Feb. 1660 and 10 Feb. 1660, *Registre*, ed. Imbert, 97-8; ARS, MS 7463/34v: 'Ce long & agréable séjour qu'il [Morus] a fait en ce lieu si illustre & si considérable [Thouars]'.
⁸³⁸ Daillé to Morus, c1660, *Registre*, ed. Imbert, 101-5.

Alexandre Morus was most famous for his controversy with John Milton over the legality of the English regicide, triggered by his preface to Pierre Du Moulin the Younger's *Regii sanguinis clamor ad coelum adversus parricidas Anglicanos* (1652). Du Moulin, who considered himself 'happily engrafted into the body of the Church of England', was a former chaplain of the Derby family.⁸³⁹ Milton responded with his *Defensio secunda contra infamem libellum anonymum* (1654) and launched a personal attack against Morus in his *Defensio prose contra Alexandrum Morum Ecclesiasten Libelli famosi, cui titulus, Regii sanguinis clamor* (1655).⁸⁴⁰ Couët du Viviers, who met Alexandre Morus in a Parisian salon, described him as a great orator, extravagant and argumentative.⁸⁴¹ Crowds gathered when he preached, even Catholics came to listen to his over-long sermons, for 'il captive extrêmement bien l'attention de son auditoire parce qu'il a des pensées fort surprenantes'.⁸⁴² Orthodox critics pointed out that Morus had been asked to leave Geneva for his Arminian tendencies,⁸⁴³ and drew up a considerable file with reports about the pastor's libertine behaviour, his womanising and frequentation of *cabarets*.⁸⁴⁴ One of these condemning reports led to Morus's suspension in August 1661. His intense correspondence with Duchess Marie from his English 'exile' in 1662 reveals how factional fighting for control of the consistory interacted with court politics. On a more private level, it also documents a striking inversion of roles, resulting in the duchess giving spiritual guidance to the pastor.

⁸³⁹ Raines, 'Memoirs', p. li; Vivienne Larminie, 'Peter du Moulin', *DNB* (forthcoming).

⁸⁴⁰ Bayle, *Choix*, ii. 393-9; Haag, *La France protestante*, s.v. 'Morus'.

⁸⁴¹ Couët to Ferry, 23 July 1659, *BSHPF* 104 (1958), 232.

⁸⁴² Couët to Ferry, 23 July 1659 and 4 Feb. 1659, *BSHPF* 104 (1958), 231, 237.

⁸⁴³ Laplanche, *Orthodoxie*, 226; Leroy and Bots (eds.), *Saumaise*, p. xxii.

⁸⁴⁴ ARS, MS 4121, MS 5423, MS 5123, and MS 7463, analysed by Schapira, *Conrart*, 330-5.

Factional Politics: Control over the Consistory

Morus polarised opinions and the fight over his professional rehabilitation or demise caused strong oppositions between the leading factions at Charenton, the Hôtel de Turenne and the Hôtel de La Trémoille. In July 1659, Morus had been received extremely coldly at the Hôtel de Turenne, dominated by Charlotte de La Tour, better known as Mademoiselle de Bouillon, Charlotte de Caumont de La Force, Madame Turenne since 1651, and Claude de Champagne, daughter of the comte de La Suze.⁸⁴⁵ At the Hôtel de La Trémoille Morus was, on the contrary, heaped with praise, and his sermons were considered 'bon au superlatif degré'.⁸⁴⁶ Duchess Marie considered it unseemly for Mademoiselle de La Suze to interfere in ecclesiastical matters:

Quand j'entends dire que Mlle de la Suze est une de celles qui s'efforcent le plus de vous nuire, j'en ai pitié; car je ne trouve pas que ce soit une matière qui lui soit plus convenable que lorsqu'on la faisoit juge de l'opinion des Milenaires, contestée entre MM. Amyraut et de Launay.⁸⁴⁷

The reason behind de La Suze's scheming was, according to the duchess, a desire to control the consistory. Seemingly oblivious that the same accusation could be levelled against herself, she added, 'et cela fait qu'elle est nommée parmi vos confrères une Coquette de ministre'.⁸⁴⁸

Morus complained that upon his arrival in England the Hôtel de Turenne immediately launched a campaign to discredit him in front of the French Protestant Church of London:

Melle de La Suze et Melle de Bouillon sont les deux sources d'où découlent ici des ruisseaux pleins de fiel et de haine... Je n'ay point de traverse que de leurs

⁸⁴⁵ Couët to Ferry, 23 July 1659, *BSHPF* 104 (1958), 232; Schapira, *Conrart*, 329, 335, 503.

⁸⁴⁶ Couët to Ferry, 4 Feb. 1660, *BSHPF* 104 (1958), 237.

⁸⁴⁷ Marie to Morus, 25 Feb. 1662, 'Correspondance de Marie de La Tour, Duchesse de La Trémoille, avec le ministre Alexandre Morus', ed. P. Marchegay, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 147. Amyraut had dedicated his 1657 *Apologie de Moïse Amyraut contre les invectives de Monsieur de Launay* to Mademoiselle de la Suze.

⁸⁴⁸ Marie to Morus, 5 Mar. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 227.

clients et de leurs adhérens, qui exercent sur moi une rigueur et une inhospitalité qui n'eust jamais de pareille.⁸⁴⁹

It is impossible to identify the 'adherents' the Hôtel de Turenne had at Charles II's court, but their most recognisable 'clients' were the Anglican priests Jean Durel and Daniel Brevin, who married Anne Carteret, a friend of Mademoiselle de La Suze, in 1662.⁸⁵⁰ Morus believed that Madame de Carteret 'fronde ici secrètement contre moi', because she interrupted a meeting he had set up with Marie's niece, the countess of Strafford.⁸⁵¹ The Derby family, and its connections at the English court, were supporters of the Hôtel de La Trémoïlle. Lady Derby herself had been forced to leave London for pecuniary motives,⁸⁵² and Morus complained that '[son] absence m'a fait un cruel préjudice', although he was aware of 'la plus tendre et la plus obligeante lettre du monde' by which the duke had recommended him to his sister.⁸⁵³ Time and again Morus asked the duchess to write him a reference letter for King Charles II, for 'vostre seul suffrage a plus de poids que mille comme ces autres'.⁸⁵⁴ The duchess's letters, however, mixed rebuke and praise rendering them unsuitable for public usage.⁸⁵⁵ Although Morus assured her that her own reputation would always be 'audessus de la mesdizance, [ayant] esté tousjours plus tost austère que licentieuse', the duchess presumably did not want to risk her own reputation by warranting Morus's good behaviour.⁸⁵⁶

⁸⁴⁹ Morus to Marie, 22 Jan. /2 Feb. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 140-1. See also: Morus to Marie, 10/20 Feb. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 145. The countess of Derby believed that the French Protestant Church was strongly opposed to Morus, Charlotte to Marie, 24 Jan. 1662, 1AP 385/72; Witt, *Lady of Latham*, 287-8.

⁸⁵⁰ Marie to Morus, 5 Mar. 1662 and 10/20 Mar. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 227, 232.

⁸⁵¹ Morus to Marie, 22 Jan. /2 Feb. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 140.

⁸⁵² 'C'est la pure nesesité qui m'a fait sortir de londre, qui certes est tres grande et j'en suis pleus fachee pour Mr Morus que pour toute autre chose et sy Dieu me donne le moyen d'y retourner, je feray mon possible pour le servir. Oultre que je le dois pour l'amour de vous, il faut que je confaisse que j'ai en extreme plaisir de l'entandre precher', Charlotte to Marie, 1 Apr. 1662, 1AP 385/73.

⁸⁵³ Morus to Marie, 12/22 May 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 282. Henri's letter, dated 20 Dec 1661, has been reproduced in *Registre*, ed. Imbert, 213.

⁸⁵⁴ Morus to Marie de La Tour, 17/27 Jan. 1662 and 2/12 Feb 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 137, 142.

⁸⁵⁵ Morus complained twice that she did not separate 'private' exhortations and 'public' compliments, Morus to Marie, 26 Feb./6 Mar. 1662 and 17/27 Apr. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 229, 280.

⁸⁵⁶ Morus to Marie, 10/20 Feb. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 144.

Spiritual Guidance

Marie recognised Morus as the most gifted orator of his generation and an indispensable asset to the congregation of Charenton. She accepted Morus's teaching that salvation was secured through faith, rather than personal morality or way of life.⁸⁵⁷ The duchess did not, however, condone the scandalous behaviour that had led to his excommunication by the synods of Tergoude and Nijmegen.⁸⁵⁸ Although she blamed Morus's detractors for their lack of charity and Christian compassion,⁸⁵⁹ she assumed the role of 'directeur de conscience' and urged the pastor to change his ways:

Rendez vos amis témoins de votre repentance, prenez un train de vie qui édifie cette église, et après que, par l'espace de quelque temps, vous serez confirmé dans un si bon chemin, ne doutez point que Dieu n'étende sa bénédiction et sur votre personne et sur votre ministère. Mais, Monsieur, pour en venir là, il faut renoncer à tous préjugés, ne recherchez votre gloire mais celle de Dieu, agir en toutes vos actions vous le représentant toujours scrutateur de votre cœur et comme un Dieu qui ne peut être moqué ni trompé. Prenez, je vous supplie, cette bonne résolution, ne vous fiez ni en votre capacité ni en votre adresse: ce sont des armes trop faibles pour résister Dieu; mais faites qu'en vous retournant à lui il retourne à vous et lors vous serez assez fort il vous donnera la victoire et contre vous même et contre tous ceux qui sont ennemis injustement, et donnera à vos amis la joie de vous revoir au milieu d'eux, et à cette église celle de profiter de vos bon enseignements et des fruits de vos excellents dons. Je me trouve bien hardie, Monsieur, de vous écrire avec tant de liberté, mais vous l'avez voulu.⁸⁶⁰

Marie's teaching appears to have fallen on fertile ground. Her correspondence with Morus suggests that her protégé's attitude changed and became less vindictive. Criticism was now accepted as 'équitable and juste', and mortification was embraced with *élan* in the hope of a reconciliation with his opponents at the Hôtel de Turenne, 'ces bonnes

⁸⁵⁷ See Matthew 5:10-11, quoted by Marie's *Recueil de Passages de l'Escriture Ste*, and the importance it had for the doctrine of justification, Labrousse, *Conscience*, 78-9. Morus gave a controversial sermon on Luke 7 at Charenton in July 1659, asking to forgive all sinners, Couët du Viviers to Ferry, 23 July 1659, *BSHPF* 104 (1958), 231.

⁸⁵⁸ Haag, *La France protestante*, s.v. 'Morus'.

⁸⁵⁹ Marie to Morus, 14 Feb. 1662 and 25 Feb. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 142, 147.

⁸⁶⁰ Marie to Morus, 15 Mar. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 231-2. Other noblewomen acted as spiritual counsellors; Mme de Turenne, for instance, advised the pastor Pierre Du Bosc, Gout, *Le miroir*, ii. 147-8. See Schapira, *Conrart*, 324. Female spiritual direction was perceived by contemporaries as a threat to the traditional male/female hierarchy, Linda Timmermans, *L'accès des femmes à la culture (1598-1715)* (Paris, 1993), 555-60.

âmes qui disent qu'elles seront les premières à me donner la main lorsqu'elles me verront humiliés'.⁸⁶¹ In the meantime, Marie had spoken to her brother Turenne,⁸⁶² and Mademoiselle de Bouillon, who declared that she and Madame de Turenne would be the first to welcome Morus back, if he truly repented his faults and had given up on glory and applause.⁸⁶³ In June 1662, Morus was back in Paris, full of gratitude for Marie's mediation and spiritual guidance.⁸⁶⁴ For the duchess, the most important issue at stake was not Morus's innocence, nor the rivalry with the Hôtel de Turenne, but the opportunity to place one of her clients in close range of the English king. Morus's proximity to Charles II was considered to be of benefit to the negotiation of a union between the king and Marie's eldest daughter.

The Royal Match

Shortly after his arrival in England, Morus was actively promoting Marie de La Trémoïlle:

je publie ses louanges de toute ma force dans les plus hauts lieux et ... j'attens réponse d'un seigneur du Parlement sur une affaire qu'on me doit proposer pour elle.⁸⁶⁵

A marriage with a Member of the House of Lords was conceivable, but Marie de La Trémoïlle was reluctant to marry someone below the status of duke, as she would lose the privilege of the *tabouret*.⁸⁶⁶ A royal match, on the other hand, would have firmly established the La Trémoïlle's rank in France above that of the dukes and peers, and equal to the rank of the *princes étrangers* of Lorraine, Monaco and Savoy.

⁸⁶¹ Morus to Marie, 21/31 Mar. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 233-4.

⁸⁶² 'J'eu hier un grand entretien de vous avec mon frère; je voudrais que tous ceux qui l'approchent fussent aussi modérés qu'il l'est sur votre sujet', Marie to Morus, 5 Mar. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 227.

⁸⁶³ Marie to Morus, 15 Mar. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 231.

⁸⁶⁴ Morus to Marie, 13 June 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 285.

⁸⁶⁵ Morus to Marie, 17/27 Jan. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 138.

⁸⁶⁶ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 40; see Chapter VI.

There was much speculation surrounding Charles II's marriage. Countess Charlotte reported that his councillors advised him against a bride 'of contrary religion' and that many wished to see a union with a princess of Orange.⁸⁶⁷ French candidates included one of Mazarin's nieces and Mademoiselle de Montpensier.⁸⁶⁸ The La Trémoille's offer was kept a secret for 'dès qu'on découvrira votre visée, les catholiques se déchaîneront pour la traverser'.⁸⁶⁹ In order to influence the king's choice, Marie de La Trémoille approached Princess Henrietta-Anne of England, who resided in Paris after her marriage to the duc d'Orléans.⁸⁷⁰ More important than winning over Charles's sister was, according to Morus, the favourable opinion of the queen mother, Henrietta-Maria, 'parcequ'elle viendra bientôt ici, et parqu'on m'a dit qu'elle avoit des desseins que je ne puis vous écrire, qui se rencontreroient bien avec les nostres'.⁸⁷¹ When rumours that Charles had chosen the Infanta of Portugal were confirmed in April 1662,⁸⁷² the blame for the failure of the La Trémoille wedding plans was cast on Douvrier, the messenger who had failed to deliver the congratulations of the La Trémoille to the king at his Restoration in 1660. The letters had been found among Douvrier's papers after his death, and Marie asked her sister-in-law to present them to the king

afin qu'il ne nous croy pas assez impertinans pour avoir manqué à un devoir que tout le monde luy a rendu et pour un sujet que je puis dire que nous aurons ressenty plus vivement que personne.⁸⁷³

Although it was too late for a royal match, Morus was instructed in May 1662 to let the king know about the 'grande joye que j'avois veu éclater à Touars pour son heureux rétablissement'.⁸⁷⁴ Morus considered the relationship patched up, when Charles shouted, as he left London, 'N'oubliez pas mes recommandations à Mme de La Trémoille et à M

⁸⁶⁷ Charlotte to Marie, 17/27 Sept. 1660 and 22 Sept. 1660 1AP 385/36, 37.

⁸⁶⁸ Charlotte to Marie, 14 Feb. 1661 and 17 Sept 1660, 1AP 385/36, 48.

⁸⁶⁹ Tarente to Marie, 30 May 1660, *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 160.

⁸⁷⁰ Marie to Morus, 5 Mar. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 228.

⁸⁷¹ Morus to Marie, 26 Feb./6 Mar. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 230.

⁸⁷² Charlotte to Marie, 1 Apr. 1662, 1AP 385/73.

⁸⁷³ Marie to Charlotte, 15 Nov. 1661, 1AP 429/107.

⁸⁷⁴ Morus to Marie, 12/22 May 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 282.

de La Trémoille, et que je prens beaucoup de part à ce qui les regarde'.⁸⁷⁵ The hypothesis that Morus was used to promote the La Trémoille's affairs at the English court explains why the duke himself was supporting Morus so strongly. Henri de La Trémoille declared to his sister 'ayant tousjours aimé, chéry et honoré [Morus] je tiendray tous les bon offices qu'il recevra de vous, toutes les grâces qu'il méritera de vostre incomparable monarque, comme si je les avois moy mesme receues'.⁸⁷⁶ He was in regular correspondence with Morus,⁸⁷⁷ and told the pastor,

le désir que j'ay de vostre [satisfaction] me feroit sortir de l'obscurité de mon cabinet pour faire rentrer dans l'abîme ces démons de Loudun venus à Londres affin d'esteindre la plus grande lumière de nos jours, pour y faire de nouvelles mines infernelles, et pour y rallumer un feu capable de réduire en cendre tout un royaume.⁸⁷⁸

The 'démons de Loudun' alluded to Urbain Grandier's 1634 trial, but also to Morus's opponents at the national synod of Loudun, who had been defeated by the La Trémoille in 1659, but continued to assail their protégé in London.

The Morus affair illustrates the duchess's practice of piety, based on the principle that charity and Christian love 'oblige us to seek [a sinner's] improvement, not his ruin'.⁸⁷⁹ This belief informed her educational methods, which left children a great deal of freedom, unlike the strict Calvinist education which she had experienced herself, and which was promoted by the duchesse de Liancourt. On a doctrinal level, the duchesse de La Trémoille embraced Amyraut's hypothetical universalism, which criticised strict predestinarianism and defied the canons of Dordt. French Protestantism was no more a monolithic confession than French Catholicism, and internal division was considered to

⁸⁷⁵ Morus to Marie, 19/29 May 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 284.

⁸⁷⁶ Henri to Charlotte, 20 Dec. 1661, *Registre*, ed. Imbert, 213.

⁸⁷⁷ Imbert lists a total of nine letters from Morus to the duke, and eleven from the duke to Morus, dated 1660-5, *Registre*, ed. Imbert, 94-99, 108-18, 187-9, 193, 202, 223-4, 241-3.

⁸⁷⁸ Henri to Morus, 30 May 1662, *Registre* ed. Imbert, 188-9.

⁸⁷⁹ Marie to Morus, 5 Mar. 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 227.

seriously weaken the Reformed Churches. What motivated Marie to intervene in Amyraut's quarrel and Morus's struggle was, on the surface, her desire to reunite the Huguenot community. The Act of Thouars was in fact less a reconciliation of Amyraut's and Rivet's positions than the result of a skilful usage of patronage to silence Amyraut's critics. Her defence of Morus has to be seen in the context of the rivalry with the Hôtel de Turenne over control of the consistory of Charenton. It had, moreover, a dynastic sub-context, as Morus was used to promote a union between Marie's daughter and Charles II of England.

CHAPTER V. FEMALE INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS

In order to increase their landed income and bolster their social position, the La Trémoïlle aimed at royal patronage in general, and at the provincial governorship of Poitou in particular.⁸⁸⁰ Cardinal Mazarin refused it point-blank, for he believed that

the duke is led by his wife, who is a Huguenot and sister of one of the *Mécontents*, the duc de Bouillon. She is a clever woman ('une femme d'esprit') who has attached herself to the House of Condé and who is a friend of the duc d'Enghien. Poitou is, moreover, a province prone to sedition, and the Huguenots there are powerful.⁸⁸¹

This chapter will clarify whether Mazarin's fears of a Huguenot 'fifth column' in France and of a powerful alliance of the nobility centred on Condé and Bouillon were based on any real threat. It will examine to what extent the La Trémoïlle were manipulating those fears to argue their case for a governorship, and for their most cherished ambition, the status of *prince étranger*. The La Trémoïlle's relationship with the monarchy, based on a complex interplay of expectations and promises, needs to be examined in order to determine whether Marie de La Tour was the driving force behind the La Trémoïlle's participation in the Fronde, or their 'player' at court, constantly mediating between the monarchy and her family. Opinions were much more polarised in England, in the context of acute Civil War and the subsequent Commonwealth period. Nonetheless, the countess of Derby was able to display the same level of pragmatism as her sister-in-law when dealing with a regime she clearly detested. The final section will look at what motivated the La Trémoïlle's oscillations between confrontation and cooperation with the monarchy, focusing on their claim to the title of *prince étranger*, based on their rights to the kingdom of Naples. Special attention will be paid to the duchess's

⁸⁸⁰ See Chapter I.

⁸⁸¹ Quoted from Mazarin's diary (1643) by Adolphe Chéruel, 'Notice sur un soulèvement en Poitou, Aunis, Saintonge, Angoumois (1643)', *Mémoires de la Société des antiquaires de l'Ouest* 35 (1870-1), 145-7.

involvement in bringing their claim to the Westphalian peace conference and obtaining a royal brevet recognising their princely privileges.

The involvement of noblewomen in the Fronde and in the English Civil War should not be reduced to their 'heroic' roles as modern Amazons.⁸⁸² The La Trémoille sets of correspondence allow us to go beyond contemporary fiction,⁸⁸³ and highly biased memoirs.⁸⁸⁴ The exceptionality of the 'femmes fortes' of the Regency reinforced the message that women in general were not supposed to enter the public domain, which they often did in a less spectacular – yet highly efficient – manner, through petitioning and networking. The political involvement of Marie de La Tour and Charlotte de La Trémoille shows how, within the confines of a patriarchal society, women of high social standing could wield considerable influence.

A.) Participation in the Fronde

There is no in-depth study of the La Trémoille's role in the Fronde,⁸⁸⁵ but what seems to emerge from an analysis of their constant wavering between opposition to and support of the Crown is the pursuit of personal interests, shaped by family ties and political

⁸⁸² See for instance the portraits of Longueville and Montpensier in George Scudéry, *Le cabinet de Monsieur de Scudéry*, ed. C. Biet and D. Moncond'huy (Paris, 1991), 152-3, 203-5; Noémie Hepp, 'La notion d'héroïne', *Onze études sur l'image de la femme dans la littérature française du XVIIe siècle*, ed. W. Leiner (Tübingen, 1984), 11-24. On Charlotte de La Trémoille's vilification by contemporary pamphleteers and nineteenth-century heroification, see Katherine Walker, 'The Military Activities of Charlotte de La Tremouille, countess of Derby, during the Civil War and Interregnum', *Northern History* 38/1 (2001), 52-6.

⁸⁸³ Yves-Marie Bercé, 'Les princes de Condé héros de roman: la princesse amazone et le prince déguisé', *La Fronde en question* (Actes du 18e colloque du Centre méridional de rencontres sur le XVIIe siècle, Aix-en-Provence, 1989), 131-42; Joan DeJean, 'La Fronde romanesque: de l'exploit à la fiction', *ibid.* 181-92. Mme de Longueville stood as model for Mandane, a central figure of Madeleine de Scudéry's novel *Artamène ou le Grand Cyrus*. In Scudéry's *Clélie* the figure of Cléandre might have stood for Henri-Charles de La Trémoille, Chantal Morlet-Chantalat, *La Clélie de Mademoiselle de Scudéry. De l'épopée à la gazette: un discours féminin de la gloire* (Paris, 1994), 582.

⁸⁸⁴ Jean Garapon, 'Mademoiselle devant la Fronde d'après ses mémoires', *La Fronde en question*, 63-72; Marie-Thérèse Hipp, *Mythes et réalités: enquêtes sur le roman et les mémoires, 1660-1700* (Paris, 1976).

⁸⁸⁵ It is best summarised by C. de La Ménardière, *L'esprit politique et l'esprit littéraire dans une grande famille française au XVIIe siècle* (Poitiers, 1913); and Courteault, *Un témoin de la Fronde*.

opportunism. Henri de La Trémoille's opposition to the Crown in 1649 was not determined by any shared agenda with the Parlement of Paris.⁸⁸⁶ Nor did his son, the prince de Tarente, join Condé's party by the end of 1651 because he agreed with Condé's plans to remodel the ministerial council.⁸⁸⁷ The judicial and the princely Fronde followed two distinct logics,⁸⁸⁸ yet the motives of the La Trémoille remained the same: to secure what they considered their 'due', a provincial governorship and the recognition of their status as *princes étrangers*.⁸⁸⁹ What role did the duchess play in mobilising their provincial clientele, and in exploiting links with French Protestantism and local *assemblées de noblesse* to put pressure on the monarchy?

1.) The Parisian Fronde

According to Saint-Simon, the initiative to claim preferential treatment at the French court on the basis of the claim to Naples came from the duchess, who was 'grieved to see her husband left behind and not made prince like her brother the duc de Bouillon'. Not satisfied to see her family of birth enjoy princely status, she used the Fronde to obtain it for her marital family as well.⁸⁹⁰ This assertion reflects a statement made by Mme de Motteville:

Mme de La Trémouille qui étoit habile et ambitieuse, vouloit que son mari fût Prince, comme issu par femme de Charlotte d'Aragon, héritière du royaume de Naples. Elle crut que pour parvenir à ses dessins il falloit faire quelque mal ou quelque peur au ministre; et comme ils sont grands seigneurs, et qu'ils avoient beaucoup de crédit et de puissance dans leur province, il leur fut aisé d'émouvoir des troubles en leur pays.⁸⁹¹

⁸⁸⁶ A. Lloyd Moote, *The Revolt of the Judges: The Parlement of Paris and the Fronde, 1643-1652* (Princeton, 1971); Richard Bonney, 'The French Civil War, 1649-53', *European Studies Review* 8 (1978), 71-100.

⁸⁸⁷ Richard Bonney, 'Cardinal Mazarin and the Great Nobility during the Fronde', *English Historical Review* 96 (1981), 818-33.

⁸⁸⁸ Robert Descimon and Christian Jouhaud, 'La Fronde en mouvement: le développement de la crise politique entre 1648 et 1652', *XVIIe siècle* 145 (1984), 305-22.

⁸⁸⁹ Rewards that were not, as Sharon Kettering has been right to point out, purely economic, but political and psychological, Kettering, 'Fronde', 433.

⁸⁹⁰ Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, ed. Coirault, iii. 51; Saint-Simon, 'Thouars', 202.

⁸⁹¹ Françoise Bertaut de Motteville, *Mémoires*, ed. Michaud and Poujoulat, (Paris, 1838), 262.

The duchess was playing cards with the queen and Mme de Motteville on the evening of Epiphany 1649, when the royal family decided to leave Paris.⁸⁹² Instead of following the cour to Saint-Germain-en-Laye, Marie went to Brittany where she gathered support for her husband. Among the Parisian Frondeurs were Marie's brother, the duc de Bouillon, and a distant cousin, Louis de La Trémoille, marquis de Noirmoutier. The duc de La Trémoille's offer to raise 8,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry was welcomed by the Parlement of Paris on 2 March 1649.⁸⁹³ An *arrêt* dated 11 March 1649 gave him the *commission de général d'armée* over the western provinces of Poitou, Aunis, Angoumois, Périgord, Limousin, Touraine and Brittany.⁸⁹⁴ On 25 March, Henri accepted the commission to 'serve the king under the authority of the Parlement ... for the good of the State'.⁸⁹⁵ He chose his half-brother Marcilly as deputy, and left his son Laval in command of Thouars, before setting out for Brittany.⁸⁹⁶ The duke tried in vain to gain Condé for the 'bon parti' against Mazarin,⁸⁹⁷ while his wife established contact with Condé's sister, the duchesse de Longueville, one of the key players of the Parisian Fronde.⁸⁹⁸ The signature of the peace of Rueil forced Henri de La Trémoille to break off the siege of Angers and surrender to its governor, the maréchal de Brézé.⁸⁹⁹ His claim that, given one month, he would have gathered an army of 20,000 men, and would have formed 'un gouvernement équitable et sur de si solides fondements que les gens de bien

⁸⁹² Motteville, *Mémoires*, 230.

⁸⁹³ 1AP 429/75; Armand-Désiré de La Fontenelle de Vaudore, *La Fronde en Poitou* (Poitiers, 1835), 6. According to Retz, Henri had been raising troops before receiving the *Parlement's* instructions, Cardinal de Retz, *Mémoires*, ed. S. Bertiére (Paris, 1998), 414.

⁸⁹⁴ 1AP 397/100; 1AP 397/II/183; La Fontenelle, *Fronde en Poitou*, 7-8; Retz, *Mémoires*, 489-90.

⁸⁹⁵ 1AP 397/II/178.

⁸⁹⁶ La Fontenelle, *Fronde en Poitou*, 11-2.

⁸⁹⁷ Henri to Condé, 17 Mar. 1649, 1AP 397/II/177; Henri to Condé, 3 Apr. 1649, *Registre*, ed. Imbert, 30-1.

⁸⁹⁸ Henri thanked her for 'les assurances qu'il a pleu à V.A. de donner à ma femme de l'honneur de sa bienveillance en la protection de nos interests', Henri to Mme de Longueville, 9 Apr. 1649, 1AP 397/II/179.

⁸⁹⁹ Henri to Brézé, 2 Apr. 1649, 1AP 397/II/178; Henri to the *Parlement* of Paris, 10 Apr. 1649, 1AP 397/II/179; Henri to Anne of Austria, 10 May 1649, 1AP 397/II/182.

s'en pourroient promettre la perpétuité de sa durée' has to be considered implausible.⁹⁰⁰

Like the rest of the Frondeurs he was pardoned by the end of March 1649.⁹⁰¹

In November 1649, rumours circulated that their eldest son, the prince de Tarente, was planning on joining the Fronde in Bordeaux. Mazarin assured the duchess in a friendly yet warning tone that the Regent knew

fort bien qu'aprez les choses que vous dites à Sa Majesté, à vostre départ, et dans les intentions qu'Elle a pour les avantages dudict Prince et de toute sa famille, il n'est rien moins vraysemblable que de croire capable d'une telle résolution si préjudiciable à ses interests propres.⁹⁰²

The La Trémoille were careful not to join the party of the princes that formed itself after Condé's imprisonment in January 1650. The duke dismissed rumours that he was raising troops to oppose La Meilleraye in Poitou, as he had left his children 'avec Sa Majesté pour garande de ma fidélité'.⁹⁰³ The persistence of the rumours shows that it was expected that the La Trémoille would support their kin,⁹⁰⁴ and it was a fine act of balance to remain loyal to the Crown, without alienating the Bouillon-Condé faction. In December 1650, Tarente declined to participate in Mazarin's campaign against Turenne.⁹⁰⁵ Paradoxically, Mazarin's triumph at Rethel led to a unification of his opponents in the call for Condé's release, and by February 1651 the cardinal had been forced into exile. Marie de La Tour noticed the winds of change in December, and cautiously encouraged her son to re-establish contact with Bouillon and Condé. Since the Crown had failed to deliver what it had promised, she wrote, 'no doubt my sister-in-

⁹⁰⁰ 'Abrégé de la Vie du duc Henry de La Trémoille et son apologie sur la prise d'armes du Parlement et des pairs', *Documents inédits*, ed. Imbert, ii. 1-9, at 6. This claim is taken seriously by de La Ménardière, *L'esprit politique*, 11-2.

⁹⁰¹ Retz, *Mémoires*, 544.

⁹⁰² Mazarin to Marie de la Tour, 26 Nov 1649, *Lettres du cardinal de Mazarin pendant son ministère*, ed. A. Chéruef, 9 vols (Paris, 1872-1906), iii. 428.

⁹⁰³ Henri to Brienne, 26 Feb. 1650, 1AP 397/II/205.

⁹⁰⁴ Letter by Guy Patin, dated 3 May 1650, *Lettres*, ed. J.-H. Reveillé-Parise, 3 vols. (Paris, 1846), ii. 9; Marie to Marcilly, 8 July 1650, 1AP 430/97 (*LT5s*, iv. 94-6): 'on escrit à [ma fille] que l'on a chanté sur le Pont-Neuf l'engagement de M. de La Trémoille au party des princes'.

⁹⁰⁵ Tarente used illness as a (possibly genuine) excuse for his absence, Marie to Tarente, 1AP 430/98-9.

law and my sister will no longer be against us'.⁹⁰⁶ The death of the dowager princesse de Condé allowed her to send letters of condolence to the young princess, Claire-Clémence de Maillé-Brézé.⁹⁰⁷ As soon as she heard of Condé's release, Marie wrote to congratulate:

J'ay tousjours esté si sensible aus intérêts de V.A. que je puis menquer de l'estre beaucoup au bonheur de sa liberté et à la joye que tous les gens de bien en ressentent, j'en ay fait mille voeux du ciel et je les convertis à cest heure en autant d'actions de grâces à dieu qui en efet ne pourroit donner de plus fortes marques du soin qu'il veut prendre de la France qu'en vous redonnant les moyens d'apuyer de vos conseils et de vostre générosité les résolutions qui se prendront pour l'affermissement de son repos. Vous y avez, Monsieur, plus d'intérêt que personne puis qu'outre le rang que vous y donne vostre naissance, vous avez tant contribué à en accroistre la gloire.⁹⁰⁸

If the duchess's main concern was peace ('repos'), as she asserts in this complimentary, yet non-committal, letter to Condé, how can one explain the La Trémoille's decision to take up arms in October 1651, shortly after the king had reached his majority? Unfulfilled promises regarding their status at court and their position in the provinces were at the root of the La Trémoille's distrust of the Crown, but an additional provocation was needed to trigger their rebellion.

2.) The Breton Estates of 1651

This trigger was provided by the Crown's mismanagement of the 1651 Breton Estates. The presidency over the second estate might not have translated into economic advantage or control over the Breton nobility,⁹⁰⁹ but it had a highly symbolic value as it represented the highest position in the province, and was bitterly contested between the

⁹⁰⁶ Eléonore de Bergh, duchesse de Bouillon, and Charlotte de La Tour had been imprisoned in the Bastille from April 1650 until the peace of Bordeaux in October 1650. Marie to Tarente, 20 Dec. 1650, 1AP 430/99.

⁹⁰⁷ Marie to Tarente, 20 Dec. 1650, 1AP 430/99.

⁹⁰⁸ Marie to Condé, 21 Feb. 1651, AC, P X, 67.

⁹⁰⁹ J. Russell Major, *Representative Government in Early Modern France* (New Haven, 1980), 436-40.

Rohan and the La Trémoille.⁹¹⁰ For the latter, official recognition of their social eminence, symbolised by the presidency of the second estate, reinforced their claim to Naples.⁹¹¹ After Rohan's rebellion in 1620, Henri de La Trémoille supplanted him and presided, as Richelieu's client, in 1623, 1626, 1628, 1636, 1638, 1640, and 1643.⁹¹² In 1645, the duke attached his fortunes to Henri II, prince de Condé, and turned against Richelieu's cousin, the lieutenant general La Meilleraye.⁹¹³ The *secrétaire d'Etat* Brienne tried to counter Condé's influence by insisting on the tradition of La Trémoille service to the Crown and by hinting at possible rewards regarding their claim to Naples:

[La gloire] de ceux de vostre maison s'est ellevée en eslevant la grandeur du Royaume ... Les couronnes ne changent point, leurs maximes sont solides, qui les sert en est honoré. Ce doit estre vostre but et qu'il contribue à faire recognoistre vos prétentions sur un Royaume [Naples], ce qui ne vous sauroit manquer quand vous donnerés vos soins et vos veilles à la conservation de celuy-cy.⁹¹⁴

In 1647, the La Trémoille lost the presidency to their traditional rivals, the Rohan, who were back in favour thanks to the new prince de Condé, who arranged Henri Chabot's marriage to the Rohan heiress.⁹¹⁵ Despite Louis de Bourbon's patronage of François Gouyon, Baron de La Moussaye, and his tolerant attitude to religious differences, the La Trémoille's cooperation with the 'Grand' Condé was more problematic than previous

⁹¹⁰ BNF, Collection Dupuy 761/135, 139, 149.

⁹¹¹ The *Mémoire touchant la pretention de Monseigneur* cited not only extensive genealogies, but also an act whereby the duc de Bretagne recognised the *baronnie* of Vitré as the highest dignity after his own, 1AP406/12. Saint-Simon also considered that their position in Brittany formed the basis for the La Trémoille's claim to Naples, 'Estat des changements arrivez à la dignité de duc et pair depuis may 1643 jusqu'en may 1711', *Ecrits inédits de Saint-Simon*, ed. Faugère, 8 vols. (Paris, 1880-1893), iii. 87-219, at 211.

⁹¹² Kenneth Malcolm Dunkley, 'Richelieu and the Estates of Brittany, 1624-1640', Ph.D. thesis (Emory University, 1972), 198, 218; Collins, *Classes*, 192, 195, 226.

⁹¹³ Henri de La Trémoille to Henri de Condé, Mazarin, and Brienne 14 Feb. 1645, 1AP 397/II/122, 123, 125; Henri to Condé, 22 Feb. 1645, 1AP 397/II/127; Henri to Perrault, 1 Mar. 1645, 1AP 397/II/127; see Béguin, *Condé*, 80.

⁹¹⁴ Brienne to Henri de La Trémoille, n.d., 1AP 397/II/123-4. Henri's reply is dated 4 Mar. 1645, 1AP 397/II/128-9.

⁹¹⁵ Pineau to Rivet, 14 Oct. 1646, UBL, BPL 286/III/89; Tallemant, *Historiettes*, i. 643; Béguin, *Condé*, 81, 410. The Crown might also have been disappointed by the reduced donation it received from the Estates (2,200,000 *livres* in 1645 compared to 2,900,000 in 1643). In 1647, Rohan managed to obtain 2,600,000 *livres* for the king, 1AP 397/99.

relations with his father, who was reputed 'ennemi déclaré et cruel persécuteur de la [Religion]'.⁹¹⁶ Aristocratic rivalries rooted deeper than confessional solidarity.

The duc de La Trémoille regained the presidency in 1649, and was determined to keep it. According to Tarente's memoirs, Condé offered to withdraw his support from Rohan, if the La Trémoille would join his 'party', an offer Tarente staunchly refused. Instead of rewarding his loyalty, Mazarin's *créatures*, who dominated the Council, issued an *arrêt* against La Trémoille, warning them not to 'trouble the presidency of M. de Rohan'.⁹¹⁷ Tarente's narrative focuses on the Crown's ingratitude and leaves out the pro-active measures he took in preparation for the 1651 meeting, following the advice of the duchess, his mother.

First, a reconciliation was arranged with La Meilleraye, a 'personal enemy' of Rohan-Chabot and rival of Condé.⁹¹⁸ Secondly, the La Trémoille mobilised their large Breton clientele. In December 1650, Marie de La Tour claimed that she had obtained the support of the bishop of Rennes, Henri de La Motte-Houdancourt. She advised her son to mediate between the marquis de Coëtquen, governor of Saint-Malo, and her brother-in-law, the marquis de La Moussaye, for otherwise Coëtquen might give in to the overtures the duc d'Elbeuf was making on Rohan's behalf. The marquis de Brossay, traditionally Elbeuf's client, had promised Marie to bring sixty noblemen to the Estates to support the La Trémoille, but the duchess had to admit that 'promises do not cost

⁹¹⁶ Pineau to Rivet, 28 Dec 1646, UBL, BPL 286/III/93. Condé's black legend dated from his military campaign against Huguenot strongholds in the Midi, Chamdor to Charlotte-Brabantine, 25 July 1629, 1AP 648; David Parrott, 'Richelieu, the *Grands*, and the French Army', *Richelieu and His Age*, 153.

⁹¹⁷ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 59-62; Louis XIV to Henri de La Trémoille, 3 Aug. 1651, *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 148.

⁹¹⁸ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 63; Henri to La Meilleraye, 10 June 1650, 1AP 397/II/220; Henri to Tarente 28 July 1651, 1AP394/24. A letter from Turenne to La Meilleraye, dated 27 July 1651, was included in Marie's letter to Tarente, 25 Aug. 1651, 1AP 430/101.

much'.⁹¹⁹ Family friends and traditional allies such as Noirmoutier, Boisdapuin, Olonne, Assérac, and Madame de La Moussaye appear to have been more reliable.⁹²⁰

Marie set up a strategy for dealing with the Breton nobility from Paris:

tous estant à Paris vous les pourrez gagner plus aysément qu'au païs. Je croy qu'il seroit bien à propos que vous donniez advis à M votre père de ce qu'il aura à faire: soit icy ou en Bretagne, si la noblesse le sollicite à leur assemblée, car sans doute cela est capable de l'embarrasser.⁹²¹

In March, the duke returned to Thouars to consult with his wife:

[J']attendray des nouvelles de l'arivée et résolution de Mme pour prendre la mienne, pour mon sejour icy ou mon retour en Bretagne. Elle sait les raisons de l'un et de l'autre dont vous vous concerterés ensemble pour me donner vos avis.⁹²²

Some real progress seemed to have been made by June 1651 when Tarente was told that not only were Brissac and Cossé offering 'tous leurs amis de fort bonne grace', but that Condé's circle (Condé, Conti, Madame de Longueville, Beaufort, Madame de Montbazou, and Chavigny) had agreed 'à vous assister de tous leur crédit'.⁹²³ The Council's initial decision to grant Rohan the presidency was reversed two weeks later, and the case was handed over to the Parlement of Rennes.⁹²⁴ Faced with Condé's increasingly defiant behaviour, the Crown was playing for time until Louis XIV's majority was to be proclaimed on 7 September 1651.⁹²⁵ The king seemed to favour Rohan, while the queen appeared supportive of the La Trémoille, but the stakes remained open.⁹²⁶ As soon as Marie was informed by Brienne that their case was transferred to Rennes, she sent out detailed instructions to her son and husband to keep

⁹¹⁹ Marie to Tarente, 20 Dec. 1650, 1AP 430/99. Unfortunately, a passage relating to the main obstacle 'pour avoir pour soy tous les principaux seigneurs' is in cipher.

⁹²⁰ Henri to Tarente, Apr. 1651, 1AP 394/29-32; Pelleus to Bonaventure Vaillant, sieur de Chamboneau, 1 July 1651, 1AP 352/11.

⁹²¹ Marie to Tarente, 14 Mar. 1651, 1AP 430/100.

⁹²² Henri to Tarente, 31 Mar. 1651, 1AP 394/33.

⁹²³ Pelleus to Tarente, 10 June [1651], 1AP 352/9.

⁹²⁴ Louis XIV to Henri, 3 Aug. 1651, *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 148-9.

⁹²⁵ Michel Pernot, *La Fronde* (Paris, 1994), 267.

⁹²⁶ Louis XIV to Tarente 27 Aug. 1651, *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 163; Marie to Tarente, 26 Aug. 1651, 1AP 430/102.

'vos amis advertis de ce qu'il faut qu'ils fâcent, car il seroit fâcheux qu'ils marchassent avant et à contre temps'. The duchess suggested bribing the La Chasse family by granting them a benefice or a priory.⁹²⁷ She counted on their traditional clients to put pressure on their contacts in the Parlement. The *rapporteur* of the Parlement had to be carefully chosen and it was advisable to

consulter l'affaire avec le[s] plus fameux advocats de Rennes quand ce ne seroit que pour en tirer l'avantage de les oster à M de Rohan.⁹²⁸

In the end, these efforts to mobilise the Breton nobility in their favour paid off: the marquis de La Moussaye was chosen as president over Rohan and over the Crown's own candidate, the duc de Vendôme.⁹²⁹ The La Trémoille were thus able to assert their position in Brittany, but in order to be recognised as *prince étranger* at court, they needed the support of the Crown. The 1651 Estates had shown them that the queen regent was unable to help, so they turned to Condé. The duchess had reassured him on 20 August 1651:

si j'avois autant de facilité à bien faire un compliment que vous en avez à gagner des batailles personne ne vous en formeroit avec plus d'éloquence que moy ... je suis la personne au monde la plus attachée à vos intérêts.⁹³⁰

In October Condé offered Tarente 78,000 *livres* to raise a small army, and promised him 'à maintenir [votre] Maison dans tous les avantages qui lui sont dus comme représentant celle d'Aragon'.⁹³¹

⁹²⁷ Marie to Tarente, 25 Aug. 1651, 1AP 430/101. Again, the most important part of this letter is written in cipher. See Chapter I for La Trémoille estates sold to the seigneur de La Chasse.

⁹²⁸ Marie to Tarente, 26 Aug. 1651, 1AP 430/102. De La Troche was to influence his 'amye intime', the sieur de La Noue, a *conseiller au parlement*, and de La Mansselière was to put pressure on a *président*, Monsieur de la Coquerie. Madame de La Moussaye's network was once again to prove useful.

⁹²⁹ Kettering, 'Fronde', 422; Collins, *Classes*, 209-11; *La Moussaye*, ed. Tulot, 165-86.

⁹³⁰ Marie to Condé, 20 Aug. 1651, AC, M XXXII, 290.

⁹³¹ Tarente, *Mémoires*, p.69. The treaty with Condé was signed at Taillebourg on 9 October 1651, AC, P XII, 45-6, cited by Katia Béguin, 'Patrons et mécènes au Grand Siècle: les princes de Condé (1630-1709)' doctoral thesis, 3 vols. (Université Paris I), iii, 542.

3.) The 'Guerre Condéenne'

Tarente's military leadership in the southwest was not very successful, and Saintes was soon captured by Duplessis-Bellièvre and Montausier.⁹³² Tarente's threats of retaliation led to the dismantling of Taillebourg and even endangered Thouars.⁹³³ Rather surprisingly, Tarente refused the king's offer to compensate him for Taillebourg and to have his claims of princely rank 'favourably' examined.⁹³⁴ Unlike the comte de Tavannes, with whom he had shared military leadership in September 1652, Tarente refused the king's amnesty.⁹³⁵ He did not trust Mazarin's vague promises and was playing on his connections with the Protestant community and the local nobility to obtain a better bargain from Mazarin.

The Huguenot Threat

Fears that the Huguenots would contract an alliance with the English regime pre-dated the Fronde,⁹³⁶ and rose to the surface in 1649, when Turenne was marching on Paris, and again in 1651, when the Council debated Longueville's alleged plotting of an English invasion in Normandy.⁹³⁷ The danger was warded off by granting the House of

⁹³² Tarente, *Mémoires*, 73-82; Retz, *Mémoires*, 883, 951. Tarente's only positive exploit is narrated by *La Relation véritable concernant la reprise par force de Pont en Xaintonge, par l'Armée de Monseigneur le Prince de Condé, Commandée par Monseigneur le Prince de Tarante* (Paris, 1652), BNF, MS Clairambault 1137/189-190.

⁹³³ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 106; Henri to La Moussaye, 4 May 1652, 1AP 394/41; Montpensier, *Mémoires*, i. chapitre 12, <<http://www.penelope.uchicago.edu/mlle/chapitre12/chap12.html>>, accessed May 2003. The duc de Montausier executed the command 'avec toute la douceur et la civilité qui lui étoit possible, parce que lui et sa femme faisoient profession d'amitié avec la maison de La Trémoille', *Mémoires de Valentin Conrart, premier secrétaire perpétuel de l'Académie française*, ed. Michaud and Poujoulat (Paris, 1838), 548.

⁹³⁴ Mazarin to Abbé Fouquet, 9 Oct. 1652, *Lettres du cardinal de Mazarin*, v. 371-2. This corresponds to Tarente's demands, listed by Gourville, François de La Rochefoucauld, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. L. Martin-Chauffier (Paris, 1964), 193-5; *Mémoire sur les droits honorifiques dont jouissent chez le roy les princes, ducs et pairs, ducs non-pairs, officiers de la couronne et autres seigneurs*, AN, KK 599/292.

⁹³⁵ Kettering, 'Fronde', 417; Retz, *Mémoires*, 1060; 1AP 440/110.

⁹³⁶ This was feared since 1645, when Longueville wrote to Mazarin: 'On commença à discourir de la faction huguenotte et que le parlement d'Angleterre se rendant le maistre, estant joint avec la Hollande, la Suède et les protestants que ce seroit une puissance redoutable', 9 Sept. 1645, *APW*, Serie II, B, Band 2, ed. F. Bosbach (Münster, 1986), 675.

⁹³⁷ Richard Bonney, 'La France après la paix de Westphalie: absolutisme ou pluralisme confessionnel?', *L'Europe des Traités de Westphalie*, ed. L. Bély (Paris, 2000), 150; Philip A. Knachel, *England and the*

Bouillon the status of *princes étrangers* and by promising Longueville the status of *prince du sang*.⁹³⁸ Tarente's participation in Condé's campaign in 1652 was motivated by the expectation of a similar deal. Initially, Mazarin did not consider Tarente a sufficient threat to grant him his request. The French Protestant community had been pacified by a series of concessions, culminating in the Declaration of Saint-Germain,⁹³⁹ and followed their ministers' recommendation of absolute loyalty to the monarchy.⁹⁴⁰ Condé thus turned to Spain for help, and Tarente himself ratified the treaty of Madrid on 10 December 1651.⁹⁴¹ The following year, Tarente made contact with Cromwell's agent, Jean-Baptiste Stoupe, and told him that despite the internal division of the Huguenot community, he would try to instigate an uprising of the Protestants of Languedoc if England joined the Spanish war against France.⁹⁴² Even after Tarente had accepted Mazarin's amnesty,⁹⁴³ he claimed that this decision

shall not make me change my resolutions, which I have taken not to leave [the United-Provinces] ... I will have, as long as I live, the same inclinations, which I ought to have, for the interest of those of the religion and that I will always make it my work and interest before anything else: but to engage slightly in a business of that nature, without having first the advice and counsel of several persons, is not to be thought on.⁹⁴⁴

Tarente was waiting for the international situation to develop. When it became clear that Cromwell had chosen to side with France, Tarente 'did declare to a friend that indeed he

Fronde: the Impact of the English Civil War and Revolution on France (Ithaca, N.Y., 1967), 159; François Saulnier, *La diplomatie française et la République d'Angleterre 1649-1658* (Villeneuve d'Ascq, 2001), 134.

⁹³⁸ Knachel, *England and the Fronde*, 160; Rosa, 'Turenne's Conversion in Context', 634; The agreement with Longueville dated from July 1652, *lettres patentes* were granted in April 1653, but were never registered by the *Parlement*, Philip Grover, 'Claiming Status: rang and the House of Longueville', (forthcoming).

⁹³⁹ Deyon, *Du loyalisme au refus*, 39-40; Léonard, *Histoire générale du protestantisme*, ii. 333.

⁹⁴⁰ Knachel, *England and the Fronde*, 179; Saulnier, *La diplomatie française*, 331; Galland, 'Les pasteurs français', 231-3.

⁹⁴¹ Morosini to the Doge and Senate, 24 Oct. 1651, *CSP Ven*, xxviii. 202; La Rochefoucauld, *Mémoires*, 290.

⁹⁴² Tarente, *Mémoires*, 169-71. On Stoupe, see Labrousse, *Conscience*, 60-8.

⁹⁴³ Intelligence report from Paris, 29 July 1654, *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe*, ed. T. Birch, 7 vols. (London, 1742), ii. 473. The royal amnesty is dated 31 July 1654, 1AP 439/67; reproduced in *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 161-2.

⁹⁴⁴ Stoupe to Tarente, 29 July/7 Aug. 1654, *Thurloe*, ed. Birch, ii. 498; Tarente to Stoupe, 21 Aug. 1654, *ibid.* ii. 537.

goes into France, but in no wise with an intention to engage himself with France'.⁹⁴⁵ Within six months of his return, he was arrested by Mazarin, who feared that 'un homme de sa condition et de sa religion peuvent faire bien du mal'.⁹⁴⁶ Although his religion was no longer a threat, Tarente had come to be seen as a defender of customary privileges and noble liberties.⁹⁴⁷

Noble Discontent in the Provinces

Tarente was released from prison in September 1656, 'upon condition that he retires to Holland', later altered to a mere banishment from Poitou.⁹⁴⁸ In July 1658, Colbert suspected 'de grandes liaisons entre les maisons de Retz, Brissac, La Meilleraye et La Trémoille', adding

Le prince de Tarente a fait en Poitou toutes les démarches d'un homme qui veut brouiller et qui est le chef et l'auteur de toutes les assemblées de noblesse.⁹⁴⁹

Despite the king's prohibition of noble assemblies, several were held clandestinely in Poitou and elsewhere.⁹⁵⁰ 'Through a letter to my mother, who read it to the queen', Tarente offered to pledge loyalty to the monarchy.⁹⁵¹ He was careful not to get drawn into Hocquincourt's plans for a Spanish military offensive based on a coalition between noble *mécontents* and Condé's troops.⁹⁵² Tarente distanced himself from the Huguenot nobleman Gabriel de Jaucourt de Bonnesson, who was executed as ringleader on 13

⁹⁴⁵ Intelligence report from The Hague, 29 Oct. 1655, *Thurloe*, ed. Birch, iv. 94. The treaty of Westminster was signed on 3 November 1655.

⁹⁴⁶ Turenne to Charlotte de La Force, 11 June 1656, *Lettres*, ed. Huart, 508.

⁹⁴⁷ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 193. The La Trémoille had a history of clashing with noble assemblies, rather than supporting them, see R. Mousnier, J.-P. Labatut and Y. Durand (eds.), *Problèmes de stratification sociale. Deux cahiers de noblesse 1649-51* (Paris, 1965), 86; Parker, *La Rochelle*, 122.

⁹⁴⁸ Intelligence report from Paris, 26 Sept. 1656, *Thurloe*, ed. Birch, v. 420; Boreel to Ruysch, 2 Feb. 1657, *ibid.* vi. 16; Tarente, *Mémoires*, 211.

⁹⁴⁹ Colbert to Mazarin, 14 July 1658, *Lettres, instructions et mémoires de Colbert*, ed. Pierre Clément, 4 vols. (Paris, 1861-7), i. 303-4.

⁹⁵⁰ Arlette Jouanna, *Le devoir de révolte. La noblesse française et la gestation de l'État moderne, 1559-1661* (Paris, 1989), 274; Tarente, *Mémoires*, 206.

⁹⁵¹ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 210, 221.

⁹⁵² Jean-Dominique Lassaigne, *Les assemblées de la noblesse de France aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris, 1962), 97; Guy Patin, 26 July 1658, *Lettres*, ed. Reveillé-Parise, ii. 413.

December 1659, while his co-conspirators escaped punishment thanks to their patrons Longueville and Beaufort.⁹⁵³

The duchess's prominent involvement in the first Fronde and in the rallying of the Breton clientele in 1650-1 highlights her lack of support for Tarente in the later rebellions. Her pre-eminence in Protestant circles would have made it easier for her son to use Huguenot support as a threat against the Crown, but Marie de La Tour refused to cooperate. It appears that Mazarin's assessment was only partially accurate: the duchess was indeed a 'femme d'esprit', but that did not lead her to support Huguenot sedition or a noble rebellion led by Bouillon or Condé. In 1643, when Mazarin expressed his worries, Bouillon stood accused of participating in Cinq-Mars's conspiracy. Marie intervened in his favour, not by instigating rebellion, but by contacting Madame d'Aiguillon, Richelieu's niece, on behalf of her sister-in-law, the duchesse de Bouillon.⁹⁵⁴ The Regency might have seen an increase of female political involvement, but after the king had reached his majority in September 1651, Marie used her networking skills mainly to achieve a reconciliation between the cardinal-minister and her son Tarente.

B.) Cooperation based on Political Pragmatism

As members of Richelieu's extensive clientele, the La Trémoille worked with the monarchy throughout the 1630s.⁹⁵⁵ Their relationship with Mazarin was more antagonistic, as the new cardinal had difficulties grasping the intricacies underlying the ambitions and rivalries of the French aristocracy. Montglat observed that the cardinal

⁹⁵³ Lassaigue, *Les assemblées de la noblesse*, 103-4. The Protestant churches held a collective fast but did not intervene to help him, Jouanna, *Le devoir de révolte*, 277.

⁹⁵⁴ Marie to Eléonore de Bergh, 15 Sept. 1642, AC, O VII, 461.

⁹⁵⁵ Notably at the Breton Estates, Dunkley, 'Richelieu and the Estates of Brittany', 198; Collins, *Classes*, 192, 195, 226. Joseph Bergin, David Parrott and Katia Béguin have shown that Richelieu did not set out to 'humble' the high nobility, as his *Testament politique* claimed, but that he constructed a formidable network based on patron-client relationships.

'ne savoit point les règles et ne connoissait point le dedans de la France', a comment recent scholarship tends to agree with.⁹⁵⁶ His dealings with the La Trémoille provoked deep resentment. Henri de La Trémoille's written diatribe denounced Mazarin as a

pirate public, mesquin et avare voleur, un cardinal sans religion, un ministre sans foi ... qui sacrifioit les personnes de naissance à la haine et à l'intérêt de gens de néant ... C'est une patience criminelle de laisser vivre [ce] chien enragé, ... cet avorton d'enfer plus parricide que Cromwell et plus impie que Mahomet.⁹⁵⁷

There is no indication that the duchess shared this implacable hatred of the cardinal. Less impulsive than her husband, and more of an accomplished courtier, she was in charge of dealing with Mazarin and the queen regent. What made her choose monarchical loyalty over support for the Bouillon-Condé faction in the princely Fronde, and how did she try to reconcile Mazarin with her eldest son, who had joined Condé's party?

1.) Marie de La Tour and Mazarin

When Condé, Conti, and Longueville were arrested in January 1650, the La Trémoille distanced themselves immediately from the *parti des princes*, having realised that 'toute ceste illustre maison a besoing pour s'establir d'estre visitée des plaisirs des biens faictz de la Royalle maison'.⁹⁵⁸ Tarente was 'grandement caressé' at court, and his brother received the benefice of the abbey of Charroux, worth almost 15,000 *livres* per year.⁹⁵⁹

⁹⁵⁶ Montglat, *Mémoires*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1825-6), ii. 196. James Inglis-Jones has analysed the relationship between Mazarin and the Grand Condé, and noted how much it differed from that between Richelieu and Henri de Condé, James Inglis-Jones, 'The Grand Condé in Exile: Power Politics in France, Spain, and the Spanish Netherlands, 1652-1659', D. Phil. thesis (University of Oxford, 1994), 246. Mazarin's relations with Italian noblemen appear to have been equally difficult, Theresa Weir, 'Diplomacy and Patronage: the failure of Cardinal Mazarin's Roman policy in the 1650s', D. Phil. thesis (University of Oxford, submission anticipated 2004). For a more traditional view, see Bonney, 'Cardinal Mazarin and the Great Nobility', 818-33.

⁹⁵⁷ It was drafted after the treaty of Westminster (3 Nov. 1655) to which it refers, and may be dated from Tarente's spell in prison (June to Sept. 1656), 'Abrégé de la Vie du duc Henry de La Trémoille', *Documents inédits*, ed. Imbert, ii. 5-7.

⁹⁵⁸ Rozemont to Rivet, 28 Jan. 1650, UBL, BPL 2211a/253.

⁹⁵⁹ Henri to Servien, 19 Jan. 1650, 1AP 397/II/202; Pineau to Rivet, 22 Jan 1650, UBL, BPL 286/IV/99.

This was a favour the duke had negotiated, probably through the intermediary of Père Léon.⁹⁶⁰ The duchess would probably have preferred, like Rozemont, to see the comte de Laval as 'général de la cavallerye hollandoise et deschargé de dire et marmotter bréviaire par la considération du pain du chapittre qu'il en tire'.⁹⁶¹ Was the anticipation of greater rewards than ecclesiastical benefices the main motivation for the duchess's refusal to support her brothers' rebellion in 1650, or was it based on other, more political, considerations?

Refusing to support the Princely Fronde

Since the death of the duke's first cousin, Henri de Condé, in 1646, relations with the Bourbon-Condé had become frostier, due to Louis de Condé's friendship with Chabot-Rohan. According to Rozemont, 'il est vray que Monseigneur le Prince qui hayt à mort Monseigneur ne vouloit faire aucun bien à luy, ny aux sciens, ny à sa Maison et le publioit hautement'.⁹⁶² Condé had offended the La Trémoille in October 1649 by suggesting that their rank was not superior to that of the duc d'Epernon, and by supporting the *tabouret* of the duchesse de Rohan, but not that of the La Trémoille.⁹⁶³ Issues of precedence at the Breton Estates and at court were taken very seriously by Marie de La Tour, but what probably alarmed her even more was the treaty with Spain signed by Turenne and Madame de Longueville on 30 April 1650:

J'avoue que ce secours d'Espagnols et le dessein de metre l'ennemy de l'estat au milieu de la France, me choque à tel point que je ne trouve rien que le puisse colorer. Et je le tiens si préjudiciable à celuy que l'on a de prescrire la liberté des Princes, qu'il me semble qu'on ne pouvoit rien faire que l'éloignast davantage.⁹⁶⁴

⁹⁶⁰ Henri to Léon, 15 Jan. 1650 and 14 June 1650, 1AP 397/II/203, 220.

⁹⁶¹ Rozemont to Rivet, 28 Jan. 1650, UBL, BPL 2211a/253; Marie to Tarente, 2 Mar. 1651, 1AP 430/103.

⁹⁶² Rozemont to Rivet, 28 Jan. 1650, UBL, BPL 2211a/253.

⁹⁶³ Marcilly to Marie, 27 Jan. 1650, quoted by Courteault, *Un témoin de la Fronde*, 39; Tarente, *Mémoires*, 57-8.

⁹⁶⁴ Marie to Marcilly, 8 July 1650, 1AP 430/97, reproduced in *LT5s*, iv. 94-6. The same arguments are developed by the anonymous *Avis au mareschal de Turenne, sur son Traitté avec les Ennemis de l'Estat* (Paris, 1650), BNF, MS Clairambault 513-4/3-24.

Marie questioned the political sagacity of a Spanish alliance, rather than condemning it on religious grounds, as the pastors of Charenton did.⁹⁶⁵ She regretted that her brother Bouillon, who expected 2,600,000 *livres* from Spain, had not learnt from his previous dealings with Philip IV that, considering 'la disete où ils sont d'argent', his Spanish allies would be unable to provide him with funds.⁹⁶⁶ She concluded that the La Trémoille were better served by supporting the Crown, and attended court at Poitiers in July 1650. The duchess expected her son to do the same, 'car je tiens avec lui qu'il est bien plus à propos qu'il vienne au devant de la Cour jusques là, qu'en l'attendant à Saintes, donner sujet de dire qu'il n'y est venu qu'à toute extrémité'. It was a critical time; Marie was aware that

'plusieurs personne ... voyant [mon fils] s'aprocher de Bourdeaux n'en conceusses des espérances de le pouvoir attirer à leur party et ne fissent toutes les tantatives nécessaires à ceste fin'.

But she was confident that if his sense of duty and conscience failed to make Tarente choose the king's party then reason would. She believed that Condé's supporters merely wanted to use Tarente to distract the king from Bordeaux for a while in order to negotiate a peace settlement that would favour them, but would severely damage the La Trémoille.⁹⁶⁷ Tarente followed his mother's advice; he attended court at Poitiers,⁹⁶⁸ and accepted the military command that had been promised to his father.⁹⁶⁹ It was essential for Mazarin to have Tarente involved in the campaign against Bordeaux 'pour s'asseurer ... de sa personne et de sa maison dans les conjonctures présentes'.⁹⁷⁰ Tarente was thus

⁹⁶⁵ Daillé was angry that Turenne 'se soit jetté dans un si mauvais parti, et si scandaleux pour nos Eglises, qui n'ont vocation qu'à servir Dieu et à honorer son Oint', cited by Galland, 'Les pasteurs français', 226.

⁹⁶⁶ Marie to Marcilly, 8 July 1650, 1AP 430/97, reproduced in *LT5s*, iv. 94-6. On Bouillon's relations with Spain, see Simon Hodson, 'Sovereigns and Subjects: The Princes of Sedan and the Dukes of Bouillon in Early Modern France, c.1450-1652', D. Phil. thesis (University of Oxford, 1999), 343-4.

⁹⁶⁷ Marie to Marcilly, 8 July 1650, 1AP 430/97, reproduced in *LT5s*, iv. 94-6.

⁹⁶⁸ Mazarin to Le Tellier, 22 July 1650, *Lettres du cardinal de Mazarin*, iii. 616.

⁹⁶⁹ Louis XIV to Henri de La Trémoille, 11 June 1650, 1AP 397/II/221, reproduced in *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 148; Henri to Louis XIV 25 June 1650, 1AP 397/II/222.

⁹⁷⁰ Mazarin to Le Tellier, 23 Aug. 1650, *Lettres du cardinal de Mazarin*, ed. Chéruef, iii. 734.

offered 100,000 *livres* on the *ferme* of Tonnay Charente in order to raise three regiments (two of infantry and one of cavalry), and was given the rank of *maître de camp*, answerable to La Meilleraye only.⁹⁷¹ Mazarin recognised the potential danger posed by the La Trémoille's power base in Poitou ('vous ne sauriez croire le crédit qu'il a dans les provinces qui sont derrière nous'),⁹⁷² and tried to offset the efforts the rival camp made to enlist Tarente:

[il est] continuellement sollicité par Mme la Princesse et M de Bouillon, qui luy offre de partager le commandement avec luy et une plus grande somme que les 100,000 francs, sur l'espérance qu'il a de l'argent d'Espagne.⁹⁷³

In order to prevent Tarente from joining the rebels, Mazarin threw in the governorship of Maine, held at the time by René Potier, duc de Tresmes.⁹⁷⁴ There is no evidence that any steps were taken to actually transfer it to the La Trémoille, once Tarente had gathered 3,000 soldiers and presented them to the king on 19 October 1650.⁹⁷⁵ Tarente was not even offered thanks, a lack of respect the duke never forgave Mazarin.⁹⁷⁶

Mediating between Mazarin and Tarente

After Mazarin's flight in February 1651, pressures to adhere to the *parti des princes* increased, but the duchess urged her son to remain loyal to the Crown, using 'toute la prudence et adresse dont on peut estre capable'.⁹⁷⁷ Tarente followed her advice, and assured Mazarin of his friendship.⁹⁷⁸ In July 1651, he agreed to hold Taillebourg for the

⁹⁷¹ Servien to Tarente, 8 Aug. 1650, 1AP 678; Louis XIV to Tarente, 30 Aug. 1650, *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 162-3; 1AP 440/110.

⁹⁷² The importance of local 'credit' has been highlighted by Kettering, 'Fronde', 415; Arlette Jouanna, 'Des réseaux d'amitié aux clientèles centralisées', *Patronages et clientélismes*, ed. C. Giry-Deloison and R. Mettam (London, 1990), 21-38.

⁹⁷³ Mazarin to Le Tellier, 28 Aug. 1650, *Lettres du cardinal de Mazarin*, ed. Chéruef, iii. 757.

⁹⁷⁴ Marie to Tarente, 19 Dec. 1650, 1AP 430/98; Henri to Tarente, 11 Jan. 1651, 1AP 394/37.

⁹⁷⁵ BNF, MS Clairambault 1155/111-2; *Gazette de France* 22/163 (Oct. 1650), 1436.

⁹⁷⁶ Henri to Tarente, 28 Dec. 1650, 1AP 394/21.

⁹⁷⁷ Marie to Tarente, 2 Mar. 1651, 1AP 430/103.

⁹⁷⁸ Mazarin to de Bougy, 29 May 1651, *Lettres du cardinal de Mazarin*, iv. 226.

king,⁹⁷⁹ on the queen mother's promise of concrete rewards for him and his *maison*.⁹⁸⁰ We have seen how the Crown's 'ingratitude' and mismanagement of the meeting of the Breton Estates drove Tarente to join Condé's rebellion in October 1651.⁹⁸¹ Over the next years, Marie de La Tour did everything she could to reconcile her son and the cardinal-minister, who returned to power in January 1652. The duchess attended court first at Poitiers, then at Saumur, and managed to convince Mazarin to re-open negotiations with Tarente.⁹⁸² The princesse de Tarente was equally active in petitioning the cardinal.⁹⁸³ We have seen in Chapter I how she managed to reverse the confiscation of Tarente's lands by assuming legal widowhood, and claiming the revenues of her jointure lands.⁹⁸⁴ In January 1653, Tarente informed Mazarin that he was prepared to abandon Condé on certain conditions:

que si l'on vouloit luy accorder toutes les choses qu'il a demandées en dernier lieu, il trouveroit un pretexte pour se destacher des ennemis et rentreroit en bonne foy dans son devoir.⁹⁸⁵

By October 1653, Tarente 'ha[d] made his agreement in court, with the consent of M. le Prince, [and was] to go to Holland, upon condition to renounce all intrigues and to live peaceably and quietly for some time to come'.⁹⁸⁶ Through Marie de La Tour's intercession, the king agreed to send letters of pardon to Tarente to allow him to return to France.⁹⁸⁷ The duchess made her standpoint clear: she saw no future in an alliance

⁹⁷⁹ Louis XIV to Tarente, 3 July 1651, *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 162.

⁹⁸⁰ Anne of Austria to Tarente, 25 July 1651, *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 163. One possible reward, which the duke hoped for, was the bishopric of Luçon for his youngest son, Henri to Tarente, 2 Aug. 1651, 1AP 394/20.

⁹⁸¹ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 58.

⁹⁸² Mazarin to Père Léon, 15 April 1652, *Lettres du cardinal de Mazarin*, v. 86.

⁹⁸³ 1AP 439/55; *LT5s*, iv. 170-3.

⁹⁸⁴ According to Mademoiselle de Montpensier, Amalia was responsible for her husband's decision to raise troops against Condé in October 1651, *Mémoires*, i. chapitre 8, <<http://www.penelope.uchicago.edu/mlle/chapitre8/chap8.html>>, accessed Oct. 2003.

⁹⁸⁵ Mazarin to Le Tellier, 18 Jan. 1653, *Lettres du cardinal de Mazarin*, v. 541. Tarente continued to serve Condé that year 'with some German troops', Intelligence report from Paris, 26 July 1653, *Thurloe*, ed. Birch, i. 356.

⁹⁸⁶ Intelligence report from Paris, 8/18 Oct. 1653, *Thurloe*, ed. Birch, i. 532.

⁹⁸⁷ Mazarin to Pierre Chaunu, 24 June 1654, *Lettres du cardinal de Mazarin*, vi. 190; amnesty dated 31 July 1654, 1AP 439/67, reproduced in *Chartrier*, ed. La Trémoille, 161-2.

with either England or Spain and desired her son to return to France. We have seen that Tarente waited until an alliance between Condé and Cromwell had been ruled out. His arrival in Paris was not greeted with much enthusiasm,⁹⁸⁸ and within six months Mazarin had him arrested and taken to the castle of Amiens.⁹⁸⁹ His imprisonment served as a test for the level of international support the La Trémoille possessed.⁹⁹⁰ The princesse de Tarente managed to obtain letters of recommendation from the States General by showing them letters from her brother, the landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, to the same effect.⁹⁹¹ Tarente also asked his wife to contact the elector of Brandenburg and the king of Sweden, whose response failed to impress Mazarin.⁹⁹² After almost four months in prison, Tarente was released 'upon condition that he retires to Holland and that the landgrave of Hesse engages that he shall not take up arms against the king'.⁹⁹³ The greatest credit for Tarente's release, however, goes to Marie de La Tour. She petitioned the king, the queen, the cardinal, and various ministers, enlisted Turenne's support, and eventually went to Amiens herself to advise her son on how to approach the cardinal. She achieved not only Tarente's discharge, but obtained – through her friendship with the financier de Lorme – a donation of 80,000 *livres*, which Mazarin had promised the La Trémoille for years.⁹⁹⁴ The duchesse de Montpensier also intervened 'pour me presser de me rapprocher de Mazarin, dans la vue de contenter ma mère'.⁹⁹⁵

⁹⁸⁸ H. Bennet to Charles II, 10 Dec. 1655, *Thurloe*, ed. Birch, i. 687.

⁹⁸⁹ Boreel to the States General, 9 June 1656, *Thurloe*, ed. Birch, v. 76.

⁹⁹⁰ 'Je crois que Monsieur le Cardinal veut que ma sœur de La Trémoille et Mme la landgrave de Hesse s'emploient pour M. le Prince de Tarente', Turenne to Charlotte de Caumont, 11 June 1656, *Lettres*, ed. Huart, 508.

⁹⁹¹ Intelligence report from The Hague, 28 July 1656, *Thurloe*, ed. Birch, v. 225.

⁹⁹² Tarente, *Mémoires*, 186, 195; Mazarin to d'Avaugour, 8 July 1656, *Lettres du cardinal de Mazarin*, vii. 640.

⁹⁹³ Intelligence report from Paris, 26 Sept. 1656, *Thurloe*, ed. Birch, v. 420. The States General had been reluctant to act as guarantors for Tarente's future behaviour, Intelligence report from The Hague, 7 Sept. 1656, *Thurloe*, ed. Birch, v. 355. On the landgrave of Hesse, see Tarente, *Mémoires*, 195-6.

⁹⁹⁴ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 194, 196-7, 200-1, 224. Mazarin to the *surintendants des finances*, 27 Oct. 1656, *Lettres du cardinal de Mazarin*, vii. 698.

⁹⁹⁵ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 215

What is most striking in this brief account of the La Trémoille's cooperation with Mazarin is the level of pragmatism displayed by the duchess. She was convinced that an alliance with Spain would not pay off and decided therefore to support Mazarin. Tarente's first involvement with Condé might have been a case of the La Trémoille consciously 'hedging their bets' or at least trying to keep enough pressure on the Crown to obtain recognition of their princely rank, while making sure at the same time not to alienate them completely.⁹⁹⁶ Marie de La Tour did not, however, endorse her son's alliance with Spain, nor did she encourage negotiations with the English Republic. She obtained two amnesties for Tarente and his release from prison, opportunities her son failed to take advantage of.

In entirely different circumstances, Marie's sister-in-law, the countess of Derby, faced a similar choice between opposition to and cooperation with the political authorities. Traditional historiography has celebrated Charlotte de La Trémoille as a Royalist heroine, and Barry Coward endorsed this view by contrasting her militant pro-royalist stance with her husband's 'mediatorial' approach.⁹⁹⁷ The following section will analyse whether Charlotte shared Marie's political pragmatism, and how she tried to influence events.

2.) Charlotte de La Trémoille and the Interregnum authorities

Charlotte's royalism, combined with the earl's refusal to surrender the Isle of Man and a militant 'puritan' opposition to the Stanleys in southeastern Lancashire are said to

⁹⁹⁶ The cooperation between Tarente and Marie de La Tour is illustrated by their shared cipher, from which the duke remained excluded, Henri to Tarente, 8 Mar. 1651, 1AP 394/19.

⁹⁹⁷ Coward, 'The Social and Political Position of the Earls of Derby', 133.

explain why the earl of Derby was continually denied permission to compound.⁹⁹⁸ His original impeachment, however, occurred in September 1642 and was thus prior to any negotiations concerning Man, as well as Charlotte's first appearance on the public stage as defender of Lathom in 1643-4.⁹⁹⁹ The second siege of Lathom, which did not involve the countess, provided the Committee for Compounding with a reason to deny the family access to their manor of Knowsley, even if they paid 'the ordinary assessments'.¹⁰⁰⁰ Consequently, the countess left for London in February 1647, armed with 'une lettre où [mon mari] me dit que tout ce que je feray pour ce qui regarde ses submissions au Parlement il le l'avouera'.¹⁰⁰¹ If the earl was thus willing to negotiate with Parliament, so was his wife. Denzil Holles, a 'political Presbyterian', was so obliging towards her that she recommended him most warmly to Marie de La Tour's protection when he fled to France the following year.¹⁰⁰² Holles was not the only one who helped her; Charlotte worked with two overlapping networks of support, one based on the connections of her natal family and the other related to the Stanley family.

Petitioning Members of Parliament, 1647

As early as November 1642, she sent a letter to the Dutch States General asking them to intervene with the English Parliament 'that her person, children and house may be secured from dangers to which she may be exposed by Lord Derby following the king's party'. She was given 'a civil answer, but no false expectations', because the States General had decided to remain strictly neutral in the conflict between king and

⁹⁹⁸ Coward, 'The Social and Political Position of the Earls of Derby', 135-7. In the propositions of Uxbridge (24 Jan. 1643/4) and Newcastle (13 July 1646) the earl of Derby ranged third on the list of people to 'expect no pardon', Samuel Rawson Gardiner (ed.), *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution, 1625-1660* (Oxford, 1906), 279, 298.

⁹⁹⁹ *JL*, v. 354 (14 Sept. 1642); George Ormerod (ed.), *Tracts relating to Military Proceedings in Lancashire during the Great Civil War* (CS 2, 1844), 35-7.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Cited by Raines, 'Memoirs', p. cxxiv-cxxv.

¹⁰⁰¹ Charlotte to Marie, 21 June 1647, 1AP 384/78.

¹⁰⁰² Charlotte to Marie, 21 Aug. 1647, 1AP 384/81.

Parliament.¹⁰⁰³ Charlotte hoped for support from the Dutch ambassador, Albert Joachimi, whose secretary was a son of the La Trémoille's former chaplain André Rivet.¹⁰⁰⁴ Charlotte was not only Frédéric Rivet's godmother, but might have been instrumental in providing him with the position of ambassadorial secretary in 1640.¹⁰⁰⁵

While Charlotte continued to pray 'd'estre maintenue de quelque bon Etat ou prince étranger',¹⁰⁰⁶ she significantly never mentioned France. Conscious of the fact that her French origins could easily lead to accusations of papist allegiances, she continually stressed her Dutch heritage and her Protestant descent. In August 1646, she addressed the earl of Lothian, a distant kinsman of the Stanleys and supporter of Argyll who attended Charles I after his surrender to the Scots, as follows:

J'ai souvent désiré de treter avec ceux de vostre nation; car je m'asure qu'ils eusse rendu temoignage comme j'avois tout quité pour conserver ma religion et pour obeir aux commendemens de feu madame ma mere, qui ne croioit pas que je la peusse conserver dans un mariage de contraire... [Ceux] dont je suis dessendue, [s]e leveroi[ent] en Jugement contre moy, si j'oubliois jamais la religion où j'ay esté nourrie et où j'espere, avec la grasse de Dieu, de vivre et de mourir.¹⁰⁰⁷

William Kerr, third earl of Lothian, was the stepson of Anne Stanley, sister of the earl of Derby, by Robert Kerr, earl of Ancram.¹⁰⁰⁸ He had married a niece of the eighth earl of Argyll in 1630 and followed his political lead throughout the Civil War period.¹⁰⁰⁹ In 1647, he was in London as a representative of the Scottish Parliament, and was a political force to be reckoned with. Charlotte wrote to him on 15 March, asking him for

¹⁰⁰³ W. Strickland to John Pym, 10/20 Nov. 1642, HMC, 10th Report, 91.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Witt, *Lady of Latham*, 116 (Winter 1646/47); the original – presumably 1AP 384/69 – is unfortunately unreadable.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Rozemont to Rivet, 9 Nov. 1640, UBL, BPL 2211a/234.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Charlotte to Marie, 27 Sept. 1649, 1AP 384/88.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Charlotte to Lothian, 3 Aug. 1646, *The Correspondence of Sir Robert Kerr, First Earl of Ancram, and his Son William, Third Earl of Lothian*, ed. D. Laing, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1875) [subsequently referred to as *Corr. of R. Kerr*], i. 194.

¹⁰⁰⁸ See Appendix a-4.

¹⁰⁰⁹ On 22 Mar. 1641 he was talking about 'a just and hold warre for the advancement of Religion', *Corr. of R. Kerr*, vol. i, p. lxii.

advice 'ayent charge expresse de Monsieur mon Mary de suivre [vos avis], n'y ayent personne en qui, luy et moy, prenions plus de consience qu'en vous'.¹⁰¹⁰ The duchesse de La Trémoille also wrote to Lothian on behalf of Lady Derby, beseeching him to

contribuer à la satisfaction de Monsieur le Comte Derby par le credit et la creance que vous avés en vostre Parlement, ... et par ce moyen restablir sa maison en son premier estat. Madame la Contesse Derby me mande qu'elle employe tous ses soins et ses amis pour cela, et qu'elle vous a de fortes obligations. Nos interests sont si conjoints qu'il ne se peut que je n'y prenne beaucoup de part.¹⁰¹¹

Charlotte mentions that 'plusieurs personnes qui m'ont autrefois connue me témoigne[nt] encore beaucoup d'affection et me promet[tent] bien de m'assister dans nos affaires'. They advised her to start by petitioning the House of Lords to remove the earl of Derby's name from the list of people to be exempted from pardon. Charlotte agreed that 'cela seroit plus aisé à l'optenir des seigneurs, mais pour les communes y ayant tant de gens, je croy que ce ne sera pas sans penne'.¹⁰¹² A few weeks later she reported:

je n'y ay encore rien fait synon que de voir et estre visité de plusieurs du Parlement des principaux en pouvoir des deux maisons et leur dire ce qui peut servir à nos affaires tous m'en promettent bonne issue.¹⁰¹³

The peace settlement was at the centre of Charlotte's concerns, for she had been told that Derby's case could not be decided before Charles I had reached an agreement with Parliament.¹⁰¹⁴ In June 1647, she reported that the two Houses seemed indeed prepared to 'remetre le Roi et avoir l'honneur de cela et de faire une bonne paix', but she also observed that 'la ville de Londres ne s'acorde pas avec le Parlement et veu[t] que l'on donne tout contentement à l'armée'.¹⁰¹⁵ When the military occupied London in early August, the countess stayed in the capital and displayed a cautious optimism after having seen the king at Hampton Court:

¹⁰¹⁰ Charlotte to Lothian, 15 Mar. 1647, *ibid.* i. 212.

¹⁰¹¹ Marie de La Tour to Lothian, 17 May 1647, *ibid.* i. 221-2.

¹⁰¹² Charlotte to Marie, 10 Mar. 1647 and 19 July 1647, 1AP 384/73, 80.

¹⁰¹³ Charlotte to Marie, 4 Apr. 1647, 1AP 384/75.

¹⁰¹⁴ Charlotte to Marie, 25 Mar. 1647, 1AP 384/74.

¹⁰¹⁵ Charlotte to Marie, 21 June 1647, 1AP 384/78.

Je ne rien à vous dire d'isy tout y estant dans l'incertitude et cha[c]un en juge selon son désir... Les propositions qu'il[s] ont fait à l'armée, à Sa Majesté seront présentée[s], et ... comme cela quelque treté se pourra commencer. L'on parle déjà d'envoyer le duc de Richemont en n'enbasade extraordinère et Mme sa fame pour quérir la Reyne.¹⁰¹⁶

This proved to be premature. After his escape from Hampton Court in November, Charles I rejected the peace proposal known as the Four Bills and signed the Engagement allying himself with the Marquis of Hamilton. In London, Charlotte finally succeeded in lobbying the Houses of Parliament to allow her husband to compound for his 'delinquency',¹⁰¹⁷ possibly in exchange for a promise not to enter a coalition with the Scottish Engagers. The earl of Derby remained prudently neutral during the second Civil War and was conspicuously absent from the battle of Preston, which was fought in Stanley heartland in August 1648. Charlotte, had been, by all accounts, negotiating with Members of Parliament over a period of several months and might not have been willing to risk her substantial achievements: a series of declarations to prevent the further dilapidation of the manors of Knowsley and Lathom;¹⁰¹⁸ the immediate restitution of one-fifth of the Stanley revenue for the maintenance of their children (September 1647);¹⁰¹⁹ and, last but not least, the permission to compound (March 1648).¹⁰²⁰ Marlet's speculation that the earl stayed away from the Lancashire battle scene because his belligerent countess was not by his side has thus to be discarded.¹⁰²¹

Acts of 'Delinquency'

In 1649, Parliament demanded the surrender of the Isle of Man, a harbour of Royalist refugees and of strategic importance in relation to the conquest of Ireland. In March

¹⁰¹⁶ Charlotte to Marie, 20 Sept. 1647, 1AP 384/83. See J. S. A. Adamson, 'The English Nobility and the Projected Settlement of 1647', *Historical Journal* 30 (1987), 567-602.

¹⁰¹⁷ *JL*, x. 113 (14 Mar. 1648); *JC*, v. 498 (15 Mar. 1648).

¹⁰¹⁸ The repetition of that order seems to suggest that it was not respected *JL*, ix. 77-78 (13 Mar. 1647), 88 (19 Mar. 1647), 340 (20 July 1647), 382 (10 Aug. 1647).

¹⁰¹⁹ PRO, SP 23/79/418.

¹⁰²⁰ *JL*, x. 113 (14.3.1647/8); *JC*, v. 498 (15.3.1647/8).

¹⁰²¹ Marlet, *Charlotte de La Trémoille*, 185-6.

1649, when Parliament started to take an interest in the Isle of Man, King Charles II wrote to the countess to 'acknowledge the many obligations he hath to her ... and to continue the same good affections as she had always done to his Father'. A copy of this letter can be found in Lady Carlisle's papers, together with a so-called 'paper of intelligence', which acknowledges the strong influence the countess was supposed to have had over her husband:

That the tyrants of Westminster were designing to gain the Isle of Man, and were treating with the Earl of Derby, advising a Letter to be sent to the Earl's Lady, not to part with it on any terms.¹⁰²²

The impression that the Derbys had given up the conciliatory stance towards Parliament that Charlotte had displayed in 1647 is confirmed by the sharp reply given to General Ireton's summons to surrender the island.¹⁰²³ Marlet suggests that the aggressive tone reflects the countess's temper, as she had made a similar threat of punishing the messenger when she rejected the summon to surrender Lathom on 25 April 1644.¹⁰²⁴ The reply to Ireton, couched in an even more defiant language, was published under the title *A Declaration of the right honourable James, Earl of Derby, ... concerning his Resolution to keep the Isle of Man for his Majesty's service against all force whatsoever*.¹⁰²⁵ The countess of Derby abandoned all hope of reaching an understanding with the new Republic because of the arbitrary nature of the new regime. She claimed that

[even] if we pay the composition fine which they had granted us, and have since refused us, we would not be any safer... If one has the least enemy, ... they can, without any form of trial, take away your goods and your life.¹⁰²⁶

¹⁰²² HMC, 70 Pepys, 304-5.

¹⁰²³ Derby to Ireton, 12 July 1649, *Cobbett's Complete Collection of State Trials*, 33 vols. (London, 1809-28), v. 320; Ormerod, *Tracts*, 283.

¹⁰²⁴ Marlet, *Charlotte de La Trémoille*, 186.

¹⁰²⁵ Published in *State Trials*, v. 320-3; Ormerod, *Tracts*, 283.

¹⁰²⁶ Charlotte to Marie de La Tour, 20 Jan. 1650, 1AP 384/91.

Under these circumstances, the only viable option was to support Charles II and his newly found allies, the Scottish 'Solemn Leaguers', led by Argyll and Lothian. Shortly before the Scottish diplomatic commissioners were supposed to meet the king in March, the earl of Derby claimed that he had faith in what Lothian was doing and expected 'punctuall directions' from his cousin.¹⁰²⁷ Lothian appeared, at that time, willing to bring more moderate elements into the negotiating process. In May 1650, however, the Scottish Parliament refused Royalists and Engagers access to the king, as they were considered guilty under the Acts of Classes of 1646 and 1649.¹⁰²⁸ The earl of Derby was thus not allowed to approach the king and it would have been politically damaging for Lothian to stay in contact with him. Charlotte might have hoped that, as a woman, she would be less conspicuous. As we shall see, this was not the case, and her trip 'to the Scotts King' was later to be construed as an act of dangerous counter-intelligence, the centrepiece of a set of accusations of 'delinquency'.

On 27 July 1650, Charlotte left the Isle of Man for Scotland, ostensibly in order to reach Holland to break up her son's misalliance. Her letters insisted that she had to go via Scotland in order to get a passport from Lothian.¹⁰²⁹ Her explanation seems unconvincing on grounds of the imminent threat of a war between Scotland and Cromwellian England.¹⁰³⁰ Even if Lothian provided Charlotte with a passport, which he had not been able to do for her son in 1646,¹⁰³¹ it would not safeguard her from interception by Parliamentarian vessels, which was the only reason she needed a passport in the first place. While there is no doubt that the countess was very upset at

¹⁰²⁷ James, earl of Derby, to Lothian, 13 Mar. 1650, *Corr. of R. Kerr*, ii. 261.

¹⁰²⁸ John R. Young, *The Scottish Parliament 1639-1661* (Edinburgh, 1996), 249, 253.

¹⁰²⁹ Charlotte to Lothian, 5 Aug. 1650, *Corr. of R. Kerr*, i. 277-8; Charlotte to Marie, 8/18 Aug., 2/12 Sept. and 20/30 Oct. 1650, 1AP 384/96, 97, 98.

¹⁰³⁰ The Scottish parliament was levying forces to meet the threat from Cromwell from May 1650 onwards. Cromwell and his army crossed the Tweed on 22 July. Young, *The Scottish Parliament*, 253, 257.

¹⁰³¹ Charlotte to Lothian, 3 Aug. 1646, *Corr. of R. Kerr*, i. 194.

the prospect of her eldest son marrying against her will, there is a possibility that she did in fact go to Scotland to gather intelligence on the king and his allies. The only surviving letter sent by Charlotte directly from Scotland is very revealing in that respect. Whereas her subsequent letters to her sister-in-law were in danger of being intercepted and only referred to her son's disobedience, the letter headed 'Kirkcudbright, 8 August 1650' was sent by a safe route. Charlotte admitted that she did not wish the king to win this war against Cromwell, because 'ceux qui sont en othorité ne sont pas tant pour la monarchie que contre le duc d'[H]amilton et saite faction-là'. The disrespect with which the king was treated made the countess apprehensive of the explosive mixture of predestinarian doctrines and social egalitarianism preached by radical Presbyterians.¹⁰³² Although it is impossible to say whether the earl of Derby ever envisaged supporting Charles II and the 'Solemn Leaguers' against Cromwell, the countess would certainly have tried to stop any such plan. This dead-end was only resolved by the defeat of the Scottish army at Dunbar on 3 September 1650, which opened the way for a new alliance between the king and more conservative elements of Scottish society.

Surrender to the Commonwealth Regime

Derby left the Isle of Man with three hundred men in August 1651, leaving Charlotte in command of the armed forces 'with power to kill, imprison or otherwise punish enemies ... and power likewise to pardon and forgive'. She also received 'full power and authoritie to dispose of, place or displace all officers of this Island, spirituall or temporall', which allowed her to replace governor John Greenhalghe upon his death in

¹⁰³² Charlotte to Marie, 8/18 Aug. 1650, 1AP 384/96.

September 1651 by Philip Musgrave. 'Knowne [for her] wisdom and courage', Lady Derby was appointed

in my place and steade ... to order and dispose of all and everie the fforces of his Island, and the officers and soldiers thereof of what degree whatsoever, as to your wisdom shall be thought meete ... in as full and ample maner to all intents and purposes as I in my owne p[er]son might, could, or should make or ordaine the same.¹⁰³³

The royalist defeat at Worcester and Derby's summary execution at Bolton on 15 October opened a new phase of relations between the countess and the Cromwellian regime.¹⁰³⁴ According to William Blundell, a recusant refugee who lived on the island in the 1640s, the Isle of Man had been impenetrable until the fighting forces were demoralised by Derby's defeat.¹⁰³⁵ In fact, an internal rebellion had rendered Charlotte's situation militarily untenable and forced her to surrender.¹⁰³⁶ The countess later claimed that she had

never opposed Parliament forces, but surrendered that castle which was her dwelling house, on the articles offered ... without so much as reading them over, a greater submission than which she knows not how to have given.¹⁰³⁷

Her readiness to surrender the Isle of Man was investigated as part of an inquiry into her own delinquency, launched by the Committee for Advance of Money at the behest of Robert Massey, a pro-Parliamentarian mercer from Liverpool.¹⁰³⁸ Massey had denounced Lady Derby, claiming that his ship had been seized in June 1650 by privateers working for the earl of Derby, and that his wife had been 'displeased that the

¹⁰³³ J.R. Dickinson, 'The Earl of Derby and the Isle of Man, 1643-1651', *THSLC* 141 (1991), 68. The declaration, which also granted the countess 'full power and authoritie to dispose of, place or displace all officers of this Island, spirituall or temporall', is published in A. W. Moore, *A History of the Isle of Man*, 2 vols. (London, 1900), i. 263-5.

¹⁰³⁴ Attempts to save the earl's life by appealing to the La Trémoille's influence were made by his children, Charles Stanley to Marie and Henri, 11/21 Sept. 1651, 1AP 385/85, and Catherine Stanley to Marie, 9 Sept. 1651, 1AP 385/95.

¹⁰³⁵ William Harrison (ed.), *William Blundell: A History of the Isle of Man*, (*Manx Society* 25, 1876), 16, 88, 90-93.

¹⁰³⁶ William Harrison, *Illiam Dhône and the Manx Rebellion 1651* (*Manx Society* 26, 1877), 4-27; Moore, *History*, i. 265-70.

¹⁰³⁷ Petition to the Council of State, May 1653, PRO, SP19/147/44.

¹⁰³⁸ PRO, SP19/147/1, 2 Jan. 1652: 'A charge of delinquencies exhibited against the Countesse of Darbye', followed by a series of witness interrogations, including a cross-examination of her own daughter, Mary Stanley, PRO, SP19/147/2-16.

[pirates] had not upon takeing the said shippe and goods cast this informer and all the rest of the passengers with him overboard into the sea as Rebels and Traytors'.¹⁰³⁹ Massey's grudge was also founded on having been a 'prisoner twentie and five weekes in the Earl of Derbys own house at Lathom'. This might have resulted in a confrontation with the countess during the siege of Lathom, a possible explanation for Massey's anger towards her in particular. Massey had been compensated,¹⁰⁴⁰ but the case was dug up after the Royalist campaign of 1651. Previous mentions of Charlotte going to Scotland in August 1650 in order to meet 'the Scotts King' were re-interpreted as evidence for spying and smuggling of arms. It was suggested that the countess had been instrumental in preparing an alliance between Derby's troops and the Scottish Royalist movement in 1651. Although Charlotte was eventually allowed to compound for her jointure lands,¹⁰⁴¹ the fine was extraordinarily high.¹⁰⁴² As Charlotte complained to the Council of State in July 1654,¹⁰⁴³ why was there 'more severity used against her than others'?

The answer may lie in the perception of the role played by the countess in the Civil War. The Parliamentarian Committees had difficulties seeing as the victim she portrayed herself as ('a stranger borne and a Protestant and a widowe and a mother of five fatherlesse children').¹⁰⁴⁴ The siege of Lathom had been widely covered both by Royalist and Parliamentarian news-sheets, and the countess had been celebrated as a heroine by the first, but denounced as a 'malign example of foreign female interference'

¹⁰³⁹ PRO, SP23/79/408, 413.

¹⁰⁴⁰ CCAM, 1295-8

¹⁰⁴¹ PRO, SP 23/79/395; *JC*, vii. 331 (8 Oct. 1653).

¹⁰⁴² She was to pay Robert Massey £1,000 in damages and a further £7,200 composition fine, although her lands yielded only £1,468 per year, thus a fine of almost one fourth of the capital value of her lands, Stanning, *Composition Papers*, 184-9. See Habakkuk, 'Landowners', 132-3, 136.

¹⁰⁴³ PRO, SP 23/230/55.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Charlotte to Council of State, July 1654, PRO, SP 23/230/55.

by the latter.¹⁰⁴⁵ Charlotte tried to use the traditional argument that women were not to be held responsible for supporting their husbands:

shee humbly conceives is the only woman that ever was sequestrated for as[is]ting on that side w^{ch} her husband adhered.¹⁰⁴⁶

But the Committee appeared more impressed by witness accounts such as that of Robert Jollie of Layton who heard 'by relation from Philip Moore of Douglas and others' that the countess

tould the Earl that if hee would not come over [to England ... with forces to the Assistance to the Scotts King] shee would goe herselfe and leade them.¹⁰⁴⁷

Charlotte had to pay the full amount of her composition fine, but she hoped to avoid further penalties by 'not getting mixed up in anything at all'.¹⁰⁴⁸ In 1659 her son, the eighth earl of Derby, participated in Booth's rising, the only royalist rebellion of potential danger to the regime, and was imprisoned in Shrewsbury. Charlotte had lived estranged from her son and resented his part in this 'unfortunate affair unknown to me'. Nonetheless, she wanted to intercede on his behalf as 'the tenderness of a mother is easily aroused when her children are in danger'. Although 'many people give us great hopes that there is no danger, others fear the contrary, and in this uncertainty I am not myself'. Charlotte hoped to obtain – with Marie de La Tour's help – letters of recommendation from Antoine de Bourdeaux, Mazarin's agent in London.¹⁰⁴⁹ Prevented from going to London herself, due to financial problems and physical infirmities, she had to rely on letter writing and on her daughter-in-law, who busied herself 'in acting outside [prison] with my daughter Dorchester and our other friends'.¹⁰⁵⁰ It was the

¹⁰⁴⁵ Walker, 'Military Activities', 52, 56.

¹⁰⁴⁶ PRO, SP 23/230/55.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Testimony sworn at Preston, 30 Apr. 1652, PRO, SP 19/147/24.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Charlotte to Marie, 16 Nov. 1655, 1AP 395/9.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Charlotte to Marie, 16 Sept. 1659, 1AP 385/25; Witt, *Lady of Latham*, 232-3.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Charlotte to Marie, n.d., 1AP 385/26; Witt, *Lady of Latham*, 233-4.

second time Marie de La Tour was asked to intervene in English affairs on behalf of the countess of Derby.

Family networks continued to operate during the Interregnum years. Rather than establishing links with Royalist exiles in France, Charlotte preferred to tie bonds with her husband's Scottish kinsman, the earl of Lothian, and offered her co-operation to the English Parliament between 1646 and 1648. She also stressed the Dutch origins of her mother, Charlotte-Brabantine of Nassau, in order to demonstrate support for a republican and Protestant regime. Even before she became a widow and had to rely on her own resourcefulness, Charlotte developed a strong sense of initiative and responsibility. The old dichotomy between the 'dovish' earl and the 'hawkish' countess appears, however, more than tenuous. While Charlotte certainly hoped for a restoration of the monarchy, she refused to support Charles II during his brief alliance with the 'Solemn Leaguers'. Ironically, her trip to Scotland in 1650 was later interpreted as an act of 'delinquency', and her position became increasingly vulnerable as her husband was executed for treason and the Isle of Man had to be surrendered. Eventually, Charlotte saw no other option but to comply with the new Republic to save her jointure lands and secure the welfare of her children. Concerns over status and precedence were not a high priority for the countess of Derby, but did bear on her political choices.¹⁰⁵¹ Charlotte was aware of her family's 'pretentions de Naples', and wished Marie de La Tour much success.¹⁰⁵²

¹⁰⁵¹ Her animosity towards Queen Henrietta-Maria for instance was motivated by disagreements over rank, as we shall see in Chapter VI. See Ronald Andrew Sharp, 'The English Lay Peerage in Political and Heraldic Thinking During the Civil Wars and Interregnum', Ph.D. thesis (University of Cambridge, 1970).

¹⁰⁵² Charlotte to Marie, 21 June 1647 and 30 Dec./9 Jan 1650/1, 1AP 384/78, 90.

C.) Striving for Recognition: the Claim to the Status of *Prince Étranger*

Rank and status at court were central to the La Trémoille's concerns. According to Tarente's memoirs, he returned to France in 1648

dans le dessein d'obtenir de la Cour, pour ma Maison, les honneurs particuliers dont jouissoient celles qui avoient le rang de Princes étrangers; & pour moi, des établissements convenables à ma naissance.¹⁰⁵³

The La Trémoille's claim to precedence was based on Naples, which held 'dans une médiocre enceinte ... tous les avantages et toutes les commoditez nécessaires pour la gloire du Souverain'. Unfortunately, 'les mortelles divisions que les Intérêts des maisons d'Anjou et d'Aragon ont causées dans les plus Illustres Familles du Royaume, dont les playes quoy que fort vieilles, sont encore sanglantes'.¹⁰⁵⁴ This section will examine how the La Trémoille played on this rivalry between Anjou (France) and Aragon (Spain) to have their claim recognised both internationally and at the French court.

1.) The Title to the Kingdom of Naples

The La Trémoille based their claim to the title of Naples on their descent from Charlotte of Aragon, daughter of the last king of Naples, Frederick IV, who had been deposed by a joint Franco-Spanish operation in 1501. After the extinction of his son's line in the 1560s, the claim to Naples reverted to Charlotte's descendants, the Laval family. The La Trémoille inherited the Aragon claim in 1605 through female descent,¹⁰⁵⁵ while the royal House of Spain based its claim on collateral male descent. Similarly, the French kings declared themselves to be the legitimate male heirs of the Anjou succession, while

¹⁰⁵³ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 56.

¹⁰⁵⁴ *Histoire des révolutions de la ville et du royaume de Naples, par le comte de Modène* (Paris, 1665), 1, 18.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Genealogical details are given by the *Traicté du droict hereditaire appartenant au duc de la Tremoille au royaume de Naples* (Paris, 1648), 1AP 397/II/163; Guy Massin Le Goff, 'Les droits des La Trémoille au Trône de Naples', *L'Europe des Anjou* (Paris, 2001), 267-9. See Appendices a-1, a-2.

another princely family, the Lorraine, based their Angevin claim on lineal descent through the female heir of 'le bon roi', René d'Anjou, duc de Lorraine.¹⁰⁵⁶

According to the La Trémoille, the Aragon claim had never been pursued by the Laval because of a succession of minorities and other 'confusions'.¹⁰⁵⁷ While this may be true, it has been overlooked that the Laval-Coligny had been *unable* to claim their rights to the kingdom of Naples, because they were Protestants. The same applied to the La Trémoille until the duke's conversion in 1628. Naples was a papal fief, and the bearer of the title had to be Catholic in order to pay allegiance to the Holy See.¹⁰⁵⁸ This may have influenced Guy XX de Laval's conversion shortly before his death,¹⁰⁵⁹ and it appears to have played an important part in Henri de La Trémoille's decision to abjure Protestantism. The very day of his conversion, he sent for family papers and documents 'justiffians l'antiquité et noblesse de mad[ite] maison'.¹⁰⁶⁰ He was particularly interested in the marriage contracts of his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather which were later included in the tract defending the La Trémoille's claim to Naples. In 1629, the La Trémoille presented the king with a 'brevet de reconnaissance' relating to their sovereign title.¹⁰⁶¹ The original claim thus pre-dates the *affaire des tabourets* as described by Saint-Simon:

Lors du désordre des tabourets, données dans la régence de la Reine mère, puis ôtées, après rendus de façon ou autre, Madame de La Trémoille, qui voyait MM de Bouillon et Turenne ses frères devenus Princes par les troubles, essaya de faire Prince aussi son mari.¹⁰⁶²

¹⁰⁵⁶ I would like to thank Jonathan Spangler for this information.

¹⁰⁵⁷ AN, KK 599/292; Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, ed. Coirault, iii. 52.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Abraham de Wiquefort, *L'ambassadeur et ses fonctions*, 2 vols. (Cologne, 1715), i. 29-30; *Du droit de M. le duc de La Trémoille au Royaume de Naples*, BNF, MS Français 3784/75.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Léonard, *Histoire générale du protestantisme*, ii. 325-6.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Henri to his officers, 18 July 1628, 1AP 394/164.

¹⁰⁶¹ Chartrier, ed. La Trémoille, 139, 141; *LT5s*, iv. 125.

¹⁰⁶² Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, ed. Coirault, ii. 704. Saint-Simon was very dismissive of the 'artificiality' of the La Trémoille's claim, *ibid.* iii. 49, 52.

Saint-Simon's analysis of court life, and more particularly court rank, informs much historical work, often without the necessary critical distance.¹⁰⁶³ However, despite his obvious bias against the La Trémoille, there is a grain of truth in this allegation. The claim to Naples had not been made public during the 1630s, and was dug up by Marie de La Tour in November 1642. She asked Marcilly to send her a copy of Sainte-Marthe's history of the House of La Trémoille 'pour justifier le droit que nous avons au Royaume de Naples par représentation de Charlotte d'Aragon'.¹⁰⁶⁴ The timing was not unrelated to the situation of the duc de Bouillon, who had escaped capital punishment for his participation in Cinq-Mars's conspiracy some weeks earlier. He had given up Sedan, but desired formal recognition as *prince étranger* as compensation.¹⁰⁶⁵ The duchess mentioned this in her letter to Constantijn Huygens, secretary of the prince of Orange:

L'exemple de Monsieur mon frere qui présentement poursuit la même chose et espère de l'obtenir, quoyqu'il ait perdu la possession de Sedan, donne sujet – à ceux qui sont les plus avant dans le maniment des affaire[s] – de crèrè qu'aydés du crédit de leurs Altesses cela nous seroit absolument accordé.¹⁰⁶⁶

Marie de La Tour contacted the Dutch counsellor after a failed attempt by the duke's agent, Beauregard, to convey the importance of the La Trémoille's claim to the Stadholder.¹⁰⁶⁷ She explained that the issue at stake was not the actual possession of the

¹⁰⁶³ Saint-Simon is the only source Labatut used for his section on the 'Princes étrangers', *Ducs et pairs*, 351-6. The Petit Duc is also the main informant of Antonetti, 'Les princes étrangers'. For a more critical approach, see Robert Oresko, 'Princes étrangers', *Dictionnaire de l'Ancien Régime*, ed. L. Bély (Paris, 1996), 1019-20; Simon Hodson, 'Princes étrangers at the French Court in the Seventeenth Century: the Grimaldi, the La Tour d'Auvergne and the La Trémoille', *The Court Historian* 3 (1998), 24-8; Jonathan Spangler, 'A Lesson in Diplomacy for Louis XIV: The Treaty of Montmartre, 1662, and the Princes of the House of Lorraine', *French History* 17 (2003), 245.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Marie to Marcilly, 15 Nov. 1642, 1AP 430/80. The *Histoire généalogique de la maison de La Trémoille* written by royal historiographers, Scévole and Louis de Sainte-Marthe, was published by their nephew Pierre-Scévole de Sainte-Marthe in 1667, but must have circulated in manuscript form before that.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Hodson, 'Sovereigns and Subjects', 363. The request was granted in March 1647, and registered in Parliament in January 1652, *ibid.* 368-9, 382.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Marie to Huygens, 26 Dec. 1643, *Briefwisseling*, ed. Worp, iii. 454.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Henri to Huygens, 9 Nov. 1643, *Briefwisseling*, ed. Worp, iii. 449.

kingdom of Naples ('ce seroit vouloir passer pour entièrement ridicules'), but princely status in France:

d'estre recognus pour descendans de ceste maison, et par conséquent tenir le rang que tiennent les Princes vivans des maisons souveraines.¹⁰⁶⁸

2.) International Support

Huygens responded favourably to the request. He convinced the prince of Orange to send the La Trémoille letters of recommendation addressed to the king, and advised the duchess to lobby French ministers *soubs main* via their friends, the peace negotiators at Münster.¹⁰⁶⁹ The French plenipotentiaries, d'Avaux and Servien, had been informed in October 1643 that Naples belonged to the king, as descendant of the House of Anjou, and not to the La Trémoille, descendants of the 'Bastard d'Arragon', but that

j'ay pourtant eu agréable qu[e mon cousin de La Trémoille] agisse en ce rencontre avec la liberté qu'il pouvoit désirer et non seulement j'ay agréé qu'il deputast quelqu'un qui en l'assemblée générale peut faire ses demandes,¹⁰⁷⁰ mais ie me suis mesme resolu de vous en escrire affin de l'appuyer... J'y mets une restriction: que ca ne prejudiciera point a mes droits.¹⁰⁷¹

Henri de La Trémoille was 'undoubtedly the legitimate heir of Frederick of Aragon', but the Aragon claim to Naples had been disputed by the French 'arms and justice' since Francis I had been forced to sign the treaty of Madrid in 1526.¹⁰⁷² The diplomats thought it unwise to recognise the La Trémoille's claim and suggested that the duke should be asked to accept the legitimacy of the French claim, and then receive the title of Naples as recompense. The French *chargé d'affaires*, Théodore Godefroy, proposed a papal arbitration between La Trémoille's claim, and that of his Aragon rival, Philip IV

¹⁰⁶⁸ Marie to Huygens, 26 Dec. 1643, *Briefwisseling*, ed. Worp, iii. 454. Chapter VI will examine what courtly privileges the rank of *prince étranger* entitled, and why it was important to the La Trémoille.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Huygens to Marie, 4 Jan. 1644, *Briefwisseling*, ed. Worp, iii. 455-6.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Henri de La Trémoille sent François Bertaut, abbé de Saint Thomas du Mont aux Malades, a *procuration* dated 12 Mar. 1648, which has been included in the *Traicté du droict hereditaire*.

¹⁰⁷¹ Louis XIV to d'Avaux and Servien, 26 Oct. 1643, BNF, MS Français 3784/63.

¹⁰⁷² Report by d'Avaux and Servien, 26 Jan. 1644, BNF, MS Français 3784/67. They based their argument on the findings of a historical investigation into the territorial rights of the French Crown, reproduced in *APW*, Serie I, Band 1, ed. F. Dickmann (Münster, 1962), 180-3.

of Spain. He optimistically concluded that after one or two years of deliberations, the Pope would rule in favour of Henri de La Trémoille, and that the duke would then sign over the title of Naples to the French Crown and receive some compensation, such as the House of Penthièvre had received for the duchy of Brittany.¹⁰⁷³ This proposal was quickly dismissed because Pope Innocent X was in the pro-Spanish camp and unlikely to rule in favour of the La Trémoille.¹⁰⁷⁴ In April 1647, the duchess obtained official recognition of the rights of the La Trémoille to the *comté* of Villefranche, as part of the dowry Frederick of Aragon's wife, Anne of Savoy, had received from her uncle, Louis XI.¹⁰⁷⁵ This was a sign of royal favour the La Trémoille tried to exploit by issuing a declaration the following month, asking the plenipotentiaries at Münster

de nous faire en tant qu'ils peuvent et doivent droit sur la justice de nostre demande, ... sous le bon plaisir du sérénissime roy très chrétien nostre souverain seigneur et la sérénissime reyne régente mère de Sa Majesté.¹⁰⁷⁶

Servien was not too pleased with this initiative. He replied that, firstly, the peace conference was not some kind of tribunal for private settlements, and, secondly, that it was difficult for the French monarch to support the claim without calling into question the role of his ancestor in defeating the last king of Naples.¹⁰⁷⁷ In order to put pressure on the French delegation, the La Trémoille decided to lobby the Protestant princes represented at Münster. The duke wrote to the Dutch Estates, the elector of Brandenburg, the dowager landgravine of Hesse-Cassel, and the prince of Orange.¹⁰⁷⁸

¹⁰⁷³ 'Mémoire de M. Godefroy sur l'affaire de Naples', *LT5s*, iv. 126-7; BNF, Collection Dupuy 619/274 and 737/169.

¹⁰⁷⁴ BNF, MS Français 3784/75.

¹⁰⁷⁵ *Arrest du Conseil d'Etat* dated 26 Apr. 1647, *LT5s*, iv. 128; '1661 Mémoire', 212. Villefranche and the whole comté de Roussillon figured among the La Trémoille's demands in March 1649, Retz, *Mémoires*, 537.

¹⁰⁷⁶ 'Declaration de M. le duc de La Trémoille', 10 May 1647, 1AP 397/II/164. This letter was later included in the pamphlet *De regni Neapolitani jure pro Tremollio duce* (Paris, 1648).

¹⁰⁷⁷ Servien to Henri, 10 June 1647, 1AP 397/II/170-1.

¹⁰⁷⁸ 1AP 397/II/166-8.

The reply of Frederick William, the elector of Brandenburg, survives, agreeing that 'vostre prétention [est] fort légitime et juste'.¹⁰⁷⁹

3.) Pamphlet Campaign

Meanwhile, the duchess resorted to an even more powerful weapon: she obtained a royal *privilège* to print and distribute pamphlets concerning 'le droit de M. mon mary au royaume de Naples', albeit with the provision that it would never be used against French interests, nor without the explicit permission of the king of France.¹⁰⁸⁰ The *privilège* is dated 2 June 1648, though Pineau had already received the Latin version, *De Regni Neapolitani Jure Pro Tremolio Duce*, in February 1648. He ascribed the authorship to Blondel, Justel and the Sainte-Marthe brothers.¹⁰⁸¹ As we have seen, Marie had expressed interest in the Sainte-Marthes' work as early as 1642. Saint-Simon may thus be right in believing that the duchess orchestrated the outpouring of factums.¹⁰⁸² The *Traité du droit héréditaire appartenant au duc de La Trémoille au royaume de Naples* was first published in 1648, followed by a second edition in 1651 and a third one in 1654. The timing can be explained by international and domestic political circumstances. In 1647 the Neapolitans rebelled against the Spanish rulers, and chose as their leader Henri de Lorraine, duc de Guise, representing the House of Anjou.¹⁰⁸³ His capture the following year might have prompted the La Trémoille to show that their right to the throne of Naples was at least as valid as that of the Lorraine. The second edition may be linked to the proclamation of Louis XIV's majority in September 1651, since the king had promised the La Trémoille to confirm the 1649 *brevet* at his

¹⁰⁷⁹ Frederick William, elector of Brandenburg, to Henri, 6 June 1647, 1AP 397/II/166-7.

¹⁰⁸⁰ '1661 Mémoire', 212; *Traicté du droit hereditaire appartenant au duc de la Tremoille au royaume de Naples* (Paris: Chez Pierre Des-Hayes, 1648), 7-8.

¹⁰⁸¹ Pineau to Rivet, 28 Feb 1648, UBL, BPL 286/IV/17. David Blondel was the author of *Parenté d'Henri de La Trémoille avec Alphonse, roi d'Aragon*, BNF, Collection Dupuy 777/68.

¹⁰⁸² Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, ed. Coirault, iii. 52.

¹⁰⁸³ Retz, *Mémoires*, 1090; *Mémoires de M. le duc de Guise contenant son entreprise sur le royaume de Naples* (Paris, 1681).

majority.¹⁰⁸⁴ In 1654, Mazarin supported Guise's second attempt to take over Naples, while a third edition of the *Traité du droit héréditaire* failed to rally any support for the La Trémoille.

The treaties of Westphalia, signed on 24 October 1648, did not mention the La Trémoille's claim, presumably because Spain was not a signatory and Naples remained under Spanish rule. Nonetheless, the royal permission to take the claim to Münster, obtained through international pressure and a carefully orchestrated pamphlet campaign provided the foundation of the La Trémoille's right to Naples.¹⁰⁸⁵ Interestingly, the Lorraine's claim to Naples was not represented at Münster; the La Trémoille's Protestant connections and collaboration with the Crown appear thus to have worked out. From 1648 onwards the La Trémoille were recognised abroad to be of princely status, and their eldest son was styled 'prince de Tarente', a title traditionally given to the heir of the king of Naples.¹⁰⁸⁶ However, when France made peace with Spain in 1659, no Protestant ally was present, and Marie's attempt to patch things up with Condé was not enough for the La Trémoille to be included in the treaty of the Pyrenees.¹⁰⁸⁷

The concept of networking is key to both Marie de La Tour's and Charlotte de La Trémoille's involvement in politics. Making use of vertical (patron-client) as well as horizontal (mostly kinship) ties, both women were pursuing their family interests through exchanges of letters and personal visits. This *modus operandi* blurred the boundaries between 'private' and 'public' spheres, allowing them to participate in

¹⁰⁸⁴ Chartrier, ed. La Trémoille, 141-2; *LT5s*, iv. 141.

¹⁰⁸⁵ *L'Etat de la France*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1722), ii. 423. Antonetti's assertion that the La Trémoille's claim dates from 1651 has to be dismissed as inaccurate, Antonetti, 49.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 176-7. It confused the French ambassador Chanut, who was told by Brienne that he was allowed to address Tarente with the title 'Altesse' only if he thought it useful for the French Crown, Chanut to Brienne, 2 Feb. 1655 and Brienne to Chanut, n.d., reproduced in Tarente, *Mémoires*, p. xxii-xxiii.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Condé to Marie de La Tour, 24 Oct. 1659, *Registre*, ed. Imbert, 90.

political life, and wield a substantial amount of influence, without upsetting the patriarchal system. The English Civil War and its republican aftermath present a very different social, political, and religious framework from contemporary France.¹⁰⁸⁸ The goals of the two women diverged: Charlotte's primary objective was physical and financial survival, while Marie's main concern was increased power in the provinces and preferential treatment at court. Yet the strategies deployed by the countess and her sister-in-law were not fundamentally different. Pragmatic considerations led both women to cooperate with political figures they themselves, or their families, objected to. Charlotte lobbied the Parliament in 1647 to obtain permission for her husband to compound, using her family ties with the Scottish commissioner, the earl of Lothian. After the signature of Cromwell's treaty with France, she considered making use of Marie de La Tour's connections with Mazarin to obtain the release of her son from prison. Marie's support for Mazarin was based on an apprehension of the consequences of his fall. She did not fear that France would follow England's path into civil war and constitutional revolution,¹⁰⁸⁹ but realised that Mazarin's removal from power would result in Condé's domination of the royal Council, and the rise of his *protégé* Rohan. Moreover, peace with Spain, an aim Condé was pursuing, would sound the death knell of Huguenot privileges. In 1651, the duchess successfully lobbied Breton nobles to prevent Rohan from assuming presidency over the second estate. She was careful not to antagonise Condé, and never publicly blamed her son for taking part in the *guerre condéenne*. At the same time, she worked incessantly at Tarente's reconciliation with Mazarin, and was instrumental in obtaining his release from prison in 1656. However,

¹⁰⁸⁸ Robert Forster and Jack Greene, 'Introduction', *Preconditions of Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Baltimore and London, 1970), 1-18, drawing on articles by Lawrence Stone and Roland Mousnier, presented in the same book; Richard Bonney, 'The English and French Civil Wars', *History* 65 (1980), 365-82.

¹⁰⁸⁹ A fear which Mazarin played on when he drew the parallel between himself and the earl of Strafford. Charlotte clearly possessed that fear, Charlotte to Marie, 25 Mar. 1652, 1AP 384/102.

rather than successfully 'hedging their bets', the La Trémoille's reluctance to commit themselves entirely to either Condé or Mazarin undermined their efforts. Tarente's political threats were not taken seriously, as his mother continued to aver his profound attachment to the French Crown. On the other hand, Marie de La Tour was unable to obtain significant concessions from the monarchy, as her son repeatedly rocked the boat. Their international network of support was the La Trémoille's greatest asset. It ensured them a *de facto* recognition of their rights to Naples at the Westphalian peace conference and for years to come, although the royal *brevet* was never registered in the Parlement.

CHAPTER VI. NETWORKS OF POWER AND INFLUENCE

The length to which the La Trémoille went to have their claim to the kingdom of Naples tabled at domestic as well as international peace negotiations shows how important the rank of *prince étranger* was to them. Louis XIV claimed that

nulle [récompense] ne touche plus les coeurs bien faits que ces distinctions de rang qui sont presque le premier motif de toutes les actions humaines mais surtout des plus nobles et des plus grandes.¹⁰⁹⁰

This chapter will try to explain *why* rank mattered. It will examine how privileges at court and the resulting proximity to the king enhanced the possibilities for advantageous marriage alliances, which in turn added to a family's social prestige and facilitated access to royal patronage.¹⁰⁹¹ The *tabouret* or right to sit in the presence of the queen symbolised equality of rank and power through closeness to power. It was granted to the wife of a duke, but not to his daughter, and was automatically bestowed on princesses (*royales, du sang* and *étrangères*).¹⁰⁹² In the first section, the La Trémoille strategies of gaining *tabourets* for their daughters, and obtaining placements in the royal household of England will be examined, and the political importance of these honours will be assessed. It will be discussed whether the honour of participating in a court masque was a test of royal favour, or merely a consolation prize when a more established type of ranking had been denied.

The Court may have been at the centre of Marie and Charlotte's stellar system, but there were other planets. Marie in particular was looking for alternative means of self-affirmation. Her role as 'Reine des Huguenots' has been analysed in Chapter IV; this chapter will introduce another type of network: the salon. Although salon culture should

¹⁰⁹⁰ Quoted by Labatut, *Ducs et pairs*, 82.

¹⁰⁹¹ On disputes of precedence, see David Parrott, 'Richelieu, the *Grands* and the French Army', 139; Roger Mettam, 'Definitions of Nobility in Seventeenth-Century France', *Language, History and Class*, ed. J. Corfield (Oxford, 1991), 84.

¹⁰⁹² Henri Brocher, *Le Rang et l'étiquette sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris, 1934), 28.

not be set *against* court life, it was by comparison more 'democratic', as personal value was not solely based on rank, but also on education and cultural interests. Court performances, such as the Caroline masque, were expressions of a hierarchically structured milieu and were essentially means of self-production (in the sense of *Selbstinszenierung, mise en scène de soi-même*). The genre of portrait writing, brought to France by the La Trémoïlle, was by contrast based on self-observation and allowed a critical appraisal of oneself. This type of literary pastimes prefigured what Habermas calls the 'authentic public sphere', an extremely useful tool for understanding the role of female networks in the Old Regime.¹⁰⁹³ Kinship ties, the primary personal relationship of early modern societies, provided a third type of 'horizontal' (friendship) ties, which could overlap with 'vertical' (clientage) ties.¹⁰⁹⁴ The last section will assess the role rank played in the choice of marriage partners, based on an analysis of trans-national alliances and misalliances. An examination of abortive alliances (nonalliances) will shed more light on the importance of rank and religion, and determine its relevance for the matrimonial strategies of the La Trémoïlle.

A.) Honours at Court: Power through Status

1.) The Status of *Prince Étranger* at the Court of France

Since 1522, the head of the La Trémoïlle family had been allowed to style himself prince de Talmont, by virtue of the treaty of Saint-Jean-de-Losne between Francis I and the archduke of Austria.¹⁰⁹⁵ It was a courtesy title, which did not lead to any preferential treatment at court. Ducal status was conferred on Thouars in 1563 and the peerage was registered in 1599. In 1633, when Henri de La Trémoïlle was made a knight of the

¹⁰⁹³ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Oxford, 2002), 32.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Sharon Kettering, 'Friendship and Clientage in Early Modern France', *French History* 6 (1992), 146.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, ed. A. de Boisisle, 40 vols. (Paris, 1879-1930), xiii. 316.

Order of the Holy Ghost, the seniority of his dukedom gave him precedence over all dukes and peers.¹⁰⁹⁶ He came ninth in the ceremony, following five members of the First Estate (cardinals and archbishops), two *princes légitimés* (the duc de Longueville and the comte d'Alais), and one *prince étranger* (the comte d'Harcourt).¹⁰⁹⁷ There was therefore no room left to improve his position within the group of dukes and peers; the only possible step forward was into the category of the *princes étrangers*. The La Trémoille claimed that this intermediary category (wedged between the *princes du sang* and the *ducs-et-pairs*) was an innovation and that

[les] maisons qui par leur ancienneté, leurs services et leurs grandes alliances meritoient des tiltres et des dignités qui en marquassent la différence et que cette raison oblige ceux qui ont des droicts apparans et legitimes de les faire recognoistre pour les tirer du Pair.¹⁰⁹⁸

According to Henri Brocher, the rank of *prince étranger* was not a legal status sanctioned by the Parlement, unlike the rank of *duc-et-pair*; it constituted a simple favour granted by the king to noblemen who were – or claimed to be – of a sovereign house.¹⁰⁹⁹ From the monarch's point of view, upgrading someone's rank at court could indeed be used as a favour. However, to describe it as 'un moyen seur et peu odieux de faire justice', as the abbé de Caumartin put it, does not reflect the reality of the practice.¹¹⁰⁰ Granting one family a favour (often to prevent their defection), or withdrawing it from another family to please the first one created bitter resentments. Simon Hodson has pointed out that the title of *prince étranger* expressed the king's recognition of a nobleman's sovereignty (or claim to sovereignty), not the reality of

¹⁰⁹⁶ The Duc d'Uzès had the seniority of peerage, which prevailed at the coronation, at the Parlement and at the meetings of the Estates, *LT5s*, vol. iv, p. vii; *Chartrier de Thouars*, ed. La Trémoille, 4.

¹⁰⁹⁷ 1AP 395/132; *Dictionnaire du Grand Siècle*, 1386.

¹⁰⁹⁸ *Mémoire touchant la pretention de Monseigneur*, 1AP406/12; 1AP 397/86, 107, 123. Equally coveted among courtly residents was the *pour* (having the inscription 'pour Madame...', rather than a simple 'Madame...', written on one's door). It was taken so seriously that deleting the inscription was a criminal offence, Saint-Simon, 'Thouars', 203; id., *Mémoires*, ed. Coirault, i. 538.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Brocher, *Le rang et l'étiquette*, 17.

¹¹⁰⁰ BNF, MS Clairambault 719/123-5.

independent political power.¹¹⁰¹ Status at court, expressed by the title of *prince étranger*, could be at least as advantageous to the bearer of the title, as the possession of 'true' sovereignty (so-called 'real' political power). Within the French political system, influence over the monarch, the courts of law, or the provincial Estates were concrete expressions of power. Access to international networks of support was another powerful tool in court politics. In fact, power through influence was, to a large extent, based on rank. The distinction some historians make between status and power is too rigid,¹¹⁰² and does not correspond to the experience of seventeenth-century courtiers. Saint-Simon only derided 'empty' honours because he understood (and deplored) that status signified power. 'Real' power, which Fitou alludes to, cannot be dissociated from political discourse and symbols.

In order to increase their hold over clients in Brittany and Poitou, over the courts of law (notably the Chambre de l'Edit), and over the king himself, the La Trémoille were keen to enhance their status. On an international level they played on their descent from the House of Naples, as discussed in Chapter V. At court, their argument was based on previous *de facto* recognitions of their title, which entitled them to the so-called *honneurs du Louvre*:

M. de La Trémoille possède tous les honneurs droits et prerogatives dont jouissent les princes estrangers reconnues en France. Ses fils sont traités de cousin par le Roy. Ils entrent au Louvre en Carosse; Baisent Mesdames de France en les saluant. Ses filles ont le tabouret au cercle de la Reyne; Et le privilege de se couvrir aus audiences [des ambassadeurs].¹¹⁰³

¹¹⁰¹ Hodson, 'Sovereigns and Subjects', 379-82.

¹¹⁰² A 'distinction essentielle entre statut et pouvoir, aussi différents l'un de l'autre que la main droite l'est de la main gauche', is said to be ingrained 'dans l'esprit des contemporains, fêrus d'hiérarchie pure, le statut l'emporte nettement sur pouvoir', Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie and Jean-François Fitou, *Saint-Simon ou le système de la cour* (Paris, 1997), 96.

¹¹⁰³ 1AP 406/12. Le Roy Ladurie and Fitou, *Saint-Simon*, 93.

In 1611, the right to enter the Louvre in her coach had been granted to Charlotte-Brabantine, dowager duchesse de La Trémoille, possibly in an attempt to win her over at a time when Huguenot resistance was emerging at the assembly of Saumur.¹¹⁰⁴ Her daughter (the future countess of Derby) was granted the *tabouret*, as was her niece and future daughter-in-law, Marie de La Tour. When Marie lost the privilege in 1617, the duchesse de Bouillon considered that 'un petit rude', but did not manage to reverse the decision.¹¹⁰⁵ Charlotte-Brabantine, however, was determined not to accept the affront when her daughter was refused the right to sit down in the presence of the queen. She wrote to her son:

Je ne say ce quy en sera, mais je say bien qu[e votre soeur] n'ira pas pour estre plus mal traitée et que ni l'aprouverier, car il y a de la honte d'ôter ce qu'on a peut estre, cella se remestra.¹¹⁰⁶

She called in her sister-in-law, Catherine de La Trémoille, dowager princesse de Condé, who agreed to talk to the queen. Whether it was because of this intercession, or thanks to Richelieu, Sardigny ('gentilhomme de la Reine mère') and Claude Bouthillier – as Charlotte later recollected – the *tabouret* was restored and Anne of Austria presented her apologies for having acted 'par persuation et inopportunité et non par aucune mauvaise vollonté qu'elle eust contre nostre maison, à qui elle sçavoit que cela appartenoit'.¹¹⁰⁷ In 1637, Marie de La Trémoille, aged five, received the *tabouret*,¹¹⁰⁸ and Charlotte-Amélie, who was given the same right in 1656, declared in her memoirs that

Sa Majesté, voulant obliger Madame ma grand'mère ... fit apporter des tabourets ... pour me faire prendre de bonne heure le rang que les filles de la maison de La Trémoille ont toujours eu du tabouret.¹¹⁰⁹

¹¹⁰⁴ 1AP 395/134; Anne-Marie Cocula, 'La fin du parti protestant en Guyenne', *Adhésion et résistances à l'Etat en France et en Espagne, 1620-1660* (Bordeaux, 2001), 77.

¹¹⁰⁵ Elisabeth of Nassau to Charlotte-Brabantine, 30 Dec. 1617, 1AP 334/206.

¹¹⁰⁶ Charlotte-Brabantine to Henri, 17 July 1623, 1AP 331/64.

¹¹⁰⁷ Charlotte to Marie, 27 Jan. 1650, 1AP 384/92.

¹¹⁰⁸ Charlotte to Marie, 7 June 1637, 1AP 384/65.

¹¹⁰⁹ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 36.

This rank had been confirmed by a private *brevet* after the first Fronde, but was called into question during the so-called *affaire des tabourets* in October 1649. In an attempt to please everybody, the queen regent had distributed *tabourets* and princely titles generously, a gesture mocked by satirists such as Tallemant.¹¹¹⁰ The 'multiplication des princes' incensed the lesser nobility, who joined forces with Vendôme and former Frondeurs, and petitioned the queen 'not to elevate anyone to the rank of prince who was not born a prince'.¹¹¹¹ Anne of Austria had no choice but to recall the privileges granted to the La Trémoille, the Rohan and others, confirming only the title of the Bouillon family.¹¹¹² It was in this context that Marie de La Tour wrote to the countess of Derby for 'éclaircissement' regarding the rights the family had formerly enjoyed. 'Je rapelle ma mémoire le mieux possible', Charlotte replied, listing those who had supported her *tabouret* in 1623, and those who had intrigued against it.¹¹¹³ Although the privilege had no legal foundation, it had been visible ('je l'ai depuis possédé chés les deus re[i]nes au veu de toute la Court') and therefore accepted:

[je] le posédé plus de 3 ans devant que d'estre marié sans aucune difficulté ou opotition chés les deux rennes à la [cour] d'une chacun. M[essieurs] de Guisse, de Rohan, de Montmorency et maim la Reyne et celle d'Engleterre le savent.¹¹¹⁴

In 1650, neither Anne of Austria nor Henrietta Maria, who had found refuge in Paris, were able or willing to endorse the La Trémoille's princely privileges. In December, Marie de La Tour lost her most important ally at court, Charlotte de Montmorency. According to Tallemant, the late princesse de Condé had insisted that the duchesse de

¹¹¹⁰ Tallemant, *Historiettes*, i. 639-40, 648 and ii. 228; Retz, *Mémoires*, 573-5; BNF, MS Clairambault 719/130-1.

¹¹¹¹ Montglat, *Mémoires*, ii. 193-8; La Rochefoucauld, *Mémoires*, 29-35; Labatut, *Ducs et Pairs*, 372-4.

¹¹¹² Hodson, 'Sovereigns and Subjects', 373.

¹¹¹³ Charlotte to Marie, 20/30 Jan. 1650, 1AP 384/91.

¹¹¹⁴ Charlotte to Marie, 20/30 Jan. and 27 Jan. 1650, 1AP 384/91-2.

La Trémoille was allowed access to the queen's private apartments 'où personne n'entre que les princesses'.¹¹¹⁵

Tarente's involvement in the *guerre condéenne* failed to sway the king to recognise his princely title, and his rank was challenged even among Condé's friends.¹¹¹⁶ The greatest blow, however, came in 1662 when Charles IV of Lorraine sold his duchy to Louis XIV for a lifelong annual rent of one million *livres*, a remission of his debts and a rank created specifically for his house, which would include the Lorraine in the royal succession.¹¹¹⁷ There was a hue and cry orchestrated by Charles's heir to the duchy and the *princes légitimés* Vendôme and Longueville.¹¹¹⁸ Henri de La Trémoille considered it 'également injuste et impossible' that such an important treaty had been concluded 'sans que les Pairs, les Etats Generaux du Royaume, et tous les princes, parents et intéressés de part et autre ayent esté ouïs, appelez et consultez'. The La Trémoille themselves had as much right as the Lorraine to the royal succession, Henri sneered, since they descended from Yolande, daughter of King Charles VII.¹¹¹⁹ However, unlike the Lorraine, or the Bouillon, who obtained a registration of their status as *prince étranger* in 1652, the La Trémoille had no bargaining power. Their claim to sovereignty, recognised at Münster on the condition that it would not be detrimental to the king's rights, was not enough to push the king's *brevet* through the Parlement. But even the 'real power' of sovereignty was not enough of a bargain counter for the duc de Lorraine

¹¹¹⁵ Tallemant, *Historiettes*, i. 73.

¹¹¹⁶ His quarrel over precedence with the comte de Rieux, son of the Duc d'Elbeuf, famously resulted in Rieux slapping Condé in the face and being sent to the Bastille, Montpensier, i. chapitre 12, <<http://www.penelope.uchicago.edu/mlle/chapitre12/chap12.html>>, accessed Oct. 2003; Omer Talon, *Mémoires*, ed. Michaud and Poujoulat (Paris, 1854), 502-4.

¹¹¹⁷ Spangler, 'The Treaty of Montmartre', 225-6.

¹¹¹⁸ Spangler, 'The Treaty of Montmartre', 242-6; Vendôme's memoir to Louis XIV, dated 12 Feb 1662, BNF, Factum 16850.

¹¹¹⁹ Henri to Marie, 14 Feb. 1662, *Régistre*, ed. Imbert, 182-3.

to obtain the rank of *prince du sang* and a place in the royal succession.¹¹²⁰ The opposition to the treaty of Montmartre created a bond of solidarity between the La Trémoille and other courtly factions which allowed them to reaffirm their claim to Naples.¹¹²¹ The same year, on the occasion of Marie de La Trémoille's marriage to Bernard of Saxony-Weimar, the Crown confirmed the *tabouret* for all La Trémoille daughters.¹¹²² Although the privilege was never registered in Parlement, the La Trémoille were *de facto* treated as *princes étrangers* and the *Etat de France* of 1678 listed them in the same category as the families of Lorraine, Savoy, Tour d'Auvergne, Grimaldi and Rohan; not among the dukes and peers.¹¹²³

The quarrels over precedence demonstrate that rank was an indicator of royal favour and influence at court. Service in the royal household provided even greater possibilities for personal advancement, promotion of kinsmen, and clientele.¹¹²⁴ The La Trémoille, however, had not held an official post since Duchess Jeanne, mother of Claude de La Trémoille, had served as lady-in-waiting to Charles IX's queen.¹¹²⁵ Charlotte-Brabantine refused to attend court with her children to prevent their forced conversion to Catholicism. Marie de La Tour was less circumspect and was rewarded in 1650 with a pension to 'soustenir les despences qu'elle est obligée de faire po[ur] s'entretenir en nostre Cour', but never held an official position.¹¹²⁶ It was not until Charles-Hollande-Belgique, who had converted to Catholicism in 1672, that a La Trémoille was appointed

¹¹²⁰ The Duc de Longueville also experienced difficulties in exchanging the principality of Neuchâtel for the rank of *prince du sang*, Philip Grover, forthcoming article.

¹¹²¹ *Raisons et moyens de Monseigneur le duc de La Trémoille pour s'opposer au traité de Lorraine*, 1AP 428/11.

¹¹²² AN, KK 599/283-304; Chartrier, ed. La Trémoille, 159.

¹¹²³ *L'Etat de la France*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1678), i. 545; *L'Etat de la France* (Paris, 1692), 838; *L'Etat de la France*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1722), ii. 423.

¹¹²⁴ Sharon Kettering, 'The Household Service of Early Modern French Noblewomen', *French Historical Studies* 20 (1997), 55-86; Mettam, *Power and Faction*, 50-1; Olwen Hufton, 'Reflections on the Role of Women in the Early Modern Court', *The Court Historian* 5/1 (2000), 8.

¹¹²⁵ Anselme, *Histoire généalogique*, iv. 170.

¹¹²⁶ 1AP 403.

premier gentilhomme de la chambre du Roi.¹¹²⁷ Nonetheless, throughout the eighteenth century, the La Trémoille continued to claim official recognition of the title of *prince étranger*. For Labourdette it is incomprehensible that

ils s'accrochent à des vanités, en renouvelant encore leurs prétentions au rang de Prince étranger, à la veille même de la Révolution: ils passent à côté de l'essentiel.¹¹²⁸

In the seventeenth century, a princely title and the privileges it conferred at court were not dismissed as mere vanity. They represented for the La Trémoille a key to patronage and political influence, all the more important since governorships and official positions at court eluded them. When Charlotte de La Trémoille arrived in England, she was expecting a placement in the entourage of the new French-born queen, Henrietta Maria, but political circumstances prevented her establishment at court.

2.) Official Posts at the Court of England

Since the 1980s, court studies have largely undermined Geoffrey Elton's differentiation between courtiers and councillors. The royal household has been recognised as a power centre equally or more influential than the Privy Council.¹¹²⁹ Service in the royal Bedchamber provided access to, and political influence over the monarch, particularly at the courts of James I and later Charles II. Charles I, although a 'distant' and frugal monarch, recognised the influence the queen's attendants had over his wife.¹¹³⁰ He

¹¹²⁷ Chartrier, ed. La Trémoille, 281; Labourdette, 'Fortune', i. 4-6.

¹¹²⁸ Labourdette, 'Fortune', *Annales*, 173.

¹¹²⁹ G. R. Elton, *The Tudor Revolution in Government* (Cambridge, 1953); David Starkey, 'Introduction: Court History in Perspective', *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (London and New York, 1992), 13; Neil Cuddy, 'Reinventing a Monarchy: the Changing Structure and Political Function of the Stuart Court, 1603-1688', *The Stuart Courts*, ed. E. Cruickshanks (Stroud, 2000), 71-2.

¹¹³⁰ The ladies of the Bedchamber were the only ones allowed unrestricted access to the queen, BL, Stowe MS 561/15r.

imposed four English Protestant ladies-in-waiting, although by treaty Henrietta Maria was to be attended by French Catholics.¹¹³¹ According to the Venetian ambassador,

This led to several angry discussions between her and the king, especially because Melle de La Trémoille, lately married to Lord Derby's son, has been unable to obtain office in the Court, on the pretence of her being too young, but really because she is French. Nevertheless her mother, who is very astute and receives many honours in England, such as board and lodging at the king's cost, keeps intriguing to obtain this distinction for her daughter, and even has hopes of success.¹¹³²

The greatest asset of Charlotte, Lady Strange, was her Protestantism, which set her above any intrigues by Marie de' Medici's party.¹¹³³ On the other hand, Charles knew that the dowager duchesse de La Trémoille pursued a political agenda of her own. Her aim was to reconcile the king and Henrietta Maria, and to negotiate a rapprochement between England and France.¹¹³⁴ Despite the fact that her son, the comte de Laval, had joined Soubise's rebellion, the duchess refused to support a war against France.

Extraordinary attentions are paid to her, reported Contarini, she is banquetted by the favourites and the duke [of Buckingham] himself will also entertain her one of these days... But so far I do not perceive any inclinations in this lady to interfere in the matter, indeed she rather leans to take the other side and go to Court to divert any suspicion which the Most Christian might entertain of herself and her family. She rather desires to place her son in the service of Denmark.¹¹³⁵

The duchess did not support the English plan 'to foment disturbance in France ... under pretence of religion', and remained 'rather in favour of union between the two crowns

¹¹³¹ Morosini to the Doge and Senate, 9 Dec. 1624 and 14 Mar. 1625, *CSP Ven* xviii. 507, 612; Caroline M. Hibbard, 'The Role of a Queen Consort. The Household and Court of Henrietta Maria, 1625-1642', *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age, c.1450-1650*, ed. R.G. Asch and A.M. Birke (Oxford, 1991), 402, 406-9; Kevin Sharpe, 'The Image of Virtue: the Court and Household of Charles I', *The English Court*, ed. Starkey, 248.

¹¹³² Contarini to the Doge and Senate, 28 Aug. 1626, *CSP Ven* xix. 520. On 25 Sept. Contarini reported that the duchesse de La Trémoille was 'dissatisfied at having failed to get her daughter a post about the queen', *CSP Ven* xix. 547.

¹¹³³ Bassompierre was told 'that the French, instead of serving their mistress, meddled unduly in politics and in the internal affairs of the government and the realm, especially in religion, which is a very sensitive point', Contarini to the Doge and Senate, 9 Oct. 1626, *CSP Ven* xix. 565-6.

¹¹³⁴ Contarini to the Doge and Senate, 25 Sept. 1626, *CSP Ven* xix. 547. Contarini knew the duchess from The Hague, Contarini to the Doge and Senate, 2 Aug. 1626, *CSP Ven* xix. 496.

¹¹³⁵ Contarini to the Doge and Senate, 2 Oct. 1626, *CSP Ven* xix. 560.

than otherwise'.¹¹³⁶ The French envoy, Bassompierre, met Charlotte-Brabantine twice, and continued to pay his respects to her daughter, Lady Strange, on a weekly basis after the dowager duchess had left England.¹¹³⁷ Charlotte de La Trémoille agreed with her mother that 'saite guerre ne rende ceux de nostre religion bien odieux',¹¹³⁸ but she was powerless to intervene:

Quent je serois capable d[e] faire quelque ouverture [pour la paix], ce qui n'est pas, mon éloignement de la Court m'en ôteroit le moyen, et puis celui qui nous est alié ne se melle d'aucune affaire; et ce n'est pas qu'il ne le désireroit bien, mais il a unne certaine humeur peu compatible, et mame n'est pas fort aymé des puissance supérieures. Pour l'autre, son pouvoir n'est pas comme au passé et croy qu'il diminue, et ne croy pas que la paix vienent d'autre que de ceux qui ont commencé la guerre. Pour la Reyne, elle ne se melle de rien et ne songe qu'à passer son temps; le Roy et elle sont très-bien ensemble.¹¹³⁹

The above mentioned contacts at court may refer to the earl of Montgomery (Lord Strange's uncle) or to the earls of Holland and Carlisle, who had arranged Charlotte's marriage to Lord Strange, and pursued a pro-French line.¹¹⁴⁰ Lady Strange's Francophile attitude explains, at any rate, why the king refused to appoint her lady-in-waiting to the queen. The international connections of the La Trémoille did not automatically lead to preferential treatment at the English court. During her first visit, Charlotte-Brabantine was 'allowed to sit down in the queen's apartment, as a princess of the blood and aunt of the king of Bohemia, sister-in-law of the king here, sister of the prince of Orange and other very distinguished connections'. When she returned in 1630 this privilege was refused. As the Venetian ambassador explained: 'the nature of the king here is such that

¹¹³⁶ Contarini to the Doge and Senate, 2 Oct. 1626 and 9 Oct. 1626, *CSP Ven* xix. 560-1, 566-7.

¹¹³⁷ François de Bassompierre, *Mémoires*, ed. Petitot (Paris, 1823), 64, 66-8.

¹¹³⁸ Charlotte to Charlotte-Brabantine, 28 Sept. 1627, 1AP 384/37.

¹¹³⁹ Charlotte to Charlotte-Brabantine, 29 Nov. 1627, 1AP 384/40.

¹¹⁴⁰ Charlotte-Brabantine to Pontobré, 1626, *LT5s*, iv. 45-6: 'si Mr le conte de Carly [Carlisle] lui parle de ma fille, lui dira que je n'oublieray jamais, et aussi au conte de Hollande, l'obligation que je leur ay'. See R. Malcolm Smuts, 'The Puritan followers of Henrietta Maria in the 1630s', *English Historical Review* 93 (1978), 27. On Carlisle's early pro-French stance, see *DNB*, s.v. 'Hay'.

he oblige no one either in deed or word (*questo Re e di natura tale che non oblige ne in fatti ne in parole alcuno*)'.¹¹⁴¹

Thirty years later, Charlotte, now dowager countess of Derby, tried to use her French connections to obtain a placement in the royal household. Alexandre Morus recommended her to Charles II, while trying to promote her niece, Marie de La Trémoille, as a marriage partner for the king.¹¹⁴² Before Morus entered the scene, Charlotte relied on the marquis de Ruvigny, brother-in-law of the earl of Southampton, who had been made Lord High Treasurer at the Restoration.¹¹⁴³ Ruvigny and the Francophile Henry Jermyn, earl of St. Albans, obtained lodgings for Charlotte in the queen mother's apartments and advised her to make use of her La Trémoille connections to obtain a post in the royal Bedchamber:

L'on me conceille de vous supplier et tout le reste a qui j'ay l'honneur d'appartenir de supplier Sa Majesté de me faire celuy de me faire de sa chembre du lit [C]ela me donneroit moyen de parler au roy et de pouvoir servir mais amis et d'avenser mais enfens.¹¹⁴⁴

In September 1661 the king promised to appoint Charlotte governess to his children, 'an important place, which will enable me to confer favours and do much good'.¹¹⁴⁵ St. Albans was considered the person who could make Charles II honour his promise:

L'on m'asseure fort que le roy me fera l'honneur de me tenir la promesse qu'il m'a faicte. Tout le monde le sait et sy Mr vostre frère fesoit que Mr de St. Albans fust de mais amis, la Reyne sa metresse n'y seroit pas contraire.¹¹⁴⁶

Although it was necessary to keep the favour of the queen mother, Charlotte attached herself to the rival faction, represented by the earls of Clarendon and Ormonde. She

¹¹⁴¹ Soranzo to the Doge and Senate, London 12 July 1630, *CSP Ven* xxii, 373; Albert J. Loomie (ed.), *Ceremonies of Charles I. The Note Books of John Finet, 1628-1641* (New York, 1987), 97.

¹¹⁴² Morus to Marie, 12/22 May 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 282.

¹¹⁴³ Charlotte to Marie, 22 Sept. 1660, 30 Oct. 1660 and n.d., 1AP 385/36, 39, 40.

¹¹⁴⁴ Charlotte to Marie, 14 Mar. 1661 and 17 Jan. 1661, 1AP 385/52, 45.

¹¹⁴⁵ Charlotte to Marie, 9 Sept. 1661, 1AP 385/68; Witt, *Lady of Latham*, 283-4.

¹¹⁴⁶ Charlotte to Marie, 3 June 1662, 1AP 385/74.

befriended Clarendon's daughter, Anne Hyde, who had married the duke of York. As members of her entourage, Charlotte and her daughter accompanied the duchess of York to Charles's coronation and, in the summer, to a health spa.¹¹⁴⁷ To gain the favour of Henry Hyde, Charlotte asked Marie de La Tour to send her a doll ('une poupée qui se deshaille et qui soit des plus belles') for Hyde's little daughter.¹¹⁴⁸ Clarendon's friend and political ally, James Butler, earl of Ormonde, knew of Charlotte through her daughter, Lady Strafford.¹¹⁴⁹ At the Restoration he had been made Lord Steward of the royal household, and confirmed, in this capacity, the king's promise to appoint Lady Derby governess to his children.¹¹⁵⁰ More specifically, she was to look after the Prince of Wales 'qui ne sçauroit estre mieux qu'entre ses mains'.¹¹⁵¹ Unfortunately for the countess of Derby, Charles II, nicknamed 'father of England' for his fourteen children born outside wedlock, did not have any legitimate offspring. But the position as governess was not the only strategy Charlotte had devised to further the careers of her children. Since the rift between Charlotte and her eldest son, the eighth earl of Derby, was beyond repair, the dowager countess focused all her energies on her daughters, notably Lady Strafford, and on her younger sons. The Act of Parliament dated 19 May 1662, whereby Strafford was reinstated and Derby's Bill was turned down, was thus less of a defeat for Charlotte than one might have expected. The earl of Ailesbury later recorded his belief that the king was swayed by Clarendon's personal dislike of the earl of Derby,¹¹⁵² shaped perhaps by his amity with Derby's mother. Morus reported that the Chancellor apologised for the Act, and that he gave great praise

¹¹⁴⁷ Charlotte to Marie, 23 Apr. 1661 and 1 July 1661, 1AP 385/54, 62.

¹¹⁴⁸ Charlotte to Marie, 7 Jan. 1661, 1AP 385/44.

¹¹⁴⁹ Charlotte to Marie, 18 Feb. 1661, 1AP 385/49. Ormonde had been one of the few to defend the first earl of Strafford against the attacks made upon him in the parliament of 1641, *DNB*, s.v. 'Ormonde'.

¹¹⁵⁰ Charlotte to Marie, 1 Apr. 1662, 1AP 385/73.

¹¹⁵¹ Morus to Marie, 12/22 May 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 282.

¹¹⁵² Coward, *The Stanleys*, 76.

à cette maison et pour son origine et pour sa vertu et ses souffrances pour le Roy; lequel il a assuré n'avoir refusé cet acte que pour y pourvoir d'une autre manière plus avantageuse à cette maison.¹¹⁵³

Charlotte expressed the advantages she was hoping for as follows:

la considération de ce que je devois ... à mes jeunes enfans ... m'a fait enfin souhater saite faveur speciale de la bonté du roy que s'il plaisoit à S.M. m'onorer de quelque nouveau titre. Il me sufiroit de que mes jeunes enfans puissent jouir du privilege qu'ils auroi[ent] eu sy Mons. leur père l'eust eu de son vivant, sans que la quallité descendist à aucun par après.¹¹⁵⁴

An honorary title for her younger sons was, Lady Derby argued, the least the king could do, since their father had lost his life in the service of the Crown. Had the seventh earl lived longer he would have broken the entail his estate was subjected to and disinherited his eldest son for conniving with the 'rebels'.¹¹⁵⁵ On 6 February 1663, Charlotte joyfully reported that the king had appointed her son Edward 'premier et seul gentilhomme de sa chambre qui est assez adventageux', and that she had to thank no one else but the king himself and the duchess of York for this post.¹¹⁵⁶ Her youngest son, William, had been made cornet, and 'Sa Majesté luy a fait l'honneur de l'assurer que ce n'est qu'un commencement'.¹¹⁵⁷

The post of First Gentleman of the Bedchamber, also known as Groom of the Stole, was important in itself and as a springboard for further offices. As Starkey has shown, a Gentleman of the Bedchamber acted as a symbol of royal authority, sharing in the charisma of monarchy through the intimacy he shared with the king.¹¹⁵⁸ His tasks, detailed in the 1689 *Book Containing His Majesty's Orders for the Government of the*

¹¹⁵³ Morus to Marie 19/29 May 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 284.

¹¹⁵⁴ Charlotte to Mr. Legge, 18 Feb. 1662, HMC, Dartmouth III, 106-7.

¹¹⁵⁵ Ibid.; Derby's will established his second son Edward as main heir, LRO, DDK 12/1.

¹¹⁵⁶ In fact the First Gentleman of the Bedchamber from 1660 to 1685 was Sir J. Granville, J. C. Sainty and R. O. Buchholz, *Officials of the Royal Household, 1660-1837*, 2 vols. (London, 1997-8), i. 8.

¹¹⁵⁷ Charlotte to Marie, 6 Feb. 1663, 1AP 385/77.

¹¹⁵⁸ David Starkey, 'Representation Through Intimacy. A Study of the Symbolism and Court Office in Early-Modern England', *Symbols and Sentiments. Cross-cultural Studies in Symbolism*, ed. I. Lewis (London, 1977), 196, 198, 208.

Bedchamber and the Private Lodgings, included the regulation of access to the king, symbolised by a 'gold key on a blue ribbon'. It was the third great office of the royal household after the Lord Stewardship, held by Ormonde, and the Lord Chamberlainship, held by the earl of Manchester.¹¹⁵⁹ The political function was revived under Charles II when 'secret' policies were pursued against the advice of the Privy Council.¹¹⁶⁰ Some Gentlemen of the Bedchamber, most famously Endymion Porter in the 1620s, used their office to access upper levels of society, but Edward Stanley died in March 1665, before he had a chance to fulfil his mother's hopes. His brother William followed him five years later; both officially unmarried and without offspring.¹¹⁶¹ Nonetheless, their appointments, as well as the post of governess Charlotte had been promised, were visible signs of royal favour, comparable to high status at the French court.

3.) The Court Masque

Proximity to the king was what made the honour of the *tabouret* and the post of lady-in-waiting or governess so valuable for the La Trémoille. Physical proximity did, however, not always express closeness to the monarch. A prominent position in a court ceremony or entertainment could be bestowed as an honour that was neither binding nor permanent. When Charlotte-Brabantine was refused the (truly influential) position as godmother of the Prince of Wales, as proxy for Marie de' Medici, the rebuff was assuaged by giving Lady Strange the second rank in the procession of the 'great ladies', after the countess of Kent. According to the Master of Ceremonies, '[she was] allowed

¹¹⁵⁹ BL, Stowe MS 563/7v; see Starkey, 'Representation Through Intimacy', 204-13; Sharpe, 'Image of Virtue', 234.

¹¹⁶⁰ Neil Cuddy, 'Reinventing a Monarchy', 74.

¹¹⁶¹ It is possible, however, that William Stanley married a Quaker woman in Philadelphia and founded a family overseas, as reported by family tradition, personal communication by Capri-Mara Fillmore 8 Mar. 2004.

that place as to a stranger and the duchess of Tremoilles daughter'.¹¹⁶² Shortly after the duchesse de La Trémoille's departure, Lord and Lady Strange were invited to participate in the king's and queen's masques. Their return to court was facilitated by the pro-French turn foreign policy had taken after Buckingham's death, under the influence of Viscount Dorchester and the earl of Holland.¹¹⁶³

James Stanley, Lord Strange, performed on 9 January 1631 in Ben Jonson's *Love's Triumph Through Callipolis*.¹¹⁶⁴ He played the seventh lover, known as 'the secure', placed for the culminating 'triumphal dance' directly opposite the king himself:¹¹⁶⁵

1 the provident (Marquis of Hamilton)		2 the judicious (Earl of Montgomery)
3 the secret (Earl of Holland)		4 the valiant (Earl of Carnarvon)
5 the witty (Earl of Newport)		6 the jovial (Viscount Doncaster)
7 the secure (Lord Strange)	15 the heroical (Charles I)	8 the substantial (Sir William Howard)
9 the modest (Sir Robert Stanley)		10 the candid (Sir William Brooke)
11 the courteous (Master Goring)		12 the elegant (Master Raleigh)
13 the rational (Master Dymock)		14 the magnificent (Master Abercrombie)

It was a private performance by and for an elite circle of courtiers, or 'an intertayment intended only for the queens particular pleasure and satisfaction', as the Master of

¹¹⁶² Soranzo to the Doge and Senate, London 12 July 1630, *CSP Ven* xxii, 372-3; *Note Books of John Finet*, ed. Loomie, 89.

¹¹⁶³ Smuts, 'The Puritan followers of Henrietta Maria', 28-9.

¹¹⁶⁴ Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, *Love's Triumph through Callipolis, performed in a masque at Court in 1630. By his Majestie, with the Lords, and Gentlemen assisting* (London, 1630).

¹¹⁶⁵ Ben Jonson, *The Complete Masques*, ed. S. Orgel (New Haven and London, 1969), 458, 507.

Ceremonies explained to the French and Spanish ambassadors.¹¹⁶⁶ James Stanley performed next to the most powerful men at court. His uncle, the earl of Montgomery and Pembroke, was Lord Chamberlain, Carnarvon his former ward, and Holland High Steward to the queen. Both Holland and Viscount Doncaster, better known as the earl of Carlisle, knew Lady Strange from The Hague. Charlotte herself played one of fourteen nymphs in *Chloridia*, the queen's masque staged on 20-22 February 1631.¹¹⁶⁷ Inigo Jones's designs and a contemporary description of the nymphs' costumes have survived.¹¹⁶⁸ Even with their customary attributes, such as a bow and a quiver, or a javelin,¹¹⁶⁹ the nymphs conveyed a very different image from Honthorst's armour-clad Minerva or wistful Diana.¹¹⁷⁰ The masque's aim was to present an ideal picture of the court; veils and flowers stood for chastity and beauty, even bare flesh – if the surviving designs are accurate – referred to pre-lapsarian innocence and virtuousness. Charlotte appeared sitting in a bower with the queen, dressed as Chloris, goddess of the flowers, along with the following 'court ladies':¹¹⁷¹

The Queen

Countess of Carlisle
Lady Strange
 Lady Anne Cavendish
 Countess of Newport
 Mistress Olivia Porter
 Lady Howard
 Mistress Anne Weston

Countess of Oxford
 Countess of Berkshire
 Countess of Carnarvon
 Lady Penelope Egerton
 Mistress Dorothy Savage
 Mistress Elizabeth Savage
 Mistress Sophia Cary

¹¹⁶⁶ *Note Books of John Finet*, ed. Loomie, 98.

¹¹⁶⁷ *Chloridia: Rites to Chloris and her Nymphs. Personated in a Masque, at Court. By the Queenes Majesty and her Ladies. At Shrue-tide. 1630* (London, n.d.), reproduced in Jonson, *Complete Masques*, 462-472; Thomas Heywood, 'The Earls of Derby and the Verse Writers and Poets of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Stanley Papers I* (CS 29, 1853), 52-3.

¹¹⁶⁸ Percy Simpson and C. F. Bell (eds.), *Designs by Inigo Jones For Masques & Plays at Court* (Oxford, 1924), plates XVII/99, XVIII/100; Steven Orgel and Roy Strong, *Inigo Jones: the theatre of the Stuart Court*, 2 vols. (London and Berkeley, 1973), ii. 419-51; see Appendix c-7.

¹¹⁶⁹ Allan H. Gilbert, *Symbolic Persons in the Masques of Ben Jonson* (Durham, N.C., 1948), 68, 170-5.

¹¹⁷⁰ C 26.10.1984 (31); C 8.7.1998 (91); Appendices c-3, c-4.

¹¹⁷¹ Jonson, *Complete Masques*, 508.

Next to the queen was her confidant, Lady Carlisle, and the countess of Oxford, widow of Lord Strange's first cousin, Henry de Vere.¹¹⁷² Anna Sophia Herbert, countess of Carnarvon, was Montgomery's daughter and thus also related to the Stanleys. On Charlotte's right sat Anne Cavendish, who married Holland's nephew, Robert, third earl of Warwick, in 1632. Next came Buckingham's nieces – Anne Boteler, countess of Newport, and her sister Olivia, wife of the First Gentleman of the Bedchamber, Endymion Porter – and Anne Weston, future wife of Basil Feilding, and daughter-in-law of Buckingham's sister, Lady Denbigh.¹¹⁷³ Since *Chloridia* was the only court masque Charlotte participated in, it is difficult to judge what her relations with her co-masquers were. There is no evidence of further contacts, except for a possible cooperation with Lucy Percy, countess of Carlisle, during the Civil War.¹¹⁷⁴

The royal masque was mainly a tool of monarchical propaganda, but the genre itself was not confined to Whitehall. Masques were performed at Harefield and Ludlow for Alice Spencer, dowager countess of Derby, at Dublin for the earl of Strafford, and at the Isle of Man.¹¹⁷⁵ Thomas Parr, vicar of Malew, reported that

The Right Honourable James Earl of Derby and his Right Honourable Countess, on the last day in Christmas invited all the Officers, Spiritual and Temporal, the Clergy, the Twenty-Four Keys of the Isle, the Coroners with all their wives, and likewise the best sort of inhabitants of the Isle, to a great Mask; where the Right Honourable Charles Lord Strange, with his train, the Right Honourable Ladies with their attendants, were most gloriously decked with silver and gold, brodered works, and most costly ornaments, bracelets on their hands, chains on their necks, jewels on their foreheads, ear-rings in their

¹¹⁷² *DNB*, s.v. 'Hay'; *G.E.C.*, *Peerage*, s.v., 'Oxford'.

¹¹⁷³ Erica Veevers, *Images of Love and Religion. Queen Henrietta-Maria and Court Entertainment* (Cambridge, 1989), 87. Lady Denbigh was also the mother-in-law of Marquis Hamilton, fellow masquer of Lord Strange, *DNB*, s.v. 'Hamilton'.

¹¹⁷⁴ Lady Carlisle advised to send a letter to Charlotte not to surrender the Isle of Man on any terms, *HMC*, 70 Pepys, 304-5.

¹¹⁷⁵ The first two were Milton's *Arcades* (1633) and *Comus* (1634), Paul Reyher, *Les masques anglais. Etude sur les ballets et la vie de cour en Angleterre 1512-1640* (Paris, 1909), 100-2, 205, 207-12; Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven and London, 1992), 230.

ears, and *crowns* on their heads. And after the mask to a feast, which was most *royal* and plentiful, with shooting of ordnance.¹¹⁷⁶

The production of a 'grand masque' at the Isle of Man appears to have been an annual event. It was a self-representation, as it was aimed at an audience of natives and royalist exiles. By resuscitating court entertainment, the earl and countess sought to reaffirm their allegiance to the Royalist cause. Secondly, the regal character of the festivities implicitly asserted sovereignty over the Isle of Man, or – at least – its autonomy from the English Parliament. Thirdly, a masque required the participation of a number of people and may have been used to create a sense of community among the local circle of 'courtiers'. Nonetheless, court entertainment differed from salon culture, as it failed to stimulate the creative thinking of each of the participants and remained highly hierarchical in nature.

B.) Honours Through Culture: The Salon Network

The term 'salon culture' applies, in the mid-seventeenth century, to the literary circles animated by the so-called *précieuses*. According to Myriam Maître, the derogatory use of *précieuse* ('une femme qui se donne du prix') was part of a reaction against the Regency of Anne of Austria and more generally against women in power at court.¹¹⁷⁷ Maître includes the queen herself among the *précieuses*, defined as 'un milieu sociologiquement mêlé, mais qui trouve son principe d'unité dans un souci de distinction qui masque l'équilibre des forces sur lequel repose la cour absolutiste'.¹¹⁷⁸

¹¹⁷⁶ Cited by J. G. Cumming, *The Great Stanley, or James, VIIth Earl of Derby and his Noble Countess, Charlotte de La Trémoille, in their Land of Man* (London, 1867), 104-5 [my italics]; Dickinson, 'Earl of Derby', 52.

¹¹⁷⁷ Myriam Maître, *Les précieuses. Naissance des femmes de lettres en France au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1999), 141, 151, 186. Lougee and Duchêne agree that the term was coined in the 1650s, although they see it mainly as a reaction against the imitators of the 'first generation', Carolyn Lougee, *Le Paradis des Femmes': Women, Salons and Social Stratification in Seventeenth-Century France* (Princeton, 1976), 7, 99; Roger Duchêne, *Les précieuses ou comment l'esprit vint aux femmes* (Paris, 2001), 262.

¹¹⁷⁸ Maître, *Les précieuses*, 213.

For the author, court and salon belonged to the same world, where social precedence ('souci de distinction') was but a mask for the balance of power ('l'équilibre des forces'). This interpretation of the court is bolstered by current historiography, and I would agree that it is equally valid for the salons, since both circles were frequented by the same people.¹¹⁷⁹ However, salon culture offered more to noblewomen in general, and Marie de La Tour in particular, than the court could. It shaped an elite of another kind, where high birth and *tabourets* were not the only things taken into consideration. The duchesse de La Trémoille was respected not only because of her noble origins, but also because of her literary acuity. It compensated to a certain degree for the fact that she could not climb the highest social echelons at court because of her religious outlook.¹¹⁸⁰ Somaize's *Dictionnaire des Précieuses* (1661) lists Marie de La Tour and her daughter:

Thessalonice et sa fille sont deux précieuses de grande naissance. L'une du temps de Valère [Voiture], l'autre est encore aujourd'hui une des agréables personnes de son siècle. Elle écrit galamment en prose, et elle a fait elle-même son portrait.¹¹⁸¹

The contention that there were two generations of *précieuses* – the first in accordance with the court, the second in opposition to the court – was made by Somaize in order to mock the second generation.¹¹⁸² In fact, Marie frequented the Hôtel de Rambouillet before the Fronde, and was in contact with Montpensier's circle at Champigny in the 1650s. Both 'salons' were steeped in court culture, yet remained open to self-scrutiny and criticism through literary observations and caricatures. Duchess Marie was a member of Rambouillet's circle before 1640, as the letters of consolation written on the occasion of her daughter's death show. Vincent Voiture wrote:

¹¹⁷⁹ See Maître's bio-bibliographic index, *Les précieuses*, 655-726.

¹¹⁸⁰ Montpensier considered Marie de La Tour 'une des plus illustres dames de ce siècle; mais la mauvaise fortune de sa maison et ses indispositions sont causes que tout le monde n'a pas le bonheur de la connoître', Montpensier, *Mémoires*, i. chapitre 19, <<http://www.penelope.uchicago.edu/mlle/chapitre19/chap19.html>>, accessed Oct. 2003.

¹¹⁸¹ Charles Livet (ed.), *Dictionnaire des précieuses par le sieur de Somaize*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1856), i. 231. Somaize also indicates that Thessalonice invented the expression 'avoir l'abord peu penchant', meaning 'être de difficile abord', Duchêne, *Les précieuses*, 441, 523.

¹¹⁸² It was taken seriously by his editor, Livet, *Dictionnaire des précieuses*, vol. i. p. xxx, xxxii.

Je n'en connois pas une icy [de vos amies] qui ne plaigne vostre perte comme si c'estoit la sienne, et les malheurs publics ne sont pas pleurés davantage que le vostre l'a esté.¹¹⁸³

Julie d'Angennes, daughter of the marquise de Rambouillet, indicated that 'Mme de Clermont, Mesdemoiselles ses filles, ma mère, et Melle Paulet n'ont osé prendre la hardiesse de vous escrire; mais je vous assure que personne ne vous sauroit plaindre plus qu'elles'.¹¹⁸⁴

Autographs and Emblems

Julie d'Angennes, her mother, and her future husband, the duc de Montausier, also offered their painted emblems to the duchess.¹¹⁸⁵ The three of them contributed in 1641 to Marie's collection of autographs (name, date and *mot d'esprit*), an extraordinary source regarding the composition of Marie de La Tour's social circle. Angélique de Paulet, Voiture, Jean Chapelain, and Valentin Conrart offered their autographs, as did the marquise de Sablé and the marquise de Sévigné.¹¹⁸⁶ Many mottoes were self-ironical, such as the duc de Longueville's 'Mauvaise herbe croit toujours', or Conrart's 'Je ne sais sur quel pied danser'.¹¹⁸⁷ By contrast, the *dévises* were formal and their mottoes pompous. They were not self-reflections, but outward presentations, conforming to the 'court style' identified above, and used in tournaments, carousels, and royal weddings.¹¹⁸⁸ According to Nicholl, the fashion for the emblem-book reached its highest expression in the masque.¹¹⁸⁹ Marie de La Tour's own *Recueil de devises*

¹¹⁸³ 1AP 433, ltr. 62. Voiture was in contact with the duc de La Trémoille, who complimented him on his latest work and promised to help his nephew, Henri to Voiture, 1648, 1AP 397/II/172.

¹¹⁸⁴ 1AP 433, ltr. 13. A letter signed 'De Clermont, Mme la connestable de Montmorancy' was sent later, 1AP 433, ltr. 22.

¹¹⁸⁵ *Recueil de devises données à Marie de La Tour*, ARS, MS 5217, planches 9, 10, 11.

¹¹⁸⁶ The collection has been discovered by Philippe Godet, 'L'Album de Marie de La Tour', *Revue de Champagne et Brie* 5 (1893), 151-8; see Appendix c-8.

¹¹⁸⁷ Godet, 'L'Album de Marie de La Tour', 153, 155.

¹¹⁸⁸ For instance: Gissey, *Les emblesmes et devises du Roy, des princes et seigneurs qui l'accompagnèrent en la cavalcade royale et course de bagues que Sa Majesté fit au Palais Cardinal* (Paris, 1656).

¹¹⁸⁹ Allardyce Nicholl, *Stuart Masques and the Renaissance Stage* (London, 1937), 154.

included, not surprisingly, the queen regent's emblem, with the motto 'Superstes Et Praevia Soli', crowned by her heraldic bearings.¹¹⁹⁰ It was preceded by the emblems of the princesse de Condé, her daughter-in-law (the duchesse d'Enghien), and her daughter (the duchesse de Longueville).¹¹⁹¹ Duchess Marie entertained a close relationship with Charlotte de Montmorency, princesse de Condé, notwithstanding her alleged 'aversion et haine contre nôtre religion'.¹¹⁹² According to Katia Béguin, the duchess and her son Tarente were frequent visitors of the Hôtel de Condé.¹¹⁹³ Like the comtesse de La Suze, a member of the same social circle, Marie de La Tour was considered both a *précieuse* and a courtier:

Aux Précieuses de la Cour,
A Scudéry, Vandy, La Tour,
A la comtesse de La Suze,
Qu'on nomme la dixième Muse.¹¹⁹⁴

Pastorals

Mademoiselle de Scudéry's novels and Honoré d'Urfé's *Astrée*, a multivolume pastoral novel published between 1607 and 1627, inspired sumptuous tapestries and court masques, as well as Arcadian role-plays at Thouars or Champigny.¹¹⁹⁵ In April 1627, Marie established a set of rules entitled *Loix establies dans la bergerie de la Nimphe d'Aquitaine pour estre inviolablement observés par les bergers et bergeres, fait au*

¹¹⁹⁰ ARS, MS 5217, planche 5.

¹¹⁹¹ ARS, MS 5217, planche 1, 2, 3. Claire-Clémence de Maillé-Brézé, duchesse d'Enghien, offered her autograph, dated 1641, with the following motto: 'Ce qui m'entre par une oreille me sort par l'autre', Godet, 'L'Album de Marie de La Tour', 156.

¹¹⁹² Pineau to Rivet, 9 Dec. 1650, UBL, BPL 286/IV/134.

¹¹⁹³ Béguin, *Condé*, 69. Tallemant des Réaux admitted that he received much of his information about the Princess from the duchesse de La Trémoille, Tallemant, *Historiettes*, i. 67-74, 762.

¹¹⁹⁴ *La Relation divertissante d'un voyage fait en Provence, envoyé à la duchesse de Chaulnes-Villeroy* (1667), cited by Maître, *Les précieuses*, 176, 685.

¹¹⁹⁵ Nicholl, *Stuart Masques*, 95-6; Veevers, *Images of Love*, 39-41, 49-50. In 1653 Segrain published *Athys, poème pastoral dédié à S.A.R. Mademoiselle*, with mini-portraits of twenty-seven nymphs including Madame de Rambouillet, Jacqueline Plantié, *La mode du portrait littéraire en France, 1641-1681* (Paris, 1994), 200-2. In 1655 the princesse de Tarente played a shepherdess in a masque at the Orange court, Carola Oman, *The Winter Queen, Elizabeth of Bohemia* (London, 2000, first ed. 1938), 423-4.

hameau de la bergere Argenis.¹¹⁹⁶ In the social order dreamed up at Thouars, the 'Nymphé d'Aquitaine' ruled with a 'council' of three shepherds or shepherdesses, elected each month by a general assembly ('chapitre general') of at least six people. New members were co-opted with the approval of the whole community, and fines were fixed for malicious gossip about fellow shepherd(esse)s, for non-attendance of the 'chapitre', and for revealing the secret deliberations of the 'bergerie' to outsiders. The imposition of secrecy and the usage of 'noms de bergerie' underline the strong sense of community. The rules of the society over which Henrietta Maria presided in the seven-hour play *The Shepherds' Paradise* were equally binding and emphasised similar 'communal' virtues, such as loyalty and sisterhood.¹¹⁹⁷ The autocratic ideal was, however, much more pronounced in Caroline masques than in the Thouars pastoral. The main theme of Henrietta Maria's masques was conjugal love and domestic happiness, eventually transferred to the political world.¹¹⁹⁸ This was very different from the neo-platonic discourse of the *précieuses*.¹¹⁹⁹ The educational tract found among Marie de La Tour's papers was equally opposed to marriage for marriage's sake:

ce n'est pas le manque d'un mari qui rend tant de filles ennuyées de leur vie & envieuses de celle d'autrui. C'est la pauvreté et la stérilité de leur esprit où elles ne trouvent rien pour se satisfaire, imbecilles qu'elles sont.¹²⁰⁰

Portraiture

Introspection and communication were the twin values promoted by salon sociability. In her auto-portrait the princesse de Tarente affirmed that 'une des choses qui me touche le

¹¹⁹⁶ 1AP 431/96. The grotto built at Thouars might have been used for similar enactments, but was constructed at a later date, 1AP 1062.

¹¹⁹⁷ Veevers, *Images of Love*, 43.

¹¹⁹⁸ Veevers, *Images of Love*, 45-6, 127-8, 150.

¹¹⁹⁹ Morlet-Chantalat, *La Clélie*, 321-4, 339-41; Joan DeJean (ed.), *Anne-Marie-Louise d'Orléans, Duchesse de Montpensier. Against Marriage. The Correspondence of La Grande Mademoiselle* (Chicago, 2002), 12; Mark Bannister, *Privileged Mortals, the French Heroic Novel 1630-1660* (Oxford, 1983), 89.

¹²⁰⁰ *Sur l'éducation d'une princesse*, Geldersarchief 0613/589, f° 140.

plus est une conversation jolie et spirituelle'.¹²⁰¹ Originally concerned with literature, conversations soon turned to historical, philosophical and scientific reflections.¹²⁰² Gradually the discussions became more political, and by the eighteenth century salons constituted forums for intellectual and political debates.¹²⁰³ Women continued to play a leading role in salons because they were perceived to be situated within the private realm. As such a new form of public life developed within (and precisely because it was within) the private sphere.¹²⁰⁴ As Habermas has suggested, 'before the public sphere explicitly assumed political functions in the tension-charged field of state-society relations, the subjectivity originating in the intimate sphere of the conjugal family created, so to speak, its own public'. Subjectivity also originated in small literary circles, and the fashion of auto-portraits provided a particularly fertile 'training-ground for a critical public reflection (self-scrutiny)'.¹²⁰⁵ According to Jacqueline Plantié, the literary fashion of self-portraits was launched at Champigny by the princesse de Tarente and Mademoiselle de La Trémoille.¹²⁰⁶ Both women were frequent guests of the Grande Mademoiselle,¹²⁰⁷ and showed their host

leurs portraits qu'elles avoient fait faire en Hollande. Je n'en avois jamais vu; je trouvai cette manière d'écrire fort galante, et je fis le mien. [Madame] de La Trémouille m'envoya le sien de Thouars.¹²⁰⁸

The prince de Tarente and his daughter, Charlotte-Amélie, then aged five, also contributed their portraits.¹²⁰⁹ Plantié has identified a particular La Trémoille style,

¹²⁰¹ 'Portrait de Mme la Princesse de Tarente', 110.

¹²⁰² *Sur l'éducation d'une princesse* included chapters on the learning of philosophy, physics, and history, Geldersarchief 0613/589.

¹²⁰³ 'Centres of criticism – literary at first, then also political', Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, 32.

¹²⁰⁴ Dena Goodman, 'Public Sphere and Private Life: Toward a Synthesis of Current Historiographical Approaches to the Old Regime', *History and Theory* 31/1 (1992), 14, 18.

¹²⁰⁵ Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, 29.

¹²⁰⁶ Plantié, *La mode du portrait*, 187-9.

¹²⁰⁷ On 19 Nov. 1657 a series of poems were composed 'dans l'attente de voir Mme de Tarente'. Marie de La Trémoille contributed to another collection of poems lamenting Madame de Montglas's departure, ARS, MS 05418 Recueil Conrart IX/1219, 1229.

¹²⁰⁸ Montpensier, *Mémoires*, i. chapitre 19,

<<http://www.penelope.uchicago.edu/mlle/chapitre19/chap19.html>>, accessed Oct. 2003. The portraits were published by Montpensier, *Divers portraits* (1659); reproduced in *Portraits littéraires*, ed. Bouyer, 107-22.

marked by 'le goût de l'introspection, de la vie profonde, le don de placer ombres et lumières', which the historian links to their Protestant faith.¹²¹⁰ Although Marie de La Tour did not participate in the literary sessions held at Champigny, she professed a great interest in the papers produced by Montpensier's circle.¹²¹¹ After her death, Madame de Sévigné found among her personal belongings 'mille vers [et] des infinités de portraits, entre autres celui que Mme de La Fayette fit de moi sous le nom d'un inconnu'.¹²¹² Some of these papers, including several unedited portraits, appear to have been inherited by Charlotte-Amélie, and are now held by the Geldersarchief in the Netherlands.¹²¹³ They include the negative portrait of the archetypical 'coquette',¹²¹⁴ and the *Portrait ou pour mieux dire original que Mme la Princesse D'Hombourg a fait d'elle même et qu'elle a obligé la Jaucourt a mettre en rimes sur peine d'avoir le fouët*, which is a pure caricature ('un teint de saffran, un front a triple étage'). Critique and self-critique can be found in most portraits. By their nature they were at once very private, yet oriented towards an audience. They can, in this respect, be related to letter writing, through which, as Habermas put it, 'the individual unfolded himself in his subjectivity'.¹²¹⁵ Marie de La Tour was an assiduous letter-writer, and combined the public and the private person to perfection. This is illustrated by the alcoves installed at Thouars, an architectural detail copied from the Hôtel de Rambouillet.¹²¹⁶ The alcove of her own *garderobe* was separated from the main room by 'deux rideaux de serge jaune'

¹²⁰⁹ 'Portrait de M. le Prince de Tarente', *Portraits littéraires*, 101-6; Plantié, *La mode du portrait*, 210-1. See Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 64-5.

¹²¹⁰ Plantié, *La mode du portrait*, 354-5, 415-6. Marie de La Trémoille for instance wrote: 'J'ai trop peu de dévotion, et je reconnois fort bien que je ne fais pas mon capital du service de Dieu, et que je ne prie pas avec assez de soin, 'Portrait de Mme la Duchesse de La Trémoille', 121.

¹²¹¹ In August 1661 she received three portraits written by Urbain Chevreau, published in his *Oeuvres meslées*, Plantié, *La mode du portrait*, 712.

¹²¹² Sévigné to Mme de Grignan, 1 Dec. 1675, *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné*, v. 257.

¹²¹³ Geldersarchief 0613/589.

¹²¹⁴ *Sur l'éducation d'une princesse*, chapter 14.

¹²¹⁵ Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, 48-9.

¹²¹⁶ Peter Thornton, *Seventeenth Century Interior Decoration in England, France and Holland* (New Haven, 1978), 9-10.

and a 'balustre', pointing towards an increased privatisation of life.¹²¹⁷ As we have pointed out in Chapter III, the 'balustre' was an outward sign of princely rank. Marie de La Tour thus combined salon and status mentalities, and was in herself 'a bridge between the remains of a collapsing form of publicity (the courtly one) and the precursor of a new one (the bourgeois public sphere)'.¹²¹⁸ She did not have to choose between salon and court networks, as most of the *précieuses* belonged to both. Even more significant than court and salon networks, in terms of affection and practical utility, were kinship ties, defined as 'horizontal' lines of support founded on marriage alliances.

C.) Trans-national Marriage Alliances

This final section seeks to establish if the La Trémoille followed a well-defined matrimonial policy, based on the conscious decision to marry only into families that already possessed sovereign status in order to bolster their own claim to a princely status. Alternative marriage alliances and the reasons why were they discarded will be discussed, as they highlight the motivations underlying the unions that were actually contracted.

1.) Sovereign Status *par alliance*

Bouillon (Sedan)

The marriage between Henri de La Trémoille and Marie de La Tour was the cornerstone of the alliance between the two families. Their mothers, both of the sovereign House of Orange, were sisters, and their paternal grandmothers were both daughters of the Connétable de Montmorency. The 'parallel cousin' marriage of 1619 was not as

¹²¹⁷ 1AP 1063; Marie to Chamdor, 12 Aug. 1642, 1AP 431/100.

¹²¹⁸ Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, 30.

restrictive as structural anthropology would have it, but allowed for further alliances between the two lineages.¹²¹⁹ In 1695, Marie-Armande-Victoire de La Trémoille married her great-uncle, Emmanuel-Théodose de La Tour, duc de Bouillon, and their daughter, Marie-Hortense-Victoire de La Tour, married her cousin, Charles-Armand-René, duc de La Trémoille, in 1725. According to Bourdieu, whose Kabylia society is even more patriarchal than seventeenth-century French nobility, a mother, by marrying her daughter into her own lineage, tends to strengthen her own position and reduce potential competition in the domestic unit.¹²²⁰ Charlotte-Brabantine and Elisabeth of Nassau had a very close relationship, as their letters attest, and strengthened their position mutually by the marriage of their children, which had been planned practically since their birth.¹²²¹

The royal *dispense de parenté* granted to Henri de La Trémoille and Marie La Tour stated that Henri, 'étant chef de deux anciennes et illustres maisons, La Trémoille et Laval', had to marry somebody of equally grand standing. Since he preferred a Protestant and rejected a 'foreign alliance', Marie was the only choice.¹²²² The Bouillon were thus not perceived as 'foreigners', although they exercised sovereignty over the neighbouring principality of Sedan. As sovereign rulers they were prestigious allies, and when their title of *prince étranger* was recognised by the king in 1647, the emphasis was put on 'prince', not on 'étranger'. Hence Saint-Simon's allegation that Duchess

¹²¹⁹ For a critical appreciation of structuralism, see Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Oxford, 1990); David Warren Sabean, *Kinship in Neckarhausen, 1700-1840* (Cambridge, 1998).

¹²²⁰ Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 196.

¹²²¹ The duchesse de Bouillon included a letter by her six-year old daughter addressed to 'son petit mary, mon cher fils, je le nomme comme cella par vostre permission', Elisabeth of Nassau to Charlotte-Brabantine, 29 May 1606, 1AP 333/63.

¹²²² *LT5s*, iv. 79-81.

Marie, 'qui voyait MM de Bouillon et Turenne ses frères devenus Princes, essaya de faire Prince aussi son mari'.¹²²³

Derby (Isle of Man)

Saint-Simon also noted that Charlotte de La Trémoille's husband, James Stanley, was a sovereign prince ('souverain de l'isle de Man').¹²²⁴ In the fifteenth century, the Isle of Man had been politically autonomous from Scotland and England, and – as Tim Thornton has pointed out – the Stanleys used the title 'Lord of Man and the Isles' well into the sixteenth century, suggesting that they aspired to resurrect from Man the old unity of the lordship or even kingdom of Man and the Isles.¹²²⁵ The latest reference to their sovereign status in English was Roger Codrington's elegy of Alice, countess of Derby, as 'Queene in the Isle of Man'.¹²²⁶

Within Lancashire the earls of Derby were 'esteemed by most about them with little lesse respect than kings', as a Civil War pamphlet remarked.¹²²⁷ This the Stanleys wanted to demonstrate when Charlotte-Brabantine visited her daughter in September 1630. She was received in Chester in the manner of a *joyeuse entrée* by

all the gentry of Cheshier, Flintshier and Denbighshier ... being at least 600 men; all the gentlemen of the artelery yard ... met her *in a very statelly manner*, all with great white and blew fithers, and went before her chariot to the bishop's pallas, and making a yard, let her threw the midest, and then gave her three volleys of shot, and so returned to their yard; also the maior and

¹²²³ Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, ed. Coirault, ii. 704.

¹²²⁴ Saint-Simon, 'Thouars', 209. This information might stem from *L'Etat de la France* (1678), i. 547: 'Jaque Stanley, comte d'Arby, prince souverain de l'Isle de Man'. It is no longer mentioned by *L'Etat de la France* (1692), 838.

¹²²⁵ Tim Thornton, 'Scotland and the Isle of Man, c.1400-1625: Noble Power and Royal Presumption in the Northern Irish Sea Province', *The Scottish Historical Review* 203 (1998), 1-30, here 15, 17.

¹²²⁶ HMC, Hasting Papers iv. 341. According to William Blundell, in the Manx tradition the countess of Derby is referred to as 'Queen', and the customs specified that 'all y^e goats of felons' goods in y^e island do belong to the queen', Harrison, *William Blundell*, 44.

¹²²⁷ William Beamont (ed.), *A Discourse of the Warr in Lancashire* (CS 62, 1864), 63.

aldermen in their best gowns and aparel were on a stage in the Eastgate Street to entertagn her.¹²²⁸

This reception may have been publicised in France, but the earl of Derby remained relatively unknown at the French court, and his status of little consequence. On the other hand, the name of La Trémoille was well recognised in England. The Marchioness of Dorchester was extolled by the following verse:

She is a princess and a bride ...
She's Derby's royal blood, Derby le Gran
She of the Princely Orange is a branch;
Imp'd on the Trimouillan stem of France¹²²⁹

Hesse-Cassel

Amalia of Hesse-Cassel married Tarente in 1648 and made her *entrée* into Thouars in a 'char de triomphe'. Three days of festivities ('course de bagues de grand prix, comédies après le souper et bal ensuite') were concluded by a massive firework display.¹²³⁰ There is no evidence of a reception on this scale for either Charlotte-Brabantine or Marie de La Tour. According to Tarente himself,

Mes parents avaient pensé à me faire épouse une Princesse de Hesse-Cassel. L'étroite alliance qui étoit entre la France et Mme la Landgrave, sa mere, nous faisoient [sic] espérer que ce mariage nous seroit plus avantageux que tout autre, où j'aurois trouvé plus de biens et moins de grandeur.¹²³¹

For Montpensier, courtly privileges were an indirect consequence of Tarente's marriage:

comme il a épousé une fille de M. le landgrave de Hesse, et que ce mariage a fait qu'il a été longtemps en Allemagne, où il a été traité comme les autres princes, ... n'a pas cru diminuer en venant en son pays, où la maison de La Trémoille a toujours tenu des premiers rangs entre les plus considérables du royaume.¹²³²

¹²²⁸ Raines, 'Memoirs', p. xxxv [my italics].

¹²²⁹ James Howell, 'An Epithalamium upon the nuptials of the princely pair, Henry Lo. Marquis of Dorchester, and the Lady Katherine, daughter of the late heroik Earl of Derby, in a dialog 'twixt Philemon and Sylvius' (1663), *Stanley Papers* I, ed. Thomas Heywood, 57-8.

¹²³⁰ Parish register note by François Guillet, curé de Saint-Laon, quoted by Imbert, *Histoire de Thouars*, 304.

¹²³¹ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 55.

¹²³² Montpensier, *Mémoires*, i. chapitre 12,

<<http://www.penelope.uchicago.edu/mlle/chapitre12/chap12.html>>, accessed Oct. 2003.

Madame de Motteville put it more bluntly:

il estoit difficile de laisser debout une personne si hautement et si prochainement apparentée et fille d'une princesse si utile et fidèle à la France.¹²³³

The *tabouret*, granted in 1649, appears thus directly linked to Amalia's high birth and to the wartime alliance of her mother with France, an association often repeated by Saint-Simon.¹²³⁴ At any rate, the alliance with Hesse-Cassel made it easier for the king to justify the *brevet* granted in the aftermath of the La Trémoille's participation in the first Fronde.

Saxony-Weimar

The La Trémoille's rank at court was confirmed by the alliance Tarente's sister entered into in 1662 with Bernard of Saxony-Weimar, nephew and namesake of the General who fought on the side of France during the Thirty Years War.¹²³⁵ In the marriage contract, the bridegroom is referred to as 'tres haut tres puissant et tres excellent prince Monseigneur Bernard deuxiesme par la grace de Dieu Duc de Saxe, Juliers, Cleves, Mons &c.'. ¹²³⁶ Though a younger son of the duke of Saxony-Weimar, Bernard used his father's title, as was the custom among princes of the Empire, with the addition 'in Jena' to indicate the parcel of semi-sovereign territory he had inherited. Marie de La Trémoille's *devise* proudly displayed princely insignia,¹²³⁷ and she was treated at the French court with the same respect as a princess. Her niece, Charlotte-Amélie, believed that

Si le tabouret ne luy avoit pas si fort tenu au coeur, je crois qu'elle auroit épousé M. le comte de Roye, car le grand bien et la bonne maison du cavalier,

¹²³³ Motteville, *Mémoires*, 65, 73.

¹²³⁴ Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, ed. Coirault, ii. 704 and iii. 52.; id., 'Thouars', 206.

¹²³⁵ AN, KK 599/283-304; *Chartrier de Thouars*, ed. La Trémoille, 159; Detlev Schwennicke, *Europäische Stammtafeln*. Neue Folge, 18 vols. (Berlin, 1980-98), i. 44.

¹²³⁶ ThHStAW, Urkunden 1662 June 9, Bl.1r-9r.

¹²³⁷ ARS, MS 5217, planche 39.

jointe à la forte inclination qu'il y avoit entre eux, avoit fait aller les choses bien loin, & d'autant plus que son mérite personnel le faisoit fort distinguer.¹²³⁸

2.) Nonalliances

The four marriages analysed above are cases of hypergamy. However, the pursuit of higher social rank *par alliance* might have prevented other marriages from taking place. Were there any other reasons for such 'nonalliances'? Alexandre Morus commented on the union with Saxony-Weimar: 'Loué soit Dieu, Madame, qui a fait enfin ce que plusieurs tenoient impossible à cause de vostre rang et vostre religion'.¹²³⁹ This section will investigate the role played by religion, the issue of factional balance, and the influence of the monarchy on the La Trémoille's matrimonial strategies.

La Meilleraye

According to Charlotte-Amélie, Duchess Marie planned to marry her daughter to the Catholic Armand de La Meilleraye, although she knew that this would result in her daughter's conversion. Here, material considerations ('pensant au beau poste où sa fille seroit et à mille autres considérations mondaines desquelles elle se chatouillait elle-même') appear to have outweighed any religious reservations. Divine punishment, in the form of a life threatening disease, led the duchess to break off all negotiations.¹²⁴⁰ Alternatively, it is feasible that La Meilleraye broke the engagement because Mazarin had made him an offer he could not refuse.¹²⁴¹ The cardinal had, for years, kept negotiations with La Meilleraye open, while he discussed other potential marriage

¹²³⁸ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 40. Frederic-Charles, comte de Roye, was the son of Marie de La Tour's sister Julienne-Catherine. He married in 1656 his cousin Elisabeth de Durfort, and was later made an Irish peer, G.E.C., *Peerage*, s.v. 'Lifford'.

¹²³⁹ Morus to Marie, 12/22 May 1662, *BSHPF* 21 (1872), 282.

¹²⁴⁰ Charlotte-Amélie, *Mémoires*, 41-2.

¹²⁴¹ Georges Livet, *Le duc de Mazarin, gouverneur d'Alsace 1661-1713* (Strasbourg, 1954), 14-6.

partners for his niece Hortense.¹²⁴² The La Trémoille had equally been in contact with La Meilleraye for years, at least since the Marshall assisted, as godfather, at the baptism of Armand-Jean de La Trémoille in 1641.¹²⁴³ As *lieutenant-général* of Brittany, La Meilleraye cooperated with the duke at the Breton Estates, sharing his opposition to Rohan. In October 1647, Pineau reported that the Marshall preferred an 'illustre alliance' with Mademoiselle de La Trémoille for his only son rather than one of Mazarin's nieces.¹²⁴⁴ Rumours of an engagement were spread by the *gazettes*, and reached Lady Derby, who judged: 'sy cela est [vrai] et que vous les trouviés à propos je ne suis point de doute que ce ne soit pour son bonheur et celui de la maison'.¹²⁴⁵ At this point Mazarin might have stepped in to prevent an alliance between two of the most powerful families of Poitou. Ten years later, Duchess Marie reopened negotiations with La Meilleraye. This might have accelerated Mazarin's decision to seal his niece's marriage by offering a 'record' dowry, including the title of duc de Mazarin and the governorship of Alsace.¹²⁴⁶ The La Trémoille could not compete with the potentially wealthiest heiress in France, and withdrew their proposal. Whether divine punishment was used as pretext to save face or provided an explanation for a psychosomatic illness caused by religious remorse can only be left to speculation.¹²⁴⁷

¹²⁴² Robert Oresko, 'The Marriages of the Nieces of Cardinal Mazarin. Public Policy and Private Strategy in seventeenth century Europe', *Frankreich im Europäischen Staatensystem der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. R. Babel (Sigmaringen, 1995), 141.

¹²⁴³ Paris-Jallobert, *Journal historique*, 120.

¹²⁴⁴ Pineau to Rivet, 18 Oct. 1647, UBL, BPL 286/III/159.

¹²⁴⁵ Charlotte to Marie, 27 Jan. 1650, 1AP 384/92.

¹²⁴⁶ Bonney, 'Cardinal Mazarin', 831. According to Robert Oresko, Mazarin realised that he was dying; he rapidly concluded the marriage and drew up his testament days before his death, Oresko, 'The Nieces of Cardinal Mazarin', 139-141.

¹²⁴⁷ The religious factor may have the prime motivation for the rejection of an alliance between Charlotte de La Trémoille and Henri, son of the duc de Roannez, in 1622, Elisabeth of Nassau to Charlotte-Brabantine, 9 June 1622, 1AP 335/346.

International nonalliances

Before Charlotte was introduced to the son of the earl of Derby, she hoped to find a marriage partner in France, and rejected the German candidates (Hesse-Cassel and Saxony-Anhalt) proposed by the queen of Bohemia.¹²⁴⁸ After the Restoration, she was hoping to draw another member of the La Trémoille family to England, this time in alliance with the king himself.¹²⁴⁹ Charles II was, however, not the only candidate. Lady Derby also proposed the duke of Richmond for her niece: 'la 4^e personne d'Angleterre, parent du Roy, a du bien; vous l'avez veu en France devent la mort de son cousin'. The drawback was that he already had a daughter from his first marriage.¹²⁵⁰ Charlotte was even more cautious about the eldest son of the duke of Limbourg:

J'étois l'autre jour chez la Reyne de Boheme qui me dit que l'on luy arivoit l'enné du duc de Lennebourg [Limbourg] estoit allé en France avec un grand equipage et qu'il avoit desen de faire ces adresse a Melle vostre fille. Elle le dit un grand party, mais qu'il sait maryé a sa cousine germaine qui refuse de demeurer avec luy et comme cela les teologiens l'asseurent qu'il se peut demarier mais je n'aprouve pas ce prosedé.¹²⁵¹

Moral apprehensions and fear of judicial complications may thus have also played a part in the rejection of some alliances.

French Protestant nonalliances

There were plans to resolve the traditional rivalry among Protestant grandees through matrimonial alliances. Benjamin de Soubise, the brother of the duc de Rohan, was the only option Elisabeth of Nassau saw for her niece, Charlotte de La Trémoille, in France.

¹²⁴⁸ Elisabeth of Nassau to Charlotte-Brabantine, 18 Mar. 1619, 1AP 335/238.

¹²⁴⁹ See Chapter V.

¹²⁵⁰ Charlotte to Marie, 21 June 1661, 1AP 385/61. Charles Stuart had succeeded to the title of his cousin (Esmé Stuart) in September 1660; his first wife, Elizabeth Rogers, had died on 21 April 1661, G.E.C., *Peerage*, s.v. 'Lennox'.

¹²⁵¹ Charlotte to Marie, 9 Sept. 1661, 1AP 385/68. The suitor in question was not the eldest, but the youngest son of Hermann Otto I, count of Limbourg and Bronckhorst. Moritz, count of Limbourg 'in Styrum', officially married his first cousin, Maria Bernhardina, on 17 Mar. 1662, Schwennicke, *Europäische Stammtafeln*, xviii. Tafel 5.

Je ne voy rien en France propre pour elle ... rien de mieux que Monsieur de Soubise, mais il luy faudroit des biens faits du Roy et que Monsieur son frère luy donna le gouvernement de St-Jan.¹²⁵²

Several years later, Soubise's niece, Marguerite de Rohan was considered a potential bride for Turenne. Although the duchesse de La Trémoille had a 'grande aversion' to this union,¹²⁵³ she admitted that 'si mon frère s'intéresse encore à Melle de Rohan, ses chances paraissent bonnes'.¹²⁵⁴ After her father's death in 1638, which left her the sole heiress, Marguerite was approached by the La Trémoille themselves. Tarente reports in his memoirs:

mon père vouloit me faire épouser Melle de Rohan, unique héritière du dernier Duc de ce nom. C'étoit sans contredit le plus grand parti qu'il y eût en France, mais j'étois trop attaché à Melle d'Orange, pour prendre d'autres engagements.¹²⁵⁵

According to Pineau, it was Marguerite who rejected Tarente's offer because of his bad health, 'altérée par excez et par intempérance'.¹²⁵⁶ Personal incompatibility was thus a factor that could prevail over potential familial and confessional advantages. There is no sign of a direct intervention by the monarch, as in 1594 when Henri IV opposed a union between Claude de La Trémoille and the daughter of the Protestant duc de Lesdiguières.¹²⁵⁷ At Court, the news that Mademoiselle de Rohan chose Henri Chabot, against her mother's will, was, however, greeted with relief:

on n'estoit pas fasché que cette glorieuse se mesalliait, parce que, comme a de grandes terres en Bretagne, on craignoit qu'elle ne rendist la maison de la Trimouille trop puissante; car le prince de Talmond, aujourd'huy le prince de Tarente, l'avoit recherchée.¹²⁵⁸

In 1620 François de Béthune, comte d'Orval, was courting Charlotte de La Trémoille. He was the son of the former minister, the duc de Sully, and had held since 1617 the

¹²⁵² Elisabeth of Nassau to Charlotte-Brabantine, 18 Mar. 1619, 1AP 335/238.

¹²⁵³ Turenne to Elisabeth of Nassau, 1 Sept. 1630, *Lettres*, ed. Huart, 137.

¹²⁵⁴ Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 14 June 1633, AN, 273 AP 180.

¹²⁵⁵ Tarente, *Mémoires*, 20.

¹²⁵⁶ Pineau to Rivet, 26 Apr. 1647, UBL, BPL 286/III/122.

¹²⁵⁷ Imbert, *Histoire de Thouars*, 259.

¹²⁵⁸ Tallemant, *Historiettes*, i. 637.

offices of *Grand Voyer* of Paris and *Surintendant des Bâtiments*.¹²⁵⁹ There is no evidence suggesting that either Louis XIII or the queen mother forestalled this Protestant union, and the Crown did nothing to oppose other Protestant alliances, such as Orval's marriage to Jacqueline Nompars de Caumont in 1621, or his brother's to Françoise de Créquy, granddaughter of the duc de Lesdiguières. The La Trémoille might have rejected Orval because, as Marie wrote to her mother, 'il vit en l'assemblée tousjours de mesme façon au blasme de tous les gens de bien'.¹²⁶⁰

Personal qualities and compatibilities were only taken into consideration if the potential marriage partner was of comparable social standing and wealth. Hypergamies were always welcome (though sometimes regretted afterwards as in the case of Katherine Stanley, Marchioness of Dorchester); hypogamies were always deplored by the rest of the family and branded as *mésalliances*.

3.) Misalliances

Marriage was one of the major opportunities to preserve and enhance the authority conferred by strong integration and the prestige stemming from an extensive network of kin. A misalliance, on the other hand, stood to diminish these. This explains the strong reactions it provoked.

Maria Mussi

Concubines and illegitimate offspring were socially tolerated unless they stepped outside their designated roles and laid claim to lawful titles, estates and pensions. Frédéric de La Trémoille, comte de Laval, a notorious gambler and duellist, bequeathed

¹²⁵⁹ Pannier, *L'Eglise réformée 1610-1621*, 522.

¹²⁶⁰ Marie to Charlotte-Brabantine, 14 Mar. 1620, 1AP 431/30.

some property to his two 'spouses' and their children.¹²⁶¹ The testamentary executor, Laval's half-brother Hanibal de La Trémoille, was requested by the duke and duchess to contest these clauses.¹²⁶² Maria Mussi from Venice claimed a pension of 60,000 *livres* for her daughter and a reimbursement of the sums she had paid on Laval's behalf. The duke was confident that if the case went to court, Mussi did not stand a chance.¹²⁶³ The duchess suggested she should be paid 'pour la faire taire et retirer la pièce qu'elle a entre les mains'.¹²⁶⁴ Mussi appears to have refused any settlement, since two rulings were pronounced against her, one by the *grande chambre* 'par lequel la Vénitienne est déboutée quand à présent de la provision qu'elle demandoit' and a second one by the *chambre de l'edit*, which forbade her to take the title of widow and to call her daughter legitimate.¹²⁶⁵

Ann Orp

Laval's first mistress, and the mother of two of his children, Ann Orp, was far more dangerous, because she had the support of Queen Henrietta Maria.¹²⁶⁶ She claimed that Laval had given her 'la calité de sa femme', and used his name, introducing their children as 'lord et lady, [qualités] que l'on ne donne qu'o enfens de conte'.¹²⁶⁷ In 1642, Duke Henri hoped that the queen would cease to support Orp, considering the services his brother-in-law, Lord Strange, was rendering to the Crown, for it was unacceptable that

¹²⁶¹ Tallemant, *Historiettes*, ii. 1169.

¹²⁶² Marie to Hanibal, 25 Oct. 1642, 1AP 430/78. Hanibal, vicomte de Marsilly, was of illegitimate descent, but his unassuming character led to a gradual acceptance and integration into the family, where he was treated with affection and respect, Courtault, *Un témoin de la Fronde*, 4-6.

¹²⁶³ Henri to Hanibal, 10 Oct. 1642, 1AP 393/149.

¹²⁶⁴ Marie to Hanibal, 8 Nov. 1642, 1AP 430/79.

¹²⁶⁵ Rulings dated 4 Sept. 1657 and 27 Aug. 1658, '1661 Mémoire', 213-4.

¹²⁶⁶ Her brother was married to the queen's wetnurse, Charlotte to Marie 7 June 1637, 1AP 384/65.

¹²⁶⁷ Charlotte to Marie 7 June 1637, 1AP 384/65.

les biens de nostre maison [puissent] tomber en une estrang[è]re qui en obscureroit la grandeur par l'approbation du pariage si disproportionné à la condition de feu mon frère.¹²⁶⁸

Despite the interventions of the prince of Orange, and Tarente, then residing in England, and despite the 'bonnes parolles' Henrietta Maria gave to Hanibal, the queen remained loyal to Orp.¹²⁶⁹ When the countess of Derby arrived in London in 1647, she antagonised Henrietta Maria by insisting that there had never been a secret wedding.¹²⁷⁰ She believed that Orp's son was not her brother's and ordered an investigation into the Englishwoman's background and genealogy.¹²⁷¹ It was revealed that Orp's grandfather was a brewer and that the family's arms were not listed by the College of Arms. There was, however, the inscription 'Anne contesse de Laval' in a parish register, on the occasion of her marriage to Jean Aylofte, esquire. Charlotte believed

qu'il est nésere de faire auster ce nom des registres, ce qui me fait vous supplier que l'arrest me soit envoyé et en bonne forme colationné affin que ce prétendu titre soit effacé.¹²⁷²

This *arrest* had been pronounced on 6 July 1647 and divested Ann Orp 'de la qualité de femme légitime et son fils de la succession de feu M. le comte de Laval'. The following month another ruling rejected her son Edward's claim to his father's bequest, and granted him an annual pension of 1,000 *livres* as compensation.¹²⁷³ Twelve years later, Duchess Marie agreed to change this to the lifelong usufruct of Mauléon, worth 1,500 *livres* per year.¹²⁷⁴

¹²⁶⁸ Henri to Hanibal, 19 Sept. 1642 and 31 Oct. 1642, 1AP 393/148, 151.

¹²⁶⁹ Marie to Hanibal, 15 Nov. 1642, 1AP 430/80; Henri to Hanibal, 31 Oct. 1642, 1AP 393/151.

¹²⁷⁰ Charlotte to Marie, 10 Mar. 1647, 1AP 384/73.

¹²⁷¹ Charlotte to Marie, 25 Mar. 1647, 1AP 384/74.

¹²⁷² Charlotte to Marie, c1647, 1AP 384/76.

¹²⁷³ '1661 Mémoire', 212; Pineau to Rivet, 5 Apr. 1647, UBL, BPL 286/III/118.

¹²⁷⁴ *Transaction homologuée à la chambre de l'édit*, 11 Jan. 1659, '1661 Mémoire', 213-4.

Dorothea Helena Rupa

More damaging than loss of property was the loss of potentially advantageous alliances, especially if it involved the eldest son defying his family and marrying 'beneath himself'. Charles, Lord Strange, ran away from home in 1646 to rejoin his mother's family in France.¹²⁷⁵ He was put in a Parisian academy to complete his education as 'honneste homme',¹²⁷⁶ and was then sent to The Hague to join the regiment of his cousin Tarente.¹²⁷⁷ Alarming news of an impending marriage reached his mother in the summer of 1650, but she trusted Charles not to turn against his family: 'Je m[ets] le doi[g]t sur ma bouche et sait qu'il ne fait rien, qui ne tourne en bien à ceux qui l'aime'.¹²⁷⁸ Charles refused to comply and married Dorothea Helena of Rupa, a maid of honour to the queen of Bohemia.¹²⁷⁹ Lady Derby was beside herself with anger:

Je ne suis pas moy mame quend je pense à la manie de cette créature et ne puis presque la cr[oi]re; le bon Dieu touchera son coeur affin qu'il ne demeure pas plus longtemps avec saite Dalila.¹²⁸⁰

This 'unfortunate affair' was, Charlotte believed, 'to ruin my family if it remains so'.¹²⁸¹

Since the wedding could no longer be prevented, it had to be annulled:

j'écris en Hollande à tous ceux que je croy qui peuvent servir a rompre saite mauvaise affaire et vous supplie encore très humblement de vous y employer.¹²⁸²

¹²⁷⁵ Charlotte was ready to forgive him if he showed obedience to his aunt, Charlotte to Marie, 11/21 Aug. 1646 and n.d., 1AP 384/68, 71.

¹²⁷⁶ Charlotte insisted that Roman History was as important as Mathematics and Cosmography, Charlotte to Marie, 19 July 1647, 1AP 384/80; Charlotte to Marie, 10 Sept. 1647, 1AP 384/82.

¹²⁷⁷ Charlotte to Marie, n.d., 1AP 384/93.

¹²⁷⁸ Charlotte to Marie, 8/18 Aug. 1650, 1AP 394/96.

¹²⁷⁹ Raines, 'Memoirs', p. cclviii. Dorothea is often described as a daughter of John Polyander Kirkhoven, heer van Heenvliet, and Catherine, Lady Chesterfield. The only connection between Dorothea de Rupa and Kirkhoven's children is that they were naturalised on same day, 27 Aug. 1660, HMC, 7th Report, 129; *JL* xi. 145. It is more likely that she was linked to the Roupovsky of Roupov (Rupa) family, considering the connection that existed between one prominent member of that family, William Vaclav of Rupa, chamberlain of Bohemia, and the Winter King, Henry Sacchi, *La Guerre de Trente Ans*, 3 vols. (Paris, 2003), i. 269, 391, 409; Oman, *Winter Queen*, 420. She may have been one of the six children of William of Rupa, the Moravian high chamberlain (*nejvyšší komorník moravský*), who benefited from a grant from the States General in 1621, *Resolutiën der Staten-Generaal Nieuwe Reeks 1610-1670*, v. 294 [I would like to thank Nicolette Mout for this piece of information].

¹²⁸⁰ Charlotte to Marie, 2/12 Sept. 1650, 1AP 384/98.

¹²⁸¹ Charlotte to Marie, 20/30 Oct. 1650, 1AP 384/97.

¹²⁸² Charlotte to Marie, 2/12 Sept. 1650, 1AP 384/98.

Lord Strange's pension was cut off to prevent him from returning to England,¹²⁸³ and Daniel Trioche was sent to the United Provinces to reason with 'ce jeune fou'. It soon emerged that the princess of Orange would not use 'all that is in her power to break the union', as Charlotte had assumed.¹²⁸⁴ 'Il n'y a rien a attendre d'elle', concluded Trioche. Amalia von Solms had been in a similar position when, as lady-in-waiting to the queen of Bohemia, she married a prince of Orange. Out of sympathy for the newly wed, and probably aware that it was extremely difficult to annul a marriage both bride and groom accepted, the princess of Orange refused 'tout a plat' to have Lord Strange arrested in Utrecht.¹²⁸⁵ Charles refused to return to the Isle of Man without his wife and sought advice from the La Trémoille, whom he judged 'trop genereux pour me vouloir persuader, bien moins contraindre, de quitter celle qu'il a pleu a Dieu me donner pour femme'.¹²⁸⁶ The duke, however, was firm:

j'approuve for la cassation du mariage de M. strange et que celle qui l'a affronté passe pour ce qu'elle est: une bien honeste garce. Une autre ne voudroit espouser une personne de cette age et qualité sans l'avis de ses proches.¹²⁸⁷

As all attempts to annul the *mésalliance* had failed, Charles was disinherited by his father for his 'disobedience'.¹²⁸⁸ A misalliance represented the reverse side of marriage, a form of behaviour that refused exchange, fissured relationships, and set up practices of exclusion. Lady Derby ignored Charles's participation in Booth's rising, 'for I have long

¹²⁸³ 'Ny M. son père ny moy voullon[s] que ce soit ou par vostre ordre sy il reçoit quelque argent sy il vous plaist de vous donne[r] la penne et je l'espère de vostre bonté envers moy', Charlotte to Marie, 20/30 Oct. 1650, 1AP 384/97. See Charles to Marie and Henri, 9 Dec. 1650, 1AP 385/82.

¹²⁸⁴ Charlotte to Marie, 20/30 Oct. 1650, 1AP 384/97.

¹²⁸⁵ Trioche to Tarente, 18 Jan. 1651, 1AP 679.

¹²⁸⁶ Charles Stanley to Marie, 9 Dec. 1650, 1AP 385/83.

¹²⁸⁷ Henri to Tarente, 11 Jan. 1651, 1AP 394/37.

¹²⁸⁸ Charlotte to Mr. Legge, 18 Feb. 1662, HMC, Dartmouth iii. 106-7; 'The last Will and Testament of James, Earl of Derby, and of Charlotte, Countess Dowager of Derby', *Stanley Papers* III/2, ed. Raines, p. ccclxxvii-ccclxxxv; LRO, DDK 12/1.

been a stranger to everything that concerns him'.¹²⁸⁹ Two years later she was involved in a lawsuit against her son concerning her dower rights over the Isle of Man.¹²⁹⁰

Trans-national alliances were not necessarily successful. The union of Charlotte de La Trémoille and the seventh earl of Derby proved highly advantageous to both families; the eighth earl's marriage to Dorothea de Rupa, on the other hand, was seen as a disaster because she brought neither dowry nor family connections. Such a 'misalliance' was considered unnatural ('dénaturé'), because it undermined parental authority and familial obligations. Kinship represented the strongest of all 'horizontal' ties, based on affection and a sense of duty. The La Trémoille and Derby families benefited on countless occasions from their inter-alliance and from their larger network of kin, notably to support their claim to princely status and to obtain Tarente's and earl Charles's release from prison. Court and salon networks provided different types of social advantage. Proximity to the monarch conferred power, as the infighting among courtiers illustrates. Obtaining a *tabouret* or an official position at court were visible signs of royal favour. Participation in a masque, on the other hand, was no more than fool's gold. It could indicate high standing at court, as in the case of the Buckingham clan, but for the Stanleys it constituted a mere compensation for being denied more substantial honours. The La Trémoille also experienced difficulties in entering the inner circle of courtiers, possibly because of the duchess's continued allegiance to the Reformed Church. This explains why they accorded so much importance to the *tabouret*, and why they sought social recognition outside the court. The monarchy was not the sole arbiter of social credit; the salons led by the marquise de Rambouillet, the princesse de Condé and the duchesse de Montpensier conferred cultural prestige and gratification for Marie de La

¹²⁸⁹ Charlotte to Marie, 16 Sept. 1659, 1AP 385/25; Witt, *Lady of Latham*, 232-3.

¹²⁹⁰ Charlotte to Marie, 14 Mar. 1661, 1AP 385/52.

Tour, her daughter and her daughter-in-law. Although the *salonières* did not openly challenge the monarchy, and were indeed courtiers themselves, salon culture differed from court culture in nature. The first was hierarchical with the monarch at the apex; the second recognised the importance of its individual member, and cultivated a new sense of subjectivity.

CONCLUSION

In the seventeenth century the La Trémoille controlled vast landed estates in Brittany and Poitou, which generated about 60,000 *livres* per year. Royal pensions added a further 30,000 *livres* to their annual income, and placed the ducs de Thouars among the most affluent of the local elite. Their income was, however, considerably lower than that of the *ducs et pairs* of princely status, a group to which they aspired to belong. Spiralling indebtedness, amounting to 1.8 million *livres* by 1661, made it difficult to bridge the gap between the family's actual financial capacity and its social ambitions. The solution proposed by Duchess Marie was to sell outlying landed assets, and to attract royal largesse. This study has revealed that the duchess was actively involved both in landed administration and in negotiations with the Crown.

Henri de La Trémoille's conversion to Catholicism in 1628 has been put in its context. His abjuration did not result in the family's submission to the king's will, rewarded by high military honours or provincial governorship. It merely prepared the ground for the La Trémoille's claim to the kingdom of Naples, a papal fief, which was later used to justify their courtly rank of *princes étrangers*. The conversion has to be analysed as part of a long-term strategy of seeking monarchical support, pursued in the early seventeenth century by Duchess Charlotte-Brabantine and later by Duchess Marie. Adherence to the Reformed faith did not obstruct Marie's collaboration with the monarchy, but it had a direct influence on her goal, which combined the advancement of her family's fortunes with the protection of Huguenot interests. Henri's conversion enabled him to reach Catholic clients and tenants, but did not prevent him from supporting his wife's patronage of Huguenot ministers and synods, and her legal and financial involvement in the building of temples at Thouars and Vitré. Duchess Marie

also intervened behind the scenes to influence Huguenot politics against strict Calvinist interpretations of church government and individual salvation. The duchess's role in religious affairs was thus not limited to the 'domestic' sphere, and went beyond the mere transmission of faith to the next generation.

International Protestant alliances provided Marie de La Tour with a network of support, which helped her to present the La Trémoille's claim to Naples at the Westphalian peace conference. Marie reinforced inherited kinship ties with the House of Orange with matrimonial alliances with the German princely families of Hesse-Cassel and Saxony-Weimar. In order to obtain royal confirmation of the La Trémoille's princely status Marie supported her husband's participation in the first Fronde. Mazarin believed that the duchess was not to be trusted because of her attachment to the Protestant cause and her links with his political enemies Bouillon and Condé. However, political pragmatism convinced Marie to co-operate with the cardinal-minister and not to support Condé's rebellion. Her demonstrations of loyalty might have borne fruit, had it not been for her son Tarente's decision to side with the Frondeurs. Marie managed to obtain Tarente's release from prison and some financial compensation, but failed to have the La Trémoille's princely status registered in the Parlement.

Political pragmatism was likewise the guiding principle of Charlotte de La Trémoille, Lady Derby, often mistakenly portrayed as an intransigent Royalist. In the early stages of the Civil War her husband had been impeached by Parliament and their lands had been sequestrated. In 1647 Charlotte successfully lobbied Scottish commissioners and English Parliamentarians to allow the earl to pay a composition fine and recover his estates. When he died on the scaffold in 1651, Charlotte's inheritance, which had been

invested in land, was freed from sequestration. The countess expected to recover her jointure lands, as the *princesse de Tarente* did when her husband was declared legally dead after his conviction for *lèse-majesté*. Charlotte was, however, accused of 'delinquency' in her own right. The allegation was based on Lady Derby's trip to Scotland in the summer of 1650. Ironically, it was precisely during this expedition that Charlotte discovered the religious radicalism espoused by Charles II's Scottish allies, and advised her husband not to back the Royalist campaign of September 1650. Charlotte's support of the monarchy during the Civil War was thus not unconditional, and she remained politically passive during the Protectorate, while trying to pay the heavy composition fine she had been assigned. The usefulness of her family ties with the La Trémoille was limited during the 1640s and 1650s, but became a key asset when Lady Derby tried to obtain a placement at the Restoration court. As a sign of royal favour, an official position at court was even more visible than the privilege of the *tabouret*, which the La Trémoille enjoyed in France. Marie tried to help her sister-in-law, and hoped that Charlotte would in return promote a union between her daughter and King Charles II. Financial difficulties forced Lady Derby to leave London, and the La Trémoille had to abandon their dream of a royal match, which would have sanctioned their own status as *princes étrangers*. Their claim to Naples continued, however, to be presented by their descendants at every international peace conference up to the Congress of Vienna in 1815.¹²⁹¹

Concern over status and the promotion of dynastic interests provide the key to Marie de La Tour's architectural patronage. The dual necessity of maintaining a presence in Paris and increasing the local prestige of the House of La Trémoille translated into the

¹²⁹¹ A piece of information given by Boisisle, the editor of Saint-Simon's *Mémoires*, xiii. 314, note 1.

purchase of a town residence and into sumptuous building programmes in Brittany and Poitou. The English Civil War forced the Derbys to invest in military fortifications rather than ornamental architecture for representational purposes. Except for one family portrait by Van Dyck, Charlotte de La Trémoille's artistic patronage centred on her own person, whether she had her likeness painted in the allegorical style of the 1630s or in the dignified pose of a martyr's widow. Like the countess of Derby, Duchess Marie remained excluded from the inner circle of courtiers, and eventually gave up trying and sought other forms of recognition. She built up a reputation for personal piety by circulating a *recit des dernières heures* of her daughter Elisabeth, and made the Hôtel de La Trémoille a centre for Huguenot social life, which competed with that of Madame de Turenne, her sister-in-law. The architectural design and interior decoration of the castle of Thouars conveyed the image of Marie as a *femme savante* and *précieuse*. Her association with the Hôtel de Rambouillet and Mademoiselle de Montpensier's circle at Champigny allowed her to play a role of social pre-eminence that she had been denied at court.

The case studies of Marie de La Tour and Charlotte de La Trémoille reveal that female interventions in religious, social, economic and political spheres transcended the 'domestic' framework which has traditionally been used to define women's activities in a patriarchal society. Although legal and theological discourse on female incapacity severely restricted their freedom of action, noblewomen in seventeenth century France or England could in practice wield considerable influence. Gender discrimination could be eased, if not neutralised, by social hierarchy, economical power, religious authority, parental deference and conjugal respect. Theories about wifely submission were unlikely to have much practical effect in the common situation where the aristocratic

wife, used to widespread deference from her social inferiors, was also a stronger character than her husband. It is not entirely surprising to find that the grand-daughters of William the Silent and Charlotte de Bourbon emerge from this study as more resolute, and often more politically astute, than their menfolk.

William (the Silent) of Orange-Nassau

- + 1.) Anne Egmont-Buren
 - * Philip-William (d.1618)
- + 2.) Anne of Saxony
 - * Maurice (d.1625)
- + 3.) Charlotte of Bourbon
 - * Louise + Frd. IV, elector Palatine
 - * Frederic V (d.1632)
 - + (m.1612) Elizabeth Stuart
 - * Charles-Louis + Charlotte of Hesse-Cassel
 - * Elisabeth + duc d'Orléans
 - * Rupert
 - * Maurice
 - * Elisabeth + Henri, duc de Bouillon
 - * *Marie de La Tour*
 - * Catherine + Philip-L. zu Hanau-Münzberg
 - * Amalia + William V of Hesse-Cassel
 - * Charlotte + elector Palatine
 - * *Amalia*
 - * William VI
 - * Flandrine (abbess of Sainte-Croix, Poitiers)
 - * *Charlotte-Brabantine*
- + 4.) Louise of Coligny (d. 1620)
 - * Emilia-Secunda-Antwerpiana (d.1657)
 - + duke of Zweibrücken-Landsberg (d.1645)
 - * Louise of Coligny (d. 1620)
 - * Frederic-Henry (d.1647) + Amalia von Solms (d.1675)
 - * William II (d.1650) + Mary Stuart

Frederick of Aragon,
king of Naples

- * Charlotte of Aragon
 - + Guy de Laval
 - * Anne de Laval
 - + François de La Trémoille
 - * Louis III de La Trémoille
 - + *Jeanne de Montmorency*
 - * Charlotte-Catherine
 - + Henri I, prince de Condé
 - * Henri II
 - * Eléonore
 - + Philip-Wm. of Orange
 - * Claude de La Trémoille
 - + *Charlotte-Brabantine*
 - * **Henri de La Trémoille**
 - + *Marie de La Tour*
 - * **Henri-Charles** (prince de Tarente)
 - + *Amalia of Hesse-Cassel*
 - * Charlotte-Amalia
 - * Charles-Belgique-Hollande
 - * Charlotte de La Trémoille
 - + James Stanley, earl of Derby
 - "prince souverain de l'Isle de Man"

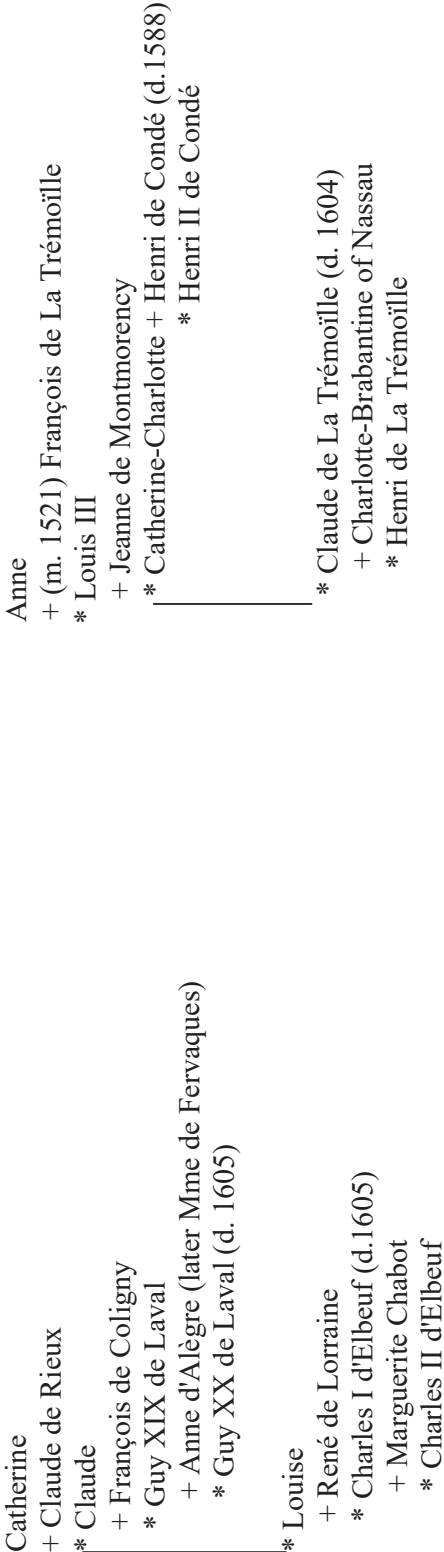
Connétable Anne de
Montmorency

- * Eleonore
 - + François de La Tour
 - * Henri de La Tour
 - + Elisabeth of Nassau
 - * *Marie de La Tour*
- * *Jeanne*
- * Henri de Montmorency
 - + Louise de Budos
 - * Charlotte de Montmorency
 - + Henri II, prince de Condé
 - * Louis (Grand Condé)
 - * Armand, prince de Conti

[+: married to; * : born from that marriage]

The Laval Inheritance

Guy XVI de Laval + Charlotte of Aragon, daughter of the last king of Naples



Appendix a–3

- * Henri de La Tour, duc de Bouillon (d.1623)
 - + 1.) Charlotte de La Marck, heiress of Sedan
 - + 2.) Elisabeth of Orange-Nassau (d.1642)
- * **Marie de La Tour (17 Jan. 1601-24 May 1665)**
 - + (m. 1619) Henri, duc de La Trémoille (1598-1674)
 - * Henri-Charles, prince de Tarente (1620-1672)
 - + (m. 1648) Amalia of Hesse-Cassel (1625-1693)
 - * Charlotte-Amélie, countess of Aldenburg (1652-1732)
 - * Charles-Belgique-Hollande (1655-1709)
 - * Henriette (1662-1665)
 - * Frederic-Guillaume (1663-after 1719)
 - * Marie-Sylvie-Brabantine (1666-1692)
 - * Louis-Maurice (1624-1681), comte de Laval
 - * Elisabeth (1628-1640)
 - * Marie-Charlotte (1632-1682)
 - + (m. 1662) Bernard, duke of Saxony-Weimar (1638-1678)
 - * Armand-Jean (1635-1643)
- * Frederic-Maurice, duc de Bouillon (1605-1652)
 - + (m. 1633) Eleonore de Bergh (1615-1657)
 - * Godefroy-Maurice, duc de Bouillon (1642-1721)
- * Elisabeth de La Tour
 - + (m. 1619/24) Guy Aldonce de Durfort, comte de Duras
 - * Duc de Duras et de Lorges
 - * Elisabeth de Durfort
 - * Louis de Duras (1641-1709), naturalized in 1665, created earl of Feversham
- * Julienne-Catherine de La Tour
 - + (m. 1627/30) François, comte de Roucy
 - * Frederic Charles, comte de Roye [earl of Lifford] + (m. 1656) Elisabeth de Durfort
- * Henriette de La Tour
 - + (m. 1619) Amaury III Gouyon, marquis de La Moussaye
- * Charlotte de La Tour
- * Henri de La Tour, maréchal de Turenne (1611-1675)
 - + (m. 1651) Charlotte de Caumont de la Force

Appendix a-4

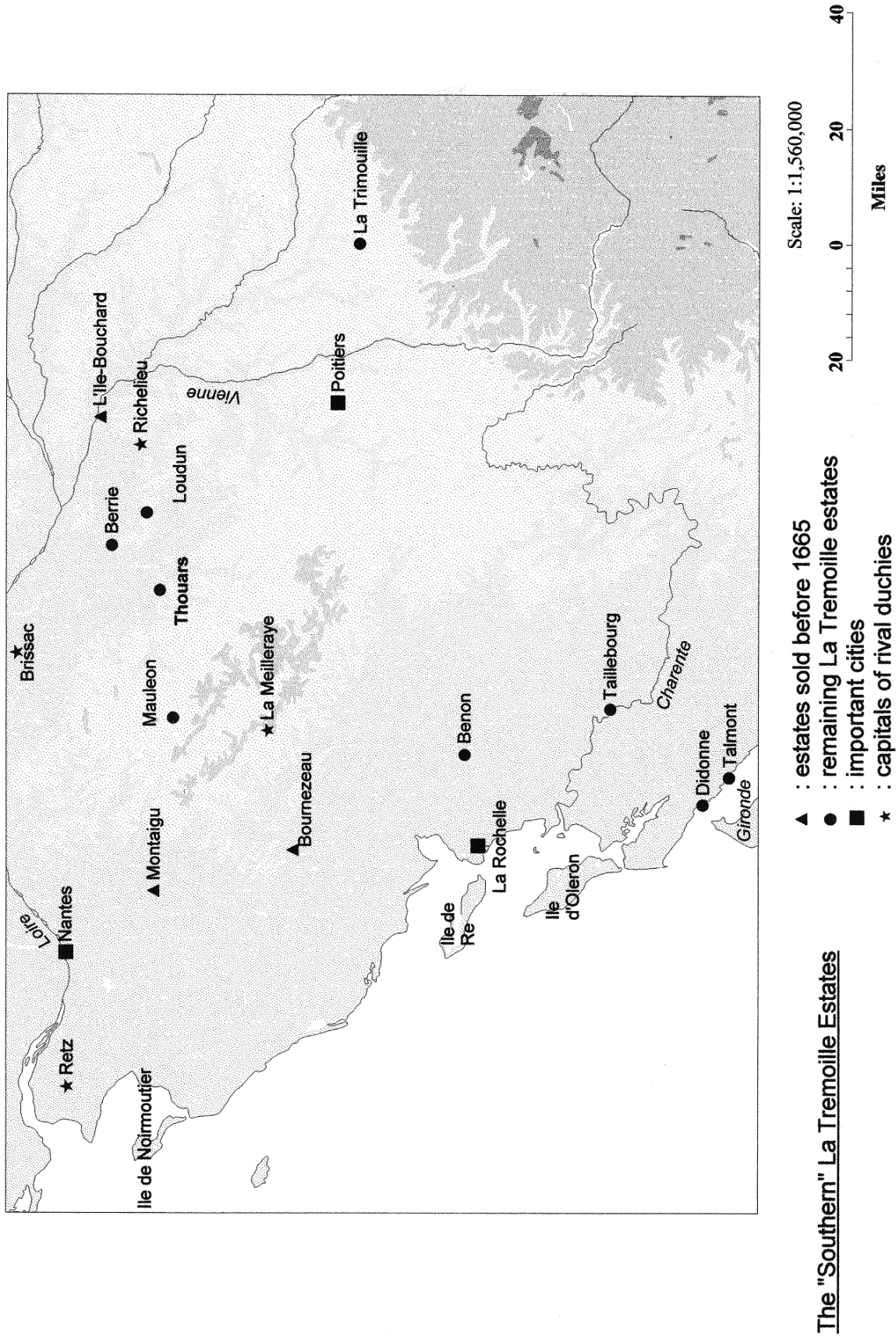
Henry Stanley, 4 th earl of Derby (d.1594) + Margaret Clifford (d.1596)	Edward de Vere, 17 th earl of Oxford + Anne Cecil-Burghley	Colin Campbell, 6 th earl of Argyll + Annabel Keith
* Ferdinand, 5 th earl of Derby (d.1594) + Alice Spencer [remarried Th. Egerton, Lord Chancellor Ellesmere] (d.1637)	* Henri, 18 th earl of Oxford * <i>Elizabeth</i> * Susan (d.1629) + Philip, earl of Montgomery, and (from 1630) Pembroke [remarried Anne Clifford]	* Archibal, 7 th earl of Argyll + Anne Douglas
* Anne + 1.) baron Chandos + 2.) (m. 1624) earl of Castlehaven		* Annabella + Robert Carr, 2 nd earl of Lothian * Anne Carr + <i>William Kerr</i> [made 3 rd earl of Lothian]
* Frances + John Egerton, earl of Bridgewater		* Archibal, 8 th earl of Argyll + Margaret Douglas
* Elizabeth + earl of Huntingdon * Alice Hastings		* Archibald, 9 th earl of Argyll * Jane + Robert Kerr, 4 th earl of Lothian * Neil + Vere Kerr [sister of 4 th earl of Lothian]
* William, 6 th earl of Derby (d.1642) + (m.1595) <i>Elizabeth de Vere</i> (d.1627)		
* Anne (1600-1657) + 1.) (m. 1615) Sir Henry Portman + 2.) (m. 1621) Robert Kerr, earl of Ancram (d.1654), father (from a previous marriage) of <i>William Kerr</i> , 3 rd earl of Lothian		
* James, 7 th earl of Derby (1607-1651) + (m.1626) Charlotte de La Trémoille (1599-1664)		
* Robert (d.1632) + Elizabeth Gorges, d.1675 [remarried Theophilus, 4 th earl of Lincoln] * Charles * James		

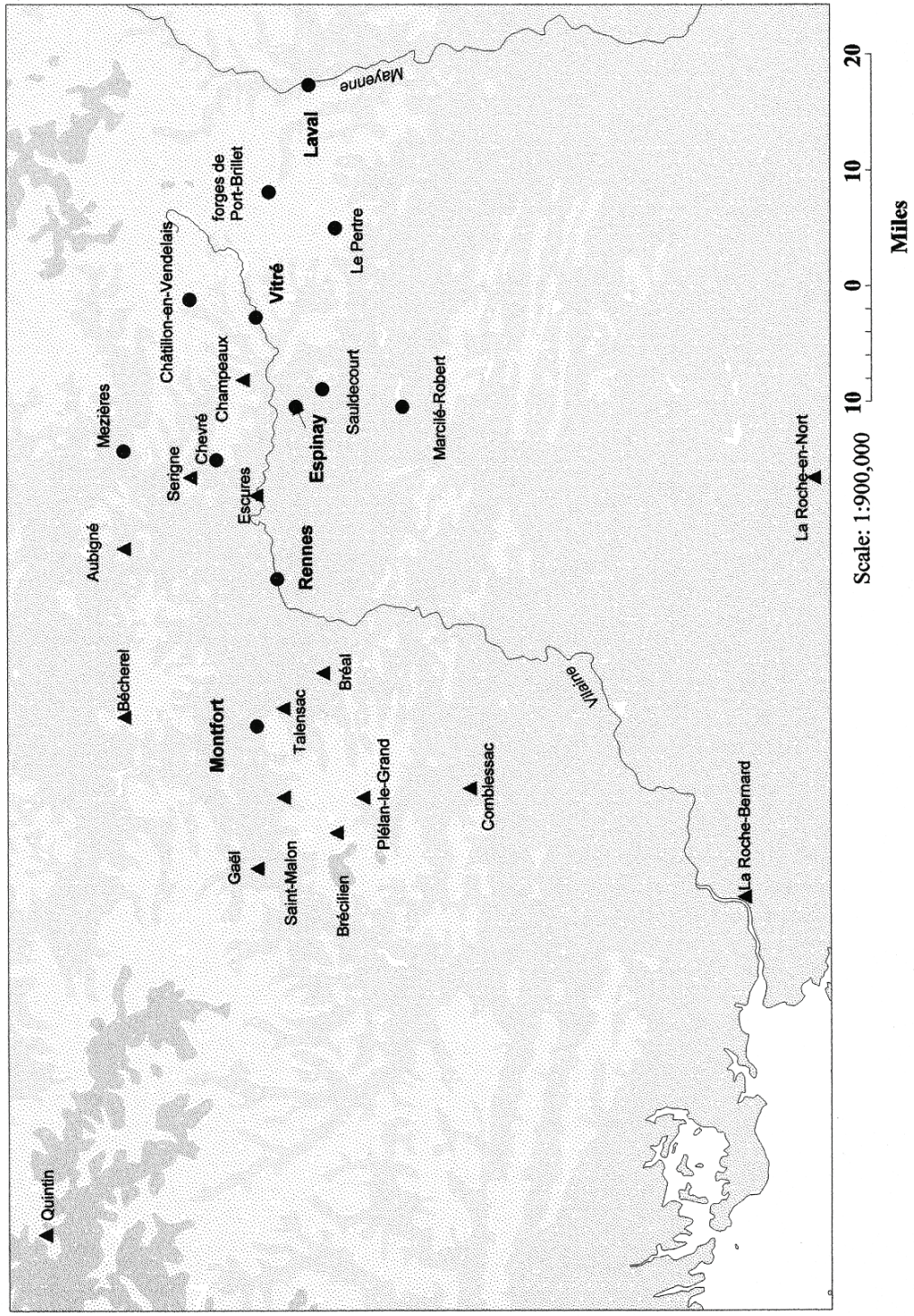
[+: married to; * : born from that marriage]

Appendix a-5

- * James, 7th earl of Derby (30 Jan.1607-15 Oct.1651)
 - + (m.25.6.1626) **Charlotte de La Trémoille (Dec. 1599-22 Mar. 1664)**
- * Charles, 8th earl of Derby (1 Jan.1628-21 Dec.1672)
 - [engaged to Anne Cottington, d. 1643]
 - + (m.1650) Dorothea Helena of Rupa (d.1702)
 - * William, 9th earl of Derby (1655-1732)
- * Charlotte (10 Mar.1629-4 Apr.1629)
- * Henrietta-Maria (17 Nov.1630-27 Dec.1685)
 - [engaged to Richard, viscount Molyneux]
 - + (m. Feb.1655) William Wentworth, earl of Strafford (1626-1695)
 - [remarried Henrietta de Roye de La Rochefoucauld]
- * Catherine (4 Dec.1631-9 Jan.1680)
 - + (m. Sept. 1652) Henry Pierrepont,
 - marquess of Dorchester (1607-1680)
 - [widow of Cecilia Bayning]
- * Amalia-Anna-Sophia (17 June1633-after 1691)
 - + (m. 5 May 1659) John Murray, earl of Atholl (1631-1703)
 - [created marquess of Atholl in 1676]
 - * John, 1st duke of Atholl
- * Henry Frederick (24 Feb.1635-24 Apr.1635)
- * James (2 Nov.1636-27 Mar.1638)
- * Edward (7 Jan.1639-buried 7 Mar.1665) [unmarried]
- * William (18 Nov.1640-buried 23 Dec.1670)
 - + Mary ... [presumed to be a Quaker woman from Philadelphia]

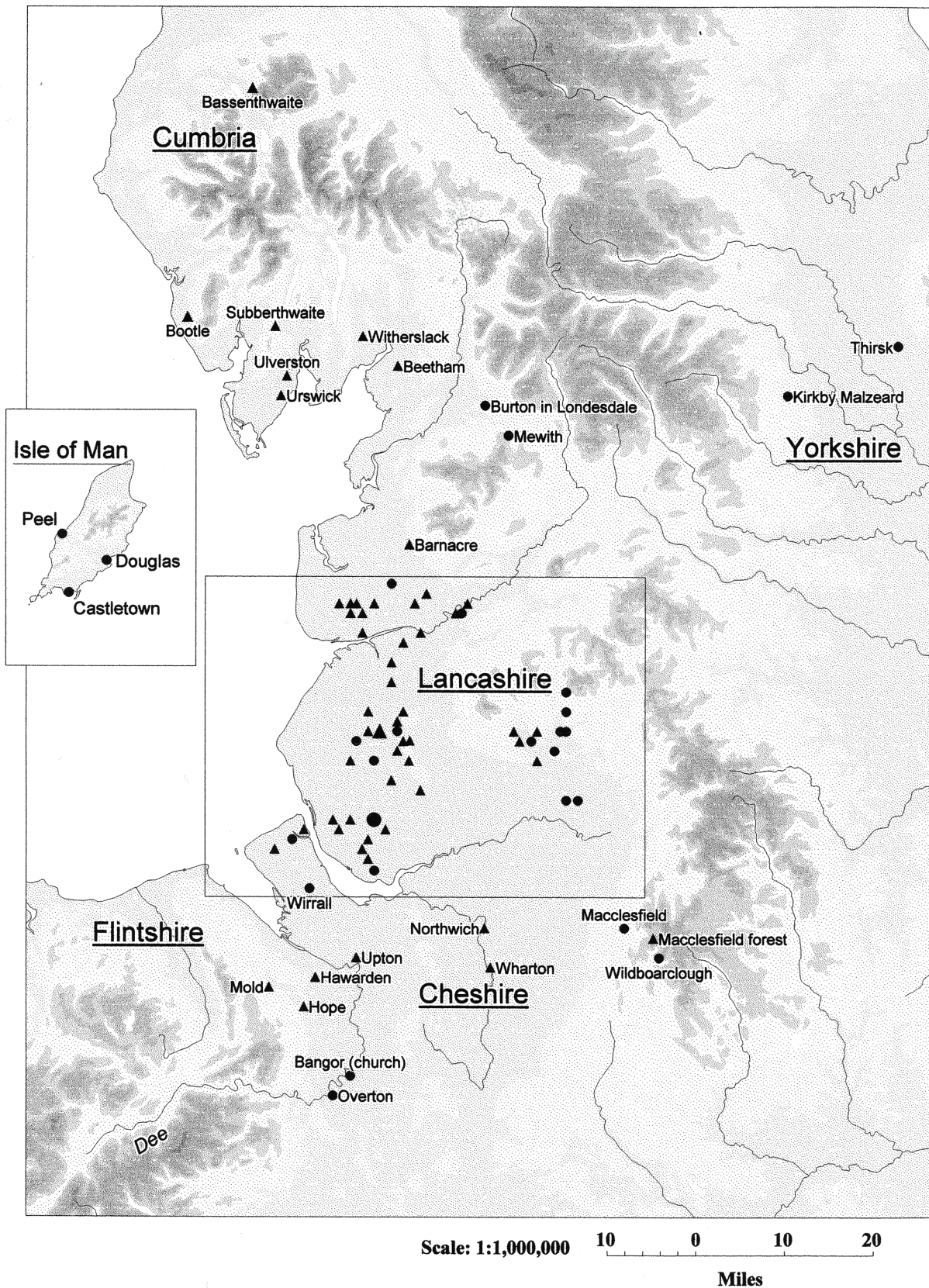






The "Northern" La Tremoille Estates

(▲ : landed estates sold between 1605 and 1665) (● : remaining La Tremoille estates)



Stanley Estates

(• : jointure lands, held by Charlotte de La Tremoille, Countess of Derby, 1651-1664)



(● : jointure lands held by Charlotte de La Tremoille, Countess of Derby)

Scale: 1:400,000

1er étage

gr	Rennes	Vittré (Melle de Tarente)		gr	C	Chambre du Conseil	gr	Taillebourg (M. le prince)	C	antichambre		Talmont [feu M. le prince]	C
gr	Olivet			gr	Laval	anti- chambre (de Laval)	grand degré					Guines	gr
		degré	gr							Salon			
									petit degré				
													degré
													vestibule



Legend

gr = garderobe

c = cabinet

(...) = 1AP 1063, 1652 inventory

[...] = 1AP 1063, 1672 inventory

2ème étage

C	La Tremoille	Amboise (M le comte)		Galerie	gr demi degré	Naples (Mme)	gr (Grand Cabinet)	Cabinet aux portraits		
gr	antichambre	degré	gr	Bourbon	anti- chambre	Salle	La Tour	gr	degré	Cabinet aux médailles



Legend

gr = garderobe

c = cabinet

(...) = 1AP 1063, 1652 inventory

[...] = 1AP 1063, 1672 inventory

Appendix c-8: *L'Album de Marie de La Tour*¹

In the 1640s and 1650s, when Duchess Marie was collecting pictorial *dévises* from her friends and acquaintances,² she also received a series of autographs with personal mottos. The contributors were not identical, but some names appear in both albums and have been highlighted in this list. A systematic comparison is not possible, because the original list of autographs has been lost. As far as we can tell, the collection of autographs emanated from a mixed social background, while the *Recueil de dévises* listed only members of the aristocracy. The mottos reproduced here are practically all in French, whereas the mottos accompanying the *dévises* were mostly composed in Latin.

Year	Name	Motto
1640	Louis de Bourbon, comte de Soissons	'Après la pluie vient le beau temps'
1640	Henri de Lorraine, duc de Guise	'Chacun le sien, ce n'est pas trop'
1640	Anne-Sybille, princesse palatine	'Clair comme le jour'
	Marthe du Vigean	'A laver la tête d'un asne, on n'y perd que la lessive'
1640	Anne Deschamps	'Petite mouche fait courir grand asne'
1640	Hélène de Schelandre ³	'S'il m'esgratigne, je le mordray'
1641	Frédéric-Maurice de La Tour, duc de Bouillon	'Ettourdi comme le premier coup de matine'
1641	Henri-Auguste de Loménie, comte de Brienne	'Plutôt rompre que plier'
1641	Maurice de Coligny	'Est bien fol qui s'oublie'
1641	Frédéric-Morise de Durfort, conte de Rosan	'Il sue quand il voit l'orage'
1641	Guy de Durfort, conte de L'Orge	'Esveillé comme un chat qu'on foite'
1641	Jacques-Auguste de Thou	'Tout ou rien'
1641	François-Auguste de Thou	'Au besoin on connaît l'ami'
1641	François de Roye de La Rochefoucauld, comte de Roucy ⁴	'Il fait bon pêcher en eau trouble'
1641	Catherine de Vivonne, marquise de Rambouillet	'Ny chaud ny froid'
1641	Julie d'Angennes de Rambouillet	'Je ne m'étonne pas pour le bruit'
1641	Charles de Sainte-Maure, duc de Montausier	'Résolue comme Bartole'
1641	Vincent Voiture	'A tout perdre n'y a qu'un coup'
	Anne Bigot Cornuel	'Qui sayme trop na point damis'
1641	Jean Chapelain	'Plus heureux que sage'
1641	Isabelle-Angélique de Montmorency de Bouteville	'Pour un perdu cent recouvers'

¹ The present selection of handwritten autographs stems from an album discovered by Philippe Godet in the castle of Middachten (NL), see Godet, 'L'Album de Marie de La Tour', *Revue de Champagne et Brie* 5 (1893), 151-8. I would like to thank Mr. Tulot for bringing Godet's article to my attention. Despite the efforts of Mr. Van Driel and Ms. Blasczyk of the Gelders Archief, the original could not be located.

² *Recueil de devises données à Marie de La Tour*, ARS, MS 5217, see, for instance, appendix c-6.

³ Lady-in-waiting of the duchesse de La Trémoille.

⁴ Not, as Godet assumed, the author of the *Maximes*, but the husband of Marie de La Tour's sister, Juliette.

	Isabelle de Choiseul-Praslain	'Garde me Dios de mi-misme'
1641	Marguerite de Montmorancy, duchesse de Vantadour	'Nul neme [n'aime] comme moy par l'autre'
1641	Claire-Clémence de Maillé, duchesse d'Anguien	'Ce qui m'entre par une oreille me sort par l'autre'
1641	Anne Du Fay	'Elle est née le samedy, elle aime la bien besogne faite'
1641	Marie de Loménie de Brienne	'Qui ne la voit lentent'
1641	Henriette de La Tour, marquise de La Moussaye	'Saute crapaut voici la pluye'
1641	Henriette de Durfort	'Elle cauze comme une pie borgne'
1641	Marie de Fiesque, marquise de Breante	'Les sages de ce temps ont la bouche fermée avec un cadenas'
1641	Marie-Catherine de La Rochefoucauld, marquise de Sillery	'Pour se taire on n'en pense par moins'
1641	Charlotte Brulart de Sillery, marquise de Moüy	'L'eau qui dort est pire que celle qui court'
1641	Marie de La Tour, duchesse de La Trémoille	'Telle vie, telle mort'
1643	Angélique de Paulet	'Tout ce qui gronde ne mor pas'
1643	Louis de Bourbon, duc d'Anguin	'Je te crie mercy: Bar-sur-Aube'
1643	Henri d'Orléans, duc de Longueville	'Mauvaise herbe croît toujours'
	Marie d'Orléans de Longueville	'Bon sen [sang] ne peut mentir'
1643	César-Phébus d'Albret-Miossens	'Après bon vin, bon roussin'
1643	Claire de Thou	'A brebis tondue, Dieu luy mesure le vent'
1659	Armand-Jean Du Plessis, duc de Richelieu	'Nul n'est prophète en son pays'
1659	César de Choyseul, maréchal du Plessis	'Caesar ou rien'
1659	Gourville	'Tant vaut l'homme, tant vaut la terre'
1659	Marcillac	'Honte ne me fera jamais dommage'
	Jean-F.-P. Gondi, duc de Retz	'Ils sont pris ni ne s'envolent'
1659	Marie-Madelaine de La Vergne, comtesse de La Fayette	'Les femmes font et défont les maisons'
1659	Segrais	'Qui a bon voisin a bon matin'
	Marie de Rabutin, marquise de Sévigné	'Nuda si, ma contenta'
	Henri de Sévigné	'A bon jeu bon retour'
1659	Valentin Conrart	'Je ne say sur quel pied danser'
	Perrot d'Ablancourt	'On n'aime pas si l'on aime trop'
	Madeleine de Souvré, marquise de Sablé	'Il annuie à quoy atand'
1659	Marie de Bretagne, duchesse de Montbazon	'Si je t'en donne, prends-en, mais ne m'en demande pas'
1659	Marie-Anthoinette de Loménie, marquise de Gamaches	'Elle dit bien et fait encore mieux'
1659	Suzanne d'Aumale	'Je suis délicatte et blonde'
1659	Charlotte-Amélie de La Trémoille	'Je donne un coup pour en avoir deux'

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* The asterisks indicate sources transcribed by Jean-Luc Tulot.

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**Noblewomen and Family Fortunes in Seventeenth-Century France and England.
A Study of the Lives of the Duchesse de La Trémoille and her Sister-in-Law, the
Countess of Derby.**

Sonja Kmec, Harris Manchester College

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, April 2004

Short Abstract

This thesis offers an analysis of the Huguenot nobility under Richelieu and Mazarin, based on the example of one of the most prominent French Protestant families, the La Trémoille of Thouars, and examines the bonds that existed with members of the family who married abroad, such as Charlotte de La Trémoille, who was wedded to James Stanley, future earl of Derby, in 1626. By privileging the female point of view, this investigation attempts to overcome the nationalistic frame, which characterises traditional historiography. It brings to the fore a trans-national network of support, based on a common religious outlook and family alliances. The main focus is on the friendship between Lady Derby and her sister-in-law, Marie de La Tour, duchesse de La Trémoille, a relationship cultivated through an epistolary exchange that stretched over forty years. The analysis of the lives of these two women, who originated from the same social milieu but were exposed to very different political cultures, highlights similarities and divergences of the female condition in seventeenth-century France and England. The duchesse de La Trémoille and the countess of Derby promoted themselves as well as their family through active interventions in landed administration, architectural and artistic patronage, and court politics. Duchess Marie played, moreover, an important role in the patronage of the Reformed churches, despite the conversion of her husband, Duke Henri, in 1628. There is no attempt at a generalisation; instead this thesis offers a critical appreciation of the freedom of action individual noblewomen could enjoy within the patriarchal framework of both countries. Exceptional political circumstances, such as those created by the English Civil War, might have made it easier for women to intervene in the 'public sphere', but the very distinction between 'public' and 'private' realms in the seventeenth century is called into question by this study.

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Long Abstract

This thesis investigates, through the case-studies of Marie de La Tour, duchesse de La Trémoille, and Charlotte de La Trémoille, countess of Derby, the freedom of action and the degree of initiative enjoyed by noblewomen in seventeenth-century France and England. It also provides a close-up of the Huguenot nobility and the English aristocracy, traditionally considered to have experienced a deep crisis in the mid-seventeenth century. This study demonstrates that the French Protestant aristocracy retained a great amount of influence over the Reformed church leaders and were willing to share that control with the monarchy.

The La Trémoille of Thouars inherited vast estates in Brittany in 1605, doubling their landed fortunes in size, but plunging the family into severe indebtedness. By 1661 their debt amounted to 1.8 million *livres*, and generated annual interest charges of 90,000 *livres*, approximating their annual revenue. The solution proposed by Duchess Marie was to sell outlying landed assets and to counter the negative effects of absenteeism by sharing the responsibilities of estate management with her husband. She acted as a representative of ducal authority and prestige, and as a source of advice to her husband. The model of a 'division of labour' between a female indoor and a male outdoor sphere is therefore discarded. As a *procuratrice générale* Marie de La Tour remained in theory bound to her husband's power of decision, but the reality of authority was much more supple. Likewise, the countess of Derby overcame her ignorance of the English language and customs, which held her back in the early years of her marriage, and followed in the footsteps of her mother-in-law, who had managed the Derby estates in the first decades of the seventeenth century.

Duchess Marie was blamed for the decline of the La Trémoille landholding, and this investigation shows that the preservation of patrimony was indeed not her first priority. Landed sales were accepted in order to build up alliances with Cardinal Richelieu and various La Trémoille clients in the Breton Estates. Large dowries were granted to out-marrying daughters, such as the future countess of Derby, but were not a decisive factor in choosing in-marrying brides. Instead, what mattered was to bolster the La Trémoille's claim to the status of *prince étranger* by marrying into 'sovereign' families, such as the Bouillon (princes de Sedan), the Derby ('sovereign lords of the Isle of Man'), the landgraves of Hesse-Cassel, and the dukes of Saxony-Weimar. Marie even hoped – in vain – to marry her daughter to the king of England, as this would incontestably confirm her family's rank at the French court. This international network of support was the La Trémoille's greatest asset. It helped achieve recognition of their rights to the kingdom of Naples discussed at the Westphalian peace conference, which led to a *de facto* recognition of their princely status at court, symbolised by the right for the La Trémoille daughters to sit on a *tabouret* in the presence of the queen. The importance of the *tabouret* can be compared to that of the post of lady-in-waiting or governess of the king's children, which Charlotte was seeking to obtain at the English court. These privileges were much coveted, as the resulting proximity to the monarch enhanced the

possibilities for advantageous marriage alliances, which in turn added to a family's social prestige and facilitated access to royal patronage. The honour to participate in a royal masque, which was granted to Charlotte and her husband in 1631, was, on the other hand, ephemeral and of no real consequence, except for the fact that the Derbys transposed the masque to the Isle of Man, where they themselves occupied the centre of the political stage.

The common theme of the activities of the duchesse de La Trémoille and the countess of Derby was the promotion of their family, of their own place within that family, and of themselves as individuals. Financial restraints prevented Charlotte from displaying magnificence and stateliness on the same scale as her sister-in-law, but she used her limited means in an original and highly symbolic way by endowing the family burial chapel with a baptismal font in remembrance of the 'martyr's death' of the seventh earl. Marie, on the other hand, instigated a series of architectural projects, notably the reconstruction of the castles of Thouars and Vitré, and the construction of new temples in both cities. For their main seat at Thouars, the La Trémoille borrowed the *architecte du roi*, Jacques Lemercier, and many artisans from the neighbouring building site at Richelieu. The new castle of Thouars was monumental in style, yet kept very sober; a choice motivated by the increasingly encumbering debts which forced the La Trémoille to suspend all work at Thouars from the late 1640s to the early 1650s. In Paris, financial considerations prevailed over the benefits the La Trémoille expected from living in the proximity of the Palais du Louvre, and forced them to take up residence in the *quartier* Saint-Germain. Conspicuous consumption was necessary for the maintenance of that very perception and hence for the maintenance of their social status. Their heraldic devices were ubiquitous in castles, temples, and parish churches; they displayed the La Trémoille's alliance with the La Tour d'Auvergne and their descent from the sovereign houses of Orange-Nassau and Aragon-Naples. The countess of Derby's descent from the House of Orange was shown more subtly through the colour orange used by Van Dyck in the Stanley family portrait, while the Isle of Man, and the Stanley's claim to sovereignty, loomed in the background.

The English Civil War hit the Derby family particularly hard, as it led to the execution of the seventh earl in 1651. However, the effects appear to have been more psychological than material in nature. The land bought with Charlotte's dowry was freed immediately after she became a widow; in theory, it should not have been confiscated at all. Her dower lands – reversionary in nature – would have been restored as well, had it not been for Charlotte's own 'delinquency'. She had to pay an unusually high composition fine, but managed to recover her estates. Despite transitory financial difficulties, she managed to arrange very advantageous matches for her three daughters.

Calvinism remained the social and doctrinal framework within which Marie de La Tour operated. Secular concerns such as the promotion of dynastic interests could be reconciled with spiritual beliefs based on a rejection of material life, as the skilfully orchestrated commemoration of the death of Marie's daughter, Elisabeth, illustrates. On the other hand Marie's consistent refusal to renounce Protestantism despite heavy social pressures, and the unceremonious nature of her funeral, eschewing the traditional opportunity to display family status and alliances, is evidence that her piety was far from superficial. At the same time, Marie's piety rejected the moral rigorism, which had characterised her own upbringing at Sedan, and which was taught by Catholic reformist movements such as the Jansenists. The duchess's optimistic providentialism helped her to accept her husband's conversion, in the hope of bringing him eventually back to the

'true faith'. Duke Henri's practical ecumenicism blurred the confessional border, and made it easier for the duchess to patronise Huguenot divines such as Moïse Amyraut and Alexandre Morus. The irenicism of the elite allowed Marie moreover to freely mix with Catholics at court and in the literary circles run by the marquise de Rambouillet and Mademoiselle de Montpensier.

Charlotte de La Trémoille and Marie de La Tour both experienced difficulties in entering the inner circle of courtiers, possibly because of their allegiance to the Reformed Church, which pleased neither Henrietta Maria nor Anne of Austria. Both women thus sought social recognition outside the court. Charlotte tried to build up her own social circle on the Isle of Man, and later to befriend the duchess of York, but she remained rather isolated. In France, the *salons* led by Madame de Rambouillet and the princesse de Condé, and the literary circle inspired by the duchesse de Montpensier conferred cultural prestige on Marie de La Tour, her daughter and daughter-in-law. The *salonières* were themselves courtiers, and did not openly challenge the Crown, yet they made it clear that the monarchy was not the sole arbiter of social credit. Marie cultivated her image as *précieuse* and *femme savante* through her collections at the castle of Thouars and her rich albums of pictorial *dévises* and literary mottoes.

Marie's adherence to the Reformed faith was not always a social obstacle. Her position as 'Reine des Huguenots' allowed the duchess, on the contrary, to build up personal prestige, and justified her intervention in the doctrinal debate opposing Amyraut and the orthodox scholar André Rivet. Marie de La Tour embraced Amyraut's hypothetical universalism, which criticised strict predestinarianism and defied the canons of Dordt. French Protestantism was no more a monolithic confession than French Catholicism, and internal division was considered to seriously weaken the Reformed Church. What motivated Marie to intervene in Amyraut's quarrel and Morus's struggle was – on the surface – her desire to consolidate the Huguenot community. The Act of Thouars of 1649 was in fact less of a reconciliation of Amyraut's and Rivet's positions than the result of a skilful usage of patronage to silence Amyraut's critics. Informed by her sister-in-law of the 'religious confusion' that reigned in England, Marie came to subscribe to Amyraut's gallicanism. The Anglican model appealed to her, and to many other Huguenot grandees, as it put the Reformed churches under the protection of the monarch and gave the aristocracy greater control over the church hierarchy.

During the Fronde, the La Trémoille oscillated between co-operation and confrontation with the monarchy. Their declared goal was the confirmation of their status as *princes étrangers* by the king and its registration in the *Parlement*. Marie supported her husband's involvement in the first Fronde, but after the king granted them an informal *brevet* confirming their princely privileges, the duchess decided to support Mazarin against the princely Fronde. Her apprehension was that Condé's release would result in his domination of the royal Council, and the rise of his *protégé*, the duc de Rohan, a long-time rival of the La Trémoille in Brittany. Moreover, a peace with Spain, as Condé was pursuing, would sound the death knell for Huguenot privileges. In 1651 she successfully lobbied the Breton nobles to prevent Rohan from assuming the presidency over the second estate. Her eldest son, Tarente, sided nonetheless with Condé's party, and was imprisoned upon his return from exile in 1656. Duchess Marie worked incessantly at accommodating Tarente with the cardinal-minister and eventually obtained his release. The English Civil War and its republican aftermath present a very different social, political, and religious framework from contemporary France. The goals of the two women diverged: Charlotte's primary objective was physical and

financial survival, while Marie's main concern was increase of power in the provinces and preferential treatment at court. Yet the strategies deployed by the countess and her sister-in-law were not fundamentally different. Pragmatic considerations led both women to co-operate with political figures they themselves, or their families, objected to. Charlotte lobbied the Parliament in 1647 to obtain permission for her husband to compound, using her family ties with the Scottish commissioner, the earl of Lothian. After the signature of Cromwell's treaty with France, she considered making use of Marie de La Tour's connections with Mazarin to obtain the release of her son, Charles, from prison. The concept of networking is key to both Marie de La Tour's and Charlotte de La Trémoille's involvement in politics. Making use of vertical (patron-client) as well as horizontal (mostly kinship) ties, both women were pursuing their family interests through exchange of letters and personal visits. This *modus operandi* blurred the boundaries between 'private' and 'public' spheres, allowing them to participate in political life, and wield a substantial amount of influence, without upsetting the patriarchal system.