“The Wandering Life I Led”

“The Wandering Life I Led”: Essays on Hortense Mancini, Duchess Mazarin and Early Modern Women’s Border Crossings

Edited by

Susan Shifrin

CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARS PUBLISHING

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This book first published 2009

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-4438-1103-3, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-1103-3

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EDITOR'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is a rare privilege indeed to have spent the last four years with a most distinguished group of colleagues, examining from our various disciplinary vantage points the diverse aspects of a historical personality who has occupied my own studies for the last fifteen years. I now know so much more about her because of the investigations and insights of the other contributors to this volume. I am extremely grateful to them.

Special thanks are due to Beth Goldsmith, Katharina Piechocki, and Andrew Walkling, who served as panelists in a session devoted to the Duchess Mazarin at the annual conference of the Group for Early Modern Cultural Studies in 2005: the session provided the first material and the inspiration for this volume. To Beth Goldsmith I owe a particular debt of gratitude for her extraordinary generosity and her persistence in forging the connections that make true colleagues of scholars.

INTRODUCTION

SUSAN SHIFRIN

In the last decade, scholars have begun to turn their attention with new seriousness (and readers with renewed interest) to the biography, iconography, and critical fortunes of Hortense Mancini, Duchess Mazarin (1646-99), recognizing her and several of her contemporaries as significant historical figures in their own right but also as important paradigms of proto-feminist behaviors that helped to precipitate the reconsideration of gender norms within their societies.

The case of the Duchess Mazarin is that of a storied seventeenth-century woman made familiar to early modern readers by such highly-placed court gossips as Madame de Sevigné and the fairytale-teller and romantic court chronicler the comtesse d'Aulnoy; by political pamphleteers and publishers of broadsides; and by poets who wrote lampoons at her expense and others whose encomia celebrated her for posterity.[1] She was mythologized in her own time as the favorite niece of the Cardinal Mazarin; an exotic, foreign fugitive—first removed by her uncle from her native Italy, then exiled from her adopted France; a "famous beauty and errant Lady"[2] who had abandoned her marriage and carried on notorious liaisons in the public eye, including a brief but politically significant affair with Charles II of England; and the muse of expatriate poets, musicians, and artists at the Italian and English courts.

Using the Duchess Mazarin's literal, geographical "border crossings" as a synecdoche for her various elisions and transgressions of borders of all kinds, this book of essays brings together international scholars working on the literary, visual, musical, and theatrical representations and reception of this paradigmatic early modern woman. We lay out several strategies for exploring the ways in which she crossed geographical,

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[1] See Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, marquise de Sévigné, *Letters of Madame de Sévigné* (Philadelphia: J. P. Horn, 1927); and Marie Catherine La Mothe, Countess d'Aulnoy, *Memoirs of the court of England…By the Countess of Dunois…Now made English* [by J. C.], 2nd ed. (London, 1708 [1675]).

[2] John Evelyn, *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. E. S. De Beer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 4: 97-8.

gendered, cultural, and—in scholarly terms—disciplinary boundaries, and we consider how an investigation of those border crossings can enhance our understanding of early modern cultural formation. It is our hope that the new scholarly work presented here across the disciplines of history, art history, literary history, the history of theater, and the history of music will stimulate a broader scholarly discussion about border-crossing early modern women in general.

It is worth reiterating at this point that the Duchess Mazarin's claim to fame is not that she was a notable monarch, nor the consort of a notable monarch, nor even a noted author or artist whose name comes readily to the lips of literary or art historians. The case study of Hortense Mancini is perhaps most notable for the fact that its subject crossed in such visible ways the boundaries of location, of representation, and of reception, thus emerging as a hybrid figure simultaneously susceptible to and transgressive of conventions. If she was marked in her own and subsequent times for any one thing more than others, it was for the fact that her "crossings" had become the center of attention during a period of notoriety that lasted from the 1650s through to at least the 1680s, and then beyond, represented by an amalgam of painted portraits and their printed copies, historical romances, gossipy memoirs, and even a few heavily romanticized nineteenth-century genre paintings. It is to that legacy of hybridity and notoriety that we turn our attention in the six essays that comprise this volume.

The volume is divided into two parts, the first devoted to the Duchess Mazarin herself and the second to several of the most significant figures whose lives and interests were inextricably intertwined with her own. In the first chapter of Part One, "Thoroughly Modern Mazarin," Elizabeth Goldsmith frames our overall discussion of border-crossing with her examination of the Duchess Mazarin as a figure poised on the threshold of modernity, whose liminal position was defined by her self-creation as a gendered moveable body. Goldsmith is primarily concerned in this essay

> with mobility and circulation in Hortense Mazarin's self-fashioning, and how these preoccupations were echoed in the writings of contemporaries who observed her. Mobility and circulation are recurring metaphors, too, in the writings by and about her.[3]

She introduces the topic of Mazarin's memoir—significant in and of itself insofar as it represents the first European memoir written and published by a woman not of royal pedigree—through her analysis of it as

[3] Goldsmith, 3.

a travelogue of sorts, tracking both Mazarin's geographical peregrinations and her emergence as an "iconic risk-taker." Goldsmith suggests that the memoir might have served almost as a "guidebook, an invitation to risky travel, if only, perhaps, of the armchair variety"[4] for women of her time, and in that same sense, Goldsmith's own essay can serve as a guidebook to the analysis of late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century women's writings as commentaries on the placement and movement (both literal and figurative) of women's bodies within their societies.

Katharina Piechocki also takes up the Duchess Mazarin's memoir in her essay "The Fortified Self: Hortense Mancini's 1675 *Mémoires* Between Border-Crossing and Border-Building," but offers a substantially different interpretive approach from Goldsmith's. For Piechocki, the *Mémoires* constitutes a forum for self-definition and a site of struggle for self-recognition. Like Goldsmith, she places Mazarin and her writing within the context of "the crystallization of the modern self in seventeenth-century Europe."[5] She further theorizes the 1675 *Mémoires* as a "defensive fortification" or "protective enclosure" in which the author delimits and strives to set subjective parameters for what Piechocki describes as the open-ended narrative of autobiography that resists closure. She characterizes this narration as "a necessary prerequisite for the process of constituting the autonomous self."[6] Piechocki's exploration of the theme of border-crossing as it pertains to the Duchess Mazarin, in other words, has as much to do with the building of new borders as it does with the transgression of pre-existing ones.

In "'Idylle en Musique': Performative Hybridity and the Duchess Mazarin as Visual, Textual, and Musical Icon," Susan Shifrin and Andrew Walkling investigate the notion of border-crossing in terms of the blurring and crossing of generic boundaries within and across representational media; and the blurring and crossing of boundaries within representations of the Duchess Mazarin as iconic, hybridized subject. The essay argues for a particular kind of contingency in the relationships between acts of representation and reception: for a new way of understanding seventeenth-century representational works that presumes an audience in the know, whose reception is not only actively solicited by the works in narrative, formal, and performative terms, but upon whose knowledgeable responses the works' consummation seems to be predicated. In this respect, the details of the widely-circulated narratives (life stories and myths alike) associated with the Duchess Mazarin serve as the subtexts and contexts for

[4] Goldsmith, 14.
[5] Piechocki, 31.
[6] Piechocki, 32.

visual, theatrical, and musical representations of her and the ways in which they were viewed and understood during her lifetime. Within this broader viewing context, Shifrin and Walkling analyze three primary instances of the representation and reception of the Duchess Mazarin in which "internal cues within the composition alert the audience to their particular positions as external viewers"[7]: a hybridized portrait image of the Duchess Mazarin in the guise of the goddess Diana (with a difference) by the Italian artist Benedetto Gennari; a series of previously little-studied operatic episodes by Saint-Évremond in which Mazarin is hybridized as a familiar member of court society, as a theatrical character, and as a player; and an Italian painting from the last quarter of the seventeenth century that merges genre painting, still life, and portraiture to present—as the essay argues—a hybridized image in which Mazarin figures simultaneously as a visual icon and as a formal and performative cue to the painting's viewers.

The first chapter of Part Two, Francesco Petrucci's "A Brief Iconography of the Duchess Mazarin: Between Portrait and Allegory in Baroque Rome," considers Mazarin's affiliation with such artists as Jacob-Ferdinand Voet and Guillaume Courtois "il Borgognone," active in Rome during her residence there in the late 1660s and early 1670s. Petrucci also extends the discussion of Mazarin's association with generically-driven and generically-hybridized representation. He identifies Mazarin as the inspiration for seventeenth-century Italian beauties series (*gallerie delle belle*), a sub-genre of portraiture that proliferated throughout Europe during the second half of the century in particular and for which the Flemish expatriate artist Voet was particularly well-known. Petrucci emphasizes the generic uncertainty or "betweenness" of Voet's images of Mazarin, describing them as

> neither [portraits]…of…courtesan[s], as in the Renaissance, nor…work[s] of pure imagination dealing with…mythological subject[s], but… portrait[s] of an actual, named noblewoman[8]

in a manner that recalls the hybrid operatic episodes and paintings discussed by Shifrin and Walkling in their essay. Petrucci provides further evidence of Mazarin's association with generic trend-setting or boundary-blurring, crediting her with having served as the inspiration "for a number of decorative paintings that were allegories of natural, spontaneous beauty"[9] and the nexus of collaborations between Roman still-life and

[7] Shifrin and Walkling, 98.
[8] Petrucci, 103.
[9] Ibid.

figurative painters. Petrucci distinguishes between actual portrait images that depicted Mazarin and the so-called decorative programs that referred back to the portraits of Mazarin and in some cases her physical features, but which he does not construe as portrait images in and of themselves. In this regard, Shifrin's and Walkling's essay and Petrucci's, together, provide a model for reevaluating the strict generic divisions that have conventionally governed the study of portraiture in particular during this period[10] and for investigating the generic hybrid potentialities in visual representations that are suggested by the hybridizations found in literary and theatrical representations of women such as the Duchess Mazarin.

Valeria De Lucca's "'Pallade al valor, Venere al volto': Music, Theatricality, and Performance in Marie Mancini Colonna's Patronage" provides context for the representation, reception, and arts patronage of Hortense Mancini through an investigation of her elder sister Marie's relationship with the Roman society into which she married. Like Hortense, Marie was much mythologized in her own time. As De Lucca's essay makes evident, the details of her personal life—like those of her sister's—were followed closely in the newsletters and periodicals that circulated throughout the Continent, and her arts patronage became yet another vehicle for the exposure (and scrutiny) of her personal and cultural predilections. If Hortense's story is one of peregrination, border-crossing, and adopting culture where she found it, Marie's story could be described as that of self-consciously eliding borders and importing culture. De Lucca notes that Marie "was well aware that Rome was not Paris" and that she "decided to create a niche for herself, her intellectual interests, and her 'French' taste for entertainment."[11]

Both by virtue of this insistent importation of "Frenchness" and in her highly visible patronage of and participation in various aspects of the annual carnival—its masquerades, floats, balls, and other theatrical and musical events—Marie appears to have self-consciously fashioned herself

[10] Elizabeth Cropper broke ground in this area more than twenty years ago with her essay "The Beauty of Woman: Problems in the Rhetoric of Renaissance Portraiture" in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 175-90, in which she argued for a more historicized and figurative (and less literal-minded) understanding of the integration of the particular with the generalized in so-called "portraits" of beautiful women by such artists as Parmigianino, Paris Bordone, and Titian.

[11] De Lucca, 121.

as a persistent "foreigner" who flouted Roman prohibitions against such highly-visible displays by women of her standing. As De Lucca writes,

> her activity as a patron seems to have fueled the antagonism of the Roman nobility, for whom patronage was inevitably a quintessentially male-dominated activity. They viewed her patronage as the bold 'border-crossing' gesture of a woman who purposely broke the rules imposed on her by her social status and marital state.[12]

Thus Marie constitutes both context for and counterpart to her younger sister, transgressing geographical and gendered boundaries through the acts of representation with which she associated herself. Indeed, Marie's appropriation of theatrical roles that hybridized her own, storied persona with mythological and historical figures directly parallels what Shifrin and Walkling refer to as the "performative hybridity" of Hortense's representations in multiple genres. De Lucca's analysis of these hybrid characterizations as

> not only affirm[ing] [Marie's] social rank and demonstrat[ing] her power as patron, but also, ultimately,…[providing] a means to make her otherwise repressed voice heard[13]

offers an additional perspective to the reception-centered and artist-centered approaches emphasized in earlier chapters.

The final chapter of the volume, "The Duchess Mazarin and Saint-Évremond: The Final Journey" by Denys Potts, offers a close examination of the complex relationship that developed between these two expatriates in London during the last twenty-five years of Mazarin's life. Potts's essay provides historical and biographical context for several of the figures who dominate the volume as a whole. It also provides another means of approach to the constructs of border-crossing and hybridity as they relate to the Duchess Mazarin, suggesting that even such apparently cut-and-dried categories as "married" or "not"—in this moment of transition in the seventeenth century—could themselves merge and become hybrid conditions. Potts's essay does another essential service to the volume and its main character. While the Duchess Mazarin can inadvertently become a cipher for the historical, artistic, and theoretical paradigms we explore with relish in the following pages, "The Final Journey" reminds us that she and her contemporaries were as much made of flesh and blood as are we.

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[12] De Lucca, 122.
[13] De Lucca, 126.

Postscript

As described at the start of the Introduction, the primary project of this book is to present the case study of the Duchess Mazarin within the context of a cross-disciplinary investigation of early modern border-crossing and hybridity, and to lay out productive strategies for doing so in the hope that they might help to generate further scholarship in this area. In the process, however, we also have the opportunity and obligation to confront some of the scholarly "issues" that are symptomatic of writing about the early modern period. In this sense, the fact that we are all focusing on a single case study brings such scholarly concerns into sharper focus than might otherwise be the case with a broader and more diverse set of topics. (So for instance, the fact that De Lucca, Petrucci, and Shifrin and Walkling are all attending in their essays to elements of a common visual iconography enables us to demonstrate the scholarly differences that come into play in identifying the sitters of certain seventeenth-century portraits of women.)

We have also had to consider how best to allocate names and titles in a volume that focuses on a small cast of main characters but encompasses as well a broad array of figures who span at least three countries and therefore three sets of naming and titling conventions. Here we have arrived at a hybrid solution (not surprisingly). We have used the English forms of titles for the members of the Mancini "inner circle": the Duchess Mazarin, the Duke Mazarin, the Constable Colonna, the Constabless Colonna, the Duchess of Nevers and the Duke of Nevers, the Duchess of Bouillon, the Cardinal Mazarin. However, for most others, we have retained the original language and titling conventions of their native countries: so, for instance, the seigneur de Saint-Évremond.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

In citing works in the notes, short titles and abbreviations have generally been used for frequently cited sources. These sources have been identified in expanded form in the list below.

Frequently cited primary sources:

Mancini, *Mémoires*: *Mémoires d'Hortense et de Marie Mancini*, ed. Gérard Doscot (Paris: Mercure de France, 1987).

Saint-Évremond, *Oeuvres*: Saint-Évremond, *Oeuvres en Prose*, ed. René Ternois (Paris: Marcel Didier, 1962-9).

Saint-Évremond, *Lettres*: Saint-Évremond, *Lettres*, ed. René Ternois (Paris: Marcel Didier, 1967-8).

Saint-Évremond, *Oeuvres meslées*: Saint-Évremond, *Oeuvres meslées de Mr. de Saint-Evremond, publiées sur les manuscrits de l'auteur*, ed. Pierre Des Maizeaux and Israel Silvestre (London: Jacob Tonson, 1705).

Frequently cited secondary sources:

Cholakian 2000: Patricia Cholakian, *Women and the Politics of Self-Representation in France* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2000).

Goldsmith 2001: Elizabeth C. Goldsmith, *Publishing Women's Life Stories in France, 1647-1720: From Voice to Print* (Burlington, VT and Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001).

Goldsmith and Goodman 1995: Elizabeth C. Goldsmith and Dena Goodman, ed., *Going Public: Women and Publishing in Early Modern France* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995).

Petrucci 2005: Francesco Petrucci, *Ferdinando Voet (1639-1689) detto Ferdinando de' Ritratti* (Rome: Ugo Bozzi, 2005).

Potts 2002: Denys Potts, *Saint-Évremond: A Voice from Exile. Newly Discovered Letters to Madame de Gouville and the Abbé de Hautefeuille (1697-1701)* (Oxford: Legenda, 2002).

Shifrin 2008a: Susan Shifrin, "'Subdued by a famous Roman dame': Picturing Foreignness, Notoriety, and Prerogative in the Portraits of Hortense Mancini, Duchess Mazarin," in *Politics, Transgression and Representation at the Court of Charles II*, Studies in British Art Volume 18, ed. Catharine MacLeod and Julia Marciari Alexander

(New Haven and London: Yale Center for British Art and Yale University Press, 2008), 141-74.

Shifrin 2008b: Susan Shifrin, ed., *Re-Framing Representations of Women: Figuring, Fashioning, Portraiting, and Telling in the* 'Picturing' Women *Project* (Burlington, VT and Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

Shifrin 2002: Susan Shifrin, "'At the end of the Walk by Madam Mazarines Lodgings': Si(gh)ting the Transgressive Woman in Accounts of the Restoration Court," in *Women as Sites of Culture: Women's Roles in Cultural Formation From the Renaissance to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Susan Shifrin (Burlington, VT and Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 195-203.

Shifrin 1998: Susan Shifrin, "'*A Copy of my Countenance*': Biography, Iconography and Likeness in the Portraits of the Duchess Mazarin and Her Circle" (PhD diss., Bryn Mawr College, 1998).

Frequently cited repository names:

BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris
I-Rvat	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City
I-SUss	Biblioteca di Santa Scolastica, Subiaco
PRO	Public Record Office, Kew
TNA	The National Archives of the United Kingdom

PART I.

THE HYBRID DUCHESS

CHAPTER ONE

THOROUGHLY MODERN MAZARIN

ELIZABETH C. GOLDSMITH

When in 1661 the dying Cardinal Mazarin arranged the marriage of his niece Hortense Mancini to Charles-Armand de la Porte, marquis de la Meilleraye, the couple inherited the Mazarin name along with much of the cardinal's immense fortune. This impressive legacy was the subject of much discussion among contemporary observers, who also marveled at the unlikely union of the 15-year-old Hortense, who had been raised at the court, with the religious zealot Armand nearly twenty years her senior. The inheritance as well as the marriage was to remain in the public eye for many decades. Armand's zeal led him to deface and even destroy some of the works of art that he had inherited and that he deemed sinful, and Hortense eventually fled the Palais Mazarin and refused to return. In her memoir the Duchess Mazarin defends her risky choice. Her narrative describes the ways in which she attempted to negotiate her independence despite cultural practices that limited a woman's access to wealth and money. Moveable property—jewels, horses, carriages—constituted her stake toward a new life, and these goods assume particular importance in her account. In letters and conversations her friends recounted the scene of one of the wealthiest women in Europe unable to pay for property or basic necessities, traveling "like heroines in a novel, with plenty of jewels and no clean clothes," as Madame de Grignan comments.[1] When eventually Hortense Mazarin settled in London at the court of Charles II, she formed a salon that became known for its "French" style. There, visitors attempted to enhance their own social currency as well as make a quick profit through gambling.

In her bold roles as writer, traveler, salonnière, gambler, and runaway wife, Hortense Mazarin became a cultural icon. Her life story unfolds at moments in French history that we might consider moments of transition

[1] "comme des héroïnes de roman, avec force pierreries et point de linge blanc," quoted by the Duchess Mazarin in her memoir. Mancini, *Mémoires*, 88.

to modernity. Modernity is sometimes defined in relation to science, following Descartes, and equated with method, a route toward knowledge that relies on process and not previously established systems of thought. With reference to the trajectory of a life, modernity may be viewed more broadly as "the consciousness of oneself as self-creating," in Carla Hesse's recent definition, which highlights the modern self as embracing uncertainty, risk, and paths not taken.[2] Hortense Mazarin's *oeuvre*, by which I mean her writing as well as her life as she designed and displayed it, engaged with the modern in a number of ways. Her memoir constitutes the first example in France of a published autobiography by a woman not of royal blood. In the volatile arena of marriage legislation, her divorce trial in 1689 was one of the earliest to be printed and circulated in pamphlet form, in which lawyers argued the case drawing on "testimony" drawn from her memoir and letters. Her flight from Paris and her subsequent impressive mobility were calculated risks, made possible by newly designed carriages, roads, and maps that had been recently improved along with the creation of a state-managed postal service. Her life after her departure from Paris was read by many as a story without precedent, and her efforts to orchestrate her own survival by appealing alternately to the forces of providence and chance were regarded with interest and amazement. Her determination to establish a life for herself led her to "invest" in her own celebrity and attempt to secure her survival by a modern strategy of risk-taking that could potentially assure her a continued existence outside of the traditional spaces to which convention and fate had assigned her.

Reading current scholarly work on French travel writing, one would think that seventeenth-century women did not travel. And yet the experience and spectacle of women's mobility is one that is explored and recounted in some of the most engaging prose narrative of the period. In real letter correspondences and in fiction, the traveling woman was an object of great fascination. The correspondence of Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, marquise de Sévigné with her daughter, occasioned by their separation and her daughter's repeated voyages to Provence, records a lifetime of attention to transport, travel, and the challenge of communicating across distances. The pastoral landscapes of Honoré d'Urfé's popular and influential novel *L'Astrée* are traversed by runaway ladies of all classes. Escaped and traveling women are prominently featured in the literary fairy tales that enjoyed a vogue at the end of the

[2] Carla Hesse, *The Other Enlightenment: How French Women Became Modern* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), xii.

seventeenth century, most of them authored by women. The novels of Madeleine de Scudéry are populated with heroines who cross vast territories and converse at length on the experience. In an essay on "desires" in modern life, Madeleine de Scudéry identifies the desire to travel as the most problematic, for it pulls one away from "the most perfect place on earth,"[3] Versailles, while also inspiring the desire to return to court, to recount how one has lived at a distance. The travels of real fugitives like Marie Mancini Colonna, Marie-Sidonie de Courcelles, and Hortense Mancini Mazarin were closely tracked in both private correspondences and letters of state, as were the more deliberate and official diplomatic itineraries of female figures like Marianne de La Trémouille, princesse des Ursins, and Christina, Queen of Sweden. Many of these women, moreover, exhibit in their own writings a keen awareness of each other as travelers, and many of them crossed paths. [4]

Mobility, both physical and social, has been cited since the seventeenth century as a "modern" ideal.[5] In this essay I will focus on the concern with mobility and circulation in Hortense Mazarin's self-fashioning, and how these preoccupations were echoed in the writings of contemporaries who observed her. Mobility and circulation are recurring metaphors, too, in the writings by and about her, connecting the themes of money, conversation, travel, and marriage as a form of exchange.

Patricia Cholakian has called Hortense Mazarin's memoir "the story of a woman's financial education,"[6] and indeed, in Hortense's descriptions of the new realities she faced after fleeing her husband in 1668, the problem of securing material support for herself looms large. As a girl, she writes, she had once amused herself by throwing her uncle's gold coins out the window of the Palais Mazarin, but after her marriage she became alarmed when her husband, claiming to be investing their inheritance in his properties, seems to lose large amounts of it. She makes her decision to

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[3] *Entretiens de morale* (Paris: Jean Anisson, 1692), 209. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations in this essay are my own.

[4] See Marie Mancini, *La vérité dans son jour*, ed. Patricia F. Cholakian and Elizabeth C. Goldsmith (Delmar, NY: Scholars Facsimiles and Reprints, 1998); Marianne Cermakian, *La Princesse des Ursins, sa vie et ses lettres* (Paris: Didier, 1969); *Mémoires de la marquise de Courcelles*, ed. C.H. de Saint-Didier (Paris: Académie des bibliophiles, 1869); Per Bjurstom, *Feast and Theatre in Queen Christina's Rome* (Stockholm: Nationalmusei skriftserie n. 14, 1966).

[5] On this point see Larry Riggs, "Social Mobility, Market Economics, and *Amour-Propre in the Early Modern Theatrum Mundi*," *Papers on French Seventeenth-Century Literature* 39, no. 57 (2002), 428-37.

[6] Cholakian 2000, 98.

leave when her husband asks her for her jewels, saying that he is worried that she will give them away: "he told me that he feared that I would give some of them away, liberal that I am, and that he was only taking them to add to them."[7] And it is to retrieve her jewels that Hortense returns to her residence on the night of her escape:

> I was so troubled as I was leaving that I had to return from the Saint-Antoine gate to retrieve my chest of jewels and money, which I had forgotten. It is true that I never dreamed that I would lack money, but experience has taught me that it is the first thing that one runs out of, especially people like me who have never been short of it and in consequence who have never understood its importance and the need to manage it.[8]

Discussions of moveable wealth versus landed property in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries focus not only on the obvious distinction between bourgeois and noble wealth, but they also often propose a moral distinction, contrasting the psychology of the landowner with that of the owner of moveable forms of wealth. Lawrence Klein has evocatively described how this distinction was linked to anxiety about mobility:

> The land stood still and palpable while other sorts of property were moving and invisible. Since land was pictured as an inheritance, it was firmly situated in time as well as in place. By contrast, mobile property lacked physical and temporal definition. While land was pictured as intrinsically valuable, passed in entirety from generation to generation, outside the exchanges and fluctuating values that constituted the market society, mobile property, always shifting hands and dependent on the market, lacked any such autonomy.[9]

As a designated heir to a part of her uncle's staggeringly large fortune,

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[7] "il me dit qu'il craignait que je n'en donnasse, libérale comme j'étais, et qu'il ne les avait prises que pour les augmenter." Mancini, *Mémoires*, 48.

[8] "[J]e fus si troublée en partant qu'il fallut revenir de la porte Saint-Antoine prendre la cassette de mon argent et de mes pierreries, que j'avais oubliée. Il est vrai que je ne songeais pas seulement que l'argent pût jamais me manquer: mais l'expérience m'a appris que c'est la première chose qui manque; surtout aux gens, qui, pour en avoir toujours eu de reste, n'en ont jamais connu l'importance, et la nécessité de le ménager." Mancini, *Mémoires*, 65.

[9] Lawrence Klein, "Property and Politeness in the Early Eighteenth-Century Whig Moralists: The Case of *The Spectator*," in *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, ed. John Brewer and Susan Staves (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 221-3.

Hortense was in fact once removed, for the Mazarin name as well as the wealth went first to her husband, and then to their children. Under the terms of the marriage contract, if the couple remained childless the inheritance, along with the Mazarin name, was to pass on to Hortense's brother.[10] In fact, Hortense herself was part of the inheritance as much as or more than she was a legatee; she was a piece of the property that Charles-Armand de la Porte had acquired from Mazarin. In the last decades of the seventeenth century, legal and philosophical debates over the status of women as property in the marriage market were just beginning.[11] The Mazarin inheritance and marriage contract received considerable publicity because of the size of the fortune involved, the prominence of the legator and the anomalies of the contract. This inheritance was a peculiarly modern one, consisting largely of moveable assets (much of this of dubious origin) and some recently acquired property, and bequeathing a new identity to the male heir but no ancient family property on which to ground his new status. In a risky but probably strategic move shortly before his death, the Cardinal Mazarin had first designated the king as his sole heir, leaving Louis XIV to graciously refuse the legacy and return it to his minister, thus legalizing a fortune that was thought by many to have been largely illegitimately acquired.[12] The status of Hortense, the Cardinal's blood relative, as perhaps the most legitimate piece of property that Charles-Armand was acquiring through his marriage, was thus particularly starkly evident. And while the contract specified that the couple would have a "common" share of the inheritance, Hortense's share was not specifically protected. This was unusual for such a large inheritance, and it meant that the marriage contract established her as a carrier, more than a controller, of her wealth.[13] Years later, after the husband and wife had argued over the issue of a marital separation before the courts, the English philosopher Mary Astell was to base her critique of

[10] Georges Mongrédien, *Une aventurière au grand siècle : la Duchesse Mazarin* (Paris : Amiot-Dumont, 1952), 26; Georges Livet, *Le Duc Mazarin, Gouverneur d'Alsace* (Paris: Le Roux, 1954), 16.

[11] See Carol Blum, "Of Women and the Land: Legitimizing Husbandry," in *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, 162.

[12] Livet, *Le Duc Mazarin*, 16.

[13] Livet, *Le Duc Mazarin*, 15. On laws governing women's control of property, see Christian Biet, *Droit et littérature sous l'ancien régime* (Paris: Champion, 2002), 255-8. Martha Howells has studied how redefinitions of property and legal reforms in the early modern period influenced the way people came to view women in relation to wealth, in *The Marriage Exchange: Property, Social Place, and Gender in Cities of the Low Countries, 1300-1550* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 228-36.

women as property on the Mazarin case.

Over the decades following their much-celebrated wedding, the Duke and Duchess Mazarin would each witness a dramatic decline in the value of this fortune bequeathed to them. The two spouses had radically different views of money, as well as different degrees of control over it. Charles-Armand de la Porte from the beginning devoted his attention almost exclusively to the oversight of his lands, in the traditional manner of other great nobles, an approach to wealth management that may have been doomed to failure in the changing economy of the late seventeenth century.[14] Hortense's perspective grew out of the sphere over which she had some control—she spent money on entertainment, material goods, and luxury—and thus her view of wealth was more modern. The wealth that interested her was mobile, and in this category she came to include her own person as a kind of moveable property that fluctuated in value according to the social economy in which she circulated.

In her memoir Hortense chafes at her husband's obsessive attachment to his new lands and his repeated efforts to plant her on his provincial properties where he could restrict her conversations and her interactions, keeping her away from cities and from social circles of her own choosing. She lists in her memoir the places where she was made to reside with her husband. In her description, these unpleasant properties are characterized by discomfort and a rigorous denial of opportunities for movement and "divertissement," resulting in her being unable to form any kind of independent connection, either to a place or to the company of others: "He always chose these sorts of places, so that I would be sure not to find any company."[15] She quotes her husband, who later justified the restrictions he imposed on her by saying that he did not want her to decline in value due to over-circulation in society:

> He was impelled to say later on *that he did what he did because he knew what I was worth, and that social commerce was so contagious that however much he might be ridiculed for it, he wanted to keep me from being sullied because he loved me even more than his own reputation.*[16]

[14] Livet, *Le Duc Mazarin*, 56-78.

[15] "Il choisissait toujours ces sortes de lieux, afin que je ne visse point de compagnie." Mancini, *Mémoires,* 45.

[16] Ibid. "Il a dû dire depuis, que ce qu'il en faisoit était à cause qu'il connaissoit ce que je valais, et que le commerce du monde était si contagieux, quelque raillerie qu'on fit de luy, il voulait empecher qu'on ne me gastât, parce qu'il m'aimait encor plus que sa propre réputation."

Hortense's adventures immediately following her flight constitute a series of experiments in how to give her newly mobile person a kind of currency. She describes her departure simply as a fatal decision to expose herself to the consequences of distance from her husband, "to expose my reputation to the calumny which is inevitable for any woman of my age and my quality who is at a distance from her husband."[17] She leaves Paris disguised as a man, taking with her a small chest of jewels and money and little else. Throughout her adventures cross-dressing would function much like currency conversion. Her male clothing was like counterfeit coin, to be used quickly to achieve an immediate purpose but then just as quickly abandoned when the ruse became transparent. For her, disguise is never a long-term strategy, and it could even be accidental, an opportunity to be exploited on the spot. Traveling to Neuchâtel she is mistaken for the duchesse de Longueville, a mistake that she exploits ("the mistake was to my advantage") long enough to recover from her voyage and then continue on her very haphazard itinerary.[18]

After a brief return to the Palais Mazarin imposed on her by the courts, Hortense made her definitive escape on 13 June 1668. Her memoir describes her early adventures on the road as a series of "experiences" that lead her to a more mature understanding of how to negotiate her own path.[19] As though marking this phase of her life as one that has finally located her in the world, she notes the exact date of her departure (this is in

[17] "exposer ma réputation aux médisances inévitables à toute femme de mon âge, et de ma qualité, qui est éloignée de son mari." Mancini, *Mémoires*, 65.

[18] "A tout prendre, la méprise m'était avantageuse: je gagnais bien à la qualité ce que je perdais à l'âge." Mancini, *Mémoires*, 67.

[19] The idea that travel could be not only an adventure but a way of life was first given currency in the seventeenth century, perhaps starting with the famous metaphor proposed by Descartes in his *Discourse on Method*, in which he describes the process of reasoning as a voyage. In 1662, Paris became the first city to offer a paying system of public transportation, and developments in postal routes across France meant that travelers could move across long distances without a planned itinerary or a private coach, simply following the regularly scheduled postal stagecoaches. Road maps were introduced that made the country conceivable as an open space that could be traversed and not simply penetrated. Postal route maps supported new ways of imagining travel and mobility, and suggested the intriguing possibility of travel that was both unplanned and reliable. Any paying traveler could ride in the postal stagecoach, arrive at a relay point, and make a connection to a number of other possible destinations. See Guy Arbellot, *Autour des routes de poste: les premières cartes routières de la France, XVIIe-XIXe siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale/Musée de la Poste, 1992).

fact the only date in her life that she specifies in the memoir) and outlines the precise means of her travel. Writing as though her readers might be able to follow her movements on a map, she itemizes each step in her itinerary. She mentions that she organized a relay of postal horses in advance of her escape, then traveled in a small carriage, followed by a six-horse carriage, then a "chaise roulante," then by horseback until she has crossed the French border, and when she is injured in a fall she arranges to be transported by stretcher. She tells her readers that she managed to acquire guards to escort her into Switzerland despite attempts by her husband to have her arrested. She explains how she managed to remain informed about events in Paris, specifying the number of postal couriers who delivered messages to her over a period of six weeks spent in Milan. Finally she joined her sister Marie Mancini Colonna in Rome and settled in to observe, at a safe distance, the disorder that her departure had wrought and the legal measures that her husband was undertaking to force her return.

Hortense relates in her memoir that she was struck by how invested others were in keeping her in circulation and out of her husband's reach. When she herself is discouraged, confined to a convent in Rome by order of her husband and preparing to negotiate her return to him, her friends persuade her to escape. When her husband tries to block her efforts to pawn her jewels, she is supported by friends who help her return to France to obtain a legal resolution that would enable her to live independently. Upon her arrival at court Louis XIV offers her a pension of 24,000 francs, while also counseling her return to the Palais Mazarin. Instead, she takes the money and runs, this time against the advice of friends, but taking the chance that the sum will be an adequate stake toward her future independence:

> Monsieur de Lauzun asked me *what I expected to do with my twenty-four thousand francs?* …But he didn't know that I had learned to manage money. It's not that I didn't see that it would be impossible to subsist properly for a long time with that sum. But considering that I couldn't get any more and that Monsieur Mazarin didn't even want to allow me to use it in Paris without being with him, I calculated that it would at least give me the time to take other measures.[20]

[20] "M. de Lauzun me demanda, *ce que je voulais faire avec mes vingt-quatre mille francs?* …Mais il ne savait pas que j'avais appris à ménager l'argent. Ce n'est pas que je ne visse qu'il m'était impossible de subsister longtemps honnêtement avec cette somme; mais outre que je n'en pouvais pas obtenir davantage, et que M. Mazarin ne voulait pas même me permettre de la manger à Paris sans être avec lui,

Thus buying herself some time she returned to the household of her sister in Rome.

Even during her sojourn in Rome at the Palazzo Colonna, Hortense's movements were observed, recounted, and communicated to a broad public via correspondences and hand-written Italian newsletters, known as *avvisi*. In a newsletter circulated shortly after Hortense's arrival, it is reported that her abandoned husband, unhappy that his wife was "giving herself so freely to conversations," had written the Cardinal Mancini to ask him to pressure her into entering a convent.[21] Painted portraits of Hortense were circulated and critiqued, again most severely by the duke, who, the *avvisi* report, on one occasion shipped one that was in his possession back to the painter and demanded that it be redone.[22] The relationship between the two sisters was a popular topic of gossip. Their quarrels, escapades, attendance or sponsorship of concerts and plays, and other social activities in common were recounted in the gazettes.[23] When they are on their own, and no longer in the company of the Constable Colonna, the two of them quickly earn nicknames in the newsletters and no doubt also in public conversations about them ("La Colonna" and "La Mazzarina") suggestive of their transgressive behavior (their nobilary titles are dropped) and also of the eagerness of observers to cast them in roles comparable to entertainers or novelistic characters. In some entries the two of them become a kind of legendary duo, "the Duchess and the Constabless":

> the duchess has once again left the monastery where she had retired, and gone to all the *feste* around Rome together with the Constabless her sister, although is was pouring rain, because those devils without code are made of fire, and have no fear of water.[24]

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je faisais mon compte, qu'elle me donnerait du moins le temps de prendre d'autres mesures." Mancini, *Mémoires*, 81.

[21] "Dispiacendo grandemente al Duca Mazzarini e altri Parenti, che la duchessa del med.ma cognomen si sia data cosi liberamente alla conversationi; si è per ciò portato il Card.Le Mancini Sio della detta Duchessa de S.Sta con pregarla di voler operare, ò con esortationi o con altro, che la med.ma Signora entri in un chiostre…." I-Rvat. Barb. Lat. 6401, fols. 406r-v (Rome, 11 November 1668).

[22] I-Rvat. Barb. Lat. 6404, fol. 270v (Rome, 5 April 1670). The painter in question was one "D. Domenico."

[23] For example, I-Rvat. Barb. Lat. 6404, fol. 390v; Barb. Lat. 6369, fols. 335r, 356r; Barb. Lat. 6371, fols. 17r, 21v, 33r, 81r.

[24] "la duchessa uscita nuovam.te dal Monastero, dove si era ritirata è andata tutte queste feste per Roma, insieme con la Contestabilessa sua sorella, benche