

# Dynastic Marriages 1612/1615

A Celebration of the Habsburg and Bourbon Unions



EDITED BY  
**MARGARET M. MCGOWAN**

EUROPEAN FESTIVAL STUDIES  
1450–1700

ROUTLEDGE

## DYNASTIC MARRIAGES 1612/1615

# European Festival Studies: 1450–1700

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# Dynastic Marriages 1612/1615

A Celebration of the Habsburg and Bourbon Unions

*Edited by*

MARGARET M. MCGOWAN  
*University of Sussex, UK*

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## Notes on Contributors

**Maria Inès Aliverti** is Associate Professor of Discipline della Spettacolo at the University of Pisa (Dipartimento di Storia della Arti). Her many publications include *Il Gioco del Ponte di Pisa. Memoria e Ricordo in una città* (Catalogue, 1980), *Il ritratto d'autore nel Settecento francese e inglese* (1986), *Poesia fuggitiva sugli attori nell'età di Voltaire* (1993) and *La naissance de l'acteur moderne* (1998).

**Marie Baudière** is a PhD student, supervised by Denis Crouzet (Paris IV – Sorbonne). She works on royal French festivals and their political meaning during the reigns of Henri IV and Louis XIII. She drew up the inventory of Festival books belonging to the Institut national de l'Histoire de l'Art, and participated in the Exhibition *Chroniques de l'éphémère: le livre de fête dans la collection Jacques Doucet* (2010).

**Marie-Claude Canova-Green** is Reader in French at Goldsmiths College (University of London). Her publications include *La Politique-spectacle au grand siècle: les rapports franco-anglais* (1993), many articles on court festivals, and she has edited *Benserade: Ballets pour Louis XIV* (2 vols, 1997), and *Ballets pour Louis XIII. Danse et politique à la cour de France (1610–1643)* (2010).

**Monique Chatenet**, conservateur en chef du patrimoine and researcher at the André Chastel Centre (CNRS, Paris), teaches at the Université Paris-Sorbonne. She has published many books and articles on French Renaissance architecture and court life in the sixteenth century. Her publications include *Le Château de Madrid au bois de Boulogne* (1987), *Chambord* (2001), *La cour de France au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle. Vie sociale et architecture* (2002); and she has edited *Maisons des champs dans l'Europe de la Renaissance* (2006), *Chasses princières dans l'Europe de la Renaissance* (2007), *Les arts de l'équitation dans l'Europe de la Renaissance* (2009) and *Le Gothique de la Renaissance* (2011).

**Paulette Choné** is Emeritus Professor at the Université de Bourgogne, where she directs the Centre for the study of Emblems. Her research has centred on the study of symbolism in literature and art of the Early Modern period. Her publications include *Emblèmes et pensée symbolique en Lorraine (1525-1633)* (1991), *Ligier Richier* (2000), *Le langage européen des signes et des symboles* (2002), and *L'emblème et le lieu* (2003).

**Sir John Elliott** (Fellow of the British Academy) is Regius Professor Emeritus of Modern History at the University of Oxford. His many publications on Spain, Europe and the Americas in the Early Modern period include *Imperial Spain, 1469–1716* (1963), *The Old World and the New, 1492–1650* (1970), *The Palace for a King. The Buen Retiro and the Court of Philip IV* (in collaboration with Jonathan Brown, 1980), *The Count-Duke of Olivares* (1986), *Spain and its World, 1500–1800* (1989), *Spain, Europe and the Wider World, 1500–1700* (2009). He was awarded the Wolfson Prize (1986), the Prince of Asturias Prize for the Social Sciences (1996), the Balzan Prize for History (1999), and knighted for his services to history in 1994.

**Iain Fenlon** is Professor of Historical Musicology at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of King's College. His research has focused on the social and cultural history of music in Renaissance Italy, and his publications include *Music and Patronage in Sixteenth-Century Mantua* (2 vols, 1980, 1982), *Music, Print and Culture in Early Sixteenth-Century Italy* (The Panizzi Lectures, 1994), *The Ceremonial City: History, Memory and Myth in Renaissance Venice* (2007) and *Piazza San Marco* (2009).

**Patrice Franchet d'Espèrey** is Ecuyer du Cadre noir de Saumur, and Director of the Centre de documentation de L'Ecole nationale d'Equitation. Pupil of René Bacharach, he has researched deeply the origins and current techniques of horsemanship; his publications include *La Leçon de la longe* (1994), *La main du Maître* (2007), and with Monique Chatenet *Les arts de l'équitation* (2009).

**Chantal Grell** has been Professor at the Université de Versailles-Saint Quentin since 1992 where she directs the research centre 'Etats, société et religion en Europe XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles' (ESR 17–18). Her publications include *L'Histoire entre érudition et philosophie* (1993), *Le XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle et l'antiquité en France* (1995), *L'Histoire intellectuelle et culturelle de la France de Louis XIV* (2000) and *Anne d'Autriche* (2009).

**Nicolas Le Roux** is Professor at the Université de Lyon. His publications include *La Faveur du roi: Mignons et courtisans au temps des derniers Valois* (2001), *Les guerres de Religion 1559–1629* (2006), *Un régicide au nom de Dieu* (2010) and many articles on court history and political culture during the French Wars of Religion.

**Margaret M. McGowan** (Fellow of the British Academy) is Research Professor of French at the University of Sussex. Her research interests centre on the intellectual, cultural and artistic concerns of Early Modern Europe. Her publications include *L'Art du Ballet de cour en France, 1581–1643* (1963), *Montaigne's Deceits* (1974), *Ideal Forms in the Age of Ronsard* (1985), *The Vision of Rome in Late Renaissance France* (2000), and *Dance in the Renaissance: European Fashion, French*

*Obsession* (2008). She gave the Léopold Delisle lectures in 2012, was awarded the Wolfson Prize in 2008, and the CBE for services to French Studies in 1998.

**J.R. Mulryne** is Professor Emeritus at the University of Warwick, and a Series Editor of *European Festival Studies: 1450–1700* (Ashgate Publishing). He has published widely on Shakespeare and Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, and was a General Editor of *Europa Triumphans. Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe* (2 vols, 2003). His most recent works (published jointly with Margaret Shewring) are *Shakespeare's Globe* (1997), *Shakespeare and the Japanese Stage* (1998), and editor (with Elizabeth Goldring) of *Court Festivals of the European Renaissance: Art, Politics and Performance* (2002).

**David Sánchez-Cano** graduated with a Bachelor of Music (composition and classical guitar) from Roosevelt University (Chicago) and a Magister Artium in art history and musicology from the Technical University Berlin, where he also defended his doctoral dissertation in art history on royal entries into Madrid in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He has published various articles on religious and courtly festivals, dance, and photography in Spain and is co-author of *Madrid and the Prado* (Königstein, Ullmann, 2009). Currently he is editing a book on festival texts in Spain for Ashgate Publishing (UK). Based in Madrid, he works as a freelance author and translator.

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# Acknowledgements

This volume represents the first in a series of studies based on annual conferences promoted by the Society for European Festival Research. Each volume seeks to provide a fully rounded view of a festival genre (such as *Waterborne Pageants*); or to study key themes which dominated the minds of patrons and artists as they elaborated their shows (such as *The Iconography of Power in Ceremonial Entries*); or, as here, an in-depth analysis of a particular occasion (*Dynastic Marriages, 1612–1615*). The series is remarkable in that it examines the context of festival, its reverberation across Europe in the Early Modern period, and the engagement of a vast array of players: princes, artists, merchants, and humble workmen and citizens. This volume aims to give as complete a bibliographical underpinning as possible with references not only to state and municipal Archives and to the printed and manuscript resources of major European libraries, but also to provide links to digitized material such as those offered by the British Library, the Warburg Institute and the recent Bibliographical database of Festivals and Ceremonies established by Helen Watanabe O’Kelly and her colleagues [<http://festivals.mml.ox.ac.uk>].

The Editors wish to extend particular thanks to those who participated in the Conference on Dynastic Marriages 1612–1615, to Ashgate Publishing (UK) and the University of Warwick for financial support, and to the Warburg Institute for generously providing the venue for this event.

MARGARET M. MCGOWAN

J.R. MULRYNE

MARGARET SHEWRING



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# Introduction

Margaret M. McGowan

It is now widely recognised that the study of festivals in the Renaissance demands input from scholars and specialists in many disciplines and, in this volume, we present an analysis of one major event – the double marriage alliance in 1612/15 between two powerful European dynasties: the Habsburgs and the Bourbons. Our aim has been to adopt an interdisciplinary and international approach so that the contributions of multiple agencies are set in relief and their interactions clearly revealed. The analysis has been made possible by the extraordinary number of primary sources which relate to this dynastic union all of which are listed at the end of this volume: numerous accounts of festivals in Paris, Bordeaux, Spain, Italy, and in the cities along the route from the French capital to Madrid; ambassadors' reports of entertainment and negotiation; epithalamia and – in contrast – satirical pamphlets; political and moral works in defence of the marriages; musical scores; printed and manuscript narratives of firework displays and naumachia; engravings and designs for carrousels and *ballets de cour*; and some treasury and municipal accounts of the costs of festival. The work of modern scholars has helped to define the directions of our own research which, we hope, will provide the basis for identifying ways of giving future researchers access to festival texts and studies, through digitisation.

We recognised that establishing a clear context for the multiple celebrations was essential since, as the knowledge of the French court's matrimonial plans gradually seeped out, there were reverberations not only in France but also across Europe. The reactions were both friendly and hostile. Spanish supporters in Italy greeted the news with celebrations. James I, whose pacific intentions had encouraged him to think of ties with Catholic France, under the influence of his son Henry – on hearing the news – immediately set in train negotiations for the marriage of his daughter Elizabeth to Frederick, count Palatine.

Perfecting the arrangements for the marriages was a long drawn-out business. Although the decision to unite the two realms in this way was secured in the spring of 1612, the marriages were only celebrated three years later, in November 1615. This delay was occasioned by political and military considerations: festivities, for example, were constantly interrupted by protestant uprisings; the journeys to and from Spain were marked by royal entries, plays, ballets, mock sea battles, processions, religious ceremonies and contests against the rebels.

By bringing together experts from diverse disciplines, we have been able to provide an all-round view of the sequence of festivals and events, and to indicate the approaches required for in-depth study of such occasions: the problems that had to be tackled by politicians, courtiers, stage managers, artists and musicians; the

questions they posed, and those we ask today. Historians (J.H. Elliott and Nicolas le Roux) have given insights into the complex political manoeuvring that went on in both countries. They have spelt out the tensions at court; the comings and goings of rebel princes which brought back memories of similar unrest during the Wars of Religion; and explained the hesitations of the principal actors, bringing into full sight the determination of the main personalities – Marie de Médicis, the Duke of Lerma, and the Prince de Condé.

Compared to the lavish nature of festival celebrations in France, those provided for Princess Elizabeth on her journey through Spain were altogether more muted, as David Sánchez Cano demonstrates. The interactions of the Spanish court and city councils are highlighted underlining the domination of the former as the financial burdens of festival were often transferred to the citizens' purse. Mascarades, involving large numbers, were performed at Burgos (for instance), and in the capital where the city council obeyed the peremptory orders of the Duke of Lerma but, nonetheless, merchants and guilds managed to allay the costs by unravelling some of the plans.

Further research on Italian contributions to commemorate the planned union of Habsburgs and Bourbons by Maria Inès Aliverti reveals significant discrepancies. Many cities, in 1612, were preoccupied with expensive funeral arrangements following the death of Margaret of Austria, and – therefore – monies were limited for other purposes: except in Naples, ruled by the Spanish, and where a magnificent Carrousel was put on.

The centrepiece of our volume is the Carrousel performed over three days on the Place Royale in Paris in 1612. Its splendour reverberated across Europe, quickly recorded in pamphlets listing the entire cavalcade which took two days to complete; these pamphlets were hurriedly written in French, or translated into Spanish and Italian, the latter at the French ambassador's expense. The detail of the designs for the various machines, architectural structures, and triumphal cars is studied by art historians – Monique Chatenet and Marie Baudière who analyse the painting by Claude Chastillon (preserved at the Musée Carnavalet) and the engravings of the Place Royale by Ziarnko which offer a bewildering assemblage of chariots, knights, horses and monuments. They relate these elements back to earlier Valois *fêtes*, to the strong influence of festival traditions in Florence and Turin, and indicate the continuing interest in these images in later records and inventions of *fêtes* for Louis XIV.

The equestrian skills of Louis XIII's courtiers, well trained in Antoine de Pluvinel's Academy, are examined by Patrice Franchet d'Espèrey, *maître dans l'art de l'équitation*, and thus singularly qualified to present the horse ballet which occasioned so much admiration from contemporary observers. The Carrousel and evidence of the all-round training provided at Pluvinel's establishment marked significant developments in the equestrian art and behaviour associated with it, and which were to endure not only in France but were also passed into England, thanks to the enthusiasm of the Duke of Newcastle.

Music played a dominant role in the Carrousel. The noise of trumpets and the sound of oboes controlled the rhythm of the spectacular entries into the square, and

regulated the movement of the horses; together, they announced the arrival of each combatant on the third day, ready to display his skills at the quintain or running at the ring. Interestingly, music survives – the three songs of Venus, for example, used for the horse ballet on the second day. Iain Fenlon traces the popularity of *airs de cour* in France, and the origins of the musical forms used in the Carrousel back to the *Académie de Poésie et de Musique* founded by Antoine de Baïf and Thibault de Courville and receiving its Letters Patent from Charles IX in 1570, and to the influence of Italian festivals performed at Turin and in Florence four years earlier.

Symbolism was a key component of representation and explanation in early festivals, for by means of myth and allegory, the creators of the Carrousel promoted the renown of knights, recalled their past achievements and present ambitions. Paulette Choné examines how poets incorporated the rich resources of symbolic images into the design of cars, the elaboration of costumes, and into the *cartels* (challenges) and poems presented to the Queen, Louis XIII and Princess Elizabeth. Mythological compendia, hieroglyphs, emblems and figures taken from Romance traditions are all called upon to project grandiose conceptions. This hyperbolic language was carried over into the fabrication of fireworks – that public display of festival fever which regularly accompanied celebration. Notably, Paulette Choné takes a comparative approach, examining such displays in Paris, London, and Heidelberg, and revealing how the techniques had become more and more refined, and how such manifestations of public joy took on a very different character from place to place. Everywhere, however, everyone exploited the powerful impact of moving images on the minds of the spectators – whether by extolling in Paris the glory of the French monarchy with names written in fire, or by illustrating military strength with images spread across the sky, illuminating Saint George in action, slaying the dragon.

Continuity and difference both characterise the forms deployed in festival, 1612–1615. Accounts of the Carrousel are cast in the form of novels and this imaginative genre allowed Laugier de Porchères and François de Rosset – the two inventors of the *fête* – to cross the boundaries of fact and fiction, conjuring up chivalric adventures, the paraphernalia of disguise, exotic names, rich and spectacular machines, and feats of arms. Everything is couched in the language of excess; poems intrude to explain the action or the symbolism, or to offer proper salutes to the dignity of princely spectators. Margaret McGowan shows how difficult it is to separate out real happenings from expressions of intent or conscious statements of self-promotion. Indeed, reality and fiction are constantly fused, as they are in the *Ballet de Madame*, 1615, performed by Princess Elizabeth, in the guise of Minerva, on the eve of her departure for Spain. While the sensational scene changes engineered for the ballet by Tommaso Francini left a lasting impression on contemporaries, the lyrical power of the verses of François de Malherbe still move us today. Great poets were content to participate in these events for they offered recognition for the monarch they served as well as for themselves, in a lasting manner. In fact, it is demonstrated here that the success of both forms – the Carrousel and the *ballet de cour* – had a permanent impact on artistic production

associated with political purpose. Both forms were used again in the novels of Puget de la Serre and Abraham Rémy, to illustrate the political advantages of the union of Princess Henrietta Maria and Charles, Prince of Wales in 1625; and both reappeared in historical works and in theoretical considerations of festival forms.

The extent and range of forms of entertainment created to celebrate the marriage of Louis XIII and Anne of Austria are abundantly illustrated by the many festivals put on in Bordeaux at the end of 1615. It is interesting to relate the events prepared for such an important occasion in a provincial capital with those organised in Paris. The artistic efforts by the Bordelais certainly did not lack enterprise. Marie-Claude Canova-Green studies the royal entries, the fireworks, the jousts and tournaments, the plays written and performed by Jesuits in their college (who enthusiastically supported the union with Catholic Spain), interweaving the language, the pretensions and claims from the fictions of the Carrousel (1612) and the *Ballet de Madame* (1615), and from other *ballets de cour*, from harangues, histories and pamphlet literature. From this vast field of reference emerges the same unsteady relationship and ambivalence between fact and fiction; the same political pleas and the customary iteration between acknowledged devastation of war and anticipated pleasures of peace.

The messages of hope are consistent, but what of the judgements of History? These are explored by Chantal Grell who argues that the hostile reception of the marriage by Protestants and rebel princes was amply recorded in the political pamphlets of the time, that the extended delay between *fiançailles* and marriage was more beneficial to France than the union itself since that had been engineered by an Italian queen in thrall to Catholic Spain. This hostility shines through nineteenth-century assessments where historians like Michelet, antagonistic to extravagant display and imbued with republicanism and anti-clerical attitudes, denounced the union as a disaster and interpreted published opposition to it as if it genuinely reflected general public opinion. More recent reviews, by Jean-François Dubost (for example) are more balanced, and the magnificent series of paintings by Rubens, in homage to the Queen Regent's own marriage and her triumphant policy for her children, serves as a reminder of the powerful boost art can give to politics. Matrimonial alliances and the festivals that surround them are useful ways of governing. Two comparative examples – the cases of Grand Duke Ferdinando I de' Medici and Prince Henry Stuart – are presented by J.R. Mulryne. These serve to emphasise how political alliances, cemented through marriage, were employed as a tool of government universally in Renaissance Europe. In the eyes of princes, such approaches enhanced the prestige of both parties; secured bonds of friendship and understanding which could be deployed when times became hard. Their celebration through magnificence, and even extravagance, was – in their view – a clear manifestation of their power, intended to persuade other states of their strength and resolve; and, moreover, to convince others of their cultural and artistic superiority. Festivals in Renaissance Europe were considered an essential part of a well-managed State.

# Chapter 1

## The Political Context of the 1612–1615 Franco-Spanish Treaty

J.H. Elliott

On Monday 9 November 1615 the Bidasoa river dividing France from Spain was the setting for a carefully choreographed ceremonial occasion of transcendent importance for European international relations. A double pavilion had been constructed on four barges, serving as pontoons, in the exact middle of the river. On each of the two river banks, where two other pavilions had been run up for the occasion, large bands of courtiers had congregated to witness the event. At an agreed moment, two canopied barges, attached to the shore and the river pavilions by cables, left the Spanish and French shores respectively for the river pavilions, where – again at exactly the same moment – the two principal figures disembarked with their entourages. One was the Infanta Dona Ana, the 15-year-old daughter of Philip III of Spain and the late queen Margaret of Austria; the other, the 13-year-old Madame Elizabeth, the daughter of Henri IV and his wife, Marie de Médicis, and the sister of the 15-year-old Louis XIII, king of France since the assassination of his father five years earlier.<sup>1</sup>

With the duc de Guise leading her by the hand, Madame Elizabeth, dressed in silver, proceeded towards the point where the two pavilions joined, while the Spanish Infanta, wearing gold and blue, and led by the Duke of Uceda, moved forward with equally measured steps to the nominal frontier line between France and Spain. Here the two suites were presented to each other and the princesses embraced. Then Uceda handed over Dona Ana (in future to be known as Anne d’Autriche) to the duc de Guise, who in turn handed over to Uceda Madame Elizabeth, henceforth Isabel de Borbón. After the exchange, and to the

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<sup>1</sup> For a contemporary description of the river setting and the exchange of brides see Pedro Mantuano, *Casamientos de España y Francia* (Madrid, 1618), pp. 228–41. Later accounts in François T. Perrens, *Les mariages espagnols sous le règne de Henri IV et la régence de Marie de Médicis, 1602–1615* (Paris, 1869), pp. 547–50; Ruth Kleinman, *Anne of Austria. Queen of France* (Columbus, Ohio, 1985), p. 24. Visual representations are discussed by Maria José del Rio Barredo, ‘Imágenes para una ceremonia de frontera’, pp. 153–82, in Joan Lluís Palos and Diana Carrió-Invernizzi, *La historia imaginada* (Madrid, 2008). For Rubens’s allegorical depiction of the event, see Ronald Forsyth Millen and Robert Erich Wolf, *Heroic Deeds and Mystic Figures. A New Reading of Rubens’ Life of Maria de’ Medici* (Princeton, NJ, 1989), pp. 160–3, and plates 47 and 48.



Figure 1.1 Exchange of Princesses on the Bidasoa River, attr. Pieter van der Meulen (Monasterio de la Encarnación; Patrimonio Nacional, Inv. Nr. 06621531)

accompaniment of trumpets, drums and flutes, the two women proceeded in the reverse direction, Isabel to the Spanish side of the river, and Anne to the French.

The exchanges, impressively coordinated, had been safely made, and marked the long-anticipated and much-deferred conclusion of many years of intensive diplomacy designed to bring about a reconciliation and lasting peace between the two countries whose rivalry had dominated so much of European power politics since the late fifteenth century – Valois, and now Bourbon, France, and Habsburg Spain. The process of reconciliation was to be formally sealed by a double marriage treaty, under the terms of which the Spanish Infanta would wed the young king Louis XIII, almost exactly her own age, while Louis's sister, Madame Elizabeth, would become the wife of the heir to the Spanish throne, Philip, Prince of Asturias, three years her junior.

For much of the later sixteenth century their civil wars left the French too preoccupied with their internal dissensions to pursue a sustained and effective anti-Habsburg foreign policy. But the accession of Henri IV in 1589, and his abjuration of his Protestant faith four years later, marked the beginning of the restoration of order and stability in a war-torn country. Philip II had been actively intervening in the French religious wars in support of the Catholic cause and had been working to place his daughter, Isabel Clara Eugenia, on the French throne instead of the Protestant Henri de Navarre, but the new Bourbon ruler's political skills,



accompanied by his conversion to Catholicism, succeeded in rallying the mass of the country to his cause. In 1595 Henri declared war on Spain and successfully held Spanish forces at bay. In 1598, with Philip II bankrupt and nearing the end of his life, and France exhausted by its civil wars, the two countries made peace at Vervins. Five months later, Philip II died, and was succeeded by his young son, now Philip III, and as yet an unknown quantity.

The Franco-Spanish peace treaty of 1598 constituted part of a phased withdrawal from Spain's heavy commitments in northern Europe – a withdrawal planned by a dying Philip II in the hope of leaving his son with a more manageable legacy until such time as the crown's shattered finances could be restored. Peace with France was accompanied by a devolution of sovereignty over the Spanish Netherlands to Isabel Clara Eugenia and her husband, the Archduke Albert. It was hoped that this might in due course open the way to some sort of settlement with the Dutch rebels in the northern provinces, whose resistance had done so much to sap Spain's military and financial resources. War with England continued, but the ageing queen could not last for ever, and war-weariness was taking hold in England as well as Spain.

At the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, therefore, Europe was slowly drifting back to peace, although the underlying tensions remained. At first it was not clear what direction Spain would take under its new king, Philip III. Philip himself seems to have been keen to show his colours by a display of activism, in the hope of winning a great victory at the start of his reign. The Spanish Council of State, affirming that 'reputation is necessary at all times, and especially at the beginning' of a new reign, opted for 'offensive war' as a device for frightening off Spain's enemies and making the Spanish Monarchy respected and feared in the world.<sup>2</sup> The need to maintain 'reputation', or, in modern terminology, not to lose face, was a constant theme of Spanish policy-making, but on this occasion the pursuit of reputation proved counter-productive. An attempted invasion of Ireland in 1601 ended in fiasco at Kinsale, although the reputation of Spanish arms was partially restored when the army of Flanders, under its new commander Ambrosio Spinola, captured Ostend in the autumn of 1604 after what had looked to be an interminable siege.

Since Kinsale it had been clear that Spain lacked the resources for a prolonged 'offensive war' on more than one front. The death of Elizabeth in 1603 and the accession of a pacifically inclined James VI of Scotland to the English throne provided the opportunity that both countries needed to resolve their differences. After intensive negotiations an Anglo-Spanish peace treaty was agreed in August 1604, and another of Philip II's wars was brought to an end. One month later, Spinola's capture of Ostend, followed by his spectacular campaigning successes against the United Provinces in 1605, held out the possibility, which would be

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<sup>2</sup> Cited by Bernardo José García García, *La pax hispánica. Política exterior del Duque de Lerma* (Leuven, 1996), p. 34.



seized on by the 'Archdukes' Albert and Isabella, for achieving peace with honour in the war with the Dutch.

Philip III's instincts may have been in favour of war, but the deplorable state of the Spanish crown's finances was against him, and his government was effectively in the hands of his favourite, the Duke of Lerma, who had other priorities, among which were his own survival in power and the enrichment of his family.<sup>3</sup> His inclinations were all towards a quiet life. A general peace in Europe would allow time for the restoration of the crown's finances and some restructuring and reform of the machinery of government. But peace in Europe did not depend on Spain alone. It also depended on the attitude and policies of Henri IV. Would the resurgence of France, now clearly under way, lead to a revival of the old Franco-Spanish rivalries and a new round of conflict, or could these dangers somehow be averted?

In 1601, taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the domestic difficulties of the two great powers, Pope Clement VIII broached the idea of a Franco-Spanish marriage alliance, just after the birth within five days of each other of the future Anne d'Autriche and Louis XIII of France. This happy conjunction of royal births seemed a providential event, holding out both the promise and the means for a general peace in Christendom.<sup>4</sup> No matter that the two infants were scarcely more than a few days old, and that prospects for the survival of children – and especially of royal children – were notoriously precarious. Erasmus had long ago expressed his scepticism about the value and desirability of marrying off young princes and princesses as a device for setting the seal on peace treaties and diplomatic alliances. Dynastic inter-marriage, however, as an instrument of international power politics was and remained standard practice among the ruling houses of early modern Europe, and notoriously among the Habsburgs, whose current dominance owed much to the planned or fortuitous consequences of the complicated web of matrimonial arrangements that they had woven over the centuries.<sup>5</sup>

At the time when Clement put forward the idea of a Franco-Spanish marriage alliance, the age of the two royal infants made this little more than a glint in the papal eye. At this moment the rulers of both countries had more pressing priorities. Spain was still fighting England and the United Provinces. Henri IV of France was anxious to restore domestic tranquillity and counter the aggressive activities of Charles Emmanuel, Duke of Savoy, who had profited from the internal troubles of France to invade the French enclave of Saluzzo in the Piedmontese Alps, and, with Spanish support, had shown himself unamenable to reaching a settlement. With

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<sup>3</sup> For Lerma's political career see especially Patrick Williams, *The Great Favourite. The Duke of Lerma and the Court and Government of Philip III of Spain, 1598–1621* (Manchester, 2006). Also Alfredo Alvar Ezquerro, *El Duque de Lerma* (Madrid, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Perrens, *Les mariages espagnols*, pp. 13–14; J. Michael Hayden, *France and the Estates General of 1614* (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 41–2.

<sup>5</sup> See Pauline Sutter Fichtner, 'Dynastic Marriage in Sixteenth-Century Habsburg, Diplomacy and Statecraft: an Inter-Disciplinary Approach', *American Historical Review* 81 (1976), pp. 243–65.

the help of papal mediation, France and Savoy agreed a peace treaty in 1601, but on terms that were widely regarded as unfavourable to French interests.<sup>6</sup>

The dilemma facing Henri IV after 1601 was that, after 36 years of civil war, he needed peace, but Spain remained hostile and continued to encourage the French malcontents. Together with the throne, Henri inherited traditional French fears of Habsburg encirclement. At several points the famous Spanish road, the military corridor along which the Spaniards sent men and supplies from Milan to Flanders, ran close to France's eastern frontier, and – as seen from Paris – looked like a noose, although from the standpoint of Madrid the corridor appeared dangerously exposed to French attack. To counter-balance what he saw as the continuing threat from Spain, Henri needed to restore his country's international standing. This meant casting himself as the credible protector of what the Venetians called the *stati liberi*, the chain of small independent states, several of them Protestant, running from the Adriatic to the North Sea, which owed formal allegiance neither to France nor the Habsburgs.<sup>7</sup> It meant, too, financial assistance for the Protestant Dutch in their struggle against Spain, especially after James I had agreed, as one of the conditions of the Anglo-Spanish peace treaty, to abandon his predecessor's policy of supporting the rebels.

A foreign policy tilted towards alliance with Protestant states required a delicate balancing act from a monarch who had recently converted to Rome, and had already tarnished his credentials by guaranteeing toleration for French Protestants in the Edict of Nantes. The delicacy of his situation makes it difficult to unravel Henri's true intentions, but he was well aware that France needed a lowering of international tension.<sup>8</sup> His interest was in peace, although ideally this was to be a *pax gallica*, peace on France's terms, with France possessing room for manoeuvre if either the Austrian or the Spanish Habsburgs showed signs of aggression. Fortunately for Henri, by the middle of the decade the Duke of Lerma's government found itself in serious trouble.

There was a fresh royal bankruptcy in Spain in 1607, and Madrid was left with no option but to approve the moves initiated by the Archdukes for peace with the Dutch – moves that would lead to the signing of a 12-year truce in 1609. In 1608, at this moment of acute difficulty, Madrid showed some interest in approaches from Henri for a Franco-Spanish marriage alliance, but the level of mutual distrust was too high and the negotiations stalled.<sup>9</sup> As Henri contemplated possible alternative marriages for his children, including marriage alliances with England and Savoy,<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Mark Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV* (London, 1984), p. 191.

<sup>7</sup> Roland Mousnier, *L'assassinat d'Henri IV* (Paris, 1964), pp. 106–7.

<sup>8</sup> The case for Henri IV's limited objectives is persuasively made by Antonio Eiras Roel, 'Política francesa de Felipe III: las tensiones con Enrique IV', *Hispania* 31 (1971), pp. 245–336.

<sup>9</sup> Hayden, *France and the Estates General*, pp. 11–12; and García García, *La pax hispánica*, pp. 90–91, for the 1608 negotiations.

<sup>10</sup> Perrens, *Les mariages espagnols*, part I, ch. 8.

his relations with Spain and the Emperor deteriorated. They broke down over the succession question in the Duchy of Clèves, on the eastern border of the Spanish Netherlands, when the duke died without an agreed heir in 1609. In the opening months of 1610 Spain's new ambassador in Paris, Inigo de Cárdenas, was reporting that war was almost inevitable.<sup>11</sup> Henri was now actively preparing for military intervention in Clèves-Jülich and was struck down by Ravallac's knife as he was leaving Paris on 14 May 1610 to embark on his campaign.

Henri's assassination changed everything. It left France with a nine-year-old king in Louis XIII and a regency government under an Italian queen, Marie de Médicis. Although the immediate crisis produced by the king's death was overcome, the new regency government inevitably found itself in a weak position, having to fight off pressure from the prince de Condé and his fellow princes of the blood for a greater degree of influence in the running of the country, while at the same time having to keep the restless Huguenots from rebelling. In the circumstances a conciliatory foreign policy, aimed at preservation of the European peace, was essential, and the cornerstone of such a policy could only be a *rapprochement* between the two Catholic powers of France and Spain.

The years after 1610 were therefore to be years of peace, or at least relative peace, on the continent, but this was to be a peace on Spanish terms, a *pax hispanica*, rather than the *pax gallica* that Henri IV had hoped to establish. The Lerma regime was well placed to make the most of its new and highly favourable situation. With the unexpected weakening of France, Spain's position as the dominant power in Europe was once again uncontested. In spite of its financial problems its military power remained formidable, and it had a corps of experienced diplomats who possessed the skill to cover up its weaknesses and trade on its reputation, reinforcing their efforts with pensions and other *douceurs* which would help to build up groups of clients in foreign capitals and keep the potentially obstreperous in line. Inigo de Cárdenas in Paris, the Count of Gondomar in London, Don Baltasar de Zuniga in Vienna, were the frontiersmen of the *pax hispanica*, cleverly using their diplomatic skills and Spanish silver to maintain European peace in the interests of Madrid.<sup>12</sup>

The way was now open for serious negotiations for a Franco-Spanish marriage alliance, consisting of the double marriage of Louis XIII to the Infanta Ana, and of Prince Philip, the Prince of Asturias, to Louis's sister Madame Elizabeth, although the Spanish Council of State, when discussing the possibility in July 1610, seems to have been under few illusions. 'Peace brought about by marriages', it concluded, 'never lasted any longer than it suited both parties'. As evidence for this, it adduced the Spanish-French marriages of the sixteenth century, and the

<sup>11</sup> Alain Hugon, *Au Service du Roi Catholique. "Honorables ambassadeurs" et "divins espions"* (Madrid, 2004), p. 180.

<sup>12</sup> See Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (London, 1955), p. 22, and, for the *pax hispanica* in general, H.R. Trevor-Roper, 'Spain and Europe, 1598–1621', *The New Cambridge Modern History*, vol. 4 (Cambridge, 1970), ch.ix.

marriage of Philip II's younger daughter to the congenitally unreliable Charles Emmanuel of Savoy.<sup>13</sup> Lerma, however, was determined to make the most of the opportunity and, shaking off the melancholia and lethargy to which he was prone, he took a leading part in the discussions and negotiations that occupied the coming months. The assassination of Henri IV, however horrific the act of regicide, had come as a miraculous escape for Spain from another probable round of conflict with France, and Lerma seems to have seen the unfolding of events as an indication that divine Providence looked favourably on his attempts to seek a lasting peace between the Spanish Monarchy and its age-old rival.<sup>14</sup>

Marie de Médicis and her secretary of state, Villeroy, were also committed to the marriages, and papal diplomats were working hard to bring them about, but Marie had to move with caution to avoid the appearance of an excessively overt Catholic foreign policy if she was not to exacerbate her difficulties with the *grands* and the Huguenots. France's religious divisions, now as always, had major international ramifications, and made its relations with England especially touchy. James I, picking up the mantle that Henri de Navarre had let fall on his conversion to Rome, had assumed the role of protector of the Protestant cause across Europe. It was as the champion of Protestant Europe that he arranged for the marriage of his daughter Elizabeth to the Calvinist Frederick, the Elector Palatine. The grand Protestant wedding celebrated in the royal chapel at Whitehall in February 1613 was read across the continent as a symbol of James's intentions. As Frances Yates reminds us at the start of the *Rosicrucian Enlightenment*: 'In the old Europe, a royal wedding was a diplomatic event of the first importance, and royal wedding festivities were a statement of policy'.<sup>15</sup>

James's relations with the Huguenots were especially close, and Henri IV had tried to keep him friendly and prevent him from interfering on their behalf by holding out the possibility of the marriage of one of his daughters to Henry Prince of Wales. Marie de Médicis continued this policy of dangling a French marriage alliance before him, with her second daughter, Christine, as the bait, once the eldest had been reserved for Spain.<sup>16</sup> A French marriage had its attractions for James, who saw himself as something more than the saviour of protestant Europe. Above all, he wanted to be the great reconciler, who would heal the divisions of Christendom. A splendid way to achieve this would be to balance the protestant marriage of his daughter with a Catholic marriage for Henry, or subsequently for his second son, Charles, who became the heir to the throne on Henry's death in 1612. Besides France, there was also possible scope for a Catholic marriage with the ruling houses of Savoy and Tuscany. But the supreme prize would be a Spanish match – a possibility that had first been broached in 1604 following the conclusion of the Anglo-Spanish peace treaty. In 1611 the British ambassador in Madrid

<sup>13</sup> Citation in Garcia Garcia, *La pax hispánica*, p. 306, n. 28.

<sup>14</sup> Garcia Garcia, *La pax hispánica*, p. 91.

<sup>15</sup> Frances A. Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (London, 1972), p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Hayden, *France and the Estates General*, pp. 47–9.

approached Lerma about the prospect of a marriage between Henry, Prince of Wales and the Infanta Ana.<sup>17</sup> The expected betrothal of Ana to Louis XIII ruled out this possibility, but Philip III's second daughter, the Infanta Maria, was brought forward as an alternative bargaining counter by Madrid. James could only regard this as a second best, but, in the years that followed, Gondomar worked with great skill and energy for a marriage between the Prince of Wales and the Infanta Maria, and in 1623 came tantalisingly close to success when the prince suddenly arrived incognito in Madrid.

With England kept on the sidelines by tentative marriage offers from France and Spain, the courts of Paris and Madrid settled down to negotiate the marriage alliance that both were anxious to secure. During the course of 1611 the Spanish Council of State assembled a large number of opinions from theologians and jurists on the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed marriage. One objection was that a Franco-Spanish marriage would complicate the already complicated relationship between the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs, who used periodical intermarriages to reinforce their mutual family interests. But the rights of inheritance of the two princesses represented a larger stumbling-block to a dynastic alliance between France and Spain. Since, under the Salic law, it was deemed that the crown of France could not be transmitted by a woman, this was less of a problem on the French than the Spanish side, where there were fears that one day a king of France descended from the marriage might ascend the Spanish throne in the event of the failure of the Spanish line. In the course of long and complex negotiations this and other problems were sorted out. The two parties agreed that both princesses should renounce their rights of inheritance; dowries of equal size were fixed, as befitted a marriage between equal partners; and each bride was to come with jewellery to exactly the same value. There was also much discussion about the size and composition of their households. But finally the marriage contracts were signed in Madrid in August 1612, with the marriages to be performed and the brides exchanged by the end of 1613.<sup>18</sup>

The ceremonies would in fact be postponed to the summer of 1614, and then again for another year. Why the delay? Some of it was due to continuing disputes over the demarcation of the frontier between French and Spanish Navarre, and to the rise of international tension caused by the Duke of Savoy's invasion of the marquisate of Montferrat in 1613 in a dispute over the Mantuan succession which in 1614 drew Spain into war in northern Italy. Spain, however, was firmly committed to the marriages, which, in the view of Cárdenas, its ambassador in Paris, as expressed in a letter to Philip III, offered three advantages: 'the first is to ensure and fortify the Catholic religion in all Europe, giving a new breath of life to Catholics, along with other benefits. The second is to marry your daughter to a great king. Given the present state of the world, this is more important than anything that has occurred over the last two hundred years. The third is to allow

<sup>17</sup> Glyn Redworth, *The Prince and the Infanta* (New Haven and London, 2003), p. 10.

<sup>18</sup> García García, *La pax hispánica*, pp. 92–3; Kleinman, *Anne of Austria*, p. 15.

Your Majesty to adjust the affairs of your Monarchy while remaining arbiter of the world, and draw to him the monarchy that has been his adversary and made itself the leader of the Protestants'.<sup>19</sup>

The delay came largely from the French, rather than the Spanish, side, and was primarily caused by the prevarication and manoeuvring of Marie de Médicis. Although desperately anxious to see the marriages solemnised, she was confronted with fierce opposition to her plans by the *grands* and the Huguenots. Condé and the malcontents were worried that a policy of *rapprochement* with Spain would act as an invitation to Madrid to start interfering once more in France's domestic affairs, while the Huguenots feared that it would jeopardise their already insecure situation, and pressed hard for a marriage alliance with Protestant England instead.

In the spring of 1614 the Queen Regent was faced with a rebellion led by Condé and his fellow magnates. Her settlement with the rebels included an agreement by the regency government to call a meeting of the Estates General to discuss the country's grievances. The meeting began on the official termination of the regency with the proclamation of the 13-year-old Louis's majority in October 1614. The Spanish marriage project had done much to reignite the old feuds of Ligueurs and *politiques*, and it figured prominently in the bitter pamphlet warfare that preceded and accompanied the meeting of the Estates. The ultra-Catholic group of old Ligueurs saw the sealing of an alliance between the two great Catholic powers as the logical culmination of the process begun at the peace of Vervins in 1598, and as a means of halting the advance of heresy and then of rallying all Christendom in a crusade against the Turk. The *politiques* argued that France, as the strongest power in Christendom, had no need of an alliance with Spain, which would upset the European balance of power and undermine France's allies. They also argued that there was an innate incompatibility between the humours, or national characteristics, of Frenchmen and Spaniards – a theme that would be examined at length by Dr. Carlos Garcia, an Aragonese doctor resident in Paris, whose *Opposition and Conjunction of the two Great Lights of the World*, first published in French and Spanish in 1617, argued that the love and unity brought about by marriage could transcend contrasting humours and mutual antipathies.<sup>20</sup>

In spite of the widespread protests against the marriage project, the king and the queen mother were determined to press ahead, and despatched an envoy to Madrid in January 1615 to finalise the arrangements. The Estates General, which were now drawing to a close, refused to follow the princes in opposing the marriages, but Condé won the support of the Parlement of Paris for his stand, and began

<sup>19</sup> Cited by Hugon, *Au Service du Roi Catholique*, p. 83 (letter of 4 December 1614).

<sup>20</sup> Denis Richet, 'La polémique politique en France de 1612 à 1615', in Roger Chartier and Denis Richet (eds), *Représentation et vouloir politiques. Autour des Etats-Généraux de 1614* (Paris, 1982), pp. 151–94; Carlos Garcia, *La oposición y conjunción de los dos grandes luminaires de la tierra*, (ed.) Michel Barea (Edmonton, 1979).



preparing for a fresh revolt.<sup>21</sup> This made it difficult for the French crown to commit itself to a date for the marriages, while the resurgence of unrest in France made Madrid uneasy about the prospects of success. Marie de Médicis might lay on a court ballet in which Princess Elizabeth dressed as Minerva led the Spanish prince on a golden chain,<sup>22</sup> but, as so often with court festivals, there was a gulf between representation and reality. In the spring of 1615, Condé left the court, refusing to return unless it abandoned the Spanish marriages, which, once they occurred, could diminish his own chance of succession to the throne if Henri's direct line should fail. Although himself a Catholic, his opposition to the marriages would help win him allies among the Huguenot nobles of southern France.

By the time the court itself left Paris in mid-August 1615 on the first stage of the trip to the south for the celebration of the marriages, rival armies were gathering. To make matters worse, the princess Elizabeth fell ill, and the royal progress had to be halted at Poitiers. After the king and Marie de Médicis had rejected a demand from the Huguenot Assembly for the abandonment of the marriages, a Huguenot army assembled in Guyenne to stop them in their tracks. But the rebels and their potential supporters were disunited, help from the Dutch and the English was not forthcoming, and the Huguenot towns decided against joining the insurrection. As a result, the court safely reached Bordeaux on 7 October without the royal and rebel armies joining in battle.<sup>23</sup>

Preparations had long since got under way in Spain, and the court had left Madrid at the end of May on the road to Burgos, where the Infanta was due to be married by proxy. The delays on the French side meant that the court had to spend three months marking time in Valladolid, and could only resume its progress to Burgos once it was assured that the French court was again on the move. Serious cracks were beginning by this time to appear in the elaborate edifice of power and patronage that the Duke of Lerma had so laboriously constructed over the years, but the king retained sufficient confidence in him to designate him in July 1615 as his representative in all negotiations with the French over questions of etiquette, ceremonial and future relations between the two crowns.<sup>24</sup> In effect he was to be the impresario and master of ceremonies, as befitted someone who had been the principal architect of the policies that had brought them about. He was in fact in his element when it came to ostentation and display, and laid on a round of lavish banquets and festivities as the court made its slow journey towards the frontier. The costs to the already hard-pressed crown finances were immense, the royal bankers had to be called in repeatedly to provide additional funds to meet some new requirement, and the president of the Council of Finance protested vigorously

<sup>21</sup> Antonio Eiras Roel, 'Desvío y "mudanza" de Francia en 1616', *Hispania* 25 (1965), pp. 521–60, at p. 531.

<sup>22</sup> Perrens, *Les mariages espagnols*, p. 521.

<sup>23</sup> Hayden, *France and the Estates General*, pp. 169–71.

<sup>24</sup> Antonio Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism in the Spain of Philip III, 1598–1621* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 235.

but in vain to the king that there was simply no more money to be found: ‘there is no record in either religious or secular histories or tradition of such expenditure in a single year’.<sup>25</sup>

Although Lerma complained that he was tired and ill, the king insisted that he should serve as the proxy for Louis XIII at the wedding ceremony, acting as counter to the duc de Guise, a staunch supporter of the queen mother and her allegedly hispanophile policies,<sup>26</sup> who was to perform the same duty in the parallel ceremony in Bordeaux. With Lerma seated in a sedan chair covered with gold leaf, and accompanied by 24 servants and 12 pages, the proxy wedding was celebrated with great magnificence in Burgos cathedral on 18 October, after the Infanta Ana, now Queen of France, had renounced her own rights and those of her descendants to the Spanish throne. On the same day the duc de Guise stood proxy for the Prince of the Asturias in the ceremony held in the cathedral of Bordeaux.<sup>27</sup>

Philip III instructed Lerma to accompany Anne to the frontier, but the duke begged to be excused on grounds of ill health. In fact the excuse seems to have been a pretext for avoiding a personal encounter with the French, whom he regarded as responsible for Spain’s recent humiliation in North Italy at the Treaty of Asti, which concluded the war with Savoy in June 1615 on terms that were widely seen as a blow to Spanish prestige.<sup>28</sup> Philip therefore agreed that Lerma’s son, the Duke of Uceda, who was gaining in the royal favour as Lerma’s star began to wane, should stand in for his father and take charge of the ceremonial handover on the river Bidasoa. After accompanying Anne a short distance Lerma turned back to await the French princess’s arrival in Burgos. The king himself, having parted from his daughter apparently for ever, suddenly changed his mind and broke with convention by chasing after her. He then accompanied her all the way to the frontier at Fuenterrabia, where in tears he again bade her farewell, this time for good.<sup>29</sup> Meanwhile the French princess, with all her baggage train and escort, was moving by slow stages towards the river Bidasoa. And so it was that, on 9 November, the long-anticipated and carefully orchestrated exchange of brides took place.

Following the exchange, Anne d’Autriche began the journey to Bordeaux – a journey that took 12 days to complete, with the coaches and baggage trains getting bogged down in the mud. Finally entering Bordeaux on the evening of 21 November, she was welcomed with a salute from the city’s guns and with paper lanterns in the streets, and was taken to the archbishop’s palace, where she was greeted by Marie de Médicis, who in turn presented her to her husband. The nuptial mass was celebrated in the cathedral on the 25th, and was followed by a bedding which does not seem to have been a success. The two children did not

<sup>25</sup> Cited by Williams, *The Great Favourite*, p. 199.

<sup>26</sup> Hugon, *Au Service du Roi Catholique*, p. 328.

<sup>27</sup> Williams, *The Great Favourite*, pp. 198–9; Kleinman, *Anne of Austria*, p. 23.

<sup>28</sup> Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism*, pp. 235–6.

<sup>29</sup> Williams, *The Great Favourite*, pp. 199–200.



sleep together again until 1619.<sup>30</sup> On the other side of the frontier Isabel de Borbón was carried in a litter to Fuenterrabia, and then travelled by stages to Burgos. On Tuesday 17 November, in Vitoria, she appeared for the first time dressed in the Spanish style.<sup>31</sup> On Sunday the 22nd she was greeted by the king and the 10-year-old Prince Philip as she approached Burgos. Following the ceremony and festivities in Burgos the royal party moved to the ducal town of Lerma, where more festivities awaited them laid on by the duke, never one to be parsimonious where ostentation was required. The princess finally made her entry into Madrid on 19 December. The pair would not be allowed to cohabit until 1621.

For Lerma the successful conclusion of the royal marriages must have appeared a triumphant vindication of a policy designed to bring about a reconciliation of the two great Catholic powers and the establishment in Europe of a *pax hispanica*. France was now nominally a friend and partner; but, as the Constable of Castile had sharply but presciently remarked in 1612, 'it is possible that marriages in such high spheres do not so much produce friendship between enemies as enmity between friends'.<sup>32</sup> Within seven months of the exchange of brides the old tensions were resurfacing in North Italy and elsewhere.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, with stability in France continuing to be undermined by the activities of the princes of the blood and nobility, Spain again seemed dominant in Europe. But Lerma was unable to profit from his success in negotiating the marriages, and his authority was being eroded even at the moment of apotheosis.<sup>34</sup> His extravagant lifestyle, the notoriously corrupt behaviour of his henchmen and clients, and a generalised feeling that he had neglected and mismanaged the business of government, were all building up a formidable opposition against him. Although declaring his intention to retire, he remained in office until 1618, but after 1615 his power was dwindling.

Marie de Médicis equally enjoyed her last moment of glory with the celebration of the royal marriages. The endless struggles with the malcontents had worn her down, and in the spring of 1617 her Italian favourite, Concini, for long the target of their anger, was assassinated. With Concini's assassination Louis showed himself ready to declare his independence. King at last, he refused to see his mother, who was exiled to Blois after being confined in the Louvre. Her days of power, if not of influence, were over. Her seven years of government would be vilified, both by contemporaries and by later generations, but her endless manoeuvring had allowed her to maintain the royal authority in exceptionally difficult circumstances. Her policy of peace with Spain, culminating in the royal marriages, was the only

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<sup>30</sup> Elizabeth Wirth Marvick, *Louis XIII. The Making of a King* (New Haven and London, 1986), pp. 170–72; Victor L. Tapié, *La France de Louis XIII et de Richelieu* (Paris, 1967), p. 92.

<sup>31</sup> Mantuano, *Casamientos*, p. 250.

<sup>32</sup> British Library, Additional Ms. 14,000, fo. 861 (*Parecer del Condestable de Castilla*).

<sup>33</sup> Eiras Roel, 'Desvio y "mudanza"', p. 535.

<sup>34</sup> Williams, *The Great Favourite*, p. 198.