

# Defining Papal Power: Frondeur Interpretations in the *Mazarinades*

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According to French Catholic tradition, France has been looked upon as the “eldest son of the Church,” harkening back to Clovis’ conversion in the fifth century. And yet since that somewhat legendary time, the filial relationship between the Holy See in Rome and the French kings has remained problematic. Two basic theological interpretations that distinguished this relationship were the ultramontane and the Gallican. The former emphasized papal authority to the detriment of the royal while the Gallican was the reverse. This controversy lay in the background of franco-papal relations until 1905, when Catholic Church and the French government formally separated with the annulment of the Napoleonic Concordat of 1801 in 1905.<sup>1</sup> This paper focuses on the Fronde, 1648-1653, the last real threat to royal power before the Revolution, and especially how the troublesome relationship between church and crown was characterized in the *mazarinades*, the popular political literature of the day. It examines an unexplored aspect of this tumultuous period with documents seldom considered beneficial in the past.<sup>2</sup>

Similar to other times of troubles like the Wars of Religion and the Revolution, the French delighted in publishing numerous pamphlets which reflected a wide variety of antagonistic views. The Fronde—a mid-seventeenth century series of revolts – was especially fruitful since more than five thousand have been cataloged.<sup>3</sup> The first to take notice of them, the nineteenth-century antiquarian Célestin Moreau, cataloged over 4,300 of them<sup>4</sup> and thereby made it possible

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<sup>1</sup> The Napoleonic Concordat remains in effect in Alsace and Moselle despite the vagaries of two world wars. It is also in effect in several overseas territories.

<sup>2</sup> Many thanks to the editors of *The Journal* and the two reviewers who kindly examined the original paper presented in Victoria, B.C. (2022) and provided thoughtful critique to improve its quality.

<sup>3</sup> The most recent comprehensive study of the *mazarinades* is Hubert Carrier, *La Presse et la Fronde (1648-1653): Les Mazarinades, la conquête de l’opinion* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1989). Also helpful in understanding the Fronde, please consult A. Chéruel, *Histoire de France pendant la minorité de Louis XIV*, 4 vols. (Paris: Hachette et Cie., 1879-1880) and Orest Ranum, *Paris in the Age of Absolutism: An Essay* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968). Also very useful is Madeleine Laurain-Portemer, *Études mazarines* (Paris: de Bocard, 1981), vol. 1.

<sup>4</sup> The primary cataloguer of the *mazarinades* was C[élestin] Moreau in his *Bibliographie des mazarinades*, 3 vols. (Paris: Renouard et Cie., 1850-1851). On the discovery of other pamphlets, Moreau issued a *Supplément* in 1869, Émile Socard in 1876, and Thomas C. Sosnowski in his 1975 dissertation at

for scholars to access them with some ease. This literary *potpourri* reflected the political and social tensions of the mid-seventeenth century and especially the prejudices and anxieties of this turbulent quinquennial. This popular literature gives significant insight into this turbulent era, but it must be emphasized that these works varied significantly—from broadsides to full-length books, from sheer slander to pious religious tracts and even sophisticated political essays.<sup>5</sup>

The Catholic Church did not officially participate in these tumultuous and seditious activities, but notable ecclesiastics like the Cardinal de Retz and the canon Claude Joly dipped their pens into the controversies, which were primarily political. Cardinal Mazarin was primarily the object of attack and considered by an overwhelming number of pamphleteers as the source of all problems in France. Nonetheless, religion was often in the background of many of these publications and was used to support or attack a cause, a stance, or a public figure. Religion was a given in the pamphlets, but as such it has not been a focus of much scholarly attention.<sup>6</sup> What the pamphleteers addressed gives one more avenue of understanding the Fronde as Moreau declared: “The pamphleteer is a witness who gives testimony, even against himself.”<sup>7</sup> Despite the fast-moving turn of events during these unsettled years, these pamphlets were usually carefully edited prior to publication. Christian Jouhaud claims that the authors were quick to react but usually careful in crafting their responses.<sup>8</sup> The publishing industry surely thrived while censorship was in abeyance.

Because the Fronde was primarily a series of political confrontations focusing on the monarchy, the nobility, and the Parlement of Paris, the *mazarinades* reflected those concerns. Yet until the last few decades of the twentieth century, the mazarinades were usually overlooked as a useful research tool, although they have since become an important source for any serious research on the Fronde. Primary in realizing their importance was Madeleine Laurain-Portemer who focused originally on the clerical status of Cardinal Mazarin before publishing her monumental *Etudes mazarines* in 1981. Hubert Carrier, the dean of *mazarinade* analysis in the late twentieth century, emphasized the need to study the religious attitudes in the pamphlets, while Richard Golden, who focused on the decade after the Fronde, counted only 250 from 1648 to 1653 which explored such themes.<sup>9</sup> My own work on this topic, which goes back to my 1975 dissertation, focuses on various religious themes in the collection and shows that Golden’s numbers should be revised. I have found references to religious topics in more than nine hundred

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Kent State University, “The French Church at Mid-Century: An Analysis of Religious Attitudes in the Popular Literature of the Fronde.”

<sup>5</sup> See Thomas C. Sosnowski, “Frondeur Recipes of Catholic Piety: Advice from the Contemporary Press,” *Selected Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* (2002) 21: 105-115. The relationship of religion to the monarchy was examined in his “Cult of France and Its King: Political Theory in the Mazarinades During the Fronde,” *Selected Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* (2014) 42: 9-20.

<sup>6</sup> Carrier, *Presse de la Fronde*, 1-54.

<sup>7</sup> Moreau, *Bibliographie*, 1: ii-iii.

<sup>8</sup> Christian Jouhaud, *Mazarinades: La Fronde des mots* (Paris: Aubier, 1985), 16,17.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Golden, *The Godly Rebellion: Parisian Curés and the Religious Fronde, 1652-1662* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 10. Carrier, *Presse de la Fronde*, 5-6.

of these pamphlets. Significant for this essay is that over fifty of them considered the relationship of France and its king with the Holy See.<sup>10</sup>

The political and social tensions of the Fronde reflected in the mazarinades also affected the religious dimension, especially with the francophobe Pope Innocent X. It is significant that by the seventeenth century the French Church claimed a special relationship with the papacy as the Gallican Church whose rights and privileges were guaranteed by law and tradition. Harkening back to the early fourteenth century, Philip the Fair, 1285-1309, aggressively attacked papal power, even to the point of arresting Pope Boniface VIII, leading in short order to the Great Western Schism. After more than a century of division, church councils attempted to mediate and restore unity. One of these, the Council of Basel, 1430-1437, prepared what is remembered as the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges specifying some autonomy for the French Church. Less than a century later, during Francis I's invasion of Italy, the Concordat of Bologna in 1516 clarified those rights.<sup>11</sup> The king could nominate episcopal and abbatial candidates with papal approbation. Certain financial considerations were also included, much to the pleasure of the permanently money-strapped, royal government.<sup>12</sup>

However, the turmoil of the Reformation, the decrees of the Council of Trent, as well as the Wars of Religion added layers of disagreement and misunderstanding between the French monarchy and the Holy See. The Tridentine crusade to extirpate ecclesiastical corruption offended many in France since it would imperil Gallican autonomy, a stance strongly defended by the Parlement of Paris. Of course, there was a fear that the pope might undermine those perceived rights and seek to enhance his power.<sup>13</sup> By the mid-seventeenth century, the legacy of the last Estates General remained strong: it was summoned in 1614 by Marie de Médicis, regent and Queen Mother of Louis XIII, and after months of discussion and debate, could not recommend promulgation of the Tridentine decrees, even though many members realized their necessity and practicality. The Gallican spirit prevailed again. However, the much-needed reforms did take place under French episcopal direction, not the umbrella of papal power.<sup>14</sup>

This controversy between the Gallican supporters and pro-papal ultramontanes appeared occasionally in the *mazarinades*. It was not a major issue dominating this *corpus*, but the fact that

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<sup>10</sup> Sosnowski, "Church at Mid-Century." In addition to 848 cataloged pamphlets and appropriate arrêts, the Selected Bibliography [of works cited] includes a listing of ninety uncatalogued pamphlets, arrêts, and royal decrees.

<sup>11</sup> Madeleine Laurain-Portemer, *Le Statut de Mazarin dans l'Église* (Paris: Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes, 1970); Laurain-Portemer, *Études mazarines*; Carrier, *Presse de la Fronde*; Carrier, *Le Labyrinthe de l'état: Essai sur le débat politique en France au temps de la Fronde (1648-1655)* (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2004).

<sup>12</sup> J. Michael Hayden, *France and the Estates General of 1614* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), chapter 3.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Bergin, *Church, Society and Religious Change in France, 1580-1730* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2009), especially Chapters 7 & 8.

<sup>14</sup> Michael Hayden, *Estates General*, chapter 9; J. Michael Hayden & Malcolm R. Greenshields, *Six Hundred Years of Reform: Bishops and the French Church, 1190-1789* (Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University, 2005), 131-146.

numerous pamphlets addressed it indicates that it lurked in the background of mid-century politics and diplomacy. Catholic France and Catholic Spain were still at war. Often the pamphleteers declared the king as “defender of religion” as well as “protector and shield of the Church,”<sup>15</sup> without reference to papal leadership. Claude Joly enumerated the religious duties of the king in his *Recueil de maxims* as if it were a national church similar to the Church of England. For example, it was the monarch who ensured that bishops were living up to their episcopal responsibilities, not the pope. But at the same time, Joly did emphasize that he should listen carefully to the advice of prelates—the pope is not mentioned—because of their concern for his salvation.<sup>16</sup> One response to Joly was the author of the *Parfait repos de la France* in 1652 who concluded that spiritual and political powers were completely independent of each other. While the Church could not involve itself in politics, the king could not interfere in religion. This meant that ecclesiastical courts must not acquiesce by punishing offenders at the behest of the king. It was incumbent that the Church exhibit Christ-like behavior and never resort to the sword against its enemies, but only invoke the Word of God.<sup>17</sup> A Gallican interpretation of 1649, much of it hyperbole, emphasized the special nature of the French monarch who, unlike other Catholic royalty, could tax the clergy even without papal approval and confer benefices on whomever he wanted as bishops. He also agreed with Joly that the pope could neither excommunicate the king nor subject the realm to an interdict.<sup>18</sup>

In a fifty-four-page treatise on royal authority, François Paumier pointed out that “the Kings of France are exempt from the power of the popes.” Affirming the divine right theory, Paumier declared that His Most Christian Majesty was sovereign over all the *temporalia* of the French Church according to a large number of unspecified bulls. He reminded the king that whenever the pope entertained delusions of greater power, his predecessors convened an Estates General to deliberate on these pretensions. As a result of these unspecified meetings, this

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<sup>15</sup> *Question morale et politique très-importante à décider et pour la gloire du roi et pour le bien de son peuple* [...] (Paris, 1650), [M2949]. 13. Also *Dialogue ou entretien de deux cavaliers, l'un François, l'autre* [...] (Paris, 1649), [M1096], 4. The “M” designation in brackets refers to the catalogue number assigned to the pamphlets by Moreau in his monumental *Bibliographie*.

<sup>16</sup> *Recueil de maxims véritables et importantes pour l'institution du roi contre la fausse et pernicieuse* [...] (Paris, 1652), [M3039]. Also see *Arrêt de la cour de parlement de Bordeaux, portant cassation des jugements, condamnations et ordonnances du Sieur* [...] (Paris, 1650) [M177], 3-4 and *Lettre d'une religieuse présentée au roi et à la reine régente, le premier février 1649, pour obtenir la paix* (Paris, 1649), [M1901]. 7. Bishop Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet was delighted to accept this responsibility during the reign of Louis XIV in his noted *Politique tirée des propres paroles de l'Écriture sainte*, Jacques Le Brun, ed. (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1967).

<sup>17</sup> *Parfait repos de la France, ou Moyens assurés pour rendre la France tranquille, heureuse et invincible* (Paris, 1651), [M2688], 13-15; also, *contrefaçon, François désabusé, montrant les moyens infaillibles pour établir et affirmer la véritable paix dans l'État* (Paris, 1652), [M1410] 13-15. Other useful pamphlets include the following: *Suite des maxims morales et chrétiennes pour le repos des consciences dans les affaires présentes, pour servir d'instruction aux cures* ... (Paris, 1649), [M2427], 12-13; *Horoscope du roi, donnant à connaître le gouvernement de l'État sur les affaires présentes et pour l'avenir* (Paris, 1652), [M1666], 24.

<sup>18</sup> *Observations curieuses sur l'état et gouvernement de France, avec les noms, dignités, familles principaux, comme il est en présente année 1649, nouvelle revue et augmentée* (Paris, 1649), [M2568], 4-5.

assembly always decided in favor of the king by assenting to royal control over ecclesiastical revenues. Paumier, who had written about this topic before the Fronde, was encouraged to write about it again because the clergy, who were assembled for their quinquennial meeting, opposed another grant of the *don gratuit*. Such clerical independence disgusted Paumier since he wanted to accentuate royal power, not those elements subject to its power.<sup>19</sup> And the *Parfait repos de la France* declared that the Vicar of Christ could not depose monarchs and release their subjects from their oaths of loyalty. He contended that no article of faith gave the pope such power.<sup>20</sup> These assertions support Ronald Asch's interpretation of the king's status in pre-revolutionary France as both *rex* and *sacerdoce*: "the king ruled the Church as autocratically as his lay subjects, but he did so because of his quasi-sacerdotal status."<sup>21</sup>

This Gallican spirit was dominant in other *mazarinades*, like the *Heureuse rencontre* of 1649, which declared gleefully how much power the king exercised over the Church, especially in accordance with the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges. The author exclaimed that, as a result, papal power extended over sixty million souls, surely an exaggerated figure.<sup>22</sup> The year 1651, when Louis XIV's majority was proclaimed, provided an opportunity for two Frondeur scribes to laud this power, one as his legitimate patrimony based on Scriptures, although no specific reference was listed, and the other that the king's piety would ensure that "the Gallican Church [be] filled with judicious nominations, with active and brilliant lights [that] will shine with new splendor."<sup>23</sup> These florid descriptions of royal power were similar to those of a contemporary analyst, Pinson de la Martinière, in his *Estat de la France of 1649*.<sup>24</sup>

However, not all pamphleteers were completely satisfied with this approach. An *Apologie pour messieurs les princes* of 1650, allegedly written by Madame de Longueville, vehemently denounced corrupt clergy as exemplified by Mazarin who had an undue influence on the young Louis XIV. Obviously, with their focus on the secular, kings were not always concerned about the salvation of souls, indeed their actions were often interpreted by the author as opposing religious

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<sup>19</sup> *Remontrance faite au roi sur le pouvoir et autorité que Sa Majesté a sur le temporel de l'État ecclésiastique pour le soulagement [...]* (Paris: Antoine Estienne, 1651), [M3329], 13,26. Also, see Moreau, *Bibliographie*, 3: 100.

<sup>20</sup> *Parfait repos de la France*, 11. For other examples, consult *Les Véritables sentiments d'État pour la paix et sur le sacre du roi Louis XIV, avec les marques de sa conduite pour le repos du royaume, par Mre H. de S.P.D.* (Paris, 1652), [M3979] and *Courrier François, apportant toutes les Nouvelles véritables de ce qui s'est passé depuis l'enlèvement du roi, tant à Paris qu'à Saint-Germain-en-Laye* (Paris, 1649), [M830, part 6], 9.

<sup>21</sup> Ronald G. Asch, *Sacral Kingship Between Disenchantment and Re-Enchantment: The French and English Monarchies, 1587-1688* (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2014), 163.

<sup>22</sup> *Heureuse rencontre d'une mine d'or, trouvée en France pour l'enrichissement du roi et de ses sujets* (Paris, 1649), [M1631], 4. Also useful to examine Gaston Zeller, *Les Institutions de la France au XVIe siècle* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1948).

<sup>23</sup> *Très-humbles remontrances faites au roi dans son avènement en sa majorité [...]* (Paris, 1651), [M3836], 10-1. Also see *Remontrance faite au roi sur le pouvoir et autorité que Sa Majesté a sur le temporel de l'état [...]* (Paris, 1651), [M3329], 53-54.

<sup>24</sup> J. Pinson de la Martinière, *Estat de la France comme elle estoit gouvernée en l'an 1648 [...]* (Paris, 1649), 13-14.

precepts.<sup>25</sup> Another anti-Mazarinist writer, while acknowledging royal power of nomination, observed reluctantly that too often money interfered in these appointments to the detriment of the faithful.<sup>26</sup> Mundane considerations like money and corruption underscore that these debates are not limited to theological problems but have practical repercussions in the secular world.

In spite of all the declarations of royal authority over the Church, the king was only the temporal head of the Gallican Church, for the pope remained the leader of Catholic Christianity. Among the Frondeurs, none dared to be schismatic: the imprint of Reformation and the Wars of Religion was still palpable. Among French Christians, only the Huguenots (and an infinitesimal number of Lutherans in Alsace) did not recognize papal primacy, and they did not discuss this subject in the paucity of pamphlets that can be attributed to them. After the Peace of Alais, it was not politically practical for them to participate in these debates since they owed their “freedom” to the good wishes of the sovereign.<sup>27</sup> Even the libertine librarian of Mazarin, Gabriel Naudé described His Holiness as the Vicar of Christ on earth and the head of Christianity.<sup>28</sup>

In this spirit of supporting papal authority, one ultramontanist of 1652 underscored his beliefs by calling the Church the palace of God directed by the pope who was the successor of St. Peter. He continued that “while following his teachings, one cannot fail . . . to reach the promised celestial haven.”<sup>29</sup> Others reminded their readers that they had two leaders: Christ and the pope—it was the latter who served as “the first minister of the whole congregation of the faithful” who alone “had the right to claim absolute administration of [Church] affairs.”<sup>30</sup> This view was complemented by another who claimed that papal power was more absolute than that of kings. In assuming the title “servus servorum Dei,” popes consecrate[d] themselves to the welfare of all Christians.” Believers would do all that they could to “overcome all obstacles in order to enjoy the presence of the common father of all Christians.”<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *Apologie pour messieurs les princes, envoyée par madame de Longueville à messieurs du parlement de Paris* ([n.p.], 1650), [M126], 23.

<sup>26</sup> *Manifeste ou Raisonement sur les affaires de Catalogne contre les intrigues du cardinal Mazarin, traduit de l'espagnol en François* (Paris, 1649), [M2398], 22. Also see i ([n.p.], 1650) [M126], 26-29.

<sup>27</sup> Louis XIV's comment on Huguenots. There were also three small Jewish communities in France, and they did not participate in the Fronde's activities.

<sup>28</sup> Gabriel Naudé, *Mascurat ou ce jugement est formé du dialogue entre Saint-Ange libraire et Mascurat imprimeur* [...] (Paris, 1650), 623, 625.

<sup>29</sup> Pierre Dupuy, *Commentaire sur le Traité des Libertés de l'Église Gallicane de Maistre Pierre Pithou, avocat en la cour de Parlement* (Paris, 1652), 3. Originally this work was published in 1639 as the *Preuves des Libertés de l'Église Gallicane*.

<sup>30</sup> *Le Politique universel, ou Briève et absolue décision de toutes les questions d'État les plus importantes, savoir est* [...] ([n.p.], 1652), [M2818], part 2, p. 5. Also useful to read is *Véritable censure de la Lettre d'avis écrite par un provincial à messieurs du parlement, et la véritable censure de la réponse à la lettre* [...] (Paris, 1649), [M3924], 3. Numerous other pamphlets recognize papal authority without defining it.

<sup>31</sup> *Le Royal au Mazarin, lui faisant voir par la raison et par l'histoire* [...] (Paris, [n.p.], 1652), [M3561], 15; *Discours adressé aux soldats François, dédié à M. Deslandes Payen, conseiller au parlement* (Paris, 1649), [M101], 8.

The *Robe sanglante de Mazarin*, an obvious anti-Mazarinist tract, admitted the supra-national character of the papacy because the Holy Spirit, who guided the Church, did not favor any nation as superior.<sup>32</sup> However, it claimed that not everyone respected the popes, including the Catholic Spanish who sacked Rome, killed cardinals, and attempted to ransom Church officials.<sup>33</sup> Such commentary pointed out a schizophrenic approach to the papacy that developed because its concerns were not totally spiritual. The Patrimony of St. Peter, i.e. the Papal States, which supposedly gave the Pontifex Maximus independence of action, also made him a secular ruler with worldly concerns which could misdirect his mission. For example, one 1652 pamphleteer affirmed that the Holy Spirit guided the pope in his direction of the Church, but that this inspiration did not extend to his temporal domain where he was subject to failure like other secular rulers.<sup>34</sup> Another acknowledged his power but decried that the manner of his election led to numerous abuses where the concerns for *temporalia* were more important than those for the spiritual realm. He noted that the rivalry, indeed belligerent relations, between the Bourbons and the Spanish Hapsburgs even affected papal elections, especially the one in 1644 leading to the choice of an anti-French, and especially anti-mazarinist Innocent X.<sup>35</sup> It is important to note that France and Spain were still at war, one that would not be concluded until the Treaty of the Pyrenées in 1659. Nonetheless, the Gallican author of *La Manifeste du cardinal Mazarin* defended involvement in the election as appropriate since it was in the political interests of France.<sup>36</sup>

As is obvious, a number of pamphleteers discussed the papacy in a very secular manner while giving only lip service to its spiritual mission. They praised its work as a peacemaker during the lengthy diplomatic negotiations which finally ended the Thirty Years War in Germany with the Peace of Westphalia.<sup>37</sup> According to a few pamphleteers, such activities even made the Papal States appear more as an Italian state than a home for a spiritual ruler.<sup>38</sup> Several of Mazarin's enemies were sure that the Cardinal wanted the tiara for himself as yet another way to accrue more riches and prestige. They claimed that he, at first, encouraged the candidacy of his brother

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<sup>32</sup> *La Robe sanglante de Jules Mazarin, ou les Véritables récits des fourbes, des imposteurs et autres vices...* (Paris, 1649), [M3554], 11-12.

<sup>33</sup> *Maximes fondamentales touchantes le gouvernement et les pernicioux desseins des Espagnols* (Paris, 1649), [M2425], 7.

<sup>34</sup> *Parfait repos de la France*, 18. Also see *contrefaçon Le François désabusé*, 18.

<sup>35</sup> *Le Caquet ou entretien de l'accouchée, contenant les perniciouses entreprises de Mazarin découvertes* (Paris, 1651), [M630], 27-28. Also examine Pastor, chapter 1.

<sup>36</sup> *Le Manifeste du cardinal Mazarin, laisse à tous les François avant sa sortie hors du royaume, contenant un exact...* (Paris, 1651) [M 2390], 17-18. For an opposing view, read *L'Icare sicilien, ou la Chute de Mazarin, avec sa métamorphose, en vers burlesques ...* (Paris, 1652), [M 1672], 14.

<sup>37</sup> *Les Sentiment des François intéressés à la paix Générale, adressés à messieurs du Parlement de Paris*, ([n.p.], 1650), [M3653], 16-17. For a superb discussion of the diplomacy leading to the Peace of Westphalia, consult Paul Sonnino, *Mazarin's Quest: The Congress of Westphalia and the Coming of the Fronde* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008).

<sup>38</sup> *Les Exemples politiques* (Paris, 1649), [M1326], 9; *Apologie pour Monseigneur le cardinal Mazarin, tirées d'une conférence entre son éminence et monsieur \*\*\** ... (Paris, 1649), [M127], 12.

Michael who unfortunately died before the election could take place.<sup>39</sup> It must be pointed out that by the time of the Fronde, the diplomatic power of Rome was already in eclipse and would only play a minor role in European politics in the future. Whereas prior to 1648, papal delegates were present at all peace conferences involving Catholic nations, after the Peace of Westphalia it was no longer considered necessary to secure such papal counsel.<sup>40</sup>

Because of the political nature of the Fronde, one would have expected some Frondeurs to call on the pope for guidance and assistance. Two opponents of Mazarin ostensibly addressed His Holiness as a proponent of peace who was concerned about the welfare of Christians asking him to mediate the situation in Paris.<sup>41</sup> However, apparently no one else supported this appeal. But there were other responsibilities of the pope according to some pamphleteers. He had the right to judge all the sins of mankind.<sup>42</sup> Omer Talon of the Parlement of Paris emphasized the pope's role as the mediator between God and mankind whose only weapons were prayer and incense<sup>43</sup> – not terribly different from Old Testament prophets.<sup>44</sup> He could also issue bulls that recognized Christians who deserved veneration as saints.<sup>45</sup> And one writer even dared to mention papal infallibility but did not elaborate on it.<sup>46</sup> Indeed the Council of Trent defined a more powerful, Petrine patriarch, an approach that helped to lay the foundation for that dogma at the First Vatican Council in 1870.<sup>47</sup> Although the contemporaneous Renaudot brothers of the *Gazette de France* inferred that the pope had the power to decide on matters concerning doctrine,<sup>48</sup> some pamphleteers claimed that the University of Paris must assist in this all-important matter. Its faculty had been so successful in separating false maxims from the true that popes allegedly

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<sup>39</sup> *Lettre d'un gentilhomme romain à un Français, contenant les discours ...* ([n.p.], 1649), [M1879], 4.

<sup>40</sup> Pastor, 6.

<sup>41</sup> *Lettre envoyée à Sa Sainteté, touchante le rétablissement de la paix Générale de France* (Paris, 1649), [M2231], 3-4, 6-7.

<sup>42</sup> *Les Pressantes exhortations de l'Europe aux quatre monarchies chrétiennes et autres États de son Empire pour la paix universelle ...* (Paris, 1649), [M2863], 5; *Réponse à l'Outrecuidante présomption du cardinal Mazarin* (Paris, 1649), [M3358], 5.

<sup>43</sup> *Journal de ce qui s'est fait ès assemblées du Parlement, depuis le commencement de janvier 1649, ensemble par addition de ce qui s'est passé tant en ville de Paris ...* (Paris, 1649), [M1743], 86.

<sup>44</sup> *Lettre envoyée à Sa Sainteté*, 4.

<sup>45</sup> *Lettre à Mademoiselle de V., étant à la campagne, ensuite de la guerre des tabourets* (Paris, 1649), [M1811], 8-9.

<sup>46</sup> *Relation de ce qui s'est passé à Rome en la promotion de monseigneur le coadjuteur de Paris au cardinalat et la confirmation faite par Sa Sainteté de l'arrêt ...* (Paris, 1652), [M3119], 4.

<sup>47</sup> Golden, *Godly Rebellion*, 12-13; also see Deniella Kostroun, *Feminism, Absolutism, and Jansenism: Louis XIV and the Port-Royal Nuns* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), especially pp. 184-5.

<sup>48</sup> *Recueil des Gazettes, Nouvelles ordinaires et extraordinaires. Relations, actes, et récits désavoués toutes l'année 1653. Bureau d'adresse, 1654.* Copies of the *Gazettes de France* were bound every year by Théophraste Renaudot, the founder, and his descendants every year as an annual *recueil*. The *Gazette* was the semi-official organ of the monarchy from its founding under the aegis of Cardinal Richelieu. It is often useful to compare spirited prose of the mazarinades recounting events on Parisian streets with the mundane accounts in the *Gazette*. Often nothing is reported in the latter.



approved its doctrinal interpretations without question.<sup>49</sup> Indeed some historians have noted that the papacy did esteem the Sorbonne and its deliberations.<sup>50</sup>

Despite its apparent prestige, the Holy See was still subject to additional criticism. Some writers criticized His Holiness for creating religious orders which were not subject to episcopal jurisdiction, only the pope's. Evidently because of their distance from Rome, they flaunted their independence and acted impiously.<sup>51</sup> Another lambasted the papal court as "a cursed land"<sup>52</sup> a moniker that had a ring of veracity. It was like any other major capital which swarmed with flatterers in search of sinecures and patronage.<sup>53</sup> The spirit of the baroque dominated and with it, according to the noted papal historian Ludwig von Pastor, promoted and provided lavish subsidies of the arts aptly characterized by Bernini in the Holy City.<sup>54</sup> Gabriel Naudé and Guy Patin described it as "a country of deceit and superstition, some do not believe enough, others too much, and always without reason and truth, one expects miracles." Simultaneously they denounced Innocent X as a "crafty [politician] [...] who searches to enrich his family."<sup>55</sup> Pastor concurred: "historian[s] of the Church cannot overlook the harm done by the excessive favor shown by Innocent X . . . to [his] relatives and the great loss of prestige which the Holy See suffered in its consequence."<sup>56</sup>

Embedded within these debates and discussions about papal power was the developing controversy over Jansenism, a re-interpretation of Augustinian theology gaining a substantial following prior to the Fronde. Derived from the *Augustinus* of Cornelius Jansen, a Flemish bishop and Louvain professor, it was promoted in France during the reign of Louis XIII by the Abbé de Saint-Cyran and Antoine Arnauld, using of Port-Royal under the spiritual direction of Mère Angélique as its base. Despite the rigorous ascetic lifestyle they promoted, many individuals viewed Jansenism as a means to oppose the development of an absolute monarchy under the

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<sup>49</sup> *Les Sentiments de la France sur la délivrance de messieurs les Princes, présentés à monseigneur le Prince de Condé par le père de Valognes, ce la compagnie de Jésus* (Paris, 1651), [M3651], 9. Also see *Le Mouchard ou Espion de Mazarin* (Paris, 1649), [M2510], 5-6; *La Conclusion de la Faculté de Théologie de Paris, pour les Hybernois, Contre le Décret de Monsieur le Recteur de l'Université ...* (Paris, 1651), 12.

<sup>50</sup> Élie Meric, *Le Clergé sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Victor Leclouffre, 1890), 140-141; A[imé] G[eorges] Martimort, *Le Gallicanisme de Bossuet* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1953), 27-34.

<sup>51</sup> *Lettre à mademoiselle de V., 10; À nos vénérables frères Archevêques et Evêques qui sont en toute la France, Le Clergé de France assemblée à Paris* ([n.p.], [1650]), 6.

<sup>52</sup> *L'Italie vengée de son tyran par les armes des bons François, par le sieur N.R., champenois* (Paris, 1649), [M1732], 5-6.

<sup>53</sup> Martimort, *Gallicanisme de Bossuet*, 112.

<sup>54</sup> Pastor, chapter VII. A preliminary study of this era of art and architecture should begin with Victor-Lucien Tapié, *Le Baroque et le classicism* (Paris: Plon, 1957).

<sup>55</sup> Gabriel Naudé and Guy Patin, *Naudéana et Patiniana ou Singularitez remarquables prises des conversations de Mess. Naudé et Patin* (Paris: Florentin et Pierre Delaulne, 1701), 7, 90, 101. It is interesting that Mazarin, although the target of a vast number of the pamphlets mostly derogatory, apparently delighted in collecting them and charged Gabriel Naudé with that task. Later the Cardinal's palace became the home of the Bibliothèque nationale which has the largest collection of the *mazarinades*.

<sup>56</sup> Pastor, 411.

direction of Richelieu and Mazarin. As a result, the Parlement of Paris tended to support this religious party which had hoped in vain to gain the favor of the regency after the deaths of Richelieu and Louis XIII. At the same time, anti-Jansenism developed a following, especially after 1648 when the highly respected Vincent de Paul, a former friend of Saint-Cyran, in addition to several religious orders declared their opposition to the movement.<sup>57</sup> Although the political conflicts of the Fronde overshadowed the Jansenist controversy, this religious debate continued and, from time to time, surfaced in the *mazarinades*.<sup>58</sup>

One notable Jansenist episode which concerns the Gallican-ultramontane debate began at a monthly meeting of the Sorbonne faculty called the *Prima mensis*. On 1 July 1649, the syndic Nicholas Cornet asked the faculty to consider seven Jansenist propositions which he claimed to have gleaned from recent bachelor theses. In spite of the opposition of sixty-one professors, Cornet appointed a committee to study them. The vociferous and bitter debates which followed forced Molé, the president of the Parlement of Paris, to declare a truce, but to no avail. By autumn it was obvious that the Sorbonne could not decide upon the theological status of these propositions—the only recourse was the Holy See.<sup>59</sup> Numerous bishops led by Isaac Habert directed this matter to Rome—Gallican hesitations were abandoned.

This controversy was debated in the *mazarinades* in the following years creating two obvious, self-righteous groups: the “sorbonnistes” and the Jansenists. Efforts to bring the sides together were not successful. Each claimed purity of doctrine while awaiting response from the Holy See.<sup>60</sup> Finally, in 1651, with no apparent activity in Rome, Bishop Habert sent a letter to Innocent X with the signatures of seventy-eight colleagues requesting judgment. At the same time, eleven Jansenist-motivated bishops also sent a similar request.<sup>61</sup> Obviously Jansenism was dividing the Catholic community. The *Dérèglement de l'État* described this situation as detrimental to the welfare of the state and of the Church while denouncing the interpretations of Molina and Jansen as “both seditious.”<sup>62</sup> Molinists were the anti-Jansenists who supposedly propagated the

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<sup>57</sup> For a superb introduction to Jansenism, consult Dale Van Kley, *The Jansenists and the Expulsion of the Jesuits from France, 1757-1765* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), especially chapters 1 & 2. Also see Kostroun, *Feminism*, passim, and R. Ellen Weaver, “Jansenist Bishops and Liturgical-Social Reform” in Richard M. Golden, ed., *Church, State, and Society Under the Bourbon Kings of France* (Lawrence, Kansas: Coronado Press, 1982).

<sup>58</sup> For one example, see *Sur la Révolte de Paris* (n.p., 1649). Or *Le Tombeau du sens commun, ou le renversement des idées de tous les sages...* (n.p., 1650), [M3784] and *Les Paradoxes d'État, servant d'entretien aux bons esprits et faisant voir ...* (n.p., 1651), [M2677].

<sup>59</sup> Louis Cognet, *Le Jansenism, Qui sais-je?*, no. 960 (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1961), 50-52.

<sup>60</sup> *Le Prima Mensis funeste, des Jansénistes, avec advertisement aux Docteurs de l'une et l'autre opinion* (n.p. [1649]), [Ms64], 1-7. The controversy remained alive as seen in *Les Litanies du temps* (Paris: François Noël, [1650]), [M2322]; *Ambassade de la bonne paix g"en"erale, avec un combat contre eux qui publient un faux repos et par conséquent la méchante guerre* (n.d., n.d.), [M68].

<sup>61</sup> *Le Dérèglement de l'État, où les curieux verront que les véritables causes des désordres sont 1ole m"epris de la religion, dans la division ...* (n.p., 1651), [M1009]. 8-13.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* Also see Moreau, *Bibliographie* 1:298.

Pelagian heresy. This debate continued in the pamphlets until mid-1653 when the Pope responded with *Cum occasione* by proscribed five Jansenist propositions. By this time with the pacification of the Ormée in Bordeaux, the last center of anti-government activity, the Fronde came to an end. But dissension continued, especially in Paris with disputes between Mazarin and the Cardinal de Retz, an episode properly analyzed by the historian Richard Golden.<sup>63</sup>

What we see so far are basically two interpretations of papal power during the Fronde in the *mazarinades*. The Gallicans attempted to restrict it substantially, while the opposing ultramontanists were willing to expand it. At least they agreed that the Vicar of Rome was the leading prelate of the Catholic Church. The Gallican approach appears closer to the Eastern Orthodox understanding of the position of the Patriarch of Constantinople who has no direct power over fellow patriarchs since he is only first among equals. Perhaps they would have supported an interpretation similar to Elizabeth II's role in the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth—she reigned but did not rule. It meant avoiding controversy and remaining a neutral figure who said nothing substantial that could offend anyone. When one considers the political and religious controversies in mid-seventeenth century France, that approach was impossible. The fifty-plus pamphlets that have been referenced in this paper out of more than five thousand that were published make clear that this controversy was notable but did not dominate this popular literature.<sup>64</sup> Political concerns were primary, but any study of the religious scene during the seventeenth century must also examine them. It is apparent that in the basic legal dictum “une loi, une foi, un roi,” that “une foi” meant the Catholic Church especially after the Wars of Religion and the controversy over the succession of the Huguenot Henry Bourbon as king.<sup>65</sup> To be schismatic would have undermined a cornerstone of the monarchy. Hence, to be His Most Christian Majesty meant to be Catholic under some ill-defined mantle of papal power. That conflict between secular and religious powers was not unique to France during the Fronde and instead has remained a constant until today – not only in France but also in many other nations.

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<sup>63</sup> Golden, *Godly Rebellion*.

<sup>64</sup> For another significant perspective on the Fronde and the importance of the *mazarinades*, consult Howard J. Brown, *Mass Violence and the Self: From the French Wars of Religion to the Paris Commune* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2018), chapter 2.

<sup>65</sup> A noteworthy analysis of this monarchical and ecclesiastical crisis is found in Ronald S. Love, *Blood and Religion: The Conscience of Henry IV, 1553-1593* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001).