WORKSHOP TITLE:
Exchanging “Heads” and Traveling Bodies: Movement as Meaning in the Early Modern Period?

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

In this workshop, we will examine together several early modern case studies involving the circulation of printed portrait images and the movement of certain 17th-century women across the states of Europe as a jumping-off point for a broader discussion of ways in which movement of various kinds can be understood to have constructed meaning during the early modern period.

In preparation for this workshop, we are seeking the active participation and contribution of attendees by asking each of you to consider two or three ways in which movement or mobility figures in your work or in your interests in the early modern period.

Please record these thoughts – in tandem with a relevant short (2-3-sentence) excerpt or two from a pertinent primary or secondary source (visual or textual) -- and send them to us at sshifrin@ursinus.edu and ecg@bu.edu.

We will then compile a list of these examples and circulate them among the full workshop membership as a way of initiating the dialogue that will take place at the workshop itself. We look forward to starting this conversation with you!

The readings and images the organizers put together initially for attendees (see the “readings and images” list below) will offer examples of the kinds of materials others might bring to the attention of the workshop – letters, diary entries, published early modern texts, printed images in and outside of collected volumes, objects (such as furnishings, for instance) – as well as suggesting potential strategies for examining such materials in cross-disciplinary ways, incorporating art historical, literary, and (material) cultural analysis. The conference organizers will each lead a 10-minute discussion of the readings/images they provided to the group, and then will spend the rest of the workshop facilitating discussion of other individuals’ work (based on the prior correspondence with attendees described above). The examples provided by the organizers will serve primarily as a jumping-off point and a touchstone for the ensuing discussions.

By reading together the texts included here and analyzing together the images also included, and then focusing on how they might generate ways of approaching research topics and other primary source materials brought to the attention of the workshop by participants, we hope to formulate new ideas about the most fruitful ways to approach these kinds of texts and topics that revolve around the circulation of images (and texts), the “circulation” of women, or other kinds of circulation during the early modern period.
From Pepys’ diary, entry dated 27th August 1661:

“...[My] wife and I to the Theatre ..., where the King, Duke and Duchesse, and Madam Palmer were; and my wife, to her great content, had a full sight of them all, all the while....”

From Pepys’ diary, entry dated 7th September 1661:

“...[My] wife and I ... took [the young ladies of the Wardrobe] to the Theatre, where we seated ourselfs close by the King and Duke of Yorke and Madame Palmer (which was great content; and, endeed, I can never enough admire her beauty)....”

From Pepys’ diary, entry dated 21st May 1662:

“My wife and I ... to my Lord’s Lodgeings, where she and I stayed, walking into Whitehall garden; and in the privy Garden saw the finest smocks and linen petticoats of my Lady Castlemayne’s, laced with rich lace at the bottomes, that ever I saw; and did me good to look upon them....”

From Pepys’ diary, entry dated 20th July 1664:

“...my Lady Castlemayne, whom I do heartily adore...”

From Pepys’ diary, entry dated 7th November 1666:

“Called at Faythorn’s, to buy some prints for my wife to draw by this winter, and here did see my Lady Castlemayne’s picture, done by him from Lilly’s, in red chalke and other coulours, by which he hath cut it in copper to be printed. The picture in chalke is the finest thing I ever saw in my life, I think; and did desire to buy it; but he says he must keep it awhile to correct his copper plate by, and, when that is done, he will sell it me.”

From Pepys’ diary, entry dated 1st December 1666:

“By coach home, in the evening, calling at Faythorne’s, buying three of my Lady Castlemaine’s heads, printed this day, which indeed is, as to the head, I think a very fine picture, and like her.”
From Evelyn’s diary, entry dated 8th July 1689:

“I sat for my picture to Mr. Kneller, for Mr. Pepys, late Secretary to the Admiralty, holding my ‘Silva’ in my right hand. It was on his long and earnest request, and is plac’d in his library. Kneller never painted in a more masterly manner.”

Quoted from August 1689 letter from John Evelyn to Samuel Pepys in Guy de la Bédoyère, ed, Particular Friends: The Correspondence of Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn (The Boydell Press, 1997) 198.

“Sir,

I was on Wednesday last (after-noone) to kisse your hands. But finding you abroad and my selfe oblig’d to Returne that Evening … I do now write, what I should have said to you, if Time had permitted. And that is, To let you know, that upon your Late Communicating to me your Designe of Adorning your Choice Library with the pictures of Men Illustrious for their parts and Erudition, I did not in the least suspect your Intention of placing my shallow-head amongst those Heros, who, knowing my Unworthynes of that honour will in spight of your good Opinion of Mr. Kneller for his skill of Drawing to the Life, either condemn his Colouring, that he made me not Blush, or me for Impudent that I did not. But this is not all – For men will question your Judgement, or suspect you of flattery, if you take me not down, for in good earnest, when seriously I Consider, how unfit I am to appeare in the Rank of those learned Gentlemen: I am perfectly asham’d….”

And, from later in the same letter,

“… my worthy Friend Mr Pepys, to whose learned, and laudable Curiositie, of still Improving his choice Collection, I should not Advise a solicitous Expense of having the Pictures of so many greate Persons, painted in Oyle (which were a vast, and unnecessary charge (though not so extraordinary a one to my Lord Chancellor as one may imagine; because, when once his Designe was once made-known, Every body (who either had them of their owne, or could purchase them) [at any price] strove to make their Court by such Presents, by which means he got many excellent pieces of Vandykes, and other Originals of Lelys, Johnson, Daniel Myttens and other and the best of our Modern Masters hands: -- But if, instead of these you think fit to add to your Volume of Title-Pages, the Heads [and effigies] of All I have enumerated and of as many other as either in this, or any other Age have ben renoun’d for Armes and Arts etc. in Taille Douce, and (with very tolerable expense) to be procur’d amongst the Print sellers; I should not reprove it: I am confident you would be exceedingly delighted with the Assembly; and some are so very well don and to the Life, that they may stand in Competition with the best paintings: This were I say, a Cheape, and so much a Usefuller Curiositie, as they seldome are without the Names Ages, and Elogies of the Persons whom they are made to represent: I say, you will be infinitely pleas’d to Contemplate the Effigies and Icons of
those who have made such a noise and bussle in the World, either by their Madnesse and folly, as well as greater Figures by their Wit and Learning: Nor should I confine you to stop here; but to be continually gathering as you happen to meete with other Instructive Types … such as relate [to history], and for the Reasons specified more at Large in my Treatise of Chalcographie.”

**Quoted from August 1689 letter from Pepys to Evelyn in de la Bédoyère, 205.**

“… One word only I woud now say to you upon your first words, about the Place I have beene bold in doomeing your picture to, namely, that besides 40 other Reasons that I had (founded upon Gratitude, Affection and Esteeme) to covet that in Effigie which I most truly value in the Originall, I have this one more, that I take it for the onely Head living I can hope to invite most by after it, of those few shoe Memorys, when Dead, I finde myself wishing I could doe ought to perpetuate. Among which fills a principall place, the most Excellent Mr Boyle, concerning whom I lately bespoke your favour, and dare now bee the bolder in doing it againe, from my having heard that he has newly beene prevayl’d with by Dr King to have his head taken by one of much lesse Name than Kneller’s, and a stranger, one Causabon [sic Kerseboom].”

**Quoted from September 1690 letter from Evelyn to Pepys in de la Bédoyère, 222-3.**

“But one word I must now say to you before your journey, namely, that I want Mr Evelin’s head, as in a thousand senses more, soe particularly for the perfecting my Collection, which is now as far advanced as I thinke I can expect to carry it. I may possibly against I see you bee able to pay you in kinde, but with great disadvantages, I having noe Nanteuil to helpe mee.

One thing more I must add on this occasion, that I am at a mighty losse for 2 or 3 other heads, the Market not being able to furnish mee therewith, vizt Old Admirall Nottingham’s, the old Duke of Buckinghams, my Lord Chancellor Clarendons and his Daughter the Duchesse of Yorke’s. Pray see whither you have ever a head to spare of these….”

**Quoted from September 1690 letter from Evelyn to Pepys in de la Bédoyère, 225.**

I send you Sir my Face, such as it was of yore, but is now so no more (tanto mutata) and with it (what you may find harder to procure) the Earle of Notingham, Lord High Admiral, which, though it make gap in my poore Collection (to which it was glu’d) I most cheerfully bestow upon you, and would accompanie it with the other two, were I master of them: I have Sir George Villars when a youth, and newly dignified, in a small trifling print, not at all fit for you, who ought to have him when he was Duke and Admiral, and of such there are extant many, easily to be had: I am sure his Picture is before several flattering dedications, though at present, I do not well remember where; But this I do, that there is a Taille douce of that mighty favourite (almost as big as the
life, and nothing inferior to any of the famous Nanteuils,) graven by one Jacob of Delph
in Holand from a painting of Miereveld, that were well worth the sending even into
Holand for, and for what ever else is of this kind of that incomparable workemans hand: I
have once seene of it, and tooke this notice of it, to mention in a new edition of my
Chalcographie, when I have leasure to revise that trifle: Lastly –

As to my Lord Chancelor Hide, though I have not his Effigies among the rest that
I have huddled together (always presuming to get it of my Lord Clarendon, but
perpetually forgetting to aske it) yet I can direct you where you may certainly come by it,
and perhaps, already have it in your Library: If not, ‘tis but inquiring where Sir William
Dugdale’s History of the Lord Chancellors was printed, and there you’ll find him; and the
rest of the Long Robe, if you have a mind to them:

Thus Sir, in return to youre Letter, I have given you a desultory Account of your
Enquiries, as far as on the suddaine I am able, and shall (so soone as I am at
liberty) be most ready to receive what other Commands you reserve for

Sir, Your most humble, faithfull servant,

JEvelyn:

Have you ben at Mr Baker’s shop neere the old Exchange? Cannot Mr White furnish
you? I am deceiv’d, if he has not graven most of the Chancellors since his Majesty’s
restauration.
Marie-Sidonie de Lénoncourt, Marquise de Courcelles. Married at age 16, in 1666, she was ordered confined to the abbaye de Bonlieu three years later after her husband successfully brought suit against her for adultery. Before her sentence could be carried out she fled and became a fugitive until the death of her husband 10 years later. She traveled for a time with her friend Hortense Mancini, duchess Mazarin, who had fled her husband in 1668. She was given some protection and assistance for awhile by her lover François Brulart du Boulay, but broke off relations with him in 1677 and traveled to London to join the duchess Mazarin at the court of Charles II. She died in 1685.

Letter from the Marquise de Courcelles to Du Boulay.

Geneva, 8 November 1675

I have been here since Tuesday. I haven’t had an earlier occasion to write to you, because the mail only goes twice a week and it was just leaving as I arrived. I’m not yet recovered from my voyage; I’ve never had such a tiring one. The chaise took two long days to get to Nantua and we even had to use oxen in three places in order to climb up the mountains, and from Nantua I rode horses for two more days to get here, with rain, hail, and wind in our faces, and on abominable roads. But at last here I am, and if our affairs were going smoothly I would be patient, even though I am dying of the cold and trouble; but I fear that you would also encounter difficulties for which you are not prepared. I learned, upon arriving here, that Madame Mazarin had spent a few days here just before going on to Germany, in a town that is called Augsbourg, I believe, not 30 leagues from here. All this because Madame de Savoie had told her to leave her territory after the death of her husband [the Duke of Savoy]. Some say that it’s because Madame de Savoie has scruples and doesn’t want to protect a woman who has broken with her husband and who is suspected of bad behavior. Others say that while the Duke was alive his wife was jealous of Mazarin, who while in favor had done her a hundred shocking impertinences. This reason is more believable; still, it is quite a misfortune to find oneself chased out of everyplace in the world. What is extraordinary is that this woman triumphs over her disgraces with an unprecedented excess of folly, and after suffering she only thinks of pleasure. Coming through here, she was on horseback, wearing feathers and a wig, with 20 men in her entourage, talking only of violins and hunting parties, in short, all that brings pleasure. I am amazed that she traveled so far from Savoy where she has many good friends, and that she did not chose to stay in Geneva which is a secure place, for you know everyone still says that her husband wants to have her kidnapped and that Madame de Savoie had given him permission to do so on her territory, ever since she ordered Madame Mazarin to leave. But I’ve been told since that I was mistaken to think that this is a secure place; and that judges don’t prevent the kidnapping of criminals in hiding here; that this is something seen every day and that just a little while ago a young noblewoman from Dauphiné who had willingly been carried off to be married [against her parents’ wishes] and who was hiding here, was taken and returned to her parents who put her in a convent. Her ravisher would have been taken too if he had been there. Draw your own conclusions from that.
No one here suspects my identity and I must not have as much grandeur in my demeanor as you sometimes tell me I have, I am able to hide my nobility so easily. To tell you the truth, this stupid name that you had me take contributes not a little to this; and I’m always hearing people ask my valet – “from which Beaulieu does your mistress get her name? Is it not this one, who looks like such and such, who lived in the Marais, or is it another that I knew somewhere else?” In other words I am thinking that I am not a noble lady here? I listen to all of this with a marvelous tranquility; still, I admit that this role suits me very poorly. Please, hurry and save me from it, and if you aren’t impatient enough yourself, think about me and enter into all the reasons that make me wish for your return.

Continue to write to me using the name Beaulieu and add chez M. de La Combe, master of the Trois Rois hotel. I will send you another letter for my uncle; give him both of them, I beg you; it is essential for me, not just for the reason you think but also for other even more important reasons to me. I would like to have received one of your letters so that I could write a thousand more things that you need to know and that I don’t dare risk until then. I would hope that you know some of what I am talking about without my telling you. I just heard that a courier arrived from Lyon who is looking for a woman in disguise: I am going to see what it’s all about … It’s just a figment of my servants’ imagination, that courier from Lyon.

**Introductions to additional letters:**

**Letter by Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, Marquise de Sévigné to her daughter Madame de Grignan.** Madame de Sévigné’s letters to her daughter following her move to the south of France with her husband span more than thirty years. Sévigné moved to Grignan to join her daughter at the end of her life and died there in 1696.

**Letters of Marie Mancini, Constabless Colonna and her sister Hortense Mancini, Duchess Mazarin.** Both fled their husbands and quickly became known by epithets such as “illustrious adventurers” or “vagabonds.” Hortense ran away from her husband Armand-Charles de la Meilleraye in 1668 and joined her sister in Rome where she lived with her husband Lorenzo Onofrio Colonna. In 1672 Marie joined her sister’s fugitive existence and they fled Rome together. Hortense was protected by the Duke of Savoy and lived in Chambéry until his death in 1675. She eventually settled in London where she lived for over 20 years, dying there in 1699. Marie lived in many different courts, convents, and prisons in France, Spain, Italy, and Holland. She chose to retain her hard-won independence even after her husband’s death in 1689. She died in Pisa in 1715.
From Grenoble, 24 July 1672

Madame Mazarin has sent her officer to Rome to fetch her clothes and also at the same time bring her serving women, if you want to do me a great favor please send me Constance and Andrea. If Nanette wants to come, and Antonia, I would be very happy but if either of those two have the slightest hesitation I don’t want to force it. Andrea belongs to me and won’t make difficulty. Constance won’t either if others don’t make trouble for her. I beg you please facilitate these things and above all don’t forget to send me Nene because I don’t have a dog anymore. Tell Antonia to send me the little book that I had at Marino, with astrological figures in it. Tell her also to send me the book in my cabinet that has red pages and where I have written a great deal in my own hand. If my clothes could be sent that would also give me great pleasure, for I have nothing. If I am treated kindly I will be able to respond very well. Adieu my dear Countess, you would not like to leave Rome and that is why I would never ask it of you, but please, look to my affairs. Marcatelli will have to provide money for the girls’ voyage and I have already sent you a written order for him so that he can take out [the sum]. Send me a bottle of oil from Baldini and have Marcatelli pay for it. … Adieu once more my dear Countess and do not fail to accomplish my wishes if you want me to continue loving you forever,

La Connetable Colonna
Appendix

Letters from Marie Mancini to her husband Lorenzo Onofrio Colonna
translated from the Italian by Giovanna Suh

[January 1672]

Regarding what you had conveyed to me, I can tell you that I do not reject the offers you have made me; on the contrary, it will be a pleasure for me to let it be known that you still have regard for me. As for the decision I took to withdraw to France, it was prompted only by the worries I had about my health; and, as well, by what my brother said several times, to me and to others, about the designs someone had against me. (I could say more but will keep silent, for you would not want such things to be common knowledge.) Yet I will accept whatever you are kindly disposed to do for me, and you must never doubt that, wherever I am, I will give you a full account of myself. And I will make you understand that this decision of mine was not a whim, but rather that it was an attempt on my part to ease my spirit and live out my days in peace. This is all I can say to you, with the assurance that you will always find in me the cordial feelings and affection I have always had for you. I send my love to the boys with all my heart. And assure them that I will never forget them.


Lyons, 14 January 1672

I do not doubt that you will be very satisfied to see me make my way back to Italy, and I am leaving France without regrets. I will make Turin the first step, provided I find the Duke favorably disposed toward me; my idea is to settle into a convent there. Knowing that your one desire was that I should leave France, I had to comply with your wish. I might also pass through Milan, but I am not sure yet if you want to send me one of my boys, the one who most wanted to come to see me. You could send him by sedan chair this February, with one of the women. Also, Mr. Boniel was overseeing his progress in his studies like a second Lotti. But in the meantime, please believe that what I find the hardest is to overcome my aversion to returning to Rome. I pray for your sake that God will free me of it. Even though I am far away, I remain yours always,

Maria Mancini Colonna


* * *

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Grenoble, 1 August 1672

...You have never been very fair to me, and yet even now you want to make me responsible for the fact that everyone is blaming you; I know that no one can truly say that I ever complained about you in connection with the suspicions you speak of. Had they been confirmed, I would not have been so imprudent as to publicize them, and had they not, I would not have had the meanness to invent them. Saint Simon is a real liar if he says that I ever complained about you other than for the scant esteem and affection I really got from you, and he forced me to admit even that. For the rest, I do not believe that my departure in any way compromised you or my sons or the family, indeed, I was trying to make amends for what you so often told me I had brought with me when I came into your home. I will wait for time to make you change the bad opinion you have of me and give me a chance to decide on some other course of action that I pray God will suggest to me, if it is for the best.
M.M.C.

Lys, 23 September 1672

The women have arrived with the things, which was very heartening; for I could see that on this occasion you willingly satisfied my wishes. I will not fail to look after them, especially Maria Madalena, who has an opportunity to become a saint if she wants to, this convent being a model of virtue. Here I do not think you will be able to complain about my behavior, which is such that my very enemies will be compelled to praise it. I hope that you will be pleased and that more and more often you will have occasion to show me the esteem you have till now denied me. I assure you that you will forever have my esteem. Take care of the boys, kiss them for me and give them my love. I will send Andrea back to look after them, because she is more useful to them than to me in the convent. Please take care of the poor Countess and of the other women who stayed with you. In the meantime, I will always pray for you and the whole household.
M.M.C.

Madrid, 5 March 1675

Now I realize from your letter that you are always trying to fool me with empty promises about my return to Italy, when instead you should be content to do what is necessary and not be giving me different orders with every invitation. I am not the one who keeps charging; I always say the same thing. If I complained about the Admiral, it was for a good reason, because despite my repeated requests to see him, it was never possible in two whole months, even though I always respected him and followed his instructions in everything. As for my trip, do what God inspires you to do now; you who have the ball in your hand, play it, while fortune conspires against me ... maybe one day that will change.

M.M.C.

Madrid, 12 June 1675

I was not able to inform you in the last regular mail about what the Queen would be writing you, because I found out about it only after the mail coach had left. You will see, then, in her letter how she wants to comfort me and awaits your approval to do so. Indeed, the air would be better in a house at some distance from the convent but I would draw the most solace from being outside, where I could get more exercise and enjoy the cool of the evening; whereas here the monks close the doors at 9:00, so that I cannot even go into the garden. What is more, the house where I am staying is extremely hot in the summer. These reasons would not have led me to propose Flanders if I had not seemed to me to be a decent and altogether proper solution. When earlier I had asked the Admiral what he thought of it, he answered that, once my son came, he saw no reason why I could not go there with him. I know that the Queen too approves, and she would have given me permission immediately if it had not seemed wiser to let you know of it first and find out your wishes. But since you hold out the hope that your nuncio will come as soon as he can, I will be calmer in the knowledge that consolation is at hand, when Marcantonio will be with me. If you do not want this Flanders plan to go ahead, I will meet with him in this house, but outside the cloister. And in case the nuncio is delayed, send him with a passport for France and he will arrive without any problem, so that as soon as possible I may have this satisfaction, which for over a year you have encouraged me to hope for. I am waiting to receive the Countess Stella's cedar fans and the other chest that you say you sent me by boat. I do not know if you have yet shipped the Admiral's painting—upon my life, remember to send it because he is dying for the painting, which he expected to have long ago. I am very pleased that they had a boy, and I am writing. Give my love to my little boys. Yours as always,
M.M.C.

The special mail will bring you a box with a black vase that the first lady-in-waiting gave me, and since it is highly considered I am offering it to you, together with some small incense tablets for burning and some little cups on a tray for chocolate, one for each of the boys.
Madrid, 29 May 1675

By special mail I received a letter from you containing four fans, and their scent is absolutely perfect. I also received by boat mail the painting for the Queen. My health has been better since I purged myself three times and was bled twice, although I hardly have the use of my arm, but if it doesn’t hurt, I don’t care. I don’t know what Don Ferdinando has been writing to you, but it has been more than a month since I have seen him; I do know that he talks a lot of nonsense and that he does not want me to leave, and all this to justify his mistreatment. In any case, you will never see me make any decision that has not been approved by the Queen, by the Council and by all our relatives, as is only decent. Please believe that I will sooner sacrifice myself and remain locked up all my life than do anything that violates decorum and propriety. I have not yet received your letters by regular mail, but, having received some by special mail I am happy to know that your health is good. Tell my little sons that I kiss them tenderly, and if you assure you once again that I am yours,

M.M.C.

After I wrote to you, Don Ferdinando gave me one of your letters, having taken this opportunity to come to see me. He sends them cordial wishes. Again, yours,

M.M.C.

Madrid, 2 July 1675

By this special mail I am advising you that I have received the coconut wood wreaths and the rosewood rosaries and the silver and bronze medals, together with ten very interesting fans. I like them very much, and thank you no end. Don Ferdinando is telling everyone that, having asked your permission, he no longer wants to stay with me. I can assure you that I have little stomach for his moods and duplicities, and I am enduring it all in the hope that you will set things right, now that the nunco will leave if you recall him. Mr. Gian Battista, as you already proposed, will assist me in his stead, and he will do so in a different manner and more punctually; whereas he does not serve me and does not know how to have others serve me. He is always thinking that I am about to leave. I would have a low opinion of him if he thought so, because if I did want to leave the convent, the Prioress and all the nuns would open the doors for me without any problem; and I could live in the same house without anyone stopping me, because I entered it of my own free will, after having been the one to make a request myself to the Queen, and not our relatives, who have been too unfeeling to come up with anything that might be helpful to us or to me. In the meantime, I would like to hope that you will agree to satisfy my wishes, this being the last thing I will ask you. Had you not thwarted me thus far, you would perhaps be more pleased with me. Forbidding me to go to Paris, incarcerating me in Flanders in order to satisfy my enemies—these are all things that instead of bringing me closer to you have distracted me from you. I am speaking to you with my usual frankness, and I maintain that if you grant me something as reasonable as this, you will stand to gain in every way; whereas the expense here will be exorbitant since I will be living outside the convent with my son, and this is something that will affect you directly. However, do what God inspires you to do. I will be awaiting your final decision, and afterwards I will try to do God’s will. I send my regards to the children, and am, as always, yours,

M.M.

After I wrote this, the mail coach was delayed, and this gives me a chance to tell you that Don Ferdinando, to discredit me and to ensure that they would keep me in custody, invented the story that I was planning to flee with the Turkish woman the other night and that one of the nuns was supposed to open the doors for me, and he, allegedly to prevent this, went to the Presidente and many highly-placed ministers so that they would obtain a decree from the Queen and send guards to surround the convent. There is no question I was angered when I saw the deep malevolence it took to invent such a thing in order to make me unhappy and push me to complete desperation. If it were not for the fact that I am hoping you will recall him, I would already have had him removed by order of the Queen. For here they uphold justice and her entourage knows that I am right, and that such an idea never entered my mind, but rather that he, wanting to make sure that I could not leave the convent, fabricates whatever he wants in order to compel you to hold me here by force. This is what is happening, and please believe it unquestioningly. I am, as ever,

M.M.C.

Madrid, 9 July 1675

I was very sorry about the pain in your knee that forced you to stay in bed, as I learned from your letter to Don Ferdinando. The Marquise Diccia wrote to me that she was about to embark, her ship having already reached Carthage. This woman was here for many months in Madrid without ever coming to see me, and now that she is going to Rome and knows she will need you, she is acting with such friendliness toward me in the hope that you will do her a thousand other favors. But take care not to be too forthcoming, for it’s not only in this instance that they are quick to take advantage. It took, for instance, a whole song and dance to make Don Pedro lend me a tapestry — which he ought to have offered me himself after the favors he has received from our family. It is as if the favors were due them, and they do not even remember them. They hoodwinked me before you, and so do not be surprised by what I wrote you,
seeing that they had assured me that the despatch was so much in our favor and against the cardinal that we could not have hoped for better. The Queen should be brought more into this, for she tends to favor me, and but for our concern that the ministers too would make difficulties; she would already have granted my own wishes, and perhaps I could have gotten help from her with the cost of the trip. But she ... withdrew her permission. I do not know what you will answer, but it is everyone's opinion that you should comply with what the Queen will say to you on the matter, because you would almost be forcing her to assist me and make herself responsible for me. As for my staying in Madrid outside the convent, I know that neither with the boy nor without the boy will it be to your advantage since the cost is exorbitant; what one can in Flanders with a hundred doubloons cannot be done here with a thousand. This will certainly be my last trip. Try for once to grant me this, and do not betray me as was done in Flanders. You see that I would be ready to do anything you might desire of me; I say this to you with all my heart and with the same sincerity and loyalty with which I have done everything in life. If that were not the case, I would not be here. I could, as you know, have fled from the grasp of that betrayer and gone to one of the free cities in Germany, where I would not have wanted for protectors. But since I had given my word, it never even occurred to me to go back on it. Would that others had likewise kept their word to me. Goodbye, I think of you and send my love to my little sons. I am and will be forever yours. I have completely lost heart over the loss of the Duke of Savoy, who had shown me so many kindnesses after I left Turin. M.M.C.

* * *

Madrid, 7 August 1673

I was not expecting an answer different from the one you gave me, for by now I am accustomed to your subtle games with me; nor will I urge you any further about Flanders, even though you had no other motive in denying it to me than to oppose what I would have liked. Nor, either, will I plead with you to let me live in Madrid in a house, because even if you agreed I would not. But allowing me to go into a convent in Genoa with this cardinal nuncio—that, yes, I beg you to grant me, give me this consolation, because I am resolved not to stay in Madrid any longer. But if you consider it better to contradict me in everything, do what God inspires, and for my part, this is the last request I will make of you. Only the nuncio is privy to what I am now writing you; I have spoken of it to no one except my brother and you, because here everyone is treacherous. But write to me yourself if it pleases you, and also to the Queen, so that she does not think I am making this up; and let me tell you, she was sorry that I would be leaving, ... Lose no time in answering, for if I lose this opportunity with the nuncio, my little son, if he comes, could no longer embark without peril and expense. After having kissed the hand of the King and Queen, I will take him with me. It would

not be the time for him to make a stop here if I myself am leaving. when he is older, he can present himself to the King, whereas now he cannot learn anything worthwhile here or be of any help to me, without incurring a big expense. Besides, I should take precedence over anyone else, and there is no greater consolation I could have than to keep him always with me as long as I am far from the others. Adieu, and as always,

M.M.C.

* * *

Madrid, 21 August 1675

Since the nuncio has not yet left, I want to hope that you will have time to arrange whatever is necessary with regard to my little boy and that he will be able to leave with him. Although the nuncio is coming by boat, there is nothing to fear, because it is unthinkable that the nuncio would put himself in any danger; and therefore I want to hope that it is one way or another you will send him. I am sorry that Pippo was sick, and am glad to hear that he has already recovered. As for the idea that you have to marry one of our sons to one of the heirs here, this would be appropriate for a third-born, after having married one son to a niece of the Pope to ensure a cardinal's hat. And this Pope would be the one, if he were not in declining health, leaving little time for you to enjoy his reign; on the other hand, it seems to me that another one would not offer you the same advantages ... That being the case, I would not think it a bad thing to put off a decision. If instead these gentlemen offer you more attractive conditions than you hope from the others consulted, then this appeals to me more, and you can rest assured that I myself will approve whatever we decide to do. For good reasons, I have forbidden Abbot Migno to come so often to see me, because I have learned that he was and still is saying not very decent things about me. I never found him to be truthful, and lately, to justify himself and make me seem more guilty, he has been spreading the rumor that I have also forbidden the Admiral to see me, when in fact I have been wishing him to come. I felt I should inform him of this, so that you can be advised of the truth. Regarding the pleas I have made to you, I no longer want to importune you, but can only assure you that by granting me this consolation you could so easily achieve lasting peace in our household. As for the expenses here, they are high, but since I save as much as possible and nonetheless find myself now without a farthing and with Don Fernando begrudging me any money I need. there is nothing I can do about that. Think about whether it is more in your interest to make me happy and spend less, or to leave me disconsolate and spend a great deal. Adieu. I send my love to my little sons, and remain, yours always,

M.M.C.

* * *

* * *
Madrid, 2 April 1676
The reason you tell me forces you not to allow me to live in Bologna is so compelling that I cannot complain, and am instead appreciative. Please understand that I proposed it to you only in the hope of having one of my boys with me, and also because I had to remain cloistered since without him my housing in Madrid was not going to change. If at least I have my health, I can always console myself about the rest. You know that Rome was not so good for me and, speaking frankly, I could never resolve to return permanently to a city where I was always ... ill health. We will do everything we can for the German envoy if he calls again, ... I have already spoken to the envoy of Ossuna, and will do the same with the other ministers when I see them. ... Goodbye—I beg you to send me, care of the Countess, what I am asking for, and also some stylish little gifts for these ladies, my friends, one of them being the Presidente, who is already a relative because her son will soon be marrying our niece, and I cannot think what to give them. I was most intrigued by Pippo Acciaioli's comedies. There is not a more charming and imaginative man than he in the world—send him my best. Give my love to my little sons, and please believe that I am more than ever yours.

M.V.C.

Letter from Marie to her husband, 23 September 1672.
Biblioteca Statale S. Scolastica. (Photo: 'Passe Par Tout,' Subiaco.)
See Appendix for translation.
De Chamberi le 14 octobre 1672

Si je n'ay pas repondu ponctuellement a V.E. alla derniere lettre cest par la difficulte que jay de la lire. A force de mi etudier jey remarque a travers milles homnestele le plesir que vous aves de men fere en renvoiant a ma priere les filles de ma sœur. Je vous en rens milles grazes et vous suplie de croire autant qu'il est vray qui ne dependra jamais de moy que vous payes toutes les satisfactions que vous desires ce que vostre procede merite par milles differente raison. Je vous prie de croire que je me le pardonnaire jamais si par caprice ou par facilite jayes ouvert a ma sœur le chemin de sologner de vous. La terreur que je crois punique fonnee sur des avis done indiscretament et plusieures fois reiteres ont est les seuls conseiliers de cette disparade, je nay eu d'autres part que celle du secret. Jey cru que ce seroit une action contre la bonne fois et la proximitie de le reveuler et bien qua mon particuliers je ne donnasse aucune creanee au sujet qui causoit nostre despart je ne voulu pas mi opposer par scrupulle et par delicatesses d'amitie, aymant mieux risquer mon repos mon plesir est mon bien. Le Roy me voulait ajuster ma pension pour l'avoir suivi que de la voir partir seule. Je ne lay pas suivie au fil ni trouvant pas mes surtes. Je me suis retire a chamberi nayant pour toute compagnie que les arbres dun jardien de ce chateaus. Il me paresse plus agreeable qu'une religion forcee. Jatans ampatiece que miz mazarin sois asse resounable pour mantener en macordant des conditions les plus juste du monde et desquelles je fere un tres bon usage. Je suis persuadee que ma sœur en fera un tres sallutare des compleseuse que vous avez pour elle. Je hescri la dessu ce que je dois bien qu'il ne soit pas necessaire ayant autans despirit quelle en a. Continue sil vous plet vos bontes pour elle et pour moy et me croies vostre tres humble sœur et servante.

La Duchesse Mazarini

Je ne comprens pas qui peut vous avoir dit que je conserve du ressantiment contre vous. Jen conserve en esfait mais cest pour les obligations que je vous ay impunement. Lou me fait tourjou parler parce que lon scayt que je la discretions de faire toutes choses et de me lessier condamner plus tost que dacuser le tiers.
From Chambery the 14th of October 1672

If I have not responded promptly to Your Excellency to the last letter, it is because of the difficulty that I had in reading it. In applying myself to it, I noticed, in a thousand niceties, the pleasure that you take in granting my request that you send back my sister's maidservants. I give you a thousand thanks for this, and beg you to believe how true it is that it will never be my doing that you have anything but all the satisfaction that you desire and which your action merits for a thousand different reasons. Please believe that I would never forgive myself if by caprice or by carelessness I had cleared the path for my sister to distance herself from you. Terror, or what I think was panic, based on counsel indiscreetly given and repeated many times, were the only counselors of this disappearance. My only part was keeping the secret. I believed that it would be a violation of good faith and intimacy to reveal it, and although in my own mind I give no credence to the subject that caused our departure, I did not want to oppose it, out of scruple and delicacy of friendship, preferring to risk my repose, my pleasure, and my wealth (the King wants to withdraw my pension for having followed her) rather than see her leave alone. I did not follow her to Lys, not finding security there. I retired to Chambery, having for all company only the trees of a garden of the castle. They seem more agreeable than a forced religion. I wait in patience for Mr Mazarin to be reasonable enough to draw me away, by granting me some very just conditions of which I would make very good use. I am persuaded that my sister would make very salutary use of indulgences that you would grant her. On this subject I write to her what I ought, although it is not necessary as I have as much intelligence as she does. Please continue your kindnesses to her and to me, and believe that I am your very humble sister and servant,

The Duchess Mazarini

I do not understand who could have told you that I bear you any resentment. I do have some, in fact, but for the obligations that I owe you without penalty. People always have me saying things, because they know that I have the discretion to be silent on everything and to let myself be condemned rather than accuse another.

1 Lorenzo Colonna would have written in Italian. This may explain Hortense's difficulty in reading the letter, or she may be referring to the handwriting.
behaviour, which was laid open to her without the least reserve. She thinks herself very happy in the terms that are offered her, and very readily came into them; which are, that she shall for the future observe a strict silence, and on those conditions no more will be said to her on this affair. You have friends here that interested themselves in the warmest manner in your behalf; I find not one that has not a very great love and esteem for you, and readily sympathize with me in my grief. I have not as yet been any where but at Madame de la Fayette’s. All our friends strive to find me out, and get me along with them, which I dread like death. I entreat you, my dear child, to take care of your health; preserve it for my sake, and do not give way to those negligences which are so seldom got the better of. I embrace you with a tenderness that is not to be equalled; no offence to the most tender.

The marriage articles between Mademoiselle d’Houdancourt and Monsieur de Ventadour were signed this morning. The Abbe de Chambonnes was this morning likewise nominated to the Bishoprick of Lodeve. The Princess¹ will set out on Ash-Wednesday for Chateauroux, where the Prince is desirous she should make some stay. M. de la Marguerie succeeds M. d’Estampes, who is dead, in his place in the council. Madame de Mazarin comes to Paris this night; the King has declared himself her protector, and has sent a grand equipage with an exempt and eight men, to bring her up from Lis.

¹ Clara Clementina de Maillé Breze, Princess of Conti.
yet am I in this condition! You do then take a pleasure in thinking of me? in talking of me? and, as you say, have a greater satisfaction in writing your sentiments to me than in telling them? In whatever way they come, they meet with a reception the warmth of which can be only known to those who love as I do. You make me experience the greatest degree of tenderness for you that is possible to be felt. And if you think of me, be assured that I, on my side, am continually thinking of you: This is what the Devotees call an habitual thought; and is such as we ought to have for the Divine Being, were we to do our duty. Nothing is capable of taking me off from it. I see your coach continually driving on, but never, never to come nearer to me; I fancy myself on the road, and am always in apprehensions of the coach overturning. I am just distracted about the violent rains we have had these three days past; and I am frightened to death at the thoughts of the Rhone. I have this instant a map before me, I know every place you lie at. To-night you are at Nevers, Sunday you will be at Lyons, where you will receive this letter. I could but write to you at Moulins by Madame de Guene-gaud. I have had but two letters from you; perhaps a third will come; that is all the comfort I desire. I ask for no other. I am utterly incapable of seeing a great deal of company together, I may come to it again in time, perhaps, but it is out of the question now. The Duchesses of Verneuil and Arpajon have used all their endeavours to divert me, for which I am much obliged to them: Never sure were there better people than in this country.

MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNE

Saturday I was all the day at Madame de Villars, talking about you, and crying; she takes a great share in my concern. Yesterday I was to hear Monsieur d'Agen preach, and at Madame de Fuisieux and Madame du Pui-du-Fou's, who both send you a thousand services. This evening I shall sup *tete a tete* in the Fauxbours. These are my carnivals. I have a mass said for you every day. This is no superstitious piece of devotion. I saw Adhemar* but for a moment; I am going to write to him, and thank him for his bed. I am more obliged to him for it than you. If you have a mind to do me a real pleasure, take care of your health, sleep in that little snug bed, eat broth, and exert that courage which I want. Continue to write to me. Whatever friendships you left behind you here, are all increased, and I should never have

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3 Marie de Bellfond, Marchioness of Villars, mother to the late Marshal of that name.
4 Claude Joli, a celebrated preacher, afterwards Bishop of Agen.
5 With Madame de la Fayette.
4 Joseph Adhemar de Monteil, brother to M. de Grignan, known at first by the name of Adhemar, was after the death of Charles Philip d'Adhemar his brother, which happened the 6th of February 1627, called the Chevalier de Grignan; but being afterwards married to N... de Craison, he resumed the name of Count Adhemar. In 1675 he was Mestre de Camp to a regiment of horse, at the head of which he signalized himself on several occasions, particularly at the battle of Altenheim. He was made Marechal de Camp in 1688; and had not repeated attacks of the gout prevented him from continuing in the service, he would doubtless, from his great reputation, merit, and illustrious birth, have obtained the most considerable military honours. He died without issue the 19th November 1713, at the age of sixty-nine.
LETTERS OF THE

done making you compliments, and telling you how much every one is concerned about your health.

Mademoiselle d’Harcourt was married the day before yesterday; there was a grand supper en maître given to the whole family: Yesterday there was a grand ball, and at night a supper for the King and Queen, and all the ladies of the court, who were extremely brilliant on the occasion; it was one of the most splendid entertainments that could possibly be seen.

Madame d’H. . . . is departed in the greatest despair, having lost all her friends, and being fully convicted of what Madam Scarron had so long defended her against, and in short every piece of treachery imaginable. Let me know when you have received my letters. I shall seal this presently.

Monday Night

I am making up my packet before I go to the Fauxbourses, and shall direct it to the Intendant of Lyons. I am charmed with the distinction you observe in your letters with respect to me. Ah, my dear, I well deserve it from the distinction of my love to you.

I will now tell you what I learned concerning the entertainment yesterday: The court-yards belonging to the Hotel de Guise were illuminated with upwards of 2000 lanterns. The Queen went first of all into the apartment of Madame de Guise, which was illuminated and set forth in a most sumptuous manner; the ladies of the court were all ranged round her Majesty on their knees,

MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNE

without any distinction of rank: Supper was served up in that apartment. There were forty ladies at table, the supper was very magnificent: the King came in, and looked very gravely round him, without sitting down to table. After supper the company went into an upper apartment, where every thing was prepared for the ball. The King took out the Queen, and honoured the assembly by dancing three or four courants, and then retired to the Louvre with his usual attendants. Mademoiselle would not come to the Hotel Guise. This is all I know about the affair.

I am resolved to see the country fellow from Sulli, that brought me your letter yesterday. I intend to give him something to drink. I look on him as a happy creature in having seen you. Ah, what would I give could I see you but for a moment! I form Dragons 1 to myself as well as other people! Dirval 2 has heard talk of Melusina; he says it’s no matter, that he told you of the jests she made of you at your first lying-in, but that you would not hear a word of it; from which time he never came near you. That creature has spoke ill of you for a long time, but nothing would persuade you of it but your own eyes. And our Coadjutor too, will you not make much of him for my sake? Do you not yet find him to be Seignor Corbeau? I earnestly wish to see you friends again. Ah, my dear child, for God’s sake, tell me, are you taken a great deal of care of? But there is no believing you in what

1 A familiar expression between the mother and daughter, to signify vexations or uneasy reflections.
2 The Count d’Avaux.
LETTERS OF THE

relates to your health. You would not make use of this bed. This is just like not letting me send for Madame Robinett. Adieu, my dearest child! the only joy and anxiety of my life.

LETTER XVIII

To the Same

Paris, Friday 11 Feb. 1671.

I have received but three of those delightful letters which so affect my heart. One is yet wanting. Was I not so fond of them, and that I am loth to lose any thing that you send me, I should not think I had lost much; for nothing can be wished for beyond what I find in those I have already received: In the first place, they are well wrote, and are besides so tender, so natural, that it is impossible not to believe every thing in them; distrust itself must here stand convinced: They wear that air of truth which, as I have always maintained, carries its authority with it; while falsehood and lies skulk under a load of words, without having the power of persuasion: the more they attempt to shew themselves, the more are they entangled. Your expressions are sincere, and they appear so; they are used only to explain your meaning, and receive an irresistible force from their noble simplicity. Such, my dear child, do your letters appear to me. If my words have the same power as yours, I am confident the truths they convey must have had their usual effect with you. I will

MARCHIONESS DE SEVIGNE

not have you say, that I was a curtain that concealed you; so much the worse if I concealed you; you appear still more amiable now that curtain is drawn; you require to be discovered to appear in your true perfection. This is what we have said a thousand times of you. As for me, I appear to myself quite naked, and divested of every thing that made me amiable: I am ashamed to appear in the world; and notwithstanding the endeavours that have been used to bring me back to it, I have latterly been like one just come out of the woods, I could not be otherwise. Few are worthy of feeling what I feel; I have sought those chosen few, and avoided all others. I have seen Guittaut and his wife, they have a great regard for you; write me a word or two for them. Two or three of the Grignans came to see me to-day. I have given Adhemar a thousand thanks for lending you his bed: We did not pretend to examine how far it might have been his interest to have disturbed your quiet, rather than to have contributed to it, we had not spirits to carry the joke any farther, but were very happy that the bed had proved so good. I fancy you are at Moulins to-day, if so, you will receive one of my letters. I did not write to you at Briare, I must have wrote that cruel Wednesday, that very day you set off; and I was so overwhelmed with grief, that I was incapable even of tasting the consolation of writing to you. This is the third, my second is at Lyons. Be sure you let me know if you have received them. When one is at a distance, one no longer laughs at a letter beginning with, I received yours, &c. The thought of your going always farther and farther

After forty days, when I got up from my lying-in, I had to prepare to receive the compliments of the Sacred College, the princesses, and the ladies of the city; and so to receive their visits with the appropriate formality, I set myself up in a bed which had been prepared for me for my first confinement and which was only used this one time. The novelty as well as the magnificence of this bed filled everyone with admiration: it was a sort of seashell which seemed to float in the middle of an artfully represented sea, which served as a base for it. It rested on the hindquarters of four sea horses mounted by mermaids; the whole thing was admirably sculpted, and the brilliance of the gold had disguised so well the material underneath that it seemed to be entirely made of that precious metal. Ten or twelve little cherubs served as attachments for curtains of a very rich gold brocade, which they allowed to hang casually and which served more as ornaments than as veils, since they hid nothing from view of all that deserved to be seen in these sumptuous trappings.
Pietro Sati Bartoli, 1663, etching after drawing by Johann Paul Schor.
Gabinetto Nazionale dei Disegni e delle Stampe, Rome.

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Album of Prints, Vol. 3, Pepys Library at Magdalen College: double spread from class of “Artists”