

PART 1: THE SUN KING 1643–1685

1 The Regency, 1643–1661



In this section, we shall look at the beginning of Louis XIV's reign and the situation in France when he came to the throne aged four. We shall look at how the government was established that ruled in France until Louis took personal control of affairs in 1661. The Regency years were marked by armed conflict, so we shall also examine the wars and civil wars of this period in French history. We will look into:

- the French monarchy in 1643: the legacy of Richelieu and Louis XIII; the establishment of the Regency
- the minority of Louis XIV: the roles of Anne of Austria and Mazarin; the Parlement of Paris, unrest and opposition; the Frondes
- France and Europe: the rise of French power at the expense of the Habsburgs; the treaties of Westphalia and the Pyrenees
- the condition of France at the accession of Louis XIV in 1661: politics, economy and society.

The French monarchy in 1643

The legacy of Richelieu and Louis XIII

Louis XIII was king of France 1610–1643 and married Anne of Austria. After 23 years of hoping for an heir and four still births, the couple produced Louis in 1638, prompting calls of a miracle birth.

A/AS Level History for AQA: The Sun King: Louis XIV, France and Europe, 1643–1715



Voices from the past

Richelieu



Figure 1.1: Richelieu

Armand Jean du Plessis de Richelieu was French Chief Minister 1624–1642. He founded France’s navy and promoted colonies. His **Testament Politique** celebrated enhancing Louis XIII’s glory and power, and boasted that the monarch was leaving France:

‘in the highest degree of glory and reputation which it has ever had.’¹



Key terms

Huguenots: French Protestants, influenced by the writing of theologian Jean (John) Calvin.

Richelieu’s achievements included defeating **Huguenot** revolts. The 1629 **Edict of Grace** permanently weakened the Huguenots’ ability to rebel, depriving insurgents of cities and fortresses.

He developed state **propaganda**. Countless **Académie Française** (formed 1635) pamphleteers defended and glorified Richelieu. A royal printing press presented government opinion as fact.



Key terms

Chambres de l’Arsenal: a court that usurped the parlements’ authority.

parlements: law courts, *not* parliaments. The Paris Parlement was the biggest; its jurisdiction covered at least a third of France. In this book where we simply say ‘Parlement’, we mean the Paris Parlement.

Lit de justice: a session when Parlement met in the king’s presence, thereby deterring opposition.

The noble family of Habsburg: held the Holy Roman Empire crown for nearly 300 years. They acquired Spain; Philip IV was son-in-law to Habsburg Emperor Ferdinand III.

Richelieu frequently circumvented judicial procedure. His **Chambres de l’Arsenal** quickly tried and removed royal opponents. He weakened the **Paris Parlement** and its right to **remonstrance** (protest) against royal edicts. Louis XIII used **lits de justice** to override remonstrances and force through an **edict** preventing discussion of state affairs without his permission. This limited remonstrances to just three: one regarding judicial legislation and two regarding financial legislation. By 1643, state affairs were the Crown’s legislative prerogative.

Royal infringement of parliamentary liberties by 1643 included:

Actions:	Consequences:
Handpicked judges	Lost prestige and revenue
Extensive use of commissaries (special royal representatives)	Sovereign courts overruled
Intendants supervised judicial affairs and civil cases.	
Richelieu exploited the office system , selling government service jobs and threatening to create and sell more.	Undermining the value and status of existing judicial and administrative posts.

Richelieu increased royal power in the provinces of France by extending government administration to Dauphiné, Burgundy and Provence. He increased Intendant use and powers. These hand-picked officials were only employed for three years. They supervised army billeting, used troops to enforce taxation and suppress revolts and took over the **assiette** (the basic assessment of the main direct tax, the **taille**) in 1642.

1 The Regency, 1643–1661

France and Europe by 1643

Richelieu wanted to:

- weaken **Habsburg** power to limit possible incursions along France’s eastern border
- take the province of Alsace
- frustrate the ambitions of Spanish king Philip IV.

He therefore took France into the **Thirty Years War** against Spain and the Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor in 1635. Territories captured included:

- Arras
- Artois
- Alsace
- Rhine bridgeheads
- Roussillon
- Perpignan.

This laid foundations for French European dominance.



Figure 1.2: Europe during the 30 Years War

A/AS Level History for AQA: The Sun King: Louis XIV, France and Europe, 1643–1715

ACTIVITY 1.1

Look up and clearly define:

- Huguenots
- Edict of Grace
- Académie Française
- Chambres de l’Arsenal
- Paris Parlement
- remonstrance
- lit de justice
- intendants
- offices
- taille
- pays d’états

ACTIVITY 1.2

List the key elements in Richelieu and Louis XIII’s legacy. After studying later chapters, revisit this question and see whether you still take the same view. Annotate your list, commenting on how further study has changed your opinion.

Catholics and Huguenots

By 1643, the monarchy’s natural devout Catholic supporters were disconcerted by ongoing Huguenot religious freedom and conspiracy (in Languedoc) and a Protestant war against Spain (led by the United Provinces, Brandenburg-Prussia and, from 1630, Sweden) that increased poverty.

By 1643, even government and royal-family members opposed the war and royal policies:

- Brigadier-General the Duc de Bouillon had negotiated for peace with Spain and helped Louis **Bourbon** lead insurgents from Lorraine, Champagne, Sedan and **Spanish Netherlands**, defeating royal troops at La Marfée in 1641.
- Louis XIII’s brother Gaston d’Orléans repeatedly tried removing Richelieu. In 1641–2, he plotted Richelieu’s murder and negotiated peace with the Duc de Bouillon, Louis XIII’s favourite the Marquis Cinq-Mars, and Olivares.
- Anne of Austria, Louis’ wife, confessed to treasonable correspondence with her brother, the **Cardinal** Infante Ferdinand of Spain.

Despite Cinq-Mars’ execution in 1642, aristocratic rebellion remained a threat. Louis XIII absolved other conspirators (including Gaston, the Duc de Bouillon and Anne of Austria), allowing those exiled to return home after Richelieu’s death. This invited future rebellion, as did Louis’ will. This stipulated that war must continue until a decisive outcome, thereby extending the biggest cause of royal unpopularity and instability.

Taxation

Royal treatment of parlements had created conditions for habitual radical opposition and revolt:

- In 1641 Aix and Rouen’s parlements openly defied royal policy, rejecting new **chambres de requêtes** (sessions with judicial officials that examined petitions for cases going to magistrates).
- In 1643 Parlement significantly delayed and modified plans to extend **Intendant** control over taxation.
- By 1643, parlements and tax payers were both alienated. Taille and troop **‘subsistence’** tax levies had trebled since 1620. Indirect taxes had more than doubled. So too had annual military costs, consuming nearly 75% of expenditure.
- Richelieu’s war was financially disastrous. Averaging about 25 million **livres** annually, government expenses outran revenue and debt interest spiralled.

Taxation collection was corrupt and wasteful; over 75% of 19 million livres of **gabelle** (an indirect tax on luxury goods) collected in 1641 was lost. Tax evasion was widespread. Much of France remained grossly undertaxed. France’s newly acquired and often semi-autonomous territories, the **pays d’états** (Brittany, Burgundy, Dauphiné, Languedoc, Normandy and Provence), comprised one third of France, but paid just 10% of all taxes.



Voices from the past

Mathieu de Morgues

Mathieu de Morgues was prominent among the pamphleteers who actively opposed Richelieu’s religious and foreign policies. Initially supportive of Richelieu, he became disillusioned and emerged as a leader of the **dévot** (religious) faction. This was a loose grouping of people who supported monarchy and Roman Catholicism and opposed:

- French participation in the Thirty Years War

- Richelieu’s tyrannical power.

Morgues demanded Richelieu’s overthrow:

‘all good Frenchmen, open your eyes to see what a miserable condition you are in; open your minds to foresee the great desolation that menaces you. Do not permit a puny man, sick in body and mind, to tyrannise over the bodies and minds of so many sane persons.... Cast off these ... evil instruments.’²

Subsequently, revenue was increasingly dependent upon:

- High-interest rentes (loans). Interest rates between 20% – 33% broke both the 5.5% legal limit and fiscal common sense.
- Office sales. By 1642, the number of these administrative posts was around 40,000, more than the administration required. This increased salary and pension costs and transferred tax collection to notoriously dishonest officials.

By 1643, revenues from rente and office sales approached 700 million livres. Other problems were caused by Richelieu:

- burning old Treasury accounts
- ignoring the **chambres des comptes** (sovereign courts specialising in financial affairs)
- secretly paying financiers (nearly 172 million livres).

This prevented proper auditing, debt control and trust in royal fiscal management.

By 1643, open revolt had erupted against royal taxes in Orléans. No scope remained to increase taxation without risking further revolt.³

Richelieu left a rapacious taxation system which unduly burdened those least able to pay. This threatened civil war, as Richelieu himself foresaw in 1641:

‘If Messieurs of the council continue to allow tax farmers and contractors the freedom to treat the king’s subjects according to their unruly appetite, then it is certain that a disorder similar to that in Spain will happen in France.’⁴

France’s army in 1643

Richelieu’s army was not disciplined, big or good enough to conclusively defeat its enemies.

- Troops were often unpaid, and prone to looting and extortion.
- Corrupt commanders (and some Intendants) often cheated **muster rolls** (troop number lists used to calculate pay) by borrowing other regiments’ troops, temporarily recruiting peasants or retaining dead soldiers on pay rolls.

French dominance over its territories was incomplete. Habsburg invasion of Corbie (1636) – 80 miles from Paris – and Spain’s invasion of Languedoc (1637) left France craving security. Lorraine remained occupied, but disorderly and resentful. Local brigands attacked and tied down French soldiers. French troops engendered hostility, plundering so much property and food that many women were reportedly reduced to eating their own children.

Richelieu’s and Louis XIII’s reported achievements were fairly exaggerated in reality. Much maligned though Mazarin has been, he did not initiate the key problems he faced after 1643 – but as we shall see, he did intensify them.

Richelieu and Louis XIII left behind them:

- financial and social disorder
- an unpopular, unwinnable war
- enormous debt
- the foundations for aristocratic, parlement and mass revolt.

The establishment of the Regency

When Richelieu died in 1642, Louis XIII’s health was already failing. Internal tuberculosis left him contorted and emaciated. By April 1643, Louis XIII’s death was only a matter of time, but the issue of his **succession** created many problems.

1 The Regency, 1643–1661

ACTIVITY 1.3

Look up and clearly define:

- Spanish Netherlands
- maîtres des requêtes
- paulette
- Cours des Aides
- chambres des requêtes
- gabelle
- rentes
- chambres des députés.

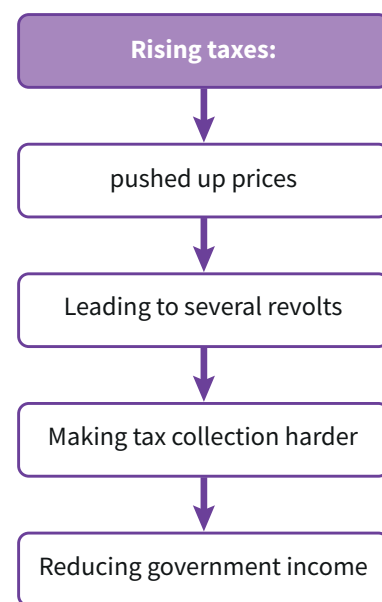


Figure 1.3: Richelieu’s financial legacy

ACTIVITY 1.4

Look up and clearly define:

- subsistence tax
- Lorraine.

ACTIVITY 1.5

Draw up spider diagrams summarising the problems Richelieu left in the areas of:

- religion
- politics
- finance
- defence.

A/AS Level History for AQA: The Sun King: Louis XIV, France and Europe, 1643–1715

The old king's son, also Louis, was only four, so too young to rule. Louis XIII's brother Jean Baptiste Gaston had repeatedly plotted against Richelieu and been a co-conspirator with Cinq-Mars. Louis' wife Anne of Austria had also been treacherous and distant. Louis had been reportedly reluctant to sleep with her, preferring close emotional attachments with men.

The king's priority was to protect his young son's interests and avoid power falling into the wrong hands or worse still, a power struggle developing into a civil war. He thus devised a will that denied Anne, Gaston and other political players the opportunity to assume power after his death. This established a Council of Regency that essentially ensured that Anne could not take full power as **regent** but should be controlled and guided by it:

'the office of Regent is a trust of great weight, upon the due discharge of which depends the welfare and glory of the kingdom; and as it is possible that the Queen can have the requisite knowledge to conduct the course of great and important events, which is acquired only by long experience, we have thought good to name a Council of Regency, by the advice of which, and under her Majesty's authority, state affairs shall be resolved by a plurality of votes'⁵

Louis' will struck a careful balance, curtailing different individuals' power without denying or inflating it. Louis refused to name either Gaston or Anne as regent, but included both as council members. He also insisted that:

- Anne could not change Regency Council members, unless one died.
- State policies required a majority vote in this council, thereby reining in his wife's power.

As a further precaution against Anne trying to dominate, Louis insisted that the Regency Council should include trusted allies in the following roles:

Who:	Role:
Prince Condé Henri de Bourbon	Royal household head
Gaston d'Orléans	Lieutenant General
Pierre Séguier	Chancellor – this was not a financial role, but judicial, controlling the parlements
Claude Bouthillier	Finance superintendent
Léon Bouthillier (Comte de Chavigny)	Foreign minister
Cardinal Jules Mazarin	Council member in charge of all ecclesiastical issues.

Louis XIII overestimated his ability to determine events after his death through his will. French constitutional law prevented a king from binding his successor to any **decree** or will, as each king had the full authority of the crown. He also underestimated Anne of Austria's ability to disregard his last wishes regarding her status and to gain support. Anne was astute and active, not apathetic. In establishing Louis XIV's regency and her prominent role within it, Anne was very much her own woman with her own agenda. Nothing would prevent her son from being the future king of France and from her having a leading role as regent. To achieve this, she asked the Duc de Beaufort to guard her sons and courted the support of the powerful Condé family, especially the Duc d'Enghien, who commanded the army. In addition, she 'was the first to kneel in homage to her son Louis XIV', thereby conveying her leading role in serving the new king.⁶

Anne was certainly not prepared to be side-lined and denied her rightful leading role as her son's regent. She immediately set about overturning her late husband's will that restricted her power. To do this, she:

- covertly prepared the ground to overturn Louis XIII's will; five days before he died, Anne made it clear to Paris Parlement lawyer Omer Talon that a lit de justice on her son's behalf could be in the offing regarding her husband's will
- led Louis to a formal lit de justice session with the Paris Parlement for removing the restrictions placed on her authority by her late husband; this was just four days after his death
- placed Louis on the throne of state in the Parlement hall of justice and took a seat to his right
- surrounded herself with potential power rivals Gaston, the Prince de Condé, the Duc de Vendôme (both illegitimate sons of Louis' Bourbon grandfather Henri IV) and other peers and dukes; this reinforced the idea that Louis' rule under her tutelage was popularly supported
- used her son Louis to initiate the request to overturn his father's will; Anne taught him to say "Gentleman, I am come to show you my affection; my chancellor will tell you the rest".

Anne also wooed the Paris Parlement by:

- offering it an advisory role about the welfare of the state during the rest of her regency
- removing the need for magistrates to swear new oaths of loyalty
- offering magistrates the chance to reduce the regency council from a ruling body to an advisory role.

Since the regency council left by Louis XIII contained so many of Richelieu and Louis XIII's ministers, Anne's appeal to the Paris Parlement seemingly offered a win-win premise for Crown and Parlement alike. The Paris Parlement perceived, and was encouraged to perceive, that it now had the opportunity to curb Richelieu and Louis XIII's more 'despotic' policies. This idea also appealed massively to Gaston and Condé.

Anne overturned constraints upon her power by using the ultimate propaganda smokescreen during Louis XIV's lit de justice. To this end, she employed Chancellor Séguier to persuade the Paris Parlement to dissolve Louis XIII's will. Séguier did not speak as if he was representing Anne, but her four-year-old son Louis. He brilliantly deployed the language of shock and reason to win magistrates' hearts and minds. He flagged up warnings about the stability of royal **sovereignty** in the event of authority being divided (as in Louis XIII's proposed Regency Council).

He also reinforced Louis XIV's natural **dynastic** right to be king by presenting the concept that 'The King never dies' – the idea that, even though an individual king dies, the institution of monarchy survives because as soon as one king is dead, his heir is immediately the rightful king. Thus the natural way for royal authority to live on after Louis XIII's death was through his son, as Louis XIV, who would naturally need his mother's protection. Séguier claimed that 'seeds of royal virtue' guaranteed 'the rebirth of the dead king in the person of his king the son'.⁷

Paris Parlement Avocat Général Omer Talon also strongly supported Anne in helping to overturn Louis' will. He reinforced Louis' dynastic Bourbon right by claiming that he had taken 'public possession of the throne of his ancestors'.⁸

These interventions effectively made the Paris Parlement's nullification of Louis XIII's will and approval of Anne as sole regent a done deal. Contrary to her deceased husband's explicit wishes, she was enshrined as regent with all restrictions upon her power quashed. The regency council was to be an advisory board, not a ruling body. This meant that Anne, as according to ancient and natural **royal prerogative**, would be left to take charge of the young king and the business of state.

A/AS Level History for AQA: The Sun King: Louis XIV, France and Europe, 1643–1715

Anne immediately set about her own reshuffle of the royal administration. On the evening after the successful lit de justice, she invited Cardinal Jules Mazarin to be her closest adviser and chief minister. She had a strong personal bond with him and met with him in her private cabinet for two hours each evening to be briefed on foreign policy.

Jules Mazarin had succeeded Richelieu as Louis XIII's Chief Minister in 1642 and remained in the post under Louis XIV until his own death in 1661. Born Giulio Mazzarini in Italy, he was a former French secret agent and Cardinal in the **Roman Catholic** Church. In 1640 he had defused a dangerous situation in Savoy, where the regency of Louis XIII's promiscuous sister, Duchess Christine (and thus French influence in the duchy), had been challenged. He had helped to unmask the Cinq-Mars conspiracy.

Mazarin tactfully enabled Anne to believe that she was in control, claiming that 'she was born to govern'.⁹

Anne surrounded herself with ministers she could trust. She disgraced Chavigny and with Mazarin's support and recommendation, enlisted as her inner council:

Person:	Role:
Pierre Séguier	royal expert on judicial matters
Patricelli d'Hémery	Finance Minister
Michel Le Tellier	Secretary of State for War

Here was a recipe for continuity of royal policies, not change. Séguier had been Louis XIII's Chancellor. D'Hémery and Le Tellier were Mazarin's friends and yes-men when it came to the key issue of extending the war. Crucially, the royal **council of state** existed in a purely advisory role. Although it was party to official decisions made by Anne and Mazarin, it was entrusted to merely ratify policies which Anne and Mazarin and their inner council had formulated in advance. Anne's regency council deftly included **princes of the blood** with posts that flattered their egos but denied them any central political role. Gaston was maintained as the Kingdom's Lieutenant General and Condé was offered a general's role on the frontline. Only rarely were they consulted on basic state policies made by Anne and her chief advisers. This was intended to give Anne and Mazarin's rule a veneer of legitimacy and a measure of control, by 'associating illustrious names with the regency, without granting a corresponding responsibility'.¹⁰

The minority of Louis XIV

The roles of Anne of Austria and Mazarin

Anne's tenure as regent lasted until 1653. Mazarin's role as Chief Minister lasted until his death in 1661.

Anne was widely perceived to be under his spell, if not in his bed. He had certainly formed a very close relationship with her, giving her jewels and signing letters to her 'Yours to the last breath'.

Together, they were supposed to:

- prepare Louis XIV for his future rule as king
- continue Richelieu's war
- tap extra revenue to fund this campaign
- prevent the princes of the blood from seizing power.

1 The Regency, 1643–1661

In only the first of these roles did Mazarin and Anne have any definite success. Mazarin played a leading role in mentally conditioning Louis for personal rule. In 1644, he enlisted Hardouin de Péréfixe (Archbishop of Paris 1664–1671) to tutor Louis and instil in him a strong grasp of his Divine Right and prime him for taking a strong and active future role. History lessons gave Louis a secure grasp of public laws and right, alongside the importance of order and resolute action to overcome successive challenges. According to Geoffrey Treasure, Louis also learned that, as the peak of a pyramid of counsel and command, his role was ‘primarily to perform decisive actions’.¹¹ Louis translated Divine Right theories daily from Latin. This helped to cultivate his appetite for personal rule:

‘The profession of a king is a majestic, noble and delightful one ... a king should delight in his calling ... homage is due to kings; they may do as they please.’¹²

Buoyed by improving French military fortunes and the prospect of securing substantial territorial gains, Anne committed herself to continuing the war against Spain. In 1643, she rebuffed Spanish overtures for peace, even though she was the daughter of Philip IV (Spanish King until 1655). Louis XIII’s will had stipulated that this must continue until a decisive outcome. Mazarin also wholeheartedly supported the war. The Duc d’Enghien’s (Condé’s son) victory over Spain at Rocroi in May 1643 increased Mazarin’s ambitions. War was continued at great detriment to royal finances and popularity, as explained below.

For all the problems he inherited, Mazarin made them considerably worse, especially royal debt and opposition to royal policies. Like a compulsive gambler, he decided that conquering additional territory was important enough to risk borrowing more money. The results were disastrous:

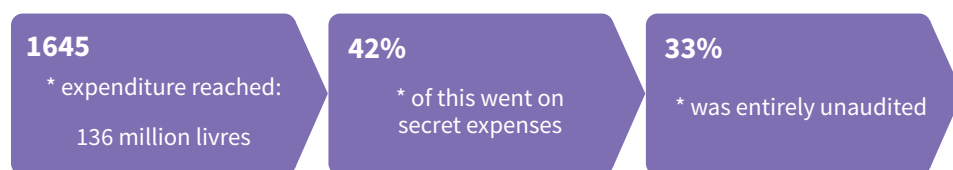


Figure 1.4: French state expenditure under Mazarin

Instead of acting like an accountant and cutting back expenses while raising income, Mazarin acted like a gambler and borrowed 115 million livres. Lenders were getting more worried and could only be persuaded to hand over the cash by being given high interest rates of 15%–20%.

The security for this was royal revenues until the end of 1647. Concerns about financial mismanagement mounted and were entirely well founded.

With debts exceeding 100 million livres and no conclusive military victory in sight, Mazarin left D’Hémerly a nigh on impossible job of trying to balance the books. His efforts made Mazarin and the regency the fulcrum of increasing opposition:

A/AS Level History for AQA: **The Sun King: Louis XIV, France and Europe, 1643–1715**

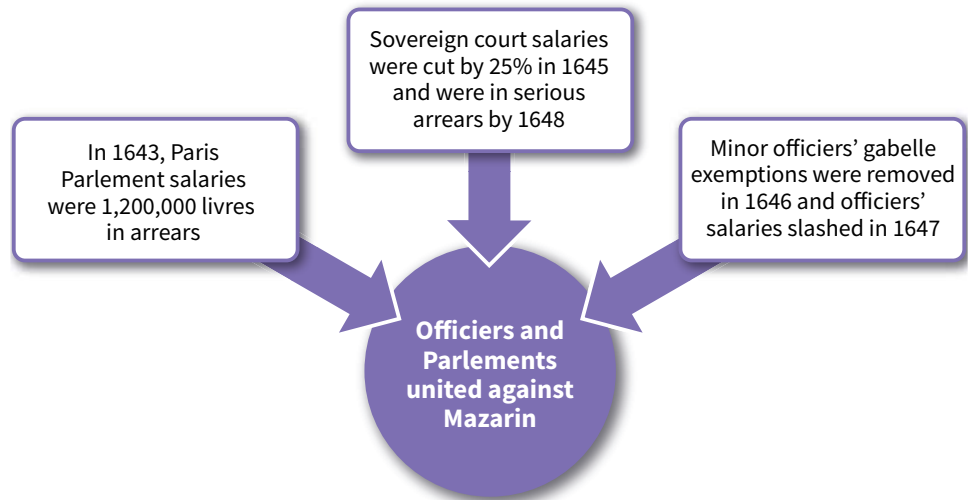


Figure 1.5: Reasons why the Paris Parlement and officers united against Mazarin

Mazarin's blindness to rising socio-economic hardship also made him an increasing source of hate among tax payers. Subsequently, royal control of taxation deteriorated. By 1648, taxation had soared to three times its 1630 figure. Payment arrears increased, as did:

- troop use to enforce collection
- riots
- attacks on collectors; by 1645, serious tax revolts had affected Arles, Draguignan, Marseille, Gascony, Pardiac and Dauphiné.

Anne and Mazarin tried but failed to contain aristocratic ambition. In 1646, Condé's son (the Grand Condé) inherited the royal household headship and royal council seat. His brother-in-law, the Duc de Longueville, was admitted to the council in 1648. Mazarin aimed to divide and rule *les grands* (important aristocrats) by promising everything to everyone without actually delivering. This antagonised *les grands*, as did Mazarin's mismanagement of French internal affairs.

Indignant at their lack of promised central and provincial political power, an aristocratic gang led by the Duc de Beaufort conspired to murder Mazarin during 1643–44 in '**l'affaire des importants**'.

The plot included:

- The Duc de Vendôme: coveting the admiralty and governorship of Brittany, he promised to pull Mazarin's moustache off.
- Augustin Potier, Bishop of Beauvais: his ambition was to be chief minister.
- The Marquis of Châteauneuf: he wanted to be restored to favour after being sacked by Richelieu.

Government spies detected the conspirators. Beaufort was imprisoned and others sought voluntary exile. But a renewed aristocratic revolt was only a matter of time:

- Beaufort escaped from jail in 1648.
- Châteauneuf and Potier continually tried to turn other nobles and Parisian judges against Mazarin and Anne.
- The Count of Chavigny, the former secretary of state, constantly schemed to undermine Mazarin and secretly negotiated with the Cardinal's enemies in the sovereign courts of Paris.

The aristocracy was neither prepared to be excluded from office nor to accept Mazarin as Chief Minister, far from it. Mazarin's selection as Chief Minister ignited xenophobia,

1 The Regency, 1643–1661

intrigue, resentment and vitriol. Mazarin became a lightning rod for an irreversible trend of personal attacks on himself and Anne. This is shown by the 5,000–7,000 **Mazarinade** pamphlets that swept across Paris during the **Frondes**.

Hostile pamphleteers habitually referred to Anne as Mazarin’s whore and focused upon Mazarin’s low birth, greed, lechery, scrounging – and alleged shameful personal tastes. They also condemned him for financial mismanagement, **embezzlement** and misleading the regent, as well as capturing her affections with love potions.

Mazarin was hated for extending the war for personal gain and united opposition, as explained in the next few sections.

Anne’s courting of Paris Parlement support for overturning Louis XIII’s will had whet the appetite of magistrates for remonstrance. They now sought a leading advisory role to help scale back Louis XIII’s policies. When neither of these things proved forthcoming, royal **constitutional powers** were attacked. Anne was something of a pushover for the Paris Parlement. When she stated her intention to have a lit de justice to enforce registration of a forced loan scheme on the richest Parisians, in September 1644, Talon disparaged her authoritarian approach:

‘It was an extraordinary and unparalleled act for a king who was still a minor to hold a lit de justice and to have edicts verified by the exercise of his absolute power.’¹³

After a fierce backlash against the 1645 lit de justice, Anne made no formal attempt to overrule the Paris Parlement until January 1648. Conversely, the Paris Parlement became increasingly willing to defend various vested interests (people who were well served by the current system and would defend it against any proposed changes) and taxpayers, as we will now see.

The Parlement of Paris: unrest and opposition

From 1643, Paris Parlement’s unrest and opposition involved blocking and challenging:

- finance raising measures
- judicial reviews
- lits de justice.

Dates:	Government action:	Paris Parlement opposition:
July 1643	Ordered Cours des Aides to register intendants’ new fiscal powers.	Remonstrance, forcing modifications Persuaded Cours des Aides to: a) alter the edict b) demand control of embezzlement cases.
March 1644	Introduced the toisé (a tax on houses built near Paris’ walls) Referred appeal cases to royal councils, not Parisian sovereign courts.	Omer Talon: a) questioned lost appeal revenue b) warned of riots and provincial parlement resistance unless appeals were heard by the Paris Parlement, forcing the tax’s withdrawal.



Key terms

Frondes: French for ‘sling’ (used by Parisian crowds to smash the windows of Mazarin’s supporters) and the name for the unrest overall.



Voices from the past

This January 1649 Mazarinade entitled *The Guard at the King’s Bed who Tells All* was typical in alleging an affair between Queen and Cardinal:

‘People can’t doubt it any longer, it’s true that he shags her’.¹⁴

A/AS Level History for AQA: **The Sun King: Louis XIV, France and Europe, 1643–1715**

Dates:	Government action:	Paris Parlement opposition:
July 1644	<p>Resumed toisé collection; royal guard companies assessed property fines</p> <p>Placed all litigational cases under Royal Council control</p> <p>Anne accused Parlement's enquiry and requests chambers of causing tenant riots and disturbances in Paris.</p>	<p>United condemnation of authoritarian taxation</p> <p>Radicals: proposed arresting toisé collectors refused to register it forced its suspension</p> <p>Remonstrances against loss of appeals</p> <p>Mathieu Molé (Paris Parlement President from 1645) accused Anne of slander</p> <p>Appeal and enquiry judges encouraged riots, forcing 90% tax reductions and exemptions.</p>
March 1645	<p>Revived the toisé</p> <p>Arrested Jean-Jacques Barillon (Parlement President until 1645) for demanding guarantees against this.</p>	<p>Immediate protests ended its collection and attempted enforcement</p> <p>Parlement refused to approve any future fiscal expedients, stirred by taxpayers' support and martyr Barillon's death in jail.</p>
1645	<p>Proposed taxing royal domains</p> <p>Used a lit de justice to enforce registration and 18 other financial edicts.</p>	<p>Judges: refused registration created a 'veiled veto', converting the tax to a voluntary levy denounced royal tyranny encouraged Paris merchants to close shops rather than pay, forcing the tax's suspension.</p>
1646–7	<p>Tried enforcing Parisian goods' tariffs.</p>	<p>Cours des Aides' rejection and insistence on exemptions</p> <p>Parlement: questioned its legality without its authorisation insisted upon registering all future indirect taxes limited the tax to 200,000 livres – well below its estimated 450,000 potential.</p>

Table 1.1: How royal financial policies stirred Paris Parlement unrest and opposition.