

Another Spare to the French Crown:
Henry III of France's Self-Representation & Royal Authority

Estelle Paranque

“My lord, I am upset to know that you have been sick for so long. I would like to be able to give you something to please you and to be near you to entertain you. My lord, I am still studying well in order to serve you when I become an adult.

I am recommending myself to your good grace. I pray to God that you recover soon. Your very humble and very obedient brother, Alexandre de France.”¹

Alexandre-Edouard, the future Henry III of France, wrote this letter to his eldest brother, Francis II of France, at only six years old.² In many ways, this letter reveals that Henry did not expect to rule, but rather to serve his brother when he became an adult. Fate decided otherwise, and Henry was named King of France in 1574 after the death of his two older brothers, Francis II in 1560 and Charles IX in May 1574. During Henry's reign, France was ravaged by religious civil wars. His inability to put an end to them contributed to his reputation as a bad king and a tyrant.³ His effeminate appearance and rumours about his sexual orientation (allegedly homosexual) were used against him to undermine his authority.⁴ For Katherine Crawford, these allegations were due to the king's failure to produce an heir.⁵ Recent scholarship has endeavoured to reassess Henry's reputation and to offer a fairer and more well-rounded appraisal of his reign.⁶ It is in the new optic that this chapter attempts to align itself. Few scholars have thoroughly analysed Henry III's own words when it comes to defining his monarchical representation. Xavier Le

Person provides several important insights into Henry III's writings, notably the speech the king gave in 1585. Person studies the rhetoric used by the king, but does not highlight the different representations throughout this speech and how they allowed the king to defend his royal authority.⁷ Henry's inspiration in portraying himself as a father to his country has also been examined through his speeches.⁸ This chapter aims to go beyond these interpretations and uses Henry's letters and speeches to analyse how a king who was not supposed to rule managed to fashion a strong royal identity.

Despite the fact that he was not a direct heir to the throne, Henry III received a proper Christian and humanist education.⁹ He was the third son of Henry II of France and Catherine de Medici. He was known for his appreciation of literature and his interest in the use of rhetoric.¹⁰ Henry's former teacher, Jacques Amyot, dedicated to the king his *Projet de l'éloquence royale* in 1579, demonstrating the significance of mastering language in order to be a good king.¹¹ From his younger years as Monsieur to his last years as the King of France, his letters and speeches reveal an image of a king who, despite immense challenges, was devoted to his people and to the French crown.

A KING'S BROTHER: GLORY, RIVALRY AND LOYALTY

Only fifteen months separated Charles IX of France and his brother Henry. This section offers insight into their relationship, as no scholarly work devoted to their relationship exists. In 1569, Henry was appointed General Lieutenant of the Realm, becoming second-in-charge of military affairs. Henry took his responsibilities very seriously, but at times his military leadership did overshadow his brother's rule. In any case, he remained loyal to his brother. In a letter sent in May 1573, Henry

demonstrated his loyalty to Charles and stated that he wanted “to sacrifice hundreds of thousands of lives” in service of his brother and thanked him for honouring him. He insisted that in response he would “kiss very humbly your feet and hands and will kiss them when I have this honour to see you.”¹² He signed all the letters he sent to his brother, “your very humble and very obedient brother and subject, Henry.”¹³

Despite this obedient and loyal attitude, Henry often positioned himself as the one in charge—promoting his glory inside and outside the borders of his realm and creating some sibling rivalry. In 1568, he wrote to the Governors of the Provinces stating the importance of the recent edict of pacification.¹⁴ In another letter, Henry wrote: “the king and myself [are] authorised to implement more taxes to ensure the defence of the bridge.”¹⁵ In both cases, he connected himself to his brother’s authority, revealing the importance of his status as General Lieutenant and as the next legitimate heir to the throne. Henry also imposed his role and authority outside the borders of France. For instance, when, in September 1568, Charles IX decided to send a special envoy to the Spanish court, he agreed with his brother Henry on the identity of the diplomat. Furthermore, Henry decided to write directly to Philip II of Spain, explaining, “the King and the Queen are sending you the lord of Lignerolles, who is mine.”¹⁶ He continued on to say that he was the one commanding Lignerolles on his duties.¹⁷ A month later, Henry wrote again to the Spanish king, revealing his devotion to him and asserting, “you will never have a servant nor a kinsman who desires more to humbly serve you than I do.”¹⁸ At the death of his sister in October 1568, Elisabeth of Valois, Queen Consort of Spain, Henry wrote to Philip expressing his grief and claiming that he would obey him willingly.¹⁹ In direct correspondence with the Spanish king, Henry positioned himself as true heir to his brother, Charles IX of France. Furthermore, while insisting on the importance of his role in the French

realm, he also used the rhetoric of obedience to Philip and signed all his letters to him as “your humble and obedient brother, Henry.”²⁰ The fact that he signed “your brother” is not surprising, as monarchs used familial rhetoric when writing to one another.²¹ However, the adjectives preceding echo greatly those used when Henry wrote to his natural and true brother Charles, demonstrating that Henry was being submissive to Philip.

As a king’s brother, Henry asserted a certain authority and showed Charles that he took his responsibilities seriously. In February 1568, Henry informed his brother that he had captured a spy who spoke German and who had managed to intercept letters exchanged between them. He reassured Charles that he would make the right decisions regarding the spy. Therefore one could argue that he was acting as a second king.²² At no point in this letter did he ask for advice or orders from Charles, revealing the complex dynamic between the two brothers.

Henry was obedient, but this was also tainted by his own aspiration to reveal and promote his own glory. In March 1569, Henry won an important battle at Jarnac against the Huguenots.²³ In a very short letter of only a few lines, he reported to Charles, “My lord, you have won the battle. The Prince of Condé [Huguenots’ leader] is dead. I have seen him dead. I am fine.”²⁴ With a few words, Henry revealed his leadership and glory. In insisting that he saw the enemy dead, he reminded his brother that he was the one on the battlefield, asserting the importance of appearing as a martial potential king. A few days later, he wrote the king a very detailed letter relating the course of events during the battle. Henry notified Charles that he had written to the different factions, to the ambassadors in Europe and directly to Queen Elizabeth I of England to explain what happened on the battlefield, believing that it would give “more authority and favour to your affairs.”²⁵ Henry was making sure that

his glorious victory was known abroad. Furthermore, he also gave a speech on the day of the victory which was printed by Guillaume de Nyverd, the royal printer.²⁶ This speech detailed the events on the battlefield and also insisted on Henry's bravery. He was described as the one in charge of military decisions that led to the victory over their enemies.²⁷ Henry was also reported as the one pursuing the enemies who were fleeing the battlefield, further depicting the image of a warrior prince.²⁸ However, the end of the speech focused on Charles's glory as King of France and on his victory.²⁹ In all, it seemed that Henry's courageous actions served to promote the crown as well as himself, but his name remained the one associated with the victory at Jarnac. These examples show some of the ways in which Henry overstepped and overshadowed his brother's glory with his own. Additionally, he directly demonstrated his leadership to his brother when he insisted on "having a full and better knowledge of those who are our enemies."³⁰ This statement further asserts Henry's glory and authority and demonstrated that he was the one leading the troops on the battlefield. In other instances, Henry even informed Charles of his military decisions without asking for any permission or advice.³¹ These letters demonstrate Henry's great military skills and leadership.

Henry also deployed his political abilities and wanted to serve as a true adviser to his brother, as well as a mediator between Charles and the King of Navarre, the next leader of the Huguenots after Condé's assassination. After the victory at Jarnac, Henry wrote to Henry of Navarre in response to the latter's request to hand over Condé's body. Henry informed Navarre that the body had already been handed over to Condé's family. He then continued his letter by advising Navarre to surrender and to "come back to the king, my said lord and brother, whom I am sure, given his goodness and your young age, will kiss you."³² Henry clearly positioned himself as a

mediator between the two enemies, reassuring Navarre that Charles would welcome him back as long as he pledged obedience to the French crown. In September 1569, Henry wrote to his brother Charles about the edict of pacification and clearly stated how he thought peace should be established. He advised that “those of the new opinion [religion] would be pardoned” as long as “they want to live according to your edicts and ordinances and pledge to have no other religion other than your own: Catholicism.”³³ These two letters not only showed Henry’s devotion to Catholicism, but also demonstrated his political skills—even as a king’s brother. Through glory and obedience, Henry prepared himself to be king of France.

FIGHTING FOR PEACE AS THE “MOST CHRISTIAN KING” IN THE MIDST OF THE RELIGIOUS WARS

In May 1574, Charles IX of France died, which forced Henry, who had just been elected King of Poland, to come back to his homeland and assume his responsibilities as King of France. The country had been ravaged by religious wars, and the importance of preserving Catholicism became Henry’s first burden. Indeed, the Pope gave the French kings the title of the “Most Christian Kings.”³⁴ During his reign, Henry was strongly attached to this title and referred to it in his letters and speeches.³⁵ It was essential for Henry to depict himself as a pious and true Catholic.³⁶ Though scholars have mentioned his own religious beliefs as a motivating factor for Henry to create Holy Orders, I argue that these Orders helped him promote his authority as a Catholic king. Henry created multiple Holy Orders and from his youth was very concerned with his Christian image.³⁷ Four years after his ascension to the throne, for example, the Valois king created the Order of the Holy Spirit,³⁸ which was a strong demonstration of his devotion to Catholicism.³⁹ With the creation of this

Order, Henry referred to himself as the “first founder” in the charter.⁴⁰ It appeared that the King was trying to convince the Catholic community of his faith.⁴¹

Throughout his reign, Henry continued to establish more Holy Orders to convey the image of a true Catholic.

However, due to events between 1576 and 1577, such as the General States of Blois, the debates on a “monarchie mixte,” and the sixth religious civil war (December 1576 – September 1577), Henry was forced to compromise on religion in order to achieve peace inside the borders of his realm.⁴² The peace of Bergerac and the Edict of Poitiers were implemented on September 17, 1577, allowing Protestants to exercise reformed religion. However, Catholicism remained protected by the king. In his Edict, he stated that “those who are of the said reformed religion will have to maintain the laws of the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church.”⁴³ This statement insisted on the king’s willingness to unite all of his subjects to the Catholic Church, even though Protestants could exercise their faith. It demonstrated that Henry III’s Catholic faith was as strong, but he still sought to rule all of his subjects effectively,⁴⁴ simultaneously implying a desire to unite everyone through a political union. Two weeks after the implementation of the Edict of Poitiers, Henry sent a letter to the inhabitants of each town, instructing his people about his orders. He asserted his aspiration “to unite our subjects with one another in friendship and benevolence, and that their hearts full of hatred and grudges will be converted in one love for God.”⁴⁵ Henry highlighted the role of friendship and benevolence in a political union. In this statement, he carefully avoided any reference to Catholicism, and referred only to God.

However, this peace did not last, and in 1579 the seventh religious war erupted. Protestants demanded more religious liberties and places where they could

worship peacefully. In a letter sent to Henry of Navarre, the leader of the Huguenots, King Henry III endeavoured to appease the tensions and also revealed his pacific intentions and beliefs. He wrote “you know well that only God has the power over what concerns our conscience, that the use of force and human violence are all useless, and how much it would offend God’s will to employ them for this.”⁴⁶ For the French king, violence would not resolve their differences, and he hoped to convince the king of Navarre of that in order to promote peace.

Though Henry III seemed to seek for peace, in other instances, he pledged his complete devotion to the Catholic faith and to the Pope. In a letter sent to his ambassador in the Vatican, he claimed, “I have always resorted and will always carry all my life with respect and reverence that I will consider myself happy not only when he will judge me for my actions and deeds, but also when it will please him to help me.”⁴⁷ Demonstrating his faith to the Pope was paramount for Henry and even directly wrote to him and asserted that he was the Pope’s “most obedient and devout son.”⁴⁸ Even in his speeches, Henry asserted that he had always done everything to preserve “the honor and service of God and the restoration of the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman religion in my realm.”⁴⁹ Despite the tensions that persisted between Protestants and Catholics, being the Most Christian King allowed Henry to display his religious zeal.

However, the religious wars had an impact on Henry III, and in his personal letters to his primary councillor Nicolas Neuville de Villeroy, he often complained, “my heart bleeds that there are so many atrocities occurring under my rule.”⁵⁰ A few months later, he again asserted his pacific intentions and insisted that he refused to break anything that was helping him maintain the peace because he believed that “neither God nor my subjects will be happier, and nor will I.”⁵¹ Despite these peaceful

statements, and perhaps sincere intentions, Henry was forced to impose his authority over all his subjects.

DEMONSTRATION OF POWER: THE HEART AND STOMACH

After the death of Francis of Anjou, Henry III's younger brother and legitimate heir to the throne, on June 10, 1584, the realm faced a major succession crisis. The next legitimate heir to the throne was Henry of Navarre, the Huguenot Leader, and devout Catholics could not bear the idea of having a heretic at the head of their country. As a result, some important Catholic nobles decided to create the Catholic League in order to defend the true religion of the realm and to help the Valois king re-establish his authority and his rule over all his subjects.⁵² They swore allegiance to the Catholic faith and *only* the Catholic faith, and stated that they would fight until the whole population was converted and had accepted the true religion. In a letter dated March 31, 1585, Charles Cardinal de Bourbon, Premier Prince de Sang (1523-1590), asserted that France needed to find peace, and that this peace could not be found until Catholicism was plainly reinstated.⁵³ In their opinion, Catholicism was inherent with French identity because it had been the religion of the realm for centuries. Charles also explained that France could not accept a heretic king, "given that this is the first oath that our Kings take, when they are crowned, to maintain the Catholic Apostolic and Roman religion; it is under this oath that they received their subjects' allegiance and not otherwise."⁵⁴ He further explained that this Catholic union had the aim of preserving the state and helping the king to keep his oath. However, it was clear that the Catholic League's loyalty to Catholicism came first.⁵⁵ The Catholic League perceived any peace treaty with the Huguenots as outrageous, and they engaged in the eighth religious civil war. Henry deplored how "the tolerance

of the said exercise of the new religion over the past years has not brought the peace and pacification that we hoped it would.”⁵⁶ Henry gave a speech on October 16, 1585, during which he publicly blamed the reformed religion for bringing “woes and calamities” to his realm.⁵⁷

Tensions between Catholics and Huguenots increased, and the Catholic League gained great power. Henry III became conscious that the League was also challenging his royal authority and that they sought to overthrow him.⁵⁸ In May 1588, the Catholic League besieged Paris and forced the king to flee to Chartres.⁵⁹ At the Cour de Parlement, Henry gave an important speech that insisted on his own strength and power.⁶⁰ In this 1588 speech, the French king asserted,

...that patience can turn into fury and how an offended King can react: I will use all my power and will not neglect any means to avenge myself, although I do not have a vindictive mind; I want my people to know that I have a heart and stomach as big as any of my predecessors.⁶¹

Henry developed a warlike rhetoric, reasserting his authority over his subjects and demonstrating that he was in charge of his realm. The words “I have a heart and stomach as big as any of my predecessors” remind us of Elizabeth I of England’s famous quotation on August 9, 1588, “I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too.”⁶² For sixteenth-century monarchs, references to “the heart and stomach” were not that uncommon; Henry and Elizabeth used similar warlike rhetoric when contested or at war.⁶³ While Henry had the reputation of being a weak king, his words demonstrate that he endeavoured to project a strong monarchical authority.

Henry also asserted his authority through the image of a representative of God on earth. In two of his speeches, the Valois king reminded his audience that not only

he was chosen by God but that also he was his representative. He insisted that God “has constituted me in charge of you, to represent his image”⁶⁴ and that he was “like God, in whose image I am on earth.”⁶⁵ In his speech given in October 1588, Henry reminded his audience that: “I am your king, chosen by God and I am the only one who can truly and legitimately say it.”⁶⁶ Through his godly authority, he asserted his divine rights and demonstrated that he was the one chosen by God to be in charge of the realm which directly condemned the Guises’s actions.⁶⁷

Furthermore, it is also important to note that Henry was supported by Catholics who were not Leaguers. A Catholic man who remained anonymous explained why he did not join the Catholic League. For him, the League was against his king, and he therefore could not join them, as he believed that his duty was to both his Catholic faith and to “the obedience that we owe to our King.”⁶⁸ He then denounced the Leaguers’ intention to hurt the monarchy and to attempt to overthrow the king.⁶⁹ Another Catholic strongly opposed Leaguers who sought foreign support from Spain in order to fight the French as they attempted to keep control over their realm and independence. He insisted that he could not “recognize them as French as they have their heart in Spain.”⁷⁰ Likewise, in the midst of the war Henry privileged patriotism and asserted, “this is a tale to speak about religion; we need to look for another path.”⁷¹ The king never supported the reformed Church, but he knew that to have a strong France, the country needed to be united under the authority of only one king. His efforts were not rewarded, and after ordering the assassination of the Duke of Guise in December 1588, Henry was stabbed by a Dominican friar, Jacques Clément, on August 1, 1589. He died the next day. In his last words, Henry advocated for unity and proclaimed that “division only undermines the foundation of this Monarchy, advising [his country] to be united and joined through a common will.”⁷²

CONCLUSION

In many ways, Henry III's own words deserve more consideration and scholarly dedication. His numerous letters and speeches not only provide fascinating information on the period and the trouble he was facing during his reign, but also offer great insights about his understanding of the monarchy and how he projected his royal authority into the public sphere. Despite the fact that he was a third son and not expected to rule after his brothers, Henry fashioned the image of a devoted and strong king. From promoting his own military prowess and sometimes overshadowing his brother to his demonstration of power in his speeches, Henry III projected his authority while attempting to rule during one of the most troubled periods in French history. While his detractors have often depicted him as a tyrant and an incompetent king, an examination of Henry's letters and speeches enables us to approach this period from a different angle: Henry's point of view.

This chapter has shown that during Henry's youth he developed important political and military skills. It also reveals that despite promoting his own glory, Henry remained loyal to his brother Charles. Furthermore, examining the letters and speeches Henry published and sent during his reign offers unexpected monarchical representations: that of a powerful king who had a "heart and stomach" like any other European ruler. Ultimately, this chapter has demonstrated that Henry III's negative reputation can be fully reassessed through a thorough analysis of his own words.

¹ Alexandre-Edouard to the Dauphin François, 1557, BNF MS. Fr. 3159, fol. 70.

² Henry III was born and baptized as Alexandre-Edouard, in tribute to his two godfathers, Alexandre Farnèse and Edward VI of England, see George Bordonove, *Henri II, Roi Gentilhomme* (Paris: Pygmalion, 1987), 154.

³ On Henry's bad reputation, see Annie Duprat, *Les rois de papier, la caricature de Henri III à Louis XVI* (Paris: Belin, 2002) and Keith Cameron, "Introduction," in *From Valois to Bourbon, dynasty, state and society in early modern France*, ed. Keith Cameron (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 1989). For pamphlets and libels against Henry III, see *La vie et les faits notables d'Henry de Valois tout au long, sans rien requérir*, s.l., 1589 (Lb 34 812 A); *Les sorceleries de Henry de Valois, et les ablations qu'il faisoit au diable dans le Bois de Vincennes*, Paris, 1589 (Lb34 811); *De la difference du Roy et du Tyran*, Paris, 1589 (Lb34 609); *Advertissement des nouvelles cruautés et inhumanités s'esseignées par le Tyran de la France*, Paris, 1589 (Lb34 596); *L'Atheisme de Henry de Valois : Où est monstré le vray but de ses dissimulations et cruantez*, Paris, 1589 (Lb34 593); *Discours sur les causes et raisons qui ont meu justement les François de prendre les armes contre Henry de Valois, jadis leur Roy*, Paris, 1589 (Lb34 698).

⁴ See Louis Crompton, *Homosexuality and Civilization* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 328-330.

⁵ Katherine Crawford, "Love, Sodomy, and Scandal: Controlling the Sexual Reputation of Henry III," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 12 (2003): 513-542, 513.

⁶ See Jacqueline Boucher, *La cour de Henri III* (Rennes: Ouest-France, 1986); Nicolas Le Roux, *Un régicide au nom de Dieu* (Paris: Gallimard, 2006); and Robert J. Knecht, *Hero or Tyrant: Henry III, King of France, 1574-1589* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

⁷ Xavier Le Person, “*Pratiques et Practiqueurs*,” *La vie politique à la fin du règne de Henri III (1584-1589)* (Genève: Droz, 2002), 256-68.

⁸ Estelle Paraque, “Catherine of Medici: Henry III’s Inspiration to be a Father to his People,” in *Royal Mothers and their Ruling Children: Wielding Political Authority from Antiquity to the Early Modern Era*, eds. Elena Woodacre and Carey Fleiner (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 225-40.

⁹ Marie-Ange Boitel-Souriac, “Quand verty vient de l’étude des bonnes lettres. L’éducation humaniste des Enfants de France de François Ier aux derniers Valois,” *Revue historique* n° 645 (2008): 33-59.

¹⁰ See Claude La Charité, “La formation rhétorique de Henri III: le Discours de la philosophie (1584) d’Amadis Jamyn,” *Seizième Siècle*, n° 7 (2011): 243-259 and *Henri III mécène: des arts, des sciences et des lettres*, eds. Isabelle de Conihout, Jean-François Maillard and Guy Poirier (Paris: PU, 2006).

¹¹ Jacques Amyot, *Projet de l’éloquence royale*, (Paris, 1579). Also see *Henri III mécène*, 168-169.

¹² Henry to Charles IX of France, May 1573, BNF Collection Dupuy 211, fol. 50, “je voudroys me sacryfier çant mylles vyes si je les avoys pour vostre service [...] pour m’avoyr tant honoray que je vous an bayse tres humblement les pyeds et les mayns et les vous bayseray quand que j’aye cest honneur que de vous voyr.”

¹³ Henry signed all his letters to his brother this way, for example Henry to Charles IX of France, March 17, 1569, BNF Cinq-Cents Colbert 24, fol. 383.

¹⁴ Henry to the Governors of Provinces, June 5, 1568, BNF MS Fr. 15546, fol. 164.

¹⁵ Henry to the inhabitants of Beaugency, June 14, 1568, BNF MS Fr. 15546, fol. 210.

¹⁶ Henry to Philip II of Spain, September 1568, Archives Generales. Simancas, K 1511, B 23, n° 149, “le roy et la royne vous anvoient le sieur de Lignerolles, qui est a moy.”

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Henry to Philip II of Spain, October 1568, Archives Generales. Simancas, K 1509, B 22, n° 7, “vous n’aréz jamays servitteur ny parent qu’il desire plus vous faire humble service que moy.”

¹⁹ Henry to Philip II of Spain, November 18, 1568, Archives Generales. Simancas, K 1511, B 23, n° 105, “je vous obeyray d’aussey bon coeur.”

²⁰ See letters mentioned above, “Vostre humble et obeissant frere, Henry.”

²¹ See the works of Susan Doran, “Elizabeth I and Catherine de Medici,” in *The contending kingdoms: France and England 1420-1700*, ed. Glenn Richardson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008); Elaine Kruse, “The Virgin and the Widow: The political finesse of Elizabeth I and Catherine de Médici,” in *Queens and Power in Medieval and Early Modern England*, eds. Carole Levin and Robert Bulcholz (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska, 2009); Glenn Richardson, ““Your most assured sister”: Elizabeth I and the Kings of France,” in *Tudor Queenship: the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth*, eds. Alice Hunt and Anna Whitelock (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Lena Orlin “The Fictional Families of Elizabeth I,” in *Political Rhetoric, Power and Renaissance Women*, eds. Carole Levin and Patricia A. Sullivan (Albany: Suny Press, 1995), 85-110, and Estelle Paranque, *Elizabeth through Valois Eyes: Power, Representation and Diplomacy, 1568—1588*, PhD thesis, unpublished, UCL, 2016.

²² Henry to Charles IX of France, February 17, 1568, BNF MS Fr 15544, fol. 241.

²³ Knecht, *Hero or Tyrant*, 39-45.

-
- ²⁴ Henry to Charles IX of France, March 13, 1569, BNF Cinq-Cents Colbert 24, fol. 377, “Monseigneur, vous avez gagné la bataille. Le prince de Condé est mort. Je l’ay veu mort. Je me porte bien.”
- ²⁵ Henry to Charles IX of France, March 17, 1569, BNF Cinq-Cents Colbert 24, fol. 383.
- ²⁶ *Le Vray Discours de la Bataille de Jarnac donnée par Monsieur, le 13 jour de Mars 1569* (Imprimerie Guillaume Nyverd: Paris, 1569).
- ²⁷ *Ibid*, 10-12.
- ²⁸ *Ibid*, 13.
- ²⁹ *Ibid*, 15.
- ³⁰ Henry to Charles IX of France, March 17, 1569, BNF Cinq-Cents Colbert 24, fol. 383.
- ³¹ In several letters, Henry informed his older brother of his military decisions, see: Henry to Charles IX of France, April 26, 1569, BNF Nouv. Acq. Fr. 6003, fol. 11; Henry to Charles IX of France, April 29, 1569, BNF Nouv. Acq. Fr. 6003, fol. 17; Henry to Charles IX of France, May 10, 1569, BNF Nouv. Acq. Fr. 6003, fol. 27 and Henry to Charles IX of France, September 27, 1569, BNF Nouv. Acq. Fr. 6003, fol. 46.
- ³² Henry to Henry of Navarre, March 25, 1569, BNF Cinq-Cents Colbert 24, fol. 385, “trouver le roy, mon dict seigneur et frere, lequel je m’asseure, attendu sa bonté et vostre jeune age, vous embrassera.”
- ³³ Henry to Charles IX of France, September 24, 1569, BNF Nouv. Acq. Fr. 6003, fol. 41, “que il seroyt pardonné a tous ceulx de la nouvelle oppinion [...], pourveu qu’ilz voulsissent vivre selon vos dictz edictz et ordonnances qui est de n’avoir aucune religion que celles vous tenez, la catholicque.”

³⁴ See Hervé Pinoteau, *La symbolique royale française, V^e-XVIII^e siècle* (La Roche Rigault: PSR Editions, 2006) and Jean de Pange, *Le Roi très chrétien. Essai sur la nature du pouvoir royal en France* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1949). Also see Myriam Yarderni, *La Conscience Nationale en France pendant les Guerres de Religion* (Paris and Louvain: Editions Nauwelaerts, 1971). She explains the psychological influence of the appellations of “Eldest son of the Catholic Church” (“fils aîné de l’Eglise) or “most Christian kingdom/king” (“royaume très chrétien, roi très chrétien”) on the French people and their bond to the Roman Catholic Church, 102.

³⁵ See notably for example his letters to Sieur d’Abain, ambassador at the Vatican, June, 3, 1578, BNF MS. Fr. 17791, fol. 180; January 15, 1577, BNF V^o Colbert, n^o345, fol. 142; to the bishop of Paris, December 31, 1585, BNF MS Fr. 6627, fol. 83 and Edit du roi, sur l’union de ses sujets catholiques, vérifié en la cour de Parlement, 21 juillet 1588, *Mémoires de la Ligue*, Tome II, (Amsterdam: Arkstee & Merkus, 1758), 369.

³⁶ In Mario Turchetti, "Huguenots, Papautz, Sacramentaires, Catholiques bons et mauvais: bataille de mots, guerre de factions. Une apologie de la concorde par le "moyenneur" declare Claude d'Espence en 1568," in *Mythes et réalités du XVI^e siècle, Foi, Idées, Images*, ed. Bernard Lescaze and Mario Turchetti (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2008), 83-109. Mario Turchetti explains the differences between a good and bad Catholic through the work of Claude d’Espence and the importance to justify the faith. Though the work of Claude d’Espence was published during Charles IX’s reign, the influence of it were still observable in the ways Henry III dealt with religion and his own faith.

³⁷ Jacqueline Boucher explains in her book how important it was for the king to create Religious Orders. See Boucher, *La cour de Henri III*, 193-200.

³⁸ BNF MS Fr. Clair 256, fols. 6779-6808.

³⁹ In a letter to Villeroy, Henry gave him instructions to prepare the celebration of the creation of the Order for the Pentecost, Henry III to Villeroy, May, 29, 1579, BNF Nouv. Acq. Fr. 1244, fol. 102.

⁴⁰ BNF MS Fr. Clair 256, fol. 6781.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, fol. 6782, to see the list of the Knights appointed by the king (including the Duke of Guise and his brother Charles of Lorraine): Alexandre Teulet, *Liste chronologique et alphabétique des chevaliers et des officiers de l'ordre du Saint-Esprit depuis sa création en 1578 jusqu'à son extinction en 1830* (Paris: Librairie héraldique de J.-B. Dumoulin, 1864). It is important to mention that François of Alençon, the king's brother, was supposed to be a knight of this order but was not received by the king which made his appointment unofficial.

⁴² A "Monarchie mixte" consisted in dividing power between the king, the General States and the Council, the work of Jean Bodin influenced this concept, see Jean Bodin, *Les Six Livres de la République*, 1593 (paru en premier en 1576) (Fayard, 1986) but see also the work of Mark Greengrass, "A Day in the Life of the Third Estate: Blois, 26th December 1576," in *Politics, Ideology and the Law in Early Modern Europe*, ed. A. Bakos (New York: University of Rochester Press, 1994), 73-90.

⁴³ Edict of Poitiers, Article XVI, Eugène and Emile Haag, *La France Protestante ou Vies des Protestants Français*, Tome X (Paris : Joël Cherbuliez, Librairie Editeur, 1858), 156, "Ceux de ladite religion pretendue reformee seront tenus garder les loix de l'Eglise catholique, apostolique et romaine."

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Article I, 142.

⁴⁵ Aux manants et habitants des villes, September 29, 1577, BNF MS Fr. 17823, fol. 255, “reunir noz subjects les ungs avec les autres en toute amitié et bienveillance et que le coeur de haines et de rancunes qu’ilz avoient sera converti en ung amour envers Dieu.”

⁴⁶ Henry III to Henry of Navarre, June 15, 1579, BNF MS Fr. 3319, fol. 167, “Vous sçavez bien qu’il n’y a que dieu seul qui ayt puissance sur ce qui deppend de nostre conscience, que la force et violence humayne y est du tout inutile, et combien ce seroit offencer sa bonté divine que d’en user en cest endroit.”

⁴⁷ Henry III to Sir d’Abbain, June 3, 1578, BNF MS. Fr. 17791, fol. 180 v°, “je n’auray toujours recours, et porteray toute ma vie tel respect et reverence que je m’estimeray bienheureux non seulement qu’il se rende juge de mes actions et deportements, mais aussy qu’il luy plaise m’assister.”

⁴⁸ Henry III to Pope Gregory XIII, October 19, 1578, Archives Vatican, Segreteria di Stato, Francia, vol. 12, fol. 449, “Vostre plus obeissant et debvot filz, Henry.”

⁴⁹ Discours du roi au Parlement de Paris, July 18, 1585, de la main de Villeroy, secrétaire d’Etat du roi Henri III, BNF MS. Fr. 15570, fol. 87 r°, “l’honneur et service de Dieu et la restauration de la religion Catholique apostolique et romaine en mon royaume.”

⁵⁰ Henry III to Villeroy, April 23, 1583, BNF MS Nouv. Acq. Fr. 1244, fol. 151, “Le coeur m’an saigne que de mon tamps il se passe an mon obeyssance de telles meschansetez.”

⁵¹ Henry III to Villeroy, July 5, 1583, BNF MS Nouv. Acq. Fr. 1244, fol. 134, “Je ne veux nulemant rompre ce qui maintient la paix an mon estat car je ne croys pas que Dieu ny mes subjects fussent plus contans ny moy aussy.”

⁵² Déclaration des causes qui ont mu monseigneur le cardinal de bourbon et les pairs, princes, seigneurs, villes et communautés catholiques de ce royaume de France, de s'opposer à ceux qui par tous moyens s'efforcent de subvertir la religion catholique et l'Etat. March 31, 1585, *Mémoires de la Ligue*, Tome I (Amsterdam: Arkstee & Merkus, 1758), 55.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 57, “étant le premier serment que nos Rois font, lorsqu'on leur met la Couronne sur la tête, que de maintenir la Religion Catholique, Apostolique et Romaine, sous lequel serment ils reçoivent celui de leurs Sujets et non autrement.”

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁵⁶ Henry III to Seigneur de la Verrière, July 23, 1585, BNF MS Fr. 17990, fols. 81v^o-82, “la tolerance dudict exercice de la nouvelle religion, qui a esté par quelques années, n’a peu apporter le repos et pacification que l’on esperoit.”

⁵⁷ Déclaration du Roi sur son Edit du mois de juillet, lu et publié en la Cour de Parlement, October 16, 1585, *Mémoires de la ligue*, 227-32, 227.

⁵⁸ Knecht, *Hero or Tyrant*, 244-248.

⁵⁹ See Arlette Jouanna, *La France du XVIe Siècle : 1485-1598* (Paris: Puf, 1996), 591 and Knecht, *Hero or Tyrant*, 252-7.

⁶⁰ Knecht, *Hero or Tyrant*, 256 and Paranque, “Catherine of Medici,” 231.

⁶¹ Propos que le Roi a tenu à Chartres aux Députés de la Cour de Parlement, imprimé à Paris, chez Lhuillier May 1588, *Mémoires de la Ligue*, Tome II, 364, “Vous savez que la patience irritée tourney en furie & combien peu un Roi offense: j’emploerai tout mon pouvoir & ne laisserai aucun moiens en arrière pour me venger, encore que je n’aie l’esprit vindicatif ; mais je veux que l’on sache que j’ai du coeur & du courage autant qu’aucun de mes Prédécesseurs.”

⁶² Queen Elizabeth's Armada Speech to the troops at Tilbury, August 9, 1588, in *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, eds. Leah Marcus, Janel Mueller and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago and London, 2000), 326.

⁶³ Elizabeth's warlike rhetoric has been analyzed by scholars. See Anna Whitelock, "'Woman, Warrior, Queen?': Rethinking Mary and Elizabeth," in *Tudor Queenship: the Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth*, eds. Alice Hunt and Anna Whitelock (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 173–189; Ben Spiller, "Warlike Mates? Queen Elizabeth and Joan La Pucelle in 1 Henri VI," in *Goddesses and Queens: the Iconography of Elizabeth I*, eds. Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), 34–44, and Estelle Paranque, "The Representations and Ambiguities of the Warlike Female Kingship of Elizabeth I of England," in *Medieval and Early Modern Representations of Authority in Scotland and Great Britain*, eds. Katherine Buchanan and Lucinda Dean (London: Routledge, 2016), 163-176.

⁶⁴ La Harangue faite par le Roi Henri III de France et de Pologne, à l'ouverture de l'assemblée des Trois Estats generaux de son Royaume, en la ville de Blois, 16 octobre 1588, A Lyon, Par Jean Pillehotte, à l'enseigne du Jesus, avec Privilège du Roy, Bnf MS 314539, 15, "la reverence que vous devez à Dieu, qui m'a constitué sur vous, pour représenter son image."

⁶⁵ Propos que le Roi a tenu à Chartres aux Députés de la Court de Parlement, imprimé à Paris, chez Lhuillier, 1588, *Mémoires de la Ligue*, Tome II, 365, "comme Dieu, à l'image duquel je suis en terre."

⁶⁶ La Harangue faite par le Roi Henri III de France et de Pologne, à l'ouverture de l'assemblée des Trois Estats generaux de son Royaume, en la ville de Blois, October 16, 1588, A Lyon, Par Jean Pillehotte, à l'enseigne du Jesus, avec Privilège du Roy,

Bnf MS 314539, 6, “ie suis vostre Roy donné de Dieu & suis seul qui le puis veritablement & legitiment dire.”

⁶⁷ M. DE Guise pour se saisir de la ville de Paris & y prendre le Roi 1588, *Mémoires de la Ligue*, tome II (Amsterdam: Arkstee & Merkus, 1758), 309-311.

⁶⁸ Readvis et abjuration d'un gentilhomme de la Ligue, contenant les causes pour lesquelles il a renoncé à ladite ligue, 1585, *Mémoires de la Ligue*, Tome I, 111, “de l'obéissance que devons à notre Roi.”

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁷⁰ Briève réponse d'un catholique français, à l'apologie ou défense des ligueurs, November 19, 1586, *Mémoires de la Ligue*, Tome I, 341.

⁷¹ Propos que le Roi a tenu à Chartres aux Députés de la Cour de Parlement, imprimé à Paris, chez Lhuillier, May 1588, *Mémoires de la Ligue*, Tome II, 364, “C'est un conte de parler de la Religion, il faut prendre un autre chemin.”

⁷² Derniers propos du roi, consolant avant sa mort ses fidèles sujets, 1589, Lb34 791, “la division seule sappe les fondemens de ceste Monarchie, advisez d'estre vnis & conjoints en mesme vonlonté.”

Bibliography

Primary Sources:

Advertissement des nouvelles cruautés et inhumanités sesseignées par le Tyran de la France. Paris, 1589. Lb34 596.

Amyot, Jacques. *Projet de l'éloquence royale.* Paris, 1579.

Archives Generales. Simancas, K 1511.

Archives Generales. Simancas, K 1509.

BNF Cinq-Cents Colbert 24.

BNF Collection Dupuy 211.

BNF MS. Fr. 3159.

BNF MS Fr. 3319.

BNF MS Fr. 6627.

BNF MS Fr. 15544.

BNF MS Fr. 15546.

BNF MS. Fr. 17791.

BNF MS Fr. 17823.

BNF MS Nouv. Acq. Fr. 1244.

BNF Nouv. Acq. Fr. 6003.

BNF V° Colbert, n°345.

Bodin, Jean. *Les Six Livres de la République*. 1593 (paru en premier en 1576). Fayard, 1986.

De la difference du Roy et du Tyran. Paris, 1589. Lb34 609.

Derniers propos du roi, consolant avant sa mort ses fidèles sujets, 1589. Lb34 791.

Discours sur les causes et raisons qui ont meu justement les François de prendre les armes contre Henry de Valois, jadis leur Roy. Paris, 1589. Lb34 698.

Haag, Eugene and Emile. *La France Protestante ou Vies des Protestants Français*, Tome X. Paris: Joël Cherbuliez, Librairie Editeur, 1858.

L'Atheisme de Henry de Valois: Où est monstré le vray but de ses dissimulations et cruautez. Paris, 1589. Lb34 593.

La vie et les faits notables d'Henry de Valois tout au long, sans rien requerir, s.l. 1589. Lb 34 812 A.

Le Vray Discours de la Bataille de Jarnac donnée par Monsieur, le 13 jour de Mars 1569. Imprimerie Guillaume Nyverd: Paris, 1569.

Les sorceleries de Henry de Valois, et les ablations qu'il faisoit au diable dans le Bois de Vincennes. Paris, 1589. Lb34 811.

Mémoires de la Ligue. Tome I. Amsterdam: Arkstee & Merkus, 1758.

Mémoires de la Ligue. Tome II. Amsterdam: Arkstee & Merkus, 1758.

Elizabeth I: Collected Works. Edited by Leah Marcus, Janel Mueller and Mary Beth Rose. Chicago and London, 2000.

Secondary Sources:

Boitel-Souriac, Marie-Ange. "Quand verty vient de l'étude des bonnes lettres. L'éducation humaniste des Enfants de France de François Ier aux derniers Valois." *Revue historique* n° 645 (2008): 33-59.

Bordonove, George. *Henri II, Roi Gentilhomme*. Paris: Pygmalion, 1987.

Boucher, Jacqueline. *La cour de Henri III*. Rennes: Ouest-France, 1986.

Cameron, Keith. "Introduction." In *From Valois to Bourbon, dynasty, state and society in early modern France*, edited by Keith Cameron, 1-3. Exeter: Exeter University Press, 1989.

Crawford, Katherine. "Love, Sodomy, and Scandal: Controlling the Sexual Reputation of Henry III." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 12 (2003): 513-542.

Crompton, Louis. *Homosexuality and Civilization*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.

de Pange, Jean. *Le Roi très chrétien. Essai sur la nature du pouvoir royal en France*. Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1949.

Doran, Susan. "Elizabeth I and Catherine de Medici." In *The contending kingdoms: France and England 1420-1700*, edited by Glenn Richardson, 117-132. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008.

Duprat, Annie. *Les rois de papier, la caricature de Henri III à Louis XVI*. Paris: Belin, 2002.

Henri III mécène: des arts, des sciences et des lettres. Edited by Isabelle de Conihout, Jean-François Maillard and Guy Poirier. Paris: PU, 2006.

Jouanna, Arlette. *La France du XVIe Siècle : 1485-1598*. Paris: Puf, 1996.

Knecht, Robert J. *Hero or Tyrant: Henry III, King of France, 1574-1589*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.

Kruse, Elaine. "The Virgin and the Widow: The political finesse of Elizabeth I and Catherine de Médici." In *Queens and Power in Medieval and Early Modern England*, edited by Carole Levin and Robert Bulcholz, 126-140. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska, 2009.

- La Charité, Claude. "La formation rhétorique de Henri III: le Discours de la philosophie (1584) d'Amadis Jamyn." *Seizième Siècle*, n° 7 (2011): 243-259.
- Le Person, Xavier. "*Pratiques et Practiqueurs*," *La vie politique à la fin du règne de Henri III (1584-1589)*. Genève: Droz, 2002.
- Le Roux, Nicolas. *Un régicide au nom de Dieu*. Paris: Gallimard, 2006.
- Orlin, Lena. "The Fictional Families of Elizabeth I." In *Political Rhetoric, Power and Renaissance Women*, edited by Carole Levin and Patricia A. Sullivan, 85-112. Albany: Suny Press, 1995.
- Paranque, Estelle. "Catherine of Medici: Henry III's Inspiration to be a Father to his People." In *Royal Mothers and their Ruling Children: Wielding Political Authority from Antiquity to the Early Modern Era*, edited by Elena Woodacre and Carey Fleiner, 225-240. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- Paranque, Estelle. *Elizabeth through Valois Eyes: Power, Representation and Diplomacy, 1568—1588*. PhD thesis, unpublished. UCL, 2016.
- Paranque, Estelle. "The Representations and Ambiguities of the Warlike Female Kingship of Elizabeth I of England." In *Medieval and Early Modern Representations of Authority in Scotland and Great Britain*, edited by Katherine Buchanan and Lucinda Dean, 163-176. London: Routledge, 2016.
- Pinoteau, Hervé. *La symbolique royale française, V^e-XVIII^e siècle*. La Roche Rigault: PSR Editions, 2006.
- Richardson, Glenn. "“Your most assured sister”: Elizabeth I and the Kings of France." In *Tudor Queenship: the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth*, edited by Alice Hunt and Anna Whitelock, 191-208. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Spiller, Ben. "Warlike Mates? Queen Elizabeth and Joan La Pucelle in 1 Henri VI." In *Goddesses and Queens: the Iconography of Elizabeth I*, edited by Annaliese Connolly and Lisa Hopkins, 33-44. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007.
- Teulet, Alexandre. *Liste chronologique et alphabétique des chevaliers et des officiers de l'ordre du Saint-Esprit depuis sa création en 1578 jusqu'à son extinction en 1830*. Paris: Librairie héraldique de J.-B. Dumoulin, 1864.
- Turchetti, Mario. "Huguenots, Papautz, Sacramentaires, Catholiques bons et mauvais: bataille de mots, guerre de factions. Une apologie de la concorde par le "moyenneur" declare Claude d'Espence en 1568." In *Mythes et réalités du XVI^e siècle, Foi, Idées, Images*, edited by Bernard Lescaze and Mario Turchetti, 239-266. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2008.
- Whitelock, Anna. "“Woman, Warrior, Queen?": Rethinking Mary and Elizabeth." In *Tudor Queenship: the Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth*, edited by Alice Hunt and Anna Whitelock, 173-190. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Yarderni, Myriam. *La Conscience Nationale en France pendant les Guerres de Religion*. Paris and Louvain: Editions Nauwelaerts, 1971.