Ruling Women, Volume 1

Government, Virtue, and the Female Prince in Seventeenth-Century France

Derval Conroy

QUEENSHIP AND POWER

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In memory of my brother Séamus Conroy,
who, on a sunny Summer's day, began
to teach me how to read.

Contents

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Introduction

In 1521, the Italian philosopher Agostino Nifo (1473–1538) published his *Libellus de his quae ab optimis principibus agenda sunt*. In this traditional "mirror for princes" text, Nifo examines the qualities he believes a good ruler should possess, and devotes a chapter each to prudence, justice, modesty, gentleness (*mansuetudo*), innocence, clemency, piety, religion, humanity, accessibility, honesty. Thus far, Nifo's text is typical of the genre, inherited from classical times, and contains few surprises. However, in Chapter 29, the text takes a somewhat more original turn as the author turns his attention to examining what qualities are desirable in high-ranking women, a question he says has not received systematic treatment from the philosophers. Examining ancient testimonies, he sketches the canvas of virtues for which women have been praised in the past, a wide-ranging panoply that highlights the absence of a single or definitive answer to the question. His overview points to the fact that women in roles of leadership have been repeatedly praised both for their constancy, liberality, patriotism, courage, and fidelity—virtues manifestly associated with good government—and on the other hand, for the qualities frequently perceived as feminine (moderation, modesty, chastity, temperance, gentleness, clemency, humanity), which correlate with the ones he has just outlined as important for the ruler. Although Nifo draws no conclusions from the lack of consensus of the Ancients, the text suggests that women have frequently demonstrated their capacity for princely virtue, as he defines it.[1]

While the tacit defense of women's ability to rule is in itself not uncommon—much ink was spilt on favorable demonstrations of female ability at the time, albeit far less than that spilt on counter-demonstrations—there are two aspects to Nifo's text that make it more significant than it might appear at first glance. Firstly, the nature of his argument amounts to an explicit examination of the interplay between a code of sexual ethics (defining appropriate virtues and hence behavior for men and women) and a code of princely

virtues (defining qualities desirable in a ruler). This type of enquiry sets it apart from many similar texts where issues of gender are entirely occulted and that examine princely virtues in terms of a single sex—the universal male. It is noteworthy that this discussion is situated within the broader framework of an analysis concerning rulership in general. Nifo's context is not one of explicit philogyny nor of direct engagement with gynæcocracy debates, although clearly informed by them.[2] His emphasis is not on women but on rulership, and while the women are still treated in a chapter apart, they are implicitly integrated throughout the volume by the correlations drawn between the virtues they have demonstrated and the virtues he discusses in the other chapters. Secondly, the nature of the argument itself distinguishes it from other claims made in women's favor, and although hinted at elsewhere is rarely presented as explicitly. In sum, Nifo's text as a whole suggests that rulership requires virtues traditionally seen as either male or female, in other words, it necessitates a type of moral androgyny. By implication, the prescriptive discourse that excludes women from the activity of government makes no sense. Nifo's volume illuminates with unambiguous simplicity one of the central ideas of this study, namely that the ethical code of princely virtues, *by its own terms*, accords space to women. It follows that the dominant patriarchal discourse that constructs government as a male prerogative quite simply implodes when juxtaposed with the traditional political discourse of virtue ethics. Analysis of how that happens is the focus of this study.

As Ian Maclean pointed out in the late 1970s in his classic study *Woman Triumphant*, government by women is one of the three principal contentious issues debated in the seventeenth-century corpus associated with *la querelle des femmes*.[3] However, as a subject of research over the last three decades, it remains considerably overshadowed (including in Maclean's own study) by the attention devoted to the other two principal contentious issues hotly contested, namely marriage and access to learning. A crucial topic in political writing concerning women since Christine de Pizan's *Cité des Dames* (1405), avidly debated in the sixteenth century as female princes dominated the European stage, it remains in the seventeenth century the ultimate litmus test of attitudes towards equality; it is the kernel of the "woman question," inextricably linked with the debates concerning marriage and education. In debates on female learning, access to political power remains frequently the silent, unarticulated "elephant in the room," since it is a logical, and hence

problematic, conclusion to claims for equal capacity for moral and intellectual virtue. If women are intellectually and morally equal to men, and deserve equal access to learning and education, how can their exclusion from positions of authority, which hinges on moral and intellectual strength, be justified?[4] Similarly, if female rule is an unexceptional and widely acceptable form of government, what challenges does this represent for patriarchal authority within marriage and within the family, the basic unit of societal structure? As Éliane Viennot puts it, if women can exercise the highest political authority, what lesser powers will they then also have access to?[5] The political question of women's capacity to rule is therefore the key challenge to the entire structure of patriarchy. In recent studies on women rulers, it has become a commonplace to see the debate concerning gynæcocracy as "settled" (unfavorably for women) by the beginning of the seventeenth century, or at the latest with Marie de Médicis' regency, as women disappeared from the European political stage.[6] Apart from the obvious fact that women did not disappear from the European political stage—as is highlighted in the case of France by Anne of Austria's lengthy regency and by the role of Madame de Maintenon, not to mention the women of the upper nobility—the topic of female rule is certainly not settled. At any rate, as Viennot also aptly points out, it is crucial to remember that even if women's role in France appears diminished compared to the sixteenth century, it is only retrospect that allows us to appreciate that. Since female rule in France was always dependent on the king's absence (temporary or definitive), women's diminished role, if such there is, can at least in part be attributed to the historical accident of Louis XIV's longevity and the dearth of prolonged absences abroad on his part.[7] Neither of those elements could have been known, or envisaged, for three-quarters of the century. And so the access of women to political power continues to haunt the collective consciousness of the time.

The aim of this two-volume study, then, is to examine the debate concerning gynæcocracy in seventeenth-century France, a question that remains neglected to date, despite the considerable upsurge in research concerning women rulers. Although I use the term debate, my emphasis is on the discursive and dramatic mechanisms at play that carve out a space for the female prince. In other words, it is not the dominant discourse of Judaeo-Christian origin that vehemently argues for women's exclusion from authority that interests me, and which has been well documented, but the challenges and resistances

to that discourse. The analysis focuses on the ways in which questions of virtue and sexual differentiation are negotiated and how they contribute to the construction of a nascent paradigm of equality. As we will see, the framing of certain moral and intellectual virtues, particularly prudence, as key to government, allows a way in for the "ideologists of women's authority,"[8] for whom prudence transcends sexual differentiation. On the other hand, in an argument which exploits sexual differentiation in women's favor, the claim is made that it is precisely the qualities perceived as "female" that are invaluable in government, namely clemency, mercy, humanity—all frequently connoted collectively in the notion of *douceur*. What emerges in either case, as I hope to demonstrate, is a notion of government, the quintessential public role, as the ultimate site of androgyny.

This approach, as will be obvious by now, hinges on the premise that a code of sexual ethics continues to be deeply rooted in society in the seventeenth century, in other words that a prescriptive moralist discourse (masquerading as descriptive), which dictates appropriate virtues and behavior for the sexes, continues to inform attitudes towards men and women. In sum, women are lauded for, and encouraged to foster, their chastity, modesty, moderation, piety, while men are praised for their courage, strength, liberality, reason, and so forth. Problematic and limited as this polarized view of human virtue is, and hence rejected by some, the repeated references to "une vertu mâle" or to "les vertus du Sexe" (the female sex, of course—only one half of humanity has sexual attributes) demonstrate transparently that those ideas continue to have widespread currency.[9] Within the framework of this study, evidently, it is not adherence to this paradigm that is of interest, but on the contrary, where it breaks down, revealing itself, like a form of Procrustean bed and like all prescriptive discourses, to be an invalid and inadequate way of conceptualizing reality.[10]

The significance of androgyny as a way of highlighting the shared elements of human experience, the common humanity of men and women, has long been recognized, and was particularly prevalent in the sixteenth century.[11] The best-known examples of European female rulers who exploited it expertly in their self-representation and rhetoric are no doubt Elizabeth I and the seventeenth-century Christina of Sweden.[12] More generally, the appropriation of the Amazon figure is possibly the most obvious instance of its deployment. However, it is precisely the popularity of the Amazon figure that can render a disservice to androgyny, all too often limited to

images of cross-dressed warrior women that can in fact prioritize the masculine (depending on their treatment). What is important in the concept of androgyny, as an analytical category for understanding the female sovereignty under analysis here, is not that women can embody "male" characteristics or behave in "masculine" ways, but that in incorporating both male and female characteristics, the androgyne moves towards a gender inclusivity and completeness that is the very hallmark of sovereignty.

This is the aspect of sovereignty highlighted over twenty years ago by Louise Olga Fradenburg in her essay "Rethinking Queenship," which, it seems to me, merits far more critical attention than it has received, particularly given the multitude of studies on queens published since. For Fradenburg, sovereignty is "a site of gender-transgression and crossover," which depends on the "dislocation and fluidity" of the constructs of masculinity and femininity. It hinges on a plasticity of gender, which "seems to be related to sovereignty's urge toward totality, inclusiveness, and exemplarity (its need to gain a purchase on both sexes and on all the cultural functions with which they are severally associated)." It necessitates the simultaneous "enactment of multiple, transgressive gender-positions, *and* the exemplification of perfectly ordered 'masculinity' or 'femininity.'"[13] A key concern of this study is to analyze how gender fluidity provides a vital way of conceptualizing the female sovereign in the Early Modern period, exploited by her partisans as much as condemned by her adversaries. In sum, the transcendence of gender differentiation, or sexual ethics, in the configuration of the ideal prince, *and* its simultaneous exploitation, sees the emergence of the "complete prince," as we could call this androgynous monarch, of male or female sex. To configure the female prince as a "complete prince," in substance if not in terminology (as, too, male rulers may be), is to divest the term female prince of much of its perceived paradoxical, oxymoronic, and anomalous quality. This is in no way to imply that the figure of the ruling woman is magically transformed into one greeted with widespread approval—the dominant patriarchal discourse frames her, on the contrary, as unnatural and monstrous—but quite simply that the fluidity and extensiveness of what sovereignty involves allows a space for women at the acme of power, a space that a focus on virtues and on the notion of the "complete prince" permits us to identify.

The space allowed the female prince is inextricably linked to another key consideration characteristic of the period, namely the prioritization of rank over sex, of dynasties over individuals.[14] In this

fundamentally hierarchical society, it is inevitable that the hierarchy of rank will clash with the hierarchy between the sexes, at certain moments and in certain circumstances, such as the absence or death of the male head of the family. (In fact, the very existence of female regency is the obvious example of this.) A deep-rooted belief in a distinction between the virtue of nobles and commoners—founded in the theory of the humors—contributes to a further challenge to the code of sexual ethics, and a space for androgyny, at least as regards the higher echelons of society. The discourse, which maintains that men and women are fundamentally the same, not ontologically different, receives added support when rank not sex is used as the primary defining signifier of identity.[15]

The importance of virtue in Early Modern political thought has largely been neglected until very recently, and still remains a relatively unexplored area. The vast body of "mirror for princes" literature, or advice-books for rulers, whose hallmark is an elaboration of a type of virtue ethics, has frequently been dismissed as monolithic and trite. Yet failure to take account of this literature in the broad canvas of Early Modern political thought can lead to the misrepresentation of that canvas, as was already suggested by some scholars over thirty years ago.[16] Instrumental in the neglect of virtue as a political concept is undoubtedly the construction of a canon of political thought that hinged on the tendency to separate politics and ethics into distinct spheres. As Jacqueline Broad and Karen Green point out, modern political theory is dominated by a concept of politics that focuses on *rights* and *obligations*, whereas in the Aristotelian tradition, where politics is inextricably linked with ethics, the key concepts are *virtue* and the *good*.[17] Being attentive to the survival of that earlier tradition in the Early Modern period, and to the centrality accorded to virtue—not least in the survival of the humanist discourse of the ideal prince—enriches our understanding of the canvas of Early Modern political thought and enables us to nuance the paradigm of state formation, which tends to dominate that canvas.

Re-defining what counts as political thought, or at least revising definitions to include earlier traditions of political thought, requires a broadening of the definition of what constitutes a political text. The political nature of drama as an artistic medium and of theatre as an institution is by now widely accepted, and I will turn to this in Volume 2. As regards this volume, no one would dispute that the "mirror for princes" literature is a political genre, even though it is profoundly moralist and didactic in approach. But there is another

body of literature which also treats of virtue and morality, in addition to traditional political themes such as government (by women, as it happens) and equality, and yet which is far less readily accepted as political in the narrow definition of the term. I refer to the body of literature associated with the *querelle des femmes*, and often referred to as feminist or antifeminist. Use of the umbrella term *la querelle des femmes* to describe the literature which discusses the nature of the sexes and the relations between them (as superior, inferior or equal) runs the risk of being counter-productive, to the extent that it lends itself to a separation of the question of sexual politics from the broader context of Early Modern political and philosophical thought. Use of a single term could also unwittingly imply the existence of a contained, distinct, if heterogeneous, corpus; yet the stakes of the debate are so far-reaching and the question so central to human relations, that related issues are treated well beyond texts whose titles clearly treat of the question, and one might justifiably wonder whether the delineation of an exhaustive corpus is ever possible.[18] Certainly the idea of a distinct *querelle des femmes* corpus, which "deals with women," may have contributed to numerous texts being repeatedly classified (and analyzed) in academic circles as feminist or pro-woman rather than as political.[19] Studies examining the history of feminist ideas will frequently be found in library sections devoted to women's studies, not alongside the heavy-weights on the revered shelves of political thought. While for many scholars today it is self-evident that feminist writing of any era is political, for others it constitutes a domain apart, a supplement. In fact, the so-called "feminist" literature under examination here is triply political: political in the Aristotelian sense whereby politics is inextricably bound with ethics; political in that in engages with issues of sexual politics and equality; and political in that it repeatedly examines the question of government (by women). One of the aims of chapters 2 and 3 in this volume is to restitute the so-called feminist literature of the time within a tradition of political thought, precisely by examining the implications of these three axes. The fundamental importance of feminism to the historiography of political thought has been championed by scholars, like Karen Offen and Siep Stuurman among others, who have repeatedly indicated, for example, that the key question is less what the Enlightenment contributed to feminism but rather what feminism contributed to the Enlightenment.[20] More broadly, the significance of feminism goes beyond Enlightenment concerns. As Stuurman puts it, "The historiography of political thought must come to terms with the fact

that feminism is *not* simply a variety of recent "radical discourse" but a specific mode of discussing the issues of virtue, power and authority that are at the heart of political thought. The realization that feminist thought has been part of the self-reflection of European society right from the beginning, may in due course lead to a reconsideration of the key concepts underpinning the history of political philosophy itself."[21] In sum, it is not just the treatment of sexual equality and oppression by Early Modern egalitarian philosophers which can be regarded as fundamentally political, but the entire discourse of feminist literature which treats of "virtue, power and authority" in the Early Modern period.

Any discussion of feminism necessarily raises the issue of definition. A striking feature of much critical work on Early Modern feminisms, over the last thirty-five years, is the diversity of trends that have been identified, and the number of categories that have been sketched. To Maclean's "traditional" feminism and "new" feminism, we could add Albistur and Armogathe's "Christian" feminism, Linda Timmerman's *galant*, *mondain*, and "intellectual" feminisms, Elsa Dorlin's "logical" feminism, Siep Stuurman's "egalitarian" feminism (see bibliography for titles). It is a testament to the diversity of material available that so many epithets can be justifiably applied, and a resounding reminder that, not only is it useful to think of different feminisms within a European tradition, as Akkerman and Stuurman argue,[22] but it is also useful to conceptualize in terms of different feminisms within seventeenth-century France. However, it is important to ensure that such classifications are not interpreted in a reductionist fashion as mutually exclusive, and that they do not mask the fundamental ambivalences that lie at the heart of these texts. Born of a melting pot of different intellectual currents, and different societal ideologies and interests, seventeenth-century pro-woman texts necessarily combine elements of varying and, at times, contradictory discourses. Being alive to these ambivalences and contradictions is an important step in understanding the sharp tensions that underpin much of this literature.[23] Within the confines of the current study, the understanding of feminism is broad and can be taken to mean that which challenges received ideas concerning men and women and which aims to reassess the relations between them.

The occlusion of virtue as an important political theme and the necessity of redefining what constitutes political thought or a political text are both clearly symptomatic more generally of the problematic nature of the canon of the history of political thought. This

canon, developed in the nineteenth century and remarkably resilient to change, can be seen to represent "the intellectual component of a more general view in which the rise of the West is depicted as the gradual triumph of liberty and modernity," or "a retroactive vision of European history as the realization of the (imagined) project of the Enlightenment," and has therefore been regarded by political historians with increasing uneasiness since the 1960s, and indeed before.[24] In a useful résumé of the main criticisms of this canon, many of which are as old as the canon itself, Siep Stuurman identifies two questions that have troubled intellectual historians and political theorists, and both of which, unsurprisingly, mirror the questions posed by scholars of women's history over the last four decades: "1. Whose history is this, and on what grounds are a limited number of authors awarded canonical status?" and "2. How historical is such a history? Can it ever do full justice to the 'otherness' of times past?" Together with the omission of "plebeian" and non-European political ideas, Stuurman points to the omission of feminist ideas from the canon of political thought as an example of its selectivity and incompleteness. The gradual inclusion of these other voices in the history of political thought, most importantly, does not solely mean that they should be added to the existing voices as a supplement, but that the interpretation of the traditional canonical voices of political theory can no longer be read the same way, as definitions of what was *thinkable* in a particular period are altered.[25] While of course gynæcocracy was thinkable in the Early Modern period, since it was a widespread reality, the female prince is frequently configured either as a monstrosity or as a divinely appointed exception. However, examining the extent to which the female prince is represented as *un*exceptional (an issue that emerges from some of the material under examination here) can lead to a more nuanced appreciation of what paradigms of power and authority were thinkable at the time.

Since Olga Fradenburg's *Women and Sovereignty* (1992), and specifically over the last decade, scholarly interest in women rulers has grown immensely, fueled by (and contributing towards) an increasing awareness that close examination of the role, function, status, and *modus operandi* of the queen figure is crucial to a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics and modalities of power relations in the court societies of monarchical Europe. The most obvious manifestation of this upsurge in interest is the Palgrave Macmillan series devoted to "Queenship and Power," which to date incorporates over thirty volumes. While many of these focus on English queens,

recent studies are devoted to queenship in Navarre and in the Mediterranean.[26] A move towards providing a comparative transnational overview of the mechanics of queenship across Europe emerges as a key concern both in recent monographs on female sovereigns, such as those by Thierry Wanegffelen and Bartolomé Bennassar, or in collective volumes, which, while frequently constituted of essays that focus on a single queen, organize the material thematically. A recent important volume edited by Isabelle Poutrin and Marie-Karine Schaub, for example, includes treatment of dynastic marriages, inheritance rights, diplomatic networking, and ceremonial. Another, edited by Armel Dubois-Nayt and Emmanuelle Santinelli-Folz and covering a longer chronological period, focuses on the perception and representation of female power; the spheres and strategies of female power; and the relations between women in power and men in power.[27] Other significant research has focused on specific aspects of queenship such as the queen's body and the role of the consort, while valuable new biographical research also continues to appear.[28]

Prior to recent research, the only book-length study devoted to the queen in Early Modern France was Françoise Barry's lengthy *La Reine de France* (1964), which was the first to focus on the prerogatives, privileges, and powers of the French queen, from the tenth to the eighteenth centuries.[29] However, two key studies have appeared in recent years that have radically changed the landscape: Fanny Cosandey's *La Reine de France* (2000) and Katherine Crawford's *Perilous Performances: Gender and Regency in Early Modern France* (2004).[30] Cosandey's approach is within a framework of institutional history, as she examines the queen's fundamental importance in the formation of the Early Modern state, and highlights the importance of the queen's position, liminal and yet central, in understanding the construction of Early Modern monarchy. Crawford's focus, on the other hand, is on the interplay between power, representation, and discourse in an in-depth examination of the dynamics of gender performativity in the elaboration of French regency. Transnational examinations of female rulership relevant to France have also recently appeared, such as the monographs by Sharon L. Jansen and E. William Monter, and the edited volume by Anne J. Cruz and Mihoko Suzuki.[31] Particularly useful is Maria Teresa Guerra Medici's *Donne di governo nell'Europa Moderna* (2005), which examines the role of the queen figure in the transmission of power and the importance of the dynastic and familial models in state formation.[32]

While all of this work has contributed immeasurably to a greater understanding of the dynamics of queenship—although inevitably the studies that offer a transnational approach or a broad chronological approach tend to offer less in terms of analytical depth—the focus of this current study is rather different since it aims to examine the specific theoretical political debate surrounding gynæcocracy, an issue examined in Cosandey's work but not central to the other studies mentioned.[33] Two useful studies that do treat of this debate specifically, as it was played out in sixteenth-century England and Italy, are Amanda Shephard's *Gender and Authority in Sixteenth-Century England* (1994) and Sharon L. Jansen's *Debating Women, Politics, and Power in Early Modern Europe* (2008).[34] The other body of research that is directly relevant to this study and that has been most useful in analyzing the discursive dynamics of exclusion of women from authority in seventeenth-century France is the significant body of work devoted in recent years to the myth of the "Salic Law" by Sarah Hanley, Éliane Viennot, and, above all, Ralph Giesey.

Both volumes of this study have been constructed as a progression from one end of a spectrum to the other. By this I mean that the material and arguments are organized in such a way as to move from the analysis of the discursive elements that support exclusion of women from government to those that support inclusion—to move therefore from female rule as the "unthinkable" to the "thinkable," highlighting the contradictions and ambiguities throughout the texts examined. In this first volume, following a brief overview of the events that led to the original exclusion of women from the French throne in 1316, chapter 1 examines the argumentation used to justify that exclusion and the strategies used to construct monarchical power as male, before going on to examine how that argumentation breaks down when viewed in the light of the constructions of the ideal prince in the humanist-influenced discourse of the period. Chapter 2 turns to the feminist literature of the period, which frames government by women as both feasible and laudable. Particular attention is given to the ways in which the code of sexual ethics, which defines women in terms of passive virtue, is increasingly challenged and the type of moral androgyny outlined above can be seen to emerge. Not only is gender malleable, and nowhere more so than with regard to government, but moreover codes of princely ethics and sexual ethics coincide in such a way as to render meaningless the exclusion of women from rulership. Chapter 3 turns to the key political concept of equality, a central issue in this study but one that

has been surprisingly neglected in the history of political thought.[35] In terms of seventeenth-century French egalitarian ideas, the considerable attention devoted in recent years to Poulain de la Barre and to Marie de Gournay has contributed significantly to the writing of a history of equality. However, the most developed examination of societal inequity with regard to women comes from a third thinker, Gabrielle Suchon, whose analysis of privation of women of the key elements of human experience, namely freedom, knowledge, and authority, merits far more critical attention than that accorded her to date, although progress has been made in recent years. This chapter focuses on the issues raised concerning women and government in these three thinkers, within the larger framework of their respective philosophies of equality and of oppression. Particular attention is devoted to the third (largely neglected) volume of Suchon's *Traité de la Morale et de la Politique* (1693)—a lengthy analysis of the mechanisms of the exclusion of women from authority, which amounts to a unique philosophical theorization of that exclusion and which makes of Suchon's text a milestone in the history of political thought concerning women.

A word on terminology is required from the outset. I am well aware that the terms government and sovereignty are not synonymous. The concept of sovereignty in the Early Modern period encompasses a much broader range of meanings than government, and is further complicated by the fact that in some cases, such as France, the queen consort is regarded as sovereign. Interestingly, however, in the common usage of the time, government by women is often specifically referred to as female sovereignty. For the purposes of this study, therefore, the two terms will be used interchangeably, and it is hoped readers will be lenient in accepting this usage. A word on translation is also required. With the exception of Desmond Clarke's translation of Poulain de la Barre's and Gournay's work, all translations are my own, at times influenced by the seventeenth-century published English translations. Two terms in particular, however, cannot be rendered by a single word in English, namely *douceur* and *générosité*. The former, as we will see later, has much broader connotations than gentleness or kindness in English, while the latter combines the idea of nobility of spirit with honor and courage, making direct translation difficult. These two words therefore will be frequently used in French. A final word on references. The original spelling of primary sources has been maintained, although obvious errors have been corrected and past participle accents have been added as required by the

sense. Likewise original punctuation has been maintained except in those cases where it is radically at odds with modern usage. Where modern editions of Early Modern material have been used, the conventions of those editions have been adhered to.

This is a study of conflicting discourses produced at a particular moment in French history and clearly part of a European-wide debate concerning power and sexual difference. Some readers will no doubt lament, justifiably, the absence of greater contextualization of the material examined with respect to the specific historic circumstances of the regencies of Marie de Médicis and Anne of Austria; others may lament the absence of a systematic examination of the reception of the plays or the influence of the galleries or feminist texts (to the extent that such is possible); still others may lament the absence of an analysis of *mazarinade* literature—an extraordinarily rich resource of conflicting discourses concerning gynæcocracy as well as regency. There is no doubt that the issues of historical context and reception raise crucial questions that merit considerable attention. Examining them here would have required another book, and a very different one. As regards the *mazarinades*, the density and complexity of the corpus, together with the specificities of pamphlet discourse, are such that they too would have necessitated a very different study.

Despite these lacunae, what this study attempts to do, however, is to contribute to an awareness of an alternative and occluded political discourse of the Early Modern period that directly pertains to contemporary Western society. As Joan Scott pointed out in her now classic analysis of gender, normative statements concerning gender only emerge as dominant since their contestation and any alternative possibilities have been refused or oppressed: "The point of new historical investigation is to disrupt the notion of fixity, to discover the nature of the debate or repression that leads to the appearance of timeless permanence in binary gender representation."[36] While it is not new to suggest that constructions of gender were challenged in the Early Modern period, the challenge to male-only configurations of power through the philosophical and political paradigm of virtue ethics has perhaps not been fully appreciated. The canonical vision of the past, inherited through the prism of the nineteenth century and the *grand renfermement*, and one to which feminism has paradoxically in part contributed, as Danielle Haase-Dubosc among others points out, is one that propagates a misogynist vision of the relationship between the sexes in the past. However, it has

been accepted for quite some time that this ahistorical view fails to take account of the specific periods and circumstances in history when relations between the sexes were not solely relations of domination and oppression, but where alternative relations were played out, or at the very least envisaged. The key issue for Haase-Dubosc is not about examining exceptions in the past that could become today's reality, but in being aware of the "long moments in the past which bear witness to a society capable of conceiving women in a heterosocial project."[37] It is one of the contentions of this study that in broadening our understanding of political literature to incorporate the highly charged dramas and the debates concerning the nature of the sexes, we can reach an enriched understanding of seventeenth-century France as one such moment.

Chapter 1

The Dynamics of Exclusion: "Salic Law" and Constructions of Masculine Monarchy

> The French are an ingenious People, and the Contrivers of that [Salic] Law knew well enough, that we were no less capable of reigning, and governing well, than themselves; but they were suspicious, that if the Regal Power shou'd fall often into the Hands of Women, they would favour their own Sex, and might in time restore 'em to their Primitive Liberty and Equality with the Men, and so break the Neck of that unreasonable Authority they so much affect over us.[1]

The series of events that led to the definitive exclusion of women from the French throne, played out in the short years between 1316 and 1328, provide an extraordinary example of the arbitrary nature of history, whose peripeteia gain enormously in significance retrospectively. Although recounted in detail in the work of medievalists,[2] they remain largely unknown. A brief outline of these events will therefore be useful to set the scene for our examination of the Early Modern discourses concerning women and government.

The Exclusion of Jeanne de Champagne in 1316

On June 5, 1316, the king of France Louis X died, survived by his four-year-old daughter Jeanne and his pregnant widow Clémence de Hongrie. For over 300 years, since the accession of Hugues Capet to the throne in 987, the monarch had always been succeeded by a

male heir. At the time, the tenets on which monarchical succession were founded were largely undeveloped throughout Europe;[3] France had never had a queen regnant before, but the recurrence of female regents through the centuries meant that it was far from established that women could not rule.[4] The presence of women in positions of power was also highlighted by Mahaut, comtesse d'Artois, who as a peeress participated fully in peerage assemblies.[5] Furthermore, the Capetians were surrounded by examples (Castile, Aragon, Navarre, Naples, and Hungary among others) where the exclusion of women was unimaginable.[6] In the immediate aftermath of Louis's death, the group of nobles acting as the "court of France" clearly did not consider it impossible that a future daughter of the pregnant Clémence might succeed to the throne.[7]

However, Philippe de Poitiers, the late king's brother, had other plans. Immediately styling himself as regent, he set in motion a chain of events that were ultimately to override his young niece's legitimate claims to the throne and so influence, in no minor fashion, the course of French political history.[8] On his arrival in Paris in July, Philippe assumed the title of regent of France and of Navarre, having managed with some difficulty, according to one chronicle, to win the Palais de Paris from the hands of two of his opponents: his uncle Charles de Valois (who was anxious to procure the regency for himself) and his brother Charles de la Marche.[9] However, a treaty signed at an assembly of princes and barons in Vincennes on July 17—possibly summoned by Charles de Valois—explicitly validated the succession rights of Jeanne and her unborn sister, in the event of Clémence giving birth to a girl. The principal signatories of this treaty, or *convenances*, were Philippe de Poitiers and Eudes, duc de Bourgogne, Jeanne's uncle and protector, acting apparently on behalf of his niece and his mother Agnès de Bourgogne (Jeanne's grandmother and, as Saint Louis's daughter, a powerful figure), as well as in his own name. In this treaty it was agreed that if a son were born, the infant would be declared king, and Philippe would govern the country until his nephew reached his majority; if a girl were born, however, the decision regarding the succession was to be postponed until the girls reached their majority, and hence the legal age necessary to decide to renounce or contest their rights. At the end of this interregnum, the girls would succeed to Navarre, Champagne, and Brie, on condition that they renounced their claim to the kingdom of France. If on the other hand, one or both of them refused to renounce those rights, they would forfeit their

succession to Navarre, Champagne, and Brie, and potentially end up with nothing—a powerful disincentive to any contest, and one undoubtedly inserted at the instigation of Philippe.[10] Invaluable as this treatise is in highlighting the potentiality of female succession to the French throne, it was not destined to impact greatly on later debates concerning succession, quite simply because the crucial clauses concerning the validation of the girls' rights and the necessity for an interregnum did not make it into the chronicles. From the very beginning of this saga, therefore, the received version of events was flawed and incomplete.[11]

In early November, Clémence de Hongrie gave birth to a boy, Jean I, who died some days later. In December 1316, Philippes de Poitiers declared himself king, initially of France and subsequently of France and of Navarre, thus completely overriding his young nieces' claims to the succession. Aware that Philippe was planning his own coronation, Eudes and Agnès de Bourgogne continued to object and to marshal support for Jeanne. A letter from Eudes written on December 26 implies that since the treaty of July had not stipulated what would happen in such an event, Philippe now viewed the agreement as invalid. Eudes, on the other hand, claimed that the death of a male heir *had* been envisaged verbally with Philippe and that the July treaty was still valid. A letter from Agnès some days later is even more forthright as she asks the peers of France to oppose the coronation, and calls for an assembly of peers that would decide on what precisely were the respective rights of Jeanne and of Philippe (or monseignour de Poitiers, as she calls him). It is clear that there was no doubt in her mind concerning those rights, as she refers to Jeanne as direct heir ("droiz hoirs") of the kingdoms of France and of Navarre and the counties of Champagne and Brie.[12] Given the fact that many nobles objected to Philippe, such a meeting would have been potentially very dangerous for the "regent." A third letter, dated January 10, indicates that Eudes had read the articles of the July treaty to an assembly of Burgundian subjects, and that they too had concurred with the treaty's validity. However Philippe preempted any disputes and was crowned at a surreptitious ceremony in an army-protected Rheims on January 9, 1317—a ceremony that moreover was disrupted by the formidable Agnès, who continued to demand recognition of her granddaughter's claims.[13] Three weeks later, on February 2, in his anxiety to consolidate his position, he called another assembly of notables in Paris. Too good a politician to submit his fate to the peers of France, as Agnès wished, Philippe invited instead a mix

of nobles, prelates, and Parisian bourgeoisie, and additionally consulted university doctors. His title of king was duly ratified.

Opposition continued nonetheless, particularly from Agnès, supported by the Champagne nobles. A letter written by the latter on behalf of Jeanne at an assembly held near Joigny on April 10, 1317 called on her friends and vassals to come (armed) to her aid.[14] The king also faced considerable opposition from Flanders, Artois, and Picardy, in addition to nobles such as the comte de Nevers.[15] Armed conflict seemed imminent. However, further to ongoing negotiations, bribes, and force, it would appear that Philippe managed to win over most of his opponents; on March 27, 1318, Eudes de Bourgogne signed a further treaty with Philippe in which on behalf of Jeanne, he renounced any claim to the thrones of France and Navarre, and the counties of Champagne and Brie.[16] He also committed himself to obtaining a ratification of this treaty from Jeanne herself when she was twelve years old, and from her husband, who was to be Philippe d'Evreux.[17] No mention was made at this final juncture of the reversion of the kingdom to Jeanne at her majority; although the necessity for the later ratification by Jeanne implies that juridically the agreement of July 1316 was still being adhered to, in reality it no longer had any meaning.[18] The usurpation of Jeanne de Champagne was complete.

Once this precedent had been established, it was with little difficulty that Charles IV (conveniently overlooking his own defense of female succession in 1316–17) succeeded to the throne when his brother Philip V died without a male heir in 1322, once again overriding any female claims. No official treaty appears to have ratified this second incidence of the exclusion of women from the throne: as Viollet indicates, events began to shape the law.[19]

The situation was not as straightforward in 1328 when Charles IV himself, now the last of the direct Capetians, also died without a son, bringing about the third dynastic crisis in twelve years. The two pretenders to the throne were Edward III of England, nephew to the late king through his mother Isabelle, and Philippe de Valois, first cousin to the late Charles. An assembly of notables decided in favor of the latter, arguing from a judicial perspective that since women could not succeed to the throne, they could not pass on to their offspring, male or female, a right that they themselves did not enjoy. Doubtless this statement was underscored by the desire to keep an English king from the French throne.[20] This second statement from an assembly, evidently politically expedient, remained yet again unaccompanied

by any legal justification of why women should be excluded in the first place. In the space of twelve years then, from 1316 to 1328, the fate of female heirs and their descendants within the royal succession had been sealed.

If these were the events, what were the arguments raised on either side? Little is known in fact of the issues aired in the assemblies and at court in the debate that accompanied the initial unprecedented state of affairs in 1316. It is apparent, however, that an appeal to custom, implicit or explicit, featured on both sides of the argument. Feudal custom was so fluid that it could easily be exploited by both parties. The *Libri Feudorum* maintained that women were legally excluded from the succession to fiefs, and yet added, "unless it is expressly stated that the daughters may succeed."[21] Furthermore many of the other *coutumiers* (regional customary laws) did not incorporate the principle of female exclusion at all. In reality many women did succeed to fiefs, apanages, and duchies.[22] The letter of April 10 written by the Champagne nobles appealed to the customs observed in "kingdoms, empires, peerages, principalities and baronies" as well as to divine, canon, and civil law in Jeanne's favor.[23] Louis X himself, in 1315, had invoked reason and natural law in supporting the inheritance rights to the apanage of Poitiers of Philippe de Poitiers's own daughters.[24]

On the opposing side, most of the "argumentation" would appear to be mere bald statement rather than theoretical or legal justification. One argument hinged upon the doubtful parentage or possible bastardy of Jeanne, but this does not appear to have been the principal argument.[25] At the 1317 assembly, the decision concerning the succession was reached seemingly with little disagreement; in the words of one contemporary chronicler, the continuator of Guillaume de Nangis, "At that time it was also declared that a woman cannot succeed to the crown of France."[26] Another chronicler, Jean de Saint-Victor, indicates how those opposing Eudes de Bourgogne in December 1316 maintained, simply, that women should not succeed to the throne, an idea that, as Saint-Victor himself adds, could not be proven with any evidence.[27] Another idea, of great ingenuity, features in the text produced by the university doctors at the time of the 1317 assembly: Philippe's succession to the throne was preferable to that of Jeanne apparently, since only two generations separated him from Saint Louis, while Jeanne was separated from the latter by three generations.[28] While it is difficult to conceive of what significance this type of genealogical argument may have had 700 years ago, it does

seem as if the nature of the reasoning is dubious. As Potter indicates, "Nothing could better illustrate the poverty of resource of the contemporary apologists, and the fog of uncertainty in which the whole problem of succession was enshrouded."[29]

A further argument, in fact possibly the first theoretical justification, appeared in 1322, when François de Meyronnes, in his commentary on *La Cité de Dieu*, maintained that women could succeed to private inheritances (*hereditates*) but not to *dignitates* (a category that included the kingdom of France), a similar argument raised by Pierre Jame in 1329.[30] Finally, at the time of a later controversy in 1337 when Edward III reiterated his claim to the throne (a claim that was possibly a pretext for the Hundred Years War), Pope Benedict XII based his reasoning on the force of custom, at his intervention in 1340 in support of Philippe de Valois.[31] It seems that there was little else that the pope or the apologists for the king could appeal to; certainly neither the "Salic Law" nor so-called female "ineptitude" were ever mentioned.

What is crucial to underline in this debate is that recognition of Jeanne's right to rule is apparent on two levels: explicitly in the original interim treaty signed between Eudes and Philippe, and implicitly both by the fact that her acceptance of this treaty, her formal renunciation of her lands, was required, and by the fact that she had to be compensated. As Viollet indicates, one cannot renounce rights that one never held in the first place.[32] Furthermore, the very existence of the debate itself, and the manipulation of arguments, few, bald, and weak though they may be, also represents an implicit recognition of the right of women to become ruling queens; paradoxically then, by their very arguments, those arguing against it allow for the possibility of female government.

Philippe V's succession to the throne, after much opposition, clearly had less to do with any legal reasoning (specious or otherwise), or indeed with any misogynistic sentiment, than with division among his opponents, bribery, and the consent of the assembly.[33] In sum, women were not excluded from the throne because of their sex, although latent misogyny cannot have helped their cause, but because of the machinations of a powerful opponent, who was ultimately victorious in a battle of political wills.[34] Hence royal lawyers were faced with a delicate situation in 1316, and later, unequipped as they were with any legal justification for the exclusion of women. However, rather than admit that only the sanction of the notables had secured the throne for three successive kings, a concept that

might have evoked overtones of elective monarchy, lawyers appear to have said very little, or to have founded whatever argument they had on custom.[35] The question of female succession was to remain largely unelaborated from a legal perspective for nearly a hundred years.

The dearth of arguments formulated at the time becomes even more significant when compared with the elaboration of later theories, formulated long after the events. The concept of custom continued initially to play an important role in the debate and was undoubtedly the most common reason furnished throughout the fourteenth century for the exclusion of women. As an argument, it is invoked by the Roman jurist Baldus de Ubaldis in 1377,[36] by both the *Clerc* and the *Chevalier* in their discussion of female succession in *Le Songe du Vergier* (1378),[37] and most significantly by lawyer Jean de Terre Rouge, who in his development of a theory of royal succession in his text *Tractatus* (written in 1419) brought the customary usage of the exclusion of women to the status of a fundamental law of the land.[38] The emphasis of the argumentation from the dawn of the fifteenth century, however, was entirely changed by the advent of "Salic Law" into the debate, since finally a legal justification was furnished, and exclusion was rescued from the nebulous (albeit powerful) realm of abstract custom.[39]

The Myth of "Salic Law"

The legal justification most associated with the exclusion of women from the French throne is that of "Salic Law," which was ratified as the first fundamental law of the state by the *arrêt Le Maistre* passed in the Paris *parlement* on June 28, 1593, at the time of the succession crisis that preceded Henri IV's accession to the throne. However, it has long been accepted that in fact Salic Law, originally, had nothing to do with female exclusion. The history of the fabrication of the myth and the political uses to which it was put from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, continues to excite considerable debate today and to divide historians. Since that debate has been played out elsewhere,[40] it is sufficient for our purposes here to sketch a brief overview of the original controversy.

There is little dispute that in his *Traité contre les Anglais* (1413), Jean de Montreuil, secretary to Charles V, falsified a fragment of Salic code through the insertion of the words *in regno*, making the law governing the inheritance of private (allodial) lands seem relevant to the royal succession. This falsification was propagated among others

by Jean Juvénal des Ursins, archbishop of Rheims, in 1435 and 1446, and popularized in the anonymous *La loy salicque, premiere loy des françois* (1488)—the first text to attribute the law to Pharamond, hence imbuing it with the proportions of an original French royal ordonnance, and the first law of the kingdom[41]—and in Guillaume Postel's *La Loy salique* (1552). However, the latter half of the sixteenth century saw a change in the fortunes of the "Salic Law," as philological research revealed its history of falsification, and scholarly editions of the original Salic Law texts were published. The first severe attack came from Jean du Tillet in his *Receuil des Rois de France* (a manuscript of which dates from 1550) in which he points out that the original Salic Law does not concern royal succession; in fact, paradoxically, if the succession were subject to Salic Law, then women would succeed to the throne. The fact that they never have, proves that Salic Law was never applied.[42] For this supporter of Catherine de Médicis and advocate of female regency, women are excluded from the throne by custom and by the specific law of the French dynasty, the latter rooted in the magnanimity of the French, who cannot endure being governed by women ("par coustume & loy particuliere de la maison de France, fondée sur la magnanimité des François, ne pouvans souffrir estre dominez par femmes"), a phrase that was to echo throughout the following century.[43] Bernard de Girard, sieur Du Haillan, Hotman's successor as royal historiographer, also distinguishes between Salic Law and the royal succession, in his text *De L'Estat et succez des affaires de France* (1570), and refutes the idea that the law was established by Pharamond. Interestingly, he attributes the fact that Salic Law was appropriated as relevant to the issue of female exclusion during the Capetian dynasty, to the fact that it was politically expedient for the kings, and hence introduces the concept of law founded on force rather than reason—a novel idea in the debate and potentially explosive.[44] François Hotman in his monarchomach text *Francogallia* (1573) follows suit in refuting the idea that Salic Law concerns monarchical succession, or indeed any aspect of public law; it in fact does not even concern the succession to fiefs but rather to specifically private lands.[45] And finally in 1577, Papire Masson deduced the truth: the name "Salic Law" was given by jurists and historians to the custom excluding women, long after the 1328 succession crisis.[46] However, albeit bereft of a legal justification for the exclusion of women, aware of the evident falsification of "Salic Law," both Hotman and Du Haillan continue to support and defend female exclusion from the succession, drawing on custom as their

main rationale.[47] From 1587 to 1593, the succession crisis gave rise to numerous anonymous heated pamphlets and longer treatises on the issue—particularly heated given the suggestion of Isabella Clara Eugenia Infanta of Spain, daughter of Philippe II and Elizabeth de Valois, hence grand-daughter of Henri II, as a candidate for the throne. One of the last of these treatises was Antoine Hotman's *Traicté de la Loy Salique* (1593), in which he maintains that the origins of the exclusion are irrelevant, be it founded on law or on custom.[48] It is worth remembering despite the ongoing reliance on custom as an argument, that such an argument is insufficient in itself. One of the key arguments for supporters of gynæcocracy was the cultural and historical relativity of custom—a fact that vociferous defenders of custom cannot have been unaware of.

When we turn to the seventeenth century, it becomes clear that this last idea is the one that dominates. While some jurists continue to defend "Salic Law," arguing against the weight of sixteenth-century scholarship, most attempt to dismiss, ignore, or deny the controversy and to focus on the substance of the so-called law rather than the existence (or nonexistence) of an age-old written law. The polemic in the first decades of the seventeenth century surrounding the law's origin or relevance to succession is made to fade into insignificance. Royal historiographer Claude Malingre, in a text that draws heavily on Postel, is one of the last writers of those early decades to address the controversial issues at any length, and then only to come out entirely in favor of the law, emphasizing its specifically French antiquity.[49] Rather, the fact that "Salic Law" has always explained juridically the exclusion of women from the throne enters, or is made to enter, the realm of accepted fact, as it becomes further entrenched in the collective memory of the time. From the 1620s onwards, no new material appears to even question the validity of the law. Of course, as Cosandey has pointed out, the defense of "Salic Law" in the early part of the century, while excluding women, also provides the evolving French state and monarchy with a vital foundation stone: by bestowing a mythic status on the law, absolutist writers develop a concept of the state as underpinned by immutable fundamental law that constructs the monarchy as indivisible and divinely ordained.[50] This, and not the exclusion of women per se, is no doubt the primary issue for some jurists. Be that as it may, the fact remains that the model of monarchy that they construct and laud is entirely masculine, and the exclusion of women is made to seem a lynchpin of its strength and particularity.

As the century progresses, not only does the debate regarding the "law" disappear, but the "law" itself as an exclusionist argument fades into irrelevance. This is not to imply that the "Salic Law" myth disappears but rather that the main focus of the discussion shifts. The very fact that this myth could fade considerably from prominence without lessening, as we shall see, the strength of the exclusionist discourse indicates to what an extent the principal line of reasoning did not lie in legal or customary justifications: from the sixteenth century onwards, even those who categorically refute the link between the law and the royal succession do not necessarily (usually not at all) go on to advocate that women should succeed to the throne. On the contrary, while legal support was desirable for the jurists, the crux of the argumentation hinges on a discourse of deep-set cultural constructions and configurations regarding gender and power. Examination of the other arguments, that is to say, the network of discursive elements that were used to uphold the fragile, falsified "Salic Law," and defend the exclusion of women, will demonstrate the role of these more deep-rooted concerns.

Cultural Constructions of Gender and Government

A key argument inherited from earlier periods in the justification of female exclusion from the succession hinges on the twin themes of dangerous marital alliances and military ineptitude. Loyseau, Malingre, Turquet de Mayerne, and Bossuet are among those who argue that exclusion of women from the throne keeps the kingdom intact by eliminating any foreign influence.[51] That a female ruler might resist this influence, or rule in her own right, is evidently unthinkable, as the argument hinges on the ubiquitous belief in female moral and intellectual weakness. The military argument also hinges on the notion of weakness, this time physical: for Le Bret, for example, the principal reason that inclined the forefathers of France to establish the "Salic Law" was that warrior and bellicose men were required for the conservation of the state. Women were excluded from the Crown since they were unsuited to arms-bearing.[52] What is remarkable here is that writers are constructing a discourse of military ineptitude that was blatantly contradicted by the reality of the time, in which warrior women were clearly not exceptional and were to be seen in all strata of society.[53] These writers then choose to ignore inconvenient evidence, and focus on propagating an inherited myth

of female weakness. Underpinning these two arguments of military ineptitude and foreign influence, which are far from being as solid as they are made out to be, are more fundamental concerns. The fact that women allegedly cannot protect the country or maintain unity and tranquility within it, and that they may introduce a foreign influence, contributes to a construction whereby the idea of women in power is made to seem synonymous with chaos and disorder. Just as authority in women allegedly goes against custom and against the Bible, it also goes against the natural order and represents *le monde à l'envers*, a hierarchy inverted, a world upside-down. Inherent in this very common topos lies the crux of the exclusionist discourse that underlies the above arguments: the continual construction of power as a male prerogative.

One of the primary ways in which government itself is constructed as male relies heavily on the familiar tapestry of misogynistic commonplaces, which informed many medieval and early modern texts. Women, for example, are allegedly inconstant, fragile, malicious, false, rash, lascivious, and it is this accumulation of essentialist generalizations that constitutes the social and cultural construction labelled generic *woman*.[54] Most writers frame female weakness in both physical and moral terms: Jacques de La Fons is overtly in favor of the exclusion from the throne of "feeble women" ("femmes imbecilles") since every woman is "fragile, inconstant and fickle."[55] Women are naturally inferior and weak. Turquet de Mayerne sees gynæcocracy as incompatible with majesty and sovereignty because of women's natural weaknesses and propensity to prioritize private rather than public concerns.[56] Jean-François Senault, although largely receptive to the possibilities of female rule, as we will see below, reminds his readers of the opposing negative opinion held by a considerable number of political theorists, according to which women should be excluded from the throne not because they are incapable, but because they are cruel and ambitious, and fatal for their subjects.[57]

This accumulation of essentialisms is imbued with an added significance when the essentialisms are constructed to be exclusionist. To describe women's "nature" (physical and/or moral) as inconstant, fragile, and unstable, takes on greater significance when sovereignty is constructed as hinging on constancy, strength, and stability. From *Le Songe du Vergier* onwards, the definition of the prerequisites for sovereignty in terms of virtues traditionally constructed as male, results in the construction of sovereignty itself as exclusively male, from which women are automatically excluded. As Turquet

de Mayerne puts it: "[la nature] a doué le sexe viril de fermeté, prudence, magnanimité, & autres telles vertus Royales par dessus le feminin" ("[Nature] has endowed the male sex with steadfastness, prudence, magnanimity and other such royal virtues beyond the female reach").[58] Richelieu also explicitly binds government and male "nature" together as one indivisible unit. Government of kingdoms requires male virtue and an unshakeable steadfastness ("une vertu mâle et une fermeté inébranlable"); women are excluded from all public administration by their "natural" traits—lazy and indiscreet, swayed by their passions, hence little inclined to reason and justice.[59]

Lest her virtues might help her case, the exclusionist discourse frames these also as incompatible with positions of power. According to Dupuy (in a passage based on Bignon), since female modesty (*pudeur*) and virtue have excluded women from the military and legal professions, so too do they necessarily exclude her from the throne.[60] Fortin de la Hoguette elaborates on the same idea that female virtue is incompatible with the public space, as he examines what happens in a gynæcocratic regime, where a woman can come to the throne if there is no male heir. Firstly if the queen is unmarried, her virginal modesty renders her "stunned" (*interdite*) in a male assembly. She is even more befuddled when asked to deliberate on, and solve, a political issue that she (necessarily) does not understand. In such a situation, the queen lacking moral capacity or merit (*suffisance*), confides the issue to her (male) council and it is therefore they who reign. Finally, since there will automatically be someone who has won the queen's confidence more than the others, envy is rampant and the public critical.[61] The recurrent topos of the dangers of a "favorite," which usually features in political writings with reference to both kings and queens, ungendered, is here made to seem relevant to women only. For Fortin de la Hoguette, it is inconceivable then that women could actually reign, even in countries where they have the right to the throne, in other words in all the kingdoms of Europe except France. The exclusionist discourse, here based on assumptions of women as ignorant and irrational, reveals itself as less descriptive than prescriptive and instrumental,[62] to the extent that it is underpinned by an attempt to contain women, and to keep them out of the public space. Essentialisms and consistent use of binary opposites combine to construct a reality whereby women are, or should be, justifiably prevented from playing a public role due to their inherent "natural" flaws, or even "natural" virtue,

and primarily their lack of "male" *virtù* and virtues. The dynamics of what excludes them hinges on a fluctuating continuum between what women "are" and what they "are not." Constructions of maleness and government are made to coincide—informed by a sexual differentiation of virtue, by a sexual ethics—just as femaleness and government are made to appear diametrically opposed, in this "monarchic virilization of power."[63]

It follows that if women are naturally unsuitable for government, their exclusion will be upheld by natural law. And as we might expect, it is indeed on a conception of a natural order, consistent with a divine order, that the most frequent argument is based.[64] It is primarily by having recourse to a particular model of "natural' law that jurists defend "Salic Law," despite its juridical flaws. The idea, for example, that there is no written evidence of the relevance of "Salic Law" to monarchical succession is summarily dismissed by Claude Leschassier in his short treatise "De la loy salique" (1602) on the basis that it was unnecessary to write it down: natural law, with which "Salic Law" is equated here, "is born with men, and is an unwritten law."[65] Bignon reproduces this idea twice, once verbatim and once in a variation of his own, casting these received ideas as a product of natural instinct.[66] The correlation of natural and divine law is often explicit, as in Turquet de Mayerne's description of the most perfect monarchies as those where "divine law and natural law retain the Scepter in the possession of the male sex" ("la loy de Dieu & de Nature retient le Sceptre par devers le sexe viril").[67] Throughout this type of argumentation, it becomes clear not only how "natural law" is used to support "Salic Law," but, inversely, "Salic Law" allows writers to uphold the idea of female weakness, in a kind of institutionalization of the latter.

Furthermore, France's exclusion of women from the throne (unique in Europe) is seen as a hallmark of its superiority and privileged nature, and the French inability to tolerate female authority (Du Tillet's *magnanimité*) presented as a mark of their cultural superiority over their neighbors. Natural law has been particularly safeguarded in France, so this argument goes, where other monarchies like the Spanish and English have allowed themselves to stray from the correct path.[68] Nature has particularly honored France above all other nations of the world.[69] The kingdom of France is "too noble" to fall into female hands.[70] The French monarchy represents "a perfect sovereignty," in part because women cannot succeed to the throne.[71] God wanted France to have "the reign of men."[72] Masculine

monarchies ("les Royaumes masculins") are in this respect "true and perfect Kingdoms" ("vrays & accomplis Royaumes").[73] The exclusion of women from the throne is constructed as a vital, even necessary, element in the conservation of the state.

A more specific interpretation of "natural law" is also possible: according to Sarah Hanley, many of the early seventeenth-century writers in question are adhering to a theory of natural law that she has designated a "biogenetic seminal theory," and which hinges on biological argumentation. Certain theorists, from Jean de Terre-Rouge and Noël de Fribois through to Turquet de Mayerne and Le Bret, constructed the principle of male governance as a natural law, where the concept of nature, dating back to Aristotle, is that which attributes the hereditary generative power to the male seed. Queens could reproduce but could not generate: they therefore could not adequately maintain the royal line. Reiteration of political maxims such as "the king never dies," together with its implicit corollary "the queen dies," constructed gynæcocracy as leading to "the imminent death of the state." These "biogenetic seminal propositions" cloaked as natural law were used to validate male right both within the family and within the monarchy.[74]

While Hanley's thesis is very seductive, it is also true to say that the use of divine law to prop up natural law is in many cases enough to support the patriarchal order.[75] For many, since natural law is determined by divine law, it is in turn determined by what is perceived as the divinely established hierarchy as exemplified within two models of authority, either paternal or marital. Many theorists adhere to the idea that the state needs to be under the authority of the king just as the family is under the father. In turn, since God is consistently perceived as male, male monarchy is constructed as the most natural form of government since the paternal relationship between sovereign and subject mirrors God's rule over the world.[76] Support for the marital model in the construction of power as male, a model that had the advantage of being constructed as specifically French, drew in no small part on the sixteenth-century Jean Bodin, who was clearly opposed to gynæcocracy.[77] For Bodin, it is unthinkable that a husband could exert authority in the domestic sphere and yet be a slave in the public arena: sovereign power must be male to avoid chaos.[78] Le Bret and Bossuet among others ardently defend similar arguments, with a dogmatic rationale that reveals a fundamental fear of any subversion of male hegemony: women are born to obey and a wife must obey her husband.[79] For

Fortin de la Hoguette, in a gynæcocratic regime, not only do subjects imply by accepting a queen regnant that they also accept that the roles of authority are reversed within the family, but the queen's own marriage would be highly problematic, since by necessity it would be to either a subject or a foreign prince.[80] In discussing the example of Elizabeth I, who herself often defended her celibacy by declaring that she was married to her country, the concept of the non-generative power of queens is emphasized by the attribution of impotency to Elizabeth. Even if she had married therefore, she would have been unable apparently to guarantee the continuation of the monarchy.[81]

The notion of Elizabeth's alleged impotency is closely related to the recurrence of the metaphor of illness or monstrosity with reference to gynæcocratic regimes. Turquet de Mayerne is probably one of the greatest exponents of this point of view: while acknowledging that many countries all over the globe do allow gynæcocracy, he clearly sees France as having an enormous advantage, free of this recurrent virus or deplorable sickness ("fascheuse maladie").[82] Once again binary oppositions are at play, in this case the opposition of metaphors of health and illness. Gynæcocracy is seen as "extraordinary" time (in Fradenburg's terms),[83] an intermediary period between two "real" reigns, when the country merely suffers through its illness, too weak to attempt any strenuous undertaking. Those who have reigned successfully are dismissed (like Elizabeth) as exceptional, miraculous, male rather than female, or as God's way of demonstrating his power by using weak vessels to confound the mighty—a common biblical topos.[84]

It is worth noting in this configuration of masculine prerogative that it is not only government that is constructed as male but all official authority, in the ranks, for example, of the legal profession and the clergy. Evidently there are no women judges or priests. What results then is a type of circular argumentation in which a *non sequitur* is made to seem logical: the fact that women are excluded from these areas becomes in itself an argument for their exclusion from the throne. According to Fortin de la Hoguette, for example, since women are excluded from judging or preaching or acting as regents because of their incapacity, this is all the more reason to exclude them from royal duties, which are more difficult and of greater consequence.[85] Starting with the foundation stone of alleged female incapacity, a pyramid of exclusionist arguments is easily constructed, representing a body of seemingly irrefutable knowledge.

Buttressing this pyramid of arguments is the powerful tool of example. Writers such as Le Bret and Bignon move smoothly from abstract theorizing to concrete example, and enumerate a litany of disasters of both queens and regents, invoking the so-called chaos they caused.[86] Here, negatively configuring examples such as Catherine de Médicis, Semiramis, Fredegonde, Brunehilde makes for an overall negative construction of female government. The fact that the same examples are often used in defenses of gynæcocracy, that Catherine de Médicis' supporters railed against the dark portrayals of her, or that a scholar such as Étienne Pasquier had unraveled the considerable elements of myth in the popular portrayals of the Merovingian queens goes to show how malleable these examples are.[87] However, there is no doubt that the unfavorable representations outweigh the favorable ones, both in volume and vehemence—a phenomenon mirrored by the treatment of women in the written histories of the time, where they are either represented in this same negative light or omitted, erased. This marginalization and demonization, intensified by the proliferation of eulogistic portrayals of masculine monarchy (of the *bon-roy-Henri* type), indicate how queenship can be seen as a dynamic historical phenomenon in flux, as dependent on the writers that represented it (or erased it) as on the women that lived it.[88]

From philological falsification to circular argumentation, it is evident that dubious mechanisms were in use, consciously or unconsciously, to exclude women not from power (which in reality they exercised at every level), but from monarchical authority. The exclusionist discourse hinges on a construction of sovereignty as male, which is fueled by the reiteration of essentialisms, and the configuration of paternal and marital models of power, in turn founded on a deep-rooted code of sexual ethics that defines male and female capacity for virtue as active and passive respectively.

The French Paradox: The Issue of Regency

Of course, the fundamental problem with this discourse is that it breaks down in the face of the one major paradox within the French system: female regency. While women may be excluded from the throne, they are clearly not excluded from governmental authority. As Fanny Cosandey and Katherine Crawford have frequently demonstrated, it is precisely because of their exclusion from the throne that French queens are repeatedly invested with the regency: in fact, since 1483 women exclusively had occupied the regency in France,

a fact that explains some of the vehemence in the arguments of the exclusionist writings.[89] While many of the writers mentioned above rail against women in government in any capacity (and not few, as Cosandey argues), others are more circumspect with regard to regency, while many avoid the topic altogether.[90] The situation is, to say the least, delicate: how can one argue that (the falsified) "Salic Law," and hence female exclusion, is natural and justifiable, and yet maintain that the queen regent legitimately occupies her position in government, an argument necessary for the stability of the monarchy?

Support for female regency is often ambiguous since it is frequently framed in terms of containment and control. All the advantages Dupuy enumerates, for example, focus on minimizing the risk of women in power: as the weaker sex, they are less likely to invade their children's state; in France there can be no fear of them succeeding to the throne, therefore they couldn't possibly even entertain the thought of it; they can never act by themselves but only through others in all the principal activities of their administration.[91] Elsewhere, however, a more positive note is sounded, albeit one that continues to tie the queen to her biological sex. The trump argument for the discomfited partisans of Marie de Médicis and Anne of Austria, ironically, is one of natural law, in this case the natural bonds of maternity. As the king's mother, bound to him by mutual ties of affection, and motivated solely by his best interests, the queen is the logical, "natural" choice as regent. Mother of the king, she is also mother of her people, "mère de la patrie," in an adroit adaptation of the common *paterfamilias* model.[92] Catalogues of female regents such as Florentin du Ruau's lengthy *Tableau historial des régences* (1615) or Robert Luyt's short *La Régence des reynes de France* (1649), in addition to other royalist pamphlets published during the Fronde, also exploit the maternity motif as they attempt to provide a counter-history to the dominant defamatory history in circulation.[93] Furthermore, at times, the queen is presented as both father and mother, in an image redolent of the "complete prince" we will see elsewhere. One pamphleteer suggests to the queen, with reference to the French people: "Vous tenez la place du Roy, comme sa Mere dans vostre Regence, & vous devez tenir lieu de Pere pour luy dans votre administration" ("You take the place of the king, as mother [of the people] in your regency, and you should take the place of its father in your administration").[94] As mother/regent and father/administrator, the queen is the father (of the state) and as monarch transcends gender boundaries.[95]

Writing at the end of Anne of Austria's regency, Jean-François Senault voices a number of favorable arguments, similar to those found in the feminist "galleries" of the period. Although physically weaker, women can be as mentally strong as men, as wise and as courageous; women have played an important role in state conservation in numerous countries; a host of examples, from Elizabeth I to Isabella of Castile, Semiramis, and Tomyris, demonstrates that women can overcome the "weaknesses of their sex" to rule alone. A more original argumentation, and one of the strongest defenses both of female regency and Anne of Austria to circulate in the mid-century, can be found in *Le Censeur Censuré* (1652). Written by Henri d'Audiguier du Mazet, *avocat général* to the queen (although published anonymously), this text was commissioned as a reply to the *frondeur* pamphlet *Le Censeur du temps et du monde* (also 1652), written by one Sandricourt. According to d'Audiguier, who points out that regents exercise sovereign authority, the problematic issue is not female government, but the very nature of regency, a time prone to civil unrest, irrespective of the sex of the regent.[96] The idea that any government can be prone to disorder, and the deconstruction of the commonplace association between women in power and chaos is characteristic of d'Audiguier's approach. Aware that female weakness is a widespread received idea, he sets out to deconstruct this prejudice by examining, in the light of "law, reason, experience and examples" if government by men is any better than government by women. Legal arguments are rapidly dispensed with on the basis that France is unique in its exclusion of women from the throne; "Salic Law" provides no foundation for it since this "odd and heteroclite law" ("cette Loy Hetroclite [sic] et singulière, qualifiée Salique") is not written and is of dubious origins, established possibly by commonly held opinion or by chance, or by popular anti-English sentiment.[97] Reason provides no basis for exclusion either, since both past and present examples (examples that Sandricourt himself acknowledges apparently) show that it is untenable that women are incapable of government. Trying another tack, d'Audiguier adds, in a rather ambivalent argument, that while kings have allowed themselves to be ruled by women, no queen has been ruled by another woman, governing either by herself or confiding affairs of state to a male advisor.[98] Throughout the text, d'Audiguier anticipates, and replies to, counter arguments, so as to constantly frame female government, as, at best, well within female capacities, and female regency, at worst, the lesser of two evils. Ultimately, there is no reason to prefer male to female government, and such a

preference is only explicable as ingrained in the French psyche, here not seen as Du Tillet's *magnanimité* but as *impatience*:

> Il n'y a donc point de rayson convaincante pour justifier que le Règne des Femmes soit moins avantageux que celuy des hommes, sinon que les hommes, notamment les François portent plus impatiemment le Gouvernement des Femmes, & que les grands entreprennent plus volontiers sur leur authorité, comme nous voyons en l'Histoire de la Régence de la Reyne Blanche, auquel cas il ne faut plus blasmer les Femmes ny leur governement, mais notre impatience & l'ambition des grands.
>
> There is therefore no convincing reason to justify [the argument] that the reign of women is less advantageous than that of men; the only argument is that men, especially Frenchmen, tolerate government by women with difficulty, and that the nobles encroach more readily on their authority, as is evident in the history of the regency of Queen Blanche. In light of this, neither women nor their government should be blamed but rather our intolerance and the ambition of the nobles.[99]

Moving from the general to the specific, the queen's lawyer rests his last argument on the fickleness of humankind, commenting that if the queen's regency had continued as it had been for the first four years, it would have been regarded as the most glorious regency in history; it is only since, "by the vicissitudes of this world," its harmony has become troubled that voices are now raised against the regent and praise turns to blame—a common error, apparently, but one that only the ignorant uphold.[100] What emerges from d'Audiguier's text then is a clear defense of female government through a deconstruction of his opponents' arguments as either unfounded or ignorant.

Support for the queen is also apparent in some of the texts that examine the place and function of the queen in the French monarchy earlier in the century. One such text is André Duchesne's *Les Antiquitez et recherches de la grandeur et de la majesté des Roys de France* (1609). In a chapter entitled "Des grandeurs, authoritez, et prerogatives des Reynes de France," Duchesne uses the analogy of peerages to indicate how queen consorts necessarily share the majesty and authority of the king.[101] As consort or as mother, the queen participates in the royal political arena the way the wife of a peer would exercise the same right in her husband's domain. While queens do not have entirely the same *grandeurs* as kings, they do share with them the authority and the prerogatives of royalty.[102] The highest

position ("la plus grande dignité") that they have been led to hold is that of regency, and in so doing French queens have consistently indicated, apparently, that Elizabeth I is not the only example of capable, prudent female government.[103] Examples from the three royal dynasties follow, demonstrating how women can rule successfully. Be that as it may, this line of reasoning does not lead Duchesne to condemn "Salic Law": on the contrary, he maintains that the frequency of female regency indicates that the question of regency did not carry the same weight as did the succession to the throne. Furthermore, one of the reasons the kings allow their wives to rule as queen regents is to highlight their own grandeur by highlighting that of their spouses. Despite this comment, however, Duchesne not only demonstrates female capacity for government, but also goes a considerable way towards indicating how both the dignity and authority inherent in sovereignty can be embodied by either sex.[104]

In sum, the construction of government as exclusively male falters somewhat in its failure to adequately accommodate the issue of female regency. But this is not the only way in which the discourse falters. As we will see, the fragility of the masculine principle is patently exposed when this discourse of male monarchy is viewed in context with an equally prevalent discourse of the period: that of virtue ethics.

Humanism, Virtue Ethics and Gynæcocracy

In parallel with the discourse that extols the glories of monarchy and sovereignty—and at times conflicting with it, even within the one text—lies evidence of a much older traditional discourse. Although often ignored in the historiography of seventeenth-century political philosophy, the humanist notion of the ideal prince—itself inspired by classical ideas—continues to surface throughout the century. To dismiss the concomitant "mirror for princes" literature as merely a vehicle for well-worn platitudes is unwise: firstly, the sheer volume (and frequent success) of this type of literature implies a sense of a perceived need, or at least place, for it (whether or not it was ever read by the king or dedicatee).[105] While it is rarely original, it is clearly topical. Secondly, the ways in which this discourse is inflected by the political climate and current affairs provides an insight into contemporary reactions to that climate.[106] Far from being a monolithic discourse, the construction of the ideal prince shifts throughout the century. Furthermore, even where certain topoi are repeated

and insisted upon, this very insistence is revelatory, pointing to a nostalgia for an earlier form of government in the face of growing absolutism. By the end of the century, it is precisely the insistence on justice, equity, and godliness characteristic of the humanist ideal of the prince that informs the greatest criticisms of Louis XIV, from Protestants and Catholics alike, as the discrepancy between the absolutist prince and this traditional configuration is acknowledged, criticized, and lamented.[107]

From the point of view of this study, the discussion of the virtues required for good government is particularly interesting, since it allows us to investigate what space is accorded to women through this virtue ethics. Before turning to the significance of this discourse for women, it is necessary to examine the dominant characteristics of this humanist concept of princely government as it continued to inform seventeenth-century political philosophy. Of course, a certain overlap exists between the discourse that glorifies monarchy and that which aims to instruct princes—as texts like Senault's, Lartigue's or Fortin de la Hoguette's highlight—but frequently the body of literature that focuses on virtue, or evokes it at any length, is rather different to the juristic literature examined above.

In sum, from the fifteenth-century Italian advice-books onwards, and allowing for variance in emphasis, the ideal prince was typically portrayed as embodying a combination of the four cardinal virtues in their Platonic typology—prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude—together both with the Christian virtues of piety and faith, and with what were presented as specific princely virtues, namely liberality, magnificence, clemency, and fidelity to one's word.[108] Furthermore, from the late sixteenth-century onwards, a neo-Stoic element was added to this humanist configuration, through the influence of ideas promulgated by the Dutch humanist Justus Lipsius initially, and later by French thinkers Pierre Charron and Guillaume du Vair; for these neo-Stoics, it is the virtues of constancy and self-mastery that are paramount.[109]

Particularly equivocal in this line-up is the virtue of prudence. From classical times, prudence had been seen by many as the quintessential political virtue. For Aristotle, prudence (*phronesis*) is the virtue of practical wisdom, an intellectual virtue that he sums up as "a truth-attaining rational quality, concerned with action in relation to things that are good and bad for human beings."[110] Hinging on a capacity for understanding, for deliberative reasoning, and for action, it "is a virtue peculiar to a ruler," and one that implies the

prior possession of all others.[111] In Cicero's later formulation, popularized by St. Thomas Aquinas, *prudentia* is perceived as comprising three elements, namely memory, intelligence or understanding, and foresight[112]—memory of the past, understanding of the present, and foresight of the future—and is again presented as crucial for government.[113] However, following Machiavelli, and given the war-torn context of sixteenth-century Europe, an equivocal notion of political prudence developed that accommodated a type of moral compromise, and which ultimately fueled reason of state theories.[114] Key to this reorientation is the question of deceit: when is it prudent for a ruler to be deceptive? An influential answer to this thorny question was provided by Lipsius, who devoted a considerable portion of his *Six Books of Politics* to the question of prudence and who suggested a typology of slight, moderate, and serious deception (acceptable, tolerable, and unacceptable) in his conceptualization of "mixed prudence."[115] By the seventeenth century, therefore, prudence had come to have two very distinct meanings, implying either the use of practical wisdom in government, or more cynically, the use of deceit in government. In many cases, its usage is ambiguous and encompasses both connotations. Certainly, dissimulation is increasingly viewed as an essential part of court politics, widely advocated later in the century by Mazarin among others.[116]

In the seventeenth century, the humanist model of the ideal prince is configured differently from its fifteenth- and sixteenth-century antecedent, since frequently it is simultaneously more Christian and yet more cynical in approach. Nonetheless the earlier model continues to manifest itself in the ongoing emphasis on princely virtues, or what amounts to a type of virtue ethics, in a wide range of writings, often written from considerably different perspectives, from anti-Machiavellian texts of the "Christian political" tradition, such as Étienne Molinier's *Politiques chretiennes* (1621), to Nicolas Faret's absolutist *Des vertus necessaires à un prince pour bien gouverner ses sujets* (1623), Jean-Louis Guez de Balzac's *Le Prince* (1631), Georges de Scudéry's fashionable *Discours politiques des rois* (1647), Jean Baudoin's neo-Stoic *Le Prince parfait et ses qualitez les plus eminentes* (1650), Claude Joly's anti-absolutist *mazarinade*, *Recueil de maximes véritables et importantes pour l'institution du Roi* (1652), Jean-François Senault's *Le Monarque ou les devoirs du Souverain* (1661), Jean de Lartigue's *Politique des conquérans* (1662), and Pierre Le Moyne's *L'Art de régner* (1665).[117] At the risk of stating the obvious, the following outline aims to remind the reader

of the preponderance of references to certain virtues in this political discourse that is frequently taken for granted.

First and foremost is an emphasis on the Christian virtue of piety ("the foundation of Politics" according to Senault), or on the adherence to the tenets of the Christian religion, frequently buttressed by the extolling of probity and goodness (*bonté*).[118] In the tradition of Christian-political literature, this approach is defined by an anti-Machiavellian insistence on the compatibility of politics and Christian ethics.[119] Once that is established, it is prudence, clearly understood for many within the traditional framework of the Ancients, which remains the most fundamental virtue for government. Drawing both on the Bible and Aristotle, Molinier presents prudence as the very essence of the ruler, without which government is impossible.[120] For Faret, its constituent elements of discernment, judgment, common sense, reason, adaptability are paramount for government, while (in a nod to the Machiavellian ideas in circulation) dissimulation is an abuse of reason, and the appearance of virtue is insufficient.[121] In 1650, Baudoin posits prudence as the quality "absolutely necessary for the prince," after religion and piety, and focuses on the role of learning, in addition to experience, in acquiring it.[122] For Senault, no government can be successful without prudence, which he describes in a clearly Christian slant as "an effusion of God's light which dissipates the darknesses of the human mind," before clearly embracing Cicero's understanding of the term.[123] Le Moyne follows suit in 1665, analyzing the quality in Aristotelian terms as fundamental for all others ("all other virtues are powerless without it" / "toutes les autres vertus n'y peuvent guère sans elle"), and setting forth a detailed typology of innate and acquired prudence.[124] In all of these cases, it is prudence as practical wisdom that is primarily understood, although Senault does allude to a type of "mixed prudence," allowing for the use of artifice and dissimulation, but never deceit, in government.[125] Opposition to the Lipsian model of "mixed prudence" (a model that is advocated, unsurprisingly, in the writings of reason of state supporters such as Guez de Balzac, Gabriel Naudé, and Philippe de Béthune)[126] tends to feature less in discussions of prudence per se in these texts (with the exception of Molinier's), but in discussions of the virtue of *foy* (fidelity to one's word) and the use of deceit in politics.

The cardinal virtue of justice continues to feature prominently as a primary quality of the monarch but is clearly inflected by the discourse of Machiavellian preventive justice and hence frequently

juxtaposed with discussions of clemency. Simultaneously drawing on and deviating from a Christian appropriation of Seneca, clemency is strongly recommended not only as a Christian virtue but also more cynically as a political tool. Punishment frequently doesn't work; those who remain unmoved by gratitude and obligation would also be unmoved by fear; mercy and forgiveness contribute to royal *gloire*; to pardon is to demonstrate self-control and the ability to resist the temptation to seek vengeance;[127] mass execution of large numbers of rebels weakens the state.[128] However, writers persistently qualify their remarks by contending that while clemency and justice are not incompatible, it is imperative that moderation be shown: exclusive use of either pardon or severity is dangerous and the monarch must be prudent in the use of both.[129] As Senault puts it, following Seneca, the prince needs to remember that if the state is pitiable when led by a prince who punishes everything, it is even more pitiable when governed by a prince who permits everything ("si l'Estat est misérable d'estre conduit par un Prince qui punit tout, il l'est encore davantage d'être gouverné par un Prince qui permet tout").[130]

Inextricably linked to discussions of clemency and justice are discussions of punishment and recompense, the idea that the sovereign should aim to be loved rather than feared, that the people's affection is the best guarantee of a stable reign and of the king's security.[131] Clemency and *douceur* are repeatedly explicitly linked,[132] and the importance of the latter as a political tool is manifest. The sovereign attaches his subjects to him, Senault tells us, "by chains of love, which nothing can break" ("par des chaisnes amoureuses, que rien ne peut rompre"), adding that the most absolute authority is established through *douceur*.[133] "[L]es Rois de la terre," Joly contends, "ne sont les portraits vivans du Roy éternel qu'autant qu'ils expriment & représentent sa bonté, sa douceur, sa miséricorde, & toutes ses vertus divines" ("The kings of the earth are only living portraits of the eternal King to the extent that they express and represent his goodness, his *douceur*, his compassion and all the divine virtues").[134] The most crucial divine quality that kings should imitate, says Fortin de la Hoguette, is *douceur*, and the only protection they need is their subjects' affection.[135] Following Erasmus, many writers evoke the image of the king bee who has no sting, and no need of a sting. Even Lartigue, despite the self-evident focus of his *Politique des Conquérans* finds cause to mention *douceur* (the monarch reigns "more absolutely through *douceur* than by authority", in an interesting opposition of the two) and highlights its link not only with clemency but

also with royal liberality.[136] Faret, Senault, Le Moyne among others likewise prioritize liberality as indeed key to good government: the distribution of just rewards, the judicious promotion of meritorious courtiers, or, for Joly, the construction of hospitals and other public institutions to aid the poor are all part of the king's role, fostering the happiness of the subjects and the glory of the monarch.[137] Finally, the monarch's *foy*, in the sense of good faith, a ruler's fidelity to their word, is frequently prioritized as central to the success of domestic and foreign affairs, to the wellbeing of the state and of society, and to the respect of subjects, allies, and enemies alike.[138] Joly places a particular emphasis on *foy*, as we might expect in a virulent criticism of Mazarin, framing it with clemency and liberality as the three specifically royal virtues.

While some treatment is found of the neo-Stoic virtue of constancy, which Lipsius had defined for the prince as a type of steadfast courage and equanimity,[139] more attention is given to the related neo-Stoic virtue of self-mastery, not only in discussions concerning clemency, as indicated above, but also in discussions concerning temperance. Fortin de la Hoguette posits as a maxim the idea that the monarch should be even more a master of himself and of his passions than of others.[140] A recurrent thread in Louis XIV's *Mémoires*,[141] it also underpins Le Moyne's discussion of moderation and Lartigue's emphasis on an equanimous temperament.[142] For Guez de Balzac, self-mastery is specifically linked to chastity, a Christian virtue that is less frequently evoked in this material than elsewhere,[143] but to which Balzac devotes a chapter. His comments are particularly telling, as they point to an awareness of a sexual ethics that he is not afraid apparently to reject (in this context at least). Preempting the criticism that he should not be praising men for female virtues ("des vertus des femmes"), he argues that chastity (or *pureté* as he calls it at times) is a key virtue for the sovereign since it requires courage and resolution. It extends well beyond the sphere of private morality, since what is at stake is the preeminence of reason (another nod to the neo-Stoics) and of self-mastery.[144] For Balzac, chastity is a rare virtue for princes, the majority of whom are frivolous and feckless, their courts lascivious and debauched.[145] Baudoin, who also devotes a chapter to chastity, for his part leans on the traditional moralist argument that erotic desire distracts from serious work (in this case the work of government) and weakens both the mind and the body.[146] Finally, the virtue of modesty is repeatedly extolled, in the sense of moderation, humility, an absence of arrogance and pomp.[147] The

ideal monarch, it would seem, therefore, is prudent and just, temperate and self-controlled, pious and chaste, merciful and liberal, loved, not feared, by their subjects.

So, where does this leave women? None of this material is in any way more favorable to women than the defenses of male monarchy examined above. In fact, Joly, for example, is openly critical of Anne of Austria for failing to act with true piety in the treatment of her subjects (a common topos in the *mazarinades*),[148] while the advocacy of royal chastity in Guez de Balzac and Baudoin is driven by a desire to ensure women do not indirectly wield power through their princely conquests. However, for the most part, mention of women is slight, and writers clearly have a male monarch in mind. And yet the politico-ethical code of virtues extolled can be read as allowing a space for gynæcocracy in a very powerful way.

Two issues are key here: firstly, the emphasis on prudence—repeatedly emphasized as the primary quality required for government—as an intellectual virtue, and secondly the importance accorded to *douceur* in government.

Firstly, to the issue of prudence. For Aristotle, it would seem that women cannot embody or exercise *phronesis* since their deliberative faculty lacks authority and *phronesis* hinges on deliberation. Furthermore, *phronesis*, as the quintessential virtue of rulership, can only be cultivated by those in positions of authority, so, the exclusion of women from rulership automatically, and through the type of circularity we find elsewhere, precludes them from *phronesis*.[149] While one could argue, as Bradshaw does, that Aristotle does not in fact "give a persuasive natural or essential explanation for the exclusion of women from rule,"[150] more important here is the fact that Early Modern female ideologists of women's authority, such as Christine de Pizan, Louise de Savoie, Isabella d'Este, Catherine d'Amboise, Elizabeth I can be seen to challenge Aristotle's denial of *phronesis* to women, and argue in favor of female capacity for prudence.[151] It is within this current of thought that we can situate seventeenth-century French writers who defend female government.

In the case of the authors examined in the brief outline above, clearly not ideologists of women's authority—far from it—the configuration of the ruler and prince remains predominantly male.[152] What is important, however, is that the virtue most required for government is perceived primarily as an intellectual one: prudence continues to be understood as what Le Moyne calls "une Vertu intellectuelle, mais agissante & de pratique" ("an intellectual virtue

but one which is also dynamic and experiential")[153] and that what is regarded as vital for good government is the mental agility to judge how and when to act, and to execute those actions. It is against the background of this traditional discourse, still clearly present in seventeenth-century political thought, this prioritization of intellectual over physical prowess—prudence can overcome natural impediments, we are told, it can function without valor in the creation of great reigns[154]—that the code of sexual ethics which defines prudence as an exclusively male virtue can be challenged, that egalitarian writers are able to sketch their theories of equal capacity for government, and that dramatists can depict their capable, authoritative female rulers. Indeed, in the case of the dramatists, it is at times a type of "mixed prudence" that the ruling women are given to demonstrate. What matters, within the confines of this study, is not what kind of prudence they exercise, but the very fact that they exercise this political virtue at all.[155] This is not to say that valor or military skill are not valorized in this literature,[156] but they are in no way given the same attention or accorded the same importance as prudence and justice. Paradoxically, therefore, although this "mirror for princes" literature does not appear to accord any space to female government, its very tenets could be exploited—and were exploited—by partisans of gynæcocracy.

Secondly, leaving prudence aside, it won't have escaped any reader that a considerable portion of the code of virtues for *le bon prince* coincides in no small part with the code of sexual ethics that defines appropriate virtues for women: piety, modesty, moderation, goodness, chastity, pious charity, and above all, *douceur*. Crucially, as we saw in the opening pages of this study, this correlation did not escape all Early Modern commentators particularly in the sixteenth century, primary among them Agostino Nifo. Of the seventeenth-century writers under consideration here, Joly is manifestly aware of the concurrence between a putative female ethics and a princely ethics, although he distinguishes between theory and practice. It seems, he argues, that women's role should be salutary for the state given their irenic nature, but since they have no experience or training in government, and are therefore heavily reliant on others who often deceive them (an obvious implicit reference to Mazarin and Anne of Austria), that doesn't happen and "despite themselves, their government can be marred by misfortune" ("Il arrive malgré elles des maux dans leur gouvernement").[157] While other indications of an awareness of this correlation no doubt exist that I have not come across, it

seems to be largely ignored by the majority of writers, whose silence is deafening on the issue. Of course, it could be argued that the elaboration of an essentialist code of behavior for women (emphasizing *douceur*, goodness, piety, etc.) focuses on the deployment of virtue in the private sphere, certainly not in government, that the *douceur* of sexual ethics is not the same *douceur* of politics, that it is ill-advised to juxtapose morality and politics. But it is precisely the emphasis on private virtue in constructions of kingship, precisely the inextricable link between ethics and politics, private virtue and political morality (in this discourse at least), that represents a chink in the exclusionist argumentation, and a way in for women.[158]

The debate concerning the utility of *douceur* as a political tool can be traced back to Tacitus,[159] and continues to surface in Early Modern political thought, although for many writers it is less debated than accepted. As Marie-Claude Canova Green has pointed out, the expression *royale douceur,* as it is used at the time, is rather vague, and appears to encompass the various meanings of the word *doux*. Since Nicot's *Thresor de la langue françoise* (1606) gives as synonyms *bénin, clément, gracieux, débonnaire, traitable*, and *humain*, it becomes apparent that *douceur* can be understood in (at least) three different ways: as a way of being, a way of acting, or a way of appearing. Frequently identified with clemency, *douceur* in fact goes beyond pardon and mercy to designate a gentle and tempered style of government ("un mode doux et tempéré de gouvernement"), and hence falls into the realm of prudence as much as justice.[160] It is also an eminently social phenomenon. As Eric Méchoulan has indicated, the political strength of *douceur*, frequently seen in Early Modern France as a specifically French characteristic of power relations, stems from the fact that it binds people together without need for "explicit mediation or constraint." Inspiring gratitude and love, it prompts obedience. All the more powerful since invisible, *douceur* can be seen, in this engendering of obedience and consolidation of power, not as the opposite of *force* (in the French sense, with its connotations of both force and strength), but rather one of its constituent parts.[161] In fact, the link between *douceur* and *force* is also such that at times the greatest manifestation of *douceur* is through *force*, or at least through *sévérité*.[162] In either case, it is a crucial element of sovereign power.

As we will see, a distinct line of reasoning presents itself concerning *douceur* that was duly exploited by those arguing in favor of female authority—a line of reasoning diametrically opposed to that which seeks to invalidate a code of sexual ethics, and yet which is related

to the androgynous nature of government. Here, in an approach that accepts the dominant code of sexual ethics and sexual differentiation, *douceur* is framed as an essentially feminine characteristic that therefore renders women specifically capable of government.[163] This is the argument presented, for example, by Henri Estienne in his *Carmen de Senatulo fœminarum*, in one of the earliest celebrations of sexual difference. In this thirty-two-page poem, developed as a contribution to a discussion in the University of Strasbourg as to whether women should partake in political affairs or not, Estienne maintains that a number of "feminine" traits are particularly useful in politics, and advocates the creation of a small "female senate" to which male political leaders could turn as required. Chief among these qualities, in addition to the quality of ruse mentioned above, is *douceur*. The moral delicacy and refined conscience of women would lead them, he argues, to oppose absurd or barbaric customs in favor of humanity and justice.[164] This prioritization of *douceur* is a key element of the feminist discourse, which presents women as the superior of the sexes, and is discernible in even the most egalitarian texts of the period such as Poulain de la Barre's.

It is easy to see how, for modern readers, this emphasis on *douceur* could be seen merely to be redolent of an essentialist code of gallantry, to reinforce a gendered paradigm of female weakness, and to continue to propagate a disempowering polarity. However, such a reading of *douceur* is clearly fundamentally insufficient in light of the construction of the ideal prince outlined above. Viewing *douceur* not in terms of sexual ethics but rather in terms of a virtue ethics of sovereignty, as a *political* virtue par excellence, alters our reading of the term, as we are alerted to the broad range of resonances that its usage evokes. (Indeed, the same could be said of piety, moderation, modesty in addition to clemency, and humanity). The point is not (or at least *not only*) that women are associated with peace and harmony, and hence good government, but that sovereigns of either sex are called upon to act—albeit not exclusively and not at all times—with *douceur* and the associated clemency, to inspire love rather than fear.[165] In sum, the very institution of government transcends the code of a binary sexual ethics, and necessitates the fostering of a non-gendered, or gender-inclusive, human morality.[166] That this is firmly engrained in the political thinking of the time is nowhere more apparent than in the inscription below the dedicatee's engraving in Baudoin's *Prince Parfait*: "La Majesté règne dans ce Visage / Où la Douceur à la Beauté se joint" ("Majesty reigns in this countenance / Where gentleness and

beauty unite"). The portrait is not of Anne of Austria, or any other female sovereign, but of Louis XIV, in a powerful reminder of the androgyny of sovereign virtue.

To sum up, the implications of the constructions of the ideal prince for a pro-gynæcocratic stance are twofold. On the one hand, defining moral virtues such as prudence and self-mastery (rather than military prowess or physical valor) as the key prerequisites for government—idealist though this discourse may be, in the cynical political climate of the time—opens up the possibility for ideologists of female authority to demonstrate women's ability to govern by demonstrating their capacity for these virtues. In this way, the code of sexual ethics that excludes women from active political virtue and activity is challenged. A second challenge is mounted to the same code when *douceur* is viewed as a political virtue, thus necessitating a crucial reorientation of our reading of perceived "feminine" qualities. The construction of *le bon prince* as exclusively male crumbles when the code of royal virtues is juxtaposed with the prevalent code of sexual ethics. Put another way, sovereignty cannot be constructed as exclusively male when it is framed as requiring "female" virtues; the construction of government as a solely male prerogative implodes. While it is important not to overstate this case—given the weight of the dominant discourses of masculine monarchy in political, moralist, and, as we will see in Volume 2, dramatic texts—it is nonetheless clear that the political philosophy of the time provided, unwittingly no doubt, a crucial framework within which the idea(l) of the female prince could not only be accommodated, but lauded.

Chapter 2

Government by Women in Early Modern "Galleries" of Women

It is well known that gynæcocracy is one of the three key themes, together with education and marriage, debated in the large body of texts loosely and problematically grouped together under the rubric *la querelle des femmes*.[1] The early auspicious years of the regency of Anne of Austria saw a flourishing of pro-woman literature where writers tackled deep-rooted misogynistic prejudice and continued to question the categories of sex and gender, which their sixteenth-century predecessors had challenged. In tackling the issue of female authority, writers precariously negotiated codes of sexual difference and of princely virtue in order to carve out a space for the female prince, and in so doing demonstrated the malleability of gender. The aim of this chapter is firstly to outline the ways in which the philogynous arguments inherited from the Renaissance were deployed in the 1640s and 1650s in the debate concerning gynæcocracy; and secondly to examine the interplay between codes of sexual ethics and princely virtue in the configuration of the female prince. Particular attention will be paid to the role of the exemplary portrait in the gallery-books of Pierre Le Moyne, and Madeleine and Georges de Scudéry, as offering the most coherent representations of felicitous androgyny in government.

Most of the texts examined in this chapter, with the exception of the Scudéry harangues, and to a certain extent Le Moyne's *Gallerie*, fit loosely into the tradition of a defense of female superiority. Most can also be simultaneously aligned with the medieval rhetorical tradition of *exempla*, where the transmission of a moral maxim is paramount, and with the classical tradition of anthologies of famous women, notably Plutarch's *Mulierum virtutes*, a genre popularized by Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus* (ca. 1360).[2] In the case of Boccaccio,

the influence is primarily discernible in content rather than tone: of the frequently recurrent queen figures in the seventeenth century, Semiramis, Tomyris, Athaliah, Artemisia I, Sophonisba, Berenice, Mariamne, Cleopatra, and Zenobia can already be found in his pages, although seventeenth-century writers, as was common, selected favorable passages that suited their purposes, and neglected others.[3] Fueled by these diverse traditions, these texts unsurprisingly juxtapose apologetic and epideictic rhetoric.[4]

A thorny methodological issue that arises in analyzing the discourse of female superiority is the extent to which such texts should be read solely as mere rhetorical set-pieces, or as effusions of *galanterie*, devoid of any serious meaning. There is no doubt that texts which argue for the superiority of women could be read as exercises in rhetorical declamation, as virtuoso demonstrations of paradox, and there is also no doubt that writers would have been alert to the rhetorical challenge.[5] However, as Angenot has argued, it would be foolish to reduce such a voluminous and widespread discourse—and, moreover, a dissenting discourse that prefigures "a philosophical criticism" of "conservative and androcentric societies"—to mere rhetoric.[6] Furthermore, not only is it vain, as Angenot also points out, to try to distinguish between what might be mere court entertainment or erudite display and what might be innovative thinking,[7] but as Stuurman has more recently argued, to even conceptualize in this dualistic way is problematic: we need to "cease to think of these interpretations as polar alternatives," and appreciate how "the genres interlocked and overlapped in manifold ways, producing a tension between 'gallantry' and 'philosophy' of which contemporary authors were well aware."[8] Finally, faced with the arguments concerning superiority, which may seem sterile or absurd to modern readers, and indeed disempowering for women, it is important to recall the serious intent of paradoxical literature in the Early Modern period and, moreover, the fundamental influence that this discourse had on feminist ideas of the time.[9]

By way of preamble to the discursive texts, a brief foray into the panegyric literature of the time provides a telling example of the configuration of sovereign virtue in women, all the more so since the conventional panegyric of the period devoted to noblewomen continues to propagate one model of "ideal womanhood," based on traditional constructions of female virtue and firmly rooted in a moralist discourse.[10] In 1644, the year after Anne of Austria had assumed the regency, royal historiographer Puget de La Serre published his

Portrait de la Reyne.[11] Twelve chapters are devoted each to a virtue of the queen's, namely piety, justice, clemency, goodness, liberality, magnanimity, patience, temperance, chastity, modesty, humility, and prudence (in that order). Four years later, La Serre published a gallery comprising the history and portraits of all those named Anne in the queen regent's family tree.[12] Here again a similar list of virtues is presented, as the queen is portrayed as the embodiment of the qualities of the other eleven Habsburg women: constancy, liberality, innocence, goodness, charity, beauty, piety, prudence, magnanimity, temperance, *douceur*, and grace.[13] The queen therefore is made to represent a synthesis of both female virtue, as cast traditionally (piety, chastity, modesty, and humility), and princely virtue (prudence, justice, temperance, clemency, liberality, magnanimity), in the tradition of the humanist prince.[14] The two codes of what it is to be a woman and what it is to be a prince, overlap. The polar distinctions made, then, by partisans of the exclusionist discourse are seen to falter, as these codes of virtues reveal themselves to be far less distinct than some commentators imply. Gender is malleable, and never more so than in the figure of the sovereign, male or female. As La Serre waxes lyrical on the importance of these virtues in *Portrait de La Reyne*, drawing on classical authorities such as Seneca, he demonstrates how "la Reyne" embodies "les vertus des Roys," moving seamlessly between the male and female signifier.[15] This is not to imply that La Serre is particularly enlightened, or in favor of women in power[16]—his comments are to be expected in a panegyric of the queen, particularly one written by a protégé of Marie de Médicis—but quite simply that his discourse highlights how the figure of the queen regnant or female prince defies pigeon-holing. The *roi* and *reine* are not the separate constructions they are made out to be.

Recurrent Feminist Arguments Relevant to Gynæcocracy (1642–1657)

The following analysis will focus on six texts whose argumentation is representative of the pro-woman discourse of the 1640s and 1650s, testament to a wide range of formats and written by authors of divergent cultural backgrounds (and hence no doubt divergent intentions). These are the brief "Apologie en faveur des femmes" (1642) by Suzanne de Nervèze;[17] the anonymous *La Femme généreuse* (1643), a lengthy tract allegedly written by a woman in the first-person voice, dedicated to the queen;[18] *La Femme héroïque* (1645) by Franciscan

Jacques du Bosc, also dedicated to the queen;[19] *Le Triomphe des Dames*, dedicated to Mademoiselle, by François du Soucy, sieur de Gerzan (1646);[20] a short defense of women (45 pages) also dedicated to Mademoiselle at the height of the Fronde, and written to be pronounced before her, *Panegyrique des Dames* (1650) by lawyer and playwright Gabriel Gilbert;[21] and *Le Mérite des dames*, dedicated to Anne of Austria, by Saint-Gabriel, another lawyer, attorney general of the Cour des Aides in Normandy. This work first appeared in 1655, and was considerably extended for its second edition in 1657.[22]

In giving voice to arguments that question male supremacy, these texts point (however sincerely) to a reassessment of the gender relations of their society. This recognition and apparent condemnation of the dynamics of male hegemony is one of the elements of these texts that distinguishes them from the simply panegyric. Many continue to propagate the idea, which, despite its seeming modernity, can be traced back to at least Martin Le Franc in the fifteenth century,[23] that men have been deliberately instrumental in women's oppression. Saint-Gabriel attributes female exclusion from learning and government variously to male strength, unjust appropriated power ("la force & l'injuste puissance qu'ils se sont donné sur elles"), jealousy, and tyranny.[24] Gilbert overtly attributes women's containment to male fears; in his opinion, men expressly try to keep women away from an interest in education ("l'amour des Lettres") and from the running of important affairs because of fear—the fear that they might be elevated to the highest dignities ("de peur qu'on ne les esleve aux plus hautes dignitez"). This idea is reiterated later as he refers to not only the examples of those who have ruled, but of those who could have done so if they had not been prevented by male fear and jealousy.[25] *La Femme généreuse* maintains that female exclusion from learning is a strategy used by men to maintain their domination and tyranny, while Susanne de Nervèze attributes female exclusion from political power to male ambition.[26] A variation on this argument is the idea that if women are weak and ignorant, it is because men wish them to be so.[27] While seventeenth-century pro-woman writers tend to be more muted than their earlier counterparts, and it will take Suchon to explicitly highlight the causality raised by Martin Le Franc and his Renaissance successors, namely that women are excluded from education *in order to* exclude them from power, nonetheless, in suggesting a deliberate oppression, this line of argumentation is a crucial element in any criticism of the androcentric bias in society.

Two common strategies are integral to the defense of women literature from its inception in the Renaissance, and continue to surface in the seventeenth century. Both involve a type of rhetorical retortion, turning in women's favor the arguments traditionally used against them. The first practice involves reinterpreting passages from biblical, patristic, or Ancient authorities, while the second, heavily reliant on neo-Platonism, involves recasting female weaknesses as strengths. These are juxtaposed with the ongoing celebration of "female" virtues—modesty, chastity, piety, charity.[28]

The favorable interpretation of the opening verses of Genesis can be traced back to the Middle Ages, with the well-known arguments concerning the order, the matter, and the place of the Creation.[29] Throughout the Renaissance, writers including Christine de Pizan, Martin Le Franc, and the highly influential Cornelius Agrippa continually returned to Genesis and added further reinterpretations. In the texts under consideration here, Nervèze, Gerzan, and the author of *La Femme généreuse* raise the argument concerning matter and order—women are superior since they were formed from the noble matter of a human rib, and not from mud, while the fact that woman was created last of all loving things indicates that she is the *chef-d'œuvre* of God's work.[30] Adam was tempted by the word of a mere woman, whereas it needed all the cunning, malice, and skill of the devil to tempt Eve.[31] In Saint-Gabriel's version, the fact that Adam obeyed Eve so quickly indicates her original authority. In addition, the fact that it was a punishment to Eve that she would have to obey Adam indicates that God had originally intended her to be above Adam.[32] Less common is the rereading of other biblical verses that Agrippa and Gournay undertake and that Poulain and Suchon would develop into a full-blown countercultural reading of Scripture. Saint-Gabriel does however provide one interesting example when he sets out to undermine the biblical injunction that wives should obey their husbands, maintaining that men's dominion over women was founded on usurpation, which was later ratified in Scripture for political reasons. In a daring suggestion, he rejects the authority of the Bible, which he sees as contradicting "natural law," and serving to justify a preexisting usurpation: "La femme n'est tombée sous la sujection de l'homme par le principe de la nature, mais par la loy de l'Ecriture, et cela en consequence de la domination qu'il avoit au précédent usurpée sur elle" ("It is not by a principle of nature that women have fallen subject to men, but by the laws of Scripture, and as a result of the domination that [men] had

already usurped over them [women]").[33] Where natural law in legal and political writings was seen to uphold male domination, here it appears that there is nothing in "Nature" to justify female submission. Clearly concepts of natural law were vague enough to be interpreted either to woman's advantage or disadvantage.[34]

More central to these texts, and more directly relevant to the gynæcocracy debate, is the second type of rhetorical retortion, which involves reinterpreting perceived female qualities in a positive rather than a negative way. This strategy takes a number of guises, and is frequently used directly to argue in favor of female government. While the theory of the humors continues to frame ideas concerning female psychology and physiology, these are frequently reevaluated. The chief reevaluation of female psychology involves the celebration of female delicacy and *douceur*, which far from being an indication of weakness can be seen as vital to the health of society, and to the civilizing and socialization of men.[35] From the Renaissance onwards, the growth in influence of neo-Platonic ideas ensured an evolution in societal values whereby physical strength becomes associated with imperfection and servitude, while delicacy is celebrated. Women's delicate physiology is perceived as fostering a greater propensity to intellectual activity ("les actions de l'esprit") and to virtue.[36] Through the influence of neo-Platonism, virtue in turn is associated with female beauty. Beauty is seen to be the reflection of interior perfection[37] and a mark of "ethical superiority."[38] It is therefore now celebrated rather than condemned as being of pernicious influence: Gilbert, Gerzan, and Saint-Gabriel, for example, all refer to its beneficent qualities.[39] Beauty also inspired love, which, again according to neo-Platonist concepts, was necessary for order in society. This celebration of love was of vital importance for feminists, since women were perceived as the agents of love, and therefore central to the harmony of society.[40] A final element in this revised worldview is a new epistemology that prioritized feelings and sentiment, and which meant that women are commended for their nonrational, privileged, "natural" way of knowing.[41]

This celebration of female beauty, delicacy, and instinctive intelligence—inextricable, of course, from the evolving gallantry of polite society—is often very specifically linked to the arguments concerning female government. For some, the importance of *douceur* in government is the key argument. As a political virtue, *douceur*, as we saw above, is synonymous with such attributes as mercy, compassion, pity in the humanist model of the ideal prince. In Saint-Gabriel's

Le Mérite des Dames, the political implications of the gallant and neo-Platonic discourse are overt. Here, the third section is devoted to examining which sex is the most necessary and the most useful in the world. Of the three categories under consideration—generation, government, and pleasure—the latter two are in fact treated together and hence presented as inextricably linked.[42] Initially, the author draws on Plato to argue that all areas of public activity (learning, justice, finance, medicine, the priesthood, military leadership, government, and so on) should be open to women. Women are born to rule, apparently, because of their perfections and virtues, and only male tyranny has usurped their due authority.[43] The support marshalled for this argument focuses on examples from the animal kingdom, where apparently the female always reigns supreme and the male obeys, and on the demonstration of female skill in the domestic economy. Women's moderation, lesser inclination to disorderly behavior, and better ability to manage money can transfer directly, says Saint-Gabriel, into skill in government:

> Il s'ensuit qu'estans eslevées dans le throne de la domination d'un Estat, elles sont aussi plus capables de bien regir et gouverner leurs peuples, & y entretenir la paix et la douceur, au lieu que l'impetuosité de ces perturbateurs du genre humain, qu'on appelle des Conquerans, y met d'ordinaire tout en trouble, et y fait ressentir par la guerre toute sorte de maux.
>
> It follows that, elevated to a throne in the government of a state, they are also more capable of ruling and governing their people [than men are], and maintaining peace and *douceur*, whereas the impetuosity of these troublemakers of the human race, whom we call conquerors, creates disorder everywhere, and inflicts all sorts of ills through war.[44]

Just as the prodigal, spendthrift, drunken, gambling male, destroyer of domestic harmony, becomes a metaphor for the warmongering conqueror, destroyer of civil harmony, so does the serene homemaker become a metaphor for the women as purveyor of peace in the public sphere. This is in fact the central theme for Saint-Gabriel, and the reason he presents government by women and pleasure as linked: "leur gouvernement ameine dans la vie tout bon-heur et tous plaisirs, et chasse tout le desordre, les mal-heurs, la desolation et la ruine que vos vices splendides y attirent" ("their government brings every happiness and every pleasure to life, and banishes all the disorder, misfortune, desolation and ruination which your [male] vices

foster in it").[45] With women at the helm, according to Saint-Gabriel, war, carnage, violence, and conquest would be replaced by peace and happiness, in a Utopian matriarchal state: in the countryside, shepherds would tend to their flocks, untroubled by pillaging soldiers; gory battles would be solely witnessed in paintings; firearms would be used uniquely for hunting; villagers would dance and make music; in the city, civility and courtesy would replace disputes and lawsuits; piety and love would dominate. The salvation of society, in sum, lies in "le règne des femmes" ("the reign of women").[46] While the attribution of a "civilizing" role to women is deeply rooted in the mores of the time, as mentioned above, the criticism of a violent ethic of militarism, the corollary celebration of a female pacificatory role and hence the celebration of female governance as *douce*—although not new—is clearly here symptomatic of a post-Fronde attitude.[47] It is not surprising then that when Saint-Gabriel finds himself, in an earlier section, drawing on the standard examples of Deborah, Tomyris, Semiramis, and the Amazons to demonstrate successful female rule—a testimony to the quasi-conventional nature of the "list"—he plays down considerably their military activity.

Elsewhere, the quality of *douceur* takes on further political implications when it is linked to docility and in turn to prudence. In a chapter devoted to proving that women are more suited to government than men, the author of *La Femme généreuse* suggests a number of the prerequisite virtues for government, in a rather circular and somewhat incoherent list, before arguing that women have a greater propensity to them. Docility, apparently, is the most important virtue for any statesman ("grand homme d'Estat") since it demonstrates an openness to advice; the female temperament being "doux & bénin" ("gentle and benign") provides them with this natural docility. Crucially, what follows is an alignment of a Ciceronian understanding of prudence with the female psyche. Having pointed to intelligence, clairvoyance or perspicacity, memory, *pourvoyance* (or providence), and *précaution* (caution) as the qualities associated with prudence, the author argues that the first four are more pronounced in women than in men because of a natural mental alacrity ("une vistesse d'esprit"), due to the female subtlety of understanding, due in turn to their moist humoral make-up, while women have *précaution* in abundance precisely because of their physical weakness, which keeps them constantly alert to risk.[48] This argument found a sympathetic reader in Gilbert who reproduced a succinct version of it some years later, again casting the alleged hallmarks of

the female mind and psychology (memory, curiosity, docility, fear) as the constituent elements of prudence:

> Que les femmes soient esclairées de cette grande lumière [la Prudence] qui fournit des raisonnemens solides, on le peut juger par leurs autres qualitez. Leur docilité qui les rend capables de recevoir des conseils, pour choisir après le plus utile; l'excellence de leur mémoire, qui met le passé devant leurs yeux pour le comparer avec le present; la vivacité de leur esprit qui fait qu'elles jugent des choses avec promptitude: leur crainte judicieuse qui les rend prévoyantes; & leur grande curiosité qui leur sert à descouvrir les secrets les plus cachez, ne sont pas seulement des perfections qui servent à acquérir la prudence, mais sont les parties mesmes qui la composent.
>
> The idea that women are enlightened by this great intellectual quality [Prudence], which fosters solid judgments, can be ascertained by their other qualities. Their docility which makes them capable of taking advice, in order to choose the most useful elements afterwards; their excellent memory, which brings the past before their eyes in order to compare it to the present; the quickness of their mind which enables them to judge matters promptly; their judicious fear which makes them prescient; and their great curiosity which helps them discover the most hidden of secrets, are not only advantages which help acquire prudence, they are its very composite parts.

And this is evident, apparently, not only in everyday affairs but in important matters and in the government of states.[49] Female qualities, in other words, make women specifically apt for government by nature.

Elsewhere Gilbert, markedly neo-Platonic in his approach, bases a large part of his argument on the power of female beauty, and reiterates the courtly idea that since women were born to command, Nature made them beautiful—a comment that needs to be understood within the context of prevalent ideas on physiognomics, as we will see with regard to Le Moyne.[50] Furthermore, he uses the idea of their superiority to make their authority appear as a logical progression; since they are closest to the divine, they should have the first rank on earth.[51] Gerzan draws on the concept of female "natural" wisdom as an aid in government. While men require a lifetime of study, and depend on their books, to form their judgment—a recurrent argument developed, among others, by L'Escale[52]—women on the other hand only need their own wisdom to lead their own lives or govern states."[53]

One defense of gynæcocracy, therefore, hinges on the framing of women as superior, on a deep-rooted belief in the link between sexual difference and particular moral virtues—in sum, on a code of gendered virtue, or a sexual ethics inherited from the Renaissance—and, in turn, on an insistence of the greater value to society of some of the "female" virtues, such as *douceur*, within that code.[54] But this approach coexists with another, often in the same texts, and reminiscent of a sixteenth-century pro-woman discourse, whereby hazy notions of equality are used to tentatively question the binarism of that code, arguing in favor of an equal moral and intellectual capacity in both sexes. Here, either women are presented as being capable of both "male" and "female" virtue, or moral and intellectual virtues are configured as transcending sexual difference, hence not the sole prerogative of a specific sex. Although, for most, that involves arguing simultaneously that women are *by nature* gentle and pacifist, but that they can be courageous, physical, and bellicose as required—*la femme généreuse* commonly referred to—the questioning of a polarizing and prescriptive sexual ethics is nonetheless significant, given the importance of moral and sexual difference in the construction of government as a male prerogative.

The argument frequently voiced in the sixteenth century that gender is androgynous and that both men and women can behave in ways culturally defined as masculine and feminine[55] is clearly articulated in Jacques du Bosc's *La Femme héroïque* (1645), although the Franciscan is ultimately very cautious of the idea. In this markedly didactic text, eight comparisons of heroines and heroes from biblical and Ancient history are presented, in the fashion of Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*.[56] Each comparison is followed by a number of "moral reflections," which are frequently as long or longer than the comparison, and which, like Le Moyne's later moral reflections, are aimed explicitly at female edification. These eight sections are preceded by one devoted to a discussion of heroic virtue. Here, du Bosc gives voice to one of the oldest and most common arguments used to support the idea of moral equality, based on theological reasoning: since both sexes are obliged in the eyes of God to aspire to the same degree of virtue, it follows that they must be equally capable of doing so; to suggest otherwise is to be simply irreligious.[57] This reasoning is in his mind one of the most forceful that can be marshalled to "demonstrate the equality of the two sexes."[58] Citing St. Ambrose, du Bosc goes on to refute generalizations about female "nature" or generic *woman*: Deborah's success as political and military leader indicates that God wanted to

illustrate that "women are as capable of great things as men; it is not Nature which is defectuous or weak, it is the individual" ("les femmes sont capables des grandes choses, aussi bien que les hommes: ce n'est pas la Nature qui est defectueuse ou infirme, c'est la Personne").[59]

In the following chapter—"De l'égalité et de la diversité des Vertus de l'un & de l'autre Sexe; et en quoy châque sexe semble avoir ses avantages & ses Vertus particulieres" ("On the equality and diversity of virtues of each sex; and on the ways in which each sex appears to have its own advantages and particular virtues")[60]—we find one of the most explicit articulations, for the 1640s, of both a code of sexual ethics and an awareness of its fragility. According to du Bosc, each sex has its "particular advantages"; men and women have a certain propensity to particular virtues. The sexes are equal but different, and society's equilibrium rests on this difference:

> [la Nature] les a rendus tous deux égaux, à cause qu'ils ne composent qu'une mesme espece; & elle les a rendus differens, tant pout la beauté du monde, que pour les rendre necessaires l'un à l'autre.
>
> [Nature] has made them both equal, since they make up the same species, and she has made them different, as much for the beauty of the world as to make them both necessary for each other.[61]

Having enumerated the usual litany for women on the one hand and the "particular advantages" that men have appropriated for themselves on the other—namely "bravery, artistic creativity, politics, philosophy, and all the great virtues and intellectual qualities of the human mind," a list that clearly goes beyond moral virtues—du Bosc goes on to argue that this division is not fixed:

> Cette diversité pourtant & cette difference n'est pas si universelle, ny si fort inviolable, que cette mesme nature comme libre, & comme maitresse de ses propres biens, en renverse quelquefois cét ordre. Et il arrive souvent qu'un sexe entreprend heureusement sur les proprietez de l'autre.
>
> This diversity, however, and this difference is not so universal, nor so entirely inviolable, that Nature, being free, and mistress of her own affairs, does not at times overturn this order. And it often happens that one sex can happily encroach upon the attributes of the other.[62]

Biological sex and cultural gender need not coincide, although, by implication, the natural order is overturned when they don't. While

the implications of this line of argument, popular among sixteenth-century feminists, are considerable, in reality du Bosc limits its application to military valor in women. This is explicit when he returns to the question later, and reveals himself to be more circumspect. In a moral reflection devoted to examining the type of bravery appropriate for each sex, du Bosc argues that while transgression of gender boundaries is not impossible, it must be treated with care. Adopting the virtues of the opposite sex is only justifiable if necessary; it is a type of usurpation that must be tempered, and used only as a privilege.[63] It becomes clear that the argument in favor of equal capacity for all virtues in du Bosc can in fact be reduced to the idea that equality may exist between men and virile women, and invariably collides with the taboo that is the violent woman.

The Warrior Queen

Given the centrality of military ineptitude in the arsenal of exclusionist arguments concerning women and government, the debate concerning the female warrior (ruler) merits particular comment. The vogue of the warrior woman in literary and artistic representations throughout Early Modern Europe has been well documented.[64] The revival of the original Amazon myth in the Renaissance together with the accounts of exotic societies in the travel writings of the time, seeking to validate the myth, fueled the literary models of Aristo, Tasso, and the Amadis cycle.[65] Both myth and literary models were in turn fueled by the reality of numerous noble women partaking in armed combat, chiefly—at least, before the *frondeuses*—in the defense of their towns or of their own domains, in times of civil war.[66] Principal objections to the warrior woman focus on the transgressive cross-dressing involved—the adoption with apparent ease by women of the male signifiers of identity is inherently threatening to a patriarchal society—and on the association between military and sexual ardor, both understood, in the theory of the humors, as due to an excess of heat in temperament. Emphasizing the chastity of the original Scythian women was one way of countering this objection; inscribing noble warrior women in a tradition of state-saving, which made of them divine agents, was another. For some, the Amazon myth provided the perfect legitimizing framework for female claims to political and military roles.[67] Frequently debated in the sixteenth century, the issue returned to the fore in the feminist texts of the 1640s, with writers examining whether women are

capable of waging war, whether they should, and why (in theory) they have been excluded from military activity.

Treatment of the warrior woman tends to be typically ambivalent; pro-woman writers, while keen to stress the patriotic role these women had played, nonetheless needed to face the weight of custom and the widespread prejudice (including their own) founded on ingrained codes of gender norms, which framed the same role as indecent and unnatural. Du Bosc, for example, lauds female military aptitude, as we saw above, yet clearly sees the marriage of *vaillance* and *pudeur* as uneasy, and views warrior women as potentially licentious. The Amazons, although both chaste and bellicose, are not seen as an appropriate example to be imitated since their upbringing and society were radically different from that of the women of his time.[68] The fulsome praise of Deborah and Tomyris draws largely on the common topos of the "miraculous" nature of their roles.

Gilbert's stance is representative of the pro-woman attitude that wants to win on every front, arguing that women don't usually fight because their natural virtues are opposed to the violence required in warfare, but that if they are required to, they are nonetheless capable. Military activity in general, he argues, is contrary to the *bienséance* of the female sex, and the hazards for women in war are greater than those for men—a covert allusion to the risk of rape for female soldiers. Female piety, he argues, is of much greater use to society than the violence of male valiance; nonetheless, when women have to take arms for a good cause such as defense of their country, they do so with no less resolve than men. Furthermore, he maintains their *gloire* in military affairs is greater than men's since they have not been brought up to fight, thus proving, apparently, that valor is a natural quality in women.[69]

Nervèze includes military activity as one of the disciplines of which she sees women capable, and also maintains that education is responsible for their so-called weakness.[70] Gerzan opens his chapter on the bravery and *générosité* of women with a resounding endorsement of military valor: unlike Gilbert, there are no criticisms here of warfare, and no hesitancy concerning female involvement.[71] History indicates that female valor is in no way lesser than that of men, apparently, and Gerzan contributes to propagating this idea, devoting nearly forty pages to a lengthy list of examples. In his forceful defense of female military activity in the preface to his heroic poem *La Pucelle*, Jean Chapelain refuses different standards of *bienséance* for the sexes, argues for a moral equality between the sexes, and rejects the blind

acceptance of custom, which limits female activity as contrary to the use of reason.[72] For the author of *La Femme généreuse*, valor can be acquired like knowledge, but men have deliberately kept women away from military affairs, as they have from learning, in order to ensure their subjugation. (This argument has a less convincing ring to it when applied to military skill than when applied to learning.) At any rate, women are physiologically more valiant than men, contrary to popular opinion, given the make-up of their blood, and a chapter is devoted to demonstrating this. Ultimately, however, the emphasis for this author is on the importance of continence and self-control as a form of courage,[73] virtues that women have in abundance apparently. Once again, the desire to include all fields of meaningful activity for women sits uneasily with deep-rooted gender constructions.

Dotted throughout this abstract reasoning are the recurrent examples of rulers Deborah, Zenobia, Tomyris, Semiramis, Amalasuntha, Artemisia—as well as state-saviors Judith, Jahel, and Joan of Arc—the stalwart figures who provide the *imprimatur* of history, no matter now brief the allusion.[74] Du Bosc's approach on the other hand, based on comparison, which he sees as the most convincing form of argument of all since it combines both example and reasoning,[75] is more systematic than many, and raises more original arguments. In the comparison between Deborah with Joshua, for example, he examines the strength of their respective armies and enemies, the aim of their wars undertaken, the role of divine intervention in the respective victories, the net result of those victories, and so on. Invariably, despite railing initially against an approach based on polarity, du Bosc's work reveals itself to be firmly rooted in that approach (a fact that does not escape Saint-Gabriel's attention), demonstrating systematically the superiority of the women concerned, all the more impressive apparently for overcoming the weakness of their sex.[76] Nonetheless, Deborah and Tomyris emerge as wise and prudent political rulers, *merveilleuses* no doubt, but of tremendous *générosité* and magnanimity.[77]

Ambivalent and ultimately traditional though du Bosc's text is, it provides a reminder that the rigid code of sexual ethics and gendered virtue continued to be questioned at the time. The potential of that questioning for the gynæcocracy debate became apparent two years later in Pierre Le Moyne's elaborate homage to Anne of Austria, *La Gallerie des femmes fortes,* not, as one might think, in his depiction of the topical *douces guerrières* but rather in the portraits of the recent Spanish women rulers. Here, finally, discourses of sexual difference

cede in importance to the construction of sovereignty, as the malleability of gender underpinning the portrait of the female prince becomes apparent.

Le Moyne's *Gallerie des femmes fortes* (1647)

Of all the texts frequently assembled under the *querelle des femmes* umbrella, Pierre Le Moyne's *Gallerie des femmes fortes* (1647) is one of the most eclectic—unsurprisingly so, given the author's stated desire to appeal to his (salon-going, female) readership. Tremendously popular for twenty-five years,[78] the gallery exploits a diverse range of tones, styles, and subgenres. In a series of mini-galleries, seven different elements are devoted to each of twenty women (five Jews, five "Barbarians," five Romans, five Christians[79]): an elaborate copperplate engraving, a verbal painting or ekphrasis based on the engraving, a sonnet, a eulogy, a moral reflection inspired by the particular heroine's exploits, a "moral question" based on the same, and finally an example (or two, in the case of Deborah) drawn from modern European history.[80] Entertaining in its diversity as this may have been for his readers, the book can also seem profoundly ambiguous when viewed in its totality, particularly for a reader led to expect from the title a discourse favorable to women. Taken as a whole, the text is clearly marked by a rigorous prescriptive discourse, which, at best, aims to contain women within the limited subordinate role allowed them, and, at worst, is scorchingly misogynist.[81] The treatment of two of the three common themes—marriage, education, and government—is particularly restrictive. In the portrait of marriage that emerges, for example, the double standard concerning marital fidelity is justified as rooted in natural and moral philosophy,[82] and the responsibility for male jealousy, even if entirely without foundation, is returned to the wife.[83] The attitude towards female education initially seems more enlightened than some of his contemporaries—Le Moyne maintains that "la Philosophie n'a point de Sexe" ("philosophy has no sex"), that women can share with men the possession of knowledge ("sciences"), and appears to argue that women are capable of "the true philosophy."[84] However, it becomes clear that what Le Moyne means by "sciences" in fact boils down to polite, cultivated conversation (the Rambouillet *chambre bleue* is held up as a glowing example of a female academy), while by "the true philosophy" to which he sees women as most suitable, he intimates a understanding of moral philosophy that focuses primarily on the practice of Christian morality.[85]

And yet, despite this constraining discourse, Le Moyne seems surprisingly open to the possibility of women in government. In fact, the role of women in the political sphere, rather than being the ultimate taboo that it frequently is in writings of the time, appears here to be the *only* one that Le Moyne is prepared to entertain. How can his approach, so marked by containment, appear to be favorable of gynæcocracy, and, more broadly, of female patriotism and state-saving? Because, I would suggest, of the book's dual, and conflicting, aims. What appears as a contradiction in his approach seems less contradictory when Le Moyne's volume is understood primarily as a work of pomp and ceremony, a "livre d'apparat" in Jean-Marc Chatelain's phrase, whose implicit political aim of glorification of Anne of Austria, and by extension of the French monarchy itself, is at least as important as his explicit aim of edifying women.[86] Throughout the preface, Le Moyne repeatedly stresses the centrality of this aim of female edification ("l'instruction des femmes"), an enterprise of great public utility apparently, and one to which the genre of gallery was perceived as particularly suited,[87] and indicates how he intends to go about it, sugaring the pill of moral philosophy with painting, poetry, and history.[88] What is also explicit elsewhere, however, this time in the paratextual panegyric epistle to Anne of Austria, is that Le Moyne—following the fashion of the time—means his gallery of twenty portraits to provide an "indirect portrait" of the dedicatee.[89] The queen will therefore be glorified and honored by seeing her numerous virtues reflected throughout the book. This idea is underpinned not only by the reference to the volume as the sketch ("le crayon") of a portrait in the *Epître*, but by the parallels drawn between the queen and certain of his *femmes fortes* in the text proper. It is the choice, in fact, as we will see, of certain modern examples that is particularly revelatory. Of course, these portraits also function as "exempla." A further aim of Le Moyne's, therefore, could be seen to be a combination of the first two: creating a dialogue between past and present, the portraits in the gallery will serve to edify and guide, as well as glorify and reflect, his ultimate female reader—the queen.[90] It is hardly surprising, then, that a positive portrayal of gynæcocracy emerges, as a thinkable, if nonetheless exceptional, reality.

There are two elements to Le Moyne's defense of women in government, firstly his abstract argumentation as raised in the *questions morales*, and secondly the image that emerges from the "modern" examples. In the former, like others before him, Le Moyne upholds

the idea of a moral equality between the sexes: since men and women are equally obliged to behave virtuously, they therefore have an equal capacity for virtue.[91] Despite the patriarchal stance of the text as a whole, the Jesuit repeatedly returns to the idea of a spiritual equality, drawing on the Augustinian topos that the souls have no sex. The soul and, by extension, heroic virtue and *générosité* transcend sexual differentiation.[92] Furthermore, distinctions between the soul (*l'âme*) and the mind (*l'esprit*) appear vague, and the two are often used in apposition to each other, an indistinction that allows Le Moyne to extend his moral equality to an intellectual equality, when it suits. "Everything," he maintains for example, "is equal between men and women as regards the soul, which is the intelligent part" ("Toutes choses sont égales entre les Hommes & les Femmes du costé de l'Ame, qui est la partie Intelligente").[93] In his *Peintures morales*, published some years earlier, one of his interlocutors comments, in an example of another seamless shift: "Vous sçavez bien que les Esprits n'ont point de sexe; & que Dieu souffla d'une mesme bouche l'Ame d'Adam, & l'Ame d'Eve" ("It is well known that minds have no sex, and that God created in the same breath the souls of Adam and Eve").[94]

One place where this putative equality underpins the argument is in the book's opening section on Deborah where comparisons with Anne of Austria are most explicit, and where the most resounding defense of female capacity for government can be found, in a section examining "si les femmes sont capables de gouverner." Le Moyne's argument, in various guises, is that intellectual capacity (as manifested in *esprit* and *raison*) is not a function of sexual difference, and that therefore either men or women can have the ability to rule well:

> Les Estats ne se gouvernent pas avec la barbe, ny par l'austerité du visage: ils se gouvernent par la force de l'Esprit & avec la vigueur & l'adresse de la Raison: & l'Esprit peut estre aussi fort & la Raison aussi vigoureuse & aussi adroite, dans la teste d'une Femme que dans celle d'un Homme.
>
> States are not governed by a beard, nor by an austere countenance: they are governed by strength of mind, and by the vigor and dexterity of reason; and the mind can be as strong, and reason as vigorous and dextrous in a woman's head as in a man's.[95]

Humoral differences are dismissed as superficial—Le Moyne's ideas are consistently informed by the theory of the humors throughout

his text—and not responsible for the making of wise men (*les Sages*). Physical strength and outer appearances are unimportant compared to the qualities of being well-informed and well-advised; and the two moral attributes required for good government, prudence and magnanimity, are not a solely male preserve: they pertain to both sexes ("elles sont de l'un & de l'autre sexe").[96]

Such an apparently gender-neutral idea is, however, nuanced by comments later in the volume, when it becomes clear that, for Le Moyne, the attributes required for government are, in essence, very clearly male, and that government is a male prerogative: "La Vertu des Hommes est une Vertu de commandement & d'authorité, une Vertu Intendante & Directrice: elle est de la partie qui gouverne & qui conduit" ("The virtue of men is a virtue of command and authority, a virtue of administration and direction; it belongs to the side which governs and leads"). Female virtue, on the other hand, is "dépendante & subalterne."[97] But these gendered virtues are acknowledged to be less than clear-cut, and the same fluidity we saw elsewhere emerges, as the Jesuit concedes that women can appropriate this male virtue:

> Mais il n'est pas certain, que cette Vertu de commandement & Gouvernante, ne soit que de nostre costé: elle se trouve encore de l'autre; & ne s'y treuve pas en estrangère. Elle s'y acquitte des mesmes charges, & y fait toutes les fonctions qu'elle peut faire parmy nous.
>
> But it is not true that the virtue of command and authority can be found solely on our side; it can also be found on the other, and is no stranger there. It acquits itself of the same duties and carries out the same functions as it does among us.[98]

Zenobia, Pulcheria, Amalasuntha, and Artemisia provide his examples. Le Moyne simultaneously adheres to the code of sexual ethics common in his society and indicates how invalid it can be.[99] His parting shot in the Deborah "moral question" is aimed at the critics of women who generalize about the female sex on the basis of the same few infamous examples. Raising the same argument from St. Ambrose as du Bosc and Saint-Gabriel use, he posits that vice or virtue are the preserve of an individual not of a biological sex, adding that similar generalizations could produce examples of vice-ridden princes, greater in number and in vice than their female counterparts.[100] Such arguments as the latter serve as reminders that Le Moyne's text is heavily influenced by the rhetoric of polarity that framed women as superior.

It is important to note that all of Le Moyne's reasoning is underpinned by a belief in the exceptionality, the *marvelous* quality, of capable ruling women. Examples such as Deborah show that from time to time "souls of the first magnitude may be found in bodies of the second sex" ("il peut bien y avoir des Ames de la premiere grandeur en des Corps du second sexe"). Women can be chosen by God, as agents and instruments of his will. Deborah is "a declaration of God." To argue otherwise is to contradict scripture and despise God's choice.[101] It is only with this proviso in place, this appeal to the common topos of women as state-saviors, that Le Moyne can raise his other arguments.

Le Moyne's Warrior Queen

The warrior woman plays a key role in Le Moyne's *Gallerie.* Three of the principal *femmes fortes*, Deborah, Zenobia, and Joan of Arc, are warriors—the first two also rulers—while several "modern" examples—Joanna of Flanders, countess of Montfort (1295–1374), Margaret of Anjou, queen of England (1430–1482), in addition to Blanche of Castile (1188–1252) and Isabella of Castile (1451–1504)—are all depicted as playing a military role. Furthermore, several examples are given of valiant women who defended their country by physical means (such as the sixteenth-century Françoise de Cézely (also known as Constance de Cézelli), defender and later governor of Leucate), or who defended their husbands or their own honor, again in ways requiring physical action and mental courage. The principal abstract discussion on female capacity for military virtue can be found in the "moral question" devoted to the issue, while those devoted to heroic virtue and "la haute générosité" are also relevant.

Le Moyne's conservative stance is apparent from the outset: he prefaces his remarks by a reassurance to readers, just as he does regarding women and "philosophy," that his aim is not in any way to challenge the status quo in calling the fair sex to arms; women should be happy with their lot as decided by nature and law and institutionalized by custom, namely their role in the domestic economy.[102] His aim is quite simply to demonstrate their capabilities. However, given the androcentric climate of the time, that in itself is far from negligible. His argument draws on physiology, Genesis, and the theory of the humors, all manipulated at will. The organ necessary for valor is the heart, he argues, and the male and female hearts are identical. In fact, since Eve's was drawn from solid matter, unlike Adam's, the

female heart may indeed be stronger. Furthermore, the humoral choler that serves to transform brute force into valor is in fact sharper and more immediate in women ("plus vive et plus soudaine"), and they are also endowed with the "bilious spirit" necessary for combat. Female weakness is engendered by upbringing rather than temperament: their humoral balance could be easily restored by exercise, according to Plato.[103] Le Moyne also argues that valiance shouldn't be confused with physical strength, it doesn't require arms of steel or hands of iron, and that delicacy is not incompatible with valor: noble spirits and vigorous souls ("des Esprits genereux & des Ames fortes") can be found in delicate bodies. Like his contemporaries, the Jesuit marshals two somewhat conflicting arguments, therefore, on the one hand stressing an equal capacity for military virtue, and on the other hand emphasizing female superiority, as his repeated superlatives indicate.

His last comment quoted above, however, points to another element that underpins his argument and that becomes explicit elsewhere, namely the importance of *générosité*, uniquely the preserve of the nobility. Le Moyne's argument, like that of many others of his time, is anchored in received ideas concerning "race." What these (noble)women lack in sex, they make up for in lineage:

> la Noblesse estant des Femmes non moins que des Hommes, & le bon sang se répandant également par leurs veines dez leur naissance, il reste que la Generosité ait de part & d'autre un fond égal, et que la matière dont elle se fait soit une matiere commune.
>
> Since nobility pertains to women no less than to men, and since good blood flows equally through their veins since birth, it follows that in both cases *générosité* has an equal basis, and that the matter of which it is composed is common to both.[104]

According to the physiognomics of the time, the humoral make-up of the noble classes was distinct from that of commoners: noblewomen by their birth were therefore more prone, more capable, and more justified in engaging in the military activity that was the hallmark of the aristocratic "race."[105] So, Le Moyne's emphasis on "equal" virtue is certainly not egalitarian in the modern sense but fundamentally hierarchical: noblewomen are superior to commoners of either sex, for different reasons, and therefore are allowed more latitude than that accorded the majority of their sex. Le Moyne's lengthy discussion of *générosité*, his emphasis on the

lineage of his heroines,[106] combined with his repeated emphasis on the manifestations of their temperament on the faces of his female examples—since nobiliary humoral distinction, like all humoral temperament, was apparently visible for all to see—indicate how he adheres to these ideas more than many.[107]

If the Renaissance Amazon can be seen as an emblem of good government, incarnating a symbiosis of "la générosité masculine et la continence féminine"[108] (hence demonstrating, once again, the fluidity of any putative sexual ethics), then Zenobia is made to provide the perfect example not only of the androgynous female warrior, but of the androgynous warrior queen, by demonstrating other assets useful in government. More chaste, though married, than most of the Vestal virgins, Zenobia is "modest and magnanimous, eloquent and accustomed to war" ("pudique & magnanime, eloquente et aguerrie"), and combines "all the graces of her sex and the virtues of ours" ("toutes les Graces de son Sexe & toutes les Vertus du nostre").[109] Furthermore, as a queen, she is portrayed as intelligent, well-versed in political science and the art of war, and (more unusually) is made to equal conquerors of yore through her writing of history: Le Moyne credits her with writing (lost) annals of Levantine history, by which she therefore equals those conquerors who wielded the pen as skillfully as the sword. And, of course, she is beautiful: her beauty is "majestic and military," "of command and of action;" her entire appearance gives her "a certain graceful and seemly authority, which could persuade without words and subdue souls by its very aspect" ("une certaine authorité agreable & bien-seante, qui persuadoit sans parler & soumettoit les Ames par la veuë").[110] This mixture of *galanterie* and physiognomics, while it jars to modern ears, gains meaning within the neo-Platonic paradigm within which Le Moyne is working.[111] Exterior beauty points to interior virtue, as mentioned above, and in this case, to the political quality of authority (of which, more anon).

If Le Moyne appears favorable towards Zenobia, it is worth bearing in mind that elsewhere he comes out clearly in favor of pacifist virtue in women. Theodelinda is explicitly presented, and celebrated, as the antithesis to a military queen;[112] furthermore, while the military capacities of Blanche of Castile and Isabella of Spain are evoked in their respective portraits, they are not a focus of attention. Le Moyne, like his contemporaries, is interested in demonstrating what women can do (capacities and exploits that remain in the realm of the *marvelous*), rather than what he believes they should do.

Le Moyne's Exemplary Portraits or Epideictic Discourse

While the comments quoted above from the "Debora" *question morale* are frequently evoked by commentators as indicative of Le Moyne's support for gynæcocracy, with little or no account taken of the ambivalent stance of the volume as a whole, little or no attention tends to be given to his examples. However, the image of gynæcocracy that emerges from the epideictic discourse of the "modern" examples as well as from the portraits of Deborah and Zenobia is of possibly greater importance than his ratiocination and his rhetoric of apology. Here, the idea of the indirect portrait becomes key. Links with Anne of Austria are implicit in references to the *regency* and *royalty* of Deborah, terms that are anachronistic for the biblical judge, culminating in an explicit parallel being drawn between the virtuous qualities of "nostre regente" and "la regente juive."[113] The wise and just Deborah has the added advantage of being a widow, and so is a perfect exemplum for the queen: the commonly cited passage concerning her from St Ambrose's treatise *Of Widows* is paraphrased, and embellished, in support.[114] However, it is in the examples drawn from "modern" European history that the specularity of the gallery book becomes most apparent. In addition to the women that played a patriotic role in saving their homeland, six "modern" portraits are given of women who have ruled—in other words, over a quarter of the twenty-one examples—Isabella Clara Eugenia of Spain (1566–1633); Margaret of Austria (1522–1586); Theodelinda of Lombardy (573–627); in addition to Blanche of Castile, Isabella of Castile, and Margaret of Anjou mentioned above. Le Moyne gives particular attention to four in his *Epître*, guiding his reader to their portraits: of all the *illustres* in his gallery, apparently, "the Blanches and the Isabelles, either of Castile or of Austria" will be particularly vocal in their praise of the queen. Keen to demonstrate that women can rule in order to glorify the queen, he is particularly interested (perhaps exclusively interested?) in demonstrating that Spanish widows can do so. His second allusion to this group of four makes this clear:

> Les grandes Reynes & les Femmes de commandement sont d'Espagne, comme les grands Roys & les Vaillans hommes sont de France. [...] Et leurs noms seuls sans autre discours, peuvent estre des argumens invincibles & d'authorité souveraine, à ceux qui voudront preuver que les Princesses d'Espagne entendent l'art de regner fortement & de bonne grâce, qu'elles sçavent manier le Sceptre avec adresse.

> Great queens and women fit for government are from Spain, just as great kings and valiant men are from France. [...] Their very names, without any discussion, provide arguments which are invincible and of sovereign authority to those who would like to prove that the princesses of Spain understand the art of reigning powerfully and gracefully, and that they know how to manage a scepter with skill.[115]

Even allowing for the element of conventional eulogy of the queen's ancestors, these four portraits need to be read therefore specifically as reflections of, and models for, the queen. In this regard, the two direct relations of the queen are most useful, and hence the reflection process most explicit: for Isabella Clara Eugenia of Spain and Margaret of Austria, we are told: "nous avons leurs portraits au vif [...] en nostre bonne Reyne leur Niepce" ("we have their very likeness [...] in our good queen their niece").[116]

The most striking portrait is the detailed and lively one of the governor of the Spanish Netherlands, Isabella Clara Eugenia of Spain—considerably longer than the average gallery "example" and given pride of place at the opening of the book—a woman deceased only some ten odd years before Le Moyne is writing.[117] Behind the superlatives and hyperbole that might mark the piece as conventional panegyric, Isabella is represented as the ultimate female ruler, demonstrating the heights the female mind can achieve in the art of ruling ("jusques où peut aller l'esprit des femmes en la science de régner"). Endowed with a sharp intelligence and innate prudence, educated in political science ("la Science des Roys") by her father, Philip II, Isabella is described as "active and dynamic, bold and hard-working," handling her affairs directly, giving painstaking attention to her *audiences*, writing her own despatches, accompanying her armies on the battlefield. In this last role, she is depicted—specifically at the Battle of Nieuwpoort (July 2, 1600) and the Siege of Ostende (1601–04)—as capable of aiming cannons and ordering artillery, but more involved in inciting her soldiers with verbal encouragement and material rewards, and, above all, caring for the sick soldiers.[118] Singled out for special attention is the quality of goodness (*bonté*),[119] her constant solicitude for her subjects and for, interestingly, less fortunate heads of state (a covert allusion undoubtedly to the Infanta's warm reception of Marie de Médicis in the Spanish Netherlands in 1631, following the Day of Dupes).[120] While goodness might seem like an obvious quality to praise in anyone, and standard in a panegyric piece like this, it takes on a different significance

when viewed as a crucial quality of kingship. As we saw in chapter 1, *bonté* is a key quality in the model of the ideal prince as it continues to be propagated in the seventeenth century. This is furthermore buttressed here by the other virtues evoked. Magnanimous, prudent, astute, intelligent, charitable, deeply committed to her subjects' well-being, and of strong religious faith, what emerges is a portrait of the ideal sovereign. The key to the portrait lies in the fact that Le Moyne does not present his case in terms of sexual difference: the focus is not on a "male" virtue, being appropriated or otherwise. The clear implication (intentional or not) is that good governance transcends gender. This is spelt out in his comment on authority in this portrait, one of the seven virtues he later highlights in *L'Art de régner* as crucial to monarchical government:

> L'authorité qui est aux Princes une Couronne sans matière, & un caractere de Majesté invincible, qui leur est une Vertu d'agir sans se mouvoir, & de se faire obeïr sans violence & sans forces: cette Authorité, dis-je, qui se forme de la Vertu du Prince, & de l'estime des Peuples, estoit souveraine en l'Infante.
>
> Authority which is for princes a crown without matter, and a quality of invincible majesty, a virtue that ensures they act but without agitation, and that imposes obedience without violence or force; this authority, I say, which stems from the virtue of the prince and the esteem of the people, was sovereign in the Infanta. [121]

As we will see elsewhere, the use of the masculine noun to refer to a queen highlights the paradoxical nature of exclusionist discourse and the ultimate fluidity of sovereignty. It is worth noting that, in this context, it is not important whether the portrait is idealized or not in order to serve as a model for the reigning regent, or quite simply in order to praise her ancestors. We are not looking to Le Moyne for biographical details concerning Isabella as an individual; it is not she as a person that matters, but what she represents—the essence of an "exemplum" in fact. And as an "exemplum," she represents the ultimate "complete prince."[122]

Similar images emerge elsewhere. The portrait of the fifteenth-century Isabella of Castile (also of considerable length and detail) also reads like the prototype of the ideal sovereign:

> La Politique ne fut iamais plus habile, ny plus saine & mieux intentionnée; la Raison d'Estat plus étenduë ny plus forte; les Graces plus vigoureuses ny plus efficaces, qu'en cette Princesse.

> Politics was never so able, nor so sound and well-intentioned; reason of state never more developed or powerful; the graces never more vigorous nor more effective than in this princess.[123]

The priorities in governance with which she is attributed correspond to those of the (male) sovereign—domestic unification and pacification, defense, conquest, exploration, and discovery—as do qualities such as her "exact and severe, incorruptible and disinterested justice."[124] Furthermore, what was latent in Isabella Clara Eugenia's portrait is expressed openly here: as female prince, Isabella of Castile combines the virtues of government with the usual litany of so-called feminine virtues, *patience, civilité, modestie, pieté, pudeur*:

> Isabelle n'estoit pas seulement intelligente, courageuse, magnanime, juste & magnifique. Ces Vertus publiques & d'action estoient accompagnées d'autres Vertus domestiques & de repos.
>
> Isabella was not only intelligent, courageous, magnanimous, just and magnificent. These public, active virtues were accompanied by other domestic, passive virtues.[125]

Isabella of Castile's embodiment of a symbiosis of public and private virtue is significant: hinging on a code of sexual ethics in order to be understood, in an implicit association of public virtue as male and private virtue as female, it simultaneously transcends that code to point to the broad deployment of gender fluidity in a construction of sovereignty as androgynous, or in Fradenburg's terms, as total, inclusive, and exemplary.

The two other "Spanish" portraits, shorter in length, contain elements of the same idea. Margaret of Austria—duchess of Parma, and governor of the Spanish Netherlands from 1559 to 1567, whose portrait directly follows Isabella Clara Eugenia's, as Le Moyne devotes a second example to gynæcocracy—is depicted as skillful, intelligent, well versed in the art of ruling ("l'Art des Princes"). She is "a favorable and modern proof that women can govern" ("une preuve avantageuse & moderne pour le gouvernement des Femmes"), a governor who, by implication in the text, favored clemency in her approach, the sovereign virtue much lauded by political theorists as we saw above.[126] Finally, in the case of Blanche of Castile, frequently held up as a shining example of regency motherhood, it is noteworthy that as much space is given to her political dealings as to her stellar career

as widow and mother. Her virtue, apparently, and by implication her role, was both public and private:

> Il n'y eut pas seulement des Pauvres entretenus, & des Malades soulagez en ses bonnes œuvres; il y eut des Nations conservées & des Provinces mises en repos, des Guerres éteintes & des troubles pacifiés, de bonnes Loix établies & des abus publics exterminez, des Heresies humiliées ou abolies: & tout un Royaume maintenu en paix, & gouverné tranquillement & avec justice.
>
> Not only were the poor supported, and the sick relieved by her good deeds; nations were preserved and provinces stabilized, wars ended and troubles pacified, sound laws established and public abuses eradicated, heresies subjugated or abolished, and an entire kingdom maintained in peace, and governed peaceably and justly.[127]

Dominant constructions of male kingship merge with female consortship in the portrait of the androgynous "complete" prince, played out here in the body of a woman.

As elsewhere, while a polarized code of sexual ethics is exploded on one hand, it is simultaneously upheld with the validation of female *douceur* and beauty as advantages in government. Like that of his contemporaries, Le Moyne's evocation of the common topos of women's capacity to rule by love, *régner sur les cœurs*,[128] cannot solely be understood in terms of conventional gallantry, given the importance of *douceur* in the political model of the ideal prince, and points to the concurrence of the virtue ethics of sovereignty and so-called female virtues. Secondly, his references to beauty must be understood within a larger context of physiognomics. Isabelle d'Espagne was born, apparently,

> avec cette Souveraineté agreable & de droit naturel, qui a son titre & ses forces sur le visage des belles personnes. Et cette Souveraineté est une pièce puissante & de grand usage quand elle est bien maniée. Elle gouverne par la veuë les Cœurs les plus rudes & les moins dociles.
>
> with this graceful sovereignty of natural right, whose title and strength is borne on the countenance of fine persons. And this sovereignty is a powerful and very useful tool when it is handled well. Its very aspect governs the toughest and least docile hearts.[129]

The spiritual quality of majesty that originates in the monarch's soul is transparently visible on her/his face; and it is this quality that can silence the unruly. What Le Moyne is hinting at, as he does with

Zenobia, is the idea central to the ideology of Early Modern monarchy that the monarch governs by their very appearance (*par la vue*).

The four "Spanish" portraits together form a unit where the emphasis is quite distinct from the remaining portraits. Certainly, the idea of androgynous virtue, or the "complete prince" is less evident in the two "non-Spanish" examples, although they remain favorable. The penultimate example of a ruling woman follows the discussion concerning male and female public virtue, and is the considerably less "modern" Theodelinda, who is proof apparently that "great crowns are of her sex no less than of ours."[130] In this account of the regency government of a widowed, foreign, young queen (the parallel with Anne of Austria is clear), whose capabilities and skill as a governor during her husband's absences resulted in her being granted an unrestricted sovereignty ("une souveraineté sans restriction") on his death (contrary, apparently, to custom),[131] the emphasis is primarily on the queen's religion and proselytizing. The final example of the book is that of Margaret of Anjou, queen consort of England, who frequently ruled in the place of her husband, Henry VI, and who is held up as a model of behavior in the face of adversity. Interestingly, two lessons for Anne of Austria are implicit: the importance of avoiding the arousal of calumnious suggestions that she might favor her country of birth over her husband's country, and the importance of maintaining power in her own hands. The queen, "libérale et bien-faisante," is depicted as exercising a favorable influence over her indolent husband, and of playing a key military role during her husband's imprisonment (the reference is to the Battle of Wakefield, 1460).

It is beyond the scope of this study to trace Le Moyne's sources and to examine how they were adapted or not: he includes no marginal annotations, unlike many of his contemporaries, nor would it be in keeping with the tone and style of the book for him to do so.[132] But such information would not change the basic argument here: either Le Moyne chose favorable sources in order to represent gynæcocracy favorably, or he altered his sources to represent the ideal female sovereign. Le Moyne's interest here is not to write a history, although gross manipulation of sources or fabrication of events might have cost him credibility with certain readers. What is important is what he decided to portray as historical fact, and therefore thinkable reality, through these lively entertaining portraits. There is no doubt that these colorful portraits, full of anecdotal and personal details that give substance and life to the women (particularly the two of Isabella

Clara Eugenia of Spain and Isabella of Castile, the two longest ones under consideration here), would have been greeted with a warm reception among Le Moyne's female salon-going readership and no doubt contributed to the popularity of the volume over the following twenty-five years, particularly given the fashion for literary portraiture.[133] It is also important to bear in mind that while it is difficult to reconcile them with the harsh moralist emphasis on chastity and the prescriptive discourse elsewhere in the volume, it is highly likely they would have been read in isolation, like other segments of the book, that being the particularity of the gallery genre. So too would the "moral question" concerning female government ("Whether women are capable of government") have been read in isolation. Devoting a section to the issue gained it a prominence (wittingly or unwittingly) that ensured the posterity of the ideas expressed therein. This is the section that scholars continue to quote, even today, with no mention of the fact that it jars radically with much of the rest of the text. In sum, crucial elements of Le Moyne's text question normative discourses concerning gender categories, specifically, I would argue, the elements concerning rulership. Alerting his readers to this approach is one of his peritextual emblems, which gains further in significance on conclusion of the text. Atop the sonnet that precedes the preface is an emblem of a beehive, a common metaphor used in representations of government at a time when popular belief upheld the idea of a king bee (and particularly ironic in this context). Carrying the device *Rex animo non sexu* ("a king in spirit if not by sex"), it serves as a succinct reminder of the androgynous nature of rulership: a "king" need not be male.[134]

Less than twenty years later, in his *L'Art de régner*, dedicated to Louis XIV, there is no room, or need, for a pro-gynæcocracy argument, and Le Moyne returns to a traditional stance, where he argues that it is clear that "l'Homme est plus accomply que la Femme," since "l'action de conduire & de gouverner, demande necessairement plus de lumiere, plus de force, plus de vertu, qu'il n'en faut pour estre conduit & gouverné" ("the action of leading and governing necessarily requires more intelligence, more strength, more virtue than is required to be led and governed").[135] And yet, paradoxically, Isabella of Castile and Isabella Clara Eugenia still feature as examples of good governance, juxtaposed with, and in the case of the former, superseding, their menfolk, Ferdinand and Albert. The examples belie the spurious rationale.

The Scudérys' *Les Femmes illustres ou Les Harangues héroïques* (1642–44)

The fluidity of sovereignty is also thrown into relief, albeit in very different ways, in the Scudérys' *Les Femmes illustres ou Les Harangues héroïques*, a work that distinguishes itself from other pro-woman material of the time in a number of important ways, not least in form, tone, and aim.[136] Each volume consists of a series of harangues delivered by famous heroines drawn primarily from historical sources in volume I, and literary sources in volume II, a choice of genre clearly influenced by Georges' translation of *Les Harangues ou Discours académiques de Jean-Baptiste Manzini*.[137] The emphasis is decidedly *mondain*, rather than moralistic, "aristocratic and secular," as Catherine Pascal puts it,[138] and the declared aim is quite simply to celebrate the female sex, women of the past and of the present, in a pleasing fashion. The parameters are different therefore from texts that inscribe themselves firmly in a tradition of female superiority, and the rhetoric, as we will see, is not one that polarizes the sexes. Three times in the first volume, in prominent places (the frontispiece, the last paragraph of the dedicatory epistle, and the last line of the text proper), the desired monumentality of the book is highlighted through the triumphal arch metaphor, borrowed from the realm of architecture. The work is a celebration, an "arc de triomphe . . . élevé à la gloire [du] sexe" ("a triumphal arch . . . erected to the glory of the [female] sex"). Immediately striking is the fact that the choice of harangue as genre presents women as orators, publicly engaged in the demonstration of rhetorical skill—a field from which they are traditionally excluded—with the explicit aim of valorizing the perceived female capacity for natural eloquence (as spelt out in the prefatory "Epître aux Dames"). This female *prise de parole* has the further advantages of, firstly, granting women a level of self-affirmation and agency through their speech, and, secondly, allowing them to inscribe themselves in a collective memory through the rewriting and redressing of history. This process of "revising memory," as Faith Beasley refers to it with regard to other women writers of the period, which has not escaped critical attention regarding the *Harangues héroïques*,[139] is further reinforced if the harangue genre is understood as remonstrance, reprimand, reproach—a definition that both Furetière and the *Académie française* allow for.[140] At any rate, repeated references made to the influencing of posterity and to the search for truth (by the orators themselves or in the introductory *argument* and concluding *effet* that precede and

follow each harangue),[141] together with the inclusion of the pseudo-historical visual portraits, underline the historiographical nature of the Scudéry project, as they propose a type of "secret" alternative history.

While the harangue that has attracted most attention is that of Sapho—a forthright defense of female intellectual (specifically literary) activity and a veritable call to arms to women to engage in it—for our purposes what are most striking are the three portraits in volume I of rulers Zenobia, Pulcheria, and Amalasuntha, portraits that appear to have gone entirely unnoticed by critics. If a redefinition of female agency is the hallmark of the collection, it seems to me that these three portraits of women whose self-affirmation is inextricably linked with kingship—the ultimate sphere typically closed to women—are key to that redefinition. In addition to being depicted as logical, rational, eloquent, virtuous women like the other orators in the gallery, they are represented as capable and popular rulers—popular at least with their subjects, if not with their enemies—whose virtues have particular resonances in the public sphere, and who are represented as conversant with the requirements of kingship.

The harangues remind the reader of the successful rule of the three women in ways that inscribe them in a paradigm of rational sovereignty. The most notable difference from other images of female government is the eschewal of physical beauty as a feature of any importance.[142] Exploited by some, as we saw earlier, for its association with virtue and majesty, beauty remains an ambivalent category in feminist argumentation. In Zénobie's self-portrait, the first half is devoted to an overview of her role in power, and the second to a discussion of virtue, the whole addressed to her daughters, and significantly not the sons who feature in Le Moyne et al. Here, not only is her physical appearance irrelevant to her government, but furthermore the one fleeting reference to it serves to highlight the falsity of its veneration, as she comments ironically on how her limited beauty didn't prevent court flatterers from waxing lyrical on the subject.[143] Avoiding the category of beauty altogether, despite its favorable potential as an argument, serves to crystallize focus unequivocally on the moral virtues of the queen and on the intellectual faculties of judgment and reason. The valorization of reason in the three women—both in and by the harangues throughout the volume, and typical of Madeleine de Scudéry—is particularly significant in light of the contemporary constructions of gynæcocracy as synonymous with chaos and unreason. All three speak with reason

("raisonnablement"), all three view their decisions as considered and rational.[144]

If reason is represented as independent of sex, it is hardly surprising that biological sex is also seen as unrelated to specific moral virtues. The most explicit comment on the issue is given to Zénobie:

> J'ai toujours crû, mes filles, que toutes les vertus ne pouvaient être incompatibles, qu'il n'était pas impossible qu'une même personne les possédât toute[s], que celles des hommes pouvaient être pratiquées par des femmes, que la véritable vertu n'avait pas de sexe affecté, qu'on pouvait être chaste et vaillante tout ensemble, témoigner de la grandeur de courage en une occasion et de l'humilité en l'autre, être sévère et clémente en diverses rencontres, pouvoir commander et obéir et savoir porter des fers et une couronne avec un même visage.
>
> I have always thought, my daughters, that all virtues are not incompatible, that it isn't impossible for one individual to possess them all, that those of men can be exercised by women, that true virtue affects no sex, that one can be both chaste and valiant, exhibit great courage on one occasion and humility on another, be severe and merciful in different circumstances, be able to command and obey, know how to carry irons and a crown with the same countenance.[145]

Although in the Sapho harangue it is argued that men are more suited for warfare then women,[146] here Zénobie's words—possibly by Georges, rather than Madeleine, given the opposing views expressed in the Sapho speech—continue to question the validity of a rigid code of sexual ethics, and posit a paradigm of androgynous human morality. Of course, the queen of Palmyra herself in this very favorable portrait is the ultimate portrait of a gender symbiosis, characterized by Stoicism, self-mastery, constancy in action (also the hallmarks of Pulchérie), a skillful warrior and adept ruler, who knew equally "the art of rule and the art of combat" ("l'art de régner et l'art de combattre").

Secondly, it is not insignificant that all three are given to comment on the nature of kingship. For Amalasonthe, triply legitimate heir to the throne, liberality and acknowledgment (*reconnaissance*) are the "true virtues of kings." A king can be ambitious and prodigal without being dishonored, she argues, but can never be miserly or ungrateful without exciting his subjects' contempt and the loathing of posterity. It is she who provides the mirror (through her discourse), and the standard (through her character) by which the indolent and avaricious usurper king Théodat can judge himself. For Zénobie,

constancy is the virtue of greatest necessity for kings, although they should set good examples to their subjects of all virtues, since they are in the public eye.[147] All three valorize experience over book learning and philosophy. Amalasonthe is given to remark drily on how Théodat's study of Plato for "the greater part of his life" has apparently not taught him how to practice the philosopher's tenets, and she later commends her own experiential knowledge of kingship.[148] According to Pulchérie, "an active philosophy" is required to know how to reign; philosophers "who make perfect kings in their writings would not be fit to reign" ("qui sont des rois si parfaits dans leurs écrits ne seraient pas aptes à régner"). Athénaïs has failed since she only knew the world through books ("elle ne connaissait le monde que par les livres") and her humble experience before her life at court could not be drawn on. No books will help her, "if her judgment is not enlightened" ("si elle n'a le jugement bien éclairé").[149] While these remarks are noteworthy in themselves, aligning the text with a Machiavellian rejection of Plato's philosopher king, they have an added resonance here when given to women to voice, quite simply since they attribute to these women a reflection on political thought. Furthermore, the criticism of male education as inadequate is juxtaposed with experiential wisdom (and not with any "natural" female intuition, as is common in the *querelle des femmes* arguments), in a validation of human experience that implicitly opens the public space equally to both men and women. This appropriation of a male sphere is underlined, as always, by the use of the male referent "roi" by these queens in their discussion of royal virtue, where it is they themselves who embody those virtues. In implying that government transcends sexual differentiation, these harangues implicitly call into question the rationale of their exclusion from governmental authority.

The third and final striking feature of these rulers is the fact that all three are simultaneously marked by a sense of self, while nonetheless inscribed within the status quo. In a word, they provide a model of female gynæcocracy that facilitates complementary relations between the sexes.[150] They are not interested in eradicating the patriarchy, but, crucially, nor are they interested in being subsumed by it. All three indicate how their government benefitted their male counterparts (husband, brother, or cousin).[151] All three envisage a space working in harmony with and alongside their menfolk.[152] Furthermore, Amalasonthe and Pulchérie represent the very antithesis to the stereotypical female *libido dominandi*: both have expressly

empowered their men, both seek to share their own power, and both are prevented from doing so by the flaws and jealousies of others (Théodat and Athénaïs respectively). Pulchérie opts to step down discreetly, in order to protect her brother and Athénaïs from committing a public *faux pas* ("une faute publique") in her dismissal. But merit wins out, as she is recalled to the administration, as the *effet* tells us.[153] Though content to work within the patriarchy as required, and devoted to their menfolk as appropriate, they are nonetheless all, crucially, interested in their own self-affirmation. Because of the nature of this self-affirmation, the alignment with their menfolk—far from diminishing their role, as can happen elsewhere when women are defined as mothers, regents, wives, widows—points instead to the potential of collaboration, based not on sexually differentiated roles but on an equality of moral and intellectual capacity.[154]

What makes these three harangues different from the material examined earlier in this chapter is the absence of the comparative markers, and the superlatives and hyperbole that pepper the conventional discourses on female superiority. (When Amalasonthe emerges as clearly the morally superior force to her cousin Théodat, it is by an implicit rather than explicit comparison). The absence of a rhetoric of exceptionality, of *le monde à l'envers*, of usurping virtues, or even of women governing "sur les cœurs" or by *douceur* or by beauty—favorable though these last can be—lends a force to these speeches that is lacking elsewhere, underlined by the female *prise de parole*. As in the other texts examined above, but perhaps even more powerfully therefore, the gendered discourse that constructs government as an exclusively male prerogative is presented as an inadequate rendering of reality, as these three women of the past validate their ethos as monarchs.

This is all the more striking since the tenor of the volume as a whole, despite the female agency, tends to uphold sexually differentiated roles. Notwithstanding the defense of female literary activity in the Sapho harangue, the exclusion of women from public roles goes unchallenged in that speech and serves as justification of their inclusion in the sphere of *belles-lettres*. In the Cléopâtre portrait, little attention is given to the political power of the queen, who is presented as the traditional passionate and beautiful *amoureuse*. Yet where female political power *is* represented, as is the case with Zenobia, Pulcheria, and Amalasuntha, they defy gender stereotyping and codes of sexual ethics.

D'Auteuil's *Blanche, Infante de Castille* (1644)

One final "gallery" of sorts merits mention here. As is clear by now, it is a notable feature of these texts, with the exception of Le Moyne and particularly where examples are few, that ancient examples dominate. Frequently, modern examples of gynæcocracy are limited to a passing reference to the female rulers of Spain, England, and Sweden. However, this prioritizing of the well-known examples disappears in the veritable "catalogue" of cases that is provided in a text which falls outside the conventional bibliographies of *querelle des femmes* literature, namely the biography *Blanche, Infante de Castille*, by Charles de Combault, comte d'Auteuil.[155] In the preface, framed as a "Discourse concerning the most famous regents of Antiquity," d'Auteuil undertakes a chronological and systematic examination of world civilizations, and provides one of the most extensive of all the "catalogues" of female rulers. His opening lines indicate what he sets out to demonstrate, namely that government by women has been "universally accepted' in all states, both those where custom and law have allowed them to reign as queens regnant, and those were they have governed as regents—the reference to custom and law a telling reminder that customs and laws other than those that support patriarchy have been long established in certain societies.[156] What follows is an overview of ancient and modern societies—Babylonian, Israelite, Judean, Egyptian, Ethiopian, Greek, Roman, Arabian, Byzantine, German, Bohemian, Danish, Polish, Spanish, Portuguese, English, French—where women have ruled, and ruled (almost without exception) wisely and efficiently. To the well-known names d'Auteuil adds a panoply of others, including Salomé Alexandra of Judea, Candace of Ethiopia, Helena of Adiabene, Margaret I of Denmark, Berengeria of Castile, as well as more familiar names such as Nitocris, Pulcheria, Theodora, and Livia. The French queens enumerated, prior to the eponymous Blanche, include the Merovingians Brunehilde, Nantilde, Bathilde, as well as the Capetian Alix of Champagne. D'Auteuil's main aim, and the merit of this text, is to frame female governance as a universal practice. In broad brushstrokes, he sketches a history of world civilizations where women have consistently held the reins of public power, and held them, for the most part, successfully—epithets of *prudence, grandeur, générosité, mérite, estime* are common. In so doing, d'Auteuil does something very important: in sum, he provides an alternative view of history *and* he constructs a tradition of gynæcocracy. Where "Salic Law" was constructed elsewhere as "la loi des gens,"[157] here

female government is presented as "généralement reçeuë par le Droit des Gens,"[158] pointing to a fluidity in understanding of *ius gentium*, which could be exploited by opposing sides. In the establishment of an alternative tradition, d'Auteuil explodes the circular argument according to which since men have traditionally ruled, authority is a male prerogative. Importantly, every reference is accompanied by marginal annotations indicating his sources (frequently several for the one woman mentioned), pointing to a serious historical undertaking. Over forty sources for this preface are listed at the end of the volume, in addition to the French and Spanish historians mentioned in his bibliography—in itself a hallmark of a serious history. It is in keeping with a "serious" history that there are no overtones of gallantry in this list, and indeed little sense of sweeping panegyric. The transparent selectivity—he lists Fredegonde, Athaliah, Salome, and Cleopatra as rulers unworthy of inclusion in his list[159]—strengthens rather than weakens his position. He is not setting out to prove that all women rulers are always good governors, nor that gynæcocracy is in some way superior to government by men, but quite simply that some women—over forty of them—have ruled well in every corner of the globe. It matters less that there are gaps, or that it is not always entirely accurate, or that goddess figures such as Isis and Marcia Proba are marshalled as examples—the inclusion of mythical figures at any rate being common in the Renaissance catalogue—but that an alternative vision of history is presented.[160]

D'Auteuil's list reached another readership two years later since it clearly served as a source for Gerzan's *Triomphe des Dames*, in a chapter entitled "De la prudence politique des Femmes au gouvernement des Estats."[161] Much of the impact of d'Auteuil's catalogue is lost without the original framework; the geographic breadth of his claims is obscured, and therefore the sense of an alternative history is lost (for this reader at least). Nonetheless, Gerzan's work does continue to propagate that alternative view.[162]

Despite the shift in emphasis towards more sophisticated egalitarianism, as we will see in chapter 3, traditional arguments continued to circulate well into the eighteenth century (just as early egalitarian ideas had coexisted with the more dominant discourse on the excellence of women in the sixteenth century). A final text worthy of note in this regard is C. M. D. Noël's *Les Avantages du Sexe* (1698), which juxtaposes traditional arguments used to defend female superiority (as the title announces) with Cartesian ideas, as set out in the *Avant-propos*, clearly influenced by Poulain. The familiar paradigm

of sexual ethics underpins the enumeration of the usual so-called female virtues (beauty, delicacy, natural eloquence, piety, modesty), and the arguments from Genesis and regarding procreation reappear. For our purposes, the text provides a useful concrete example of Le Moyne's influence. In the chapter devoted to female military abilities, the discussion is clearly drawn from Le Moyne's *question morale* on the issue: in sum, courage transcends sexual differentiation, and history has proven it.[163] Elements of the chapter on female government, noteworthy by its very inclusion, are also drawn loosely from Le Moyne, although less explicitly:

> Les Estats se gouvernent-ils par la force & par la violence? Il me semble que les Princes ne sortent point de leur Cabinet pour gouverner leur peuple; c'est donc par l'esprit, par le jugement & par la raison qu'ils le gouvernent: or l'esprit, le jugement & la raison n'ont point de sexe.
>
> Are states governed by force and by violence? It seems to me that princes never leave their cabinet to govern their people. It is therefore by intelligence, by judgment and by reason that they govern; and intelligence, judgment and reason have no sex.[164]

After the divinely chosen Deborah, Blanche of Castile is the best example of female capacity to rule, demonstrating "jusqu'où pouvait aller l'esprit des femmes en la science de gouverner" ("how far the female mind can go in the science of governing"), a phrase adapted from Le Moyne's comments on Isabella Clara Eugenia. Of course, the political climate is radically different from that of Anne of Austria's regency, but here Noël uses a veiled reference to Mme de Maintenon's influence as demonstration of political acumen in women. Following conventional praise of the king, he adds:

> Tout éclairé qu'il [Louis XIV] est, encore ne méprise-t'il pas les lumières des Dames, en ce qui regarde le gouvernement. Il sçait qu'il y en a dans sa Cour qui ont le jugement si solide & une si grande pénétration d'esprit, qu'il ne feint point de les consulter fort souvent; & c'est avoir des sentimens contraires à ceux de ce grand Monarque qui ne se trompe jamais, & dont le discernement est si fin & si juste, que de nier, que les Dames soient capables de gouverner.
>
> Enlightened as he [Louis XIV] is, nonetheless he does not disregard the intelligence of ladies as regards government. He knows that there are some in his court who have such solid judgment and such great insight, that he does not hesitate to consult them often. To deny that

> ladies are capable of governing is to entertain sentiments that are opposed to this great monarch who is never mistaken, and whose discernment is so astute and so accurate.[165]

The text ends with a chapter devoted to an indictment of male tyranny, *libido dominandi*, and injustice—blamed for keeping women uneducated and excluded from positions of authority, by now a familiar topos—combined with repeated *galant* references to women's natural role in "commanding" men.

In terms of the history of political thought concerning women, the limitations of much of this argumentation are self-evident: the conservative stance, the emphasis on theory rather than practice, the eulogistic celebration of women (which can be as damaging as the opposite tack), the tacit but common notion of exceptionality. However, to lament the absence of a coherent program for societal change and to dismiss these texts accordingly is to impose unrealistic expectations on the period in question and to blind us to the significance of what they *do* do. Limited as these writings may seem to modern eyes, they are categorically progressive when viewed in relation to the crushingly oppressive moralist literature of the period.[166] What is repeatedly thrown into relief, despite these limitations, is that firstly a space is created for the female prince through these writings, that gynæcocracy is framed as a thinkable, at times desirable, alternative to the dominant patriarchal model; and secondly that that space is created through a manipulation of codes of sexual ethics, arguing both in favor of a common universal morality and a distinct female essence. That those two strands of argument are contradictory serves merely as a reminder of the conflicting discourses in circulation. What is important is not the contradiction, but the fact that the kernel of the debate is virtue. The diverse strategies discernible in this treatment of ethics—a treatment that makes these texts eminently political—all hinge to varying degrees on a reevaluation of female "nature," which is made to coincide with notions of good government, and point therefore to the mutability of the construction of government as an exclusively male prerogative.

Chapter 3

Engendering Equality: Gynæcocracy in Gournay, Poulain de la Barre, and Suchon

In certain sixteenth-century pro-woman texts, such as those by Agrippa and Billon, the defense of theological, moral, and intellectual equality between the sexes is not uncommon, unsurprisingly in works that also question and criticize the putative exclusion of women from political authority, or which openly argue in favor of gynæcocracy.[1] In seventeenth-century texts, as we saw above, an equality in principle continues to be firmly defended by many writers, although usually in more muted terms (reflecting the change in the European political climate and the decreasing role of women rulers). All of these texts, nonetheless, ultimately argue in favor of the superiority of women, and remarks concerning equality often jar with their overall tone and thrust. In parallel with this discourse, however, the seventeenth century also saw the development of a philosophical theorization of equality and a philosophical theorization of oppression and exclusion, in works that, while not devoid of the traces of the superiority arguments, mark a radical step in the history of equality and, hence, in the history of political thought concerning women. Early in the century, traces of Montaigne's skepticism can be perceived within Marie de Gournay's egalitarian text, providing a philosophical framework for her ideas on equality;[2] in the 1670s, Poulain de la Barre constructs a social Cartesian philosophy to frame his theory of sexual equality. Finally, writing in 1693, Gabrielle Suchon provides the first philosophical analysis of the mechanics of female exclusion from the defining features of human existence, namely freedom, knowledge, and authority. This chapter examines the debate surrounding government by women in certain writings by these three, within the framework of the broader feminist concerns

raised in those writings. As we will see, all three provide an explicit defense of women's ability to occupy public office, and reject patriarchal ideology as unnatural and unjustifiable, although it is clearly Suchon whose theorization is most elaborate in this regard, as she devotes a full volume to the issue of authority. Arguing in favor of equality in this context, or against privation in the case of Suchon, involves arguing in favor of equal capacity for moral and intellectual virtue, and hence rests on an implicit refutation of sexual ethics and a challenge to the category of gender, although such demonstrations are juxtaposed, however uneasily for the modern reader, alongside essentialist affirmations of the superior civil benefit to society of female *délicatesse* and *douceur* in government. Unsurprisingly, given the power dynamics at stake, the issue of government by women or their inclusion/exclusion from the highest echelons of political activity emerges repeatedly as the ultimate litmus test in the evolving conceptualization of sexual equality.

Marie de Gournay, Equality, and Government by Women

Marie le Jars de Gournay's *Égalité des hommes et des femmes*, dedicated to Anne of Austria, first appeared in 1622.[3] While readers will be familiar with the thrust of its argument and approach, a brief overview will serve to situate its ideas concerning government by women. Much of its argumentation had featured in the first edition of her *Proumenoir de Monsieur de Montaigne* (1594) and was augmented (chiefly through additional examples) in the final 1641 edition of her work. Likewise, her *Grief des Dames* (1626) is in fact the development of a passage from her 1595 edition of Montaigne's *Essais*. The question of sexual differentiation and equality was one to which Gournay frequently returned, therefore, from early in her career, although its treatment represents a fraction of her overall literary output. The originality of the text stems, quite simply, from its focus on equality—a novel approach given the dominant mindset of the time, which constructed and construed the world in terms of hierarchy. This radical viewpoint is articulated from the outset, as Gournay expresses a desire to avoid "extremes" ("extremitez") in her treatment of women, aiming instead "de les esgaler aux hommes: la Nature s'opposant aussi pour ce regard, autant à la supériorité qu'à l'infériorité" ("to make women equal to men, for nature is also as opposed to superiority as to inferiority in this respect").[4] This comment can be seen as one of

the covert indications of the influence of Montaigne's skepticism on Gournay, particularly his rejection of an ordered hierarchical universe in his philosophy of nature.[5] In keeping with sixteenth-century scholasticism, and in a demonstration of her familiarity with the humanist literary canon, Gournay sets out to argue not by reason or example but solely by recourse to the traditional authorities, basing her ideas on the testimony of the Bible, the Fathers of the Church (especially St. Paul, St. Jerome, and St. Basil), and the Ancients (Socrates, Plato, Tacitus, Plutarch).[6] This countercultural reading of a mainstream androcentric discourse is the hallmark of a deliberate attempt to appropriate that discourse for her own purposes, to situate herself within it, and hence subvert it from within: as she stipulated in 1641, in reacting against the tyranny of men, she aims to combat them with their own arms ("les combattre plustost par eux mesmes").[7] It also signals an awareness—that Suchon was later to point to explicitly, and that Agrippa had earlier upheld implicitly, long before the twentieth-century development of feminist philosophy or theology—that there is no one definitive, so-called correct, reading of any source, no matter how embedded traditional readings are in the propagation of received ideas.[8] However, it is worth noting that despite her intentions, wittingly or unwittingly Gournay in fact exploits all three common forms of argumentation, commenting towards the end on the examples, authorities, and reasons she has given ("exemples, authoritez et raisons nottés en ce discours"), which prove the equality of God's graces and favors to both sexes.[9] At any rate, for Gournay, as will be the case later for Suchon, use of example and authority are inextricably linked. Great care is frequently taken to indicate the authoritative classical source of her examples, rather than merely enumerating them as is frequently the case in the writings traditionally associated with the *querelle des femmes*, in a demonstration (however selective) of the space carved out for women in ancient societies, and in the writings of the Wise.

Gournay's driving point throughout the text, in different guises, is that the sexes are morally, spiritually, and intellectually equal.[10] The only difference she allows for is that of physical strength. In a fashion similar to Agrippa, Gournay uses the earlier version of the story of creation in Genesis I.26–27 to affirm that the human race was created in both male and female forms, eschewing the more popular story of Genesis II.22, according to which woman was created from Adam's rib. She posits that the human essence has no sex ("l'Animal-humain n'est homme ny femme" / "the human animal is

neither a man nor a woman") and that the two sexes are only different for the purposes of reproduction (adding the now oft-quoted "il n'est rien plus semblable au chat sur une fenestre, que la chatte" / "there is nothing more like a male cat on the windowsill than a female cat").[11] Seneca, Plutarch, and St. Basil are all marshalled to defend the idea of a basic human morality, which opposes a sexual differentiation of virtue, arguing respectively that men and women are endowed with the same strength and capacity in all matters *honnête* and commendable (Seneca); that men and women are of equal *vertu*, in the sense of bravery/courage (Plutarch); and that male and female *vertu* are the same, here understood, it would appear, in the sense of moral virtue (St. Basil).[12]

If the sexes are equal, so too should they occupy equal positions. Plato and Socrates are used to uphold a conception of society that attributes to both sexes the same rights, capacities, and functions ("mesmes droits, facultez et fonctions"),[13] before Gournay goes on to attack two of the bastions of patriarchy: marriage and the Church. In a profoundly radical step (given Bodin's influence, and the widespread acceptance of the marital governance model, as analyzed by Sarah Hanley), Gournay reinterprets the commonly quoted biblical declaration that a wife is to be submissive to her husband (Genesis III.16) by refusing to see in it an indication of male superiority: "si l'Escriture a declaré le mary, chef de la femme, la plus grande sottise que l'homme peut faire, c'est de prendre cela pour un passedroict de dignité" ("if the Scriptures declared that the husband is the head of his wife, it would be the greatest folly for men to understand that as an entitlement to dignity"). On the contrary, this declaration, she maintains, was only made to foster peace within marriage, a peace that required that one person yield to the other, since the weakness of human nature prevented the equal distribution of authority within the couple, which would have been the rational solution. In the absence of this rational "concord," the physical strength of the male ("la prestance des forces du masle") made it inconceivable for him to be the submissive party.[14] Gournay implies therefore that the power men now assume within marriage is an usurpation, a gross distortion of that which was originally authorized by the Bible.[15] Further biblical reinterpretation emerges in Gournay's criticism of the minor role accorded to women within the Church. That Saint Paul forbids them to be ministers and imposes silence on women in church[16] is turned to women's favor, and attributed not to contempt but rather to fear, in a comment that reveals an ideological blind spot concerning an assumed female

nature. The Apostle is motivated (she argues) by the fear that women would arouse temptation in their listeners by the public manifestation of their superior grace and beauty that their ministrations and preaching would involve.[17] Like Poulain after her, Gournay appears not to see any contradiction between her egalitarian discourse and the unequivocal acceptance of an essential female grace and beauty, seemingly oblivious to the idea that these are as much cultural constructions of gender as the putative female inferiority she refutes. Nonetheless, the argument *in toto* remains compelling. The example of Mary Magdalen, who preached throughout Provence, is a clear contradiction apparently of this rule of silence. Arguments in favor of women priests follow, drawing on custom—all the pre-Christian churches[18] allowed female priesthood—on the fact that even the Christian faith allows them to carry out the sacrament of baptism (and forbids them the other sacraments, in Gournay's opinion, for no other reason than to consolidate further male authority), and finally on the authority of St. Jerome. For the latter, biological sex should not be taken into account in the service of God, an idea that should be generalized, according to Gournay, to allow women access to all branches of knowledge and important fields of activity.[19] Through her appeal to these authorities, Gournay insists on the moral and psychological equality of the sexes. In her use of these traditional sources, it seems that Gournay contrives to read counterculturally, and reveals how the very bastions of male hegemony can be read in an alternative fashion. Of course, this is not always unproblematic, as in the case of Aristotle, for example, where she resorts to a rather awkward syllogism to appropriate his authority.[20]

Although arguments based on the light of reason in seventeenth-century feminism are most associated with the Cartesian Poulain de la Barre (as we shall see below), much of what is most radical in Gournay's text also hinges on ratiocination and logic. Firstly, by indicting popular opinion and hearsay for their role in the propagation of contempt for women, she questions attitudes toward the female sex that are based on social constructions rather than reason.[21] Secondly, she highlights the role of education in the maintenance of inequality. Rather than vaunting female intelligence, she points out, with irony, that it is astonishing that they manage to succeed at all given the poor education they receive. Furthermore, in querying whether gender inequality could not be erased by education, or whether women are not more like men of their own education, upbringing, and nationality than they are like other women,

Gournay hints at anthropological and sociological lines of enquiry, well ahead of her time.[22] Even more striking are the remarkably modern elements of a feminist theology. Firstly, she maintains that Jesus Christ was only male because of the historical timeframe into which he was born, since a woman would not have had the freedom of movement at the time to carry out the required mission.[23] Secondly, she argues that there is no reason to suggest that God is male: anyone who attributes a sex to God is as incompetent a philosopher as a theologian.[24] Finally, in her parting shot at the end of *Égalité*, the idea of male superiority is interpreted as nonsense, even as blasphemous: to maintain that woman is created in God's image, and is worthy of enjoying the benefits of the Eucharist, and the mysteries of redemption, of paradise and of the vision of God, and yet is deprived of the advantages of men, is to place men above God, and hence commit the greatest of blasphemies.[25] In the light of Gournay's logic, male supremacy is revealed as an absurdity.

With regard to female government, it is evident that all of these arguments profoundly affect the debate concerning women and government by destroying the basis of exclusionist argumentation. Firstly, to reveal male supremacy as absurd and blasphemous is to shake the very foundation of patriarchy. Secondly, to claim that men and women are morally and psychologically equal is to negate the exclusionist argument that women are inferior and therefore incapable of ruling. Furthermore, to portray the notion of a patriarchal dynamic within marriage as founded solely on physical strength, or failure to reason is to deflate the commonly used argument that as the father is the "natural" head of the family unit, so the king is the head of the State; the idea that authority is a male prerogative is negated therefore. Finally, to explore and defend the possibilities of female ordination is to explode the circular argumentation, seen in the politico-legal writings, that since women have no authority in the Church, that in itself is proof that they can have none within the state.

In addition to arguments that are implicitly relevant to the issue of female sovereignty, Gournay also explicitly discusses the question of government by women. The first reference to the question occurs in a discussion concerning moral equality where she appeals to the authority of Montaigne:

> Il luy semble, dit-il, et si ne sçait pourquoy, qu'il se trouve rarement des femmes dignes de commander aux hommes. N'est-ce pas les mettre

> en particulier à l'égale contrebalance des hommes, et confesser, que s'il ne les y met en general, il craint d'avoir tort?
>
> It seems to him, he says, although he knows not why, that one rarely finds women who deserve to command men. Is that not equivalent to making them equal to men as individuals and acknowledging that, if he fails to make the same claim in general terms, he is afraid of being mistaken?

Gournay seems to base her interpretation on a positive understanding of "rarement": the fact that women can *rarely* govern men implies that *occasionally* they can. Montaigne therefore is apparently placing individual women on an equal footing with men, and therefore admitting that he is afraid of being wrong if he does not put women in general on a par with men.[26] She further attenuates any negative implications by evoking immediately Montaigne's support of Plato's ideas on female authority and of Antisthenes' ideas on equal capacity and virtue.[27] Gournay's chief defense of female government comes in a later passage, however, where her argument, in sum, involves dismissing "Salic law" and marshalling examples of ancient peoples governed by women, drawn as always from classical authorities. Drawing attention to "Salic law" as peculiar to France, Gournay implicitly rejects it as the "universal" tenet it is often made out to be, and goes on to imply that it has no currency in contemporary society:

> elle n'a lieu qu'en France. Et fut inventée au temps de Pharamond, par la seule consideration des guerres contre l'Empire, duquel nos Peres secouoient le joug: le sexe feminin estant vray-semblablement d'un corps moins propre aux armes, par la necessité du port et de la nourriture des enfans.
>
> it [is] in force only in France and was instituted during the age of Pharamond exclusively in response to the wars against the empire, the shackles of which our forefathers cast off, because the female sex was probably less suited physically for battle, given the necessity of bearing and nourishing their children.[28]

"Salic law" then was invented uniquely because of political expediency—the demands of war at a particular historical conjuncture—on the basis that women were less suited to arms-bearing than men, due to their child-bearing function. Far from using the longevity of this law to support it, the implication is that it is now out of date or invalid. Men, by implication for Gournay, as Albistur and Armogathe point out, have turned to women's disadvantage decrees and laws that

originally had a precise aim and a limited application.[29] The inclusion of women in political power is a reality for Gournay, given the fact that the peeresses of France have the same privileges as the peers, a fact that we saw earlier (chapter 1) in the case of Mahaut d'Artois. Furthermore, she defends female military activity elsewhere in alluding to God's establishment of women as judges, teachers, and leaders of his people, in times of both war and peace (citing the biblical Huldah and Deborah as cases in point), and in evoking the examples of Judith and Joan of Arc as state saviors.[30] In favor of female government, Gournay evokes the idea that female regency has saved France in the past from ruination (another phenomenon that invalidates "Salic law"); that certain Germanic peoples were ruled only by women (Tacitus); and that the Lacedemonians consulted women on all public and private matters (Plutarch).[31] Her final refutations of "Salic law" focus on the roles given to women by the Carthaginians and the Gauls, the reference to "nos anciens Gaulois" highlighting the former political role given to women on the same French soil that now excludes them.[32] In the lexicon of oppression, evoking tyranny and usurpation, as will Suchon, Gournay sums up the exclusion of women from the most important prerogatives of human activity ("des meilleurs advantages") as male-instituted theft ("larcin"), based uniquely on the ignoble values of greater physical strength.[33] Given the context of her argument here, these prerogatives clearly include political authority by implication. What becomes a sense of personal grievance in her later text *Grief des Dames* is already palpable here as a marked sense of injustice.

It is worth noting here that Gournay also penned a type of manual for government in her "Adieu de l'âme du roy" (1626)—in itself based on a section of the earlier *Adieu, de l'âme du Roy de France et de Navarre Henry le Grand à la Royne* (1610)—in which the deceased king offers advice to Marie de Médicis on the art of ruling.[34] In addition to a discussion of prudence and justice, the text offers practical advice on issues such as managing subjects, avoiding court wranglings, promoting morality, maintaining authority. In the focus on statecraft, the queen by implication throughout the text is the "prince" although this is not explicit. Governance is not seen as a male prerogative; in fact, the widowed regent is now "Roy, Reyne et Pere et Mere" ("King, Queen, and Father and Mother"), who now embodies the prudence of both in government ("la prudence des deux en la conduitte des affaires").[35] Thus Gournay can be seen to sketch a portrait of the morally androgynous "complete prince" we have seen

elsewhere, outlining a vision of rulership that overrides the gendered distinction of virtues into predominantly "male" and "female" categories, and points to the necessary exercise of both.

Equality, Gynæcocracy, and Marguerite Buffet

While half a century separates Marie de Gournay from Poulain de la Barre, it would be a mistake to think that the idea of an intellectual equality between men and women disappeared from view. As we saw earlier, Le Moyne and Du Bosc among others use the Augustinian topos of the ungendered soul to support the idea of an ungendered mind. While Geneviève Fraisse was perhaps the first to suggest in 1985 that the well-known "l'esprit n'a point de sexe" ("the mind has no sex") was in fact "a common phrase at the time, intelligible to all,"[36] it was Linda Timmermans, more recently followed by Siep Stuurman, who highlighted the frequent appearance of the idea. The persistence in critical circles to frame the idea as a Poulain innovation suggests it is worth mentioning some of its occurrences again. For Norman lawyer Jean Auvray in 1630, "l'esprit des femmes [...] est de mesme sexe que celuy des hommes" ("the mind of a woman [...] is the same sex as that of a man"); in 1639, Grenaille posits that experience supports Seneca's suggestion that "[les esprits] sont tous d'un mesme sexe" ("minds are all of the same sex"). Other variations of the latter can be found in Fléchier, who, writing from Auvergne in 1665, alludes to an animated discussion about intellectual activity in general and the demonstration by numerous Parisian women that "l'esprit est de tout sexe"; in Donneau de Visé who follows suit in 1669 suggesting "l'esprit est de tout sexe et de tous âges," and in Mme de Pringy who echoes in 1694, "l'esprit est de tout sexe."[37] While it would be foolish to suggest that these comments necessarily point to a deep-rooted belief in equality for these authors, it would be equally foolish to dismiss them all as gallant formulations. What may be lip-service, for example, for the Abbé Cotin who echoes in 1663 Le Moyne's formulation that "les esprits n'ont point de sexe,"[38] is certainly not such for teacher and chemist Marie Meurdrac, who in the foreword to her chemistry book for women, *La Chymie charitable et facile en faveur des Dames* (1666), cites an belief in intellectual equality as one of the reasons she decided to publish her work. She convinced herself, apparently:

> Que les esprits n'ont pas de sexe, & que si ceux des femmes estoient cultivez comme ceux des hommes, & que l'on employast autant

> de temps & de dépense à les instuire, ils pourroient les égaler: que nostre siècle a veu naistre des femmes qui pour la Prose, la Poësie, les Langues, la Philosophie, & le gouvernement mesme de l'Estat, ne cedent en rien à la suffisance, & à la capacité des hommes.
>
> That the mind has no sex, and if women's minds were educated like men's minds, and as much time and money was spent on teaching women [as is spent on men], they could equal them; that our times have produced women who in no way lack the merit and capacity of men as regards prose, poetry, languages, philosophy, and even government of the State.[39]

As the adverb *même* implies, public government is perceived as the ultimate activity to which women can aspire, albeit the most difficult sphere to penetrate. What Meurdrac's comments also highlight is the interrelatedness of the *femme savante* and the *femme politique*: government is listed after literature, languages, and philosophy as an area in which women have excelled in her own century, in an implicit reference to the two queen regents. This is not to say, of course, that all *femmes savantes* have political skill or aspirations: the point is, quite simply as mentioned above, that many women in government were also frequently highly educated and cultivated women. Hence, although there is a move in the second half of the century towards catalogues of *femmes savantes* rather than *généreuses, héroïques*, or *illustres*, the female ruler does not disappear but continues to feature.

An interesting example in this regard, both in terms of a theorization of equality and the interrelatedness of the *femme savante* and the *femme politique* is Marguerite Buffet's *Éloges des illustres sçavantes* (1668). In the short defense of the female sex that precedes her catalogue of learned women, Buffet deploys traditional arguments that uphold the superiority of women (including the well-worn ideas concerning the order and matter of creation), and that laud their perfection and beauty. However, juxtaposed with this discourse—thus making of this text an important example of coexisting conflictual discourses—is a clear attempt to theorize equality. Here, intellectual equality is expressly represented as a consequence of theological equality:

> Les ames n'ayant point de sexe, il s'ensuit par consequent que la beauté de l'esprit ne connoist point cette difference d'homme et de femme, & qu'elle est sans difficulté l'apannage de l'un & de l'autre Sexe.
>
> Since the soul has no sex, it follows that the beauty of the mind knows no difference between man and woman, and that it is easily the prerogative of both sexes.

Like Gournay, the only difference she accepts is that required for the generation of the species ("l'entretien & conservation des especes"); like Gournay, although less cogently, she highlights how differences between individuals can be greater than differences between the sexes: "il n'y a pas plus de difference d'un sexe à l'autre, qu'il y en a souvent entre les individus en chacun sexe."[40] In her demonstration of female capabilities, underpinned by this belief in equality, Buffet's examples of learned women are consistently aligned with examples of politically astute women (often the same ones), thus implicitly framing exclusion from these two fields of activity as equally unjustifiable. Women have been praised in the works of the great historians (a comment that implies they do have a written history), for their Christianizing, their learning, and their government ("la conduite des Estats"), thus demonstrating that they are as capable of the most noble functions ("des plus nobles emplois") as men.[41] Politically astute women count among the learned that she is so keen to praise. In her evocation of the large number of "knowledgeable and courageous heroines" of ancient and modern history, she alludes to the range of roles played by women, appearing to distinguish between those who have governed with prudence and measure ("toute la prudence & la politique la mieux réglée"), others who have maintained their people in obedience, and others who introduced laws and prevented the ruination of their monarchies.[42] The examples are well-worn, the ones readers have come to expect: reference is made to Asian peoples (the Amazons) and Indian peoples as well as to the Lacedemoniens (following Gournay), before Buffet highlights the role women have played in France as regents, referring to the "twelve queens and two princesses" who ruled the country, specifically Adela of Champagne, Blanche of Castile, Anne of Brittany, and Catherine de Médicis. Later, it is Isabella Clara Eugenia of Spain and Margaret of Austria, duchess of Parma, who are singled out for praise of their political prudence, in overt borrowings from Hilarion de Coste.[43] In keeping with her valorization of the present is Buffet's first example in her catalogue of learned women. Here, in the telling choice of Queen Christina of Sweden as an *illustre savante*, Buffet reinforces the link between the spheres of learning and politics (wittingly or unwittingly). Praised for her intellect and wise government, this modern-day "Minerva" apparently continues to reign, despite her abdication, in all the courts of Europe where her maxims provide guidelines for good government and her royal virtues a model for all good rulers.[44]

Equality and Government by Women in Poulain de la Barre

The major milestone in seventeenth-century thought concerning the politics of equality can be found, of course, in the egalitarian writings of François Poulain de la Barre, *De l'Égalité des deux sexes* (1673), *De l'Éducation des dames* (1674), and *De l'Excellence des hommes* (1675).[45] As is now well-known, Poulain's novel leap is to apply Cartesian ideas to reveal systematically how the sexes are equal and how any would-be inequality is entirely grounded in ill-founded and irrational prejudice, in turn founded on custom and self-interest.[46] Furthermore, for Poulain, the prejudice embedded in received ideas concerning sexual inequality is at the foundation of all other prejudices and inequalities; hence, his project to unpick those received ideas becomes the basis of a whole new anthropology.[47] What is therefore crucial to his approach to "the woman question" is his awareness, and articulation, of its centrality to all philosophical debates: it is an issue with clear social, political, and theological implications that extend far beyond the debate concerning the nature and status of women.[48] The relevance of Poulain's argumentation to women's political role is implicit from the preface to *De l'Égalité des deux sexes* where he notes that there is greater inequality in the exercising of civil functions and those that concern the mind than in those related to physical strength.[49] While the entire thrust of his argument can be seen to undermine any justification of the exclusion of women from power, his approach also incorporates specific key areas of criticism that do so. Through his rejection of custom and natural law, of paradigms of male supremacy, of essentialisms as cultural constructions, and of any authority except that of reason, Poulain sketches his caustic critique of the deep-rooted androcentric bias in society that underpinned the exclusion of women from political authority. How radical this text was for its time is highlighted when we remember that his insistence on absolute equality in access to power was still far from accepted by his partisans in the early twentieth century.[50]

Although Poulain's ideas are by now well known to many, an overview of his main arguments, particularly as they pertain to government by women, may be useful for those less acquainted with his writing. Throughout his work, one of Poulain's *bêtes noires* is custom, which he indicts as founded on self-interested prejudice. Where for many jurists the fact that women had been traditionally excluded by custom from the throne is a powerful argument in itself, Poulain

rejects any blind acceptance of custom. Men have created false ideas about it, based on the assumption that all custom was originally founded on reason.[51] In fact much custom is entirely irrational, including by implication that which discriminates against women. Poulain specifically addresses the role of custom in the exclusion of women from active civil roles: while it would be surprising to see women act as lawyers, judges, professors, or army generals, such surprise would stem only from the novelty:

> J'avoue que cet usage nous surprendrait: mais ce ne serait que par la raison de la nouveauté. Si en formant les états et en établissant les différents emplois qui les composent, on y avait aussi appelé les femmes, nous serions accoutumés à les y voir, comme elles le sont à notre égard. Et nous ne trouverions pas plus étrange de les voir sur les Fleurs de Lys, que dans les boutiques.
>
> I admit that all that would surprise us, but only because it would be novel. However, if women had been admitted when the various states of the kingdom and the functions they exercise were established, we would be as used to seeing them in those offices now as they are to seeing us in them, and we would not find it any more unusual to see them as judges in the courts than as customers in shops.[52]

Male self-interest has ensured that custom remains unquestioned. Ill-founded custom has in turn led to the establishment, by men, of laws that clearly discriminate against women and reinforce male hegemony,[53] although juriconsults have interpreted these laws as a result and reflection of "nature," rather than of custom. Androcentric bias therefore is encoded and enshrined within the very laws themselves.

Rejection of universally accepted custom leads Poulain to provide an account of the origins of sexual inequality, that is to say, to sketch a hypothetical or conjectural history of humanity. From his description of the emergence of patriarchy, it is clear that Poulain sees it as founded on *rapports de force*: male authority is usurped authority.[54] Women have been subjugated by "la Loy du plus fort," and not because of any "natural" lack of ability or merit.[55] Contrary to the numerous justifications of patriarchy as natural, Poulain portrays it as completely *unnatural*.[56] Just as he questions the basis of gender-biased civil law, so too does he condemn the interpretation of natural law as a justification for gender inequality. Women's subjugation to their husbands by law, on the basis that it is natural, is perceived as

totally unjustified: most jurists according to Poulain would be at a loss to explain exactly what they mean by nature in this context, and furthermore they contradict themselves by arguing elsewhere that nature does not uphold any dynamic of domination: "ils reconnaissent eux-mêmes, que la dépendance et la servitude sont contraires à l'ordre de la nature, qui rend tous les hommes égaux" ("they themselves acknowledge that dependence and servitude are contrary to the order of nature, which makes all human beings equal").[57]

Learned opinion, like popular opinion, has upheld what he terms "ridiculous absurdities," since many great thinkers have founded their philosophies on popular prejudices, rather than reason.[58] The authority of the Ancients is dismissed as flawed, since subject to human error.[59] Adherence to these traditional classical authorities is based on blind imitation by the learned, who, like sheep and like slaves, follow the well-worn path of received ideas.[60] While keen to dismiss classical authorities, Poulain is clearly anxious however to retain biblical and patristic authority, and sets out through his feminist rationalistic hermeneutics, as Ruth Whelan has indicated, to "[appropriate] biblical authority as part of a critique of patriarchy."[61] The lengthy preface of *De l'Excellence des hommes* is devoted to a countercultural reading that rejects male-supremacist interpretations of the Bible. Following a reminder to the reader of patristic defenses of equality—where, as Stuurman points out, Poulain "short-circuits the distinction between the spiritual and the worldly realm that the Church fathers so carefully maintained"[62]—he sets out systematically to wrest Genesis from traditional misogynistic interpretations, including that of Saint Paul. Like many before him, he proposes feminist interpretations of the order and matter of creation, which refute Adam's supremacy. More original is the refutation of Genesis III.16 (which he quotes as "Vous serez sous la puissance de votre mari, et il dominera sur vous" / "you will be under the power of your husband and he will dominate over you") as mistranslated from the Hebrew in the Vulgate Bible, highly improbable (why would God reward Adam with domination over Eve when he had just sinned?), clearly partial (what about women who are not married, or queens who dominate over their male subjects?), and only explicable as a prophesy: since it cannot be interpreted as a positive law or a formal punishment, it is clearly the prediction of a misfortune ("la prédiction d'un malheur").[63] St. Paul's interpretation of Genesis as upholding female subordination is similarly called into question.[64] In sum, as Stuurman puts it, "Eve's seduction is relegated to the status of a historically contingent

event."[65] Finally, Poulain implicitly rejects the argument that male governance is natural given the putative hereditary generative power of the male seed, by appearing to uphold the scientific theories of ovism. Very recently elaborated at the time by Reinier de Graaf,[66] but portrayed in *De l'Excellence* as a widespread and well-accepted idea, male influence in generation is likened to "une simple pluie nécessaire à la terre pour faire germer la semence qu'elle renferme" ("mere rain, necessary for the earth in the germination of the seeds it contains"), an idea that not only attributes the principal generative role to the female, but also implicitly opposes an entire tradition of Aristotelian thinking.[67]

In parallel with his rejection of scholastic and patristic authorities, androcentric custom, and law, Poulain posits an unequivocal equality. The argument that the mind is ungendered ("l'esprit n'a point de sexe" / "the mind has no sex"), commonly in circulation as we saw, is vested here with the weight of Cartesian rationalist philosophy.[68] Once this premise is established, it follows that women, intellectually equal to men, are capable of appropriating all forms of knowledge, including in the areas of law and politics. Knowledgeable women are far from the exception.[69] Women's alleged incapacities, although accepted even by women themselves, are founded on prejudice and popular tradition.[70] Furthermore, the litany of stereotypical faults that allegedly characterize generic *woman* is constructed: according to Poulain, the faults of which women are often accused are imaginary or of little importance, stem from the education women are given,[71] or are based solely on the biased testimony of male authority.[72] Women then are either made to be incapable, or made out to be incapable. They are judged unfairly by what he calls the external conditions of their sex ("l'état extérieur de leur sexe"), a formulation that encapsulates succinctly the influence of gender difference on lived experience.[73] Crucially, codes of gendered virtues or sexual ethics are dismissed: natural virtue is the same for both sexes, since it involves behaving in accordance with reason. Furthermore, what is commonly regarded as virtue is culturally relative, and provides a false foundation for the deployment of societal double standards.[74]

If virtue is ungendered, sexual ethics a societal code, intellectual inequality a nonsense, and male domination a usurpation, there can be no justification, in Poulain's mind, for the exclusion of women from civil, political, and ecclesiastical positions in society. Women could be pastors and ministers, just as, if appropriately educated, they could be lawyers and professors.[75] Women and men are equally

capable of exerting authority since its exercise is entirely based on reason: "toute notre autorité naturelle se réduit au pouvoir de la raison, et appartient également aux deux sexes" ("all natural authority comes down to the power of reason, and belongs equally to both sexes").[76] Authority is necessary for the maintenance of a harmonious society: the sole aim of those in authority should be to use it to procure "le salut et l'avantage de ceux qui leur sont inférieurs" ("the safety and benefit of those who are its subjects"). Since women, he believes, are as capable of this as men are, there is no reason why men should not submit to women and indeed why men should not encourage those recalcitrant also to obey.[77] It follows, Poulain proceeds to argue, that there is no reason a woman cannot occupy a throne: in order to govern her people she could study their ways and customs, and make judicious appointments in both secular and ecclesiastical ranks. Interestingly, the gynæcocracy Poulain envisages is meritocratic (and hence revolutionary) on every level:

> Rien n'empêcherait qu'une femme ne fut sur un Trône, et que pour gouverner ses peuples, elle n'étudiât leur naturel, leurs intérêts, leurs lois, leurs coutumes, et leurs usages; qu'elle n'eut égard qu'au mérite dans la distribution des charges: qu'elle ne mit dans les emplois de la robe et de l'épée que des personnes équitables; et dans les dignités de l'Église que des gens de lumière et d'exemple.
>
> Nothing could prevent a woman from occupying a throne and, in order to govern her peoples, from studying their natural dispositions, interests, laws, customs, and practices. Nothing could prevent her from distributing offices on merit alone, from appointing only those who are suitable to offices in the army and the judiciary and only enlightened and exemplary people to offices in the church.[78]

The political activities required in government, such as discovering the strengths and weaknesses of a state and of its neighbors, establishing secret intelligence networks to foil inimical plans, keeping spies in all suspect areas, are within female capacities. Government requires the same *application* and *vigilance* that women bring to their management of the home and the convent. Here again, as we have seen elsewhere, the specific female propensity for the key political virtues of piety and *douceur* is evoked (an essentialism that appears to jar with Poulain's rationalist egalitarianism), with the addendum that women in power could therefore serve as models for their subjects. He concludes that since women are capable of exercising all public

authority as sovereigns, they are all the more capable of exercising it in subsidiary roles, as "Vice-reines, Gouvernantes, Secrétaires, Conseillères d'État, Intendantes des Finances" ("vice-regents, governors, secretaries, state counsellors or tax officials"),[79] in an useful reminder of some of the feminine nouns in circulation at the time.

His discussion of women's role in warfare is similar. Poulain sidesteps the usual argument concerning sexual difference and military virtue, avoiding all discussion of the physical aspects of battle, and concentrates instead on the intellectual activity required to analyze a map, lead a campaign, plan a strategy, or trick one's enemies.[80] Although his argument is not framed in terms of the common princely virtues of the "mirror for princes" literature, the thrust of the argument is the same, prioritizing intellectual and moral strength over physical force or skill. Furthermore he argues elsewhere, in a resounding rebuttal of the notion of sex-specific functions—traditionally constructed in a hierarchy unfavorable to women—that no position (*emploi*) is uniquely the prerogative of one or other sex: what is important is that one merits the position and does not abuse it.[81]

Poulain's approach differs radically from any of his contemporary pro-woman thinkers in his attitude towards historical example. While he evokes the fact that history is peppered with examples that can be used to demonstrate female capacities, including their ability to rule with wisdom and moderation,[82] more crucially he outlines how these examples do little to threaten the patriarchy. Even where women *have* exerted authority, Poulain sees it as underpinned by male interest. Those women who have governed states were for the most part not invited to do so but, rather, managed to manipulate matters so that their authority could not be wrested from them.[83] States that allow gynæcocracy originally did so to avoid civil war, and so female regency, far from being a major conciliatory gesture on the part of men, is allowed solely because of the queen's non-threatening role as mother:

> Il y a aujourd'huy des états héréditaires où les femelles succèdent aux mâles, pour être Reines ou Princesses; mais il y a sujet de croire, que si on a laissé d'abord tomber ces Royaumes-là en quenouille, ce n'a été que pour éviter de tomber en guerre civile; et si l'on a permis les Régences, on ne l'a fait que dans la pensée que les mères, qui aiment toujours extraordinairement leurs enfants, prendraient un soin particulier de leurs états, pendant leur minorité.

> There are hereditary states today in which women succeed men and become queens or princesses. Nonetheless, there is reason to believe that when women were allowed initially to rule these kingdoms, the only reason for doing so was to avoid civil war. Likewise, if regencies were tolerated, it was only because they believed that mothers, who always had such extraordinary love for their children, would take special care of their states during their children's minority.[84]

Historical examples do little then to mask the hidden gender inequalities of social structures, or the androcentric bias of society.

Poulain's innovation is obvious at every turn. And yet a fundamental ambiguity is apparent in the fact that despite his environmentalist psychology and his interpretation of so-called female characteristics as due to their "état extérieur," he nonetheless argues that women have numerous natural qualities and capacities that make them superior to men. In sum, despite the overarching egalitarian argument, the discourse of female superiority runs perceptibly through the three treatises. While this could be regarded as an effect of rhetoric,[85] it is also possible that the two discourses are not incompatible but hinge on a conceptualization of equality that promotes the notion of equivalence. Revalorizing the role women can play in society, as the earlier neo-Platonic writers had also done—because of a putative natural "civilising" irenical quality, due to their greater capacity for love, due in turn to the their child-bearing function—is not necessarily incompatible with a general sexual equality.[86] At any rate, it would seem that, on some level, these discourses that appear incompatible to a modern reader did not appear incompatible to the Early Modern mind, as remnants of the older, deep-rooted, tenacious discourse continue to surface in the elaboration of the innovative egalitarian theory.

Gabrielle Suchon: The Politics of Exclusion

While Poulain's influence has been the subject of much speculation, there can be no doubt of the positive reception he received from his successor Gabrielle Suchon, whose *Traité de la Morale et de la Politique* (1693) reveals her to be a keen follower of his ideas. However, Suchon's approach is radically different from Poulain's: there is no explicit discussion concerning equality quite simply because it is taken as an undeniable truth that brooks no discussion. First highlighted by Pierre Ronzeaud in 1975, after three centuries

of neglect,[87] Suchon's work has attracted increasing critical attention over the last thirty-five years. Ronzeaud's original hope that his exchange of ideas with Paul Hoffmann concerning her would contribute to bringing this female voice out of "the darkness of oblivion where male readings have kept her"[88] would seem to have been fulfilled by the slow but steady stream of articles concerning her work, together with the partial editions of her work in French, and more recently of extracts in English.[89] While much of the attention has focused on Suchon's second treatise, *Du Célibat volontaire ou la vie sans engagement* (1700),[90] or on her life and the reception of her work,[91] key concerns of the *Traité* have been highlighted by Michèle Le Dœuff, Elsa Dorlin, Linda Timmermans, and Cecilia Nubola.[92] Yet, on the whole and with the exception of a chapter by Le Dœuff,[93] inadequate attention has been given to the third, and most radical, volume of the *Traité* on authority.

First published in 1693 in Lyons at the author's expense, and issued again in Paris the following year,[94] the *Traité* runs to over 600 pages and is clearly written both *by* a woman (a fact she announces in the "Préface générale," thus indicating that the use of a pseudonym is certainly not an attempt to hide her sex), and *for* women. Unlike earlier egalitarian thinkers, Suchon's focus is not on the equality of the sexes, which she takes as an indisputable fact, nor on any would-be female nature, but rather on the deprivation(s) suffered by women. Each part of the text, as the full title indicates,[95] concentrates on one of the three principal values (*biens*) of which women have been deprived: freedom, knowledge, and authority, a triptych consistently juxtaposed by Suchon with its antithesis, characteristic of women's fate: "la contrainte, l'ignorance et la dépendence" (constraint, ignorance, and dependence). The novelty and originality of this approach cannot be underestimated since it makes of the text, as Stanton and Wilkin point out, one of the earliest discourses on rights.[96] For Suchon, access to freedom, knowledge, and authority is a birthright given by God to all humankind: to deny an individual this birthright is to deny them the essence of their humanity.[97] A corollary difference in her approach is the move away from virtue to freedom as an organizing principle for her ideas,[98] although as we will see, classical virtue ethics continue to inform much of the discussion on authority. Inherent in Suchon's analysis is a theorization of female oppression, and hence a desire to create a new knowledge, as Le Dœuff has indicated—a knowledge *for* women, and that can only come *from* women, since only they are cognitive in the matter.[99] In parallel with her

analysis of female privations, what Le Dœuff calls her "metaphysics of privation,"[100] Suchon sets out to demonstrate female capacity for freedom, knowledge, and authority, since it is only if the subject is capable of the *bien* in question that its absence can be qualified as a privation. This is her two-pronged approach in her theorization of female oppression: to both "publier leurs loüanges [ainsi que parler] de leur abaissement" ("to sing their praises [as well as to speak of] their debasement"), to analyze simultaneously "leur misère et leur mérite" ("their misery and their merit").[101]

While the demonstration of female merit might seem to be redolent of earlier pro-woman works—Suchon mentions the "entire volumes" of her time devoted to exemplary women, indicating that her own examples will be "in a shortened form" ("en abrégé")[102]—her text bears little resemblance to that literature. She does demonstrate however similarities with Gournay and Poulain, crucially the vivid experiential sense of injustice evident in Gournay,[103] the indictment of received ideas and prejudice evident in Poulain, and the skeptical rejection of custom evident in both and indeed in the earlier Agrippa. However, her method of argumentation, drawing as she stipulates "on good and solid reasons, on authorities and on examples,"[104] differs considerably from that of Poulain. Like Gournay, Suchon appropriates, and hence situates herself within, a paradigm of male hegemonic discourse, drawing on both Ancients and Moderns, in her use of scriptural, patristic, classical, and modern writings.[105] In this countercultural reading of traditional sources, which Suchon explicitly justifies,[106]—one that is not always unproblematic, to say the least—the two female thinkers can be seen to participate in the creation of an alternative female tradition of interpretation, a pro-woman hermeneutics.

The third volume of the *Traité* on authority, containing twenty-three chapters, focuses on the exclusion of women from political and ecclesiastical governance. As is the hallmark of her twofold approach, Suchon analyzes the great advantages that can spring from the exercise of authority—therefore indicating how women are disadvantaged in being excluded from that privilege—as well as how women have the capacity to govern: "elles ne manquent ni de prudence, ni de conseil, ni de force pour gouverner, regler et conduire les Estats & les Republiques" ("they lack neither prudence, counsel nor strength to govern, control and lead states and republics").[107] Key to her approach is the discussion of dependence: it is bad enough for

women to be excluded from authority but it is their deliberate subjection to its very opposite—the corollary dependence—that makes it profoundly unjust and unbearable.[108] Government involves the administration of justice—the greatest virtue, highest honor, and a crucial way of influencing people's lives for the better. To be excluded from it, *and* to be subjected to its worst abuses, is the ultimate privation. As we will see, her treatment of the Gordian knot of exclusion and dependence is framed within a corrosive attack on the hidden mechanisms of patriarchy.

Throughout the volume, Suchon devotes the greater part of each chapter to abstract philosophical argument, before turning to the implications of that argument for women.[109] In order to highlight the gravity of the deprivation of women of any authority, it is necessary to demonstrate the value of the latter, just as earlier the value of freedom and knowledge as fundamental elements of human experience had been demonstrated. According to Suchon, who echoes the political theories of divine right theorists from Bodin to Bossuet, monarchy is divinely established, since it is necessary to have on earth powers that represent God's own, and it was God's will to create a hierarchy of authority.[110] Since it would be impossible for people to live in harmony together without a sovereign power to guide them, it follows that the institutions of government (be they "monarchies, principalities, or republics") are sustained by natural law.[111] Given that both ecclesiastical and secular hierarchies were established by God, authority is both "un bien et un honneur" ("an advantage and an honor").[112] To be deprived of it is not only to be bereft of honor and power, but, worse, to be deprived of many ways of doing good, and hence of serving God and one's neighbor—a point to which Suchon repeatedly returns.[113]

Some of the power ("une partie du pouvoir") exercised by men, Suchon argues, is not legitimately theirs, and the usurpation is sustained by force of custom rather than equity. Originally when God created man and woman, equal power was given to both over the earth, sky, and sea, and the command to subdue the earth was equally addressed to both Adam and Eve:

> Et son commandement de remplir la terre & de l'assujettir, fut pour Eve aussi-bien que pour Adam, à qui le Seigneur donna une compagne & une associée, & non pas une servante ni une esclave, parce que la différence n'est qu'aux Sexes & non pas aux Esprits, *qui sont un et le même en nôtre Seigneur*, comme nous l'apprend le grand Apôtre.

> And his commandment to fill the earth and subjugate it was as much for Eve as for Adam, to whom the Lord gave a companion and an associate, and not a servant nor a slave, since the only difference is between the [physical] sexes and not between the minds, *who are one and the same in our Lord*, as the great Apostle teaches us.[114]

Like her predecessors who shifted seamlessly from *âme* (soul) to *esprit* (mind), Suchon uses arguments that support (relatively) undisputed spiritual equality—all individuals are equal in the eyes of God—in her defense of an essential intellectual equality. Furthermore, just as Poulain presented patriarchy as unnatural, Suchon equates inequality with disorder, saying of men and women:

> N'ont-elles pas le même Dieu, une vie & société égale, l'esperance de la felicité future, & la crainte des supplices éternels, & le souverain Maître ne les a-il [sic] pas associées dans la conduite & la superiorité de l'Univers[?] Mais cét ordre est tellement renversé qu'en quelque manière que l'on considère les femmes, on les trouve toûjours dans l'abaissement & dans la dependance.
>
> Have they not the same God, an equal life and society, the hope of future happiness, and the fear of eternal torment? Did the sovereign Master not unite them in the governing and the superior roles of the universe? But this order has been so overturned that whatever way one views women, their situation is always one of debasement and dependence. [115]

The egalitarian relations of pre-civil society have been rejected in favor of an unnatural hierarchy. In a reversal of the common *monde à l'envers* ("world upside-down") topos, Suchon (like Poulain) sees the present order as "à l'envers."

If men and women are equal, what has led to their unequal treatment and position in society? How, in other words, has the androcentrism, which began with male usurpation of power, been sustained? In indirectly answering this question throughout her text, Suchon not only engages in an indictment of patriarchy but simultaneously indicates how female exclusion from authority is unnatural, and is constructed and maintained by male injustice. In her version of conjectural history, she argues that those who couldn't tolerate equality undertook to command others whom they surpassed in strength and valor ("les uns impatiens de l'égalité entreprirent de commander aux autres qu'ils surpassoient en force & en valeur").[116] With a passing reference to Poulain, Suchon argues that no "solid reasons" are ever furnished

in support of women's so-called inferiority, which instead is taken as an accepted given—a common topos in popular discourse. The mere mention of the female sex is provided as proof that women should be excluded from government, since the common understanding of what woman *is* (in other words, what we would call today the social construction of woman) is incompatible with *la prudence, la subtilité, la solidité, la force*. The implication is that good government requires certain qualities that are made out to be of male preserve, and beyond the reach of women. Such an idea, according to Suchon, is untenable, when one considers the successful female rulers of the past and the state-saving women of the Bible, those who pacified and united torn countries.[117] (Her argument implies a gendered irenic role for many women, on which more below.) The sometime difficulty in appropriating scripture for her purposes is evident here when the verse used to support the idea of female peacemaking and hence state-saving is "que la colère n'a point été créée avec le Sexe des femmes, & que la femme vertueuse est l'ornement de sa maison" ("anger was not created with the female sex, and the virtuous woman is the ornament of her house")—a amalgam of truncated verses from Ecclesiasticus 10.22 and 26.21, which clearly fails to support her argument.[118] On surer ground are her many denunciations of the double-edged sword of male domination, such as when she rails against the double injustice inherent in the presentation of a false rationale for exclusion, and the push to accept that false rationale as a natural fact:

> L'on n'est pas encore satisfait de les priver [...] de la vertu et du courage: mais l'on veut absolument qu'elles croyent que c'est avec justice qu'on les traite de la sorte, à cause qu'elles n'ont que de l'insuffisance au lieu des grandes qualitez que doivent avoir les personnes qui manient les affaires de la Republique.
>
> It is not enough that they be deprived of [...] virtue and courage, but the desired aim is that they believe that such treatment is justifiable, on the basis that they are inadequate in the great qualities which those dealing with the affairs of the republic should have.[119]

Not only are women excluded but they are made to believe that that exclusion is just and reasonable, under the pretext that they are inessentially inadequate beings. Also a target of criticism is the hypocrisy and *mauvaise foi* that underpins the (male) argument that to exclude women from power is to protect them from "the vagaries, disparities & ingratitude of peoples" ("caprices, bigearreries & ingratitudes

des peuples"), an argument dismissed as a pathetic attempt to console them in their "weak and lowly destiny" ("foible & rempante [sic] destinée").[120] Furthermore, Suchon roundly denounces the notion of women ruling by their beauty as a poor consolation that merely fosters their position as objects of the male gaze.[121] Perhaps the greatest indictment of the hidden springs of patriarchy—one that is not new, but which is particularly succinctly framed here—is her analysis of the nature of the vicious circle in which women are trapped, as she points out the causal link between deprivations: deprivation of freedom and knowledge serves as the reason and principle behind depriving women of authority:

> L'on peut dire que [...] cette privation [de l'Autorité & du Gouvernement], non seulement est aussi grande que les deux autres, mais encore qu'elle leur sert de cause & de principe: parce que les hommes ne privent les personnes du beau Sexe des deux premiers avantages, que pour les empêcher de prétendre au troisiéme.
>
> It is clear that this privation [of authority and government] is not only as great as the other two, but furthermore it provides them with a grounding principle, since men only deprive persons of the fair sex of the first two advantages in order to prevent them aspiring to the third.[122]

While the implication that men deliberately exclude women from freedom and knowledge so as to exclude them from power can be traced back to at least Martin Le Franc and his sixteenth-century successors, as pointed out above, it is less commonly found in such an explicit formulation in the seventeenth century.[123] This implication that the entire devaluing process ("processus de dévalorisation"), as Ronzeaud puts it, aimed at keeping women in a state of inferiority is linked to a political project of male domination is a key axis on which much of the ideological power of the text hinges.[124] Exclusion from freedom and knowledge makes it easier for men to keep women in their state of dependency, a state that is allegedly "natural," as the fact that it has never changed over the centuries apparently indicates. The speciousness of this reasoning is also quickly pinpointed, with a direct replica of Poulain's argument. Of course laws and customs have never been changed to alter women's condition—it is not in men's interest to do so:

> les hommes sont juges & parties en cét article, comme en tous les autres qui regardent la conduite des femmes, & quelques injustes que soient leurs causes ils n'ont garde de se condamner eux-mêmes.

> Men are judges and litigants in this instance, as in all others which concern the behavior of women, and however unjust their cause they refrain from reproving themselves.[125]

Even those who acknowledge the capacities of many women to rule, and to fulfil all sovereign functions, avoid voicing a consensus on the issue.[126] Furthermore, it is hardly surprising that women have ruled solely in hereditary monarchies, and have never had any authority in elective forms of government, since the latter are also controlled by men, "instituées & soûtenuës par l'élection & par les brigues de ceux du premier [Sexe]" ("established and sustained by the election and by the plotting of the first sex").[127]

The same principle applies to laws and lawmaking, Suchon argues. The fact that no city or kingdom is governed by laws written by women is not an indication of incapacity but again male-instigated dependence, since men have not been as *juste* and *raisonnable* as Plato, who would have involved women in both governing and making laws.[128] There is no female tradition of lawmaking, and even if there were, it would not be taken seriously by men.[129] Forcefully arguing for the necessity to change ill-conceived tyrannical laws, since circumstances change and since human judgment can be flawed, Suchon also demonstrates clear awareness of the double injustice of the legal system: not only are women excluded from the good and honor of lawmaking—one of the highest activities of the human mind, in her eyes—but they are also made to comply with the most severe of laws,[130] and laws that have been deliberately introduced against them.[131] There is no veiling the profound sense of resentment as she fulminates that men would rather let women die rather than change or annul the least law or political ruling in their favor.[132]

This resentment is brought to the fore in a caustic later chapter entitled "De l'aversion des Supérieurs," a chapter marked initially, in my opinion, by the corrosive "unsaid" of which Pierre Ronzeaud spoke,[133] but that moves to an overt justification of resentment, and a bitter railing against the imposed silence that shrouds sexual injustice. Despite the fact that dependence is overt and widespread, nonetheless the severity ("la rigueur") and inequality with which women are treated has to be buried in a profound silence, she argues. Resentment and aversion must never be spoken of because although entirely justified, no one would agree, since "leurs Juges sont leurs parties, leurs Maîtres & leurs Supérieurs" ("their judges are their litigants, their masters and their superiors").[134] The portrait of the relations between the sexes is bleak: male opposition to female "advancement

and happiness" is presented as proof that their love is never pure (*véritable*), but is based on utility, pleasure, and self-interest; male attentions are frequently false and merely signal contempt, while women's attitude to men can never be devoid of resentment, since men deprive them of so many benefits.[135] If resentment is justified, however, and if silence is unfair, Suchon ultimately recommends the latter. In the following chapter entitled "Murmure entre les égaux" ("Protestations Among Equals")—this last word telling in itself—Suchon argues that women, thanks to their natural intelligence and divine grace, manage to overcome their animosity, to the overall benefit of society.

Although most of Suchon's argumentation focuses on analyzing the mechanics of exclusion and dependence, and the corollary fundamental injustice, two chapters are devoted to a discussion of female capabilities and virtues in government, and to the presentation of examples. Early on in the text, Suchon draws a distinction between ecclesiastical and secular authority. Exclusion from the ruling authorities of the Church (which, unlike Gournay, she does not question) is one of the greatest deprivations for women, she argues—an exclusion that she sees as solidly rooted in (and therefore authorized by) divine law, as revealed in Scripture.[136] The support of this privation by divine law is solely attributed to their biological sex, however, and not to any inherent intellectual inability or moral weakness, as past examples prove.[137] On the other hand, in the case of secular authority, there is no basis for the exclusion of women. The examples of Deborah, Jahel, and Judith indicate how it is untenable to maintain that women are excluded from secular government by divine law. Nor can one hold that they are excluded by civil law, since a princess who is sovereign by birth remains sovereign and does not lose her royal authority upon marriage.[138] Any authority her husband might have is always dependent on, and subject to, hers, and any element of his administration that is contrary to her wishes can be revoked and cancelled. Examples of this include Mary Stuart and Mary Tudor, who despite her marriage with Philip II of Spain "always retained the primary and sovereign authority." Numerous other examples, apparently, indicate how women have governed with sovereignty and without submission to male power.[139] This argument refutes (at least, theoretically) the commonly held opinion in exclusionist discourse that queens cannot hold any public authority over their husbands, since within the private marital model they can have no authority. For Suchon, queens-regnant do maintain their own authority and are

not subject to their husbands. While this was indeed legally the case, some readers may not have found either example of female authority, Mary Stuart or Mary Tudor, particularly convincing, given the received ideas concerning both.[140]

Arguments demonstrating female capacity for government, which appear throughout the text, are repeatedly situated within a framework of classical political ideas. Most significant is the explicit accommodation of women within Aristotelian thought, implicitly challenging his denial of female capacity for *phronesis*, as Pizan and others had done before her. Rather than disagree with the philosopher's pronouncements concerning women elsewhere, Suchon focuses on his ideal of good government, and on the prerequisite moral and intellectual virtues of *esprit* and *prudence*, casting these as androgynous qualities, as "natural" in women as in men. Only the exercise of authority is lacking to them. Ability to govern is not gender-specific: many men agree that their own sex often falls short in this regard. According to Suchon, male ability to govern is not a natural given, but rather the product of education. If women had the same education, they would demonstrate the same ability.[141] What underpins all of this argumentation, as in Poulain's, is a refusal to accept as "natural" what is in fact socially and politically constructed.[142]

Chapter 10, entitled "Les femmes sont capables de gouverner" ("Women Are Capable of Governing"), and the first of the two chapters devoted explicitly to gynæcocracy, involves taking a classical expression of the equal capacity for virtue of men and women, and applying it to government. Drawing on Seneca's expression of women's ability to equal men in "To Marcia on Consolation," Suchon firstly uses the Stoic as a springboard to reiterate the idea that the only difference between the sexes is biological.[143] Seneca's words imply, she argues, that women have a rational soul, an intelligent mind, and a sovereign will just as much as men, since the only difference God established was physical and not of the soul or the mind. It follows that the exclusion of women from authority has nothing to do with ability, and everything to do with manmade laws and customs. She then proceeds to demonstrate an alignment between the prerequisite qualities for government and those women can embody (according to Seneca), in sum to demonstrate female capacity for political virtue, positing that the three qualities the Stoic attributes to women are the most necessary for successful government. Firstly, Seneca's advocacy of *puissance libre* in women is seen to manifest itself in the qualities of intelligence (which allows them to understand matters

necessary and useful for governing), prudence (which helps them rule with justice and order), and reason (which guides them in negotiating difficult situations where public safety might be threatened).[144] The example of the biblical Sara is presented as the ultimate proof of divine approval for female government, while Judith and an Amazon queen who challenged Alexander the Great (apparently drawn from Vincent de Beauvais) are praised for their subtle reasoning and wisdom.[145] Throughout this chapter and the next, considerable space is given to examples, each presented in some detail—a reminder of the traditional aspect of Suchon's argumentation. The second requirement for those in government is the strength and courage to execute their plans. Here, Seneca's earlier comments on moral strength are combined with scriptural defense of strength in women (Proverbs 31.17), to frame a defense of female courage and military strength, which is some distance from the original quotations. The examples of Deborah, Semiramis, and Tomyris all point to female ability in warfare, specifically within the context of their rulership. Suchon doesn't engage with earlier constructions of "male" or "female" virtue, and its seemliness or unseemliness, in relation to military prowess, but concentrates quite simply on presenting the successes of these rulers. The final quality that Seneca's remarks point to—what she refers to as "la patience & générosité dans le travail & la douleur" ("patience and nobility in toil and suffering")—is interpreted by Suchon as a type of stoic constancy, or *patience généreuse*, which enables rulers to deal with the trials and tribulations of fortune and adversity. In her eyes, "l'on pourroit dire avec beaucoup de raison que ceux qui ne sçavent pas endurer ne sçavent pas régner" ("it is very true to say that those who cannot endure cannot reign")—an interesting twist on the more common "Qui ne sait pas dissimuler ne sait pas régner" ("they who cannot dissimulate cannot reign"). Here the examples of Clotilde, Amalasuntha, and Zenobia are used to demonstrate how women faced adversity in their lives and in their government, although countless other examples, apparently, could be furnished.[146] Thus far, the portrait that emerges is of the ideal ruler as prudent, just, moderate in behavior, victorious in war, and constant—a direct copy of the Platonic model that we saw earlier, highlighting prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude.[147] Like other ideologists of female authority, Suchon's interest lies in demonstrating female capacity to fulfil that model. It is not coincidental that throughout her demonstration, and in a fashion similar to other female writers before her such as Scudéry and Guillaume, Suchon

does not frame any of these women as "male." Her emphasis is on a human androgynous morality.

Added to this Platonic portrait is a valorization of *douceur* as a specifically female advantage in government, which Suchon returns to implicitly and explicitly on a number of occasions. Key remarks regarding sovereign–subject relations, which take on particular significance with regard to gynæcocracy, are dotted throughout the text. In a chapter devoted to examining how the advantages of hierarchical human relations, domestic and political, are founded on love and affection rather than hatred and resentment, our philosopher argues that it was a maxim among the Ancients that a long reign hinged on the affection and goodwill of the people rather than on defense. Love between "masters" and 'subjects" is "useful and profitable." The portrait of Pulcheria presented is precisely that of the "complete prince" we have identified elsewhere, a ruler who, according to Suchon, stunned her entourage with her intelligent mind, her solid judgment, her prudent counsel, and her unmatched ability to win over the hearts of her subjects. The collective happiness of the subjects of any regime depends on the "debonnaireté, douceur & modération" of their ruler.[148] Although these remarks are not made with regard to women, the link is made explicit elsewhere. According to Suchon, Seneca maintains that those of a gentle and humane mindset are more fit to govern than those with proud and untamable courage. Now while this statement is ungendered in itself in the original source, Suchon is quick to point out how it is clearly advantageous to women, since their minds are more gentle ("plus doux & plus debonnaire") than those of men.[149] Earlier in the text, similar qualities are attributed to them. In Chapter 7, devoted to civil harmony, Suchon examines the role of the ruler and the good she or he can do for their people. Peace is the most desirable state for any country and there can be no greater honor for anyone than to work towards the good and happiness of their subjects. Here, the natural predisposition of many women equips them for a public role: countless women, apparently, are moved by a "propensity to peace and mercy" ("[une] inclination pacifique & miséricordieuse"), which can be instrumental in procuring peace and tranquility in any society.[150] Similarly, in terms of societal dynamics, a happy and healthy society depends on human communication, exchange, and friendship, as Suchon develops at length in the following chapter on human society, drawing largely on Aristotle. Again, most women are well placed to facilitate this healthiness, since, with some exceptions, friendship and tenderness come naturally to them;

it is they who make society pleasant.[151] In sum, like the more traditional pro-woman writers examined in chapter 2 above, and like Poulain, Suchon's argument appears to be underpinned by both a defense of a moral equality between the sexes, an equal capacity for specific intellectual virtues key to government, *and* a celebration of a specifically female "nature," in her framing of *douceur* as a political virtue that many women embody. Interestingly, however, this apparent contradiction is less unsettling than elsewhere, precisely because of Suchon's frequent qualifier that her remarks are relevant to *many* women (and therefore, by implication, not *all*).

Suchon's second chapter devoted to gynæcocracy (Ch. 11) opens with two crucial points concerning female governance, before devoting itself to examples. Firstly, she argues that gynæcocracy, just like male monarchy, is founded in natural law, which in turn draws on divine law. In other words, it is the institution of hereditary monarchy that is important, not which sex rules. Secondly, she points out that gynæcocratic states are in the majority in Europe, and that in many cases this custom is founded on the divine injunction that God gave to Moses: "If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter" (Numbers, 27.8)—a biblical verse frequently cited by opponents of male-only succession laws. Elective monarchies clearly are an exception, as too is France, bound by "Salic Law." Like Gournay, Suchon mistakenly attributes this law to Pharamond, whom she argues was motivated by the fear of foreign influence—a common argument in the "Salic law" defenses of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, as we saw in chapter 1 above—and by the idea that something unique in the French psyche (as opposed to that of the rest of Europe) cannot tolerate female domination, a variation of Jean Du Tillet's idea on French *magnanimité* that continues to surface. Just a few lines earlier, in the final paragraph of the previous chapter, Suchon, like Gournay, evokes the example of the Gauls, highlighting the role women played as arbitrators of all disputes, and in managing affairs in times of both war and peace, the Gaul that is now called France.[152] Given the fact that "Salic law" is unique to France, the juxtaposition of the present and past roles attributed to women tacitly highlights the significant discrepancy between the two.

Although to a modern reader it is Suchon's reasoning that is most striking in her argumentation, she herself attaches considerable importance to her examples, unsurprisingly for the time; so while all her arguments, apparently, should be sufficient to silence

women's detractors ("pour imposer silence à tous ceux qui travaillent à l'abaissement du Sexe")—significantly, an attempt to silence the silencers, and let the silenced speak—she opts to devote a further chapter entirely to examples to prove beyond doubt that the so-called inability of women to govern is "an invented fiction."[153] That her examples are drawn from "all the nations of the world" points to a desire to highlight the cultural relativity and contingency of male-only government. Isis of Egypt, Tanaquil of Rome, Parysatis of Persia, Mavia queen of the Saracens, Artemisia of Caria (an amalgam of Artemisia I and II apparently, after Boccaccio), together with the sixteenth-century governors of the Spanish Netherlands are all evoked, in a testament to the enduring power of the catalogue of illustrious women, inherited from the Renaissance and common in the defense of women literature we saw above (chapter 2). As warriors, Plutarch's women of Argos are evoked, Diodorus' Gordons of Lybia, and above all the Amazons—the epitome of all that is great in politics and in warfare in their intelligence, prudence, strength, courage, and fearlessness, fine examples that are authentic, Suchon argues, despite appearing extraordinary, since they figure in the writings of several trustworthy authors ("plusieurs Auteurs dignes de foy").[154] More noteworthy than her choice of examples (all very common) is this repeated insistence on her use of traditional sources for those examples. Just as Suchon maintains that her arguments are unassailable since they concur with those of so many learned authorities, so too does she use the very commonality of her examples as an asset: all the "great men" who have evoked them in the past can't be wrong. A clear attempt to demonstrate a scholastic paratextual network, key to her method, is evident in the numerous marginal references to her biblical and ancient sources, although these references are not always entirely accurate, nor is every source identified, and her account of her use of sources is somewhat ambiguous.[155] The volume ends with a powerful résumé of all her arguments in favor of gynæcocracy. It can never be demonstrated, she argues, that women cannot govern, since they harbor the same good sense, subtlety of mind, judgment, and prudence as men. All that excludes them from political authority is entirely manmade:

> L'on est contraint de tomber d'accord qu'elles n'ont point d'autre défaut qui les empêche de regner, de gouverner, de commander et de conduire que celui qui leur impose la Coûtume, les Loix & le pouvoir absolu des hommes.

> there can be no disagreement that they have no other flaw that prevents them from reigning, governing, commanding and leading than that which Custom, Law and male absolute power imposes on them.[156]

If the discourse on female superiority is what seems most ambiguous in Poulain's thought, in Suchon's work there is a different fundamental ambiguity, at least on first appearance: namely the tensions evident in her refusal to condemn outright the patriarchal hierarchy. In her discussion of domestic dependence (Ch. 16), Suchon explicitly disagrees with Poulain's interpretation of Genesis 3.16 to opt for the traditional male-supremacist reading.[157] She explicitly upholds the idea that man was created superior to woman: while she rails against dependence, she unequivocally states that it is just. At first glance, these declarations may seem difficult to reconcile with her criticism of enforced dependence. In fact, the key is a crucial distinction she makes between divinely decreed power and its abuse or misuse: "Si ceux du premier Sexe [...] s'étoient conformez aux intentions de Dieu [...], celles du second n'auroient pas sujet de se plaindre de leur dependance" ("If those of the first sex had complied with God's intentions [...], those of the second would have no reason to complain about their dependence.")[158] The hierarchy (or in this case patriarchy) is in its origins just, but man has abused God's order and has transformed it into tyranny. Throughout the five chapters devoted to dependence—the painful and humiliating corollary of the privation of authority—Suchon returns repeatedly to the issue of the unsuitability and inadequacy of those in positions of power, which is what makes the state of dependence unbearable. In theory, she does not object to the workings of a just patriarchy. However, what she implies throughout the treatise is that, in practice, there is no such thing as just patriarchy since the workings of patriarchy are inextricable from the abuse of power, given the flaws of human nature.

A similar crucial nuance underpins her remarks concerning obedience to the *reasonable* exercise of power. Women owe submission to men, according to Suchon, only when the latter are guided by reason. While St. Augustine advocates female submission to men, Suchon is quick to use another of his own arguments to nuance this idea: elsewhere Augustine argues that men, in governing well, should be guided by reason ("les hommes, pour bien gouverner, ne doivent agir que par raison"). By implication, Augustine is highlighting,

she argues, how men only deserve to be called such to the extent that they are humane and reasonable, and that dependence is due to them only in matters that are just and justifiable ("les choses justes & bien ordonnées").[159] She later rails against the popular opinion which holds that the very fact of being a women means that one is obliged to obey men without distinction or discernment, since the latter don't know, or don't want to know, that women only owe them submission or obedience in matters that are just and reasonable ("les choses justes & raisonnables").[160] Given the fact that the implication throughout "De l'Autorité" is that men are frequently *not* guided by reason in their exercise of power and their exclusion of women from authority, it follows then that they are frequently not owed submission at all.

It is in the light of this ambiguity (deliberately cultivated, I would argue) that the conciliatory protestations of the preface and forewords, on which critics frequently remark, need to be read. Indeed, it is hardly by chance that Suchon's most conciliatory remarks come in these peritextual passages, to which one could add the subtitle of Part 3: "De l'Autorité. Les femmes en peuvent estre participantes sans s'éloigner de la soumission qu'elles doivent à ceux du premier Sexe" ("On authority. Women can share in it without neglecting the submission they owe the first sex"). It is highly possible that there is a deliberate attempt here—in these passages likely to be read first—not to alienate a conservative readership, and to present a less radical approach than that which in fact marks much of the treatise.[161] Suchon's insistence on female submission, for example, in the foreword to "De l'Autorité"—where she maintains that she does not aim to convince women that they could aspire to government, which would be folly, but merely to raise morale as they obey all men who have power over them—sounds a deeply ironic note in the light of later comments on submission. Furthermore, submission to all men is not what she advocates in the preface where she specifies that male respect is owed to all those who are truly men ("veritablement des hommes")—a crucial addendum. While she defines true men as those who are wise, judicious, learned, capable, good-natured, and prudent,[162] and by implication dismisses all others, she maintains elsewhere that even those who are alleged to embody these characteristics do not always do so. The designations "learned, just and wise," which appear respectful are often "full of irony and contempt" ("pleins d'ironies & de mépris").[163] One is led to wonder how much of Suchon's own text is "plein d'ironie et de mépris."

A similar ambivalence underpins the stated aim of the book, at least in its initial formulation. In the preface, Suchon's stance is far from one advocating rebellion or erosion of male privilege. Her aim apparently is to inspire in women "des sentimens genéreux & magnanimes" ("noble-minded and magnanimous sentiments") so that they can protect themselves against the worst aspects of the constraint, ignorance, and dependence that is their lot.[164] There is no need to revolt against men as the Amazons did; contemporaries instead can imitate the Amazons in another way—by "une force & générosité Chrétienne" ("a Christian strength and nobility of spirit")—and the status quo can remain untroubled:

> Et sans rien diminuer de la soûmission & déference qu'elles doivent à ceux du premier Sexe, elles les laisseront paisiblement dans la possession de tous leurs avantages. Pendant qu'elles feront un bon usage de *ceux qu'on ne peut leur refuser sans une tres-grande injustice* & dont elles ne pourront se priver elles mêmes que par une extréme stupidité ou notable negligence. (My italics)
>
> And without in any way diminishing the submission and respect that they owe those of the first sex, [women] will peaceably leave [men] to enjoy all their privileges, while they [i.e. women] will put to good use *those [privileges] which cannot be justifiably refused them* and which they could only deny themselves by extreme stupidity or considerable negligence. (My italics)[165]

But *ceux qu'on ne peut leur refuser sans une tres-grande injustice* are precisely the three "avantages" she advocates throughout the treatise for women: namely freedom, knowledge, and authority. While appearing to leave the dynamic of male dominance intact, Suchon is in fact suggesting its subversion, in demanding a reevaluation of the (in)justice behind that dynamic. Finally, it is worth noting that at the very end of the treatise, her aim has moved from the somewhat passive one of "inspiring . . . noble-minded and magnanimous sentiments" to the more active one of "procuring the betterment, the advantage and the self-fulfillment" of women ("procurer la réformation, l'utilité & la perfection des personnes du Sexe").[166] While it is not possible in these short pages to do justice to the complexity of argumentation and stylistic nuance that underpins all three volumes, there is definitely a sense that Suchon's discursive strategies bear out the dialectic of *être* and *paraître* that she recognizes in society. In sum, it is tempting to read as a euphemistic testimony to the unsaid in her own work her observation that "l'on trouve beaucoup de déguisement dans la

soûmission & déférence que l'on rend à ceux qui commandent: les dispositions intérieures n'étant pas toûjours conformes à ce que l'on témoigne" ("there is much disguise to be found in the submission and respect given to those in power, and one's private leanings do not always coincide with what one might outwardly demonstrate").[167]

A final mention should be made here of a little known commentary on equality to be found in a juridical text that appeared in the same year as Suchon's Paris reprint of the *Traité*, namely Jacques de Tourreil's *Essais de Jurisprudence*, in which at one point the jurisconsult and academician produces a compelling indictment of male hypocrisy.[168] Despite the recourse to gallantry at times, the text is for the most part marked by the forthright tone of the orator addressing his peers. Tourreil highlights as unnatural the prejudices that operate against women, "établis par l'erreur & maintenus par la violence" ("established through error and maintained through violence"), outrightly rejects both the need for male tutelage and the capability of (fallible) men to provide that tutelage,[169] and upbraids his sex for their criticisms of women that are of male making. The argument is underpinned by a nascent support of freedom and autonomy, and a categorical defense of equality, both of which will take root in the Enlightenment.[170] The influence of Descartes, and possibly Poulain, is clear in Tourreil's final injunction, which sums up succinctly the principal argument in favor of sexual equality recurrent throughout the century:

> Convenons hardiment d'une égalité de sagesse: nous ne perdrons pas trop à la reconnoistre. [...] Encore une fois, convenons d'une égalité, qui se demontre par les notions les plus claires, & par les plus incontestables maximes. Elles nous apprennent ces maximes, & ces notions, que les ames n'ont point de sexe.
>
> Let us acknowledge with conviction an equal wisdom, it costs us little to recognize it. [...] Once again, let us acknowledge equality, which is proven by clear ideas and irrefutable maxims. We know from these maxims and ideas that the soul has no sex.[171]

Once again, the issue of female government is raised. Although women are in general destined from infancy to uselessness by men ("destinées par nous dez le berceau à l'inutilité"), history demonstrates the folly of assuming government to be a male prerogative, showing that men are wrong to appropriate for themselves the science of government, that it is not only they that can embody

prudence, fearlessness, and constancy and that great events can take place without men ("que nous nous approprions à tort la science du gouvernement, que nous n'avons pas seuls en partage la prudence, l'intrepidité, la constance, & que l'homme n'est pas toûjours necessaire aux grands évenemens"). Drawing on the example of Livia, empress of Rome, Tourreil goes on to produce a wonderfully succinct alliterative chiasmus, in a characteristic rhetorical flourish that sums up both the dense network of gendered ideological presuppositions concerning government and their fundamental invalidity, which many of his predecessors had intimated throughout the preceding centuries: "Combien de Reines ont regné en Rois, & de Rois en Reines?" ("How many queens have reigned as kings, and kings as queens?").[172] While the chiasmus hinges on received ideas (unfavorable to women) concerning the kind of government men and women represent, it simultaneously reveals those ideas to be specious, thus, I would argue, tacitly challenging the fallacious sexual ethics that upholds them.

Unjust, unreasonable, unnatural, counterproductive, and ahistorical: thus is the depiction of the exclusion of women from political authority that these theories of equality bring to the debate concerning gynæcocracy. Despite the tensions and ambiguities, despite the appearance of Poulain's Utopianism or Suchon's conservatism, despite the limitations in the conceptualization of equality,[173] what emerges from these writings is a radical challenge to the very tenets of patriarchy as it is operational in their society. In unpicking and analyzing androcentric prejudice as irrational and unjustifiable, these writings represent collectively a compelling attempt to conceptualize differently the power dynamics inherent in sexual relations and societal relations. In so doing, they can be seen to constitute an important mechanics of resistance to the dominant discourse of male hegemony.

Appendix: Biographical Notes on Women Rulers

Brief biographical notes on the principal, lesser-known biblical, classical, and medieval female rulers who feature frequently in the seventeenth-century sources examined.

Amalasuntha (498–535): Ostrogothic regent (526–534) for her son Athalaric, and later queen (534). Highly educated and politically astute, in the early years of her regency Amalasuntha stabilized the volatile Italy her father Theodoric had left her. Her pro-Roman stance, however, and classical education of her son created opposition in the Ostrogothic military aristocracy. Following her brief reign alone after her son's death, she opted to marry her cousin Theodahad, who, as a male heir of the royal line, also had designs on the throne. Her attempt to stay in power by sharing the throne with Theodahad failed and she was murdered in 535, probably by Theodahad, encouraged by the Byzantine emperor Justinian.

Further reading: A. Daniel Frankforter, "Amalasuntha, Procopius, and a Woman's Place," *Journal of Women's History*, 8.2 (1996), 41–57.

Artemisia I: Early fifth-century BC queen of Caria (a region of Asia Minor that corresponds to present-day western Anatolia in Turkey) who ruled over Halicarnassus, Cos, Nisyrus, and Calymnos. Her personal participation in the Battle of Salamis (480 BC), in addition to the prudence and perspicacity of her advice, evinced much admiration from the Persian king Xerxes (*The Histories of Herodotus*, Books 7 and 8).

Further reading: Joyce Salisbury, *Encyclopedia of Women in the Ancient World* (Santa-Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2001); *Oxford Classical Dictionatry*, 4th edition (2012).

Artemisia II: Fourth-century BC queen of Caria who shared rule with her husband and brother Mausolus, before reigning alone for about three years following his death in 353 BC. Often remembered for the construction of the tomb known as the Mausoleum, which she erected at Halicarnassus in the memory of her husband, and

which became known as one of the Seven Wonders of the World, Artemisia was clearly more than a devoted widow-sister, and was in fact a strong and able ruler in her own right, as her military intervention in Rhodes indicates. She was an avid patron of the arts, and the rhetorical competition she organized to commemorate her husband was patronized by the most famous rhetoricians of the period. She was also known as a botanist, healer, physician, and surgeon: her contribution to early botany is reflected in the fact that the plant genus *Artemisia* may be named after her.

Further reading: E. D. Carney, "Women and *Dunasteia* in Caria," *The American Journal of Philology*, 126. 1 (2005), 65–91; *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 4th edition (2012).

Blanche of Castile (1188–1252): Queen regent of France during the minority of her son Louis XI (later Saint Louis) from 1226 to 1234, and during his absence on the Crusades from 1248 to 1252. On her husband's death, she quickly brought forward the date of her son's coronation, in order to consolidate his power immediately. Rebellion by a coalition of nobles, keen to exploit the perceived weakness of a regency period, was the initial thorn in Blanche's regency, but by politically astute decisions and diplomatic negotiations, she succeeded in gradually quelling the rebellions of the grandees and securing her position. The signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1229 marked the pacification of the state and heralded a period of political stability for France. Blanche continued to assist her son after his majority. A highly intelligent and skillful ruler, her role in strengthening the French monarchy is widely accepted. She is also remembered for her piety and patronage of the arts.

Further reading: Margaret Schaus, ed., *Women and Gender in Medieval Europe: An Encyclopedia* (London: Routledge, 2006); Régine Pernoud, *La Reine Blanche* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1972).

Brunehilde (or Brunehaut) (534–613): Visigoth princess, later Merovingian queen of Austrasia (now northeastern France) from 566 to 613. A *de facto* ruler during her marriage to Sigebert I, she was later also regent of both Austrasia and Burgundy for her grandsons from 595 onwards, and once again in 613. An intelligent stateswoman, Brunehilde was anxious to consolidate royal authority by limiting the powers of the Austrasian aristocracy and the Church. Her resulting lack of support from the aristocracy ultimately led to her downfall since, resentful of her authority and anxious to be unified with the neighboring rival kingdom of Neustria (now northwestern France), the leaders of the aristocracy sought the support

of the king of Neustria, Clotaire II. Brunehilde's efforts to raise an army in Burgundy were in vain, and she and her four great-grandsons were seized. Given the rivalries between the neighboring kingdoms, this period was marked by an ongoing and bloody battle between Brunehilde and Fredegonde. It would seem, however, that it was the latter who was responsible for the majority of crimes.

Further reading: Ian Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms, 450–751* (London: Longman, 1994).

Deborah: Biblical judge, prophetess, and leader, accounts of whom are found in the Book of Judges IV–V. Angered by reports of Canaanite violence against Israelites, she organized a military attack against the Canaanites with Barak, and routed them successfully near the river Kishon. Deborah is perceived as a wise political leader of great influence and sound judgment, whose undertakings helped establish peace and stability in Israel for forty years in the twelfth century BC.

Further reading: Susan Ackerman, *Warrior, Dancer, Seductress, Queen: Women in Judges and Biblical Israel* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2009).

Fredegonde (ca. 545–597): Queen of Neustria (now northwestern France) from 567 to 597, third wife of Chilperic I. Under the protection of her brother-in-law Gontran, king of Burgundy, she governed Neustria for her son Clotaire II, after her husband's death. Intelligent but entirely unscrupulous, Fredegonde is traditionally seen as responsible for the assassination of a number of political rivals. It is difficult to ascertain what political skill she may have had since her reign is so markedly characterized by violence and murder, which ultimately led to the weakening of the Merovingian dynasty.

Further reading: Ian Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms, 450–751* (London: Longman, 1994).

Pulcheria (399–453): *De facto* ruler of the Eastern Roman Empire, and saint in the Greek Orthodox Church. As sister of the weak emperor Theodosius II, she assumed power in 414, at the age of fifteen, when the title Augusta was bestowed on her. A skillful leader, Pulcheria's influence was felt in both political and church matters. A public vow of virginity at an early age proved a useful political tool in maintaining ongoing support from both people and Church. Pulcheria's influence diminished ca. 431, following Theodosius's marriage to Athénaïs-Eudocia in 421, but she regained importance on the death of Theodosius in 450. Historians are in no doubt that her subsequent marriage, at the age of fifty-one, to the elderly Roman senator

Marcian was entirely nominal. With his help and that of Rome, she was highly influential in the restoration of Orthodoxy at the Church Council of Chalcedon (451), which she helped to organize.

Further reading: Kenneth G. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press, 1982).

Semiramis: A quasi-legendary Assyrian figure based on the historical figure of Sammuramat, who reigned as regent for her son Adadnirari III from 811 BC to 806 BC. According to the legend constructed around her, however, she was the daughter of the goddess Derceto, whose second marriages was to Ninus, king of Nineveh. Later declared sole empress of Assyria, she conquered Bactria, and is celebrated for her political awareness and military skill, although other versions of the legend highlight an alleged incestuous love for her son Ninyas. She is also associated with the embellishment of the cities of Nineveh and Babylon.

Further reading: *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 4th edition (2012).

Tomyris: Sixth-century BC queen of the nomadic Massagetae (in the east of Persia, now eastern Iran). The principal account of her activities comes from Herodotus, according to whom she was responsible for the death of Cyrus the Great, king of the Medes and Persians. Following her refusal of his proposal of marriage, Cyrus decided to attempt to take her states by force. As preparations to attack began, Tomyris suggested a meeting to negotiate with the Persian king. This was refused and the Persians attacked the Massagetae, killing almost a third. Tomyris's counterattack resulted in the slaughter of the Persians and the death of Cyrus.

Further reading: *The Histories of Herodotus*, Book 1.

Zenobia: So-called by the Romans (her real name was Septimia, or Bat Zabbai in Aramaic), queen of Palmyra (part of modern-day Syria) from 266 to 272. Highly educated and intelligent, she claimed descent from the Ptolomies, possibly as a political strategy. She ruled both with her husband Odenathus and alone after his death, becoming in effect the most powerful ruler in the Eastern Roman Empire. Renowned for her military prowess and the gradual expansion of her empire, her power eventually drew the attention of the Roman emperor Aurelian, who ultimately secured her defeat in 271. She was subsequently brought to Rome to participate in Aurelian's triumph and lived in Rome on a state subsidy for the rest of her life.

Further reading: Pat Southern, *Zenobia: Palmyra's Rebel Queen* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2008).

Notes

Introduction

1. The *Libellus* figures in Part II of the political works of Gabriel Naudé's edition of Nifo's *Opuscula moralia et politica* (Paris: R. le Duc, 1645), pp. 89–148 (Chapter 29 spans pp. 139–143) and so was in circulation at the period with which we are concerned.
2. As we shall see throughout this study, the term gynæcocracy is used variously in the Early Modern period to indicate a regime where *only* women can succeed to the throne, where *both* women and men can succeed to the throne (e.g., England), or more generally governance by women. This last corresponds with the *Oxford English Dictionary*, in which it is defined as "government by a woman or women; female rule or mastery." It is this general meaning that I shall adhere to, although my sole focus is on female monarchs and not regents.
3. Ian Maclean, *Woman Triumphant. Feminism in French Literature, 1610–1652* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), p. 53.
4. As Marc Angenot indicates, to demand equality in education is to open the doors of public life to women (Marc Angenot, *Les Champions des femmes. Examen du discours sur la supériorité des femmes, 1400–1800* (Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Québec, 1977), p. 147), a consideration that renders these demands uncomfortable for some. In fact, some of the limitations and contradictions in the discourse concerning female education are undoubtedly due to an awareness of this logical conclusion, and a desire to avoid it.
5. Éliane Viennot, *La France, les femmes et le pouvoir*, II: *Les Résistances de la société (XVII^e–XVIII^e siècle)* (Paris: Perrin, 2008), p. 149.
6. The term is Sharon L. Jansen's in *Debating Women, Politics, and Power in Early Modern Europe* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 9. Thierry Wanegffelen's *Le Pouvoir contesté. Souveraines d'Europe à la Renaissance* (Paris: Payot, 2001) evokes the same idea in his epilogue on "la défaite des souveraines," and Claudie Martin-Ulrich sees Marie de Médicis' exit from the political scene in 1630 as a definitive cutoff point for the analysis of queenship (see *La Persona de la princesse au XVI^e siècle: personnage littéraire et personnage politique* (Paris: Champion, 2004), p. 14).
7. Viennot, *La France, les femmes et le pouvoir*, II: *Les Résistances*, pp. 149–150.

8. The phrase is Karen Green's in "*Phronesis* Feminised: Prudence from Christine de Pizan to Elizabeth I," in Jacqueline Broad and Karen Green, eds., *Virtue, Liberty, and Toleration: Political Ideas of European Women, 1400–1800* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), pp. 23–38 (p. 23).
9. One of the most explicit elaborations of this code can be found in Torquato Tasso's *Discorso della virtù feminile e donnesca* (1582) which was in circulation in French in the 1630s, under the rather misleading title "De la vertu des dames illustres," in *Les Morales de Torquato Tasso, traduittes par Jean Baudoin* (Paris: chez A. Courbé, 1632), pp. 113–164. Tasso does allow, however, for a rank-based androgyny; see n. 11 below.
10. Ruth Kelso made the point many years ago that it is important not to overstate the importance of a code of sexual ethics (what she calls "the qualities assigned to men and to women"), since there is considerable overlap in what is recommended for both sexes, and since "the differences lie more in emphasis than in meaning, and in the external circumstances under which they were exercised" (see Ruth Kelso, *Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1956), p. 279). In its essence, my argument is not dissimilar although I approach the question from a different angle: to my mind, the code *is* very prevalent but the efforts to impose distinctions (fundamental to the Early Modern mind, which conceptualizes in terms of hierarchies and binary dualisms) repeatedly breaks down, precisely because it is underpinned by a basic discourse on human morality.

    The necessity to view the discourse concerning female vice and virtue within the greater context of Renaissance moral philosophy (specifically the dignity and misery-of-man literature) has been cogently highlighted recently by Lyndan Warner in *The Ideas of Man and Woman in Renaissance France: Print, Rhetoric, and Law* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011). As Warner argues, examining "the woman question" in isolation can lead to a reading of misogyny or feminism where none such is intended, and to a misinterpretation of the "Renaissance idea of human nature" (p. 6). While this point is very valid (leaving aside the tricky issue of authorial intention), and Warner's timely study provides a welcome reminder of how important it is to bear in mind the broader intellectual framework of the time, it is equally important to avoid the other extreme, ignoring the sexual politics at work, and collapsing the category of gender into a wider moralist discourse, where men and women are equally praised or criticized. For one thing, even leaving aside the gendered epithets of *vertu mâle* or *du Sexe*, there is no doubt that women at the time are regarded as having a greater propensity to vice; that in itself implies a fundamental distinction which can't be ignored.

However, to the extent that my argument focuses on how this code of sexual ethics is rendered invalid, precisely by a wider moralist discourse, I also concur with the essence of Warner's argument.

11. For an analysis of its importance in the sixteenth century, see the chapters in Constance Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism: Literary Texts and Political Models* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990) on "Sex and Gender" and "Equality," pp. 134–307. A succinct overview of the awareness of a distinction between sex and gender at the time can be found on pp. 134–137. Concerning gynæcocracy, of particular interest is the analysis of the valorization of the feminine aspects of androgyny in Philip Sidney's *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* (1593), pp. 220–240.

    Also relevant here is the type of rank-based androgyny suggested by Torquato Tasso in his *Discorso della virtù feminile e donnesca* (1582). Having elaborated a very specific code of appropriate virtues for men and women in the greater part of his treatise, Tasso argues in the last third (bearing in mind his dedicatee Eleonor of Austria, duchess of Mantua) that this prevalent code of sexual ethics has no meaning when applied to noblewomen who play a public role. For these women, strength and prudence are more appropriate virtues than modesty and chastity. A recent edition and translation of Tasso's *Discorso* by Lori J. Ultsch can be found in Julie D. Campbell and Maria Galli Stampino, eds., *In Dialogue with the Other Voice in Sixteenth-Century Italy: Literary and Social Contexts for Women's Writing* (Toronto: Iter, 2011), pp. 115–141.

    On the exploitation of a code of sexual ethics in the celebration of the androgyny of the heroic woman, perceived as superior to both sexes, in sum an exploitation of the ambiguity of gender categories, see Maclean, *Woman Triumphant*, pp. 249–255.

12. On Christina, see Jean-Pierre Cavaillé, "Masculinité et libertinage dans la figure et les écrits de Christine de Suède," in *Masculinité et "esprit fort" au début de l'époque moderne, Les dossiers du GRIHL*, 1 (2010), http://dossiersgrihl.revues.org/3965 (accessed February 10, 2015). The literature on Elizabeth's political androgyny is considerable; for a good starting point, see Carole Levin's chapter "Elizabeth as King and Queen" in *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Philadelphia Press, 1994), pp. 121–148.

13. Louise Olga Fradenburg, "Introduction: Rethinking Queenship" in Louise Olga Fradenburg, ed., *Women and Sovereignty* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992), pp. 1–13 (pp. 1–2).

14. The significance of this idea, in relation specifically to women in power, was pointed out by Danielle Haase-Dubosc, nearly twenty years ago, in her article "De la 'nature des femmes' et de sa compatibilité avec l'exercice du pouvoir au XVII^{e} siècle," in Éliane Viennot,

ed., *La Démocratie à la française ou les femmes indésirables* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de Paris 7, 1995), pp. 111–125. Reprinted as "On the Nature of Women and Its Compatibility with the Exercise of Power in Seventeenth-Century France," in Danielle Haase-Dubosc et al., eds., *French Feminism: An Indian Anthology* (London and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003), pp. 163–172. It is developed at length in Sylvie Steinberg, "Hiérarchie sociale et hiérarchie entre les sexes en France sous l'Ancien Régime (mi-XVI^{e}–mi-XVII^{e} siècles)," in Michèle Riot-Sarcey, ed., *De la différence des sexes. Le Genre en histoire* (Paris: Larousse, 2010), pp. 133–160.

15. Thus, although Tasso's rank-based double standard of virtues (see n. 11) was controversial, heavily criticized, for example, in Lucrezia Marinella, *La Nobiltà et l'eccellenza delle donne* (1591), it is clear that its basic premise was not unique, certainly in later decades.
16. See, for example, Volker Kapp, "Georges de Scudéry: 'Salomon instruisant le Roi' (1651), édition critique," *Francia*, 9 (1981), 236–256 (pp. 236–237). The volume *Princely Virtues in the Middle Ages, 1200–1500*, eds. István P. Bejczy and Cary J. Nederman (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007) aims to address the "scholarly neglect" of this theme for the medieval period (p. 3), as did the conference "New Approaches to the History of Political Thought: Mirrors for Princes Reconsidered" at the Freie Universität Berlin in November 2012.
17. Jacqueline Broad and Karen Green, "Introduction," in Jacqueline Broad and Karen Green, *A History of Women's Political Thought in Europe, 1400–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 1–9 (pp. 4–5). Broad and Green argue that the modern paradigm of political thought "is the result both of the occlusion or forgetting of an earlier political tradition, and of the exclusion of women and their concerns from standard political theory" (p. 4). On the significance of a tradition of virtue ethics for women in political thought, see Karen Green and Constant Mews, eds., *Virtue Ethics for Women, 1250–1500* (New York: Springer, 2011).
18. On the history of the *querelle*, its historiography, and some of the methodological issues involved in its research, see Éliane Viennot, "'Revisiter la querelle des femmes.' Mais de quoi parle-t-on?" in Éliane Viennot with Nicole Pellegrin, eds., *Revisiter la "Querelle des femmes." Discours sur l'égalité/inégalité des sexes, de 1750 aux lendemains de la Révolution française* (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2012), pp. 7–30. For the period 1400–1700, see http://www.siefar.org/revisiter-la-querelle-des-femmes/le-corpus.html (accessed February 10, 2015), for the most complete list of primary texts relating to what has traditionally been regarded as the *querelle*. A shorter useful list of works pertaining to both sides of the "woman question" can be found in Jeanette Geffriaud Rosso, *Études sur la féminité aux XVII^{e} et XVIII^{e} siècles*

(Pise: Editrice Libreria Goliardica, 1984), pp. 189–211, which lists 142 texts for the seventeenth century alone. Titles of eighty-three of the better-known ones can be found in Maïté Albistur and Daniel Armogathe, *Histoire du féminisme français du moyen âge à nos jours*, 2 vols (Paris: des femmes, 1978), pp. 174–176, 192–194. For a useful overview of the key issues raised in this material, see Gisela Bock, "*Querelle des femmes*: A European Gender Dispute," in her *Women in European History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 1–31. For a brief outline of the history of the term *querelle des femmes*, see Margarete Zimmermann, "The *Querelle des Femmes* as a Cultural Studies Paradigm," in A. Jacobson Schutte, T. Kuehn, and S. Seidel Menchi, eds., *Time, Space, and Women's Lives in Early Modern Europe* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press), 2001, pp. 17–28 (pp. 19–24). For a critique of the term and its use, with which I concur, see Marie-Frédérique Pellegrin, "La 'Querelle des femmes' est-elle une querelle? Philosophie et pseudo-linéarité dans l'histoire du féminisme," *Seventeenth-Century French Studies*, 35.1 (2013), 69–79, who argues that the debate about women is not one single *querelle* but that it enters into every intellectual debate of the period.

19. The alternative term "guerre des sexes," although less frequently used, is perhaps more apt since it highlights the key issue to be one of gender relations: texts treating of women's "nature" are only meaningful with reference to an ideological position concerning gender relations, even if the latter is not explicit.
20. See, for example, Siep Stuurman, "The Deconstruction of Gender: Seventeenth-Century Feminism and Modern Equality," in Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor, eds., *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 371–388 (p. 371).
21. Tjitske Akkerman and Siep Stuurman, "Introduction: Feminism in European History," in Tjitske Akkerman and Siep Stuurman, eds., *Perspectives on Feminist Political Thought in European History: From the Middle Ages to the Present* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 1–32 (p. 6). See also Karen Offen's prologue "History, Memory and Empowerment," and introduction "Thinking about Feminisms in European History," in *European Feminisms, 1700–1950: A Political History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 1–26.
22. "Introduction" in Akkerman and Stuurman, eds., *Perspectives on Feminist Political Thought*, pp. 8–9.
23. It is also worth noting, firstly, that broad categories such as "traditional" can be interpreted differently—Timmerman's "traditional" incorporates Maclean's "new," unwittingly it would seem, and in a judgment I concur with—and, secondly, that any classification is dependent on definitions, so the same author can variously be aligned with feminists or anti-feminists. Le Moyne, for example, is usually listed as a "feminist" writer, but for Carolyn Lougee, he is

"anti-feminist." All of this highlights the necessity of foregrounding ambivalences rather than strict categorizations.

24. See Siep Stuurman, "The Canon of the History of Political Thought: Its Critique and a Proposed Alternative," *History and Theory,* 39.2 (2000), 147–166 (pp. 147, 161). Stuurman points out (pp. 149–150) how the textbook-taught history of political thought has remained largely unchanged since Robert Blakey's *The History of Political Literature from the Earliest Times* (1855).
25. Stuurman, "The Canon," pp. 152–156.
26. Elena Woodacre, ed., *Queenship in the Mediterranean: Negotiating the Role of the Queen in the Medieval and Early Modern Eras* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Elena Woodacre, *The Queens Regnant of Navarre: Succession, Politics, and Partnership, 1274–1512* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).
27. Wanegffelen, *Le Pouvoir contesté*; Bartolomé Bennassar, *Le Lit, le pouvoir et la mort: reines et princesses d'Europe de la Renaissance aux Lumières* (Paris: Fallois, 2006); Isabelle Poutrin and Marie-Karine Schaub, eds., *Femmes et pouvoirs politiques. Les princesses d'Europe, XV^e^–XVIII^e^ siècle* (Paris: Bréal, 2007); Armel Dubois-Nayt and Emmanuelle Santinelli-Folz, eds., *Femmes de pouvoir et pouvoir de femmes dans l'occident médiéval et moderne* (Valenciennes: Presses Universitaires de Valenciennes, 2009). Other collective volumes and journal issues relevant to early modern France include Giovanna Motta, ed., *Regine e sovrane. Il potere, la politica, la vita privata* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2002); Melinda Gough and Malcolm Smuts, eds., "Queens and the Transmission of Political Culture: The Case of Early Modern France," special issue of *The Court Historian*, 10.1 (2005); Philippe Meunier, ed., *Reines, princesses, favorites: quelle autorité déclinée au féminin? Cahiers du CELEC*, 3 (2012), http://cahiers-ducelec.univ-st-etienne.fr/ (accessed February 10, 2015).
28. Regina Schulte, ed., *The Body of the Queen. Gender and Rule in the Courtly World, 1500–2000* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2006); Clarissa Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Europe, 1660–1815: The Role of the Consort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Denis Crouzet, *Le Haut Cœur de Catherine de Médicis: une raison politique au temps de la Saint-Barthélémy* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2005); Thierry Wanegfellen, *Catherine de Médicis. Le Pouvoir au féminin* (Paris: Payot, 2005); Chantal Grell, ed., *Anne d'Autriche: Infante d'Espagne et reine de France* (Paris: Perrin, 2009); Kathleen Wellman, *Queens and Mistresses of Renaissance France* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013).
29. Françoise Barry, *La Reine de France* (Paris: Éditions du Scorpion, 1964). Barry also published earlier a shorter volume entitled *Les Droits de la Reine sous la monarchie française jusqu'en 1789* (Paris: Loviton, 1932).

30. Fanny Cosandey, *La Reine de France. Symbole et pouvoir: XV^e^-XVIII^e^ siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000); Katherine Crawford, *Perilous Performances: Gender and Regency in Early Modern France* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2004). Also on regency, see Harriet Lightman's PhD thesis, "Sons and Mothers: Queens and Minor Kings in French Constitutional Law" (Bryn Mawr College, 1981), and Elizabeth McCartney's PhD thesis "Queens in the Cult of the French Renaissance Monarchy: Selected Studies in Royal Ceremonial, Public Law, and Political Discourse, 1484–1610" (University of Iowa, 1998).
31. Sharon L. Jansen, *The Monstrous Regiment of Women: Female Rulers in Early Modern Europe* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); E. William Monter, *The Rise of Female Kings in Europe, 1300–1800* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012); Anne J. Cruz and Mihoko Suzuki, eds., *The Rule of Women in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2009). See also Giulia Calvi, ed., *Women Rulers in Europe: Agency, Practice and the Representation of Political Power (XII-XVIII)*, European University Institute Working Papers, HEC no. 2008/2. A number of general articles can also be found in Annette Dixon, ed., *Women Who Ruled. Queens, Goddesses, Amazons in Renaissance and Baroque Art* (London: Merrell, 2002), a volume that was produced to accompany an exhibition in the University of Michigan Museum of Art, and which includes four essays of wider range than the title implies, in addition to a magnificent body of iconographic work. I mention here only volumes that include essays relevant to Early Modern France, and not those that focus solely on other countries and time periods, for example, on England or Spain, or on medieval queenship.
32. Maria Teresa Guerra Medici, *Donne di governo nell'Europa Moderna* (Rome: Viella, 2005). On this aspect of state formation, see also Sarah Hanley's idea of the "Family-State Compact" in, for example, Sarah Hanley, "Engendering the State: Family Formation and State Building in Early Modern France," *French Historical Studies*, 16 (1989), 4–27; and Hanley "The Monarchic State in Early Modern France: Marital Regime Government and Male Right," in Adrianna Bakos, ed., *Politics, Ideology and the Law in Early Modern Europe* (New York: University of Rochester Press, 1994), pp. 107–126. Guerra Medici's volume also includes a 55-page biographical inventory of 157 ruling women from the fifth to the late nineteenth century.
33. Cosandey, *La Reine de France*, pp. 19–54. Martin-Ulrich's section on virtues (pp. 209–384) focuses on the role of the "princess" as intermediary and as patron rather than on her political virtue per se.
34. Amanda Shephard, *Gender and Authority in Sixteenth-Century England* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1994); Jansen, *Debating Women*.

35. On the need for a history of equality, see Stuurman, "The Canon," p. 162.
36. Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review*, 91 (1986), 1053–1075 (pp. 1067–1068).
37. Haase-Dubosc, "On the Nature of Women," pp. 165, 172.

1 The Dynamics of Exclusion: "Salic Law" and Constructions of Masculine Monarchy

1. [Judith Drake], *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*, repr. in Marie Mulvey Roberts and Tamae Mizuta, eds., *The Pioneers: Early Feminists* (London: Routledge/Thoemmes, [1696] 1993), p. 20. (This essay was often mistakenly attributed to Mary Astell in the past.)
2. Elizabeth A. R. Brown, "The Ceremonial of Royal Succession in Capetian France: The Double Funeral of Louis X," *Traditio*, 34 (1978), 227–271; Paul Lehugeur, *Histoire de Philippe le Long, roi de France (1316–1322)* (Geneva: Slatkine-Megariotis Reprints, [1897–1931] 1975); Paul Viollet, *Comment les femmes ont été exclues, en France, de la succession à la Couronne* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1893; Extrait des *Mémoires de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, 34.2 (1893), 125–178); G. Servois, "Documents inédits sur l'avènement de Philippe le Long," *Annuaire-bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de France*, 2^{e} partie (1864), 44–79. A brilliantly in-depth analysis of the legal and political intricacies involved, which supplants many earlier accounts, can be found in Ralph Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu de la loi Salique: La succession royal, XIV^{e}–XVI^{e} siècles*, trans. Frank Regnot (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2007). All references to Giesey are to this volume unless otherwise stated.
3. John Milton Potter, "The Development and Significance of the Salic Law of the French," *English Historical Review*, 52 (1937), 235–253 (p. 239).
4. On this issue, see Charles T. Wood, *The French Apanages and the Capetian Monarchy, 1224–1328* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 58. As Potter also indicates, "the fact that there had never been a queen regnant in France did not demonstrate, of itself, that there never could be, unless an accident of genealogy be esteemed automatically to constitute a custom of the realm"; Potter, "Development and Significance of the Salic Law", p. 236).
5. In 1309, a court of peers had ruled in favor of Mahaut's succession to the county of Artois despite the pretensions of her nephew Robert, and thus overrode any distinction between so-called masculine fiefs and feminine fiefs. In 1315, she was involved as a peer in the judgment against Robert de Flandre. See Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, p. 25.

6. Viollet, *Comment les femmes ont été exclues*, pp. 128–129.
7. Brown, "Ceremonial of Royal Succession," p. 241.
8. For a detailed account of Philippe's machinations in the month preceding his arrival in Paris, see ibid., pp. 242–256.
9. Servois, "Documents inédits," pp. 48–49. As Brown points out, even if the Flemish chronicle tradition on which this episode is based has little substance, it nonetheless indicates popular awareness of the tensions between the factions in the royal family (Brown, "Ceremonial of Royal Succession," p. 257).
10. Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 28–35. See also Lehugeur, *Histoire de Philippe le Long*, pp.37–40. For the text of this agreement, see "Traité entre Philippes, second fils de Philippes IV dit le Bel, [...] et Eudes IV Duc de Bourgogne," in Pierre Dupuy, *Traité de la majorité de nos Rois, et des regences du royaume* (Paris: Mathurin du Puis et Edme Martin, 1655), pp. 149–53, reprinted in Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 271–274. The text clearly indicates as one future possibility the assertion of the rights of the two female heirs: "elles reviendront à leur droit tel comme elles le pueent & doivent avoir en toute la descenduë du pere" ("they will inherit what is theirs insofar as they can and should as sole descendants of their father"), and later reiterates its assertion of daughters' rights, referring to the safeguarding of "le droit des filles en tant commes à elles puet appartenir" ("the rights of daughters to the extent that those rights belong to them").
11. Both Giesey and Lehugeur (*Histoire de Philippe le Long*, p. 37) agree that the chroniclers were clearly not aware of, or had not been informed of, all the details of the treatise. This silence has led some historians, including Lehugeur, to suggest that there were two treaties, one agreed in Paris on July 16 and a second one with added concessions to Eudes on July 17. See Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, p. 282, n.13 for the difficulty with this argument. Although the partial nature of the chroniclers' account is mentioned in earlier accounts, its significance, to my mind, is only fully highlighted in Giesey's recent astute analysis. The treaty or *convenances* of 1316 only appeared in the public domain when published in Dupuy's regency treaty in 1655 (see previous note), and even then it had little influence on the historiography of the succession.
12. It is worth noting that the word "droiz" at the time has the connotations of "rightful' and "lawful" as well as "direct." The texts of these three letters from Eudes and Agnès to Robert de Béthune, Comte de Flandre and peer of France, are reprinted in Servois, "Documents inédits," pp. 65–73. On these letters, see Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 37–40.
13. Of the six lay peers in the kingdom, only two were present at the ceremony, Charles de Valois and Mahaut d'Artois. The king's brother, Charles, le comte de la Marche, also absented himself.

14. Reproduced in Alexandre Pinchart, "Lettres missives tirées des Archives de Belgique concernant l'histoire de France, 1317–1324," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 45 (1884), 73–80. The copy Pinchant reproduced would appear to be that sent to Jean III, duc de Brabant. See also Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 45–47.
15. Servois, "Documents inédits," p. 60; Lehugeur, *Histoire de Philippe le Long*, pp. 95–96.
16. This treaty is reprinted in [Denis-François Secousse], *Recueil de pièces servant de preuves aux Mémoires sur les troubles excités en France par Charles II dit le Mauvais* (Paris: Durand, 1755), pp. 6–10. (Due to the old system of dating documents, where the new year began at Easter, this treatise is mistakenly dated as 1317 in both Secousse and Servois; Cosandey follows suit (*La Reine de France*, p. 22, n.1) but refers to the year in her text proper as 1318).
17. Viollet, *Comment les femmes ont été exclues*, p. 143. Lehugeur indicates (*Histoire de Philippe le Long*, pp.102–03) that she was given an annual rent of 15,000 *livres tournois* in return for this renunciation. Eudes' turnabout may have been facilitated by his engagement to Philippe's niece (also Jeanne) in September 1316; they married in 1318 and so Eudes moved from being Philippe's chief opponent to his son-in-law. According to Lehugeur (*Histoire de Philippe le Long*, p. 44), it is possible that this betrothal may have been agreed verbally on 16 or 17 July. As Viollet comments (*Comment les femmes ont été exclues*, p. 144), in this way, the king's daughters served to dispossess the king's niece. It is indeed possible, as Potter implies, that Eudes was more interested in his own gain, rather than in assuring the succession for his niece (Potter, "Development and Significance of the Salic Law," p. 238, n.2).
18. Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, p. 46. The treaty did stipulate that Champagne and Brie would revert to Jeanne if Philippe had no male heir. As it happened, however, even that did not occur: in 1328, the claim to Champagne and Brie was renounced *in exchange for* Navarre, although in 1316 all three had been considered her birthright. See Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 47, 55–57.
19. Viollet, *Comment les femmes ont été exclues*, p. 149. As Monod points out, there is no reason to believe that at the time women were regarded as incapable of transmitting succession rights since false genealogies through the female line had been invented, linking the Carolingians to the Merovingians and the Capetians to the Carolingians, in order to legitimize Carolingian and Capetian power. See G. Monod, "La légende de la loi salique et la succession au trône de France," *Revue critique de l'Histoire et de Littérature*, 34.2 (1892), 515–520 (p. 517).
20. On the 1328 assembly, see Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 49–55.

21. See Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 17–18. Of course the kingdom of France was not officially a fief, but the influence of feudal law was probable.
22. Sarah Hanley, "Identity Politics and Rulership in France: Female Political Place and the Fraudulent Salic Law in Christine de Pizan and Jean de Montreuil," in Michael Wolfe, ed., *Changing Identities in Early Modern France* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1996), pp. 78–94 (p. 79).
23. Pinchart, "Lettres missives," p. 76. For Agnès and the other nobles, it would seem that royal devolution is similar to that of any barony or peerage. (See Andrew W. Lewis, *Royal Succession in Capetian France* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 151, and p. 289, n.229).
24. Cited in Viollet, *Comment les femmes ont été exclues*, p. 130. By revoking the reversion clause established by his father Philippe IV, Louis decreed that Philippe's daughters would succeed to the apanage of Poitiers in the absence of male heirs; the county would not revert to the king, as Philippe IV had decreed. As Cosandey points out, in so doing the king indicated how women could succeed to a part at least of the royal domain. See Fanny Cosandey, *La Reine de France. Symbole et pouvoir: XV^e–XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), p. 24. See also Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 23–24.
25. Lewis, *Royal Succession*, p. 153. Jeanne's mother, Marguerite de Bourgogne, Louis X's first wife, had been convicted and imprisoned for adultery. Louis however continued to recognize Jeanne as his daughter (Servois, "Documents inédits," p. 57, n.1). Wood seems to vary his opinion on the matter: compare his "Queens, Queans, and Kingship: An Inquiry into Theories of Royal Legitimacy in Late Medieval England and France," in William C. Jordon, Bruce McNab, and Teofilo F. Ruiz, eds., *Order and Innovation in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 385–400 (pp. 385–387), where he implies that her illegitimacy plays a role in her exclusion, and *The French Apanages* (pp. 48–65), in which he indicates that a significant prejudice was growing against the idea of female succession, and implies that it seems likely that "her sex was a more than sufficient argument against her" (pp. 57–58). The specific mention of faithful marriage in Louis's own comments would certainly imply that the possible bastardy of Jeanne was an issue at the time, even if it were not a decisive argument. Giesey argues that Philippe may have been motivated by a belief in Jeanne's illegitimacy (*Le Rôle méconnu*, p. 47). At any rate, even if Jeanne's possible illegitimacy played a role, this argument does not take account of the theoretical exclusion of a newborn girl, a child whose legitimacy was unquestionable as daughter of Louis's second wife, Clémence.

26. "Tunc etiam declaratum fuit quod ad coronam Franciae mulier non succedit" (cited in Potter, "Development and Significance of the Salic Law," p. 238, n.1). See Giesey for the possibility of this referring to Jeanne's specific circumstances, rather than positing a general principle (*Le Rôle méconnu*, p. 40).
27. The Latin text runs: "Cui in oppositum dicebatur quod in regno Franciæ mulieres succedere *non debebant*. Hoc tamen probari non poterat evidenter" (my emphasis). Cited in Viollet, *Comment les femmes ont été exclues*, p. 138, n.1.
28. Viollet, *Comment les femmes ont été exclues*, p. 140. Clearly this argument could have been later turned against the king's own son, a situation which was preempted by the doctors' recognition of the son in advance. It is also particularly dubious as a defense for the very person who had asked the late king to recognize his daughters' rights to a royal apanage. See also Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 41–42 who sees this argument as based on a perception of Jeanne as illegitimate.
29. Potter, "Development and Significance of the Salic Law," p. 239. See also Cosandey (*La Reine de France*, p. 25) who indicates that the unconvincing arguments are due to the thorny situation the university doctors found themselves in, trying to defend a thesis that juridically is essentially indefensible.
30. See Lewis, *Royal Succession*, p. 153 and Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, p. 70 on Meyronnes. See Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 57–60 on Pierre Jame (Petrus Jacobi).
31. Potter, "Development and Significance of the Salic Law," p. 241. On Edward III's claims, see Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 60–68.
32. Viollet, *Comment les femmes ont été exclues*, pp.132, 144 and Cosandey, *La Reine de France*, p.25.
33. Potter, "Development and Significance of the Salic Law," p. 237.
34. See Brown, "Ceremonial of Royal Succession," p. 269 for a summary of Philippe's political strategies.
35. For the lawyers' position, see Potter, "Development and Significance of the Salic Law," pp. 239–241. As Giesey indicates (*Le Rôle méconnu*, p. 68), it was precisely the silence of this period, and of sources, which facilitated the furnishing of myths and fallacies, such as Salic law, as retrospective justifications.
36. See André Lemaire, *Les Lois fondamentales de la monarchie française d'après les théoriciens de l'ancien régime* (Geneva: Slatkine-Megariotis Reprints, [1907] 1975), p .44, n.1.
37. See, for example, *Le Songe du Vergier*, ed. Marion Schnerb-Lièvre (Paris: CNRS, [1378] 1982) p. 248, §2.
38. This text, made up of three treatises, was first published over a hundred years later in 1526; the first two treatises were republished

at the end of François Hotman's *Disputatio de contraversia successionis regiae*, 1585. The discussion of the succession features in the first article of the first treatise. For discussion of this text, see Lemaire, *Les Lois fondamentales*, pp. 54–62; Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 129–135; Jean Barbey, *La Fonction royale. Essence et légitimité d"après les* Tractatus *de Jean de Terrevermeille* (Paris: Nouvelles éditions latines, 1983).

39. As Cosandey has indicated (*La Reine de France*, pp.34–35), the political instability throughout the fourteenth century led to fervent activity by jurists to uphold the Valois legitimacy to the throne, activity that led not only to the formulation of "Salic law," but to a profound analysis of the principles governing hereditary monarchy.
40. For divergent views, see, for example, the analyses of Ralph Giesey and Craig Taylor on the one hand, and Sarah Hanley and Éliane Viennot on the other. On the myth, see also the articles by Fanny Cosandey and Élie Barnavi. A crucial point has been raised by Sarah Hanley in these debates, namely the necessity to "correct the serious problem caused for historical studies by the misleading short-cut phrase 'Salic Law,' used (then and now) to signal female exclusion from rule in France from time immemorial (as if contexts did not change over centuries)." She adds: "There was no Salic Law that excluded women from rule in the French kingdom; only a gross forgery produced under that name in the 1400s." Of course, the issue is considerably complicated by the fact that the customary exclusion of women was ratified as "Salic Law" in 1593. So post-1593, there *is* a Salic Law excluding women from rule. However, given the fact that this law was based on the original falsified one, and since I concur with Hanley that the dangers of the "short-cut phrase" are very real, I will designate the falsified Salic Law as "Salic Law." See Hanley, "Configuring the Political Authority of Queens in France, 1600s-1840s," *Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historiques*, 32.2 (2006), 453–464 (p. 456).
41. This treatise, recently attributed to Guillaume Cousinot, appears at the end of the 1541 and 1558 editions of Claude Seyssel's *La Grande Monarchie de France*. For the attribution to Cousinot, see Craig Taylor's edition of *La Loy salicque* in *Debating the Hundred Years War: Pour ce que plusieurs (La Loy Salique) and A declaration of the trew and dewe title of Henrie VIII* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 5–13. The text of the law, including the interpolation (shown here in italics), then ran as follows: "No part of Salic land may pass as an inheritance to a woman *which [Salic land] is to be interpreted as the royal domain that is neither dependent on nor subject to anyone according to the principle covering other allodial*

land that is divided, but all inheritance goes to the virile sex." Cited in Sarah Hanley, "The Salic Law," in Christine Fauré, ed., *Political and Historical Encyclopedia of Women* (London: Routledge, [1997] 2003), pp. 3–12 (p. 9). Concerning the textual falsification in *La loy salicque*, Giesey sees in the moves from Latin to French in the passage concerned, a "kind of petty linguistic shiftiness [which] betrays uneasiness about the relevance of the Salic law passage to the crown succession, but, as with Juvénal des Ursins (who may have inspired the argument), the author's patriotism overcomes all scruples" (Giesey, "The Juristic Basis of Dynastic Right to the French Throne," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 51.5 (1961), p. 19). Presumably Giesey sees female exclusion as patriotic since the main aim of *La loy salicque* was "to uphold the French king's rights [. . .] in a type of post-Hundred Years' War wrangling" (see Giesey, "Juristic Basis," p. 18). On Montreuil, Ursins, Cousinot, and Noël de Fribois, the fourth "inventer" of the "Salic law" myth, as Giesey perceives them, see Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 91–128.

42. Jean Du Tillet, *Recueil des Roys de France, leur couronne et maison* (Paris: J. du Puys, [1580] 1586), pp. 214–215.
43. Ibid., p. 214.
44. Bernard de Girard, sieur Du Haillan, *De L'Estat et succez des affaires de France* (Paris: Vve J. Provence, [1570] 1613), fol. 213v. See also fols. 214r–216v for events relating specifically to Philippe le Long and 1316. For ideas of law based on force, see fol. 215v. On the implications of this argument, see William F. Church, *Constitutional Thought in Sixteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1941), pp. 85–86.
45. François Hotman, *Francogallia*, ed. Antoine Leca (Aix-en Provence: Presses Universitaires d'Aix-Marseille, [1574] 1991), pp. 85–86). Hotman continued to play a role in the controversy concerning "Salic Law" in general, and its larger issues, by the publication of his *Disputatio de controversia successionis regiae inter patruum et fratris praemortui filium* (1585), commissioned by Henri de Navarre, the second edition of which contains Terre-Rouge's treatise of 1418–19, and later in *De jure successionis regiae in regno Francorum* (1588).
46. Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, p. 181. On these four "demolitions" of the myth, see Giesey, *Le Rôle méconnu*, pp. 171–181.
47. It is worth noting, as regards Du Haillan's text, that what might seem like the foolhardy lamenting of the absence of a law that would exclude women entirely from any governmental authority (fol. 219v)—foolhardy given Catherine de Médicis' position—does not feature in the original edition, nor in the later sixteenth-century editions, but first appears in the 1609 edition.
48. Antoine Hotman, "Traicté de la loy salique," in *Opuscules françoises des Hotmans* (Paris: Vve M. Guillemot, 1616), pp. 267–288, p. 268.

According to Church, the controversy waged through the anonymous pamphlets highlights the confusion regarding "Salic Law." For titles of some of these pamphlets, see Church, *Constitutional Thought*, pp. 91–92. Antoine Hotman's text, although marked "de 1593" did not appear until 1616.

49. Claude Malingre, *Traicté de la loy salique, armes, blasons, et devises des François, retirez des anciennes chartres, panchartes, chroniques et annales de France* (Paris: C. Collet, 1614). The chapters that concern "Salic Law" (i.e., Chapters 8 to 26, or pp. 23–70) have been reprinted in *Les Droits des femmes et la loi salique* (Paris: Indigo and côté-femmes, 1994), pp. 85–120. Extensive passages from this *Traité* were in turn integrated by Laurent Bouchel the following year into the latter's *Bibliothèque ou Thresor du droit françois* (1615, reprinted in 1629, and in an extended edition in 1667 and 1671), thus ensuring the continued circulation of the ideas from this period. All Bouchel references are to the *Bibliothèque ou Trésor du droit françois*, 3 vols (Paris: J. Girin et B. Riviere, 1671).
50. See Cosandey, *La Reine de France*, pp. 45–54.
51. Cf. Loyseau, *Traité des ordres et des simples dignitez* (Paris: A. L'Angelier, 1610), pp. 103–104; Malingre, *Traicté de la loy salique*, p. 108; Turquet de Mayerne, *La Monarchie aristodemocratique* (Paris: J. Berjon, 1611), p. 495, and Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, *Politique tirée des propres paroles de l'Écriture Sainte*, ed. Jacques Le Brun (Geneva: Droz, 1967), Bk. 2, pp. 58–59. (Books I–VI were written between 1677 and 1679, books VII–X between 1700 and 1704; the entire text was published posthumously in 1709.)
52. Cardin Le Bret, *De la Souveraineté du Roy* (Paris: J. Quesnel, 1632), p. 33. See also Philippe Fortin de la Hoguette, *Les Élémens de la Politique selon les principes de la Nature* (Paris: Antoine Vitré, 1663), pp. 314–315. La Hoguette's ten-page discussion manages to marshal essentially all of the conventional anti-gynæcocratic arguments in circulation.
53. This military argument figures chiefly in the writings of the early decades of the century, as in the imaginative literature, a fact that can possibly be attributed to the evolution of the focus of society from military values to courtly values. As we shall see, it was ironically one of the strongest arguments in the deconstruction of the myth of female ineptitude. Much more is made of the military argument in the pro-woman literature, possibly because of the appeal of *l'imaginaire de l'Amazone*, possibly because arguing from historical example provided ample material to defeat misogynistic arguments.
54. The term is Hanley's, who refers to this accumulation as the *defamation litany*. See Hanley, "Identity Politics," p. 82. On the Renaissance and scholastic use of compendia of epithets to define a being, see

Maclean, *Woman Triumphant,* pp. 241–242. As Maclean's examples highlight, these compendia frequently incorporated both favorable and pejorative epithets.

55. Jacques de La Fons, *Le Dauphin* (Paris: Claude Morel, 1609), pp. 30, 32. Around the same time, Jean de Tavannes provides another example of a vehement accumulation, citing vengeance, irritability, love, inconstancy, fickleness, impatience, and rashness as rendering women incapable of handling state affairs. Cited in Viennot, *La France, les femmes et le pouvoir*, II: *Les Résistances de la société (XVII^e^-XVIII^e^ siècle)* (Paris: Perrin, 2008), p. 163. *Le Dauphin* appears to air both sides of the argument, allowing the "daughters of France" to voice their objections to their exclusion, and raising, interestingly, the idea of greater humanity in women: "La femme est plus humaine, elle a moins de rigueur, / Elle a l'humeur plus douce, & plus tendre le cœur, / Elle ayme la justice, & fuit la violence" ("A woman is more humane, she is less severe / She has a more gentle temperament and tender heart / She cherishes justice and flees violence") (La Fons, *Le Dauphin*, p. 28). However, the voices of the "daughters of France" are clearly drowned by the vehement negativity of the opposing side.
56. Turquet de Mayerne, *La Monarchie aristodemocratique*, p. 59.
57. Jean-François Senault, *Le Monarque ou les devoirs du souverain* (Paris: P. Le Petit, 1661), p. 43. Senault himself, clearly anxious not to offend Anne of Austria, ultimately seeks refuge behind the specious argument that the French exception is in line with the biblical maxim according to which lilies do not spin, *lilia non nent* (Matthew, 6.28), and invokes the idea that the French peoples are too *généreux* to obey a female sovereign, a variaton of Du Tillet's suggestion concerning magnanimity (pp. 43–44).
58. Turquet de Mayerne (*La Monarchie aristodemocratique*, p. 62). See also the series of gendered antitheses used by Malingre (*Traicté de la loy salique*, p. 106) and Le Bret (*De la Souveraineté du Roy*, p. 31).
59. Richelieu, *Testament politique ou Les Maximes d'Etat de Monsieur le Cardinal de Richelieu* (Paris: Complexe, 1990), pp. 31–32. The same sentiment is repeated some lines later where women are made out to be incapable of the "male virtue necessary for administration," although he does allow for the existence of exceptions. See also Turquet de Mayerne (*La Monarchie aristodemocratique*, pp. 495–96) for the common topos that women's uncontrollable sexuality precludes them from any royal command, office, or authority.
60. Pierre Dupuy, *Traitez touchant les droits du roi très chrétien sur plusieurs états et seigneuries possédés par divers Princes voisins* (Paris: A. Courbé, 1655), p. 223; Jérôme Bignon, *De l'Excellence des Roys et du Royaume de France, traitant de la préséance, premier rang et prerogatives des roys de France*

par dessus les autres, et des causes d'icelles (Paris: J. Drouart, 1610), p. 293. This type of circular argumentation, as we will see, is common.

61. Fortin de la Hoguette, *Les Élémens de la Politique*, pp. 316–318.
62. I have borrowed this triptych of terms from Ann-Louise Shapiro's analysis of the "separate sphere" concept in women's history. See Ann-Louise Shapiro, "Introduction: History and Feminist Theory, or Talking Back to the Beadle," *History and Feminist Theory*, ed. Ann-Louise Shapiro, *History and Theory,* Beiheft 31 (1992), 1–13 (p. 4).
63. The phrase is Gilbert Durand's in *Les Structures anthropologiques de l'imaginaire*, 11th edition (Paris: Dunod, [1969] 1992).
64. As Cosandey indicates, while an argument like Choppin's emphasizing the institutionality of the "Salic Law" might seem to offer the most thorough analysis of the question, the dominant argument in circulation is that of a natural law conform with the divine order (Cosandey, *La Reine de France*, p. 48).
65. Claude Leschassier, "De la loi salique," in *Les Œuvres de Maistre Jacques Leschassier* (Paris: Pierre Lamy, [1602] 1652), pp. 100–103 (p. 103). This text, first published in 1602 and reprinted during the Fronde—when it would have had particularly unfavorable resonances for Anne of Austria—is reproduced in part in Bignon, *De l'Excellence des Rois*, pp. 293–297, and almost in its entirety in Pierre Dupuy, *Traitez touchant les droits du roi*, pp. 223–225. This interesting example of unacknowledged borrowings (although Bignon does allude to Leschassier in passing) testifies to the promulgation of received ideas in juristic circles. It also may explain in part the contradiction between the anti-gynæcocratic ideas expressed in Dupuy's *Traitez*—compiled with Théodore Godefroy over five years between 1629 and 1634 at the instigation of Richelieu, with a view to establishing the rights to which the title refers—and the pro-female-regency stance of his *Traité de la majorité de nos Rois, et des regences du royaume*, which was probably written later in the 1630s and 1640s. (On this text, see Harriet Lightman, "Political Power and the Queen of France: Pierre Dupuy's Treatise on Regency Governments," *Canadian Journal of History*, 21 (1986), 299–312.) The borrowing from Leschassier's text means that the description of gynæcocracy as something opposed to Nature, violent and extraordinary ("chose contraire, violente & extraordinaire à la Nature"), appears in all three (Leschassier, "De la loi salique," p. 102; Bignon, *De l'Excellence des Rois*, p. 295; and Dupuy, *Traitez touchant les droits du roi*, p. 224). Dupuy also borrows from Antoine Hotman's *La loy salique*, which means that a comment likening the custom/law of female exclusion to "a masterpiece of Nature, by which France is honoured above all other nations in the world" is still in circulation in 1655 (Dupuy, *Traitez touchant les droits du roi*, p. 223).

66. Bignon, *De l'Excellence des Rois*, p. 287, p. 298. See also Malingre, *Traicté de la loy salique*, p. 105.
67. Turquet de Mayerne, *La Monarchie aristodemocratique*, p. 495.
68. Leschassier, "De la loi salique," pp. 102–103, reproduced in Bignon, *De l'Excellence des Rois*, pp.296–297, and in Dupuy, *Traitez touchant les droits*, p. 225.
69. Antoine Hotman, "Traicté de la Loy salique," p. 268, reproduced in Dupuy, *Traitez touchant les droits*, p. 223.
70. Pierre de L'Hommeau, *Les Maximes generalles du droict françois* (Rouen: C. le Villain, [1612] 1614), p. 29.
71. Charles Loyseau, *Traité des Seigneuries* (Paris: A. L'Angelier, [1608] 1609), p. 44.
72. Turquet de Mayerne, *La Monarchie aristodemocratique*, p. 493.
73. Ibid., p. 63.
74. Hanley, "The Monarchic State," pp. 116–120. Natural law in Hanley's reading is one of the elements of the "French Law Canon" that underpinned what she calls Marital Regime government, from the early 1500s to the mid-1600s. The "biogenetic seminal propositions" of Natural Law combine with the political marital maxims of Public Law, the legislation on marriage within Civil Law, and the "defamation litany" of Moral Law, to construct governance as male right, at a time when "queens ruled in Europe, queen regents were installed in France, women owned and inherited government offices, and kings regularly failed to generate progeny" (p. 115).
75. See, for example, Fortin de la Hoguette, *Les Élémens de la Politique*, p. 314; Claude Le Prestre, *Questions notables de droict* (Paris: G. Aliot, [1645] 1652), p. 231.
76. Fermineau, *Traicté des droicts de la Monarchie*, pp. 9–10; [François de Cauvigny, sieur de Colomby], *De l'Autorité des Rois* (Paris: T. Du Bray, 1631), p. 5; Jean de Lartigue, *La Politique des conquerans* (Paris: Guillaume de Luyne, 1662), p. 23; Bossuet, *Politique tirée de l'Écriture Sainte*, Book II, "De l'autorité," p. 46ff. For an analysis of the importance of the familial model to the construction of monarchy, see Aurélie du Crest, *Modèle familial et pouvoir monarchique (XVI^e–XVIII^e siècles)* (Aix-en-Provence: Presses Universitaires d'Aix-en-Provence, 2002), esp. pp. 83–178.
77. Hanley maintains that the marital model dominated throughout the seventeenth century, and that the paternal model (which had its roots in Roman law) only returned toward the end of the century, when the first model had been discredited ("The Monarchic State," pp. 112, 123). It seems to me however that both discourses exist in parallel.
78. Jean Bodin, *Les Six Livres de la Republique* (Paris: J. du Puys, 1577), pp. 14–20, pp. 718–727. On Bodin, see Pierre-Louis Vaillancourt, "Bodin et le pouvoir des femmes," in G. Cesbron, ed., *Jean Bodin.*

Actes du colloque interdisciplinaire d'Angers sur Jean Bodin, 2 vols (Angers: Presses de l'Université d'Angers, 1985), I, pp. 63–74.

79. Le Bret, *De la Souverainté du Roy*, p. 31, pp. 42–43; Bossuet, *Politique tirée de l'Écriture Sainte*, p. 58.
80. Fortin de la Hoguette, *Les Élémens de la Politique*, pp. 321, 318.
81. Ibid., pp. 322–323. Ironically, it is noteworthy, as Hanley points out, that in the 1500s and early 1600s, the Valois and Bourbon kings regularly failed to produce an heir (Hanley, "The Monarchic State," p. 115).
82. Turquet de Mayerne, *La Monarchie aristodemocratique*, pp. 61–62.
83. See Louise Olga Fradenburg, "Introduction: Rethinking Queenship" in Louise Olga Fradenburg, ed., *Women and Sovereignty* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992), p. 7.
84. Fortin de la Hoguette, *Les Élémens de la Politique*, p. 323; Turquet de Mayerne, *La Monarchie aristodemocratique*, p. 497. See, for example, I Corinthians I:27.
85. Fortin de la Hoguette, *Les Élémens de la Politique*, pp. 315–316. See also Leschassier, "De la loi salique," p. 100.
86. See, for example, Le Bret, *De la Souverainté du Roy*, pp. 43–44.
87. On Pasquier's efforts to correct the history of Fredegonde and Brunehilde in his *Recherches de la France*, and the efforts of others to propagate an injurious version of their biography, see Viennot, "Les historiens de la Renaissance, la loi salique et les reines de la dynastie mérovingienne," in Marie Viallon, ed., *L'Histoire et les historiens au XVI^e siècle* (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2001), pp. 143–156.
88. See Viennot on the frequent reprinting of Jean de Serres's *Inventaire général de l'histoire de France* (1597), for example, or Saulnier Du Verdier's *L'Abrégé de l'Histoire de France* (1651), or the *Recueil de diverses pieces pour servir à l'histoire de Henri III*, containing the caustic *Discours merveilleux de la vie, actions et déportements de Catherine de Médicis* (Viennot, *La France, les femmes et le pouvoir*, II: *Les Résistances*, pp. 153, 169–170, 175). On the efforts made to write women into history in the Early Modern period, see the essays in Claude Arnould and Sylvie Steinberg, eds., *Les Femmes et l'écriture de l'histoire, 1400–1800* (Rouen: Presses universitaires de Rouen et du Havre, 2008).
89. On regency legislation, see Cosandey, *La Reine de France*, pp. 33–43.
90. Le Bret, for example, devotes one line to the idea that queens are granted the regency, when their virtues and merits warrant it. Turquet de Mayerne shows no such restraint, arguing that since French "royal law" excludes women from the throne, this exclusion should be understood to apply also to any sovereign administration (*De la Souverainté du Roy*, p. 60).
91. Dupuy, *Traité de la majorité de nos Rois*, pp. 35–36.

92. On the exploitation of maternal affection as a discursive tool in the shaping of regency, see Crawford, *Perilous Performances*, pp. 34–35, 49–50, 76. See also Fanny Cosandey, "Puissance maternelle et pouvoir politique: la régence des reines mères," *Clio,* 21 (2005), 63–83; Cosandey, "'La maîtresse de nos biens.' Pouvoir féminin et puissance dynastique dans la monarchie d'Ancien Régime," *Historical Reflections/Réflexions historiques*, 32.2 (2006), 381–401.
93. Florentin du Ruau, *Tableau Historial des régences*: *ou se voit tout ce qui s'est passé pendant icelles depuis Clotilde jusques a Marie de Medicis a present regente ensemble de leurs droicts & prerogatives* (Poitiers et se vendent à Paris chez I. Mousnier, 1615); Robert Luyt, *La Régence des reines de France* (Paris: Henault, 1649). Luyt's text had a rather unfortunate fate since unsold copies were appropriated for insertion into the virulently hostile *frondeur* pamphlet *Le Sceptre de la France en quenouille* (1652). On this episode, see Hubert Carrier, *La Presse de la Fronde (1648–1653): les mazarinades*, II: *Les Hommes du livre* (Geneva: Droz, 1991), p. 98.
94. *Discours d'estat et de religion, sur les affaires du temps présent, à la Reyne* (n.p., n.d.), p. 7.
95. As Hanley puts it, in terms of the queen's *two bodies*: "In one sphere a queen, as mother, physically sustained the royal family in *one body* by giving birth to sons and transmitting property to them. In the other [sphere] the queen, as regent, politically maintained the monarchic state in the *other body* by taking up the office of regent (for a minor son)" (Hanley, "Configuring the Political Authority of Queens," p. 455).
96. *Le Censeur censuré* (n.p., 1652), p. 8.
97. Ibid., p. 10. Interestingly, the great *mazarinade* scholar Célestin Moreau testifies to mid-nineteenth-century ideas in his comments on this text; while lauding the "ingenious and subtle" reasoning of the lawyer, he criticizes him for being "carried away by his zeal" in referring to "Salic law" as "bizarre et hétéroclite." See Moreau, *Bibliographie des mazarinades*, 3 vols, Société de l'Histoire de France (Paris: Renouard, 1850–1851), I, p. 203.
98. *Le Censeur censuré*, pp. 11–12.
99. Ibid., p. 13.
100. Ibid., pp. 15–16. See also the criticism of inordinate calumny that female regents have suffered in *Le Bandeau levé de dessus les yeux des Parisiens* (n.p., 1649, p. 6) where the author comments "Ceux qu'on a detesté en un temps, sont souvent tenus pour des Saints en un autre: Tant notre humeur est volage" ("Those who have been detested in one period are often regarded as saints in another, such is our fickle humour").
101. André Duchesne, *Les Antiquitez et recherches de la grandeur et de la majesté des Roys de France* (Paris: J. Petit-Pas, 1609), p. 581. This

important text was published seven times between 1609 and 1668, although the status of the queen had radically changed by 1668, and this chapter may well have seemed outdated by then.

102. Ibid., p. 585. See also du Ruau's *Tableau Historial.*
103. Duchesne, *Les Antiquitez*, p. 586.
104. Duchesne's remarks reveal the presence of considerable ambiguity regarding the status of the queen (certainly at the beginning of the century), and the inherent contradictions in many of the other writings. For the early jurists, sovereignty is chiefly understood as the embodiment of public power and authority, and is inextricably linked with the development of divinely ordained royal infallibility. Since this authority is concentrated solely in the king, then, sovereignty by its very nature is denied the queen, as is indicated by the fact that her right to the titles of sovereign and majesty was highly contested. However, to deny the queen sovereignty entirely is to neglect the understanding of sovereignty as royal dignity, and to imply that the queen consort or the queen mother has none of the sacred quality required by her role as wife or mother to the divinely appointed monarch. On the thorny questions of sovereignty and dignity, see Cosandey, *La Reine de France*, particularly pp. 262–274.
105. For a useful, albeit partial, bibliography, see Volker Kapp's bibliography of "mirror for princes" literature, which lists 150 works written or republished in the seventeenth century in French, Latin, Spanish, and Italian in Volker Kapp, *"Télémaque" de Fénelon. La signification d'une œuvre littéraire à la fin du siècle classique* (Tübingen/Paris: Gunter Narr/Jean-Michel Place, 1982), pp. 209–220. On the genre of the *institution du prince* in the early seventeenth century (a genre that frequently incorporates the type of virtue ethics under discussion here), see Isabelle Flandrois, *L'Institution du prince au début du XVII^e siècle* (Paris: P.U.F., 1992). As Flandrois points out, it is precisely the repetitive nature of the texts, the repetition of certain precepts, that authors are at pains to defend (p. 2, pp. 218–219). On the persistence of a humanist current, at least up until the early years of Louis XIV's personal reign, and its subsequent transformation, see Nicole Ferrier-Caverivière, "Louis XIV et le Prince idéal dans la littérature française de 1660 à 1685," in Noémi Hepp and Madeleine Bertaud, eds., *L'Image du souverain dans les lettres françaises* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1985), pp. 69–79. See also Kapp, "Georges de Scudéry,", 236–256. On humanism in the earlier part of the century, see Étienne Thuau, *Raison d'État et pensée politique à l'époque de Richelieu* (Paris: Albin Michel, [1966] 2000), pp. 153–165.
106. See, for example, Claude Joly's *Recueil de maximes véritables et importantes pour l'institution du Roi* (1652), a text that is both a spirited anti-absolutist *mazarinade* and a traditional advice-book, where the

author rails against the erosion of the traditional model of French monarchy and the advance of what he perceives as the pernicious tenets of reason of state, or Georges de Scudéry, *Discours politiques des rois* (Paris: A. Courbé, 1647), in all likelihood aimed at his favored *mondain* audience, and testament, by its success, to an avid readership within that audience. On this text, see Rosa Galli Pellegrini, "Le Prince selon Georges de Scudéry dans les *Discours politiques des rois*," *XVII^e siècle,* 33.130 (1981), 36–51.

107. For Hubert Carrier, the ideas of a "Christian humanist" such as Claude Joly provide a link between sixteenth-century political theorists and late seventeenth-century writers such as La Bruyère, Fénelon, Jurieu. See Hubert Carrier, "Un manifeste anti-absolutiste à la fin de la Fronde: l'idéal du souverain chrétien dans le *Recueil de maximes véritables et importantes pour l'institution du Roi* de Claude Joly," in Hepp and Bertaud, eds., *L'Image du souverain*, pp. 211–226 (pp. 221, 226). But Joly is clearly not alone in the maintenance of this "anachronistic" discourse. (The term is Carrier's, p. 225.) Scudéry's *Discours*, for example, shares much more with Joly's text than Carrier allows (p. 214), particularly as regards royal virtue and the limitations on monarchy, although the two texts are aimed at different audiences. For Kapp ("Georges de Scudéry," pp. 236–237), this discourse is not at all anachronistic and has been wrongfully neglected. On the political implications of the discourse on virtue, see Marie-Odile Bonardi, *Les Vertus dans la France baroque: représentations iconographiques et littéraires* (Paris: Champion, 2010), pp. 335–358.

108. Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, I: *The Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 126–128; 228–231.

109. On Lipsius, see Jacqueline Lagrée, *Juste Lipse et la restauration du Stoïcisme* (Paris: Vrin, 1994). Lagrée provides a useful succinct overview of the neo-stoic concept of princely virtues in this text, pp. 92–96. See also Christopher Brooke, "Justus Lipsius and the Post-Machiavellian Prince," in *Philosophic Pride: Stoicism and Political Thought from Lipsius to Rousseau* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. 12–36. On the contemporary critique of constancy that coexisted with the prevalent favorable attitude, see Brooke, *Juste Lipse*, pp. 59–69.

110. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library (London: W. Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1934), VI.v.4; see also *The Art of Rhetoric*, trans. J. H. Freese, Loeb Classical Library (London: W. Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1926), I.ix.5–13.

111. Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library (London: W. Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1932), III.ii.11 (on rulers); *Nicomachean Ethics*, VI.xiii.6 (on moral virtue).

112. Cicero, *De Inventione*, II, §160.
113. For an overview of *prudentia* in Cicero, see Thomas N. Mitchell, *Cicero. The Senior Statesman* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1991); for his transformation of the concept and his influence on humanist ideas, see Robert W. Cape Jr., "Cicero and the Development of Prudential Practice at Rome," in Robert Hariman, ed., *Prudence. Classical Virtue, Postmodern Practice* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2003), pp. 35–65.
114. For a brief overview of the reorientation of humanist ideas in the face of reason of state theories, see Skinner, *The Foundations*, I, pp. 248–254; for a more detailed analysis of the tensions between the discourses, see Thuau, *Raison d'État et pensée politique*. See also Francis Goyet, "La prudence: entre sublime et raison d'État," in Isabelle Cogitore and Francis Goyet, eds., *Devenir roi: essais sur la littérature adressée au Prince* (Grenoble: Ellug, 2001), pp. 163–178.
115. Justus Lipsius, *Politicorum sive Civilis doctrinae libri sex* [Six Books on Politics or Civil Doctrine], (Amsterdam: Blaeu, [1589] 1632), IV.xiii–xiv.
116. On dissimulation in government, see Jon R. Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy in Early Modern Europe* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009), pp. 106–158. The *Bréviaire des politiciens* attributed to Mazarin first appeared in Latin in Cologne in 1684. On this text, see Snyder, pp. 147–154. For a modern edition, see *Bréviaire des politiciens*, trans. from the Latin by François Rosso (Paris: Arléa, [1684] 1997). For a primary and secondary bibliography on dissimulation, see Jean-Pierre Cavaillé, "Bibliographie: Mensonge, tromperie, simulation et dissimulation," *Les dossiers du GRIHL*, http://dossiersgrihl.revues.org/2103, which lists over 300 sixteenth- and seventeenth-century works that treat of the question (accessed February 10, 2015).
117. Étienne Molinier, *Les Politiques chrétiennes, ou Tableau des Vertus politiques considérées en l'Estat chrestien* (Paris: Martin Collet 1621; repr. 1631; translated into English 1636); Nicolas Faret, *Des Vertus necessaires à un prince pour bien gouverner ses sujets* (Paris: Toussaint du Bray, 1623); Guez de Balzac, *Le Prince*, ed. Ch. Leroy (Paris: La Table ronde, [1631] 1996); Georges de Scudéry, *Discours politiques des rois* (Paris: A. Courbé, 1647; repr. 1661, 1663; translated into English (1654), German (1662), and Italian (1669)); Jean Baudoin, *Le Prince parfait et ses qualitez les plus éminentes, avec des conseils et des exemples moraux et politiques tirez des œuvres de Juste-Lipse et des plus célèbres autheurs anciens et modernes* (Paris: Cardin Besongne, 1650); [Claude Joly], *Recueil de maximes véritables et importantes pour l'institution du Roi* (Paris: n.p., 1652; repr. 1653 and 1663); Pierre Le Moyne, *L'Art de régner* (Paris: S. Cramoisy, 1665). For Senault (1661; repr. 1662 and 1664), and Lartigue (1662; repr. 1663 and 1664), see above, nn. 57 and

76. For simplicity, I have indicated both new editions as well as reissues here as reprintings (repr.), simply to highlight the extent of the circulation of these texts.

118. Senault, *Le Monarque*, p. 123. Chapters on piety can be found in Senault, Le Moyne, and Balzac; on religion, in Baudoin, Lartigue, and Faret. They are treated together in Molinier. References to the importance of both are common throughout Louis XIV's *Mémoires*; see Jean Longnon, ed., *Mémoires de Louis XIV* (Paris: Tallandier, 1978). Treatment of probity can be found in Le Moyne and Baudoin; of *bonté*, in Le Moyne and Senault. This latter quality is often evoked in rather vague terms. Senault however provides a useful definition: *bonté* is "une certaine probité naturelle, qui fait que le Prince qui la possède se porte toûjours au bien; & s'éloigne toûjours du mal; qu'il ne peut souffrir l'injustice ni la violence; qu'il prend plaisir à obliger tout le monde; qu'il cherche plûtost à se faire aimer, qu'à se faire craindre; qu'il regarde ses Sujets comme ses enfans, qu'il ressent les maux qu'ils endurent; qu'ils les soulage quand il peut, & qu'il les plaint quand il ne les peut soulager" ("a type of natural probity, which means that the prince who is endowed with it always inclines toward what is good and distances himself from evil; that he does not tolerate injustice or violence; that he takes pleasure in obliging everyone; that he aims more to be loved than to be feared; that he regards his subjects as his children, and feels the misfortunes they suffer; that he comforts them when he can and pities them when he cannot comfort them") (Senault, *Le Monarque*, pp. 188–189).

119. Central to Molinier as one would expect, this also surfaces in, for example, Joly, *Recueil de maximes véritables et importantes*, p. 55 and Scudéry, *Discours politiques des rois*, *passim*. See also Hubert Mugnier, *La Véritable Politique du Prince chrestien à la confusion des sages du monde & pour la condemnation des Politiques du siècle* (Paris: S. Piquet, 1647).

120. Molinier, *Les Politiques chrétiennes*, p. 76. For his full discussion, see pp. 62–94.

121. Faret, *Des vertus necessaires à un prince*, pp. 25–29, 39–40.

122. Baudoin, *Le Prince parfait*, p. 125. It is noteworthy that in this text that draws on Lipsius, but which distinguishes itself from its source material nonetheless (see "Advertissement"), there is no mention of "mixed prudence." In fact, what is depicted as crucial for the prince is being faithful to his word ("d'estre inviolable en ses promesses & de ne fausser iamais sa Foy" (Preface.)

123. Senault, *Le Monarque*, pp. 256–257.

124. Le Moyne, *L'Art de régner*, pp. 219–251. See also Fortin de la Hoguette, *Les Élémens de la Politique*, pp. 198, 418–420.

125. Senault, *Le Monarque*, p. 262. On ruse in warfare, see pp. 489–491.

126. See, for example, Balzac, *Le Prince*, ch. 17. On the reason of state advocates, see Étienne Thuau, *Raison d'État et pensée politique*.

127. These arguments are made variously in Senault, *Le Monarque*, pp. 280–281, 287; Faret, *Des vertus necessaires à un prince*, pp. 69–71; Le Moyne, *L'Art de régner*, pp. 400–437; Scudéry, *Discours politiques des rois*, especially pp. 51–57, 102–104, 166–194, 301–332, 503–520. French translations of Seneca's *De Clementia* appeared in 1604, 1606, 1614, 1659, 1663, and 1669. On clemency, see also Lipsius, *Six Books on Politics*, II.xii–xiii.
128. Scudéry, *Discours politiques des rois*, pp. 51–52.
129. Faret, *Des vertus necessaires à un prince*, pp. 67–68; Senault, *Le Monarque*, p. 283; Scudéry, *Discours politiques des* rois, pp. 57, 327–329, 504, 518–519; Le Moyne, *L'Art de régner*, pp. 279–284, 416–429.
130. Senault, *Le Monarque*, p. 283. See also Baudoin, *Le Prince parfait*, pp. 158–162 (on severity) and pp. 178–207 (on clemency). For Seneca, see *De la clémence*, ed. F. Préchac (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1990), p. 6.
131. Faret, *Des vertus necessaires à un prince*, p. 67, Senault, *Le Monarque*, pp. 284–290. La Mothe le Vayer makes the same point in *La Politique du Prince* [1653], *Œuvres* (Paris: J. Guignard, 1684), p. 909. On this "tactical clemency," as she refers to it, in the early decades of the century, see Flandrois, *L'Institution du prince*, pp. 196–202.
132. Louis XII is praised in Joly, for example, for governing by peace, clemency, and *douceur* (see *Recueil de maximes véritables et importantes*, p. 408; see also p. 451). On this link, see also Senault, *Le Monarque*, p. 279, and Baudoin, *Le Prince parfait*, pp. 178–179.
133. Senault, *Le Monarque*, p. 255. See also pp. 285–286.
134. Joly, *Recueil de maximes véritables et importantes*, p. 215. He later reminds his reader of Erasmus's words on the subject (p. 465).
135. Fortin de la Hoguette, *Les Élémens de la Politique*, pp. 274–275, 430–431. See also La Mothe le Vayer, who focusses on the four cardinal virtues in his *Morale du Prince*, and on princely goodness in *La Politique du Prince*.
136. Lartigue, *La Politique des conquerans*, pp. 55–58. Lartigue devotes two chapters to "De la personne, des mœurs & autres qualitez des conquerans" and "De la liberalité, clémence, foy ou fidelité du Conquerant."
137. Faret, *Des vertus necessaires à un prince*, pp. 82–90; Senault, *Le Monarque*, pp. 290–299; Le Moyne, *L'Art de régner*, pp. 474–517; Joly, *Recueil de maximes véritables et importantes*, pp. 462–464. For Joly, liberality is clearly a type of pious charity. Louis XIV's *Mémoires* also make repeated reference to the importance of recompense and liberality; see, for example, pp. 60 and 105.
138. Joly, *Recueil de maximes véritables et importantes*, pp. 435–451; Baudoin, *Le Prince parfait*, pp. 207–238; Senault, *Le Monarque*, pp.299–305, Le Moyne, *L'Art de régner*, pp. 357–399; Lartigue, *La Politique des conquerans*, pp. 52–54. In Scudéry, see particularly the speeches by

Ferdinand de Castille, *Discours politiques des rois*, pp. 130–165, and Soliman II, pp. 361–388. See also Molinier, *Les Politiques chrétiennes*, pp. 248–257.

139. See Lipsius, *Monita*, I.7. Lartigue reproduces a close variant of this definition (*La Politique des conquerans*, p. 50). Unsurprisingly, a chapter is devoted in Baudoin's text to constancy (see *Le Prince parfait*, pp.125–142).
140. Fortin de la Hoguette, *Les Élémens de la Politique*, p. 200.
141. See Stanis Perez, "Les brouillons de l'absolutisme: les 'mémoires' de Louis XIV en question," *XVII^e siècle*, 222.1 (2004), 25–50 (pp. 37–40).
142. Le Moyne, *L'Art de régner*, pp. 143–195; Lartigue, *La Politique des conquerans*, pp. 44–52; Senault, *Le Monarque*, pp. 190–197; Molinier, *Les Politiques chrétiennes*, pp. 214–221. For an overview of this crucial question, see Claudine Haroche, "Se gouverner, gouverner les autres. Éléments d"une anthropologie politique des mœurs et des manières (XVI^e–XVII^e siècle)," *Communications*, 56 (1993), 51–68.
143. On sexual temperance as a virtue in the *institutions du prince* of the early decades of the century, see Flandrois, *L'Institution du prince*, pp. 202–209.
144. Balzac, *Le Prince*, pp. 98–99.
145. Ibid., pp. 101–103.
146. Baudoin, *Le Prince parfait*, pp. 276–277.
147. Faret, *Des vertus necessaires à un prince*, pp. 91–98; Baudoin, *Le Prince parfait*, pp. 239–272; Senault, *Le Monarque*, pp.198–204.
148. Joly, *Recueil de maximes véritables et importantes*, pp. 36–37.
149. See Leah Bradshaw, "Political Rule, Prudence and the 'Woman Question' in Aristotle," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 24.3 (1991), 557–573 (pp. 564, 562).
150. Ibid., p. 572. Bradshaw's reading of Aristotle refutes many of his most ardent feminist critics. See p. 573, n.6.
151. On these figures, see the essays by Green, Müller, and James in Jacqueline Broad and Karen Green, eds., *Virtue, Liberty, and Toleration: Political Ideas of European Women, 1400–1800* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007); Karen Green, "*Phronesis* Feminised: Prudence from Christine de Pizan to Elizabeth I," pp. 23–38; Catherine M. Müller, "Catherine d'Amboise's *Livre des Prudents et Imprudents:* Negotiating Space for Female Voices in Political Discourse," pp. 39–56; and Carolyn James, "'Machiavelli in Skirts.' Isabella d'Este and Politics," pp. 57–76. See also Torquato Tasso's controversial rank-based argument outlined in the Introduction, n.11, above.
152. Maclean points out that Neo-stoicists such as Lipsius and Du Vair express their extolling of prudence in terms of "masculine political functions (prince, magistrate, citizen)" (see Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University

Press, 1980), p. 55). Fortin de la Hoguette argues that women have little prudence (although he later contradicts himself by attributing the end of the Franco-Spanish war to Anne of Austria's prudence). See Fortin de la Hoguette, *Les Élémens de la Politique*, pp. 315, 461.

153. Le Moyne, *L'Art de régner*, p. 226.
154. Faret, *Des vertus necessaires à un prince*, p. 26; Le Moyne, *L'Art de régner*, p. 220.
155. Given the traditional association of women with dissimulation and secrecy, the centrality of dissimulation to "mixed prudence," and the centrality of prudence for government, a logical conclusion might be that women are the most fit to rule since they are the best at dissimulation. This argument is, in fact, made by one writer, namely Henri Estienne in his *Carmen de Senatulo Fœminarum* (Strasbourg: Antonius Bertramus, 1596), which highlights how specifically "female" qualities could be useful in government. If ruse is a key element of government, then women, he argues, make adept practitioners. Estienne's main emphasis, however, is on *douceur*, as the most crucial female quality for government (see p. 43 of this book).
156. Le Moyne and Faret devote sections to valor, while warfare is a key concern for Lartigue, Senault, and Le Moyne.
157. Joly, *Recueil de maximes véritables et importantes*, p. 169.
158. As Lartigue points out concerning what he portrays as the most important virtues, namely liberality, clemency, and *foy*: "bien que ces Vertus soient des Vertus morales, qu'elles reglent les actions & les mœurs des hommes en general, neantmoins elles sont une matiere si importante à celuy qui a la conduite de l'Estat, qu'elles deviennent un des principaux objets de la Politique"/"although these virtues are moral virtues, ones which pertain to the actions and behavior of men in general, they are so important for the person leading the state that they become a key issue within politics" (*La Politique des conquérans*, p. 52). For Molinier (*Les Politiques chrétiennes*, pp. 210–211), the virtues of the "private man," such as temperance, modesty, chastity, should be possessed by the ruler to an even greater degree than the common man. On the increasing separation between ethics and politics elsewhere and the increased cynicism concerning the putative superior virtue of the monarch, see Anna Maria Battista, "Morale 'privée' et utilitarisme politique en France au XVII^{e} siècle," in Ch. Lazzeri and D. Reynié, eds., *Le Pouvoir de la raison d'état* (Paris: PUF, 1992), pp. 191–230, esp. pp. 209–214.
159. See Yasmina Benferhat, *Du Bon Usage de la douceur en politique dans l'œuvre de Tacite* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2011).
160. Marie-Claude Canova-Green, "Plus doux que juste: Louis XIII au miroir des entrées (1610–1643)," in Hélène Baby and Josiane Rieu, eds., *La Douceur en littérature: de l'Antiquité au XVII^{e} siècle* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2012), pp.121–135 (pp. 122, 133). This article

provides numerous further examples to the ones cited above of the centrality of *douceur* both to the rhetoric of royal entries and to the "mirror for princes" literature.

161. Eric Méchoulan, "La douceur du politique," in M.-H. Prat and P. Servet, eds., *Le Doux aux XVI^e^ et XVII^e^ siècles. Écriture, esthétique, politique, spiritualité* (Lyon: Université Jean Moulin-Lyon 3, 2003), pp. 221–237 (pp. 222–224).
162. See Louis XIV, *Mémoires*, p. 62. See also Canova-Green's examples, "Plus doux que juste," p. 131.
163. The association of women with *douceur* is partly linked to a perception of their physical delicacy, and partly to do with the classical genderization of clemency and mercy as the "feminine" elements of justice.
164. See above, n.155. On this text, see Louis Clément, "Le 'Carmen de Senatulo fœminarum' d'Henri Estienne," *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, 1 (1894), 441–445 (p. 443). Other sixteenth-century predecessors to highlight the value in government of attributes regarded as feminine include Bernardo Trotto, Philip Sidney, and Christoforo Bronzini. See Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism: Literary Texts and Political Models* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 154–160, 220–240, 266–269.
165. The best-known literary example at the time of *douceur* at play in a woman within a political arena is undoubtedly Corneille's Livie in *Cinna*. For divergent views on Livie's role, see Antoine Soare, "Cinna ou la clémence au deuxième degré," in Milorad R. Margitic and R. Byron Wells, eds., *Actes de Wakeforest. L'Image du souverain dans le théâtre de 1600 à 1650; Maximes; Madame de Villedieu* (Paris: PFSCL, 1987), pp. 103–121, and André Georges, "Importance et signification du rôle de Livie dans *Cinna*, de P. Corneille," *Romanic Review*, 79.2 (1988), 269–282.
166. See Fradenburg's comments on "sovereignty's urge toward totality, inclusiveness and exemplarity," cited in the Introduction above, p. 5. In this respect, the discourse concerning the *douceur* of the king bee becomes particularly ironic. On the king bee, see Jeffrey Merrick, "Royal Bees: The Gender Politics of the Beehive in Early Modern Europe," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 18 (1988), 7–37.

2 Government by Women in Early Modern "Galleries" of Women

1. On the *querelle* and its designation, see above Introduction, p. 7.
2. Giovanni Boccaccio, *Famous Women*, ed. Virginia Brown (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 2001). This text was in circulation in French since the early years of the

fifteenth century as *De la louenge et vertu des nobles et cleres femmes*, a translation frequently attributed to Laurent de Premierfait. Christine de Pizan's *De la Cité des Dames* (1405) is another example of this genre, although one that seems to have had less influence than Boccaccio's, possibly because of the radicality of its ideas, possibly because it was misunderstood as a translation of Boccaccio's text as opposed to a rewriting of it. On galleries of women, see Glenda McLeod, *Virtue and Venom. Catalogs of Women from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1991); Catherine Pascal, "Les recueils de femmes illustres au XVII[e] siècle" (2003) on www.siefar.org/docsiefar/file/Pascal-dicos.pdf (accessed February 10, 2015).

3. Boccaccio himself also modified his sources and invented certain episodes. Not all his heroines are painted in eulogistic colors: as he states in his preface: "It is not in fact my intention to interpret the word 'famous' in such a strict sense that it will always appear to mean 'virtuous.' Instead [...] I will adopt a wiser meaning and consider as famous those women whom I know to have gained a reputation throughout the world for any deed whatsoever" (*Famous Women*, p. 5). In fact, many of Boccaccio's heroines are infamous rather than virtuous. On this text and its propagation of a conservative, at times misogynist, tradition, see McLeod, *Virtue and Venom*, pp. 59–80, and especially Margaret Franklin, *Boccaccio's Heroines. Power and Virtue in Renaissance Society* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).
4. As Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani indicates in her analysis of the "poetics of the list," this pro-woman discourse draws simultaneously on demonstrative, deliberative, and judicial eloquence. See Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani, "Le cas Cornelia. Métamorphoses d'une figure dans le discours féministe," in Philip Ford and Gillian Jondorf, eds., *Women's Writing in the French Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge French Colloquia, 1999), pp. 171–186 (pp. 173–174).
5. On the centrality of rhetoric to this literature, see Floyd Grey, *Gender, Rhetoric and Print Culture in French Renaissance Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
6. Marc Angenot, *Les Champions des femmes. Examen du discours sur la supériorité des femmes, 1400–1800* (Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Québec, 1977), p. 160.
7. Ibid., p. 151.
8. Siep Stuurman, "Literary Feminism in Seventeenth-Century Southern France: The Case of Antoinette de Salvan de Saliez," *The Journal of Modern History*, 71 (1999), 1–27 (p. 3).
9. On Renaissance paradox, see Rosalie A. Colie, *Paradoxia Epidemica. The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966). Linda Timmermans points out the importance of this discourse on superiority even for theorists of equality

such as Poulain de la Barre (see Linda Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes à la culture (1598–1715)* (Paris: Champion, 1993), pp. 265, 268–269).

10. See, for example, Sieur de Rangouze, *Lettres panegyriques aux plus grandes reynes du monde, aux princesses du sang de France, autres princesses, et illustres dames de la cour* (Paris: imprimées aux dépens de l'autheur, 1650). The "plus grandes reynes" concerned are the queens of England, Poland, and Sweden. Although unnamed in the text, references are clearly to Henrietta Maria of France, Marie Louise Gonzaga (queen consort of Poland), and Christina of Sweden. Although Christina is praised for her prudence and *générosité*, the overall tenor of the text points to a traditional patriarchal view of women.
11. Jean Puget de la Serre, *Le Portrait de la Reyne* (Paris: Pierre Targa, 1644). References to a 1634 edition in the BN catalogue would seem to be erroneous. The BN Réserve copy, catalogued as 1634, in fact carries the date 1644.
12. Jean Puget de la Serre, *L'Isthoire et les portraits des imperatrices, des reynes, et des illustres princesses de l'auguste maison d'Austriche, qui ont porté le nom d'Anne* (Paris: P. de Bresche, père et fils, 1648). A manuscript of this text, dated 1647—the queen's own copy it would seem, transcribed by the calligrapher Nicolas Jarry—is in the Bibliothèque Mazarine under the title "Le Temple de la gloire. Ou l'on peut voir les éloges et les portraits des illustres princesses de l'auguste maison d'Austriche, qui ont porté le nom d'Anne." On this manuscript, see H. Cocheris, "Les curiosités de la Bibliothèque Mazarine: le Temple de la Gloire," *Le Bibliophile français*, 2 (1868), 71–76. These are not two different works, as is frequently suggested. Most noteworthy for its elaborate frontispiece (reproduced on the cover of this book), the volume provides an example—typical of the gallery book—of a series of portraits providing an indirect portrait of the dedicatee, as is explicit in its final pages (pp. 50–51).
13. Puget de la Serre, *L'Isthoire et les portraits*, p. 50. Innocence is included since this is the virtue associated with an ancestor of the queen's who died at birth.
14. See chapter 1, pp. 34–40.
15. See, for example, on justice (p. 34) and on clemency (p. 65). Given the almost equal space accorded to all twelve virtues, it does not seem to me, as Maclean suggests (*Woman Triumphant*, p. 86), that Puget focuses on piety. On the contrary, the focus seems to me to be on the presentation of a wide range of moral qualities, giving rise to the portrait of a "complete prince."
16. Indeed, the caustic moralistic tone of La Serre's popular *Le Réveille-matin des dames* (1638) and *Le Bréviaire des Dames* (1652) would suggest a vigorously conservative attitude towards women in general,

implying that for him it is *only* in the figure of the female sovereign that gender is malleable.

17. Suzanne de Nervèze, *Apologie en faveur des femmes*, in *Œuvres spirituelles et morales* (Paris: J. Paslé, 1642), repr. in Colette H. Winn, ed., *Protestations et revendications féminines* (Paris: Champion, 2002), pp. 63–66.
18. *La Femme généreuse qui montre que son sexe est plus noble, meilleur politique, plus vaillant, plus sçavant, plus vertueux et plus œconome que celuy des hommes*, par L. S. D. L. L. (Paris: F. Piot, 1643). As Timmermans points out (*L'Accès des femmes à la culture*, p. 247, n.71), despite the alleged female voice, the initials would rather suggest a male author, Le Sieur de L. L. This text is made up of fourteen discursive chapters demonstrating the title (pp. 1–176), followed by two dialogues (pp.177–332). As the full title indicates, *généreuse* in this text is taken in its broadest sense, as noble of spirit, virtuous, and honorable, and not in the narrower sense of physically courageous that it can have elsewhere.
19. Jacques du Bosc, *La Femme héroïque, ou les héroines comparées avec les héros en toute sorte de vertus*, 2 vols (Paris: A. de Sommaville et A. Courbé, 1645)
20. François du Soucy, sieur de Gerzan, *Le Triomphe des dames* (Paris: chez l'autheur, 1646). Of its twelve chapters, five are devoted entirely to examples, which vary in length from a brief mention to a few paragraphs.
21. Gabriel Gilbert, *Panegyrique des dames* (Paris: A. Courbé, 1650). Gilbert's stance is no doubt influenced by his position as protégé, possibly secretary, to the duchesse de Rohan and later secretary to Christina of Sweden. See also his "Ode à la Reyne Mere sur la Régence" (1643) and the "Poème à la Serenissime Reyne de Suède" (1651?) for his favorable representation of women in government, inevitable given their panegyric nature.
22. In addition to the considerable revisions and additions to the text proper, the 1657 edition also includes an appendix (the *entrée* of the title) of 101 contemporary women whom Saint-Gabriel signals out for praise. The text of the third 1660 edition is identical to that of 1657, the only difference being the addition of a further list of more meritorious women: *Le Mérite des dames avec l'entrée de la reyne et de cent autres dames du temps, dans le ciel des belles héroines, Et en suite est la nouvelle entrée de la reyne infante, avec cent autres dames, dans ledit ciel des belles héroïnes* (Paris: J. Le Gras, 1660). This text is often mistakenly dated by critics as 1640, possibly following the (currently) incorrect BN catalogue entry. (The BN volume in question itself carries the date 1660.) Noémi Hepp includes a number of insightful remarks concerning this text in her article "À la recherche du

'mérite des dames,'" in Yves-Marie Bercé et al., eds., *Destins et enjeux du XVII^e siècle* (Paris: PUF, 1985), pp. 109–117.

23. See Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes à la culture*, pp. 26–27.
24. Saint-Gabriel, *Le Mérite des dames*, pp. 47 and 217.
25. Gilbert, *Panegyrique des dames*, pp. 16, 43.
26. "Les hommes après s'estre rendus les femmes serves et captives, leur ont osté la science, comme les seules armes & instrumens à faire la guerre aux hommes, & à machiner leur delivrance" ("Men, having made women subservient and captive, have taken knowledge from them, as the only arms and instruments with which they could combat men and plot their delivrance") (*La Femme généreuse*, pp. 97–98; see also pp. 94–95); Nervèze, *Apologie*, p. 86. See also Charlotte Brachart, *Harangue* (1604), in Winn, ed., *Protestations et revendications féminines*, pp. 46–48, p. 47.
27. See Saint-Gabriel, *Le Mérite des dames*, p. 53. Timmermans points out that this is the basis for the argumentation of Vigoureux's text, *La Défense des femmes*, 1617 (Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes à la culture*, p. 251, n.92).
28. See, for example, Gilbert, *Panegyrique des dames*, pp. 33–36, and Gerzan's chapter "Du jugement & de la sagesse des Hommes & des Femmes au choix de leurs dominantes vertus, à sçavoir du Courage & de la Chasteté" ("On the judgement and wisdom of men and women in the choice of their dominant virtues, namely courage and chastity"), *Le Triomphe des dames*, pp. 55–67.
29. See Angenot, *Les Champions des femmes*, pp. 11–12.
30. Nervèze, *Apologie*, p. 63; Gerzan, *Le Triomphe des dames*, p. 205; *La Femme généreuse*, pp. 26–31. For a fuller discussion of the arguments from Genesis used to favor women from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, see Angenot, *Les Champions des femmes*, pp. 101–105, and Maclean, *Woman Triumphant*, pp. 40–42.
31. Gerzan, *Le Triomphe des dames*, p. 205.
32. Saint-Gabriel, *Le Mérite des dames*, pp. 192, 190.
33. Ibid., pp. 185–186, 188. On this idea, see Carolyn C. Lougee, *Le Paradis des Femmes: Women, Salons and Social Stratification in Seventeenth-Century France* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 18.
34. Saint-Gabriel seems to be pointing here to what Constance Jordan calls "metaleptic law," in sum, where the (natural and divine) laws follow rather than precede practice. See Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism: Literary Texts and Political Models* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 207–211 on metaleptic law in the sixteenth-century feminists Nicolas de Cholières and Alexandre Pont-Aymery.
35. Gilbert, *Panegyrique des dames*, pp. 31–32; Gerzan, *Le Triomphe des dames*, pp. 132–133. For a brief résumé of this role, see Angenot, *Les*

Champions des femmes, pp. 142–144, 148–149; Lougee, *Le Paradis des Femmes*, pp. 33–34; and especially Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes à la culture*, pp. 141–152.

36. Gilbert, *Panegyrique des dames*, p. 8; Gerzan, *Le Triomphe des dames*, p. 12.
37. Angenot, *Les Champions des femmes*, p. 117; for further discussion of the importance of beauty, see pp. 117–122, and Ruth Kelso, *Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1956), pp. 202–205.
38. Lougee, *Le Paradis des Femmes*, p. 38; on the influence of neo-Platonism, see pp. 34–40.
39. See Gilbert, *Panegyrique des dames*, pp. 10–11; Gerzan, *Le Triomphe des dames*, pp. 208–209; and Saint-Gabriel, *Le Mérite des dames*, pp. 16–41. See also Louis Machon, *Discours ou Sermon apologétique en faveur des femmes, question nouvelle, curieuse et non soustenuë* (Paris: T. Blaise, 1641), pp. 89ff.
40. Lougee, *Le Paradis des Femmes*, p. 34.
41. Ibid., pp. 31–32. See Gerzan, *Le Triomphe des dames*, p. 169; Saint-Gabriel, *Le Mérite des dames*, p. 46.
42. Saint-Gabriel, *Le Mérite des dames*, pp. 217ff.
43. Ibid., pp. 217–220. Despite the ambivalence of Plato's treatment of women, pro-woman writers repeatedly used his favorable comments in support of their arguments. On women in Plato, see, for example, Susan M. Okin, "Philosopher Queens and Private Wives: Plato on Women and the Family," in Mary Lyndon Shanley and Carole Pateman, eds., *Feminist Interpretations and Political Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), pp. 11–31; and Diana H. Coole, "Plato and Aristotle: The Status of Women in the Just State," *Women in Political Theory. From Ancient Misogyny to Contemporary Feminism* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1988), pp. 29–48.
44. Saint-Gabriel, *Le Mérite des dames*, pp. 232–233.
45. Ibid., p. 268.
46. Ibid., pp. 245–252. See also pp. 113–114, 221–222. On the topos of "le règne des femmes," see Angenot, *Les Champions des femmes*, pp. 148–149, and Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes à la culture*, pp. 252–254.
47. It is possible to see how this line of argument would fit in with the debate concerning male and female reason, which Timothy Reiss associates with the mid-seventeenth century. According to Reiss, while "male" reason was inextricably bound up with violence, "on the other hand, however, because women had been historically excluded from the making of society and culture, reason in them (not *female* reason, but simply Reason as acting within women) was free of that violence, and could thus offer a solution to the dangerous decay of political and civil order." See Timothy J. Reiss, "Corneille and Cornelia: Reason, Violence, and the Cultural Status

of the Feminine; Or, How a Dominant Discourse Recuperated and Subverted the Advance of Women," *Renaissance Drama*, 18 (1987), 3–41 (p. 4). That Anne of Austria's government had not prevented the Fronde is an irony Saint-Gabriel avoids.

48. *La Femme généreuse*, pp. 55–67.
49. Gilbert, *Panegyrique des dames*, p. 41. See also Gerzan (*Le Triomphe des dames*, p. 169) who argues that the prudence necessary for government is natural in women but acquired in men.
50. Gilbert, *Panegyrique des dames*, p. 6. Authority and power are manifested by their physical features. See also Gerzan (*Le Triomphe des dames*, p. 208) for whom the beauty of women should render them "Mistresses of the world" who would have "an absolute power over men."
51. Gilbert, *Panegyrique des dames*, p. 12.
52. Le Chevalier de L'Escale, *Le Champion des femmes* (Paris: veuve M. Guillemot, 1618), pp. 73–74. Quoted in Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes à la culture*, p. 250.
53. Gerzan, *Le Triomphe des dames*, pp. 180–181. See also Gilbert, *Panegyrique des dames*, p. 14.
54. For a clear sense of gendered virtues, see the comparisons in Gerzan, *Le Triomphe des dames*, pp. 55–67 and Gilbert, *Panegyrique des dames*, pp. 34–36.
55. See Constance Jordan's chapter "Sex and Gender," in *Renaissance Feminism*, pp. 134–247 for a detailed discussion of the idea in sixteenth-century texts.
56. The eight pairs are Deborah and Joshua, Tomyris and Cyrus, Salomone and both Abraham and Eleazar, Porcia and Brutus, Judith and Goliath, Tanaquil and both Tarquin and Servius Tullius, Suzanne and Ioseph, Lucretia and Cato. For du Bosc's role within a current of "Christian feminism," as Albistur and Armogathe designate it, aimed at standing out against the traditional misogyny of the church, see Maïté Albistur and Daniel Armogathe, *Histoire du féminisme français du moyen âge à nos jours*, 2 vols (Paris: des femmes, 1977), I, pp. 188–190.
57. Du Bosc, *La Femme héroïque*, I, pp. 32–34. Saint-Gabriel follows du Bosc in this, arguing that such a suggestion is blasphemous in implying God is unjust (Saint-Gabriel, *Le Mérite des dames*, pp. 90–91). Saint-Gabriel draws considerably in fact on du Bosc throughout his text.
58. Du Bosc, *La Femme héroïque*, I, pp. 34–35. See also Saint-Gabriel, *Le Mérite des dames*, pp. 89–91, and Gerzan, *Le Triomphe des dames*, pp. 51–52.
59. Du Bosc, *La Femme héroïque*, I, p. 28. The quotation is adapted from St. Ambrose, *Treatise concerning Widows*, Ch. 8, §44 (written ca. 377). Saint-Gabriel later borrows this idea from du Bosc, although

he incorrectly attributes it to St. Augustine (p. 103). A slightly earlier articulation of the idea of ungendered virtue can be found in Guerry: "les vertus ne sont à juger selon le sexe, mais selon l'âme" ("virtues should be judged not by sex but by the soul"); see *Traicté de l'excellence du sexe fœminin, et des prerogatives de la mere de Dieu* (Paris: J. Petrinal, 1635), p. 24. According to Maclean, the full quotation, although attributed to St. Jerome in the margin, is a conflation of Jerome and Gregory of Nazianzus (see Maclean, *Woman Triumphant*, p. 73, n.34).

60. Du Bosc, *La Femme héroïque*, I, pp. 39–49.
61. Ibid., p. 42. As Lougee comments (*Le Paradis des Femmes*, p. 16), "This acceptance and even celebration of diversity is striking; whereas the psychological inability to cope with variations in behavior had necessitated the subjection of women to norms of behavior by definition male, women could be rehabilitated as difference became tolerable." Du Bosc's ideas on equality and difference were later adopted by the author of *L'Apologie des sciences des Dames* (1662).
62. Du Bosc, *La Femme héroïque*, I, p. 47. The link with difference is clear later when he reiterates that if men and women exhibit the virtues of the opposite sex, it points to how they are both "naturally equal in the practice of virtue" ("égaux naturellement pour la pratique de la Vertu"); this flexibility in virtue is designed to "highlight the equality of the species, although the difference between the sexes provides some diversity within it" ("faire paroistre l'égalité de l'espece, quoy que la difference des sexes y apporte quelque diversité") (Du Bosc, *La Femme héroïque*, I, p. 48). Gerzan also devotes a chapter to highlighting how men and women are equally capable of "all virtues and areas of knowledge" (*Le Triomphe des dames*, pp. 49–54).
63. Du Bosc, *La Femme héroïque*, I, p. 245.
64. See the bibliography concerning the warrior woman in chapter 2, Vol. 2, of this book.
65. On the Amazon, see Pierre Samuel, *Amazones, guerrières et gaillardes* (Brussels: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 1975); Guyonne Leduc and Sylvie Steinberg, eds., *Réalité et représentations des Amazones* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008).
66. On this role see, for example, Brian Sandberg, "'Generous Amazons Came to the Breach': Besieged Women, Agency and Subjectivity during the French Wars of Religion," *Gender and History*, 16 (2004), 654–688; Nicole Dufournaud, "Femmes en armes au XVI^{e} siècle," in Coline Cardi and Geneviève Pruvost, eds., *Penser la violence des femmes* (Paris: La Découverte, 2012), pp. 75–84, which treats of the question beyond the sixteenth-century of its title; Dominique Godineau, "De la guerrière à la citoyenne. Porter les armes pendant l'Ancien Régime et la Révolution française," *CLIO. Histoire, femmes*

et sociétés, 20 (2004), 43–69. For two of the better known *guerrières* of the period, see Micheline Cuénin, *La Dernière des Amazones, Madame de Saint-Baslemont* (Nancy: Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 1992); and *Mémoires de Madame de La Guette*, ed. Micheline Cuénin (Paris: Mercure de France, 1982). See also, more generally, Michéline Cuénin, "La femme et la guerre (1516–1660)," in Ian Richmond and Constant Venesoen, eds., *Actes de London. Présences féminines: Littérature et société au XVII^e siècle français* (Paris, Seattle, Tübingen: PFSCL, 1987), pp. 291–322; Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War* (Brighton: Harvester, 1989); Danielle Haase-Dubosc, "Des vertueux faits de femmes (1610–1660)," in Cécile Dauphin and Arlette Farge, eds., *De la Violence et des femmes* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1997), pp. 53–72. (In recent years, researchers have begun to examine the implications of the warrior woman as violent woman, as this last title and the volume *Penser la violence des femmes* indicate. For two different approaches concerning the links between violence committed by women and against women, see the articles mentioned here by Haase-Dubosc and DeJean).

67. On the political usages of the Amazon myth, see, for example, Éliane Viennot, "Les Amazones dans le débat de la participation des femmes au pouvoir à la Renaissance," in Leduc and Steinberg, eds., *Réalité et représentations des Amazones*, pp. 113–129; Sylvie Steinberg, "Le mythe des Amazones et son utilisation politique de la Renaissance à la Fronde," in Kathleen Wilson-Chevalier and Éliane Viennot, eds., *Royaume de Fémynie. Pouvoirs, contraintes, espaces de liberté des femmes, de la Renaissance à la Fronde* (Paris: Champion, 1999), pp. 261–273; Marion Lemaignon, "Du modèle de l'héroïne à l'amazone extraordinaire: Christine de Suède dans les pamphlets français du XVII^e siècle," in Danielle Haase-Dubosc and Marie-Élisabeth Henneau, eds., *Revisiter la "Querelle des femmes": Discours sur l'égalité/inégalité des femmes et des hommes (1600–1750)* (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2013), pp. 197–207, which highlights the ambivalence of the model with regard to the Swedish queen.

It is worth noting that the category of the *femme forte* is often mistakenly confused today with that of the Amazon or warrior woman. While the Amazon is a type of *femme forte*, certainly all *femmes fortes* are not warrior figures. In neither of the two texts, which, it seems to me, are most responsible for the popularization of the category in recent literary and historical studies—namely Le Moyne's *Gallerie des femmes fortes* with its multiple reprints on the one hand, and Ian Maclean's chapter "The new feminism and the *femme forte*, 1630–1650" on the other—is the *femme forte* exclusively a warrior woman. For Le Moyne, the emphasis is very clearly on moral strength, while for Maclean, in his analysis of Le Moyne and

his contemporaries, *la femme forte* is a type of heroic woman, characterized by the virtues of stoic apathy (constancy), magnanimity, and liberality (Maclean, *Woman Triumphant*, pp. 82–83). Neither refers specifically to the warrior woman; as the examples here indicate, this figure is probably more accurately rendered by the term *femme généreuse* (a term that is, however, also very polyvalent). In fact, it seems to me that a reexamination of the very category of *femme forte*, frequently undefined in modern usage and perhaps not as popular in the seventeenth century as historiography has us believe, would be timely.

68. Du Bosc, *La Femme héroïque*, I, pp. 243, 244.
69. Gilbert, *Panégyrique des dames*, pp. 35–40.
70. Nervèze, *Apologie*, p. 64.
71. Gerzan, *Le Triomphe des dames*, pp. 68–70. Compare with Gilbert, *Panégyrique des dames*, p. 35.
72. Jean Chapelain, *La Pucelle ou la France délivrée, poème heroïque* (Paris: Augustin Courbé, 1656), preface (non-paginated). Like others, he also evokes the primacy of the individual over biological sex, arguing that the idea of physical strength being necessary for heroic virtue excludes weak men.
73. *La Femme généreuse*, pp. 118–128, 134.
74. This inscription of women in a tradition of saviors—based on the Pauline idea that God often uses women for his purpose, *in extremis*, when all else has failed, confounding strength with weakness—is repeatedly evoked throughout this literature.

    The fundamental role of the "list" or catalogue of examples in this pro-woman discourse, and the importance of situating it within a framework of Renaissance rhetoric and historical poetics, has been highlighted by Mathieu-Castellani. While it may seem alien to the modern reader, she argues that the "list" needs to be understood in part as a constituent element of collective cultural memory ("Le cas Cornelia," p. 174). However, the ambiguous nature of such a list is highlighted by the fact that, at times, the examples are precisely the same as those that feature in anti-regency *mazarinades* and political writings, a reminder (if one were needed) of how the past could easily be read to suit any argument. The same women are fierce and monstrous or courageous and patriotic, depending on one's viewpoint.
75. Du Bosc, *La Femme héroïque*, I, p. 79. Saint-Gabriel repeats his words, almost verbatim (*Le Mérite des dames*, pp. 91–92).
76. Du Bosc, *La Femme héroïque*, I, p. 39, p. 111; cf. Saint-Gabriel, *Le Mérite des dames*, p. 107.
77. See, for example, pp. 131 and 197. The third admirable stateswoman who features here is Tanaquil, wife of Tarquinius Priscus, fifth king of Rome, who is compared with both Tarquin and Servius

Tullius, in a description du Bosc terms "the veritable portrait of a political woman or stateswoman," proof apparently that women are capable of being involved in government and public administration (du Bosc, *La Femme héroïque*, II, p. 562). However, despite this auspicious presentation, what emerges is a traditional model of female behavior whereby female intelligence and skill is channeled into the promotion of their male counterparts.

78. Catherine Pascal points to seventeen French printings between 1647 and 1672 (see Pascal, "Les recueils de femmes illustres," p. 3, n.7). To Chérot's extensive, although not exhaustive, list of editions, and to the English, German, and Italian translations he mentions—Henri Chérot, *Étude sur la vie et les œuvres du P. le Moyne (1602–1671)* (Geneva: Slatkine, [1887] 1971), pp. 517–523—we could add the full Spanish translation (Madrid, 1794) and the earlier partial Spanish translation (Lima, 1702). It is also worth noting that the German manuscript translation is extremely partial, each engraving being followed by a brief number of pages, at times only one.
79. This type of classification is not new; Jean Bouchet's *Le Jugement poetic de l'honneur femenin* (1538), for example, divides his catalogue of women into three similar categories: those from the Old Testament, those from classical antiquity, and those who are Christian.
80. Le Moyne indicates in the preface that he will end each section with a modern example taken from France or its neighbors. Modern is clearly meant in the broadest sense of the term: of the twenty-one examples, one straddles the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, seven are from the sixteenth century, five from the fifteenth century, two from both the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries, one from the tenth century, and three from the sixth to the eighth centuries.
81. See his comments on female anger in "Camme" (*La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 109), or on female beauty in "Lucrèce" (*La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 163). I use the word "text" advisedly: the extent to which the engravings by Rousselet and Bosse, after drawings by Vignon, nuance one's appreciation of the text is a key question in terms of its reception, but one that is beyond the scope of this study. On the relations between text and image in the *Gallerie*, see articles by Mantero, Spica, Conroy, in the bibliography.
82. See the "moral question" devoted to "Why women are more faithful in conjugal love than men" in "Camme," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, pp. 104–108. Le Moyne argues, seemingly without a hint of irony, that since women are excluded from numerous matters that occupy men, and since love is "the occupation of those who are at leisure" ("l'employ de ceux qui sont de loisir," p. 107), it is necessary that they love more than they are loved.

83. See "Monime," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, pp. 138–139. This is all the more surprising since it follows quite a harsh criticism of the paranoid husband, and it appears temporarily that Le Moyne's sympathies lie with the maligned wife.
84. "Pauline," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, pp. 249, 252, 250. He does, however, as we will see below, allow for equal intellectual ability, in theory at least, even if he baulks at the idea of women attending university ("Collège") (see "Pauline," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 253).
85. For the extent to which the "educated woman" for many meant in fact the "refined cultured woman," a type of *honnête femme* (the meaning of which evolves considerably throughout the century), see Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes à la culture*, pp. 329–331.
86. On the "livre d'apparat," see Jean-Marc Chatelain, "Formes et enjeux de l'illustration dans le livre d'apparat au XVII[e] siècle," *CAIEF*, 57 (2005), 77–98.
87. See Richard Crescenzo, *Peintures d'instruction. La postérité littéraire des* Images *de Philostrate en France de Blaise de Vigenère à l'époque classique* (Geneva: Droz, 1999), pp. 194–200. See also Bernard Teyssandier, "Les métamorphoses de la *stoa*: de la galerie comme architecture au livre-galerie," *Études littéraires*, 34.1–2 (2002), 71–101.
88. See Catherine Pascal's judicious remarks on the ways in which the galleries written by the religious aimed to promote Christian virtues among the nobility of the time (Catherine Pascal, "Les recueils de femmes illustres," pp. 6–8).
89. On this practice, see Dominique Moncond'huy, "Les femmes illustres en leurs galeries (littéraires et picturales) dans la première moitié du XVII[e] siècle," in Jean Serroy, ed., *Littérature et peinture au temps de Le Sueur* (Grenoble: Diffusion Ellug, 2003), pp. 87–94 (pp. 89–92). The idea of the indirect portrait is originally developed in Alain Mérot's *Retraites mondaines. Aspects de la décoration interne à Paris au XVII[e] siècle* (Paris: Le Promeneur, 1990).
90. The "indirect portrait" that emerges here therefore is less a portrait of the queen than the projection of Le Moyne's ideal portrait of her—a sketch of what she *should* resemble. See Derval Conroy, "Geste et monumentalité dans *La Gallerie des femmes fortes* du Père Le Moyne (1647)," *Cahiers Tristan L'Hermite*, 32 (2010), 99–109 (pp. 104–106).
91. See, for example, the comments in the "Pucelle" moral question, pp. 312–313.
92. "Ce n'est donc pas la différence du Sexe, qui fait la difference de facultez de l'Ame" / "It is not therefore the difference of sex which makes a difference to the faculties of the soul" ("La Pucelle," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 313); "les Vertus qui ont leur siège dans

l'Ame, & n'ont besoin que de la bonne disposition de l'Ame pour agir, sont de l'un et de l'autre Sexe" ("Virtues, having their seat in the soul and needing only the good disposition of the soul to act, belong to both sexes") ("Porcie," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 210). See also "Porcie," p. 213, "Judith," p. 46. *La Femme généreuse* voices the same idea, maintaining that sexual difference is uniquely physical, that the soul is neither male nor female, and that both man and woman are defined as reasoned beings (p. 89).

93. "Pauline," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 251.
94. Le Moyne, *Peintures morales*, 1 (Paris: S. Cramoisy, 1640) p. 204. Interestingly, this is given as an example of those propositions that "although removed from popular opinion are nonetheless true and founded in reason" / "pour estre éloignées des Opinions communes, ne laissent pas d'estre veritables, & fondées en raison"). On the common currency of the idea of the ungendered mind, frequently articulated long before Poulain de la Barre, see pp. 91–92 above. Remarks in Le Moyne's *Discours de la Poésie* (1641) would imply that he was writing the *Gallerie* at the same time as the *Peintures*, and that he had started both prior to 1641. See Richard Maber, *The Poetry of Pierre Le Moyne* (1602–1671) (Berne: Peter Lang, 1982), p. 39, n.54.
95. "Debora," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 10.
96. Ibid., p. 11. This follows on the suggestion: "Il n'importe gueres plus, de quel sexe & de quelle complexion soit le Corps, qui n'est que l'habillement de l'Ame qui gouverne. L'importance est que cette Ame soit instruite & bien conseillée" ("It hardly matters of what sex and of what complexion the body is, it being only the outer clothing of the soul which governs. What is important is that this soul be edified and well advised").
97. "Clelie," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 192. The "moral question" here is devoted to examining whether virtue in women is of the same public utility as virtue in men.
98. Ibid., p. 193.
99. Elsewhere he points out that some men don't have "the faintest glimmering of good sense" ("la premiere lueur de bon sens") where some women seem to be made from the "purest extract of distilled matter" ("du pur extrait de la matière rectifiée") ("La Pucelle," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 313), and that some men have less *esprit* and *courage* than some women ("Clelie," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 194).
100. "Debora," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, pp. 11–12.
101. Ibid., pp. 9–10. See also the references to Joan of Arc's actions as proof of a divinely conferred gift of miracle-working ("Judith," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 49).
102. "Zenobie," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, pp. 153–154. For the similar argument regarding women and formalized education, see "Pauline," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 253.

103. "Zenobie," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, pp. 154–155.
104. "Porcie," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 211.
105. See Sylvie Steinberg, *La Confusion des Sexes. Le Travestissement des la Renaissance à la Révolution* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), pp. 275–280. Le Moyne doesn't limit *générosité* to military activity—he defines the former as the courage and elevation of mind through which one adheres to painstaking duties and virtues ("Porcie," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 210)—but it is clear from the context that it is through military activity that this courage and elevated mind manifest themselves.
106. Zenobia, for example, is "de la Race des Ptolomées, & Descendante de Cleopatre" ("Zenobie," *La Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 150).
107. Understandably, it is in the ekphrases or verbal portraits that accompany the engravings that Le Moyne's interest in physiognomics is most apparent, as he describes the emotions marking his heroines' faces. See, for example, "Zenobie," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 146.
108. Sylvie Steinberg, "Le mythe des Amazones," p. 271.
109. "Zenobie," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, pp. 151, 148. Other examples of this symbiosis are Deborah ("Debora," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, pp. 4, 6, 9), the Maréchale de Balagny (Renée de Clermont), and Joanna of Flanders, represented as another chaste warrior ("Zenobie," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, pp. 156–157). The importance of chastity in the warrior woman construction is further evidenced in the ambiguous treatment of Semiramis. In different parts of the volume, Le Moyne alludes to her as both a favorable and an unfavorable example ("La Pucelle," pp. 315–316, and "Lucrece," pp. 174–175, this latter reference a refutation of Tasso). Le Moyne is happy to praise her as long as it is the chaste version of the myth that is being propagated. The chaste virago figure as a model of female behavior can be traced back to the gallery of women contained in St. Jerome's *Adversus Jovinianum* (ca. 393), although it is Boccaccio's merging of Jerome's virgin virago and his continent widow that had the greatest influence from the Renaissance onwards.
110. "Zenobie," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 151. The primary source for the history of Zenobia (ca. 241–272), possibly inflected through Boccaccio's *De mulieribus claris*, can be found in the "The Lives of the Thirty Pretenders" by Trebellius Pollio and "The Life of Aurelian" by Flavius Vopiscus, in the *Historia Augusta*, a collection of biographies of dubious historical authenticity, composed before AD 425. The idea of Zenobia as historian, repeated in Boccaccio, can be found here (see the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, Loeb Classical Library (London: W. Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1922–32, III, p. 141, 30.22). For recent studies on Zenobia (reflecting the surge of interest in the Palmyrian queen), see the bibliography for titles by Winsbury, Southern, Zahran, Stoneman, and above all,

Jacques Charles-Gaffiot, Henri Lavagne and Jean-Marc Hofman, eds., *Moi, Zénobie, Reine de Palmyre* (Milan: Skira; Paris: Seuil, 2001). For an overview of her reception in seventeenth-century France (by, for example, Boileau, La Bruyère, Bossuet, and Bayle), see Alain Lanavère, "Zénobie, personnage du XVII^{e} siècle?" in *Moi, Zénobie, Reine de Palmyre*, pp. 139–142, although his comments concerning d'Aubignac's play and reception (*Zénobie*, 1647, first performed 1640) are not entirely accurate.

For a provocative reading of Zenobia, see Joan DeJean, "Violent Women and Violence against Women: Representing the 'Strong' Woman in Early Modern France," *Signs*, 29.1 (2003), 117–147 (pp. 128–131). For DeJean, Le Moyne's gallery plays a role in the celebration of a new model of violent woman, which contributed towards the book's popularity, and which also may have contributed to the increase in violence against women. While the implications of the representation of female violence are clearly worthy of consideration, it is worth remembering that the appeal of the gore and violence in Le Moyne needs to placed within the broader context of the ongoing appeal of the baroque, and above all that Le Moyne, rather than celebrating female violence, clearly struggles in the text to condone it (both as a man of the cloth and as a *mondain* moralist acutely conscious of the importance of *bienséances* in his 1640s environment), often focusing on the courage or mental fortitude that led to a particular action rather than the action itself. Certainly there is none of the gratuitous detail of violence that one finds in his earlier works. (For comparative purposes, see Maber, *The Poetry of Pierre Le Moyne*, pp. 139–147, on that earlier representation of violence).

111. For the type of physiognomics in circulation prior to Descartes' *Traité des passions* (1649), see the first two volumes of Marin Cureau de la Chambre's *Les Caractères des passions* (1640 and 1645). For an overview of this tradition, see Anthony Levi, *French Moralists. The Theory of the Passions 1585–1649* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), Ch. 9, "Medicine and Morals," pp. 234ff.
112. "Clelie," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 196.
113. References are made to Deborah as "regente" (p. 6), to her "Regence" (p. 8), and to her fulfillment of the duties of royalty ("les charges de la royauté," p. 5), before Le Moyne explicitly states, "NOSTRE REGENTE [...] a beaucoup de traits de la Regente Juifve" / "OUR REGENT [...] has many of the qualities of the Jewish regent" ("Debora," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, pp. 9–10).
114. "Debora," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 8. The centrality accorded the widow throughout the text reinforces this link (Artemisia, Zenobia, Porcia, Judith are also widows, in addition to numerous

"modern" examples—a fact not surprising in itself since certainly those women who attained any power generally did so through widowhood). While it is not unusual to have large passages of a moralist treatise devoted to a heavily loaded prescriptive discourse in their regard, it is hard not to be aware of the particular resonances of this discourse for the dedicatee here. Anne of Austria's widowhood might also explain Le Moyne's readiness to follow St. Ambrose's rather than St. Jerome's treatment of Deborah; the former presents her as a widow, while the latter posits that nothing in the Bible points to this. See Jerome, Letter 54 ("To Furia"), §17.

115. "Debora," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, pp. 12–13. See also the reference to Blanche of Castile as "one of these Artemisias born in Spain and formed in France" ("Artemise," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 123).

116. "Debora," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 13. Margaret of Austria was half-sister to Philip II of Spain, and therefore aunt to his daughter Isabella Clara Eugenia; Isabella in turn was aunt to Anne of Austria, as the half-sister of Anne of Austria's father, Philip III of Spain. (This Margaret of Austria, also known as Margaret of Parma, is not to be confused with her homonym Margaret of Austria (1480–1530), daughter of Marie de Bourgogne). The metaphor of portraiture is continued later concerning Blanche of Castile, where Anne of Austria is alluded to covertly as "a copy, which posterity will esteem as much as its original" ("une Copie, que la Posterité estimera bien autant que son Original;" see "Artemise," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 123).

Two other queens of Castile feature in the *Gallerie,* Blanche de Bourbon (1339–61) and Eleanor of Castile (1241–90), mistakenly referred to by Le Moyne as Isabelle de Castille. However, government is not central to their portraits, although the latter played a considerable role as queen of England.

117. As indicated above (n.94), evidence suggests Le Moyne had started the *Gallerie* before 1641. Given the role of the Spanish Infanta in the "Salic Law" controversies in 1593, as granddaughter of Henri II and Catherine de Médicis (see chapter 1, p. 23), it is ironic that she is evoked fifty years later as a model of female government. Isabella governed as co-sovereign with her husband Albert from 1598 to 1621, and then alone until her death in 1633. On her life and career, see Charles Terlinden, *L'Archiduchesse Isabelle* (Brussels: La Renaissance du Livre, 1943); Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo, eds., *Albert and Isabella 1598–1621: Essays* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998); Magdalena S. Sánchez, "Sword and Wimple. Isabel Clara Eugenia and Power," in Anne J. Cruz and Mihoko Suzuki, eds., *The Rule of Women in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2009), pp. 64–79.

The popularity of the Infanta Isabella as a model of female governance is evidenced by Anne of Austria's commissioning of Mathieu de Morgues's *Pourtraict en petit d'Isabelle-Claire-Eugenie, infante d'Espagne, archiduchesse d'Austriche, souveraine de Pays-bas, &c.* (Paris: Sebastien Cramoisy et Gabriel Cramoisy, 1650), at the height of the Fronde. Furthermore, Marie de Médicis had earlier commissioned Puget de la Serre's *Mausolée erigé à la mémoire immortelle de très haulte, très puissante et très auguste princesse Isabelle-Claire-Eugénie* (Brussels: Pepermans, 1634). The gallery represented in the frontispiece of the latter features six female allegories of virtues (Piety, Justice, Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance, and Liberality), accompanied by Charity and Humility in the foreground.

118. "Debora," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, pp. 13–17.
119. See, for example, the rhetorical accumulation where *bonté is* referred to six times ("Debora," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 18). He later characterizes the defining quality of the Infanta as a beneficent grace ("cette grâce à faire le bien estoit [son] caractère particulier") (p. 19).
120. On this reception, see Michel Carmona, *Marie de Médicis* (Paris: Fayard, 1981), pp. 473–480.
121. "Debora," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 20.
122. Coste's contemporaneous account of Isabelle, one of the many added to his augmented second edition of *Les Éloges et vies des reynes* also published in 1647, while different in tone, is not dissimilar in essence: justice, piety, liberality, magnificence are the hallmarks of the Infanta. See Hilarion de Coste, *Les Eloges et vies des reynes, princesses, dames et demoiselles illustres en pieté, courage et doctrine, qui ont fleury de nostre temps, et du temps de nos peres* (Paris: S. Cramoisy, 1647), pp. 663–696.
123. "La Pucelle," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 319. Le Moyne maintains that Ferdinand only acted "by the direction [of] and as subaltern" to Isabella (p. 320).
124. Ibid., p. 321.
125. Ibid., p. 322.
126. "Debora," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 22. Le Moyne highlights the internal wranglings of her governorship but credits her with overcoming them. No mention is made of the opposition of her half-brother Philip II of Spain to her policy of clemency, or her decision to step down from power. Her portrait is another example of the paradigm of exceptionality in Le Moyne: it was "a marvellous spectacle" ("un merveilleux spectacle") to see a young woman wrestle alone against such a great and dangerous storm; she was looked upon by all Europe with astonishment ("avec étonnement," "Debora," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 23).

127. "Artemise," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 124.
128. See, for example, "Debora," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 7.
129. Ibid., pp. 13–14.
130. "Clelie," *Gallerie des femmes fortes*, p. 200.
131. Ibid, p. 198.
132. It is difficult to determine Le Moyne's sources. For Isabella Clara Eugenia, reference is made to "those who wrote the History of the wars of Flanders" (p. 16), which might suggest any of Francisco Lanario Y Aragon's *Histoire des guerres de Flandre* (1618), Antoine Oudin's *Histoire de la guerre de Flandre* (1634), or Pierre Du Ryer's translation of volume 1 of Flaminius Strada's *Histoire de la guerre des Flandres* (1644). However, in the first, only passing reference is made to Isabella, while the last two do not cover the period of her governance at all. Certain similarities with Coste might suggest Jacques-Auguste de Thou as a source, since Coste cites the latter. De Thou's *Historia sui temporis* had been published between 1604 and 1620.
133. On the literary portrait, see Jacqueline Plantié, *La Mode du portrait littéraire en France (1641–1681)* (Paris: Champion, 1994). A stylistic reading of Le Moyne's *Gallerie* examples as literary portraits, drawing on Plantié's work, for example, could throw further light on portraiture in Le Moyne's work, particularly significant for a Jesuit crucially aware of the *ut pictura poesis* debates.
134. The prosopopoeia sonnet, lending a voice to the queen, highlights the same disjunction between the categories of biological sex and kingship: "Et pour faire fleurir un Estat sous mes loix, / Si je n'ay le Sexe des Roys, / J'en ay recue du Ciel l'Esprit & le Courage" ("And for the state to flourish under my laws, / If I do not have the sex of kings, / I have received from the Heavens their intelligence and courage"). On the symbol of the bee in Le Moyne, see Julien Eymard, "Les tenants et les aboutissants d'un symbol féminin: les abeilles du P. Le Moyne, *Cahiers de littérature du XVII^e siècle*, 8 (1986), 249–264.
135. Le Moyne, *L'Art de régner*, p. 443.
136. [Madeleine et] Georges de Scudéry, *Les Femmes illustres, ou Les Harangues héroïques de Mr de Scudéry, avec les véritables portraits de ces héroïnes, tirez des médailles antiques* (Paris: chez Antoine de Sommaville et Augustin Courbé, 1642); *Les Femmes illustres, ou Les Harangues héroïques de Mr de Scudéry, Seconde partie* (T. Quinet et N. de Sercy, 1644). A partial modern edition of Volume 1 was published by Côté-femmes in 1991. References will be to this edition unless stated otherwise. The most complete study of this text remains Rosa Galli Pellegrini, "*Les Femmes illustres* di George de Scudéry," in Cecilia Rizza, ed., *La prosa francese del primo Seicento* (Cuneo: Saste, 1977), pp. 91–146.

Although published under Georges de Scudéry's name, the work is generally thought to be the fruit of a collaboration between brother and sister, as intimated by Tallemant in his *Historiettes*. The extent and nature of the collaboration remain unknown. The critical consensus, however, tends to attribute the Sapho harangue at least to Madeleine. For our purposes, the issue of dual authorship is only relevant to the extent that it may explain internal contradictions, such as those between the Sapho harangue and the others. In sum, the inconsistencies and ambiguities that mark much of the *querelle des femmes* discourse are amplified here by the dual authorship.

137. This translation appeared in 1642 although completed in 1640; the *privilège* for both volumes of the *Femmes illustres* dates from December 10, 1641. The Manzini translation is alluded to in the "Epître," as having inspired the author to investigate if he would succeed as well in writing originals as in writing copies. A different type of model is provided by Ovid's *Heroides*.
138. Pascal, "Les recueils de femmes illustres," p. 8.
139. On the feminization of history in the harangues, see particularly Suzanne Toczyski, "Ce dont l'esprit est capable: Beauty and Truth in *Les Femmes illustres*," in François Lagarde, ed., *L'Esprit en France au XVII^e siècle* (Paris, Seattle, Tübingen: PFSCL, 1997), pp. 197–205 (pp. 202–203), and Renée-Claude Breitenstein, "Représentation de l'histoire et parole féminine dans *Les Femmes illustres ou les Harangues héroïques* des Scudéry," in *Les Femmes et l'écriture de l'histoire (1400–1800)*, eds. Jean-Claude Arnould and Sylvie Steinberg (Rouen: Presses universitaires de Rouen et du Havre, 2009), pp. 341–353 (pp. 350–351).
140. This is how Joan DeJean reads it in *Fictions of Sappho, 1546–1937* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 101–102. DeJean, however, does not appear to allow for the ambivalence that marks the text.
141. See, for example, "Mariane," *Les Femmes illustres,* I, pp. 40, 50.
142. See Toczyski, "Ce dont l'esprit est capable," pp. 197–199. Beauty does feature in other harangues such as those of Cléopâtre and Sappho, and particularly with relation to the literary characters of volume 2. See the dedicatory epistle of the latter where we are told that the author has now added a trophy to the triumphal arch, made up of the weapons and crowns of all the kings vanquished by the beauty of the illustrious women depicted ("Aux Dames," II, n.p.). Government is not a concern for the heroines of the second volume.
143. *Les Femmes illustres,* I, p. 84.
144. See, for example, Amalasonthe's characterization of her actions as consistently governed by justice and equity (p. 115).
145. *Les Femmes illustres,* I, p. 81.

146. *Les Femmes illustres,* I, p. 156. See also Armide's remarks on the ambivalence of Clorinde in *Les Femmes illustres, Seconde partie*, pp. 619–620. For an estimation of Scudéry's role in the changing attitudes towards the Amazon figure, see Karen Green, "The Amazons and Madeleine de Scudéry's Refashioning of Female Virtue," in Paul Salzman, ed., *Expanding the Canon of Early Modern Women's Writing* (Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Cambridge Scholars, 2010), pp. 150–167. It is worth remembering at any rate that despite the evolution in societal values, the Amazon figure did not disappear.
147. *Les Femmes illustres*, I, pp. 118–119, 84.
148. *Les Femmes illustres*, I, p. 119.
149. *Les Femmes illustres*, I, pp. 153–154.
150. This does not prevent Amalasonthe from issuing a veiled threat to the scheming Théodat on the repercussions of her potential murder. Facilitating relations does not include condoning murder.
151. Near the beginning of her harangue, Zénobie sets up her military activity as a collaboration with her husband, Odenat. She speaks "sans orgueil et sans faire tort à ce grand homme" ("without pride and without wronging the great man"). Amalasonthe's criticisms of Théodat were made, apparently, in order to prepare him for the throne. Pulchérie claims she ruled "assez heureusement," although her comments point to a highly successful reign, always in Théodose's interests, and ensuring divine protection for him.
152. On a related issue, the centrality of the marital couple in volume 1, see Suzanne Toczyski, "Corps sacré, discours souverain: le couple dans *Les Femmes illustres*," in Delphine Denis and Anne-Elisabeth Spica, eds., *Madeleine de Scudéry: une femme de lettres au XVII^e siècle* (Arras: Artois Presses Université, 2002), pp. 155–164.
153. *Les Femmes illustres*, I, pp. 153–154.
154. Their stance is thrown into relief by the portrait of another female ruler, Artémise, whose role is unchallenging to the patriarchy in a more traditional way. Artémise defines herself uniquely in terms of her late husband, seeks solely to valorize his memory, and has no interest in commenting on her own role, although we are given an account of it in a paralipsis.
155. Charles de Combault, comte d'Auteuil, *Blanche, Infante de Castille* (Paris: A. de Sommaville et A. Courbé, 1644). The text is divided into three books, followed by the "Preuves" ("Proofs"), all within the one volume.
156. Ibid., I, pp. 1–2. The latter part of his lengthy introductory sentence is repeated almost verbatim in Marguerite Buffet, *Nouvelles Observations sur la langue françoise, où il est traitté des termes anciens et inusitez, et du bel usage des mots nouveaux. Avec les Eloges des illustres sçavantes, tant anciennes que modernes* (Paris: J. Cusson, 1668),

p. 330, pointing, as do other similar examples of intertextuality, to the circulation of this occluded pro-gynæcocratic discourse. The emphasis on universality in the opening lines is reiterated later in d'Auteuil, where "administration by women" is depicted as "universally accepted in diverse circumstances" (*Blanche*, pp. 17–18).

157. Claude Malingre, *Traicté de la loy salique* (Paris: C. Collet, 1614), p.108; repeated in Laurent Bouchel, *Bibliothèque ou Tresor du droit françois*, 3 vols (Paris: J. Girin et B. Riviere, 1671), III, p.402. The concept of "droit des gens" (*ius gentium*) dates back to classical times and designates a type of natural law thought to be observed by all mankind.
158. D'Auteuil, *Blanche*, p. 6.
159. Ibid., p.25. He also evokes Brunehilde's ambivalent treatment by historians (pp. 24–25) and refers to Olympias' authority as "guère longue, ny guère heureuse" ("not very long nor felicitous") (p. 8).
160. It is a peculiarity of this text that although d'Auteuil is clearly setting out an apology for Anne of Austria's regency, his account of female government fades away when he returns to it after his account of Blanche's life: he devotes a mere seven pages to all the regents from Jeanne de Navarre (who died before she could reign) through to Anne of Austria, that is, the most recent 400 years of French monarchy. On the whole, d'Auteuil is much more circumspect in his praise of gynæcocracy in the text proper, and implies that female regency is felicitous since contained, although Blanche's embodiment of *douceur* and *prévoyance* are lauded implicitly throughout. The difference in tone is such that one might wonder whether the preface is not by a different hand. However, I have been unable to trace it to any other source.
161. Gerzan, *Le Triomphe des dames*, pp. 169–198. (The chapter is not as long as it seems since p. 170 is mis-paginated as 180 and the error is continued).
162. Another gallery that merits attention with regard to its representation of royal virtue is the anonymous *Les Éloges des XII dames illustres grecques, romaines et françoises dépeintes dans l'alcove de la reine* (Paris: Jean du Bray, 1646), wherein the exercise by women of royal virtue is seen to straddle the domains of both politics and religion. See Catherine Pascal, "Représenter la régence? "Image(s) de reine(s) dans les *Éloges des douze dames illustres grecques, romaines et françoises dépeintes dans l'alcove de la reine* (1646)," in Arnould and Steinberg, eds., *Les Femmes et l'écriture de l'histoire*, pp. 89–102.
163. C. M. D. Noël, *Les Avantages du sexe, ou Le Triomphe des femmes, dans lequel on fait voir par de très-fortes raisons que les femmes l'emportent par dessus les hommes, & méritent la préférence* (H. Sleghers: Anvers, 1698). See especially pp. 99–100, and 105–106.

164. Ibid., pp. 112–113.
165. Ibid., pp. 114–115. (Interestingly, in the BNF digitized copy, a manuscript annotation is inserted after the word "esprit" here, explaining that the reference is to "La Maintenon, vice-reine"). On Madame de Maintenon's political role, see Mark Bryant, "Partner, Matriarch and Minister: The Unofficial Consort: Mme de Maintenon, 1680–1715," in Clarissa Campbell Orr, ed., *Queenship in Europe, 1660–1815: The Role of the Consort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 77–106.
166. Compare, for example, with the stance of texts such as François Dinet's *Le Théâtre françois des seigneurs et dames illustres* (1642), heavily prescriptive despite a short section on "la générosité des femmes," or Nicolas Caussin's *La Cour Sainte* (1624), which focuses on the traditional virtues of piety, modesty, chastity in its section on "queens and ladies." There is one telling comment in the latter, however, which sets queens regnant apart from others, and defines them primarily as monarchs not as women: the advice concerning discretion in the conduct of their activities ("la discretion en la conduite des affaires") is apparently aimed not at queens who govern states and empires because: "cette fonction leur estant commune avec les Monarques, elles en trouveront les instructions nécessaires dans le traité des devoirs du Prince" ("since they fulfil this function in common with monarches [male monarches implied], they will find the necessary teachings in the treatise on the duties of the prince") (Paris: Jean du Bray, 1645, II, p. 132).

3 Engendering Equality: Gynæcocracy in Gournay, Poulain de la Barre, and Suchon

1. Agrippa opens his declamation thus: "God most beneficent, Father and creator of all good things, who alone possesses the fecundity of the two sexes, created humans in his image, male and female created he them. Sexual distinction consists only in the different location of the parts of the body for which procreation required diversity. But he has attributed to both man and woman an identical soul, which sexual difference does not at all affect. Woman has been allotted the same intelligence, reason, and power of speech as man and tends to the same end he does, that is, [eternal] happiness, where there will be no restriction by sex." Henricus Cornelius Agrippa, *Declamation on the Nobility and Preeminence of the Female Sex*, trans. and ed. Albert Rabil, Jr. (Chicago, IL; London: University of Chicago Press, [1529] 1996), p. 43. On Billon's ideas in his *Fort inexpugnable de l'honneur du sexe féminin* (1555), see Constance Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism: Literary Texts and Political Models*

(Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 200–204. See also Maria Equicola, *De mulieribus* (1501), quoted in Rabil's introduction to Agrippa, *Declamation*, p. 24. See Siep Stuurman, *François Poulain de la Barre and the Invention of Modern Equality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), pp. 59–60 for other European examples of the idea that "the soul, the mind and reason were not sexually differentiated."

2. See in particular Isabelle Krier, "Souvenirs sceptiques de Marie de Gournay dans *Égalité des hommes et des femmes*," *Clio*, 29 (2009), 243–257, as well as Rebecca M. Wilkin's analysis in *Women, Imagination and the Search for Truth in Early Modern France* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 177–182. Wilkin suggests that Gournay draws specifically on Montaigne's suspension of gender difference to frame her philosophical egalitarianism. For an opposing view re Gournay's skepticism, see Ian Maclean, "Marie de Gournay et la préhistoire du discours féminin," in Danielle Haase-Dubosc and Éliane Viennot, eds., *Femmes et pouvoirs sous l'ancien régime* (Paris: Rivages, 1991), pp. 120–134 (p. 126). For more general questions of the influence of Montaigne on Gournay, see the articles in *Montaigne et Marie de Gournay*, ed. Marcel Tetel (Paris: Champion, 1997) and *Montaigne and Maire de Gournay*, special issue, *Journal of Medieval and Reniassance Studies*, 25.3 (1995).
3. All references are to Marie de Gournay, *Œuvres complètes*, eds. Jean-Claude Arnould et al. (Paris: Champion, 2002), 2 vols (hereafter referred to as *OC*). All English translations are from Desmond M. Clarke, trans. and ed., *The Equality of the Sexes: Three Feminist Texts of the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). On this text, in addition to the works cited in n.2 and the introduction to the Clarke translation, see Elsa Dorlin, *L'Évidence de l'égalité des sexes. Une philosophie oubliée du XVII^e siècle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), Albistur and Armogathe, Dezon-Jones, and articles by Farrell, Frelick, Mathieu-Castellani, Michel, and Worcester in the bibliography.
4. *OC*, p. 965. The desire to avoid extremes, in other words to value moderation, is typical of the Renaissance humanist value code to which Gournay adheres.
5. See Krier, "Souvenirs sceptiques," p. 246.
6. *OC*, p. 967. The sources of Gournay's arguments are indicated in the footnotes of the *OC* edition.
7. "Discours sur ce livre. À Sophrosine," *OC*, p. 563. To regret, as does Constant Venesoen, the failure to use French female authors as sources, therefore, is rather inappropriate. See Venesoen, ed., *L'Égalité des hommes et des femmes* (Geneva: Droz, 1993), p. 35. So too is the criticism that even in her appeal to a dominant tradition, she quotes "many of her authorities out of context," "distorting, even

repressing their positions"; see Mary M. Rowan, "Seventeenth-Century French Feminism: Two Opposing Attitudes," *International Journal of Women's Studies*, 3.3 (1980), 273–291 (p. 276), and Michèle Farrell, "Theorizing on Equality: Marie de Gournay and Poullain de la Barre," *Cahiers du Dix-septième*, 2.1 (1998), 67–79 (p. 69). It is imperative to recall that quoting "out of context" was a widespread and accepted practice; according to Jacques Truchet, it was accepted, even traditional, to draw from isolated Bible verses meanings, that they clearly did not have in their original context. See his *Politique de Bossuet* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1966), p. 30.

8. For a broad overview of a tradition of feminist Bible criticism, see "One Thousand Years of Feminist Bible Criticism," Ch. 7 in Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Feminist Consciousness: From the Middle Ages to Eighteen-Seventy* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 138–166. See also Letty M. Russell, ed., *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1985); Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe, eds., *The Women's Bible Commentary* (London: SPCK; Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992). For the argument that her expressed aim to root her argument in divine patristic writings is an indication of her fideism, see Eileen O'Neill, "The Equality of Men and Women," in Desmond Clarke and Catherine Wilson, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 445–474 (pp. 450–453).
9. *OC*, p. 987. On the traditional use of example in Gournay, or what Gisèle Mathieu-Castellani calls "the poetics of the list"—a staple feature of the deliberative genre within which Gournay is writing—see Mathieu-Castellani, "La quenouille ou la lyre. Marie de Gournay et la cause des femmes," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 25.3 (1995), 447–461 (pp. 454–459). Reprinted in Marcel Tetel, ed., *Montaigne et Marie de Gournay* (Paris: Champion, 1997), pp. 195–216.
10. According to Constant Jordan: "Gournay's argument for the equality of men and women rests on the same foundation as the arguments for constitutional monarchy made by the more radical political thinkers of the previous century. [...] For Gournay, the political importance of spiritual equality is discovered not in the common obligation of monarch and people to observe divine law but in the shared privileges of men and women before customary and positive law" (Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism,* p. 284).
11. *OC,* p. 978. See Clarke, *The Equality of the Sexes*, on Gournay's use of this argument to highlight how it is "inconsistent to endorse the scholastic teaching of Church councils and still deny the essential equality of the sexes" (p. 16).

12. *OC*, pp. 973, 972, and 979.
13. Ibid., p. 967.
14. Ibid., p. 987: "car la commune foiblesse des esprits ne pouvoit souffrir, que la concorde naquist du simple discours de raison, ainsi qu'elle eust deu faire en un juste contrepoids d'authorité mutuelle"/"because the common frailty of human minds would not allow agreement to emerge merely from rational discussions, as it should have done in a fair balance of reciprocal authority." This idea of mutual authority first appeared in the 1641 edition.
15. Poulain and Suchon later make the same argument although they apply it to all male–female relations, not solely those of marriage.
16. See, for example, the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians (XIV, 34–35).
17. *OC*, p. 981.
18. "[T]outes les nations" in the 1641 edition is "toutes les anciennes nations" in the 1622 edition.
19. *OC*, p. 983.
20. See ibid., p. 973. Ian Maclean maintains that it is almost certain that she had not read Aristotle since she fails to cite his opinions on sexual identity that could have been useful for her argument, and instead attributes to him opinions that he is far from expressing (Maclean, "Marie de Gournay," p. 125). Linda Timmermans points to the fact (although not in reference to Aristotle) that, despite her erudition, it is very possible that Gournay is at times quoting at secondhand rather than directly from the original sources (see *L'Accès des femmes à la culture (1598–1715)* (Paris: Champion, 1993), p. 248, n. 76).
21. *OC*, p. 966.
22. Ibid., pp. 971–972.
23. Ibid., p. 986. For Siep Stuurman, here "she is drawing on the doctrine of accommodation, which taught that many passages in the Bible were couched in the customs and language of their time and had to be interpreted accordingly" (Stuurman, *Invention of Modern Equality*, p. 58).
24. *OC*, p. 986.
25. Ibid., p. 988. Maclean sees traces of the pyrrhonist and anti-scholastic Montaigne here, "using reason to confound those who pride themselves on their reason," although he argues that Gournay does not adhere to Montaigne's skepticism in general (Maclean, "Marie de Gournay," p. 126).
26. *OC*, p. 973. That this argument is rather convoluted is no doubt due to the even less favorable tone of the original that Gournay tries to attenuate: "il me semble, je ne sçay comment, qu'en toutes façons la maistrise n'est aucunement deuë aux femmes sur les hommes, sauf

la maternelle et naturelle"/"it seems to me, I know not how, that no kind of mastery is due to women over men, except that which is maternal and natural" (Michel de Montaigne, *Essais* II.viii, *Œuvres complètes*, eds. Albert Thibaudet and Maurice Rat (Paris: Gallimard, 1962), p. 379). However, when juxtaposed with Montaigne's subsequent skeptical treatment of "Salic law," it seems less unfaithful to the original than it may appear. For a reflection on Montaigne and gynæcocracy and an examination of this passage among others, see Isabelle Krier, "Examen sceptique de la gynécocratie," *Nouveau Bulletin de la société des amis de Montaigne*, 2.46 (2007), 67–84.

27. The passage from Montaigne in question can be found in *Essais,* III.v, *OC*, p. 875, where he argues that "les masles et femelles sont jettez en mesme moule; sauf l'institution et l'usage, la différence n'y est pas grande"/"males and females are cast in the same mould; except for education and custom, the difference between them is not great."
28. *OC*, pp. 975–976.
29. Maïté Albistur and Daniel Armogathe, *Histoire du féminisme français du moyen âge à nos jours*, 2 vols (Paris: des femmes, 1977), I, p. 184.
30. *OC*, pp. 980 and 984–985.
31. The marginal reference is to Plutarch, presumably to his *Life of Lycurgus* (XXVI–XXXI).
32. *OC*, p. 977. References to the Gauls are not uncommon in sixteenth-century pro-gynæcocracy arguments. See, for example, the argument raised in *Reponse à un curieux demandant pourquoi les hommes s'assubjectissent aux femmes* (Paris: Lucas Breyer, 1598), p. 12 (cited in *OC*, p. 975, E).
33. *OC*, pp. 977–978. The dismissal of physical strength as an idiotic argument for superiority, highlighted first by Plutarch (*OC*, p. 978, A), becomes a commonplace in the seventeenth century. If physical strength were a sign of superiority, animals would be superior to men. Lucrezia Marinella, for example, rejects physical strength as a sign of nobility, arguing that by that logic laborers would be nobler than kings (cited in Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism*, p. 260). On male tyranny, see also the reference in "Discours à Sophrosine," to *Égalité* as an attempt to "demonstrate the qualities of women, oppressed by male tyranny" ("pour verifier les privileges des Dames, opprimez par la tyrannie des hommes"), *OC*, p. 563. Gournay preempts Suchon's horror of dependence as early as 1594, in advocating reading for women as a means of warning them against it, in a reference to "le pestilent désastre de dépendre d'autrui" / "the disastrous plague of depending on others." Cited in Elyane Dezon-Jones, *Marie de Gournay. Fragments d'un discours féminin* (Paris: J. Corti, 1988), p. 57.

34. On the original 1610 text, see Claude-Gilbert Dubois, "Autour de l'*Adieu de l'Ame du Roy Henry de France* (1610) de Marie de Gournay," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 25.3 (1995), 477–487. On Gournay's political ideas more generally, see Jean-Philippe Beaulieu and Hannah Fournier, "Le Discours politique de Marie de Gournay, ou la modernité d'une prise de parole," *Signs of the Early Modern 2. EMF: Studies in Early Modern France,* 3 (Charlottesville: Rookwood Press, 1997), pp. 69–79; Jacqueline Broad and Karen Green, eds., *A History of Women's Political Thought in Europe, 1400–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 125–139; Michèle Fogel, "La Damoiselle de Gournay, qui a tousjours bien servi au public," in Jean-Claude Arnould and Sylvie Steinberg, eds., *Les Femmes et l'écriture de l'histoire (1400–1800)* (Rouen: Publications des Universités de Rouen et du Havre, 2008), pp. 205–217.
35. *OC*, p. 654.
36. Geneviève Fraisse, *Les Femmes et leur histoire*, coll. Folio (Paris: Gallimard, 1998), p. 46, an idea she first articulated in 1985 in "Poullain de la Barre, ou le procès des préjugés," *Corpus*, 1 (1985), 27–41 (p. 31).
37. *Les Lettres du Sr Auvray* (Paris: A. Courbé, 1630), p. 526 (cited in Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes*, p. 249, n.86); François de Grenaille, *L'Honnête Fille*, ed. Alain Vizier (Paris: Champion, 2003), p. 268; Esprit Fléchier, *Mémoires de Fléchier sur les Grands-Jours d'Auvergne en 1665*, ed. Yves-Marie Bercé (Paris: Mercure de France, 1984), p. 100 (the discussion leads on to discussion of Madeleine de Scudéry's literary activity); Donneau de Visé, *L'Amour échappé* (Paris: T. Jolly, 1669), 3 vols., III, p. 181 (cited in Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes*, p. 232, n.410); Jeanne-Michelle Hamonin de Maranville, Mme de Pringy, *Les Differens Caractères des femmes du siècle*, ed. Constant Venesoen (Paris: Champion, [1694] 2002), p. 88.
38. For Cotin, see Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes*, p. 249, n.86. For Le Moyne, see p. 61 above.
39. Marie Meurdrac, *La Chymie charitable et facile en faveur des Dames* (Paris: chez Jean d'Hoüry, [1666] 1674). This popular pharmacopeia had five French editions and was translated into German and Italian. Interestingly, the forthright preface disappears after the 1680 edition.
40. Marguerite Buffet, *Nouvelles Observations sur la langue françoise, où il est traitté des termes anciens et inusitez, et du bel usage des mots nouveaux. Avec les Éloges des illustres sçavantes, tant anciennnes que modernes* (Paris: J. Cusson, 1668), pp. 200, 224, 223. The defense of women runs from pp.199–to 237, followed by the *éloges* of nineteen contemporary women (pp. 237–287) and forty-one women from the past (pp. 288–342). On this text, see articles in the bibliography by Ducharme, Beasley, and Beaulieu.

41. Buffet, *Nouvelles Observations*, p. 206, repeated p. 213 and p. 252.
42. Ibid., p. 208.
43. Ibid., pp. 309–311.
44. Ibid., pp. 240–241, p. 239. On the dialogue between past and present, implicit here in the reference to Minerva, see Jean-Philippe Beaulieu, "Jacquette Guillaume et Marguerite Buffet: vers une historiographie du savoir féminin?" in Jean-Claude Arnould and Sylvie Steinberg, eds., *Les Femmes et l'écriture de l'histoire (1400–1800)* (Rouen: Presses universitaires de Rouen et du Havre, 2009), pp. 325–339 (pp. 332–335), and Isabelle Ducharme, "Une formule discursive au féminin: Marguerite Buffet et la *Querelle des femmes*," *PFSCL*, 30.58 (2003), 131–155 (p. 150). Ducharme's analysis of Buffet's epideictic discourse is, to my mind, more judicious than her claims for the originality and merit of the text as a whole, which take inadequate account of Buffet's predecessors.
45. The recent publication of a critical edition of the three treatises by Marie-Frédérique Pellegrin, *Poulain de la Barre: De l'Égalité des deux sexes; De l'Éducation des dames; De l'Excellence des hommes* (Paris: J. Vrin, 2011) in addition to Siep Stuurman's ground-breaking study *François Poulain de la Barre and the Invention of Modern Equality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), and Maria Corona Corrias's work, *Alle origini del femminismo moderno. Il pensiero politico di Poullain de la Barre* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1996) have sealed Poulain's position as key in the history of Early Modern political ideas. Where earlier scholarship focuses on Poulain's role in the history of feminism, Pellegrin and Stuurman situate the philosopher (and his feminism) within the history of Cartesianism and Enlightenment ideas respectively. As indicated in the Introduction above, key to Stuurman's argument is the demonstration of how feminism influenced the Enlightenment (rather than how the Enlightenment influenced feminism). Further interest in Poulain is demonstrated by the English translation and edition of all three treatises, *Three Cartesian Feminist Treatises: François Poullain de la Barre*, ed. Marcelle Maistre Welch, trans. Vivien Bosley (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2002), and a second recent translation in *The Equality of the Sexes. Three Feminist Texts of the Seventeenth Century*, Desmond M. Clarke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). For a bilingual edition of *De l'Égalité,* see François Poullain de la Barre, *The Equality of the Two Sexes*, trans. A. Daniel Frankforter and Paul J. Morman (Lewiston, NY; Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1989). See also the earlier study by Madeleine Alcover, *Poullain de la Barre: Une aventure philosophique* (Paris, Seattle, Tübingen: PFSCL, 1981); the presentation of the Italian translation of *L'Égalité* in Ginevra Conti Odoririo, *Poullain de la Barre e le teoria*

dell'uguaglianza (Milan: Edizioni Unicopli, 1996), and articles by Seidel, Armogathe, Fauré, Badinter, La Vopa, and Pellegrin in the bibliography.

46. It is worth remembering from the outset that Poulain drew on other existing discourses, as Stuurman points out, such as the philosophy of modern natural law, cultural relativism, early anthropology, biblical criticism, and the *querelle des anciens et des modernes*. See Stuurman, *Invention of Modern Equality*, p. 2.
47. See Pellegrin, *De l'Égalité*, p. 54, n.1. All references hereafter are to Pellegrin's critical edition (2011).
48. As he points out in the preface to *De L'Excellence*, there is no question more important than that concerning the equality of the sexes. Why? Because "elle sert à décider de quantité d'autres questions curieuses, principalement dans la Morale, la Jurisprudence, la Théologie et la Politique, dont on ne peut parler librement dans un livre" ("it serves to settle a number of other thorny questions, chiefly in the areas of ethics, jurisprudence, theology and politics, which cannot be spoken freely about in a book") (*De l'Excellence des hommes,* p. 297).
49. *De l'Égalité*, p. 54.
50. Fraisse indicates how Poulain's early twentieth-century commentators (Piéron, Ascoli, Grappin, and Lefèvre—see bibliography for titles) still regarded him as excessive, less in his theories on knowledge than on those concerning power for women. See Ch. 1, "Poullain de la Barre ou le procès des préjugés," in Fraisse, *Les Femmes et leur histoire*, pp. 37–64 (pp. 43–44).
51. *De l'Égalité*, p. 63.
52. Ibid., p. 62. All English translations of *De l'Égalité* are from Clarke (2013).
53. "Toutes les Loix semblent n'avoir été faites que pour maintenir les hommes dans la possession où ils sont" ("All laws seem to have been passed simply to maintain men's possession of what they currently have") (*De l'Égalité*, p. 63); see also p. 95.
54. See *De l'Égalité*, pp. 12–16. For an analysis of Poulain's historical conjecture, or what Albistur and Armogathe refer to as "the first attempt at an anthropological and existential explanation of female dependence" (*Histoire du féminisme français*, 1, p. 231), see Stuurman, *Invention of Modern Equality*, pp. 81–83, 204–208.
55. *De l'Égalité*, pp. 63–64. For the philosophical underpinnings of Poulain's rejection of common argumentation regarding "nature" as fallacious, see Clarke, pp. 38–44.
56. See Ruth Whelan, " 'Liberating the Bible from Patriarchy': Poullain de la Barre's feminist hermeneutics," in Allison P. Coudert, Sarah Hutton, Richard H. Popkin, and Gordon M. Weiner, eds.,

Judaeo-Christian Intellectual Culture in the Seventeenth Century (Boston, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999), pp. 119–143, for whom: "Poullain's outline of evolution within the state of nature is an implicit rejection of the findings of natural law theorists, like Pufendorf, who present the patriarchal family as both natural and normative. In Poullain's theory, patriarchal domination goes against nature, it upsets the natural order founded on freedom, equality and mutuality" (p. 122).

57. *De l'Égalité*, pp. 94–95. It is worth remembering that sixteenth-century feminists had earlier, in a related argument, as Jordan puts it, "characterized patriarchal attitudes as *perversions* of a legitimate vision of sex and gender relations as egalitarian rather than hierarchical" (Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism*, p. 272).
58. *De l'Égalité*, p. 141.
59. Ibid., p. 93.
60. *De l'Éducation des Dames,* p. 193.
61. Whelan, "Liberating the Bible," p. 127. On Poulain's feminist hermeneutics, see Whelan, "Liberating the Bible," pp. 126–130. See also Stuurman, *Invention of Modern Equality*, pp. 214–224.
62. Stuurman, *Invention of Modern Equality*, p. 214.
63. *De l'Excellence*, pp. 305, 307, 306, 314. See Whelan, "Liberating the Bible," p. 127, who also points to a similar interpretation in *The Women's Bible* (1895).
64. *De l'Excellence*, p. 324.
65. Stuurman, *Invention of Modern Equality*, p. 218. On the doctrine of accommodation and its implications, the Spinozist ideas in Poulain, and the wider context of biblical criticism at the time of Poulain's writing, see Stuurman, *Invention of Modern Equality*, pp. 218–224.
66. Reinier de Graaf's *Nouveau traité des organes génitaux de la femme* had appeared in 1672.
67. *De l'Excellence*, pp. 381, 388. Michel Delon also makes this point in "Cartésianisme(s) et féminisme(s)," *Europe*, 594 (1978), 73–86 (p. 85, n.35). For the debate between Aristotelian-Galenic ideas and ovist ideas, see Maryanne Cline Horowitz, "The 'Science' of Embryology before the Discovery of the Ovum," in Marilyn J. Boxer and Jean H. Quataert, eds., *Connecting Spheres: Women in the Western World, 1500 to the Present* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 86–94, which includes a useful bibliography on the subject. A marginal subheading in *De l'Égalité* (p. 127) had earlier posited that women contribute more than men to procreation.
68. *De l'Égalité*, p. 99. See Stuurman, *Invention of Equality*, pp. 94–96.
69. *De l'Égalité*, pp. 99–110, 82.
70. Ibid., Préface, p. 54.
71. Ibid., pp. 134, 132–133.

72. Ibid., passim.
73. Ibid., pp. 132–133. What Poulain goes on to sketch, as Stuurman points out, corresponds to what we might call today "a social psychology of female socialization" (*Invention of Equality*, pp. 115–116).
74. See *De l'Excellence*, pp. 326–327, and *De l'Égalité*, p. 131.
75. *De l'Égalité*, pp. 117–118.
76. *De l'Excellence*, p. 309.
77. *De l'Égalité*, p. 118.
78. Ibid.
79. *De l'Égalité*, p. 119.
80. Ibid.
81. *De l'Excellence*, p. 325.
82. *De l'Égalité*, p. 94.
83. "L'on a vu aussi quelquesfois des femmes gouverner de grands États: mais il ne faut pas pour cela s'imaginer, que c'est qu'elles y eussent été appelées, par esprit de restitution; c'est qu'elles avaient eu l'adresse de disposer les affaires de sorte qu'on ne pouvoit leur ôter l'autorité d'entre les mains" ("Women have also been observed occasionally governing large states. One should not conclude, however, that they were invited to do so out of a spirit of reparation; rather, they had become so skilled in management that it was impossible to deprive them of their authority") (*De l'Égalité*, p. 68). A most unfortunate misprint in the Fayard edition, omitting the words "c'est qu'elles y eussent été appellées par esprit de restitution" in the above quotation has been misleading for scholars. The contradiction Viennot sees here is in fact not in the original. (See Éliane Viennot, *La France, les femmes et le pouvoir*, II, *Les Résistances de la Société (XVII^e–XVIII^e siècle)* (Paris: Perrin, 2008), p. 188).
84. *De l'Égalité*, p. 94.
85. See Dorlin, *L'Évidence de l'égalité des sexes*, pp. 86–92.
86. For this argument, see Marie-Frédérique Pellegrin, "Égalité ou supériorité: les ambiguïtés du discours égalitaire chez Poulain de la Barre (1647–1723)," in Danielle Haase-Dubosc et Marie-Élisabeth Henneau, eds., *Revisiter la "Querelle des femmes": Discours sur l'égalité/inégalité des femmes et des hommes (1600–1750)* (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université Saint-Étienne, 2013), pp. 17–30, esp. 19–21, 26–29. See also Anthony J. La Vopa, "Sexless Minds at Work and at Play: Poullain de la Barre and the Origins of Early Modern Feminism," *Representations*, 109.1 (2010), 57–94 (pp. 71–72) on the issue of female delicacy, although he does not address the issue of the resultant tension with Poulain's elaboration of equality.
87. Pierre Ronzeaud, "La femme au pouvoir ou le monde à l'envers," *XVII^e siècle*, 108 (1975), 9–33 (pp. 28–32).

88. Pierre Ronzeaud, "Note sur l'article de Paul Hoffmann," *XVII^e siècle*, 121 (1978), 276–277 (p. 277), following Paul Hoffmann, "Le féminisme spirituel de Gabrielle Suchon," in the same issue, pp. 269–276.
89. An edition of the first part of the *Traité* entitled *La Liberté* was published by Sévérine Auffret in two sections, *Traité de la morale et de la politique: La Liberté* (Paris: des femmes, 1988), containing Chapters 1 to 22 of the original, and *Traité de la morale et de la politique: La Contrainte* (Paris: Indigo et Côté-femmes, 1999), containing Chapters 23 to 38. Colette Winn reproduces the "Préface générale" of the *Traité* and Chapter 20 of Part II in *Protestations et revendications* (2002). To date, there is no critical edition of Part II, *La Science*, and Part III, *L'Autorité*. Auffret has also published an edition of the *Petit Traité de la faiblesse, de la légèreté et de l'inconstance qu'on attribue aux femmes mal à propos* (Arléa, 2002), which appeared at the end of the *Traité*, and a partial edition of *Du Célibat volontaire ou la Vie sans engagement* (Paris: Indigo & côté-femmes, 1994), containing, of the three books, the first book in its entirety and eight chapters of the second. For a translation and edition of extracts in English, see Domna C. Stanton and Rebecca M. Wilkin, eds., *Gabrielle Suchon. A Woman Who Defends All the Persons of Her Sex. Selected Philosophical and Moral Writings* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2010). The translation of quotations in the pages that follow are my own.
90. See bibliography for details of articles by Nubola, Rosso, Dunn-Lardeau, Zimmermann, and Desnain (2006 and 2009). See also Broad and Green, *A History of Women's Political Thought*, pp. 255–264.
91. See articles by Bertolini, Kirsop, and Schutte.
92. Michèle Le Dœuff, *Le Sexe du savoir* (Paris: Flammarion, 1998), esp. pp. 71–87; Dorlin, *L'Évidence de l'égalité des sexes*; Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes à la culture*, pp. 476–478, pp. 777–782; Cecilia Nubola, "Libertà, cultura, potere per le donne: il *Traité de la Morale et de la politique* di Gabrielle Suchon," in Gabriella Zarri, ed., *Donna, disciplina, creanza cristiana dal XV al XVII secolo: Studi e testi a stampa* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1996), pp. 333–346. See also articles by McFadden and Desnain (2004), the latter of which concentrates on the second volume of the *Traité*.
93. Le Dœuff, *Le Sexe du savoir*, pp. 79–87, which focuses on the issue of women's legislative power (or lack of).
94. Wallace Kirsop indicates how the 1694 Paris edition of the *Traité* is a "re-packaging" rather than a reprint. See Kirsop, "A note on Gabrielle Suchon's efforts to seek publication of her works," *Journal of Romance Studies*, 5.2 (2005), 17–18 (p. 18).

95. *Traité de la morale et de la politique, divisé en trois parties sçavoir la Liberté, la Science et l'Autorité, ou l'on voit que les personnes du Sexe pour en être privées, ne laissent pas d'avoir une capacité naturelle, qui les ne peut rendre participantes. Avec un petit traité de la foiblesse, de la légèreté et de l'inconstance qu'on leur attribue mal à propos* (Lyon: J. Certe, 1693).
96. Stanton and Wilkin, *Gabrielle Suchon*, p. 67.
97. As Stanton and Wilkin put it: "Suchon's concept of privation implies the existence of a human essence. Hers is a gender-neutral essentialism: freedom, knowledge, and authority are essentially human attributes. Thus whereas for Beauvoir 'becoming a woman' means internalizing traits that are defined as essential to being a woman, for Suchon, 'becoming a woman' means being denied all that is essentially human." (Stanton and Wilkin, *Gabrielle Suchon*, pp. 13–14, n.43).
98. For Broad and Green, "Virtue, the central concept of an earlier Aristotelian or Stoic way of thinking, gives way to freedom, though the sources for Suchon's discussion of liberty hardly differ from those which ground the virtues tradition. Her transformation of the reading of these texts is mediated by the fact that liberty comes to be recognized as a precondition for virtue" (*A History of Women's Political Thought*, p. 255). These authors also indicate that what Suchon means by liberty is what would now be called "rational autonomy" (p. 257).
99. See Le Dœuff, *Le Sexe du savoir*, p. 77. She expresses the same idea in "Feminism Is Back in France—Or Is It?" *Hypatia*, 15.4 (2000), 243–255 (p. 251).
100. Le Dœuff, *Le Sexe du savoir*, p. 78.
101. "Préface générale," ¶15, and "Conclusion générale," p. 138. While Geneviève Guilpain accurately points out that Suchon does not analyze any would-be female nature (although, as we will see, the text is not devoid of comments on the subject), it is a mistake, in this otherwise stimulating article, to suggest that she does not set out to praise women (see Geneviève Guilpain, "Le statut de l'exemple historique chez Gabrielle Suchon," in Jean-Claude Arnould and Sylvie Steinberg, eds., *Les Femmes et l'écriture de l'histoire (1400–1800)* (Rouen: Publications des Universités de Rouen et du Havre, 2008), pp. 355–366 (p. 361)). On the contrary, demonstration of women's ability and merit is key to her overall approach. Nor is it entirely accurate to suggest that Suchon does not use examples to make generalizations about the female sex. See, for example, Ch. 11, where she chooses examples of the merit and capacity of women (p. 62) in order to demonstrate that women can rule in general.
102. "Préface générale," ¶15.

103. See *Égalité*, p .41 and *Grief des Dames*, passim. Colette Winn highlights the similarities with Gournay in the footnotes to her edition of the "Préface générale" (in *Protestations et revendictions*). Suchon never cites Gournay as a source or an influence, and, in fact, mistakenly seems to see herself as the first woman "to defend their cause" ("Préface générale," ¶31), although she nonetheless acknowledges, and indeed depends on, all those who have written in women's favor before her. What she justifiably sees as original is her approach from the "inside," her focus on privations or hardships (*peines*) rather than on equality or female merit ("Conclusion générale," p. 138).
104. "Préface générale," ¶7.
105. The modern authors she acknowledges are Le Moyne, Du Bosc, Poulain, and (it would seem) Scudéry ("Préface générale, ¶13). The reference to "les illustres" could be to Jacquette Guillaume's *Dames illustres,* but given the far greater availability of the Scudéry *Femmes illustres* in its numerous editions, in addition to Suchon's claim to be the first woman writer to defend women, it is more likely to be to the Scudéry volume, figuring Georges' name on the title-page.
106. "Les écrits des sçavans peuvent recevoir diverses expositions, & s'accommoder aux differentes necessitez des ames. [. . .] Quelle raison peut-on avoir pour trouver mauvais que les saintes lettres, les livres des Peres, & des Auteurs graves soient appliquez differemment pourveu que l'on suive toûjours la foy Catholique & orthodoxe[?]" ("The writings of the learned can be explained in different ways, and can be adapted to different spiritual necessities. Why should the different usage of sacred texts, the writings of the Church fathers and of serious authors be frowned upon, as long as orthodox Catholic faith is always adhered to?") (Préface générale," ¶20). It is worth remembering that while Poulain rejected all classical authorities in *De L'Égalité*, he had provided a countercultural reading of biblical and patristic writings in *De l'Excellence*, as we saw above.
107. "Avant-propos" (n.p.), Part III, "De l'Autorité."
108. Privation, as Le Dœuff points out, is more than mere lack or absence; it is violence ("[i]l n'y a jamais absence pure et simple, mais violence") (*Le Sexe du savoir*, p. 78).
109. This is presumably what has led Sévérine Auffret to argue that to perceive the text within a framework of seventeenth-century "feminist" literature is reductionist, since its main problematic has much wider philosophical implications than much of the *querelle des femmes* literature; see Auffret, "Introduction," *La Liberté*, pp. 11–12. Of course, the categories need not be oppositional: it is most useful to see the text as both feminist and philosophical.

110. "De l'Autorité," p. 1. All further references are to this volume.
111. Ibid., p. 18. For her definition of government, see p. 8.
112. Ibid., p. 7.
113. Ibid., "Avant-propos." See also pp. 41, 112, 123, 127. According to Suchon, if the only disadvantage to exclusion from authority was the inability to dominate over others, women could easily be consoled—a comment that implicitly refutes the idea that women thirst for power ("Avant-propos"). It is worth noting at this point that Suchon seems to use *pouvoir* and *autorité* interchangeably, a usage supported by Furetière's definitions, which highlight the blurred distinction between the two: *pouvoir* he defines as "Autorité, droit de commander et d'agir selon ses volontez" ("Authority, the right to command and to act accordingly to one's will"), while *autorité* he defines as "Droit qu'on a de commander, de se faire obéir" ("the right to command, to be obeyed"). See Antoine Furetière, *Dictionnaire universel* (1690).
114. "De l'Autorité," p. 7. The reference is to Saint Paul, Gal. 3:28: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."
115. Ibid., p. 86.
116. Ibid., p. 2.
117. "L'on se contente de nommer leur Sexe pour faire croire que l'on peut persuader avec justice, que la prudence dans les conseils, la subtilité dans les affaires, tant politiques que militaires, la solidité à les bien deliberer, & la force pour les mettre en exécution, sont tellement au dessus de leur portée, que la seule pensée d'y prétendre passeroit pour ridicule & digne de risée" ("The very mention of their sex is enough to have people believe that it is justifiable to argue that prudence in counsel, subtlety in political or military matters, a solid ability to deliberate on them, and strength to implement them, are so beyond their reach that the very thought of aspiring to such qualities seems ridiculous and risible") (ibid., p. 42).
118. The Lemaistre de Sacy bible gives "L'orgueil n'a point été créé avec l'homme, ni la colère avec le sexe des femmes" (10.22) and "le visage d'une femme vertueuse est l'ornement de sa maison" (26.21).
119. "De l'Autorité," p. 42.
120. Ibid., pp. 127–128.
121. She adds, "C'est une miserable servitude à celles du Sexe, de rechercher avec tant de soin, et d'entretenir avec tant de peine une legere beauté et de petits agrémens pour satisfaire des ingrats qui les méprisent, ou des brutaux qui les rendent les victimes de leurs passions" ("the servitude of women is a wretched one, that they seek with such care, and maintain with such difficulty a fickle beauty

and modest attractions in order to satisfy ungrateful men who despise them, or violent ones who make them victims of their passions") (ibid., p. 94).

122. Ibid., p. 11.
123. On the related idea of male envy and fear as reasons for female exclusion, see p. 48 above. See also her awareness of a collusion between church and patriarchal state in fostering dependence: "il semble que l'Eglise s'accorde avec la Politique pour bien établir la dependance du Sexe" ("it seems that the church is matched by the political system, in firmly establishing the dependence of women") ("De l'Autorité," pp. 88–89).
124. Ronzeaud, "Note," p. 277.
125. "De l'Autorité," p. 12. See Poulain, *De L'Égalité*, p. 93. On the impasse for equality that the issue of men as "judges and litigants" represents, see Dorlin, *L'Évidence de l'égalité des sexes*, pp. 92–96.
126. "De l'Autorité," p. 12.
127. Ibid., p. 24.
128. Ibid., p. 32. Suchon clearly understands the fundamental significance of exclusion from any juridical policy-making as a forceful tool in female subjugation: "Les hommes ne sçauroient jamais tant abaisser les personnes du beau Sexe, en leur ôtant la puissance de faire des Loix" ("Men will never find a better way of debasing women than by excluding them from the power to make laws").
129. Ibid., p. 37.
130. Ibid., p. 36.
131. Ibid., p. 107. For Suchon, the description by the Scythian Anacharsis of laws as spider' webs, which catch the small and the weak but not the rich and the powerful, is particularly appropriate for women. (See Plutarch's *Life of Solon* for Anacharsis' comments).
132. Ibid., p. 107. See also p. 103, where (in a reference to Poulain) she points out how Gregory of Nazianzus accused male legislators of injustice against women. The argument referred to appears in Poulain's *De l'Excellence des hommes*, p. 311. For sixteenth-century criticisms of law as self-interested and male-biased, see Jordan on Nicolas de Cholières and Alexandre Pont-Aymery, the first of whom treats of women's rule at some length (Jordan, *Renaissance Feminism*, pp. 207–211).
133. Ronzeaud, "Note," p. 277.
134. "De l'Autorité," p. 111. Similar resentment is evident earlier (p. 89) when she argues that the greatest difficulty for women with regard to the state of dependence is the obligation "to respect the power that destroys them, to kiss the hands that strike them, and to honor the strength that debases them" ("respecter la puissance qui les détruit, de baiser les mains qui les frappent, & d'honorer la force qui les abaisse").

135. Ibid., pp. 111–112.
136. Ibid., p. 16.
137. Ibid., pp. 16–17. The examples she describes are Pulcheria and Empress Irene of Athens (ca. 752–803). She repeats this point later (p. 67) and provides examples of the positions women hold in religious orders, such as at Fontevraud, over both men and women (p. 66).
138. "L'on ne sçauroit jamais dire que les personnes du beau Sexe soient excluses par le droit Divin des Gouvernements & Dignitez Politiques [grâce aux exemples de Debora, Jahel et Judith]. L'on ne sçauroit aussi soûtenir qu'elles en soient privées par le Droit civil; puisque les plus grands Legistes & Interpretes des Loix nous apprenent qu'une Princesse, qui est Souveraine par le droit de sa naissance peut bien disposer de sa personne en épousant un homme qui lui est inferieur, mais non pas se dépoüiller de son autorité & de sa puissance Royale qu'elle ne lui communique que d'une maniere dependante & dans un degré qui se rapporte toûjours à elle" ("It could never be said that persons of the fair sex are excluded from government and political dignities by divine law [given the examples of Deborah, Jahel, and Judith]. Neither could it be argued that they are excluded from it by civil law, since the greatest legists and interpreters of laws inform us that a Princess, who is sovereign by birthright, can dispose of her own person by marrying a man who is her inferior, but cannot divest herself of her authority and her royal power, which she only communicates to him as a dependent and in a degree which is always in relation to her") (ibid., p. 23). Suchon is clearly not referring to France here but to gynæcocratic regimes. (My understanding of "L'on ne sçauroit aûssi soutenir" differs from the 2010 English translation where it is translated as the opposite.)
139. "De l'Autorité," p. 23.
140. On the issues surrounding Philip's role as consort, see Alexander Samson, "Changing Places: The Marriage and Royal Entry of Philip, Prince of Austria, and Mary Tudor, July-August 1554," *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 36.3 (2005), 761–784; and Judith M. Richards, "Mary Tudor as 'Sole Quene'?: Gendering Tudor Monarchy," *The Historical Journal*, 40.4 (1997), 895–924. On sixteenth-century attitudes to Mary Tudor's personal reign, see Kristen Post Walton, *Catholic Queen, Protestant Patriarchy: Mary, Queen of Scots, and the Politics of Gender and Religion* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). One wonders what knowledge Suchon would have had of other European gynæcocracies that would have better demonstrated her argument. Elizabeth I does not serve her purpose here (not because she was Protestant, as Stanton and Wilkin suggest, but) simply because she never married.

141. "De l'Autorité," pp. 86, 135, 136.
142. Earlier, the ability to govern is again framed as hinging on intellectual virtues—"la capacité naturelle des esprits, de la raison, et du bon sens" ("the natural capacity of the mind, of reason, of good sense")—and equally within men's and women's reach (p. 12).
143. In the frequently reprinted Du Ryer translation of Seneca, which circulated widely and which may therefore have been at Suchon's disposition, the passage runs: "Mais qui voudrait soutenir que la nature ait esté moins liberale envers les femmes, & qu'elle ait reduit leurs vertus entre des limites plus estoites? Croyez-moy, elles ont le mesme courage que les hommes, & la mesme faculté de se porter aux choses vertueuses. Elles souffrent comme les hommes le travail & la douleur lors qu'elle s'y sont accoustumées" ("Consolation à Marcia," Ch.16, in *Les Œuvres de Sénèque de la version de Pierre Du Ryer*, II (Paris: A. de Sommaville, 1658), p. 326). A modern English translation of the passage runs: "But who has asserted that Nature has dealt grudgingly with women's natures and has narrowly restricted their virtues? Believe me, they have just as much force, just as much capacity, if they like, for virtuous action; they are just as able to endure suffering and toil when they are accustomed to them" ("To Marcia on Consolation," in *Moral Essays*, trans. John W. Basore, 3 vols, Loeb Classical Library (London: W. Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1928–35), II. xv.4–xvi.3).
144. "De l'Autorité," pp. 53–54. Saint Jerome is marshalled in turn to defend this idea, as Suchon directly quotes Letter XXXI to Saint Eustochium from the 1672 edition of the *Lettres*: "la différence du Sexe [...] n'est point considérable dans le service de Dieu, mais bien la pureté du cœur & le zèle de la volonté" ("the difference between the sexes [...] is insignificant in the service of God, but [depends rather on] purity of heart and zealous will"). See *Lettres de St. Jérôme, divisées en trois livres, traduction nouvelle* (Paris: Frédéric Leonard, 1672), Lettre XXXI, p. 79.
145. The marginal annotation ("De l'Autorité," p. 55) refers to "V. de B., Li. 19, ch. 12." The translation into French by Jean du Vignay, completed in 1332, of Vincent de Beauvais' *Speculum historiale* continued to circulate throughout the Renaissance. For the reception of de Beauvais in the seventeenth century, see Jean Schneider, "Vincent de Beauvais à l'épreuve des siècles," in S. Lusignan and M. Paulmier-Foucart, eds., *Lector et compilator. Vincent de Beauvais, frère prêcheur, un intellectuel et son milieu au XIII^e siècle* (Grâne: Créaphis, 1997), pp. 21–46 (pp. 26–28).
146. "De l'Autorité," p. 58.
147. See also the classical model of virtue ethics in government as it emerges from Chapter 2 concerning the definition and

characteristics of government ("De l'Autorité," esp. pp. 8–9, 11) and Chapter 23 concerning the qualities required for good government (pp. 128–136).

148. Ibid., pp. 109, 17, 11.
149. Ibid., p. 59. The argument would appear to be based on Seneca's remark (concerning "free peoples" who resemble lions and wolves): "comme ils ne sçauroient obeïr, ils ne sçauroient aussi commander. Car ils n'ont pas la force d'un esprit plein de douceur & d'humanité, mais d'un esprit cruel & intraitable; & après tout, on ne peut gouverner les autres, si on ne s'est laissé gouverner" ("De la colère," livre II, in *Les Œuvres de Sénèque de la version de Pierre Du Ryer*, II, p. 108; for an English version, see Seneca, "On Anger," Book 2, xv.3–4, in *Moral Essays*, I).
150. "De l'Autorité," pp. 40, 42.
151. Ibid., pp. 49–50.
152. Ibid., pp. 61–62.
153. Ibid., p. 62. See her comments about the imposition of silence on women (cf. pp. 107–112).
154. Ibid., p. 64. On the Amazon figure in Suchon, see Cécile Voisset-Veysseyre, *Des Amazones et des femmes* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2010), pp. 59–118.
155. This ambiguity highlights her struggle to read a mainstream androcentric discourse in a nontraditional fashion. On the one hand, she stresses that in her use of the Ancients, she takes care not to change the words and maxims of the Sages ("ne point changer les paroles & les sentences de ces habiles gens"), and that in her use of biblical and patristic sources she has adhered strictly to the meaning of the words ("le sens de leurs paroles") ("Préface générale," ¶¶12 and 11). However, she later defends the idea of applying these sources "differently," as long as that application remains Catholic and orthodox (¶20). This "different" reading means that it is not necessarily *in strictu sensu* true that her sentiments are "conform" (¶19) with the traditional authorities.

    A full examination of her sources, and their accuracy, is beyond the scope of this study. It is nonetheless worth remembering that at times typography can be misleading: the marginal references beside the paragraph concerning Mavia, for example (p. 63), are not inaccurate references to Mavia but intended for the following paragraph on Artemisia, in relation to whom they are relevant.
156. "De l'Autorité," p. 136.
157. Ibid., p. 91. The reference to Poulain is to *De L'Excellence*, p. 305. Although Suchon disagrees with Poulain here, other elements of their respective discussions of dependence and abuse of authority show certain similarities.

158. Ibid., p. 135.
159. Ibid., p. 71. The first reference to Augustine is to the *Confessions*, 13.32; for the second reference, it is unclear to which commentary on Genesis she is referring. Augustine comments on Genesis III.16 in *De Genesis contra Manichaeos*, 2.29; *De Genesi ad litteram*, 11.37; and in the *Opus imperfectum contra Julianum*.
160. "De l'Autorité," p. 97.
161. There is also a sense underpinning these conciliatory remarks that custom, quite simply, is too strong an adversary to take on. The patriarchy is immutable, good sense advocates resignation, although not acceptance: "il faut supporter & dissimuler les anciennes coûtumes, soit justes ou injustes, soit raisonnables ou trop onéreuses: & le bon sens veut que l'on s'y soûmette autant qu'on le peut & qu'on le doit. Ce ne sont pas les femmes de ce tems qui entreprendront jamais de deposseder les hommes de leur puissance & Autorité, parce que ce seroit un égarement d'esprit de pretendre à des choses moralement impossibles" ("one must tolerate and pay no attention to these ancient customs, just or unjust, reasonable or too onerous; good sense would advocate that one should submit to them as much as one can and is obliged to. It is not the women of today who will undertake to dispossess men of their power and authority, since it would be a mental anomaly to aspire to such a moral impossibility") ("Avant-propos," "De l'Autorité"). Elsewhere, she implies that intelligent women are resigned to their exclusion from law-making since they prudently align themselves with custom, knowing that it is not in their power to resist (p. 37), while later she argues that women submit to male power for fear that resistance would provoke male indignation (p. 89).
162. "Préface générale," ¶35.
163. "De l'Autorité," p. 76. Furthermore, despite this alleged desire not to discredit men, that is precisely what she does throughout the text proper.
164. "Préface générale," ¶36.
165. "Préface générale," ¶36.
166. "De l'Autorité," p. 138.
167. "De l'Autorité," p. 70. Éliane Viennot provides another example when she points out that although Suchon appears not to contest the "French exception" of exclusion from the throne by "Salic law," she does in fact contest it, but always indirectly; see Viennot, *La France, les femmes et le pouvoir*, II: *Les Résistances*, p. 190. Despite the frequent (and I feel somewhat misleading) judgment of Suchon's work as "laborious, scholastic and excessively long-winded" (Broad and Green, *A History of Women's Political Thought*, p. 256), the irony and "tongue in cheek statements" have not gone unnoticed. See

Sonia Bertolini, "Gabrielle Suchon: une vie sans engagement," *Australian Journal of French Studies*, 37.3 (2000), 289–308 (p. 303), and Le Dœuff, "Feminism Is Back," p. 251. However, this is clearly an area that deserves much greater critical attention.

168. Jacques de Tourreil, "Vingtième question: Si l'on a sagement aboli la Loi, qui tenoit des femmes en tutele toute leur vie," *Essais de Jurisprudence* (Paris: Coignard, 1694), pp. 383–424.
169. Ibid., pp. 403–405.
170. Tourreil's text, which Stuurman doesn't mention, provides a clear example of the relatedness between the Enlightenment ideals of freedom and equality which Stuurman maintains is key at the time. See Stuurman, *Invention of Modern Equality, passim*. Tourreil's entire *vingtième question* is reproduced verbatim (and unsignaled) with very minor modifications in the Chevalier Dell'Acqua's *Essai sur la supériorité intellectuelle de la femme* (1797).
171. Tourreil, *Essais de Jurisprudence,* pp. 420–421.
172. Ibid., pp. 407–408, 410.
173. See the various remarks by Noémi Hepp, "À la recherche du 'mérite des dames,'" Bercé et al., eds., *Destins et enjeux du XVII^e siècle* (Paris: PUF, 1985), pp. 109–117 (p. 113); Marc Angenot, *Les Champions des femmes. Examen du discours sur la supériorité des femmes, 1400–1800* (Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Québec, 1977), p. 163; Timmermans, *L'Accès des femmes à la culture*, p. 348.

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