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**The *Faux pas* of a *Vert Galant*:
The Historiography of Henry IV's
Military Leadership**

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Henry IV is one of the few historical figures whose military reputation rests on the fact that he operated successfully during the course of his life at all definable levels of military command: as a soldier and partisan leader, a battlefield tactician, a campaigner, and a national strategist. He fought in over two hundred engagements, never lost a battle, and was the major victor in four landmark battles. Nevertheless, until recently most judgments by French, British, and American historians, scholars like Pierre de Vaissière, Sir Charles Oman, Lynn Montross, and David Buisseret, have portrayed Henry IV not as a great military commander, but as a risk-taking opportunist, always the *Vert Galant* in the guise of a skilled tactician and cavalryman. He has been condemned as a casual strategist who was often too shortsighted to take full advantage of his successes. Even Buisseret, a historian who

* This paper is dedicated to the memory of Craig M. Cameron, a social and cultural military historian whose life ended tragically on 30 December 2004 at the age of forty-six. At the time of his death he was working on a manuscript examining civil-military relations in the United States during the era of the Vietnam War. I knew him as my colleague in the Department of History at Old Dominion University from the time of my arrival in 1991 until his death. Along the way I learned a great deal from his vision of military history.

clearly likes Henry and produced a biography in the 1980s that emphasized his military prowess, dismissed him in the end as a "poor strategist."¹ This negative, or at best lukewarm, evaluation of Henry IV reflects assumptions by French historians, military historians, and military scientists that are based chiefly on post-Westphalian logic which views decisive battle and military objectives in the context of modern warfare between nation-states. More recently, however, scholars like Ronald S. Love have begun to place early modern warfare into a paradigm that perceives war, warfare, and military operations as social and political phenomena not restricted by or to states and not necessarily the preserve of rational actors with strictly defined battlefield goals. In the process, they have put history back into military history. This new perception of conflict and military engagements lends itself to a revised evaluation of Henry IV as a military commander and highlights his

¹ I want to thank Terence Loveridge for allowing me to restate on pages 1-6 of this paper words and ideas from an unpublished paper we jointly authored entitled "Besieging France: Henry IV as a Military Commander." David Buisseret, *Henry IV* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), 25, 35. See also Edgard Boutaric, *Institutions militaires de la France avant les armées permanentes suivies d'un aperçu des principaux changements survenus jusqu'à nos jours dans la formation de l'armée* (Paris: H. Plon, 1863), 345; Charles W. C. Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1937), 505; Lynn Montross, *War through the Ages* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), 244; Pierre de Vaissière, *Henri IV* (Paris: A. Fayard, 1928), 303; and Daniele Thomas, *Henri IV, Images d'un roi entre réalité et mythe* (Paris: Héraclès, 1992), 343. For more positive views of Henry as a military commander see Ronald S. Love, "All the King's Horsemen: The Equestrian Army of Henry IV," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 22:3 (1991): 511-33; idem., "Henri IV et Ivry, Le Monarque Chef de Guerre," *Revue historique des armées* 1 (1991): 11-20; and Archer Jones, *The Art of War in the Western World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 207-9.

genius as a general who understood that pressing the advantages of a particular battle was not as important as winning the war.

In this contribution to the small but growing revisionist literature on Henry IV as a military commander, I build on the work of Ron Love, who along with the French historian Christian Desplat, has mastered an understanding of both Henry IV's military role and his political objectives. Love and Desplat both explain how Henry's two agendas overlapped, and they emphasize that Henry spent most of the religious wars engaged in a civil conflict with his own people. This protracted battle involved Henry in complicated civil-military relations since the ultimate outcome of his military command after 1589 was to gain him the acceptance of the very people he considered his sons and daughters. The situation, Desplat concludes, lent itself more to compromise than to radical solution.² Henry had to convince those he was fighting of his legitimacy as king and win their consent to rule. His military decisions, skirmishes, sieges, set battles, and campaigns were directly connected to maintaining his course through the political, religious, and social issues surrounding the civil wars. This long-term strategic vision ultimately won him the throne. In the process, he revealed himself to be not only an expert employer of his century's newest technologies, but also as Terrence Loveridge has shown, a master of information dominance.³ Henry well understood that he was not fighting simply to win battles but to forge a lasting peace.

² Christain Desplat, "Henri IV le soldat et le capitaine," in *Avènement d'Henri IV. Quatrième Centenaire de la bataille de Coutras, Volume des actes du colloque Coutras, 16-18 octobre 1987* (Pau: J & D Éditions, 1989), 90.

³ Terence Loveridge, "Henry IV as a Military Commander" (M.A. thesis, Old Dominion University, 1999).

His harshest critics tended to assume that conquest of a kingdom was his goal when, in fact, his desired end was the willing consolidation of his realm under his stewardship.⁴ Thus Henry could not starve Paris into submission during the 1590 siege of the city and left the ramparts to pursue the duke of Parma instead.⁵ On hearing this news, Henry's ally, Elizabeth I of England, sent an angry letter to the Bourbon king chastising his behavior.⁶ From a psychological point of view, however, Henry's strategy helped to secure the capitulation of his capital in 1594.

In assessing the historiography of Henry IV as a military commander, I will first discuss a few of his military accomplishments. Next I will ponder why someone who was so successful in battle has been so uniformly condemned. Finally I will tackle the "but why" question and argue that historians have wrongly perpetuated a historiographic legacy in which Henry as a military commander is conflated with Henry as the *Vert Galant*. The origin of this conflation can be found in the very self-

⁴ For contemporary evidence see Henry's manifesto of 4 Mar. 1589: Henri IV, *Recueil des Lettres Missives de Henri IV*, ed. Jules Berger de Xivrey, 7 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1843-58), 2:443-58.

⁵ "Bref Traité des Misères de la Ville de Paris," in *Archives Curieuses de l'Histoire de France depuis Louis XI jusqu'à Louis XVIII*, eds. M. L. Cimber and F. Danjou (Paris: Membres de l'Institut Historique, 1837), Ser. I, 13:277-8, 281-2; Filippo Pigafetta, *Relation du Siège de Paris par Henri IV*, trans. A. Dufour (Paris: Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Ile-de-France, 1875); and Nancy Lyman Roelker, ed., *The Paris of Henry of Navarre as seen by Pierre de l'Étoile, Selection from his Mémoires-Journaux* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), 190-1.

⁶ *Recueil des Lettres Missives*, 3:284-5; and R. B. Wernham, "Elizabethan War Aims and Strategy," in *Elizabethan Government and Society: Essays presented to Sir John Neale*, eds. S. T. Bindoff, J. Hurstfield, and C. H. Williams (London: Athlone Press, 1961), 354.

fashioning that the king promoted in his own lifetime: Henry as both a valiant warrior and an inexhaustible lover.

Henry IV's military accomplishments and so-called failures

Contemporaries acknowledged that Henry possessed a keen eye for ground of tactical importance and a remarkable sense of the tempo, pulse, and patterns of battle. An early chronicler of the religious wars, Enrico Davila, wrote in the seventeenth century that Henry could appear and disappear on the battlefield "like lightning," meaning Henry had his own brand of "shock and awe" based on superb use of sixteenth-century tactics and technology. David Buisseret credits Henry with perfecting a tactic known as the *pistolade* in which his cavalry fired their pistols only after coming into close contact with the enemy at which point Henry's forces charged with their swords. Henry also rejected the medieval *gendarme* or horse-mounted, armored knight and relied instead on a new kind of cavalry soldier called the *arquebusier-à-cheval*, the forerunner of the seventeenth-century dragoon. He achieved remarkable success by combining the use of infantry armed with pike and firearm with artillery and light cavalry. Posting musketeers between cavalry squadrons seems to have been an original idea with Henry. Perfecting a Huguenot ambush tactic that delivered a counter-punch attack, he ordered his musketeers to fire in volleys from multiple ranks and at point blank range into the flank of the enemy.⁷ Henry was also open to innovation and established a number of adapted tactical and administrative measures that soon became standard within Europe. He was one of the first commanders in Europe to

⁷ Oman, 474.

use common colors among his troops that did not privilege noble captains over common soldiers.⁸ He developed his corps of engineers and had them build impressive systems of fortresses and trenches when besieging cities, and he produced the first army field hospital recorded in French history at the 1597 siege of Amiens.⁹ He experimented with new technologies and, according to Christopher Duffy, may well have invented the petard.¹⁰ Additionally, Henry was not only interested in taking advantage of the printing press to propagandize his quest for the throne, he also experimented with map-making. In 1590 he ordered Jacques Fougeu, a lodging-master with his army, to prepare maps that would aid the billeting of troops.¹¹ Fougeu produced over five hundred maps during his tenure with Henry IV, advancing the science of military cartography in the process.¹²

⁸ Bert S. Hall, *Weapons and Warfare in Renaissance Europe: Gunpowder, Technology, and Tactics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 97; Thomas F. Arnold, *Renaissance at War*, (London: Cassel & Company, 2001), 86-7; and Hugh Thomas, *History of the World* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 200.

⁹ David Buisseret, "Henri IV et l'art militaire," in *Henri IV le roi et la reconstruction du royaume, Volumes des actes du colloque Pau-Nérac 14-17 septembre 1989*, ed. Pierre Tucoo-Chala (Pau: J & D Editions, 1990), 338-40; and Baron Xavier de Bonnault d'Houët, *La Première Ambulance sous Henri IV* (Paris: A. Picard, 1919), 14-5.

¹⁰ Christopher Duffy, *Siege Warfare: The Fortress in the Early Modern World, 1494-1660* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1979), 111.

¹¹ Joel Kovarsky, "Maps in a Time of War, The Rise of European Military Cartography," *Mercator's World* 7 (May/June 2002): 32.

¹² David Buisseret, ed., *Monarchs, Ministers and Maps: The Emergence of Cartography as a Tool of Government in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 107-8. Buisseret explains that little is known of military cartography in France before Fougeu. Sully ran a workshop for cartographers during his life, but little is known either about this endeavor (111). See also David

Even while acknowledging these innovations and achievements, military historians virtually always berate Henry IV for misuse of his battlefield successes and for personal recklessness. For example, Henry has been repeatedly criticized since the sixteenth century for a perceived failure to exploit his first major victory at the battle of Coutras in 1587. Numerous historians have criticized him for failing after defeating the duke of Joyeuse to take his army straightaway to meet up with a nearby force of 34,000 German and Swiss troops to march on Paris and force battle on Henry III.¹³ Even Henry of Navarre's ally and close confidant the baron of Rosny (later duke of Sully) wrote that the advantage of Coutras "floated away like smoke on the wind."¹⁴ A more recent critic, Sir Charles Oman, one of England's most distinguished military historians in the first half of the twentieth century, used Coutras and other post-battle actions to label Henry "the most inconsequent and the most un-Napoleonic of generals."¹⁵ The oft-repeated story with regard to Coutras goes that after the battle Henry galloped away in the direction of Béarn to lay the captured standards from his victory at the feet of his mistress, Corisande d'Andoins.¹⁶

Ronald S. Love rejects this assessment of Coutras in an article published in 1999, in which he underscores that one cannot separate Henry's military campaigns from his political goals. In this example Love supports an analysis of

Buisseret, *The Mapmakers' Quest: Depicting New Worlds in Renaissance Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 139.

¹³ For example, Buisseret, *Henry IV*, 25; and Thomas, *Henri IV*, 343.

¹⁴ Maximilien de Béthune, duc de Sully, *Les Oeconomies royales de Sully*, eds. David Buisseret and Bernard Barbiche, vol. 1, 1572-1594 (Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1970), 193.

¹⁵ Oman, 505.

¹⁶ Buisseret, *Henry IV*, 25.

the aftermath of Coutras first expounded by Garrett Mattingly in 1959, although both historians are indebted to Father Hardouin de Beaumont de Péréfixe's seventeenth-century assessment of the battle.¹⁷ Péréfixe, Mattingly, and Love all argue that Henry of Navarre had nothing to gain in 1587 by engaging Henry III in battle. Aside from the fact that Henry's army was tired and in need of rest, the army of Henry III actually blocked the Loire River at that time. Engaging the Valois king's army might actually have strengthened the Guise-led Catholic League, a situation that would have destroyed any hopes Navarre had for an eventual alliance with Henry III to defeat the League. Coutras occurred before the Day of the Barricades when Henry III fled Paris and was discredited in the eyes of his subjects. The strategy in place in 1587 thus mandated that it was more important for Henry of Navarre to appear to be a Calvinist war leader who was loyal to Henry III and intent on defeating the Guise threat to the realm.¹⁸ Love argues, "But from Navarre's much broader political perspective, restoring the integrity of his campaign to win the Valois monarch was more important than securing his short-term military gains."¹⁹

Henry has also been criticized for his rash behavior as a soldier-king, for taking the lead in battle and so often putting himself in harm's way. His allies warned that the Protestant cause would collapse without him, and after

¹⁷ Hardouin de Beaumont de Péréfixe, *Histoire de Henri-le-Grand, Roi de France et de Navarre Suivie d'un Recueil de Quelques Belles Actions et Paroles Mémorables de ce Prince* (Paris: Edme Martin, 1661), 78.

¹⁸ Garrett Mattingly, *The Armada* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959), 159-60; and Ronald S. Love, "A Game of Cat and Mouse: Henri de Navarre and the Huguenot Campaigns of 1584-89," *Canadian Journal of History/Annales canadiennes d'histoire* 24 (1999): 1, 16-20.

¹⁹ Love, "A Game," 20.

1589 his ministers frequently chastised him for his reckless pursuit of valor. More recently Edmund Dickerman and Anita Walker have echoed these sentiments by noting that Henry seemed oblivious to the fact that every risk he took compromised the future stability of France.²⁰ But Henry had good practical reasons for wanting to take the lead in battle. The nobles in Henry's army, in particular, needed frequent reminders that he was one of them and their leader. He certainly knew as well that many of his cavalrymen were not competent to command critical wings of his unique force. Additionally, where Henry was not personally involved, plans had a way of unraveling. At the battle of Ivry his own squadron began to break up when he was believed dead and only reassembled in the heat of battle at his desperate urging. Even after victory was achieved, post-battle jubilation was subdued until Henry returned from the field and removed his helmet to prove he was still alive.²¹ Henry's victories were personal; he was the cause for whom his troops fought. Christian Desplat states, "With Henry IV, the king of France was rebaptized as the first soldier of the realm; the function of monarchy had thus returned to its original purpose."²² Accepting the totality of his monarchical heritage, Henry as warrior became the embodiment of the state long before his grandson made the claim.²³ His kingly acts of clemency to survivors, rewards to victors, and gentle admonitions to those who failed to follow him were meaningless without his personal role in battle. In this light, Henry actually

²⁰ Edmund H. Dickerman and Anita M. Walker, "The Choice of Hercules: Henry IV as Hero," *The Historical Journal* 39:2 (1996): 323.

²¹ H. C. Davila, *The Historie of the Civill Warres of France* (London: R. Roworth, 1647), 902-3.

²² Desplat, 96.

²³ Ibid.

embodies what John Keegan calls "heroic leadership" and echoes the exemplary risk-taking and raw courage of Alexander the Great.²⁴

The Vert Galant as "great general"

In Love's 1999 article he identifies a four-hundred-year-old tradition of criticism of Henry IV as a military leader that he traces to two derogatory quips that Alexander, the duke of Parma, made about the king's actions in battle. Love argues that historians have uncritically accepted Parma's version of Henry IV ever since. "Consequently," Love states, "their [historians'] treatments of Henry IV as a military leader, and especially as a strategist – the major focus of their disdain – are superficial and repetitive, and never consider, or grapple with accompanying conditions or the king's ultimate political objectives."²⁵ Another sixteenth-century anecdote, the story of Henry leaving the battlefield at Coutras to join his lover, Corisande d'Andoins, has similarly been told and retold by historians to deride Henry's strategic sense. Instead of identifying the master design in Henry's suspect military decisions, however, my intent is to explore the anecdote about Henry's post-Coutras behavior in order to show how historians have conflated Henry's battlefield prowess with his oversized libido.

The 20 October 1587 battle of Coutras was Henry's first major victory. As was typical of almost all his military engagements, Henry faced a much larger army than his own: Joyeuse commanded a force of 10,000 versus Henry's

²⁴ John Keegan, *The Mask of Command* (New York: Viking, 1987), 10-1.

²⁵ Ronald S. Love, "Henry IV and Ivry Revisited: The King as a Military Leader," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History* 11 (1984): 65.

6,300 troops. Nevertheless, the Huguenot commander maneuvered his men into a defensive position, alternating his troop lines with musketeers and cleverly ordering his front ranks to kneel. Henry's plan worked so well that within ten minutes Joyeuse's army was in disarray. The battle ended less than an hour after it began. Joyeuse and some 2,500 of his men were killed in that short span of time while Henry lost less than 500.²⁶ "At least," Henry supposedly quipped, "nobody will be able to say after this that we Huguenots never win a battle."²⁷ At this point, the master narrative goes, the man who in so many other situations proved to be a consummate opportunist impulsively left his band of brothers to go find his lover.

Agrippa d'Aubigné seems to have publicized this anecdote first around 1616 in the publication of his *Histoire Universelle*. Aubigné mentions that Henry went to Corisande and concludes that in doing so he threw "all his words to the wind and gave up his victory to love."²⁸ The duke of Sully echoed this same sentiment in his *Oeconomies Royales*.²⁹ After Henry's unexpected death, the story about his post-battle method for relieving stress must have circulated in popular discourse as the legend of his greatness grew. During the reign of Louis XIV a man known as Tallemant des Réaux entertained people in the salons with stories about Henry's penchant for leaving his armies to pursue his mistresses. These stories eventually

²⁶ Estimates vary as to how many men were lost at the battle of Coutras: Oman, 473-80; Montross, 242-3; and Buisseret, *Henry IV*, 24-5.

²⁷ Quoted in Mattingly, 157.

²⁸ Théodore-Agrippa d'Aubigné, *Histoire Universelle*, ed. Alphonse de Ruble (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1893), 7:161. The work was originally published between 1616 and 1620.

²⁹ Sully, 195-6. See as well *Recueil des Lettres Missives*, 2:602-3. Sully's work was first published in 1638.

found their way into racy accounts of Henry's sex life produced in works like *Les Amours de Henri IV* published in the Netherlands in the 1665. By the time François-Eudes de Mézeray produced a critical summary of Henry's reign in the 1680s, the essential notion that throughout Henry's life his sex drive always overpowered his rational thinking was already the stuff of legend.³⁰ Thus, when analyzing the battle of Coutras, nineteenth- and twentieth-century historians, especially military historians, drew uncritically on a long tradition of evaluating Henry's battlefield command from the perspective of his sexual persona. The impact of this misconception was so damaging that it has obscured historical understanding of his military leadership ever since.

The story of Henry and his post-Coutras exploits is actually quite complex. Eight days after the battle, Henry did in fact quickly leave his disintegrating army in the hands of the Prince of Condé and set out for Pau where he spent much of November in the company of Diane d'Andoins, countess of Guiche and Gramont (1555-1621).³¹ By that time Diane had already taken to calling herself Corisande, an affectation she probably took from her deep interest in chivalric literature. She welcomed Henry, whom she affectionately dubbed "Petiot," a friend she had known all of her life and whom she had taken as a lover after the death of her husband in 1580. Contemporaries considered the young widow eccentric. She favored grotesque colors in her retinue and collected a menagerie of wild animals. She

³⁰Taken from J. H. M. Salmon, "The Afterlife of Henry of Navarre," *History Today* 47:10 (1997): 13-4.

³¹ There are several letters from Henry to Corisande dated Dec. 1587 and Jan. 1588 in the *Recueil des Lettres Missives*, 2:318-9, 330-3.

had a flair for poetry and perhaps other hidden talents that Henry readily indulged.³²

The infamous vignette concerning Henry and Corisande involves the flags and pennants from the battle of Coutras. Whether he actually took twenty-two captured standards and other souvenirs from the battle and laid them at the feet of his lover is hard to say. In one sense it was a great romantic move in keeping with her love of chivalry. But the story also has a slightly odd, even kinky, flavor. It conjures up images of Henry in post-battle heat rolling in the arms of Corisande on the flags of the vanquished, rendering perverse the very symbols of their military honor. In reality, if the story of the flags is true, it was probably a gallant gesture of thanks on Henry's part to the noblewoman who supported his cause at Coutras with both money and troops. It may even be a symbolic story emphasizing a chivalric Henry who did not butcher his prisoners after the battle, misdeeds for which Joyeuse was notorious, nor extract ransoms from them. Instead he honorably freed those captured during the fight. In this sense he had acted as a true chevalier and offered himself to *la belle* Corisande as the ideal warrior-hero. In the hands of historians, however, the story of Henry and Corisande has become an indicator of the future king's supposed failure to capitalize on victory and a trope for his flawed military vision.

This misreading of Henry and his strategic brilliance is due in part to the king's own efforts to fashion his heroic

³² George Edward Slocombe, *Henri IV* (Paris: Payot, 1933), 116; Daniele Thomas, 349; and idem., *Henri IV et la reconstruction du royaume* (Pau: Editions de la Réunion des musées, 1989), 212, image 262 ("Diane d'Andoins, comtesse de Guiche et sa fille, Catherine de Gramont"). For more on Corisande see Raymond Ritter, *Cette grande Corisande* (Paris: A. Michel, 1936).

persona in the guise of a magnificent lover. Henry was his own best promoter, and he encouraged the development of political propaganda that portrayed him as the emblematic warrior-hero. Edmund Dickerman and Anita Walker acknowledge that "[w]ar remained the activity he most valued; his identity as warrior the core-constituent of his self-image."³³ Yet his reputation as a lover of extraordinary abilities was also juxtaposed or implied in the countless artistic renderings of his likeness as Hercules produced during his reign.³⁴ References to his dynamic sexual energy persisted even after the old king began to experience bouts of impotence late in his reign.³⁵ Katherine B. Crawford argues that this duality in Henry's representation as hero and lover spanned his entire reign and grew out of his complex sexual behavior which contemporaries witnessed from time to time.³⁶ It was good propaganda to juxtapose Henry IV's virility with Henry's III's impotence, but at other times the king's sexual behavior seemed dangerously out of control; for instance, his designs to marry Gabrielle d'Estrées in 1598 or his pursuit of Charlotte de Montmorency in 1610.³⁷ In a nuanced reading of the iconography of Henry's reign, Crawford underscores that the very masculine images of the king also contained intertextual tensions that posited counter-images. She argues, "The assertions of self-control and heroic masculine

³³ Dickerman and Walker, 325.

³⁴ Ibid., 315-37.

³⁵ Edmund Dickerman, "Henry IV and the Juliers-Clèves Crisis: The Psychohistorical Aspects," *French Historical Studies* 8:4 (1974): 635-7.

³⁶ Katherine B. Crawford, "The Politics of Promiscuity: Masculinity and Heroic Representation at the Court of Henry IV," *French Historical Studies* 26:2 (2003): 225-52.

³⁷ Ibid., 225.

comportment always contained the specter of incipient sexual disorder."³⁸

It is worth considering that the historiography of Henry IV as a military leader has been too heavily influenced by a popular tradition that focuses, somewhat proudly in modern France, on Henry IV as a consummate lover and womanizer. In part Henry's own self-promotion inspired this tradition. It also derives from a historiographic tendency to read his ability as a military leader from 1568, when he took up his first command, to 1598, when he signed the Peace of Vervins and ended the religious wars, from the perspective and sexual antics of his entire life, particularly the post-1598 period. Thus, the story of his post-Coutras behavior seems all the more believable when it is read in the context of his life-long sexual license; knowing, for example, that he and Marie de Médicis fought bitterly over his desires to bring all his bastard offspring to the Louvre to live with the royal couple and their legitimate children.

If this is indeed the case, it seems obvious that a re-evaluation of Henry IV as a military commander is in order. Thus, as David Trim argues in a very recent reassessment of Henry's martial abilities: "The *vert-galant* was indeed a "*demon de batailles*."³⁹ His military successes and the image they created in the minds of his people explain his successful rule. Henry devised a long-term strategy for winning the throne and implemented that strategic plan while he personally led his men into battle.

³⁸ Ibid., 252.

³⁹ David Trim, "Edict of Nantes: Product of Military Success or Failure?" in *The Adventure of Religious Pluralism in Early Modern France, Papers from the Exeter Conference, April 1999*, eds. Keith Cameron, Mark Greengrass, and Penny Roberts (New York: Peter Lang, 2000), 97.

Henry won his kingdom on the battlefields of France and as a result brought peace to his realm. In the context of military history, that fact alone should be the key indicator in any judgment of Henry IV as a military commander.