

## Pamphleteers Construct Concini

by  
Jeffrey K. Sawyer

This paper is built around a problem of textual analysis that I have been wrestling with for some time as a historian of early seventeenth-century political propaganda.<sup>1</sup> Stated broadly the problem is how to use the texts of hundreds of political pamphlets to reconstruct the world of discourse within which pamphlet readers reacted to printed political tracts.<sup>2</sup> Take for example the dozens of pamphlets concerning the rise to power and assassination in April 1617 of Concino Concini. Concini, also referred to as the *Maréchal d'Ancre*, was for a time one of the principal ministers in the administration of Marie de Médicis during the youth of Louis XIII.

The Bibliothèque Nationale holds over 100 pamphlets published against Concini between 1614 and 1617, and another 16 (or so) in his favor.<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to note that almost half of the pamphlets published against Concini appeared after his death. In fact, carefully edited accounts of Concini's strange career and horrible demise formed the centrifugal center of a legally sanctioned (and no doubt subsidized) campaign of printed propaganda.<sup>4</sup> Fifty-seven (57) of the one hundred one (101) pamphlets against Concini at the B.N. were published after the events of April 24th, and many of these were published well after the subsequent trial and execution of Concini's widow on July 8th of the same year.<sup>5</sup> (See Figure 1.)



My question is this: what kind of audience reaction took place when a citizen of Paris, Lyon, Bordeaux, or Rouen encountered these printed tracts?<sup>6</sup> The question has been asked by others as well, notably Christian Jouhaud, but the reaction of the public, or more precisely of the various publics of the Old Regime, remains problematic.<sup>7</sup> Among the few sources available for reconstructing this vital part of seventeenth-century political culture are the rhetorical strategies manifest in the pamphlets themselves.

I was continually impressed even after reading dozens of the Concini pamphlets by their simultaneous literary richness, historical plausibility, rhetorical extravagance, and legal subtlety. The April coup d'état was analyzed in these pamphlets with remarkable candor, but at the same time it was dramatized according to conventional literary forms. The result is somewhat uncanny. More than any other minister of this generation, Concini steps forth from the pages of the pamphlets as a flesh and blood person with real ambitions and a plausible career in courtly politics. This impression contrasts very sharply with the conventional platitudes about ministers and the perfunctory descriptions of their promotions and demotions usually found in the published discourse of the period.<sup>8</sup> But at the same time, there was much playful exaggeration on the part of pamphlet authors with the spectacular, bizarre, comic and tragic elements of Concini's life and death. The murdered minister was a perfectly baroque character, and his rise and fall was ready made for the dramatic genres of the age--tragedy, comedy, or even pastorelle.<sup>9</sup> Concini had risen from a position as a household servant to become one of the most powerful men in France. He lived the illusion of being a great nobleman, whereas in reality all of his wealth, his title, and his military offices had only recently been given to him by Marie de Médicis. He was easily ridiculed as an over-dressed foreigner, of the silly, self important, Mediterranean type. Yet there was little that was funny about the horrifying ritual of exhumation, mutilation and incineration that Parisian street people administered to Concini's corpse on the

25th of April.<sup>10</sup> From still another descriptive angle, Concini was a political tyrant and a criminal. Well before the assassination, Concini's political opponents launched a vicious variation of the classical rhetoric of tyranny against the royal favorite.<sup>11</sup> These themes were played out in even more legalistic terms following the trial by the Parlement of Paris in which Concini (posthumously) and his wife (still living) were found guilty, among other things, of "lèse majesté humaine et divine."<sup>12</sup> According to other accounts Concini had caused the death of an officer in the royal army, insulted the majesty of the King, and stolen the King's money.

All of these themes were combined into an elaborate rhetoric of blame, often structured into self-consciously oratorical prose. One can well imagine the King's new ministers trying to encourage and also control this dramatization of the assassination. Did they also advise pamphlet authors how to translate the administration's official version of Concini's rise and fall into effective, emotionally appealing rhetoric?<sup>13</sup>

There are some instructive tensions among the various themes in the anti-Concini pamphlets. These tensions reflect both the complexity of Old Regime political culture and the sophistication of the political strategies and authorial intentions behind the pamphlet literature. Emphasizing the literary themes appropriate to Concini's rise and fall dramatized the event, yet also tended to portray the coup as just another example of the inconstancy of human affairs. Emphasizing Concini's political behavior provided an explanation for the assassination, but might reveal too much about royal favoritism, factional intrigue, and ministerial competition. Treating the assassination as something like an execution, provoked by outrageous criminal behavior, raised other embarrassing issues about the weakness of the royal government. Yet the anti-Concini pamphlets succeeded remarkably well in molding oratorical, historical, literary, and juridical modes of discourse into a persuasive and largely

coherent body of explanation, justification, and even celebration of the violent end of the Maréchal d'Ancre.

Legitimizing the coup d'état of April 24th was a very delicate matter for a number of reasons. The purpose and result of the coup was a major shift in the personnel controlling the executive functions of the royal government. Louis XIII's royal councils passed out of the hands of a coalition of ministers loyal to Marie de Médicis and into the hands new coalition of ministers, advisers, and court favorites more loyal to the fifteen year old king.<sup>14</sup> The success of the coup depended in large measure upon separating Louis XIII from his mother and exiling her from Paris. Yet it was unwise to attack the Queen Mother directly in public, for she continued to enjoy wide political support, especially among militant Catholics. Moreover, an important figure in the new faction of favorites and ministers was Louis XIII's hunting companion, Charles Albert de Luynes, a man hardly much more qualified to preside over the royal government than Concini had been. Finally, the violence of the coup was a sign of weakness and political disorder; it signaled the breakdown of royal authority. This was an impression that the new ministers desperately wanted to avoid.

It was especially dangerous politically to reveal too much about the workings of ministerial intrigue behind the coup, and particularly how a faction of court favorites might under certain circumstances virtually usurp the role of the monarch. Yet at the same time, there was a rhetorical need to describe Concini's political misdeeds in the most poignantly and graphically specific terms in order to explain why the assassination had been legitimate and perhaps even necessary. Only the magnitude and immediacy of the evil posed by Concini's continuation in power could provide a sufficient reason for the killing.

The effort to combine several modes of discourse into a persuasive whole shaped the rhetorical pattern of *Les Feux de joye de la France: Sur la mort & sepulture du Marquis d'Ancre*, a seven page pamphlet in the form

of a funeral oration.<sup>15</sup> It begins with the following exhortation.

O, juste jugement de Dieu! O  
profonds et incomprehensibles conseils  
du Tout Puissant! O, souverain decret  
de la providence de Dieu! Celuy-là  
[Concini] s'est perdu mal-heureusement  
qui nous vouloit perere dans le malheur.  
[Il] a finy ses jours par une tragique  
mort de la main des fideles François,  
qui vouloit causer d'un coeur desloyal la  
tragique fin de la France . . . .<sup>16</sup>

The pamphlet employs throughout the effective conceit of comparing and contrasting what Concini hoped for during his life to what actually happened to him upon his death. This was a neat rhetorical device for reinforcing the idea that Concini's fate had been a strange turn of the wheel of fortune, or the result of divine intervention. While living "il croyoit que le Ciel de son autorité fust sans nuage, le soleil de sa domination sans eclipse, le jour de sa gloire sans tenebres, la mer de sa grandeur sans tourmente, la rose de son honneur sans espines." But at the moment of his death "il a veu en un instant son autorité [et] sa domination estouffee, sa gloire esteinte, . . . et recogneu que toutes ses prosperitez n'estoient qu'un miel empoisonné de fortune, qui se seroit converty en l'absynte et amertume de tout malheur."<sup>17</sup>

But we also find a number of passages in *Feux de joye* exploiting a more serious, quasi-juridical rhetoric of political tyranny and criminal guilt.<sup>18</sup> These passages describe Concini in language resonant with deep cultural meanings.<sup>19</sup> With the same contrapuntal rhetorical constructions, the author of *Feux de joye* compares the dismemberment of Concini's body to the dead minister's desire while living to "dismember the body of the state." The burning of the various parts of Concini's corpse is then compared to his desire while living "to burn up and consume the liberty of the people with the flames of violence." "[Il] a esté



desmembré et mis en pieces, luy qui vouloit desmembrer le corps de l'Estat; [il a] esté bruslé et consommé des flammes, luy qui vouloit brusler et consommer la liberté du peuple du feu des ses violences."<sup>20</sup> Not content to be merely an important person and a royal minister, Concini's unlimited greed and ambition had motivated him to try to "bastir une puissance absoluë dans les mesures et ruynes de ceste perdurable Monarchie."<sup>21</sup> Concini, in short, had been a tyrant in the juridically technical sense of one who without right usurped the sovereign authority of the state and ruled outside the framework of the law. This line of legalistic accusation culminated in the following passage.

"Il a esté tué à faute de n'avoir voulu obeyr au commandement du Roy, luy qui vouloit commander à sa Royauté. [Il] a finy de mort violente, luy qui violoit le respect deu à sa Majesté, violoit la Justice, violoit les loix, et qui n'estoit que violence. Estant monté si haut qu'il ne pouvoit estre abaissé que dans le tombeau--mort que la justice approuve, que la loy autorize, que l'équité commande, que le droict conseille, que la raison ordonne, que l'Histoire confirme, . . . ."<sup>22</sup>

In these passages Concini's death was represented not at all in literary terms as the result of a twist of fate, but as the rational and just punishment of a political criminal. The theme of tyranny was further amplified by the allusions to Concini's oppression of "the liberty of the people." The truth of this last charge was nicely substantiated by references to the horrible enthusiasm with which Concini's corpse had been exhumed, mutilated, and incinerated by Parisian street people.

*Feux de joye* also noted that "History" (with a capital "H") had confirmed the sentence of death upon Concini. The reference was to historical literature in the heroic style, the stuff that would celebrate the

courageous deed of Monsieur de Vitry and keep his memory alive forever in the minds of Frenchmen.<sup>23</sup> But history of a different, more serious, kind, was also an important part of the anti-Concini pamphlet rhetoric.

The basic structure and thematic content of the officially sanctioned account of Concini's rise and fall was first articulated in *Lettre du roy aux gouverneurs de ses provinces*, a pamphlet published in several different versions which reproduced almost word for word a real piece of diplomatic correspondence.<sup>24</sup> The letter is in large measure an historical narrative that purports to explain when and how Concini came to France, and how he subsequently proceeded to disrupt the royal government to the point of endangering the king and the nation.

Monsieur de . . . ,

Je ne doute point que dans le cours des affaires qui se sont passees depuis la mort du feu Roy Monseigneur et Pere, que Dieu absolue, vous n'ayez facilement remarqué comme le Mareschal d'Ancre et sa femme, abusans de mon bas aage, et du pouvoir qu'ils se sont de longue main acquis sur l'esprit de la Royne Madame ma mere, ont projectté d'usurper toute l'autorité en mon Estat, disposer absolument des affaires, et m'oster les moyens d'en prendre cognoissance: Dessein qui'ils ont poussé si avant, qu'il ne m'est jusques icy resté que le seul nom du Roy, et que c'eust esté un crime capital à un de mes officiers et subjects, de me voir en particulier, et m'entretenir de quelque discours serieux. Ce que Dieu par sa toute bonté m'ayant fait appercevoir et toucher au doigt le peril eminent que ma personne et mon Estat encouroient . . . . J'ay esté constraint de dissimuler et couvrir par toutes mes



actions exterieures ce que j'avois de bon en l'interieur . . . .

Je me suis resolu de m'asseur de la personne dudict Mareschal d'Ancre, ayant donné charge au Sieur de Vitry, . . . . Ce qu'ayant voulu executer ledict Mareschal qui estoit fort accompagné à son accoustumee, auroit avec quelque'un des siens, voulu faire de la resistance. Il se seroit tiré quelques coups, dont aucuns ont porté sur ledict Mareschal, qui en est demeuré mort sur la place. De là j'ay fait arrester sa femme, ensemble des susdicts ministres, et supplié la Royne madicte Dame et mere, de trouver bon que desormais je prene en main le gouvernail de cet Estat . . . .<sup>25</sup>

This narrative account was intended to explain two things, 1) how a lowly, foreign born servant come to be such a threat to the French nation that he had to be eliminated by force, and 2) why the murder was not really a crime, but an act of heroism on the part of the king and his supporters. It was carefully shaped accordingly.<sup>26</sup> The Florentine had taken advantage of the youth of the king and the inexperience of his mother while France was politically vulnerable. Once in a position of power, Concini's behavior so aggravated the great nobles that he became the primary cause of the civil wars of 1614-1617. Concini's failure to allow the great nobles an appropriate role in government affairs (especially after the accord between the government and the discontented Princes in 1616) precipitated a final political hemorrhage to which the young king had to respond.

This historical analysis was the keystone in the new administration's propaganda. A great deal of authentic explanation (in addition to mere description) was offered. By fabricating a persuasive explanation of Concini's rise and fall as the result of historical

events and circumstances (i.e., the problems of a regency government and the inclinations of the French nobility) the new faction in power could better legitimate the assassination as something much larger than an act of partisan violence.

After all, the coup that brought down Concini and the other ministers of the Queen Mother was disturbing, not to say frightening, precisely because it was too easily perceived as the result of a political conspiracy born of factional intrigue. The representation of Louis XIII as clearly having taken part in the plot to remove Concini was reassuring, because it helped promote the idea that the act emanated from the highest legal authority. Yet the fact that a king of France had been constrained to become part of a plot in order to take control of his own government, and the fact that this plot resulted in an assassination, meant that something was deeply wrong with the political system in France.

Concini's career lent itself wonderfully to the literary conventions of the early seventeenth century, but was also a disconcerting challenge to the view that monarchical authority in France was firmly based on an eternal foundation of right and justice--one of the most cherished political assumptions of the age. The traditional view stressed that the political authority of kings was divinely ordained, and that the domination of the royal government over the rest of the kingdom was a natural reflection of the immutable, hierarchical order of the world.<sup>27</sup> Such assumptions about law, order, and political authority exercised a powerful influence over the political sensibilities of the age. Events that challenged these assumptions had to be explained in such a way as to make them less threatening.

The rhetorical skill with which the political propagandists of 1617 handled these contradictions of theory, discourse, and practice suggests that they anticipated a high level of political interest and awareness on the part of the pamphlet reading

audience. Skillful manipulation of literary, historical, and oratorical genre made it possible to present several different kinds of justifications for the coup d'état of April 24th. Some pamphlets emphasized the queer turns of the wheel of fortune that brought about the rise and fall of a lowly, irritating, foreigner. Others suggested that divine vengeance was partly responsible for chastising the diabolical minister. Still others played on the theme that these events demonstrated yet again the eternal hierarchy of authority emanating from the divine ordering of the universe; law and order naturally prevailed when the rightful sovereign Louis XIII assumed his position as the head of State. Other pamphlets were able to explain (without impugning too greatly the reputation of Marie de Médicis or the integrity of the political process) how Concini had come to be a threat to the king and the nation. A remarkably detailed but carefully controlled narrative emerged as the official account of the causes for the assassination and the redistribution of political power in France.

The urban elite of France must have read these pamphlets with interest, concern and amusement. But their most important reaction seems to have been precisely that which the pamphleteers had hoped to produce--a sense of relief. A legitimate political order had been re-established. The turmoil of the regency years would now be over. A sovereign Dieu was indeed watching out for the Most Christian King and his subjects, and politics could go on as usual in France.

University of Baltimore

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Jeffrey K. Sawyer, "Jacques Bon-Homme and National Politics: Ethos and Audience in Seventeenth-Century Pamphlets," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History* 12 (1985):23-32; and *Printed Poison: Pamphlet*

*Propaganda, faction Politics, and the Public Sphere in Early Seventeenth-Century France* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990).

<sup>2</sup>Recently published work on the history of printing is helpful in clarifying the broader cultural context within which pamphlet literature functioned; cf., Roger Chartier, "Publishing Strategies and What the People Read, 1530-1600," in *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane, 145-182 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987) first published along with another useful survey, "Pamphlets et Gazettes," in *Histoire de l'édition française*, vol. 1, *Le Livre conquérant: du Moyen Age au milieu du XVII siècle*, ed. Henri-Jean Martin and Roger Chartier, (Paris: Promordis, 1982). But such work has seldom focused on the specifically political functions and rhetorical dimensions of pamphlet literature. Two important exceptions are Denis Richet's "Autour des Etats-Généraux: La polémique politique en France de 1612 à 1615," in *Représentation et vouloir politiques: Autour des Etats-Généraux de 1614*, ed. Roger Chartier and Denis Richet, 151-194 (Paris, 1982); and Christian Jouhaud, "Imprimer l'événement. La Rochelle à Paris," in *Les usages de l'imprimé*. Roger Chartier, 381-438 (Paris: Fayard, 1987), see note 6 below.

<sup>3</sup>Hélène Duccini, "La Littérature pamphlétaire sous la Régence de Marie de Médicis," 3 vols., thèse de troisième cycle (University of Paris X, 1977), I:108. Using a broader base of library holdings, Orest Ranum has estimated that there were between 275 and 300 works published about the assassination; see below note 10, "French Ritual of Tyrannicide," at 75. Many of these pieces can be located in the United States using Robert Lindsay and John Neu, *French Political Pamphlets 1547-1648: A Catalog of Major Collections in American Libraries* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969). See also *French Political Pamphlets, 1547-1648*, on microfilm (Woodbridge, Conn. Research Publications Inc., 1979-1980).

<sup>4</sup>Following the coup, an increasing number of anti-Concini pamphlets were published "avec permission" and with the name of the printer on the title page, indicating that the printers believed themselves protected from prosecution for sedition or libel. Some publishers of pamphlets were "imprimeurs du Roy," who almost certainly were subsidized. On censorship, sedition laws, and the privilege to publish, see Bernard Barbiche, "Le régime de l'édition," in *Histoire de l'édition française*, vol. 1, *Le Livre conquérant: Du Moyen Age au milieu du XVII siècle*, ed. Henri-Jean Martin and Roger Chartier, 367-377 (Paris: Promordis, 1982). The process of obtaining "permission" for a book or pamphlet was not effectively regularized until Richelieu's era, but the chief judge of the Châtelet (the primary royal jurisdiction) exercised considerable powers over the book trade in Paris even before the post-1630 regime. Censorship was an ever present concern of the Parisian magistrates; see Alfred Soman, "Press, Pulpit, and Censorship in France before Richelieu," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 120 (1976): 439-463.

<sup>5</sup>*Arrest de la Cour de Parlement, contre le Mareschal d'Ancre & sa femme. Prononcé & executé à Paris le 8. Juillet 1617* (Paris: Morel & Mettayer, 1617).

Editorial note: all citations in French in this paper (of pamphlet titles and text) reflect as closely as possible the original spelling, punctuation, and diacritical marks. Where appropriate "v" is substituted for "u", "j" for "i", "et" for "&", and an intentionally omitted "n" or "m" is supplied. All translations are my own.

<sup>6</sup>I mention these four towns because they were important centers of printing and publishing, and therefore, of the production of pamphlet literature. The term "audience reaction" is not an anachronism. It may be that "the truly significant period of development for rhetoric begins in 1635," Hugh M. Davidson, *Audience, Words and Art: Studies in*

*Seventeenth-Century Rhetoric* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1965), 3. Yet Marc Fumaroli's massive study shows that while concerns of "style" dominated much of the theoretical literature of "l'âge de l'éloquence", the notion of audience reaction--to certain kinds of "images" as well as to certain styles--was fundamental to the analysis of sermons and devotional literature; see *L'Age de l'éloquence: Rhétorique et "res litteraria" de la Renaissance au seuil de l'époque classique* (Geneva: Droz, 1980), 187.

<sup>7</sup>The following perceptive remarks are found in the preface to Christian Jouhaud's chapters, "Lisibilité et persuasion. Les placards politiques," and "Imprimer l'événement. La Rochelle à Paris," in *Les usages de l'imprimé*, cited above, note 2 at 308: "Enfin, l'image politique imprimée ne s'adresse plus aux 'ignorants', mais au 'public', à des publics: la difficulté très diverse des déchiffrements, de la vignette directement illustrative à la métaphore visuelle complexe, conduit à une nouvelle interrogation sur les partages des effets visuels. Le public voit-il les mêmes objets? En perçoit-il les mêmes leçons? Questions cruciales aussi pour l'homme de pouvoir, le chef de parti, l'auteur, l'imprimeur. Sans doute peut-on d'ailleurs voir là une spécificité de l'imprimé politique: qu'il veuille persuader, divulguer ou prescrire, il ne peut éviter de penser sa propre réception."

<sup>8</sup>Duccini notes that in the early seventeenth century there were at least four pamphlet campaigns designed specifically to disgrace the Crown's principal ministers and remove them from power: against Concini from 1614 through 1617, against Luynes from 1619 through 1622, against La Vieuville in 1624, and against Richelieu in 1631 and 1632. The texts of these pamphlets are often constructed of well-worn themes and oratorical techniques. An interesting "book of commonplaces" could be assembled to determine whether much of the political discourse of the early 1600s had been recycled from the refuse heap of the sixteenth-century religious and dynastic wars. However, success in the world of political rhetoric is

hardly predicated upon originality. The conventionality of pamphlet literature should not conceal from us the fact that most pamphlets had very specific and politically concrete persuasive intentions behind them.

<sup>9</sup>Among the pamphlets that played with established literary genres were pieces such as *Dialogue du berger picard avec la nymphe chapmenoise, sur la fortune et gouvernement du marquis d'Ancre en Picardie* (Paris: J. Sera, 1617), *La Descente du marquis d'Ancre aux enfers, son combat, et sa rencontre, avec maistre Guillaume* (Paris: A. Saugrin, 1617); and *Histoire tragique du Marquis d'Ancre & sa femme* (Paris: Anthoine du Brueil, 1617).

<sup>10</sup>Cf., Orest Ranum, "The French Ritual of Tyrannicide in the Late 16th Century," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 11/1 (1980): 63-82; and "Guises, Henry III, Henry IV, Concini--30 Years of Political Assassinations," *Histoire* 51 (1982): 36-44.

<sup>11</sup>See especially *Lettre de Monsieur le Duc de Buillon au roy sur la declaration publiee contre luy sous le nom de sa Majesté le xiii Fevrier 1617* (no place of publication, 1617); *Lettre de Monsieur le Duc de Nevers. Au roy sur la declaration publiee contre luy, sous le nom de sa majesté* (no place of publication, 1617); and *L'Union des princes* (no place of publication, 1617).

<sup>12</sup>See the published arrêt cited in note 5 above.

<sup>13</sup>On the calculated use of rhetoric to elicit emotional ("pathétique" and "enlevant") responses from an audience in the seventeenth century, see Bernard Dompnier, "Le Missionnaire et son Public," in *Journées Bossuet: La Prédication au XVIIe siècle*, ed. Thérèse Goyet and Jean-Pierre Collinet, 105-122 (Paris, 1980). There is plenty of evidence to suggest that politicians were well aware of the techniques of the preachers.



<sup>14</sup>Elizabeth W. Marvick, *Louis XIII: The Making of a King* (New Haven Conn.: Yale University Press, 1986), 201-225.

<sup>15</sup>The full title is *Les Feux de joye de la France: Sur la mort & sepulture du Marquis d'Ancre. Lequel à esté enterré & deterré, trainé & pendu par les pieds, retrainé par la ville & fauxbourgs de Paris; & son corps enfin réduit en cendre. Pour servir d'exemple à tous ceux qui entreprennent contre l'Autorité de leur roy.* (Paris: Estienne Perrin, 1617).

<sup>16</sup>*Feux de joye*, 3.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 4-5.

<sup>18</sup>In this respect, it is interesting how the rhetoric of "lese majesty" that Concini's faction had mobilized in an effort to disgrace the opposition was, in turn, used to justify the April coup. Cf., *Declaration du roy, contre monsieur le duc de Nevers, et tous ceux qui l'assistent. Verifée en Parlement le dixseptiesme Janvier mil six cens dixsept.* (Paris: F. Morel, P. Metayer, 1617).

<sup>19</sup>Ranum, "Ritual of Tyrannicide," cited above note 10.

<sup>20</sup>*Feux de joye*, 4.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>23</sup>Vitry was captain of Louis XIII's personal body guard. He had personally received the order to arrest Concini, and was thus in charge of the small band that did the actual killing. In *Feux de joye* we read that, "Monsieur de Vitry tres fidelle au Roy ayant porté son coeur et sa main à la fois à l'execution d'un act si heroïque que l'Histoire fera vivre à jamais en la souvenance des hommes...." (p. 5).

<sup>24</sup>This pamphlet was published in late April or May 1617 by the imprimeurs du roi, F. Morel and P. Mettayer. It had first been sent as a letter by royal post in the form of an official diplomatic communication to the principal military commanders in the provinces. The basic account of the coup contained in the letter was refined over the next several months, but remained the core of the government's "official" explanation of Concini's assassination. Several versions of the pamphlet exist, some "avec permission" printed on the title page and some without.

<sup>25</sup>This quotation is taken from an anonymous version of the pamphlet, *Lettre du Roy. A Monsieur de Bonnouvrier[.] Gouverneur de Mets en l'absence de Monseigneur le Duc d'Espéron. Concernant la mort du Mareschal d'Ancre*, (no place or date of publication), 3-6.

<sup>26</sup>As an apologetic for a crime, the narrative elements of this account can be compared to some of the narrative elements in the "pardon tales" analyzed by Natalie Zemon Davis in her recent book. For example, the emphasis placed on the aggravating behavior of the victim, and the "heat" of the moment at which the killing occurred; Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1987), 2-6, 28-39.

<sup>27</sup>Nannerl O. Keohane, *Philosophy and the State in France* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980), 79-82; Howell A. Lloyd, "The Political Thought of Charles Loyseau (1564-1627)" *European Studies Review* 11 (1981), 53-82; and David Parker, "Law, Society and the State in the Thought of Jean Bodin," *History of Political Thought*, 2 (1981), 253-285.