

# Princely Heroic Virtue

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## 1. Definition

In general terms, heroic virtue can be described as an extraordinary virtue which corresponds to a degree of moral excellence which exceeds normal human capabilities or is bestowed upon human beings only as a divine gift. The idea that such a superhuman virtue existed proved to be a useful concept in the ideology and rhetoric surrounding monarchical forms of government in pre-modern Europe. In medieval and early modern Europe, it became increasingly common to regard princely virtues as synonymous with heroic virtue, just as the monarchs of the day identified themselves with the [heroes](#) of classical history and mythology. This political use of the concept of heroic virtue was a distinct, but parallel and similar, development to the role heroic virtue played in the processes of canonization in the same time period.<sup>[1]</sup>

## 2. Origin and political development of the concept

When describing heroic virtue, which for him is something beyond virtue in the normal sense and the opposite to bestiality, Aristotle recurs in his *Nicomachean Ethics* (VII. 1. 1) to the example of Hector in the *Iliad* and how his father king Priam declared that he seemed not like “the son of a mortal man”,

but rather “of a god”.<sup>[2]</sup> (See also [Homeric Heroes](#).)

This very first definition of heroic virtue is the appropriate point of departure for a survey of the heroic and its connection to [monarchical power in the early modern era](#); not only because of its authority and continued reinterpretation across the centuries. It also anchors this concept in a princely sphere.

Heroic virtue describes the mortal who *seems to be* or *acts like* a god, despite being merely human. In parallel to Aristotle’s use of the Homeric example, early modern monarchs also consistently portrayed themselves as the mythological or historical heroes of antiquity. However, heroic virtue is only briefly mentioned by Aristotle. It was in the later philosophical tradition that the concept was elaborated and developed, most likely because of the political and theological uses to which it could be put.

The divine or godlike character and deeds of the possessor of heroic virtue has been one constant in descriptions of this superhuman disposition from antiquity to the 18th century. This is true for one of the most important developments in the history of this concept, which took place in the 13th century. As Biörn Tjällén has shown in a recent article, it was through the writings of Thomas Aquinas’ disciples Peter of Auvergne (d. 1304) and, in particular, Giles of Rome (d. 1316) that the concept of heroic virtue found its way into political thought. From then on, it became strongly connected to the image of the ideal monarch.<sup>[3]</sup> Tjällén demonstrates how this interpretation of the heroic is prominent in both Peter of Auvergne’s commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* and Giles of Rome’s influential mirror for princes, *De Regimine Principum* (ca. 1280). These medieval Aristotelians strove to integrate the philosopher’s ethical principles with his political theory. In particular, Aristotle’s discussion in book III of the *Politics* (on justice) introduces the idea of a virtue so eminent that its possessor should be considered above the law of common mortals.<sup>[4]</sup> The medieval philosophers connected this super-eminent individual to a strong monarchical power. The king was elevated far above his subjects and considered as almost divine.

### 3. Catholic and Protestant development of the concept

While the concept of heroic virtue was appropriated to form an essential part in the canonization process in Catholic countries, it developed along a divergent yet strikingly similar path in protestant Northern Europe. There, the political aspect of the concept became prominent.

In the aftermath of the Counter-Reformation – in particular during the pontificate of Urban VIII, Maffeo Barberini (1623–1644) – a renewed conception of sainthood gradually gained ground. It was postulated that a candidate saint should not only possess uncommonly excellent virtues but that these should also be specifically heroic or of the heroic degree.<sup>[5]</sup> All saints, except martyrs, must satisfy three basic requirements: doctrinal purity, heroic virtue and miraculous intercession after death.<sup>[6]</sup> In this way, heroic virtue became fundamental for the opening of all canonization processes.<sup>[7]</sup>

The Protestant adaptation seems to have developed primarily from theological ethics, despite the fact that heroic virtue as such was commonly considered a worldly or political virtue by Protestants. In Risto Saarinen’s view, the Protestant version of heroic virtue developed as a parallel to the Catholic. But whereas it was developed in the context of canonization on the Catholic side, it followed the development of the absolutist state in Protestant countries.<sup>[8]</sup> Some discussions of heroic individuals led by providence to accomplish God’s work on earth can be found in the writings of Martin Luther.

Philipp Melanchthon similarly described an extraordinary natural gift, apparent in great men of history, but also artists and philosophers. Towards the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th centuries, heroic virtue had become a common feature in Protestant theology and moral philosophy, with many dissertations *De Virtute Heroica* being published at Northern European universities. These drew on the views of Luther and Melanchthon, but also on the Renaissance of Aristotelian scholasticism which occurred at this time. There were also many shared views across confessions: Francesco Piccolomini's textbook, *Universa Philosophia de Moribus* (1583), was used by Catholics and Lutherans alike. Although a Catholic, Piccolomini regarded heroic virtue as a moral philosophical rather than a theological concept, and thus his discussion was relevant to philosophers of both confessions.[9]

In Lutheran contexts heroic virtue is commonly described as a natural gift or talent bestowed on men by God, as an extraordinary quality. It is also described as transcending "beyond common rules", which means that this virtue should not be imitated by ordinary human beings. Among points of contention were whether true heroic virtue could be found in pagans and women – on these issues there was no consensus. The "transgressive" quality of the heroic was, according to Ronald Asch, characteristic of non-academic representations of the heroic during the same period as well, among Protestants and Catholics alike.[10]

We will now focus on some examples of how heroic virtue was used in the Early modern period in order to express and legitimize royal power in both Protestant and Catholic Europe.

#### 4. Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden (1594–1632)

The close parallel between Catholic and Protestant applications of the concept of heroic virtue at this time can be observed in the case of Gustavus Adolphus, the famous king of Sweden who died at the battle of Lützen in 1632, and was mourned as a martyr for the Protestant cause in large parts of Northern Europe. Among a large number of panegyric works is an *Oration on the Heroic Virtue of the Unconquerable and Incomparable Hero Gustavus Adolphus (Oratio de Virtute Heroica Invictissimi ac Incomparabilis Herois Dn. Gustavi Adolphi Magni ...)*, by Georg Alandus at Uppsala University in 1635.[11]

Alandus draws on both the Aristotelian origins of the concept and more recent Lutheran theology, but notably also on Piccolomini's textbook. The oration builds on a theory of degrees of virtue: the more eminent the virtues, the closer to the divine man can reach. The most eminent virtue, which is called heroic, elevates man to a status "above the human condition".[12] Building on Piccolomini, Alandus also adds that heroic virtue is by definition something which shows itself in particularly *difficult* actions. In short, for Alandus, heroic virtue is (1.) a gift of God which provides (2.) a certain prudence in observation and determined, quick action, which results in (3.) magnificent endeavours which are (4.) successful, but (5.) cannot be imitated. This virtue approaches divine perfection and it is clear that it is a result of a gift or natural talent – God working through nature.[13] Alandus then argues that Gustavus Adolphus matches this definition better than anyone: his virtues and deeds were indeed extraordinary, but his intervention in the war in Germany also occurred at a moment of dire need for both Sweden and the German Lutherans, a sure sign in Alandus's eyes that he was an instrument of God. Furthermore, Alandus provides historical examples for comparison, such as Joshua, Gideon,

Cyrus, Alexander, etc., i.e. both Biblical and pagan heroes, who knowingly or unknowingly performed some part in God's plan for mankind. To underline the divine calling of Gustavus Adolphus, Alandus refers to the Biblical prophecy of the Lion of the North.[14] Similar heroizations are evident in the numerous works celebrating the king which were published all over Europe following his death, although not all of them built on the explicit philosophical basis which Alandus used.[15]

## 5. Queen Christina of Sweden (1626–1689)

Gustavus Adolphus's example is of paramount importance for another fascinating case of monarchical representation of heroic virtue in the early modern period, namely his own daughter, Queen Christina. Her example illustrates how the heroic was equally important for the self-fashioning of sovereigns in both Catholic and Protestant Europe.

Christina, who, after her abdication from the Swedish throne in 1654, became one of the most famous converts of her time, was praised in different panegyrics for her heroic virtue both during and after her reign in Sweden.[16] Her case is also significant in that it shows how heroic virtue could be utilised in staging the public persona of a female ruler, whose aspirations in that regard were often regarded as problematic.[17]

Heroic virtue is, for instance, connected to Christina in the anonymous libretto of the ballet *Le Monde Reioivi*, staged on new year's day 1645 to celebrate the beginning of her reign.[18] Naturally, for a performance aimed at legitimizing the beginning of her rule, the libretto focuses on the praise of her *kingly* virtues. Heroic virtue stands as particularly important in this respect, appearing on stage in the fourth entry of the first act together with the personification of Honour and just after Jupiter, Wisdom and Justice. A short prose text describes the character of heroic virtue:

“This heroic virtue and honour come together to follow Christina and render her Reign as glorious as that of Gustavus'. He that never decided anything without prudence, never executed anything without Justice, never engaged in any deed that was not advised by heroic virtue [...].”[19]

Heroic virtue is introduced to underline the continuity between Christina's reign and that of her father Gustavus Adolphus. Her sovereignty should be guided, as his was, by reason, with which earthly passions are transcended. The heroic person acts in accordance with prudence or wisdom (*prudencia*) and justice (*iustitia*), the most markedly princely virtues. The same explicit connection of heroic virtue with prudence introduced by Alandus' in Uppsala in 1635 recurs thus in *Le Monde Reioivi*, staged ten years later in Stockholm. Moreover, Christina is praised for her “male strength” (“masle vigueur”). It is by means of this strength, instilled by her father, that Christina overcomes the limits of her gender in the moment she ascends the throne, the author claims.[20] Though a woman, she is Gustavus's daughter and therefore fully capable of ruling. The theme of her ancestry is reiterated several times in the ballet revealing both its importance and connection with heroic virtues.[21] Thus, *Le Monde Reioivi* must be considered as a statement in the process of legitimization of the young Queen and her newly attained position.

Christina continued to be praised for her heroic virtue after her abdication in June 1654 and following

her public conversion to Catholicism in November 1655. Furthermore, she centred her literary patronage in Rome on this very concept. Evidence of this comes from her learned Academy in Rome, *Accademia Reale*.<sup>[22]</sup> Christina's Royal Academy was created with the explicit aim of legitimizing her continued status as monarch in Rome *after* her abdication from the Swedish throne. This claim – already clearly stated in the name of the academy – was pursued through recurrent references to heroic virtue and its royal character. Christina indicates this subject as the one to be treated in the very first session of the assembly.<sup>[23]</sup> Focus on this quality recurred in several speeches held in her Academy, such as the opening discourse held by Cardinal Francesco Albizzi. Albizzi addressed his *Discorso Accademico* to Christina, “magnanimous Queen that, endowed with sublime and Heroic Virtues no longer as a mortal Woman but as a Heavenly Goddess, is praised, revered and loved by the all World”.<sup>[24]</sup> She is here described as the foremost example of heroic virtue and stands as a personification of the concept. The panegyric purpose of the discourse merges naturally with a defence of the Catholic faith against Protestantism as Christina's abdication and conversion are presented as the most outstanding heroic action ever – a parallel to the portrayal of the conversion of Henri IV of France half a century earlier.<sup>[25]</sup> The Swedish Queen is described as a superior, godlike being whose sacrifice of the crown for the sake of the Catholic faith indicates a truly heroic virtue. Her qualities are, according to the author, in every respect supereminent, “Majestic, Heroic and Divine” and are all directed to vanquish “as an enchanted spear [...] the Strongest Enemies”, namely the Protestants.<sup>[26]</sup> Christina's sacrifice of the throne for the sake of Catholicism stands as an action that surpasses the heroism of ancient heroes. Although her surpassing virtue depends on her newly attained faith it is, nevertheless, at the same time a both religious and political action. Christina is described as actively committed to the cause of Christian faith, unlike the “nonbeliever” Diocletian who led an “idle life”. Christina's active embracing of Catholicism and the comparison with Diocletian is particularly important. In the *Discorso Accademico*, just as in *Le Monde Reioivi*, heroic virtue represents a markedly royal quality. However, its political scope and function has been extended to a religious sphere by Albizzi. The intimate connection between the political and the religious spheres which this signified, and which more generally characterises the Catholic Church during the Counter-Reformation and its aftermath, is evident in Albizzi's use of heroic virtue. Historian Paolo Prodi has showed how the merging of these two spheres resulted in both a politicization of the Catholic Church and a sacralization of the power of other Christian Princes.<sup>[27]</sup>

Finally, Lorenzo Brancati da Lauria's discussion on the voluntary dimension of the heroic in his *De Virtute Heroica* from 1668 stands out as particularly important for Albizzi's arguments. Brancati builds on Augustine's opinion in the tenth book of *De Civitate Dei* that only Christian martyrs can be rightly defined heroes because of their imitation of Christ and divinely inspired self-abnegation. This Christian heroic virtue pertains more markedly to the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, while the four cardinal virtues – wisdom, justice, courage and moderation – are employed to a different heroic degree. By means of this distinction Brancati conceives therefore both a worldly and a Christian heroic virtue. These two spheres are both traceable and active in Albizzi's praise of Christina in which her kingly virtues serve the cause of the Catholic Church. Her abdication and conversion are therefore conveyed as both acts of self-abnegation for the sake of religion and, somewhat paradoxically at the same time, as a triumph of her royal status.

## 6. Louis XIV of France (1638–1715)

The use of heroic virtue for the representation and legitimization of monarchs was anything but a prerogative of the Swedish house of Vasa. The most influential sovereign of the early modern period, Louis XIV of France, was certainly a model for numerous other monarchs in this as in so many other respects.

Notably, Peter Burke has devoted to the self-fashioning of the French monarch his classic *The fabrication of Louis XIV* (1992).<sup>[28]</sup> The Sun King (*Le Roi soleil*) epitomizes according to Burke a great variety of the rhetorical strategies employed by different monarchs in order to establish and secure their royal status. The very same sun metaphor – so effectively employed by him as to become one with his name – is a good example of the representational strategies appropriated by Louis and investigated by Burke. Whether the successful propaganda of the Sun King was a result of his eagerness to outshine other planets / monarchs, as Burke suggests, or whether it should rather be regarded as a sort of ‘defence’ *vis-à-vis* competing sovereigns, as has been argued by art historian Hendrik Ziegler, is an open question.<sup>[29]</sup> It is, however, appropriate in the present context to mention that Queen Christina, as several other seventeenth-century monarchs, entered into competition with Louis XIV and his devise “Nec pluribus impar” (*Inferior to none*) followed by the emblem of the sun illuminating the earth with its far reaching rays.<sup>[30]</sup> Christina’s solar counterstrike was presented in 1679, when a medal was struck with the devise “Nec falso, nec alieno” (*Neither false nor borrowed*) – together with the very same image of the sun. Christina’s medal indicated that, unlike Louis, Christina shines of her own splendour, depending on no-one, neither lands nor subjects.<sup>[31]</sup> This single episode will make the case for the complex representational relations between seventeenth-century monarchs, which is defined as “bataille d’emblèmes” in Ziegler’s book.<sup>[32]</sup> Moreover, this controversy bears witness to that “crisis of representation”, which would affect the use of symbols and allegories in the depiction of Louis XIV and, due to his central position, of Early Modern monarchs in general.<sup>[33]</sup> The upsurge of Cartesian rationalism; the so-called *querelle des anciens et des modernes* – with its partially favourable outcome for the latter – and a certain weariness of the complicated imagery described above, led to a decrease in references to Ancient myths. However, this decline of Classical elements – situated in Louis’ case both by Burke and Ziegler at the end of the 1680’s – did apparently not involve heroic virtue.

Two panegyric texts addressed to the two main rivals in the “bataille d’emblèmes” prove the continued importance of heroic virtue. The first is devoted to a member of the House of Habsburg, Archduke Leopold Wilhem of Austria (1614–1662), brother of Emperor Ferdinand III (1608–1657), and bears the revealing title of *Le Prince Devot et Guerrier Ou Les Vertus Heroiques De Leopold Guillaume* (1667).<sup>[34]</sup> The second – entitled *L’Apollon françois, ou le Parallèle des vertus héroiques du Tres- Auguste Tres- Puissant & Tres- Invincible Roy de France & de Navarre* – written by Brice Bauderon de Sénece is a collection of maxims and mottos of emblems devoted to Louis XIV. *L’Apollon françois* was first published in 1681 and then reprinted at least two times in 1684 and 1691.

Although Ziegler rightly remarks how Bauderon de Sénece argues that the comparison between Louis and the sun is essentially improper – the sun being a “body without soul” and only a “shadow of God” – it should be noted that the whole panegyric departs from the sun metaphor in order to prove how the qualities of integrity, luminosity and beneficence better pertain to the French King.<sup>[35]</sup> Bauderon de

Sénecé's rhetorical critique of the well-established sun metaphor seems already in this key passage to be mostly directed towards its deficiency in representing the truly divine character of Louis. Therefore, it is not surprising to find among the mottos discussed by the French poet one referring expressly to Hercules – "*Allicit ille animos. Il charme les esprits*" (He enchants the spirits) – in which the ancient hero is equated with Apollon because of his eloquence or one in which Louis XIV is praised for his superhuman generosity.[36] In this last motto we can read, among other praises, these expressions concerning Louis' divine character:

"So natural and ordinary is the virtue of generosity for Louis that a hundred of hands would not suffice to distribute all his charities. He is always in search for subjects to exercise his magnanimity and it is rather the occasions that fail him than will or power. Such prodigality seems not to be the virtue of a human. He who acts with such plentifulness is rather similar to a God." [37]

Louis XIV acts with such an excellent degree of virtue that his generosity appears as effortless and above the common use of men. The generosity of the French King is described as of the divine kind with expressions that remind us of Aristotle's first definition of heroic virtue and its performer Hector.

Even more strikingly are Bauderon de Sénecé's references to heroic virtue in his discussion of the device "*Rerum tutela salusque. Nostre unique salut.*" (Our only salvation), in which he comments on Apollo's thaumaturgical capacity by referring directly to Louis' divine virtue:

"I will limit myself to that particular quality [virtue] of the Sun to produce and maintain health. And to make the right use [give a correct interpretation] of it I will be satisfied to admire that divine virtue [capacity] bestowed on Your Majesty by the Almighty, by means of a Royal and sacred unction, to cure with a simple touch one of the most cruel and obstinate diseases of which men are afflicted." [38]

The author refers here to Louis XIV's renowned capacity to cure scrofula by the mere touch of his hand. This legendary quality of the French monarchs is here still sustained as an effective cure against this disease. Burke's ideas of a progressive disenchantment of the sacrality of the early modern absolutist ruler, towards the end of the seventeenth century, should therefore be considered as a gradual process, rather than a clear break. The superhuman character of heroic virtue with its *godlike* element seems therefore to have been a possible and influential resource for authors also in a time of transition.

## 7. Late 17th century development of the concept

In the latter half of the 17th century there are signs that the heroic in a Protestant context was being more definitively equated with innate qualities and divine gifts. Swedish dissertations of the absolutist period (1680–1718) now describe the heroic quality as a form of *ingenium* ("talent" or perhaps "wit") and seem to avoid speaking of heroic virtue altogether. This *ingenium* is clearly thought of as a result of natural endowments, the individual temperament of the hero in question: qualities determined by one's physical nature could only with difficulty be termed virtues in the proper sense. In action, this quality is often described as a talent for quick thought and deeds, as embodied by historical figures

such as Alexander the Great or Julius Caesar. In the Swedish case, as in Germany, Johann Heinrich Boeckler – active first at Strasbourg and later at Uppsala university – was highly influential in spreading such ideas.<sup>[39]</sup> In England, John Dryden apparently drew on very similar ideas in his *Heroic Stanzas* on the death of Oliver Cromwell, which he wrote in 1659 to his later embarrassment:

“Swift and resistlesse through the Land he past  
Like that bold Greek who did the East subdue;  
And made to battails such Heroick haste  
As if on wings of victory he flew

...

For from all tempers he could service draw;  
The worth of each with its alloy he knew;  
And as the Confident of Nature saw  
How she Complexions did divide and brew.

Or he their single vertues did survey  
By intuition in his own large brest,  
Where all the rich Idea’s of them lay,  
That were the rule and measure to the rest.

When such Heröique Vertue Heav’n sets out,  
The Starrs like Commons sullenly obey;  
Because it drains them when it comes about,  
And therefore is a taxe they seldome pay.”<sup>[40]</sup>

Beginning in the late 17th century, the concept of heroic virtue came under increasing criticism. This occurred as the ideological force of ancient mythology declined, as has been described by Burke, Disselkamp and Asch.<sup>[41]</sup> To early enlightenment philosophers, heroism was often seen as a thin disguise for Machiavellian power politics or simply as the ideology of absolutism that it undoubtedly often was. The English journalist Richard Steele gave voice to common views when he criticised the idolisation of the pagan heroes of antiquity as thoroughly unchristian in *The Christian Hero* (1701). Their virtues were nothing more than passions, he argues. Whether they be the deceitful Machiavellianism of Caesar or the vain and proud Stoicism of Cato, such pseudo-virtues are the result of man’s fallen nature and can never be truly benign, in Steele’s view. However, in the end Steele does hope for a Christian form of virtue to replace the heathen Greco-Roman ideals he criticises. In doing so he specifically calls Christian humility a heroic virtue.<sup>[42]</sup>

There were certainly efforts to save the concept, as Johan Ihre’s in the dissertation on the by then very familiar theme *De Virtute Heroica* at Uppsala (as late as 1770). This text argues that true heroes are men (very seldom women) who serve the public interest or common good. They are not warlords – such as Alexander the Great or Julius Caesar – who seek only glory and an immortal name for themselves, often to the great detriment of their citizens or subjects.<sup>[43]</sup> This philosophical development, in line with Enlightenment ideas, corresponds to the image of the citizen-king, as cultivated by monarchs such as Frederick the Great and his nephew, Gustav III of Sweden. Generally



speaking, the philosophical concept of heroic virtue seems to have mostly disappeared after the middle of the 18th century, although traces can still be found, for instance in Rousseau's treatment of the virtues.[44]

## 8. Conclusion

In this article we have discussed the adaptation of the concept of heroic virtue as a useful tool in the legitimization and representation of early modern monarchs in Europe. Through three prominent but very different examples – Gustavus Adolphus, Christina and Louis XIV – we have showed how the heroic played an important and recurring role until the very end of the seventeenth century. Heroic virtue was a standard ingredient in Aristotelian moral philosophy as taught at universities across Europe. Moral philosophy served an important function as a foundation for political thought, for rhetoric and for panegyric poetry. But even in a Protestant context, heroic virtue always retained some connection to theology, and conversely, it was clearly used politically in Catholic countries as well. The importance of heroic virtue diminished greatly in the 18th century, as political ideals changed and scholastic Aristotelian moral philosophy went into decline. However, it did not disappear completely, but rather gradually faded from view. Still, there was some room for a re-defined heroic virtue in the thought of at least some thinkers of the Enlightenment.

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- 5 This new conception of sainthood was sanctioned in *Urbani VIII Pontificis Optimi Maximi Decreta Servanda in Canonizatione, & Beatificatione Sanctorum. Accedunt instructiones & declarationes quas Em.mi S.R.E. Cardinales Praesuleque Romanae Curiae ad id muneris congregati ex eiusdem Summi Pontificis mandato condiderunt, Romae, Ex Typographia Rev. Cam. Apost. MDCVLII*.
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- 19 "Cette vertu héroïque, & l'honneurs viennent ensemble pour accompagner Christine & rendre son Regne aussi glorieux que le fût celui de Gustave, qui ne resolut jamais rien sans la prudence, n'executa rien sans la Justice, ne fit aucune action qui ne fût avouée par la vertu héroïque [...]". *Le Monde Reioivi.*
- 20 *Le Monde Reioivi.*
- 21 On the precedence of ancestry before gender in the praise of Christina's rule see Tegenborg

- Falkdalen, Karin: *Kungen är en kvinna. Retorik och praktik kring kvinnliga monarker under tidigmodern tid*. Umeå 1995: Umeå universitet; Grundberg, Malin: *Ceremoniernas makt: maktöverföring och genus i Vasatidens kungliga ceremonier*. Lund 2005: Nordic Academic Press.
- 22 *On Christina's Academy – which started to gather already in 1656 and was permanently established first in 1674 – see Fogelberg Rota, Stefano: Poesins drottning: Christina av Sverige och de italienska akademierna*. Lund 2008: Nordic Academic Press.
- 23 *In Christina's statutes for her academy we can read that: "The first public Academy gathering will be devoted to the praise of the Pope's exceptional and heroic virtues, as it is inaugurated under His Holiness' glorious protection" ("La prima Accademia pubblica che si farà sia tutta diretta alla lode delle grandi ed heroiche virtù del sommo Pontefice, in augurarla sotto i gloriosi Auspicj della Santità Sua.")*. Riksarkivet, Stockholm, *Constituzioni dell'Accademia Reale (Montpellier-samlingen, Mss. H 258, vol. XIII) f. 150 v*. This statute is reproduced also in Fogelberg Rota: *Poesins drottning*, 97.
- 24 *"magnanima Reina, che dotata di sublimi, et Heroiche Virtù, non più come Donna mortale, mà come Dea Celeste siete dal Mondo honorata"*. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *Discorso Accademico dell'Em.mo Sig.r Cardinal degli Albizzi per l'appertura della Regia Accademia della M.tà di Svezia (Urb. Lat. 1692) f. 46r*. On Albizzi's discourse see Fogelberg Rota: *Poesins drottning*, 2008, 95-106; Rodén, Marie-Louise: *"L'anello mancante: Il discorso di apertura della Regia Accademia del cardinale Francesco Albizzi"*. In: Poli, Diego (Ed.): *Cristina di Svezia e la cultura delle accademie*. Roma 2005: Editrice "il calamo", 261-269 and Åkerman, Susanna: *Fenixelden: drottning Kristina som alkemist*. Stockholm 2013: Gidlunds förlag, 208-210.
- 25 Asch: *Herbst des Helden*, 2016, 37.
- 26 *Discorso Accademico dell'Em.mo Sig.r Cardinal degli Albizzi, f. 51r – 51v*.
- 27 Prodi, Paolo: *Il sovrano pontefice. Un corpo e due anime: la monarchia papale nella prima età moderna*. Bologna 1982: il Mulino.
- 28 Burke, Peter: *The fabrication of Louis XIV*. New Haven-London, 1992: Yale University Press.
- 29 Ziegler, Hendrik: *Louis XIV et ses ennemis. Image, propagande et contestation*. Centre allemand d'histoire de l'art / Centre de recherche du château de Versailles. Paris 2013: Presses universitaires de Vincennes.
- 30 Ziegler: *Louis XIV et ses ennemis*, 2013, 30-33.
- 31 Fogelberg Rota: *Poesins drottning*, 2008, 113. For a reproduction of the medal see Bildt, Carl: *Les Medailles Romaines de Christine de Suède*. Rome 1908: Loescher, 55.
- 32 Ziegler: *Louis XIV et ses ennemis*, 2013, 9.
- 33 Burke: *The fabrication of Louis XIV*, 1992, 126.
- 34 *Le Prince Devot et Guerrier Ou Les Vertus Heroiques De Leopold Guillaume Archiduc d'Autriche. Traduit du Latin du R.P. Nicolas Avancin, & augmenté de quelques memoires en François: Par le Pere Henry Bex, tous deux de la Compagnie de Jesus. A Lille, De l'Imprimerie de Nicolas de Rache, à la Bible d'or. 1667*.
- 35 *"Le Soleil n'estant qu'une creature purement materielle, & un corps sans ame; quelque lumineux qu'il soit, ne peut estre consideré que comme l'ombre de Dieu."* ("The sun being no more than a purely material creature, and a body without soul – although brilliant – cannot be considered more than a shadow of God"). Bauderon de Sénece, Brice: *L'Apollon françois, ou le Parallèle des vertus héroïques du Tres- August Tres- Puissant & Tres- Invincible Roy de France & de Navarre*. Louis le

Grand, XIV. de ce nom. Avec les proprietéz & les Qualitez du Soleil. Dedié a Sa Majesté. par Mre. Brice Bauderon, Seigneur de Senecey, Ancien Lieutenant General au Bailliage de Mâconois, & Siége Présidial de Mâcon. A Macon, Chez Robert Piget, Imprimeur & Marchand Libraire. 1684, 82; Ziegler: *Louis XIV et ses ennemis*, 2013, 28.

- 36 Bauderon de Sénecé: *L'Apollon françois*, 1684, 122 and 132.
- 37 "Telle est la liberalité de Louis, qui luy est une vertu si naturelle & si ordinaire, qu'il semble que cent mains ne seroient pas suffisantes pour la distribution de ses bienfaits. Il cherche continuellement des sujets pour exercer ses largesses, & les occasions qui luy manquent plutôt que la volonté ny le pouvoir. Une telle prodigalité ne semble pas estre la vertue d'un homme : Quiconque fait de si grandes profusions, il est semblable à Dieu." Bauderon de Sénecé: *L'Apollon françois*, 1684, 132-133.
- 38 "Je me renfermay à cette vertu particuliere du Soleil, de produire & de maintenir la santé: Et pour en faire une juste application, je me contenteray d'admirer cette vertu divine, que le Tout-puissant a donné à Vostre Majesté, par le privilege d'une origine Royale & d'une onction sacrée, de guerir par le seul attouchement une des plus cruelles & des plus obstinées maladies, dont les hommes soient affligez." Bauderon de Sénecé: *L'Apollon françois*, 1684, 157.
- 39 Hellerstedt, Andreas: "The Absolute Hero: Heroic Greatness and Royal Absolutism in Sweden 1685–1715". In: Fogelberg Rota, Stefano / Hellerstedt, Andreas (Eds.): *Shaping Heroic Virtue. Studies in the Art and Politics of Supereminence in Europe and Scandinavia*. Leiden 2015: Brill, 153-185; Disselkamp, Martin: *Barockheroismus. Konzeptionen 'politischer' Größe in Literatur und Traktatistik des 17. Jahrhunderts*. Tübingen 2002: Niemeyer, 69-75.
- 40 *The Works of John Dryden. Vol. 1: Poems 1649–1680*. Berkeley and Los Angeles 1956: University of California Press, 1956, 11-16; see also Asch: *Herbst des Helden*, 2016, 95.
- 41 Burke: *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, 1992; Disselkamp: *Barockheroismus*, 2002; Asch: *Herbst des Helden*, 2016.
- 42 Steele, Richard: *The Christian Hero: an Argument Proving that no Principles But Those Of Religion Are Sufficient to make a Great Man*. London 1745 [1701], 40.
- 43 Ihre, Johan / Juringius, Zacharias: *De Virtute Heroica*, Uppsala, 1770.
- 44 Nell, Jennie: "The Enlightened Hero. Virtue, Magnanimitas and Glory in Panegyric Poetry on Gustavus III 1771–1792". In: Fogelberg Rota, Stefano / Hellerstedt, Andreas (Eds.): *Shaping Heroic Virtue. Studies in the Art and Politics of Supereminence in Europe and Scandinavia*. Leiden 2015: Brill, 186-205. Asch: *Herbst des Helden*, 2016, 117-122, 125, 128.

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