



## Outline: CHWNE Transcripts Module 5 Lesson 2 - Henry and the Duc de Sully

- The **Duke of Sully - Maximilien de Bethune**, lived from **1560 to 1641**. He was a nobleman and soldier, held titles to many estates & was considered **the right-hand man** of **King Henry IV** in ruling France.

(see 2 Kings 11 & 12; Daniel 6)

- Wise and disciplined administrator, helped Henry to implement policies resulting in strong government after many years of internal and external wars.
- His family **were Protestants** from **Artois**. In **1571** at 11 years old, he was presented to **Henry of Navarre** as the **Baron of Rosny**. Became one of Henry's closest supporters and friends. **Henry was 18 years old** at the time.
- Henry enrolled him in studies at the **Collège de Bourgogne**. In **1572**, he escaped death at the **St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre** by carrying a **Catholic Book of Hours** under his arm.
- He continued his studies in mathematics and history in the court of Henry of Navarre (see M4 L6 - Enjoying Nerac).
- Fought in the war of **1575 (Henry escaped from house arrest)**.
- In **1576**, he accompanied **Francois Duke of Alencon** to the Netherlands to regain the Rosny estates but was unsuccessful. He served for a short time with **William of Orange**

### NOTE: 1576 - Birth of Edict of Beaulieu & Catholic League)

- Next he joined Henry of Navarre in Bordeaux where he served as a military engineer.
- In **1583**, he became Henry's special agent in Paris (**Wars with The Catholic League**). When the civil war resumed with the **Catholic League** after Henry IV became **King of France**, was wounded at the **Battle of Ivry**.



- He advised Henry to convert to Catholicism in **1593**, but remained Protestant & faithful to Henry. He also arranged the marriage between Henry IV and Marie de Medici.
- A trusted friend and advisor, Henry endowed him with lands and titles such as: **First Duke of Sully-sur Loire (1606)** - a castle which was a medieval fortress, **Pair de France (1606)** but he refused the title of the **Constable of France** because he would not become a Catholic (**See M4 L2: Anne de Montmorency**).
- In **1596**, appointed to **Henry's Finance Commission**, brought some order to France's economy.
- By **1601**, sole **Superintendent of Finances**. It was said that he implemented honest and rigorous measures for conducting the country's financial affairs.

### Personality and Character

- He was unpopular because he was seen as Henry's favourite. He acquired a vast personal fortune.
- Catholics hated him because he was a Protestant and Protestants hated him because he was the King's favourite, and was criticized as being selfish, stubborn and rude (maybe arrogant?).
- Character was above reproach, punished dishonesty and corruption of public officials, strongly opposed expenditures he thought would harm the court. Great administrative gifts and abilities, devoted to his work and his master.
- **Henry IV** trusted **Sully** implicitly. He transformed France To a prosperous country between **1598 and 1610** in agriculture and commerce. There was internal and external peace.
- Between **1601 and 1610**, France was able to save almost 1 million livres annually. Brought prosperity after many wars.



- Some of the measures Sully implemented included: free export of wine and grain, stricter financial measures like interest reduction, prosecution for embezzlement, restrictions on raising taxes at local level, tighter tax laws to restrict abuse of collection, elimination of offices which promoted dishonesty.
- He held a variety of top positions in government, including - Highways and Public Works; National Security; Governor of various cities like Poitou, Bastille, , Captain of the feared armoured cavalry with lances

#### **Agricultural accomplishments include:**

- Free trade of products, improved animal husbandry, forest preservation, draining of swamps

#### **Public Works accomplishments include:**

- Building many roads and bridges, began the construction of the **Canal de Barre** to develop the French grain trade and reduce food shortages (stunning system of locks to link rivers and expand trade).

#### **Military accomplishments include:**

- defences at the French border; circumventing nobles' insurrections, both Protestant and Catholic;
- It is said that Henry was on his way to see Sully who lay sick in the Arsenal. **They were finalizing military intervention in Germany on behalf of a Calvinist candidate with respect to a succession to the territory which straddled Germany and Holland.**

#### **Manufacturing accomplishment include:** Silk production

**From 1600 to 1601**, he fought with Henry in Savoy and negotiated a peace treaty in 1602. **In 1603**, he represented the King in the court of **James I of England**.



### Exploration:

- **Sully did not support the colonisation of Canada.** His political role ended abruptly with Henry's assassination.
- He continued to serve in the Queen's Council of Regency until January **1611**.
- He resigned as Superintendent of Finances and went into private life.

**Marie de Medici** allowed him to maintain possession of his estates and rewarded him with **300,000** livres for his long and faithful service.

- In **1614** he attended the **Estates General**. It is said that his sympathies lay with the policy and government of **Richelieu**, but he did not support the blockade of **La Rochelle in 1621**.
- In **1634**, he was conferred with the baton of '**Marshal of France**', a title given to generals of exceptional achievements. He died in **1641 at the age of 81 years old**, in his Château de Sully-sur-Loire.