

The Role of Louis XI in France's Foreign Policy (1461-1483)

Wael Jabbar Jouda^a, Anass Hamza Mahdi^b, ^aCollege of Education for Human Sciences, Dept. of History / Al-Muthanna University. The Republic of Iraq, ^bAnass Hamza Mahdi, College of Basic Education, Dept. of History / University of Babylon . The Republic of Iraq, Email: ^{a*}yuol@mu.edu.iq

The early stages of the life of Louis XI until 1446 have been discussed, he grew up in tumultuous conditions in France, which was not under the control of the central government only the middle and south, but he had a poor relationship with his father King Charles VII, which prompted him to join the movement of Prague in 1440 and after the movement failed, his father forgave him. He tried to prove his military efficiency to his father through a series of successful battles, his political activity between 1446-1461 has been examined, his relationship with his father worsened due to his father's mistress, Agnes Sorel, who plotted to remove him from the French court. His father then entrusted him with the rule of the province of Dauphine, where he initiated a series of reforms, but fled to the province of Burgundy due to a quarrel with his father and remained there until his father's death. He returned to the French throne in 1461. This research examined Louis XI's policy towards the Spanish Kingdoms, when he took advantage of the crisis that occurred in the kingdom of Aragon. He succeeded winning some territory for France due to his involvement in the crisis. The research reviews his policy towards England, especially after Edward IV's succession to the throne of England who had ambitions to occupy France, but Louis XI succeeded in curbing those ambitions by signing the Treaty of Picquigny in 1475, his policy towards the Holy Roman Empire was discussed, the relationship between the two parties worsened due to the inheritance of the Duchy of Burgundy. The research ensures the follow-up of Louis XI's policy towards the Italian kingdoms, especially his positive relationship with the Duchy of Milan, as well as shedding light on his policy towards the Papal States, which wanted to strengthen the relationship promoted by France with the papacy and succeeded in doing so.

Key words: *Louis XI, Philip Good, Burgundy, Edward IV, Duke of Berry.*



Introduction

Louis XI is one of the kings of France and some historians have described him as the founder of modern France as he saving it from collapse and dispersion during the feudal hegemony and restored it to the stage of prestige of the central government This proved that he was a first-class politician, especially that he did not rush his political decisions, but consulted with his advisers regarding political decisions, particularly in foreign policy. Louis XI experienced the Hundred Years War (1337-1453 in its final stages), between France and England during his father's rule, and succeeded in removing the threat posed by England towards his country, and gain a group of lands adjacent to his country by various means. The above indicators have made the subject worthy of further research.

The research included an introduction, seven parts and a conclusion. The first part examines the early stages of the life of Louis XI until 1446. The most important outcome of this part is that he rose from amidst confusing conditions in France, only the country's centre and south were under the control of the central government, despite of which he received a distinguished education, but his relationship with his father King Charles VII was not positive, which prompted him to join the movement of Prague in 1440. After the movement failed, his father forgave him. He tried to prove his military efficiency to his father through a series of successful battles. The second part discusses his political activity between 1446-1461, during this period his relationship with his father worsened due to his father's mistress, Agnes Sorel, who plotted to remove him from the French court. His father then entrusted him with the rule of the province of Dauphine, where he underwent a series of reforms, but fled to the province of Burgundy due to his quarrel with his father and remained there until his death. He then returned to the French throne in 1461.

The third part continues to critique his foreign policy towards the Spanish kingdoms, where he took advantage of the crisis that occurred in the Kingdom of Aragon, and succeeded in gaining some land for France. Due to this intervention in the crisis, the fourth part reviews his policy towards England during the period of the civil war, known as the War of the Roses. After the accession of Edward IV to the throne of England, he had ambitions to occupy France, but Louis XI succeeded in curbing those aspirations through the Treaty of Picquigny in 1475/ The fifth part reviews his policy towards the Holy Roman Empire. The relationship between the two parties worsened as a result of the inheritance of the Duchy of Burgundy. The sixth section ensures his policy towards the Italian kingdoms, especially his relationship with the Duchy of Milan. In the Seventh section he imposed his policy on the Papal State, which he wanted to strengthen and promoted France's relationship with the Papacy and succeeded /. Finally, the research is based on a collection of French, English and foreign encyclopedias.



First: Early stages of the life of Louis XI until 1446

Louis XI's origins are attributed to the Valois family, which ruled France since 1328, a branch of the Capétienne dynasty. Louis XI was born in the city of Bourges, in the centre of France, on July 3 1423, his father was Charles VII (1422-1461), while his mother was Marie d'Anjou (Redier, De France 1950). His deity? Catherine de l'Isle-Bouchard oversaw his childhood upbringing and lived in the Château de Loches where he received a distinguished education. He began to learn Latin, Mathematics and History while still the age of 6, and was supervised by Jean de Gerson, former President of the University of Paris. At the time the University was not under the authority of King Charles VII, only the centre and south of the country. Even Paris was out of his control, and Louis XI grew up under such . When he became 13 years old, he married Marguerite (Marinesco., Alphonse 1923) of Scotland, the bride whom his father had chosen for diplomatic reasons on June 24, 1436, at the Château de Tours, in the province of Indre-et-Loire. In the east of the country, marriage ceremonies were so simple that Charles VII attended the ceremony in riding clothes. At that time, Charles VII did not care or support him morally . France was experiencing a financial crisis so that the French did not welcome their Scottish guests for long. The Scots felt such behavior to be an insult to their small country, and Margaret was not living a happy life in the castle since Louis entered the political arena. The inhabitants of Lyon, as well as the municipality of Vienne, in southeastern France, offered the oath of allegiance to him. During the period between February and May 1437, he visited Languedoc and succeeded in recovering Velay from the English forces. He accompanied his father during the liberation of Paris on November 12 of the same year, nevertheless, his political role remained locked in until 1439 (Delanoue, Etienne, 1891). The conclusion can be drawn that his father was not sufficiently interested in him, which left a negative impact on him, especially as he insulted his Scottish guests and received them in riding clothes. However, he tried to win the sympathy of his father by helping him return French influence to Paris during that period.

His father wanted to increase his confidence by appointing him as Governor of Languedoc in May 1439, and granted him wide powers, including the right to choose his advisers. This however did not last long, he quickly stripped his father of his powers. In December of that year, he was taken to the city of Poitou, near Paris. As a result, Louis did not hesitate to join the Praguerie movement, which began in February 1440, against Charles VII due to of his military reforms, and joined by some Lords was dissatisfied with the manner of Charles VII, the movement opposed to Charles VII was orchestrated by his son Louis in order to win the throne (Gautier1881,). The municipality of Niort took a seat for him, which occurred in the centre of western France, especially as Louis realised his father's weakness before the rise of the system of apanages, which directly privileges the feudal land received 0 directly belonging to the King and managed by feudalists. Louis was under the influence of Charles

I Duke of Bourbon (Desplaces, 1854) but the fate of that movement was a failure. Louis was forced to ask for amnesty by his father, and indeed his father forgave him.

Louis wanted to restore confidence in him by his father by leading a military campaign against the English and the Burgundians, which lasted from 5 June to 19 September, 1441, in the municipality of Pontoise, located in Ile-de-France, about twenty-five kilometres north-west of Paris, and managed to beat them. The town recovered after a complete siege lasting about three months was imposed. In 1443, he led a military campaign against John IV *d'Armagnac a prominent rebel against Charles VII, who was arrested in the* same year and imprisoned in Carcassonne prison, in southern France. He was released three years later and proved to be the military success of the Louis command. He led a group of mercenary soldiers on 26 August, 1444, to Switzerland and clashed with the Swiss Confederate forces at the Battle of Jakob an der Birs, a kilometre outside the walls of the Swiss city of Basel. Despite French victory, in the battle, there was a heavy loss in ranks, but Louis was forced to conclude the Treaty of Ensisheim for the sake of peace with the Swiss 8th Cantons Union. The Treaty was signed on 28 October of the same year, the most important section of which was to ensure the security of the Swiss on French territory, the free passage of the members of the Council of Countons and merchants from both sides, the commitment to end hostilities and a promise to help create peace between Austria, Zurich and the Confederation.⁽¹³⁾ Louis's successful military leadership, in which he wanted to send a message to his father, was to reinforce trust, give him ample attention, and expand the powers entrusted to him.

Second: Political Activity 1446-1461

Louis enjoyed high diplomatic relations, but his relationship with his father was tense, especially as his behaviour towards his mistress Agnès Sorel was characterised by hatred, cunning and disrespect, as well as Pierre II de Brézé who was responsible for the court chamber and supported by Sorel. As a result, his father expelled him from his court on 27 September, 1446, and sent him to the province of Dauphiné. After a tour, Louis settled in Grenoble, a town in southeastern France, on 12 August 1447. At that time, Louis met with the nobleman Imbert de Batarnay who became the official in charge of his court and later one of his advisers, and was able to arrange finances in the province of Dauphine by taking a private building in Grenoble specifically in Saint-André. To manage financial affairs, he ran the province firmly and managed to gain experience in governance. He carried out a series of measures that characterised Dauphine's province: reforming the tax collection system and attracting foreign craftsmen and Jewish bankers (Moreau, 2010).

It can be concluded from the above that Louis was not a bad person but the whims of his father towards his mistress took him away from court, yet it didn't break him



psychologically but increased his strength to rely on himself to prove his administration efficiency and gain grassroots support while changing his father's convictions.

Louis followed a policy aimed at achieving his personal ambition to extend his influence on both sides of the Alps. To confirm this ambition, he signed a treaty with Louis I the Savoy Duke of Alliance and Co-operation, on the twenty-eighth of December 1451, moreover, it was agreed to conduct political negotiations between the two parties under a contract signed secretly on 14 February 1451. Through the marriage of Louis from his daughter, Charlotte de Savoie, a delegate was sent to inform his father of the marriage project, when his father discovered he didn't approve and sent delegates to the Duke of Savoy to tell him to reject the proposal. Louis was closely watching developments so he sent delegates to intercept his father's delegates on the pretext of accompanying them, and to block their speedy arrival to Savoy. When they arrived on 8 March of the same year, they found the marriage decrees ready and the bride ready to take them. The wedding was indeed held the next day in the city of Chambéry, which was called the city of Dukes within the Duchy of Savoy, with all the facets of luxury, bluff and opulence. Louis then signed an alliance with the Savoy Duke, and as a result his relationship with his father became very tense. His father provided an army to march against him and the Duchy of Savoy. Louis heard the news in Grenoble and managed to negotiate a truce. In any case she gave birth to eight children, only three of them survived, her eldest daughter Anne, her daughter Joan and her son Charles VIII, the only son of King Louis XI.

He was particularly favoured by the help of the famous French merchant Jacques Coeur who possessed great wealth. On the other hand, he founded the Université à Valence on 26 July 1452. Louis converted the Conseil delphinal Municipal Council in the province on July 29, 1453 to the Third Parliament of the province of Dauphine. After the parliaments of Paris and Toulouse, the legal adviser to Louis, Mathieu Thomassin, arose the legal basis for his sovereignty, through a wide range of ancient rights, concerning the manner in which he offered obedience to him, and his powers, he was employed in a register known as the Registre delphinal, completed in 1456 (Rue, De Chaulnes 1868).

Despite Louis and his father continuing to feud against him, accusing him of immorality and delinquency, Louis sent several ambassadors to his father to end the differences and recognise his last marriage, but his father's reaction was to send an army led by Antoine de Chabannes to break the tyranny of Louis on August 30, 1456. Louis could not face that army and fled to Franche-Comté, to the city of Louvain in the centre of the Duché de Brabant, belonging to the province of Burgundy. He was received by the Duke Philippe (Philippe le Bon), with great hospitality on the fifteenth of October of the same year, who granted him the Genappe castle, twenty kilometres from Brussels. He was given forty-eight thousand pounds, as well as a pension of thirty-six thousand each year. King Charles VII asked the

Duke of Philip to hand over Louis, but the latter refused, as a result Charles VII warned the Duke of Philip by saying: “Cousin of the Burgundian, you have been given asylum to the fox who will eat your chicken” (Cadet, de Chabannes 1916). Louis remained in the castle of Geneab until he heard about the death of his father on 25 July 1461, and left Geneab for the French throne. It seems that his father did not treat him as his son, but rather a political adversary who couldn't be ignored, which is the main reason for the large gap between him and his father.

Louis rushed to the city of Reims, which is part of the French province of Marne, for his coronation in the Catholic cathedral by its archbishop, fearing that his brother, Charles de France' exploited his quarrels with his father, to reach Reims before him to ascend the throne, and indeed was crowned Louis XI by the Archbishop of Reims John II (Jean II Jouvenel des Ursins) on August 15, 1461, entering Paris on 30 August 30 of the same year, in a large parade (Gobry 2012).

Third: His Policy towards the Spanish Kingdoms

The policy of Louis XI was based on France's external strength. Louis intervened in the crisis in the Royal Kingdom of Royaume d'Aragon after the death of its fifth monarch, Alphonse V on 27 June, 1453, his brother John II opposed his son Charles de Viane taking the throne, who was found dead on 23 September, 1461, and a civil war broke out between some Spanish cities that stood beside John the second against the state of Catalonia (États de Catalogne). As a result, Louis XI tried to persuade Catalonia in a polite manner to accept John II's assumption to the throne, based on interests. John II surrendered to Louis XI regarding the revenues of the provinces of Roussillon and Cerdagne, exploited it and seized them (Chapelot, Lalou 1996). It can be concluded from the foregoing that Louis XI took advantage of the uncertain conditions in those kingdoms for his own benefit and to gain some land by force. This is a confirmation of his traditional policy based on purpose justifying means.

Fourth: His Policy towards England

England suffered a bitter civil war known as the War of the Roses (1455-1483). This war particularly occupied the attention of King Louis XI, as England supported the rebellion of the Duke of Burgundy against the then French government, which was allied with the Yorkists, who opposed King Henry VI. Indeed, Edward IV succeeded with the help of the noble Earl Warwick. This success would not have been possible without the assistance of the French King Louis XI. In return, Louis made France a safe haven for Warwick. High diplomacy was enjoyed by Louis XI. Warwick formed an alliance with his enemies in the past, led by Margaret Anjou, wife of Henry VI, and succeeded in restoring the throne to

Henry VI on October 3, 1470, but the deposed King Edward IV did not stand idly by and was able to regain his throne and kill Warwick on April 14, 1471, after which he succeeded in killing King Henry VI on 21 May of that same year (Favier ,2001). In order to confront France, King Edward IV invaded and directed his army towards it, but the diplomacy of Louis XI made him prefer the language of dialogue instead of the language of war. The Treaty of Picquigny was signed on 29 August, 1475. The most important provisions of the treaty were a seven-year truce and free trade between the two countries. France paid England 75,000 crowns for its withdrawal. Furthermore, it included not demanding the throne and the payment of pensions to King Edward IV as well as a large number of his entourage and even his ministers (Nadal, 1861). Therefore it is clear that Louis XI succeeded in settling his political accounts with England, and gained the gratitude of the king and his senior staff through the pensions he paid them, thereby removing the English threat from his country.

Fifth: His Policy towards the Holy Roman Empire

Maximilian I the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, married Mary the heir to the throne of Burgundy and the Duke of Burgundy died in 1477. France tried to adopt the Salic Law, which forbids the inheritance of women. In addition, the text of the marriage contract forbids the children of the couple to inherit from any of them, but the Emperor did not abide by that rule and attacked France in order to conquer the Duchy of Burgundy. Despite the defeat of the French army in Guinegate and Enguinegatte on 9 August , 1479, it has maintained them, after the death of Mary on 27 of March 1482, the horse riding incident, the province of Littlelander anti-Emperor, the Treaty of Arras signed with Louis XI on 23 December , 1482, which forced Maximilian to abandon Franche-Comté and Artois to the French Crown (Vaesen 1909). It is possible to assert that the problem of Burgundy ended with the death of Marie Burgundy, the wife of the Emperor Maximilian, whose property he aspired to annex . French law does not allow inheritance by a woman, so Burgundy returned to French rule.

Sixth: His policy towards the Italian Kingdoms

King Louis XI was interested in Italian affairs, which was divided over several kingdoms. Despite his marriage to the Royal House of Savoy, he had a strong relationship with Francesco I Sforza the Duke of Milan, Savoy, who was a traditional enemy of Savoy and in order to confirm the close relationship between the two sides, sent his son Galeazzo Maria Sforza (De Lauwe, de Beaujeu 1980) to help Louis XI in his war against the League of the Good Lord in 1465, at the head of a large army. However, this good relationship did not continue, because of the succession of the Duchy of Burgundy in 1477, but it succeeded in restoring relations to the former, especially that the King of Naples Ferdinand I, who was hostile to the Duchy of Milan sought to establish a political marriage between the Kingdom of Naples and France. On the other hand, the Treaty of Moatier with the Republic of Venice

was signed in order to improve the relationship between the two parties, in January 1478 (Frager., d'Anjou 1948). We can say that a political manifestation cannot necessarily have consistent rules of convergence, but interests are inevitable, and that is what applies to Louis XI.

Seventh: His policy towards the Papal State

Louis XI tried to strengthen his relationship with the Papal State after it was distressed because of its assistance to the Duke of Normandy. On the other hand, an agreement was signed with the Papacy in the city of Imboise during the period between 13 August and 31 October 1472. Its most prominent items are the collection of ecclesiastical benefits in lists prepared during each year, and recognising Pope Sixtus IV (Curnow, de Pisan 1975), (Sixtus IV), not to appoint bishops in France without the advice of the French king. When Louis XI became seriously ill in 1478, the merchants of Naples spoke to King Louis XI about a man named François de Paule known as a holy man, with special dignity to heal the sick. As a result, Pope Sixtus IV was asked to allow the holy monk to move to France. When he met with Louis XI, he bowed to his feet and asked for his blessings, and remained in the French court until the death of Louis XI on August 30, 1483 (Bonenfant, 1955).

Conclusion

- The research proves that King Louis XI was a man of the stage he lived and his political efforts had a great role in reviving the political reality of the state and restoring the prestige of France on the outside by following the policy “the end justifies the means.”
- The research shows Louis XI's field intelligence as a first-rate diplomatic negotiator. For example, when he negotiated with King Edward IV, he succeeded in persuading him to conclude the Treaty of Picquigny and withdraw his troops from the French arena.
- The study finds that there was no lasting friendship on foreign policy. It was in Louis XII's interest to establish strong relations with the Duchy of Milan, despite his hostility to the Savoy. Louis XI was married to their daughter, Shalott Savoy. As with the Aragon kingdom, it was in the interest of Louis XI to intervene.



REFERENCES

French Books

Redier A, De France J. (1950), X. Mappus.

Marinesco C., Alphonse V.(1923) roi d'Aragon et de Naples, et l'Albanie de Scanderbeg, École Roumaine en France, Paris.

Delanoue C, and Etienne M. (1891) Casimir Hippolyte, Jacques Coeur, Philadelphia, H.L. Kilner.

Gautier E. (1881), Histoire du donjon de Loches, Typographie ET Stereotypie A. Nuert ET Fils, Chateruroux.

Desplaces E, (1854) Biographie universelle (Michaud) ancienne et moderne Vol. VII., Paris.

Moreau G. (2010), Le Saint-Denis des Dauphins : histoire de la collégiale Saint-André de Grenoble , L'Harmattan, Paris.

Rue G. and De Chaulnes C(1868), Inventaire-sommaire des archives départementales antérieures Vol. A a1790, Dethorey Archiviste, Typographiquir DE F. Allier Pere ET Fils, Nedige Par M. PilotImprimerie.

Cadet H, de Chabannes A. (1408-1488). Sa famille et ses souvenirs à Dammartin-en-Goële, Impr. Roche, 1916.

Gobry V., Charles VIII (2012): Fils de Louis XI 1483-1498 Souverains et Souveraines de France, Pygmalion, UK.

Chapelot J, and Lalou E(1996), Vincennes aux origines de l'état moderne: actes du colloque scientifique sur "Les Capétiens et Vincennes au Moyen age", Presses de l'École normale supérieure, Paris.

Favier J. (2001), Louis XI , Fayard, Paris.

Nadal J.(1861), Histoire de l'Université de Valence et des autres établissements d Instruction de Cette Ville Depuis Leur Fondation Jusq A Nos Jours, Suivre de Nombbeuses Pieces Justificatives, Imprimerie E. Marc Aurel , Deiteur, Imprimerie ED Lemipereur, Valence.



- Vaesen J. (1909), and Others, *Lettres de Louis XI, roi de France: publiées d'après les originaux pour la Société de l'histoire de France*, Librairie Renouard, H. Laurens, successeur, Paris, , tome XI.
- De Lauwe M., de Beaujeu A.(1980): *ou, La passion du pouvoir Figures de proue du Moyen Age (6)*, Figures de proue, J. Tallandier.
- Fragier M., d'Anjou M.(1948), *femme de Charles VII, 1404-1463*, Éditions de Paris.
- Curnow M. and de Pisan C.(1975),*The Livre de la Cité Des Dames*, Ed 4, Vanderbilt University, , Pr 1.
- Bonenfant P.(1955), *Philippe Le Bon Collection "Notre Passé"*, La Renaissance du Livre, Paris.
- Champion P. (1931), *La dame de Beauté: Agnès Sorel*, Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion.
- de Gascogne R.(1874), *Bulletin Bimestrial de la Société Historique*, Vol. 15 DE Gascogne, Imprimerie ET Lithographie Felix Foix, Rue Blaguerie.
- Albert Guérard A.(1959), *France: A Modern History*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, Michigan.
- Small G., Chastelain G. and Burgundy S.(1997): *Political and Historical Cultuer at Court in the Fifteenth Century*, The Boydell press, USA.
- Roper H.(2007), *Maximilian I*, Copyrighted Material, Didactic Press.
- Alden J. (2010), *Songs, Scribes, and Society: The History and Reception of the Loire Valley Chansonniers*, Oxford University press, Oxford.
- Russell J. , Ronald Cohn R (2012), *Imbert de Batarnay*, Book on Demand,China.
- John Watts J.(1999), *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship*, ed 2, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Tyrrel J.(1980), *Louis XI*, Twayne's world leaders series, World Leaders Series (82), Twayne.
- Vale M.(1974), *Charles VII*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California.
- Pächt O.(1948), *The Master of Mary of Burgundy*, Faber & Faber, London.



Kendall P.(2001), Louis XI: The Universal Spider, Phoenix, Quezon.

Erlanger P.(1970), Margaret of Anjou: Queen of England, Elek, London.

Champion P.(2013), Louis XI, Tr. Winifred Stephens Whale, Literary Licensing, LLC, Australasia.

Desmond T.(2011), Agnes Sorel, The Nazca Plains, Corporation.

Ältere R.(1998) Deutsche Geschichtskunde, Monumenta Germaniae historica (Deutsches Institut für Erforschung des Mittelalters),Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters,Böhlau., Vol. 54.

A.Vallet de Viriville : Jean Juvenel des Ursins, in Didot ; La Nouvelle Biographie Générale, t. XLV, 1866.

Jean B. Robinet, Dictionnaire universel des sciences morale, économique, politique et diplomatique, Paris, 1780, tome XIV.

English Encyclopaedias

Fernando Lanzi, and Gioia Lanzi, Saints and Their Symbols: Recognizing Saints in Art and in Popular Images, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 2004.

Robert Benedetto, and Others, The New Westminster Dictionary of Church History: The early, medieval, and Reformation Eras, Westminster John Knox Press, London, 2008.

Walter Yust, Encyclopædia Britannica, A New Survey of Universal Knowledge, London, 1959, Vol. V.

Italian Encyclopaedias

Source Wikipedia, and Books Llc,House of Sforza: Francesco I Sforza, House of Sforza, Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza, Caterina Sforza, List of Milanese Consorts, General Books LLC, Tennessee, 2010.

International Information Network (Internet)

Marguerite d'Écosse (1424-1445):

[https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marguerite_sse_\(1424-1445\)](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marguerite_sse_(1424-1445))



Encyclopædia Britannica See Article History:

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jean-de-Gerson>

muejim almaeani aljamie - muejam earabiun earabiun.

<https://www.almaany.com/ar/dict/ar>