

'SIRE, POUR DIEU, LESSIEZ-MOY ALER!'¹ THE INTRICATE WEB OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN WOMEN AND MERCENARIES IN THE 1360s²

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ABSTRACT

The subject of this article is the relationship between mercenaries and women during the Hundred Years' War, specifically century eastern France and the western marches of the Holy Roman Empire in mid-fourteenth. This study presents examples of all kinds, covering the whole spectrum of local society, from simple peasants to warlike princesses such as Yolande de Bar, as well as merchants and noblewomen living in the towns or in the countryside. All these cases can be found in the archives from Lille to Lyon. A closer look at the relationship between mercenaries and local society reveals a complex one, determined not only by violence but also by other factors. Women not only traded and feasted, but also became mistresses and wives, spied for or against the routiers, employed the mercenaries or were the cause of their downfall.

KEYWORDS

Women, Hundred Years War, mercenaries, France, Holy Roman Empire.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Mulieres, Bellum Centum Annorum, Milites mercenarii, Francia, Sacrum Romanum Imperium.

Insuper, idem Guillermus le Descozus nobis significare curavit quod, cum anno Domini M. CCCC. LXIII, Maria uxor Johannis dicti Gruillion, in dicta villa de Sedeloco commorans, ad requestam et instigationem dicti significantis qui cum ipsa Maria jacere et rem cum eadem habere intentabat, eidem Guillermo significanti noctem seu horam ad veniendum secum in domo sua super hoc assignasset, et quadam nocte dicti anni, ipse Guillermus domum conjugum predictorum secreta intrasset, expectans ipsam Mariam sub spe et intentione predictis, nichilominus dicta Maria, a priori proposito jam mutata fecit scandalum perhorrescens quasi attonita, viso prefato Guillermo in domo sua, ut prefertur, prescol... clamare incepit vicinos suos et eorum auxilium alta voce invocando et dicendo quod homo quid domum suam intraverat, et quid querebat ipsa ignorebat. Quibus auditis, ipse Guillermus, habito respectu ad maliciam dicte mulieris, pericula et scandala cupiens evitare, nec statim domum predictam exist et ad locum suum rediit pacifice, nec ipse mulieri injurias art jurgia super hoc intulit nec fieri seu inferri aliquatenus procuravit.³

The love story between a mercenary and a local woman called Maria, from a small Burgundian village near Samur-en-Auxois, took place a few years after the Tard-Venus invasion. The disappointed lover, Guillermus le Descozus, belonged to one of the most murderous companies: the “route” of Garciot de Chastel. This brief quotation from Charles V’s letter of remission, which was given to the routier in November 1366, shows that the relationship between women and routiers was much more complex than one might think.

This article focuses on the relationship between mercenaries and women during the Hundred Years’ War, more precisely during the middle of the fourteenth century in eastern France and the western marches of the Holy Roman Empire. This study examines various examples of this theme, covering the entire spectrum of local society, from women like Maria, rogue merchants and noblewomen living in the cities or the countryside, to warrior princesses like Yolande of Flanders, who took mercenaries into her service. The aim of this article is to show that a closer look at the relationship between mercenaries and local society reveals a complex network of connections, determined not only by violence but also by other factors.

1. Trial report by Katherine, wife of Henryet du Roquier. *Registre criminel du Châtelet de Paris du 6 septembre 1389 au mai*, ed. Henri Duplès-Agier. Paris: Ch. Lahure, 1861: I, 41-47.

2. Abbreviations used: ADCO, Archives Départementales de la Côte-d’Or; ADM, Archives Départementales de la Meuse; ADM, Archives Départementales de la Meuse; AMM, Archives Municipales de Metz; AVES, Archives de la Ville et l’Eurométropole de Strasbourg.

3. “In addition, the already mentioned Guillermus le Descozus informed us that, when in the 1364th year of Our Lord, Maria, resident of the aforementioned village of Sedeloco [Saulieu] and the wife of a certain Jean of Gruillion, upon the pleading and provocation of the informer – who had the intention of sleeping with and making love to her – told this informer Guillermus, at what time at night he should come to her house and so this very year, one night Guillermus secretly entered the house of the aforementioned couple, waiting for Maria in the hope and intention of the fulfilment of the above, yet the aforementioned Maria having changed her mind made a scandal as if she were taken by surprise and were frightened when she saw the aforementioned Guillermus in her own house and they say that she even started shouting and calling her neighbours out loud and asking them for help, saying that this man had entered her house and she did not know what he wanted. When he heard this, Guillermus – seeing the ill will of the woman – to avoid danger and a scandal, left the house immediately and went home peacefully, and neither did he hurt the woman, nor did he quarrel with her because of this and he did not wish to do so in any way.” Guigue, Georges. *Récits de la guerre de cent ans. Les tard-venus en Lyonnais, Forez et Beaujolais, 1359-1369*. Lyon: Imprimerie Vitte et Perrussel, 1886: 46.



Over the last thirty years, international literature has focused much on rethinking the relationship between women and power in the fourteenth century. A number of medievalists have published works analysing the position of women in power and the preservation of their power in fourteenth century Europe, from the Iberian Peninsula,⁴ and Middle Europe⁵ to Eastern Europe⁶ and the Byzantine Empire.⁷ One of these important studies is by Attila Bárány, who, on the basis of an extensive literature review, provides a European overview of the political position of queens in the fourteenth century, their power, their financial dependence or even independence, and their role at court.⁸ The fear that a change in the balance of power within the court during the period covered by the study might have cost a queen her life is illustrated by the example of Queen Eleanor by Flocel Sabaté.⁹ In a similar vein to Yolande de Bar's role as regent, Murielle Gaude-Ferragu discusses the struggle of fourteenth century French queens to remain in power as regents at the court of Paris.¹⁰

But much less has been written on the subject of war and women. It is no coincidence that Justin Firnhaber-Baker so aptly notes that, although there were aristocratic women who "pursued violent strategies on their own as lords or participants in feuds, but the overwhelmingly masculine nature of medieval warfare sidelined them from many (but not all) conflicts", they may nevertheless have had a "crucial role to play in the decision to wage war as a hereditary holder of (or claimant to) a lordship".¹¹ Jennifer Ward examines the impact of the Hundred Years' War from two perspectives. First, the role of noble women in forging peace and alliances, and second, the impact of the war on fertility and demographic

4. Silleras-Fernández, Núria. *Power, Piety and Patronage in Late Medieval Queenship. Maria de Luna*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008; Pina Baleiras, Isabel de. *The Political Role of a Portugal Queen in the Late Fourteenth Century. Queenship in the Mediterranean. Negotiation the role of the Queen in the Medieval and Early Modern Eras*. Elena Woodacre, ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013: 97-123.

5. Nolte, Coldula. *Frauen und Männer in der Gesellschaft des Mittelalters*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2011.

6. Szende, László. "Mitherrscherin oder einfache Königinmutter. Elisabeth von Łokietek in Ungarn (1320–1380)". *Maestas*, 13 (2005): 47–63; Györkös, Attila. "Egy francia nő Budán. Anna királyné, II. Ulászló felesége (1502-1506)", *Királynék a középkori Magyarországon és Európában*, Kornél Szovák, Attila Zsoldos, eds. Székesfehérvár: Városi Levéltár és Kutatóintézet, 2019. 173-185.

7. Karagianni, Alexandra. "Female Monarchs in the Medieval Byzantine Court: Prejudice, Disbelief, and Calumnies", *Queenship in the Mediterranean. Negotiation the role of the Queen in the Medieval and Early Modern Eras*, Elena Woodacre, ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013: 9-25.

8. Bárány, Attila. "Medieval Queens and Queenship: A Retrospective on Income and Power". *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU*, 19 (2013): 149-199.

9. Sabaté, Flocel. *The Death Penalty in Late-Medieval Catalonia. Evidence and Significations*. London - New York: Routledge, 2020: 62.

10. Gaude-Ferragu, Murielle. *La Reine au Moyen Âge. Le pouvoir au féminin, XIV^e-XV^e siècle*. Paris: Éditions Tallandier, 2014: 147-175.

11. Firnhaber-Baker, Justin. "Seignorial Violence in Medieval Europe", *Social, Interpersonal and Collective Violence*, Matthew S. Gordon, Richard W. Kauper, Harriet Zurndorfer, eds. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 2013: 248-266.



change.¹² The relationship between women and war is most comprehensively dealt with by João Nisa in a forthcoming volume of studies now available. Rejecting the traditional, linear approach that women could only be victims of male-dominated medieval warfare, he examines the role of women from a holistic perspective, citing a number of diverse examples to outline a much more complex set of relationships.¹³

There has never been a comprehensive study dealing exclusively with mercenaries and women in the fourteenth century. However, books and studies on mercenaries, medieval violences or warrior princesses contain important references to the relationship between women and mercenaries in the fourteenth century. In an interesting study of Anne Dauphin, Séverine Mayère discusses the story of the Duchesse de Bourbon, who had to personally lead the defence of Forez against mercenary attack on several occasions between 1387 and 1389. Carlo Ciucciovino reports that when Conrad von Landau, the famous *condottiere*, was seriously wounded during a captivity, he owed his recovery to the devoted care of the sister of Giovacchino di Maghinardo degli Ubaldini in the castle of Pagano in 1358.¹⁴ Valérie Toureille analyses the relationship between women and mercenaries through the lens of crime, at a time when mercenaries have become bandits in peacetime.¹⁵ William Caferro tells us that when mercenaries robbed women, they were sometimes lucky enough to get away without violence, especially if the mercenaries were in a hurry because they felt threatened.¹⁶ The case of López Sánchiz and Miguel Marrochel de Navarra, who joined the English under Calveley and were later held accountable, is well known due to research by Pilar Azcárate Aguilar-Amat. Thanks to a petition by their wives, Queen Joanna I of Naples finally let them off the fines.¹⁷ Germain Butaud, in his book on the routiers, writes about women who joined the companies, married mercenaries and became their mistresses, or about women like Thomasse la Rousse, who was captured on her way to Paris and forced to follow the Englishmen belonging to Robert Knolles' company.¹⁸ In another study, Germain Butaud uses the case of Marie of Blois to show, thirty years after Yolande of Bar, that there were other fourteenth-century female regents who, with the active involvement of mercenary companies, made their enterprises a success in order

12. Ward, Jennifer. *Women in Medieval Europe 1200-1500*. London-New York: Routledge, 2016: 81-82.

13. Nisa, João. "Um jogo de luz e sombra: as mulheres e a guerra no Portugal medieval", *Mujer y guerra en la Edad Media: el liderazgo militar femenino en la Península Ibérica y el ámbito mediterráneo*, Carlos Jesús Rodríguez Casillas, ed. Cáceres: Universidad de Extremadura, 2023: 149-178.

14. Ciucciovino, Carlo. *La Cronaca Trecento Italiano. Giorno per Giorno. L'Italia di Albornoz e dei Visconti la Cerata dalle Compagnie di Ventura. Vol III. 1351-1375*. Rome: Universitalia, 2016: 339.

15. Toureille, Valérie. *Crime et Châtiment au Moyen Age (V^e-XV^e siècle)*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2006, e-book edition: location (l). 2129.

16. Caferro P., William. "'The Fox and the Lion': The White Company and the Hundred Years War in Italy", *The Hundred Years War. A Woder Focus*, L. J. Andrew Villalon, Donald Kagay, eds. Leiden: Brill, 2005: 179-210.

17. Azcárate Aguilar-Amat, Pilar. "El azote de las comparas y sus estragos en Navarra (1366-1367)". *Hispania*, LI/1, n. 177 (1991): 73-101.

18. Butaud, Germain. *Les compagnies de routiers en France (1357-1393)*. Clermont-Ferrand: Lemme edit, 2012: 59-60.



to succeed their sons.¹⁹ Perhaps the most relevant work on the subject in modern literature is Stephan Selzer's seminal work on the history of German mercenaries in Italy. He concludes that the relationship between mercenaries and women in *Trecento* Italy was much more complex, extending beyond the well-known violence and rape. He cites several examples of the marriage of German mercenaries to Italian women, where it was expected that the mercenary's political connections would be strengthened and his integration into local society would be more rapid. Violence lies in the very nature of warfare, and violence against non-combatants, including women, was very much present where mercenaries encountered women. Of all the types of warriors who fought in the Hundred Years' War, the members of the routiers were the cruellest. Many similar descriptions tell us about the fate of virgins and unlucky wives who fell victim to marauding routiers:

*primitus quidem, quod in partibus nostris circumvicinis sicut et adjacentibus civitatibus Remensi et Cathalanensi homines armorum in gravi multitudine, qui scilicet Britones usitato nomine nuncupantur, per spatium trium ebdomadarum villas campestris et et planam patriam occuparunt, villas bonis omnibus quasi spoliantes, homines depredantes, ad redempcionem quosdam capientes, sed plurimos gladio trucidantes, virgines et viduas quaslibetque sibi mulieres complacentes indifferenter corrumpentes...*²⁰

The letter was sent from Reims by *Johannes dictus Largus alias dictus li Poulain* to the council of Strasbourg reporting about the devastating effects of the great companies' crusade in 1366.

The same reference can be found in the Bull *Clamat ad Nos* of Urban V, which was proclaimed against the mercenaries in 1365.

cuncti eorum potentiam et saevitiam perhorerent quos poterant in miseriam captionis abducere ut extorquerent ab eis pecunias, immaniter cruciabant variis et incredibilibus generibus tormentorum, temetarique inebriati furore, omnisque pietatis exortes, non parcentes conditioni, aetati, vel sexui in captionibus terratum et locurum, non solum viros se suasque familias et patrias justissime defendentes sed mulieres, nec non senes et juvenes, ac in cunabulis vagientes truculenta rabie perimebant, stuprabantque virgines, etiam di perimebant, stuprabantque virgines, etiam di catas Altissimo, et maculabant etiam conjugatas quarum nonnullas, quantacumque nobilitate sulgerent post delusionem frequenter publicam ad abusum continuum, ut eis ancillaretur in campis et alibi, scum ducebant, ac contra muliebrem more et miserandam possibilitatem earum ipsas armis

19. Butaud, Germain. "Les mercenaires et les routiers actifs durant la guerre civile de Provence (1383-1388)", *Routiers et mercenaires pendant la guerre de Cent ans. Hommage à Jonathan Sumption*, Guilhem Pépin, Françoise Lainé, Frédéric Boutouille, eds. Bordeaux: Ausonius Éditions, 2016: 207-227.

20. "First of all in our region, and certainly in the towns surrounding Reims and Chalon-sur-Marne a multitude of armed men, who are commonly referred to as the Britons, held the rural villages, countryside and the region occupied for three weeks and took almost all the goods and possessions of the villages, robbed the inhabitants, held some hostage and demanded ransom, but also slew many by sword, the virgins and widows and all women they took a liking to they raped...". Archives de la Ville et l'Eurométropole de Strasbourg AA 81. *Urkundenbuch der Stadt Strassburg. Politische Urkunden von 1332 bis 1380*, eds. Hans White, Georg Wolfram. Strasbourg: Verlag von Karl J. Trübner, 1896: V, 561, n. 724.



*onerabant, ac si essent villa mancipia masculina, in omni etiam sacrilegii specie provocare non verentes Atissimum.*²¹

The descriptions of violence against women are similar: rape is most often mentioned in the sources when they tell us how the mercenaries deflowered virgins, wives or nuns and how they were put to death.²² At other times, the mercenaries continually abused women as they dragged them into their camps. Women were forced to serve in the camps of the routiers; they were often forced to carry heavy loads, as shown by the Bull *Clamat ad Nos*.

The picturesque town of Ribeauvillé (Rappoltsweiler in medieval times) lies at the foot of the Vosges Mountains, which run parallel to the Rhine. One of the three castles above the town belonged to a powerful Alsatian lord, Bruno de Rappolstein, in the mid-fourteenth century. He acquired several settlements in Burgundy and Champagne through his marriage to Jeanne of Blamont, Lady of Magnières.²³ Through this marriage, he became part of the sphere of influence of the Burgundian court and in the blood feud with John Harleston, one of the most active mercenary captains in Edward's army during the English king's campaign of 1359/60, which had lasted several decades. During the English *chevauchée* in Burgundy, Bruno captured Harleston, but he had to release the English captain because Harleston's company captured 160 nobles and commoners from the town of "Schexÿe".²⁴ After his release, Harleston attacked the lands of the Sire of Rappolstein. The Alsatian lord captured John Harleston for the last time in 1384, on his way to Rome on a pilgrimage he had the misfortune to choose to cross Alsace,²⁵ According to Bruno's letter Harleston:

21. "and everybody was terrified of their strength and brutality, those who they were able to capture as miserable captives so as to force them to pay, they tortured horrendously with different incredible tools of torture and they were drunk on terrible wrath, without the slightest mercy, not sparing anyone, no matter the state, age or gender of the captive. And at the location where they captured the victims they did not only take the men who were justly defending themselves, their families and their homeland, but they also took infants crying in their cradle with brutal rage, ravished virgins, even those consecrated to the Lord Almighty, and they besmirched their wives, from among whom they took not only a few, even if they were of noble origin, after the public rape that often took place, for the purpose of using them continuously, so that they could serve them in the camps and elsewhere, and contrary to female customs and despite their miserable abilities, they were burdened with weapons, as if they were common male servants and they did not hesitate, even in the form of sacrilege to infuriate the Lord Almighty". Rinaldi, Odorico. *Annales Ecclesiastici*. Cologne: Ionannem Wilhelmum Friessem 1691: XVI, 442.

22. In 1361, the same violence is reported by Froissart: *violoiert femmes vielles et jones sans pité*. Froissart, Jean. *Chronique*, ed. Siméon Luce. Paris: Libraire de la société de l'histoire de France, 1876: VI, 73.

23. Carter, Geoffrey. *Bruno von Rappolstein: Power relationships in later medieval Alsace*. Durham: Durham University (Masters' Thesis), 2007. Available at Durham E-Theses Online: <<http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/2849/>>.

24. *Rappolsteinisches Urkundenbuch 759-1500: Quellen zur Geschichte der ehemaligen herrschaft Rappolstein im Elsass*, ed. Karl Albrecht. Colmar: Barth'schen Buchhandlung, 1894: II, 205, n. 246. Grill, Geoffrey. "Les Grandes Compagnies en Lorraine et en Alsace de La Paix de Bretigny à la Mort de Charles V. 1370-1380". *Société académique du Bas-Rhin pour le progrès des sciences, des lettres, des arts et de la vie économique*, 125-126 (2005-2006): 58.

25. *Rappolsteinisches Urkundenbuch...*: 205, n. 246.



Item da hatt seine gesellen mich geschediget zu Urvil uff der Marnen, auch in der graffschafft zu Schampanien, uff 7406 franckhen, ohn den schaden, das das dorff und kirch verbrant würdent, und ohne die mann, die mir da inne erschlagen wurdent, und einem die zehne außgeschlagen, und viel frauwen und jungfrauwen, die da genotzoget wurdenn, gefangen und hinge geführt.²⁶

The rules of war made a clear distinction between combatants and non-combatants and treated them differently. Among non-combatants, noblewomen were more likely to survive an unfortunate encounter with mercenaries. During the Crusade of the Great Companies in the summer of 1365, when the Council of Strasbourg warned the peasants to flee to the fortified towns, the nobles reacted with greater vigour. The peasants did not believe the news, and it cost them dearly. Women were again raped and tortured:

Do von floehetent die geburen nüt vil, un wurdent sere geschediget un wart ir vil gefangen. Un was lüte die Engelder begriffent, den dodent sū grosse martel ane umb gut. Sū schetzetent die richen umb gülden un umb hengeste un umb duch, wan alles ir werben was umb gut. Die armen die nüt hettent gülden zu gende, die schetzetent sū umb roszyzen un rossenagel un umb schuhe.²⁷

There was, however, much more to the relationship between mercenaries and women. Important interests played their part in a complex network. The merchants of Villefranche and Colonges and their wives continued to practice a forbidden trade, and then they feasted with the soldiers of the Margot, the formidable Great Company of Seguin Badefol, when he took the Anse Pontée north of Lyon in 1365. They risked their souls by being excommunicated.

prout domini Urbani cape V, anno quarto, per quas nobis committitur absolutio presbiterorum, clericorum, et laicorum, utriusque sexus civitatis et diocesis Lugdunensis, qui cum quibusdam hominibus armorum de societatibus nuncupatis in region Francie et ducats Aquitanie existentibus per processus apostolicos ad reprimendas eat miserabil. incipientes et al. excommunicatis, pacta faciendo ne amici eorum et terra dampnificarentur, bona quoque propria voluntate ipsis dando, emendo, vendendo, munera, recipiendo, al. que cum ipsis in cibo, pots, et loquela, aliis, commonibus, actibus, pretequam, in crimine, participando,

26. "He and his servants also caused me damage in Urvil, by Marne, in Champagne County, worth 7406 francs, not counting the damage caused by them burning down the village and the church and the men they beat to death there, and they knocked out the teeth of one man, and then there were the four women and maidens they raped, held captive and took with them". *Rappoltsteinisches Urkundenbuch...*: 205, n. 246.

27. "With the women and girls whom they captured they behaved in such an indecent way that even mentioning it would be shameful. They burned down some of the villages they marched through, accompanied by light and flames, which they had left carelessly behind". Closener, Fritsche; von Königshofen, Jakob Twinger. *Code historique et diplomatique de la ville de Strasbourg*. Strasbourg: Imprimerie de G. Silbermann, 1843: I, 161.



*excommunicationis incurrerunt sententias in talibus per predictos processus et al. generaliter promulgatos, prout hec alia in dictis literis plenius sunt expressa.*²⁸

This was the case in 1366, shortly after Seguin de Badefol had left Anse with his company to join the crusade of Enrique de Trastámara. Merchants were excommunicated *en masse* after obtaining absolution individually, such as the tailor Gobardi and his wife Roynetam of Villefranche, who had smuggled spoiled goods to the members of the Margot in 1365. They received absolution in a letter dated 20th of May 1366:

*Girardini Gobardi, gipponerii habitoris Ville Franche qui ad nos accedens, peccit humiliter et juxta dictarum litterarum continentiam de remedio provideri, ejus confessione audita, a generalibus excommunicationem sententiis, quas cum quibusdam hominibus socialibus per dictos processus et al. excommunicat. In loco Anse existentibus in cibo potu et loquela vendendoque aliquibus ex eis de gipponis suis certis pretiis ascendentes in universis, ut sibi videtur, ad summam triginta florenorum vel circa, non tamen in crimine nec aliis participando, per eosdem processus et alia generaliter incurrit, et excessu hujusmodi juxta traditionem nobis forma in forma ecclesiastice absolvimus...*²⁹

As well as trading and feasting, women became the lovers of mercenaries, like the aforementioned Mary. Sometimes these love affairs sealed the faith of fearful mercenary warlords: Seguin de Badefol's lieutenant, Louis Roubaud, set out on a long chevauchée to collect the debts of the town of Brioud, but was betrayed by one of his friends, called Limousin, out of jealousy.³⁰ When the routiers entered the town, they had to surrender their weapons. Louis Roubaud went to his mistress's house, where he found his mistress in bed with his friend and comrade Limousin.

28. "...as in the 4th year of Our Lord, Pope Urban V (i.e. it is contained in his letter), by which he entrusts us to grant absolution to the presbyters, clergymen and laymen and women living in the City of Lyon and its diocese, who had entered into a contract with the armed men of the companies in France and Aquitaine (and) who were (thus) excommunicated by the Holy See in the trials launched to fight them (the companies) off, (because) so as to spare their friends and lands they gave them (the companies) their land voluntarily, traded with them and accepted gifts from them and otherwise shared food, drinks, conversation and other activities with them, except for participating in crimes, thus they were struck by the sentence of excommunication in the aforementioned trials and other generally promulgated trials as these and many other deeds are described in detail in the aforementioned letter". Guigue, Georges. *Récits de la guerre de cent ans...*: LXVII, 353.

29. "Tailor Gobardi, residing in Ville Franche, who addressing us humbly asked us according to the content of his letter that – after having heard his confession - we ensure legal remedy concerning the sentence of general excommunication, which punishment struck not only him, but some other members of a company staying in Anse involved in the said trials and also excommunicated in other ways – in general based on these trials and others – because of drink and food and conversations and because they had sold some of them a few of their clothes, the value of which – according to him – amounted in total to a mere thirty-one florins, yet they did not participate in crimes, nor in other deeds and thus according to the tradition bestowed upon us we hereby grant them absolution in the name of the Church...". Guigue, Georges. *Récits de la guerre de cent ans...*: LXVI: 350 (Absolution en faveur de Girardin Gobard et de sa femme, habitants de Villefranche, qui avaient trafiqué avec les compagnies).

30. Froissart, Jean. *Chronique...*: XXXVI-XXXVII; Savy, Nicolas. *Bretrucart d'Albret ou le destin d'un capitaine gascon du roi d'Angleterre pendant la guerre de Cent Ans*. Archeodrom: Kindle edition, 2015: 148.



He chased the naked Limousin through the town. The humiliated mercenary swore revenge and sought out the lord of La Voulte, under whom he had previously served as a servant. They set a trap and caught Louis Roubaud. In May 1365, he was brutally beaten and thrown into the prison of the lord of Voulte. He was taken to Villeneuve-lès-Avignon, where he was beheaded, and his body parts were displayed in the town.³¹

This was not the only case where members of the great companies died because of women. During the companies' second invasion of Alsace in 1375, when Enguerrand VII, the last Sire of Coucy, led the routiers to take back his inheritance, there was a brief moment when the villagers were able to repay the company members for the suffering they had endured. The retreating companies from the Swiss Waldstätte felt safe because they had invaded the Thur Valley, between Belfort and Mulhouse in southern Alsace. Uffolhotz,³² Wittelsheim, Aspach Schweighausen, Leimbach, Roderen, Willer, Saint-Amarin, Cernay and Thann were pillaged and altogether forty villages were ransacked. A series of castles was stormed and destroyed, such as Herrenfluch, Rougemont, Schrankefels, and Stettenberg.³³ In the extraordinary case of Guebwiller, however, local women played a decisive role in taking revenge on their tormentors. When the English arrived in Guebwiller, they felt safe and did not expect an attack. The villagers –men and women– from the neighbouring villages gathered and armed themselves, ready to fight. According to Dietler's account, it was the brave women who led the charge against the mercenaries. The men followed them and surprised the companies to such an extent that the peasants slaughtered the English on the spot, the routier "did not know who was friend and who was foe. They killed many of their own and later escaped".³⁴

The local authorities used women to spy on the companies. One of the few female spies mentioned in the written sources sealed the faith of many members of the Margot when they went to a *chevauchée* in Dombes. That is why a spy called Ancelisia's news concerning Badefol's intentions was so important, she warned the castellan about the "utterly terrible threats"³⁵ in June 1365: that Seguin was especially tempted to plunder the high Bresse, the territories of St-Trivier-du Courtes, Pont-Veyle and Pont-de-Vaux.

Liberavit Stephano de Arbenco chacipollo Castellionis familiari suo qui fuerunt apud Montemlupellum Miribellum Trevos Vimies et Sanctum Bernardum prope Ansam pro querendo et inveniando quandam mulierem vocatam Ancelis, que steterat apud Ansam, pro reportando nova et verba illorum de Ansa, quia dicebatur aliqui eorumdem stetisse in partibus Breysie, videlicet apud Sanctum Triverum de Cortous Pontem Vallium Baugiacum

31. Descroix, Bernard. *Seguin de Badefol. 'Ce fils d'iniquité' qui fit trembler Anse et la France entière*. Lyon: Prestimprim, 1986: 53.

32. *Rappoltsteinisches Urkundenbuch...*: 120, n.132.

33. Grill, Geoffrey. "Les Grandes Compagnies...": 147.

34. Dietler, Seraphin. *Die Gebweiler Chronik des Dominikaners*, ed. Johann von Schlumberger. Gebweiler: Verlag der J. Boltze'schen, 1898: 38-39.

35. Perroud, Claude. *Les grandes compagnies en Bresse et en Dombes*. Bourg: Imprimerie Adolphe Dufour, 1874: 14.



*Pontem Vele, Burgum, Castellionem et in pluribus aliis villis pro inquirendo et sciendo custodiam et statum dictarum villarum prout dicta Ancelisia predicta reportavit et quod ipsa audiverat ab eisdem apud Ansam. Quod dampnum breve fecerunt in illis predictis suo posse brevi tempore, incluslis sex grossis datis dicte Ancelisiie - III flor. auri parvi ponderis.*³⁶

The attack of the companies might not have succeeded as planned, because in the accounts of Bourg there is a reference to the salary of the *carnassier* (hangman) of Macôn, who came to Bourg to capture a soldier of the Margot.³⁷ The Pont-de-Veyle accounts of 1365 also mention that the Bresse bailiff received news of the capture of the routiers of Anse in Pont-de-Veyle.³⁸ Although there is no more information about this attack, it shows precisely how the authorities coordinated their moves against the companies as a result of the early warnings from their spies.

There were, however, female spies employed by the companies to help them provide the information needed to take castles and towns. When spies were captured, they received no mercy. In 1363, Bogne of Mont-Réal was paid to deliver a letter to the Bailiff of Saint Bris to inquire about the wife of Humbert Grotto, a native of Villefranche, and who had been sent to the prison of Montreal by order of Philippe II, Duke of Burgundy, on suspicion of having spied in Chastelnul. Later, Humbert Grolot's property was sold and the bailiff received 7 sols. because he and his wife died in the prison of Montreal.³⁹

Women, especially noble women, would often bring about the downfall of the spies of the companies. Just before the Battle of Brignais, the Dame of Chauceris captured a spy of the companies named Gieffroy, accompanied by four female companions, who had been sent to Burgundy to gain information on the situation of the principality. He appeared to be suspicious and was therefore interrogated. Under torture he confessed that he had worked for the companies. According to his confession, he was forced to travel with the companies and during his voyage, he committed petty crimes like theft. The Lady of Chauceris was empowered to administer high, middle and low justice; thus she beheaded Gieffroy Charpi and hanged his headless body on a tree.⁴⁰

36. Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or, B.7590. f. 6; Guigue, Georges. *Récits de la guerre de cent ans...* : LX, 332-334.

37. "Payment to soldier Stephanus de Arbeno and to his servant by the name of Al Surnillioris who rode to Montluel, Mirebel, Trevoux, Vimy, and Saint Bernard near Anse, to find a woman called Antelis who was in the proximity of Anse so that she could gain information and listen to the words of Anse's residents because someone says, that she was near Bressyssie, in Saint-Trivier de Cortoux, Pont-de-Veyle, Pont-de-Vaux, in Baugiacus, Burgus, Castellio and in many other villages to ask and inquire about the defense and status of these villages, and Ancelisia also reported the above-mentioned and according to what she had heard from the people near Anse they had caused damage in the villages mentioned...". ADCO, B. 7590, f. 6; Guigue, Georges. *Récits de la guerre de cent ans...* : LX, 332-334.

38. ADCO, B. 9921. Inventaire; Perroud, Claude. *Les grandes compagnies en Bresse...* : 15.

39. ADCO, I. f. 365. Compte de Baillage de Auxois, f. 44., B. 2751. f. 6r.

40. *Jehan etc., savoir faisons etc. que de la partie de Alips dame de Chauceris, nous a resté humblement que comme ait toute justice haute moyenne at basse en sa forte maisons de Chauceris et sa appartenances d'icelle et en icelle fort maison, l'an LX, environ la Nostre Dame en aoust, elle eut pris ou fait prendre Gieffroy Charpi, charpentier, pour certains cas criminels dont il estoit souspeconnez et desquils il feust nez d'environ ladicte fort maison, et que pour ce*



During the crusade of the Great Companies, women played their part in an early warning system setup by the Council of Strasbourg to warn the city about the imminent threat posed by the mercenaries. Their numbers were unprecedented according to a contemporary letter dated 26th of June 1365, written by Clara von Finstingen, the member of one of the most influential families in Alsace and Lorraine, to the Council of Strasbourg that informed the city about the arrival of 30.000 crusaders.

Do wissent, daz unser diener von Metzzen kûmen sint und sagent, daz ir wol driszig dûsint sint und daz in vyl folkez nottante na kûme, und sint ir eyn deil her us gezoget und sint wol fünf mylen wegez na by uns meinet man sicher, daz sie gen Elsas wellent.⁴¹

This was crucial information for Strasbourg, as it gave the Council the time they desperately needed to prepare the city and warn the people in the countryside of the unprecedented threat.

The relationship between the noblewomen and the armed men of the companies evolved according to their specific needs in the uncertain times of the Hundred Years' War. They used the routiers as escorts on their journeys or hired armed mercenaries to besiege castles. They even declined requests from local authorities to hand over mercenaries in their service. Noblewomen, when they had no other choice, sought the protection of the captains of great companies against their own families. At other times, the princesses were forced to organise the resistance of a region against the attacking companies.

In 1362, a few weeks before the Battle of Brignais, Nycolas de Lignes and the Lady of the Marche. hired the mercenaries for 160 francs. When the two nobles entered the town of Nevers, where the lady had a house, the Bretons told the guards at the town gate that they would only stay only for one night and that they would leave Nevers the next morning. Instead, they spent the whole of the day in the town, where they went to the cathedral and many other places. The citizens of

*deust avoit esté avec les Anglais, lors noz ennemis, et leur avoit fait foy et serement et les avoit menez en plusieurs lieux, en nestredit royaume, et eu compaignie avec quatre fames francoises, contre leur volenté, fait plusieurs larecins et autres malefices, et pour ce fu condempnez ledit Gieffroy par le juge de ladicte dame à estre trainez et coupé la teste et pendu à un arbre. ("Jehan, etc., let it be known, etc., that on behalf of Alips, lady of Chauceris, it has been humbly brought to our attention that, having full high, middle, and low justice in her fortified house of Chauceris and its appurtenances, in the year sixty, around the Feast of Our Lady in August, she had taken or had taken into custody Gieffroy Charpi, a carpenter, for certain criminal acts of which he was suspected. It was said that near the aforementioned fortified house, he had been born, and that, for this reason, he had been with the English, who were then our enemies. He had sworn allegiance to them, led them to various places in the kingdom, and, in the company of four French women, against their will, committed several thefts and other misdeeds. Therefore, the said Gieffroy was condemned by the lady's judge to be dragged, beheaded, and hanged from a tree"). Guigue, Georges. *Récits de la guerre de cent ans...*: XXXVIII, 291-293 (Lettre de rémission pour la dame de Chauceris, May 1362).*

41. "As they know that our subjects have left Metz, and they tell us that there are perhaps 30 000 of them, and that from among the people many are still joining them and that a part of them have pulled out and are at about five miles from us, they take it for granted that they are planning to march towards Alsace". AVES, AA. 81. f. 50, USS: 525, n. 652.



Nevers wanted to capture the Bretons because they were kidnapping people and robbing houses in the town. When the authorities decided to imprison the routiers, they took refuge with the Lady of the Marche, who refused to hand them over to the *prévôt* of Nevers. The routiers replied that they would rather fight than be taken to prison where they would surely die.⁴²

42. *Item, de nouvel deux Bertons sont venuz en la ville de Nevers, des quelz li ungs fut connestable du foit de Flory, et li autres est lieutenant du capitaine d'Arssy en Anceurroys, détenu pour les Bertons qui soloient détenir ledit foit de Flory, les quelz estoient venuz en la dite ville en la compagnie de Monsieur Nycole de Lignes qui estoit venuz querir Ma Dame de la Marche qui estoit et encores est en la dite ville de Neverz. Et avoit fait, le dit chevalier, accort es diz Bertons si comme il dient à luy conduire des Jongny jusques à Neverz à l somme de cent frans, et condor la dite Ma Dame et sa compagnie de Neverz jusques Anceurre à huyt vinz (160) frans. Les quelx Bertons entrèrent en la dite ville senz l'assentement des genz du dit Monsieur, parmi ce que il promistrent es gardes de la porte, parmi la quelle il entrèrent que il n'y demorroient que une nuyt et landemain matin il s'en partiroient. Néanmoins les diz Bertons y demorirent landemain tout le jour et alèrent parmi la ville en la grant église et en plusieurs autres lieux et celuy jour, eulx estanz en la dite ville aucuns de la garnison de Arche venirent sur l'eure de environx soleil couchant courre devant la dite ville, et pristrent plusieurs personnes, bestes, draps et autres biens et enmenèrent au dit foit de Arche. Des quelles choses les diz deux bertons hont fait vendre partie et nonmie tout pour quoy li commun de la dite ville fut esmehuz de corre sur les diz deux Bertons qui estoient en la dite ville si pour obvier es perilz qui s'en povoient ensigre aucun des bourgeois de la dite ville, avec le prévost, se transportirent en l'ostel de la dite Dame, où quel estoient les diz Bertons et yceulx pristrent et menèrent en prison es prisons du dit Monsieur et tantost le commun fut rappaiséz. Et depuys la dite Ma Dame a fait requérir et requis en sa personne par plusieurs foiz les genz du dit Monsieur, c'est assavoir : le lieutenant du bailli de Neverz, le conseiller et procureur du dit Monsieur qui estoient en la dite ville, que les diz deux Bertons voussissent mettre a délivré, les quelx officiers ont continuellement répondu que la dite délivrance il ne porroient faire, quar à eulx n'apartenoit mie en ce mal contente des diz officiers fait ayans à Monsieur le Gouverneur de Nivernoys, dont la dite Ma Dame s'est tenue et tient pour très mal contente des diz officiers et depuys a envoyé vers le dit Monsieur le Gouverneur par plusieurs foiz. Le quel n'a mie heu de consoil de faire yceulx délivrer ne autre chose en faire sen le commandement du dit Monsieur, tant pour les périlz qui s'en pourroient ensuivre amprès leur délivrance, comme pour les malfaçons grands et énormes que il fait heut fait on pais du dit Monsieur ; comme d'avoir pris tant par eulx, comme par leurs complices le dit foit de Flory qui est du fié du dit Monsieur, de avoir murtry et ocis plusieurs personnes, mis feux, faiz pillaiques, rançons et autres malices et fait du pis que il hont pehu et doin à présent il sont accusé par plusieurs personnes et pour especial par Johan de Mirebeaul escuier qui dit et maintient que fausement et mauvaisement il sont venu en son hostel luy piller, rober, d'ussés ses maisons qui estoient du reffré du dit Monsieur, et depuys ceulx de Duché ne corrent environs la dite ville, mes (mais) de nouvel ont bien mandé es habitans de la dite ville que se il ne sont délivré il guerreront le pais, le plus efforcement que il pourront. Toutevoies est l'espérance des diz habitans que se il estoient délivrés de dites prisons, il guerreroient le pais plus fort qu'il ne feront tant comme il seront es dites prissons pour doute que il ne soient mis à mort. ("Furthermore, two Bretons have recently arrived in the town of Nevers, one of whom was the constable of the fortress of Flory, and the other is the lieutenant of the captain of Arssy in Anceurroys, held on behalf of the Bretons who used to occupy the said fortress of Flory. These men had come to the said town in the company of Sir Nycole de Lignes, who had come to fetch My Lady of La Marche, who was and still is in the said town of Nevers. The said knight had made an agreement with the said Bretons, as they claimed, to escort him from Jongny to Nevers for the sum of one hundred francs and to escort the said My Lady and her company from Nevers to Anceurroys for one hundred and sixty (160) francs. The said Bretons entered the town without the consent of the men of the said Lord, as they had promised the guards at the gate through which they entered that they would stay only one night and would leave the next morning. Nevertheless, the said Bretons remained the entire following day, going through the town, to the great church and various other places. On that day, while they were still in the said town, certain members of the garrison of Arche arrived at sunset, rode before the town, and seized several people, animals, cloths, and other goods, taking them to the said fortress of Arche. The said two Bretons took part in selling some of these goods, or at least most of them, which caused the common people of the said town to be alarmed and to consider taking action against the said two Bretons who were in the town. To prevent the dangers that might arise*



In 1364, a young widow, Agnès de Bazoche, was suspected by her husband's relatives and friends of being an accomplice to his murder. She was soon imprisoned for *li impositent qu'elle voulait rendre et avoit promis rendre la forteresse de Agnou, qu'elle tenoit, à aucun des ennemis de monseigneur le roy et de nous, qui lors tenoient la forteresse de Villaines-les-Prevostez*.⁴³ She had promised her hand to Brother Darre, a cruel mercenary captain, who operated in eastern France. Fate struck Darre for his attempted mischief two years later when he was killed in battle.⁴⁴

Among the powerful princesses of the border region, Yolande of Flanders had a unique relationship with the mercenary companies in the mid-fourteenth century. She came from two of the most illustrious French noble families. Her father, Robert of Flanders, Sire of Cassel, played a decisive role in the Battle of Cassel in 1328. His intervention saved the new French king Philip VI and endowed Robert with several new lands, some of which were confiscated from the rebels by the victorious French.⁴⁵ Her mother, Jeanne, was the daughter of Arthur II, Duke of Brittany, and the granddaughter of Yolande of Dreux, the widow of the Scottish King Alexander III.⁴⁶ After the early death of her brother, she became the sole heiress to the vast lands of the county of Cassel in North Flanders.⁴⁷ Her marriage to Henry IV,

from this situation, some of the town's bourgeois, along with the provost, went to the residence of the said Lady, where the said Bretons were, and arrested them, imprisoning them in the prisons of the said Lord. The common people were soon appeased. Since then, the said My Lady has repeatedly requested in person that the men of the said Lord—namely, the lieutenant of the bailiff of Nevers, the counsellor, and the prosecutor of the said Lord who were in the said town—release the said two Bretons. However, these officials have continually responded that they could not grant such a release, as it was not within their authority. Dissatisfied with these officials, My Lady complained to the Lord Governor of Nivernais and has since sent multiple messages to him. However, the said Governor has not taken counsel to release them or to act otherwise without the command of the said Lord, both because of the dangers that might arise following their release and due to the grave and heinous misdeeds they have committed in the lands of the said Lord. These include having taken, either by themselves or with their accomplices, the said fortress of Flory, which belongs to the said Lord, having murdered and slain several people, set fires, committed plundering, imposed ransoms, and other misdeeds. They are presently accused of these crimes by several persons, especially by Johan de Mirebeaul, esquire, who states and maintains that they wrongfully and maliciously entered his residence, pillaging, robbing, and burning his houses, which were under the suzerainty of the said Lord. Since then, the men of Duché have not been attacking near the said town, but they have recently warned the inhabitants that if the prisoners are not released, they will wage war against the region with the greatest force they can muster. Nevertheless, the inhabitants believe that if they were released from prison, they would wage war against the region even more fiercely than they would while still imprisoned, for fear that they might be put to death"). ADN, B. 757 n. 8060.

43. "They claim that she wanted to surrender and had promised to surrender the fortress of Agnou, which she held, to one of the enemies of my lord the king and of us, who at that time held the fortress of Villaines-les-Prévostés". Chérest, Aimé. *L'Archiprêtre. Épisodes de la guerre de cent ans au XIV^e siècle*. Paris: Imprimerie Paul Bouserez, 1879: 295-296.

44. Chérest, Aimé. *L'Archiprêtre ...*: 296.

45. Baudot, Jules. *Les princesses Yolande et les ducs de Bar de la famille des Valois*. Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1900: 2.

46. Bubenicek, Michelle. *Quand les femmes gouvernent. Yolande de Flandre Froit et politique au XIV^e siècle*. Paris: École des chartes, 2002: 53.

47. Bubenicek, Michelle. *Yolande de Flandre ...*: 58.



Count of Bar, lasted only four years and produced two sons: Edward and Robert. In the last days of 1344, Yolande, the Lady of Cassel, was widowed at the age of eighteen and became regent of the County of Bar. She then began a decades-long power struggle against her internal and external enemies, where she actively used local troops and foreign mercenaries.

The county of Bar is situated on the border of the Kingdom of France and the Holy Roman Empire, next to the Duchy of Lorraine, west of Alsace, south of Metz and north of Burgundy. The strategic position of Bar influenced the political orientation of its rulers profoundly. The total absence of the House of Bar in the will of Henry IV determined right from the beginning who the internal enemies of Yolande would be the younger branches, the lineage of the House of Bar, the Sires of Pierrefort, and the Sire of Pierrepont and their allies.⁴⁸

The external enemies of Bar and, of course, of Yolande (whose duty as regent was to defend the country) were many and varied: The neighbouring principalities, such as the Duchy of Lorraine; foreign mercenary companies, such as the coalition of Navarrese, French, Hainaut and English captains during the invasion of Champagne in 1359; powerful local mercenary captains, such as Broquart de Fénétrange and his German mercenaries; local lords, such as the Sires de Faucogney of France-Comté; and important cities and bishops, such as the city and bishop of Verdun. These enemies usually formed alliances with each other against Yolande, so the Regent had to deal with both her external and internal enemies at the same time. This happened in December of 1357, when Broquart de Fénétrange and the Sire of Pierrefort attacked the two important forts in the Barrois region, Godrecourt and Foug, at the same time.⁴⁹ At the end of her regency, in the winter of 1359 and the first half of 1360, she and her son Robert had two impossible tasks: first, to resist the invincible English army and its leader Edward III; and second, when the English king left the border region, to prevent the invasion of his remaining English mercenary companies.

Naturally, she could not face such formidable enemies alone. She therefore had to look for powerful allies in local and international politics to counterbalance the odds. Moreover, Yolande (also known as the Lady of Cassel) did so with such success that she was not only able to resist most of her enemies and remain in power but also managed to have the county of Bar elevated to a duchy by Emperor Charles VI during his visit to Metz in 1354. Her surviving son, Robert, became the first Duke of Bar. Initially, in the 1340s, she successfully sought the protection of the King of France, Philip VI. With the royal intervention of the 23 of July 1345, she succeeded in removing the first internal threat caused by the alliance of the houses of Pierrefort and Pierrepont.⁵⁰ These repeated interventions by the French king enabled Yolande to remain in power, even if she had to share her power over the county with her enemies temporarily.

48. Bubenicek, Michelle. *Yolande de Flandre...*: 79-81.

49. Servais, Victor. *Histoire politique, civile, militaire et ecclésiastique du duché de Bar*. Bar-le-Duc: Contant-Laguerre et C^{ie}, Imprimeurs-Éditeurs, 1865: 61.

50. Bubenicek, Michelle. *Yolande de Flandre...*: 89.



From the point of view of this paper, the second and third periods of her regency are more interesting as it was during these periods that she was forced to fight openly against her internal and external opponents. In 1352, her enemies found the ideal candidate for the regency of Bar: Jeanne of Bar, countess of Warren. She was the living representative of all the collateral branches of the House of Bar, the closest to Yolande's children. Jeanne was the sister of Edward I, Robert's grandfather, and was therefore the paternal great-aunt of both Robert and Edward.⁵¹

As the conflict escalated, both Countesses called in all the help they could find: they relied on their traditional allies in the County of Bar, and both used outside military help in the form of foreign mercenaries. However, they used the military expertise of the routiers in very different ways. Jeanne of Bar's main supporters seemed to be the younger Houses of Bar and their allies: Thiébaud of Bar, Regnaut, Sire of Pierrefitte, Henri of Bar, Sire of Pierrefort, Hugues of Bar, Bishop of Verdun, her brother Waleran, Count of Zweibrücken, and Eudes, Sire of Grancey, who would later become a very successful military leader in the 1360s. Finally, with external financial support, the Countess of Warren hired a great number of mainly German mercenaries.

The lords who were on Yolande's side in this war came from her traditional political and military supporters: Jean of Appémont, Lord of Forbach, Humbert, Lord of Bulgnéville, and Jean, Lord of Boulay. She also succeeded in gaining the support of Philip of Navarre, who was Charles the Bad's brother, the King of Navarre. Yolande married Philip to have an experienced military leader who played a major role in the various theatres of war during the Hundred Years' War in the mid-fourteenth century.⁵²

Considering both sides, it becomes clear that this internal conflict in the border region had a direct effect on the Holy Roman Empire and the Kingdom of France. The war, with some interruptions, lasted for more than a year and brought destruction and chaos to Bar, as well as the usual looting and suffering of the local population by the mercenaries and other members of the armies of the warring princesses.⁵³ In the beginning of her struggle for power, Yolande's actions already showed the signs of the vigorous leader she would later become. She took steps to supply the castles she owned, to send appropriate troops to ward off the internal threat posed, not surprisingly, by Henry of Bar, as shown in the account of Henry, *prévôt* of Gondrecourt: *grant soison de gens d'armes de par monseigneur Thiébault de Bar pour meffaire sur la comtey*.⁵⁴

When the opportunity arose to repel the Sire of Pierropont, Yolande reacted quickly and rushed to Saint-Mihiel, ordering the bailiff to gather troops to fight off the enemy. On the orders of the Countess of Bar, the *prévôt* of Foug led all the

51. Servais, Victor. *Histoire...*: 2.

52. Servais, Victor. *Histoire...*: 5-8.

53. Extrait des registres de la Chancellerie de France, 1353; Duchesne, André. *Histoire des maisons de Dreux de Bar-le-Duc de Luxembourg et de Limbourg*. Paris: Sebastien Cramoisy, 1631: 50.

54. "large number of armed men [gathered] by Thibault of Bar to make wrong in the county". ADM, B. 1414. Inventaires-Sommaires Compte de Henris, prévôt de Gondrecourt.



men-at-arms of his *prévôté* to Saint-Mihiel. They arrived in the town on the evening of 11th of August and remained there until the 14th. The Bailiff of Bassigny also went there on the 11th, and did not leave the town until the 19th to return to his bailiwick. Having concentrated her troops near Saint-Mihiel, Yolande sent them against Thiébaud of Bar, whom she pushed back successfully. During her advance in several places, she sacked and burned those who tried to resist her, and lacked no means of violence, and did not even spare the lives of her subjects.

In her constant struggle for power, Yolande used mercenaries in various ways. Her second husband, Philip of Navarre, started fighting for the Barrois immediately after their marriage and participated in the administration of the duchy, which remained divided between the Countess of Garennes and Yolande. There are several examples of this confusing situation in the sources. In Jehan Lospitaul's account of 1352-53, the *gruier* of the county had to comply with the orders of two rival countesses at the same time: he had to deliver sixty carts of firewood by order of Jeanne of Bar, countess of Garennes, and the bailiff had to make other payments for the countess,⁵⁵ while shortly afterwards he had to pay a part of the expenses of Philip of Navarre.⁵⁶ Double taxation may have been frequent. If someone had paid the tax to Countess Garennes' men, it was possible that soldiers from garrisons loyal to Yolande collected it a second time. This caused quite a considerable stir. For example, there was a dispute over cattle taken by the garrisons of Fou and Sorcy during the war between the countess of Bar and the countess of Garennes.⁵⁷

Philip of Navarre had to fight against the army of Lorraine led by Broquart of Fénétrange that consisted partly of mercenaries and partly of princely troops. The sources show that he not only directed the operations but also played a part in organising the necessary forces for the defence and in providing financial backing. He gave direct orders to the bailiffs of Sens, Vitry and Chaumont concerning the *arrière-ban* (mobilisation) of the county troops.⁵⁸ He also ordered Gilles de la Mothe to raise financial aid to finance the war efforts in the town of Châtillon.⁵⁹ At the beginning of the war Broquart of Fénétrange, who was also the governor of the Duchy of Lorraine with his ally Wieri of Fristorf, a German nobleman, took advantage of the weakness of the troubled county and attacked the castle of Conflans and sacked Toulon in early November 1353.⁶⁰ Jeanne of Garennes, who governed a part of the county of Bar, was forced to reach an agreement with the Lorraine troops under Fénétrange, but the truce lasted only a month. Hostilities were resumed in mid-December 1353.⁶¹

The defence of the county was extremely complicated in this confusing political situation, when the rival fractions could change the castellans at short notice.

55. ADM, Compte de Jehan Lospitaul. B. 675. f. 14v.

56. ADM, Compte de Jehan Lospitaul. B. 675. f. 6v, 9r, 11v.

57. ADM, B. 2201. Inventaires-Sommaires.

58. ADM, B. 2927. Inventaires-Sommaires.

59. ADM, 2525. Inventaires-Sommaires.

60. ADM, B. 2527. Inventaires-Sommaires.

61. ADM, B. 2201. Inventaires-Sommaires.



This happened in the case of La Chaussée. Jean de Marley, to whom Jeanne de Garennes had given the command of the castle in mid-October, was given the task of defending it against Broquart de Fénétrange. After the capture of Toulon, the garrisons in the surrounding forts, such as La Chaussée, had to be reinforced to at least reduce the immediate threat. Philip of Navarre replaced the recently appointed captain Jean of Marley by Clérembault of Berney and Simonin of Avillers at the head of La Chaussée.⁶²

However, Yolande was not to enjoy her new husband's support for long, for great politics intervened and, thanks to Philip of Navarre's brother, Charles II, Philip also became an enemy of the kingdom when Charles the Bad turned against the French king. In January 1354,⁶³ on the orders of Charles the Bad, Philip ambushed and participated in the murder of Carlos de la Cerda, Constable of France in Normandy.⁶⁴

John II of France considered the brother of the King of Navarre, who was an ally of the English, an enemy on the eastern border of the kingdom, and a threat that had to be dealt with. As a consequence, Yolande's husband was arrested in April by Henry of Bar, Joffroi of Fou, Vauthier of Cumières and others who were faithful to Jeanne of Garennes and led the Navarrese prince under strong escort on 10th of April to the castle of Nonsard, where Philip was locked up⁶⁵ until the end of May. Yolande of Flandre went to Nonsard and visited her husband, who was under heavy guard.⁶⁶ Later Philip was transferred to the castle of Pierrefort, where he was held in comfortable conditions. During Philip's detention in this fortress, the King of Navarre spared no effort to have his brother released. Charles had an article inserted into the treaty concluded on the 10th at Valogne, by which John undertook to help in the liberation of Philip of Navarre and the persons of his house arrested with him. Charles even tried, shortly afterwards, to free his brother, and went to the gates of the town of Bar⁶⁷ with his troops with a view of forcing the Duke of Bar to return his prisoner.⁶⁸ Then the Navarrese king even became an ally of a powerful local lord, the Count of Vaudémont, who was the enemy of the count of Bar, to free his brother. Despite these attempts, the imprisonment of Philip of Navarre continued until the first days of the following January.⁶⁹ This prince had several meetings in Pierrefort with Yolande of Flanders. Henry of Bar also made several trips there in the last months of that year: for example, he went there on 13th of October, just to confer with his prisoner.

62. ADM, B. 2527. Inventaires-Sommaires.

63. Neillands, Robin. *The Hundred Years War*. London-New York: Routledge, 1990: 119-120.

64. Sumption, Jonathan. *Trial by Fire, The Hundred Years War II*. London: Faber and Faber, 2011, e-book edition: 191.

65. ADM, B. 1508. f. 47r.

66. ADM, B. 1508. f. 47r.

67. *car les gens du roi du Navarre devaient être devant Bar*. ("Because the people of the King of Navarre had to be in front of Bar"). ADM, B. 1508. 56r.

68. ADM, B. 1418. ff. 49v-50v.

69. Servais, Victor. *Histoire...*: 40.



Following the treaty signed on 8th of February 1356 in Saint Michel, Philip of Navarre was released, renouncing all his rights in the Duchy of Bar and vowing never to return. In return for his release, he was, of course, required (as was the custom of the time) to provide hostages.⁷⁰

Although Yolande and Philip never divorced, in fact, by leaving his wife and never returning to Bar, he made Yolande a quasi-widow, with all the advantages and disadvantages that entailed. Yolande had lost an important and trusted supporter of her cause; therefore, she had to resort to new means in her struggle for power. The period from 1356 to 1359 brought a fundamentally different Yolande of Flanders from the one she had experienced after the death of her first husband, when she was still very young. During this period a much more energetic leader emerges from the sources, hiring mercenary troops, ordering siege engines to besiege enemy castles, conducting political negotiations, acting ruthlessly when necessary, sometimes rashly and with a feral air, breaking the diplomatic conventions of the time. Nevertheless, she did her best to ensure that her only surviving son could take over the leadership of the state from her after his coming of age.

In the period 1356-1360, Yolande conducted offensive and defensive campaigns against her enemies. During these campaigns, the sources paint a picture of a princess who reacted quickly to external threats or moved troops in a concentrated manner to achieve realistic, limited objectives, relying on her trusted knights, local lords or hired mercenaries who had served her loyally for years. She made every possible effort to raise sufficient funds and manpower to mobilise her troops, sometimes involving smaller surrounding sovereigns that were not directly under her control. These measures resulted in continuous political tensions, from which she usually emerged victorious. For the campaign against Verdun in 1356,⁷¹ Yolande ordered the mobilisation of 200 infantrymen at Foug *prévôté* and then sent them to Saint-Mihiel, where they joined the other troop units of the duchy. The mobilisation also extended to the territory of the Abbey of Gorze, to which Abbot Nicolas of Priney vehemently objected. The abbot later tried his best to obtain compensation without success.⁷² As the sources indicate, *Madame la comtesse de Bar*⁷³ ordered the *prévôt* of Foug to collect the wine and bread needed to supply the troops, and then to bring the collected goods to Pargny where forty armed men awaited the arrival of the supplies.⁷⁴

Such an active role in the midst of constant warfare naturally involved a direct risk to her life, as Yolande did not rule the duchy from Bar, but was always on the move. Henry of Bar, one of her opponents, seized the opportunity in December 1357 to attack Yolanda by storming Bourmont, where she was staying. Fortunately, she was informed of the ambush in time to send for help. Henrion, Foug's *prévôt*,

70. Servais, Victor. *Histoire...*: 46.

71. ADM, B. 1629. Inventaires-Sommaires.

72. Servais, Victor. *Histoire...*: 50.-51.

73. "Milady, the countess of Bar..." ADM, B. 2202. f. 9r.

74. "Milady, the countess of Bar..." ADM, B. 2202. f. 22r.



obeyed the order, rushed to Bourmont and forced Henry of Bar to abandon the siege.⁷⁵

In 1358, old enemies of the regent, the lords of Faucogney from Burgundy, led a new skirmish at Bar⁷⁶ and, a few days later, forced the Duke of Bar and his mother to take troops into Burgundy. The Burgundians advanced as far as the gates of Châtillon-sur-Saône, taking advantage of the moment when some of the watchmen, placed on the walls, had abandoned their post, attacked the town and took it by climbing over the ramparts. However, it did not remain in their power for long, for the Duke of Bar, upon hearing of the event, hastened to put troops in place to drive the enemy from Châtillon and make them repent for their enterprise. An army was organised in Gondrecourt under the very eyes of Yolande and Robert, who arrived in this town on 23rd of May, at the head of the Poullenoix (Poles), and a corps of men-at-arms from the Barrois.⁷⁷ The prince and his mother spent three days in Gondrecourt, leaving on the 26th to return to Bar. These results were not long in coming, for the expedition hardly lasted a dozen days. The enemy evacuated Châtillon so hastily that they left part of weapons and their stock in the castle. This is the only entry that I have come across in my research in the French archives where a French nobleman, let alone a noblewoman took Polish mercenaries into his or her service in the fourteenth century. Moreover, it was Yolande who, as regent, showed her leadership skills in this episode. The same decisive and rapid reaction marked the intervention in Burgundy that we had witnessed before. She did not allow the situation to escalate, which could have turned out much more severe if the lords of Faucogney had gained a foothold in Châtillon and from there had ravaged the southern frontier of the duchy. Unfortunately, not many details about the Polish mercenaries have been recorded. All that is known from the account books of the Duchy of Bar is that the mercenaries were paid 50 ecu.⁷⁸ by Yolande and some of them were captured and later liberated by the regent. Based on the archival sources, the Polish were in Yolande's service for several months, because on 15th of July, Warnaire de Chastel, a squire, was entrusted to bring back the captured Polish mercenaries.⁷⁹

Over the next two years, Yolande of Flanders and the young Duke Robert were faced with a challenge that much more powerful and experienced monarchs had failed to meet: in September 1359, the mercenary companies that had occupied Champagne, and a few months later, in the spring of 1360, the invincible English army and its king, Edward III, and the English mercenaries who remained after the army had left the border region. Although the mercenaries who appear in the sources during these two years are briefly referred to as English, they were in fact

75. ADM, B. 2203. Inventaires-Sommaires.

76. ADM, B. 1418. f. 34v.

77. *et avec eux les Poullenoix et grant soison de gens d'armes.* ("And with them, the Poullenoix and a great number of men-at-arms"). ADM, B. 1418. f. 34r.

78. ADM, B. 676. f. 48v.

79. Servais, Victor. *Histoire...*: 63, footnote a.



a multi-ethnic group of soldiers, including Bretons, Navarrese, French, Hainaut, Welsh and Germans.

On the northern border of Champagne, the 1358/9 invasion of Champagne was led by independent captains: the German Frank Hennequin,⁸⁰ the English Rabigot Dury and Robert Scott.⁸¹ Rabigot Dury and Robert Scott arrived from Picardy,⁸² where they had occupied several castles.⁸³ In Champagne, they first took the castle of Vailly on the Soissons River and eventually joined their forces with Frank Hennequin⁸⁴ and occupied the castle of Roucy, situated on the bank of Aisne River.⁸⁵ The three captains swiftly took five more castles in the region between Vailly and Roucy, thus they were able to control the major commercial routes north of the coronation city of Reims.⁸⁶ In the beginning of 1359,⁸⁷ Champagne was about to face yet another threat, this time from the south.⁸⁸ The German Albert Sterz,⁸⁹ the English Peter Audley⁹⁰ and the Hainauter Eustache d'Auberchicourt,⁹¹ three independent captains, with 1.000 men-at-arms altogether,⁹² invaded Champagne from the direction of Beaufort, the southeastern corner of Champagne. They took

80. Molinier, Auguste. "Fragments inédits de la Chronique de Jean de Noyal, abbé de Saint-Vincent de Laon (XIV^e siècle)". *Annuaire-Bulletin de la société de l'Histoire de France*, 20/2 (1883): 258.

81. Sumption, Jonathan. *Trial by Fire...*: I, 9076.

82. Both English captains were in Navarrese service. See Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. Français 10138, f. 168.

83. The companies used the political crisis caused by the rivalry between Charles the Bad and the Regent over the control of what remained of the kingdom to invade Champagne.

84. Molinier, Auguste. "Fragments inédits de la Chronique de Jean de Noyal...": 259. His origin is not sure. He might have originated from Cologne or he was from Hainaut, as Sumption suggests. Sumption, Jonathan. *Trial by Fire...*: I, 9088.

85. "At the feast of Christmas this Robert led savage attacks on the castle of Roucy and took captive the rightful count and his gentle wife and daughter". *The True Chronicles of Jean le Bel 1290-1360*, Nigel Bryant, trans. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2011: 243; *cil finast bien de deux mille bone florins au mouton*. ("He ended up with a good sum of two thousand fine mouton florins"). *Les Vraies Chroniques de Messire Jehan le Bel*, Mattieu Lambert Polain, ed. Brussels: F. Heussner Libraire-Éditeur, 1863: II, 238.

86. The political situation in France was very turbulent at the time of the invasion of the Champagne region. John II, King of France, had been in English captivity since the battle of Poitiers. He was desperate to win back his liberty, but all his attempts ended in failure, as did Etienne Marcel's struggle for power. A few months before the companies' adventure in Champagne, the Jacquerie had scorched the region. Later, the Jacquerie was largely crushed by the Navarrese troops. This was when the mercenaries acquired the necessary information about the situation in Champagne.

87. Denifle, Henri. *La désolation des églises, monastères, & hôpitaux en France pendant la guerre de cent ans*. Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1899: I, 240.

88. These captains stayed in the region for some time see: Sumption, Jonathan. *Trial by Fire...*: I, 9097.

89. The Champagne adventure was at the beginning of his impressive career, before he was contracted by the Italian cities and led his own international company consisting of German, English and Hungarian mercenaries. See: Schäffer, Karl Heinrich. *Deutsche Ritter und Edelknechte in Italien während des 14 Jahrhunderts. Erstes Buch im Päpstlichen Dienste, Darstellung*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1906: 81, 94, 119, 130.

90. Poinson, Maurice. *Histoire générale de la Champagne et de la Brie*. Châlons-sur-Marne: Martin Frères, Imprimeurs-Éditeurs, 1896: 328.

91. Crubellier, Maurice. *Histoire de la Champagne*. Paris: Privat-Didier, 1975: 181.

92. *Les Vraies Chroniques de Messire Jehan le Bel...*: 237.



two towns at the confluence of the Aube and the Seine, notably Pont-sur-Seine⁹³ and the bridge-town Nogent-sur-Seine, without much effort. This southern branch of the invasion also affected Bar. The threat was so great that even the decade-long adversaries, the cadet branches of the house of Bar and Yolande of Flanders, were obliged temporarily had to cease their everlasting fighting and were forced to cooperate in defending the duchy. The regent put Henry of Bar governor of Châlons. in command, while Charles, Regent of France, also entrusted him, in the first days of September, with the superior command of Sainte-Ménéhould, Vitry, and some other parts of Bar. Jean of Fliery, in his account book of 1359, made several references to the English invasion of Bar in the summer of 1359 and the defensive measures taken in connection with it.⁹⁴ Yolande, like her son later, asked for and received help from the city of Metz.⁹⁵

Nevertheless, in the beginning of June, the local authorities, with external help, managed to reverse the *Rota Fortunae* in Champagne. The Duke of Normandy hired Broquart of Fénétrange, with five hundred horsemen, as well as the troops of the Count of Vaudemont, to take part in the campaign to cleanse the Champagne region of the mercenaries. At the same time, the troops of the largest cities of Champagne either accompanied the Lorraine troops or operated in tandem with the great counter-attack from the south. Thus, an army from Reims laid siege to the castle of Sissonne the same week that the great army led by Broquart of Fénétrange, and the Count of Vaudemont laid siege to Pont-sur-Seine. Henri de Poitiers, Bishop of Troyes, also joined this campaign with an infantry of 3.000 soldiers, including nobles from Artois, Burgundy, Champagne and Brie.⁹⁶ As a result of parallel operations, the defenders of Sissonne were all massacred.⁹⁷ However, the most important campaign was that of the south. When Eustache d'Auberchicourt, Sir Peter Audley and Albert Sterz heard of "the gathering of the troops they sent word to their fellow brigand garrisons at Saponay and Crécy-sur-Serre and had soon raised a good six or seven hundred mounted lances".⁹⁸ Jean le Bel gives an overview of the companies' strategy: they used the same method before the Battle of Nogent-sur-Seine as the one they had used a few months earlier in Sissonne. The mercenaries helped each other in order to put a large army on the field against the army of Champagne-Lorraine. The decisive battle took place on the banks of the River Seine on the 23rd of June 1359. Eustache d'Auberchicourt wanted to repeat the Battle of Poitiers on a smaller scale with his 700 soldiers. He took a defensive position at the top of a hill near Bray-Sur-Seine.⁹⁹ He planned to rely on his archers. The French army,

93. Poinson, *Histoire Générale de la Champagne...*: 328.

94. Archives départementales de la Meuse, B. 1511. f. 2v.

95. Archives départementales de la Meuse, B. 1511. f. 3r.

96. Doleine, Paul. "La Bataille de Nogent-sur-Seine", *Extraits des causeries sur l'histoire de Nogent-sur-Seine et des environs par L'Écho nogentais*. Nogent-sur-Seine: Commune de Nogent-sur-Seine, 1935. 2.

97. *The True Chronicles of Jean le Bel 1290-1360*, Nigel Bryant, trans. Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2011: 245; *Les Vraies Chroniques de Messire Jehan le Bel...*: 239.

98. *The True Chronicles of Jean le Bel...*: 245. *Les Vraies Chroniques de Messire Jehan le Bel...*: 239.

99. Froissart, Jean. *Chronique...*: V, 159.



including the mercenaries from Lorraine, was divided into three usual battles, each consisting of 300 lances. However, Vaudemont's army encircled the mercenaries, and ended up crushing them. Eustache d'Auberchicourt was captured and brought to Reims, where the enraged citizens wanted to lynch him.¹⁰⁰ The Battle of Nogent-sur-Seine put an end to the first attempt by the mercenary companies to occupy Champagne.

After successfully eliminating the mercenary threat in Champagne, Yolande and Robert had little time left to ensure order in the battered land of the Duchy of Bar, torn by internal and external conflicts, as they faced an unprecedented threat in the first half of 1360.

Edward III and his invincible army arrived at Reims. Following the unsuccessful siege of Reims, the English army made its way south into the heart of Burgundy, threatening the entire border region. The local lords of the provinces situated between Reims and Dijon sent spies and envoys to the English army to seek their intentions, like Yolande and Robert who sent Thiébaud, the sire of Blâmont to confer with the English king in the second half of January. On his way back, he was in Étain¹⁰¹ on 27th of January. The news the court received in Bar-le-Duc caused panic in the duchy: the feelings of dread and fear are tangible in the sources; researchers may only find such obvious signs of contemporary feelings in a bailiff's accounts in very exceptional cases. By their very nature, these sources consist of short descriptions of the events related to the income or expenditure recorded in the books. In the account of Symonet of Verdun, and Jean of Fliery in one folio, there are several expenditures incurred "because of the fear of the English".¹⁰² Robert and Yolande hastily strengthened the fortresses in the endangered region: siege engines were placed on the walls of Châtillon-Sur-Saone.¹⁰³ A *barres* (barricade) was also built in front of the suburb of the city. In Etain, Jean of Billy refurbished the artillery of the city, and reinforced its walls. In Foug, the ditch was repaired and flooded, and they constructed the palisade and twenty-one belfries. In Lachaussée two new ditches were dug in front of the castle. The people of the provostship carried out all these works in the middle of a very cold February.¹⁰⁴ The duke also swiftly hired German mercenaries to strengthen the defensive forces of the duchy.¹⁰⁵

The rural population around Bar was invited along with some of the citizens of the less defended cities to take shelter in the castles with their belongings.¹⁰⁶ The cities were obliged to guard their walls when the companies were near. In the

100. Delachenal, Roland. *Histoire de Charles V*. Paris: Imprimerie Valentinoise, 1909: V, 41.

101. ADM, B 1128. *Compte de Symonet de Verdun* f. 29v.

102. *pour la doutez dez angloix*. ADM, B. 1128. *Compte de Symmonet de Verdun*. f.42r-v. B 1511. *Compte de Jean de Fliery receveur pour Henri de Bar 1359-1360*. f. 9r-v.

103. ADM, B. 1128. *Compte de Symmonet de Verdun*; Servais, Victor. *Histoire...: 92*.

104. *il fasoit si fort temps* [11th of February] *que on ne pouoit yssir des voyez*. ADM, B. 1128. *Compte de Symmonet de Verdun*.

105. ADM, B. 1128. *Compte de Symmonet de Verdun*. f. 99v.

106. ADM, B. 798. *Compte de Jean de Longville, 1360-61*, Servais: 96.



Accounts of Jean of Sainte-Geneviève, *prévôt* of Longwy,¹⁰⁷ it is indicated that in 1360 watchmen guarded the city of Longwy day and night to keep an eye on the surroundings, while there were others who watched the watchmen as a secondary measure of assurance. If the watchmen were to fall asleep, they woke them up or if they were ignorant and neglected their duty, they had to pay a fine. As we will see later, all these preparations were not in vain, however, the English army did not enter Barrois on its way to Burgundy in February, only a month later.

Following unprecedented, intense looting and destruction in Burgundy, negotiations between the English and the Burgundians began on the 10th of March.¹⁰⁸ From March onward, the *actio radius* of the *chevauchées* grew to such an extent that Barrois was completely overrun, and elements of the English companies crossed the southern marches of Alsace. These raids lasted longer, they went on even after Edward's departure toward Never with the ultimate destination being Paris, as a number of English captains stayed in Burgundy, hence they did not give up the castles which they had taken during the invasion. A coalition was formed to deal with the southern threat. Robert, the Duke of Bar, along with other magnates of the border region of the Kingdom of France and the Holy Roman Empire entered into a defensive alliance against the companies on 4th of May 1360.¹⁰⁹ The Bishop of Metz, the Duke of Luxembourg, the Duke of Bar, Broquart of Fénétrange, and the Governor of the Duchy of Lorraine signed it. They agreed that each of the parties to the treaty would cover the expenses of sixty men-at-arms on horse under a captain leading them, and that they would send them where they were most needed.¹¹⁰

107. *Pour plusieurs sergents qui furent ordeneis et commis à estre on chastel de nuyct pour eschargetier et penre garde et la cusenson de reueillier les gaites sor les murs on temps que les compengnes estoient on paix et en tous aultres temos que on estoit en doubles tant d'Alemans comme de plusieurs aultres ennemis de monseigneur, qui voloient meffaire on paix de mon dit seigneur et de jours aussi y demorèrent pour y garder par plusours termines pour la doubte de la forteresse estre prinse, eschielleie ou embleie. Despens ens dis sergents qui firent leurs frais, tant en l'opstel le prévôt comme en la ville toutes choses comptées à deniers, témoins Hennequin le sergens.* ("For several sergeants who were appointed and assigned to be in the castle at night to stand watch, keep guard, and ensure the duty of waking the sentries on the walls at a time when the companies were at peace, as well as at all other times when there was fear, both of the Germans and of various other enemies of my lord, who sought to cause harm in the lands of my said lord. These sergeants also remained there during the day for extended periods to guard it, out of fear that the fortress might be taken, scaled, or stolen. The expenses of these sergeants, who covered their own costs, both at the provost's lodging and in the town, were all accounted for in money, as attested by Hennequin, the sergeant"). ADM, B. 1857.

108. Dom Plancher, *Histoire générale et particulière de Bourgogne, avec des notes, des dissertations et les preuves justificatives*. Dijon: Antoine de Fay Imprimeur, 1741: II, 227.

109. AMM, AA. 49. f. 15.

110. *Signours et Chief dessusdis, doit avoir et averait maintenant soixante hommes bonnes gens d'armes, pour chichier, et pour contrestre contre les dessusdis, on dit pays par-dessay la Muese, et seront lesdites gens d'armes chescuns az despens dou Signour, ou dou Chief à cui il seront et doit checcune soixantene desdites gens d'armes avoir une Chavetenne soffixent, que li Sires, ou li chief à cui il seront, lor doit mettre et soignier, lesquelles Chvetennes doivent, jurier, que bonnement et loyament il gouverneront et menront lesdites gens d'armes contre les dessusdis, lay où plus grant besoing dereit, en nosdis paiis.* ("Lords and chiefs aforesaid must have, and should now have, sixty good men-at-arms to seek out and resist the aforementioned enemies in the said lands beyond the Meuse. These men-at-arms shall each be at the expense of the lord or chief to whom they belong. Each group of sixty men-at-arms must have a competent captain, whom the lord or chief to whom they belong must appoint and oversee. These captains must swear an oath to lead and govern the said



The municipal archive of Metz has a unique collection of sources concerning the middle of the fourteenth century: this is where I found the treaty, but also the corresponding mandates and receipts for the military services. By combining these sources along with the bailiff's accounts in Bar it is possible to reconstruct how such a defensive alliance operated in practice. There are several receipts for military services, the earliest one being from the 11th of February,¹¹¹ which is related to the Lothringian aid given to the Duchy of Bar. The receipt dated from the 4th of August 1360 indicates a payment for Olris, Sir of Fenestrenge, who served the city of Metz with his seven soldiers against the English while they stayed in Lorraine.¹¹² He and his servants were compensated for all their losses (horses and harness). In addition, his more famous relative, Broquart of Fénétrange, was paid by the council of Metz to provide military services against the English.¹¹³ There are also other receipts for military services related to the Treaty of Metz: Bertrous Strangen, a knight who served with five men-at-arms for two months in the Duchy of Bar, received 150 florins.¹¹⁴ Frankes of Wendelshheim, esquire in the service of Metz with his seventeen men-at-arms was paid on the 4th of May of 1360.¹¹⁵ From the accounts of Symmonet of Verdun, the *prévôt* of Etain, we learn that in 1360 there were expenses incurred

men-at-arms honorably and loyally against the aforementioned enemies, directing them where the greatest need shall arise in our said lands"). AMM, AA. 49. n. 15 (Traité entre Adhemar, évêque de Metz, Wenceslas, roi de Bohème, Robert de Bar et la Cité); *Preuves de l'Histoire de Metz*, Nicolas Tabouillot, ed. Metz: Marchal, 1775: 186-189.

111. AMM, EE. 6. f. 11. Receipt for military services of Arnauld de Putanges.

112. *Je Olris sires de Fenestrenge ...fais savoir et cognissant atous, que li citanis de mes, mont bien salt et paneit enthierement de tous les serizes que je et mes seruant et aidans lor avons fait pires lou temps que li amglois ont esteur enlorene et de tous autres fermes que je mes seruans et aidans lor potons avoir fait ou temps passeit en quel q maniere sesoit jusques a jour de huy et me ting des dit cervinses et de toutes des cheuals et hernex et detous autres damages que je mes dit seruant et aidant y puissent avoir dit ou avoir en quel maniere q se fait ou puist estre pour dit solz et por dit paneis. Enteil mainiere que je ne autres por ni ne por mes dit seruans et aidans ne puix et ne doi de dit armes de menant ou habitans de la dite citeit ne' a altruy por cauls jamais m'ant demander. Et les en acquire por tous jours mairs. Et lor en doie porter et porteran bone paix. Pernulz lor en demandoit jamais m'ant. Entesmoignange de veriteit et porten que ferme chose sont et est auble. Je olvis sires de fenestrenge dessus dit mis mon sanel en tez sentes letres qui furet faites san de grance sign mil. trois cens et sexante lou quart jour dou mois dauost.* ("I, Olris, Lord of Fenestrenge, make known and acknowledge to all that the citizens of Metz have fully satisfied and compensated me for all the damages that I and my servants and assistants caused them during the time when the English were in Lorraine, as well as for all other levies that I, my servants, and my assistants may have imposed on them in the past, in any manner whatsoever, up to this day. I consider myself fully settled regarding the said damages, including all horses, harnesses, and any other losses that I, my said servants, and assistants may have claimed or could claim, in any manner whatsoever, for the said sum and the said payment. In such a way that neither I nor anyone else, whether on my behalf or on behalf of my said servants and assistants, may or should ever again make any claims against the men-at-arms or inhabitants of the said city, nor against anyone else for any related cause. And I release them forever. I also pledge to maintain and uphold good peace with them, and no one shall ever again make any claim against them. In witness of the truth and to ensure that this agreement is firm and valid, I, Olris, Lord of Fenestrenge, have affixed my seal to these letters, which were made without coercion, in the year one thousand three hundred and sixty-four, on the fourth day of the month of August"). AMM, EE. 6. f. 8.

113. AMM, EE. 6. f. 9; Froissart gives detailed account on his deeds in the *Chronique*, see: Froissart, Jean, *Chronique ...*: V, 164.

114. AMM, EE. 6.

115. AMM, EE. 6.



by the soldiers of Metz coming to aid the defenders of Barrois.¹¹⁶ 7 sol. were paid to a messenger so he would “go to the *prévôt* of Briey at Chalcie to inform him that men from Metz, who came to help the Lord, will stay in his *prévôté*”. There is evidence of some of the results of these defensive measures. The soldiers of Lamarche arrested thirteen Englishmen on the 31st of March 1360. Seven of them were ransomed for 256 florins, six others were imprisoned in Lamarche, a *larron* (thief) called Jean de Poulley was executed on the 3rd of August. Another one was released so he could search for money to pay the ransom for the others, but he never came back. This proved to be fatal for his companions because the Sire of Bulgnéville drowned them on the 3rd of November.¹¹⁷ The garrison of Foug captured two Englishmen as well. One of them was called Olivier and he paid 110 florins for his ransom.¹¹⁸ However, in general, the duchy was overrun by the English¹¹⁹ and life in the countryside came to a standstill and people survived in the fortified cities and castles. According to the bailiff’s accounts, the mills were the favourite targets of the English companies: the mill of Andernay in the *prévôté* of Bar was shut down because of the terror.¹²⁰ The English destroyed another mill in Airecourt (today Avrecourt),¹²¹ while the mill of Rancourt was also pillaged when the English ravaged the mill of Revigny on the 5th of April.¹²² They ransacked the village of Brabant (today Brabant-le-Roi) four and a half kilometres from Auzécourt. In Brabant they killed the mayor, and other people of the neighbouring village from Rancourt as well.

As can be seen from the above, the mercenaries proved to be too much for the defenders of the Duchy of Bar, and although they achieved some success, however, the Duchy remained completely exposed to the routiers in the first half of 1360. During Edward’s campaign, Yolande disappeared from the sources because her son Robert took over the reins of the Duchy and governed it alone.

Conclusion

This paper aims to demonstrate the complexity of the relations between women and mercenaries. As it has been shown, beyond the usual violence that followed in the path of the routiers, there were all sorts of contacts between the routiers and women from every layer of society. This is not a surprise, as local society and the mercenaries lived together. The mercenaries, where they stayed for long periods, became a part, albeit an extremely unpleasant part, of local life. The local inhabitants, including women, interacted with the routiers according to their

116. ADM, B. 1128. Compte of Symmonet de Verdun 1359-1360, Servais, Victor. *Histoire...*: 96.

117. ADM, B. 1128. Compte of Symmonet de Verdun, Servais, Victor. *Histoire...*: 96.

118. Servais, Victor. *Histoire...*: 96.

119. ADM, B. 2204. Comptes de Henrion f. 10r-v B. 798. Comptes de Jean de Longeville f. 8v

120. Servais, Victor. *Histoire...*: 97.

121. ADM, B. 798. Comptes de Jean de Longeville, f. 7r.

122. ADM, B. 798. Comptes de Jean de Longeville, f. 9v.



interests at the time. Of course, in the vast majority of cases, this meant a violent, one-sided relationship where women were the suffering party, but, as the examples have shown, at the level of everyday life, living with mercenaries took many forms. On the one hand, women became the mercenaries' mistresses, trading with them, having fun with them, seeking their protection from their families and relatives, serving them, and spying for them. On the other hand, mercenaries accompanied these women as bodyguards, sought the protection of powerful women, served princesses and countesses in their private wars, and, more than once, women saved mercenaries lives. Nevertheless, many mercenaries died, directly or indirectly, because of these women, risking their lives to spy on them, to deliver justice and order their execution, to encourage their husbands and sons to take up arms and fight the routiers. The richer and more powerful a woman was, the greater were her chances of surviving an encounter with mercenaries. The influential princesses of the border provinces, such as Yolande of Bar or Jeanne of Bar, the countess of Warren for their struggle of power relied on mercenary companies in the Duchy of Bar. Yolande of Bar employed mercenaries to lay siege on her enemies' castles, to wage wars against important cities such as Verdun, or to defend herself and her son, Robert, the first Duke of Bar, when she was besieged by her rivals. Yolande used all the support she had to stay in power and to secure the throne for Robert, who would go down in history as Robert the Great, the first Duke of Bar. To achieve all these goals, she went toe to toe with everyone. As a woman, however, she could only lead troops and pursue her own politics when external circumstances allowed her to do so: when she was widowed, or when her husband was imprisoned and then exiled from the baronial duchy. The first time was when she was still young, following the death of her first husband, and the second time was when her second husband was arrested as an enemy of the kingdom and forced to leave Bar and never returned. After she married Philip, he immediately took command of the troops and took part in the administration of Bar. In the sources, the regent and her husband are mentioned together. It is only after the departure of the duke of Navarre that Yolande becomes political and military leader again. In this respect, Yolande was unique in the period and region under study in that she directly intervened in the management of the troops and, as I have mentioned, did so at the risk of her own safety and security. During Edward's campaign of 1360, once her son Robert came of age and was able to act in a self-sufficient way, Yolande's role, of course, was radically reduced, and her relationship, a few years later, was even degraded.

Apart from Yolande, there were other highly respected princesses of the era, mostly of royal blood, for whom local lords went to battle, but none of them was directly involved in the conduct of campaigns, none of them came into as close a contact with mercenaries as the Lady of Cassel did.

